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The Prolegomenon to Proclus' *Platonic Theology*
An Introduction, Translation, and Commentary of Chapters 1-7 of Book I of the *Platonic Theology*

Thèse

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Résumé

Bien qu'elle représente son *opus magnum*, la *Théologie platonicienne* de Proclus a souvent été négligée par les études néoplatoniciennes récentes. Hormis l'importante édition et traduction de cette œuvre dans la *Collection des Universités de France* (Proclus, *Théologie platonicienne*, 6 vol., éd. H. D. Saffrey et L. G. Westerink, Paris, 1968-1997), et le *Festschrift* qui l'a célébrée par la suite (*Proclus et la théologie platonicienne*, Actes du Colloque International de Louvain [13-16 mai 1998], en l'honneur de H. D. Saffrey et L. G. Westerink (†), éd. A. Ph. Segonds (†) et C. Steel,, Leuven/Paris, 2000), peu de travaux ont été consacrés à la *Théologie platonicienne*. Le signe le plus révélateur de ce manque criant est sans aucun doute l'absence d'une traduction anglaise digne de foi et d'un commentaire détaillé de cette œuvre, pourtant capitale, de la tradition philosophique occidentale.

La présente traduction anglaise des premiers chapitres des prolégomènes de la *Théologie platonicienne* (chap. 1-7), accompagnée d'une introduction, d'un essai interprétatif et d'un commentaire détaillé, cherche en partie à combler cette lacune, espérant aussi stimuler par-là l'intérêt pour ce dernier grand monument de la philosophie antique tardive.

Abstract

Despite being his magnum opus, Proclus' *Platonic Theology* has been largely overlooked by the contemporary revival of Neoplatonic scholarship. Aside the publication of H. D. Saffrey and L. G. Westerink's edition in the *Collection des Universités de France* (Proclus, *Théologie platonicienne*, 6 vol., éd. H. D. Saffrey et L. G. Westerink, Paris, 1968-1997), and a *Festschrift* dedicated thereto (*Proclus et la théologie platonicienne*, Actes du Colloque International de Louvain [13-16 mai 1998], en l'honneur de H. D. Saffrey et L. G. Westerink (†), éd. A. Ph. Segonds (†) et C. Steel, Leuven/Paris, 2000), scant work has been done on the *Platonic Theology*. Perhaps the most telling signs of the neglect from which it has suffered are its lack of at once a reliable English translation and detailed commentary.

The present English translation of the opening chapters of the prolegomenon of the *Platonic Theology* (chap. 1-7), with its accompanying introduction, interpretative essay, and running commentary, is therefore an attempt to give this work some of the attention it so richly deserves.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

General:

TP = Proclus, *Theologia Platonica*.

Editions and translations of the *TP*:

Abb. = *Teologia Platonica*, trans. M. Abbate (Milan: Bompiani, 2005).

C.-L. = *Teologia Platonica*, trans. M. Casaglia and A. Linguiti (Turin: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 2007)

D.-G. = English translation of the first three chapters of the *TP* in *Neoplatonic Philosophy: Introductory Readings*, trans. J. Dillon and L. P. Gerson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2004).

S.-W. = *Théologie platonicienne*, vol. *I-VI*, ed. and trans. H.-D. Saffrey and L. G. Westerink (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1968-1997).

Taylor = *The Theology of Plato*, trans. T. Taylor (originally published in 1816; reprinted at Frome, Somerset, UK: Prometheus Trust, 1995)

Editions of other works by Proclus:

De decem dub. = *De decem dubistationes circa providentiam* (*Procli Tria Opuscula*, ed. H. Boese [Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1960]).

De mal. subs. = *De malorum subsistentia* (*ibid*.).

De prov. = De providentia et fato et eo quod in nobis (*ibid*.).

In Alc. = In Platonis Alcibiadem (*Sur le Premier Alcibiade de Platon,* vol. I-II, ed. and trans. A.-Ph. Segonds [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1985-1986]).

In Crat. = In Platonis Cratylum commentaria, ed. G. Pasquali (Leipzig: Teubner, 1908).

In Euc. =In primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii , ed. G. Friedlein (Leipzig: Teubner, 1873).

In Parm. = In Platonis Parmenidem commentaria, vol. I-III, ed. C. Steel (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

In Parm. L.-S. = In Platonis Parmenidem commentaria (*Commentaire sur le Parménide de Platon*, vol. I-III, ed. and trans. C. Luna and A.-Ph. Segonds [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007-2011]).

In Remp. = In Platonis rem publicam commentarii, vol. I-II, ed. W. Kroll (Leipzig: Teubner, 1899-1901).

In Tim. = In Platonis Timaeum commentaria, vol. I-III, ed. E. Diehl (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903-1906).

IT = Institutio theologica (*The Elements of Theology*, ed. and trans. E. R. Dodds [Oxford: OUP, 1963]).

Editions and translations of other ancient texts:

Dam. In Parm. = Damascius, *In Parmenidem* (*Commentaire du Parménide de Platon*, vol. I-II, ed. and trans. J. Combès, A.-Ph. Segonds, and L. G. Westerink [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1997]).

De deis = Sallustius, *De deis et mundo* (*Concerning the Gods and the Universe*, ed. and trans. A. D. Nock [Cambridge: CUP, 1926]).

De myst. = Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* (*On the Mysteries*, ed. and trans. E. C. Clarke, J. M. Dillon, and J. P. Hershbell [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003]).

In Met. = Syrianus, *Syrianii In Metaphysica commentatria*, ed. G. Kroll (Berlin: G. Reimeri, 1902).

In Phaed. = Damascius, *In Phaedonem* (*Commentary on Plato's Phaedo*, versions I and II, in *The Greek commentaries on Plato's Phaedo*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. L. G. Westerink [Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1977]).

Met.= Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, ed. W. Jaeger (Oxford: OUP, 1963).

Num. = Numenius of Emesa, *Numénius : Fragments*, ed. and trans. E. Des Places (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1974).

Or. Chald. = Oracles Chaldaïques, ed. and trans. E. Des Places, rev. and corr. A.-Ph. Segonds (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1996).

Plot. Op.= Plotini Opera, vol. I-III, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964-1983).

Prol. ad Plat. Phil. = Prolegomena philosophiae Platonicae (*Prolégomènes à la philosophie de Platon*, ed. and trans. L. G. Westerink [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1990]).

V. Isid. = Damascius, *Vita Isidori* (*The Philosophical History*, ed. and trans. P. Athanassiadi [Athens: Apamea Cultural Association, 1999]).

V. Procli = Marinus, *Vita Procli* (*Proclus ou sur le Bonheur*, ed. and trans. H. D. Saffrey and A.-Ph. Segonds [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2002]).

V. Plot. = Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* (*The Life of Plotinus* in the *Enneads*, trans. A. H.

Armstrong [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969-1988]).

V. Pyth. = Iamblichus, *De vita Pythagorica* (*Vie de Pythagore*, ed. and trans. L. Brisson and A.-Ph. Segonds [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2011]).

In Phaedr. = Hermias, *In Platonis Phaedrum Commentarii*, ed. C. M. Lucarini and C. Moreschini (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2012).

Suda = *Suidae lexicon*, vol. I-IV, ed. A. Adler (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928-1935).

Modern works:

Denniston = J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford: OUP, 1954).

Dodds = E. R. Dodds, Introduction and Commentary to *The Elements of Theology* (Oxford: OUP, 1963).

Fest. = A.-J. Festugière, "Notes critiques sur le livre I de la *Théologie Platonicienne*" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, Actes du colloque international de Louvain (13-16 mai 1998) en l'honneur de H. D. Saffrey et L.G. Westerink, ed. A.-Ph. Segonds and C. Steel (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2000), pp. xxix-xli.

Künher-Gerth = R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache* (Munich: Hueber 1963).

Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne = *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, Actes du colloque international de Louvain (13-16 mai 1998) en l'honneur de H. D. Saffrey et L.G. Westerink, ed. A.-Ph. Segonds and C. Steel (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2000).

Proclus lecteur et interprète = *Proclus lecteur et interprète des Anciens*, Actes du colloque International du CNRS, Paris (2-4 octobre 1985), ed. J. Pépin and H. D. Saffrey (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1987).

Smyth = H. W. Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920).

Sigla:

CAG = Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, ed. consilio et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae (Berlin: Reimer, 1882-1909).

DK = H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, *vols I-III* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1951).

DPhA= Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques, ed. R. Goulet (Paris : Éditions du CNRS, 1989-present).

LSJ = H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: OUP, 1940).

OED = Oxford English Dictionary online edition (Oxford: OUP).

RE = Paulys Realencyclopadie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft : neue Bearbeitung unter Mitwirkung zahlreicher Fachgenossen, 2nd edition, ed. G. Wissowa, W. Kroll, and K. Witte (Stuttgart: A. Druckenmuller, 1893-1980).

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INTRODUCTION

Proclus' Plato

It is now generally accepted that Proclus shares with Plato the distinction of having been an extraordinarily gifted thinker. The meteoric scholarly career which Marinus ascribes to him, however embellished, does not surprise in the least, given the quality of his writings and the scope of his influence.[1] His surviving commentaries on the *Timaeus*, *Parmenides*, *First Alcibiades*, *Cratylus*, and *Republic*, though all incomplete, remain masterpieces of the commentarial style which characterised late antique thought. What is more, the lost works on the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, and *Philebus* may have outshone even these.[2] His expository talents, however, were hardly confined to Plato's texts alone. The

[1] Numerous instances of Proclus' intellectual abilities are offered in the *V. Procli*. For example, Marinus informs us (*V. Procli*, 12, 9-10) that Proclus, rather than immediately embarking on a study of the complete Aristotelian and Platonic curricula in their so-called 'Iamblichean' order, read the *De anima* and the *Phaedo* with the now aged Plutarch. This breach of the normal reading order illustrates something fundamental, yet often overlooked, about these lists. They were constructed according to Neoplatonic virtue theory in order to lead the average student from the lowest to highest virtues. Proclus therefore began with an advanced Aristotelian treatise alongside the third of dialogues in the reading order (after the *First Alcibiades* and the *Gorgias*) because Plutarch likely felt him to possess already the virtues inculcated by the first two dialogues and by earlier Aristotelian treatises. As the portrait of Proclus by Marinus has been redrawn several times in earlier works, we shall forgo the ritual and instead direct the reader to the recapitulation offered at *S.-W.*, I.ix-xxvi and that of L. Siorvanes in his *Proclus: neo-platonic philosophy and science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). For other, less sympathetic anecdotes concerning Proclus' life, see Damascius' *V. Isid*.

[2] The lost commentary on the *Theaetetus* is described by Marinus, Proclus' biographer, as having much pleased its author (*V. Procli*, 38, 14), while the *Suda* offers us the following anecdote concerning Marinus' own commentary on the *Philebus*: "[Isidore] having come to Athens a second time, since their common teacher had died, he [i.e. Marinus] showed him a commentary composed by him at great length on Plato's *Philebus*, bidding him at once to peruse [it] and to judge whether the book should be published. Having read it carefully he did not hide any of his opinions, yet uttered no unseemly word, but said only this, that their teacher's commentary on the dialogue was sufficient. And having understood this [Marinus] presently destroyed the book by fire. (ἐλθόντι τὸ δεύτερον Ἀθήναζε, τοῦ κοινοῦ διδασκάλου τετελευτηκότος, ἐπέδειξεν αὐτῷ συγγεγραμμένον ὑπόμνημα πρὸς ἑαυτοῦ στίχων παμπόλλων εἰς τὸν Πλάτωνος Φίληβον, ἐντυχεῖν τε καὶ ἐπικρῖναι κελεύσας εἰ ἐξοιστέον εἴη τὸ βιβλίον. ὁ δὲ ἀναγνοὺς ἐπιμελῶς οὐδὲν ἀπεκρύψατο τῶν αὐτῷ δοκούντων, οὐ μέντοι ἄμουσον ἀφῆκε φωνὴν οὐδεμίαν, τοσοῦτον δὲ ἔφη μόνον, ἱκανὰ εἶναι τὰ τοῦ διδασκάλου ὑπομνήματα εἰς τὸν διάλογον: συνεὶς δ'ἐκεῖνος παραυτίκα διέφθειρε πυρὶ τὸ βιβλίον.)". *Suda*, M. 199, 3-10. For a complete list of the works

startling diversity of his known and attested works, from his commentaries on Homer, Euclid, Plotinus, and Ptolemy, to his topical works on theology, astronomy and literature, paint the picture of a man with an encyclopedic knowledge of nearly every branch of Greek culture and thought.

The quality of these writings, combined with his reputation as a sage and ability as a teacher, secured Proclus an enormous influence amongst Neoplatonic circles. Indeed, Neoplatonism at the turn of the sixth century may justly be called 'post-Proclean'. Decades after his death, Damascius still considered Proclus to be his principal intellectual rival, while the most celebrated ideas of the Alexandrian commentators may equally be traced back to the great Athenian master. Proclus was undoubtedly the chief philosophical authority of the last of the Hellenes, one whose ideas were both appealed to and inveighed against, but never ignored.

It is a further testament to Proclus' genius that while his direct influence faded following Justinian's suppression of the pagan schools, his ideas continued to exercise an enormous indirect influence on Western thought. The immense popularity of the works of his devoted student, the Pseudo-Dionysius (*fl*. 500), and of a compilation of extracts from the *IT* which came to be known as the *Liber de causis*, gave Proclean thought a central role in the Latin, Greek, and Arab middle ages. Moreover, when Plato finally returned to the Latin world, he was accompanied by Proclus and his fellow Neoplatonists, whose works were procured by the great Florentine Humanists alongside those of their master. The influence of Proclus on the likes of Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), his student Pico della Mirandolla (1463-1494), and Nicolas of Cusa (1401-1464), assured that the Renaissant interpretation of Plato, which would endure well into the seventeenth century,[3] bore no small Proclean mark. The eighteenth century, however, saw the emergence of modern philological and historical

attributed to Proclus and the sources of these attributions, see G. Endress, "Proclus" in *DPhA*, vol. 5b, p. 1546-1674.

[3] As proof of Proclus' enduring influence in the seventeenth century, we need only look to what André Dacier (1651-1722) wrote of him in the introduction to his translation of the complete works of Plato: "Ce dernier [i.e. Proclus] estoit très-grand philosophe… Nous avons de ce Proclus encore six livres sur la Théologie de Platon et des Institutions Théologiques : ses ouvrages sont fort difficiles à entendre, parce qu'il est fort abstrait. Mais quand on peut les pénétrer, on les trouve très profond et plein des choses admirables… Mais il faut le lire avec beaucoup de jugement et de précaution, car ces choses si admirables sont meslées de beaucoup d'erreurs dans lesquelles la haine, dont il estoit animé contre les Chrétiens, l'avoit fait tomber." *Les oeuvres de Platon*, vol. 1, 279-280.

scholarship, particularly in Protestant lands, which ushered in growing a demand to interpret Plato *sola scriptura*. This demand culminated in the rejection of the Proclean-tinged 'systematic' interpretations of Plato in favour of the 'developmental' or 'genetic'[4] and sceptical interpretations[5]. By the following century, this rejection was nearly total.

It is one of history's cruel ironies that at this nadir of Proclus' philosophical influence, his writings began to emerge from obscurity. He and his interpretation of Plato were therefore received by few nineteenth-century scholars as anything more than another curious example of late antique decadence. His reputation as a philosopher has since recovered, yet his authority as an exegete, or lack thereof, remains unchanged. Contemporary commentators who do not ignore Proclus entirely are apt to treat his Plato in the same manner as Aquinas' Aristotle or Heidegger's Nietzsche. In each case, they hold, the subject of the commentary has become little more than a vehicle for the commentator's own thought. In other words, Proclus' Plato is but a Proclean Neoplatonist *avant la lettre*.

[4] The 'developmental' or 'genetic' interpretation may be said to have its origin in the F. Schleiermacher's (1768-1834) German translation of Plato. In his ample introductions to the various dialogues, Schleiermacher laid out a new interpretation of Plato which aimed to treat the dialogues as the sole useful source for our knowledge of the Platonic system. Although his idea that the Platonic corpus contains an explicit system has been rejected by many, the idea that it is the sole source of our knowledge of Plato's thought has been widely accepted. The acceptance of the latter and the rejection of the former hypothesis have led to a debate over how to account for the diversity of the Platonic corpus, which has in turn spawned a variety of genetic accounts of Plato's intellectual development. These accounts are usually based upon a supposed stylistic or dramatic chronological ordering of the corpus, which is then used to paint a portrait of the thinker such as that which we find in G. Ryle's influential monograph entitled *Plato's Progress* (Cambridge: CUP, 1966).

[5] Arcesilaus of Pitane (*c.* 315-*c*. 240) and his later successor Carneades (214-129/8) transformed the Platonic Academy by transforming its founder into a sceptic. Whether the teachings of sceptic Pyrrho (*c.* 365-*c*. 275) had any influence on this radical shift in the Academy's teachings is uncertain, yet what remains certain is that the sceptical interpretation of Plato offers three concrete advantages over its rivals. Firstly, it highlights an undeniable aspect of the Platonic Socrates, namely, his tendency towards reasoning from his opponents' premises rather than supplying his own. Secondly, it offers a convincing interpretation of Plato's *Theaetetus*, while thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, it is a refuge for those wishing to escape the deeply dogmatic interpretations which are often thrust upon Plato. For these reasons, the sceptical interpretation has been able to overcome its clear limitations with regard to much of the Platonic corpus and attract a string of distinguished adherents including Cicero, Plutarch, Leonardo Bruni, Montaigne, and George Grote. Although it saw an ebb in its fortunes during the early twentieth century, it is now enjoying a minor resurgence in popularity. For a more detailed overview of this interpretation, see, among others, J. Annas, "Plato the Sceptic", in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, supplementary volume (1992), pp. 43-72; M. Bonazzi, *Academici e Platonici: Il dibattio antico sullo scetticismo di Platone* (Milan: Lettre Economia Diritto, 2003); H. Tarrant, *Scepticism or Platonism?* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985).

According to the norms of what we now take to be exegetical accuracy, Proclus' readings can indeed only be described as "fecund misinterpretations"[6] of Plato. Nevertheless, it is an "absurdly anachronistic"[7] exercise to hold him to contemporary scholarly standards. Not only did Proclus read a Plato that differed from our own,[8] but he read him in the light of contextual information which we no longer possess,[9] and according to presuppositions which we can no longer admit.

For Proclus, Plato's teachings were not simply the product of brilliant mind but the fruit of a union (ἕνωσις) with the divine, itself the climax of a long intellectual and spiritual training.[10] Plato was not chosen for this experience, nor was he born with a special access to the divine denied to most men.[11] He simply led a life that allowed him to participate in this

[6] This expression is employed several times by Ph. Hoffmann to characterize the Neoplatonic interpretations of Plato and Aristotle in his article entitled "What was commentary in late Antiquity? The example of the Neoplatonic commentators" in *A companion to ancient philosophy*, ed. M. L. Gill and P. Pellegrin (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 597-624.

[7] S. Stern-Gillet, "Proclus and the Platonic Muse", in *Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 31 (2011), pp. 363-380 at 377.

[8] "Au temps de Proclos, il y avait encore des traditions diverses, et non pas une vulgate uniforme, un « texte reçu » à l'exclusion de tout autre". H. Alline, *Histoire du texte de Platon* (Paris: Libraire ancienne Honoré Champion, 1915), 171.

[9] Proclus, although born in the capital of a Christian empire nearly a millennium after the Peloponnesian wars and given a Hellenised Latin name, was an anachronism. In the midst of a veritable sea-change in the Mediterranean world, he and his circle remained dogged proponents of the language, culture, and religion of Classical Athens. As S. Anghel has recently argued, it is very unlikely that the religious practices and cultural tastes of the Neoplatonic Academy of Plutarch were shared by more than a tiny minority of the Athenian population during Proclus' lifetime. See S. Anghel, "Living with the past: the City and its Philosophers in Late Antique Athens", in *Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2012), pp. 94-119. To the three case studies which Anghel proposes, we would add that of *V. Procli*, 11. Syrianus and Lachares' reluctance to worship in front a stranger, and their astonishment at the young Proclus' openness in his worship of the new moon, can only be signs of the increasing privacy with which traditional Hellenic ceremonies were conducted, even by members of the Academy. On the Neoplatonic Academy and its relation to the city of Athens, see, *inter alia*, A. Frantz, "From Paganism to Christianity in the Temples of Athens", in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 19 (1965), pp. 185-205; "Damascius" in *DPhA*, vol. 2 (1994), pp. 541- 593 at 548-555. By grace of time, place, and inclination, Proclus therefore had access to incomparably more contextual information regarding Plato than the modern scholar.

[10] For a brief outline of the contemplative practice which leads to union, see *TP*, I.15, 24-16, 18 and our commentary thereon.

[11] On these points, we are in agreement with D. G. MacIsaac, who writes that "what it means for the dialogues to be revelation… is not that they were written by a soul who had a different *sort* of access to the divine than most men. Rather, Plato had noetic insight into the intellectual, intelligible, and henadic orders that lie above us simply to a higher degree". D. G. MacIsaac, "Proclus: Philosophy as the Exegesis of 'Sacred' Texts", in *Philosophy and the Abrahamic Religions: Scriptural Hermeneutics and Epistemology*, ed. T. Kirby, R. Acar, and B. Baş (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 95-134 at 119. MacIsaac also notes that "One could object… that Plato does have a different sort of access [to the divine] because he is in fact a god, in terms of Proclus' three-fold classification in the *Elements of Theology* prop. 184 into divine, not-divine but exercising perpetual intellection, and passing from intellection to unintellection. However, it is highly unlikely that Proclus thought Plato to be a soul in this first category. The requirement of perpetual intellection,

"best form of activity"[12], and proceeded to teach others how to do the same. Proclus therefore saw in Plato's teachings a religious and philosophical system by which one might not only live the best of lives, but also understand reality as it truly is.

This understanding of Plato led Proclus to treat the dialogues and letters as 'revealed'[13] texts written with a specifically pedagogical intent. This at once precluded any superfluity of content and permitted the commentator to see a certain degree of polysemy in nearly every passage.[14] It is unsurprising then that Proclus' Platonic commentaries are wildly different from their modern equivalents, containing vast elaborations of seemingly trivial

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for example, would rule out something as typically human as sleeping. Therefore, it is more likely that Plato is 'divine' in the sense of being a particularly strong partial soul who has come down into the world of *genesis* intentionally for the providential care of weaker souls". "Proclus: Philosophy as the Exegesis of 'Sacred' Texts", 119, note 40. Plato's soul, therefore, is neither a god upon the psychic level, nor perpetually attendant upon the gods, but one of the many partial souls which "are at certain time attendant upon the gods (θεῶν ὀπαδοὶ ποτέ)" (see *IT*, prop. 185). But whence, one might ask, comes this strength of which MacIsaac speaks if Plato's soul is neither substantially different from other human souls, nor has been sent specifically by the gods (such as the divine souls described at *In Remp*., II.118, 8-119, 2)? The answer to this further question may lie in Proclus' often overlooked theory of metensomatosis. For Proclus, forgetfulness (λήθη) of the divine and the real nature of things was the final step in the process that causes the descent of human souls into the world of becoming (γένεσις) (on this four step process, described *Phaedrus*, 248c5-8, see *In Phaedr*., 170, 25-171, 15; on forgetfulness, see, *inter alia*, *In Tim*., III.43, 4-10; for other citations pertaining to this, see Ph. Hoffmann, "Un Grief Antichrétien chez Proclus : L'ignorance en Théologie", in *Les Chrétiens et L'hellénisme: Identités religieuses et culture grecque dans l'Antiquité tardive*, ed. A. Perrot [Paris: Édition Rue d'Ulm, 2012], pp. 161-266 at 182, note 71). Were a partial soul, however, to preserve its memory of these things through several lives, it might then accede to a daimonic, or even a divine life (on the possibility of a human soul existing 'in relation [ἐν σχέσει]' to a daimonic or divine body, see *In Remp*., II.310, 18-21). Association with a divine or a daimonic soul would certainly have a beneficent effect on a partial soul, and when it again entered into 'coordination (κατάταξις)' with a human body, one might well imagine that its memory of the divine would be a good deal sharper than that of the average partial soul.

[12] *TP*, I.16, 19.

[13] MacIsaac's above cited point ("Proclus: Philosophy as the Exegesis of 'Sacred' Texts", 119) cannot be over-emphasized. Plato's teachings are 'revealed' for Proclus in the sense that Plato, having achieved union with the gods, reveals to us in them the truth concerning these gods and the reality which depends on them. They are not 'revealed', however, in the sense in which the *Qu'ran* is often believed to have been revealed to Muhammad, i.e. directly dictated from a divine source. This, of course, does not preclude the complicity of the gods in the revelation of the truth concerning them to humankind. As Proclus states clearly "the Platonic philosophy… initially shone forth according to the will, similar in form to the Good, of the gods" (*TP*, I.5, 6-8). Proclus' gods are not passive entities. They are the Good, and their will is therefore the Good for all things. The greatest Good for humankind, in Proclus' eyes, was undoubtedly the existence of the Platonic philosophy, which offers us the key to union with the gods and to real happiness.

[14] On the characteristics of Proclus' interpretation of Plato, see "Proclus: Philosophy as the Exegesis of 'Sacred' Texts", 122-123.

points[15] and being guided by the unshakable conviction that Plato contradicts neither himself, nor the truth.

Holding such presuppositions concerning the origin and nature of Plato's thought, it is evident that Proclus could not have arrived at an interpretation that would satisfy the contemporary student of Plato. Proclus was clearly not a Plato scholar, but he was a Platonist, as was Plato himself, if we are to believe the recent argument of Lloyd P. Gerson.[16] In an attempt to break with the prevailing treatment of the Neoplatonic interpretation of Plato, Gerson proposes that we rethink what it means to be a 'Platonist'. As he notes, despite the lack of concord amongst contemporary interpreters as to the actual positive content of Plato's thought, with regard to its negative content, i.e. to the positions which are rejected in both the Platonic corpus and the indirect tradition, the possibility of a general consensus seems much more promising. For those who hold that we can determine at least to some extent what Plato said,[17] that he *rejected* nominalism, materialism, mechanism, relativism, and skepticism as global answers to the problems of philosophy is likely an acceptable proposition. This rejection, which entails that Plato was at a minimum an antinominalist, an antimaterialist, an antimechanist, an antirelativist, and an antisceptic, is referred to as *Ur-Platonism* by Gerson[18]. 'Platonism', therefore, according to him, is "any version of a positive construct on the basis of *Ur-Platonism*"[19], meant to provide an alternative to these unacceptable positions.

Having established what we may call Platonism, Gerson proceeds to advance an undoubtedly controversial hypothesis. Based on the substantial agreement of the testimonies furnished by the indirect tradition, he argues that one of the possible positive constructs under discussion at the Academy near the end of Plato's life was centred on 'a first principle

[15] As MacIsaac writes, "If a text as a whole is divinely inspired, then it should not contain any superfluous content. Every word, every gesture or detail, however small, should in its own way be an image of its divine source and should be susceptible of interpretation. This is why Proclus will produce such wonderful bizarre explanations of things like Parmenides' smile and Zeno's laugh, or explain a simple phrase in Plato like *noêsis meta logou* by distinguishing six different levels of *noêsis,* from intelligible intellection *(noêsis hê noêtê)* down to the imagination, specifying which one of these levels Plato meant to include by the term *logos.*" *Ibid*., 124.
[16] L. P. Gerson, *From Plato to Platonism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).
[17] Gerson convincingly dismisses the arguments of those who hold that there to be no possibility of discerning the content of Plato's thought with the evidence at our disposal. See Gerson, *From Plato to Platonism*, 83-91.
[18] On *Ur-Platonism*, see *Ibid*., 9-19.
[19] *Ibid*., 305.

of all', called the Good or the One[20]. This positive construct, to which Plato may make allusion several times in the dialogues, was adopted by various Platonists throughout the Hellenistic period and Early Empire, and would eventually be championed by Plotinus and his followers.

In light of Gerson's thesis, which we are inclined to accept, Neoplatonism cannot be called misinterpretation of Plato without some qualification. True, the Neoplatonic interpreters often claim to find theories in the texts of Plato which are evidently not present. But to call the development of a positive construct already being entertained at the Academy during Plato's lifetime and its retro-projection onto Platonic corpus, a 'misinterpretation', pure and simple, is a delicate affair. There is also the possibility that said dialogues and letters were written as pedagogical tools meant to incite the further development of Platonism. Were this the case, then the Neoplatonic approach would be entirely justified.

The following study of the *TP* proposes to examine this work as an expression of Platonism. We shall therefore argue that the *TP* represents not a historically accurate portrait of Plato's theology, but a Platonic theology, i.e. the development of certain positive theological constructs which were already 'on the table', as it were, at the Academy under Plato's leadership.

The *TP*: Its Purpose and Structure

The ultimate expression of the Proclean interpretation of Plato is to be found in his magnum opus, the *TP*. As Proclus alludes to in the first chapter of the *TP*, the basis of the true interpretation of Plato's theology remerged with Plotinus (*c*. 204/5-270), i.e. the concept of the One beyond being and the theological interpretation of the *Parmenides*.[21] The *TP* is therefore, in Proclus' eyes, the culmination of the theological work of the entire Neoplatonic tradition. What Proclus fails to mention, however, is the special debt which this work owes to Iamblichus (*c*. 242-*c*. 325).

[20] *Ibid*., 306.
[21] See our commentary on chapter 1 *infra*.

In the third chapter of the *TP*, Proclus offers his readers the following definition of what he takes theology to be: "All those, then, who have ever yet occupied themselves with theology, calling gods the first principles by nature, say that to treat of these is the theological science."[22] Theology is therefore, according to Proclus, a science of the gods as first principles. Proclus elaborates his conception of theology as a science in the following paragraph:

> in the beginning, collecting together all the common notions concerning the gods, as many as Plato hands down, and examining both the meanings in each case and the values of the fundamental propositions; in the middle [part] enumerating the universal orders of the gods, determining both their individualities and processions according to the Platonic method, and referring all back to the hypotheses of the theologians; in the final [part] discussing the gods celebrated sporadically in the Platonic writings, either hypercosmic or encosmic, tracing the theory concerning them back to the universal genera of the ranks of the divine.[23]

The Diadochus here tells us that he will begin his scientific theology by collecting together the 'common notions' concerning the gods found in Plato's texts. He elsewhere refers to these common notions as our "untaught and unperverted preconceptions"[24] concerning the gods, or "our innate notions (αὐτοφυεῖς ἡμῶν ἐννοίας)"[25] regarding them. They are therefore those attriubtes that are common to all the gods,[26] of which all humans have an innate notion, e.g. that the gods are beautiful, good, wise, etc. It is for this reason that Plato speaks of them so openly, and indeed, the more common the notion, the more thoroughly it is discussed by him. This, of course, does not mean that Plato offers his readers *every* common notion concerning the gods. He does not, for example, offer an exhaustive list

[22] *TP*, I.12, 11-13.
[23] *TP*, I.9, 9-19.
[24] *Ibid*., I.22, 3.
[25] *Ibid*., I.64, 11.
[26] *Ibid*., I.59, 8-10.

of every divine name, nor does he openly affirm the ungenerated existence of the gods. These, however, may be said to constitute the least common of the common notions.

For lack of a body of revealed texts or pronouncements of priestly caste concerning the nature of the divine, it is to these common notions that Greek thinkers, including Plato, appealed when attempting to describe what a god ought to be,[27] or more precisely, what 'godness' ought to be. One must indeed never lose sight of the predicative nature of the term θεός for the Greeks. The list of common notions which Proclus offers are not predicates of a certain subject, but aspects of the definition of single 'super-predicate'. That θεός should mean so many things, and be applied to so many things, underscores the impossibility of arriving at an adequate definition thereof.[28] Moreover, as we shall see, the search for such a definition is of limited interest in a polytheistic religion such as that of the Greeks. Traditional Greek theology, therefore, was never confined to seeking an adequate definition of θεός. Nor is Proclus'.

Faithful to his outline, Proclus follows his relatively brief discussion of the common notions by spending the rest of *TP* 'enumerating (διαριθμούμενος)' and 'determining (ἀφοριζόμενος)'[29] the 'orders (τάξεις)', 'processions (προόδους)', and 'ranks (διακόσμων)' of the gods. With this vocabulary of ordering and of organization, Proclus leaves aside the question of what 'godness' means and takes up a new line of inquiry. He now turns to examine the organization of the gods as a system of relations, or, put otherwise, he wishes to know where the gods are in relation to one another. Proclus' scientific theology therefore shifts early on from what might be termed a 'categoriology' to a taxology (in the most literal sense of the word).

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[27] See R. Parker, *On Greek Religion* (London: Cornell University Press2011), 34-36; G. Betegh, "Greek Philosophy and Religion", in *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy*, ed. M. L. Gill (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 625-639 at 631.

[28] As R. Parker writes, ""godness" is a predicate that no definition can circumscribe." *On Greek Religion*, 98. Proclus himself also admits the incredible polysemy of this word, writing that θεὸς may be applied equally to what is simply a god, what is a god by union, a god by participation, a god by contact, and a god by similitude. This means that henads, intellective beings, divine souls, intermediary beings such as daimones, and even human souls may be qualified by the predicate θεὸς. See *TP*, I.115, 14-21.

[29] Although often translated by English verbs such as 'to distinguish' or 'to determine', the original sense of the verb ἀφορίζω is one of spatial organization, *viz*., 'to mark off by boundaries'.

The attempt to define 'godness' was of limited interest for the Greeks in that it did not tell them what they really wanted to know about their gods, namely, what they are. In a polytheistic religion, the essence of the gods is as much a matter of what they have in common (i.e. their unity) as of their individuality (ἰδιότης). Which god has precedence in a given context? Am I overlooking a certain god? These are the types of questions which would have exercised the mind of every Greek worshipper, and they are questions which may only be answered by discovering the individuality of the gods. This individuality can only be determined by studying their relation to one another and to the things which depend upon them. To study the individualities of the gods is therefore to systematically arrange the gods. We therefore find the tendency towards the systematic arrangement of the divine expressed in nearly every aspect of Greek religion, from the divine genealogies of the poets, to the local pantheons of each polis, to the ideas which Proclus finds in Plato. Moreover, this taxological approach to Greek theology was undoubtedly amplified by the Neopythagorean interpreters of Plato, who would not have hesitated to impose their mathematical ideas on the divine. Iamblichus, of course, was one of the principle adherents of Platonic Neopythagoreanism.[30]

This idea of theology as a taxology of the divine was in fact inherited by Proclus from his Neoplatonic predecessor Iamblichus. It is in the works of this earlier Neoplatonist that there first appears the idea of a 'theological science (θεολογικὴ ἐπιστήμη)'[31], i.e. a science not of separate substances, but specifically of divine beings.[32] The purpose of this science for Iamblichus is immediately betrayed by the vocabulary according to which he describes the gods, namely, 'wholes', 'parts', 'sets', 'multitudes', 'orders', 'series', 'ranks', 'plans', etc. It was a concerted effort to determine the individualities of the gods by organizing them as scientifically as possible.

[30] On Iamblichus' possible debt to the Neopythagorean interpreters of Plato, see J.-M. Narbonne, *Plotin: Œuvres complètes*, tome I, vol. I, with the collaboration of M. Achard, text ed. L. Ferroni (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012), ccxli.

[31] Iamblichus, *De communi mathematica scientia*, ed. U. Klein (Leipzig: Teubner, 1891), 88, 19.

[32] For an overview of the evolution of theology into a science in late Antiquity, see H. D. Saffrey, "Les débuts de la théologie comme science (III^{e}-VI^{e} siècle)" in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, vol. 80, no. 2 (1996), pp. 201-220.

With the loss of so much of his corpus, it is difficult to tell to what extent Iamblichus developed this idea. Nevertheless, it has been argued, based on two supposed references by Proclus,[33] that Iamblichus also authored a work entitled the *Platonic Theology*. Proclus' statements, however, are extremely ambiguous. To immediately conclude that they refer to the title of a lost Iamblichean work would be imprudent, as each could just as easily be referring to no more than a well-known passage in another Iamblichean work which treated of Plato's theology.[34]

A far more certain fruit of Iamblichus' pen was a work known as *On the Gods*. This work is mentioned by Iamblichus himself,[35] who tells us that it contained a discussion of the properties of the gods, while Proclus mentions that it describedthe genera of being and their proper place within the structure of reality.[36] It is tantalizing speculate as to the content and structure of this treatise and as to whether it might have provided Proclus with prototype for his own theologies, especially if we are to take the opening chapters of Sallustius' (*fl*. 4th cent.) *De deis* as an *haute vulgarisation* of its contents.

Were this the case, *On the Gods* may have begun, like Sallustius' work, with a summary of the necessary qualifications of the aspiring theologian, and have likewise contained an explanation of the nature of myth, a classification of various myths, an examination of the nature of the first cause, and a treatment of the divine hierarchy.[37] All of these things are to be found in the *TP* in a similar order, giving some small credence to the theory that Proclus may have made use of *On the Gods* when laying out the structure of his own work.

Whether Iamblichus' project of theology as a taxological science was already installed at the Neoplatonic Academy upon Proclus' arrival is difficult to say. The names of two works by Syrianus (*c.* 375-437), *On the Theology of Orpheus* and *On the Gods in*

[33] See *TP*, III.44, 1-5; *In Parm*., 1067, 33-34.
[34] On these two references and their fundamental ambiguity, see *S.-W.*, III.44, note 1.
[35] Iamblichus, *Protrepticus*, ed. and trans. É. Des Places (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1989), 146, 6.
[36] *TP*, I.11.52, 4-5
[37] See *De deis,* sec. 1-6.

Homer, and Proclus' intimate knowledge of each,[38] cannot but catch our interest. Nevertheless, their content and form remain entirely unknown to us. Proclus' attribution of the theological reading of second hypothesis of the *Parmenides* to Syrianus, however, seems proof enough that he and his master were of one mind with regard to the importance of the Iamblichean project.

Aside from nature of his own religion and the tradition of which he was the inheritor, Proclus may also have had a powerful external impetus to consider theology as taxology. Following the failure of Porphyry's (*c*. 234-*c*. 305) massive treatise *Against the Christians* to halt Christianity's spread,[39] the Neoplatonists seemed to have abandoned open polemic and turned towards more subtle means of resisting this growing menace. Amongst these subtler means was the possibility of the shoring up the Greek religion by providing it with surer foundations than easily abolished rituals and easily demolished altars. To insure its survival, Proclus and others may have felt that the Greek religion would have to be given a scientific basis, one that the seemingly ignorant Christians could never hope to undermine.[40]

Although a host of supplemental *raisons d'être* or σκοποί may be proposed for the *TP*,[41] it is clear from his description of its contents that the desire to realize the Iamblichean

[38] These two works are ascribed to both Syrianus and Proclus by the Suda, while *On the Theology of Orpheus* is also mentioned by Marinus (*V. Procli*, 27). Marinus tells us that Proclus later added copious scholia to this work at the request of his students, which is likely also the case of *On the Gods in Homer*, which would explain why they are ascribed to both authors.

[39] On this work, see R. M. Berchman, *Porphyry Against the Christians* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

[40] As Ph. Hoffmann argues, "le projet de Proclus – construction et exposition d'une théologie systématique – apparaît comme une réponse globale à la doxa chrétienne et à ses erreurs. La théologie est une science, qui se déploie non seulement dans les commentaires des dialogues de Platon, mais aussi dans les deux œuvres majeures que sont les *Éléments de théologie* et la *Théologie platonicienne*". "Un Grief Antichrétien chez Proclus : L'ignorance en Théologie", 190.

[41] Among the suggestions for the *TP*'s purpose, we find the argument of S. Rappe, who writes concerning Neoplatonic texts that "Decoding these texts, involves seeing them as something like meditation manuals rather than mere texts. The non-discursive aspects of the text - the symbols, ritual formulae, myths, and images - are the focus of the pedagogy. Their purpose is to help the reader to learn how to contemplate, to awaken the eye of wisdom, to, in the words of the Chaldean oracles, 'Open the immortal depth of the soul; open all [your] eyes up in the heights.' In other words, these texts constitute a language of vision." S. Rappe, *Reading Neoplatonism: Non-Discursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Proclus, and Damascius* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), 3. Concerning the *TP* specifically, she writes further that "the *Platonic Theology* is meant to be a support, not for argument, but for vision. The text can be seen as iconic, and the system that it supposedly conveys is more like a ritual invocation or theurgic rite than a handbook of metaphysics." *Reading Neoplatonism: Non-Discursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Proclus, and Damascius*, 170. While Rappe is correct in pointing out that the *TP* and other Neoplatonic these texts were meant to serve as aids to contemplative introspection, this certainly does debar them from containing dialectical argumentation. As Proclus points out, what distinguishes Plato and

project of a scientific theology was among the fundamental motives behind Proclus' magnum opus. It is, therefore, the archetype of all medieval and modern scientific theologies.

To return to the description of the *TP*'s contents, although Proclus himself divides the work into three parts, in reality, it could easily be divided into four, as it begins with an independent prolegomenon in twelve chapters which seeks to prove the legitimacy of Proclus' entire enterprise. This prolegomenon is immediately followed by seventeen chapters on the 'common notions' concerning the gods provided by Plato throughout his dialogues. These first two parts, which together constitute the first book of the *TP*, are followed by an examination of the divine hierarchy as revealed by Plato, beginning with a long discussion of the "universal orders of the gods" in Books II-V.[42] Among these universal orders of gods we find the One (Book II), the intelligible gods (Book III), the intelligible-intellective gods (Book IV), and the intellective gods (Book V). Following this treatment of the universal gods, Proclus begins an exposition of the particular orders of the gods, which include the hypercosmic, hypercosmic-encosmic, and encosmic gods, in Book VI. It is amidst this examination, however, while treating of the hypercosmic-encosmic gods, that the *TP* as we now possess it comes to a close. According to the schema provided in the above cited paragraph, this break at the level of the hypercosmic-encosmic gods would seem to indicate that the work has come down to us in an incomplete form, as Proclus leaves untreated the final διάκοσμος of the particular gods, the encosmic gods, featured most prominently in the *Timaeus* and the *Sophist*.[43]

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the Platonic tradition from other traditions of divine revelation is that it communicates its knowledge of the divine by means of dialectical argumentation as well as the other three methods (on these four theological methods, see the central essay of this volume). The *TP*, therefore, being a text within the Platonic tradition, should contain this same form of argumentation about the divine. Besides a meditation manual, the *TP* has also been seen as part of an attempt to permanently install a rigid hermeneutical system within the School of Athens. On this argument see P. Athanassiadi, *La lutte pour l'orthodoxie dans le platonisme tardif : de Numénius à Damascius* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2006); *Vers la pensée unique: la montée de l'intolérance dans l'Antiquité tardive* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2010). For a critique of Athanassiadi's thesis, see S. Fortier, "Proclus et l'orthodoxie: une réponse au travail récent de Polymnia Athanassiadi" in *Dionysius*, vol. 29 (2011), pp. 181-192.

[42] See our commentary on this paragraph *infra*.

[43] "Therefore, looking at these doctrines, it is necessary to investigate each rank of gods in those dialogues… from the *Timaeus*, the theory concerning the intelligible gods, the divinely inspired sketch of the demiurgic monad, and the most complete truth concerning the encosmic gods… from the *Sophist*, all the generation under the [sphere of] the moon and specific nature of [its] appointed gods." *TP*, I.25, 8-18.

When the first volume of their landmark translation of the *TP* was published in 1968, H. D. Saffrey and L. G. Westerink, of whom more shall be said below, held that the work was fundamentally incomplete.[44] By the publication of the final volume nearly thirty years later, however, they held the opposite to be true.[45] They now argued that the work, as it has come down to us, is complete. In support of this assertion, they proposed that due to the sheer number of encosmic gods mentioned by Plato, finishing the third section of the *TP* with the same detail as he had begun it would have been too great an undertaking for Proclus. Moreover, Proclus would have already treated of these gods in the lost portion of his *In Parm.* concerning the second hypostasis. Secondly, they argued that there is evidence that at least one Byzantine scholiast knew of only six books of the *TP*, while Damascius (*c*. 458- *c*. 538) does not refer to lost sections of it when he treats of the encosmic gods in his own commentary on the *Parmenides*.

The arguments which Saffrey and Westerink assemble in favour of the work's completeness are certainly interesting, but none of them is wholly unassailable. More crucially though, they offer no explanation as to why Proclus proposes, and then fails to produce, a treatment of all three διάκοσμοι of particular gods, from the hypercosmic to the encosmic. Although the encosmic gods are indeed treated of in the *In Tim*., and would likewise have been in both the lost portions of the *In Parm*. and his commentary on the *Sophist*, this would hardly have been reason enough to exclude them from the *TP*. Indeed, by that logic, the entire work need not exist, as every part of its contents was certainly discussed elsewhere by Proclus: the intelligible gods in his commentary on the *Philebus*, the hypercosmic-encosmic gods in his commentary on *Phaedrus*, and so forth. The *TP*, however, could hardly have been meant to offer entirely new expositions of Plato's thought.[46] It is rather, like all succeeding systematic theologies, a work of synthesis, the distillation of more detailed exegeses.

[44] *S.-W.*, I.lxiii-lxiv.
[45] *Ibid.*, VI.xxxv-xliv.
[46] Although it nowhere seems to contradict the contents of the *In Parm*., *In Remp*., or *In Tim*., it is not impossible, however, that the *TP* contains refined versions of previous interpretations of other dialogues whose commentaries are now lost.

If anything, Proclus was an astonishingly productive author. Marinus tells us that he would, on average, write seven hundred lines of prose a day.[47] At that rate, over the course of thirty years, he could have produced forty-thousand pages of Greek as we now present it in an Oxford Classical Text or a Budé edition. The *TP*, as we now possess it, might have taken him less than a month to compose. We may therefore justly wonder at the assertion that he lacked either the energy or the initiative to finish such a work, even with the reduced capacities of old age. It is indeed far more likely that the *TP*, like the majority of the Proclean corpus, is missing a substantial portion. Whether this fragment died with Proclus or was sacrificed upon the altar of time, we cannot know. We may nevertheless seek consolation in that fact that what remains of the *TP* still constitutes the longest surviving work of any Neoplatonist.

The Prolegomenon

Although grouped with the fifteen chapters upon the common notions concerning the gods so as to form a single book, the first twelve chapters of the *TP* clearly constitute a self-contained whole. Their content and structure differ from that of any other part of the *TP*, and such distinct prolegomena are common amongst Proclean[48] and Neoplatonic works in general[49].

This twelve-chapter prolegomenon contains two basic narratives. One of these is a pedagogical narrative, clearly composed of two sections, one of seven chapters, and one of five.[50] The first (chap. 1-7) offering a general introduction as to why Plato's works are the source of a scientific theology, while the second (chap. 8-12) offers the ideal case study as proof that Plato did indeed treat of theological considerations. This first section begins with a history of the exegesis of Plato (chap. 1), followed by a discourse on how theology (including the present work) should be taught (chap. 2), a definition of theology (chap. 3), a

[47] *V. Procli*, 22, 31-32.
[48] See, for example, the *In Tim*. and the *In Remp*.
[49] See, for example, the spurious prolegomenon added to Ammonius' commentary on Porphyry' *Isagoge*.
[50] This point is well noted by Saffrey in his article "La Théologie platonicienne de Proclus, fruit de l'exégèse du Parménide", in *Revue de théologie et philosophie*, vol. 116 (1984), pp. 1-12.

presentation of the four possible modes of exposing theological truth (chap. 4), a presentation of the Platonic dialogues in which such truth is to be found in greatest abundance (chap. 5), a hypothetical objection to this entire enterprise (chap. 6), and a response to this objection (chap. 7).

The following five chapters constitute a justification of the response given in chap. 7. Having asserted that Plato does indeed discuss theological matters, because there is a dialogue that treats almost exclusively of theology, namely, the *Parmenides*, Proclus argues that there are two possible ways of reading the *Parmenides*, particularly its so-called 'second half' (chap. 8): either it is to be treated as a logical exercise (chap. 9), or as theological tract (chap. 10). If we agree that the latter is true, then we must accept, with Syrianus, that the second hypothesis teaches the hierarchy of ontological reality, and therefore, by analogy, the divine hierarchy (chap. 11). Therefore, if we accept the general outlines of the Syriano-Proclean interpretation of the *Parmenides* (chap. 12), we must conclude that Plato did indeed leave us with his theological reflections.

Aside from this pedagogical narrative, however, the prolegomenon also offers a historico-philosophical narrative that details the evolution of the theological interpretation of Plato up to the time of Proclus. It begins with a basic overview of this history (chap. 1), followed by a demonstration that it is the Platonic tradition that has the truest conception of theology (chap. 2-3). It then goes to show that the *Parmenides* is the key to the Platonic understanding of theology (chap. 4-7). In the final five chapters (8-12), Proclus proceeds through the historical development of the interpretation of the *Parmenides*, beginning with those Platonists who thought it to be naught but a logical exercise and proceeding through the various successive Neoplatonic interpretations of the dialogue (Plotinus, Porphyry/Amelius, Iamblichus), which culminate in the correct Syriano-Proclean interpretation.[51]

Although it is replete with discussion of other dialogues, as the preceding summary indicates, the prolegomenon to the *TP* is clearly focused on the *Parmenides*. We must bear in mind, however, that this focus on the *Parmenides* does not imply that the *TP* is simply a

[51] The link between this exegetical history of the *Parmenides* and that offered at *In Parm*., 1051-1064, is well demonstrated at *S.-W.*, I.lxxv-xc.

further exegesis of the dialogue.[52] The *TP* does indeed offer compressed exegesis of the *Parmenides*, but it is presented alongside similar exegeses of the theological content of other dialogues. It is the theological content of these other dialogues that Proclus will use to flesh out the bare-bones presentation of Plato's theology in the second part of the *Parmenides*. His goal is therefore not to re-examine the *Parmenides*, but to explicate Plato's theology as a whole, drawing on the resources of the entire Platonic corpus.

The Text, the Translations, and the Present Work

The date of the *TP*'s composition with relation to the rest of Proclus' writings is difficult to construe.[53] If we are to believe Marinus, then the commentaries on the *Phaedo*,[54] the *Timaeus*,[55] and several other unspecified works[56] were products of Proclus' late twenties. Hagiographical amplifications aside, we have no reason to doubt that the *In Tim.* was one of Proclus' earlier works.[57] This theory of an early composition would also account for the extremely developed considerations on the *Timaeus*, especially concerning the Demiurge, found within the *TP*. The *TP* also contains several clear references to the *In Parm*.,[58] and we may therefore assert with some degree of certitude that it was composed after both the *In Tim.* and the *In Parm*.

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[52] See C. Steel, "Le *Parménide* est-il le fondement de la *Théologie platonicienne*?" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 373-398.

[53] As A-Ph. Segonds asserts, "L'étude de la chronologie de l'œuvre de Proclus est pratiquement impossible, parce que manquent largement les références à des événements contemporains datables, et que les renvois d'un ouvrages à l'autre sont trop peu nombreux et souvent incertains. Quant à la recherche d'une "évolution interne", le caractère systématique de la philosophie de Proclus la rend très difficile". See A.-Ph. Segonds, "Liminaire" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, xix, n. 18. This contention notwithstanding, Segonds tentatively states that "selon toute probabilité, la *Théologie platonicienne* est, sinon le tout dernier ouvrage de Proclus, du moins l'un des plus tardifs". See "Liminaire", xix.

[54] *V. Procli*, 12, 13-15.

[55] *Ibid*., 13, 15-16.

[56] *Ibid*.

[57] Indeed, no scholar has yet called this assumption into question.

[58] See *TP*, I.41, 8-9; 59, 2-4; 61, 17-18. These references were first catalogued by J. Freudenthal in his article "Zu Proklos und dem Jüngeren Olympiodor" in *Hermes*, vol. 16 (1881), pp. 201-224. Freudenethal also sees a reference to the *In Tim*. at *TP*, V.72, 7, yet *S.-W.* rightly points out (*S.-W.*, I.72, note 2), the phrase is far too ambiguous to allow us to draw any firm conclusions.

The only other Proclean work whose composition one might hazard to place anterior to that of the *TP* is the *IT*. Many of the theoretical deficiencies of the latter with regard to the former may be ascribed to the obvious formal differences between the two.[59] This, however, may not be the case for the developed treatment of Limit and Unlimited found within the *TP*.[60] The notable absence of this doctrine from the *IT*, where it would have evidently been most welcome, could suggest the anteriority of the *IT* to the *TP*.

If the *TP*'s history during Proclus' life is obscure, its later existence is only somewhat less mysterious.[61] The history of its transmission is akin to that of most other Neoplatonic works. The *TP* was clearly known to Proclus' immediate successors, as it is cited by both Damascius[62] and the Pseudo-Dionysius[63]. With the closing of the Neoplatonic Academy in 529, however, its readership would have diminished drastically. It is not improbable that Proclus was still being read by the last of the Greek Platonic commentators, Stephanus of Alexandria (*fl*. 7th cent.). A copy of the work may have made its way into Arab world and eventually into the hands of al-Kindī[64] (*c.* 801–873), but everything else that remained of it was preserved in the Byzantine monasteries.

Scholia from a manuscript of the *In Tim.* indicate that it was being read in Byzantium as early as the ninth century, but it is not until George Pachymerus (1242-*c.* 1310) that we again find citations from the *TP* in the work of a datable author. It was thanks to Nicholas of Cusa, who brought it back from his mission to Constantinople in preparation for the Council of Florence, that the work first entered the Latin world. Unable to read it in the original,

[59] Examples of theories found within the *TP* but not in the *IT* include the problem of 'inverse' participation (*TP*, III.15, 9-14), the concept of super-unity (*TP*, V.103, 17), and, most notably, the theory of the intelligible-intellective gods. The former work also contains significant developments of the doctrines of the henadic mode of knowledge, of divine providence, and of the superessentiality of the henads. See T. Lankila, "Henadology in the Two Theologies of Proclus", in *Dionysius*, vol. 28 (2010), pp. 63-76 at 67. As Dodds points out (Dodds, xvii, note 2), however, this doctrine is not an innovation of the *TP*. It was already to be found in Proclus' *Phaedrus* commentary, which predated at least the *In Parm*. See *In Parm*., 949, 38ff.

[60] On the presence of this theory in the *TP* and its absence from the *IT*, see "Henadology in the Two Theologies of Proclus", especially p. 76.

[61] The following section is based on Saffrey's detailed textual history at *S.-W.*, VI.xliv-lxxiii.

[62] See *Dam. In Parm.*, I.55, 16-21; I.81, 14-19; II.48, 21-24.

[63] See I. Perczel, "Pseudo-Dionysius and the *Platonic Theology*: A Preliminary Study", in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, 491-532.

[64] See J. Jolivet, "Pour le dossier du Proclus arabe: Al-Kindî et la *Theologie platonicienne*", in *Studia Islamica*, vol. 49 (1979), pp. 55-75; see also G. Endress, "The New and Improved Platonic Theology", in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 553-570.

Cusanus offered Proclus' *TP* to a string of acquaintances for translation, a feat which was finally accomplished by the Italian Humanist Pietro Balbi (1399-1479) in 1462. Balbi, however, was not the only Italian to show interest in the *TP*. Marsilio Ficino and his student Pico della Mirandolla also acquired copies of the *TP* from the East. The fruits of this confrontation with Proclus can be seen in Ficino's own *Platonic Theology*.[65]

The first critical edition of the text, edited by Emilius Portus, appeared in Hamburg in 1618. It was upon this edition which two of the five subsequent translations were based. The first of these translations was the work of the great English Platonist Thomas Taylor (1758-1835). A prolific translator of deep learning, Taylor attempted to make nearly all Greek learning accessible to his countrymen. He produced complete translations of numerous Greek authors including Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and Proclus. Using the edition of Portus and his own conjectures, based on a profound knowledge of the Greek language, Taylor produced a remarkably perceptive translation of the six books of the *TP* (1816) with an additional seventh book, compiled from Proclus' other writings, meant to compensate for what he saw as the loss of the *TP*'s concluding section. Given his place and time, Taylor's immensely productive career as a translator is deserving of our accolades. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for his translations themselves, including that of the *TP*.

Taylor's translations and the commentaries appended to them have had little influence in scholarly circles. Though his defenders might consider this to be no more than a lingering prejudice, originating in James Mill's damning reviews of his translations of Plato,[66] there is in fact some justice to the Scotsman's remarks. Choosing quantity over quality, Taylor made no effort to produce or obtain critical editions of the texts he translated.[67] This practice is especially noticeable in his translation of the *TP*, which is missing sentences, and even whole paragraphs in comparison to any contemporary translation.

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[65] See M. Ficino, *Platonic Theology*, vol. I-VI, ed. J. Hankins with W. Bowen, trans. M. J. B. Allen and J. Warden (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001-2006).

[66] These two reviews of Taylor's *The Works of Plato* were published in *The Literary Journal*, vol. 3, no. 8, May 1, 1804 and *The Edinburgh Review*, vol. 14, April 1809. They have been republished in the journal *Apeiron*, vol. 34, no. 2 (June, 2001), pp. 111-179, along with an introduction by M. F. Burnyeat. The citations below correspond to the pages of this republication.

[67] J. Mill, "Review of T. Taylor's *The Works of Plato*", in *The Edinburgh Review*, vol. 14, April 1809, 167.

With regard to style, although Mill goes too far in calling his language "stiff, and awkward, and uncouth, to a degree that has hardly any example"[68], it is perhaps not far enough to say that Taylor's prose often leaves something to be desired. A comparison of his translations of Plato with those of Jowett is ample proof of this. Finally, what Taylor provides by way of commentary is often scarcely more a selection of passages from various Neoplatonic authors. This cut-and-paste approach to the later Platonists is perhaps nowhere better showcased than in Taylor's attempt to recreate the supposed seventh book of the *TP*. This 'lost book', no less an intriguing experiment than a hideous pastiche, is typically Taylorian. Here passages of Proclus and other authors are sewn together to form an interpretation that masquerades as the text itself. Thus passages of Proclus are used to illuminate Plotinus and vice-versa, a method of commentary which tends to confound as much as clarify. With these three factors in mind, we must conclude that Taylor's translation, although still retaining much historical value, no longer meets the needs of the specialist and the non-specialist alike.

Returning to our narrative, it was not until the mid-twentieth century that the Portus edition of the *TP* was again translated, this time into Italian by Enrico Turolla (1957).[69] In the 1960's, however, two young scholars by the names of Henri Dominique Saffrey and Leendert Gerrit Westerink undertook the reediting of the *TP* for the prestigious *Collection des Universités de France*. The first volume of their edition, containing a critical edition of Book I of the *TP* as well a substantial introduction and a French translation, appeared in 1968. Five additional volumes followed over the next three decades, eventually yielding what has come to be the standard edition of the *TP*.

The importance of this edition for the development of Proclean scholarship ranks alongside that of E. R. Dodds' edition of the *IT*. Like its illustrious predecessor, however, it remains a first edition, and suffers from all the infirmities implied by such a designation. This is especially true of the first volume, now well over forty years old. The text itself remains fairly sound. We are fortunate enough, however, to have at our disposal the notes and

[68] Mill, *The Edinburgh Review*, vol. 14, April 1809, 167.
[69] See *Procli: La teologia platonica*, trans. E. Turolla (Bari: Laterza, 1957).

corrections of André-Jean Festugière for the first volume,[70] many of which have been incorporated into the Greek text presented below. The French translation of *S.-W.*, on the other hand, has begun to show its age. Such is to be expected of a nearly fifty-year old translation, which inevitably reflects an earlier period of scholarship and different approaches to translation in general. It is therefore unfortunate that the translation of Mario Casaglia and Alessandro Linguiti,[71] as well as the brief excerpt translated by John Dillon and Lloyd P. Gerson,[72] both follow *S.-W.* with great exactitude. In doing so, they have profited from its strengths, but have also retained its weaknesses. Indeed, it is only the translation of Michele Abbate which dares to seriously break with *S.-W.*,[73] rendering it by far the most accurate of previous modern translations. With regard to commentary, the notes and introductory essays of *S.-W.* remain the only real continuous treatment of the contents of the *TP*.

The present work, although it represents only a fraction of the *TP*, was nonetheless written in hopes of aiding in the dissemination and understanding of this vital work by offering an English translation of the first portion of its prolegomenon, and a sustained commentary thereon. The translation is based on the *S.-W.* edition of Proclus' Greek text, which is presented here (without its *apparatus criticus*)[74] for the purpose of convenient comparison with the translation. All citations of the text will accordingly refer to that edition by volume, page, and line number (e.g. *TP*, I.12, 11-15 implies volume one, page twelve, lines 11-15 of *S.-W.*). Any departures we have made from the *S.-W.* edition will be noted in the section entitled 'Textual Emendations', and defended in the section entitled 'Commentary'. The principle of the present translation has been to prefer fidelity to style. Nevertheless, where the Greek syntax simply cannot be replicated in English, we have preferred to conserve Proclus' plain eloquence rather than reduce his prose to 'translationese'.

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[70] A.-J. Festugière, "Notes critiques sur le livre I de la *Théologie platonicienne*" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. xxix-xli. Cited as Fest.
[71] *Teologia Platonica*, trans. M. Casaglia and A. Linguiti (Turin: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 2007). Cited as *C.-L.*
[72] An English translation of the first three chapters of the *Platonic Theology* in *Neoplatonic Philosophy: Introductory Readings*, trans. by J. Dillon and L. P. Gerson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2004). Cited as *D.-G.*
[73] *Teologia Platonica*, trans. M. Abbate (Milan: Bompiani, 2005). Cited as *Abb.*
[74] For the text's *apparatus criticus*, see *S.-W.*, I.

The purpose of the commentary is not only to serve as an aid to the reader, but also to attempt to compensate for the paucity of scholarship concerning the *TP*. It is supplemented by a topical essay preceding the translation, which will argue for the contemporary relevance of Proclus' interpretation of Plato's theology. Between these two, we believe, the first seven chapters of the prolegomenon receive a thorough analysis.

PLATO'S THEOLOGY

The central problem of the modern interpretation of Plato's theology has been the seeming discontinuity between his development of an abstract protology and his constant reference to the traditional Greek gods. This 'discontinuity' has been resolved in several ways.[75] On the one hand, there are those who take Plato to offer a metaphysical protology as an alternative to the traditional Greek religion, while others consider his theology as a reflection, and perhaps a correction, of the civic religion of Athens, and therefore as largely distinct from his metaphysical speculations. Midway between these positions, we find those who, drawing primarily upon the *Timaeus* and the *Laws*, take Plato's gods to be "individual souls, who are bound to their position by the fate-like laws imposed by his metaphysical pirnciples,"[76] and which therefore serve as mediators between the intelligible and the sensible worlds. This 'middle' position, however, in no way does away with the apparent opposition between Plato's protology and his expressions of traditional piety: it simply subordinates the latter to the former by reducing the traditional gods to intermediary beings.

