The Teachings of Syrianus on Plato’s
Timaeus and Parmenides
The Teachings of Syrianus on Plato’s *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*

*By*

Sarah Klitenic Wear
For John M. Dillon and Kenneth Wear

With Love and Gratitude to Both
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ABBREVIATIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS

In Tim. fr. 1–25 (manuscripts and abbreviations used by Diehl, In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria, vol. 1–3)

C  Coislinianus 322 saec. XI/XII
D  cod. Parisinus graec. 1838 saec. XVI
M  Marcianus 195 saec. XIV exeuntis
P  (olum F) Parisinus 1840 saec. XVI
N  Neapolitanus Borbonicus III D 28 a. 1314
Q  (olum P) Parisinus suppl. graec. 666 saec. XIV
QD  (ς) loco quodam illius paginæ ς solam exhibere te docet ueram lectionem
ς  recensio uulgata
bedition Basileensis a. 1534
AMonacensis 382
s  Schneider qui edidit a. 1847 Vratislauiae
t  Taylor qui vertit in linguam Anglorum a. 1820 Londinii
add  addidit addidit addendum
ci coni  conieci sim.
em  emendauis sim.
ins  inserui sim.
om  omisit omissis
mg  margo
or. Chald.  De oraculis chaldaicis scr. G. Kroll Vratislauiae a. 1894
⟨⟩  additamenta
[ ]  delenda
[]  addenda quae ad fenestras codicum explendas inserta sunt

Abbreviations for In Parm. Fr. 1–9,
Proclus, In Parm., vol. 1-III Steel

A  Parisinus gr. 1810, saec. XIII ex.
A¹  lectio primi librarii
A²  lectio secundi librarii (ante 1358)
### ABBREVIATIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>A³</td>
<td>lectio tertiilibrarii (ante 1358)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A⁴</td>
<td>lectio recentioris librarii, saec. XV?</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Ambrosianus gr. 159 (B 165 sup.), saec. XIV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mᵇ</td>
<td>lectio post Bessarionis correctionem</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Laurentianus plut. LXXV 8, saec. XV (a. 1489)</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>Scorialensis T. II. 8 (gr. 147), saec. XVI (a. 1559–1563)</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>Vaticanus Rossianus gr. 962, saec. XVI</td>
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<td>W</td>
<td>Vindobonensis phil. gr. 7, saec. XVI (a. 1561)</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Monacensis gr. 425, saec. XVI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>consensus codicum FGP (Libri IV–VII) RW (usque ad IV 911.34)</td>
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<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>interpretatio latina Guillelmi de Moerbeka, saec. XIII ex. (ante a. 1286), secundum editionem C. Steel</td>
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<td>Γ</td>
<td>exemplar graecum Guillelmi de Moerbeka (deperditum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A⁸</td>
<td>interpretatio Guillelmi de Moerbeka in codice Ambrosiano A 167 sup., saec. XVI (a. 1508)</td>
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<td>PLAT. B</td>
<td>Bodleianus Clark. 39, saec. IX (a. 895)</td>
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<td>Tubingensis Mb 14, saec. XI</td>
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<td>PLAT. D</td>
<td>Marcianus gr. 185, saec. XII</td>
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<td>PLAT. T</td>
<td>Marcianus App. Class. IV 1, saec. X medio</td>
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<td>PLAT. W</td>
<td>Vindobonensis Suppl. gr. 7, saec. XI</td>
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**Sigla in textu:**

- `()`: additio
- `[ ]`: additio ex interpretatione latina
- `{ }`: textus delendus
- `…`: lacuna
- `add.`: addidit
- `cens.`: censuit
- `coni.`: coniecit
- `corr.`: correxit
- `del.`: delevit
- `eras.`: erasum
- `exp.`: expunxit
- `hab.`: habet/habent
- `in mg.`: in margine
- `inv.`: invertit
- `iter.`: iteravit
- `litt.`: litterae (-arum, -is)
- `om.`: omisit
- `ras.`: rasura
- `spat. vac.`: spatium (-o) vacuum (-o)
- `stat.`: statuit
- `transp.`: transposuit
Abbreviations for In Parm Fr. 11–15, Damascius, 
In Parm., De Prin., Dub. et Sol., Westerink

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<td>A</td>
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INTRODUCTION

A. Life

Syrianus,\(^1\) successor to Plutarch of Athens as head of the Athenian school of Platonism from 432–437,\(^2\) is best known through the writings of his well-published pupil, Proclus. In the introduction to his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides*, Proclus offers the following encomium to his teacher Syrianus:

“So may all the orders of divine beings help to prepare me fully to share in this most illuminating and mystical vision that Plato reveals to us in the *Parmenides* with a profundity appropriate to its subject; and which has been unfolded to us, with his own very lucid applications, by one who was in very truth a fellow Bacchant with Plato and filled entirely with divine truth, and who, by leading us to the understanding of this vision has become a true hierophant of these divine doctrines. Of him I would say that he came to men as the exact image of philosophy for the benefit of souls here below, in recompense for the statues, temples, and the whole ritual of worship, and as the chief author of salvation for men who now live and for those to come hereafter. So may all the higher powers be propitious to us and be ready with their gifts to illuminate us also with the light that comes from them and leads us upwards.” (Proclus, *In Parm. 618*)\(^3\)

\(^1\) Something of Syrianus’ background is known through works such as Damascius’ *Philosophical History*; Syrianus was related to Aedea and Ammonianus (Damascius, *PH* 47; 54). Damascius informs us, moreover, that he was tall, good-looking, and strong and more beloved of the gods than Ammonianus. Regarding other details of Syrianus’ physical appearance, the reader is left to his own imagination.

\(^2\) In addition to Proclus, Syrianus’ students included Isidore, Hermeias, and Domninus (Damascius, *PH*, 34D; 54; 89A).

\(^3\) Translation Morrow-Dillon (1987). Proclus offers similar praise to Syrianus in *PT* I, 1 pp. 7–8 (where Syrianus is called a hierophant) and *In Remp. I*, 71.2. In his praise of Syrianus in his *Parmenides Commentary*, Proclus makes it seem that Syrianus is one of the pure souls who descend willingly for the aid of the human race. This passage is not a hymn, however, because Proclus addresses the higher powers, rather than his teacher. For a hymn to a philosopher see Lucretius’ hymn to Epicurus in *De rerum natura* V. 1–54. See also Porphyry’s *Life of Plotinus*, ch. 22 where Porphyry calls on the Muses before he writes praise of Plotinus.
One gathers from this quotation that Syrianus was a figure of immense religious and spiritual importance to Proclus. As the “exact image of philosophy”, Syrianus personified the philosophical art for Proclus in such a way that it is impossible to avoid Syrianic thought in Proclus’ own philosophy, so pervasive is his philosophy in the works of Proclus. Moreover, although Proclus frequently mentions his teacher when discussing a point, more often than not Syrianus is behind Proclus’ discourse even when he goes unmentioned. In his *Life of Proclus*, Marinus discusses the close relationship between Syrianus and Proclus:

“Now the old man lived only two years more with Proclus as his lodger, and then when he died he entrusted the young man to his successor Syrianus, as he also did his grandson Archiadas. And when Syrianus took him, he not only gave him more help with his scholarly pursuits, but made him his housemate from then on and a sharer in his philosophic life, finding in him the sort of hearer and successor that he had long desired to have, as he was able to receive his manifold learning and divine teachings.”

Proclus was the hand-picked successor of Syrianus, who not only studied at the feet of Syrianus, but lived with him and adapted his philosophical way of life, even positioning himself within ear-shot of his Master at death.

Little is known about Syrianus’ personal history—the major study on the person of Syrianus remains K. Praechter’s article, “Syrianos” in *R.E* (IV A 1728–1729), the information for which seems based on Marinus’ *Life of Proclus*. Marinus notes that Syrianus was the son of Philoxenus and that he became head of the school of Athens in 431/2 after Plutarch’s death. In addition to overseeing Proclus, he was the teacher of Hermeias and Domninus. He died, according to Marinus, shortly after a period when he was to read either Orphic writings or Chaldean Oracles with Domninus and Proclus, in the midst of his service as *diadochos*.

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5 Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 36. Marinus tells the story that Syrianus had requested two vaults—one for himself, one for Proclus—in one tomb. When Proclus later worried out of piety that it would be improper for him to be buried with Syrianus, Syrianus appeared to him in a dream to persuade him otherwise (Marinus, *ibid*). The inscription on Proclus’ tomb, which he shares with his teacher, Syrianus, on Mt. Lycabettus reads: “Proclus I was, by race a man of Lycia, whom Syrianus Fostered here to become the successor to his own school. This is the common tomb which received the bodies of both men; Oh may a single Place be a portion of both their souls.” Marinus, *ibid*. trans. Edwards.
6 Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 11
After his death, Domninus took the chair at the Athenian School for a short while, followed by Proclus, who became head until his death in 485.

B. Works

The written product of Syrianus’ teaching is scant: extant works include a textbook on rhetoric (In Hermogenem, a commentary on Hermogenes’ De Ideis and De Statibus) and a commentary on Aristotle’s Metaphysics, books B, Γ, Μ, Ν (In Metaphysica). The Suda (IV 478, 21) attributes the following works to Syrianus s.v. Συριανός:

```
"Εγραψεν
Εἰς Ὀμηρὸν ὀλὲν ὑπόμνημα ἐν Βιβλίος ζ.
Εἰς τὴν Πολιτείαν Πλάτωνος Βιβλία δ.
Εἰς τὴν ὁρφέως θεολόγιαν βιβλία Β'
[Εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου] Περὶ τῶν παρ’ Ὀμηρῷοθεῶν
Συμφωνίαν Ὀρφέως, Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνος
Περὶ τὰ λόγια, βιβλία δέκα
Καὶ ἄλλα τινὰ ἐξηγητικὰ.
```

There is some debate as to whether these works were actually authored by Syrianus because Proclus is listed as the author of works with the same titles, Suda s.v. Πρόκλος. E. Zeller, in Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung, claims that the works were written by Proclus and that this list was tacked on to Syrianus’ entry. Praechter, in “Das Schriftenverzeichnis des Neuplatonikers Syrianos bei Sudas”, attributes the works to Syrianus, arguing that Syrianus’ works were falsely attributed to Proclus. A.D.R. Sheppard suggests that both Syrianus and Proclus may have written works with the same title. H.-D. Saffrey maintains that Proclus edited Syrianus’ work, while R.L. Cardullo regards

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8 There is actually some debate as to whether the author of In Hermogenem is the same Syrianus who was head of the Athenian School, though there is no compelling reason to deny the identification. The work is, however, dedicated to the author’s son, Alexander, of whom we have no other evidence, even as there is none of Syrianus’ being married. It is possible that his purported son was a spiritual "son".

9 See CAG VI.1 (902). These are now treated in the Aristotelian Commentators series, by O’Meara and Dillon (2006–2008.) It remains unclear whether Syrianus wrote a commentary on the other books of Aristotle’s Metaphysics, but probably not.

10 Zeller (1903) 818ff.
the entire list as suspect.\textsuperscript{13} It is possible that Proclus’ works as listed are written versions and elaborations of Syrianus’ lectures on the same subject.

In addition to the works listed in the \textit{Suda}, it seems that Syrianus delivered lectures which later formed the basis for Hermias’ \textit{Commentary on the Phaedrus}. Whether he actually composed commentaries on other dialogues of Plato remains uncertain. The issue of the possible appropriation of Syrianus’ unwritten teaching by Proclus in commentary-form will be taken up in section D of this introduction, on methodology.

\textbf{C. Philosophical Position}

While it is somewhat premature to summarise Syrianus’ metaphysics based on fragments of his teachings on Plato’s \textit{Timaeus} and \textit{Parmenides}, by gathering such evidence as appears in the attested “fragments”, we can begin to see a picture develop of what the Syrianic cosmos looked like and how it influenced Proclus’ metaphysics. As the hallmark of his metaphysics, Syrianus postulates a new level of reality for every difficulty he finds in the text of the \textit{Timaeus}, while every step in the argument of the first and second hypotheses in the \textit{Parmenides} represents also a distinct level of reality. This reality, moreover, displays Syrianus’ impulse to proliferate levels of triads—an impulse which originated with Iamblichus, who distinguished three triads at the level of intellect.\textsuperscript{14} Syrianus, indeed, comes to many of his conclusions by appropriating the opinions of Porphyry and Iamblichus, taking aspects of each to create, out of often contradictory views, one coherent doctrine. This doctrine was then elaborated upon by Proclus, who created even more ranks within Syrianus’ tiered cosmos.

\textit{The One}

Syrianus’ description of the One is encapsulated in his treatment of the first and second hypotheses of the \textit{Parmenides}:\textsuperscript{15} what is systematically denied of the One in the first hypothesis is affirmed of the One in


\textsuperscript{14} Cf. Procl. \textit{In Tim} I 308, 18ff. and Appendix C to Dillon (1973).

\textsuperscript{15} Unfortunately, for Proclus’ \textit{Commentary on the Parmenides}, only his discussion of the first hypothesis is extant (though some evidence in the interpretation of the second is derivable both from there and from the \textit{Platonic Theology}.) Damascius, however, seems
the second, so that each positive attribute corresponds in order to the preceding negation:

“All things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of being; and also that the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics” (Proclus, In Parm. 1062.10–1062.17.)

Hence, the first hypothesis says that the One is beyond multiplicity and simple and partless; however, the second hypothesis allows us to note how the One contains a beginning, middle, and end when the One is looked at with respect to others. The One is thus simple (with respect to itself—the Absolute One) or participated (with respect to the generated cosmos): Syrianus says that when Plato discusses the One as unparticipated and participated, he distinguishes between the two by adding τι ἐν ἑν to ἑν when discussing the participated One. This concept breaks from Iamblichus’ discussion of the “particular”, rather than participated, One—the ‘particular ones’ refers to a doctrine of henads, which will be described below. For Syrianus, the connection between the two hypotheses exists because the negative propositions are tied to the positive; the ways in which the One “is not” is another way of attributing something to the One—i.e., negative statements say that the One is other than these things. This mode of thinking is a correction to Iamblichus’ idea that the One is ineffable: if anything were attributed to it, such terms would subtract from and diminish the One. For Syrianus, at the intelligible level, negative statements can be specifcatory: because each form has its own identity, it can be said that the One “is not” rest; because it is not movement, identity; and so forth. At the sensible level, negation is a denial of attributes. Syrianus distinguishes between περὶ τοῦ ἑν, referring to the One, and περὶ τό ἑν, talking about the One. In the first case, the use of the genitive when discussing the topic of the One is permissible, as it implies that the One is only being mentioned as a subject. In the

to have been aware of the remainder of Proclus’ Commentary on the Parmenides and comments on both it and Syrianus’ teaching as revealed in it.

17 Syrianus, In Parm. fr. 4 Wear.
18 Syrianus, In Parm. fr. 12 Wear.
19 Syrianus, In Parm. fr. 6 Wear. Iamblichus attributes characteristics denied of the One itself to the lower elements of henadic realm. See Iamblichus, In Tim. Fr. 29 Dillon.
20 Syrianus, In Parm. fr. 10 Wear.
second case, the accusative suggests that the One is being discussed and that things are being said about the content of the One; this is impossible, because when humans speak about the One, they use sensible language, which the One transcends. Proclus agrees with and expands his teacher’s thinking on this subject, arguing two additional ways in which the One is transcendent and immanent in *The Platonic Theology* II.12: the One has the power of generation; the One can be approached by the soul, but only when it leaves behind dialectic (as a form of sensible discourse) in mystical ascent.

Syrianus, then, discusses the One and its relation to the generated universe based on the first and second hypotheses of the *Parmenides*. Syrianus, like Iamblichus, does not consider the One in its absolute state even in the first hypothesis; instead, he describes the One in its capacity for generating gods. In a rather strange passage, Damascius credits Syrianus with positing an ineffable One beyond the One:

“There is, then, a certain relation perceived between the two, such as the relationship of extremes, these things forming a sequence: the Unified, the relation, the One, and beyond the One there will be a unique principle, the Ineffable.”

(Syrianus *In Parm*, fr. 11 Wear = Damascius, *De Princip*. II. 17, 1–17.)

That Syrianus postulated an ineffable One beyond the One is a questionable proposal, as there is no other textual evidence that I have found to support the claim here, but since Iamblichus had done so before him, it is not impossible. It is possible that Damascius is reading into Syrianus his own structure of the Ineffable, followed by a generative One. It is also possible, one may suppose, that Damascius had access to more material that what is now extant and that Syrianus’ Ineffable One appears in now lost material. When Proclus inherits Syrianus’ One, he tightens the subject matter of the first hypothesis, arguing that it is about the absolute One. The ineffable, however, would not, as such, be the proper subject of any of the hypotheses.