What most clearly distinguishes the Proclean interpretation of Plato's theology from the majority of its modern successors, therefore, is its insistence upon the complementary nature of these two facets of Plato's theological thought. For Proclus, Plato, like any other theologian worthy of the title, called the traditional gods first principles by nature and considered the treatement of them to be the theological science.[77] The metaphysical protology and the traditional religious imagery of the dialogues and letters are therefore not opposed, but complementary ways of treating of the gods.

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[75] For an overview of the modern interpretations of Plato's theology, see M. Bordt's *Platons Theologie* (Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 2006), 21-42. Bordt himself might be generally said to subscribe to the 'middle' position outlined below.
[76] G. van Riel, *Plato's Gods* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 119.
[77] *TP*, I.12, 11-13. On theology as a science for Proclus, see *infra*.

That Plato treats of the gods in this manner, however, is not immediately apparent when reading the dialogues. Indeed, to uncover Plato's theological science, one must first understand the methods according to which Plato conveys theological information within his writings.

I. On Methodology

Having established what theology is,[78] but before seeking it out in the Platonic corpus directly, Proclus poses a simple, yet inescapable methodological question. What are the ways of writing theology, or, put otherwise, how might an author convey information concerning the gods? In answer to this question, the Lycian offers an intriguing schema of two types of four theological methods (τρόποι). According to him, if Plato, or any other author for that matter, makes affirmations concerning the gods, then he must either make them 'in an uncovered manner (ἀπαρακαλύπτως)', or allude to them in some way. The former method might be further divided into assertions concerning the divine which are the product of scientific reasoning and purely categorical assertions. These are referred to by Proclus as the dialectical (διαλεκτικός) method and the 'entheastic (ἐνθεαστικός)' method. The method of allusion (ἔνδειξις), may also be subdivided into two types of discourse, namely allusion by means of allegory and allusion by means of sympathy. These are referred to by Proclus as the method by means of images (ἀπὸ τῶν εἰκόνων) and the method by means of symbols (συμβολικῶς).

The earliest appearance of these methods in the Proclean corpus, as has been several times noted,[79] is to be found at *In Parm*., 646, 15-647, 4:

[78] See *TP*, I. chap. 3.

[79] Although, according to some, there exists an "ample" and indeed "vast" supply of commentary on Proclus' theological τρόποι (for the former assertion, see C. Steel, "Le jugement de Proclus sur le style du Parménide", in *Agonistes: Essays in Honour of Denis O'Brien*, ed. J. Dillon and M. Dixsaut [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005], pp. 209-226 at 220; for the latter see *In Parm. L.-S.*, I.2, 221-22, note 9), there exist, in reality, no more than two articles on the subject, *viz*., J. Pépin, "Les modes de l'enseignement théologique dans la *Théologie platonicienne*", and S. Gersh, "Proclus' theological methods" both in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 1-14 and 15-27 respectively. Both of these articles note Proclus' earlier deployment of the theological methods in the *In Parm*.

> For it is possible to expound the divine things according to different methods; by the poets possessed by Phoebus, through mythical terms and richer styles; by others having refrained from tragical attire in their mythical [discourses], but otherwise having spoken in a divinely inspired language, through priestly terms and having risen up to the summit of styles; while by others having proposed to proclaim these things through images, through mathematical terms, as perhaps those being used in the arithmetical or in the geometrical [sciences]. And therefore completely different from all of these is that explanation through dialectical terms…[80]

Although presented by Proclus here in the fourth chapter of the *TP* as four distinct methods of conveying theological information, they are by no means mutually exclusive. We need only recall, as Stephen Gersh reminds us,[81] the universal Neoplatonic dictum that "all things are in all things, but in each thing appropriately"[82]. The unity of the four methods is repeatedly alluded to by Proclus. For example, he attaches each to a specific theological tradition,[83] when it is clear from the title of a work ascribed to his master Syrianus[84] that, amongst the Athenian Neoplatonists, a συμφωνία was held to exist between these four traditions. Moreover, by scrutinizing Proclus' tacit introduction of these methods in the following passage from the *TP*, we can see that he envisions them as a continuum progressing from the most allusive to the most direct. This continuum which runs as follows: symbolic, imagistic, entheastic, and dialectical:

> In all of this work we shall prefer the clear, distinct, and simple to their opposites, translating into a clear teaching concerning them that which is transmitted [concerning the gods] through *symbols*, while restoring that which is transmitted

[80] "Τὰ γὰρ θεῖα κατ' ἄλλον καὶ ἄλλον τρόπον ἑρμηνεύειν δυνατόν· τοῖς μὲν φοιβολήπτοις ποιηταῖς, διὰ τῶν μυθικῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ ἑρμηνείας ἀδροτέρας· τοῖς δὲ τῆς τραγικῆς σκευῆς τῆς ἐν τοῖς μυθικοῖς ἀπεχομένης, ἄλλως δὲ ἐν θείῳ στόματι φθεγγομένης, δι' ὀνομάτων ἱεροπρεπῶν καὶ εἰς τὸ ὕψος ἀνηγμένης ἰδέας· τοῖς δὲ δι' εἰκόνων αὐτὰ προθεμένοις ἐξαγγέλλειν, δι' ὀνομάτων μαθηματικῶν, ἅπου τῶν ἐν αριθμητικῶν λεγομένων ἢ τῶν γεωμετρικῶν. Τούτων δὴ οὖν πάντων ἐξήλλακται παντελῶς ἡ διὰ τῶν διαλεκτικῶν ὀνομάτων…".
[81] "Proclus' theological methods", 25.
[82] "Πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἑκάστῳ". *IT*, prop. 103.
[83] As *TP*, I.20 states, the symbolic method is best showcased by the Orphic tradition, the imagistic method by the Pythagorean tradition, the entheastic by the telestic tradition, and the dialectical by the Platonic tradition.
[84] The work was entitled *On the Harmony of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato with the Oracles*.

> through *images* to their original pattern, and investigating scientifically through accounts of causation that which is written in a *categorical manner*, while examining closely that which is composed of *demonstrations* and explaining in detail the manner of truth in them, making it known to our auditors, and finally, discovering the clear meaning by means of another source of those things being put in the form of riddles, not by means of foreign hypotheses, but by means of the genuine writings of Plato, while examining the concord of the things encountered in these [writings] by our auditors with the things [encountered in reality]; it is through all of these things that the unique and perfect form of the Platonic theology will be revealed to us, the truth extending through the whole of its divine insights, and the one intellect which produced all the beauty of this system and the mysterious exposition of this theory.[85]

How Proclus proposes to treat of each method in this passage is also deeply revealing. In essence, he promises to clarify the content transmitted via each method by translating it into a more direct form of communication. Therefore the symbolic is to be translated into the imagistic, the imagistic into the entheastic, and the entheastic into the dialectical. The dialectical, as it represents the clearest possible means of conveying theological information, cannot be improved upon. We may only examine the truth of its hypotheses. If the entheastic method is therefore less open than the dialectical, and the imagistic more so than the symbolic, then it is perhaps more appropriate to view these four methods as a spectrum or a Venn diagram, rather than as four opposed poles. This 'overlap' of the four methods will be crucial for understanding their application to the Platonic texts.

I.1) Open Discourse I: The Dialectical Method

If we are to begin our examination of these four methods with the dialectical method, that which "is peculiar to the philosophy of Plato"[86], then it is necessary to first define what Proclus takes Platonic dialectic to be. In terms of its methodological content, Platonic dialectic, for Proclus,

[85] *TP*, I.9, 20-10, 7. As J. Pépin has rightly pointed out ("Les modes de l'enseignement théologique dans la *Théologie platonicienne*", 6-14), the last two statements clearly refer to the groupings of these four methods under the headings of method of allusion and the method of open discourse.
[86] *TP*, I.20, 19-20.

> on the one hand makes use of many divisions and analyses as the primary methods of knowledge and [as] imitations the procession of beings from the One and [their] reversion back to it, while it also sometimes makes use of definitions and demonstrations in the hunt for being.[87]

In spite of this fairly inclusive definition, the Neoplatonists have been widely criticized for having supposedly misunderstood Plato's concept of dialectic, which, as Monique Dixsaut describes it, is not simply "une méthode mais la science la plus haute"[88]. She goes on to state that "chez Plotin, comme chez tous les néoplatoniciens après lui, elle [*scil*. dialectic] ne peut être l'expression de la pensée intelligente, mais seulement celle de l'âme qui raisonne."[89] This judgement is undoubtedly based upon the oft-expounded Neoplatonic gnosiological hierarchy of opinion, discursive thought, and intellection which corresponds to tripartition of ontological reality into sensible, mathematical, and intelligible objects. As Alain Lernould argues,[90] however, this gnosiological hierarchy must be taken in conjunction with the Proclean epistemological hierarchy of conjectural knowledge, hypothetical science, and anhypothetical science, in order to truly understand Proclus' conception of dialectic. When the two hierarchies are combined, and understood within the context of dynamic cycles, which Stephen Gersh has shown to be fundamental pillar of Proclean thought,[91] we find that Proclean dialectic exists both *between* and *as* mathematics and intellection (being respectively the low and high point of its cycle). Moreover

> la notion de dialectique désigne en effet, dans un premier sens, la forme même de la scientificité. Toute science est connaissance par la cause. Or, donner la cause revient à rapporter la cause à son principe et, inversement, à déduire (produire) le causé à partir

[87] "ἡ δὲ παρ' ἡμῖν διαλεκτικὴ τὰ μὲν πολλὰ διαιρέσεσι χρῆται καὶ ἀναλύσεσιν ὡς πρωτουργοῖς ἐπιστήμαις καὶ μιμουμέναις τὴν τῶν ὄντων πρόοδον ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸ πάλιν ἐπιστροφήν, χρῆται δέ ποτε καὶ ὁρισμοῖς καὶ ἀποδείξεσιν εἰς τὴν τοῦ ὄντος θήραν." *PT*, I.40, 5-10.
[88] M. Dixsaut, *Métamorphoses de la dialectique dans les dialogues de Platon* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2001), 9.
[89] *Ibid*.
[90] A. Lernould, "La dialectique comme science première chez Proclus" in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, vol. 71 (1987), pp. 509-536.
[91] See S. Gersh, *Kinēsis akinētos: a study of spiritual motion in the philosophy of Proclus* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

> du principe. On aura là reconnu les deux opérations que sont l'analyse et la synthèse. Ces deux opérations constituent, avec la démonstration, la définition et la division, les moments principaux d'une méthode. Or cette méthode ne désigne pas une forme unique au sens où celle-ci serait présente en toutes les sciences de manière identique et figée. Il s'agit bien plutôt d'une puissance unique qui traverse tous les degrés de la science et qui diminue en même temps qu'elle procède.[92]

The Proclean vision of Platonic dialectic is therefore not that of *a* science or *a* method, but that of the first science which is the essence of all science and all method. This Neoplatonic description of Platonic dialectic is clearly much closer to that offered by Dixsaut than she would have us imagine.

But what of her further remark that the Neoplatonic vision of dialectic often leads towards what is little more than "une mathématique ontologisée"[93]? Lernould again offers us a response to this, by pointing out that Proclus conceives of dialectic as fundamentally different from mathematics in so far as it is the only anhypothetical science. It may be described as such because it is the only science which is able to treat of the first principle, and therefore "se donne comme principe, *le* vrai principe"[94].

That it should treat of the first principle is already an indication of its theological importance. For the clearest illustration of this method's application in the realm of theology, however, we need look no further than three celebrated passages from the *Republic*, the *Laws*, and the *Phaedo*. The first of these passages is found in the second book of the *Republic*, where Adeimantus, in response to Socrates' criticisms of the ways in which poets speak of the gods, asks "what would the models for speech about the gods be?"[95] Socrates answers Adeimantus by means of long dialectical argument which results in three τύποι regarding speech concerning the gods. The first is that the "the god is not the cause of all things, but of the good"[96], the second and third are that the gods "are neither wizards who

[92] Lernould, "La dialectique comme science première chez Proclus", 515.
[93] Dixsaut, *Métamorphoses de la dialectique dans les dialogues de Platon*, 10.
[94] Lernould, "La dialectique comme science première chez Proclus", 524.
[95] "ἀλλ' αὐτὸ δὴ τοῦτο, οἱ τύποι περὶ θεολογίας τίνες ἂν εἶεν;". *Republic*, 379a5.
[96] "μὴ πάντων αἴτιον τὸν θεὸν ἀλλὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν". *Ibid*., 380c8-9.

transform themselves, nor do they mislead us by lies in speech or in deed"[97]. The dialectic which produces these τύποι is a model of dialectic in its most basic sense in that, like mathematics, it is seen here proceeding from certain indemonstrable hypotheses, *viz*., a series (four, in this case) of common notions or "common doctrines (τῶν κοινῶν… δογμάτων)"[98] concerning the gods, as Proclus calls them.

In the case of the passage from the second book of the *Republic*, the first τύπος, that the gods are the cause only of good, Proclus holds to be itself a common notion, despite the fact that it is based upon another, namely, that the gods are good.[99] The second τύπος, however, is arrived at upon the basis of reasoning from three separate common notions concerning the gods. These are that the gods are simple,[100] immutable,[101] and true (in the broadest sense of the term)[102].

The second passage, equally well known, in which Plato employs the dialectical method of theology is the tenth book of the *Laws*. Here the Athenian Stranger argues that the root cause of impiety and blasphemy amongst the young is the belief that either the gods do not exist, or that if they do, they take no thought for human affairs, or, finally, even if they are concerned with human affairs, they are at least easily propitiated with sacrifices and the like.[103] Plato therefore sets out to disprove each of these beliefs by successively arguing for what both Proclus and the Athenian Stranger take to be another three common notions concerning the gods, namely, that they do indeed exist,[104] that they take a keen interest in human affairs (i.e. they exercise divine providence),[105] and that they cannot be bribed to overlook injustice (i.e. their providence is inflexible)[106].

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[97] "ὡς μήτε αὐτοὺς γόητας ὄντας τῷ μεταβάλλειν ἑαυτοὺς μήτε ἡμᾶς ψεύδεσι παράγειν ἐν λόγῳ ἢ ἐν ἔργῳ". *Ibid*., 383a3-5.
[98] *TP*, I.59, 9-10. For a brief history of this idea, along with a thorough list of examples of things Proclus takes to be 'common notions', see *S.-W.*, I.159.
[99] *Ibid*., I.82, 8-11. This is affirmed by Adeimantus at *Republic*, 379b1.
[100] *Ibid*., I.94-97; *Republic*, 381c8-9.
[101] *Ibid*., I.88-94; *Republic*, 380d5.
[102] *Ibid*., I.97-100; *Republic*, 382e6.
[103] Plato, *Laws* 885b5-10.
[104] *TP*, I.60-69; *Laws*, 888d7-899d3.
[105] *Ibid*., I.69-77; *Laws*, 899d5-905d7.
[106] *Ibid*., I.77-80; *Laws*, 905d8-907b9.

The third exemplary passage of theological dialectic also constitutes the third argument for the immortality of the soul offered by Socrates in the *Phaedo*. In response to Cebes' suggestion that the soul might be dispersed at death, Socrates discusses the possibility that the soul is not a composite thing, and therefore not subject to destruction. His argument, as Proclus understands it, culminates in a series of two lists of attributes.[107] These lists are meant to show

> That there is on the one hand that which is superior to the soul, which it resembles by nature (and in resembling [this] it participates in a portion of immortality), [which is] divine, immortal, intellectual, uniform, indissoluble, and in accordance with this, exists [always] in a like manner; on the other hand what is inferior to it [is] all [the] contrary.[108]

The first list which Plato offers is therefore taken by Proclus to be a list of common notions concerning the gods (i.e. that which is superior to the soul), deployed in the context of a dialectical argument.

Although these three passages provide perhaps the clearest examples of the dialectical method of theology, they are not, as far as Proclus is concerned, the finest examples of this method. In each case it might be contended that relatively loose and unconvincing argumentation is employed. This is unsurprising, however, when we consider that each argument seeks to arrive only at certain common notions concerning the gods to which none of the dialogue's interlocutors would object. Moving beyond such common notions, however, we may witness the full power of the dialectical method. This power is, for Proclus, nowhere more evident than when applied to matters of protology, such as we find in the

[107] The passage to which Proclus is referring runs as follows: "τῷ μὲν θείῳ καὶ ἀθανάτῳ καὶ νοητῷ καὶ μονοειδεῖ καὶ ἀδιαλύτῳ καὶ ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἔχοντι ἑαυτῷ ὁμοιότατον εἶναι ψυχή, τῷ δὲ ἀνθρωπίνῳ καὶ θνητῷ καὶ πολυειδεῖ καὶ ἀνοήτῳ καὶ διαλυτῷ καὶ μηδέποτε κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἔχοντι ἑαυτῷ ὁμοιότατον αὖ εἶναι σῶμα." *Phaedo*, 80b1-5.

[108] "ὡς ἄρα ἐστὶ τὸ μὲν ἀνωτέρω τῆς ψυχῆς, ᾧ δὴ καὶ ἔοικε φύσει καὶ ἐοικυῖα ἀθανάτου μετέχει μοίρας, θεῖον καὶ ἀθάνατον καὶ νοητὸν καὶ μονοειδὲς καὶ ἀδιάλυτον καὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχον· τὸ δὲ καταδεέστερον αὐτῆς πᾶν τοὐναντίον". *TP*, I.113, 19-23.

Sophist and, above all, in the *Parmenides*.[109] The dialectical protology of these and other dialogues is of paramount importance to Proclus' understanding of Plato's theology, and will therefore receive the detailed examination it warrants below. For the moment, however, we will leave the dialectical method aside in order to examine the other three theological methods which Proclus finds in Plato.

I.2) Open Discourse II: The Entheastic Method

Aside from being argued dialectically, open statements concerning the gods can also be made categorically. Proclus takes these categorical statements of Plato to be examples of the entheastic method of theology, which "is most evident amongst those highest of telestics"[110]. Proclus' choice of τελεσταί as opposed to θεουργοί is deliberate. He is here referring not simply to the practitioners of Chaldean theurgy or to the *Oracles* themselves, but to the practitioners of true sacred rites in broadest sense.[111] These men, as Proclus goes on to say, "do not think it right to use any veils to pass on the divine orders or their properties to their pupils, but they [instead] proclaim both the powers and the sets amongst them, being moved by the gods themselves"[112]. The telestics do not hide their knowledge of the divine. Indeed, the basis of any initiatory ceremony or ritual practice is the revelation of knowledge, not its obfuscation. This revelation, in the case of theurgical branch of the telestic arts, so precious to Proclus, involves the revelation of the true nature of certain symbols and images in order that they might be used to bring the participants of the ceremony into a closer communion with the divine. Plato, therefore, when he employs the entheastic method takes on a priestly role and both reveals the divine to his readers with as little mediation as possible, as well as uses this revelation as a means to elevate the souls of his readers.

Proclus, however, does not take advantage of the existence of this method, as others might be wont to do, by claiming any Platonic passage which suits his purpose to be an instance of this method and therefore subject to a literal interpretation. Rather, according to

[109] *Ibid*., I.18, 13-24.
[110] *Ibid*., I.20, 13-15.
[111] See our commentary on this passage *infra*.
[112] *TP*, I.20, 15-19.

Proclus, Plato makes it very clear to his readers when certain information concerning the gods is to be taken, at least in part, *au pied de la lettre*. There are two principal examples of this for Proclus. First and foremost, there is Socrates' palinode in the *Phaedrus*,[113] a dialogue which is replete with discussion of divine inspiration.

Plato is at pains to alert the reader that something more than human reason is at work in Socrates during the palinode. Socrates first interrupts his initial speech in mid-stream in order to ask Phaedrus whether he seems "to be caught in the grip of a divine passion (θεῖον πάθος πεπονθέναι)"[114] and states further that he may soon become "nympholeptic (νυμφόληπτος)"[115] and begin speaking in dithyrambs. This prediction is proven correct when he concludes the speech not in dithyrambs, but in epic hexameter, and with a claim that divine possession is imminent if he remains, he prepares to leave.[116] His flight, however, is cut short by divine intervention, as he claims his daimon has prevented him from leaving.[117] Socrates therefore launches into the palinode with every indication that his words are meant to be taken as divinely inspired. Although a modern commentator might see this as an elaborate piece of irony, Proclus prefers to take Plato at his word and read the discussion of the gods in the palinode as an example of direct discourse concerning them.[118]

The inspired description of the gods in the palinode, according to Proclus, contains both common notions concerning the gods (i.e. that "the divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and all things such as this"[119]) and information concerning two specific levels of divine reality, namely, the intelligible-intellective gods and the hypercosmic-encosmic gods. That it pertains to these levels of divine reality is revealed by the images of the twelve Olympians, their retinues, and the places through which they pass, namely, the heavens (οὐρανός), the super-celestial place (ὑπερουράνιον τόπον), and the sub-celestial vault (ὑπουράνιον ἀψῖδα). We may ask ourselves why, if Plato is really employing the entheastic method in his descriptions, Proclus' exegesis of these places should take up the better part of the fourth

[113] *Phaedrus*, 244a3-257a2.
[114] *Ibid*., 238c6.
[115] *Ibid*., 238d1.
[116] *Ibid*., 241e1-242a2.
[117] *Ibid*., 242b9.
[118] *TP*, I.17, 25-18, 12.
[119] "τὸ δὲ θεῖον καλόν, σοφόν, ἀγαθόν, καὶ πᾶν ὅτι τοιοῦτον". *Phaedrus*, 246d10-e1.

book of the *TP*. Why should direct discourse concerning the gods require any exegesis at all? Moreover, as Anne Sheppard points out,[120] Proclus speaks of images and symbols in the text, which is seemingly opposed to the idea that this is an example of direct discourse. Lest we forget, however, the theological methods are in no way mutually exclusive.

Even those religious traditions which hold their texts to be minimally-mediated divine revelations, such as some Islamic interpretations of the *Qur'an*, admit that certain scriptural passages must be read as images or symbols. Any description of the divine must be suited to its intended audience, otherwise its revelation will be of little consequence. This principle holds even more so for the Greeks, who considered divine revelation to be always deeply marked by human mediation.[121] In the *Chaldean Oracles*, for example, which Proclus took to be the prime example of a revealed text, it is clear that many images are employed when speaking of the divine. This fact is hardly overlooked by Proclus in his interpretation of Oracular passages.

Despite this use of images or symbols, the entheastic method differs from its more allusive fellows in that it can express certain things categorically (i.e. common notions) and its images require little more than contextualizing to be given the clarity of dialectic. Take, for example, the image of the heavens from the palinode. As Proclus shows,[122] it cannot be the visible heavens which Socrates is describing, but the intelligible heavens, as it would make little sense for a Platonist to have the gods go towards the visible heavens. Furthermore, the souls are described as following its movement, when Plato makes clear in the *Timaeus* and the *Laws* that souls are the cause of movement in the visible world. Therefore, knowing no more than a few basic tenets of Platonism, we are able to understand the sense of Socrates' use of "the heavens" with dialectical clarity. Why then, one might ask, does Socrates not simply say "the intelligible heavens" to Phaedrus? The answer, simply put, is that such an idea would be entirely lost upon the young Phaedrus, with whom, in the dialogue, Socrates has yet to even broach the subject of dialectic. The revelation is instead

[120] A. Sheppard, "Plato's *Phaedrus* in the *Theologia Platonica*" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 415-424.
[121] This can be seen in the case of the Greek oracles, where divine guidance comes in the form of riddles and nonsense verse that demands interpretation.
[122] *TP*, IV.18-22.

suited to its audience's understanding: what Phaedrus can accept categorically is offered as such, while more complex truths are offered openly, but presented in a manner which he can grasp.

Another instance of the entheastic method, according to Proclus, is found in the *Cratylus*, where Socrates offers two rules concerning the traditional names of the gods.[123] The first, and best, is that we know nothing of the true natures or names of the gods, but we know that they have them both. The second is that we should call them by the customary names "in which they rejoice"[124]. These customary names are, for Proclus, revealed to certain men "either entheastically or intellectively"[125], and are an appearance (ἔμφασις) of the true divine names available at the level of discourse.[126] Nevertheless, these common notions (as they are widely known) represent something by which the gods are at least pleased to be called, and therefore may be taken as revealed information concerning them.[127]

I.3) Allusion I: The Imagistic Method

With the two methods of open discourse, we are able to affirm that Plato holds the following attributes, in order of decreasing commonality, to be common notions concerning the gods: that they exist, that they exercise providential care over all things, that this providence is inflexible, that they are the cause of only good, that they are immutable, that they are simple and truthful, that they are good, wise, beautiful, divine, immortal, intelligible, unitary, indissoluble, unchanging, ungenerated, and that they may be addressed by their traditional names. Although it may initially seem haphazard, Proclus' arrangement of this list represents a very orderly intellectual progression. We begin with that notion which is most widely held and most knowable in itself, and after touching upon a series of ever more abstract ideas, end with those attributes which are only knowable by proxy.

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[123] *Cratylus*, 400d5-401a1.
[124] "οἵτινές τε καὶ ὁπόθεν χαίρουσιν". *Ibid*., 400e2.
[125] "ὁτὲ μὲν ἐνθέως ὁτὲ δὲ νοερῶς". *TP*, I.124, 10.
[126] *Ibid*., I.124.
[127] On Proclus' treatement of the divine names in the *Cratylus*, see MacIsaac, "Proclus: Philosophy as the Exegesis of 'Sacred' Texts".

As our examination of entheastic method employed in the *Phaedrus* demonstrated, however, this list of attributes, offered openly, does not exhaust Plato's theology. Some of this theology lies within the realm of the Platonic myths, amongst which the *Phaedrus* palinode itself is often classed. But what then are we to make of the other myths? How are we to approach their theological content? These questions bring us to Proclus' second proposed method of writing theology: the method of allusion. This method, as we saw above, may be divided into two categories. Something may, on the one hand, be alluded to by means of an images (εἰκόνες) or symbols (σύμβολα) of aptly suggestive resemblance, in what is typically called allegory. Examples of this method of conveying information are readily found within the works of Plato, such as the famous images of the sun, the cave, and divided line from the *Republic*. In each of these cases, Socrates shows that there is a 1:1 correspondence between the image and the idea it represents.

Does Plato, however, allow for this type allusion in the context of myths? It has been argued,[128] on the strength of two Platonic passages, that Plato rejects the idea of allegory, or "hidden meaning (ὑπόνοια)"[129] in myths. It is true that immediately preceding the discussion of the theological τύποι, Socrates, in Plato's sole use of the word ὑπόνοια, states that some of Homer's undignified images of the gods must be excluded from the ideal city "whether they are made with a hidden meaning, or without a hidden meaning. For a youth is unable to judge what has a hidden meaning and what has not"[130]. Furthermore, in the *Phaedrus*, Plato also seems to discourage the search for the hidden meanings of myths when Socrates questions the value of interpreting myths as allegories for natural phenomena. These two passages might serve to convince us of Plato's opposition to allegory, were it not for the fact that, as Proclus was the first to point out,[131] neither is directed at the idea of allegory *per se*, but rather at specific misapplications of allegory.

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[128] See, for example, L. Brisson, *Platon, les mots et les mythes: comment et pourquoi Platon nomma les mythes* (Paris: La Découverte, 1994).

[129] The term *allegoria*, 'saying something else (ἄλλος-ἀγορεύειν)', did not appear until the Hellenistic age. Nevertheless, we may safely take the two as synonyms.

[130] "οὔτ' ἐν ὑπονοίαις πεποιημένας οὔτε ἄνευ ὑπονοιῶν. ὁ γὰρ νέος οὐχ οἷός τε κρίνειν ὅτι τε ὑπόνοια καὶ ὃ μή". *Republic*, 378d9-10.

[131] *TP*, I.21-22.

In the passage from the *Republic*,[132] we must recognize that Plato distinguishes three aspects of myth: 1) the λόγος of a myth, or its literal narrative, 2) the νόμος, τύπος, or δόξα of a myth, i.e. the 'moral' of the narrative, and 3) the ὑπόνοια of a myth.[133] Plato is here concerned with neither the λόγος nor the ὑπόνοια of myths, but rather with their νομοί, τύποι, and δόξαι, or the moral lessons which we are apt to take away from them. These moral lessons are what must be rigorously policed in the case of myths being presented not only to children, but, it would seem, to the vast majority of adults as well.[134] Plato therefore only

[132] Although the passage at *Republic* 376eff is too long to be cited here in its entirety, J. Tate offers the following excellent overview: "Narratives (λόγοι) may be true or false (376e); both kinds are to be used in education. At first the young are to be taught the false only. But these false narratives are not to be altogether false; they must contain truth (377a). The young easily take whatever mould (τύπος, 377b) one wishes to imprint. Hence we must beware lest they absorb wrong opinions (δόξαι). Because most of the current myths instil wrong opinions they must be banished from the state (377c). The myths of Homer, Hesiod, and the rest of the poets must be rejected on this ground. Not because they are fictions, but because they are ugly fictions (377d, μὴ καλῶς ψεύδηται; 377e, οὐ καλῶς ἐψεύσατο). Examples are the stories concerning Uranus, Cronus, and Zeus, which, even if they were true, ought not to be told to the young and foolish (378a), and must not be told at all in our city. For they would foster in the young the false opinion that in committing the worst of crimes they would merely be following the example of the first and greatest of the gods (378b). Similarly, from tales of quarrelling among gods and heroes, they would imbibe the view that it is right for citizen to quarrel with citizen. The stories of the binding of Hera, the fall of Hephaestus, and all the theomachies composed by Homer must for this reason be rejected whether they have been written in allegories or without allegories (οὔτ' ἐν ὑπονοίαις πεποιημένας οὔτε ἄνευ ὑπονοιῶν, 378d). For the young cannot distinguish what is allegory from what is not, and whatever opinion they receive cannot as a rule be changed or effaced. Accordingly from the first they must be told such stories as are devised in the most beautiful manner possible for the promotion of virtue (ὅτι κάλλιστα μεμυθολογημένα πρὸς ἀρετὴν, 378e). To this end the founders of the city must dictate the moulds or principles (τύποι περὶ θεολογίας, 379a; νόμων τε καὶ τύπων, 380c) in accordance with which the myths must be composed, such as that God is not the author of evil, etc." See J. Tate, "Plato and Allegorical Interpretation", in *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 3/4 (Jul. - Oct., 1929), pp. 142-154 at 145.

[133] See "Plato and Allegorical Interpretation", 145.

[134] Plato's repeated allusions to the fact that many adults, as well as all children, will have to be protected from the bad moral lessons of poetry (see *Republic*, 378dl; 380cl; 387b4), are often overlooked. Yet, as G. R. F. Ferrari writes "Plato believes that some - most - adults remain in an important sense children throughout their lives… In the psychology of the *Republic* the soul is divided into three parts; and the lowest part is made up of impulses and appetites which, if allowed to dominate over the other parts, will emerge, in extreme cases, as the worst kind of childish indulgence. It could also be described, we shall see, as by nature the most 'theatrical' part of the soul. We all carry this theatrical child and its potential tyranny around inside us through life; and this fact has two consequences: first, that the theatrical stimulus of poetry must be carefully monitored even for adults, and second, that being adult (in the conventional sense) does not automatically qualify one to do the monitoring." G. R. F. Ferrari, "Plato and Poetry", in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Volume 1: Classical Criticism*, ed. G. A. Kennedy (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), pp. 92-148 at 114. On this point, see also S. Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002), 50. The determining factor here for permissible exposure to poetry with morally dubious τύποι, is, as Proclus rightly points out (*TP*, I.21, 19; *In Remp*., I.79, 19-81, 28), education and not age. Underscoring the rarity, but nonetheless the existence of adults sufficiently educated to understand poetry's hidden meanings, Socrates states that "if it was necessary to tell such a story, then as few as possible should hear it in secret places, having sacrificed not a young pig but some great and rare victim, so that it comes to be heard by as small a number as possible (εἰ δὲ ἀνάγκη τις ἦν λέγειν, δι' ἀπορρήτων ἀκούειν ὡς ὀλιγίστους, θυσαμένους οὐ χοῖρον ἀλλά τι μέγα καὶ ἄπορον θῦμα, ὅπως ὅτι ἐλαχίστοις συνέβη ἀκοῦσαι). *Republic*, 378a4-6. The right of this very select elite to read Homer and the tragedians will indeed be preserved even in Book 10,

mentions the ὑπόνοιαι of myths in order to make clear that their existence cannot be used to justify an immoral νόμος, because most are too ignorant to recognize them. In Proclean terms, therefore, we could say that what is found in the *Republic* is a critique not of the symbolic method of theology *per se*, but of the use of some of the more radical examples of this method (such as some of those found in Homer and the Orphic myths) in an educational context. So far as children and most adults are concerned, therefore, Plato councils the use of imagistic method instead, wherein the λόγος and the ὑπόνοια will have a 1:1 resemblance, assuring the morality of the lesson taken away from any myth.[135]

The passage from the *Phaedrus* is more directly concerned with the third aspect of myth. In response to Phaedrus' question concerning the myth of Boreas and Oreithyia, Socrates states playfully that

> But should I be incredulous, like the wise men, I would not be out of place, [and] accordingly speculating, I would say that the Borean wind blew her from the nearby rocks while playing with Pharmaceia, and having died in this way she was said to have been carried off hence by Boreas - or from the Aeropagus- for such a story is also told, that she was carried off thence and not from this place. But as for me, Phaedrus, although in some way I deem such theories attractive, surely [the work] of a clever, hard-working, and not altogether fortunate man, for no other reason, but since it is necessary for him after this to rectify the form of the horse-centaur, and in turn that of the Chimera, and then flows in a mob of Gorgon-like creatures and Pegasuses and masses of other inexplicable things and hard to find things of a certain nature marvelous to be told. If someone disbelieving in these things will bring each item into line with the probable, as if conceiving a desire for some rustic wisdom, there will be need of much leisure for him. But in my case there is no leisure for such pursuits, and the cause of this, my friend, [is] as follows. I am not yet able, according to the Delphic inscription, to know myself, so it seems ridiculous for me, still not knowing that, to investigate into other matters. Having renounced from whatever source these things of which I was just now speaking, believing what is customary about them, I investigate not these but myself, whether I happen to be some kind of

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where the greatest indictment against mimetic poetry is that it possesses "the capacity to harm [even] the decent men, apart from a certain rare few (τοὺς ἐπιεικεῖς ἱκανὴν εἶναι λωβᾶσθαι , ἐκτὸς πάνυ τινῶν ὀλίγων,)" (605c7-8).

[135] See *TP*, I.21, 13-22, 7.

> beast, more twisted and furious than Typhon, or a gentler, simpler creature, whom nature has endowed with a kind of divine, un-Typhonic portion.[136]

Socrates' criticism of the physical allegorization of the Boreas-Oreithyia myth here is threefold. He first alludes to the fact that, as a myth, there exist multiple, even conflicting λόγοι, each of which might have a different ὑπόνοια. Secondly, he suggests that once one accepts that this myth may contain a physical ὑπόνοια, one will then be obliged to examine all myths for such ὑπόνοιαι. As the myths are so numerous, however, this task would evidently take up a great deal of one's leisure. Finally, Socrates states that he could not afford to devote himself to such pursuits, for as he says, the pursuit of the Delphic maxim already amply occupies his leisure time. He must therefore content himself with no more than the customary explanations concerning this and other myths while he investigates his own self, which he compares to the titan Typhon.

Despite its jocularity, this passage evidently contains a highly organized criticism of the physical allegorization of myth which was so popular in Plato's day. Socrates, however, has no time to engage in this pursuit because he is otherwise occupied with his own self-investigation, and is therefore happy to accept the customary narratives concerning the divine at face value. This last statement is a very curious one, considering what he has said or will say in the *Republic*. One might be tempted help Socrates save face by reading a great deal of irony into this remark, thereby taking it that he in fact cares no more for the customary

[136] "Ἀλλ' εἰ ἀπιστοίην, ὥσπερ οἱ σοφοί, οὐκ ἂν ἄτοπος εἴην, εἶτα σοφιζόμενος φαίην αὐτὴν πνεῦμα Βορέου κατὰ τῶν πλησίον πετρῶν σὺν Φαρμακείᾳ παίζουσαν ὦσαι, καὶ οὕτω δὴ τελευτήσασαν λεχθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ Βορέου ἀνάρπαστον γεγονέναι—ἢ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου· λέγεται γὰρ αὖ καὶ οὗτος ὁ λόγος, ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐνθένδε ἡρπάσθη. ἐγὼ δέ, ὦ Φαῖδρε, ἄλλως μὲν τὰ τοιαῦτα χαρίεντα ἡγοῦμαι, λίαν δὲ δεινοῦ καὶ ἐπιπόνου καὶ οὐ πάνυ εὐτυχοῦς ἀνδρός, κατ' ἄλλο μὲν οὐδέν, ὅτι δ' αὐτῷ ἀνάγκη μετὰ τοῦτο τὸ τῶν Ἱπποκενταύρων εἶδος ἐπανορθοῦσθαι, καὶ αὖθις τὸ τῆς Χιμαίρας, καὶ ἐπιρρεῖ δὲ ὄχλος τοιούτων Γοργόνων καὶ Πηγάσων καὶ ἄλλων ἀμηχάνων πλήθη τε καὶ ἀτοπίαι τερατολόγων τινῶν φύσεων· αἷς εἴ τις ἀπιστῶν προσβιβᾷ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἕκαστον, ἅτε ἀγροίκῳ τινὶ σοφίᾳ χρώμενος, πολλῆς αὐτῷ σχολῆς δεήσει. ἐμοὶ δὲ πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα οὐδαμῶς ἐστι σχολή· τὸ δὲ αἴτιον, ὦ φίλε, τούτου τόδε. οὐ δύναμαί πω κατὰ τὸ Δελφικὸν γράμμα γνῶναι ἐμαυτόν· γελοῖον δή μοι φαίνεται τοῦτο ἔτι ἀγνοοῦντα τὰ ἀλλότρια σκοπεῖν. ὅθεν δὴ χαίρειν ἐάσας ταῦτα, πειθόμενος δὲ τῷ νομιζομένῳ περὶ αὐτῶν, ὃ νυνδὴ ἔλεγον, σκοπῶ οὐ ταῦτα ἀλλ'ἐμαυτόν, εἴτε τι θηρίον ὂν τυγχάνω Τυφῶνος πολυπλοκώτερον καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπιτεθυμμένον, εἴτε ἡμερώτερόν τε καὶ ἁπλούστερον ζῷον, θείας τινὸς καὶ ἀτύφου μοίρας φύσει μετέχον." *Phaedrus*, 229c6-230a6.

narratives themselves than for their physical interpretations.[137] There are, however, two other possible explanations of this remark.

Firstly, it could very well be that this remark is meant by Plato as subtle indication that we the readers should, like Socrates, also be prepared to take certain depictions of the gods at face value as well, specifically those soon to be offered in the palinode of the *Phaedrus*. Secondly, there is also the possibility that Socrates actually means what he says, and that he considers the customary λόγοι of the myths concerning the divine to be useful still, while rejecting their pretended physical interpretations. This idea of the continuing usefulness of the traditional λόγοι is reinforced immediately following this, when Socrates compares himself, the subject of his investigation, to the traditional description of Typhon. The mythical opposites of the titans, such as Typhon, and the gods are here compared to the parts of the human soul (later compared to two horses pulling a chariot). The ὑπόνοια of the mythical figure of Typhon is therefore suggested to be a great deal more august than a mere rude physical force: it is part of our soul. Socrates' critique is therefore not about the possibility of ὑπόνοια, but about the types of ὑπόνοια appropriate to certain subjects. It is inappropriate that mythical representations of divine things (for Gorgons, Pegasuses, and titans were all considered as such by a Greek) have mundane ὑπόνοιαι. Both of these explanations were first recognized by Proclus and his teacher Syrianus.[138]

Neither the *Republic*, nor the *Phaedrus* therefore seems to contain a critique of allegory *per se*. Over and above our interpretation of these two passages, however, remains the fact that Plato himself offers us undeniably allegorical images in his own myths and is also willing to read the myths of others allegorically. With regard to the former case, it is diffiuclt to deny that such mythological images as the story of the three metals from the *Republic* or the image of the charioteer from the *Phaedrus* are meant to be interpreted allegorically. With regard to the latter, a notable example of this occurs at *Theaetetus* 153c6-d5, where Socrates interprets Homer's 'golden chain'[139] as a symbol of the sun. This

[137] As does Tate at "Plato and Allegorical Interpretation", 152.
[138] *TP*, I.22, 8-23, 11; *In Phaedr*., 32, 15-33, 10.
[139] *Iliad*, VIII.26.

therefore seems sufficient evidence to allow that Plato was not entirely averse to the use of the allegorical type of allusion in myth.

Plato's theological allegories, according to Proclus, are mainly represented by the mathematical, physical, and ethical arguments in his myths. This is unsurprising in so far as it is in keeping with the τύποι set down in *Republic*, which refuse that the divine should be represented by base things, and in so far the myths containing such arguments are notoriously difficult to interpret. Chief amongst the myths are those of the *Timaeus* and *Statesman*, which Proclus in fact cites as particularly rife with theological allegory.[140] Of all the Platonic myths, these two are perhaps the least amenable to literal interpretation.[141] Although dealing with a similar subject, these myths seem to at once contradict themselves, each other, and Platonic metaphysics in general, as it is developed in the other dialogues. It is indeed no small feat to reconcile the author of the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus* with someone who holds that souls are generated, or that the world in which we now live is devoid of divine guidance. Because of such apparent contradictions, Proclus holds that much of the confusing imagery of these myths hides a deeper, theological meaning.

For example, some of the most difficult passages in Plato's description of the world-soul from the *Timaeus*,[142] such as the division of one circle into seven,[143] are rendered meaningful by Proclus' allegorical reading, in which they are interpreted as images of all the divine classes.[144] The description of the circles can also be read as an image of a specific divine διάκοσμος, in this case, that of the intellective gods, which also has a hebdomadal structure. By this same means Proclus is also able to resolve the supposed contradiction in the *Statesman* concerning the government of the cycle in which we now find ourselves, which seems to be at once described as "the λόγος of Zeus (λόγος ἐπὶ Διὸς εἶναι)"[145], and as ruled by fate. By interpreting the Zeus of the *Statesman* as simply a thinly veiled image of the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*, Proclus is able to maintain that this Zeus has both a pyschagogic

[140] *TP*, I.19.
[141] Although the tradition of interpreting them allegorically began in the Old Academy, there has remained a long tradition of literal interpretation which has found the support of ancients such as Severus, Plutarch of Chaeronea, and modern scholars such as G. Vlatos.
[142] *Timaeus*, 34b10-37c5.
[143] *Ibid*., 36d2.
[144] *TP*, V.19.
[145] *Statesman*, 272b2.

role as the universe's λόγος and a physical role as that which presides over the material cosmos by means of fate.[146] This, as John Dillon states, effectively "reconciles the two apparently contradictory descriptions of the principles on which this physical world is directed and links together also the two opposing cycles"[147].

The possibilities afforded by such allegorical readings of these and other mythical passages, such as the description of the universal revolutions in *Republic*,[148] are evident if one is looking for coherence in and amongst the Platonic dialogues. But what of those mythical descriptions of divine activity which do not involve such benign imagery? In dealing with these, we must turn to the last of the four methods, namely, the symbolic.

I.4) Allusion II: The Symbolic Method

The second type of allusion recognized by Proclus is that by means of analogy[149] or sympathy[150], where the object is again represented by a type of symbol, but one which is fundamentally different from that employed in the method by means of images.[151] The essence of this difference is that these symbols

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[146] See *TP*, V.95, 22-96, 9.
[147] J. Dillon, "The Neoplatonic Exegesis of the *Statesman* Myth" in *Reading the Statesman: proceedings of the III Symposium Platonicum*, ed. C. J. Rowe (Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 1995), pp. 364-374 at 372.
[148] *Republic*, 616b1-621b8.
[149] See *IT*, prop. 108. Analogy is evidently a polysemous term for Proclus, as it can be used either imagistically or symbolically.
[150] *Ibid*., prop. 145.
[151] By means of an exhaustive comparison of the use of the terms εἰκών, σύμβολον, and σύνθημα in the *In Remp.*, especially in the fifth, sixth and sixteenth essays, L. Cardullo offers a convincing interpretation of Proclus' seemingly indiscriminate use of the term σύμβολον. His use of the term to describe both the contents of the Homeric epics and Plato's own myth of Er, leads Cardullo to posit that Proclus in fact uses the term σύμβολον in three different senses: allegorical, arithmetical, and theurgical. In the first two senses, which Cardullo calls collectively the 'weak' sense of the term, a symbol falls under the purview of the imagistic method and is interchangeable with an εἰκών or a σύνθημα. It is according to these senses which the term σύμβολον is used in the myth of Er, for example, in Proclus' exegesis of Plato's description of the Fates (*In Remp.*, II.245. 3-249, 28; *TP*, VI.108-109). The third sense, however, referred to by Cardullo as the 'strong' sense of the term and used exclusively by Proclus when discussing the Homeric myths, is something entirely different. See L. Cardullo, *Il linguaggio del simbolo in Proclo. Analisi filosofico-semantica dei termini symbolon, eikôn, synthêma nel Commentario alla Repubblica* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1985). For a general history of the symbol in Greek thought, including a chapter devoted to Proclus development of the subject in the *In Remp.*, see P. T. Struck, *Birth of the symbol: ancient readers at the limits of their texts* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004).

> are not imitations of those things of which they are symbolic. For things could never be imitations of their opposites, the shameful of the beautiful, and the unnatural of the natural. But the symbolic theory indicates the nature of these things even through what is strongly antithetical [to them].[152]

This method therefore differs from its allegorical cousin in that it is a non-mimetic form of representation. The symbols which it employs therefore do not resemble their referent, and they may even resemble its exact opposite. Rather than imitation, this type of symbol's relation to its referent is based on an imperceptible, direct ontological link.

Proclus' doctrine of symbolic representation, as exposed in the sixth essay of the *In Remp*.,[153] has received perhaps more attention than any other aspect of his thought.[154] Given this ample treatment, there seems little need for an additional summary of Proclean semiology. What remains to be examined, however, is the relation of the symbolic method of theology exposed in the *TP* and the *In Parm*. to what might well be called the symbolic method of poetry discussed in the *In Remp*. As is now well known, Proclus divides poetry into three types: 1) divinely inspired poetry which employs non-mimetic symbols, 2) didactic poetry which relies instead on the knowledge of the poet, and finally 3) mimetic poetry, which may be either accurate or illusionistic.[155]

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[152] "τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐναντία τῶν ἐναντίων οὐκ ἄν ποτε μιμήματα γένοιτο, τοῦ καλοῦ τὸ αἰσχρόν, καὶ τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ παρὰ φύσιν· ἡ δὲ συμβολικὴ θεωρία καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐναντιωτάτων τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐνδείκνυται φύσιν". *In Remp.*, I.198, 16-19.

[153] See esp. *In Remp*., I.195.

[154] See, aside from the works of Cardullo and Struck mentioned above, J. Dillon, "Image, Symbol and Analogy: Three Basic Concepts of Neoplatonic Exegesis", in *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, ed. R. Baine Harris (Norfolk, VA: SUNY Press, 1975); J. A. Coulter, *The literary microcosm: theories of interpretation of the later Neoplatonists* (Leiden: Brill, 1976); A. Sheppard, *Studies on the 5th and 6th essays of Proclus' Commentary on the Republic* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1980); R. Lamberton, *Homer the theologian: Neoplatonist allegorical reading and the growth of the epic tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); O. Kuisma, *Proclus' Defence of Homer* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1996); S. Rangos, "Proclus on Poetic Mimesis, Symbolism, and Truth", in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 17 (1999), pp. 249-277; C. van Liefferinge, *La théurgie : des Oracles chaldaïques à Proclus* (Liège: Centre international d'étude de la religion grecque antique, 1999); R. M. van den Berg, *Proclus' Hymns: Essays, Translations, Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); R. Chlup, *Proclus : an introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), chap. 6.

[155] See *In Remp*., I.259-261.

The first of these three types, which makes use of symbols, is described by Proclus as "the enthusiastic type (τὸ ἐνθουσιαστικόν)"[156] and that which is produced by "the entheastic soul (τὴν ἐνθεάζουσαν ψυχήν)"[157]. Herein lies a potential source of confusion. If the entheastic 'method' of writing poetry is also that one which employs symbols, why then is there both a symbolic *and* an entheastic method of theology?[158] Has there been a fundamental shift in Proclus' semiology between the *In Remp*. and the *In Parm*.? Upon closer inspection, this appears unlikely.

The entheastic type of poetry which employs divine symbols is clearly synonymous with the symbolic method of theology. That this method requires contact with the divine should not surprise us, given Proclus' idea that true theological knowledge can only be the result of a union with the gods.[159] The symbolic method, therefore, as well as the other three theological methods for that matter, may be said to be divinely inspired or entheastic. The symbolic method, as employed by Homer, is even said by Proclus to be "more inspired (ἐνθεαστικώτεροι)"[160] than that employed by Plato. But it seems to be qualified as such not because the content of Homer's symbolic myths is more inspired than that of Plato's, but because the symbols Homer employs require more inspiration on the part of reader in order to be understood.

We earlier saw that Proclus arranged the four theological methods from least evident to most evident (i.e. symbolic, imagistic, entheastic, dialectic). It seems possible, however, to also read this list as an arrangement of the methods according to the 'amount' of divine inspiration required to understand the theological insights conveyed by these methods. The symbolic poetry of Homer, as Proclus states, "requires a certain mystical and entheastic intellection"[161] to be understood. The requirement for divine inspiration on the reader's part, one can imagine, diminishes as we descend the list, finally arriving at the dialectical method. The symbolic method may therefore well be said to be the most entheastic of the methods,

[156] *Ibid*., I.195, 15.
[157] *Ibid*., I.178, 28.
[158] This question is posed by A. Sheppard at "Plato's *Phaedrus* in the *Theologia Platonica*", 417. Sheppard, however, offers little by way of answer, save that she believes Proclus' goals in the *In Remp*. and the *TP* seem to be fundamentally different.
[159] See *TP*, I.16, 19ff.
[160] *In Remp*., I.79, 11-12.
[161] "μυστικῆς τινος δεῖται καὶ ἐνθεαστικῆς νοήσεως". *Ibid*., I.79, 23-24.

but it is still not to be confused with the entheastic method itself. This latter method is deserving of its appellation in so far as the divine inspiration which underlies it appears most clearly.

It may be difficult to tell whether the archetypal practitioners of symbolic or imagistic methods, i.e. the poet and the Pythagorean mathematician, are indeed inspired. For example, the symbols which the poets such as Homer place throughout their writings are offered without any indication that they are such. Who would imagine that the chains which Hephaestus uses to bind Ares and Aphrodite in fact represent the demiurgical λόγοι, without possessing some sort of symbolic key?[162] The imagistic method, as we have seen, deploys images and symbols which in some way reflect what they represent, but these still run the risk of being taken at face value. The very basis of the telestic art, on the other hand, the art which Proclus offers as the model of the entheastic method, is contact with the divine. The theology of the telestics, as we saw above, constitutes not only a deployment of minimally mediated images and symbols but, a *use* of those images and symbols. Inspiration is therefore most evident in the art of the telestic, hence the title of 'entheastic' for their theological method.

This differentiation between the symbolic method and the other three methods allows us to better understand the difference which Proclus sees between Homer and Plato as theologians. In comparing their theological practices, Proclus writes that

> that divinely inspired man [i.e. Homer], having been roused to a Bacchic frenzy by the Muses, delivers to us his teachings concerning divine and human things. Plato established these things securely by the irrefutable methods of science and through these expositions made [them] clearer for many of us, we who need help in the consideration of beings.[163]

[162] See *Ibid*., I.142, 29-30.

[163] "καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος ἐνθουσιάζων καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Μουσῶν ἀναβακχευόμενος περὶ τῶν θείων ἡμᾶς ἀναδιδάσκει καὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων. ταῦτα ὁ Πλάτων ταῖς ἀνελέγκτοις τῆς ἐπιστήμης μεθόδοις κατεδήσατο καὶ διὰ τῶν ἀποδείξεων ἐναργέστερα τοῖς πολλοῖς ἡμῶν κατέστησεν, οἳ καὶ τῆς τοιαύτης δεόμεθα βοηθείας εἰς τὴν τῶν ὄντων κατανόησιν."*Ibid.*, I.158, 30-159, 6.

Homer offers teachings concerning the gods, which, although organized according the true nature of divine reality,[164] are presented without regard to their clarity. Plato, conversely, has been able to make the same teachings clear to his readers by employing theological methods besides the symbolic.

But what are we to make of Plato's use of the symbolic method itself? Proclus describes Homer and the other 'fathers of myth' as following nature by creating "images of the divine in the medium of language, expressing the transcendent power of the models by those things most opposite to them and furthest removed from them."[165] The claim has therefore been made that Proclus is inconsistent with regard to the Plato's use of the symbolic method in his own myths.[166] At *In Remp*. I.73, 17-22, for example, Proclus states that with his myths, Plato "often teaches divine things secretly by means of images… and no shamefulness or suggestion of disorder or turbulent and material semblances find their way into his myths"[167]. The same sentiment is echoed in the *TP*, where Proclus writes that

> even though the ancient poets thought it fit to compose the secret theologies of the gods in a more tragic manner and by means of this depicting the errings of the gods, their mutilations, their battles, their agonies, their rapes, their adulteries and all other such symbols of the hidden truth in these actions concerning the gods, Plato rejects such a mode of mythology and says [it] to be wholly unfavourable to an education.[168]

How then is it possible that Plato should use the symbolic method, which permits the portrayal of the divine by its opposites? Ought he not to have limited his mythological portrayals of the divine to the imagistic method? In order to answer these questions, we must look to those myths which Proclus singles out as particularly filled with symbolic content, namely, the myths of the *Symposium*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Protagoras*.

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[164] *Ibid*., I.78, 25-79, 1.
[165] "εἰκόνας καὶ αὐτοὶ πλάττοντες ἐν λόγοις φερομένας τῶν θείων τοῖς ἐναντιωτάτοις καὶ πλεῖστον ἀφεστηκόσιν τὴν ὑπερέχουσαν τῶν παραδειγμάτων ἀπομιμοῦνται δύναμιν". *In Remp*., I.77, 21-24.
[166] J. A. Coutler, *The literary microcosm: theories of interpretation of the later Neoplatonists*, 48, n. 6.
[167] "ἀλλ' ὥσπερ αὐτὸς ὁ Πλάτων πολλαχῇ διά τινων εἰκόνων τὰ θεῖα μυστικῶς ἀναδιδάσκει, καὶ οὔτε αἶσχος οὐδὲν οὔτε ἀταξίας ἔμφασις οὔτε ἔνυλον καὶ ταραχῶδες φάντασμα παρεμπίπτει τοῖς μύθοις".
[168] *TP*, I.21, 13-20.

The symbolic content of the *Gorgias* myth, Proclus tells us, is primarily the brief mention of three sons of Kronos and division of the cosmos amongst them. This traditional myth, recuperated by Plato, is, for Proclus, in fact a symbol of a demiurgic triad of hypercosmic gods.[169] In the myth of the *Protagoras*, on the other hand, Zeus is a symbolic representation of Jovian Demiurge of the *Timaeus*.[170] Despite their symbolic nature, however, neither of these myths depicts the gods engaged in anything untoward.

The myth of the *Symposium*, which concerns "the union through love"[171], however, may at first glance be taken to contain an unflattering portrait of the gods. The strongest symbolic content of the *Symposium* is indubitably the story of the coupling of Poros and Penia.[172] In comparison with tales of divine intercourse found in Homer and elsewhere, this scene, the most irreverent description of the gods that Plato places in the mouth of Socrates, is remarkably chaste. Nevertheless, depicting the gods engaged in drunken fornication *ex cubiculo* resulting in an illegitimate birth, even if it is to be interpreted as a symbol of "the ineffable revelation of the effect from its cause"[173], requires some justification. Although we possess a handful of exegeses of this scene's ὑπόνοια by Proclus,[174] none of them offers a defence of its τύπος. It seems quite plausible, however, that Proclus' defence thereof would have centred on the fact that Poros and Penia, though indeed gods,[175] share their names with substantive nouns. By employing such gods rather than those with traditional names, Plato renders the symbolic nature of this story all the easier to recognize.

If we are therefore to take Homer and the Orphic myths to be examples of what might be called 'deep symbolism', i.e. myths whose ὑπόνοιαι are very well hidden, then Plato's myths might be said to be cases of 'shallow symbolism'. The Platonic myths sometimes have hidden ὑπόνοιαι, but this is compensated for either by the inoffensiveness of their original λόγοι (i.e. in the case of *Gorgias* and of the *Protagoras*), or by having relatively obvious

[169] See *TP*, I.18, 25-27; VI.29, 6-23.
[170] See *TP*, V. chap. 24.
[171] *TP*, I.19, 1.
[172] *Symposium*, 203a-c. Though Aristophanes' speech might be said to offer a somewhat poor reflection of the gods, one must keep in mind that Plato has Socrates criticize all the preceding speeches (198b-199b).
[173] "καὶ διότι τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτίων ἄρρητον ἔκφανσιν". *TP*, I.121, 5-6.
[174] For Proclus' decryption of the symbolism of the Poros and Penia scene, see *TP*, I.122; *In Crat*., 118, 1-26. For a survey of what remains of the Neoplatonic interpretations of this myth, see W. Theiler, "Diotima neuplatonisch", in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 50 (1968), pp. 29-47.
[175] Proclus affirms their deity at *In Tim*., III.154, 30.

ὑπόνοιαι (i.e. in the case of *Symposium*). This type of symbolism appears, in Proclus' eyes, not to violate the τύποι of the *Republic* and is therefore suitable for pedagogical purposes.

Once we accept that Plato employed these two methods of allusion in his myths, the vast majority of Plato's theological references become available to us. The depictions of the gods within these myths may now be understood, rather than literally or ironically, as allusions to some hidden theological truth. Allusions, however, require an interpretative key. One must know the object which is alluded to in order to recognize it. Where, then, is such a key to be found in Plato? The handful of common notions mentioned above could scarcely constitute an adequate one, and no more seem forthcoming. Proclus, however, claims to have found just such an interpretative key in Plato's *Parmenides*, a dialogue which he takes to contain the whole of Plato's theology exposed according to the dialectical method. It is to this dialogue, therefore, that we now turn.

II. The *Parmenides*

Having expounded the four theological methods and the dialogues in which they are most commonly found in chapters four and five of the *TP*'s prolegomenon, in the following chapter, Proclus confronts what he sees as the fundamental objection to his enterprise. Taking on the critic's guise,[176] the Diadochus asks why Plato, having developed a coherent theology, would have scattered it piece-meal throughout his dialogues. Furthermore, if every dialogue seems to have central theme upon which it offers a sustained reflection, such as nature in the *Timaeus*, language in the *Cratylus*, or justice in the *Republic* and the *Laws*, why is there no dialogue (or myth, for that matter) consecrated to that most important of subjects, theology? Finally, we must also ask ourselves whether all the talk of gods in dialogues such as the *Timaeus* and the *Republic* is not simply done for the sake of elaborating the ethical and physical arguments with which the texts really seem to be concerned.

[176] For what follows, see *TP*, I.27-30.

With this stinging self-critique, Proclus seems to anticipate the very charges levelled against him by his modern detractors. Nevertheless, our author remains undaunted. In response to such criticisms, and to the demand that there be a single dialogue which contains the essence of Plato's theology, he asks that his readers look no further than the *Parmenides*:

> For in these pages all the divine genera not only advance in order out of the primary cause but also evince their union with one another… and all, to say in an word, the axioms of the theological science appear in perfection in this dialogue and all the ordered realms of the divine are shown in the continuity of their existence; and it is nothing other than the exposition of the generation of the gods and of that which exists in any way whatsoever by means of the ineffable and unknowable cause of the whole universe.[177]

The *Parmenides* is, without a doubt, the most enigmatic of the Platonic dialogues. Its narrative structure is peculiar in that it shares, with the *Symposium*, the distinction of being the only other thrice-removed narrative in the Platonic corpus. It is also to be placed amongst the handful of dialogues in which Socrates is relegated to the position of a minor interlocutor. Assuming his place in the principal role is the eponymous Parmenides, who, along with his disciple Zeno, is the only Pre-Socratic philosopher (excluding the Sophists) to appear in a Platonic dialogue. Its dramatic date (August 450) places it decades earlier than any other dialogue, as it is the only one to feature Socrates as anything other than a mature adult. Nonetheless, Plato makes it clear to his readers, by means of several overt references, that this dialogue is somehow linked to the dramatic cycle formed by the *Theaetetus*, the *Sophist*, and the *Statesman*.[178] Dramatically, therefore, the *Parmenides* is far and away the most unusual of Plato's dialogues.

Even more puzzling than its *mise en scène*, however, are its form and its content. Unlike any other dialogue, the *Parmenides* seems to contain two distinct parts whose interconnection is not at all evident, save for the continued presence of Parmenides as the

[177] *Ibid*., I.31, 14-27.
[178] The meeting between Socrates and Parmenides which the dialogue recounts is reffered to at *Theaetetus*, 183e and at *Sophist*, 217c.

principal interlocutor. The first part of the dialogue (127c1-135d5), dominated by an exchange between Socrates and Parmenides, seems to contain a critique of the theory of the Forms expounded by Socrates in dialogues such as the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, while the second (135d6-166c6), comprised of an exchange between Parmenides and a certain Aristotle, seems to be a long dialectical exercise by Parmenides whose purpose is not immediately clear.

Despite the difficulties presented by Plato's supposed self-critique in the first part of the dialogue, it is Parmenides' mysterious dialectical exercise in second part which has justly elicited the greatest interest from Plato's interpreters. Proclus, writing at the end of Antiquity, considered there to be two historically significant interpretations of this second part,[179] a number which some judge to have since grown to as many as twelve,[180] or even seventeen.[181] A brief glance at these doxographical lists, however, quickly reveals the vast majority of modern interpretations to be no more than elaborations of the two basic interpretations originally described by Proclus: the logical and the metaphysical.[182]

II.1) The Logical Interpretation

The logical interpretation of the second part of the *Parmenides* has existed since Antiquity and may have emerged as early as the New Academy. Proclus considered there to be three such logical interpretations, namely, the polemical, the gymnastic, and the propaedeutic. Some of those who supported the polemical interpretation, according to Proclus,[183] claimed that the *Parmenides* should be classed amongst Plato's 'controversial' dialogues, along with the *Menexenus*, and that its purpose is to carry on a controversy with Zeno. They held that Plato carries on his controversies by means of both mocking imitation

[179] See *In Parm*., 630, 15-645, 81.
[180] K. Corrigan, "The Place of the *Parmenides* in Plato's Thought and in the Subsequent Tradition" in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *1*, ed. J. D. Turner and K. Corrigan (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), pp. 23-36.
[181] See F. W. Niewöhner, *Dialog und Dialektik in Platons Parmenides* (Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1971), 71-81.
[182] For a brief overview of Proclus' history of the interpretation of the *Parmenides*, see *In Parm. L.-S.*, I.i.CDLXXX-CDLXXXV.
[183] *In Parm*., 630, 37-633, 12.

and counter-argumentation, in which the *Parmenides* evidently abounds with regard to Zeno. Although few scholars would now place the *Parmenides* alongside the *Menexenus*, the idea that the dialogue constitutes an anti-Eleatic polemic, replete with "*antieleatische Ironie und Spiel*"[184], remains a fairly common contemporary interpretation.[185]

Differing only slightly from the polemical interpretation, the gymnastic interpretation holds that the dialogue is an exercise in logic, comparable to the example of the angler in the *Sophist*,[186] and meant to better prepare the reader for controversies. The dialogue may therefore be divided into three parts: a list of difficulties with regard to the theory of Forms, a method for defending this theory, and an example of the application of that method. As opposed to these two polemical interpretations, the third logical interpretation, the propaedeutic, held by the likes of Thyrsallus[187] and Alcinous[188], sees the dialogue as nothing more than a preparatory exercise in logic.

Proclus, unsurprisingly, has a long list of criticisms destined for all forms of the logical interpretation. In the *TP*,[189] he focuses on the figure of Parmenides, who, according to any of the logical interpretations, is made an object of ridicule in his eponymous dialogue. Proclus rightly calls attention to the contrast between this supposedly laughable Parmenides and Plato's other historical portraits. Even the more notable Sophists, against whom Socrates is occasionally pitted, are, in spite of their errors, justly depicted by Plato as imposing and intelligent figures. Why then has Parmenides, the great Eleatic philosopher, whom Socrates elsewhere describes as "in Homer's words, 'one to be venerated' and also 'awesome'"[190], and whose words he recalls to have been "entirely beautiful (παγκάλους)"[191], been reduced in this dialogue to a "puerile (νεαροπρεπής)"[192] schoolmaster? Of far greater importance, however, is Proclus' question of whether or not we are to consider the method employed by

[184] J. Halfwassen, *Der Aufstieg zum Einen: Untersuchungen zu Platon und Plotin* (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1992), 268.
[185] For a list of modern interpreters who subscribe to this position, see Halfwassen, *Der Aufstieg zum Einen*, 268, note 10.
[186] See *Sophist*, 218e.
[187] See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.58.
[188] See Alcinous, *Didaskalia*, 6.
[189] *TP*, I.34-39.
[190] "Παρμενίδης δέ μοι φαίνεται, τὸ τοῦ Ὁμήρου, 'αἰδοῖός τέ μοι' εἶναι ἅμα 'δεινός τε'". *Theaetetus*, 183e6.
[191] *Sophist*, 217c5.
[192] *TP*, I.37, 8.

Parmenides in the second half of the dialogue to be Platonic dialectic. Here the supporter of the logical interpretation is forced to choose between reducing Platonic dialectic as a whole to the level of a logical exercise, or holding that the *Parmenides* is a dialogue apart in which a dialectic other than Plato's is employed. The latter option obviously found many supporters, for Proclus is well aware of their arguments.

He refers to a series of supposed indications that the dialectic employed by Parmenides in not that of Plato.[193] First, Parmenides practices this dialectic in the presence of two young men, Socrates and Aristotle, while, in the *Republic*,[194] Socrates holds that young men ought not to be exposed to such a science. Secondly, Parmenides refers to it as an exercise and as "babbling (ἀδολεσχία)"[195], an appellation hardly befitting the exalted nature of Platonic dialectic. Finally, the dialectic which Plato describes in the *Sophist* and the *Phaedrus* employs the method of division (διαίρεσις), while the *Parmenides* employs an entirely different method. The first two indications are easily brushed aside by Proclus, as he notes that in the *Republic* Socrates offers a general rule concerning dialectic, while Parmenides deals with a particular case, and that in the *Republic* as well dialectic is described as an exercise.[196] As for the 'babbling', Proclus holds this to be a joking reference by Plato to the comic poets' common description of Socrates as a babbler and of his method as babbling. As for the last of the supposed indications, it requires a more detailed refutation, one which demands that Proclus lay out the threefold activity of dialectic.

According to Proclus, Platonic dialectic has three functions. It serves (1) to awaken reason by teaching us to argue both sides of an issue, it allows us (2) to ascend through the intelligible world by expounding the truth, and it serves (3) to purge us of our double ignorance by exposing our errors. The first function is that most commonly associated with the so-called Socratic dialogues, and Proclus indeed cites the *Lysis*, the *Protagoras*, and the first book of the *Republic* as particularly replete with examples of this dialectical function. It is this aspect of dialectic which is properly called an exercise, for it is meant for young minds in need of training. The third function of dialectic closely resembles its predecessor and is

[193] What follows is drawn from *In Parm*., 648-659.
[194] *Republic*, 537e-539d.
[195] *Parm*., 135d5.
[196] *Republic*, 526b.

often employed in the same dialogues, although it is directed towards those who already consider themselves wise, the Sophists in particular. The second function of dialectic, on the other hand, differs from these two in that it is employed neither in the company of opponents, nor in that of students in need of training. It is this function which like-minded philosophers employ amongst themselves. It proceeds according to *either* the hypothetical method, employed in dialogues such as the *Phaedo* and the *Parmenides*, of reasoning from given hypotheses, *or* the method of division, employed in the *Phaedrus* and the *Sophist*. This idea that the methods of reasoning from hypotheses and division are both employed by mature philosophers seems to hold true when we look at the company in which they are employed in the four above mentioned dialogues. Although young men play an important role in each dialogue, these youths, be they Theaetetus, Phaedrus, Simmias, or Socrates himself, have all been previously initiated into philosophy and received the training necessary to partake in this aspect of dialectic.

Thus Proclus refutes the logical interpretation of the *Parmenides*. He was, of course, not the last critic of this interpretation. Many contemporary readers of Plato who recognize the subtly of his writings have likewise come to reject the logical interpretation, for, as Kevin Corrigan remarks, it "trivializes the playful but serious form of the 'question mark' which the dialogue represents"[197]. Were the logical interpretation correct, the *Parmenides* would undoubtedly be one of the least challenging, and least interesting, of the Platonic dialogues. Its setting and characters alone, however, seem to persuade us otherwise.

II.2) The Metaphysical Interpretation

The second interpretation of the *Parmenides*, the metaphysical interpretation, may also be the oldest one. There is much debate as to whether Plato's immediate successor, Speusippus, may have interpreted the dialogue in this fashion.[198] Whatever the case of the Old Academy may have been, it seems fairly certain that this interpretation was known

[197] "The Place of the *Parmenides* in Plato's thought and in the Subsequent Tradition", 31.
[198] See, *inter alia*, G. Bechtle, "Speusippus' Neutral Conception of the One and Plato's *Parmenides*" and J. Dillon, "Speusippus and the Ontological Interpretation of the *Parmenides*", both in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *1*, pp. 37-58 and 67-78, respectively.

amongst Neopythagorean, Middle Platonic, and Gnostic circles, whence it was transmitted to Plotinus and the entire subsequent Neoplatonic tradition.

II.2.1) The Ontological Interpretation

Like the previous interpretation, the metaphysical interpretation has known several forms. The first one with which Proclus presents us in his commentary is the so-called ontological interpretation. According to Proclus' description, the ontological interpretation takes the dialogue's principal speaker as Plato's attempt to accurately portray the historical author of the famous Parmendiean poem. Plato's Parmenides, and the dialogue which bears his name, should therefore have the same principal concern as the author of this poem, namely, the One-Being. The Eleatic thinkers are therefore presented by Plato in order to discuss their own doctrines, and do so by means of the methods to which they were accustomed (i.e. criticism of 'the many' for Zeno and the expounding of the One-Being for Parmenides). [199]

The ontological interpretation may trace its origins back as far as Speusippus, but it was certainly not the predominate interpretation of the *Parmenides* amongst antique Platonists. That honour, as we have seen, fell to the logical interpretation issuing perhaps from the New Academy. Indeed, the only confirmed proponent of the ontological interpretation in Antiquity was the Platonist Origen. We know very little of Origen besides his association with Plotinus' Alexandrian teacher, Ammonius Saccas, and his interpretation of the *Parmenides*, which is directly opposed to that of his fellow student. Concerning this interpretation, we are told by Proclus that Origen held the One to be entirely without existence (ἀνύπαρκτον) or substance (ἀνυπόστατον), the Intellect to be the highest principle, and that absolute being and absolute oneness are identical.[200] Given these theses, it is hardly

[199] *In Parm*., 636ff.
[200] *TP*, II.31, 15-17; *In Parm*., 1064ff. See also L. Brisson, "The Reception of the *Parmenides* before Proclus", in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *2*, ed. J. D. Turner and K. Corrigan (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), pp. 49-63 at 54-57; J.-M. Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001), 29ff; *S.-W.*, II, xii.

surprising that Origen also held the conclusion of the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* to be simply "impossible (ἀδύνατον)"[201].

Origen's theses clearly bear the marks of Middle Platonism, which identified the supreme god with Demiurge of the *Timaeus*. They also have, as Proclus cannot help but remark,[202] a certain Peripatetic flavour. Not only does Origen consider the Intellect to be the highest principle, something which, as we have seen above, Proclus takes to be characteristic of Peripatetic theology, but he also conflates oneness and being. Such a conflation is, as Jean-Marc Narbonne points out,[203] a classic Aristotelian thesis from the *Metaphysics* (though not without some Platonic precedent). The most unmistakable characteristic of these theses, however, is that they present a metaphysical interpretation of the *Parmenides* directly opposed to that of Plotinus,[204] which we shall examine directly. In this way, we may say that the ontological interpretation of the *Parmenides*, if it was not first coined by the Old Academy, may have been invented in reaction to the interpretation proposed by Plotinus.

Proclus, for his part, seems puzzled by the figure of Origen, writing:

> I wonder at all these exegetes of Plato who have indeed conceded [to the existence of] the intellective kingdom amongst beings, but who have not revered the unspeakable transcendence of the One and its existence, which is transcendent of the entire universe, and above all Origen, who shared the same education as Plotinus."[205]

We may be less so. To our jaded modern eyes, this case smacks of a rivalry, of an innovator opposed by a traditionalist.[206] Each of these thinkers would gain disciples,[207] but Plotinus'

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[201] *In Parm*., 1065, 4-5.
[202] *TP*, II.31, 19-22.
[203] Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 37ff.
[204] See eps. *Ibid*., 29-36.
[205] "θαυμάζω δὲ ἔγωγε τούς τε ἄλλους ἅπαντας τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἐξηγητάς, ὅσοι τὴν νοερὰν βασιλείαν ἐν τοῖς οὖσι προσήκαντο, τὴν δὲ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρρητον ὑπεροχὴν καὶ τῶν ὅλων ἐκβεβηκυῖαν ὕπαρξιν οὐκ ἐσέφθησαν, καὶ δὴ διαφερόντως Ὠριγένην τὸν τῷ Πλωτίνῳ τῆς αὐτῆς μετασχόντα παιδείας". *TP*, II.31[4], 4-9.
[206] Porphyry, as L. Brisson points out ("The Reception of the *Parmenides* before Proclus", 57, note 39), insinuates a rather cool relationship between Plotinus and Origen, writing that "When Origen once came to a meeting of the school he [i.e. Plotinus] was filled with embarrassment and wanted to stop lecturing, and when

innovations would prove far too attractive to be quashed by Origen's traditionalist reaction. Nevertheless, the ontological interpretation lived on and perhaps found adherents even amongst Plotinus' own students.

The *Anonymous Commentary on the Parmenides*,[208] although its date is as uncertain as its authorship,[209] seems to contain a post-Plotinian criticism of the Origenic ontological interpretation of the *Parmenides*, which it opposes to its own, revised, ontological interpretation. According to the *Anonymous Commentary*,[210] the One of the first hypothesis is indeed beyond the scope of being in the sense ὀν/οὐσία. It instead has its own unique type of being, designated by the articular infinitive τὸ εἶναι. Although clearly different from the Origenic interpretation, this is still an ontological interpretation, one which seems to have had little or no lasting influence.

It was indeed not until the Renaissance that the ontological interpretation was to gain ascendance over Plotinus' innovations,[211] an ascendance which it has retained to the present day, as many of its central aspects have been taken up by influential modern interpreters. Its emphasis on the importance of Plato's appropriation of the Eleatic heritage is echoed by the interpretation proposed by Ryle.[212] This interpretation holds that the *Parmenides* is the expression of Plato's 'spiritual crisis', which resulted in the rejection of transcendental Forms, and the resolution of this crisis by means of a return to Eleatic thought. Despite its evident appeal to the modern mind, this interpretation is immediately suspect in so far as it

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Origen urged him to continue he said: 'it damps one's enthusiasm for speaking when one sees that one's audience known already what one is going to say'; and after talking for a little while he brought the session to an end (Ὠριγένους δὲ ἀπαντήσαντός ποτε εἰς τὴν συνουσίαν πληρωθεὶς ἐρυθήματος ἀνίστασθαι μὲν ἐβούλετο, λέγειν δὲ ὑπὸ Ὠριγένους ἀξιούμενος ἔφη ἀνίλλεσθαι τὰς προθυμίας, ὅταν ἴδῃ ὁ λέγων, ὅτι πρὸς εἰδότας ἐρεῖ ἃ αὐτὸς λέγειν μέλλει· καὶ οὕτως ὀλίγα διαλεχθεὶς ἐξανέστη)". *V. Plot.*, 14, 20-25.

[207] Plotinus' disciples are well known. Origen, on the other hand, seems to have had another member of Ammonius' inner circle, Longinus, as a follower (*V. Plot.* 20, 36-37). As to whether Longinus followed Origen's interpretation of the *Parmenides*, L. Brisson believes that two passages from Damascius' commentary on the *Parmenides* seem to indicate so ("The Reception of the *Parmenides* before Proclus", 53-54).

[208] For the Greek text, see P. Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1968), II.98ff.

[209] It has been variously ascribed to Porphyry, Amelius, Theodore of Asine, an unknown Middle Platonic author, as well as a Sethian Gnostic. For references, see "The Reception of the *Parmenides* before Proclus", 59-62; *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 292, note 118; T. Rasimus, "Porphyry and the Gnostics: Reassessing Pierre Hadot's thesis in light of Second- and Third-century Sethian Treatises", in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *2*, pp. 81-110.

[210] Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, II.104ff.

[211] See Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 41-60.

[212] G. Ryle, "Plato's *Parmenides*" in *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics*, ed. R. E. Allen (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1965), pp. 97-148.

relies entirely upon an *a priori* chronology of Plato's works previously established by Ryle. If any part of this chronology is rejected, or if one even goes so far as to posit that Plato may have edited his works throughout his life, then the interpretation quickly becomes meaningless.

Leaving Ryle's work aside, the second important modern 'ontological' interpretation of the *Parmenides* is that of Luc Brisson.[213] According to Brisson, the dialogue constitutes Plato's confrontation with, and appropriation of, the thought of the historical Parmenides and Zeno. Socrates is therefore depicted as the proponent of a nascent theory of the Forms, which Parmenides is able to call into question by means of a series of ἀπορίαι in the first part of the dialogue. In the second part, after reassuring a dejected Socrates of the validity of his theory, Parmenides then goes on to demonstrate a technique which he may use to solve these and all future ἀπορίαι, which is the method of reasoning from hypotheses.

Although this reading of the second part seems to resemble the logical interpretations of the *Parmenides*, Brisson assures us that the hypotheses are bound by the limits of Parmenides' and Zeno's thought. They therefore take as their subject a consideration of the universe as one and multiplicity and are organised according to a hierarchy of cosmological categories. With this guiding principle, Brisson is able to offer several novel readings of the hypotheses, as well as recuperate some that have been long ignored, such as the idea that there are only eight hypotheses as opposed to the traditional reckoning of nine.[214]

The ontological interpretation, as Proclus indicates,[215] certainly presents a manifest advantage over the logical interpretations in that it does not take the *Parmenides* to be a treatise on methodology. Plato simply did not write such things. The ontological interpretation instead holds that the dialogue has a subject, the One-Being of the historical Parmenides, and the purpose of the dialectical exercise is the expounding of this concept. It is as if Plato is offering us a treatise on Parmenidean thought.

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[213] What follows is drawn from L. Brisson, "Une nouvelle interprétation du *Parménide* de Platon" in *Platon et l'objet de la science*, ed. P.-M. Morel (Bordeaux : Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, 1996), pp. 69-111.
[214] On the theory of eight hypotheses in Antiquity, see *infra*.
[215] *In Parm*., 635, 31ff.

This interpretation, however, is not without its flaws. To say that the *Parmenides* reflects the thought of the historical Parmenides and Zeno (to the point that we may refer to it when discussing them), is to imply that we know something of their thought, independent of its presentation in Plato. What we know of Eleatic thought, however, is what we can discern from the handful of fragments preserved by later authors (Plato himself being one of our chief sources). The enigmatic nature of these fragments, especially the famous Parmenidean poem, has allowed for the wildest speculation concerning their thought. As proof of this, we need only look to Heidegger's influential interpretation.[216] The Heideggerian interpretation is paradigmatic in that, in its attempt to understand the Eleatics apart from Platonism, it is inevitably led back to Plato. For want of evidence, all considerations of Eleatic thought eventually come down to a consideration of its similarity or dissimilarity to Platonism. It is therefore in reality Brisson's conception of Plato's own thought, rather than that of the Eleatics, which informs his interpretation of the *Parmenides* (and Ryle's, for that matter). Of this particular conception of Platonism we will say nothing, save that it brings us no closer to understanding Plato's theology than the vast majority of its contemporaries.[217]

Furthermore, Proclus takes the ontological interpretation to task for holding that Parmenides' One-Being could be the subject of all the hypotheses. Among other things, he writes that

> although the hypotheses do actually take their departure from the One according to Parmenides, which is identical with the One-Being, yet as they proceed from this point they sometimes fix upon the notion of One apart from 'that which is' and develop the implications of the truly One, purged of all plurality and therefore as transcending Being and repudiating the predicate of 'that which is'.[218]

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[216] See, above all, M. Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* vol. *54: Parmenides*, ed. M. S. Frings (Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1982).

[217] For another thoroughgoing critique of Brisson's conflation of Plato's Parmenides with the historical Parmenides, see D. O'Brien, "Le Parménide historique et le Parménide de Plato", in *Lectures de Platon*, ed. M. Dixsaut, A. Castel-Bouchouchi, and G. Kévorkian (Paris: Ellipses, 2013), pp. 89-106.

[218] "καὶ γὰρ τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἄρξασθαι μὲν ὄντως ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ Παρμενίδην ἑνός, ὅπερ ἦν τὸ ἓν ὄν· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ ὁρμηθείσας, τοτὲ μὲν χωρὶς τοῦ ἔστι τῇ ἐννοίᾳ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀπερειδομένας ἐκφῆναι τὸ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἓν παντὸς πλήθους καθαρεῦον, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τοῦ ὄντος ἐξῃρημένον καὶ τὴν τοῦ ἔστι κατηγορίαν ἀναινόμενον." *In Parm*., 638, 13-18.

He is here referring, of course, to the conclusion of the first hypothesis, which is that "the One does not partake of being at all" and therefore "the One *is* not at all".[219] The ontological interpretations, whether they limit Parmenides' thought to the intelligible or the sensible world, are forced to explain away this pivotal statement, either by judging the entire hypothesis to have a purely negative content (Origen), or by simply reiterating the presuppositions concerning Parmenides' thought which inform their reading[220].

II.2.2) A Blueprint of Reality

The second important metaphysical interpretation of the *Parmenides*, however, refuses to obfuscate this conclusion. It instead takes it as the key to the entire work. The essence of this reading of *Parmenides*, as Proclus writes, is that

> since all of these [results (i.e. of Parmenides' dialectical exercise)] cannot be applied to the One-Being, they [i.e. Plotinus and his followers] conclude with plausibility that the discussion is not only about it but about all things from the primary cause down to the lowest, in which case there is a privation of all things.[221]

According to this interpretation, therefore, the second part of the *Parmenides* offers us what might be termed 'a blueprint of reality', in the guise of a dialectical exercise, beginning with the highest principle and ending with the lowest. As to the finer details of this blueprint, there was, as we shall see, much debate. There remained, however, one essential point of agreement amongst the partisans of this interpretation, which indeed forms the grounds of the

[219] "Οὐδαμῶς ἄρα τὸ ἓν οὐσίας μετέχει…Οὐδαμῶς ἄρα ἔστι τὸ ἕν." *Parmenides*, 141e9-10.
[220] As Brissson writes when confronted with this passage, "Cette fois encore, force de reconnaître qu'il n'y a pas de niveaux de réalité chez Parménide et chez Zénon; on se trouve toujours dans le sensible, c'est-à-dire dans l'espace et dans le temps." Brisson, "Une nouvelle interprétation du *Parménide* de Platon", 105.
[221] "τούτων δὲ πάντων οὐ δυναμένων ἐφαρμόσαι τῷ ἑνὶ ὄντι, συνάγουσιν εἰκότως ὡς ἄρα οὐ περὶ ἐκείνου μόνον ὁ λόγος, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν πάντων ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης αἰτίας μέχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων, ἐν οἷς ἡ στέρησις τῶν πάντων." *In Parm*., 638, 25-639, 2.

entire enterprise: "with respect to the first of the hypotheses nearly all agreed with one another and consider Plato to celebrate, by means of this hypothesis, the superessential principle of the whole universe as unspeakable, unknowable, and beyond all being."[222]

III. Henology/Agathology

The principle of which Plato speaks, the Neoplatonists will argue, is also that which is referred to by the suggestion of a Good which is "beyond being (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας)"[223] in the *Republic*, of an indescribable Beauty in the *Symposium*,[224] of a true One which is neither being nor many from the *Sophist*,[225] and of a secret object of his efforts which is beyond words, mentioned in the *Seventh Letter*. [226] These statements, and others like them, all seem to hint at the existence of an ineffable and unknowable first principle which lies at the heart of Plato's thought. Although Plato uses several names to describe this principle, two were taken by the Neoplatonists to be of special import: 'the One (τὸ ἕν)' and 'the Good (τὸ ἀγαθὸν or τἀγαθόν)'. They understood these names to have been chosen by Plato as those least inappropriate to describe the indescribable, each highlighting one of the two fundamental relations of all reality to this principle. Platonic protology might therefore be provisionally described as at once both a 'henology' and an 'agathology'.

That a handful of ambiguous lines from Plato's writings should be used to draw so a radical a conclusion concerning his thought has been the subject of vigorous criticism since Antiquity. Indeed, the inquisitive reader of Plato can hardly fail to demand why this protology, supposedly the summit of Plato's thought, was afforded only a marginal treatment in his writings. Although Proclus already possessed the answer to this question, its presentation was evidently unconvincing, for the same answer, arrived at in a different

[222] "περὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς πρωτίστης τῶν ὑποθέσεων ἅπαντες σχεδὸν συμπεφωνήκασιν ἀλλήλοις καὶ τῆς ὑπερουσίου τῶν ὅλων ἀρχῆς διὰ ταύτης ἀξιοῦσι τὸν Πλάτωνα τῆς ὑποθέσεως τὸ ἄρρητον καὶ ἄγνωστον καὶ παντὸς ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ὄντος ἀνυμνεῖν." *TP*, I.41, 23-42, 2.
[223] *Republic*, 509b9.
[224] *Symposium*, 210e2-211b3.
[225] *Sophist*, 244b6-245b10.
[226] *Seventh Letter*, 341b7-d2.

fashion, would only gain a modern audience some 1500 years later. The new vehicle for this answer would be the work of the so-called Tübingen School, led by H. J. Krämer and K. Gaiser,[227] which brought to light the testimonials concerning Plato's ἄγραφα δόγματα. Concerning Plato's protology, two teachings clearly emerge from the earliest and most reliable of the ancient testimonials.[228] According to Aristotle, Speusippus, and others, Plato at least entertained the possibility of their being two first principles beyond the intelligible Forms, the One and the Indefinite Dyad, and that "the Good is One"[229].

Despite their agreement on the teaching of the two first principles, none of the original members of the Old Academy seems to have understood Plato's One/Good as anything more than one of the supreme ontological principles.[230] Indeed, the earliest evidence of the henological interpretation of Plato's protology is nothing more than several sentences ascribed to the first-century Neopythagorean Moderatus of Gades by Simplicius[231] (which, in fact, seem to be more closely linked to the exegesis of Plato's *Second Letter* than to that of the *Parmenides* itself)[232]. The henological interpretation may therefore have existed before Plotinus,[233] but it is only with him that it attained its canonical form.

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[227] See, most notably, H. J. Krämer, *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles: zum Wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie* (Amsterdam: P. Schippers, 1967); K. Gaiser, *Platons ungeschriebene Lehre: Studien zur systematischen und geschichtlichen Begründung der Wissenschaften in der Platonischen Schule* (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1968).

[228] For an overview of the testimonia, see K. Gaiser, *Platons ungeschriebene Lehre : Studien zur systematischen und geschichtlichen Begründung der Wissenschaften in der Platonischen Schule* (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1968) ; M.-D. Richard, *L'enseignement oral de Platon: une nouvelle interprétation du platonisme* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1986).

[229] "καὶ τὸ πέρας ὅτι <τ>ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ἕν". Aristoxenus, *Elementa Harmonica*, ed. R. da Rios (Rome: Polygraphica, 1954), 40, 2.

[230] Aristotle's position on this subject is quite clear. The case of Speusippus is somewhat more complex. There is one passage from the Latin fragment of the *In Parm*. which indicates, according to L. Tarán, that Speusippus held there to be a One beyond Being ("Proclus and the Old Academy", in *Proclus lecteur et interprète*, pp. 229-233). C. Steel, however, convincingly dismisses the possibility that this fragment refers to Speusippus in his article "A Neoplatonic Speusippus?" in *ΕΝΩΣΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛΙΑ, omaggio a Francesco Romano*, ed. M. Barbanti, G. Rita Giardina, and P. Manganaro (Catania: CUECM, 2002), pp. 469-476.

[231] Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros octo commentaria*, ed. H. Diels (Berlin: Reimer, 1882-1895), 230, 34ff.

[232] See *S.-W.*, II. xxvi-xxxv.

[233] Concerning the possibility of pre-Plotinian henological speculation amongst the Gnostics, see J. Turner, *Sethian Gnosticism and the Platonic Tradition* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2001), 499-531, as well as J. Baekner's highly sceptical article entitled "Is there a Gnostic 'Henological' Speculation?", in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *1*, pp. 173-194.

That Plato's two brightest disciples should have misunderstood the most difficult part of his protology is hardly inconceivable. The conceptual leap from ontology to henology/agathology was difficult, though not impossible, for a Greek of the fourth century. More problematic, however, might have been Plato's reluctance to offer any positive demonstrations concerning this aspect of his protology. The evasiveness of his writings with regard to this subject is patent. Moreover, as Rafael Ferber has shown through an analysis of a series of passages from the *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, *Timaeus*, and the *Seventh Letter*, this equivocation was grounded in Plato's very conception of this first principle.[234] According to Ferber, Plato did not offer any positive demonstrations of his protology in his writings because his first principle simply cannot be known through logical operations. Were this the case, however, what then was Plato attempting to do during his much debated lecture 'On the Good'?

The exact circumstances surrounding Plato's lecture 'On the Good' must forever remain obscure, but some basic facts seem clear enough. Plato appears to have one day offered a public lecture in the Piraeus concerning 'the Good', an idea which had most certainly come to be associated with his school. Many curious onlookers joined the regular members of the Academy in audience, but were greatly disappointed when Plato began to speak not of the keys to happiness, but of mathematics and of astronomical demonstrations.

The lecture has been judged a failure by both ancient and modern interpreters, who consider Plato's purpose to have been, at least in part, to convince the general public of the truth of his protology. [235] It is unclear, however, whether this was ever his intention. There is a certain parable-like quality about the entire situation: Plato, using the best of his rhetorical abilities (he is before a large crowd) and the most refined form of λόγος available to him (*viz*., mathematics), fails to demonstrate his first principle. What better way to impress upon the members of the Academy in attendance the innately indemonstrable and ineffable nature

[234] See R. Ferber, *Warum hat Plato die « ungeschriebene Lehre » nicht geschrieben?* (Munich: Beck, 2007).
[235] This was the opinion of Aristotle, according to Aristoxenus (see *Elementa Harmonica*, 39, 8-40, 4), and is also that of Gaiser, who writes that "The lecture on the Good was exceptional, because here Plato addressed his doctrine of first principles to the public, whereas otherwise he kept it for discussion within the inner circle of his associates. The exception is no longer inexplicable: Plato, as I have tried to show, intended thereby to invalidate spurious written versions of the doctrine and to counter the criticisms incurred by the usually closed-shop activities in the Academy". See K. Gaiser, "Plato's Enigmatic Lecture 'On the Good'", in *Phronesis*, vol. 25, no. 1 (1980), pp. 5-37 at 25.

of the One/Good? Could it be that the entire act was meant by Plato as both a lesson and warning to his disciples, i.e. do not attempt to demonstrate this principle, as you will inevitably fail and end up looking the fool?

Such an interpretation of the lecture 'On the Good' is indeed highly speculative. Nevertheless it allows us to reconcile the seeming dissonance between Plato's reluctance to write about this principle and his supposed eagerness to speak about it, without imposing an exoteric/esoteric hierarchy amongst Plato's teachings.[236] Furthermore, it offers some explanation as to how the Academy's brightest pupils could have misunderstood one of their master's ideas. It also accords with Ferber's thesis, and indeed, with Proclus', that there can be no positive demonstrations of a first principle which is beyond οὐσία or λόγος. Proclus, of course, had little interest in the supposed ἄγραφα δόγματα transmitted by the members of the Old Academy. For him, as for Ferber, the Platonic corpus itself already contained all of the information which Plato could possibly offer concerning his protology.

If the evidence concerning Plato's unwritten teachings allows us to clarify some of the ambiguity concerning the furtive suggestions of first principles in the dialogues, there are still many who would object to the presence of henological/agathological speculation in Plato on the grounds that it is simply too philosophically developed an idea. But how absurd indeed is it to attribute such speculation to Plato? In order to answer this question, we must examine the possible origins and nature of henology/agathology.

[236] Gaiser indeed purposes just such a hierarchy: "Plato had three usual teaching methods: (a) The literary dialogues introduced the reader to philosophy by showing him aspects of philosophical question and answer. (b) External ('exoteric') school exercises for a wider circle of pupils… taught the use of certain methods (especially the *diaeresis*-method) for particular types of subject. (c) The non-public dialectical discussions for an inner circle of pupils were supposed, over an extended period, to lead to a general view of truth which encompassed all individual aspects in a theory of first principles." *Ibid*.

III.1) Henology

What then is henological speculation? Is it as simple as positing a single principle beyond the ensemble of reality, which acts as its source and sustainer? Were this the case, as Narbonne points out,[237] a great many philosophies would fall under this heading. According to its detractors, Platonism was the first of many philosophical attempts to explain sensible reality by simply tacking another, supersensible, layer of reality atop it. Does henology then imply nothing more than the addition of one or more extra layers of reality on top of this initial, still ontological, supersensible layer? Certainly not as the Neoplatonists understood it.

The name 'the One', which is tentatively used to characterize the first principle, conveys two important ideas. The first is absolute transcendence. For a Greek, one (ἕν) was not an ἀριθμός.[238] This, of course, is not to say that one was not a number for the Greeks, at least in the sense that the word 'number' has held since the Renaissance. An ἀριθμός was for Greeks such as Plato, Euclid, or Proclus, what our modern mathematics would describe as a 'numbered group' or a 'set'. These ἀριθμοί were in turn composed of individual units (μονάδες). As all ἀριθμοὶ are sets, and are therefore innately plural, ἕν is an exception. It is a μόνας which is not a member of an ἀριθμός. It was therefore not, as it might now be considered, just another number. Instead, for a Greek, ἕν was the embodiment of singularity, uniqueness, and, one might argue, of non-being. Plato's identification of the first principle as 'the One' was likely an attempt to capture in some small measure its profound difference from, and transcendence of all else. As Plotinus explains, the One "is not something, but prior to each thing, and not a being"[239]. It is therefore superessential (ὑπερούσια) and even surreal, in the etymological sense of the word (i.e. it is not a determinate thing, a *res*, and is therefore beyond 'thingness')[240].

Upon hearing talk of a 'One beyond being', we might, of course, immediately demand how this can be so when reality, as we experience it, seems to indicate exactly the contrary? Common sense and simple observation seem to dictate that 'things' (the vaguest

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[237] Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 145.
[238] The following discussion of Greek mathematics is based upon the work of P. Pritchard in his book *Plato's Philosophy of Mathematics* (Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 1995), 7-83.
[239] "ἐκεῖνο δὲ οὔ τι, ἀλλὰ πρὸ ἑκάστου, οὐδὲ ὄν". *Plot. Op.*, 9 [VI.9], 3, 38.
[240] See also Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 100-101.

noun in our language) either *are* or *are not*. There is no third category. What is more, the things that *are* are clearly many. Such reasoning, however, is far less the product of common sense and observation than of simple linguistic convention. We tend to think of language as inherently ontological because of a longstanding conflation of the concepts of 'being' and 'existence'. The attempts to overcome this conflation in English by means of importations from Latin *via* French, have largely failed. The French term *existence*, for example, was originally naturalized in the late fourteenth century along with the 'appearance (Old French '*aparance*', later '*apparence*')'. These two terms, occurring frequently in such works as *le Roman de la Rose*, were originally seen as opposites. Early on, however, the sense of 'existence' seems to have gravitated towards that of 'being', so that by the time of Johnson, 'existence' was defined merely as the "actual possession of being".[241] The Greeks, on the other hand, whose linguistic pride barred them from importing foreign terms, confronted the same problem by eschewing the derivatives of εἰμί (εἶναι, ὀν, ὄντος, οὐσία, etc.) in favour of such compounds as ὕπαρξις and ὑπόστασις.[242] These terms, at least amongst philosophers, allowed for some differentiation between a given thing's existential and ontological status.

But why, it might be asked, should one attempt to rectify this linguistic conflation when it simply reflects reality? It is here, however, that the Neoplatonists would beg to differ. Although language, like the external world, may appear ontological, it is, for them, in a much deeper way, henological. "Nothing is, which is not one"[243] writes Plotinus, who is simply reformulating Plato's statement from the closing lines of the *Parmenides* that "if the one is not, nothing is"[244]. Everything which *is* is *a* something. Even something whose being, and even existence, is questionable, such as my idea of *a* chimera, is still qualified by an indefinite article. It may not have being, but it must, in order to enter into the register of language, at least have unity. Such singular units indeed seem to act like the fundamental particles of language and thought. We group them together ("some men"), we differentiate them from one another ("this man, that man"), and we describe their actions and their

[241] For the linguistic history of the term 'existence', see the *OED* entry.
[242] On the use of ὕπαρξις and ὑπόστασις in the works of Proclus, see Narbonne, *Plotin: Œuvres complètes*, tome I, vol. I, cxiii-cli.; C. Steel, "Ὕπαρξις chez Proclus", in *Hyparxis e Hypostasis nel Neoplatonismo*, ed. F. Romano and D. P. Taormina (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1994), pp. 79-100.
[243] "οὐδὲν γὰρ ὄν, ὃ μὴ ἕν". *Plot. Op.*, 34 [VI.6], 13, 50-51.
[244] "ἓν εἰ μὴ ἔστιν, οὐδέν ἐστιν". *Parmenides*, 166c1.

sufferings ("the man is…"), yet they remain unchanged. This linguistic priority of unity over being is seen by Plotinus, through the lens of his profoundly Greek conviction that simplicity must precede complexity, as evidence of the anteriority of not only oneness, but also of number in general, with regard to being.[245] Being is in fact ordered by number and requires unity to be, for without it, it would disintegrate into the limitless infinity which, according to Plotinus, characterizes matter.

This Plotinian notion leads to the second important idea conveyed by the name 'the One'. As much as it indicates transcendence, this name equally indicates the most profound degree of imminence. A ἕν is but a single μόνας, the building block of all ἀριθμοὶ. Unlike the natural number 'one' for us, which may be said to be composed of an infinite number of irrational numbers, for a Greek ἕν did indeed represent the basic unit of all things. In this way, oneness or unity could easily be conceived of as "la règle au moyen de laquelle l'ensemble de la réalité trouve effectivement à s'ordonner"[246] or as "the enabling condition"[247] by which beings *are* and are intelligible. Were ἕν to indicate but the first among an infinite series of natural numbers, it would hardly suffice as a name for the first principle. As the first hypothesis states,[248] τὸ ἕν must be beyond equality and measure, as well as being. For Plotinus, however, it is not only language and thought which testify to the anteriority of the One.[249] We also have recourse to the One within us. Our concept of number, in the Plotinian view, emerges from within ourselves and is not abstracted from the sensible world. The ultimate source of this concept is that the soul, like all things, is fundamentally one, and it is this oneness which allows it to numerically order the sensible world by distinguishing unity from multiplicity. This fundamental sense of unity is then reflected in our thought and our language.

The idea of the first principle as a hyperontological and indeed, hypertinological unity which serves as the condition by virtue of which things are and reality is, is the core of the

[245] See, for example, *Plot. Op.*, 34 [VI.6], 10, 39-51. Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 73.
[246] *Ibid*., 145.
[247] On the One as enabling condition, see E. Perl, "Neither One nor Many: God and Gods in Plotinus, Proclus, and Aquinas", *Dionysius*, vol. 27 (2010), pp. 167-192 at 170.
[248] *Parmenides*, 14aff.
[249] Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 85-89.

Plotinian interpretation of henology. This Plotinian foundation was preserved by the succeeding generations of Neoplatonists, including Proclus, who devotes the entire second book of the *TP* to henology. Each of the first three chapters of this book, in fact, apparently sets out to prove a fundamental proposition of this science.

The first of these propositions is that there must be a One beyond the many. Proclus begins by demonstrating that being can be neither pure multiplicity[250] nor pure unity[251], for in either case a series of impossibilities would arise. Were it naught but multiplicity, it would be an infinite infinity, deprived of both identity and difference. Being as a pure unity, on the other hand, would be without parts and equally without distinctions. Such possibilities clearly fly in face of observed reality, so they may be dismissed.

Having rejected the idea of being as homogenous, it would seem that it must therefore be a mixture of both unity and multiplicity. [252] If this is so, however, then we must examine the nature of the relationship between unity and multiplicity. There are, according to Proclus, four possibilities. Either 1) the multiple participates unity, 2) unity participate the multiple, 3) they mutually participate one another, or 4) neither participates the other. This last possibility may be immediately excluded, for, by making unity and multiplicity mutually exclusive, we are again confronted by the above-mentioned impossibilities inherent to being as pure unity or as pure multiplicity.

Were, on the other hand, as the third possibility suggests, unity and multiplicity to mutually participate one another, existing as a pure mixture, then we would be forced to posit a third term beyond these two which was responsible for such a mixture. Such a third term would then immediately lead us to the first of second possibility, for it would necessarily be either one or multiplicity. The second possibility suggests that this third term might be multiplicity. Were this so, Proclus claims, it would imply a fourth term, a one beyond the multiple, from which the lower one could derive its unity, which would be in turn superseded by another multiplicity, and another one, *ad infinitum*. As the first proposition of the *IT*

[250] *TP*, II.4, 8-9, 5.
[251] *Ibid*., II.9, 5-11, 26.
[252] *Ibid*., II.12, 1-14, 6.

states, "every manifold in some way participates unity"[253]. Multiplicity's inadequacy as a first principle as Proclus earlier demonstrated as well its dependence on unity for structure leaves us with only one possibility for being as a mixture of unity and multiplicity. It must be, as the first possibility suggests, that being is a mixture of unity and multiplicity where the latter participates the former.

The conclusion of our investigation of this first proposition, as Proclus writes, is that "it is necessary that the many participate the one, that the One is unmixed with the multiple, and that nothing is greater than the One, but that it is the cause of the being of the many."[254] Furthermore, he states that the One must be the opposite of nothingness, while the many must be the opposite of the not-many.[255] We may infer from these two concluding statements, along with Narbonne,[256] that Proclus has in mind here a quadripartite vision of reality, consisting of 1) the unparticipated One, 2) the participated non-many, also one, 3) the many, synonymous with being, and 4) nothingness, or that which does not participate unity.

The second henological proposition put forward by Proclus is that there must be a One beyond being.[257] He begins by returning to the question of whether there is a unique first principle, or multiple such principles. If there are multiple principle, Proclus reasons that they must either be independent of one another or dependent upon one another. Proclus finds the former possibility simply risible, as it would imply that there exists no single, cohesive reality. The latter, however, is hardly more respectable, in that it implies that these multiple first principles would have something in common, the cause of this interdependence, and this common thing could be elevated to a principle above them. Were it nevertheless to be the case that there were multiple interdependent first principles, they would be either finite or infinite in number. An infinite number of first principles, however, would have to produce infinitely, thereby creating the impossible situation of a double infinity of producers and produced. A finite number of first principles, however, would imply a principle of number beyond these principles according to which their number is determined.

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[253] "Πᾶν πλῆθος μετέχει πῃ τοῦ ἑνός". *IT*, prop. 1.
[254] "Εκ δὴ τούτων ἀνάγκη τά τε πολλὰ μετέχειν τοῦ ἑνός, καὶ τὸ ἓν ἄμικτον εἶναι πρὸς τὸ πλῆθος, καὶ μηδὲν εἶναι τοῦ ἑνὸς κρεῖττον, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο καὶ τοῦ εἶναι τοῖς πολλοῖς αἴτιον εἶναι". *TP*, II.14, 8-11.
[255] *Ibid*., II.14, 14-15.
[256] Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 125.
[257] *TP*, II. chap. 2.

It is impossible, then, that there are multiple first principles. The first principle must instead be unique. But what manner of thing is this unique first principle? Is it being or something other than being? If it is a being, it must be either corporeal or incorporeal. If it is corporeal, however, it must be divisible. It must therefore be incorporeal. If it is incorporeal, however, is it separable or inseparable from corporeal beings? If it is inseparable, then it is hardly better than a divisible body. If it is separable, however, it must be either moving or immobile. Movement, however, as Proclus argues, is always movement relative to something else and is caused by the desire for something else. This principle must therefore be immobile.

We have so far reasoned that the first principle, if a being, must be incorporeal, separate, and immobile, arriving thus at the Aristotelian first principle of the *Physics*. Should we be satisfied with such a first principle? Not entirely, according to Proclus, for it is still unclear as to whether this principle is truly one or not. It must be kept in mind that we have already determined that the first principle is unique, so its unity should serve as the measure of all further descriptions.

A new question is therefore posed: are being and unity identical or different? Proclus commences by offering two reasons as to why these two terms cannot be identical. The first is the linguistic argument we examined above, namely, that the statement 'a one' represents something proto-linguistic, a building block of language rather than language itself. The statement 'being one' or 'one is', on the other hand, is firmly within the realm of language because it manipulates one of these building blocks. The leap from language and thought to the extra-mental world, however, is an uncertain one, and Proclus offers us no argument as to why the former should accurately reflect the latter.[258] The reason why being and unity are not identical is, according to Proclus, that if being is equivalent to one, than their opposites, non-being and multiplicity, must also be equivalent. This line of reasoning, however, seems to

[258] Narbonne offers several other potential problems with Proclus' reasoning. See Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 132-133.

contradict Proclus' earlier assertion that the One is the opposite of non-being, while the multiple is opposed to the non-multiple.[259]

In sum, Proclus' arguments against the identity of being and oneness are rather flimsy and all seem to rely upon the basic henological presupposition that being simply must depend on unity. Ignoring the weakness of these arguments for the moment, let us assume that oneness and being have been satisfactorily demonstrated to be different. If they are different, Proclus argues, their relation must either be a case of independent equality or of the superiority of one principle over the other. The former case simply brings us back to the problem of multiple first principles, so it must be dismissed. In the case then that one principle is superior to the other, there are clearly two possibilities. The first, that being is superior to unity, is unacceptable, according to Proclus, because it would imply that there are some beings that do not partake of unity (why such an outcome is unacceptable, however, is unclear). The second possibility, therefore, that unity is superior to being must be the case. The One is therefore the first principle.

This conclusion, however, can be arrived at much more quickly. Taking us back to our original point of departure, namely, the question of whether the unique first principle is being or something other than being, Proclus opts for the latter response. In this case, he argues, there are three possibilities concerning its relation to being. This unique first principle could, on the one hand, be something inferior to being. Were this the case, however, it would clearly not be the first principle. Might it then be something superior to being in which being participates? To this Proclus offers two objections. Firstly, were this principle participated in directly, it would only admit of a single participant being. Secondly, according to Proclus, that which is participable is inferior to something else. Therefore, in order to be considered the first principle, it must be imparticipable. This therefore leaves us with only the third and final option, namely, that the unique first principle transcends being.

Proclus now moves on to the third and final henological proposition which is that there must exist a One which is the first cause of all things. In order to prove this proposition, he begins with the idea that, if there is a supreme cause of all things, in which all things

[259] Narbonne, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis: Plotin, Proclus, Heidegger*, 134.

participate, all of its effects must be in some way similar to this cause. This similarity, of course, cannot be the cause of a third term beyond the cause and its effects, for that would mean that there exists something superior to the first principle. It must therefore be synonymous with the first principle. What then is this similarity which exists between all things thanks to their common cause? Attributes such as 'life', 'movement', 'rest', and 'intellect', are clearly all too exclusive. But what about 'being'? In order to show the insufficiency of even this term as a common attribute, Proclus introduces the concept of 'becoming' as an attribute outside the scope of being. Both things being and things becoming must therefore have a common attribute, and that attribute must be unity. The first principle is therefore pure unity.

In spite of the manifest weakness of the 'being' vs. 'becoming' argument,[260] which would have us believe that these are two fundamentally different attributes, Proclus continues on to offer a second proof that the One is the first cause of all things. If, according to Proclus, we consider all reality to be an enormous series of causes and effects, then, in order to avoid an infinite series, there must be a first cause and a last effect and each must be one. The first principle is therefore the One. Following this, Proclus offers us one final proof of the One as cause, which is in reality a recapitulation of several arguments which he used to prove the two earlier propositions.

Proclus' attempts to prove his three basic henological propositions in the second book of the *TP* are admittedly disappointing, as they rely heavily upon Neoplatonic presuppositions and leave unanswered the basic question of *why* being and multiplicity are necessarily dependent upon unity.[261] The reader is therefore well within his rights to ask whether henology is not then merely a pseudo-science, an attempt by some interpreters of Plato to distinguish themselves by grafting another, entirely superfluous layer onto reality? Before passing judgement, however, he should read on, for the fourth chapter is nothing less than the key to the entire argument of the second book of the *TP*.

[260] *Ibid*.,138-140.
[261] *Ibid*., 141-142.

Any proponent of the ontological interpretation of the *Parmenides* who has read up to the fourth chapter will surely feel no small smugness when Proclus opens said chapter by stating that what has preceded has made it abundantly clear that the One is the first principle and cause of all things.[262] This smugness, however, will rapidly vanish when Proclus suddenly thrusts the figure of Origen, the champion of the ontological interpretation, before his readers and accuses him of fundamentally misinterpreting Plato by holding the Intellect to be the first principle. As proof of this misinterpretation, Proclus does not once again deploy a great sequence of deductive reasoning. He instead confronts Origen, and indeed all ontological interpreters, with texts. Proclus cites the above mentioned passages from the *Republic*, the *Sophist*, the *Parmenides* itself, as well as passages from the *Philebus*,[263] and demands to know how, in the face of these, one might consider that Plato held the Intellect to be the highest principle? The natural response, of course, would be that these texts represent a handful of enigmatic passages and that nowhere in Platonic corpus do we find a positive argument for the One as the first principle.

Proclus is all too happy to concede this point. Indeed there are no Platonic arguments for the One, because, as he so well demonstrated over the course of the failed arguments of the first three chapters, it is impossible to offer positive proof of the One's existence. How can something which is beyond being, multiplicity, and intellect, be positively argued for or even thought about? As Proclus writes

> all knowledge associating with an object of knowledge not belonging to it destroys its own power. Indeed, were we to speak of the sensation of the object of science, it will destroy itself, just as the science of the intelligible, and each of the types of knowledge, so that were there a definition of the ineffable, it would not stop overthrowing itself and fighting against itself.[264]

[262] *TP*, II.31, 1-3.
[263] *Philebus*, 20b3-21e4.
[264] "πᾶσα γνῶσις τῷ μηδὲν αὐτῇ διαφέροντι γνωστῷ συναπτομένη τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἀπόλλυσι δύναμιν·καὶ γὰρ τὴν αἴσθησιν εἰ τοῦ ἐπιστητοῦ λέγοιμεν, ἑαυτὴν ἀναιρήσει, καὶ τὴν ἐπιστήμην εἰ τοῦ νοητοῦ, καὶ ἑκάστην τῶν γνώσεων· ὥστε καὶ εἰ λόγος εἴη τοῦ ἀρρήτου, περὶ ἑαυτῷ καταβαλλόμενος οὐδὲν παύεται καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὸν διαμάχεται". *TP*, II.64, 4-9.

There cannot therefore be a positive λόγος of the One. Henology, therefore, is entirely bankrupt if considered a positive science like all others.

There are, however, ways of conceiving of something besides searching for a positive λόγος. In the above mentioned passages, for example, Proclus argues[265] that Plato reveals to us two alternative methods for examining the first principle: by seeking a parallel λόγος (i.e. an analogy) or a negative λόγος. The method of analogy is exemplified by the passage from the *Republic*, while the method of negation is evidently exemplified by the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides*.

As we have seen, Origen and doubtless many others understood the series of negations given in the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* to be a series of privations, culminating in the privation of being, which would render the One nothing. According to Proclus, however, such an interpretation results from too narrow a view of the concept of negation. There are, in Proclus' opinion, three types of negations, just as there are three types of non-being. There is indeed a negation which is inferior to an affirmation, i.e. a privation, but there is also a negation which is equal to an affirmation, as well as a negation which is superior to an affirmation, and is in fact the source of affirmations.[266] It is to the last category that the negations of the first hypothesis belong. By means of the "method of negations (τρόπος… τῶν ἀποφάσεων)"[267], we are therefore able to gain a sort of ἀντίλογος of the One. Even this, however, must be qualified, for the One's transcendence is such that, according to Proclus, it defies even negation.[268] The ἀντίλογος of the One offered by the method of negations is in reality no more accurate than any positive λόγος.

The negations of the first hypothesis may therefore not reveal anything about the true nature of the One, but, they do on the other hand, according to Proclus and his master Syrianus, reveal a great deal about other things. The highest form negation is also the source of an affirmation, and the negations concerning the One in the first hypothesis are therefore also affirmations concerning that which is dependent on the One, namely, ontological reality

[265] *Ibid.*, II.37, 12-18.
[266] *Ibid.*, II.38-39.
[267] *Ibid.*, II.63, 18.
[268] *Ibid.*, II.63, 23-24.

(and therefore, in some way, the divinity in which this reality participates). Such an interpretation, however, took some time to develop.

As we saw above, the common thread of all Neoplatonic interpretations of the second part of the *Parmenides*,[269] established by Plotinus, was that the hypotheses represented a blueprint of reality and that the first of these was obviously concerned with the first principle, upon which all reality is dependent. It was here, however, as Proclus shows us,[270] that the interpretative harmony ended.

As Plotinus did not leave behind a precise exegesis of the *Parmenides*, Proclus begins his outline of the main Neoplatonic interpretations with those of the Egyptian's immediate disciples, Amelius and Porphyry. Amelius' division of the hypotheses,[271] according to Proclus, has its merits, but is marred by the fact that he holds there to be eight rather than the nine hypotheses and he places the form of matter after matter itself in the hierarchy. Porphyry's division[272] is more sensible in that it contains nine hypotheses, but it also incorrectly counts such things as ordered and unordered Body amongst the principles. The Iamblichean division[273] improves upon the Porphyrean, but still suffers, as far as Proclus is concerned, from several flaws. Chief amongst these is that he consecrates the third hypothesis to the superior beings, the angels, demons, and heroes, alone.[274] These beings,

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[269] There is, however, the curious testimony of Damascius (*V. Isid.*, frg. 244) regarding Marinus' abandonment of the henological interpretation in his own commentary on the *Parmenides* for the ontological interpretation. One must keep in mind, however, Damascius' utter lack of charity towards Proclus' immediate successor.

[270] See *In Parm*., 1052, 31-1064, 12. The finest modern exposition of this passage remains that at *S.-W.*, I.lxxv-lxxxix, upon which the following overview is largely based.

[271] Amelius' division is as follows: 1st hypothesis: the One, 2nd: Intellect, 3rd: rational souls, 4th: irrational souls, 5th: matter which possesses a disposition to participate in the forms, 6th: ordered matter, 7th: pure matter, 8th: form united with matter.

[272] Porphyry's division is as follows: 1st hypothesis: the One, 2nd: Intellect, 3rd: Soul, 4th: ordered body, 5th: disordered body, 6th: ordered matter, 7th: disordered matter, 8th: forms united with matter, considered in their subject, 9th: forms united with matter, considered in themselves.

[273] Iamblichus' division is as follows: 1st hypothesis: the One, 2nd: intellective and intelligible beings, 3rd: superior beings, 4th: rational souls, 5th: souls of an inferior rank, 6th: form united with matter, 7th: matter, 8th: celestial bodies, 9th: sublunary bodies.

[274] J. Finamore ("Iamblichus' Interpretation of the *Parmenides'* Third Hypothesis", in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *2*, pp. 119-132) argues that Iamblichus was really referring to the daemons, heroes, and immaculate souls, which he took to be those mentioned in the *Phaedrus* which descend but remain unharmed by their descent. This interpretation, however, ignores Iamblichus' claim that there exist evil daemons (see *De myst.* 2, 7; 3, 31; 4, 7; 9, 7), which implies that some daemons are indeed harmed by their descent. Iamblichus therefore could not separate off daemons, heroes, and immaculate souls from the rest of the psychic beings on the basis of the *Phaedrus*, and Proclus therefore appears to be correct in positing that Iamblichus made all the superior beings, including angels, the subject of the third hypothesis.

however, must either be psychic or intellectual in nature, and must therefore be grouped with their kind rather than placed apart.

These minor flaws aside, all these divisions must be rejected on the basis that they fail to recognize what for Proclus is a fundamental structural aspect of the hypotheses. This is that not only are their nine hypotheses, but that the first five hypotheses are positive, while the final four are negative. The first five demonstrate the consequences of the existence of the One established in the very first hypothesis, while those that follow demonstrate that should this first hypothesis be supressed, nothing else would exist. According to Proclus, it is not until the work of the enigmatic Philosopher of Rhodes[275] that this positive-negative structure is recognized, although even this philosopher makes the mistake of positing ten rather than nine hypotheses.

With Plutarch of Athens, however, we begin to approach what Proclus considers to be a genuine interpretation of the second part of the *Parmenides*. Plutarch's division of the hypotheses was as follows:

1st : One

2nd: Intellect

3rd : Soul

4th : Forms united with matter

5th : Matter

6th : Sensible beings

7th : All objects of knowledge

8th : Dreams and shadows

9th : That which is inferior to dreams

[275] Concerning the identification of this philosopher with Theodore of Asine, see H. D. Saffrey, "Le « philosophe de Rhodes » est-il Théodore d'Asiné ? Sur un point obscur de l'histoire de l'exégèse néoplatonicienne du Parménide" in *Mémorial André-Jean Festugière. Antiquité païenne et chrétienne*, ed. E. Lucchesi and H. D. Saffrey (Geneva: Cramer, 1984), pp. 65-76.

Plutarch's reading of nine hypotheses allows for a perfectly balanced one-four-four structure. The One is introduced in the first hypothesis, and the results of its existence are successively introduced in the second to fifth hypotheses. In the sixth to ninth hypotheses, however, we see the results of the negation of the first hypothesis, which precludes the existence of everything from sensible beings, to that which has lower ontological status than even dreams.

The Plutarchean division was, according to Proclus, a fundamentally correct reading. It simply required some refinement, which was ably accomplished by Plutarch's successor, Syrianus. Syrianus refined the Plutarchean interpretation in two ways. Firstly, he introduced the idea of the 'henads' into the first hypothesis, an idea which we shall examine below in more detail. Secondly, he proposed that both the negations of the first hypothesis and the assertions of the second hypothesis represent a blueprint of reality and therefore an outline of the participated One. According to this refinement, each of the eleven negations of the first hypothesis represented a level of the divine reality, a schema which was reflected, and elaborated on, in the fourteen propositions of the second hypothesis.

This Syrianine interpretation of the hypotheses, which Proclus claims to adopt as his own, is the ultimate example of henological speculation. If the *Parmenides* is a treatise concerning the ineffable first principle called the One, then what could it contain aside from a catalogue of reality, or, more precisely, a catalogue of the processions from the One? For Proclus, the most elementary causal system is that of remaining (μονή), procession (πρόοδος), and reversion (ἐπιστροφή): "every effect remains in its cause, proceeds from it, and reverts upon it."[276] If every causal system in reality behaves in such a way, it is because reality itself is inscribed in such a system, as the effect of the first principle. The name 'One', for Proclus, is simply "an image of the procession of the whole universe"[277], an affirmation that the first principle is "the cause of all multiplicity and all procession"[278]. The first principle cannot be known by means of positive reasoning or by negation, it can only be

[276] "Πᾶν τὸ αἰτιατὸν καὶ μένει ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ αἰτίᾳ καὶ πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς αὐτήν". *IT*, prop. 35.
[277] "τὸ μὲν τῆς προόδου τῶν ὅλων, τὸ δὲ τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς ἐστιν εἰκών". *TP*, II.40, 9-10.
[278] "τὸ ἓν ἐπ' αὐτὸ φέροντες αἴτιον ἐκεῖνο παντὸς πλήθους καὶ προόδου πάσης ἀποφαινόμεθα". *Ibid*., II.40, 12-13.

known by means of its effects or processions. Henology might therefore be termed the study of reality as a procession, and it is for this reason that the *Parmenides*, the theological dialogue *par excellence*, presents us with a blueprint of reality.

III.2) Agathology

If the *Parmenides* presents us with the first principle as the image of the universal procession, the passage from the *Republic* offers us another perspective on the first principle by means of another method. This passage, which serves as the culmination of the 'image of the sun' from the sixth book of the *Republic*, is undoubtedly one of the most controversial within the entire Platonic corpus: "Therefore, say that not only being known is present in the things known by means of the Good, but also existence and being are in them besides as a result of it, although the Good is not being, but is still beyond being, exceeding it in age and power."[279]

Even at the beginning of the last century commentators such as John Adams could assert, without exaggeration, that this sentence "has occasioned a vast amount of discussion."[280] The quantity of such discussion has evidently not diminished over the course of the past century. The meaning and import of this sentence have been so sharply debated largely because of its appropriation by the Neoplatonists, who took it to be an indication that "it [i.e. the first principle] is the source of the goodness which is beyond being"[281].

The fact that with this statement and the one preceding it,[282] Socrates is drawing an analogy between the sun's role relative to the terrestrial world (i.e. that it is both its source and sustainment, all while being beyond it), and the Good's role relative to the intelligible world, is indisputable. Nevertheless, the possibility that the Good is beyond the ideas so as to

[279] "καὶ τοῖς γιγνωσκομένοις τοίνυν μὴ μόνον τὸ γιγνώσκεσθαι φάναι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ παρεῖναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ εἶναί τε καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ὑπ᾽ ἐκείνου αὐτοῖς προσεῖναι, οὐκ οὐσίας ὄντος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας πρεσβείᾳ καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχοντος." *Republic*, 509b6-10.
[280] *The Republic of Plato*, ed. with notes by J. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902), 62, note 13.
[281] "καὶ ὡς ἔστι πηγὴ τῆς ἀγαθότητος τῆς ὑπερουσίου". *TP*, II.49, 24.
[282] "τὸν ἥλιον τοῖς ὁρωμένοις οὐ μόνον οἶμαι τὴν τοῦ ὁρᾶσθαι δύναμιν παρέχειν φήσεις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν γένεσιν καὶ αὔξην καὶ τροφήν, οὐ γένεσιν αὐτὸν ὄντα. —πῶς γάρ;" *Republic*, 509b2-5.

be somehow outside the scope of οὐσία has given many modern interpreters pause.[283] Others, however, including Adams, have agreed with the Neoplatonists that Plato is here simply stating that "the Good is the cause of οὐσία, though not itself οὐσία, but (to use a Neoplatonic expression) ὑπερούσια."[284]

As intriguing as such an analogy may be, Proclus is at pains to point out that, in this case, we cannot define "analogy as an identity of relations and relations as correspondences"[285]. Analogies concerning the first principle, according to Proclus, "are only used for the sake of an allusion to the resemblance of the inferior things to this (i.e. the Good), and neither any relation nor correspondence nor community of the first principle with those things [which come] after it is evinced by these [analogies]."[286]

The absolute transcendence of the One with regard to λόγος renders real analogy impossible. Therefore, when we conceive of the Platonic analogy, it must be kept in mind that although both the Good and the sun transcend that of which they are both source and

[283] It has led, of course, to much linguistic hair-splitting, even to the point of opposing οὐσία to ὄντος so as to show that οὐσία represents something other than 'being'. Plato, however, makes it quite clear in this sentence that οὐσία is opposed to εἶναι ('existence') and that οὐσία and ὄντος may be treated essentially as synonyms. The most influential philological analysis of this passage in recent years has undoubtedly been that of M. Baltes, entitled "Is the Idea of the Good in Plato's *Republic* beyond being?", in *Studies in Plato and the Platonic tradition: essays presented to John Whittaker*, ed. M. A. Joyal (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), pp. 3-23. Baltes here attempts to disprove the interpretation of H. J. Krämer, and in turn, that of Neoplatonists, that the Good is beyond being.