**Peras and Apeiria**

After the One, Syrianus places *peras* (Limit) and *apeiria* (Unlimitedness), features of the henadic realm which filter down and pervade every level of existence. The following chart, reproduced and discussed at length in *In Parm*. Fr. 5 below, outlines the levels of being and how Limit and Unlimitedness affect them.
The pair reveal the transcendent nature of the One and the One as the cause of all things; *peras* is responsible for unity and sameness, while *apeiria* causes production, procession, and plurality. Everything, thus, contains Limit and Unlimitedness, with the exception of the One, which exists beyond it. Syrianus assumes these cosmic principles from Iamblichus, who placed them after his second One.\(^{21}\) Unlike Iamblichus, who made the second One a monad and called *peras* and *apeiria* together a dyad, Syrianus seems to assimilate Iamblichus’ “second One” to *peras* as monad, while characterising *apeiria* as an (indefinite) dyad. Proclus uses both terms, depending on the context of his discussion.\(^{22}\)

\(^{21}\) Cf. Iambl. *In Tim*. fr. 7 Dillon.
\(^{22}\) Proclus sometimes uses “dyad” to refer to *peras* and *apeiria* in his commentary on Plato’s *Parmenides*, while in other writings, he refers to *apeiria* as the dyad. See Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 5 Wear, and Sheppard (1982) 3–6.
The Henomenon

Before the noetic triad, Syrianus discusses a relationship between the One and what he terms, following Iamblichus, “the Unified” (to hênomenon) which relates these extremes of the henadic realm: the One, the Unified, and the relationship can be taken to constitute a triad. Moreover, between the hênomenon and Being he posits a bond called dynamis; the hênomenon, Being, and this bond (skhesis) constitute a second triad. The hênomenon participates in the One and is the first product of the relationship between peras and apeiria. The second triad, of hênomenon and Being (or Nous) and their bond, may owe something to Porphyry’s doctrine of the One. Porphyry is reported by Damascius²⁴ as making the One the “Father” of the intelligible triad Being, Life, and Intellect, so that the head of the noetic world is also the One at least in its positive, creative aspect. Syrianus, while not adopting Porphyry’s peculiar theory, expands this interpretation of the One by explaining the relationship between the One and the noetic world in terms of the two triads—different functions of the One are expressed in terms of individual cosmic entities. Such a thesis creates a drawn-out and elaborate cosmos, as opposed to Porphyry’s compact universe based on the premise that the Father of the intelligible triad is the One.

Henads

In the Syrianic cosmos, the henads represent the link between the henadic and intelligible realm—they connect the two in a way which the absolute transcendence of the One would otherwise seem to render impossible. As aspects of the One which pervade the universe, the henads do not have a precise location per se, as might an hypostasis such as Intellect, or Soul, for instance. Still, it is possible to locate where they first enter the cosmos. The henads are the lowest element in the realm of the One, below peras and apeiria, and constitute the link to the Intelligible. The Unified (hênomenon), however, is also the product of peras and apeiria and the link to the Intelligible. It seems, then, that either Syrianus makes the contents of the hênomenon the henads or he makes the hênomenon the totality of the henads. Most likely both are true, with the hênomenon possessing the simultaneous unity and plurality which the first and second hypotheses of the Parmenides bring to light with respect to the One.

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²³ Syrianus, In Parm. fr. 11 Wear.
²⁴ Damascius, De Princ. Ch. 43.
There has been some discussion as to whether the theory of the henads originated with Syrianus or if they existed already in Iamblichus’ cosmology. While E.R. Dodds credited Syrianus with first postulating the henads in his edition of Proclus’ *Elements of Theology*, (pp. 257–260), he later retracts a key piece of evidence in his *addenda* and *corrigenda*. The point at issue for Dodds (and for Dillon) is a position attributed by Proclus in *In Parmenidem 1066.16* to “some of those revered by us” (τινες τῶν ἡμῖν αἰ-δοίον) that the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* addresses “god and the gods”, by which Proclus understands “henads”. Dodds initially attributes this statement to Syrianus, and then later retracts it. It is clear, however, that Syrianus located the gods in the second hypothesis, leaving the first hypothesis for the One alone (1061.20–1063.1) and that Iamblichus is most likely the author of this doctrine. Dillon first attributed the doctrine of the henads referred to in *In Parmenidem 1066.16* ff. to Iamblichus, arguing that this doctrine does, indeed, reflect Syrianus and Proclus’ concept of the henads, rather than mere noetic beings, the suggestion of Saffrey and Westerink. Dillon argues that Iamblichus was prepared to identify the henads, while serving as the lowest “participated” element of the realm of the One, also as objects of intellection. For Iamblichus, the One-Being exists in itself and is substantially identical with the highest level of *Nous*; in this way that it can be viewed as a unity and multiplicity—when viewed as an intelligised multiplicity, Iamblichus calls this gods or henads. Syrianus makes the *hênonomenon* (not the *hen on*) the contents of the forms and places gods in every level of the universe; his metaphysics, thus, prohibits the henads as objects of intellection. For Syrianus, each intelligible level is presided over by a henad—the henads adjust to suit every level, existing noetically in the noetic levels, noerically in the noeric levels.

The structure of the henadic realm is, therefore, as follows:

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25 Saffrey-Westerink (1978) ix–xl. Saffrey and Westerink argue that Iamblichus use *henas* to denote the forms.


27 Cf. *In Tim. fr. 29*.


30 This chart is reproduced and discussed in-depth in Syrianus, *In Tim. fr. 17* Wear.
Iamblichus and Syrianus agree here

ἕν πέρας ἀπειρία
tὸ ἴνομένον
[ἐνάδες]

Syrianus’ explanation of the first noetic triad:

Monad (τὸ ἁπλώς εἶναι)
Dyad of ἀεὶ ὁν (τὸ ἀεὶ εἶναι)

The Noetic Realm

Syrianus designs the noetic realm so that every layer of reality is marked by a level of divinity. Layers of reality, moreover, inter-relate so that the lowest level of one realm is the highest of the next. Syrianus’ hierarchy of noetic, noetic-noeric, and noeric gods is further divided into triads, which become even further divided by Proclus—a cosmos he describes over the course of the Platonic Theology. The noetic realm thus has the following levels of gods, \(^{31}\) which Syrianus relates to Parmenides 144 E 8–148 D 4.\(^{32}\) The hierarchy, as set out in 2–4.3 of J. Opsomer’s appendix to his article, “Proclus on Demiurgy and Procession: A Neoplatonic Reading of the Timaeus”\(^{33}\) appears as follows:

The intelligible gods: Being
1st intelligible triad: One-Being
2nd intelligible triad: Eternity
3rd intelligible triad: Intelligible Intellect (Paradigm)

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\(^{31}\) For a discussion of these levels, see Syrianus, In Tim. fr. 16 Wear.

\(^{32}\) Syrianus, In Tim. fr. 16 Wear.

\(^{33}\) Opsomer (2000).
The intelligible-intellective gods: Life
1st intelligible-intellective triad
2nd intelligible-intellective triad
3rd intelligible-intellective triad
The intellective gods: Intellect (a Hebdomad)
1st intellective triad
Kronos
Rhea
Zeus (intellective intellect): Demiurge
2nd Intelective Triad: the Maintainers; the Kouretes; the “Implacables”
Seventh Divinity: membrane (hypezókos)
The hypercosmic gods
The hypercosmic-encosmic gods
The encosmic gods

Zeus, as the demiurgic monad, oversees the demiurgic gods as they exist in the hypercosmic and encosmic realms. Thus, the hypercosmic and encosmic realms mirror the intellective order so that each consists of a triad of which Zeus is a member. This structure seems to be adopted by Proclus almost unchanged in his published works.

**Aeon**

Eternity is the duality ἀεί and ὅν and is, in a sense, an aspect of One-Being, where it remains at the summit of the intelligible realm. Proclus places Eternity in the second triad of the intelligible realm. Eternity, thus, is substantially Being, because it precedes Intellect, but it resides in the third intelligible triad in a causal way. Proclus, likewise, places Eternity in the second triad of the intelligible realm and states that Eternity remains in the One of the intelligible realm. With this structure, Proclus says that Eternity is substantially Being, but Intellect in a causal way.

**Paradigm**

Syrianus, as with Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Theodore of Asine, approaches the Paradigm—the sum of the forms used by the Demiurge in creation—in terms of its relationship to the Demiurge. The Paradigm as the αὐτοκτονον is the third intelligible triad (after One-Being and Eternity) and contains the causes of all being and the four forms. As such, it is

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34 Syrianus, In Tim. Fr. 17.
37 Syrianus, In Tim. Fr. 8.
superior to the Demiurge, Syrianus argues, and exists ontologically prior to it. The Demiurge looks to the Paradigm, contemplating it as a superior object. However, were the Demiurge to contemplate the Paradigm as something external, he would see it through sensation, rather than intellection. Vision, as sensation, moreover, would give the Demiurge an incomplete conception of the Paradigm—as an *eidôlon*, his vision would be a shadow of the Paradigm, which we know is not possible. Syrianus solves this by arguing that the Paradigm exists prior to the Demiurge noetically, and within the Demiurge noerically: the Demiurge contemplates the Paradigm by reflecting upon himself. The Paradigm, thus, exists simultaneously as an object of thought and as thinker itself through an act of reflective contemplation. This represents an innovation in the debates over the Paradigm and its location with relation to the Demiurge: Longinus situated the Paradigm after the Demiurge (which Syrianus faults because it forces the Demiurge to contemplate something inferior to it); Porphyry argued that the Paradigm is prior to the Demiurge (which would mean that the Paradigm must be seen by the Intellect, an impossibility were the Paradigm placed before the Demiurge); and Plotinus concluded that the Paradigm is in the Demiurge (an impossibility because if the Demiurge had the forms in him primally he would be *noetos*—but the Paradigm cannot be in the Demiurge because the Demiurge contains the forms of heavenly bodies). Proclus seems to adopt Syrianus’ opinion on the matter whole-heartedly.

**Demiurge**

The Demiurge represents Zeus, the third member of the first intellective triad, comprised of Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus. Syrianus’ presentation of the Demiurge is based on Iamblichus’, which represented an innovation in the history of Platonic interpretation of the Demiurge. Iamblichus made Zeus third among the fathers in the intellectual hebdomad, though, in his *Timaeus Commentary* at least, he seems to have characterised the Demiurge as embracing the whole intelligible universe, also placing classes of being in the Demiurge. This was a Plotinian theory which Porphyry had rejected in favor of locating the Demiurge in the realm

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40 Syrianus, *In Tim.* Fr. 6 Wear; Proclus, *PT* V.
of Soul.\textsuperscript{42} Syrianus, moreover, agrees with all three—Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus—with regard to the question of how many demiurges created the Platonic universe. Before Iamblichus, Numenius proposed that there were three gods: the Father, the Creator, and the creation, a position taken up and elaborated upon by Plotinus’ pupil Amelius, who posits three demiurges, three intellects and three kings.\textsuperscript{43} These were assimilated to the Good as primary cause. Proclus places the Father second after the Creator, asserting that Plato used the same word for “Father” and “Creator”, so that Numenius should not identify the paternal principle of the universe with the first principle. Syrianus adopts Plotinus’ and Iamblichus’ description of the Demiurge, interpreting Phanes as the Demiurge. Zeus, as the fifth king of gods, unifies the universe within himself because he contains the forms. Zeus swallows Phanes because Phanes is identified with the intelligible monad and the \(\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\zeta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\), the third member of the triad of intelligibles who produces the sum of all living things and embraces all.\textsuperscript{44} In swallowing this exemplary cause, Zeus is transcendent at the level of Intellect, but requires mediation in his demiurgic activity in the form of particular fathers or demiurges.

For Syrianus, the Demiurge, then, is in the realm of the Intellect,\textsuperscript{45} at the upper limit of the intellective gods who provide the mediation the Demiurge requires. As head of the intellective gods, he is filled with intelligible monads and assumes leadership over the particular fathers in the hypercelestial and celestial realms. As a monad, he rules over a triad of fathers. The powers of the Demiurgic monad provide the cause for all things holistically, while the demiurgic triad, which is dependent on the monad, oversees parts holistically, wholes partially, and parts partially.\textsuperscript{46}

Proclus adopts this hierarchy of demiurgic creation, arguing in \textit{Platonic Theology} V in favor of the Syrianic intellectual hebdomad. As with Syrianus, he says that the Demiurge is in the Intellect and that the triad of Kronos, Rhea and Zeus represent Being, Life, and Intellect. He posits that Zeus, as the third member of the triad, is intellective-intellect and acts as head of two triads of demiurges: the hypercosmic and encosmic. He follows these triads with a seventh divinity, which Proclus calls the “membrane”, that separates the Demiurge from the sensible world. Proclus,

\textsuperscript{42} Proclus, \textit{In Tim.} I. 307.4–5.
\textsuperscript{43} Proclus, \textit{In Tim.} I. 306.1–31.
\textsuperscript{44} Syrianus, \textit{In Tim.} Fr. 7 Wear; \textit{OF} 154; Proclus, \textit{In Tim.} I. 314.28.
\textsuperscript{45} Syrianus, \textit{In Tim.} Fr. 6 Wear; Proclus, \textit{In Tim.} I. 310.8–15.
\textsuperscript{46} Syrianus, \textit{In Tim.} Fr. 6; Proclus, \textit{In Tim.} I 310.16–18 ff.
moreover, posits a complex series of triads presided over by demiurges (all known as “Zeus”) who act as the monad of their particular triad: thus, the first Zeus is the monadic demiurge, the second is the monad of the hypercosmic triad, and the third is the monad of the hypercosmic-encosmic gods. Proclus does not credit Syrianus with this elaboration and it seems that it is his innovation, although, of course, it is possible that he adopts this hierarchy from Syrianus without crediting him.

In making the souls, Syrianus explains that the Demiurge uses the mixing bowl because it transmits form to souls. Syrianus establishes that the mixer is the Demiurge, the mixing bowl defines the form of souls, the things mixed are the elements of souls, which proceed from the Demiurge and the mixing bowl, and the product is soul itself. Soul is given form from the generative cause after it became one thing from the action of the mixing bowl. Proclus broadens the function of the mixing bowl from Syrianus’ creating partial souls to containing all life, including the world soul. Proclus is also specific about the kind of partial souls created by the crater. These include: divine, angelic, and demonic classes. In creating, moreover, Syrianus says that the Demiurge has a paternal and maternal relationship with the encosmic gods. He contains the aitia of both (ζωή as maternal causality, ον for paternal causality), which aid in his role as being the maker of forms (εἰδοποιοῦς) and creator of essence (οὐσιοποιοῦς). With these aitiai, the Demiurge transmits life and essence to soul, and enforms soul, which then reaches perfection in the mixing bowl.

Psychic Realm

Syrianus presents new doctrine regarding the psychic realm by assuming the World Soul and hypostasis Soul into one being and by his modifications to Iamblichus’ doctrine of the descent of the individual soul, including the soul’s vehicle.

Time

As with Iamblichus, Syrianus gives a non-temporal explanation for the existence of transcendent Time. Time takes its beginning from above

47 Syrianus, In Tim. fr. 24 Wear.
48 Proclus, In Tim. III. 248.19 ff.
49 Proclus claims to “clarify the thought of our Master” in In Tim. III. 248.24–249.26.
50 Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 62 Dillon.
and imitates Eternity, unfolding Eternity, as a measure of motion, rather than a separate thing. While Iamblichus identifies the levels of reality with the noeric realm, where time itself is the ordering principle, Syrianus refers it to the levels of divine souls that participate in primal Time.\(^{51}\) Primal Time, moreover, measures the circuits of these souls. Syrianus, relating Time to the level of divine soul, agrees with Iamblichus that there is higher time which relates to the level of divine soul and a level of divine souls participates in primal time.\(^{52}\) He thus takes the concept of Time unfolding Eternity and extrapolates a lower level which unravels something contained in a concentrated form at the higher level. Syrianus innovates from Iamblichus’ concept of time by positing an intermediate entity which is superior to ordinary time, lower than \(\alpha ι \tilde{o}n\), which is the causal principle of the intellectual world. Syrianus further explains that Day and Night are creative forces causing physical time and dividing themselves into physical day and night; Day and Night are the transcendent paradigms of day and night in the soul,\(^{53}\) while day and night are the contents of this transcendent time.\(^{54}\) Day and Night, as the operative parts of time, moreover, function as archetypes and creative forces of physical days and nights.

**All—Soul**

Syrianus’ contribution to the doctrine of the Soul comes in his conflating the World Soul with the hypostasis Soul; elements of the Soul are linked to various levels of the noetic cosmos so that Soul is related to the noetic world on three levels.\(^{55}\) This is an innovation from the doctrine in which Iamblichus argues that soul is suitably related to all parts of the universe—it is transcendent and part is present around earth and the bulk of the universe.\(^{56}\)

Another aspect of Syrianic innovation comes in his division of the function of Soul into two, which is unlike Iamblichus who formulates two triads, and then allocates division of function to them. For Syrianus, Soul is one as a reason principle and many because it has division. The principle of oneness in the Soul allows for its triadic remaining

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\(^{51}\) Syrianus, *In Parm. fr. 9* Wear.