[284] *The Republic of Plato*, 62, note 13. For a thoroughgoing refutation of Baltes' arguments and a reaffirmation of the interpretation of the Good as beyond being, see R. Ferber, "Ist die Idee des Guten nicht transzendent oder ist sie es doch? Nochmals Platons ΕΠΕΚΕΙΝΑ ΤΗΣ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ", in *Méthexis*, vol. 14 (2001), pp. 149-174. A similar analogy concerning the first principle, according to Proclus, can be found in the *Second Letter*, in the author's enigmatic remark concerning the three kings ("περὶ τὸν πάντων βασιλέα πάντ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἐκείνου ἕνεκα πάντα, καὶ ἐκεῖνο αἴτιον ἁπάντων τῶν καλῶν: δεύτερον δὲ πέρι τὰ δεύτερα, καὶ τρίτον πέρι τὰ τρίτα." *Second Letter*, 312e1-3). Each of these kings, according to Proclus, is analogous to an aspect of the first principle, whether its absolute transcendence, or its status as both first and final cause of all things. See *TP*, II. chap.9. The dubious authenticity of this text as well as the liberties which Proclus takes in interpreting it, however, should not be taken as evidence against the Neoplatonic interpretation of the *Republic* passage. As the essay at *S.-W.*, II.xx-lix well illustrates, this cryptic passage from the *Second Letter* had an extremely long and diverse exegetical history amongst the Neopythagoreans and Neoplatonists, and it was therefore necessary for Proclus to incorporate it into his theological reading of Plato. By making it simply another analogy of the One (carefully placed in subordination to the *Republic* analogy), Proclus renders this much disputed text largely benign.

[285] "μήτε τὴν ἀναλογίαν ἐν λόγων ταὐτότητι τοὺς δὲ λόγους ἐν σχέσεσιν ἀφοριζόμενος". *TP*, II.38, 15-16.

[286] "Αἱ δὲ ἀναλογίαι δι' ἔνδειξιν μόνον τῆς πρὸς ἐκεῖνο τῶν δευτέρων ὁμοιώσεως παραλαμβάνονται, καὶ οὔτε λόγος οὐδεὶς οὔτε σχέσις οὔτε κοινωνία τῆς πρωτίστης ἀρχῆς πρὸς τὰ μετ' αὐτὴν ἐκ τούτων ἀναφαίνεται." *Ibid.*, II.39, 6-9.

sustainer, the transcendence of the Good over all else is infinitely greater than that of the sun over the terrestrial world.[287]

For Proclus, however, this analogy, like the negations of the first hypothesis, is not simply a way of showing the utter transcendence of the first principle. It also shows us another aspect of reality's relation to this principle. The analogy employed here is a vertical one in which we begin from the terrestrial things dependent upon the sun and work our way up to the transcendent Good. Like the sun in the later image of the cave, the Good is a goal; it is the first principle as the τέλος of reality. As Proclus writes

> But again since that which proceeds is converted according to nature to this [principle] and longs for the ineffable and incomprehensible existence of this [principle], we call it the Good. For what else is the source of reversion for all things and that which sets itself before all these beings as desirable, save the Good?[288]

If, as we have argued, henology is the study of reality as a procession which is characterized by unity, agathology might then be termed the study of reality in reversion towards the ultimate object of desire, the Good. As for reality as remaining, which constitutes the union with the first principle, "it was not possible for those men wise in matters divine either to seize [it] by means of knowledge or to reveal [it] with speech"[289].

Several conclusions may be drawn from the preceding discussion. The first and most patent is that henology and agathology constitute two entirely complimentary perspectives on reality. Secondly, these perspectives do not equate to the addition of another layer of reality atop of the supersensible world. Thirdly, as an examination of both the language and the mathematics of Plato's day reveal, it is not inconceivable that a Greek of the fourth century BCE should have thought of henology/agathology, nor that his idea should have been

[287] *Ibid*., II.39.
[288] "Διότι δὲ αὖ τὰ προελθόντα πρὸς ἐκεῖνο κατὰ φύσιν ἐπέστραπται καὶ ποθεῖ τὴν ἄρρητον ἐκείνου καὶ ἄληπτον ὕπαρξιν, τἀγαθὸν αὐτὸ προσαγορεύομεν;" *Ibid*., II.40, 14-19.
[289] *Ibid*., II.42, 7-8.

misunderstood by his contemporaries. It may very well have taken several centuries for Plato's apophatic and analogic approaches to protology to become apparent.

III.3) The Yawning Gulf

In spite of the foregoing arguments, there are certainly still those who would object to ascribing such a protology to Plato, if only to save him face. For to posit the supremely transcendent and immanent One/Good as a first principle is to immediately confront what Dodds termed "the yawning gulf"[290] between this principle and the reality of which it is the source. Even the absolute imminence of this first principle as the enabling condition of all reality makes it no more than a *sine qua non*. It explains neither how that reality came to be nor the exact nature of its relationship with that which is prior to it. In other words, we know that the existence of ontological reality *is* dependent on unity/goodness, but not *how* this is so. Its transcendence with regard to this same reality, on the other hand, seems to pose a grave problem.

The solution to this problem, however, seems to have existed in the Neoplatonic tradition, at least in an inchoate form, from the very beginning. Already in the Plotinian theory of number as "a preparation and an outline for beings"[291] we can see a prefiguration of Syrianus' ideas. The theory became all the more clear with Iamblichus, who seems to have already in mind "if not the explicit concept henad at least its functional equivalent"[292].

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[290] Dodds, 259.

[291] "παρασκευὴ δὲ οἷον ἦν πρὸς τὰ ὄντα καὶ προτύπωσις". *Plot. Op.*, 34 [VI.6], 10, 2-3. As A. Charles-Saget writes "Dès lors, ne serions-nous pas fondés à présager au moins une analogie entre la théorie plotinienne du nombre, et la théorie proclienne des hénades ? Car toutes deux jouent à l'endroit du développement processif, le même rôle : *fournir une règle de déploiement à la pluralisation de l'essence*… Et nous avouons ne pas croire à un simple effet de hasard, lorsque nous rencontrons, en ce même passage de VI, 6, 10, le mot ἑνάδες." A. Charles-Saget, *L'architecture du divin : mathématique et philosophie chez Plotin et Proclus* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982), 183.

[292] D. Clark, "The Gods as Henads in Iamblichus", in *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition*, vol. 4 (2010), pp. 54-74 at 54. D. Clark argues, against *S.-W.*'s description of Iamblichus' protology and his interpretation of the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* (see *S.-W.*, III.xvii-xl), that on the basis of certain "repeated items of vocabulary" which "appear as technical usages… that Iamblichus already has in mind if not the explicit concept henad at least its functional equivalent". These items of vocabulary include such terms as *to monoeides* and *ellampsis*. His argument is sufficiently convincing to seriously call into question *S.-W.*'s now long standing assertion that "l'inventeur de cette théorie des hénades divines est Syrinaus" (*S.-W.*, III.li-lii).

Syrianus and Proclus evidently built up from these foundations the theory of the divine henads which is found throughout Proclus' writings. This theory, along with the theological reading of the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides*, offered them a convincing way to bridge the gulf between the One and reality.

IV. Henadology

The term ἑνάς, which has come to be translated as 'henad' (based on the much more common plural form ἑνάδες), like the above-mentioned μόνας, is collective noun, derived from ἕν.[293] Many such numerical collective nouns have made their way from Greek into English, such as 'decade' (a unit of ten) or 'triad' (a unit of three). A henad is therefore a unit of one, or a unit of unity. The first occurrence of this term is in the *Philebus*, where Socrates replies to Protarchus that "But whenever someone attempts to prove that man is one, or ox is one, or the Beautiful is one, or the Good is one, the broad interest in these and similar henads, by means of division, becomes controversy."[294]

Surprisingly, when Protarchus asks Socrates to clarify his line of thinking, he responds by stating that "first whether it is necessary to assume certain such monads to truly be beings"[295]. Although Socrates here seems to conflate the two terms, this is not simply a case of elegant variation. Proclus understood Socrates here to refer to the Forms as both henads and monads based on the perspective from which we regard them. From the perspective of those things which depend on them, the Forms are henads, because they are unities above the many. From the perspective of the One, however, the Forms are mere monads, parts of a greater multiplicity.[296]

[293] For a study of origin and use of this term, see *S.-W.*, III.xi-xvii.
[294] "ὅταν δέ τις ἕνα ἄνθρωπον ἐπιχειρῇ τίθεσθαι καὶ βοῦν ἕνα καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἓν καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἕν, περὶ τούτων τῶν ἑνάδων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἡ πολλὴ σπουδὴ μετὰ διαιρέσεως ἀμφισβήτησις γίγνεται."*Philebus*, 15a5-7.
[295] "πρῶτον μὲν εἴ τινας δεῖ τοιαύτας εἶναι μονάδας ὑπολαμβάνειν ἀληθῶς οὔσας". *Ibid*., 15b1.
[296] See *In Parm.*, 880, 30-38. See also *S.-W.*, III.xii-xiii.

IV.1) The Participated One

Based on the citation from the *Philebus*, we must assume that the use of the term 'henads' to designate unities upon which the many are dependent, is of Plato's own invention. It is on the strength of this precedent that Syrianus and Proclus employed it to to designate that which would bridge the gulf between the One and reality, between pure unity and multiplicity.

In Proclus' discussions of the henads, we are immediately struck by the apparently contradictory pairs of terms which are used to describe them. According to Proclus, amongst the henads "there exists there both indescribable unity (ἕνωσις) and the individuality (ἰδιότης) of each (for all the henads are in all, and yet each is separate)".[297] They are also at once "secret and intelligible: secret as conjoined to the One, but intelligible as participated by being"[298]. Furthermore, while "each is not something else and then good, but good alone, as each is not something else and then one, but one alone"[299], as opposed to the "primal" which "is the Good and the One simply", "each… is a certain goodness and a certain henad."[300]

These pairs, although seemingly opposed, in fact represent the liminal position of the henads as participated manifestations of the One. The relationship between the One and the henads is unlike any other. They are identical to the first principle in that they are unity/goodness alone (μόνον), whence their secrecy, and are unified, yet they are different from it in that they are neither the One nor the Good simply (ἁπλῶς), nor the One itself (αὐτοέν), but certain individual unities/goodnesses. This individuality is the "addition (πρόθεσιν)" or "surplus (πλεονασμόν)"[301] which differentiates them from the One itself, and which allows them to be both intelligible and, more importantly, participable. This participability is the only difference between the henads and the One,[302] something which

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[297] "οὔσης δὲ ἐκεῖ καὶ ἑνώσεως ἀφράστου καὶ τῆς ἑκάστων ἰδιότητος καὶ γὰρ πᾶσαι ἐν πάσαις αἱ ἑνάδες, καὶ ἑκάστη χωρὶς". *In Parm.*, 1048, 27-1049, 2.
[298] "Πᾶν τὸ καταλάμπον τὸ ὄντως ὂν πλῆθος τῶν ἑνάδων κρύφιον καὶ νοητόν ἐστι· κρύφιον μὲν ὡς τῷ ἑνὶ συνημμένον, νοητὸν δὲ ὡς ὑπὸ τοῦ ὄντος μετεχόμενον." *IT*, prop. 162.
[299] "οὐ γὰρ ἄλλο ἕκαστος, εἶτα ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ μόνον ἀγαθόν, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ἄλλο, εἶτα ἕν, ἀλλὰ μόνον ἕν." *Ibid*., prop. 119.
[300] "πρώτιστος ἁπλῶς τἀγαθὸν καὶ ἁπλῶς ἕν, τῶν δὲ μετὰ τὸν πρῶτον ἕκαστος τὶς ἀγαθότης ἐστὶ καὶ τὶς ἑνάς." *Ibid*., prop. 133.
[301] *TP*, III.14, 23.
[302] See, *inter alia*, *IT*, prop. 116.

Proclus illustrates by hearkening back to the solar analogy from the *Republic*.[303] As Socrates points out, the sun's light, not the sun itself, is what actually allows us to see, and we must not therefore confuse the two.[304] Yet the light of the sun is all we can know of it and our whole share in it, so that, in so far as we are concerned, there is no difference between the two. This light is for Proclus an image of the henads, as the sun is an image of the Good.

A henad's individuality is its participability. It has individuality only in so far as it is the individuality of a certain series of beings. As Proclus writes, "from the things that are dependent on them [i.e. the henads], their individualities are known, and this necessarily. For the differences of the participants are distinguished along with the individualities of the participated."[305] Jean Trouillard is therefore entirely justified in remarking that a henad "ne peut se définer que par ce qu'elle produit."[306] Because there are many different types of beings, each of whose capacity for participating in unity/goodness is different, there must be many henads, each of whom gives individuality to a certain type or series of being. And just as the number of types of beings must be finite, so too must be the number of henads.[307]

"Each of the gods [i.e. the henads]", therefore, "is nothing other than the participated One."[308] They are not a subordinate class of things which participate in the One,[309] but *are* the One in so far as it interacts with ontological reality. The One can neither be known nor spoken of, but the henads can in some way. Christian Guérard is therefore correct when he writes that "*stricto sensu*, chez Proclus, il n'y a pas d'hénologie, mais une hénadologie."[310]

The subtle nature of the relation of the henads and the One has caused many problems for those wishing to lump Proclus into one of the pre-existing categories of respectable

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[303] *TP*, III.16, 15-17, 12.
[304] *Republic*, 509a.
[305] "ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξηρτημένων οἷαί πέρ εἰσιν αὐτῶν αἱ ἰδιότητες γνωρίζονται, καὶ τοῦτο ἀναγκαίως. κατὰ γὰρ τὰς τῶν μετεχομένων ἰδιότητας καὶ αἱ τῶν μετεχόντων συνδιαιροῦνται διαφορότητες". *IT*, prop. 123.
[306] J. Trouillard, *La mystagogie de Proclos* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1982), 201.
[307] As Proclus writes, "[there are] as many participated henads as there are participating genera of beings (καὶ ὅσαι αἱ μετεχόμεναι ἑνάδες, τοσαῦτα καὶ τὰ μετέχοντα γένη τῶν ὄντων)." *IT*, prop. 135. Furthermore, "the entire manifold of divine henads is like a set [i.e. it is finite] (Πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν θείων ἑνάδων πεπερασμένον ἐστὶ κατὰ ἀριθμόν)." *IT*, prop. 149.
[308] "καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἕκαστος τῶν θεῶν ἢ τὸ μετεχόμενον ἕν." *In Parm.*, 1069, 5-6.
[309] As C. Guérard points out in his article "La Théorie des Hénades et La Mystique de Proclus", in *Dionysius*, vol. 5 (1982), pp. 73-82 at 78, the relation between the One and the henads can only be described in terms of procession, and not in terms of participation.
[310] Guérard, "La Théorie des Hénades et La Mystique de Proclus", 76, note 26.

religious thought. Perhaps, as many have claimed, Proclus was a monotheist, who simply appended the henads to the One as nod to his personal religious practices?[311] Or perhaps he was a polytheist, who understood there to be "*no such thing* as the One itself"[312] and believed the henads to be a group of super-individuals?[313] He may, however, have just been a simple henotheist (exalting the One over the henads), who unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile Platonic protology with his own religious proclivities.[314]

The categories of mono-, poly-, and henotheism, as useful as they may be for the writing of text-books on comparative religion, are, as Eric Perl points out,[315] of no use whatsoever in helping us understand the thought of Proclus. As we have seen, one of the fundamental purposes of Syrianus' theory of the henads was to overcome the apparent gulf between unity and multiplicity, a gulf which serves to define such ideas as monotheism and polytheism. The either/or choice with which these categories present us, as well as the middling position of henotheism, which attempts to preserve both at the expense of each, are in fact the antithesis of the Syriano-Proclean theological project.[316]

[311] For examples of this, see *Ibid*., 78.
[312] E. P. Butler, "Polytheism and individuality in the henadic manifold", in *Dionysius*, vol. 23 (2005), pp. 83-103 at 98.
[313] This position has recently been champion by E. P. Butler is his articles "Polytheism and Individuality in the Henadic Manifold" and "The Gods and Being in Proclus", in *Dionysius*, vol. 26 (2008), pp. 93-114.
[314] For this position, see N. Siniossoglou, "From Philosophical Monotheism to Imperial Henotheism: Esoteric and Popular religion in Late Antique Platonism", in *Monotheism between Pagans and Christians in Late Antiquity*, ed. S. Mitchell and P. Van Nuffelen. (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), pp.149-166.
[315] See Perl, "Neither One nor Many: God and Gods in Plotinus, Proclus, and Aquinas", 174-184. Perl offers an especially thorough refutation of Butler's attempt to graft a contemporary, fideistic polytheism, largely of his own creation, onto Proclus.
[316] Perl even goes so far as to write that "the simplistic and inescapably ontic categories of "monotheism" and "polytheism" cannot successfully capture an authentically philosophical understanding of divinity." "Neither One nor Many: God and Gods in Plotinus, Proclus, and Aquinas", 191. When one considers that these terms were coined for purely polemical purposes by Christians in order to offer the simplest possible distinction between 'us' and 'them', their philosophical worth does become questionable. For the scholarship concerning the earliest uses of these terms, see H. S. Versnel, *Coping with the Gods: Wayward Readings in Greek Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 24, note 3. As for henotheism, it is modern creation, purely for the benefit of the scholars of religion.

IV.2) The Religious Aspect

There are, as Proclus tells us, two types of henads: "self-complete (αὐτοτελεῖς)" henads, and henads which are merely "irradiations of unity (ἐλλάμψεις ἑνώσεων)"[317]. Although he says very little of the latter,[318] he is very clear with regard to the former: "every god is a self-complete henad, and every self-complete henad is a god"[319]. That he refers to the henads as gods is hardly surprising, given both the predicative nature of the term θεός and Proclus' idea that theology begins with the consideration of the gods as first principles. What has been the cause of much debate, however, is the fact that Proclus was clearly a practitioner of the traditional Greek religion, and that he seems to project his theory of the henads upon this religion (or vice versa), often referring to certain henads by the names of the traditional Greek gods.

Assessments of this religious aspect of the theory of the henads have ranged from damning criticisms:

> It is certainly a singular example of the survival of an obsolete creed in mummy form- a mode of preservation which becomes possible only when the creed is already dead… That Homer's Olympians, the most vividly conceived anthropomorphic beings in all literature, should have ended their career on the dusty shelves of this museum of metaphysical abstractions is one of time's strangest ironies.[320]

To attempts to explain it away as either a project of demythologisation:

> Ainsi, dans la mesure où la théologie comme science a supplanté la théologie symbolique ou mythologique, qui était la théologie traditionnelle depuis les origines de la pensée grecque, on peut dire que cette nouvelle théologie

[317] *IT*, prop. 64.
[318] Yet, as we shall see below, we may deduce that they constitute the entities referred to by the final two propositions of the second hypothesis, namely the universal souls and the superior beings.
[319] *IT*, prop. 114.
[320] Dodds, 259-260.

> scientifique a opéré une sorte de 'démythologisation'. Mais il est évident que cette 'démythologisation' atteint son achèvement complet, lorsque les dieux du panthéon olympien sont devenus les hénades divines. Lorsque Proclus nous dit que la propriété qui définit la déesse Hestia, c'est 'être en soi-même', et celle qui définit la déesse Héra, c'est 'être en un autre', nous sommes devant un cas de 'démythologisation' complète.[321]

Or as a simple bout of nostalgia:

> Or, quel est le philosophe, quel est l'homme de pensée, qui n'a eu parfois la nostalgie d'une piété toute simple, où il n'y aurait plus à penser? Où il n'y aurait plus qu'à entretenir cœur à cœur avec un κρείττων, qui serait un frère, un ami, ou, s'il s'agit d'Athéna, qui serait une protectrice et une amie? Qui n'a eu la nostalgie de redevenir enfant?[322]

With Proclus we therefore find ourselves once again confronted with the fundamental problem of Platonic theology, namely, the coexistence of an abstract protology alongside the gods of the traditional Greek religion. Yet this time, we cannot take shelter in the ambiguity of the dialogues. In Proclus' case it is patently clear: the traditional gods are henads and the henads are the traditional gods. Has Proclus then, by conflating his personal religion and his philosophical thought, really spoiled both by at once encumbering an otherwise interesting philosophical theory with pointless distinctions and by "depriving the gods of all personality"[323]? As persuasive as such charges may seem, they in fact rest upon a reductive, monolithic, and ultimately false conception of Greek religion.

Since the publication of E. R. Dodds' epoch-making study, *The Greeks and the Irrational*,[324] we have been urged to remember that, for all its superficial familiarity, that

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[321] *S.-W.*, III.lxxi-lxxii.
[322] A.-J. Festugière, "Proclus et la religion traditionnelle", in *Études de philosophie grecque* (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1971), pp. 575-584 at 584.
[323] Dodds, 260.
[324] See E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951).

world of the ancient Greeks was despertaley alien from our own.[325] Chief amongst its alien aspects, of course, was its religion. How was it that the Greeks were able to make sense of the vast welter of deities, rites, and rituals which we find documented, without the aid of a guiding text or of a universal priestly caste? Although some have argued that there was indeed an innate, systematic structure to Greek religion,[326] others have attempted to show that it was largely a pluralistic, and often conflicting, hodgepodge.[327] H. S. Versnel, however, offers another explanation. As he explains, in the Greek religion

> There is no unity, there are *unities*, creating at a different level a new diversity, even a new type of 'potential chaos', that of the multiplicity of classifications, one challenging the other and unpleasantly disconcerting the modern observer… the different local pantheons represent multiple frames of reference, contexts and perspectives, each of them serving to help create order in an otherwise confusing diversity… This has serious consequences for the description (French 'signalement') of each individual god. Demeter has been branded an Olympian, a chthonian, a women's goddess, an agrarian fertility goddess, a city goddess, a marginal goddess, a goddess of the curse, a representative of divine justice. Now Demeter may be all this but never all at once. One god -as identified by one name- always participates in a variety of systems.[328]

Greek religion, therefore, according to Versnel's convincing analysis, was radically perspectival, incorporating endless scope distinctions. A god, as represented by a traditional divine name such as Demeter, Zeus, or Athena, could be seen as any number of things, just not as two different things simultaneously. All depended upon the context in which the god was mentioned, or the perspective from which he or she was viewed. This principle, which allows us to understand how the average Greek was not in the least confused that Apollo was at once the god of healing, purification, prophecy, care for young citizens, poetry, and music, and was represented and celebrated in startlingly diverse ways around the Hellenic world,

[325] Parker, *On Greek Religion*, vii.
[326] This is Versnel's characterization of the work of J.-P. Vernant.
[327] This is Versnel's characterization of the work of W. Burkert.
[328] Versnel, *Coping with the Gods: Wayward Readings in Greek Theology*, 146.

also aids us in understanding how Greek thinkers did not care to separate the traditional gods from 'the god of the philosophers'.

That Proclus should apply the name Zeus to one or more henads, all while worshiping the same god in a variety of other civil and personal contexts, is therefore hardly surprising. Zeus could be many different things depending on the perspectives from which he was seen. The only necessary constants, in fact, as we saw above, were the traditional divine name and a set of commonly accepted divine attributes such as simplicity, goodness, wisdom, beauty, divinity, immortality, etc. This perspectival principle, of course, applies equally to interpretation of traditional myths concerning the gods. Dodds reproaches Proclus for accepting seemingly contradictory divine genealogies, such as "the statement of Hesiod that Oceanos, Tethys, Kronos, and Rhea were all of them begotten by Ouranos upon Ge, and the statement of the *Timaeus* that Oceanos and Tethys were the parents of Kronos and Rhea."[329] Proclus' response to this apparent contradiction, however, is perfectly in keeping with the perspectival principle:

> Being assumed in advance by us that *this* Oceanus and *this* Tethys are beyond Kronos and Rhea, as both intermediaries between these gods and their ascendants and as border guards between both of them, just as they were accustomed to be celebrated by the same [titles], and so to the difficulties of these subjects, [we reply] firstly, that it is no wonder to have called the same gods siblings *as well as* parents of certain other gods, because of their preeminent worth.[330]

As Proclus makes abundantly clear, in the context of the *Timaeus*, it is perfectly plausible that Oceanus and Tethys be considered parents of Kronos and Rhea because of their specific, contextual function. In a different context, however, or when considered from different perspective, they may be just as easily considered sibling and equals. This contextual and perspectival reading of myths was, of course, in no way an invention of

[329] Dodds, 260, note 3.
[330] "προϋποκειμένων ἡμῖν τὸν Ὠκεανὸν ἐκεῖνον καὶ τὴν Τηθὺν ἐκείνην ὑπὲρ τὸν Κρόνον εἶναι καὶ Ῥέαν, ὡς μέσους τούτων τε καὶ τῶν πατέρων καὶ ὁροφύλακας ἀμφοῖν, ὥσπερ εἰώθασιν αὐτοὺς ὑμνεῖν, πρὸς δ' οὖν τὰ ἄπορα τούτων ὑποκειμένων, πρῶτον μέν, ὅτι τοὺς αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ δι' ὑπεροχὴν ἀξίας πατέρας προσαγορεύεσθαί τινων οὐ θαυμαστόν." *In Tim.* III.184, 16-22.

Proclus, or even of the philosophers. It must have simply been the way ordinary Greeks understood, and coped with, the phenomenal variety of (often contradictory) religious narratives in which they were daily immersed. It was therefore no great feat for Proclus to see the traditional Greek gods in his theory of the henads. He was simply exercising the natural flexibility of his native religion, a flexibility that we sadly often seem as eager to supress as the Christian polemicists of Proclus' own time.

It should not be forgotten that Plato too had this same religious plasticity at his disposal, which would have allowed him to describe the traditional gods in terms of an abstract protology and vice-versa. It is indeed, as we shall see, just such a description which Proclus finds in the Platonic corpus.

V. The Order of the Gods

The second part of Syrianus' response to the yawning gulf between the One and reality was the deployment of his theory of divine henads according to what might be called the 'theological interpretation' of the second hypothesis of *Parmenides*. As we have seen, it was Proclus' understanding that the overwhelming majority of Neoplatonists were in agreement with Plotinus concerning the subject of the first hypothesis. Yet, as Proclus writes,

> concerning that which follows [i.e. the second hypothesis], they do not all teach the same manner a second time. On the one hand, the old ones, partisans of the philosophy of Plotinus, consider the intellective nature to manifest there, existing by reason of the principle of beings which is beyond being, and attempt to combine all the conclusions proposed by this with the unique and perfect power of the intellect. On the other, in truth, our guide in the truth concerning the gods and with regard to Plato, were we to speak in the manner of Homer, a 'familiar friend' [i.e. Syrianus]… advised us to consider the division of the conclusions according to their natural articulations when applying it to the divine ranks, and to accommodate the first and most simple of the results to the first of beings, the intermediary results to the intermediary beings, as it is indeed [their] allotted rank amongst the beings, and the

> final and multiple results to the last of beings. For the nature of being is not unique, simple, and indivisible.[331]

For Syrianus, the Plotinian explanation of the second hypothesis as a description of the realm of Intellect was insufficient. This neither aided in solving the problem of the One's relation to ontological reality, nor, indeed, did justice to the true complexity of that reality. Since, as we have seen, this explanation was generally held by the whole of the Neoplatonic tradition up to and including Syrianus' immediate predecessor, Plutarch, it was therefore necessary to seek out a new, and evidently far more complex, interpretation of this hypothesis.

The interpretation upon which Syrianus eventually settled, and which Proclus adopted, was to view the second hypothesis as a blueprint of the procession of ontological reality from the One. Based on this blueprint of the participants, we may by analogy deduce something of the participated. Each of the fourteen propositions therefore represents at once an accumulation of determination in ontological reality, and, by analogy, a divine διάκοσμος. One must keep in mind, however, that the hierarchy of divine διάκοσμοι which emerge by means of this analogy is only a matter of perspective. We may conceive of the gods in terms of the triad of Unity (ἕνωσις)-Individuality (ἰδιότης) (which might also be described as their Power [δύναμις] or their Relation [σχέσις] to ontological reality)-the Being (ὀν) which they produce. From the perspective of their unity, the gods "are in each other and united with each other, and the unity is far greater than the community and sameness among beings"[332]. They are, in effect, as we have seen, the One. From the perspective of their individuality, on the other hand, "some are more universal, while others are more particular"[333]. As we recall, a henad has individuality only in so far as it is the individuality of a series of beings. The

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[331] "Περὶ δὲ τῆς μετὰ ταύτην οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἅπαντες ἀναδιδάσκουσιν. Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν παλαιοὶ καὶ τῆς Πλωτίνου φιλοσοφίας μετασχόντες τὴν νοερὰν φύσιν ἐνταῦθα πεφηνέναι λέγουσιν ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπερουσίου τῶν ὄντων ἀρχῆς ὑφισταμένην, καὶ πάνθ' ὅσα διὰ ταύτης συμπεράσματα προτείνεται τῇ τοῦ νοῦ μιᾷ καὶ παντελεῖ δυνάμει συναρμόζειν ἐπιχειροῦσιν· ὁ δὲ δὴ τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἡμῖν ἀληθείας καθηγεμὼν καὶ τοῦ Πλάτωνος, ἵνα καθ' Ὅμηρον εἴπωμεν, ὀαριστὴς… παρεκελεύετο τὴν τῶν συμπερασμάτων διαίρεσιν κατ' ἄρθρον λαμβάνοντας ἐπὶ τοὺς θείους διακόσμους ἀναφέρειν, καὶ τὰ μὲν πρώτιστα καὶ ἁπλούστατα τῶν δεικνυμένων τοῖς πρωτίστοις ἐφαρμόζειν τῶν ὄντων, τὰ δὲ μέσα τοῖς μέσοις, ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ ἔλαχε τὴν ἐν τοῖς οὖσι τάξιν, τὰ δὲ ἔσχατα καὶ πολυειδῆ τοῖς ἐσχάτοις. Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἡ τοῦ ὄντος φύσις μία καὶ ἁπλῆ καὶ ἀδιαίρετος·" *TP*, I.42, 2-21.

[332] "πᾶσαι γὰρ αἱ ἑνάδες ἐν ἀλλήλαις εἰσὶ καὶ ἥνωνται πρὸς ἀλλήλας, καὶ πολλῷ μείζων ἡ ἕνωσις ἐκείνων τῆς ἐν τοῖς οὖσι κοινωνίας καὶ ταυτότητος." *In Parm*., 1048, 9-11.

[333] "ὥστε ἄλλα μὲν εἶναι τὰ ὁλικώτερα, ἄλλα δὲ τὰ μερικώτερα". *Ibid*., 1048, 25-27.

universality and particularity of the gods, by which we may conceive of them hierarchically as a procession, therefore exists only from the perspective of their effects.[334]

The second hypothesis is therefore effectively divided as follows:[335]

Parmenides	**Attribute Affirmed (Conclusion)**	**Class of Gods (Divine Rank)**	***TP***
145b5-c7	One-Being	1st triad of Intelligible Gods	III 24
142c7-d9	Wholeness	2nd triad of Intelligible Gods	III 25
142d9-143a3	Multiplicity	3rd triad of Intelligible Gods	III 26
143a4-144e7	Multiple (Divine number)	1st triad of Intelligible-Intellective Gods	IV 28-34
144e8-145a4	Whole and part	2nd triad of Intelligible-Intellective Gods	IV 35-36
145a4-b5	Figure	3rd triad of Intelligible-Intellective Gods	IV 37
145b6-e6	In another	Summit of the Intellective Gods (Kronos) (1st member of 1st Intellective triad)	V 37
Ibid.	In itself	Coordinated immaculate God (Kouros) (1st member of 2nd Intellective triad)	*Ibid*.
145e7-146a8	In motion	Centre of the Intellective Gods (Rhea) (2nd member of 1st Intellective triad)	V 38
Ibid.	At rest	Coordinated immaculate God (Kouros) (2nd member of 2nd Intellective triad)	*Ibid*.
146a9-147b8	Identical to itself/ identical with others	Third term of the triad of Intellective Gods (Zeus) (3rd member of 1st Intellective triad)	V 39
Ibid.	Different from itself	The 7th divinity (The Intellective monad)	*Ibid*.
Ibid.	Different from others	Coordinated immaculate God (Kouros) (3rd member of 2nd Intellective triad)	*Ibid*.
147c1-148d4	Similar, Dissimilar	Hypercosmic Gods	VI 14

[334] See *IT*, prop. 126.

[335] The following chart is based largely on that provided by C. Steel in his article "Le *Parménide* est-il le fondement de la *Théologie platonicienne*?" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 373-398 at 398.

148d5-149d7	In contact, Separated	Hypercosmic-encosmic Gods	VI 24
149d8-151e2	Equal, Unequal	Encosmic Gods	*Cetera desunt*
151e3-153b7	Time	Universal souls	_____
153b8-155d1	Parts of time	Superior beings (angels, daimons, and heros)	_____

This chart gives us some idea as to the scope and complexity of Syrianus' interpretation of the second hypothesis. Although we may be initially somewhat taken aback by the sheer number of determinations, and divine διάκοσμοι, that the Syrianine interpretation implies, it must be kept in mind that coordination with the propositions of the hypothesis is hardly the only reason for such divine multiplicity. The need for continuity and mediation between the One was the driving force behind this interpretation, and as we can see, the fourteen propositions were barely sufficient to contain all the differentiation which Syrianus and Proclus thought necessary to fully elaborate our reality.

V.1) Being: The Intelligible Gods

With the understanding that our knowledge of the gods' individualities is revealed by the structure of ontological reality, we may now embark upon our examination of the structure of divine procession, beginning with those gods which Proclus calls intelligible (νοητόν). The three highest portions of divine procession may be described according to the triad of Intelligible-Intelligible and Intellective-Intellective (νοητόν - νοητὸν καὶ νοερὸν - νοερὸν). The intelligible moment of this triad is so called because the product of the henads at this level (the ὄν which they produce) must be the foundation of ontological reality. These gods are therefore referred to as intelligible because they produce the foundations of the intelligible world which is at once the summit and the base of ontological reality.

Proclus' vision of ontological reality involves five causes: Being (οὐσία), Life (ζωή), Intellect (νοῦς), Soul (ψυχή), and Body (σῶμα).[336] The first three of these causes, understood according to the principal causal model of Remaining-Procession-Reversion, may be described as the basis of the "enneadic structure of reality"[337]. In ontological reality, Being designates all that which remains the same, Life, the motive force of procession, and Intellect, the product of this procession which also allows for reversion back to Being through thought. On the other hand, Being, Life, and Intellect may be described as three separate yet overlapping orders (τάξεις) of related things. Viewed as orders, Being is all the things which partake of being, Life is all the living things, and Intellect all the intelligent things. These two descriptions, although different, are in no way opposed. They simply represent two possible perspectives from which we may view these three all-pervading causes.

Each of these three initial causes is also tied to specific level of ontological reality: Being to the intelligible level, Life to the intelligible and intellective level, and Intellect to the intellective level.[338] Although each one of these causes emerges most fully at each level, one must keep in mind that as 'all things are in all things, but each according to its proper nature', both Life and Intellect are present at the intelligible level of reality, but essentially. The same is true for the other two levels: Being and Intellect are present vitally at the intelligible and intellective level, while Being and Life are present intellectively at the intellective level.[339] Proclean reality seems to allow for "a potentially infinite internal regress in any term, because each term shares the structure of the whole."[340] It has what might be termed a 'fractal structure', according to which we may more closely examine any part of whole and find an entire universe therein which has the same character as the larger whole of which it is merely a part.

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[336] *TP*, III.25, 11-12.
[337] S. Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena: an investigation of the prehistory and evolution of the pseudo-Dionysian tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 143-150.
[338] For the Platonic passages which Proclus draws upon to support this vision, see *TP*, III, chap. 6.
[339] See *IT*, prop. 103.
[340] D. G. MacIsaac, "The Origin of Determination in the Neoplatonism of Proclus", in *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought. Essays presented to the Rev'd Doctor Robert D. Crouse*, ed. W. Otten, W. Hannam, and M. Treschow (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 141-172 at 143.

There are therefore necessarily three triads of intelligible gods that produce, sequentially, intelligible Being, intelligible Life, and intelligible Intellect. At this level, of course, neither Life nor Intellect expresses its proper character. Being is the dominant feature at the summit of the intelligible world, and therefore intelligible Life and intelligible Intellect must be understood as Life *qua* Being and Intellect *qua* Being.

Proclus finds these three triads clearly expressed in Plato, both dialectically in the *Parmenides*, *Philebus*, and *Sophist*, as well as by means of images in the *Timaeus*. In the *Parmenides*, these triads are referred to by the conclusions of first three propositions as One-Being (τὸ ἓν ὂν), wholeness (ὁλότης), and multiplicity (πλῆθος). "The first triad", according to Proclus, "is called One-Being, because power is here present in a hidden mode. For the triad does not proceed out of itself, but subsists in indistinctly and uniformly, being primarily determined according to divine unity."[341] The first triad, therefore, as the summit of divine reality, is as close to pure unity as possible, and its ontological product must be as similar to this unity as possible. The second triad is referred to in the *Parmenides* as 'wholeness', which Proclus specifies as "intelligible wholeness (ὁλότης νοητή)"[342]. In this triad, he writes, "being and power are distinguished to greater degree from one another, and what [emerges] from them is no longer One-Being alone, but whole, having in itself as parts both One and Being."[343] If the first intelligible triad may be viewed as a monad, where the first and third terms of One and Being are still united due to the effective absence of the middle term, Power, the second triad might likewise be viewed as a dyad, where Power is for the first time fully present, and One and Being are therefore no longer united, but only linked (συνάπτω).[344] As the source of wholeness, the second triad is therefore also responsible for the partibility[345] which characterises ontological reality and which is fundamental to all procession. The third triad derived from the *Parmenides* is referred to as "intelligible multiplicity" because "in this triad there is a unity, power, and being, but the One, the Being,

[341] "Καλεῖται δ' οὖν ἡ πρώτη τριὰς ἓν ὄν, ἐπείπερ ἡ δύναμις ἐνταῦθα κρυφίως ἐστίν· οὐ γὰρ πρόεισιν ἡ τριὰς ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς, ἀλλ' ἀδιακρίτως καὶ ἐνοειδῶς ὑφέστηκε, πρώτως ἀφοριζομένη κατὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν τὴν θείαν." *TP*, III.85, 27-28.
[342] *Ibid*., III.87, 9.
[343] "καὶ τὸ ὂν καὶ ἡ δύναμις διῄρηται πλέον ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, καὶ τὸ ἐκ τούτων οὐκέτι μόνον ἓν ὄν ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὅλον, ὡς μέρη τό τε ἓν καὶ τὸ ὂν ἔχον ἐν ἑαυτῷ." Ibid., III.87, 2-5.
[344] *Ibid*., III.87, 10-11.
[345] See J. Dillon, "Syrianus's Exegesis of the Second Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*: the Architecture of the Intelligible Universe Revealed" in *Plato's Parmenides and its heritage*, vol. *2*, pp. 133-142 at 138.

and the Power are plurified"[346]. The final intelligible triad is therefore a true triad with three distinct moments, and is the ultimate source of the multiplicity in the intelligible world which will find expression on the intellective level as the Forms.[347] These same three triads are also found exposed under nearly identical names in the *Sophist*,[348] as Proclus notes briefly,[349] where it is shown successively that the One is neither One-Being, nor wholeness, nor the all (τὸ πᾶν), which Proclus takes to be the equivalent of multiplicity.

These three triads also appear in the *Philebus*, but under a very different name. Looking to the famous 'ontological passage' of that dialogue (23c-31b), Proclus, following the example of Iamblichus,[350] draws upon the four principles mentioned by Socrates (i.e. Cause [αἰτία], Limit [πέρας], Unlimited [ἄπειρον], and Mixture [μικτόν]), in order to describe the three intelligible triads. Treating 'Cause' as a title befitting the first principle,[351] alongside the One and the Good, Proclus takes Limit and Unlimited to be the first effects, or 'manifestations'[352] of this Cause, and, following the text of the *Philebus*, takes the 'Mixture' to be the product of these two principles.[353] Limit-Unlimited-Mixture, therefore, is a description of the first causal triad, and is simply another way of expressing the basic divine causal triad of Unity-Power-Being. Limit is the henad itself (i.e. as Unity), Unlimited is its Power, and Mixture is its product, Being, or its διάκοσμος.[354] Furthermore, as we know from the *Parmenides* that there are three intelligible triads, we must simply understand that the

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[346] "Ενὰς μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἐν ταύτῃ καὶ δύναμις καὶ ὄν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἓν πληθύεται καὶ τὸ ὂν καὶ ἡ δύναμις·" *Ibid*., III.89, 11-12.
[347] Dillon, "Syrianus's Exegesis of the Second Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*", 138.
[348] *Sophist*, 242c-245e. For an overview of Proclus' interpretation of this passage, see C. Steel, "Le *Sophiste* comme texte théologique dans l'interprétation de Proclus" in *On Proclus and his Influence in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. E. P. Bos and P. A. Meijer (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 51-64.
[349] *TP*, III. chap. 20.
[350] For a history of the Neoplatonic exegesis of the *Philebus*, see G. Van Riel's introduction to his edition of Damascius' *Commentaire sur le Philèbe de Platon* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2008), xvii-lxix.
[351] *TP*, III.29, 28-30.
[352] Proclus places much emphasis on Plato's choice of the words in the phrase "τὸν θεὸν ἐλέγομέν που τὸ μὲν ἄπειρον δεῖξαι τῶν ὄντων, τὸ δὲ πέρας;" (*Philebus*, 23c9-10). See *TP*, III.32, 3-7.
[353] On Proclus' derivation of the three intelligible triads from the *Philebus* in general, see G. Van Riel, "Ontologie et Théologie: Le *Philèbe* dans le troisième livre de la *Théologie platonicienne* de Proclus" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 399-413.
[354] In this equation of Limit-Unlimited-Mixture with the henadic triad of Unity-Power-Being, we follow G. Van Riel, "Les hénades de Proclus sont-elles composées de Limite et d'Illimité ?" in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, vol. 85 (2001), pp. 417-432 at 428. Although Proclus, at *TP*, III.36, 13-15, refers to both Limit and Unlimited as henads, as T. Lankila points out ("Henadology in the Two Theologies of Proclus", 72), this must be in the sense that from the perspective of its products, a henads *is* its powers, while *qua* itself, a henad is unity.

structure of Limit-Unlimited-Mixture characterizes each of these triads, with the Mixture being in the first case intelligible Being or "being-in-itself (αὐτοὸν)",[355] in the second intelligible Life,[356] and the third intelligible Intellect[357].

In the *Parmenides* and the *Sophist*, the three intelligible triads emerge during the course of what are clearly exercises in dialectic. In the *Philebus* as well, Proclus seems to take the four terms to be offered as the products of a dialectical discussion.[358] In the *Timaeus*, however, the three triads are again exposed, but this time by means of images.[359] The *Timaeus*, as far as the Neoplatonists were concerned, was the source of "the complete theory concerning nature"[360], which implied that it was of enormous theological value as well, containing "the theory concerning the intelligible gods, the divinely inspired sketch of the demiurgic monad, and the most complete truth concerning the encosmic gods"[361]. The reason for this double importance is the analogical relationship that exists between the sensible world in its physical, political, and ethical expressions, and the divine. The physical, political, and ethical, as Proclus writes, "represent the powers of the divine"[362]. This principle of analogy, of course, is in no way simply a Neoplatonic invention. It is drawn directly from dialogues such as the *Timaeus* and the *Republic*.

In the *Timaeus*, for example, we are told that the Demiurge created the universe based upon an intelligible model,[363] and that it "resembles most closely that Living Being of which

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[355] *TP*, III.35, 1-7.
[356] *Ibid*., III. chap. 13.
[357] *Ibid*., III. chap. 14.
[358] Although he does not say as much openly, his assertion that we may derive from the *Philebus* "the science concerning the One-Good, that concerning the two very first principles, and that of the triad which is revealed by them, for you will find all these things distinctly (*diakekrimenōs*) transmitted by Plato" (*TP*, I.25, 4-8), is revealing. The use of the term *diakekrimenōs* seems to indicate that Proclus takes the theological content of the *Philebus* to be clearly distinguished by Plato from the rest of the dialogue, as is the case with open discourse. Furthermore, as there are no indications, such as we find in the *Phaedrus*, that this passage is offered entheastically, we may reasonably deduce that the theological content of at least the 'ontological passage' is offered according to the dialectical method.
[359] The derivation of the three intelligible triads from the *Timaeus* is carefully exposed by J. Opsomer in his aptly titled article "Deriving the Three Intelligible Triads from the *Timaeus*" in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 351-372.
[360] *TP*, I.28, 12-13.
[361] *Ibid*., I.25, 9-11.
[362] *Ibid*., I.19, 12-13.
[363] *Timaeus*, 28c5-29b2.

all other living things are parts"[364]. It is this "complete Living Being (τῷ παντελεῖ ζῴῳ)"[365] which the Neoplatonists refer to as the αὐτόζωον.[366] The αὐτόζωον, however, is not the only model for the sensible world to which the Demiurge looks. Time is also created as a "moving image" of eternity.[367] The description of the αὐτόζωον and eternity as intelligible models beyond even the Demiurge himself leads Proclus to conclude that these must each be an intelligible triad. As for the third triad, Proclus derives this purely by means of the analogical principle. If time and eternity are analogous, then by studying the former we should be able to learn something of the latter. Time is said to move "according to number"[368], and therefore, Proclus reasons, we may say that eternity not only "remains in one"[369] but remains according to one. Eternity is therefore superseded by One, but not simply by *the* primal One, but by the One-Being which characterises the first triad according to the *Parmenides*.[370]

The names of the three intelligible triads derived from the *Timaeus* are therefore One, Eternity, and αὐτόζωον. One-Being is clearly the first moment of this triad of triads, as the other two must participate in it, and its internal triadic structure is exactly as that of the One-Being from the *Parmenides* described above. Eternity is the second moment, that of procession and life, because it is "the cause of immortality for all things"[371]. Its internal triadic structure can be deduced analogously by examining its product, time. Just as time is at once the indivisible now, continuous, and has a kinship with all living things (time measures life), eternity may be said to be composed of Limit (the ultimate 'now'), Unlimited (the source of continuity), and intelligible Life (the source of all life), just as this triad is described in the *Philebus*.[372] The αὐτόζωον is therefore the third moment of the *Timaeus* triad and the third intelligible triad. This third position is indicated by Plato, according to Proclus, when he describes it as eternal.[373] It is also, however, described as containing all the intelligible living

[364] "οὗ δ' ἔστιν τἆλλα ζῷα καθ' ἓν καὶ κατὰ γένη μόρια, τούτῳ πάντων ὁμοιότατον αὐτὸν εἶναι τιθῶμεν." Ibid., 30c5-7.
[365] *Ibid*., 31b1.
[366] For a history of the term αὐτόζωον, see "Deriving the Three Intelligible Triads from the *Timaeus*", 361, note 37.
[367] *Timaeus*, 37d5.
[368] *Ibid*., 37d6.
[369] *Ibid*.
[370] *TP*, III.57-58. See also *In Tim*. III.14, 19-28.
[371] "τὸν αἰῶνά φαμεν αἴτιον εἶναι τῆς ἀθανασίας τοῖς πᾶσι". *Ibid*., III.55, 15-16.
[372] Ibid., III.59, 16-60. See also Opsomer, "Deriving the Three Intelligible Triads from the *Timaeus*", 369.
[373] *Timaeus*, 37d3.

beings (i.e. the Forms),[374] and the most beautiful of intelligible objects[375]. These characteristics are all indicative of its position as the moment of intellect and reversion. As for its internal triadic structure, it is clearly indicated by Plato when he refers to the αὐτόζωον as only-begotten (μονογενής), as eternal (αἰώνιος), and as completely perfect (παντελής).[376] Only-begotten is a sign of Limit/Being, while, as we have seen, Eternity refers to Unlimited/Life. As for complete perfection,

> the intelligible intellect is that which makes manifest in itself all the intelligible distinct of being, and this must be, according to the opinion of Plato, the completely perfect intellect, that comprehending all of the intelligibles and marking the limit of the intelligible universe.[377]

Thus we have the three intelligible triads, which are the source, respectively, of intelligible Being, intelligible Life, and intelligible Intellect.[378] The foundation of ontological reality therefore begins with the foundation of the intelligible realm, but hardly stops there.

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[374] *Ibid*., 31a4-5.
[375] *Ibid*., 30d1-2.
[376] *Ibid*., 31b1-3.
[377] "ὁ γὰρ πᾶσαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν νοητὴν ἐκφήνας τοῦ ὄντος διάκρισιν ὁ νοῦς ἐστιν ὁ νοητός, καὶ οὗτος ἂν εἴη κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος γνώμην νοῦς ὁ παντέλειος, ὁ πάντων νοητῶν περιληπτικὸς καὶ τὸ πέρας ἀφορίζων τῆς νοητῆς διακοσμήσεως." *TP*, III.61, 25-62, 4.
[378] For a significantly different treatment of the intelligible gods, see E. P. Butler, "The Intelligible Gods in the *Platonic Theology* of Proclus", in *Méthexis*, vol. 21 (2008), pp. 131-143. In his own account (p. 143), Butler holds that "the intelligible gods are to be understood not as a discrete set of gods, but, according to the broad sense of Being, as all the Gods in their primary disposition as a polycentric manifold, and that accordingly, the divine activity that generates the procession of Being as recounted in the *Platonic Theology* is not a process in which a multiplicity of Gods come to be from one, but rather a process in which a common intellectual space comes about *among* the Gods as a resolution of the opposition between unique individuality and universalizable potencies—that is, between existence and power—in *each* God." Butler desires that all the henads be conceived of as intelligible in order to preserve the fundamental equality amongst them. Certain henads are only said to be intelligible, however, from the perspective of their participants. In themselves, the henads are all in all, pure unity with no differentiation. Moreover, on the basis of the analogy between ontological reality and divine reality, the fractal structure of the former must be paralleled in the latter. This might imply that the divine triad of Unity-Individuality-Being, which parallels the ontological triad of Being-Life-Intellect, may also parallel the epistemological triad of Intelligible-Intelligible and intellective-Intellective. In this case, we should therefore be not at all surprised when Proclus writes of the three intelligible triads that "that [first] one is an intelligible god in the first place, that which comes after it an intelligible and intellective god, and the third and intellective god (ἐκείνη μὲν γάρ ἐστι θεὸς νοητὸς πρώτως, ἡ δὲ μετ'αὐτὴν θεὸς νοητὸς καὶ νοερός, ἡ δὲ τρίτη θεὸς νοερός)" (*TP*, III.51, 9-11). He is simply stating that according to unity, all gods are intelligible, while according to their

V.3) Life: The Intelligible-Intellective Gods

According to Proclus' fractal vision of reality, in order to view the continued procession of the gods, we need therefore only examine the intelligible triads more closely. The first triad, however, as we have seen, is still too unified to allow for such an examination. Its product, intelligible Being, is also necessarily inert. It is only with Being *qua* Life, the intelligible Life of the second triad, that we find the activity of procession. It is into this second triad, therefore, that we must peer in order to examine the full deployment of the moment of Life.

Talk of ζωή at this level of reality may seem somewhat paradoxical to the modern reader, accustomed as he is to think of life as a biological property. Yet, Life, for Proclus, is the translation of the divine power and individuality into ontological reality.[379] Life is at once the source of motion (κίνησις),[380] measurement (μέτρησις),[381] and wholeness (ὁλότης) for ontological reality, the last two features being evident from two of designations of the second intelligible triad, eternity[382] and wholeness. Life is, simply put, the cause of procession in ontological reality.

It is the intelligible-intellective gods,[383] emerging from the second intelligible triad, who are responsible for the elaboration of Life. There is, evidently, a far greater multiplicity amongst them than amongst the intelligible gods, and the ontological triad of Being-Life-Intellect, which only appeared in its fullness with the third of the intelligible triads, is

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powers, they are intelligible and intellective, and according to the being which they produce, they are intellective. Every god of every order is present at every level of procession, but according to its proper nature.

[379] *TP*, IV.7, 25-26.

[380] *Ibid*., III.46, 16ff.

[381] *Ibid*., III.59, 16-17.

[382] On eternity as a measure, see *IT*, prop. 52-55.

[383] To date, the only work which offers anything more than a passing treatment of these gods, and indeed, of the fourth book of the *Platonic Theology* in general, is the article of E. P. Butler entitled "The Second Intelligible Triad and the Intelligible-Intellective Gods", in *Méthexis*, vol. 23 (2010), pp. 137-157.

omnipresent amongst them.[384] Aside from the *Parmenides*, these gods, according to Proclus, are described by Plato in the palinode of the *Phaedrus*.

In his reading of the *Parmenides*, Proclus translates the conclusions of the fourth, fifth, and sixth propositions of the second hypothesis, namely, multiple, whole and part, and figure, into the three intelligible-intellective triads of number, wholeness, and perfectivity (τελεσιουργός).[385] The first triad, number, or more specifically, divine number, is treated in what may only be described as a small essay, spanning no less than seven chapters of the fourth book of the *TP*.[386] The reason for considering this triad as the source of number, however, may be briefly stated. Simply put, in keeping with the gradual estrangement of One and Being described by the *Parmenides*, the otherness of One and Being at this level finally makes their distinction actual,[387] thereby allowing for the generation of the "distinct multiplicity"[388] which is divine number. This number "being seated midway between the intelligible gods and the intellective gods, and completing the unique bond between them"[389], is an essential step in the deployment of multiplicity throughout ontological reality. The next essential step in this deployment, of course, is the translation of the intelligible wholeness of the second intelligible triad into the world of mereological distinction for which the second triad of the intelligible-intellective gods is responsible.[390] Finally we come to the third triad, described in the *Parmenides* as figure or shape (σχῆμα). Emerging naturally from the wholeness of the second triad (for what is whole must have a beginning, a middle and an end, the constituents of shape)[391], this third triad bestows intellectual shape, which serves to perfect the lowest part of the intellectual world, allowing it to revert to its cause. Thus Proclus refers to these gods as perfective.[392]

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[384] *TP*, IV.16, 11-17.
[385] For a brief treatment of these triads, see Dillon, "Syrianus's Exegesis of the Second Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*: the Architecture of the Intelligible Universe Revealed", 139-140.
[386] See *TP*, IV. chps. 28-34.
[387] *TP*, IV.79, 15-80, 6.
[388] "ὁ δὲ ἀριθμὸς πλῆθός ἐστι διακεκριμένον." *Ibid*., IV.81, 6.
[389] "Μέσος γὰρ ἱδρυθεὶς τῶν τε νοητῶν θεῶν καὶ τῶν νοερῶν καὶ τὸν ἕνα σύνδεσμον αὐτῶν συμπληρῶν". *Ibid*., IV.84, 12-14.
[390] *Ibid*., IV. chps. 35-36.
[391] *Ibid*., IV.108, 9-22.
[392] *Ibid*., IV.108, 6-7.

The same gods are also presented to us in the *Phaedrus*, but in a very different manner. As we discussed above, Proclus considers the palinode of the *Phaedrus* to contain an entheastic exposition of "all the intelligible and intellective genera, and the independent orders of the gods which are situated immediately beyond the celestial revolutions"[393]. As for the intelligible-intellective gods, they are presented here by Plato as a topology of the heavens consisting of three places: the super-celestial place, the heavens or the celestial circuit, and the sub-celestial vault.[394] Each of these places represents an intelligible-intellective triad.

The super-celestial place, representing the first triad, is described both negatively and positively by Plato. It is, on the one hand, described as "colourless, shapeless, and impalpable", while on the other hand, it is said to be the place of "the being that truly is", of that which is visible to the soul's pilot, and "the source of true knowledge" [395]. There is also a semi-topology of this triad, as the super-celestial place is said to contain the "the plain of truth (τὸ ἀληθείας… πεδίον)"[396], the "pasture (νομή in the *Phaedrus*, but also referred to as the λειμῶνος,[397] a synonym which Proclus prefers)"[398] and the decisively non-topological "nourishment (τροφήν)"[399] of the gods, as well as an aretology, for the place is equally associated with science (ἐπιστήμη), temperance (σωφροσύνη), and justice (δικαιοσύνη)[400]. This aretology reveals to us that the three gods which form this triad are "the sources of intellective virtues"[401], which is not to say that they are the Forms of those virtues, but rather the source of the intellective Forms of these virtues. Science, temperance, and justice are therefore held by Proclus to be the root virtues from which all others emerge. The semi-topology, on the other hand, reveals that this triad is at the same time responsible for "intelligible perfection", of which the 'nourishment of the gods' is an image,[402] while the

[393] *Ibid*., I.25, 12-14.
[394] *Phaedrus*, 246e4-247d5.
[395] "ἡ γὰρ ἀχρώματός τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀναφὴς οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, ψυχῆς κυβερνήτῃ μόνῳ θεατὴ νῷ, περὶ ἣν τὸ τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐπιστήμης γένος, τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν τόπον." *Ibid*., 247c6-7.
[396] *Ibid*., 248b6.
[397] Ibid., 248c1.
[398] *Ibid*., 248b7.
[399] *Ibid*., 247d1-4.
[400] *Ibid*., 247d4-6.
[401] "πηγαὶ τῶν νοερῶν ἀρετῶν". *TP*, IV.44, 9-10.
[402] The use of the iconic method of theology here should not come as a surprise. As we saw above, the four methods are intimately interconnected and the border between the entheastic and the imagistic methods is

'pasture' is "an image of the power which engenders the λόγοι and the Forms, and of the production of life"[403]. The individuality of the 'the plain of truth', on the other hand, is "the deployment and revelation of the invisible light, the explanation of implicit λόγοι, and the perfection which is everywhere present."[404] Other traits could be drawn from these images, but Proclus fortunately offers us a summary formulation of the characteristics of this triad. It is, in essence, a source of revelation, a source of unity, and a guardian.[405]

This final idea of guardianship is, for Proclus, never more apparent than in the divine name by which Plato also addresses the final member of this triad, namely, Ἀδράστεια (i.e. Compulsion, the Inevitable, etc.). The *Phaedrus*, Socrates relates the 'decree (θεσμός)'of Adrasteia, which is that "if any soul being in the companying of a god perceives something of the truth, [she is] to be free of pain until the next cycle"[406]. This decree is therefore that of metensomatosis, an inescapable fate for all of ontological reality, which, according to Proclus, serves to guard the very order of this reality.[407] It is not difficult to see why Proclus insists that this law be made manifest in the intelligible-intellective realm, for what is metensomatosis but the ultimate expression of life as movement? The soul's journey from body to body is a ceaseless one,[408] for to come to a final rest would be to no longer participate in Life.

The second triad, "the centre in the midst of imparticipable Life" and therefore "the most vital"[409] part of life, is conveyed in the *Phaedrus* by the image of 'the heavens' or of the "celestial revolution (περιφορά)"[410]. Its principle characteristic, according to Proclus, is its

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especially blurred. Nevertheless, the palinode may safely be referred to as, on the whole, an example of the former method, since, although images and symbols are employed, it is clear from the beginning that these are strictly images of the divine world. In a dialogue like the *Timaeus*, on the other hand, the images, such as those concerning the structure of the four elements, may have a double meaning, at once theological and physical.

[403] "Τὸ δὲ τοῦ λειμῶνος ἰδίωμα γεννητικῆς ἐστι λόγων καὶ εἰδῶν δυνάμεως καὶ ζωοποιίας εἰκών". *Ibid*., IV.49, 4-5.

[404] "Τὸ δὲ τῆς ἀληθείας πεδίον ἡ τοῦ φωτός ἐστιν ἐξάπλωσις τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ ἔκφανσις καὶ ἡ ἀνάπτυξις τῶν ἔνδον λόγων καὶ ἡ τελειότης ἡ πανταχοῦ προϊοῦσα." *Ibid*., IV.49, 7-10.

[405] *Ibid*., IV.53, 25-26.

[406] "ἥτις ἂν ψυχὴ θεῷ συνοπαδὸς γενομένη κατίδῃ τι τῶν ἀληθῶν, μέχρι τε τῆς ἑτέρας περιόδου εἶναι ἀπήμονα". *Phaedrus*, 248c2-4.

[407] See *TP*, IV.52.

[408] See *IT*, prop. 206.

[409] "διότι μὲν τὸ μέσον κέντρον κατέχει τῆς ζωῆς τῆς ἀμεθέκτου καὶ ἔστι τὸ ζωτικώτατον αὐτὸ τῆς ζωῆς". *Ibid.*, IV.59, 2-4.

[410] *Phaedrus*, 247c1.

maintaining power, through which it maintains the link between the intelligible and intellective divine orders.[411] Like the first triad, this triad also has an internal topology, consisting of the "ridge (νῶτον)"[412] of heaven, the "depths (βάθος)"[413] of heaven, and the "celestial vault (οὐράνιος ἀψίς)"[414]. These three τόποι are interpreted analogically as corresponding, respectively, to the intelligible (i.e. Being), to Life, and to Intellect.[415]

The third and final triad is also a topological image, of which the name by which Proclus refers to it, sub-celestial vault, is only one part. By analogy with the two preceding topological triads, it too must have a depths and a "summit (ἄκρος)",[416] and these three, arranged in the order of summit, depths, vault, correspond to the moments of Remaining-Procession-Reversion. The reason for such a correspondence is clear when we take into account that this final intelligible-intellective triad is by character perfective, and is in fact the source of all perfection[417]. It is for this reason that Plato "placed the sub-celestial vault before all the intellective gods [as it is] the universe of reversion and perfection of the whole of the inferior divine genera"[418].

In the *Parmenides*, therefore, the three intelligible-intellective triads are referred to as number, wholeness, and perfectivity, while in the *Phaedrus* their characteristics are summarized as revealing/unifying/guarding, maintaining, and perfecting. If Life, then, in its most primitive form, is the source of motion, measurement, and wholeness, we can see why these gods are the source of such things as number (a measure of motion), the virtues (a measure as well), and perfection (synonymous with wholeness).

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411 *TP*, IV.55, 5-6.
412 *Phaedrus*, 247c1.
413 As *S.-W.* note (IV.160, note 6), the term βάθος is not found in the palinode, but Proclus likely would have justified it in his lost *Phaedrus* commentary as another name for referring to "the inside of heaven (τὸ εἴσω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ)" mentioned at *Phaedrus* 247e4.
414 The 'celestial vault', though again not mentioned in the *Phaedrus*, is taken to be implied by the existence of a 'sub-celestial vault'. See *TP*, IV.60, 19-23.
415 *TP*, IV.62, 22-23.
416 *Ibid*., IV.73, 14-19.
417 Proclus indeed mocks those who consider perfection to be either an ἐντελεχεία, or the product of a soul or an intellect. Since even the order of intellects are perfected through self-reversion, the source of perfection itself must be beyond that order. See *Ibid*., IV.71, 14-72, 8.
418 "εἰκότως ἄρα καὶ πρὸ τῶν νοερῶν πάντων τὴν ὑπουράνιον ἁψῖδα θεῶν προεστήσατο διακόσμησιν ἐπιστρεπτικὴν τῶν δευτέρων ὅλων θείων γενῶν καὶ τελεσιουργόν". *Ibid*., IV.72, 9-11.