\(^{52}\) Syrianus, *In Parm. fr. 8* Wear.

\(^{53}\) Syrianus, *In Tim. fr. 18* Wear.

\(^{54}\) Syrianus, *In Tim. fr. 18* Wear.

\(^{55}\) Syrianus, *In Tim. fr. 13* Wear.

\(^{56}\) Iamblichus, *In Tim. fr. 50* Dillon.
in itself, proceeding and returning. This higher aspect is responsible for exercising providence over pure forms in the cosmos. The aspect of many in the Soul reflects the Soul as the sum total of forms; it presides over bodies and partial beings. With these two aspects, the Soul can imitate the holistic activity of the Demiurge, while remaining in Intellect. This aspect of both holistic and individual care of Soul primes the Soul for division into higher and lower categories—a division Syrianus employs, while maintaining the fundamental unity of Soul by making the division in terms of the Soul's function. This dual nature of Soul and division of functions existed in the Platonic tradition. From Theodore of Asine, Syrianus adopts the concept of dividing the function of souls into categories. Proclus adapts and emphasises Syrianus’ amalgamation of Iamblichus’ doctrine that the soul has a super-cosmic element in it linked to Intellect and Porphyry’s doctrine that the Soul has a multiplicity of powers which are present in suitable ways to all parts of the universe.

**Individual Soul**

Syrianus’ greatest contribution to the discussion of the individual soul comes with his description of the descent of the soul and the vehicle of the soul. He describes how divine souls move cyclically, so that as they approach their end, they also produce a beginning. These souls partake in time through their circuits, which results in a cyclical motion—souls are simultaneously younger and older than themselves. While divine souls remain circling above, individual souls descend into generation. Syrianus refers to this descent as the first generation, although there is not one descent absolutely; instead, the soul descends once for every divine circuit. The soul necessarily descends with every circuit because every circuit is the same—if a soul were to descend for one circuit, which it must, it must descend with every circuit. In order to stay above, the soul would have to have an unchanging intellectual power, which only the divine souls can claim. Syrianus adopts this concept that every soul must descend from Iamblichus. From Iamblichus, he acquires the nature of the soul’s procession and the concept of the triadic motion of soul.

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57 See Damascius on this point, *In Parm.* II 24, 10–12.
60 Syrianus, *In Tim.* fr. 23 Wear.
Iamblichus adds, moreover, that some souls have a greater number of descents than others and that this repetition weakens souls.62

With regard to the doctrine of the vehicle of the soul, Syrianus reconciles the opinions of Porphyry,63 that the vehicle dissolves, and Iamblichus, that the vehicle survives, by postulating a higher and lower ochēma: while the higher ochēma is immortal, the lower one dissolves. Proclus does not adopt this theory, conflating the two ochēmata into one which is made of different elements and three envelopes.

*Matter and Evil*

Syrianus’ doctrine on evil, reproduced by Proclus in his treatise *De Malorum Subsistentia*, makes three points regarding evil: 1) that which we often consider evil in our partial universe is good with respect to the whole; 2) essential evil cannot exist, as all being participates in the good; 3) evil can exist in a limited sort of sense, in so far as degrees of nothingness get into the good.64 Syrianus approaches the problem by first arguing that evil exists with respect to particular beings. Syrianus says that just as God relates to us in a different way from how we relate to each other, so do the things that appear evil to us appear good to God. Moreover, the things that do appear evil to us on the level of partial beings are actually good on the level of the whole (καὶ τὸ τῷ μὲν μέρει κακόν, τῷ δὲ παντὶ καὶ τοῖς ὅλοις οὐ κακόν, ἀλλὰ ἀγαθόν). Syrianus argues that the problem is with limited human perspective, rather than divine goodness. This idea appears in Proclus’ *De Malorum Subsistentia*, 58.35–36 and 61.18.

While his predecessors connected evil with matter because evil exists without being (and hence, without a participation in the Good), Syrianus dismisses the idea of an Absolute Evil, for the Demiurge made everything good. Instead, he agrees with Iamblichus’ concept of the parhypostasis, an entity that latches on to another entity and feeds off of it for survival.65 He argues that evil is a parhypostasis in so far as it attaches to matter because it has no absolute form or identity of its own.

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64 Syrianus, *In Tim. fr. 9* Wear.
65 Reported in Simplicius, *In Cat. 418, 15.*
A Note on Syrianus’ Exegesis of the Parmenides

Syrianus saw the subject of the *Parmenides* as theological and gave the work a metaphysical reading set apart from many earlier readings. The influence of Syrianus’ interpretation of the *Parmenides* on Proclus cannot be overstated; on this matter, C. Steel has said “What [Proclus] owes to Syrianus is above all the general principles for consistent theological interpretation of the dialectical discussion on the One, which concludes the dialogue.” To those interpreting the *Parmenides* prior to Syrianus, Proclus attributes the following readings: there are those who approach the *Parmenides* as a dialectical exercise; those who give an ontological interpretation, focusing on the One Intelligible Being; and those who give a henological interpretation. Of those who give the text a metaphysical reading, some say that the subject of the *Parmenides* is Being; others hold that it is One-Being; while Syrianus’ view is a modification of Iamblichus, qualified: Syrianus argues that Parmenides discusses Being and all beings, in so far as all beings are the product of the One. Thus, Syrianus developed a theological interpretation of the second hypothesis, which had previously, for the most part, been attributed to intellect.

The structure of the *Parmenides*, including the number of hypotheses it outlines, as well as their subject matter, was a topic of debate among interpreters of the dialogue. Syrianus identifies nine hypotheses, stating that the first hypothesis is about the absolute God, and the second, the intelligible world. With this description, he introduced a change from Iamblichus, who said that the first hypothesis was about God and the gods and the second, intellectual and intelligible beings; instead, Syrianus seems to have returned to the first and second hypotheses, as identified by Amelius, Porphyry, and Plutarch. However, in opposition to Porphyry and Iamblichus, but like his master Plutarch, he identifies the first five

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67 Proclus, *In Parm.*, 630.37–633.12; these interpreters suggest that the *Parmenides* was an *antigraph* against Zeno.
68 Proclus, *In Parm.*, 635.31–638.2. It is possible that Origen is the author of this doctrine, as he held that the One is without existence and substance—with Intellect as the highest principle, absolute Being and absolute One are identical.
70 Syrianus, *In Parm.* fr. 1 Wear.
71 Steel (2009) 203.
72 Amelius (1052.31–1053.35) said that the first hypothesis was about the One, the second, about Intellect; Porphyry (1053.38–1054.37) identified the first as the primal God, the second as Intelligible. Plutarch (1058.21–1061.20) identifies the first and second hypotheses as God and Intellect, respectively.
positive ones (“if the One is”) with distinct levels of reality and the following four with negative conclusions from the proposition “if the One is not.” Syrianus’ greatest contribution is the doctrine that what is asserted of the One in the first hypothesis is asserted of it in the second presents us with a full panorama of levels of divinity.\(^7^3\) In 1062.10–1066.17 he describes this relationship between the hypotheses:

“… all things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of being; and also the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics.”\(^7^4\)

The hypotheses are connected to one another in such a way as to describe a complete, unified cosmos.

Proclus adopts Syrianus’ relationship between the first and second hypotheses, as well as his outline for the nine hypotheses of the Par
demides.\(^7^5\) He lists nine hypotheses (5 positive, 4 negative) (1040.1–19):

1st: relationship of the One superior to Being to itself and other things
2nd: One coordinate with Being
3rd: One inferior to Being to itself and other things
4th: relationship of others which participate in the One to themselves and to the One
5th: the relations the others which do not participate in the One have to themselves and to the One
6th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of existing in one way and not in another, to itself and to other things
7th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of absolute non-existence, towards itself and others
8th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as non-existent) in the sense of existing in one way and not in another
9th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as absolutely non-existent)

\(^7^3\) See *PT* 1, 11 where Proclus praises Syrianus for corresponding the negations in the first hypothesis and the affirmations in the second.

\(^7^4\) Trans. Morrow-Dillon (1987).

\(^7^5\) Syrianus, *In Parm.* fr. 2 Wear.
One can only assume that these nine hypotheses are the same as Syrianus’, as Proclus only lists the first five of Syrianus’. Syrianus’ subject of the third hypothesis, on souls assimilated to gods, relates to previous commentators’ identification of the third hypothesis; Proclus does not seem to adopt this subject from his teacher, preferring to keep the subjects of the hypotheses focused on relationships to the One.

D. Problems of Methodology and Notes on Syrianus’ Methodology

While it is clear that Proclus adopts the bulk of his metaphysics from his teacher, it is difficult to sort through precisely what in his thought is purely Syrianic and what is his own elaboration of Syrianus’ teaching. First of all, “fragment”, as a term used in this work could better be replaced by the more accurate “testimonium.” The selections of Syrianus given in this collection as numbered fragments are testimonia, or reports, taken from Proclus’ commentaries on Plato’s Timaeus and Parmenides. The passages from Proclus and Damascius were gathered from sections where they explicitly mention Syrianus with reference to either Plato’s Timaeus or Parmenides. Such a “fragment” collection, thus, poses the difficulty that the teachings of Syrianus as gathered from Proclus and Damascius are all non-verbatim, and possibly, as we shall see, based on oral teachings, for the most part, rather than written commentaries. It is difficult, thus, to know for certain how much of Proclus’ or Damascius’ own opinions on philosophy are included in their reports of Syrianus.

In addition, the work presented here attempts to determine Syrianus’ metaphysics based on the fragments of his teaching on the Timaeus and Parmenides found in the writings of Proclus and Damascius. Although I hope to expand this fragment collection at a later point, for now, commentaries on the Timaeus and Parmenides have been selected because they were considered to be the summit of philosophical thought by members of the Athenian School of Platonism. Iamblichus, who proposed the order of study at the Academy for Platonic dialogues, remarked on the importance of the Timaeus and Parmenides:

76 Amelius makes the subject of the third hypothesis rational souls, the fourth irrational souls; Iamblichus identifies the subject of the third as the superior beings, the fourth as rational souls, and the fifth as secondary souls; Plutarch of Athens, Syrianus’ predecessor, identifies the third hypothesis as Soul.

77 Prolegomena Philosophiae Platonicae, 219.24–29: “We relate what the divine Iamblichus did. Now he divided all the dialogues into twelve, some of which he termed
“For indeed the divine Iamblichus is quite right in saying that the whole theory of Plato is contained in these two dialogues, the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*; for the whole philosophic treatment of the things in the cosmos and above the cosmos has its best culmination in them, and no level (or system) of beings has been left uninvestigated.”

For the most part, I stay within the confines of Proclus and Damascius’ commentaries on the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*; these authors are especially important to our understanding of Syrianus’ thought: Proclus, because he was the favorite pupil of Syrianus and disseminated his thought with little overt contradiction, and Damascius, because his works were, in turn, a commentary on Proclus. Syrianus’ fragments on the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* (1–10), are taken from Proclus’ reports regarding his teacher’s opinions on various matters, which he makes in his *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* commentaries. The last six fragments of Syrianus’ teachings on the *Parmenides* (fr. 11–15) are taken from Damascius’ *Commentary on the Parmenides* and *On First Principles*. Fragments found in other texts, particularly those in Proclus’ *Platonic Theology*, are discussed in the commentary on the selected fragments. Additionally, these fragments are a fine example of Syrianus’ influential commentary style, in so far as he uses the method of providing a lemma for commenting.

Setting the parameters of a fragment proved difficult and may elicit some debate. Proclus alerts us to Syrianus’ opinion on a given matter by referring to the opinion of “ὁ ἴμετέρος καθηγεμένος”, “ὁ ἴμετέρος διδασκαλός”, or “πατήρ”. Unlike Simplicius, however, who alerts the reader that he is taking a direct account of Syrianus’ teaching, Proclus does not change his vocabulary or syntax to indicate that he is quoting Syrianus directly. Other philosophers are frequently mentioned by name in the

physical, and others theological; again he reduced the twelve to two, the *Timaeus and the Parmenides*, the *Timaeus* as head of the physical and the *Parmenides* as head of the theological dialogues.” Trans. O’Neill (1965). The *Proleg. Phil. Plat* next lists the ten dialogues (in order of when they should first be read and studied): *Alcibiades* (its subject being knowledge of the self), *Gorgias, Phaedo, Cratylus, Theaetetus, Phaedrus, Symposium*, and *Philebus* (its subject matter being the Good), followed by the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* (*Proleg. 24–26*). These dialogues were arranged to proceed on a plane corresponding to the progress of mind. Westerink argues for the addition of the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*, between *Tht.* and *Phdr.*. See Westerink (1977) 15. Proclus, *In Alc.* 11, 11, credits Iamblichus also with deeming the ten dialogues to contain the foundation for Plato’s philosophy.

80 See Baltussen (2008) 161. Here, Baltussen shows how Simplicius’ signals a near-quotation of Syrianus’ words by changing vocabulary and style.
Timaeus Commentary, although in the Parmenides commentary Proclus does not give his other authorities any such designation, but discusses the opinions of “one group” of commentators, as opposed to “another”.81 It is, however, possible to work out who Proclus is discussing based on what we know about the content of a commentator’s philosophy. Dillon points out that in Books VI and VII of Proclus’ Commentary on the Parmenides, Proclus frequently discusses commentators on a given passage using the sequence of Porphyry—Iamblichus—Syrianus.82 While only the last commentator is mentioned by name, one can gather from context that the previous two are indeed Syrianus’ chief predecessors. The fragments taken from Damascius’ works refer to Proclus as “the commentator”, but mention Syrianus by name. While in some of Damascius’ commentaries he refers to Proclus and Syrianus without distinguishing between the two,83 in the fragments selected this tendency did not arise. Unlike Proclus, who is often not explicit about the author of philosophical opinions he discusses, Damascius tends to name Proclus, Iamblichus, and Syrianus and is straightforward when it comes to comparing the three. Damascius, moreover, tends to give a more critical assessment of his predecessor than does Proclus. One problem that does arise, however, is that Damascius seems to introduce his own metaphysics, somewhat unconsciously, perhaps, into his description of Syrianus’ metaphysics.

Once a given “fragment” taken from Proclus or Damascius’ commentaries is identified as a fragment, the next step consists in determining where the fragment begins and ends. While the identification of a fragment’s beginning is, of course, clear—fragments begin when Proclus or Damascius name or refer to Syrianus and then discuss his opinion—, where a fragment leaves off is somewhat less clear, at least with respect to fragments found in Proclus’ commentaries. Generally, Proclus relays his teacher’s view on a topic, which then dissolves into his own commentary. When Proclus assimilates his own view to that of Syrianus, he does not make a point of it. Sometimes a break in the text exists between the teacher and student marked by phrases such as “I believe” or “I think”, which indicate where Proclus begins his own commentary, but more often than not, change from a report on Syrianus’ teaching to Proclus’

81 One exception is Plutarch, who he denotes his “spiritual grandfather” (ὁ ἡμέτερος προπάτωρ) in In Parm. 1058, 22.
82 Dillon (1988).
83 Damascius, In Phil., 5.1–2; 33.5; Olympiodorus is also guilty of this: In Phd, 9.5.1 and 10.3.19.
own opinion is noted by no more than a move from indirect to direct speech. Other, more subtle, changes sometimes occur, and these are indicated in my commentary on individual fragments. It is impossible, however, to select the exact instances where Proclus takes over his teacher’s opinion, but does not acknowledge Syrianus.84

One indicator that Proclus assimilated his own opinion to Syrianus’ teaching was his use of γάρ with direct speech: this construction was used when Proclus appropriated Syrianus’ opinion, fully agreeing with it. When Proclus makes a slight correction to Syrianus’ teaching, he tends to use γάρ with the accusative and infinitive (indirect speech) to show that he is reporting his teacher’s opinion. This “γάρ hypothesis”, used by Dillon when he collected Iamblichus’ fragments,85 is tested further when Proclus disagrees with the opinions of other Platonists. For instance, in Syrianus In Tim. fr. 25 Wear, Proclus uses γάρ with indirect speech to show that he disagrees with Theodore and Plutarch of Athens, who argue that the first birth is the single descent of souls into generation. For other examples, see notations made in individual fragments where either direct speech or indirect speech appear.

While use of direct or indirect speech, moreover, provides some insight into the appropriation of teaching, use of the imperfect sheds light on its transmission. In several instances, Proclus introduces Syrianus’ opinion with “ἐλέγεν”.86 Use of the imperfect may indicate that the teaching was delivered orally. This method is certainly in accord with other evidence concerning teaching in the Platonic School under Syrianus, who is noted, along with his predecessor, Plutarch of Athens, for not having written commentaries, but preferring to leave the writing to his students. In Marinus’ Life of Proclus, Marinus says that students were expected to copy lecture notes and provide their own commentaries.87 In the Platonic school, particularly in Alexandria, commentaries were often marked by the formulaic phrase “apo phonês”, followed by the master’s name and the name of the student auditor/copyist.88 Hermeias’ On the Phaedrus, for example, is a compilation of notes taken apo phonês from Syrianus’ lecture on the Phaedrus.89 Another instance of a student recording his

84 Olympiodorus accuses Proclus of doing just this in In Phd. 9.2.8–10.
85 Dillon (1973).
86 See Syrianus, In Tim. frs. 4, 5, 8, 10, 13, 18, 24, and 25 Wear.
87 Marinus, Life of Proclus, 13.
89 For a discussion of details of this text which feature characteristics of a lecture and discussion, see Saffrey-Westerink (1981) xxxi.
teacher's lectures occurs in Proclus' *Platonic Theology*, I.10 ff., where Proclus notes that unwritten doctrines sometimes had written conclusions based on them. In Marinus' *Life of Proclus*, Marinus discusses the mode of teaching in the Athenian school, as well as the manner of commentary-making:

“In less than two whole years, he read with [Syrianus] the entire works of Aristotle, logical, ethical, political, physical and the science of theology which transcends these. Once he had received sufficient direction in these, as in certain preliminary and lesser mysteries, Syrianus directed him the mystagogy of Plato, in due sequence, and not, as the oracle says, ‘putting his foot across the threshold,’ and caused him to behold the truly divine rites in Plato’s work, with the unclouded eyes of the soul and the spotless vision of the mind. Working day and night with tireless discipline and care, and writing down what was said in a comprehensive yet discriminating manner, Proclus made such progress in a short time that, when he was still in his twenty-eighth year, he wrote a great many treatises, which were elegant and teeming with knowledge, especially the one on the *Timaeus*. In the course of these pursuits, his character also gained in beauty, acquiring the virtues along with knowledge.”

Here, Marinus reports how Proclus’ *Commentary on the Timaeus* was written based on Syrianus’ instruction. Proclus and Syrianus first read together writings of Aristotle and Plato, which Proclus then transmitted to writing in the form of a summary, to which he inserted his own opinions. In Sheppard’s opening section of the sixth essay of Proclus’ *Commentary on the Republic*, the description of Proclus’ method of commentary-making in that particular passage is useful as one example of Proclus’ method. She delineates four stages of how a commentary was produced by Proclus, based on Proclus’ description of the occasion for his 6th essay on the *Republic* in *In Remp*. 69.29 ff. The steps are scattered throughout the report; however, Sheppard arranged them in the

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90 Proclus, *PT*, I, 10, p. 42, 9ff. Saffrey-Westerink (1968): “But our guide to the truth concerning the gods and ‘bosom companion’ (*oaristês*) of Plato, to borrow a term from Homer [cf. *Od*. 19.179], having changed what was indeterminate in theory of the ancients into definiteness, and transforming their confusion of diverse ranks of being into a state of intellectual distinctiveness, both in his oral discourses and in his treatises on these subjects, has urged us to maintain the division of these conclusions in accordance with their natural articulation, in order to apply them to the divine orders.”


92 It is uncertain whether Syrianus wrote a commentary on the *Republic*. See Proclus, *In Remp*. II 64.6 ff. and II 318.3 ff., where Proclus refers to a possible commentary on the *Republic* by Syrianus.

93 Sheppard (1980) 43.
following logical manner: 1) a lecture by Syrianus (71.3), 2) discussions of Proclus and Syrianus on the lecture (71.26–27), 3) a lecture by Proclus, in this case, on the occasion of Plato’s birthday (69.23), and 4) the transmission of this lecture to written form comprises the sixth essay on the Republic as it stands today. Thus, Syrianus’ oral teaching was in the form of lectures on various topics, followed by discussions with Proclus.

This is not to say that all of Syrianus’ teaching was unwritten. In Marinus’ Life of Proclus, Marinus reports the following:

“When I was reading the works of Orpheus in his presence, and hearing in his exegeses not only the thoughts of Iamblichus and Syrianus, but at the same time many others more germane to theology, I begged the philosopher not to leave such inspired poetry uninterpreted, but to write a more perfect commentary on this also. His reply was that he had often been eager to write, but had been categorically forbidden by certain visions. For he said that he had seen his own master restraining him with threats. Meditating another stratagem, therefore, I besought him to make a note of what he compiled, and when he had made his notes on the margin of the commentaries, we made a single collation of them all, and the result was that there were many lines of notes and comments by him on Orpheus, even if in the event he did not do this on the whole of the divine myth or on all the rhapsodies.”

It appears that Syrianus’ teachings had been recorded, although not fully. Proclus recorded the interpretations of Iamblichus and Syrianus on the Orphic writings in the form of scholia written on the margins of “his teacher’s books” (possibly Proclus’ lecture notes), which later formed Proclus’ commentary on the Orphic writings. Proclus also refers to a monograph of Syrianus in which he interprets the myth of Zeus and Hera on Mt. Ida. Proclus says that he excerpted this monograph and presented the selected passages in summarised form (133.7–10).

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94 Sheppard lists these steps with their location on the text in (1980) 32.
96 This is a bit odd, as teachings on the great mysteries of the Orphic hymns and Chaldean Oracles were just the sort of thing one may not want to record in writing. In his Life of Proclus 26, Marinus says that Proclus never studied the Orphic hymns with Syrianus, but instead studied Syrianus’ commentary on the hymns. It appears that this commentary must have been written and that Proclus picked it up at a later date. It is possible that Syrianus wrote this commentary and it is also entirely possible that the commentary was written by another student, although, if the latter were true, that fact might have been indicated elsewhere.
97 Proclus, In Remp. 132.13–133.4; see Sheppard on this passage (1980) 62.
There is also a possibility that Syrianus may have written commentaries on Plato’s *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*. Although Proclus does not explicitly mention such commentaries, it is possible that Damascius had access to commentaries by Syrianus. This possibility is discussed at *In Parm.* Frs. 12, 14a, and 15, below.

**E. Review of Scholarship**

cal Number”, in G. Bechtle-O’Meara (edd.), *La Philosophie des Mathématiques de l’Antiquité Tardive*, Éditions universitaires (Fribourg, 2000). Here, Mueller argues that Syrianus makes mathematical units or “monads” the matter of number on which form is imposed.


In the last ten years, the following major studies of Syrianus’ metaphysics have been completed: C-P. Manolea’s PhD thesis, *The Homeric Tradition in Syrianus*, which was awarded in 2002 by the University of London, was published in 2004 by Ant. Stamoulis Editions. The work is an engaging treatment of Syrianus’ use of Homeric interpretation and sheds light on a number of metaphysical aspects of Syrianus’ system, in addition to setting forth his method of exegesis. With regard to Syrianus’ metaphysics, two key articles by C. D’Ancona and C. Luna were published in 2000 which outlined where Proclus has inherited Syrianic principles in his philosophy. The articles are part of “La doctrine des principes: Syrianus comme source textuelle et doctrinale de Proclus”:98 the first part, “1st Partie: Histoire du Probleme” is written by D’Ancona, and the second part, “2nd Partie: Analyse des Textes”, by Luna. These studies focus on Syrianus’ *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, especially with respect to his doctrine of peras and apeiria.

Other important research on Syrianus includes R.L. Cardullo’s collection of Syrianus’ fragments on Aristotle, as well as a number of articles on the subject of Syrianus’ commentaries on Aristotle, published in 1986.99 Sheppard’s *Studies on the 5th and 6th Essays of Proclus’ Commentary on the Republic*, published in 1980, includes a chapter, “Proclus’ Debt to Syrianus”, which attributes various aspects of Proclus’ exegetical mode to Syrianus. The chapter proves helpful for study on metaphysics, moreover, because Sheppard analyses Homeric passages with respect to the

98 Segonds (1986) and Steel (2000).
metaphysics which Syrianus claims the passages uncover. Sheppard discusses _peras_ and _apeiria_, also, as the topic of her article “Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus,” in H.J. Blumenthal and A.C. Lloyd, eds., _Soul and The Structure of Being in Late Neoplatonism. Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius_ (Liverpool, 1982). In the first work, Sheppard investigates Syrianus’ cosmology with respect to his harmonisation of poetry and theology. In the second, she investigates the importance of _peras_ and _apeiria_ in Syrianus’ metaphysics.

Saffrey and Westerink have discussed Syrianus’ contribution to Proclus’ thought in their edition of the _Platonic Theology_ (1968–1987): vol. III contains a discussion of his exegesis of the second hypothesis on the _Parmenides_ (xl–lii); vols. IV (xxix–xxxvii) and VI (xx–xxviii) discuss Syrianus’ exegesis on the _Phaedrus_.

H. Baltussen’s book, _Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius: The Methodology of a Commentator_ (2008) has enlightened several readings of individual fragments, particularly with respect to how Proclus introduces Syrianus’ thought and evidence of the oral nature of Syrianus’ teaching within Proclus’ commentaries.

Ground-breaking research was conducted by both Dodds and Praechter over forty years ago on Syrianus. Dodds included a section on “Proclus and his Predecessors” (xviii–xxvi) in his introduction to _The Elements of Theology_ (Oxford, 1963), where he notes several Syriac innovations which Proclus adopts in his metaphysics. Praechter’s survey of Syrianic thought in “Syrianos”, in Pauly-Wissowa, _Real-Encyclopädie d. klass. Altertumswissenschaft_, (1932) 4.A2, cols. 1728–1775 is a seminal work which provided a look into Syrianus’ thought, especially with respect to his _Metaphysics Commentary_. This article surveys Syrianus’ works, life, and philosophy, including his teaching on the Soul, Demiurge, and logic, among other topics. Praechter’s 1910 article, “Richtungen und Schulen im Neuplatonismus”, _Kleine Schriften_, ed. H. Dörrie, Collectanea, vol. VII, (Hildesheim-New York, 1973) contrasts major figures in later Neoplatonism (including, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Syrianus, and Proclus) on a number of issues. He traces Platonism from its roots in Plotinus and Porphyry to the Syrian and Athenian schools, the theurgic Platonism of Julian, up to Eastern and Western Christian Platonists. Such a tremendous survey is handled through a series of themes, including modes of textual interpretation.
F. Notes on Present Edition

The translations of Syrianus, *In Tim.* fr. 1–25 Wear and *In Parm.* fr. 11–15 Wear are mine, while I have adopted Dillon and Morrow’s translations of Proclus’ Commentary on the Parmenides (Princeton, 1987) (hereafter, Morrow-Dillon) for Syrianus, *In Parm.* fr. 1–10 with negligible changes. The recent translations of Proclus’ Commentary on the Timaeus, covering *In Tim.* I.1-II.102 (in *In Tim.* frs. 1–16 Wear) by H. Tarrant, D. Runia, M. Share, and D. Baltzly (Cambridge, 2007–2009), unfortunately, were published after I had completed my translations. I was able to make use of these skilful translations during the revision period of this book, as noted throughout fragments 1–18. For the lemma for *In Tim.* frs. 1–25, I used R.G. Bury’s translations of the *Timaeus* (Cambridge, 1989) and for the lemma for fragments *In Parm.* 1–9, I used Morrow-Dillon’s translations, for *In Parm.* 10–15, I used H.N. Fowler’s translation of the *Parmenides* (Cambridge, 1963).


The following terms have been capitalised throughout the work: cosmic entities (including Soul, Being, Limit, Demiurge, etc.), as well as “Teacher” and “Master”, when the reference is to Syrianus.
FRAGMENTS
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 1

Proclus, In Tim. I. 20.27–23.2

Εἰς δέ δύο, τρεῖς: ὁ δὲ δὴ τέταρτος ἤμιν, ὁ φίλε Τίμαιε, ποῦ τῶν χθές δαιμονῶν, τὰ νῦν δὲ ἐστιοτάτους; [Tim. 17 A]

ἄ δὲ ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγημένος ἐν τούτοις ἐπέχρινε, ταῦτα ἤμιν ὅτι διὸ ὁ ἄριστος περὶ σεμινοτέρων γίγνονται καὶ ὑψηλοτέρων πραγμάτων, τοσούτῳ τὸ μὲν τῶν ἀριστοτέων ἐλασσούτατα πλῆθος, μυστικότερον δὲ καὶ ἀπορρητότερον πρόεισιν ὁ λόγος. καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἐν μὲν τῇ προτέρα τῆς πολιτείας παραδόσει κατὰ τὴν ἐν Πειραιεί ἐξυνοιούσιαν πολὺς ὁ ἁρραστής, καὶ οὐ γε ὁ νόμιμος πυχόντες ἐξένεν ἐν δὲ τῇ δεύτερᾳ κατὰ τὴν Σωκράτους ἀρίστην πέτασαν ὁι δεχόμενοι τοὺς λόγους· ἐν δὲ ταύτῃ καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἀπολείπεται, τρεῖς δὲ οἱ ἀριστοτέροι, καὶ ὅσον καθαρότερος καὶ νεορέτερος ὁ λόγος, τοσούτῳ συστελέοτα ὁ ἁρραστής.

πανταχοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἡ ὑψηλομενή ὁμονῆς ἐστιν ἀλλ’, ὅπου μὲν ἀγωνιστικῶς διὸ καὶ οἱ ἁρρατοὶ τὸ τε ἀριστότερον ἔχουσι καὶ τὸ διωρισμένον εἰς πλῆθος ἐκτεινόμενον, ἐν δὲ τὸ περιττὸν τῷ ἀρτιῷ συμπέπλεκται· ὅπου δὲ ἁρρηματικῶς μὲν, οὔπος (δ') ἀπηλλαγμένης τῆς μάχης καὶ τῶν ἀγωνίων τῶν διαλεκτικῶν· διὸ καὶ οἱ ἁρρατοὶ τέτασαν, τῆς τετράδος διὰ μὲν τὸ τετραγωνικὸν καὶ τὸ πρῶτος τὴν μονάδα συγγενῆς τὴν ὑμιότητα καὶ τὸ ταῦτον ἐχούσης, διὰ δὲ τὴν τῶν ἀριστίου φύσιν τὴν ἔτεροτητα καὶ τὸ πλῆθος· (ὅπου δὲ) ἐξημημένης μὲν ἀπόσις ἀγωνιστικῆς διδασκαλίας, ἀποφαντικῶς δὲ καὶ ὑψηλομενῆς τῆς θεωρίας ὑψηλομενῆς· διὸ καὶ ἡ τρίας οἰκεία τοῖς ὑποδεχόμενοις αὐτῆς, κατὰ πάντα τῇ μονάδι συμπλοκήν, τὸ περιττόν, τὸ πρῶτον, τὸ τέλειον· ὡς γὰρ τῶν ἀριστέων αἱ μὲν ἐν μαχομένοις ὑφεστήθαις καὶ περιωθοῦσιν αὐτῶν τὴν μάχην, αἱ δὲ χωρίζουσι μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν μαχομένων, οὔπω δὲ αὐτῶν

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a καὶ νοερότερος om M b γὰρ υψηλομενῆ (ἡ) μονῆς ci Kroll c συμπλέκεται P d υψηλομετικῶς Νd δ’ add Kroll
One, two, three—but where, my dear Timaeus, is the fourth of our guests of yesterday, our hosts of today?

But we should relate the judgement of our Master on this question, since it accords particularly well with the doctrine of Plato. He said then, that in so much as the expositions concern more holy and exalted matters, in corresponding measure the number of pupils is diminished and the discourse proceeds in a manner more secret and more ineffable. And for this reason, in the first description of the state, during the gathering in the Piraeus, the audience was large; as regards named people, it amounted to six. In the second, in Socrates’ narration, those listening to his words were four. But in this present discussion, the fourth person drops out, and the listeners are three, and so to the extent that the discourse is more pure and intellective, so the audience is reduced further.