V.4) Intellect: The Intellective Gods

We now turn to the final moment of the causal triad of Being-Life-Intellect, and to those gods which are to found within the third intelligible triad, the intellective gods.[419] It is these gods which are responsible for the presence of Intellect itself throughout ontological reality by means of the final deployment of the supersensible world of the Forms, as well as the initial deployment of its sensible copy. The multiplicity of these gods is, naturally, far more pronounced than that of the two preceding divine orders, and they may in fact be said to form a hebdomad (i.e. two monadic triads and a triadic monad) rather than a series of three triads. This structural mutation, although it may seem sudden, is in fact simply a clear manifestation of the growing multiplicity of the preceding six triads.[420]

Proclus finds theological grounding for this hebdomadic structure in a symbolic exegesis of the Orphic myths surrounding the figure of Kronos. According to this well-known myth, the titan Kronos, who had castrated his own father, Ouranos, and taken his place as king, feared that one of his own sons by his sister Rhea would follow suit and depose him. He therefore set about consuming his children. Zeus, however, the last born, was saved by his mother when she gave her husband a rock to swallow in his place. The infant was then hidden in a cavern guarded by the three Kouretes. Having come to adulthood, Zeus, taking advantage of his father's drunkenness, bond and castrated him, thereby realizing Kronos' forebodings.[421] The three principle gods of this myth, namely, Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus, will be drawn on by Proclus to form the first intellective triad, just as the three Kouretes are said to form the second, and as the monad, the seventh intellective god, is symbolized by the castrative "cut (*tomos*)". This Orphic mythological narrative is also

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[419] The previous scholarly treatment of the intellective gods beyond that of *S.-W.* is again, an article of E. P. Butler: "The Third Intelligible Triad and the Intellective Gods", in *Méthexis*, vol. 25 (2012), pp.131-150. Like all of Butler's work on the *TP* published in the same journal, it presents an interpretation of Proclus' thought abstruse in both content and language.

[420] As *S.-W.* make clear (V.xviii-xx), the six intelligible and intelligible-intellective triads may be conceived as triads and as a descending series of a monad, a dyad, a triad, a tetrad, a pentad, and a hexad. The fact that the three intelligible triads are also a monad, a dyad, and a triad, is fairly clear in Proclus' reading of the conclusions of first three propositions of the second hypothesis. The respectively tetradic, pentadic, and hexadic character of the intelligible-intellective triads, however, is somewhat less so.

[421] A reconstruction of this myth based on Orphic and Neoplatonic sources can be found in L. Brisson's article "La figure du Kronos orphique chez Proclus", in *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, vol. 219, no. 4 (2002), pp. 435-458 at 455-456.

coordinated by Proclus with passages from Plato describing each of these gods. Therefore, with the exception of Adrasteia, this is the highest level of divinity to which the divine names of the traditional Greek religion may be directly applied.

The first and foremost god of the intellective hebdomad is Kronos. According to the *Cratylus*, the name 'Kronos' is etymologically derived from to the word '*koros*', which itself can mean either 'satiety' or 'boy'. Yet the name 'Kronos' does not simply refer to young boys in general, but rather to "their purity and the undefiled state of [their] intellect"[422]. Proclus takes this to mean that Kronos is pure and undefiled intellect and therefore represents the summit of the intellective order.[423] As Kronos is the 'intelligible' part of the intellective order, we can begin to understand the symbolism of the Orphic myth of his binding and castration by his son Zeus. This 'binding' must refer to the contemplation and comprehension of the summit of the intellective by the third god of this order, namely Zeus.[424] The castration, as we shall see, refers to another intellective god within the Jovian series.

The pair of Kronos and Zeus also appears in the myth of *Statesman*, where each is responsible for specific type of life in the universe and a specific universal period or revolution.[425] According to Proclus, the image of the first revolution, that of Kronos, is an image providence, while the second, that of Zeus, is an image of fate (εἱμαρμένη), or "that which is accomplished by means of nature"[426]. These two periods therefore represent, respectively, the intelligible and sensible worlds. Moreover, the image of life of men during the Kronian age, that of the blissful natural man,[427] represents the existence of human souls in their "immaculate (ἄχραντον)"[428] and incorporeal condition, in which they constantly have access to the full benefits of the intellect. These souls must therefore live according to the laws of providence alone. Yet all souls, including those which have descended into the world of generation, are governed by providence and receive through it some of "the distribution of

[422] "κόρον γὰρ σημαίνει οὐ παῖδα, ἀλλὰ τὸ καθαρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκήρατον τοῦ νοῦ". *Cratylus*, 396b6-7.
[423] *TP*, V.21, 3-6. See also *In Crat.*, 56, 25-57, 10.
[424] *Ibid*., V.21, 11-22, 2.
[425] *Ibid*., V.24, 23-25. See *Statesman*, 269e1ff.
[426] "διὰ τῆς φύσεως ἐπιτελουμένη". *TP*, V.25, 7-8. On Proclus' interpretation of these two periods, see Dillon, "The Neoplatonic Exegesis of the *Statesman* Myth", 370-373.
[427] *Statesman*, 272a3-b1.
[428] *TP*, V.28, 15. See also *In Tim.*, III.309, 22ff.

intellect (ὁ νόμος διανομή)"[429]. This is why, according to Proclus, it is mentioned in the myth of *Gorgias* that the law of punishment and reward in the afterlife, the justice which providence metes out, was established under the reign of Kronos.[430]

The second god of the intellective hebdomad is Rhea. As the second moment of her triad (Kronos-Rhea-Zeus), she is the source of intellective Life, just as Kronos is that of intellective Being. Although Plato only mentions this goddess once, in the *Cratylus*, Proclus makes the most of this passage, proposing that the etymological connection mentioned by Socrates between the name 'Rhea' and the word 'stream (ῥοή)' is an allusion to the flow of life from this goddess.[431]

Plato's reserve in discussing Rhea stands in stark contrast with his loquacity regarding her son, and the third member of the first intellective triad, Zeus. There are indeed no less than nineteen chapters of Book V devoted to Zeus, which is of little surprise, considering that he is far and away that god most often discussed by Plato. For Proclus, of course, this loquacity and the special honour in which Zeus was held by the Greeks in general, are anything but arbitrary. Of all the intellective gods, Zeus is the most prominent for us because he is responsible for the production of the sensible world we inhabit. He is none other than the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*.[432] The Demiurge is the intellective intellect (i.e. the intellect which contains the fully realised Forms), which looks to the intelligible intellect, the αὐτόζωον, as a model for its own production. He is therefore the third member of the first intellective triad, Zeus.

This association of Zeus and the Demiurge is confirmed by the descriptions of Zeus in other dialogues. In the *Cratylus*, for example, one of the appellations of Zeus, '*Zēna*', is associated with life (ζήν), because Zeus is the cause of life "and the principle and king of all"[433]. These are all titles, according to Proclus, which could equally be applied to the Demiurge. In the myth of the *Protagoras*, on the other hand, Zeus is depicted as sending

[429] *TP*, V.32, 6.
[430] *Gorgias*, 523a5ff; *TP*, V.32.
[431] *Cratylus*, 402b4; *TP*, V.37.
[432] *TP*, V.chap. 12; chap. 20.
[433] "τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν ὅστις ἐστὶν αἴτιος μᾶλλον τοῦ ζῆν ἢ ὁ ἄρχων τε καὶ βασιλεὺς τῶν πάντων." *Cratylus*, 396a6-7.

Hermes to distribute the respect and justice which he possesses amongst human communities, in order that they might come to form regulated societies.[434] This passage evidently traces the "paradigm of political science"[435] back to Zeus himself, and as the political, for Proclus, is an image of physical, it is clear that in order to produce the physical cosmos, the Demiurge must likewise possess this paradigm. The *Statesman* also depicts Zeus as the source of motion for every world period,[436] and refers to him explicitly as "demiurge and father"[437], while in the *Laws*, the Athenian Stranger mentions Zeus' pyschogonic role,[438] which parallels that of the Demiurge.

Immediately succeeding the triad of Kronos-Rhea-Zeus is a triad of gods which Proclus refers to as "the three immaculate guardians of the intellective fathers"[439] who "keep the whole of the processions of the intellective gods immaculate"[440]. These immaculate guardians are the three Kouretes of the Orphic myth, which Proclus identifies with the "terrible guardians (φυλακαὶ φοβεραὶ)"[441] of Zeus, mentioned in the *Protagoras*. Following this triad is the monad, the seventh god, which completes the intellective hebdomad. This god, being the last member of the intellective order, is responsible for all division within ontological reality. As the god of division, it is symbolized in the Orphic myth by the castration of Kronos. Such a symbolic interpretation would be authorized by Plato, for according to Proclus, he himself employs such an interpretation when discussing such mythical depictions as the binding of Kronos.[442]

As we have seen, the intellective gods are discussed throughout the dialogues. Like the previous orders of gods, however, what is perhaps their most precise description is given in the *Parmenides*. Unlike the descriptions of these previous orders, however, the conclusions relative to the intellective order are applied serially rather than triadically. In other words, the first conclusion applies to the first monad (Kronos) and the monad directly

[434] *Protagoras*, 322c-d.
[435] "παράδειγμα τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐπιστήμης". *TP*, V.89, 1-2.
[436] *Statesman*, 270a2-7; *TP*, V. chap. 25.
[437] *Ibid*., 273b1-2.
[438] *Laws*, 757b5-7; *TP*, V.98.
[439] "οἱ τρεῖς ἄχραντοι φύλακες τῶν νοερῶν πατέρων". *TP*, V.121, 20-21.
[440] "Τοιοῦτοι δὲ ὑπάρχοντες φρουροῦσι μὲν αὐτῶν τὰς ὅλας προόδους ἀχράντους". *Ibid*., V.122, 3-4.
[441] *Protagoras*, 321d7.
[442] See *Cratylus*, 404a6; *TP*, V.132.

below him in his series. As each intellective god must be guarded, there is therefore a Kouros assigned to each. Furthermore, the seventh god, as the god of division, is a demiurgic monad, and is therefore second in the series of Zeus, preceding his coordinate Kouros.

The first conclusion, namely, 'in itself/in another', therefore applies to Kronos and his guardian. Kronos is in himself because he is the complete intellect, and his coordinate monad, his Kouros, is in others as the intelligible of the intellective order (i.e. all the other intellects must think him). The second, 'in motion/at rest', is clearly linked to the motive principle of Life amongst the intellective gods, Rhea. Rhea is thus the source of intellective motion, and her Kouros is source of intellective rest. The third intellective conclusion is that of identity and difference, and appropriately so, as it pertains to three gods of the demiurgic monad. These three gods are derived from an appropriately threefold conclusion. Zeus the Demiurge, as the source of identity, is designated by the conclusion 'identical to itself/ identical with others'. The seventh god, as the source of division, represents internal division, and is therefore 'different from itself'. Finally, the third immaculate god completes the set by governing external division, as 'different from others'.[443]

V.5) Soul: The Hypercosmic and Hypercosmic-Encosmic Gods

As we have seen, the intelligible, intelligible-intellective, and the intellective gods are responsible for producing all of ontological reality up to, and including, the demiurgic production of the sensible cosmos. The leap from the Jovian demiurge (and his coordinate intellective monads) to his products, however, is an enormous one. In order to ensure a continuous mediation between divine reality and the lower parts of its ontological counterpart, the former must contain several more διάκοσμοι beyond the intellective. There is, in fact, another entire triad of divine διάκοσμοι which proceed from the intellective gods, whose members are responsible for the deployment of Soul and Body in the cosmos, and for maintaining the particularity of these things. These gods, whether hypercosmic, hypercosmic-encosmic, or encosmic in nature, may therefore be called "particular

[443] *TP*, V. chps. 37-39.

(μερικός)", as opposed the three "universal (ὁλικός)" orders of gods which precede them.[444] Because of their proximity to us, these particular gods are naturally, for Proclus, those which have become the objects of religious cult. Each may be therefore identified by a traditional divine name.

The first order of particular gods is called hypercosmic, because these gods exist immediately beyond the cosmos. They are the lieutenants of the demiurge and are closely linked to him.[445] The conclusion of the tenth proposition of the second hypothesis, 'similar/dissimilar', plainly betrays their role. This class of gods is assimilative, "for it makes all things similar, not only those inferior to those superior to them, but those coordinate to one another, and by means of this similitude it likewise reveals the multiform essences and powers of all things, and is the unifier of the many into unity and of the divided into the divine communion of goods."[446]

This act of assimilating the sensible, or the organization of the Demiurge's products into ontological series or chains (εἱρμοι),[447] is fundamentally different from the Demiurge's own bestowal of identity. The Demiurge, being good, makes things identical to himself in this respect, and in doing so, makes them identical to one another.[448]

The hypercosmic gods are organized by Proclus into a group of four triads, or a dodecad.[449] This number is unsurprising, given the traditional importance of the twelve Olympians to Greek religion. Among these four triads one is responsible for the "paternal (πατρικός)" moment of remaining, one for the vivifying moment of procession, one for the elevating moment of conversion, and, finally, one acts as the guardian of the entire

[444] *Ibid*., VI.11.
[445] *Ibid*., VI.5, 11-13.
[446] "πάντα γὰρ ἀφομοιοῖ, τά τε καταδεέστερα τοῖς πρὸ αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ σύστοιχα ἀλλήλοις, καὶ διὰ τῆς ὁμοιότητος ὁμοῦ μὲν τὰς οὐσίας αὐτῶν ἐκφαίνει καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις τὰς πολυειδεῖς, ὁμοῦ δὲ συναγωγός ἐστι τῶν πολλῶν εἰς ἕνωσιν καὶ τῶν διῃρημένων εἰς τὴν θείαν κοινωνίαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν". *Ibid*., VI.14, 12-17.
[447] *Ibid*., VI.14, 9.
[448] *Ibid*., VI.15, 7ff; *Timaeus*, 29e-30b.
[449] Although they may also be conceived of, or at least associated with, the form of an ogdodad. As Damascius writes, "to these hypercosmic gods [corresponds] the ogdodad, as they mark the beginning of the complete division, and extension into all, and as assimilators, the come to rest in the harmony of the ogdoad (ἐπὶ δὴ τούτοις τὴν ὀγδοάδα τοῖς ὑπερκοσμίοις, ὡς ἄρξασι τοῦ παντελοῦς μερισμοῦ, καὶ εἰς πᾶν διαστᾶσιν, καὶ ὡς ἀφομοιωτικοῖς τῷ ἐναρμονίῳ τῆς ὀγδοάδος ἐπαναπαυομένοις)". *Dam. In Parm.*, 132, 21-23.

process.[450] In this way, we see the structure of the intellective gods reproduced in a more elaborate fashion amongst the hypercosmic successors.

The first of these triads, the paternal, is composed of the Homeric ruling trio of Zeus,[451] Poseidon, and Hades, also mentioned in the *Gorgias*.[452] These three are deeply implicated in the demiurgic task of producing and maintaining the sensible world. Zeus, for example, is responsible for the production of beings and presides over the sphere of the fixed stars, over the element of fire, and over the inter-corporeal journey of the blessed souls. Poseidon, as the second moment of this triad, is therefore charged with the administration of biological life and generations, of the planetary spheres, of air and water, and of the lower regions of the cosmos (i.e. the surface of the earth). Pluto, following suit, ensures the division of species and rules over the chthonian world, the element of earth, and over the subterranean journey described in the myth of Er.[453]

The second hypercosmic triad, that of the vivifiers, consists of the Orphic trio of Artemis, Persephone, and Athena, also mentioned by Plato.[454] In this triad, Artemis forms the summit, Persephone the source of Life, Power and Procession, and Athena the source of Reversion, as the divine intellect containing all the virtues. Proclus mentions two members of the elevating triad, Apollo and Helios, who are members of the same series as the physical sun, which is given as the ultimate image of reversion in the solar analogy of the *Republic*.[455] Finally, the guardian triad, analogous to the intellective Kouretes, is composed of the Corybantes, mentioned by Plato in the *Laws* and in the *Euthydemus*.[456]

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[450] *TP*, VI.27, 2-16.

[451] We should not be at all surprised to find the name 'Zeus' applied to a hypercosmic god as well as the Demiurge, given what we have already discussed concerning the perspectival nature of Greek religion. 'Zeus', like all the other traditional divine names, is the designation not just of any one individual, but of whole series of things super-entities exhibiting the characteristics of demiurgy, paternity, etc. This series, which is obviously routed in the third intelligible triad, includes both the Jovian Demiurge, the hypercosmic Zeus, and, as we shall see, a hypercosmic-encosmic Zeus. Each of these gods is Zeus, simply seen from another perspective of his work, and may therefore be worshipped as such.

[452] See *Iliad*, XV.187-193; *Gorgias*, 523a2-5.

[453] *TP*, VI. chap. 10.

[454] *Ibid*., VI.51, 15-52, 18. As Proclus points out, however, Plato does not use the traditional name 'Persephone' to designate the second member of this triad, but the name 'Pherrephatta'. See *Cratylus*, 404c5-d8.

[455] *Ibid*., VI. chap. 12.

[456] See *Laws*, 790d2-4; *Euthydemus*, 277d6-8.

The hypercosmic dodecad is followed by the intermediary dodecad of hypercosmic-encosmic gods. As their immediate superiors are charged with the maintenance of the cosmos as a whole, the hypercosmic-encosmic gods have responsibility over a specific portion of that cosmos. According to Proclus, three types of souls were created by the Demiurge: some in which being predominates, some in which identity predominates, and others in which difference holds sway.[457] These three types of souls are those same ones described in the *IT*, namely, divine souls, those souls which are not divine but which nonetheless exercise perpetual intellection, and those which can pass from intellection to some lower form of knowing.[458] Each of the three last divine orders is responsible for one of these types of souls, the hypercosmic gods being charged with care of the divine souls, the encosmic that of the rational souls, while the hypercosmic-encosmic, naturally, look to the un-divine souls which exercise perpetual intellection.[459]

The role of these gods as guides of the un-divine but intellective souls is, for Proclus, clearly depicted in the palinode *Phaedrus*. The twelve gods which Plato portrays leading each a cortege of souls around the heavens are, according to Proclus, the twelve hypercosmic-encosmic gods.[460] These gods, the traditional Olympians, are arranged into the following four triads: the demiurgic builders and maintainers of the psychic world (Zeus-Poseidon-Hephaestus), the guardians of this world (Hestia-Athena-Ares), the vivifiers of this world (Demeter-Hera-Artemis), and the elevators (Hermes-Aphrodite-Apollo).[461] The corteges of these gods, however, are not composed entirely of un-divine but intellective souls. As the *Phaedrus* shows us, there are also partial souls in their company, and it is indeed in this company that all partial souls should strive to stay. The hypercosmic-encosmic gods therefore, also play an important psychagogic role with regard to the souls without the world of generation. In keeping with this, Proclus holds that a triad of these gods appears in

[457] *TP*, VI.81, 8-13.
[458] *IT*, prop. 184. The passage in question is *Timaeus*, 41d, which Proclus comments at length at *In Tim*., III.242, 9-271, 27.
[459] *TP*, VI.81, 13-24.
[460] *Phaedrus*, 246e4-247a2; *TP*, VI. chps 18-19.
[461] *TP*, VI. chap. 22.

the guise of the three Parcae of the *Republic*,[462] who are depicted as equally engaged in managing the affairs of partial souls.

Following the description of these hypercosmic-encosmic gods, we naturally anticipate a treatment of the final divine διάκοσμος of the encosmic gods as they are found in Plato. We know from Proclus' other works that he holds certain others gods mentioned by Plato to be encosmic gods, such as the gods addressed by the Demiurge in the *Timaeus*.[463] Yet there is no treatment of them in the *TP*.[464] As our examination has been guided by this work, we must therefore be content to bring our survey of the architecture of divine procession to a close here.

Conclusion

With the *TP*, Proclus demonstrates how it is possible to reconcile Plato's discussion of an abstract protology with the constant presence of the traditional gods throughout his works. The vast majority of modern Plato scholars would and do find this interpretation of the historical Plato's theology entirely implausible. They would disagree not only with the protology which Proclus claims to find in Plato's writings, but also with the claim that Plato transposed the traditional the gods of his religion onto this protology.

The *TP* may fail as historical scholarship, but as a development of Platonism, it remains a stunning achievement. At the core of Plato's theological thought, according to Proclus, lie "three causes and monads… beyond bodies, I mean the Soul, and the very first Intellect, and the Unity superior to the Intellect" from which Plato produced "the sets which are proper to them, the unitary [set], the intellective [set], and the psychic [set]"[465]. If we accept both that the dialogues contain positive metaphysical reflections and that the indirect tradition is a valid source of information concerning Plato's thought, then this assertion is fundamentally correct. At the Academy, there seems to have been at least discussion of a

[462] *Ibid*., VI. chap. 23; *Republic*, 617b4-d2.
[463] *Timaeus*, 41a7ff; *In Tim.*, II.199, 13-206, 21.
[464] For a discussion of the completeness of the *TP*, see *supra*.
[465] *TP*, I.14, 7-11.

positive construct in which souls, intellects (i.e. the Forms), and principles beyond the Forms, including a principle of unity, all featured. It is also not impossible that Plato was already toying with the idea that one or more of these first principles was beyond being. His writings, however, are simply too ambiguous to allow for a universally acceptable conclusion on this head.

Out of this core protology, Proclus and his fellow Neoplatonists developed a robust Platonism which solved many of the problems which had occupied Plato centuries earlier. One of these problems was undoubtedly the reconciliation of an abstract protology with the traditional Greek gods, which as the dialogue amply testify, Plato did not wish to abandon. It is difficult to believe that Plato would have been wholly satisfied with a solution which saw the gods either isolated from, or subordinated to the first principles. Syrianus and Proclus, however, developed another possibility by transforming what was originally the Indefinite Dyad into the divine henads. The *TP* may therefore not be an exact survey of Plato's theological thought, but it is most certainly a Platonic theology.

TEXT

ΠΡΟΚΛΟΥ

ΠΛΑΤΩΝΙΚΟΥ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΥ

ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΛΑΤΩΝΑ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ

ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ

<α΄> **[p. 5, 5]**

Ἅπασαν μὲν τὴν Πλάτωνος φιλοσοφίαν, ὦ φίλων ἐμοὶ φίλτατε Περίκλεις, καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκλάμψαι νομίζω κατὰ τὴν τῶν κρειττόνων ἀγαθοειδῆ βούλησιν, τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς κεκρυμμένον νοῦν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν ὁμοῦ τοῖς οὖσι **[10]** συνυφεστῶσαν ταῖς περὶ γένεσιν στρεφομέναις ψυχαῖς, καθ' ὅσον αὐταῖς θεμιτὸν τῶν οὕτως ὑπερφυῶν καὶ μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν μετέχειν, ἐκφαίνουσαν, καὶ πάλιν ὕστερον τελειωθῆναι καὶ ὥσπερ εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἀναχωρήσασαν καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς τῶν φιλοσοφεῖν ἐπαγγελλομένων καὶ τῆς τοῦ **[15]** ὄντος θήρας ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι σπευδόντων ἀφανῆ καταστᾶσαν, αὖθις εἰς φῶς προελθεῖν· διαφερόντως δὲ οἶμαι στᾶσαν, αὖθις εἰς φῶς προελθεῖν· διαφερόντως δὲ οἶμαι τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν τῶν θείων μυσταγωγίαν ἐν ἀγνῷ βάθρῳ καθαρῶς ἱδρυμένην καὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς τοῖς θεοῖς διαιωνίως **[p. 6]** ὑφεστηκυῖαν ἐκεῖθεν τοῖς κατὰ χρόνον αὐτῆς ἀπολαῦσαι δυναμένοις ἐκφανῆναι δι' ἑνὸς ἀνδρός, ὃν οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοιμι τῶν ἀληθινῶν τελετῶν, ἃς τελοῦνται χωρισθεῖσαι τῶν περὶ γῆν τόπων αἱ ψυχαί, καὶ τῶν ὁλοκλήρων καὶ **[5]** ἀτρεμῶν φασμάτων ὧν μεταλαμβάνουσιν αἱ τῆς εὐδαίμονος καὶ μακαρίας ζωῆς γνησίως ἀντεχόμεναι, προηγεμόνα καὶ ἱεροφάντην ἀποκαλῶν· οὕτως δὲ σεμνῶς καὶ ἀπορρήτως ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τὴν πρώτην ἐκλάμψασαν οἷον ἁγίοις ἱεροῖς καὶ τῶν ἀδύτων ἐντὸς ἱδρυνθεῖσαν ἀσφαλῶς καὶ τοῖς

[10] πολλοῖς τῶν εἰσιόντων ἀγνοηθεῖσαν [ἀσφαλῶς], ἐν τακταῖς χρόνων περιόδοις ὑπὸ δή τινων ἱερέων ἀληθινῶν καὶ τὸν προσήκοντα τῇ μυσταγωγίᾳ βίον ἀνελομένων προελθεῖν μὲν ἐφ' ὅσον ἦν αὐτῇ δυνατόν, ἅπαντα δὲ καταλάμψαι τὸν τόπον καὶ πανταχοῦ <τὰς> τῶν θείων φασμάτων ἐλλάμψεις **[15]** καταστήσασθαι.

Τούτους δὴ τοὺς τῆς Πλατωνικῆς ἐποπτείας ἐξηγητὰς καὶ τὰς παναγεστάτας ἡμῖν περὶ τῶν θείων ὑφηγήσεις ἀναπλώσαντας καὶ τῷ σφετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι παραπλησίαν τὴν φύσιν λαχόντας εἶναι θείην ἂν ἔγωγε Πλωτῖνόν τε τὸν **[20]** Αἰγύπτιον καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τούτου παραδεξαμένους τὴν θεωρίαν, Ἀμέλιόν τε καὶ Πορφύριον, καὶ τρίτους οἶμαι τοὺς ἀπὸ τούτων ὥσπερ ἀνδριάντας ἡμῖν ἀποτελεσθέντας, Ἰάμβλιχόν τε καὶ Θεόδωρον, καὶ εἰ δή τινες ἄλλοι μετὰ τούτους ἑπόμενοι τῷ θείῳ τούτῳ χορῷ περὶ τῶν τοῦ **[p. 7]** Πλάτωνος τὴν ἑαυτῶν διάνοιαν ἀνεβάκχευσαν, παρ' ὧν τὸ γνησιώτατον καὶ καθαρώτατον τῆς ἀληθείας φῶς τοῖς τῆς ψυχῆς κόλποις ἀχράντως ὑποδεξάμενος ὁ μετὰ θεοὺς ἡμῖν τῶν καλῶν πάντων καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἡγεμών, τῆς τε ἄλλης ἡμῖν τῶν καλῶν πάντων καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἡγεμών, τῆς τε ἄλλης **[5]** ἁπάσης ἡμᾶς μετόχους κατέστησε τοῦ Πλάτωνος φιλοσοφίας καὶ κοινωνοὺς ὧν ἐν ἀπορρήτοις παρὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ πρεσβυτέρων μετείληφε, καὶ δὴ καὶ τῆς περὶ τῶν θείων μυστικῆς ἀληθείας συγχορευτὰς ἀπέφηνε.

Τούτῳ μὲν οὖν εἰ μέλλοιμεν τὴν προσήκουσαν χάριν **[10]** ἐκτίσειν τῶν εἰς ἡμᾶς εὐεργεσιῶν, οὐδ' ἂν ὁ σύμπας ἐξαρκέσειε χρόνος. Εἰ δὲ δεῖ μὴ μόνον αὐτοὺς εἰληφέναι παρ' ἄλλων τὸ τῆς Πλατωνικῆς φιλοσοφίας ἐξαίρετον ἀγαθὸν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ὕστερον ἐσομένοις ὑπομνήματα καταλείπειν τῶν μακαρίων θεαμάτων, ὧν αὐτοὶ καὶ θεαταὶ **[15]** γενέσθαι φαμὲν καὶ ζηλωταὶ κατὰ δύναμιν ὑφ' ἡγεμόνι τῷ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς τελεωτάτῳ καὶ εἰς ἄκρον ἥκοντι φιλοσοφίας, τάχ' ἂν εἰκότως αὐτοὺς τοὺς θεοὺς παρακαλοῖμεν τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας φῶς ἀνάπτειν ἡμῶν ταῖς ψυχαῖς, καὶ τοὺς τῶν κρειττόνων ὀπαδοὺς καὶ θεραπευτὰς κατιθύνειν **[20]** τὸν ἡμέτερον νοῦν, καὶ ποδηγετεῖν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς καὶ θεῖον καὶ ὑψηλὸν τέλος τῆς Πλατωνικῆς θεωρίας. Πανταχοῦ μὲν γάρ, οἶμαι, προσήκει τὸν καὶ κατὰ βραχὺ μετέχοντα σωφροσύνης ἀπὸ θεῶν ποιεῖσθαι τὰς ἀρχάς, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ ἐν ταῖς περὶ τῶν θεῶν ἐξηγήσεσιν· οὔτε γὰρ **[25]** νοῆσαι τὸ θεῖον ἄλλως δυνατὸν ἢ τῷ παρ' αὐτῶν φωτὶ **[p. 8]** τελεσθέντας, οὔτε εἰς ἄλλους ἐξενεγκεῖν ἢ παρ' αὐτῶν κυβερνωμένους καὶ τῶν πολυειδῶν δοξασμάτων καὶ τῆς ἐν λόγοις φερομένης ποικιλίας ἐξῃρημένην φυλάττοντας τὴν τῶν θείων ὀνομάτων ἀνέλιξιν.

[5] Ταῦτ᾽ οὖν καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰδότες καὶ τῷ Πλατωνικῷ Τιμαίῳ παραινοῦντι πειθόμενοι προστησώμεθα τοὺς θεοὺς ἡγεμόνας τῆς περὶ αὐτῶν διδασκαλίας· οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες ἵλεώ τε καὶ εὐμενεῖς ἐλθόντες, ἄγοιεν τὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν νοῦν καὶ περιάγοιεν <εἰς> τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἑστίαν **[10]** καὶ τὸ ἄναντες τῆς θεωρίας ταύτης. Οὗ δὴ γενόμενοι σύμπασαν τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν ἀλήθειαν ὑποδεξόμεθα, καὶ τέλος τὸ ἄριστον ἕξομεν τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ὠδῖνος ἣν ἔχομεν περὶ τὰ θεῖα, γνῶναί τι περὶ τούτων ποθοῦντες καὶ παρ᾽ ἄλλων πυνθανόμενοι καὶ ἑαυτοὺς εἰς δύναμιν **[15]** βασανίζοντες.

β΄

Ἀλλὰ τῶν μὲν προοιμίων ἅλις· ἀναγκαῖον δέ ἐστί μοι καὶ τὸν τρόπον ἐκθέσθαι τῆς προκειμένης διδασκαλίας, ὁποῖόν τινα αὐτὸν ἔσεσθαι προσδοκᾶν χρή, καὶ <τῶν> **[20]** τούτου ἀκροασομένων τὴν παρασκευὴν ἀφορίσασθαι, καθ᾽ ἣν οὐ πρὸς τοὺς ἡμετέρους λόγους ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν ὑψηλόνουν καὶ ἔνθεον τοῦ Πλάτωνος φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχοντες ἀπαντήσονται. Προσήκει γὰρ δήπου καὶ τὰ **[p. 9]** εἴδη τῶν λόγων καὶ τὰς ἐπιτηδειότητας τῶν ἀκροατῶν προσφόρους ὑποκεῖσθαι, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς τελεταῖς οἰκείας τὰς ὑποδοχὰς τοῖς θεοῖς προευτρεπίζουσιν οἱ περὶ ταῦτα δεινοί, καὶ οὔτε ἀψύχοις ἀεὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἅπασιν οὔτε τοῖς **[5]** ἄλλοις ζῴοις οὔτε ἀνθρώποις χρῶνται πρὸς τὴν παρουσίαν τῶν θεῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐφ᾽ ἑκάστων τὸ μετέχειν συμφυῶς δυνάμενον εἰς τὴν προκειμένην ἄγουσι τελετήν.

Ὁ μὲν οὖν λόγος ἔσται μοι τριχῇ τὴν πρώτην διῃρημένος· ἐν ἀρχῇ μὲν τὰ κοινὰ πάντα νοήματα περὶ θεῶν, **[10]** ὅσα παραδίδωσιν ὁ Πλάτων, συγκεφαλαιούμενος καὶ τάς τε δυνάμεις ἁπανταχοῦ καὶ τὰς ἀξίας τῶν ἀξιωμάτων ἐπισκοπῶν· ἐν δὲ μέσοις τὰς ὅλας τάξεις τῶν θεῶν διαριθμούμενος [δέ], καὶ τὰς ἰδιότητας αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς προόδους κατὰ τὸν Πλατωνικὸν τρόπον ἀφοριζόμενος, καὶ πάντα **[15]** ἐπανάγων εἰς τὰς τῶν θεολόγων ὑποθέσεις· ἐν δὲ τῇ τελευτῇ περὶ τῶν σποράδην ἐν τοῖς Πλατωνικοῖς συγγράμμασιν ὑμνημένων θεῶν εἴτε ὑπερκοσμίων εἴτε ἐγκοσμίων διαλεγόμενος, καὶ ἀναφέρων εἰς τὰ ὅλα γένη τῶν θείων διακόσμων τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν θεωρίαν.

[20] Ἐν ἅπασι δὲ τὸ σαφὲς καὶ διηρθρωμένον καὶ ἁπλοῦν προθήσομεν τῶν ἐναντίων, τὰ μὲν διὰ συμβόλων παραδεδομένα μεταβιβάζοντες εἰς τὴν ἐναργῆ περὶ αὐτῶν διδασκαλίαν, τὰ δὲ δι' εἰκόνων ἀναπέμποντες ἐπὶ τὰ σφέτερα παραδείγματα, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἀποφαντικώτερον **[25]** ἀναγεγραμμένα τοῖς τῆς αἰτίας βασανίζοντες λογισμοῖς, τὰ δὲ δι' ἀποδείξεων συντεθέντα διερευνώμενοι καὶ τὸν τρόπον τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀληθείας ἐπεκδιηγούμενοι καὶ γνώριμον **[p. 10]** τοῖς ἀκούουσι ποιοῦντες, καὶ τῶν μὲν ἐν αἰνίγμασι κειμένων ἀλλαχόθεν τὴν σαφήνειαν ἀνευρίσκοντες οὐκ ἐξ ἀλλοτρίων ὑποθέσεων ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν γνησιωτάτων τοῦ Πλάτωνος συγγραμμάτων, τῶν δὲ αὐτόθεν τοῖς ἀκούουσι **[5]** προσπιπτόντων τὴν πρὸς τὰ πράγματα συμφωνίαν θεωροῦντες· ἀφ' ὧν δὴ πάντων ἡμῖν τὸ ἓν καὶ τέλειον τῆς Πλατωνικῆς θεολογίας εἶδος ἀναφανήσεται, καὶ ἡ δι' ὅλων αὐτοῦ τῶν θείων νοήσεων ἀλήθεια διήκουσα, καὶ εἷς νοῦς <ὁ> τὸ σύμπαν τούτου κάλλος ἀπογεννήσας καὶ τὴν μυστικὴν **[10]** ταύτης τῆς θεωρίας ἀνέλιξιν.

Ὁ μὲν οὖν λόγος τοιοῦτος ἔσται μοι, καθάπερ ἔφην· ὁ δὲ αὖ τῶν προκειμένων δογμάτων ἀκροατὴς ταῖς μὲν ἠθικαῖς ἀρεταῖς κεκοσμημένος ὑποκείσθω καὶ πάντα τὰ ἀγενῆ καὶ ἀνάρμοστα τῆς ψυχῆς κινήματα τῷ τῆς ἀρετῆς λόγῳ **[15]** καταδησάμενος καὶ πρὸς ἓν τὸ τῆς φρονήσεως εἶδος ἁρμόσας. Μὴ καθαρῷ γάρ, φησὶν ὁ Σωκράτης, καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θεμιτὸν ᾖ· πᾶς γε μὴν ὁ κακὸς πάντως ἀκάθαρτος, καθαρὸς δὲ ὁ ἐναντίος. Ταῖς δὲ λογικαῖς μεθόδοις ἁπάσαις γεγυμνάσθω καὶ πολλὰ μὲν **[20]** περὶ ἀναλύσεων πολλὰ δὲ περὶ τῶν ἐναντίων πρὸς ταύτας διαιρέσεων ἀνέλεγκτα νοήματα τεθεαμένος παρέστω, καθάπερ οἶμαι καὶ ὁ Παρμενίδης τῷ Σωκράτει παρεκελεύσατο· πρὸ γὰρ τῆς τοιαύτης ἐν τοῖς λόγοις πλάνης, χαλεπὴ καὶ ἄπορός ἐστιν ἡ τῶν θείων γενῶν καὶ τῆς ἐν **[25]** αὐτοῖς ἱδρυμένης ἀληθείας κατανόησις. Τὸ δὲ δὴ τρίτον ἐπὶ τούτοις μηδὲ τῆς φυσικῆς ἀνήκοος ἔστω καὶ τῶν ἐν ταύτῃ **[p. 11]** πολυειδῶν δοξασμάτων <ἵνα κἀν> ταῖς εἰκόσι κατὰ τρόπον τὰς αἰτίας τῶν ὄντων διερευνησάμενος ἐπ' αὐτὴν ἤδη τὴν τῶν χωριστῶν καὶ πρωτουργῶν ὑποστάσεων φύσιν ῥᾷον πορεύηται. Μήτ' οὖν ταύτης, ὅπερ εἴπομεν, τῆς ἐν τοῖς **[5]** φαινομένοις ἀληθείας, μήτε αὖ τῶν κατὰ παίδευσιν ὁδῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐταῖς μαθήσεων ἀπολελείφθω· διὰ γὰρ τούτων αὐλότερον τὴν θείαν οὐσίαν γινώσκομεν.

Πάντα δὲ ταῦτα συνδησάμενος εἰς τὸν ἡγεμόνα νοῦν καὶ τῆς Πλάτωνος διαλεκτικῆς μεταλαβὼν καὶ μελετήσας **[10]** τὰς ἀΰλους καὶ χωριστὰς τῶν σωματικῶν δυνάμεων ἐνεργείας καὶ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου τὰ ὄντα θεωρεῖν ἐφιέμενος, ἀπτέσθω λιπαρῶς τῆς

τῶν θείων τε καὶ μακαρίων δογμάτων ἐξηγήσεως, ἔρωτι μὲν <τὰ> βάθη κατὰ τὸ Λόγιον ἀναπλώσας τῆς ψυχῆς, ἐπεὶ καὶ συνεργὸν **[15]** ἔρωτος ἀμείνω λαβεῖν εἰς τὴν τῆς θεωρίας ταύτης ἀντίληψιν οὐκ ἔστιν, ὥς πού φησιν ὁ Πλάτωνος λόγος, ἀληθείᾳ δὲ τῇ διὰ πάντων ἠκούσῃ γεγυμνασμένος καὶ πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν ὄντως ἀλήθειαν ἐγείρας τὸ νοητὸν ὄμμα, τῷ δὲ μονίμῳ καὶ ἀκινήτῳ καὶ ἀσφαλεῖ τῆς τῶν θείων **[20]** γνώσεως εἴδει προσιδρύσας ἑαυτὸν καὶ μηδὲν ἄλλο θαυμάζειν ἔτι μηδὲ ἀποβλέπειν εἰς ἄλλα πειθόμενος, ἀλλ' ἀτρεμεῖ τῇ διανοίᾳ καὶ ζωῆς ἀτρύτου δυνάμει πρὸς τὸ θεῖον φῶς ἐπειγόμενος καί, ὡς συνελόντι φάναι, τοιοῦτον ἐνεργείας τε καὶ ἠρεμίας εἶδος ὁμοῦ **[25]** προβεβλημένος, ὁποῖον ἔχειν προσήκει τὸν ἐσόμενον οὕτως κορυφαῖον, ὥς πού φησιν ὁ ἐν Θεαιτήτῳ Σωκράτης.

γ΄ **[p. 12]**

Ἡ μὲν οὖν ὑπόθεσις οὕτω μεγάλη καὶ ὁ τρόπος τῶν περὶ αὐτῆς λόγων τοιοῦτος καὶ ἡ τῶν μαθησομένων παρασκευὴ τοιάδε τίς ἐστιν, ὥς γέ μοι καταφαίνεται· **[5]** πρὶν δὲ ἄρξωμαι τῆς τῶν προκειμένων ἡμῖν πραγμάτων ὑφηγήσεως, βούλομαι περί τε αὐτῆς θεολογίας εἰπεῖν καὶ τῶν κατ' αὐτὴν τρόπων, καὶ τίνας μὲν ὁ Πλάτων δογματίζει, τίνας δὲ ἀποσκευάζεται τῶν θεολογικῶν τύπων, ἵνα ταῦτα προειδότες ῥᾷον ἐν τοῖς ἐχομένοις τὰς τῶν **[10]** ἀποδείξεων ἀφορμὰς καταμανθάνωμεν.

Ἅπαντες μὲν οὖν ὅσοι πώποτε θεολογίας εἰσὶν ἡμμένοι, τὰ πρῶτα κατὰ φύσιν θεοὺς ἐπονομάζοντες, περὶ ταῦτα τὴν θεολογικὴν ἐπιστήμην πραγματεύεσθαί φασιν. Καὶ οἱ μὲν τὴν σωματικὴν ὑπόστασιν τοῦ εἶναι μόνον ἀξιοῦντες, τὰ **[15]** δὲ τῶν ἀσωμάτων γένη συμπάντα πρὸς οὐσίαν δεύτερα τιθέμενοι, τάς τε ἀρχὰς τῶν ὄντων σωματοειδεῖς καὶ τὴν ταύτας γνωρίζουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν ἕξιν σωματικὴν ἀποφαίνουσιν. Οἱ δὲ τὰ μὲν σώματα πάντα τῶν ἀσωμάτων ἐξάψαντες, τὴν <δὲ> πρωτίστην ὕπαρξιν ἐν ψυχῇ καὶ ταῖς ψυχικαῖς **[20]** δυνάμεσιν ὁριζόμενοι, θεοὺς μέν, οἶμαι, καλοῦσι τῶν ψυχῶν τὰς ἀρίστας, τὴν δὲ μέχρι τούτων ἀνιοῦσαν καὶ ταύτας γινώσκουσαν ἐπιστήμην θεολογίαν ἐπονομάζουσιν. Ὅσοι δὲ αὖ καὶ τὰ τῶν ψυχῶν πλήθη παράγουσιν ἐξ ἄλλης **[p. 13]** πρεσβυτέρας ἀρχῆς καὶ νοῦν ἡγεμόνα τῶν ὅλων ὑποτίθενται, τέλος μὲν τὸ ἄριστον εἶναί φασι τὴν πρὸς τὸν νοῦν τῆς ψυχῆς ἕνωσιν

καὶ τὸ νοερὸν τῆς ζωῆς εἶδος τιμιότητι τῶν πάντων διαφέρειν νομίζουσιν, εἰς δὲ ταὐτὸν ἄγουσι **[5]** θεολογίαν δήπου καὶ τὴν περὶ τῆς νοερᾶς οὐσίας ἐξήγησιν.

Ἅπαντες μὲν οὖν, ὅπερ ἔφην, τὰς πρωτίστας ἀρχὰς τῶν ὄντων καὶ αὐταρκεστάτας θεοὺς ἀποκαλοῦσι καὶ θεολογίαν τὴν τούτων ἐπιστήμην. Μόνη δὲ ἡ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἔνθεος ὑφήγησις τὰ μὲν σωματικὰ πάντα πρὸς ἀρχῆς λόγον **[10]** ἀτιμάσασα (διότι δὴ τὸ μεριστὸν πᾶν καὶ διαστατὸν οὔτε παράγειν οὔτε σῴζειν ἑαυτὸ πέφυκεν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ἢ πάσχειν διὰ ψυχῆς ἔχει καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ κινήσεων), τὴν δὲ ψυχικὴν οὐσίαν πρεσβυτέραν μὲν εἶναι σωμάτων ἀποδείξασα τῆς δὲ νοερᾶς ὑποστάσεως ἐξηρτημένην **[15]** (ἐπειδὴ πᾶν τὸ κατὰ χρόνον κινούμενον, κἂν αὐτοκίνητον ᾖ, τῶν μὲν ἑτεροκινήτων ἐστὶν ἡγεμονικώτερον τῆς δὲ διαιωνίας κινήσεως δεύτερον), σωμάτων μέν, ὥσπερ εἴρηται, καὶ ψυχῶν πατέρα τὸν νοῦν ἀποφαίνει καὶ αἴτιον, καὶ περὶ ἐκεῖνον πάντα καὶ εἶναι καὶ ἐνεργεῖν ὅσα τὴν ζωὴν ἐν **[20]** διεξόδοις καὶ ἀνελίξεσι κέκτηται, πρόεισι δὲ ἐπ᾽ ἄλλην ἀρχὴν τοῦ νοῦ παντελῶς ἐξῃρημένην καὶ ἀσωματωτέραν καὶ ἄρρητον ἀφ᾽ ἧς πάντα, κἂν τὰ ἔσχατα τῶν ὄντων λέγῃς, τὴν ὑποστάσιν ἔχειν ἀναγκαῖον· ψυχῆς μὲν γὰρ οὐ πάντα μετέχειν πέφυκεν ἀλλ᾽ ὅσα ζωὴν ἔσχηκε τρανεστέραν ἢ **[25]** ἀμυδροτέραν ἐν αὐτοῖς, οὐδὲ νοῦ πάντα καὶ τοῦ ὄντος **[p. 14]** ἀπολαύειν δυνατὸν ἀλλ᾽ ὅσα κατ᾽ εἶδος ὑφέστηκε, δεῖ δὲ αὖ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν πάντων ὑπὸ πάντων μετέχεσθαι τῶν ὄντων, εἴπερ μηδενὸς ἀποστατήσει, πάντων αἰτία τῶν ὁπωσοῦν ὑφεστάναι λεγομένων οὖσα.

[5] Ταύτην δὲ πρωτίστην τῶν ὅλων καὶ νοῦ πρεσβυτέραν ἀρχὴν ἐν ἀβάτοις ἀποκεκρυμμένην ἐνθέως ἀνευροῦσα καὶ τρεῖς ταύτας αἰτίας καὶ μονάδας ἐπέκεινα σωμάτων ἀναφήνασα, ψυχὴν λέγω καὶ νοῦν τὸν πρώτιστον καὶ τὴν ὑπὲρ νοῦν ἕνωσιν, παράγει μὲν ἐκ τούτων ὡς μονάδων τοὺς **[10]** οἰκείους ἀριθμούς, τὸν μὲν ἑνοειδῆ τὸν δὲ νοερὸν τὸν δὲ ψυχικόν (πᾶσα γὰρ μονὰς ἡγεῖται πλήθους ἑαυτῇ συστοίχου), συνάπτει δὲ ὥσπερ τὰ σώματα ταῖς ψυχαῖς οὕτω δήπου καὶ <τὰς> ψυχὰς μὲν τοῖς νοεροῖς εἴδεσι, ταῦτα δὲ ταῖς ἑνάσι τῶν ὄντων, πάντα δὲ εἰς μίαν ἐπιστρέφει τὴν **[15]** ἀμέθεκτον ἑνάδα. Καὶ μέχρι ταύτης ἀναδραμοῦσα, πέρας οἴεται τὸ ἀκρότατον ἔχειν τῆς τῶν ὅλων θεωρίας, καὶ ταύτην εἶναι τὴν περὶ θεῶν ἀλήθειαν, ἣ περὶ τὰς ἑνάδας τῶν ὄντων πραγματεύεται, καὶ τάς τε προόδους αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς ἰδιότητας παραδίδωσι καὶ τὴν τῶν ὄντων πρὸς αὐτὰς **[20]** συναφὴν καὶ τὰς τῶν εἰδῶν τάξεις, αἳ τούτων ἐξήρτηνται τῶν ἑνιαίων ὑποστάσεων· τὴν δὲ περὶ νοῦν καὶ τὰ εἴδη καὶ τὰ γένη τοῦ νοῦ στρεφομένην θεωρίαν δευτέραν εἶναι τῆς περὶ αὐτῶν τῶν θεῶν

πραγματευομένης ἐπιστήμης· καὶ ταύτην μὲν ἔτι νοητῶν ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ **[25]** δι' ἐπιβολῆς γινώσκεσθαι δυναμένων εἰδῶν, τὴν δὲ ταύτης ὑπερέχουσαν ἀρρήτων καὶ ἀφθέγκτων ὑπάρξεων μεταθεῖν τήν τε ἐν ἀλλήλαις αὐτῶν διάκρισιν καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ μιᾶς **[p. 15]** αἰτίας ἔκφανσιν. Ὅθεν οἶμαι καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ μὲν νοερὸν ἰδίωμα καταληπτικὸν ὑπάρχειν τῶν νοερῶν εἰδῶν καὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς διαφορᾶς, τὴν δὲ ἀκρότητα τοῦ νοῦ καί, ὥς φασι, τὸ ἄνθος καὶ τὴν ὕπαρξιν συνάπτεσθαι πρὸς τὰς **[5]** ἑνάδας τῶν ὄντων καὶ διὰ τούτων πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν πασῶν τῶν θείων ἑνάδων ἀπόκρυφον ἕνωσιν. Πολλῶν γὰρ ἐν ἡμῖν δυνάμεων οὐσῶν γνωριστικῶν, κατὰ ταύτην μόνην τῷ θείῳ συγγίνεσθαι καὶ μετέχειν ἐκείνου πεφύκαμεν· οὔτε γὰρ αἰσθήσει τὸ θεῶν γένος ληπτόν, εἴπερ ἐστὶ σωμάτων **[10]** ἁπάντων ἐξῃρημένον, οὔτε δόξῃ καὶ διανοίᾳ, μερισταὶ γὰρ αὗται καὶ πολυειδῶν ἐφάπτονται πραγμάτων, οὔτε νοήσει μετὰ λόγου, τῶν γὰρ ὄντως ὄντων εἰσὶν αἱ τοιαῦται γνώσεις, ἡ δὲ τῶν θεῶν ὕπαρξις ἐποχεῖται τοῖς οὖσι καὶ κατ' αὐτὴν ἀφώρισται τὴν ἕνωσιν τῶν ὅλων. **[15]** Λείπεται οὖν, εἴπερ ἐστὶ καὶ ὁπωσοῦν τὸ θεῖον γνωστόν, τῇ τῆς ψυχῆς ὑπάρξει καταληπτὸν ὑπάρχειν καὶ διὰ ταύτης γνωρίζεσθαι καθ' ὅσον δυνατόν. Τῷ γὰρ ὁμοίῳ πανταχοῦ φαμὲν τὰ ὅμοια γινώσκεσθαι· τῇ μὲν αἰσθήσει δηλαδὴ τὸ αἰσθητόν, τῇ δὲ δόξῃ τὸ δοξαστόν, τῇ δὲ διανοίᾳ **[20]** τὸ διανοητόν, τῷ δὲ νῷ τὸ νοητόν, ὥστε καὶ τῷ ἑνὶ τὸ ἑνικώτατον καὶ τῷ ἀρρήτῳ τὸ ἄρρητον. Ὀρθῶς γὰρ καὶ ὁ ἐν Ἀλκιβιάδῃ Σωκράτης ἔλεγεν εἰς ἑαυτὴν εἰσιοῦσαν τὴν ψυχὴν τά τε ἄλλα πάντα κατόψεσθαι καὶ τὸν θεόν· συννεύουσα γὰρ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἕνωσιν καὶ τὸ κέντρον τῆς **[25]** συμπάσης ζωῆς καὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἀποσκευαζομένη καὶ τὴν ποικιλίαν τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ παντοδαπῶν δυνάμεων, ἐπ' αὐτὴν **[p. 16]** ἄνεισι τὴν ἄκραν τῶν ὄντων περιωπήν. Καὶ ὥσπερ ἐν ταῖς τῶν τελετῶν ἁγιωτάταις φασὶ τοὺς μύστας τὴν μὲν πρώτην πολυειδέσι καὶ πολυμόρφοις τῶν θεῶν προβεβλημένοις γένεσιν ἁπαντᾶν, εἰσιόντας δὲ ἀκλινεῖς καὶ ταῖς **[5]** τελεταῖς πεφραγμένους αὐτὴν τὴν θείαν ἔλλαμψιν ἀκραιφνῶς ἐγκολπίζεσθαι καὶ γυμνῆτας, ὡς ἂν ἐκεῖνοι φαῖεν, τοῦ θείου μεταλαμβάνειν· τὸν αὐτὸν οἶμαι τρόπον καὶ ἐν τῇ θεωρίᾳ τῶν ὅλων εἰς μὲν τὰ μεθ' ἑαυτὴν βλέπουσαν τὴν ψυχὴν τὰς σκιὰς καὶ τὰ εἴδωλα τῶν ὄντων βλέπειν, εἰς **[10]** ἑαυτὴν δὲ ἐπιστρεφομένην τὴν ἑαυτῆς οὐσίαν καὶ τοὺς ἑαυτῆς λόγους ἀνελίττειν· καὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ὥσπερ ἑαυτὴν μόνον καθορᾶν, βαθύνουσαν δὲ τῇ ἑαυτῆς γνώσει καὶ τὸν νοῦν εὑρίσκειν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ τὰς τῶν ὄντων τάξεις, χωροῦσαν δὲ εἰς τὸ ἐντὸς αὐτῆς καὶ τὸ οἷον ἄδυτον τῆς ψυχῆς, ἐκείνῳ **[15]** καὶ τὸ θεῶν γένος καὶ τὰς ἑνάδας τῶν ὄντων μύσασαν θεάσασθαι. Πάντα γάρ ἐστι καὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ψυχικῶς καὶ διὰ

τοῦτο τὰ πάντα γινώσκειν πεφύκαμεν, ἀνεγείροντες τὰς ἐν ἡμῖν δυνάμεις καὶ τὰς εἰκόνας τῶν ὅλων.

Καὶ τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ἄριστον τῆς ἐνεργείας, ἐν ἠρεμίᾳ τῶν **[20]** δυνάμεων πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον ἀνατείνεσθαι καὶ περιχορεύειν ἐκεῖνο, καὶ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος τῆς ψυχῆς συναγείρειν ἀεὶ πρὸς τὴν ἕνωσιν ταύτην, καὶ πάντα ἀφέντας ὅσα μετὰ τὸ ἓν αὐτῷ προσιδρύεσθαι καὶ συνάπτεσθαι τῷ ἀρρήτῳ καὶ πάντων ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὄντων. Μέχρι γὰρ τούτου τὴν **[25]** ψυχὴν ἀνιέναι θεμιτὸν ἕως ἂν ἐπ᾽ αὐτὴν ἀνιοῦσα τελευτήσῃ τὴν τῶν ὄντων ἀρχήν· ἐκεῖ δὲ γενομένην καὶ τὸν **[p. 17]** ἐκεῖ τόπον θεασαμένην καὶ κατιοῦσαν ἐκεῖθεν καὶ διὰ τῶν ὄντων πορευομένην καὶ ἀνελίττουσαν τὰ πλήθη τῶν εἰδῶν, τάς τε μονάδας αὐτῶν καὶ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς διεξιοῦσαν καὶ ὅπως ἕκαστα τῶν οἰκείων ἑνάδων ἐξήρτηται νοερῶς **[5]** διαγινώσκουσαν, τελεωτάτην οἴεσθαι τῶν θείων ἐπιστήμην ἔχειν, τάς τε τῶν θεῶν προόδους εἰς τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὰς τῶν ὄντων περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς διακρίσεις ἑνοειδῶς θεασαμένην.

δ΄

Ὁ μὲν δὴ θεολογικὸς ἡμῖν ἔστω κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος **[10]** ψῆφον τοιοῦτος καὶ ἡ θεολογία τοιάδε τις ἕξις, αὐτὴν τὴν τῶν θεῶν ὕπαρξιν ἐκ φαίνουσα, καὶ τὸ ἄγνωστον αὐτῶν καὶ ἑνιαῖον φῶς ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν μετεχόντων ἰδιότητος διακρίνουσα καὶ θεωμένη καὶ ἀπαγγέλλουσα τοῖς ἀξίοις τῆς μακαρίας ταύτης καὶ πάντων ὁμοῦ τῶν ἀγαθῶν παρεκτικῆς **[15]** ἐνεργείας· μετὰ δὲ ταύτην τὴν παντελῆ τῆς πρωτίστης θεωρίας περίληψιν καὶ τοὺς τρόπους διαστησώμεθα καθ᾽ οὓς ὁ Πλάτων τὰ μυστικὰ περὶ τῶν θείων ἡμᾶς ἀναδιδάσκει νοήματα. Φαίνεται γὰρ οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν πανταχοῦ τρόπον μετιὼν τὴν περὶ τῶν θείων διδασκαλίαν, ἀλλ᾽ ὁτὲ **[20]** μὲν ἐνθεαστικῶς ὁτὲ δὲ διαλεκτικῶς ἀνελίττων τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ποτὲ μὲν συμβολικῶς ἐξαγγέλλων τὰς ἀρρήτους αὐτῶν ἰδιότητας, ποτὲ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν εἰκόνων ἐπ᾽ αὐτοὺς ἀνατρέχων καὶ τὰς πρωτουργοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς αἰτίας τῶν ὅλων ἀνευρίσκων.

[25] Ἐν Φαίδρῳ μὲν γὰρ νυμφόληπτος γενόμενος καὶ τῆς **[p.18]** ἀνθρωπίνης νοήσεως τὴν κρείττονα μανίαν ἀλλαξάμενος, ἐνθέῳ στόματι πολλὰ μὲν περὶ τῶν νοερῶν διέξεισι θεῶν ἀπόρρητα δόγματα, πολλὰ δὲ περὶ τῶν ἀπολύτων ἡγεμόνων τοῦ παντός, οἳ τὸ τῶν ἐγκοσμίων θεῶν πλῆθος ἐπὶ τὰς **[5]** νοητὰς καὶ χωριστὰς τῶν ὅλων μονάδας ἀνατείνουσιν, ἔτι δὲ πλείω περὶ αὐτῶν τῶν τὸν κόσμον διαλαχόντων θεῶν, τάς τε νοήσεις αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς περικοσμίους ποιήσεις ἀνυμνῶν καὶ τήν τε πρόνοιαν τὴν ἄχραντον καὶ τὴν περὶ τὰς ψυχὰς διακυβέρνησιν καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα παραδίδωσιν ὁ **[10]** Σωκράτης ἐν ἐκείνοις ἐνθεαστικῶς, ὡς αὐτὸς διαρρήδην λέγει, καὶ τοῦτο τοὺς ἐγχωρίους θεοὺς τῆς τοιαύτης μανίας αἰτιώμενος.

Ἐν δέ γε τῷ Σοφιστῇ περί τε τοῦ ὄντος καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀπὸ τῶν ὄντων χωριστῆς ὑποστάσεως διαλεκτικῶς **[15]** ἀγωνιζόμενος καὶ ἀπορῶν πρὸς τοὺς παλαιοτέρους, ἐπιδείκνυσιν ὅπως τὰ μὲν ὄντα πάντα τῆς ἑαυτῶν αἰτίας ἐξήρτηται καὶ τοῦ πρώτως ὄντος, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ὂν μετέχει τῆς ἐξῃρημένης τῶν ὅλων ἑνάδος, καὶ ὡς πεπονθός ἐστι τὸ ἓν ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ αὐτοέν, ὑφειμένον τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ ἡνωμένον **[20]** ὑπάρχον ἀλλ᾽ οὐ πρώτως ἕν. Ὁμοίως δὲ αὖ κἀν τῷ Παρμενίδῃ τάς τε τοῦ ὄντος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς προόδους καὶ τὴν τοῦ ἑνὸς ὑπεροχὴν διὰ τῶν πρώτων ὑποθέσεων ἐκφαίνει διαλεκτικῶς καί, ὡς αὐτὸς ἐν ἐκείνοις λέγει, κατὰ τὴν τελεωτάτην τῆς μεθόδου ταύτης διαίρεσιν.

[25] Καὶ μὴν καὶ ἐν Γοργίᾳ μὲν περὶ τῶν τριῶν δημιουργῶν καὶ περὶ τῆς δημιουργικῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς διακληρώσεως μῦθον ἀπαγγέλλων, οὐ μῦθον ὄντα μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ λόγον, **[p. 19]** ἐν Συμποσίῳ δὲ περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἔρωτος ἑνώσεως, ἐν δὲ Πρωταγόρᾳ περὶ τῆς τῶν θνητῶν ζῴων ἀπὸ θεῶν διακοσμήσεως, τὸν συμβολικὸν τρόπον κατακρύπτει τὴν περὶ τῶν θείων ἀλήθειαν, καὶ μέχρι ψιλῆς ἐνδείξεως ἐκφαίνει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ **[5]** βούλησιν τοῖς γνησιωτάτοις τῶν ἀκουόντων.

Εἰ δὲ βούλει καὶ τῆς διὰ τῶν μαθημάτων διδασκαλίας μνησθῆναι καὶ τῆς ἐκ τῶν ἠθικῶν ἢ φυσικῶν λόγων περὶ τῶν θείων πραγματείας, οἷα πολλὰ μὲν ἐν Τιμαίῳ πολλὰ δὲ ἐν Πολιτικῷ πολλὰ δὲ ἐν ἄλλοις διαλόγοις ἐστὶ **[10]** κατεσπαρμένα θεωρεῖν, ἐνταῦθα δήπου σοι καὶ διὰ τῶν εἰκόνων τὰ θεῖα γινώσκειν ἐφιεμένῳ <ὁ> τρόπος ἔσται καταφανής. Ἅπαντα γὰρ ταῦτα τὰς τῶν θείων ἀπεικονίζεται δυνάμεις· ὁ μὲν πολιτικός, εἰ τύχοι, τὴν ἐν οὐρανῷ δημιουργίαν, τὰ δὲ τῶν πέντε στοιχείων ἐν λόγοις γεωμετρικοῖς **[15]** ἀποδεδομένα σχήματα τὰς τῶν θεῶν τῶν ἐπιβεβηκότων τοῖς μέρεσι τοῦ παντὸς ἰδιότητας, αἱ δὲ τῆς ψυχικῆς οὐσίας

διαιρέσεις τὰς ὅλας τῶν θεῶν διακοσμήσεις. Ἐῶ γὰρ λέγειν ὅτι καὶ τὰς πολιτείας ἃς συνίστησιν ἀπεικάζων τοῖς θείοις καὶ τῷ παντὶ κόσμῳ καὶ ταῖς ἐν αὐτῷ δυνάμεσι διακοσμεῖ. **[20]** Πάντα δὴ οὖν ταῦτα δι' ὁμοιότητος τῶν τῇδε πρὸς τὰ θεῖα τὰς ἐκείνων ἡμῖν προόδους καὶ τάξεις καὶ δημιουργίας ἐν εἰκόσιν ἐπιδείκνυσιν.

Οἱ μὲν οὖν τρόποι τῆς παρὰ τῷ Πλάτωνι θεολογικῆς διδασκαλίας τοιοίδε τινές εἰσι· δῆλον δὲ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων **[p. 20]** ὅτι καὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν εἶναι τοσούτους ἀναγκαῖον· οἱ μὲν γὰρ δι' ἐνδείξεως περὶ τῶν θείων λέγοντες ἢ συμβολικῶς καὶ μυθικῶς ἢ δι' εἰκόνων λέγουσιν, οἱ δὲ ἀπαρακαλύπτως τὰς ἑαυτῶν διανοήσεις ἀπαγγέλλοντες οἱ μὲν κατ' ἐπιστήμην **[5]** οἱ δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἐκ θεῶν ἐπίπνοιαν ποιοῦνται τοὺς λόγους. Ἔστι δὲ ὁ μὲν διὰ τῶν συμβόλων τὰ θεῖα μηνύειν ἐφιέμενος Ὀρφικὸς καὶ ὅλως τοῖς τὰς θεομυθίας γράφουσιν οἰκεῖος. Ὁ δὲ διὰ τῶν εἰκόνων Πυθαγόρειος, ἐπεὶ καὶ τοῖς Πυθαγορείοις τὰ μαθήματα πρὸς τὴν τῶν θείων ἀνάμνησιν ἐξηύρητο **[10]** καὶ διὰ τούτων ὡς εἰκόνων ἐπ' ἐκεῖνα διαβαίνειν ἐπεχείρουν· καὶ γὰρ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς ἀνεῖσαν τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ τὰ σχήματα, καθάπερ λέγουσιν οἱ τὰ ἐκείνων ἱστορεῖν σπουδάζοντες. Ὁ δὲ ἐνθεαστικῶς μὲν αὐτὴν καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἐκφαίνων τὴν περὶ θεῶν ἀλήθειαν παρὰ τοῖς ἀκροτάτοις τῶν τελεστῶν **[15]** μάλιστα καταφανής· οὐ γὰρ ἀξιοῦσιν οὗτοι διὰ δή τινων παραπετασμάτων τὰς θείας τάξεις ἢ τὰς ἰδιότητας αὐτῶν τοῖς ἑαυτῶν γνωρίμοις ἀποδιδόναι, ἀλλὰ τάς τε δυνάμεις καὶ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς τοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῶν κινούμενοι τῶν θεῶν ἐξαγγέλλουσιν. Ὁ δὲ αὖ κατ' ἐπιστήμην **[20]** ἐξαίρετός ἐστι τῆς τοῦ Πλάτωνος φιλοσοφίας· καὶ γὰρ τὴν ἐν τάξει πρόοδον τῶν θείων γενῶν καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα διαφορὰν καὶ τάς τε κοινὰς τῶν ὅλων διακόσμων ἰδιότητας καὶ τὰς ἐν ἑκάστοις διῃρημένας μόνος, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, τῶν ἡμῖν συνεγνωσμένων ὁ Πλάτων καὶ διελέσθαι καὶ τάξαι **[25]** κατὰ τρόπον ἐπεχείρησε.

[p. 21] Τοῦτο μὲν οὖν ἔσται καταφανές, ὅταν περὶ Παρμενίδου τὰς προηγουμένας ἀποδείξεις ποιησώμεθα καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ πασῶν διαιρέσεων· νῦν δὲ λέγωμεν ὅτι καὶ τῶν μυθικῶν πλασμάτων οὐ πᾶσαν ὁ Πλάτων εἰσεδέξατο τὴν **[5]** δραματουργίαν ἀλλ' ὅσον αὐτῆς τοῦ καλοῦ στοχάζεται καὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ πρὸς τὴν θείαν ὑπόστασίν ἐστιν οὐκ ἀνάρμοστον. Ἔστι μὲν γὰρ ὁ τῆς μυθολογίας τρόπος ἀρχαῖος, δι' ὑπονοιῶν τὰ θεῖα μηνύων καὶ πολλὰ παραπετάσματα τῆς ἀληθείας προβεβλημένος καὶ τὴν φύσιν **[10]** ἀπεικονιζόμενος, ἢ τῶν νοητῶν αἰσθητὰ καὶ τῶν ἀύλων ἔνυλα καὶ τῶν ἀμερίστων μεριστὰ προτείνει πλάσματα, καὶ τῶν ἀληθινῶν εἴδωλα καὶ ψευδῶς ὄντα κατασκευάζει. Τῶν δέ γε παλαιῶν

ποιητῶν τραγικώτερον συντιθέναι τὰς περὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀπορρήτους θεολογίας ἀξιούντων καὶ διὰ **[15]** τοῦτο πλάνας θεῶν καὶ τομὰς καὶ πολέμους καὶ σπαραγμοὺς καὶ ἁρπαγὰς καὶ μοιχείας καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα σύμβολα ποιουμένων τῆς ἀποκεκρυμμένης παρ' αὐτοῖς περὶ τῶν θείων ἀληθείας, τὸν μὲν τοιοῦτον τρόπον τῆς μυθολογίας ὁ Πλάτων ἀποσκευάζεται καὶ πρὸς παιδείαν **[20]** εἶναί φησι παντελῶς ἀλλοτριώτατον, πιθανώτερον δὲ καὶ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν καὶ φιλόσοφον ἕξιν οἰκειότερον πλάττειν παρακελεύεται τοὺς περὶ θεῶν λόγους ἐν μύθων σχήμασι, πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν τὸ θεῖον αἰτιωμένους κακοῦ δὲ οὐδενός, μεταβολῆς μὲν ἁπάσης ἄμοιρον ἀεὶ δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τάξιν **[25]** ἄτρεπτον διαφυλάττον καὶ τῆς μὲν ἀληθείας ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν πηγὴν προειληφὸς ἀπάτης δὲ οὐδεμιᾶς ἄλλοις αἴτιον γινόμενον· τοιούτους γὰρ ἡμῖν θεολογίας τύπους ὁ ἐν Πολιτείᾳ Σωκράτης ὑφηγήσατο. Πάντες τοίνυν οἱ τοῦ **[p. 22]** Πλάτωνος μῦθοι τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀπορρήτῳ φρουροῦντες οὐδὲ τὴν ἐκτὸς προφαινομένην διασκευὴν ἀπᾴδουσαν ἔχουσι τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἀδιδάκτου καὶ ἀδιαστρόφου κατὰ φύσιν ἐν ἡμῖν προλήψεως, ἀλλ' [ὅτι] εἰκόνα φέρουσι <τῆς> **[5]** κοσμικῆς συστάσεως, ἐν ᾗ καὶ τὸ φαινόμενον κάλλος θεοπρεπές ἐστι καὶ <τὸ> τούτου θειότερον ἐν ταῖς ἀφανέσιν ἵδρυται ζωαῖς καὶ δυνάμεσι τῶν θεῶν.

Ἕνα μὲν οὖν τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον τοὺς περὶ τῶν θείων πραγμάτων μύθους ἐκ τοῦ φαινομένου παρανόμου καὶ **[10]** ἀλογίστου καὶ ἀτάκτου μετήγαγεν εἰς τάξιν καὶ ὅρον καὶ τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ στοχαζομένην σύνθεσιν· ἕτερον δὲ ὃν ἐν Φαίδρῳ παραδίδωσιν, ἄμικτον ἀξιῶν φυλάττειν τὴν θεομυθίαν πανταχοῦ πρὸς τὰς φυσικὰς ἀποδόσεις καὶ μηδαμοῦ συμφύρειν μηδὲ ἐπαλλάττειν θεολογίαν καὶ **[15]** φυσικὴν θεωρίαν. Ὡς γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον ἐξῄρηται τῆς ὅλης φύσεως, οὕτω δήπου καὶ τοὺς περὶ θεῶν λόγους καθαρεύειν πάντῃ προσήκει τῆς περὶ τὴν φύσιν πραγματείας· τὸ γὰρ τοιοῦτον ἐπίπονον καὶ οὐ πάνυ, φησίν, ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ, τέλος ποιεῖσθαι τῆς τῶν μύθων ὑπονοίας τὰ **[20]** φυσικὰ παθήματα, καὶ τήν τε Χίμαιραν, εἰ τύχοι, καὶ τὴν Γοργόνα καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἕκαστον ὑπὸ σοφίας εἰς ταὐτὸν ἄγειν φυσικοῖς πλάσμασιν. Ταῦτα γὰρ δὴ καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης ἐν ἐκείνοις αἰτιώμενος πεποίηται τοὺς τὴν Ὠρείθυιαν παίζουσαν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος βορέου κατὰ **[25]** τῶν πετρῶν ὠσθεῖσαν ἐν μύθου σχήματι λέγοντας ὑπὸ τοῦ **[p. 23]** Βορέου δι' ἔρωτα θνητὴν οὖσαν ἡρπάσθαι· δεῖ γὰρ, οἶμαι, τὰ περὶ θεῶν μυθολογήματα σεμνοτέρας ἀεὶ τῶν φαινομένων ἔχειν τὰς ἀποκεκρυμμένας ἐννοίας. Ὥστ' εἴ τινες καὶ τῶν Πλατωνικῶν μύθων φυσικὰς ἡμῖν εἰσηγοῖντο καὶ περὶ τὰ **[5]** τῇδε στρεφομένας ὑποθέσεις, παντάπασιν αὐτοὺς τῆς τοῦ

φιλοσόφου διανοίας ἀποπλανᾶσθαι φήσομεν καὶ μόνους ἐκείνους τῶν λόγων τῆς ἐν τούτοις ἀληθείας ὑπάρχειν ἐξηγητάς, ὅσοι τῆς θείας καὶ ἀύλου καὶ χωριστῆς ὑποστάσεως στοχάζονται καὶ πρὸς ταύτην βλέποντες τάς **[10]** τε συνθέσεις ποιοῦνται καὶ τὰς ἀναλύσεις τῶν μύθων οἰκείας ταῖς περὶ τῶν θείων ἐν ἡμῖν προλήψεσιν.

ε΄

Ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν τούτους τε τοὺς τρόπους ἅπαντας τῆς Πλατωνικῆς θεολογίας διηριθμησάμεθα καὶ τὰς **[15]** τῶν μύθων συνθέσεις τε καὶ ἀναλύσεις ὁποίας εἶναι προσήκει τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἀληθείᾳ <οἰκείας> παραδεδώκαμεν, τοῦτο μὲν οὖν αὐτοῦ περιγεγράφθω· σκεψώμεθα δὲ ἐπὶ τούτοις πόθεν καὶ ἐκ τίνων μάλιστα διαλόγων ἡγούμεθα χρῆναι τὰ περὶ θεῶν δόγματα τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἀναλέγεσθαι, καὶ πρὸς τίνας **[20]** τύπους ἀποβλέποντες τά τε γνήσια καὶ τὰ νόθα τῶν εἰς αὐτὸν ἀναφερομένων κρίνειν δυνησόμεθα.

Ἔστι μὲν οὖν διὰ πάντων, ὡς εἰπεῖν, τῶν Πλατωνικῶν διαλόγων ἡ περὶ θεῶν ἀλήθεια διήκουσα καὶ πᾶσιν ἐνέσπαρται τοῖς μὲν ἀμυδρότερα τοῖς δὲ εὐαγέστερα <τὰ> τῆς **[25]** πρωτίστης φιλοσοφίας νοήματα σεμνὰ καὶ ἐναργῆ καὶ **[p. 24]** ὑπερφυῆ καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἄϋλον καὶ χωριστὴν οὐσίαν τῶν θεῶν ἀνεγείροντα τοὺς καὶ ὁπωσοῦν αὐτῶν μετασχεῖν δυναμένους· καὶ ὥσπερ ἐν ἑκάστῃ μοίρᾳ τοῦ παντὸς καὶ φύσει τῆς ἀγνώστου τῶν θεῶν ὑπάρξεως ἰνδάλματα **[5]** κατέθηκεν ὁ τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ πάντων δημιουργὸς ἵνα πάντα πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἐπιστρέφηται κατὰ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸ συγγένειαν, οὕτως οἶμαι καὶ τὸν ἔνθεον τοῦ Πλάτωνος νοῦν ἅπασι τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ γεννήμασι τὰς περὶ θεῶν ἐννοίας συνυφῆναι καὶ μηδὲν ἄμοιρον ἀφεῖναι τῆς τοῦ θείου μνήμης **[10]** ἵν’ ἐκ πάντων ἀνάγεσθαι καὶ τῶν ὅλων ἀνάμνησιν πορίζεσθαι τοῖς γνησίοις ὑπάρχῃ τῶν θείων ἐρασταῖς.

Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τοὺς μάλιστα τὴν περὶ θεῶν μυσταγωγίαν ἡμῖν ἐκφαίνοντας τῶν πολλῶν προθεῖναι διαλόγων, οὐκ ἂν φθάνοιμι τόν τε Φαίδωνα καὶ τὸν Φαῖδρον ἀπολογιζόμενος **[15]** καὶ τὸ Συμπόσιον καὶ τὸν Φίληβον, τόν τε αὖ Σοφιστὴν καὶ τὸν Πολιτικὸν μετὰ τούτων καταλέγων καὶ Κρατύλον καὶ Τίμαιον· ἅπαντες γὰρ οὗτοι τῆς ἐνθέου τοῦ Πλάτωνος

ἐπιστήμης δι᾽ ὅλων, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἑαυτῶν πλήρεις τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες. Δευτέρους ἂν ἔγωγε θείην μετὰ τούτους τόν τε ἐν **[20]** Γοργίᾳ καὶ τὸν Πρωταγόρειον μῦθον καὶ τὰ περὶ προνοίας θεῶν ἐν Νόμοις καὶ ὅσα περὶ Μοιρῶν ἢ τῆς μητρὸς τῶν Μοιρῶν ἢ τῶν περιφορῶν τοῦ παντὸς ἐν τῷ δεκάτῳ τῆς Πολιτείας ἡμῖν παραδέδοται. Εἰ δὲ βούλει, κατὰ τρίτην τάξιν καὶ τὰς Ἐπιστολὰς τίθει παρ᾽ ὅσων δυνατὸν εἰς τὴν **[25]** περὶ τῶν θείων ἐπιστήμην ἀναπέμπεσθαι· καὶ γὰρ περὶ **[p. 25]** τῶν τριῶν βασιλέων ἐν ταύταις εἴρηται καὶ ἄλλα πάμπολλα δόγματα θεῖα τῆς Πλατωνικῆς ἐπάξια θεωρίας.

Δεῖ τοίνυν πρὸς ταῦτα βλέποντας ἕκαστον διάκοσμον θεῶν ἐν τούτοις ἀναζητεῖν, καὶ λαμβάνειν ἐκ μὲν τοῦ **[5]** Φιλήβου τὴν περὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀγαθοῦ καὶ τὴν περὶ τῶν δυεῖν ἀρχῶν τῶν πρωτίστων καὶ τῆς ἐκ τούτων ἀναφανείσης τριάδος ἐπιστήμην, εὑρήσεις γὰρ ταῦτα πάντα διακεκριμένως ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἡμῖν παραδεδομένα, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Τιμαίου τὴν περὶ τῶν νοητῶν θεωρίαν καὶ τὴν περὶ τῆς **[10]** δημιουργικῆς μονάδος ἔνθεον ὑφήγησιν καὶ τὴν περὶ τῶν ἐγκοσμίων θεῶν πληρεστάτην ἀλήθειαν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Φαίδρου τά τε νοητὰ πάντα καὶ νοερὰ γένη καὶ τὰς ἀπολύτους τάξεις τῶν θεῶν ὅσαι προσεχῶς ὑπερίδρυνται τῶν οὐρανίων περιφορῶν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Πολιτικοῦ τήν τε ἐν οὐρανῷ **[15]** δημιουργίαν καὶ τὰς διττὰς περιόδους τοῦ παντὸς καὶ τὰς νοερὰς αἰτίας αὐτῶν, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Σοφιστοῦ σύμπασαν τὴν ὑπὸ σελήνην γένεσιν καὶ τὴν ἰδιότητα τῶν ταύτην κληρωσαμένων θεῶν. Περὶ δὲ αὖ τῶν καθ᾽ ἕκαστα θεῶν πολλὰ μὲν ἐκ τοῦ Συμποσίου θηράσομεν ἱεροπρεπῆ νοήματα, πολλὰ δὲ **[20]** ἐκ τοῦ Κρατύλου, πολλὰ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ Φαίδωνος· <ἐν> ἑκάστῳ γὰρ αὐτῶν πλείων ἢ ἐλάττων μνήμη γίνεται τῶν θείων ὀνομάτων ἀφ᾽ ὧν ῥᾴδιον τοῖς περὶ τὰ θεῖα γεγυμνασμένοις τὰς ἰδιότητας αὐτῶν τῷ λογισμῷ περιλαμβάνειν.

Δεῖ δὲ ἕκαστα τῶν δογμάτων ταῖς Πλατωνικαῖς ἀρχαῖς **[25]** ἀποφαίνειν σύμφωνα καὶ ταῖς τῶν θεολόγων μυστικαῖς παραδόσεσιν· ἅπασα γὰρ ἡ παρ᾽ Ἕλλησι θεολογία τῆς Ὀρφικῆς ἐστὶ μυσταγωγίας ἔκγονος, πρώτου μὲν Πυθαγόρου **[p. 26]** παρὰ Ἀγλαοφήμου τὰ περὶ θεῶν ὄργια διδαχθέντος, δευτέρου δὲ Πλάτωνος ὑποδεξαμένου τὴν παντελῆ περὶ τούτων ἐπιστήμην ἔκ τε τῶν Πυθαγορείων καὶ τῶν Ὀρφικῶν γραμμάτων. Ἐν Φιλήβῳ μὲν γὰρ τὴν περὶ τῶν δυοειδῶν **[5]** ἀρχῶν θεωρίαν εἰς τοὺς Πυθαγορείους ἀναφέρων, μετὰ θεῶν οἰκοῦντας αὐτοὺς καὶ μακαρίους ὄντως ἀποκαλεῖ· πολλὰ γοῦν ἡμῖν περὶ τούτων καὶ Φιλόλαος ὁ Πυθαγόρειος ἀνέγραψε νοήματα καὶ θαυμαστά, τήν τε κοινὴν αὐτῶν εἰς τὰ ὄντα πρόοδον καὶ τὴν διακεκριμένην ποίησιν ἀνυμνῶν· **[10]** ἐν Τιμαίῳ <δὲ> περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ

σελήνην θεῶν καὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς τάξεως ἀναδιδάσκειν ἐγχειρῶν, ἐπὶ τοὺς θεολόγους καταφεύγει καὶ θεῶν παῖδας αὐτοὺς ἀποκαλεῖ, καὶ πατέρας ποιεῖται τῆς περὶ αὐτῶν ἀληθείας, καὶ τέλος κατὰ τὴν παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς τῶν νοερῶν βασιλέων πρόοδον καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ **[15]** σελήνην θεῶν παραδίδωσι τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν ὅλων προϊούσας διακοσμήσεις· καὶ πάλιν ἐν Κρατύλῳ *** τῆς τῶν θείων διακόσμων τάξεως, ἐν Γοργίᾳ δὲ τὸν Ὅμηρον τῆς τῶν δημιουργικῶν <μονάδων> τριαδικῆς ὑποστάσεως. Πανταχοῦ δέ, ὡς εἰπεῖν συλλήβδην, ἑπομένως ταῖς ἀρχαῖς τῶν **[20]** θεολόγων τοὺς περὶ θεῶν λόγους ἀποδίδωσι, τῆς μὲν μυθοποιίας τὸ τραγικὸν ἀφελὼν τὰς δὲ ὑποθέσεις τὰς πρωτίστας κοινὰς πρὸς αὐτοὺς τιθέμενος.

ς΄

Ἴσως δ᾽ ἄν τις ἡμῖν ταῦτα διαταττομένοις ἀπαντήσειε λέγων ὡς οὐκ ὀρθῶς διεσπαρμένην πανταχοῦ τὴν Πλατωνικὴν θεολογίαν ἀποφαίνομεν καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐξ ἄλλων τὰ δὲ **[5]** ἐξ ἄλλων διαλόγων ἀθροίζειν ἐπιχειροῦμεν, ὥσπερ νάματα πολλὰ συνάγειν εἰς μίαν σύγκρασιν σπουδάζοντες οὐκ ἐκ μιᾶς ὁρμώμενα πάντα καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς πηγῆς.

Εἰ γὰρ οὕτως ἔτυχε, τὰ μὲν ἄλλα δόγματα πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας ἀναφέρειν ἔξομεν τοῦ Πλάτωνος πραγματείας, τὰ **[10]** δὲ περὶ θεῶν οὐδαμοῦ προηγουμένην ἕξει διδασκαλίαν οὐδὲ εἴς τινα ταχθήσεται χώραν παντελῆ καὶ ὁλόκληρα τὰ θεῖα γένη προάγουσαν καὶ μετὰ τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα συντάξεως· ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐοίκαμεν τοῖς τὸ ὅλον ἐκ τῶν μερῶν κατασκευάζειν ἐπιχειροῦσι δι᾽ ἀπορίαν τῆς πρὸ τῶν μερῶν **[15]** ὁλότητος κἀκ τῶν ἀτελῶν τὸ τέλειον συνυφαίνειν, δέοντος ἐν τῷ τελείῳ τὸ ἀτελὲς τὴν πρωτίστην αἰτίαν ἔχειν τῆς αὐτοῦ γενέσεως. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ Τίμαιος ἡμᾶς, εἰ τύχοι, διδάξει τὴν περὶ τῶν νοητῶν γενῶν θεωρίαν, ὁ δὲ Φαῖδρος τὰς πρώτας νοερὰς διακοσμήσεις ἐν τάξει παραδιδοὺς **[20]** ἀναφανήσεται· ποῦ δὲ ἡ τῶν νοερῶν πρὸς τὰ νοητὰ σύνταξις καὶ τίς ἡ τῶν δευτέρων ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων γένεσις, καὶ ὅλως τίνα τρόπον ἀπὸ τῆς μιᾶς τῶν πάντων ἀρχῆς εἰς τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἐγκοσμίων θεῶν ἡ πρόοδος γέγονε τῶν θείων διακόσμων καὶ πῶς συμπεπλήρωται τὰ μέσα τοῦ τε ἑνὸς καὶ τοῦ **[25]** παντελοῦς ἀριθμοῦ ταῖς τῶν θεῶν ἀπογεννήσεσι κατὰ τὴν **[p. 28]** ὁμοφυῆ καὶ ἀδιαίρετον ὑπόβασιν τῶν ὅλων, εἰπεῖν οὐχ ἕξομεν.

Καὶ τί τὸ σεμνόν, ἔτι φαῖεν ἂν οἱ ταῦτα λέγοντες, τῆς παρ᾽ ὑμῖν θρυλλουμένης περὶ τῶν θείων ἐπιστήμης; Καὶ **[5]** γὰρ ταῦτα τὰ πολλαχόθεν ἀθροιζόμενα δόγματα Πλατωνικὰ προσονομάζειν ἄτοπον, ἐξ ἀλλοτρίων ὥς φατε ναμάτων εἰς τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἀναχθέντα φιλοσοφίαν, καὶ μίαν ὅλην περὶ τῶν θείων ἀλήθειαν δεικνύναι παρ᾽ ὑμῖν οὐχ ἕξετε. Καίτοι φαῖεν ἂν ἴσως καὶ τοὺς τοῦ Πλάτωνος **[10]** νεωτέρους ἓν καὶ τέλειον εἶδος θεολογίας ἐν ταῖς ἑαυτῶν συνυφήναντας παραδιδόναι συγγραφαῖς τοῖς ἑαυτῶν κατηκόοις. Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἄρα ἐκ μὲν τοῦ Τιμαίου τὴν ὅλην περὶ τῆς φύσεως θεωρίαν προάγειν δυνήσεσθε, ἐκ δὲ τῆς Πολιτείας ἢ τῶν Νόμων τὰ περὶ τῶν ἠθῶν κάλλιστα δόγματα πρὸς ἓν **[15]** φιλοσοφίας εἶδος συντείνοντα, μόνην δὲ ἄρα τὴν Πλάτωνος πραγματείαν <ἐν> ᾗ πᾶν <τὸ> τῆς πρώτης φιλοσοφίας ἀγαθόν, ὃ δὴ κεφάλαιον ἄν τις εἴποι τῆς συμπάσης θεωρίας, ἀπολιπόντες, τῆς τελεωτάτης ὑμᾶς <αὐτοὺς> ἀφαιρήσετε τῶν ὄντων γνώσεως, εἰ μὴ λίαν εὐηθικῶς ἀπὸ τῶν μυθικῶν **[20]** πλασμάτων ἐθέλοιτε καλλωπίζεσθαι, πολλοῦ τοῦ εἰκότος ἀναπεπλησμένης τῆς τῶν τοιούτων ἀναλύσεως, καίτοι καὶ τούτων ἐπεισοδιώδη τὴν παράδοσιν ἐν τοῖς Πλατωνικοῖς διαλόγοις ἐχόντων, οἷον ἐν Πρωταγόρᾳ τῆς πολιτικῆς ἕνεκα καὶ τῶν περὶ αὐτῆς ἀποδείξεων, ἐν δὲ Πολιτείᾳ **[25]** τῆς δικαιοσύνης, ἐν δὲ Γοργίᾳ τῆς σωφροσύνης. Οὐ **[p. 29]** γὰρ αὐτῶν ἀλλὰ τῶν προηγουμένων ἕνεκα σκοπῶν συμπλέκει τὰς μυθολογίας ὁ Πλάτων ταῖς τῶν ἠθικῶν δογμάτων ζητήσεσιν, ἵνα μὴ μόνον τὸ νοερὸν τῆς ψυχῆς διὰ τῶν ἀγωνιστικῶν λόγων γυμνάζωμεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ **[5]** θεῖον τῆς ψυχῆς τῇ πρὸς τὰ μυστικώτερα συμπαθείᾳ τελειότερον ἀντιλαμβάνηται τῆς τῶν ὄντων γνώσεως. Ἐκ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων λόγων ἀναγκαζομένοις ἐοίκαμεν εἰς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας παραδοχήν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μύθων ἀρρήτως πάσχομεν καὶ τὰς ἀδιαστρόφους ἐννοίας προβάλλομεν τὸ **[10]** ἐν αὐτοῖς μυστικὸν σέβοντες. Ὅθεν οἶμαι καὶ ὁ Τίμαιος εἰκότως ἀξιοῖ τοῖς μυθοπλάσταις ὡς παισὶ θεῶν ἑπομένους τὰ θεῖα γένη προάγειν, ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων ἀεὶ τὰ δεύτερα γεννῶντας, εἰ καὶ ἄνευ ἀποδείξεως λέγοιεν.

Οὐ γὰρ ἀποδεικτικὸν τὸ τοιοῦτον εἶδος τῶν λόγων, **[15]** ἀλλ᾽ ἐνθεαστικόν, οὐδὲ ἀνάγκης ἀλλὰ πειθοῦς ἕνεκα τοῖς παλαιοῖς μεμηχανημένον, οὐδὲ μαθήσεως ψιλῆς ἀλλὰ τῆς πρὸς τὰ πράγματα συμπαθείας στοχαζόμενον. Εἰ δὲ μὴ τῶν μύθων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων θεολογικῶν δογμάτων τὰς αἰτίας ἐθέλοιτε σκοπεῖν, εὑρήσετε <τὰ> μὲν **[20]** ἠθικῶν ἕνεκα τὰ δὲ φυσικῶν σκεμμάτων τοῖς Πλατωνικοῖς παρεσπαρμένα διαλόγοις. Ἐν Φιλήβῳ μὲν γὰρ περί τε ἀπείρου καὶ πέρατος τῆς ἡδονῆς ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίου πεποίηται τὸν λόγον· γένη γὰρ οἶμαι τὰ ἕτερα τῶν ἑτέρων, δῆλον δὲ πότερα ποτέρων. Ἐν Τιμαίῳ **[25]**

<δὲ> τὰ περὶ τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν τῆς προκειμένης ἕνεκα φυσιολογίας παρείληπται, διότι δὴ πανταχοῦ τὰς εἰκόνας **[p. 30]** ἀπὸ τῶν παραδειγμάτων γινώσκειν ἀναγκαῖον, παραδείγματα δὲ τὰ ἄυλα τῶν ἐνύλων, τὰ νοητὰ τῶν αἰσθητῶν, τὰ χωριστὰ τῶν φυσικῶν εἰδῶν. Ἐν δὲ αὖ τῷ Φαίδρῳ τόν τε ὑπερουράνιον τόπον ἀνυμνεῖ καὶ τὸ ὑπουράνιον βάθος **[5]** καὶ πᾶν τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦτο γένος τῆς ἐρωτικῆς ἕνεκα μανίας καὶ τοῦ τρόπου τῆς ἀναμνήσεως τῶν ψυχῶν καὶ τῆς ἐντεῦθεν ἐπ᾽ ἐκεῖνα πορείας. Πανταχοῦ δὲ ὡς εἰπεῖν τὸ μὲν προηγούμενον τέλος ἐστὶ φυσικὸν ἢ πολιτικόν, τὰ δὲ περὶ τῶν θείων νοήματα τῆς ἐκείνων εὑρέσεως ἢ **[10]** τελειώσεως ἕνεκα προτείνεται.

Πῶς οὖν ἔτι παρ᾽ ὑμῖν ἡ τοιαύτη θεωρία σεμνὴ καὶ ὑπερφυὴς ἔσται καὶ παντὸς μᾶλλον ἀξία σπουδάζεσθαι, μήτε τὸ ὅλον ἐν ἑαυτῇ δεικνύειν ἔχουσα μήτε τὸ τέλειον μήτε τὸ προηγούμενον ἐν τῇ πραγματείᾳ τοῦ Πλάτωνος, **[15]** ἀλλὰ πάντων τούτων ἀπολειπομένη καὶ βιαίως ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ αὐτοφυῶς οὐδὲ γνησίαν ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεισοδιώδη τὴν τάξιν ὥσπερ ἐν δράμασι κεκτημένη;

ζ΄

Ἃ μὲν οὖν δυσχεράνειεν ἄν τις ἐπὶ τοῖς προκειμένοις, **[20]** τοιαῦτα ἄττα ἐστίν. Ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς μὲν τὴν τοιαύτην ἀπάντησιν δικαίαν ποιήσομαι καὶ σαφῆ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν, καὶ τὸν Πλάτωνα πανταχοῦ μὲν τοὺς περὶ θεῶν λόγους ἑπομένως ταῖς παλαιαῖς φήμαις καὶ τῇ φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων μετιέναι φήσω, καὶ ποτὲ μὲν τῆς αἰτίας ἕνεκα τῶν **[25]** προκειμένων ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς τῶν δογμάτων ἀνάγεσθαι **[p. 31]** κἀκεῖθεν ὥσπερ ἀπὸ σκοπιᾶς καταθεωρεῖν τὴν τοῦ προκειμένου φύσιν, ποτὲ δὲ καὶ προηγούμενον τέλος τίθεσθαι τὴν θεολογικὴν ἐπιστήμην· καὶ γὰρ ἐν Φαίδρῳ περὶ τοῦ νοητοῦ κάλλους καὶ τῆς ἐκεῖθεν ἐπὶ πάντα **[5]** διηκούσης τῶν καλῶν μετουσίας καὶ ἐν Συμποσίῳ περὶ τῆς ἐρωτικῆς τάξεως ἡ πραγματεία.

Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τὸ παντελὲς καὶ ὅλον καὶ συνεχὲς ἄνωθεν ἄχρι τοῦ σύμπαντος ἀριθμοῦ τῆς θεολογίας ἐν ἑνὶ Πλατωνικῷ διαλόγῳ σκοπεῖν, παράδοξον μὲν ἴσως εἰπεῖν καὶ τοῖς ἐκ **[10]** τῆς ἡμετέρας ἑστίας μόνης τὸ λεχθησόμενον καταφανές· τολμητέον δ᾽ οὖν ὅμως, ἐπείπερ

ἠρξάμεθα τῶν τοιούτων λόγων, καὶ ῥητέον πρὸς τοὺς ταῦτα λέγοντας ὡς ὁ Παρμενίδης ὂν ποθεῖτε, καὶ τὰ μυστικὰ τοῦ διαλόγου τοῦδε νοήματα φαντάζεσθε. Πάντα γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ τὰ θεῖα γένη **[15]** καὶ πρόεισιν ἐκ τῆς πρωτίστης αἰτίας ἐν τάξει καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα συνάρτησιν ἐπιδείκνυσι· καὶ τὰ μὲν ἀκρότατα καὶ τῷ ἑνὶ συμφυόμενα καὶ πρωτουργὰ τὸ ἐνιαῖον καὶ ἁπλοῦν καὶ κρύφιον ἔλαχε τῆς ὑπάρξεως εἶδος, τὰ δὲ ἔσχατα πληθύνεται κατακερματιζόμενα καὶ τῷ μὲν ἀριθμῷ **[20]** πλεονάζει τῇ δὲ δυνάμει τῶν ὑπερτέρων ἐλασσοῦται, τὰ δὲ μέσα κατὰ τὸν προσήκοντα λόγον συνθετώτερα μέν ἐστι τῶν αἰτίων ἁπλούστερα δὲ τῶν οἰκείων γεννημάτων. Καὶ πάντα, ὡς συνελόντι φάναι, τὰ τῆς θεολογικῆς ἐπιστήμης ἀξιώματα τελέως ἐνταῦθα καταφαίνεται καὶ τῶν θείων οἱ **[25]** διάκοσμοι πάντες συνεχῶς ὑφιστάμενοι δείκνυνται· καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ θεῶν γένεσις ὑμνημένη καὶ τῶν ὁπωσοῦν ὄντων ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρρήτου καὶ ἀγνώστου τῶν ὅλων αἰτίας. **[p. 32]** Τό τε οὖν ὅλον καὶ τέλειον τῆς θεολογικῆς ἐπιστήμης φῶς ὁ Παρμενίδης ἀνάπτει τοῖς τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἐρασταῖς, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτον οἱ προειρημένοι διάλογοι μέρη κατενείμαντο τῆς περὶ θεῶν μυσταγωγίας, καὶ πάντες ὡς εἰπεῖν **[5]** τῆς ἐνθέου σοφίας μετειλήφασιν καὶ τὰς αὐτοφυεῖς ἡμῶν ἐννοίας περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἀνεγείρουσι. Καὶ δεῖ τὸ μὲν ὅλον πλῆθος εἰς τοὺς προκειμένους ἀναφέρειν διαλόγους, τοὺς πλῆθος εἰς τοὺς προκειμένους ἀναφέρειν διαλόγους, τοὺς δὲ αὖ πάλιν εἰς τὴν μίαν καὶ παντελῆ τοῦ Παρμενίδου θεωρίαν συνάγειν. Οὕτω γὰρ οἶμαι τά τε ἀτελέστερα τῶν **[10]** τελείων καὶ τὰ μέρη τῶν ὅλων ἐξάψομεν καὶ τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐοικότας ἀποφανοῦμεν τοὺς λόγους ὧνπέρ εἰσιν ἐξηγηταί, κατὰ τὸν παρὰ Πλάτωνι Τίμαιον.

Textual Emendations

14, 27: retain αὐτῶν

19, 10: omit ὁ conjectured by *S.-W.*

19, 11: add ὁ before τρόπος

Ibid.: retain ἐφιεμένῳ of P

23, 16: replace ἀληθείας with ἀληθείᾳ

Ibid.: add οἰκείας after ἀληθείᾳ

28, 16: add ἐν after πραγματείαν

Ibid.: omit τὴν περὶ conjectured by *S.-W.*

Ibid.: retain ἢ πᾶν of PV, but read as ᾗ πᾶν

Ibid.: add τὸ after ᾗ πᾶν

Ibid.: retain ἀγαθόν

Proclus

The Platonic Philosopher

On the Theology according to Plato

Book I

Chapter 1

[p. 5, 5] All the philosophy of Plato, Pericles, dearest of friends to me, I hold to have initially shone forth according to the will, similar in form to the Good, of the gods, since it disclosed the hidden intellect in them and the truth which simultaneously came into existence together with the [intelligible] beings, to the souls **[10]** revolving around [the world of] generation, in so far as it is permitted for them to participate in such supernatural and great goods, and was again later to have been perfected and then, just as having withdrawn into itself and becoming invisible to many of those professing to love wisdom and seeking eagerly to take part in "the hunt for being"[466], **[15]** only later to have come forth back into the light; on the

[466] *Phaedo*, 66c2.

other hand, I think, in a very special way, the mystagogy concerning the same divine beings, being established in purity "on a sacred pedestal"[467] and having existed eternally amongst the gods themselves, **[p. 6]** to have been revealed from on high to those in a temporally bound state able to profit from it by one man, whom I would not be mistaken in calling guide to and hierophant of the true rites, to which are initiated the souls separated from the earthly places, and of "complete and unshakable apparitions"[468], in which the souls genuinely clinging to the happy **[5]** and blissful life share. And thus, by means of Plato, [this theology] first shone forth reverently and secretly, just as during the sacred rites, and having been placed safely within the innermost sanctuaries and having been ignored by many of those entering, **[10]** in the prescribed period of time through certain true priests, each having taken up a life fit to advance in the mystagogy, it came to the fore, as far as was possible for it, and it shone over all places and set down everywhere illuminations of divine apparitions. **[15]**

Among these spiritual guides to the Platonic *epopteia*, having laid out for us the most holy guidance concerning the gods and having obtained a nature resembling that of their guide, I would place [first] Plotinus the Egyptian, [second] those having received the **[20]** theory from this man, Amelius and Porphyry, and third, I think, "just as statues to us"[469], are those that were initiated by them, both Iamblichus and Theodore, even if indeed there were certain others following after these men in this divine choir [who] roused their thought concerning the works of **[p. 7]** Plato to a Bacchic frenzy, from which, after the gods, our leader in all things beautiful and good received in an unblemished manner the most genuine and purest light of truth into the folds of his soul, and made us both partners in all the rest of the philosophy of Plato **[5]** and companions in the ineffable doctrines of which he partook from those older than him, and above all proclaimed us fellow-choristers of the mysterious truth concerning the divine.

To this man, therefore, should we attempt to repay the debt of gratitude appropriate to his benefactions towards us, **[10]** all time would not suffice. But if it is necessary not only to have received for ourselves from others the extraordinary good of the Platonic philosophy,

[467] *Phaedrus*, 254b7.
[468] *Ibid.*, 250c2-3.
[469] *Republic*, 361d5.

but also to leave behind for subsequent generations memorials of these blessed sights, of which we ourselves say to have been spectators and admirers, according to our power, under the guidance **[15]** [of one who has been] the most perfect leader of our times and [one] who has reached the summit of philosophy, and perhaps we might reasonably call upon the gods themselves to kindle the light of truth in our souls, and "those attendants and worshippers of the gods"[470] to guide our mind, and to lead it to the perfect goal and **[20]** the godly and lofty end of the doctrines of Plato. For in every case, I think that it befits he "who participates but briefly in good sense"[471] to make a beginning from the gods, and not least in the exegeses concerning the gods; for it is neither possible to know the divine otherwise than through having recieved the light from them, **[p. 8]** nor to bear this knowledge to others otherwise than through being steered by them, having preserved the exposition of the divine names beyond both the multiform opinions and the complexity borne in words.

And so knowing this and being convinced of the advice of the Platonic *Timaeus* **[5]** to us, we have set before us the gods as guides to the teachings concerning themselves. And both listening "with kindness and having come propitiously"[472], may they lead the intellect of our souls and accompany it to the altar of Plato and "up the steep path"[473] of this theory. Once having engaged upon this [steep path], **[10]** we will receive all the truth concerning the gods, and we will have the best end of the birth-pangs which we have in us concerning the gods, yearning to gain some knowledge concerning them not only by learning from others, but also, as far as possible, by putting ourselves to the test. **[15]**

Chapter 2

But enough of the prefatory remarks; it is now necessary for me to explain the method of instruction to be set forth, of what sort one should expect it to be, and to define the preparation of those who would be in attendance, through which, **[20]** being suitably

[470] *Phaedrus*, 252c3-5.
[471] *Timaeus*, 27c1-2.
[472] *Phaedrus*, 257a7.
[473] *Ibid*., 247b1. See also *Republic*, 568d1.

disposed, they will encounter not only our words but especially the "high-minded"[474] and divinely inspired philosophy of Plato. For it is doubtless fitting for both the **[p. 9]** form of the lectures as well as the favourable dispositions of the auditors to serve as a foundation, just as during the rites when those skilled in these [practices] prepare proper receptacles for the gods, neither always using the same of all inanimate objects nor the same animals nor the same men without distinction to secure the presence **[5]** of the god, but in each case, they choose the one naturally able to participate in the proposed rite.

And so the discourse will first be divided by me into three [parts]: in the beginning, collecting together all the common notions concerning the gods, as many as Plato hands down, and examining both **[10]** the meanings in each case and the values of the fundamental propositions; in the middle [part] enumerating the universal orders of the gods, determining both their individualities and processions according to the Platonic method, and referring all back to the theses of the theologians; in the final part **[15]** discussing the gods celebrated sporadically in the Platonic writings, either hypercosmic or encosmic, tracing the theory concerning them back to the universal genera of the ranks of the divine.

In all of this work we shall prefer the clear, distinct, and simple **[20]** to their opposites, translating into a clear teaching concerning them that which is transmitted [concerning the gods] through symbols, while restoring that which is transmitted through icons to their original pattern, and "investigating scientifically through accounts of causation"[475] that which is written in a categorical manner, while **[25]** examining closely that which is composed of demonstrations and "explaining in detail"[476] the manner of truth in them, making it known **[p. 10]** to our auditors, and finally, discovering the clear meaning by means of another source of those things being put in the form of riddles, not by means of foreign hypotheses, but by means of the genuine writings of Plato, while examining the concord of the things encountered in these [writings] by our auditors with the things [encountered in reality]; **[5]** it is through all of these things that the unique and perfect form of the Platonic theology will be revealed to us, the truth extending through the whole of its

[474] *Phaedrus*, 270a1-2.
[475] *Meno*, 98a3-4.
[476] *Phaedo*, 97e1, 3-4; 98b3.

divine insights, and the one intellect which produced all the beauty of this system and the mysterious exposition of this theory. **[10]**

And, such, then will be my discourse, just as I have said. Now, again, the auditor of the proposed doctrines must be adorned, firstly, with the ethical virtues and have bound fast all the misbegotten and unsuitable motions of the soul to the rational principle of virtue and have suited them to unity in the form of practical wisdom **[15]**. "For to the impure", Socrates says, "it is unlawful for the pure to be attached"[477], and indeed, every evil man is wholly impure, and the opposite wholly pure. And being practiced in all logical methods, the present student will have examined many irrefutable notions concerning analyses and many concerning the opposites of these things **[20]**, divisions, just as I indeed think Parmenides ordered Socrates to do. For prior to such "a roving study"[478] in arguments, difficult or impossible is the consideration of the divine genera and the truth residing in them. Thirdly, **[25]** beyond these preparations, the student must not be ignorant of physics and of the **[p. 11]** many opinions on this subject in order that, having already examined closely, in a suitable way through images, the causes of beings, he might advance more easily to the nature of the separable and primordial hypostases. And so the student of this must neither be ignorant, as we have said, of the truth in phenomena, nor again of "the ways of education"[479] **[5]** and of the learning in these. For through these we come to know the divine being in a more immaterial manner.

But by uniting all these qualities under the guidance of the intellect, partaking in the dialectic of Plato, attending to the immaterial activities, separated from the bodily powers, **[10]** and desiring to contemplate that which exists "by intellection assisted by reason"[480], let the auditor apply himself avidly to the exegesis of both the divine and blessed doctrines, according to the Oracle, opening the depths of his soul through love, for there is not found "a better collaborator" in the apprehension of this theory **[15]** "than love"[481], as Plato somewhere says, while being versed in the truth that extends through all things and truly

[477] *Ibid*., 67b2.
[478] *Parmenides*, 136e2.
[479] *Timaeus*, 53c2-3.
[480] *Ibid*., 28a1.
[481] *Symposium*, 212b3-4.

raising the eye of the intellect to the truth itself, and finally placing himself near the stable, unmoving and safe form of divine knowledge and persuading himself neither **[20]** to wonder any longer about other things nor to look away to other things, but instead pressing on to the divine light by calm reasoning and the power of an untiring life and, in a word, applying himself to that state uniting both activity and rest, which he thus wishing to become a "coryphaeus"[482] must possess, **[25]** as Socrates says somewhere in the *Theaetetus*.

Chapter 3

[p. 12] Such, then, is the magnitude of the general theme, the manner of discourse concerning it, and the preparation of its learners should be of such a sort, at least as it seems to me. But before I have begun the exposition of the things **[5]** lying before us, I wish to speak not only concerning theology itself, but also concerning the methods thereof, and concerning "the theological models"[483], certain of which Plato opines, while certain he rejects, in order that, after these preliminaries, we might more easily understand, in the things that follow, the starting points of the demonstrations. **[10]**

All those, then, who have ever yet occupied themselves with theology, calling gods the first principles by nature, say that to treat of these is the theological science. And some, while thinking corporeal substance alone worthy of being, and also having placed all the genera of the incorporeal substances together in second place **[15]** with regard to being, have proclaimed both the first principles of beings [to be] corporeal, and that the ability in us for gaining knowledge of these principles is corporeal. But others, while making all corporeal things dependant on incorporeal things and defining the primary existence [as residing] in the soul and in its psychic faculties, call the gods, I believe, the best of souls, and also name **[20]** theology as the science extending as far as these beings and knowing them. But on the other hand, [there are] those who introduce the multitude of souls out of another, **[p. 13]** more

[482] *Theaetetus*, 173c7.
[483] *Republic*, 379a5-6.

important principle and who place "the Intellect as leader"[484] of the whole of reality, and while they say the best end to be the union of the soul with the Intellect and think the intellective form of life to surpass all others in dignity, in the same vein they also combine, I presume, theology and the exegesis of the intellective being. **[5]**

And so all, as I said, call gods the first principles and most self-sufficient of beings and theology the science of them. But alone the inspired teaching of Plato, while having regarded all the corporeal as unworthy of the rank of principle (since indeed all that is divisible and has extension can by nature neither **[10]** produce nor maintain itself, but rather has being and the capacity to act or to be acted upon by means of a soul and its movements), and also having demonstrated the psychic essence to be superior to the essence of bodies, while depending upon the intellectual hypostasis (since all which moves according to time, even if it is self-moving **[15]**, is the higher authority of what is moved by another, yet [is] second to eternal motion), showed the Intellect to be the father and the cause of bodies, as it has been said, and souls, and that with reference to this thing everything both *is* and *acts*, so far as it possesses Life in its passages and unfoldings. [This teaching] then advances to the other principle, **[20]** absolutely transcending the Intellect, even more incorporeal and ineffable than it, from which all things, even if you might speak of the last of the beings, necessarily have substance. For while not all things can by nature participate in Soul, but only those that have Life in them more or less distinctly, nor can all benefit from Intellect and from Being **[p. 14]** but only those which subsist according to form, it is also necessary again for the principle of all things to be participated in by all things, if indeed "it will never be absent from anything"[485], being in some way the cause of all that is said to subsist.

[This teaching] having discovered through divine inspiration this very first principle of the whole of reality, greater than the Intellect **[5]**, hidden in inaccessible places and having revealed these three causes and monads as beyond bodies, I mean the Soul, and the very first Intellect, and the Unity superior to the Intellect, it derived from these as monads the sets which are proper to them, the unitary [set], the intellective [set], **[10]** and the psychic [set] (for every monad is at the head of a multiplicity coordinate with it), while just as it attaches

[484] *Laws*, 631d5; 963a8.
[485] *Parmenides*, 144b1-2.

bodies to souls, so it would seem that it attaches souls to the intelligible Forms, and these in turn to the henads of beings, and finally it converts all to the single, imparticipable henad. And having ascended as far as this henad, [this teaching] is thought to have reached the highest limit **[15]** of the theoretical consideration of the whole of reality, and it holds this to be the truth concerning the gods, [a truth] which concerns itself with the henads of beings, and which transmits both their processions and their individualities, the connexion of beings to them, and the orders of Forms which are dependent **[20]** on these unitary existents. As for that theory revolving around the Intellect and the species and the genera in the Intellect, [this teaching] considers it to be second with regard to the science concerning the gods themselves; and while [this teaching] considers this theory to lay hold of the still intelligible Forms, able to be known by the soul through a direct intuition, [this teaching] also **[25]** considers the science superior to it to pursue, concerning the ineffable and inexpressible existences, both the distinction between one or another of them and their manifestation **[p. 15]** from a single cause. From this, I believe, it follows that while it is the unique intellective feature of the soul to be possessed of the direct apprehension of the intellective forms and the difference among them, it is the summit of the intellect and, as they say, its flower and its existence which unites itself to the henads of beings and by means of these to that hidden unity of **[5]** all the divine henads. For although there are many cognitive powers in us, through this one alone we are naturally able to keep company with the divine and to participate in it. For the "genus of the gods"[486] is to be apprehended neither by sense perception, since it is transcendent over all bodies, nor by opinion and reason, as these are divisible **[10]** and apprehend multiform things, nor by the activity of "intellection assisted by reason"[487], as forms of knowledge such as these are concerned with real beings, while the existence of the gods transcends that of beings and is defined as that unity behind the whole of reality. And so, if indeed the divine is to be known, **[15]** in some way or other, it remains only [that we] be possessed of the capacity for direct apprehension by means of the existence of the soul and become acquainted with this in so far as it is possible. For we say everywhere that like is known by like: quite clearly, the sensible is known by sensation, the opinable by opinion, the rational by discursive reason and the intelligible by intellect, and therefore the

[486] *Phaedrus*, 246d7.
[487] *Timaeus*, 28a1.

most unified **[20]** is known by unity and the ineffable principle by an ineffable power. That is why Socrates in the *First Alcibiades* says rightly that, by entering into itself, the soul will behold not only all other things, but also the god. For by converging inwards upon its own unity and the centre of its entire life and casting away multiplicity **[25]** and the diversity of multifarious powers within it, the soul **[p. 16]** reaches as far as that highest "vantage point"[488] of beings. And just as in the holiest of the rites, they say that the initiates first encounter multiform and many-shaped genera projected before the gods, then entering into the tranquil place and having been strengthened by the rites [so as] to receive in purity the divine illumination itself and 'naked' **[5]**, as those men might say, to partake of the divine; in the same way, I think, in the consideration of the whole of reality, when the soul looks at those things which come after it, it sees the shadows and likenesses of beings, but when it turns towards itself it uncovers its own Being and **[10]** its own innate Forms; and while at first it is as if it observes itself alone, in deepening its self-knowledge, it discovers the Intellect in itself and the orders of beings, and withdrawing into its own interior and, as it were, the innermost sanctuary of the soul, there it contemplates with eyes shut the "genus of the gods"[489] and the henads of beings **[15]**. For all things are within us in a manner proper to the soul and in this way we are by nature able to known all things, by awakening the power within us and the images of the whole of reality.

And this is the best form of activity: in the quietude of our powers to stretch forth toward the divine itself and to join **[20]** in the dance around it, and to always gather together all the multiplicity of the soul towards this unification, and letting go of all in so far as it comes after the One, to be established in it and to unite with this ineffable [principle], beyond all beings. For it is proper for the soul to ascend as far as this until, reaching the culmination of this ascent, it ends up **[25]** at the principle of beings; and having been up there, **[p. 17]** having contemplated the place up there, and returning thence, proceeding through the beings, making explicit the multiplicity of Forms, detailing both their monads and their sets, and discerning intellectually how each is dependent upon its proper henad, the soul deems itself to have a most complete knowledge of divine matters, **[5]** having contemplated in a unitary

[488] *Statesman*, 272e5.
[489] *Phaedrus*, 246d7.

manner both the processions of the gods in beings and the distinctions of beings with reference to the gods.

Chapter 4

Indeed, such is the theological [discourse] for us, according to the judgement of Plato, and theology [has] a certain such condition, [i.e.] revealing the existence **[10]** itself of the gods, distinguishing their unknowable and unified light from the individuality of [their] participants, contemplating [these things], and announcing [them] to those worthy of this happiness and of the activity able to cause all goods simultaneously; but after this perfect comprehension of the principal **[15]** theory, we must divide the methods according to which Plato instructs us in the mysterious notions concerning the gods. For he appears not to pursue everywhere the same method in [his] teaching concerning the gods, rather at times unravelling the truth concerning **[20]** them entheastically, at times dialectically, and at one time proclaiming their ineffable individualities symbolically, while at another returning to them by means of images and discovering the primordial causes of the whole of reality in them.

For having becoming "nympholeptic"[490] in the *Phaedrus* and having exchanged **[p. 18]** human intelligence for a divine mania, from his entheastic mouth he relates many ineffable doctrines concerning the intellective gods, and at the same time many concerning the independent leaders of all the universe, which link the multitude of encosmic gods to the monads, intelligible and separate from the whole of reality, and still **[5]** more concerning these gods themselves, having obtained a share in the cosmos, celebrating their intelligible aspects, their productions throughout the cosmos, their immaculate providence, their pilotage in the case of souls, and a great many other things [which] Socrates transmits in these passages entheastically, as he himself **[10]** says explicitly, and in fact alleging the local gods as the cause of such a mania.

[490] *Ibid.*, 238d1.

On the other hand, in the *Sophist*, having contended with, and raising difficulties for, the ancients dialectically concerning both Being and the existence of the One separate from beings, he shows how while all beings are dependent upon their own cause and upon the First Being, this **[15]** same [First] Being, which participates in the henad that transcends the whole of reality, and which is doubtless the One but not the One-in-itself, being subject to the One and being a unified existent, but not primarily One. And In the same way again in the *Parmenides* **[20]** he reveals dialectically both the processions of being from the One and the supremacy of the One by means of the first hypostasis and, as he himself says in these passages, according to the most complete division of this method.

Moreover, while relating a myth in the *Gorgias* concerning the three demiurges **[25]** and the allotment amongst them of the demiurgic task, not being a myth alone but also an argument, also **[p. 19]** in the *Symposium* concerning the union through love, and in the *Protagoras* concerning the ordering of the cosmos by the gods for the living mortals, he conceals the truth concerning the gods in a symbolic manner, and with no more than a mere allusion he reveals his intention to the most genuine of his auditors. **[5]**

But if you wish to heed both the teachings by means of mathematics and the arguments concerning the gods from ethical and physical reasonings, such as are dispersed to see many times in the *Timaeus*, many times in the *Statesman* and many times in other dialogues, in this case, I suppose, the mode which permits you to know the divine things by means of **[10]** images will be made manifest to you. For all these teachings represent the powers of the divine; the statesman, for example, [represents] the celestial demiurge, while the figures of the five elements defined in geometrical terms [represent] the individualities of the gods presiding **[15]** over the parts of all the universe, and the divisions of the psychic essence [represent] the whole of the ranks of the gods. Indeed permit [me] to say that Plato orders the constitutions which he organizes by modelling [them] upon the divine, the entire cosmos, and the powers in it. And so all these teachings, by means of the similitude of the things here below with the divine things **[20]**, show us in images the processions, the orders, and the demiurgic powers of the things there above.

Such are the modes of theological instruction in the work of Plato, and it is clear from what has been said that **[p. 20]** it is necessary [for them] to be so many in number. For those speaking concerning the divine by means of allusion, speak either symbolically and mythically, or by means of images, while of those relating their thoughts in an uncovered manner, some compose their discourses according to science, while others [do so] according an inspiration from the gods. **[5]** But it is Orphic, the mode permitting [us] to reveal the divine by means of symbols and, generally speaking, it is proper for those writing divine myths. But the Pythagorean mode [is] by means of images, since the mathematical science was discovered by the Pythagoreans in reference to the reminiscence of the divine and by means of these sciences, as through images, they attempted to accede to the principles up there; **[10]** for they indeed devoted the numbers and the figures to the gods, just as those eager to write the history of this school say. But the mode revealing entheastically the truth concerning the gods in itself is most evident amongst those highest of telestics; for indeed these men do not think it right to use any veils **[15]** to pass on the divine orders or their individualities to their pupils, but they [instead] proclaim both the powers and the sets amongst them, being moved by the gods themselves. But again the mode according to science is peculiar to the philosophy of Plato, for the procession **[20]** of the divine genera in order, their difference from one another, and both the common individualities of the ranks of the whole of reality and the distinguishing properties in each, Plato alone, as it seems to me, of all those known to us, attempted to both divide and order according to this mode. **[25]**

[p. 21] In any case this will become clear when we make the initial arguments concerning the *Parmenides* and all of the divisions therein; for now we may say that Plato did not admit all the dramaturgy of the mythical compositions, but only that which aims at the beautiful and **[5]** the good and is not unsuited to the divine hypostasis. For ancient is this mode of mythology, revealing the divine by means of hidden meanings, placing before the truth many veils, copying nature, which offers sensible figures as opposed to intelligible, material **[10]** as opposed to immaterial, and divisible as opposed to indivisible, and makes likenesses as opposed to true things and beings in a false manner. And indeed even though the ancient poets thought it fit to compose the secret theologies of the gods in a more tragic manner and by reason of this depicted the errings of the gods, their mutilations, their battles,

their agonies **[15]**, their rapes, their adulteries, and concealed all other such symbols concerning the truth of the divinities, Plato rejects such a mode of mythology and says [it] to be wholly unfavourable to an education, while also advising [us] to compose discourses concerning the gods in the form of myths in a more plausible manner and **[20]** suited to a more truthful and more properly philosophical disposition, e.g. alleging the divine to be the cause of all goods and of no evil and [to be] always without a share in all change, maintaining its immovable order and having detected the **[25]** source of truth in itself, being the cause of no deception for others; for Socrates teaches such forms of theology to us in the *Republic*. Accordingly all the myths of **[p. 22]** Plato, guarding the truth in secret, do not have an externally manifested construction at variance with the naturally untaught and undistorted preconception in us concerning the gods, but they [instead] offer an image of the cosmic system, in which both the visible beauty **[5]** is fit for gods and a beauty more divine than that is found in the unseen lives and powers of the gods.

Therefore by this one mode Plato translated the myths concerning the things of gods from that which appears abnormal, illogical and disorderly into order, definition and the **[10]** combination aiming at the beautiful and the good. But there is another which he offers in the *Phaedrus*, thinking it fit to guard the divine mythology always unmixed with natural explanations and neither to confound nor to intermix theology and physical theory. For, in effect, the divine itself transcends the whole of nature **[15]**, and in this way, I suppose, it is proper for the discourses concerning the divine to be entirely free of considerations concerning nature; for Plato says such a hard-working and not altogether good man to make natural occurrences the end of the hidden meaning of myths, and to identify both the Chimera, for example, and **[20]** the Gorgon and any such mythological personages with natural forms. For indeed Socrates expressed these [considerations] in the statements at hand, accusing those saying Oreithyia, while playing, was thrown from the rocks by the North wind, [when] in the form of myth, [this] mortal being **[p. 23]** [was] to have been carried off by Boreas through love; for it is necessary, I suppose, for the mythological narratives concerning the gods to have hidden conceptions more venerable always than those apparent. Therefore should anyone propose to us an explanation of the Platonic myths both natural and turned towards the things down here, we would declare them to be entirely led astray

concerning the intention of **[5]** [Plato's] philosophy and [would declare] to be exegetes of the truth in these myths only those of the interpretations, which, in so far as they aim at the divine, immaterial, and separate hypostasis, and by looking to this, both compose and interpret the myths **[10]** proper to the preconceptions in us concerning the gods.

Chapter 5

Since we have therefore both enumerated all these methods of exposition of the Platonic theology and have taught of what sort proper to the truth concerning the gods both the composition and interpretation of the myths belong to, **[15]** let us accordingly conclude this [discussion] regarding it. We shall now consider, in addition to these things, whence and out of which principal dialogues we suppose it necessary to collect the doctrines of Plato concerning the gods, and fixing our regard upon certain models, we shall be able to judge both the authenticity and the inauthenticity of **[20]** those [dialogues] attributed to him.

It is assuredly throughout all the dialogues of Plato, so to say, that the truth concerning the gods pervades and in all were sown, in some more obscurely, in some more clearly, the notions of the very first philosophy, the august, brilliant, and **[p. 24]** supernatural, which rouse to the immaterial and separate substance of the gods those able to participate of them in anyway whatsoever. And just as in each part of all the universe and in nature the demiurge of all in the cosmos established images of the unknowable existence of the gods in order that **[5]** all things would revert to the divine according to their kinship with it, thus I believe the divinely inspired mind of Plato to have woven into all his works concepts concerning the gods and to have left not one without a share of the memory of the gods, in order that it might be possible for legitimate lovers of divinity to raise themselves up by means of all things and to acquire **[10]** a reminiscence of the universal principles.

And if it is necessary to propose amongst the many dialogues those which, for us, best exhibit the mystagogy concerning the gods, I could not do better than mentioning both the *Phaedo* and the *Phaedrus*, the *Symposium*, and the *Philebus*, then also selecting the *Sophist*

[15] and the *Statesman* with these, and [the] *Cratylus* and *Timaeus*, for all these dialogues happen to be full in their entirety, as they say, with the divinely inspired science of Plato. Secondly, I would place with these the myth of the *Gorgias* and that of the *Protagoras*, that which is written concerning the providence **[20]** of the gods in the *Laws*, and that which is handed down to us concerning the Fates, the mother of the Fates, and the revolutions of universe in the tenth book of the *Republic*. And if you wish, in the third rank is placed the *Letters*, from which it is possible to ascend to the science of divinity; for **[p. 25]** in these is found that concerning the three kings and numerous other divine doctrines worthy of the Platonic theory.