For the expository element¹ is in all cases a monad: on the first occasion, however, he proceeds in a mode of contention, and for this reason the listeners are characterised both by indeterminacy and by division into multiplicity, in which the odd is interwoven with the even. On the second occasion, he proceeds through narration, but not apart from contention and the combat of dialectic, and on this account, the auditors are four, since the tetrad by reason of its squareness and its affinity to the monad, possesses likeness and sameness, but on the other hand, on account of its evenness, it possesses otherness and multiplicity. On the third occasion, all contentious teaching is eliminated and the exposition is in consequence characterized by straight exposition and instruction. For this reason, the triad is suitable to the nature of those receiving it, since according to every aspect it is of like nature with the monad, being characterized by the odd, primacy and perfection. For even as among the virtues, some are meant for contention and bestow measurement on the contentious and others are meant to separate out the contentious

¹ Tarrant translates “expository element” as “number in charge” (2007) 115.
παντελῶς ἀπέστησαν, οἳ δὲ πάντη χειρῳδιμέναι τυχάνουσιν, οὕτω δή καὶ τῶν λόγων οἳ μὲν ἀγωνιστικοὶ τινὲς εἶσιν, οἳ δὲ ἀποφαντικοὶ, οἳ δὲ μέσοι ποῖς ἀμφοτέρων· οἳ μὲν τῇ νοερᾷ γαλήνῃ καὶ τῇ νοήμει τῆς ψυχῆς προσήκοντες, οἳ δὲ ταῖς δοξαστικαῖς ἐνεργείας, οἳ δὲ ταῖς μετα-ξέν τούτων ἡμαῖς. καὶ δή καὶ τῶν ἀκροατῶν οἳ μὲν πρὸς τὰς ψυχιλοτέρας ἀφρώδειες ἔχουσι συμμέτρος, οἳ δὲ πρὸς τὰς χαμαιξιλοτέρας. καὶ οἳ μὲν τῶν μειζόνων ἀνθρωποῦν καὶ πρὸς τὰς παταδεστέρας ἀπαντάν οἵοι τέ εἶσιν, οἳ δὲ πρὸς τὰς ἐλάττωτος περικότες ἀδυνατοῦσι πρὸς τὰς σεμνότερας, οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν / οἳ μὲν τῶν μείζων ἀκρατῶν καὶ πρὸς τὰς καταδεεστέρας ἀπαντᾶν οἳ δὲ ταῖς διανευριστικαῖς ἐνεργείαις, οἳ δὲ ταῖς μετα- λεύτων / οἳ μὲν τῶν μειζόνων ἀκρατῶν καὶ πρὸς τὰς καταδεεστέρας ἀπαντᾶν τί νῦν ἔτι θαυμαστῶν, εἰ δὲ περὶ πολιτείας λόγων ἠχροαμένος ἀπολέειται τῆς περὶ τοῦ παντός ἀχρόασεως; μάλλον δὲ πὼς οὐχ ἀναγκαῖον ἐν τοῖς βαθυτέροις τῶν λόγων ἐλάττους εἶναι τοὺς παρεπιμένους; πὼς δὲ οὐ Πυθαγόρειον τὸ διάφορα μέτρα τῶν ἀχρόασεων ἀφωρίσθαναι καὶ γὰρ τῶν εἰς τὸ ὁμακοῦσον a φατώτον οὐ μὲν βαθυτέροις, οἳ δὲ ἐπιπολαιστέρων ἠμπτότως δογμάτων. πὼς δὲ οὐ τῷ Πλάτωνι σύμφωνον ἀνθένειαν ἀπαρασμένῳ τῆς ἀπουσίας; ἡ γὰρ ἀδυναμία τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς τὰ ὁικετεία νοηματα τῶν ἐνεργείων ἡμᾶς ἀφιστήμενα· ὡς οὖθ' ἡ χώραν ἔχει καὶ τὸ ἀκούοισον· ἐκούοισιν μὲν γὰρ πᾶν τὸ μείζόνος ἡμᾶς ύψελθοῦν, ἡ δὲ τῶν τελεωτέρων ἀπόττως· ἀκούοισιν· μάλλον δὲ αὕτη μὲν οὐχ ἐκούοισιν, ἡ δὲ οὐ μόνον ἀποστάσα τῶν μειζόνων ἀγαθῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὴν ἀπειρίαν ὑπενεργοῦσα τῆς κακίας ἀκράσεως. διὸ καὶ ὁ Τίμαιος οὐχ ἐκόντα φησίν ἀπολείπεσθαι τῆς συνυσίας τῶν τέταρτον· οὐ γὰρ οὕτως ἀπολέειται, ὡς ἀπόστροφος πάντη θεωρίας, ἀλλ' ὡς τὰ μείζων μειεθάνα μὴ δυνάμενος. τὸν μὲν οὖν τῶν περὶ κοσμοποιίας λόγων ἀκρατίαν καὶ τῶν περὶ πολιτείας ἀχροασίαν δυνατών, τὸν δὲ τῶν (περὶ) πολιτείας ἀνασχόμενον διὰ δυνάμεως ὑπερβολὴν ἀπολείπεσθαι τῶν περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἀκρασίας τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐστὶ. δι' ἐνδεικνύει αρὰ καὶ οὐ δι' ὑπεροχήν, ὡς φαι
elements, but they are not entirely free from them, while others again are completely separated, so among discourses, some are agonistic, others are purely expository, while others are intermediate between the two. Some are proper to the intellective calm and to the intellectual activity of the soul, but others are related to the activities of the opinionative faculty, still others with the levels of life intermediate between the two. And then, among the listeners, some are more suitable for loftier lessons, but others to the more low-grade lessons. And those listeners capable of taking in the loftier doctrines are able to deal also with the lower, but those who by nature are adapted to the lesser are unable to grasp the more serious doctrines. And so, among the virtues, he who possesses the higher also has the lesser, but he who is adorned with the lower virtues, is not entirely in all cases fitted to the more perfect.

What wonder is it then if someone who was an auditor of the discourses on the state is left out of the lecture on the universe? Or rather, how is it not necessary that in the more profound of the discourses the auditors are fewer? And how is the difference in the quantity of auditors at the various sessions not a Pythagorean trait? For among those who attend the lecture-hall of the Pythagoreans, some are able to grasp the profound, but others the more superficial teachings. And how does it not accord with Plato to give as a reason for absence an illness? For the incapacity of the soul with regard to more divine concepts keeps us away from loftier discourses. And thus even the involuntary has a place. For the voluntary is everything which gives us benefit in more important respects, but the falling away from what is more perfect is involuntary—or rather this fall is not voluntary, but that which not only separates us from the better goods, but actually is borne away to the unlimitedness of evil is involuntary.

It is for this reason, then, that Timaeus says that the fourth is absent from the conversation “not voluntarily”. Thus he is not absent, as being completely turned away from contemplation, but simply in not being able to be initiated into the higher mysteries. Thus, the idea that the auditor of the discourses of the creation of the world is able to attend to discourses on politics, but the auditor of discourses on politics is perhaps absent through an excess of power,2 from discourses on the universe, is quite impossible. It is through lack of force and not through superiority,

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Proclus provides an interpretation of *Timaeus* 17 A in which Socrates asks his friend Critias and his two guests, Timaeus of Locri and Hermocrates of Syracuse, for the whereabouts of a fourth unnamed guest: “One, two, three, where’s the fourth?” The four had attended Socrates’ exposition on the ideal constitution the previous day. Before we arrive at Syrianus’ metaphysical interpretation of the missing fourth, Proclus runs through the opinions of previous interpreters of the *Timaeus*: namely, that of Porphyry, Iamblichus, and the grammarians.

Porphyry gives an “ethical” interpretation to the text (19.1–9), in so far as he draws various ethical lessons. Iamblichus is named next (19.9–30) and he is reported to have given a metaphysical interpretation of the *Timaeus* 17 A 4. Proclus cites Iamblichus as saying that the absent guest is skilled in contemplating intelligible reality, and is thus unsuited for concerning himself with the sensible world. Iamblichus criticizes Porphyry’s moral, “political”, interpretation because the *Timaeus* is a physical dialogue (19.27). Iamblichus’s criticism of Porphyry is given as an indirect quotation (introduced with a participle, rather than an infinitive) and it seems that the above Porphyry passage may have been taken from Iamblichus, although the Porphyry passage does not contain implicit criticism.

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4 On salient features of Neoplatonic exegesis, see Praechter (1973) 185 ff.
as some say, that the fourth is absent from the present discussion, and
one must declare that the “sickness” is not due to the others’ lack of
symmetry with him, but to his inferiority to others. Let us grant that
there is incapacity both for those descending from the intelligible and for
those being led up from the contemplation of material things, as Socrates
reports in the Republic (VII 518 AB). But whoever is the auditor of lessons
on political matters would not be absent from the teaching on physics on
account of an excess of power, which was unknown to those present.3

3 Line 23.4 includes ὀμιλομαίνω, thus concluding Syrianus’ portion of the commentary and
beginning Proclus’ own opinion.

The next group of interpreters listed (though prior historically) are
the grammarians, whom Proclus praises for bringing difficulties to the
reader’s attention. The primary interest of this group is identifying the
missing fourth by name, and they proceed with an historical/literal inter-
pretation of the text. Aristocles of Rhodes (20.2–7) proposes that the
absent one is Theaetetus, but Proclus argues that Theaetetus was ill in
a different dialogue, hardly grounds for making him the absent party
in this one (20.15). Ptolemy the Platonist (20.7–9) identified the miss-
ing guest with Cleitophon, a suggestion Proclus calls “absurd” (20.18–
21): Socrates reports that Cleitophon at the time of the discussion had
returned from his journey to the Piraeus, so he certainly could not have
attended. Dercyllides (20.9–11) thinks that the missing one is Plato him-
self, who had been absent during the time of Socrates’ death, as noted
in the Phaedo (59B). As with Aristocles of Rhodes’ suggestion, Proclus
argues that the dates of Plato’s supposed absence and Socrates’ death do
not accord (20.15). Proclus prefers Atticus’ identification of the miss-
ing person as one of a number of Timaeus’ companions (20.21–27).
Socrates asks Timaeus where the fourth is and it is Timaeus who makes
the excuses. Timaeus’ response, according to Atticus, makes it clear that
the absence is forced and involuntary.

The account of Syrianus’ view that follows is a return to Iamblichus’
metaphysical interpretation. The fragment is quite extensive (20.27–23.2)
and introduces four topics: Platonic paedagogy; numerology; the grades
of virtue; and the concept of voluntary and involuntary. To the Platonic
mind, these topics are interdependent. By reading Platonic theological
texts properly, the soul becomes ordered and able to live according to virtue;\(^5\) likewise, the numbers themselves contain the principles for an ethical life.\(^6\) All of these concepts, in turn, reveal demiurgic activity, as both the numbers and the virtues of the soul constitute an ethical cosmology.

Before elaborating on the particulars of Syrianus’ fragment here, it is perhaps helpful to go over the connection between number and virtue in the Platonic school. Syrianus uses Pythagorean numerology to interpret the number of guests listening to the Socratic discourse. Pythagoreanism was widespread in the later Platonic schools,\(^7\) and Syrianus seems to have been influenced by the works of Nicomachus of Gerasa, as well as Iamblichus’ *Pythagorean Sequence*. Syrianus refers to the writings of both Iamblichus and Nicomachus\(^8\) and he mentions two of Iamblichus’ Pythagorean works, *Περὶ τῆς Πυθαγορικῆς ἀξιότερας* (On the Pythagorean Sect or On Pythagoreanism, as it is better known) and *ἡτὸν Πυθαγορείων δογμά των συναγωγή* (The Collection of Pythagorean Doctrines).\(^9\) Nicomachus’ work is important for drawing parallels between mathematical and ethical principles. For Nicomachus, virtue lies in the mathematical mean:

“For in the realm of the greater there arises excess, overreaching, and superabundance, and in the less need, deficiency, privation, and lack; but in that which lies between the greater and the less, namely, the equal, are

\(^{5}\) On this topic, see Coulter (1976).
\(^{7}\) For a general account of Pythagoreanism on this point, see O’Meara (1989).
\(^{8}\) Syrianus, *In Met.* 103, 4–9.
\(^{9}\) Syrianus refers to the title, *On Pythagoreanism* in *In Herm.* I 22, 4–5; *On the Collection of Pythagorean Doctrines* appears in *In Met.* 140, 15; 149, 30. There is a rather extensive list of commentaries on this work, from Iamblichus’ important *In Nicomachi Arithmeticam Introductionem Liber*, to Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville’s versions, through the medium of Boethius’ Latin version. See O’Meara (1989) 21.
virtues, health, moderation, propriety, beauty and the like, to which the aforesaid form of number, the perfect, is most akin.” (I. 14.2)

The mean refers to the Platonic and Aristotelian μέτριον as the virtuous measure between excessive qualities; e.g., courage is the mean between rashness and cowardice. Nicomachus places this understanding of virtue as moderation within the mathematical realm of the perfect number. Numbers contain the code for virtuous conduct, with particular numbers representing particular virtues, such as “five” indicating justice. These aspects of Nicomachean Pythagoreanism were adopted by Iamblichus, who, following Nicomachus, placed theology as the stage following preparatory mathematics. Syrianus obtained his knowledge of Pythagorean arithmetic through Iamblichus’ On Pythagoreanism, book IV and cites the Sacred Discourses, a book of Pythagorean theology attributed to Pythagoras.

In 21.4–24, Syrianus gives an account of the cosmos based on Pythagorean number theory. He begins by saying that the audience during the previous day’s talk on the ideal state amounted to six. The number six here refers to the Pythagorean arithmetical representation for the physical world, six being the total of the first even (two) multiplied by the first odd (three): here “odd is interwoven with the even.” It is the first perfect

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10 ἐν μὲν γὰρ τῷ πλέον αἱ τε ὑπερβολαὶ καὶ ὑπερυπατώσεις καὶ περισσότητες γίνονται, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἐλάττων αἱ ἕνδειαι καὶ ἕνδειαι καὶ ἐλλείψεις καὶ στερήσεις καὶ ὑπερκπτώσεις ἐν δὲ μεταξὺ του πλέον καὶ του ἐλάττων κειμένων, ὃ ἐστὶν ἴσω ἄρετα τε καὶ ὑγιεία καὶ μετριότητες καὶ εὐπρέπειαι καὶ κάλλη καὶ τά ὁμοία. οὗ γενικώτατον τό λέχθην του ἀριθμοῦ ἐδοὺ το τέλειον. Translation D’Ooge (1926) 207.

11 Nicomachus, Introduction, I, 16, 1, 2. This alludes to Euclid’s definition, Elem. VII, 22: “A perfect number is one that is equal to its own parts.” For instance, Nicomachus tells us that six has the factors 3, 2, 1 and these added together make six. See Introd. I, 16, 2. D’Ooge (1926) 209.

12 D’Ooge (1926) 106.

13 Iamblichus’ major commentary on Nicomachus’ Introduction to Arithmetic, On Pythagoreanism, is divided into nine books. See the description of Iamblichus’ use of Nicomachus in D’Ooge (1926) 125 ff., including the summary of Iamblichus’ references to Nicomachus in his Commentary on p. 127.

14 See O’Meara (1989) 130 on this topic, particularly for references.


16 Syrianus, In Met. 140, 14–18; 10, 5; 123, 2; 175, 4.

17 See Dillon-O’Meara (2008) 4, on the two kinds of mathematical numbers: one is monadic and made up of units, the other is substantial, and corresponds to form. Syrianus, In Met. 88, 7–9; 123, 19–20. On Pythagorean numbers and the creation of the universe, see Burkert (1972).
number, and was often identified with soul.\textsuperscript{18} In Pythagorean cosmology, the active principle of the monad (which he mentions in the next line) acts on the number six as the physical universe and imposes definition on the indefinite.\textsuperscript{19} By referring to the audience as the physical universe, Syrianus places the majority in the category of the unformed and hence uninitiated. At the time of the second narration, however, the audience has dropped to four. Syrianus likens the tetrad to the monad by its squareness, but finds it akin to multiplicity because of its evenness. The first members of the tetrad are the “monad itself” and “dyad itself”, which contains the intellectual decad of forms.\textsuperscript{20} This tetrad contains the intelligible decad of forms. Hence, the tetrad signifies a metaphysical rank just below the monad. Next, Syrianus calls the triad “suitable to the nature of those receiving it” as it is the mean: a combination of odd and even numbers. The triad is the most similar to the monad as a recombination of monads.\textsuperscript{21} On a metaphysical level, it seems possible that this triad, that is most similar to a monad, could be the Iamblichean triad of Limit, Unlimitedness, and their combination. The henads act as the content of the combination of Limit and Unlimitedness, with the lowest level of the henadic world, being the highest of the noetic world. Iamblichus includes a monad and a dyad, as well as a triad containing the divine numbers which are unities.\textsuperscript{22} Syrianus likewise speaks of forms prior to demiurgic (intellectual) forms, between unified and essential numbers (\textit{In Met.} 183, 24–25; 126, 17). The triad, following the tetrad (or monad and dyad) seems to exist on a henadic level.\textsuperscript{23} Mueller has argued persuasively that for Syrianus, units of mathematical are monads which must have form imposed on them as triad, pentad, heptad, etc. These monads, moreover, are our souls, while a higher unit exists outside the soul in the intelligible world (\textit{In Met.} 132, 8–14; 135, 16–32).\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{18} Iamblichus, \textit{Theologoumena Arithmeticae}, p. 24 ff. See D’Ooge (1926) 106.
\textsuperscript{19} According to the \textit{Prolegomena Philosophiae Platonicae}, a document appearing after Proclus and perhaps belonging to the Alexandrian School, auditors in Platonic dialogues were thought to be “objects of discursive reasoning”, as the rational world is the image of the intelligible world (XIII). This mode of Platonic exegesis, although later than Syrianus’, reflects Syrianus’ interpretation of the audience as the arithmological intelligible realm.
\textsuperscript{20} Sheppard (1982).
\textsuperscript{21} D’Ooge (1926) 105.
\textsuperscript{22} O’Meara (1989) 138.
\textsuperscript{24} Mueller (2000) 74; see also Dillon-O’Meara, (2006) 3.
In 21.19ff., Syrianus enters a discourse on the three levels of virtues. Plotinus first systematised virtues in *Ennead* I.2, where he addressed *Theaetetus* 176 AB, in which virtue is not the exercise of the rational over the irrational, as we see in the *Republic*, but “likeness to God.” Here, Plotinus divided virtue into three kinds: the civic, a level of virtue based on practical wisdom, discursive reasoning, and control of emotions; purificatory, the virtue that enables the soul to act apart from the body’s influences—this virtue is an intermediary one, as the soul is still not godlike, as it continues to possess an irrational part; and the higher virtue, marked by the soul’s activity towards the intellect, its self-control, and its freedom. The higher virtues alone deify the soul, although all virtues are contained in the higher stage.

In *Sententiae* 32, Porphyry further formalizes the Plotinian scale of virtues, which he arranges according to the degree to which they divinize the human soul. As with Plotinus, his virtues range from the political, through the cathartic, to the “paradigmatic”. Unlike Plotinus, Porphyry is more explicit on the issue of how virtues affect the soul versus the intellect, so that the lower virtues, such as the political and cathartic, relate to the soul, whereas the higher act on the intellect. Porphyry’s highest level of virtue, “the paradigmatic”, is really an archetype of virtue, not clearly recognized by Plotinus. This is taken up and elaborated by Syrianus.

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26 Also the definition given by Alcinous in *Didaskalikos*, chapter 28.
27 The passage of Plotinus cited here adapts the Stoic theory of grades of virtue. Plotinus, however, seems to complicate matters a bit and the later Platonists follow his lead in doing so. For instance, in *Didaskalikos* 30, Alcinous divides virtue into the perfect and the non-perfect. Non-perfect virtues use the same name as the perfect virtue, such as “brave” even when referring to a rash man, as long as the non-perfect virtue bears any similarity to the perfect virtue. He makes further distinctions by classifying types of perfect virtues, as well. Also, Alcinous does not posit an intermediate virtue *per se*, although he does explain that an intermediate disposition allows one to be virtuous (and hence possess perfect virtue) and vicious at various times—as he rightly says most men are. Of the perfect virtues, some are predominant, referring to natural qualities in *Remp.* II 366 C, and others are subsidiary, which are obtained from knowledge. Generally, however, the Stoics, Middle Platonists, Plotinus and Syrianus all build from the same Platonic principle as seen in the *Republic* that the virtues are *epistêmai*. See Dillon’s commentary (1993) §30, 185.
29 Plotinus, *Enn.* 1. 2. 4.
30 Plotinus, *Enn.* 1. 2. 6.
31 Plotinus, *Enn.* 1. 2. 7, 1 ff.; Proclus *ET* prop. 73, the higher grades contain the lower and so contain the qualities and powers of them.
In 21.6ff., Syrianus distinguishes between intellective calm and intel-lective activity of the soul and the opinionative faculty. Although he uses the terms *noera* and *noeta* to refer to these principles, it appears that the first two terms take on the same meaning and that Syrianus does not use terms to differentiate between levels of metaphysical reality as opposed to baser opinion. As usual, Syrianus places an intermediary level between the two. This finds its parallel in lines 21.28ff. in his discussion of which sort of listeners are more appropriate for particular lectures.

After 22.3, Diehl divides the text, suggesting that Syrianus ends here and Proclus begins; this seems entirely possible, and Proclus seems to gradually enter with his own opinion, but the division is still an artificial one, as there is no change from indirect to direct speech. This section seems to me to be very close to the thought of Syrianus and so I have identified it as Syrianic doctrine. In lines 22.3ff., Syrianus discusses the quantity of auditors as a Pythagorean trait in a way that recollects Iamblichus’ *Life of Pythagoras* (30). Here, Iamblichus writes that the majority of Pythagoras’ followers were disciples called *akousmatikoi*, who seemed to follow Pythagorean teaching less because of an intellectual or philosophical understanding of his doctrine, than out of a religious faith in him and his teachings. The minority were called *mathematikoi* or “philosophers”, and they had a higher understanding of Pythagoras’ teachings. Syrianus alludes to this division among Pythagoras’ pupils to show a division among the early followers of Plato, although it seems that the basic division between pupils who understand philosophically and those who follow based on a much lower understanding is fairly universal and much discussed in late antiquity.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 2

Proclus, In Tim. I. 51.13–52.2

"Ὅπως δὲ δὴ κατὰ δύναμιν εὐθύς γίγνοινθ’ ὡς ἄριστοι τὰς φύσεις ἔως τοῦ· τύχην ἡγομένοις αἰτιάν τῆς ἔυλληξεως; [Tim. 18 DE]

ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος πρῶτον μὲν ἡξίου θεωρεῖν, ὥσπερ τὸ Πλάτων αὐτὸς προσέθηκε τὸ ἑνὰ ὡς ἄριστοι γίνοντο τὰς φύσεις· δέχονται γὰρ οἱ παιδεῖς ὁµοιότητα φυσικὴν ἀπὸ τῶν πατέρων καὶ τῆς εὐγενείας μεταλαμβάνουσι τῆς τῶν γεννησάμενων κατὰ τὰς φυσικὰς ἀρετὰς· ἕπειτα κάθειν ἐννοεῖν, ὅτι εἰ καὶ μὴ συγκαταβάλλεσθαι τοῖς ἑπέρμασι τὰς ψυχὰς ἄλλην ἀληθεῖς· ὅλα καὶ ἐξ εἰς τὴν τῶν ὁργῶν διανομὴν· οὐ γὰρ εἰς τὰ τυχόντα ὁργάνα αἱ ψυχαὶ πάσαι εἰσουιζοῦνται, ἅλλ’ ἐκάστη ἐις τὸ ἔστη ὁποιηκόν· ἐσθλὰ μὲν φησιν Ὅμηρος [Σ 382]. ἕσθλος ἐδυνε, χέρεια δὲ χείροις δόασεν. ἔτι δὲ ὡσπερ ὁ τελεστὴς σύμβολα ἀττα τοῖς ἁγάλμασι περιτείχει ἐπιτηδειότερα αὐτὰ καθίστησιν εἰς μετουσίαν δυνάμεων ὑπερτέρων, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἤ ὅλη τὰ σώματα πλατύσα τοῖς φυσικοῖς λόγοις ἁγάλματα τῶν ψυχῶν ἀλλην ἀλλοῖς ἐπιτηδειότητα ἐν οἰς ἀπείρῳ πρὸς ἄλλων καὶ ἄλλων ψυχῶν ὑποδουχήν, ἀμεινών τε καὶ χειρόνων·

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* ἐσθλὸς om C
And in order that, to the best of our power, so that they might at once become as good as possible... seeing that they will ascribe the allotment to chance?

Our teacher, however, first wished to bring to our attention the fact that Plato himself added the phrase “in order that they might be engendered with the best possible natures”; for children receive a physical likeness from their parents and they acquire a share of the good breeding of their parents on the level of natural excellences.

Then, secondly, one should take into consideration that, even if it is not true that souls are not emitted with sperm, the distribution of bodies is according to merit. For all souls are not established in bodies by chance, but each soul into the body that suits it. For, as Homer says, “the good one put on the good (armour), but gave the worse to the worse.”

And further, just as the theurgist, by attaching certain symbols to statues, makes them more receptive to participation in higher powers, even so the Universal Nature, in shaping the bodies as receptacles for souls by means of natural reason-principles, sows one or other body with a receptivity for the reception of one kind of soul or another, some souls being better and others worse.

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1 Homer, Il. XIV, 382. This refers to a scene in the Iliad where, at the bidding of Poseidon, the Greek leaders order the good warriors to put on the good armour, and the worse, the worse. Proclus regarded Homer as a theologian and developed a complex mode of exegesis. Syrianus’ method of allegorising Homer seems reflected in that of Proclus, who divided poetry into three categories: at the levels of the gods; the intellect of the soul; and the sense perceptions of the soul. The allegory of this passage seems to fall in the second category, which Proclus says is characterised by good advice and moderation (In Remp. I. 179.10–15) and lacks the shock value typical of the poetry of the first category. By reading this poetry, the soul was meant to turn within itself in contemplation, as the lines embody the power of physical re-structuring. Regarding Syrianus’ interpretation of Homer, the Suda lists two works on Homer, Notes on the Whole of Homer and On the Gods in Homer, and attributes them to both Proclus and Syrianus. On Syrianus and Homer, see Manolea (2004).

2 Tarrant translates this as “initiate” (2007) 145.

3 Tarrant translates as “nature formulae” (2007) 145.
This passage refers to a discussion in the opening conversation of the *Timaeus* between Timaeus and Socrates. Socrates summarizes his argument regarding procreation of children which he had included in his conversation about the ideal state (*Rep.* 456 A) presented the previous day. Socrates recalls that magistrates must make arrangements for the contracting of marriages, so that people would be apportioned partners like themselves. The fragment brings to light Syrianus’ opinion on whether soul is generated at fertilization (the Platonic view) or at the first breath (the Stoic view), as well as the allotment of bodies to soul, some bodies being more receptive to divinity than others.

The first section, 51.18–24 introduces the issue of whether souls are emitted with sperm. These lines refer to the debate between Platonists, who generally argued that the soul was emitted with the sperm, and Stoics, who held that soul was not formed until the embryo “cooled”—at the first breath, at which point the embryo was ensouled. As is often the case in matters of orthodoxy, two of the most prominent members of the Platonic school, Syrianus and Porphyry, strayed from the generally held opinions of their school and adopted the Stoic argument that the embryo is ensouled at its first breath.

Syrianus, as with other Platonists, holds that souls are independent entities. While Syrianus’ argument is not elaborated here, it does seem to refer to one aspect of the debate, the extent to which the embryo’s parents influence its soul. The closest parallel to Syrianus seems to be the view of
It is this that the statesman understands correctly, and thus takes great account of insemination and of the whole question of natural suitability, in order that the best souls may come to be in the best natures. So much then needs to be said regarding the point raised by Longinus.\(^4\)

\(^4\) In 51, 9–12 Longinus says that “Plato never supposed that souls are emitted along with sperm. In order that the best [offspring] may exist, he pairs together like people with like people in marriage.”

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Chrysippus as quoted in Plutarch's *de Stoicorum repugnantiis*. In 1052 F, Plutarch first gives Chrysippus’ account as follows:

“Chrysippus believes that the foetus in the womb is nourished by nature like a plant, but that at birth the vital spirit, being chilled and tempered by the air, changes and becomes animal and hence soul has not inappropriately been named after this process.”\(^5\)

Translation: Babbitt.

Chrysippus gives the Stoic view that the embryo is nourished like a plant (and thus has life), but not soul. Later, in 1053 D Plutarch debates aspects of Chrysippus’ argument. The passage is worth quoting in full, as Syrianus seems to reflect Chrysippus’ doctrines in his own views of the soul:

“In his account on the generation of soul the demonstration is in conflict with the doctrine, for, while he says that the soul comes to be when the foetus has been brought to birth, the vital spirit having changed under chilling as if under tempering, yet as proof that the soul has come to be and is junior to the body he uses mainly the argument that the offspring closely resembles their parents both in bent and in character. The discrepancy of these assertions is obvious: it is not possible for the soul, coming to be after the birth, to have its character formed before the birth or else it will turn out that before soul has come to be it is similar to a soul, i.e., both exists, in that it has similarity, and because it has not yet come to be, does not

\(^5\) Τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ φύσει τρέφεσθαι νομίζει καθάπερ φύτον· ὅταν δὲ τεχθῇ, ψυχόμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ στομοῦ· τὸ πνεῦμα μεταβάλλειν καὶ γίγνεσθαι ζῷον· ὅτεν οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ τρόπου τὴν ψυχήν ὀνομάσθαι παρὰ τὴν ψυχήν.
exist; but, if one should say that, the similarity originating in the blend of the bodies, the souls change after they have come to be, the argument for the generation of soul is ruined, since in this way the soul may also be ungenerated and upon entering the body, may also change under influence of the blend that constitutes the similarity.”

Translation: Babbitt

Plutarch summarises the Stoic view, namely that the soul comes to be at birth. In the womb, the embryo takes a physical shape first and resembles the parents. When it is born, it becomes soul and takes a natural shape so that offspring resemble parents in character. Plutarch counters that the soul could be ungenerated and still be changed as it enters the body as an embryo. He says that similarity cannot exist between the embryo and parents before the birth because there was no soul, according to Chrysippus, before birth. Were the embryo to take on the physical characteristics of its parent, it would be undergoing the same basic process that embryos being ensouled would undertake. Plutarch faults Chrysippus’ logic: if souls are not generated until birth, the embryo cannot take up characteristics of its parents, because that would be evidence of soul.

Proclus does not give Porphyry’s view on the matter, rather he stops short by merely saying that he agrees with Longinus, who held the “at-first-breath stance”, but that Porphyry does not argue this sufficiently (51, 12–13). In ad Gaurum, a text formerly believed to be authored by Galen, two somewhat differing views on the subject are accredited to

6 ο περὶ ψυχῆς γενέσεως αὐτῷ λόγος μαχομένην ἔχει πρὸς τὸ δόγμα τὴν ἀπόδειξιν. γέγενθαί τε μεν γὰρ ψυχῇ τὴν ψυχῆν ὅταν τὸ βρέφος ἀποτελθῇ καθάπερ στοιμάζει τῇ περιψύξει τοῦ πνεύματος μεταβαλόντας ἀπόδειξες δε χρήσαι τὸ γεγονέναι τὴν ψυχὴν και μεταγενεστέραν εἶναι μάλιστα τῷ καὶ τὸν τρόπον και ἦσον ἐξομοιοῦσθα τὰ τέκνα τοῖς γονέοις. Βλέπεται δε ἡ τούτων ἐναντίωσις, οὐ γὰρ ὁνὸν τὸν ψυχὴν πρὸς τῆς ἀποψύξεως ἢθοποιεῖται, γεγομένην, μετὰ τὴν ἀποκύψειν, ἢ συμβιβάζεται, πρὸς ἔ γενεσθαι ψυχῆν, ὀμοίαν εἶναι τῇ ὁμοιότητι καὶ μὴ εἶναι διὰ τὸ μήπω γεγονέναι. εἰ δὲ ψφησι τις ὅτι, ταῖς χράσεις τῶν σωμάτων ἐγεγομένης τῆς ὁμοιότητι, αἱ ψυχαὶ γεγομέναι μεταβάλλουσι, διαзύγηται τὸ σημείο τοῦ γεγονέναι τὴν ψυχὴν ἐνδέχεται γὰρ οὕτως καὶ ἐγένητον ὑπόσ, ὅταν ἐπεισέλθη, μεταβάλλειν τῇ χράσει τῆς ὁμοιότητος.

7 See Cicero, Tusc. Disp. 1, 79: “Are we then to believe Panaetius when he disagrees with his revered Plato? For whilst he calls him at every mention of his name inspired… he yet fails to approve of this one opinion of his about the immortality of the souls. For he holds what nobody denies, that whatever has been born perishes; but he asserts that souls are born, as is shown by the resemblance of children to their parents, which is manifest in dispositions and not only in bodily features.” Trans.: King (1927).

Vult enim, quod nemo negat, quidquid natum sit interire, nasci autem animos, quod declarat eorum similitudo, qui procreentur, quae etiam in ingenios, non solum in corporibus appareat.
Porphyry. Smith lists two fragments for *ad Gaurum*, the first of which is taken from Iamblichus:

“According to Hippocrates the Asclepiad, the soul is enformed in the embryo (since it has the ability to participate in life); according to Porphyry, it is in the first stage of generation rather than at birth that it actually receives life and that the soul might be present.”

Porphyry argues that soul appears with the sperm’s injection into the mother. This opinion seems to agree with the opinion Proclus, rather vaguely, assigns to Porphyry in *In Tim.* 51.12, the line just preceding Syrianus’ opinion. A second fragment of Porphyry’s, however, cites a contrary view. In Fragment 267 Smith, Porphyry says that the embryo is neither alive nor ensouled. Rather, it is rooted like a plant and moved by nature, not by soul. This closely parallels a Stoic idea of embryonic

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8 Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta, Smith (1993), fragment 266E.
9 Κατὰ δ’, Ἡππορφύριον τῶν Ἀσκληπιαδῶν, ὅταν πλαοθῇ τὸ σπέρμα (τοτε γὰρ ἐπιτηθείς ἔχεις αὐτῷ μεταλαμβάνειν ζωῆς), κατὰ δὲ Πορφύριος ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἀπογεννηθεὶς τοῦ τυπομένου πρώτως ἢ κατ’ ἐνέργειας ζωποια καὶ παρονοια τῆς ψυχῆς φύεται. Iamblichus, *de anima ap. Stob.* I 49, 41 (I 381, 2–6). Festugiére says that the source of Iamblichus is most likely a treatise of Porphyry. See (1953) p. 224 for the editor’s speculation that Iamblichus agreed with Porphyry on this issue. Festugiére cites the following opinion of Iamblichus made before Iamblichus’ quotation of Porphyry.