Therefore, looking at these doctrines, it is necessary to investigate each rank of gods in those dialogues: to take from the *Philebus* the science concerning the One-Good, that concerning the two very first principles, **[5]** and that of the triad which is revealed by them, for you will find all these things distinctly transmitted by Plato; from the *Timaeus*, the theory concerning the intelligible gods, the divinely inspired sketch of the demiurgic monad, and the most complete truth concerning the **[10]** encosmic gods; from the *Phaedrus*, all the intelligible and intellective genera, and the independent orders of the gods which are situated immediately beyond the celestial revolutions; from the *Statesman*, both the demiurge in the heavens and the two periodic cycles of the universe and their intellective **[15]** causes; from the *Sophist*, all the generation under the [sphere of] the moon and specific nature of [its] appointed gods. Moreover, concerning each of the gods by itself, we will hunt down many holy notions from the *Symposium*, many from the *Cratylus*, and many from the *Phaedo*; for in each **[20]** of these dialogues there is more or less mention of the divine names, by which it is easier for those practised in divinity to seize upon individualities of these gods by means of reason.

It is further necessary to show that each of these doctrines is in harmony with the Platonic first principles and with the mystical traditions of the theologians **[25]**. For all Greek theology is born of the mystagogy of Orpheus, since first Pythagoras **[p. 26]** was instructed by Aglaophamus in the rites concerning the gods, and Plato received in second place the wholly perfect science concerning all things from the writings of both the Pythagoreans and the Orphics. For in the *Philebus*, while referring to the theory of the two forms of first

principles of the Pythagoreans, **[5]** he calls them "those living with the gods"[491] and truly happy. Indeed Philolaus the Pythagorean recorded numerous and wonderful notions concerning these [two principles] for us, celebrating both their common procession into being and their distinct creative activities. In the *Timaeus*, while attempting to better instruct concerning the gods under the lunar sphere and **[10]** the order amongst them, Plato has recourse to the theologians, calling [them] "the children of the gods"[492] and making [them] fathers of the truth concerning the these gods, and finally he teaches with these theologians, according to the procession of the intellective kings, the ranks of the sublunary gods proceeding **[15]** from the universal [gods]. And again in the *Cratylus* [he makes Homer, Hesiod and Orpheus authorities] on the hierarchy of divine ordered realms, while in the *Gorgias* [he makes] Homer [an authority] of the triadic existence of the demiurgic monads. And everywhere, to say in short, Plato delivers teachings concerning the gods in accordance with the principles of the theologians, **[20]** rejecting the tragic element of myth-making while retaining common primary hypotheses with the theologians.

Chapter 6

[p. 27] But perhaps someone might oppose these [arguments] to our undertakings, saying that we do not rightly show that the Platonic theology is scattered everywhere and that we must attempt to reassemble some doctrines out of some dialogues, and other doctrines out of others, as if **[5]** trying earnestly to converge into a single commixture many currents which do not all originate from one and the same source.

For should it be so, we will doubtless be able to refer some doctrines to some works of Plato, others to others, but those doctrines concerning the gods will nowhere have a principle teaching source **[10]**, nor will they be organized in a certain place, presenting the perfect and complete divine genera, by means of an arrangement with reference to one another; but really, we resemble those attempting to constitute the whole out of the parts,

[491] *Philebus*, 16c8.
[492] *Timaeus*, 40d9-e1.

because of the difficulty in conceiving the wholeness before the parts, and [attempting] to weave together a perfection out of the imperfect, since **[15]** in the perfect the imperfect has the primary cause of its coming to be. For while the *Timaeus*, it may be, teaches us the theory concerning the intelligible genera, the *Phaedrus* displays the first ranks of the intellective [genera], transmitting them in order; but where the arrangement of the intellective [genera] according to the intelligible [genera] **[20]** and a certain genesis of the second from the first [are to be found], and in general, in what way the procession of the divine ranks, from a single principle of all things to the multitude of encosmic gods, was produced, and how the intermediate parts between both the One and the complete set [of divine beings] have been filled **[p. 28]** with the generations of the gods according to the connatural and undivided declension of the whole of reality, we will be unable to say.

"And what [is] the venerability," those saying this might further declare, "of the science concerning the divine being jabbered on about in your works? In effect, [it would be] absurd to call these doctrines, being gathered together from many places, Platonic **[5]**, which, "from diverse rivers" [493], as you would say, have been carried back into the philosophy of Plato, and you are unable to show one whole truth concerning the gods by your method." Furthermore, they might equally say that the younger disciples of Plato teach a unique and perfect form of theology, **[10]** having woven [it] into their writings for their students. "But you will perhaps be able to bring forth out of the *Timaeus* the complete theory concerning nature, out of the *Republic* or the *Laws* the most beautiful doctrines concerning ethics, doctrines directing towards one form of philosophy, but neglecting the sole work of Plato **[15]** in which is found the entire Good of the first philosophy, which indeed one might call the sum of all theory, you will deprive yourselves of the most perfect knowledge of beings, unless, exceedingly foolishly, you should wish to make a show on account of mythical fictions, since the analysis of such things **[20]** is in large part filled with verisimilitudes, and further, since these have a subject which is episodic in the Platonic dialogues, such as in the *Protagoras* as far as regards politics and the demonstrations concerning it, in the *Republic* as far as regards justice, or in the *Gorgias* as far as regards prudence. For **[p. 29]** [it is] not on account of the myths themselves but on account of the leading ideas [of his dialogues] that

[493] *Phaedrus*, 235c8-d1.

Plato combines mythical stories with his investigations into ethical doctrines, lest we exercise only the intellective part of our soul by means of contentious arguments, but so that the divine part of the soul by means of a sympathy with more mystical things **[5]** may more perfectly receive knowledge of beings. For by means of other discourses we appear similar to those who are compelled into receiving the truth, while by myths we are affected in an unseen way and we produce the undistorted conceptions, honouring the mystical aspect in them. For which reason I believe Timaeus **[10]** reasonably thinks it fit to delineate the divine genera, always generating the secondary classes from such as are first, following the myth-makers, since [they are] the children of the gods, although they should speak without demonstration. For this form of discourse is not demonstrative, but entheastic, having been invented **[15]** by the ancients not on account of necessity, but on account of persuasion, nor having regard to pure learning but to sympathy with things.

But if you are willing to not only speculate on the causes of the myths, but also [on those] of other theological doctrines, you will find that some of them have been sown among the Platonic **[20]** dialogues for the sake of ethical, and others for the sake of physical reflections. For in the *Philebus*, Plato made the argument concerning both Unlimited and Limit for the sake of pleasure and the life of the mind: in fact, I think the latter are the genera of the former, and it is clear which belongs to which. In the *Timaeus*, one admits the doctrines concerning the intelligible gods for the sake of **[25]** the enquiry into natural causes, because it is above all necessary to know everywhere the images **[p. 30]** from the paradigms, the immaterial paradigms from the material paradigms, the intelligible from the sensible, the separate from the natural forms. But again in the *Phaedrus*, Plato celebrates the supercelestial place, the subcelestial profundity, every genus under this, for the sake of the erotic mania **[5]**, the manner of the souls' reminiscence, and the journeys thither from here. But everywhere, as it is said, the leading idea is either physical or political, while he offers the notions concerning the divine either for the sake of the discovery or perfection of these things. **[10]**

How, therefore, can such a theory as yours still be venerable and supernatural and more worthy than all [other] things to be studied, being neither able to show the whole in itself, nor the perfect, nor the leading idea in a work of Plato, but being destitute of all these

and having acquired forcibly, yet not **[15]** spontaneously, not the genuine arrangement [of Plato's theology], but [one which is] episodic just as in dramatic works?"

Chapter 7

And so those things that someone might dislike concerning the preceding arguments, are of such a sort. But I will offer against such an objection **[20]** a well-balanced and clear defence, and I will say Plato to share amongst every work discourses concerning the gods in accord with the ancient traditions and with the nature of things, sometimes, on account of the cause of the things in question, to ascend thence to the principles of the doctrines **[p. 31]**, "just as to contemplate from a point of observation"[494] the nature of the thing in question, while other times to make the theological science the principal goal; for indeed the argument in the *Phaedrus* [is] concerning the intelligible beauty and the participation extending thence to all of the beautiful things and in the *Symposium* concerning the **[5]** erotic order.

But if it is necessary to behold the perfection and the wholeness of theology as well as the continuity of the whole set [of gods] from first to last in one Platonic dialogue, [it is] perhaps to propose a paradox, one which must be spoken of as evident by those of our [spiritual] family alone; **[10]** one must nevertheless venture to do so, since we have entered into such arguments, and one must mention to those saying these objections that "[it is] the *Parmenides* which you desire and the mysterious notions of this dialogue are the notions you have in mind. For in these pages all the divine genera not only advance in order out of the primary cause but also **[15]** evince their union with one another; and the highest things, connatural with the One and primary, have obtained the unified, simple, and secret form of existence, while the lowest things are multiplied by being subdivided and they increase in number while they diminish in power in comparison to those above, and **[20]** the intermediary things, according to the relationship befitting them, are more composite than their causes, yet simpler than their proper effects. And, to say in an word, all the fundamental

[494] *Republic*, 445c4.

principles of the theological science appear to perfection in this dialogue and all the ranks of the divine are shown in the continuity of their existence; and **[25]** this dialogue is nothing other than the exposition of the generation of the gods and of that which exists in any way whatsoever by means of the ineffable and unknowable cause of the whole of reality.

[p. 32] Thus the *Parmenides* kindles the whole and perfect light of the theological science for the lovers of Plato, and after this the aforementioned dialogues have distributed amongst themselves parts of the mystagogy of the gods, and all, so to speak, partake of the divinely inspired wisdom and rouse our **[5]** innate conceptions concerning the divine. And while it is necessary to ascribe the whole multitude [of conceptions concerning the divine] to the preceding dialogues, [it is] again also [necessary] to reconcile [them] with the single and perfect theory of the *Parmenides*. For in this way I believe we will fasten the more imperfect to the perfect and the parts to the wholes and we will show that "the accounts **[10]** resemble those things of which they are exegetes"[495], according to Timaeus in the work of Plato.

[495] *Timaeus*, 29b4-5.

COMMENTARY

Commentary on chapter 1

Proclus opens the *TP* with much pomp and flourish. Yet this poetic language is not simply ornamental. It serves to impress upon the reader that Plato's theology is a revealed truth, a mystery, and therefore those who wish to know it must undergo an initiation just as those who would participate in celebration of mystery religion. Rather than a physical ceremony, however, this initiation shall take the form of a twelve chapter prolegomenon, which will enable them to properly see the truth behind our common notions concerning the gods (chap. 13-28).

This chapter is indeed replete with the vocabulary of the mystery religions, specifically, that of the Eleusinian mysteries. For example, Plato's theology is referred to as a '**mystagogy**', Plato is referred to as a '**hierophant**', and those who wish to come to experience its '***epopteia***' and to know the '**divine names**' require an '**initiation**'. We need hardly be surprised at this fact, given that Plato himself liberally employs the same type of language throughout his works,[496] giving us the impression that he was keenly aware of what occurred during the Mysteria at Eleusis.[497]

Despite having been born fifteen years after the destruction of the sanctuary at Eleusis,[498] there is strong evidence to suggest that Proclus too was intimately familiar with

[496] See, *inter alia*, *Symposium* 202e-203a; *Phaedo*, 69c; *Phaedrus*, 250c.
[497] The secondary literature confirming Plato's knowledge of the mysteries is now quite substantial. See, *inter alia*, C. Schefer, "Platons Philosophie als Religion", in *Philotheos*, vol. 4 (2004), pp. 222-236.
[498] For a very general overview of the Eleusinian mysteries, see H. Bowden, *Mystery cults of the ancient world* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

this cult. Marinus suggests that he was initiated into the mysteries by Asclepigeneia,[499] the daughter of Plutarch, and the granddaughter of Nestorius, whom we know to have been the hierophant, or chief priest, of the Eleusinian mysteries.[500] Proclus himself also states that he underwent the "most perfect of initiations"[501], a term which, as we know from other late ancient sources, was almost exclusively reserved for the Eleusinian mysteries.[502] Furthermore, Proclus is aware of what modern scholarship has only recently discerned, namely, that initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries was a three-stage process. Proclus describes these three stages as τελετή, μύησις, and ἐποπτεία,[503] which seem to correspond to the three stages of "(1) a pre-liminary initiation, (2) the festival proper of the Mysteria at which the main participants were the *mystai*, and (3) when the Mysteria were celebrated a year later, the *mystai* of the preceding year could attend as *epoptai*, together with the *mystai* of the current year."[504] With all this in mind, in seems safe to say that Proclus was not simply relying on hearsay when he employed the language of mysteries. The analogies he draws between the Platonic theology and the Eleusinian mysteries must therefore be examined with great care, especially given that such an analogy may be grounded in the Platonic corpus itself.

This chapter's initiatory language is the vehicle for a series of carefully chosen metaphors, meant to convey the history of Platonism in general and that of the Platonic theology which Proclus plans to expose. The metaphors are deployed thusly:

1. **5, 6-16**: history of the philosophy of Plato in general

[499] *V. Procli*, 28, 10-15.
[500] *Ibid*., p. 154, note 7. See also K. Clinton, "The Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mysteries", in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, vol. 64, no. 3 (1974), pp. 1-143 at 43.
[501] "ταῖς τελεωτάταις τῶν τελετῶν". *TP*, I.96, 5.
[502] See *S.-W.*, I.96, note 1.
[503] *TP*, IV.77, 9-10. The same order is also given by Hermias at *In Phaedr.*, 186, 13. It is not inconceivable that he too was initiated into the mysteries by Asclepigeneia.
[504] K. Clinton, "Stages of Initiation in the Eleusinian and Samothracian Mysteries", in *Greek Mysteries: The Archaeology and Ritual of Ancient Greek Secret Cults*, ed. M. B. Cosmopoulos (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 50-78 at 51.

2. **5, 16-6, 15**: metaphorical history of the Platonic theology
3. **6, 16-7, 8**: catalogue of the exegetes of the Platonic theology

For the sake of clarity, Proclus begins by comparing the history of Plato's theology to that of the Platonic philosophy in general. The history of the Platonic philosophy is described as having four stages: first, its general revelation according to the will of the gods, second, its perfection at a certain point in time, third, its period of concealment, and finally, its subsequent re-emergence and renaissance. Of these four stages, it is generally understood[505] that the third refers to the New Academy and Middle Platonism,[506] while the fourth refers to the tradition of Neoplatonism, in which Proclus places himself. That to which the first and second stages refer, however, is less clear.

One possible interpretation would be that the first stage refers to Plato's initial discovery of this philosophy, while the second refers to "a period of consolidation and codification of Plato's teaching during the period of the Old Academy"[507]. Such a reading, however, implies that Proclus had not only a very modern understanding of what the Platonic philosophy is, but also that he considered the Old Academy to have been the high point of Platonism.[508] A far more likely solution may be deduced by examining another Neoplatonic history of Platonism, this one written by Proclus' contemporary Hierocles (*fl*. 430). As Photius writes, in Hierocles' *On Providence*,

[505] See *Abb.*, 9, note 5, and *D.-G.* 281, note 4.
[506] This passage is, in fact, the principal piece of evidence concerning Proclus' supposed general disdain for the Middle Platonists (see J. Whitaker, "Proclus and the Middle Platonists" in *Proclus lecteur et interprète*, pp. 277-292). It is highly unlikely, however, that Proclus took all those thinkers whom we now lump under the heading of 'Middle Platonists', including Numenius and Alcinous, to be completely ignorant of the true Platonism. Moreover, he is in fact explicit that this concealment pertained only "to *many* of those professing to love wisdom" (*TP* I.1, 13-14). His aversion to the sceptical Platonism of the New Academy, however, can hardly be disputed.
[507] *D.-G.* 281, n. 4.
[508] For a comprehensive overview of the theories which Proclus ascribes to the members of Old Academy, see L. Tarán, "Proclus and the Old Academy".

> The fifth book attributes to Orpheus and Homer and to all other well-known figures before the epiphany of Plato the Platonic philosophy about the subjects here proposed. The sixth book takes up all who came after Plato, with Aristotle himself at the head, until Ammonius of Alexandria, whose most illustrious pupils were Plotinus and Origen; now as for those after Plato until the philosophers just mentioned, as many as have left a reputation for their wisdom, he proves them all to be unanimous with the judgement of Plato. As for all those who try to break up the unanimity of Plato and Aristotle, he consigns them to the thinkers that are trivial and to be avoided; they have corrupted many of the Platonic accounts, and yet they claim Plato as their teacher, just as is the case with the writings of Aristotle among those who confess to honour his school. And their machinations have no other purpose than to make the Stagirite clash with the son of Ariston. The seventh book properly begins with and treats the school of the aforementioned Ammonius, and accordingly takes up Plotinus and Origen, and also Porphyry and Iamblichus and their followers, as many as were born (as Hierocles himself says) of the sacred race, up to Plutarch of Athens, whom Hierocles describes as his own guide in such doctrines; all these thinkers agree with the philosophy of Plato in its purified form.[509]

Hierocles' history Platonism, so similar to that of Proclus "qu'une coïncidence doit être exclue"[510], holds that the Platonic philosophy was known before Plato, perfected by Plato, only to be subsequently misinterpreted by many, and finally rediscovered by the Neoplatonic tradition. This similarity, however, is unsurprising, given that both were disciples of Plutarch of Athens, and they are therefore likely drawing upon the same general narrative of the history of Platonism taught at his school. We may therefore use the details supplied by Hierocles to fill out Proclus' brief account.

The members of the Athenian school generally equated the Platonic philosophy with the truth, aspects of which had certainly been discovered by humans before the birth of Plato. It is in this vein that Hierocles' fifth book discussed Orpheus and Homer as precursors to Plato, an opinion which Proclus, as his writings everywhere attest, certainly shared. The first stage of Proclus' account is therefore likely the historical tradition of pre-Platonic Platonism embodied in the Homeric and Hesiodic poems, as well as in the Orphic and Pythagorean traditions.

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[509] See Photius, *Bibliotheca*, ed. R. Henry (Paris 1959–77), III.129ff. The translation is that of H. S. Schibli from his book *Hierocles of Alexandria* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 335-336. As *S.-W.* notes at I.131, note 2, a similar history of the Platonic philosophy is also to be found in St. Augustine's *Contra Academicos*, III.17, 37-19, 42.
[510] L. G. Westerink, "Proclus et les présocratiques", in *Proclus lecteur et interprète*, pp. 105-112 at 106.

The second stage, that of the perfection of Platonism, was therefore the Platonism of Plato himself. This perfection, however, was followed by a period of general misinterpretation where the true Platonism became "**invisible to many of those professing to love wisdom**". General misinterpretation, however, does not imply universal. Proclus states plainly that 'many' and not 'all' lost sight of the Platonic philosophy during this period. Hierocles makes the same suggestions, but precises that Aristotle and a string of philosophers following continued to profess forms the true Platonism. As the doctrine of the ὁμοδοξία of Plato and Aristotle was accepted by Proclus as well, he would have doubtless held the Stagirite, as well as certain members of Old Academy and certain Middle Platonists to have been amongst those who 'kept the flame alive', as it were.

The final stage, as we said above, is evidently Neoplatonism. Yet, in this account, Proclus does not precisely define its beginnings. Hierocles, on the other hand, specifies that the great revival of Platonism begins with Ammonius Saccas and his two star pupils, Plotinus and Origen. That Proclus should have held as well that the revival of Platonism begins with Ammonius, rather than Plotinus, and includes Origen, is not improbable. Neoplatonism, one must remember, is a modern designation, one which has come to be defined by the second history which Proclus broadly sketches, that of the Platonic theology.

The history of the Platonic theology, which Proclus describes as a mystagogy concerning the divine beings, closely resembles that of the Platonic philosophy in general. Like the Platonic philosophy, the Platonic theology is simply the finest exposition of long-held conceptions, knowledge of which can be traced back in the Greek world at least to Orpheus.[511] It too also underwent a period of concealment and remerged with the work of "**certain true priests**", who can be none other than the Neoplatonists. We know this because, in the following paragraph, Proclus goes on to rank the greatest exegetes of Plato's theology, which turn out to be the most distinguished members of the Neoplatonic tradition. He places Plotinus in the first rank, as founder of the tradition, followed by Plotinus' disciples Porphyry and Amelius, who were largely responsible for the dissemination and elaboration of their master's teachings. In the third rank he places Porphyry and Amelius' own students, namely, Iamblichus and Theodore of Asine. Finally, at the culmination of this tradition, he places his

[511] See *TP* I.25, 26-26, 18.

own teacher Syrianus and, implicitly, himself. The membership of this honour roll is unsurprising, save perhaps for the absence of such important Neoplatonic figures as Plutarch of Athens and Hierocles. Yet Proclus does recognize the presence of other important thinkers who acted as intermediaries between the pairs of Iamblichus-Theodore and Syrianus-Proclus. They remain unnamed, however, because of the nature of the history which Proclus is recounting.

The two histories of the Platonic theology which Proclus offers us each refer to the discovery of one of two fundamental pillars of said theology by the Neoplatonists. The first historical narrative, which employs the image of a sanctuary, does not specify any particular thinkers because it refers to the general discovery, shared by all Neoplatonists, that the One beyond being is the first principle of Plato's theology. The second, which is given in the form of a list of names, refers to the second pillar of the Platonic theology discovered by the Neoplatonists, namely, the special status of the *Parmenides* as the key to Plato's theology. The seven thinkers mentioned in this catalogue are therefore those who contributed most to the perfection of the theological exegesis of the *Parmenides* which we find fully realized with Syrianus and Proclus.

It may initially seem odd that two of the figures mentioned in Proclus' above discussed historical survey of the Neoplatonic exegeses of the *Parmenides*, namely, Plutarch and the 'Philosopher of Rhodes', are excluded from the list. The former exclusion, however, is likely due to the fact that Proclus considered the Syriano-Proclean interpretation to be simply a refinement of its Plutarchean predecessor, rather than something entirely new. There is no fundamental structural change between these two interpretations, and we should therefore take the later Syriano-Proclean version to be the definitive interpretation of the Athenian school. As for the latter exclusion, it becomes far less problematic if we are to hold, along with Saffrey, that "le « Philosophe de Rhodes » est Théodore d'Asiné."[512]

It is this final stage of the history of the Platonic theology, beginning with Plotinus and defined by henology and the theological exegesis of the *Parmenides*, that we have come

[512] See Saffrey, "Le « Philosophe de Rhodes » est-il Théodore d'Asiné ? Sur un point obscur de l'histoire de l'exégèse néoplatonicienne du Parménide", 75.

to call Neoplatonism. As the first chapter of the *TP* shows us, Proclus too considered this to be a historical category. There remains, however, the broader and vaguer category of the final stage in the history of Platonism in general for Proclus. Whether these two historical categories precisely coincide is unclear. If we are to hold that Proclus and Hierocles are in agreement, then it would seem that they do not.

All the philosophy of Plato, Pericles… to have come forth back into the light [p. 5, 6-16]: We have taken into consideration the detailed construction which Festugière proposes for the first clause of this opening sentence.[513] It is important to note that the subject of this first colon is the philosophy of Plato in general, and that it is the history of this philosophy as a whole, rather than of any specific branch which is related here.

Pericles, dearest of friends to me [1-2]: Little is known of this student to whom Proclus pays the great honour of dedicating the *TP*. Marinus refers to him as "the great Pericles of Lydia, quite a man and a philosopher himself"[514] who went up to the Asclepion with Proclus to pray for the sick Asclepigeneia, daughter of Archiadas. He is also mentioned at *In Parm.*, IV.872, 18-32 as having offered a literal explanation of the difficult passage at *Parmenides*, 131d7-e2, and by Simplicius as having held that there is no formless prime matter according to Plato and Aristotle.[515] Based on these testimonials, we may assume therefore that he was a philosopher of some competence and member of Proclus' inner circle.[516]

shone forth according to the will, similar in form to the Good, of the gods [7-9]: *S.-W.* translates this as "par la grâce de la volonté pleine de bonté des dieux", while *C.-L.* prefers "grazia alla volontà della forma del bene degli dèi superiori". The former attempts to capture

[513] See Fest., xxix.
[514] "τὸν μέγαν Περικλέα τὸν ἐκ τῆς Λυδίας, ἄνδρα μάλα καὶ αὐτὸν φιλόσοφον". *V. Procli*, 29, 16-18.
[515] Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* in CAG, ed. H. Diels, I.227, 23-26.
[516] See also *RE*, "Perikles". Concerning the members of Proclus' inner circle, see *S.-W.*, I.xlix-liv.

the spirit of Proclus' phrase, and the latter, the letter, yet neither is able to furnish us with an accurate translation. Although both recognize that the term ἀγαθοειδῆ is drawn from *Republic*, 509a3, only *Abb.*, it seems, attempts to conserve its original sense: "la volontà, 'di forma simile al Bene', degli esseri superiori". Another possible translation, "according to the boniform will of the gods", is offered by Festugière for an identical formulation at *In Remp.*, II.123, 18.

It is not only the will of the gods which is ἀγαθοειδῆ, but also their providence.[517] Amongst the triads pertaining directly to the gods, we in fact find "the triad similar in form to the One (τὴν ἑνοειδῆ τριάδα)"[518], composed of the Goodness (ἡ ἀγαθότης), the Will (ἡ βούλησις), and the Providence (ἡ πρόνοια) of the gods.

together with the [intelligible] beings [9]: As the truth cannot be consubstantial with all beings, τοῖς οὖσι must here refer specifically to the intelligible beings, in contrast to the particular souls which Proclus names in the following line.

souls revolving around [the world of] generation [10]: The Proclean universe is one of circuits and cycles, so it is unsurprising that he often describes the soul as revolving around something (στρεφομένη), turning towards something (ἐπιστρεφομένη), or turning away from something (ἀναστρεφομένη). To say that the soul is "**revolving around [the world of] generation**" is to say that it is going through a cycle of incarnation.

the hunt for being [14-15]: The *TP* is a rich tapestry of citations and echoes of Plato. This seamless incorporation of Plato's texts into Proclus' own calls to mind the work of great Church Fathers, whose texts were similarly laden, but seldom burdened, with Biblical

[517] See, *inter alia*, *TP*, I.59, 23.
[518] *In Tim.*, I.371, 14-15.

references. Some of these citations and allusions, seem to serve only an ornamental or rhetorical purpose, while others are of significant philosophical import.

The present citation from the *Phaedo* is drawn from a passage where Socrates is discussing the way in which the body hinders our pursuit of philosophy, which he metaphorically describes as 'a hunt for being'.[519] Commentators, both ancient and modern, seem to have very little to say concerning this curious metaphor.[520] Proclus employs it again at *TP*, I.40, 9-10 when describing Platonic dialectic.[521] The linking of Platonic dialectic and 'the hunt for being' may signal that "**those… seeking eagerly to take part in the hunt for being**" but who are unable to do so (i.e. the faux-Platonists of the New Academy and others), may be principally hindered, in Proclus' eyes, by their lack of the true dialectical science.

the mystagogy concerning the same divine beings [17]: It is now, with the second clause, that we begin discussing a specific branch of the Platonic philosophy, namely, the Platonic theology. This theology is referred to as a μυσταγωγία, literally 'a leading of an initiate (μύστης)', and constitutes, according to Proclus, an initiation into the mysteries in which truths about the gods are revealed. As several analogies will be drawn in the following two sentences between the rites of the Eleusinian mysteries and the history of the Platonic theology, it would be prudent to take a moment to go over the sequence of events which occurred in the sanctuary on the night of *Boedromion* 21, the climax of the festival. Although necessarily speculative, the following reconstruction nevertheless gives us a good idea of basic structure of the ceremony.

The secret rites took place in the evening, when darkness had fallen. Those who were to be initiated that year, each blindfolded and guided by a mystagogue (a complete initiate) filed into the sanctuary, walked past a sacred rock, and were finally led up onto the steps of

[519] Plato employs the same metaphor several lines earlier at 66a3.
[520] M. Dixsaut, for example, writes that "Chercher à savoir, c'est chercher à capturer ce qui est, et qui étant invisible et insensible, exige qu'on le traque avec toutes les ressources du raisonnement." Plato, *Phédon*, trans. with notes by M. Dixsaut (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), 331, note 81. She also signals the study of Plato's hunting metaphors by C. J. Classen, entitled *Untersuchungen zu Platons Jagdbildern*, Berlin: Akademie, 1960.
[521] Passage cited *supra*.

the Telesterion, the principal, colonnaded building within the sanctuary. Blindly, they imitate Demeter in her search for her lost daughter Kore, while the master of ceremonies, the hierophant, sounds a gong to summon the goddess. While those to be initiated remained blindfolded, the ἐπόπται (second-year initiates) were treated to a dramatic reenactment of the reuniting of Demeter and Kore, with the roles of the goddesses being assumed by their respective priestesses. At the end of their reunion, the two Goddesses and Eubuleus, the guide of Kore, then entered the Telesterion. The initiates were then un-blindfolded while standing before the Telesterion. Its doors then opened and the hierophant emerged, silhouetted against a brilliant light streaming from the interior of the building. The initiates entered, passing from darkness into an immense space blazing with extraordinary light, coming from thousands of torches held by the ἐπόπται. This was the so-called 'great light (μέγα φώς)' of the mysteries.[522] But these torches would not have been the only source of light emanating from the Telesterion. Within the center of the building stood a smaller structure which served as a platform for a series of illuminated 'sacred images (ἱερά φάσματα)', which were likely hollow statues with light sources within them.[523] One can only imagine the bizarre forms the light cast from these statutes, and it was only by advancing into the Telesterion that the initiates would have been able to see the statues themselves clearly. After the current year's initiates had left the Telesterion, a special vision was then revealed to the ἐπόπται. This vision was likely that of the display of an ear of grain and the reenactment of the birth of child. [524]

on a sacred pedestal [17]: See *Phaedrus*, 254b7. The choice of this citation is anything but arbitrary. This "**sacred pedestal**" has long been suspected to be an allusion to the smaller

[522] See K. Clinton, "Epiphany in the Eleusinian Mysteries", in *Illinois Classical Studies*, vol. 29 (2004), pp. 85-109 at 95-96.
[523] *Ibid*., 97-100.
[524] This reconstruction is based on that provided by K. Clinton in his article "The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis", in *Greek sanctuaries: new approaches*, ed. N. Marinatos and R. Hägg (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 110-124 at 118-119.

structure within the Telesterion which served as a platform, on which extraordinary illuminated images were mounted during the rites.[525]

The *Phaedrus* is cited or alluded to seventeen times in the course of chapters 1-7, placing it just ahead of the *Timaeus* (fourteen citations or allusions over the same span). This lead, however slim, has been taken by Tim Buckley as an indication that it is the exegesis of the *Phaedrus*, rather than that of the *Parmenides*, which determines the catalogue of Neoplatonists given in the first chapter. According to Buckley, Proclus holds that "the hermeneutical possibilities of the [Platonic] texts alter according to an established temporal cycle."[526] As he offers no direct citation to support this claim, one can only assume that he is referring to the statement that "**in the prescribed period of time**" the Platonic theology will, with the aid of the Neoplatonists, once again come to the fore. It is, however, a great leap from this ambiguous phrase to the idea that Plotinus inaugurates a new world cycle in which the theological interpretation of Plato has finally become possible.

The problems associated with Buckley's interpretation are numerous, and range from minor doctrinal details to major structural problems which it imposes on the *TP*. For example, one might ask why, if the list is indeed a list of the best exegetes of the *Phaedrus* palinode (implying that it is the measure of Plato's theology), does Proclus then devote so much space in the prolegomenon to the exegesis of the *Parmenides* and so little to that of the *Phaedrus*? At the cost of such crippling interpretative difficulties, one would imagine that Buckley's interpretation would be able to shed a great deal of light on the structure of the list. Yet, much to the reader's dismay, it yields no more than that Iamblichus and Theodore may have been paired together because they agreed upon the true nature of the sub-celestial vault, and that Plutarch may have been excluded because he *may* have disagreed with Syrianus over the interpretation of *Phaedrus*, 248a2-3.[527] As for the pairing of Porphyry and Amelius, Buckley openly admits that his interpretation is at a loss to explain it.[528] Few would be

[525] Clinton, "Epiphany in the Eleusinian Mysteries", 99.
[526] T. Buckley, "A historical cycle of hermeneutics in Proclus' *Platonic theology*" in *Reading Plato in Antiquity*, ed. H. Tarrant and D. Baltzly (London: Duckworth, 2006), pp. 125-134 at 126.
[527] Buckley, "A historical cycle of hermeneutics in Proclus' *Platonic theology*", 131-132. Buckley's argument is based entirely on what he believes to be an allusion to the above mentioned passage from the *Phaedrus* at *V. Procli*, 21, 22-36.
[528] *Ibid*., 132.

willing to threaten the coherence of the entire *TP* for such negligible insights, and we may therefore leave Buckley's interpretation safely aside.

With regard to the abundance of citations from the *Phaedrus*, it seems far more likely that Proclus draws so heavily upon this dialogue in the opening chapters of the *TP* because of his ideas regarding the true source of theological knowledge. In the *Phaedrus* palinode, especially at 249e-250c, Plato, by means of echoes unmistakable to the educated Athenian ear, draws an analogy between the soul's experiences with the gods and the terrestrial experience of the Eleusinian mysteries. The mysteries are therefore an image of the soul's true existence in the company of the gods. Proclus extends this analogy by adding the Platonic theology thereto. The description of the soul's initiation into the mysteries and its viewing of the "blissful revelations"[529] are interpreted by him as an analogy for the soul's union with the gods.[530] This union, as he writes in the third chapter, is the source of all true theological knowledge. The experience of the mysteries is therefore, for Proclus, an image of the divine union.

complete and unshakeable apparitions [p. 6, 3-5]: See *Phaedrus*, 250b8-c3. This is another passage from the *Phaedrus* which likely alludes to the 'sacred images' which were illuminated atop the central structure within the Telestrion.[531]

guide and hierophant [6-7]: The first title, προηγεμών, seems to refer to a sacred office in certain ecstatic, perhaps Bacchic, mystery cults.[532] The second, as was said above, was originally that of the chief priest of the Eleusinian mysteries,[533] and was later adopted by those presiding over other mystery cults. With regard to the present mystagogy, therefore, Plato assumes the chief sacred office.

[529] "εὐδαίμονα φάσματα". *Phaedrus*, 250c3.
[530] *TP*, IV.29, 14-30, 4. See also *In Phaedr*., 186, 7-20, esp. 11-12.
[531] Clinton, "Epiphany in the Eleusinian Mysteries", 97-100.
[532] See Demosthenes, *De corona*, 260, 6.
[533] For a detailed examination of the functions of the Eleusinian hierophant, see "The Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mysteries", 10-47.

And thus, by means of Plato… illuminations of divine apparitions [7-15]: A careful analogy is drawn here between the mysteries and the history of the Platonic theology, which is nearly identical to that of Plato's philosophy as whole. Like the hierophant of the Eleusinian mysteries, Plato first allowed the mysteries to shine forth, and then replaced them "**safely within the innermost sanctuaries**", which is perhaps an allusion to the central structure within the Telesterion. We know that the sacred images and objects were held at Eleusis throughout the year, because they were specifically brought to the City Eleusinion at the beginning of the festival, and were taken back during the procession to Eleusis for the main ceremonies.[534] Where these objects and images were housed at Eleusis is unknown. There is some debate as to exactly what type of structure the central structure within the Telestrion was, whether it was simply a platform for the illuminated sacred images, or whether it was indeed an independent, walled structure which the hierophant and other priests could enter and exit.[535] Were the latter the case, then it is quite possible that this structure served to house the sacred objects and images when they were not in use. The housing of the sacred images within this internal structure in the Telesterion would have allowed the uninitiated to frequent the sanctuary during the rest of the year without fear that they see what was not meant to be seen. In the same way, the Platonic theology, after its initial exposition during Plato's lifetime in his teachings, was concealed by him within the most difficult passages and myths of the dialogues. Here, like the sacred images hidden in the heart of the Telestrion, it was "**ignored by many of those entering**".

Yet, just as in the Eleusinian mysteries, where after "**a prescribed period of time**" (i.e. during the next festival) and "**through certain true priests**" (i.e. the priests of the mysteries), the sacred images would shine again, so too would the Platonic theology once again come to the fore. In the case of this theology, the true priests are evidently the Neoplatonists, who are depicted as the rightful successors to the Plato's hierophantic office. They, like the Eleusinian priests (as the Neoplatonic hagiographies attest) were considered to

[534] See Clinton, "The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis", 116.
[535] Clinton, "Epiphany in the Eleusinian Mysteries", 93-95.

have lived lives befitting this priestly status. It was thanks to them that the Platonic theology would once again become known, "**as far as was possible**"[536].

during the sacred rites [8-9]: Festugière's proposed correction of placing an ἐν between οἷον and ἁγίοις (Fest. xxx) seems unnecessary. We agree with *S.-W.* that ἁγίοις here has a temporal sense. See *S.-W.*, I.6, note 2.

these spiritual guides to the Platonic *epopteia* [16]: The word ἐποπτεία, meaning literally "a viewing", is an untranslatable technical term which refers to the final step of initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries. The process of complete initiation into the mysteries is described as follows by Kevin Clinton:

> The Eleusinian preliminary *myesis* took place within certain periods in advance of the Lesser and Greater Mysteria, and the initiate apparently had the option of receiving it either in the Eleusinian sanctuary or in the City Eleusinion. Having completed this rite, the candidate was now a *mystēs*, no longer *amyetos*. His sponsor, a member of the Eumolpidai or Kerykes, performed it, *emyēse*, i.e. completed the process of making him a *mystēs*... Now and during the rest of the rite, the *teletē*, he was *myoumenos*, undergoing the experience of a *mystēs*; at the end of the *teletē* he was "initiated as *mystēs*" (*memyēmenos*/*mytheis*). A year later he could be *epopteuōn*, participating as *epoptēs*; at the end, he was "one who has completed the *epopteia*" (*epōpteukōn*). While undergoing either rite he could be called, less specifically, "the one being initiated," *teloumenos*, and at the end, "initiated" *tetelesmenos*.[537]

The "**Platonic *epopteia***" must therefore be the highest stage of initiation into the mysteries of the Platonic theology. Those who guide the initiates through to this final stage are the "**spiritual guides**", the ἐξηγηταί. Proclus here plays on the polysemy of the word ἐξηγητής,

[536] Perhaps an allusion to the decline of Hellenic customs and religion to which Proclus bore witness during his own life.
[537] Clinton, "Stages of Initiation in the Eleusinian and Samothracian Mysteries", 60.

which means at once someone skilled in interpreting religious phenomena (dreams, oracles, omens, etc.), but also someone with a knowledge of sacred rites or customs, a sort of spiritual guide.[538] There was in fact a group of priests involved with the Eleusinian mysteries who were referred to as the ἐξηγηταί, but their exact role is uncertain.[539] The catalogue of Neoplatonists that follows is therefore a catalogue of those whose correct exegeses of Plato's writings allows them to serve as ἐξηγηταί, spiritual guides, to the mysteries at hand.

just as statues to us [22]: This metaphor from the *Republic* seems to have been chosen for its beauty alone. That Proclus is comparing Iamblichus and Theodore to the unjust and the just man (for this is the context of the metaphor of the two statues at 361d5), is difficult to imagine.

even if indeed there were certain others following after these men [23-24]: Here we find Proclus' recognition of the intermediaries who existed between pairs of Iamblichus-Theodore of Asine and Syrianus-Proclus.

Bacchic frenzy [p. 7, 1]: Another reference to the mystery cults, but this time to the ecstatic Bacchic cults rather than to the cult of Eleusis.

our leader in all things beautiful and good [4]: This undoubtedly refers to Proclus' teacher, Syrianus.

[538] See the relevant entry in the *LSJ*.
[539] See Clinton, "The Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mysteries", 89-94.

To this man… all time would not suffice [9-10]: On this literary commonplace, found throughout the works of Antiquity, see *S.-W.*, I.131, note 3.

of these blessed sights [14]: No doubt an allusion to the "blessed sight (μακαρίαν ὄψιν)" of *Phaedrus*, 250b6-7. The "**blessed sights**" to which Proclus refers are the intelligible gods.[540]

call upon the gods themselves to kindle the light of truth [17-18]: This final clause, which begins a traditional invocation of the gods before embarking upon theological speculation, naturally contains an echo of the famous prayer at *Timaeus*, 27d1 For a list of prayers in Plato and the Platonic tradition up to Proclus, see *S.-W.*, I.7, note 4.

This line is also reminiscent of *Timaeus*, 39b4, where the Demiurge is described as having kindled the light which we call the sun so that it might shine throughout the whole of the heavens.

those attendants and worshippers of the gods [19]: These are evidently the souls and intermediary beings who are members of the corteges of the gods in the *Phaedrus*.

who participates but briefly in good sense [22-23]: Again, a line drawn from the prayer in the *Timaeus* to supplement Proclus' own prayer for aid.

[540] See *TP*, IV.29.

with kindness and having come propitiously [8]: Thus Socrates implores the god of love to behave towards him at the close of the palinode. This invocation therefore fits well with the citations from the *Timaeus*.

altar [9]: On the polysemy of the word ἑστία, see the appropriate entry in the *LSJ*, as well as *S.-W.*, I.8, note 2. Here it seems to imply the Platonic corpus itself, which is the gateway to real theology.

up the steep path of this theory [10]: All previous translators, with the exception of Taylor, take τὸ ἄναντες as "the summit" of this theory. In the citation from the *Phaedrus* to which this word undoubtedly alludes, however, ἀνάντης means not the summit (ἄκρος), but the steep climb up to summit.[541] Proclus also employs the turn of phrase ἄναντες τῆς θεωρίας at *In Remp*., I.82, 2, where it is translated by Robert Lamberton as "the uphill path of contemplation"[542]. This translation seems eminently sensible. With this metaphor, Proclus is evidently referring to the difficulty of Plato's theology.

Commentary on chapter 2

In the second chapter, Proclus presents us with what might be considered the syllabus of his course on the Platonic theology. In this syllabus, he first sets out "**to explain the method of instruction to be set forth**" and "**to define the preparation of those who would be in**

[541] "ἄκραν ἐπὶ τὴν ὑπουράνιον ἀψῖδα πορεύονται πρὸς ἄναντες". *Phaedrus*, 247a7-b1.
[542] *Proclus the Successor on poetics and the Homeric poems: essays 5 and 6 of his* Commentary on the Republic of Plato, trans. R. Lamberton (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012).

attendance". The contents of his course and his method of instruction are outlined, respectively, in the second and third paragraphs of this chapter.

The course's contents, as he states in the second paragraph, will be divided into three parts. The first part will involve "**collecting together all the common notions concerning the gods**". This, as we have shown above, evidently refers to chapters 13-29 of the first book of the *TP*. The second part involves an enumeration of "**the universal orders of the gods**" and a determination of their "**individualities and processions**", both of which are undertaken by Proclus throughout Books III-V of the *TP*. The final part, as we discussed earlier, which begins in Book VI, was to be a similar classification of the hypercosmic and encosmic gods mentioned by Plato. The method of instruction outlined in the third paragraph is essentially a list of the four theological methods, which have already been amply discussed by us above.

Following the course's contents, Proclus details what one might consider its prerequisites. With these he makes it very clear that this is what we might consider a graduate seminar rather than an introductory course. By way of a propaedeutic, the members of this seminar are required to have, first and foremost, a thorough general paideia. The classical Greek paideia was structured around the three concepts of nature (φύσις), instruction (μάθησις or δίδαξις), and exercise (γυμνάσιον or ἄσκησις),[543] which are developed by Proclus,[544] based on a passage from the *Parmenides*,[545] into the paedeutic triad of good nature (εὐφυΐα), experience (ἔμπειρος), and ardor (προμύθιον).[546] The necessity of the student having a good nature, i.e. one which is both receptive to teaching and responsive to exercise, is fairly self-evident from a Greek perspective. The notion that all children are educable is a wholly modern notion. As for instruction and exercise, the Hellenistic model of paideia still prevalent in Proclus' time consisted largely of an education in grammar, rhetoric, music, and mathematics, along with some gymnastic training. This curriculum, however, was

[543] On the triad of the classical paideia, see E. De Strycker, *Plato's Apology of Socrates. A literary and philosophical study with a running commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 54, note 16.
[544] See *In Parm*., 926, 7-928, 27.
[545] *Parmenides*, 133b-c.
[546] Sallustius offers a similar, though somewhat less precise, list of requirements for prospective students of theology, asking that they be well educated, good and intelligent by nature, and acquainted with certain universal opinions. See *De deis*, chap. 1.

already recognized as inadequate to the needs of serious students of philosophy at the time of Aristotle. Proclus, therefore, asks that his students, in addition to possessing a general paideia, to "be versed in many things"[547], or more specifically, versed in the subjects of ethics, logic, physics, and advanced mathematics.[548] All of these subjects were likely taught within the Neoplatonic schools themselves, as Proclus' commentary on Euclid's *Elements* or Simplicius' commentaries on Aristotle's logical and physical works, as well as on Epictetus' *Enchiridion*, seem to attest.

Once these had been mastered, the prospective student of theology could then take up the fifth perquisite, namely, the study of the Platonic philosophy proper, including the vitally important subject of Platonic dialectic. Once this too had been mastered, Proclus states that the student is ready to attend his course on the Platonic theology. He concludes his syllabus with an evocation of the Chaldean triad of love (ἔρως), truth (ἀληθεία), and faith (πίστις), which is at once the counterpart and summit of the paedeutic triad, and the gateway to theological learning. On the one hand, the recognition of our natural abilities strengthens our faith in the divine goodness, while our intellectual experience gives us a respect for the truth, and our ardor for study becomes a love of learning.[549] It is also because of a love of study, and knowledge of the truth here below stems from the truth above, that we will find the faith to no longer concerning ourselves with any other branch of learning except the highest, which is theology.[550]

not only our words but especially [21]: Festugière (Fest. xxx) holds, quite reasonably, that there is here an ellipsis of μόνον and καὶ. As it makes logical senses, we have translated accordingly.

[547] "πολλῶν αὐτὸν ἔμπειρον εἶναι". *In Parm*., 926, 13.
[548] See *In Parm*., 926, 19-20; *TP*, I.10, 11-11, 7; also *In Crat*., sec. II.
[549] *In Parm*., 927, 18-29.
[550] *TP*, I.11, 15ff. On this triad, see Ph. Hoffmann, "La Triade Chaldaïque *erōs*, *alēthia*, *pistis* : de Proclus à Simplicius", in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 459-489.

high-minded [22]: In the *Phaedrus*, this term is used to refer to one of the qualities of the true art of rhetoric, alongside "perfect execution (τελεσιουργός)". Plato's philosophy is evidently, in Proclus' eyes, an example of the true art of rhetoric.

just as during the rites [p. 9, 2]: A reference to telestic practices of some mystery cults, where a fitting vessel (i.e. one with a sympathetic link) was chosen to receive the divine presence.

the meanings in each case and the values of the fundamental propositions [11]: Proclus will therefore attempt to uncover the meanings of each of the "**common notions concerning the gods**", as well as the value of each "**fundamental proposition**" (here translating ἀξίωμα) from which we may reason deductively concerning the gods.

universal orders of the gods [12]: Although all previous translations take τὰς ὅλας τάξεις to mean 'the whole of the orders' of the gods, it seems far more likely that Proclus is here indicating the orders of universal gods of which he will treat in Books II-V, as opposed to the orders of particular gods which make their appearance in Book VI. This distinction between the universal gods (i.e. the intelligible, intelligible-intellective, and intellective gods) and the particular gods (i.e. the hypercosmic, hypercosmic-encosmic, and encosmic gods) is made fairly clear at the beginning of Book VI:

> And just as in the case of the unparticipated and universal existences there is this intelligible genus in itself, there is besides, third from this, the intellective [genus], and there is also in between the same intelligible and intellective [genera] that [genus]

> celebrated as uniting both, in the same way amongst these ranks of particular [gods] there exists in the first place the individuality of the hypercosmic gods.[551]

Again, in the *IT*, Proclus explains that while there can be no hierarchy amongst the henads, "a god is more universal as it is nearer to the One, more particular as it is more distant."[552]

Were it indeed the case that Proclus intended to treat of *all* the orders of the gods in the middle portion of the *TP*, then what are we to make of Book VI? Does it not at least begin the treatment of the hypercosmic and encosmic gods which ought to comprise the final portion of the *TP*?

the theses of the theologians [15]: In this case, ὑποθέσεις implies what we would now consider to be a 'thesis' rather than a 'hypothesis'. The theologians to whom Proclus is referring are those such as Orpheus, Musaeus, Homer, and Hesiod.

the universal genera of the ranks of the divine [18-19]: In other words, Proclus proposes to show in which divine γένος and διάκοσμος (which we are here translating as 'rank') each of the individual, particular gods mentioned by Plato, whether the Zeus of the *Phaedrus* or the Aphrodite of the *Symposium*, may be situated.

For prior to such a roving study… and the truth residing in them [22-23]: Echoes of *Parmenides*, 135c8-136c5.

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[551] "Καὶ ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀμεθέκτων καὶ ὁλικῶν ὑποστάσεων ἔστι μὲν αὐτὸ καθ' αὑτὸ τὸ νοητὸν γένος, ἔστι δὲ ἄλλο τρίτον ἀπὸ τούτου τὸ νοερόν, ἔστι δὲ καὶ τὸ συναγωγὸν ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν νοητῶν ὁμοῦ καὶ νοερῶν ἀνυμνούμενον, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἐν τοῖς μερικοῖς τούτοις διακόσμοις προϋπάρχει μὲν καθ' αὑτὴν ἡ τῶν ὑπερκοσμίων θεῶν ἰδιότης". *TP*, VI.11, 9-15.

[552] *IT*, prop. 126.

investigating scientifically through accounts of causation [25]: One of Proclus' rare citations of the *Meno*, a dialogue which he cites only once over the course of the *TP*.

and finally, discovering the clear meaning… by our auditors with the things [encountered in reality] [p. 10, 1-5]: I.e. deciphering the enigmatic passages in Plato by means of other Platonic texts, and examining the concord of the content of what Plato's says in his texts and lived reality.

the ways of education [p. 11, 5-6]: As *S.-W.* points out (I.11, note 1), in the *Timaeus* this statement refers to mathematics. Proclus is therefore alluding with this quotation to the mathematical education that his prospective students must possess.

the divine being [7]: This, of course, cannot refer to the being of the gods. It must instead therefore refer to the being *qua* being which forms the most fundamental level of ontological reality.

under the guidance of the intellect [8-9]: Festugière (Fest. xxx) bids us to insert μεταβάς or ἀναβάς after the νοῦν, but I cannot see how either of these would improve the sense of the clause.

by intellection assisted by reason [11]: The intellection (νόησις) mentioned here is that of the partial intellect (μερικός νοῦς), while the λόγος is the intellect in us. For a careful exegesis of this line by Proclus, see *In Tim*., I, 243, 26-248, 6.[553]

opening the depths of his soul through love [13-14]: See *Or. Chald.*, fr. 46.

a coryphaeus [25-26]: In the *Theaetetus* Socrates compares the real philosophers to coryphaei, because like leaders of dramatic choruses, these philosophers speak for the rest. The real philosopher, according to Socrates, is disdainful of worldly matters and instead turns his attention to theoretical pursuits such as geometry and astronomy. The philosopher which Proclus describes also leaves aside the mundane (he does not "**look away to other things**") and applies himself wholly "**to that state uniting both activity and rest**", i.e. to contemplation.

Commentary on chapter 3

Proclus now wishes to speak "**concerning theology itself**", "**concerning the methods thereof**", and finally "**concerning the theological models**" which Plato accepts and rejects. The first of these three points will be treated in chapter 3, while the second two will be dealt with the following chapter. To begin his treatement of theology itself, he first offers the

[553] See also D. G. MacIsaac, "The Nous of the Partial Soul in Proclus' *Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato*".

broadest possible definition of the science of theology, which is, according to him, the treatment of the gods as the first principles. Because of their causal role, these first principles have often, according to Proclus, been confused with the five causal principles in ontological reality (i.e. Being, Life, Intellect, Soul, and Body). They have been considered to be bodies by some, souls by others, intellects by others. In a parallel text from the *In Parm*.,[554] Proclus names those schools of thought which have exemplified each of these positions. The Stoics, he holds, were the champions of corporeal gods, while Anaxagoras offered a theory in which god resembled a soul,[555] and the Peripatetics held that the highest principle was the Intellect. Each of these theories, however, as Proclus argues, is inadequate to the true conception of the divine, which surpasses all five of the causal principles.

In the most basic form of theology, corporeal things are taken to be the first principles. Theology, in this form, is therefore no more than a branch of physics. Should we make physics the science of first principles, however, we would, as both Plato and Aristotle made clear, be immediately confronted with the problem of motion. Corporeal things clearly do not have the capacity for self-motion, yet we find them moving. Historically, Proclus tells us, this idea led to the positing of self-moving, incorporeal entities as both the source of this motion in the material world and therefore, as first principles. These entities are commonly called 'souls', and therefore theology in this second form has become synonymous with psychology. This theory, however, is itself superseded by that one which posits an incorporeal principle, which, unlike a soul, is entirely separate from the corporeal world. This new first principle is referred to by the Neoplatonists as the Intellect, and therefore, in its third form, we may say that theology has become noology. There is, however, a final step which may be taken. This is to place the first principle beyond this divine Intellect, and even the scope of Life and of Being itself, so that it may only be referred to as the 'One' or the 'Good'. Theology, in this sense, is elevated to the status of henology/agathology, the study of the highest possible first principle.

[554] See *In Parm*., 1212, 7ff.
[555] This interpretation of the Anaxagorean *Nous* as a soul is doubtless based upon Aristotle's interpretation of the same subject at *De anima*, 404b1-6. See "Proclus et les présocratiques", 109.

It was Plato who was the first to clearly announce that the gods were beyond the Intellect, and, indeed, beyond being. His theology makes it clear that the other supposed first principles, be they bodies, souls, or intellects, are all dependent upon a single principle of unity. But how is it that Plato came to have such knowledge of the divine? Proclus holds that it was by means of an intense introspective effort, whose theoretical basis he briefly outlines.

The Proclean corpus contains a number of complex, and often seemingly contradictory analyses of the human cognitive faculties. According to the broadest possible survey,[556] however, we are possessed of six cognitive faculties: sensation (αἴσθησις), imagination (φαντασία), opinion (δόξα), discursive reason (διανοία), intellection (νόησις), and, finally, that which Proclus refers to as the '**summit**' or '**flower**'[557] of the intellect. Noology, which, according to the Platonic philosophy, is second in dignity only to theology, assumes that we can have a direct apprehension (καταληπτικός)[558] of the intelligible Forms in the Intellect by means of the direct intuition (ἐπιβολή)[559] of our faculty of intellection. Proclus argues that this structure is paralleled on a higher level, whereby the highest of our cognitive powers, the summit, or flower, of the intellect is able to have a direct apprehension of the processions and individualities of the divine henads by uniting itself with them. Existence, as we have discussed, is for Proclus synonymous with unity, and is the presence of the first principle in all reality. It is *qua* existence, therefore, that we are identical to the henads, and it is only by turning inwards and becoming "**acquainted with this in so far as it is possible**" that we may unite with them. It is this union (ἕνωσις) with the divine which is,

[556] The list of six faculties is drawn from *De decem dub.*, 3, 1-4, 12. Other passages of this sort, however, such as the present passage from the *TP* (see also *In Tim.*, I.243, 26-252, 10; *De prov.*, 17, 27-32; *In Alc.*, 247, 12-14; *In Parm.*, 955, 3-7 and 48, 17-19), list only five faculties, excluding imagination from the list. Yet, at *In. Euc.*, 49-57, Proclus seems to suggest that imagination is the intermediary between sensation and discursive reason. On the question of the relationship between imagination and opinion, see P. Lautner, "The Distinction between ΦΑΝΤΑΣΙΑ and ΔΟΞΑ in Proclus' *In Timaeum*", in *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, vol. 52, no. 1 (2002), pp. 257-269.

[557] 'The flower of the intellect' is an expression which Proclus draws from the Chaldean Oracles. See, for example, *Or. Chald.*, frag. 1, 1: "There is an object of intellection, such as must be discerned by the flower of the intellect." For a study of the use of this expression by Proclus, see C. Guérard, "L'*hyparxis* de l'âme et la fleur de l'intellect dans la mystagogie de Proclus", in *Proclus lecteur et interprète*, pp. 335-350.

[558] The idea of the direct apprehension of an object of thought by the mind (*katalēpsis*) goes back to the Old Stoa.

[559] On the history of this idea, including its use by Plotinus, see F. Lortie, "Intuition et pensée discursive : sur la fonction de l'ἐπιβολή dans les *Ennéades* de Plotin", in *Laval théologique et philosophique*, vol. 66, no. 1 (2010), pp. 45-59.

for Proclus, the source of real knowledge, including that concerning the gods themselves. Plato's theological knowledge, therefore, was the result of just such a union.

In the closing portions of this chapter, Proclus describes the steps in a contemplative exercise which culminates in a union with the gods. Each of the following steps is to be accomplished "**with eyes shut**":

1. At the first stage of mediation, the soul turns away from the material world towards itself; it casts away all external multiplicity and its own multifarious powers (i.e. sensation, imagination, ratiocination, etc.).
2. At the level of profound meditation, the soul discovers within itself its own being and its λόγοι (i.e. the Forms of all things within itself).
3. At a yet deeper level of meditation, the soul finds it is no longer alone but that the Intellect and all the τάξεις of beings are within it. In effect, the soul contains all of ontological reality within itself.
4. At the deepest level of meditation, the soul surpasses ontological reality and contemplates the gods themselves. This culmination of the meditative experience constitutes unification.
5. The soul then descends back into the world of multiplicity, ending the meditative exercise.

The type of structured contemplative or meditative practice which Proclus seems to be describing bears a striking resemblance to certain Eastern spiritual practices, and it is more than likely that forms of what we would now consider meditative exercises were both taught and practiced at the Neoplatonic Academy, much like in a Buddhist monastery or a Hindu

ashram.[560] That all practitioners would have achieved the deepest level of mediation is unlikely. Marinus tells us that Proclus

> was inspired by Bacchus concerning the first principles and was an eyewitness to the truly blessed visions there above, no longer computing by discursive reason and by demonstration their science, but just as by sight, thanks to the simple direct intuitions of his active intellect, contemplating the paradigms contained in the divine Intellect.[561]

According to this description, Marinus believed Proclus to have achieved at least the third level of meditation. Marinus nowhere mentions the word ἕνωσις, which might perhaps give us the impression that "where Plotinus is a mystic, Proclus seems to know only a theory of mysticism"[562]. That neither Proclus nor his disciples describe or even enumerate his experiences of divine union should not, however, be taken as conclusive evidence that it was generally considered that he had had no such experiences. On the contrary, the technical description of the steps to divine union which Proclus provides gives the impression that divine union was indeed "much more routine and predictable than the breathtaking mystical trips of Plotinus"[563].

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[560] The similarity between Neoplatonic and Eastern spiritual practices has been noted by J. Dillon in his article "The Platonic Philosopher at Prayer", in *Metaphysik und Religion : zur Signatur des spätantiken Denkens ; Akten des internationalen Kongresses vom 13.-17. März 2001 in Würzburg*, ed. T. Kobusch and M. Erler (Munich: Saur, 2002), pp. 279-296. Dillon also notes (p. 293) that in contrast to Eastern spiritualties such as Hinduism and Buddhism, the Neoplatonists did not seem to write meditation manuals. He rightly concludes that such writings were simply foreign to the Hellenic religious tradition, and therefore the Neoplatonists must have transmitted these contemplative practices, like their theurgic rituals, orally from master to disciple. The description which Proclus here offers us is therefore about as accurate a portrait of these exercises as we may therefore hope to attain.

[561]" περὶ τὰ πρῶτα ἐβάκχευε καὶ αὐτόπτης ἐγίνετο τῶν ἐκεῖ μακαρίων ὄντως θεαμάτων, οὐκέτι μὲν διεξοδικῶς καὶ ἀποδεικτικῶς συλλογιζόμενος αὐτῶν τὴν ἐπιστήμην, ὥσπερ δὲ ὄψει, ἁπλαῖς ἐπιβολαῖς ταῖς <τε> νοεραῖς ἐνεργείαις θεώμενος τὰ ἐν τῷ θείῳ νῷ παραδείγματα." *V. Procli*, 22, 7-12.

[562] J. Rist, "Mysticism and Transcendence in Later Neoplatonism", in *Hermes*, vol. 92 (1964), pp. 213-225 at 220.

[563] Chlup, *Proclus: an Introduction*, 183.

Thanks to Porphyry's rather crass inventory of his master's mystical experiences,[564] Neoplatonic spirituality has often been confounded with Judaeo-Christian mysticism, in which mystical experience is seen as an extremely rare election. Unitive experience as described by Proclus, however, seems far more akin to certain Eastern traditions, where the highest levels of meditative experience are considered to be attainable by any of those willing and able to undertake the life and practices which are said to lead thereto. The absence of a count of Proclus' experiences of union, therefore, should in no way be taken as proof of their non-existence.

All those, then… calling gods the first principles by nature [11-12]: Reminiscent of *Metaphysics*, 1074b1-13.

the primary existence [19]: We reserve the term 'existence' to exclusively translate ὕπαρξις, which, as we discussed above, should not be confused with the 'being' or the 'essence' (οὐσία) of a something. Existence is, for Proclus, something far deeper than being, for it is possessed by everything, including the henads themselves (though their existence is different from that of beings).

of the whole of reality [1]: This is a mereological term which seems to be the largest possible scope distinction in Proclus' thought. It seems to refer to all of reality, both ontological and hyperontological.

[564] For a discussion of how this inventory has shaped Neoplatonic scholarship, see J. Bussanich, "Mystical Theology and Spiritual Experience in Proclus' *Platonic Theology*", in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 291-310 at 306.

in the same vein… the exegesis of the intellective being [4-5]: The translation of this phrase offered by *S.-W.*, "c'est pourquoi ils en viennent, semble-t-il, à identifier la théologie avec la recherche relative au degré d'être de l'intellect", is somewhat loose. *D.-G.* offers little more than an English version thereof. *Abb*., however, comes much closer to the mark with his "d'altre parte fanno convergere nello medesima direzione, a mio avviso, la teologia e la trattazione riguardante la sostanza intellettiva." What Proclus is attempting to convey here is that the Peripatetics, by making the Intellect their first principle, confound theology and noology (i.e. the exegesis of intellective being).

since all which moves according to time… yet [is] second to eternal motion [15-17]: The comparison here is between the soul which moves in time and the Intellect, which moves in eternity. On the unmoving movement of the Intellect, see *IT*, props. 33-35.

and that with reference to this thing everything both *is* and *acts*… in its passages and unfoldings [18-20]: This difficult sentence has unsurprisingly elicited a number of quite divergent translations. On the one hand, we have the translation of *D.-G.*: "and that everything that exercises its life in conditions of progression and unfolding possesses its being and its actualization in dependence on Intellect". This translation, which largely follows that of *S.-W.*, implies that all things which partake of the reality principle of Life, derive their being and their capacity to act from another reality principle, Intellect. Such an assertion, however, makes little sense. Being and Life, as we have seen, are both more fundamental to the structure of reality than Intellect. Why, then, should all living things depend on Intellect for their very being? Furthermore, this translation requires a massive manipulation of the sentence's syntax, as well as the introduction of an additional verb (i.e. 'exercise'). Again, amongst all the translations, it is *Abb*. alone who attempts to preserve the phrase's original structure: "e che intorno ad esso si trovano ed al contempo agiscono tutte le cose, quante sono ventue in possesso della vita nelle tappe di passagio e di sviluppo".

With this phrase, Proclus is attempting to convey the idea that what already partakes of Life (and implicitly, therefore, of Being) does not depend on the Intellect, but is and acts (or lives) with reference to it, *viz*., it seeks to partake of that third reality principle as well. It is a basic premise of Neoplatonic metaphysics that all things, in striving for their own Good, ideally strive upwards and attempt to imitate that which is greater than themselves. We therefore consider the highest of those things which partake of Being alone to be those whose being imitates life. In the same manner, we consider a monkey to be a higher form of life than a shrub, because its being and living activity more closely resemble that of those things which partake in Intellect.

With regard to the somewhat colourful expression "**passages and unfoldings**", it seems to be simply one of the preferred rhetorical ornaments of Syrianus and Proclus, used in a variety of situations. See, *inter alia*, *In Met.*, 103, 4; 115, 22; *In Parm.*, 740, 21; 993, 41; 995, 24.

it will never be absent from anything [p. 14, 3]: In this citation, drawn from the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* (for which we unfortunately lack Proclus' commentary), Being (οὐσία) is said to be in all the beings (ὄντα). The One is indeed the source of the Being of all beings.

[This teaching] having discovered through divine inspiration… the single, imparticipable henad [5-15]: Plato discovered the three principles of reality, namely, One, Intellect, and Soul, by means of divine inspiration, which is for Proclus a union with the divine. From this discovery, he was able to derive at once all the processions from these three principles, as well as the channels through which things revert to the highest of these principles. The structure of the phrase is therefore that of Remaining-Procession-Reversion.

The subject of the phrase, however, must be Plato's above mentioned teaching (as *Abb*. rightly translates), and not Plato himself (as *S.-W.* translates), given that ἀνευροῦσα is an aorist feminine participle.

these three causes and monads [7]: The idea of the three monads of One, Intellect, and Soul, the central pillar of Plotinian metaphysics and the point of departure for all subsequent Neoplatonic thought, was, from the outset, attributed to Plato. See *Plot. Op.*, 10 [VI.1].8, 8-14.

the sets which are proper to them, the unitary [set], the intellective [set], and the psychic [set] [9-10]: When speaking of the three Plotinian monads, Proclus employs a mathematical vocabulary, referring to that which belongs to each monad as its 'set'. As he writes in the *IT*, "for if the divine set has for antecedent cause the One, as the intellective [set has] the Intellect, and psychic [set has] the Soul, and if everywhere the manifold is analogous to its cause, then it is clear that the divine number is unified, if the One truly is God."[565]

every monad is at the head of a multiplicity coordinate with it [11-12]: See *IT*, prop. 21.

the henads of beings [14]: This expression, unique to the *PT*, seems to be a way of underscoring the henads role as the participated One. See especially the use of the expression at *TP*, III.14, 13. The One is referred to in the following line as the "**single, imparticipable henad**".

[565] "εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεῖος ἀριθμὸς αἰτίαν ἔχει προηγουμένην τὸ ἕν, ὡς ὁ νοερὸς τὸν νοῦν καὶ ὁ ψυχικὸς τὴν ψυχήν, καὶ ἔστιν ἀνάλογον τὸ πλῆθος πανταχοῦ πρὸς τὴν αἰτίαν, δῆλον δὴ ὅτι καὶ ὁ θεῖος ἀριθμὸς ἑνιαῖός ἐστιν, εἴπερ τὸ ἓν θεός". *IT*, prop. 113.

their processions… which are dependent on these unitary existents [18-21]: Here we find the three things which the Platonic theology can tell us about the gods. It can tell us about their "**processions and their individualities**", about "**the connection of beings to them**", i.e., their individual series, and about "**the orders of Forms**" which are dependent on them. In other words, we can know the ἰδιότης, σειραί, and τάξεις of any given god.

that theory revolving around the Intellect [22]: This theory to which Proclus refers is evidently noology, which is contrasted with theology as henology/henadology. As for "**the species and the genera of the Intellect**", as *S.-W.* points out,[566] these are the five genera of the *Sophist* and the intelligible Forms, all found in the Intellect.

considers the science superior to it [25-26]: I.e. the science which is superior to the aforementioned theory revolving around the Intellect, the true theology of henology/henadology.

the ineffable and inexpressible existences [26]: The gods, as we recall, do not have being (οὐσία), of which they are the source, but only existence (ὕπαρξις), which is synonymous with unity.

another of them [27]: Festugière (Fest. xxx) suggests that there is no reason to omit the αὐτῶν, as *S.-W.* has done, and we follow him in this.

[566] *S.-W.*, I.14, note 6.

and their manifestation from a single cause [p. 15, 1]: The use of the term ἔκφανσιν to describe the henads relationship with the One is of paramount importance. The henads are not 'products' or 'effects' of the One, but 'manifestations' of it.

genus of the gods [9]: Evidently one of Proclus' preferred expressions, which fits neatly into his taxological conception of the divine. Here it implies all the gods, but he elsewhere speaks of specific divine genera (e.g. the intelligible genus, the intellective genus, etc.).

these are divisible [10-11]: Amongst all the translations, only *D.-G.* takes μερισταί to mean that the action of opinion and reason is to "make distinction of parts", rather than that opinion and reason are themselves divisible. Although Proclus would be in agreement with both assertions concerning these faculties, the *LSJ* clearly supports the latter interpretation of μερισταί in this case.

intellection assisted by reason [12]: This form of knowing, as Proclus elsewhere tells us (see *In Tim*., I.247, 8ff.) is concerned with the intelligible being, i.e. the Forms (which are here described as the "real beings").

are concerned with real beings [12]: The expression 'real beings' is one of Proclus' shorthands for the intelligible beings.

the existence of the gods transcends that of beings [13-14]: This use of the verb ἐποχέομαι may go back to Numenius and the Oracles (see *Num*., I. frag. 2, 16; *Or. Chald.*, frag. 193), whence it was adopted by Plotinus (see *Plot. Op.*, 53 [I.1].8, 9).

the existence of the soul [16]: As Christian Guérard has shown,[567] the ὕπαρξις of the soul is not equivalent to what Proclus calls the 'flower of the intellect' or the 'one-in-us'.

that like is known by like [17-18]: This is a very old principle in Greek thought, which can be traced back as far as Empedocles (see *DK*, frag. B109), and is exposed at length by Aristotle at *De anima*, 405b15ff.

known by unity and… by an ineffable power [20-21]: This unity and ineffable power is the flower of the soul, the soul's existence.

in the *First Alcibiades* [21-22]: See *First Alcibiades*, 133b7-c6. We unfortunately lack Proclus' exegesis of this passage.

vantage point [p. 16, 1]: This echo of *Statesman*, 272e5, where "the helmsman of all the universe, having dropped the tiller thereof, withdrew to his vantage point, while both fate and innate desire made the universe turn backwards once again."[568] Proclus evidently held this metaphor in high regard, for he used it copiously throughout his corpus to describe a higher level of reality from which those below may be surveyed. The "**highest vantage point of beings**" is likely that "intelligible vantage point (τὴν νοητὴν περιωπήν)" to which Proclus refers at *In Remp*., I.136, 14, as the intelligible world constitutes the limit of Being, and the 'edge of ontological reality', so to speak.

[567] "L'*hyparxis* de l'âme et la fleur de l'intellect dans la mystagogy de Proclus", 349.
[568] "τότε δὴ τοῦ παντὸς ὁ μὲν κυβερνήτης, οἷον πηδαλίων οἴακος ἀφέμενος, εἰς τὴν αὑτοῦ περιωπὴν ἀπέστη, τὸν δὲ δὴ κόσμον πάλιν ἀνέστρεφεν εἱμαρμένη τε καὶ σύμφυτος ἐπιθυμία." *Statesman*, 272e3-5.

And just as in the holiest of the rites [1-2]: Here begins yet another carefully constructed analogy based upon the Eleusinian mysteries,[569] in which the soul's journey into itself in order to achieve union with the gods is compared to the experience undergone by the μύστης during the sacred rites at Eleusis. This was already done to great effect by Plato at *Phaedrus* 249e-250c.

the initiates first encounter multiform and many-shaped genera projected before the gods [2-4]: *S.-W.* construes this phrase thusly: "les initiés rencontrent tout d'abord des êtres infiniment variés en espèces et en formes qui précèdent les dieux". This is followed closely by *D.-G. Abb*., at least, recognizes the word γένεσιν: "gli iniziati incontrino al principio vari e multiformi generi di esseri schierati innanzi agli dèi". As for the meaning of the participle προβεβλημένοις in this context, although the verb προβάλλω can, with the genitive, have simply the sense of 'to precede', a parallel usage leads us to believe that Proclus is attempting to convey a somewhat more precise idea. In the *In Parm*., while discussing the theological symbolism of the dialogue's *dramatis personae*, Proclus offers us the following phrase:

> And so just as the powers of the gods, projected before the fathers, reveal to those [beings] after them the monadic, unitary, and unspeakable existence of these [Fathers], in the same way Zeno raises, by means of refutations the multitude to the one in the many[570]

[569] On the expression "**holiest of the rites**" as a reference to the Eleusinian mysteries, see *S.-W.*, I.16, note 1.
[570] "ὥσπερουῦν αἱ τῶν θεῶν δυνάμεις, προβεβλημέναι τῶν πατρῶν, ἐκφαίνουσι τοῖς μετὰ ταύτας τὴν ἐκείνων μοναδικὴν καὶ ἑνοειδῆ καὶ ἄῤῥητον ὕπαρξιν, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ὁ Ζήνων ἀνάγει μὲν τὸ πλῆθος διὰ τῶν ἐλέγχων εἰς τὸ ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἓν". *In Parm.*, 717, 15-19.

As *In Parm. L.-S.* notes,[571] Zeno is here being presented as analogue to the guardian class of gods, whose dialectical abilities are a protection projected in front of the paternal class of gods, represented by Parmenides. Socrates must therefore first pass through this protective dialectical barrier in order to gain access to Parmenides. In the same way, we believe that in the mystery analogy at hand Proclus is describing exactly what the μύσται underwent during the sacred rites once their blindfolds had been removed. As we have seen, they would have first been dazzled by the powerful light emanating from the centre of the Telestrion, and the light being cast by the torchbearers and especially by the illuminated statues within would have certainly projected a frightening array of "**multiform and many-shaped genera**" to those standing without. Such a display must have undoubtedly been a shock to the only recently un-blindfolded μύσται, and were it not for their having been previously "**strengthened by the rites**" (i.e. the preliminary initiation they received in the City Eleusinion), it is doubtful that many would have had the temerity to proceed into the building. Thus we may say that these powerful illuminations, like Zeno's dialectical abilities, were projected before the gods (i.e. the sacred images) and served to protect them from the prying eyes of the curious αμύσται.

then entering into the tranquil place… to receive in purity the divine illumination itself [4-6]: This evidently refers to the entry of the μύσται into the Telestrion and their beholding of the illuminated sacred images.

and 'naked', as those men might say, to partake of the divine [6-7]: Festugière's suggestion of γυμνῆτος here seems unnecessary. He argues that "il ne s'agit pas du fait que les initiés se sont dépouillés du corporel, mais du fait que l'essence divine paraît désormais dans sa nudité"[572], but this does not seem to be the case. It seems more likely that with the term "**naked**", borrowed from the *Oracles*, Proclus is referring to his statement just a few

[571] *In Parm. L.-S.*, I.314, note 3.
[572] Fest. xxxi.

lines above that the soul must cast away the "**the diversity of multifarious powers within it**" (i.e. its forms of knowing, such as sensation, reason, etc.) in order to unite with the gods.

In the same way, I think… contemplates with eyes shut the race of the gods and the henads of beings [7-16]: Like the μύστης on the steps of the Telestrion, who sees only darkness and shadows behind him, but a great light before him, the soul is surrounded by likeness and shadows and it is only by looking into itself that it beholds the light of being and reason. As the μύστης enters into the Telestrion, gradually discerning the sacred images, so too the soul enters into itself and gradually discovers "**the Intellect in itself and the orders of beings**". Finally, just as the μύστης finds the gods themselves upon the innermost sanctuary of the Telestrion (i.e. the internal structure which at least served as a platform), so too does the soul, withdrawing into its own "**innermost sanctuary**" (i.e. the flower of the intellect), behold the henads themselves.

it uncovers its own being and its own innate Forms [10-11]: Although we have translated the soul's λόγοι as "**its own innate Forms**", there is no way to adequately convey what Proclus has in mind here in the space of few words. The soul's λόγοι are images of the εἴδη of the Intellect, and effectively consistute the soul's οὐσία.[573] In this way, we may say that καί here serves an epexegetic function, and that it is practically a case of hendiadys.

with eyes shut [15]: Reminiscent of the participle's use at *Plot. Op.*, 1 [I.6].8, 25.

[573] On soul's λόγοι, see D. G. MacIsaac, "The Soul and Discursive Reason in the Philosophy of Proclus", an unpublished PhD dissertation (Notre Dame); *Ibid*., "The *Nous* of the Partial Soul in Proclus' *Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato*", in *Dionysius*, vol. 29 (2011), pp. 29-60. See also E. Gritti, *Proclo: Dialettica, Anima, Esegesi* (Milano: Il Filarete, Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di lettere e philosophia dell'Università degli Studi di Milano, 2008), esp. 93–120.

For all things are within us… power within us and images of the whole of reality [16-18]: Proclus here recalls *IT*, prop. 103, *viz*., that everything is in everything, but accordingly, and offers this as an explanation for the soul's capacity to come to a knowledge of all things through self-reflection. We possess "**images of the whole of reality**" within ourselves, and through these images, we are able to know the actual things within reality.[574] It is important to note the contrast between these "**images** (εἰκόνας)" within us, and "**the likenesses of beings** (τὰ εἴδωλα τῶν ὄντων)"[575] which make up the world perceived by the senses. The degree of similarity of the image to the model is obviously very different in each case, and therefore to translate both terms by 'image', as do both *S.-W.* and *D.-G.*, seems highly misleading.

and to join in the dance around it [20-21]: Reminiscent of *Plot. Op.*, 9 [VI.9].8, 44-45.

gather together all the multiplicity of the soul [21]: Reminiscent of *Phaedo*, 67c8.

with this ineffable thing, beyond all beings [24]: Perhaps an allusion to *Republic*, 509b9.

And having been up there… to have a most complete knowledge of divine matters [16, 26-p. 17, 7]: After having made the mystic ascent and achieved union with the divine, the soul now has knowledge of the Forms, of their monads, their series, and how these series depend upon certain henads, which amounts to knowledge of the "**processions and their individualities**" of the henads themselves, as we saw above.

[574] For a more detailed explanation of this operation by Proclus, see *In Parm.*, 948, 31-38.
[575] *TP*, I.16, 9.

having contemplated in a unitary manner… the distinctions of beings according to the gods [17, 6-7]: When united with the gods, we are able to escape the limitations of our native rationality, which views all things according to parts, and to contemplate reality unitarily as the henads do. This contemplation of reality according to unity is elsewhere identified by Proclus as divine providence (προνοία).[576]

Commentary on chapter 4

Having defined theology in chapter three, Proclus must now "**divide the methods according to which Plato instructs us in the mysterious conceptions of the gods**", and then turn towards the question of the acceptable theological models. Both these methods and these models have been discussed at some length in preceding essay on Plato's theology.

such is the theological [discourse] for us [p. 17, 9]: Although *S.-W.* and *C.-L.* take θεολογικός as a substantive for 'student of theology', referring, therefore, to chapter two, I am inclined to agree with *Abb.* that this refers instead to the general discourse (i.e. the λόγος) of theology, which is treated in chapter three. Proclus has already summarized the conclusions of first and second chapters at the beginning of chapter three, so it seems odd that he should here again summarize the contents of the latter.

theology [has] a certain such condition… the activity able to cause all goods simultaneously [10-15]: Having defined what theology is in the preceding chapter, Proclus now defines its ἕξις, i.e. what it actually does here and now. According to Proclus, it is the ἕξις of theology to

[576] See, *inter alia*, *De decem dub.*, §1.

1. Reveal the existence of the gods
2. Distinguish their unity from the individuality of their participants
3. Contemplate these things
4. Announce them to those worthy of such knowledge

This definition of theology's ἕξις is effectively another outline of what will be accomplished over the course of the *TP*.

contemplating [these things] [13]: A possible reference to *Phaedo*, 84b1.

the activity able to cause all goods simultaneously [14-15]: This, as we saw in the preceding chapter (*TP*, I.16, 19), is union with the divine.

the principal theory [15-16]: This must again refer to contents of chapter three, i.e. to what theology is, as opposed to the methods of conveying theological knowledge, which shall be dealt with in the present chapter.

mysterious notions concerning the gods [17-18]: These mysterious notions concerning the gods should be contrasted with the above mentioned 'common notions' concerning them. While the common notions are those which are commonly held concerning the gods, and therefore stated openly by Plato, their mysterious counterparts are those which are known only to initiates.

entheastically [20]: As its *OED* entry attests, while not a neologism, previous occurrences of this word are hardly to be found without the confines of the writings of Thomas Taylor.[577] We believe, however, that the richness of Proclus' vocabulary should not be sacrificed to the convenience of the contemporary English reader. Should Proclus have wished to call this the 'divinely inspired' method, as most others have translated it, he could have easily employed a derivative of the verb ἐπιπνέω, as he does on the following page. This verb, as one can imagine, is the ultimate source, via a Latinization, of our own 'to inspire'.

nympholeptic [25]: See *Phaedrus*, 238d1. With regard to the word itself, as the term 'nympholepsy' long ago secured a place in our language by grace of Byron, De Quincey, Nabokov, and others, we are persuaded that its derivatives may be equally employed without explanation.

the intellective gods [p. 18, 2]: These gods, as we have seen above in our examination of Book IV of the *TP*, are in fact what Proclus will later distinguish as the intelligible-intellective gods, which are a special case of the intellective gods.[578]

the independent leaders of all the universe [3-4]: This title, as *S.-W.* notes,[579] refers to the hypercosmic-encosmic gods. Their being hypercosmic, they may be described as independent of the material cosmos which they govern. The singular τὸ πᾶν is synonymous for Proclus with the entire sensible universe. It is therefore a smaller scope distinction than the above mentioned ὅλος, which refers to the whole of ontological reality, both sensible and intelligible.

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[577] See *Collected writings of Plotinus*, trans. T. Taylor (Frome, Somerset, UK: Prometheus Trust, 1994) xxiii. Surprisingly, however, the present line is translated in *Taylor* as "but sometimes according to a *deific energy*, and at other times dialectically, he evolves the truth concerning them."
[578] *TP*, IV.6, 10-12.
[579] *S.-W.*, I.18, note 2.

the monads, intelligible and separate from the whole of reality [4-5]: This is evidently a reference to the intelligible gods treated in Book III. As the level directly above the encosmic gods, the hypercosmic-encosmic gods serve as one of the links between these highest and lowest of the divine διάκοσμοι.

these gods themselves, having obtained a share in the cosmos [5-6]: Yet another reference to the hypercosmic-encosmic gods which are exposed in the *Phaedrus*.

and in fact [11]: For this construal of the demonstrative pronoun, see Künher-Gerth, I.647.

in the *Sophist* [13]: The passage to which Proclus is referring in this sentence is *Sophist*, 242b6-245e2.

he shows how while all beings are… but not primarily One [15-20]: According to the Proclean interpretation of this passage from the *Sophist*, it would seem that Plato first disproves the pluralists by showing that "**all beings are dependent upon their own cause and upon the First Being**", then disproves Parmenides by showing that it is "**this same [First] Being, which participates in the henad that transcends the whole of reality**". This henad is, of course, the first intelligible henad in which all other henads are precontained. Therefore, although the text speaks of "**the One**", Proclus is careful to distinguish this One from "**the One-in-itself**", for although this One is a "**unified existent**", it is not "**primarily One**" like the αὐτοέν.[580]

[580] See C. Steel, "Le *Sophiste* comme texte théologique dans l'interprétation de Proclus", 54.

is doubtless the One but not the One-in-itself [18-19]: My translation is based upon that suggested by Festugière (Fest., xxxi), which, though it differs significantly from that of *S.-W.*, is far closer to Proclus' original syntax.

according to the most complete division of this method [23-24]: See *Parmenides*, 135d7-136c5; See also *In Parm*., 988-1018.

a myth in the *Gorgias* [25-26]: See *Gorgias*, 523a1-524a7.

not being a myth alone but also an argument [27]: See *Gorgias*, 523a2. This is understandably one of Proclus' preferred citations form the *Gorgias*, which he also cites at *In Tim*., I.80, 20-22 and *In Remp*., I.156, 25.

in the *Symposium* concerning the union through love [p. 19, 1]: See *Symposium*, 203b1-e5.

in the *Protagoras* concerning the ordering of the cosmos by the gods [1-2]: See *Protagoras*, 320c8-322d5.

with no more than a mere allusion he reveals his intention to the most genuine of his auditors [4-5]: The sense of the phrase hangs upon its syntax and how one understands the

preposition μέχρι. Our translation, following that of *Abb*., attempts to conserve Proclus' original syntax, while that of *S.-W.* largely disregards it: "ne laisse paraître aux meilleurs de ses auditeurs que de simples indices de l'intention qui est la sienne".

in this case, I suppose… images will be made manifest to you. [6-10]: We believe that Festugière's suggestions (Fest. xxxi) to place the additional definite article in front of τρόπος rather than διὰ, and to preserve the manuscript's original reading of ἐφιέμενοι rather than replace it with ἐφιέμενος, are correct. As he writes, " ἐφιεμένῳ reprend sans doute Εἰ δὲ βούλει (l. 6), mais Proclus est professeur et ne craint pas de reprendre la même idée sous une autre forme."

to heed [7]: We agree with Festugière (see Fest. xxxi) that the verb μνησθῆναι should in this context be understood to mean 'to heed' rather than 'to remember'.

the statesman, for example, [represents] the celestial demiurge [13-14]: See *Statesman*, 269c-274e4.

the figures of the five elements… the gods presiding over the parts of all things [14-16]: See *Timaeus*, 53c4-55c6. The gods to which Proclus refers, who preside over the parts rather than the whole, are evidently the particular gods.

the divisions of the psychic essence… the ranks of the gods [16-17]: See *Timaeus*, 34b10-36d7; *In Tim*. II.218, 20-237, 7.

permit [me] to say [17]: We are taking Ἐῶ as the second person present imperative middle/passive of ἐάω.

symbolically and mythically [p. 20, 2-3]: As the symbolic method is the method most employed almost exclusively for conveying theological information in myths in general (although not in Platonic myths), Proclus is justified in calling it the 'mythic' method.

according to an inspiration from the gods [5]: Here, by way of elegant variation, Proclus refers to the entheastic method with a derivative of ἐπιπνέω.

for they indeed devoted the numbers and the figures to the gods [11]: On this topic, see also Porphyry, *De abstinentia*, II.36; *In Phaedr.*, 95, 3-96, 2; Damascius, *In principiis*, II.127, 7-17.

those highest of telestics [14]: *S.-W.* holds that this expression refers exclusively to those who practice Chaldean theurgy, citing Hans Lewy as an authority.[581] This position has been generally accepted,[582] so that it is now assumed that just as Proclus thought the symbolic method to be exemplified by the Orphic tradition, and the iconic by the Pythagorean, so too did he take the entheastic method to be exemplified by the *Chaldean Oracles* and theurgical practices associated therewith. It is Lewy himself, however, who writes that what the

[581] See the note offered by *S.-W.* on this line, which refers the reader to H. Lewy, *Chaldean oracles and theurgy: mysticism, magic and Platonism in the later Roman Empire* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1978), 495-496.

[582] A. Sheppard, in her seminal article on theurgy ("Proclus' Attitude to Theurgy", in *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, vol. 32, no. 1 [1982], pp. 212-224), does not distinguish between τελε- stem words and theurgy. She has been almost universally followed. See, *inter alia*, L. Brisson, "La place des *Oracles chaldaïques* dans la *Théologie platonicienne*", in *Proclus et la Théologie platonicienne*, pp. 109-162 at 120.

Neoplatonists referred to as the 'telestic art' "was no monopoly of the Chaldeans"[583]. Indeed, the τελε- stem words, such as term τελεστής which Proclus here employs, form part of the bedrock of the Hellenic religious vocabulary.

There is no denying that the traditional Hellenic τελε- and ἱερ- stem words (such as term τελεστής which Proclus here employs in the passage at hand) and the Chaldean term θεουργία had a great deal of semantic overlap in Proclus' mind. Whether this overlap was complete, however, is unclear. For example, at the most basic level of 'external theurgy', there seems to be a slight distinction for Proclus between theurgy, which "through certain symbols invokes the ungrudging goodness of the gods for the illumination of artificial statues"[584], and the telestic art, which "through certain symbols and ineffable signs therefore likens the statutes to the gods and makes [them] fit for the reception of divine illumination"[585]. Theurgy is here depicted as the illumination of statues, while the telestic art is described as the consecration of those same statues in preparation for illumination.

It has been posited that the telestic and hieratic arts should be seen as specific branches of theurgy rather than synonyms of that art.[586] We would instead propose the opposite. It seems that theurgy is for Proclus a branch of telestic/hieratic arts. The following examples may lend some credence to this hypothesis. The first is from the *In Parm*., where, in a passage parallel to the fourth chapter of the *TP*, Proclus discusses the four theological methods and offers examples of each. Regarding the entheastic method, Proclus writes that "that of the hieratics offering up the names of the gods according to their own mysterious interpretation, for example those celebrated by the Assyrians, [such as] Zonai and Azonoi".[587] The 'Assyrians', by which Proclus means the Chaldeans, are here described as simply an example of the hieratics, who exemplify this method. Concerning these hieratics

[583] *Chaldean oracles and theurgy: mysticism, magic and Platonism in the later Roman Empire*, 69, note 8.
[584] "ἡ θεουργία διὰ δή τινων συμβόλων εἰς τὴν τῶν τεχνητῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἔλλαμψιν προκαλεῖται τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἄφθονον ἀγαθότητα". *TP*, I.124, 23-25.
[585] "καὶ ὥσπερ ἡ τελεστικὴ διὰ δή τινων συμβόλων καὶ ἀπορρήτων συνθημάτων τὰ τῇδε ἀγάλματα τοῖς θεοῖς ἀπεικάζει καὶ ἐπιτήδεια ποιεῖ πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν θείων ἐλλάμψεων". *In Crat*., 51, 33-36.
[586] T. Lankila, "Hypernoetic Cognition and the Scope of Theurgy in Proclus", in *Arctos*, vol. 44 (2010), pp. 147-170 at 158.
[587] "ἡ δὲ τῶν ἱερατικῶν, ὀνόματα τῶν θεῶν κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν μυστικὴν ἑρμηνείαν ἐκδεδωκότων, οἷα τὰ τοῖς Ἀσσυρίοις ὑμνημένα, Ζῶναι καὶ Ἄζωνοι". *In Parm*., 647, 4-6.

and the hieratic art in general, we might also refer ourselves to the following passage from the *In Remp*.:

> For as the hieratics close to us introduce into the *epoptai* the power to see images which they [could] not at first and make [them] spectators, so the hieratic art in the cosmos anterior to that close to us does this for many souls worthy of such blessed visions (for the whole is prior to the part).[588]

The hieratic art 'close to us', by which Proclus evidently means the native Hellenic hieratic art, is here depicted as only a small part of a universal hieratic art. We may assume therefore, that Proclus considered the other true hieratic traditions, such as the Egyptian and the Chaldean theurgical traditions, to equally represent only parts of this greater whole.

Given these examples, it seems that Lewy was correct in asserting that, at least in the mind of Proclus, the Chaldeans did not have a monopoly on the telestic or hieratic arts. It is therefore quite plausible that when citing "those highest of telestics" as the best example of the entheastic method of theology, Proclus is referring not to those theurgists of the Chaldean tradition alone (and, in turn, to the *Chaldean Oracles* themselves), but to the true practitioners of all the major hieratic traditions, who each possess some part of the universal telestic/hieratic art. We have accordingly chosen to translate τελεσταί as 'telestics' rather than as 'theurgists'.

the divine orders or their individualities [16-17]: Although *S.-W.* and *Abb*. translate the particle ἢ employed by Proclus as a conjunction, according to both Denniston and the LSJ it can only have a disjunctive or a comparative sense.

[588] "ὡς γὰρ οἱ παρ' ἡμῖν ἱερατικοὶ τοῖς ἐπόπταις δύναμιν ἐντιθέασιν ἰδεῖν ἃ μὴ πρότερον φάσματα καὶ ποιοῦσι θεωρούς, οὕτω καὶ ἡ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ πρὸ τῆς παρ' ἡμῖν εἰς πολλὰς τοῦτο δρᾷ ψυχὰς τὰς ἀξίας τῆς τοιαύτης μακαριστῆς θέας (πρὸ γὰρ τῶν μερῶν τὸ ὅλον)." *In Remp*., II.154, 5-9.

for indeed these men… being moved by the gods themselves [15-19]: As we have seen in the case of the ἐπόπται, the highest level of initiation often involves a full unveiling of the divine names and the most sacred of objects.

peculiar to the philosophy of Plato [19-20]: It is essential to note Proclus' use of the word ἐξαίρετός, which denotes that the dialectical method of theology is not simply best exemplified by Platonism, but its exclusive privilege.

in order [20-21]: i.e. according to their τάξεις.

Plato did not admit all the dramaturgy… is not unsuited to the divine hypostasis [p. 21, 3-7]: This is evidently a reference to the above discussed theological τύποι of the *Republic*. The wording is also reminiscent of *Republic*, 462a3-4.

hidden meanings [8]: The word, ὑπόνοια, is exactly that employed by Socrates in his prelude to the τύποι.

And indeed even though the ancient… being the cause of no deception for others [13-27]: As opposed to *S.-W.* and *Abb*., we take the genitive absolute which begins this massive sentence to be one of opposition or concession rather than one of cause (*Abb*.) or one of condition (*S.-W.*).[589] As far as Proclus is concerned, Plato did not reject this method of writing myths *because* it was practiced by the ancient poets, but *in spite of the fact* that it was practiced by the ancient poets. Plato, as we have seen, shows much concern for the potential

[589] For an overview of the types of genitive absolutes, see Smyth, §2070.

misinterpretation of such myths by the young and the ignorant, and therefore councils poets to shy away from the most radical forms of the symbolic method.

For Socrates teaches such forms of theology to us in the *Republic* [27-28]: These are the theological τύποι from Book II.

but they [instead] offer an image [p. 22, 4]: We disagree with Festugière's proposed corrections (Fest. xxxi). The ὅτι seems superfluous, and the addition of μάλιστα to qualify this image of the cosmos as a 'better image' cannot be justified by anything other than interpretative fancy. As to this interpretation, it is clear from the following sentence that the term "**image**" here refers to the imagistic method, which Plato prefers in his myths to the symbolic method. It is not therefore simply the case that Plato's myths offer a more accurate depiction of the cosmos, but that, by employing of a different theological method, their depiction of the cosmos is more true to life.

by this one mode [8]: i.e. the imagistic method.

But there is another which he offers in the *Phaedrus* [11-12]: i.e. the entheastic method. The passage discussed is found at *Phaedrus*, 229b4-230a6.

For indeed Socrates in these passages… carried off by Boreas through love [p. 22, 22-23, 1]: Several minor insertions are required in order to preserve the original syntax of this difficult sentence in translation, though far fewer than those which other translators have allowed themselves.

Therefore should anyone propose to us … the preconceptions in us concerning the gods [3-11]: On Proclus' interpretation of this passage from the *Phaedrus* passage, see the foregoing essay.

and [would declare] to be exegetes of the truth… the preconceptions in us concerning the gods [6-11]: Here again the translation of *S.-W.* seems to needlessly abandon Proclus' original syntax. Line 8 may also contain a possible reference to *Timaeus*, 29b5.

both compose and interpret the myths [9-10]: Literally, "make both syntheses and analyses of the myths".

Commentary on chapter 5

Having discussed what theology is for Plato and the ways in which he presents it, Proclus now turns to the question of where theology is to be found in Platonic corpus. The answer, in brief, is everywhere. Theological considerations are omnipresent throughout the Platonic corpus, although certain works contain great deal more of it than others. These Platonic writings which "**best exhibit the mystagogy concerning the gods**", according to Proclus, offer models of what the Platonic theology should resemble when we come across it in other, less theologically inclined, works. He arranges these theological models into the following hierarchy:

1) "**both the *Phaedo* and the *Phaedrus*, the *Symposium*, and the *Philebus*, then also… the *Sophist* and the *Statesman* with these, and [the] *Cratylus* and *Timaeus***"
2) "**the myth of the *Gorgias* and that of the *Protagoras*, that which is written concerning the providence of the gods in the *Laws*, and that which is handed down to us concerning the Fates, the mother of the Fates, and the revolutions of universe in the tenth book of the *Republic***"
3) The *Letters*

The first eight dialogues are those which are "**full in their entirety… with the divinely inspired science of Plato**". They seemed to be arranged not according to the type of theological discourse employed, but according to how easily recognizable the divine mystagogy is within each dialogue. The *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*, replete as they are with references to the gods and the mysteries, are therefore the most clearly theological of Plato's dialogues, while the *Cratylus* and the *Timaeus*, although they make ample mention of the gods, seem initially to treat of matters other than theology (i.e. of logic or of physics). The penultimate position of these eight dialogues amongst Plato's theological writings (the yet to be discussed *Parmenides* evidently taking precedence), is confirmed in the succeeding paragraph, which first arranges those which treat primarily of entire διάκοσμοι according to the most universal one of which they treat:[590]

Philebus
- the One-Good
- the two very first principles (Limit and Unlimited)
- the triad Limit-Unlimited-Mixed

[590] As *S.-W.* indicates (*S.-W.*, I.25, note 1), this list is very similar in structure to the structure of the *TP* as a whole, and therefore may be taken as yet another proof that the work is incomplete.

Timaeus	• the intelligible gods • the demiurgic monad • the encosmic gods
Phaedrus	• the intelligible-intellective gods • the hypercosmic-encosmic gods
Statesman	• the celestial demiurge • the two periodic cycles of the universe and their intellective causes
Sophist	• the sublunary encosmic gods

In addition to these, there are also three additional theological dialogues which treat not of specific διάκοσμοι, but of individual gods throughout the divine hierarchy, namely, the *Symposium*, *Cratylus*, and *Phaedo*. After these initial eight dialogues, Proclus places three mythical references to the gods as well as Book X of the *Laws*. These as well are ordered from most to least evidently theological. Finally, there are the *Letters*, which although not particularly rich in theological content themselves, are texts "**from which it is possible to ascend to the science of divinity**". It is these theological models, therefore, which allow us to judge the theological content of any of Plato's writings. [591]

[591] Upon reading this hierarchy of theological models, it may seem that Proclus overlooks several theological passages which he will examine later in the *TP*:

1. the solar analogy of the *Republic* (II. chap. 5)
2. the discussion of the One in *Sophist* (II. chap. 4)
3. the three intelligible triads in *Sophist* (III. chap. 20)
4. the discussion of the Demiurge in the *Critias* (V. chap. 21)
5. the discussion of Zeus in the *Laws* (V. chap. 26)

These exclusions, however, are entirely justifiable based on the criteria with which Proclus provides us. The first two passages are excluded because they are neither clearly theological nor do they discuss either a rank of gods or an individual god. Indeed the One-Good in the *Philebus* seems only to be mentioned in so far as it is an inescapable part of the discussion of the first intelligible triad drawn from that dialogue (see *TP*, III. chap. 8). Although the *Sophist* contains a sentence regarding the three intelligible triads, as do the *Phaedrus* and the

Since we have therefore… let us accordingly conclude this discussion regarding it [12-17]: *S.-W.* is quite right to describe this as a "phrase difficile à constuire"[592]. The emendations suggested by Festugière (Fest. xxxi), and sensibly based upon the construction of the preceding sentence, are indeed the only way to render it intelligible.

both the composition and interpretation of the myths [14-15]: Again, literally "both the syntheses and analyses of the myths".

fixing our regard upon certain models… the authenticity and the inauthenticity of those [dialogues] attributed to him [19-21]: This chapter does not, to the puzzlement of both *S.-W.* and *C.-L.*,[593] offer a list of what Proclus considers to be authentic and inauthentic Platonic dialogues. What it does offer, however, is exactly that which Proclus promises, i.e. a method for judging the authenticity of Platonic dialogues. In the following sentence, Proclus states that Plato's theology is present in all the dialogues. It is this omnipresent theological content that will therefore serve as the touchstone of authenticity. But what type of theological content should one look for? The answer to this is in the list of model theological dialogues with which Proclus provides us. It is according to the theological doctrines found in these dialogues, and elaborated by Proclus in the *TP*, which we should judge the theological content of every other presumably Platonic work.

Symposium, none of these sentences are mentioned because all three of these eminently theological dialogues treat *primarily* of something else, be it other διάκοσμοι or a variety of individual gods. As for the mention of the Demiurge in the *Critias* and of Zeus in the *Laws*, all the dialogues contain theological considerations, but only those which are of particular importance are listed here by Proclus.

[592] *Ibid.*, I.23, note 2.

[593] *Ibid.*, I.23, note 3; *C.-L.*, 87, note 84.

The only examples which we possess of a Proclean judgement concerning the authenticity of a dialogue are his pronouncements concerning the *Epinomis*. Although the author of the *Prol. ad Plat. phil.* considers Proclus to have rejected its authenticity based upon the impossibility of its being posterior to the *Laws*,[594] and its odd description of planetary movement,[595] another possible reason is transmitted by Damascius. As he writes

> Since [Plato] says there to be gods living on the Earth and speaking generally [says that] the same Earth [is] "the oldest of the gods" (*Timaeus*, 40c3), the *Epinomis*, in which they say the gods to be only in heaven (983c6-987d2), could not be a genuine writing of Plato.[596]

This criticism of the *Epinomis* seems a perfect example of the application of Proclus' test of authenticity. A theological doctrine clearly stated within the *Epinomis* contradicts one found within a model theological dialogue. The *Epinomis*, therefore, is to be rejected as inauthentic.

the very first philosophy [24-25]: I.e. theology.

And just as in each part of the universe… to acquire a reminiscence of the universal principles [p. 24, 3-11]: A particularly striking comparison between the Demiurge and Plato as poets (in the etymological sense of the term). Just as the Demiurge has seeded the material cosmos with images or tokens of the divine, which form the basis of all theurgical practices, so too has Plato seeded his writings with such tokens. On the basis of such a comparison, we

[594] See *Prol. ad Plat. phil.*, 25, 3-12.
[595] Proclus himself states twice that he considers the *Epinomis* to be inauthentic (see *In Remp*. II.133, 27-134, 7; *De prov*. 50, 11-13). Nevertheless, in neither of these cases does he tell us why exactly he considers the dialogue to be inauthentic. For a detailed overview of Proclus' treatment of the *Epinomis* in these works, see "Proclus and the Old Academy", pp. 257-263.
[596] "Ὅτι εἰ θεοὺς οἰκητὰς εἶναί φησιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ὅλως αὐτὴν τὴν γῆν 'θεῶν πρεσβυτάτην', οὐκ ἂν εἴη γνησία τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἡ Ἐπινομίς, ἐν ᾗ λέγονται κατ' οὐρανὸν εἶναι μόνον οἱ θεοί." *In Phaed.*, §532.

may easily conclude that Proclus takes the reading of Plato's texts to be an elevated form of theurgy.[597]

I could not do better than mentioning the *Phaedo* and the *Phaedrus*, the *Symposium*, and the *Philebus* [12-15]: The sequence of the *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, and *Philebus*, interestingly echoes the reading order of those dialogues in the so-called Iamblichean cursus.

the myth of the *Gorgias* [19-20]: See *Gorgias*, 523a1-524a7.

that of the *Protagoras* [20]: See *Protagoras*, 320c8-322d5.

that which is written concerning the providence of the gods in the *Laws* [20-21]: See *Laws*, 899d4-907b9.

that which is handed down … in the tenth book of the *Republic* [21-23]: See *Republic*, 616b1-621b8.

from which it is possible to ascend to the science of divinity [24-25]: Here we follow the translation suggested by Festugière (Fest. xxxi).

[597] On the Iamblichean origins of this theory of textual theurgy, see G. Shaw, *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 127-228.

concerning the three kings and numerous other divine doctrines [24, 25-p. 25, 2]: See *Second Letter*, 312d2-313c6.

For in each of these dialogues… those practised in divinity to seize upon individualities of these gods by means of reason [p. 25, 20-23]: These dialogues (the *Symposium*, *Cratylus*, and *Phaedo*) are particularly replete with divine names. On the theurgical role of the divine names, see *TP*, I. chap. 29.

For all Greek theology is born of the mystagogy of Orpheus… Plato received in second place the wholly perfect science concerning all things from the writings of both the Pythagoreans and the Orphics. [25, 26-p. 26, 1]: According to certain Neopythagorean descriptions drawn upon by the later Neoplatonists (see *V. Pyth.*, 146, 14-20; *In Tim*., III. 168, 9-14) Orpheus received knowledge of the gods from his mother, the Muse Calliope. This knowledge was passed on to his disciple Aglaophamus, who in turn passed it on to Pythagoras when the latter was initiated into the Orphic rites at Lebethros in Thrace. This historical sequence was extremely pleasing to the Neoplatonists in so far as it reconciled the two major Greek theological traditions upon which Plato drew.

For in the *Philebus*… he calls them "those living with the gods" and truly happy [26, 4-6]: The "**the two forms of first principles**" are evidently Limit and Unlimited. For the citation, see *Philebus*, 16c8; *DK*, 44b1; 2; 6; 11; *In Tim*. I.84, 2-5; 176, 28-30.

Indeed Philolaus the Pythagorean… celebrating both their common procession into being and their distinct creative activities [7-9]: As the fragments attest, the principles of

Limit and Unlimited seem to have formed a central part of the thought of Philolaus of Croton.[598]

In the *Timaeus*… the ordered realms of the gods under the lunar sphere proceeding from the whole [10-16]: See *Timaeus*, 40d6-41a6.

calling [them] "the children of the gods" [12]: This citation from the *Timaeus*, at 40d9-e1, is often taken ironically, as if by it Plato meant simply to mock the traditional beliefs concerning certain sources of Greek religion. Proclus, however, takes a much more subtle view of this passage:

> And so who are these [theologians] and what is their knowledge? These men are in fact the descendants of the gods and know clearly their own ancestors, being descendants and children of the gods since they conserve the form of their own ruling god during the present life. For Apollonian souls, having chosen the prophetic or telestic life, are called the children and descendants of Apollo, children in so far as souls belonging to this god and having been familiarized with this series, and descendants because they demonstrate such in the present life. Indeed all souls are children of the gods, but not all have recognized their god. But those having recognized and having chosen a life similar [to their god] are called children of the gods.[599]

[598] On the place of Limit and Unlimited in the thought of Philolaus, see, *inter alia*, C. A. Huffman, *Philolaus of Croton* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993); H. S. Schibli, "On 'The One' in Philolaus, Fragment 7", in *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, vol. 46, no. 1 (1996), pp. 114-130.

[599] "τίνες οὖν εἰσιν οὗτοι καὶ τίς αὐτῶν ἡ γνῶσις; αὐτοὶ μὲν οὖν εἰσιν ἔγγονοι θεῶν καὶ σαφῶς τοὺς ἑαυτῶν προγόνους εἰδότες, ἔγγονοι μὲν καὶ παῖδες ὄντες θεῶν ὡς τὸ εἶδος σῴζοντες τοῦ ἑαυτῶν προστάτου κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν ζωήν· αἱ γὰρ Ἀπολλωνιακαὶ ψυχαὶ μαντικὸν ἢ τελεστικὸν ἑλόμεναι βίον παῖδες καὶ ἔγγονοι καλοῦνται τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος, παῖδες μὲν καθὸ ψυχαὶ προσήκουσαι τῷδε τῷ θεῷ καὶ ᾠκειωμέναι πρὸς τήνδε τὴν σειράν, ἔγγονοι δὲ ὅτι καὶ τὸν παρόντα βίον τοιοῦτον ἐπιδείκνυνται. πᾶσαι μὲν οὖν ψυχαὶ θεῶν παῖδες, ἀλλ' οὐ πᾶσαι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἐπέγνωσαν θεόν· αἱ δὲ ἐπιγνοῦσαι καὶ τὴν ὁμοίαν ἑλόμεναι ζωὴν καλοῦνται παῖδες θεῶν." *In Tim*., III.159, 20-31. On this subject, see also *In Crat*., 38, 5ff.

Calliope was not therefore the literal mother of Orpheus, but he is referred to as her 'child' because he was a member of her series, and her 'descendant' in so far as he lived a life befitting a member of that series.

finally he teaches… the ranks of the sublunary gods proceeding from the universal [gods] [13-16]: Plato's discussion of the encosmic gods in the *Timaeus* is, for Proclus, ultimately compatible with the Orphic and Pythagorean theologies because all three teach that the procession of the final ranks of the particular gods (i.e. the encosmic gods) is modelled upon the procession of the final ranks of universal gods (i.e. the intellective gods or "**the intellective kings**"[600]).

And again in the *Cratylus* [he makes Homer, Hesiod and Orpheus authorities] on the hierarchy of divine ordered realms [16-17]: See *Cratylus*, 402b1-c3. The conjecture of *S.-W.* to fill the lacuna in the text seems perfectly plausible.

while in the *Gorgias* [he makes] Homer [an authority] of the triadic existence of the demiurgic monads [17-18]: This clause obviously depends upon material lost in the lacuna of the preceding clause. The demiurgic monads of the *Gorgias*, the three sons of Cronos, are hypercosmic gods. They are discussed at length at *TP*, VI. chaps 6-10.

rejecting the tragic element of myth-making while retaining common primary hypotheses with the theologians [20-22]: Proclus here reiterates the idea amply discussed in the preceding chapter that Plato chose the imagistic method of theology for his own myths rather than the symbolic method often employed by earlier Greek theologians. Nevertheless, whatever the differences in presentation, the basic content remains the same.

[600] On this alternative designation for the intellective gods, see, *inter alia*, *In Remp*., I.98, 30.

Commentary on chapter 6

In this chapter Proclus offers what remains one of the most thoroughgoing attacks on the Neoplatonic approach to Plato's theology. At the root of this criticism, as is made clear, lies a rival interpretation of the Platonic theology, one which does not seem to be entirely of Proclus' own invention. The arguments of this rival position against the Neoplatonists begins with the assertion that, although each dialogue contains a variety of reflections on different branches of philosophy, Plato nonetheless offers "**a principle teaching source**" for each of these branches. Therefore, while the *Timaeus* offers us Plato's "**complete theory concerning nature**", and the *Republic* and *Laws* offer the best of his ethics, no one dialogue or set of dialogues can be said to resume his theology. The passages to which the Neoplatonists refer cannot therefore be called Plato's theological doctrines, for there exists no touchstone dialogue by which one might judge their veracity.

There may not be a specifically 'theological' dialogue, according to this rival position, but this does not mean that there is no source for Plato's theology. Indeed, for the partisans of this rival position "**the younger disciples of Plato teach a unique and perfect form of theology**", one which they derive from "**the sole work of Plato in which is found the entire Good of the first philosophy, which indeed one might call the sum of all theory**". This 'sole work' whose contents were preserved in the writings of 'younger disciples of Plato', i.e. the original members of the Academy, can only be Plato's enigmatic lecture 'On the Good'.

It has been argued that this lecture, delivered before the members of the Academy and a crowd of curious Athenians, contained the fundamentals of Plato's 'esoteric' teachings, teachings which were later incorporated into the works of his former pupils such as Speusippus, Xenocrates, and Aristotle. Although Proclus believed that this lecture had taken

place,[601] he never once cites it or those who had supposedly preserved its contents in a theological context.

Proclus' relation to Plato's unwritten doctrines is complex. One the one hand, the Neoplatonic interpretation of Plato seems to have much in common with the supposed contents of these doctrines, especially in terms of protological considerations. Yet, from what Proclus knew of the Old Academy's interpretations of Plato in which these doctrines were supposedly preserved,[602] he took them to be among the first to have fundamentally misinterpreted Plato's theology.[603] This rejection of the Old Academy may have been due to a possible ontological interpretation of Plato's first principle, something which would have made them and the unwritten doctrines they supposedly preserved a welcome addition to the argumentative arsenal of Middle Platonists such as Origen. Indeed it is perhaps in the mouth of just such an opponent that Proclus envisions the objections of this chapter. Whatever the case may be, Proclus, while recognizing that Plato's teaching career was not confined to the dialogues, adamantly refuses to treat Plato's written works as secondary. As far as he is concerned, Plato's entire philosophy, including his theology, is contained in the authentic dialogues and letters.

To return to the main argument of this chapter, after having asserted that the unwritten doctrines preserved by Plato's immediate successors are the key to his theology, Proclus' imagined objector attacks the Neoplatonists' use of Plato's myths. The myths, according to the objector, are not only notoriously difficult to interpret, but they are "**episodic**" relative to the leading ideas of the dialogues. In other words, the Platonic myths function like the episodes of tragedy and comedy, providing a narrative incidental to, and indeed separable from, the main subject of the dialogue. The purpose of these mythical 'episodes' is to offer "**the intellective part of our soul**", which is attuned to the arguments and demonstrations of the dialogue, some respite. The myth instead operates on "**the divine part of the soul**" by means of "**sympathy**" in order to make the soul "**produce the undistorted conceptions**" which it contains. The Platonic myths therefore contain no

[601] See *In Parm*., 688, 4-18.
[602] His knowledge of the teachings of the Old Academy was almost certainly second-hand. See "Proclus and the Old Academy", 276.
[603] See *supra*.

rational arguments, their purpose being to persuade by sympathy rather than to convey rational information.

Finally, concerning those theological doctrines which the Neoplatonists find outside the myths, the objector admits that they do indeed exist, but specifies that their primary purpose is to elucidate ethical and physical doctrines. Three examples of this are supplied: the principles of Limit and Unlimited in the *Philebus*, the intelligible gods in the *Timaeus*, and the heavenly topography of the *Phaedrus*. Although Plato is clearly referring to the divine in all three cases, each of these is only introduced "**for the sake of the discovery or perfection**" of the dialogue's leading idea, which "**is either physical or political**". The idea, therefore, that all the theophanies of the dialogues might be collected together to form a coherent whole is absurd, considering that each was introduced only to illustrate something else.

But perhaps someone might oppose these [arguments] to our undertakings [p. 27, 1]: Although the expression Ἴσως δ' ἄν τις is frequently used by Proclus to introduce possible objections to his arguments,[604] we should not too hastily conclude that this indicates "que l'objection formulée dans ce chapitre est purement rhétorique et uniquement destinée à introduire la réponse relative au *Parménide* et à attirer sur elle l'attention."[605] It is not at all unreasonable that a thinker of the Middle Platonic persuasion could have levelled at least some of these very objections at the Neoplatonists, especially that concerning their neglect of the writings of the Old Academy.

There is also a military metaphor here based upon the juxtaposition of the verbs ἀπαντάω, which frequently means "to meet in battle", and the participle διατάσσω, which can mean "to draw up for battle". Unfortunately, this metaphor seems impossible to capture in English without larding the clause with parentheses.

[604] See *In Remp*., I.21, 8; *TP*, IV.26, 3; *In Alc.*, 99, 5; 154, 13; *In Parm*., 1171, 16; 1184, 9; 1190, 5; 1229, 8; 1241, 15; *In. Euc.*, 94, 19. Proclus indeed employs this expression more often than any other Greek author.
[605] *S.-W.*, I.27, note 1.

For should it be so [8]: The translation of *S.-W.*, "si nous admettons cette objection", is an approximation. The extremely dense sentences in which this chapter abounds have led them to make a great many such approximations, most of which, as *Abb*. well illustrates, may be avoided while still preserving the intelligibility of the text.

by means of an arrangement with reference to one another [11-13]: Contrary to the intuitions of *S.-W.* and *Abb*., the καὶ at the beginning of this clause seems to indicate that its refers back to the "**doctrines concerning the gods**" rather than to the "**the perfect and complete divine genera**".

to constitute the whole out of the parts, because of the difficulty in conceiving the wholeness before the parts [14-15]: On this subject, see *IT*, prop. 67.

to weave together [15]: A relatively rare verb which Proclus uses some twelve times over the course of the *TP*. Having most likely come across it at its *locus classicus* at *Statesman*, 305e4, it evidently became one of his preferred expressions.

since in the perfect the imperfect has the primary cause of its coming to be [15]: As *S.-W.* points out,[606] Proclus often employs the genitive absolute δέοντος where the accusative absolute δέον would normally be used.

[606] *S.-W.*, I.27, note 3.

For while the *Timaeus*, it may be, teaches us the theory concerning the intelligible genera… we will be unable to say [27, 17-p. 28, 2]: All of these objections boil down to the idea that there is no single dialogue which resumes all of Plato's theology and shows the interrelation between all the various orders and ranks of gods which the Neoplatonists claim to draw from the other dialogues.

being jabbered on about in your works [28, 3]: English lacks a preposition such as the French *chez* or the Latin *apud* which might convey the sense of παρά in this context and retain its brevity. That Proclus is using it in the sense of 'in your works' rather than 'in your homes/schools' seems likely based on his use of the same construction in the following chapter (see *TP*, I.32, 12), where the preposition could only have the former sense.

from diverse rivers [6]: Proclus' imaginary antagonist cites one of the flowery lines from the *Phaedrus* which so abound in his texts, and which we can very well imagine Proclus having employed in just such a context. This beautiful piece of self-mockery is one of those rare moments where Proclus reminds us that he does indeed have a sense of humour.

you will perhaps be able to bring forth out of the *Timaeus* the complete theory concerning nature… beautiful doctrines concerning ethics [12-14]: These are the σκοποί assigned to these dialogues by the Neoplatonists themselves.

but neglecting the sole work of Plato in which is found the entire Good of the first philosophy [15-16]: *S.-W.* is right to assume that this phrase, as it is transmitted in two manuscripts (P and V), is faulty. The corrections suggested in the modern edition of *TP*, are,

by the editors' own admission "assez violentes"[607]. Festugière, however, offers a markedly more delicate reading,[608] one which we have chosen to follow.

the undistorted conceptions [p. 29, 9]: *S.-W.* asserts that Proclus understands the term ἀδιαστρόφους in the sense of 'undistorted' rather than 'incontrovertible', 'infallible', etc.[609] There is no evidence to support this conjecture, and all three of the uses of this adjective in Book I of the *TP* could easily be construed in either sense, since Proclus undoubtedly considers both our preconceptions concerning the divine (*TP*, I.22, 3; I.81, 15) and the conceptions produced by the divine part of our soul through mystical sympathy, to be once 'undistorted' and 'incontrovertible'. An example of such an undistorted conception is our innate knowledge of the existence of the Forms (see *In Parm*., 974, 38-975, 1).

For which reason I believe Timaeus reasonably thinks it fit… although they should speak without demonstration [10-14]: See *Timaeus*, 40d6-41a3. In order to render this sentence as clearly as possible into English, the original ordering of the clauses has been ignored.

For this form of discourse is not demonstrative… nor having regard to pure learning but to sympathy with things [14-16]: Because the page break in the manuscript which occurs immediately before this sentence, *S.-W.* has made it the beginning of a new paragraph. With regard to content, however, it clearly belongs to the preceding paragraph.

[607] *Ibid*., I.28, note 3.
[608] See Fest. xxxii.
[609] *S.-W.*, I.29, note 1.

For in the *Philebus*, Plato made the argument… and it is clear which belongs to which [21-24]: In this example Unlimited constitutes the genus of pleasure, while Limit constitutes the genus of the life of the mind. See *Philebus*, 16c5-17a5; 23c1-30e8.

In the *Timaeus*, one admits the doctrines concerning the intelligible gods for the sake of the enquiry into natural causes [24-26]: See *Timaeus*, 39e3-40a2.

But again in the *Phaedrus*, Plato celebrates the supercelestial place, the subcelestial profundity [p. 30, 3-4]: See *Phaedrus*, 246e4-247e6; 249b6-256e2. For Proclus' exegesis thereof, see *TP*, IV.chaps. 4-26. See also our own discussion *supra*.

How, therefore, can such a theory as yours still be venerable and supernatural… but [one which is] episodic just as in dramatic works? [11-17]: This densely packed sentence requires several glosses in order to make its argument clear to the English reader. It amounts to a recapitulation of the imaginary objector's arguments, the first part of which is reasonably clear. The second part, however, beginning with "**but being destitute**", presents us with a clever reformulation of a previous objection. This is that the Neoplatonic interpreters violently wrested from Plato's texts an arrangement of passages and quotations which they claim constitutes Plato's theology. This arrangement is described by the objector as "**episodic just as in dramatic works**", in reference to the aforementioned assertion that the Neoplatonists rely heavily on the content of Plato's myths even though their content is irrational and incidental to the principal argument of their respective dialogues. A theology largely built out of a string of unrelated episodes is therefore necessarily episodic with regard to the real arguments of the Platonic corpus, much like the underplot of bad tragedy.

nor the leading idea in a work of Plato [14]: On the strength of *Met.*, 987a29-30, *S.-W.* suggests that ἐν τῇ πραγματείᾳ τοῦ Πλάτωνος be translated as "dans la philosophie de Platon",[610] while *Abb.* chooses instead "nella dottrina filosofica di Platone". The use of the participle τὸ προηγούμενον, however, is key. Proclus has twice before in this chapter made use of this term, and each time to denote the 'leading idea' or central theme of a particular dialogue. There is no evidence that the objector believes the Platonic philosophy in its entirety to have a single leading idea, as the translations of *S.-W.* and *Abb.* would seem to suggest.

Commentary on chapter 7

Proclus' response to the objections of the preceding chapter is decisive. He first addresses the objector's final remark, namely, that although Plato sometimes introduces theological concepts into his dialogues, these concepts are always a means and never an end in themselves. Again Proclus restates his idea that every dialogue contains *some* theological material, thereby implying that no dialogue contains exclusively theological material. At times these theological concepts are introduced by Plato in order to aid us in understanding a physical or ethical concept, but there are also theological concepts which are introduced only to elaborate Plato's theology itself. The reason behind this diversity is that the σκοποί of the majority Plato's dialogues are taxological (i.e. they treat of an entire τάξις). Proclus gives as examples the *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*.

Both of these dialogues, as Proclus earlier argued, are replete with theological material, yet, as he here openly admits, their σκοποί are not specifically theological. The σκοπός of the *Phaedrus* is the τάξις of Beauty, while that of the *Symposium* is the τάξις of Love. These τάξεις, like any other, extend from the gods through the entire ontological hierarchy. One should therefore not be surprised to find in these dialogues purely theological

[610] See *S.-W.*, I.30, note 1.

information concerning the gods, information concerning the gods which serves to elaborate ontological reality, and information concerning ontological reality alone. Each dialogue's content mirrors the content of the τάξις to which it is devoted.

There is, however, a dialogue whose σκοπός is not limited to a single τάξις: the *Parmenides*. The σκοπός of the *Parmenides* is effectively all τάξεις, or put otherwise, all reality. As Proclus recognizes, this assertion, his response to the central objection of the previous chapter, will initially seem paradoxical to those not already familiar with the Neoplatonic tradition. He will therefore spend the next five chapters, the remainder of the prolegomenon, justifying it by offering a condensed version of his interpretation of the *Parmenides*.

concerning the preceding arguments [p. 30, 19]: I.e. the arguments of chapters 2-5.

to ascend thence to the principles … nature of the thing in question [p. 30, 25-p. 31, 2]: I.e. to ascend from an ethical or physical cause to the principles of ethics or physics (i.e. the gods), in order to survey the entire causal chain. The citation from the *Republic* fits well.

in the *Phaedrus* [is] concerning the intelligible beauty and… all of the beautiful things [3-5]: As Hermias points out (*In Phaedr.*, 10, 7-9), this was considered to be the σκοπός of the *Phaedrus* at least since the time of Iamblichus.

in the *Symposium* concerning the erotic order [5-6]: This is the only indication we possess of what the later Neoplatonists took the σκοπός of the *Symposium* to be.

But if is it is necessary to behold… as well as the continuity of the whole set [of gods] from first to last in one Platonic dialogue [7-9]: *Abb.*'s choice to take συνεχές with τῆς θεολογίας seems misguided. It seems much more reasonable to follow *S.-W.* and take it instead with τοῦ σύμπαντος ἀριθμοῦ.

[it is] perhaps to propose a paradox, one which must be spoken of as evident by those of our [spiritual] family alone [9-10]: Unlike at *TP*, I.8, 9, the term ἑστία here embodies the ideas of family and household. With it, Proclus is at once referring to his spiritual family (i.e. the Neoplatonic tradition which he sketched out in chapter 1), as well as his immediate household (i.e. the Neoplatonic Academy of Athens). See *S.-W.*, I.31, note 1.

the mysterious notions of this dialogue are the notions you have in mind [13-14]: My translation follows that proposed by Festugière (Fest. xxxii).

according to the relationship befitting them [21]: Proclus uses λόγος here to signify the relationship which the higher classes of beings maintain with the classes below themselves.

the exposition of the generation of the gods [26]: As Festugière points out (Fest. xxxii), ὑμνη- words such as ὑμνημένη are often used by Proclus in the sense of 'exposing' or of an 'exposition', and therefore need not necessarily connote a 'celebration'.

kindles the whole and perfect light [p. 32, 2]: Another line reminiscent of *Timaeus*, 39b4.

the aforementioned dialogues [3]: This evidently refers to the key theological dialogues discussed in chapter 5.

And while it is necessary to ascribe the whole multitude [of conceptions concerning the divine] to the proposed dialogues [6-7]: Like *Abb*., I take πλῆθος to refer to the above mentioned ἐννοίας rather than to the dialogues themselves, as does *S.-W*.

the accounts resemble those things of which they are exegetes [11-12]: I.e. by reading the theological content of the other dialogues through the *Parmenides*, which is a description of all reality, we will show that what Plato says concerning the gods accords with reality. For Proclus' exegesis of this famous line from *Timaeus*, see *In Tim*., I.340, 15-341, 24.

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