10 Cf. Porph.II, p. 37.6x.
11 Τρισὶν ἐνέτυχον μονοβίβλοισ περὶ τούτου τοῦ ζητήματος. Ἡππορφύριος καὶ Γαληνὸς, ὅν ὁ μὲν Ἡππορφύριος καὶ Γαληνὸς ζητοῦν αὐτὸν φαίνειν ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ εἶναι, καὶ κινεῖσθαι ὑπὸ ψυχῆς τὸ μὲν ἀλόγῳ τῆς ἀλόγου, τὸ δὲ λογικὸν τῆς λογικῆς, τρέφεσθαι τε ἐν τῇ μήτρᾳ διὰ τοῦ στόματος εἶναι γὰρ ἐν ταύτῃ θηλῇς τινὰς καὶ στομάτα δ’ ἄν τρέφεται. ὁ δὲ γε Πορφύριος πολλοῖς λογισμοῖς καὶ ἀποθέεις διατιθέντας μὴ εἶναι ἐν τῷ ὑπὸ τηλαμβανομένῳ, ἀλλὰ διὰ ψυχῆς καταπεφυτεύοντας ἐν τῇ μήτρᾳ καὶ κινεῖσθαι σοὶ ὑπὸ ψυχῆς, ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ φύσεως, ὡσπερ δὴ καὶ δένδρα καὶ τὰ ψυχὴν κινεῖσθαι εἰσῴζη, τρέφεσθαι τε ὧν διὰ τοῦ στόματος, ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦ χοριοῦ καὶ τοῦ ὑμεῖαν ὁδὸν τούτων εὐθέως ἀποδεσμεύον αἱ μαῖαι, ἵνα διὰ τοῦ στόματος τὸ γεννηθὲν τρέψῃ. Quotation from Michael Psellus, *de omnifaria doctrina* 115 = Porphyry Fr. 267 Smith.
nourishment in which the embryo is like a plant in that it has life, but no soul, and hence seeks only nourishment. In Ps-Plutarch's *Placita* V 15, Ps-Plutarch states “Diogenes” opinion on the matter: "Diogenes [sc. believes] that the embryos are generated without soul, but in warmth; that is why the innate heat draws the cold into the lungs as soon as the embryo is poured forth" (*Plac.* V 15.4). This accords with a better-known fragment Kalbfleisch identifies as Porphyry’s in which he says that the immortal soul enters the body only at the moment of birth. This view, moreover, accords well with the one that appears in a fragment on the subject Kalbfleisch attributes to Porphyry.\(^\text{12}\) It seems fair to agree with the consensus and say that Porphyry places the formation of the soul at birth, a view also held by Syrianus. Syrianus' opinion, thus, seems contrary to the orthodox Platonic opinion as found in Plutarch, for instance. It appears, moreover, that Proclus adopts his master's view on this topic.

The second issue this passage raises is the distribution of souls into bodies. Syrianus says that souls are distributed according to merit, so that the best souls are assigned to the best bodies. By this, Syrianus intends differing levels of suitability in different bodies in relation to the body’s own natural virtue. The first part of this process is alluded to in 51.25–30, wherein Syrianus explains that the physical logos is projected into nature from the Universal Nature and enforms a physical body using the reason principles.\(^\text{13}\) It is nature that characterises a body and gives it qualities. These qualities make it the enmattered form which defines the physical body.\(^\text{14}\)

> The World Soul possesses the principles and the hypostasising powers of all encosmic things, and has not only the intellective causes of man and horse and all other animals, but also all the portions of the world.

\((\text{Proclus, *In Tim*, II. 266.1–5.})\)^\(^\text{15}\)

When nature enmatters body and gives it qualities, it imparts qualities to the body which vary from body to body.\(^\text{16}\) The body created precedes the soul and is naturally receptive to a particular kind of soul.\(^\text{17}\) Here,

\(^\text{12}\) Ps-Galen, *ad Gaurum*, Kalbfleisch (1895) ch. XIV, pp. 53.28–54.25.

\(^\text{13}\) Proclus, *In Tim.* I.143.17–18; III.188.5–10; III.191.7.


\(^\text{15}\) Translation Siorvanes (1996) 137.


\(^\text{17}\) A parallel idea to this exists in the Old Academy, in which the nature of beings is reflected in their habitat. This is especially true in the Old Academic interpretation of the pseudo-Platonic *Epinomis*, whereby creatures are assigned a cosmic rank in descending
Syrianus uses the technical term ἐπιτηδείωτης, often used to refer to a theurgic object’s ability to receive divine power—an object, as with a soul, might be more or less receptive to the divine depending on what kind of power the object itself has (i.e., where the object falls in a metaphysical hierarchy). Objects closer to the One, or objects located in the same metaphysical rank as a higher power are more attuned to the higher power and better able to receive it (as a sunflower sits in the same rank as the sun, so it is able to receive the sun’s power). One object in particular considered by the theurgists to receive divine power was the statue, which Syrianus gives as an analogy to the body’s ability to receive soul.

This view is thus very different from the one offered by Longinus that the receptacle is neutral, and Syrianus alludes to this fact in 52.1–2 by saying that his opinions are a response to Longinus’.

order of dignity. The author of this work established a five-tiered universe in which each tier consisted of either fire, aether, air, water, or earth (981B). Soul endowed each of these ranks with appropriate beings. The rank of fire was the highest and it was the dwelling place of heavenly gods. Beings reflect their dwelling place, so that the aery race of deamons inhabit the zone of air. This idea recurs in the Middle Platonic period as well. From this idea of beings inhabiting cosmic stations appropriate to their natures, we see the beginnings of what Syrianus posits in lines 18–30. Syrianus, however, elaborates this view immensely.

18 For Iamblichus’ use of ἐπιτηδείωτης, cf. DM 3.11.31; 24.32; 27.26; 27.29; 4.8.10; 5.7.6; 5.10.2; 6.2.7; 10.3.5; for Proclus’ use of the term, cf. In Prm: 651.37; 668.6, 10, 14 and 20; 672.32 and 35; 690.16; 692.2.
19 Proclus, De Sacrificio, II 4.
Proclus, *In Tim. I.* 153.28–155.2

While the lemma only refers to the priestly class, the fragment reflects *Tim.* 24 AB, where the priest relates to Solon the Egyptian civic classes in their laws: “You see first how the priestly class is separated off from the rest; next, the class of craftsmen, of which each sort works by itself without mixing with any other; then the classes of shepherds, hunters, and farmers, each distinct and separate. Moreover, the military class here, as no doubt you have noticed, is kept apart from all the other classes, being enjoined by the law to devote itself solely to the work of training for war.” Trans.: Bury (1929).
You see, first, how the priestly class is separated off from the rest;

Perhaps then it might be better to make our interpretation accord with our Master’s division of the text, postulating as a first pair the priestly and war-like, as a second the craftsmanly and the agricultural, and as a third the shepherds and hunters, and in postulating such an order seek to investigate their models.

For the “priestly” class is to be found among the anagogic gods and the warlike class among the guardian gods, and the class of craftsmen is among those who discriminate all the forms and the creative principles\(^2\) of the universe, and the agricultural are among those that move the natural world from above, and sow the souls into the realm of creation: for Plato calls the “sowing” the fall of the soul into generation, and sowing is most suited to farmers, even as conception is most suited to the products of Nature. But the herdsman class is found among the gods who individually administer all the forms of life being brought into creation: for in the Statesman\(^3\) [Plato] gave us divine shepherds. But the hunter class is among those gods who organise all the spirits involved in matter:\(^4\) and indeed the theologians are accustomed to call them “beasts”\(^5\).

And all these classes belong to the median level of creation, the class which stimulates return towards the gods, that which guards, that which arranges the psychic orders, that which directs the creative forms of life, all that which creates and produces the forms of things immanent in matter, that which bestows order on the lowest level of spirits. But as different from all these classes, we may postulate another which cares for wisdom

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\(^2\) Tarrant translates as “encosmic things” (2007) 251.

\(^3\) Plato, Statesman 271 D.

\(^4\) ἔνυλος is a term referring to enmattered souls. Cf. Proclus ET prop. 195; Plotinus, Enn. II.3.17; Damascius De Pr. 126; Iamblichus, DM, 6.3; Syrianus, In Met. 50.5.

καὶ θεωρητικόν, δ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἐξυμνήσει πρώτου μνησθεῖς τοῦ ἱερατικοῦ γένους ὡς ἱερεύς.

ἐπὶ τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἢ μονὰς ἐξήγηται τῆς ἑξάδος, καὶ ἢ μὲν ἀνάλογον ἐστι τῷ ἐνι νῷ, τῷ πάσαν συνέχοντι τὴν δημιουργίαν τῶν γενιτῶν, ἢ δὲ τοῖς ὑπ’ αὐτόν μερικωτέροις ἐθνεσιν, ἀναγωγοῖς, φρουρητικοῖς, εἰδοποιοῖς ζῳοποιοῖς, ἀγελάραις τῆς ἡμέρας, τὰ ἀναλογίαν τῆς ἡμέρας, τὰ ἀναγωγικά τῆς ἡμέρας, τὰ ἀγελάριας τῆς ἡμέρας, τὰ κρατητικά τῆς ἡμέρας, τὰ δὴ καὶ ἐν τῷ πάντι διώρισται ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπλῶν. καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, φησὶν, ταῦτα πάρεστιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, πρώτως μὲν παρὰ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, δευτέρως δὲ παρὰ τοῖς Σαΐταις, κατὰ τὴν τῶν γενῶν διάφορον ἐκάστου τὸ ὁμοίῳ ἐθνικοῦ ἀποτελεσματικῶς ἀναγωγικῶς, τοῦτο γὰρ δηλοῖ τὸ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ τὸ χωρίς, ἵνα τὴν ἀμηγή καθαρότητα τῶν γενῶν νοήσωμεν ἀνωθεν ἁχρὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων προϊόντων δι’ ὑφέσεως.

Commentary

This fragment equates the Egyptian civic classes with classes of being in the cosmos. Syrianus’ interpretation is preceded by that of Porphyry and Iamblichus and, in typical Syrianic fashion, reacts to the metaphysical interpretation so far both. This fragment is of particular interest as Syrianus discusses not only the particular function of grades of daemons in 153.28–154.18, but he shows the relationship between the grades in 154.18–155.2. This relationship forms the basis for key propositions of Proclus’ Elements of Theology.

While Syrianus does not mention Porphyry or Iamblichus in his commentary, his views clearly reflect those of both authors, whose interpretations Proclus discusses before that of his Master. In his interpretation, Syrianus corrects his predecessors (introduced by μήποτε) (153.28), whom he criticizes for dividing the classes incorrectly. He distinguishes τὸ δημιουργικὸν as a separate category and makes three groups of two, a division that seems to be in accordance with the text of the Timaeus. Porphyry and Iamblichus, however, omit the last category and propose five classes of divine power which are not in pairs. Porphyry calls the

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6 Porphyry and Iamblichus’ interpretations of this Timaeus passage have been treated quite thoroughly by Dillon (1973), Iamblichus, In Tim fr. 16 Dillon.
and is contemplative; this he himself will celebrate beyond everything by making mention first as a priest himself, of the priestly class.

So these classes in total are seven, and as the monad is separate from the hexad it is analogous to the single Intellect, which holds together the created existence of beings, while the hexad is analogous to the classes that are more particular and subordinated to the Intellect, those classes which elevate, guard, produce the forms, create life, shepherd the tame creation, control the wild nature, which classes are kept apart throughout the universe from the simple classes. Indeed, even among men, as he says, it is possible to see that these classes are present, first among the Athenians, secondarily among the Saitans, each performing its own work separately according to their division of classes. For this is what is demonstrated by the phrases, “apart from the others” and “separate” in order that we may grasp that the unmixed purity of the classes proceeds down to the lowest ranks of Being by descent.

entire sublunary realm demiurgic, while Iamblichus does not use the term demiurgic in his interpretation, but still describes the agricultural daemons in much the same way as Syrianus. It has been posited that Porphyry and Iamblichus chose such a division because it corresponded to an accepted division of cosmic powers. In their respective interpretations, Porphyry understands the Egyptian classes as levels of daemon, while Iamblichus makes a metaphysical reading, understanding the classes as levels of superior being. Iamblichus follows Plato, who gives the triadic structure of priest, craftsman, and soldier. Syrianus elaborates this exegesis further, so that each level of Egyptian society corresponds with a level of god.

Because Syrianus builds on Iamblichus’ interpretation, it is useful to see how Iamblichus thinks the Egyptian classes are secondary divinities,

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8 See Dillon’s commentary on Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 16 Dillon (1973) 283.
9 I 152, 28ff.: “The divine Iamblichus, on the other hand, criticises these theories as being neither good Platonism nor true—for archangels never merit so much as a mention in Plato, nor is the warlike class of the souls that are inclined towards bodies; for these should not be distinguished from gods or daemons; and indeed it is absurd, if we rank these in the middle class, and gods and daemons among the lowest demiurgic classes; nor should those be shepherds who have failed of human mind, but have a certain sympathetic connection with living things; for it is not from human species that those daemons who watch over human nature derive their essences; nor are they hunters who
as opposed to Porphyry,\textsuperscript{10} who interprets them as levels of daemon. Iamblichus’ interpretation is a response to Porphyry’s, and, before making his own statements about the Egyptian classes, he begins by working through each of Porphyry’s types of daemons. The interpretations of Porphyry and Iamblichus are as follows. Both provide identifications for priests, soldiers, shepherds, hunters, and farmers. Porphyry begins by saying that the priests are archangels turned towards the gods, a suggestion criticised by Iamblichus in a dialectical point who argues that Plato never mentions archangels. Iamblichus suggests that the priests represent secondary οὐσίαι and δυνάμεις, who honor and tend αἰτίαι (primary powers) prior to them. Next comes the warlike class, which Porphyry says is analogous to souls that descend into bodies. The source of Porphyry’s demonology here has been identified\textsuperscript{11} with Origen’s περὶ δαίμονων. Iamblichus says that Porphyry places this level too low; they should operate at the transcendent level. For Iamblichus, the soldiers are those who turn back all that is godless and give power to the divine. The third class

shut up the soul in the body as in a cage; for this is not the way that the soul is united with the body, nor is this a type of theory proper to philosophy, but one full of unhellenic trumpery; nor are the farmers to be related to Demeter; for the gods transcend the immediate causes of Nature.

Having made these criticisms, he establishes the priests as analogous through their similarity to all the secondary essences and powers, such as honour and serve the causes prior to themselves, and the shepherds to all those in the cosmos that have been allotted dominion over life that inclines towards the body and over the irrational powers, which arranges these in order, and the hunters to the general powers, which order the secondary powers by means of their search for Being, and the farmers to those who bring about the efficacy of those seeds which are borne down from heaven to earth, and the warriors to those who overthrow all that is godless, and make the divine to triumph.” Trans. Dillon, Iamblichus, \textit{In Tim. fr. 16} Dillon (1973) 121–123.

\textsuperscript{10} “The philosopher Porphyry lays down as follows: the priests are analogous to the archangels in heaven turned towards the gods, of whom they are messengers, and the warlike class are analogous to the daemons that descend into bodies, and the shepherds, again to those who are appointed over the herds of animals, whom they declare in secret teachings to be souls who have failed of human intelligence, and have a disposition towards animals; since there is one who has charge of the herd of men and certain particular ones, some overseeing races, other cities, and others yet individuals; and the hunters are analogous to those who hunt down souls and enclose them in bodies; for there are some who take pleasure in hunting after living things, such as they make out Artemis to be and with her a further multitude of hunting daemons; and the farmers are those given charge over the crops. And this whole polity of sublunary daemons, divided into many classes, is called by Plato demiurgic through the fact that he was looking to a finished product already existing or coming to be.”

for Porphyry is the shepherds, who are souls who have failed of human intelligence and have a disposition towards animals. Iamblichus attacks this reading, which involves existing at a certain rank out of punishment, and denies that they ever were human souls, let alone malicious human souls. Instead, he credits the “shepherds” with having ἐπιστασία over bodily and immaterial life—they are divinities which supervise irrational life; as general powers, shepherds bring order to secondary orders. The last two groups Porphyry defines in terms of their tasks. The “hunters” comprise the fourth group, and according to Porphyry their job is to hunt souls and enclose them in bodies, while the farmers, as the fifth group, are given charge over crops. Iamblichus says, further, that the hunters order their secondary powers by means of their search for Being and the farmers are entities who “sow” heavenly seeds (presumably here souls) into the earthly realm. Iamblichus’ point is that Plato would not have put lower entities before others, and he argues against Porphyry for not preserving the proper analogies Plato offers in the text. For Iamblichus, secondary powers such as priests and shepherds guide the souls, while hunters organise souls and farmers prepare the perfection of the universe using the seeds sown from heaven to earth. Iamblichus is not clear what level of beings he is talking about, whether minor divinities or secondary divinities.

Syrianus divides the classes by looking to models at higher levels (153.32). He groups together the priestly and warlike class, which he places at the hieratic level of the anagogic gods (154.1). Although the two classes are grouped together, they differ in function: the priestly class raises souls and perfects all the effects contained in their activity. The soldiers, also in the first group, are a guardian class (154.2). The second group consists of the demiurgic and agricultural classes (154.4–12). The demiurgic class makes the forms and the farmers bring the souls into generation (154.12ff.). The last group is that of the shepherds and hunters, the former of which administers all forms of created life, while the latter organises spirits placed in matter. Syrianus’ interpretation can be understood in the light of Proclus’ theory of divine series, which seems to be an adaptation of the Syrianic principle of divine series elucidated here. Divine series, as they appear in Proclus, are based on the premise

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12 It is possible that this class was modeled on higher levels, although it was much lower itself. Proclus subsumes these Syrianic classes into the lower orders: that of the fatherly series (the demiurgic group), the γεννητικός and ζωογόνος, and the ἀναγωγός, a perfecting group which returns effects to their causes. See Rosán (1949) 136.
that immediate effects of the unparticipated One are a series of gods (or henads), unities that contain aspects of the One but are plural. Each henad embraces (or “possesses”) a particular quality of the unparticipated One. The henads, moreover, are themselves each subdivided into vertical series, so that higher gods are said to possess a quality, which is passed to the lower gods, who possess a less intense version of that quality.13

Proclus generally divides his series into triads which oversee existence, power, and activity respectively: a triadic division that reflects Syrianus’ triads here. The names Proclus uses for his classes often vary between orders and the text he is interpreting, but we also see some parallels between his names and the names Syrianus uses. In Proclus’ *Elements of Theology*, the first class which oversees existence14 is often called the guardian class. It is a paternal order analogous to the Good which holds the levels together in a singular manner.15 It seems that Syrianus’ priestly/warlike class, as the highest order of the three, could have been a prototype for Proclus’ gods of existence. As a guardian class, this class could have been seen as preserving unity.16 The second Procline level, that of power, is a productive power. Proclus often describes it as life-giving (ζωόγονος), in so far as it is a divinity that bestows life.17 This level seems to parallel the demiurgic order which distinguishes forms and portions out souls at creation. Proclus gives as his third category those which oversee activity and are engaged in perfecting. He generally refers to this group as ἀναγωγής,18 as it returns effects to their cause. It seems that Syrianus’ third class engages in a particular type of demiurgic activity, as an offshoot of his second class. Syrianus’ herdsman/hunter group administers forms of life and arranges spirits, which seems to be ζωόγονος, rather than noetic, as Proclus generally describes his third category.

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13 In *ET* prop. 135, Proclus says that “Every god is possessed directly by some actual thing and everything which is divine returns to one god so that the number of the gods is identical with the number of real things that possess them.” Trans. Dodds (1963).


15 Proclus, *ET* prop. 154: “All that is protective in the gods preserves each principle in its proper station, so that by its unitary character it transcends derivative existences and is founded upon the primal.” Trans. Dodds (1963).


18 Proclus, *ET* prop. 158.
For Syrianus, the noetic category appears in a group he adds in addition to his original five groups in 154.18–20. This noetic class oversees wisdom and is ὑπωοιτικόν as a kind of one-intellect (154.23). The one-intellect is analogous to the monad which acts upon the hexad (being) to produce the created universe. Syrianus makes it clear that the classes which compose the hexad are less simple than the monad and are produced by higher ranks. The idea that higher classes are more simple and without mixture, while lower classes are impure and produced is an important principle that re-appears in Proclus’ discussion of divine series.

.chomp

"Ἡμᾶς δὲ τοὺς περὶ παντὸς λόγους ποιεῖσθαι πη μέλλοντας ἢ γέγονεν ἢ καὶ ἀγενές ἔστιν, εἰ μὴ παντάπασι παραλλάττομεν [Tim. 27 C]

Μήπτετε οὖν, ὅσπερ ἔλεγεν ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος, τῶν λόγων πολλα-

— ἄλλοι γὰρ εἰσίν οἱ ἀπὸ νοῦ προϊόντες δημουργικοὶ λόγοι, οἴους καὶ ὁ δημομυργός ἔρει [41.42] πρὸς τοὺς νέους θεοὺς· καὶ γὰρ ἡν ἡ νευχή νέει [37 A] κινομένην πρὸς ἑαυτὴν· καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς οἱ ἐν τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ ἔρειμένοι, καὶ ἄλλοι τρίτην ἀπόστασιν ἀπὸ νοῦ λαγόντες, οἱ ἐν προφορᾷ διδασκαλίας ἕνεκα κινομένοι καὶ τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους κοινονίας—

εἰδώς ὁ Τίμαιος, ὅτι τοὺς μὲν δημομυργικοὺς λόγους ὁ δημομυργός ύψιστοιν, τοὺς δὲ ἐπιστημονικοὺς οὐ νῦν μέλλει γεννᾶν, ἀλλ’ ἐν ἑαυ-

τῷ προείλημναν αὐτούς, μόνους δὲ τοὺς ἐν προφορᾷ λόγους ποιήσεται Ἔκαθάνεις ἕνεκα, διὰ τοῦτο τοὺς περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἔφαστο ποιήσεσθαι πη λόγους· ἄλλο γὰρ ἔστι τὸ νοερός, ἄλλο τὸ ἐπιστημονικός, ἄλλο τὸ διδασκαλικός, καὶ τὸ πὴ τὰς διαφορὰς ταύτας ἐνδείκνυται τῶν λόγων.

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a δημουργικός (in lit.) C
We therefore who are pursuing to deliver a discourse concerning the Universe, how it was created or haply is uncreate (if so be that we are not utterly demented)

Perhaps, therefore, as our Master says, since \textit{logoi} have many senses— for some \textit{logoi} are demiurgic, proceeding from Intellect, which are such as the Demiurge will utter to the young gods (41A7–42E9); and again, he says that the soul “speaks” \textit{when moved towards itself}; and others are to be seen as contemplated in thought, and a third kind, while is allotted a third remove from the Intellect, are stirred to external utterance for the sake of teaching and of communion with one another.

Timaeus, then, knowing that the Demiurge generates demiurgic \textit{logoi}, but is not now intending to create \textit{logoi} of pure thought (these he has conceived beforehand in himself), said that he will, for the sake of Socrates, only create \textit{logoi} in external utterance, for this reason has declared that he will deliver \textit{logoi} in some way concerning the universe. For it is one thing to speak noetically, another scientifically, another instructively, and the expression “in some way” indicates these differences.

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1 I take \textit{logoi} here to be understood by Syrianus as “reason-principles”. Runia and Share translated it as “accounts” (2008) 55.
2 Better to read \textit{λέγειν} φησι with ms. M (i.e., \textit{λόγοι} προφεροικοί).
3 Runia and Share translate this sentence, “the soul when moving speaks to itself” (2008) 55.
4 \textit{ἐπιστημονικός} in sense of pure thought in the mind.
Commentary

This aporia concerns the textual criticism of πη, for which there is an elaborate history of Platonic interpretation. The criticism of πη falls into a larger discussion on Platonic textual emendation in 27 C of the Timaeus. The major issues included whether in the phrase “η γέγονεν η καὶ ἀγενές ἐστιν” (1.218.28 ff.) the first and second η are aspirated, or not: either η... η (a suggestion also taken by most modern editions of the text, including OCT, Budé, and Teubner) or η... η (accepted by Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Proclus) and used to express that a temporal creation is not to be taken literally.5 Another textual problem for the Platonists included one mentioned by John Philoponus6 of Calvenus Taurus, whereby Taurus reads 27 C 5 as “εἰ γέγονεν, εἰ καὶ ἀγενές ἔστιν” (“whether it was created, even if it is uncreated”), a reading Philoponus himself accepted.7

In the light of this history of textual criticism on Tim. 27 C, our fragment discusses the πη (“a discourse in some way concerning the Universe”). Regarding the Middle Platonic tradition, Proclus tells us that this πη had been discussed by Albinus, who understood it to mean that the cosmos was eternally existent in some way, in so far as it contains the principle of createdness.8 Alexander of Aphrodisias, in his Commentary on the De Caelo, omitted the πη, which Dillon takes to indicate that it was an addition of the second century Platonists.9

The first view given is by Proclus, who says that Plato meant to attach the πη with the ποιεῖσθαι πη μέλλοντας λόγους, making the text read “those who in some way intended to make logoi on the universe” (218.2).10 The next view given is that of οἱ παλαιώτεροι τῶν ἔξηγητῶν11 (218.3 ff.) (rather than Porphyry, whom Proclus usually names first) who take the πη with ἀγενές and γενητὸν so that the universe is in some ways uncreated, in other ways created.12 Next comes the view of Iamblichus, (218.8 ff.), who attaches the πη to περὶ τοῦ παντὸς so that the dialogue was “in some way” about the universe, but “in some way” not. Iamblichus understands this as Plato leaving aside discussion about unlimited and

5 See Proclus, In Tim. I. 218.28 ff.
10 λέγει γάρ τούς περὶ παντὸς λόγους ποιεῖσθαι πη μέλλοντας.
11 Possibly pre-Plotinian philosophers.
12 Τὸ πᾶν πη μεν.
formless matter, but investigating the Forms and their variety within the universe. For Iamblichus, the difficulty lies with the fact that we are discussing forms, not matter.

The indirect quotation from Syrianus begins with the imperfect ἐλέγεν (218. 13), which makes what follows sound like it comes from Syrianus’ lectures. Proclus later adapts Syrianus’ interpretation, which places the πη with the λόγος so that Plato τὸ πῆ τὰς διαφορὰς ταύτας ἐνδείκνυται τὸν λόγων. Syrianus distinguishes three types of λόγοι: the noetic, scientific, and instructive (218.25–28). These seem, moreover, to fall under the Stoic categories of logos: logos endiathetos and logos prophorikeos.

The first logos in nous is the creative principle of the universe. This logos exists within the Demiurge, as do the scientific words. These lines most likely reflect Tim. 41A7–42E9, whereby the Demiurge created the universe by speaking to the lower gods. Here, Syrianus’ first type of logos is the Stoic demiurgic logos, the intermediary reason-principle by which the creator creates the universe without directly involving himself. The second logos is in the individual at the level of understanding (ἐπιστήμη). The Stoics also employed logos as a reason or kind of knowledge used by men to understand intellectual presentations. In this way, logos was connected to physis, in so far as logos forced men to understand and connect to reality.

The third kind of logos Syrianus lists is instructive, those words uttered by us for the purpose of communing with each other. The logos was considered to be the first part of dialectic, while the lekton which interpreted and gave meaning to the utterance, was the second. Porphyry, according

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13 Dillon notes in p. 297 that Iamblichus maintains that there is no reference to matter or material creation until 48 E ff., so that apparent references before that point must refer to a noetic form of hûle.

14 ὃ δὲ γε Θείος Ιαμβλίχος πὴ μὲν περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἔσεσθαι φησὶ τὸν λόγων, πὴ δ’ οὗ: Τὴν γὰρ ὕλην ἅτε ἀσκηθῇ καὶ ἀνείδει καὶ ἀφίλτων ἄρρητων ἀνασκέψει.

15 The Stoics closely connect the creative seminal reason principles with the creator. See Philo Act. 9.94–103; Seneca, Nat. Quaest. 3.29.3; Diog. Laert. Lives 7.135–136; Plotinus Enn. 3.17.

16 Chrysippus, SVF II 841; Diogenes VII 47; Sandbach (1971) 17. Stobaeus included among his definitions of epistêmē: epistêmē is a “systema of specific items like the rational apprehension of particulars present in the good man” Ecl. II pp. 73 ff. (SVF II I 12).

17 On the connection between truth and logos, see Long (1971) 98–104.

18 This seems parallel to the Stoic category of logos as “significant utterance” or sound which acted as a dialectical sign. Diogenes Laertius VII 56 (SVF III p. 213). See Lloyd (1971) 58–71.

to the Stoic division of dialectic, examined grammar and divided the
nouns and verbs as elements of *logos* and all other parts of speech as
*lexis*, as all other parts of speech depend on nouns and verbs for mean-
ing.\(^{20}\) It is clear that *logos* and *lekton* were mainstays of Stoic grammatical
education, and hence it makes some sense that Syrianus might call *logos*
instructive.

That the Demiurge has a special connection to the *logoi* is hardly
new to Platonic interpretation of the *Timaeus*: the most pronounced
understanding of this probably occurs in Philo, who places the *logoi*
within the Demiurge so that the idea of the universe exists within the
Demiurge from the beginning of time.\(^{21}\) Syrianus takes this idea of *logos*
and the Demiurge, however, and categorises three Stoic meanings for
*logos* in order to show different aspects of the Demiurge’s intellectual
creation. Syrianus’ categorisation of the demiurgic *logoi* underscores his
interpretation of the Demiurge as generative Intellect: hence, Syrianus
can call his creation “noetic”. The Demiurge is generative as an entity who
produces the realm of becoming, including all intelligibles.\(^{22}\) That the
creation is scientific and instructive shows how the Demiurge supervises
a range of demiurgic activity, including that of the younger gods.

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\(^{20}\) Lloyd (1971) 61.


Τὸ μὲν δὴ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτὸν, ἂεὶ κατὰ ταῦτὰ ὦν, τὸ δὲ αὐτὸν δόξη μετ’ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστὸν, γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δὲ οὐδέποτε ὦν [Tim. 28 A].

Τούτους δὴ τοὺς ἀνδράς εὖ λέγουσι καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος ἦρέσχω διδάσκαλός· καὶ γὰρ εἰ μικρὸν ποὺς τὴν λέξιν μεταφρασμένην, αὐτὸθεν ἔσται τὸ πάντα καταρανές· τὸ μὲν δὴ ἂεὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὦν ἐστι νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν, τὸ δὲ γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δὲ οὐδέποτε ὄν, δόξη μετ’ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστὸν ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ τοὺς προειρημένους ἀκόλουθα· τί τὸ ὦν ἂεὶ, γένεσιν δὲ ὦν ἔχουν, καὶ τί τὸ γιγνόμενον, ὄν δὲ οὐδέποτε· τοῦ μὲν ἂεὶ κατὰ ταῦτα ὄν, τοῦ δὲ ἂεὶ ὄν. δὴ ἔσται τὸ πάντα καταρανές· τὸ μὲν αἰώνιον, τὸ δὲ ἀεὶ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄν, ἀπολαύομεν· τοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἂν ἔσται ἀεὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντα κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄν, ἀπολαύομεν, καὶ τὸ πάντα ἀπολαύομεν. ἐν γὰρ τοὺς όρισμοις καὶ τὰ όριστα μάλλον ἐσαφήνιος διὰ τῶν προσθέσεων· δὲ ὦν ἔστιν ἀνῶ ἂεὶ ὦν, τοῦτο προσθεῖσι εἰ- πεν ἂεὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὦν, ἢν μὴ τὸ ἂεὶ τὸ χρονικόν ἀκούομεν, ἀλλὰ τὸ αἰώνιον· τότε γὰρ ὀμοῦ πάν καὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὦν, τὸ δὲ χρονικὸν
Now the one of these is apprehensible by thought with the aid of reasoning, since it is ever uniformly existent; whereas the other is an object of opinion with the aid of unreasoning sensation, since it becomes and perishes and is never really existent.

These latter authorities speak well, and our teacher approved their view. For if we rearrange the text just a little, at once everything will be clear: that which is ever uniformly existent “is”, that which is apprehensible by thought with the aid of reasoning, whereas that “which is coming to be and perishing and is never really existent” is “an object of opinion with the aid of irrational sensation.” For this is in accord with what has preceded: “What exists eternally, and has no generation, and what is coming into being, but is never existent?”¹ (27 D 6). Since the phrase “that which is ever uniformly existent” means the same as “that being is eternal and does not have creation.” There is an equivalence between “identical with itself” and “not coming to be”—and “that which is coming into being but never exists” has the same significance as “that which is born and dies and is never really being”, except that this has been described in a manner more precise, with Plato showing through the addition of “really” that, in so far as it is coming into being, it is not, in so far as it has acquired a trace of being, to that extent it is not something which comes into being. [Plato] has also, in these definitions, rendered more clear also the objects to be defined through the words that he has added. What has been described above as “being which is always”, this he calls now by an addition, “always existent in the same terms”, lest we understand the “always” as temporal, but rather as eternal. For this one is all things together, and existent in the same terms whereas what

¹ Whittaker maintains that ἀεὶ after γενόμενον is an ideological emendation. On textual emendations and late antique readers of the Timaeus, see Whittaker (1973) 387–391. Whittaker points out that the second ἀεὶ is not present in the Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 173 (P). On the history of the second ἀεὶ and textual emendation in the Timaeus, see Dillon (1989) 61, where he says that the whole Platonic tradition omits the second ἀεὶ.
Commentary

This is a discussion of the contrast between the physical and intelligible world, spurred by literary criticism based on a lemma. Unlike the previous fragments, Proclus uses γὰρ with direct speech, rather than γὰρ followed by an accusative and infinitive of indirect speech (241.4). It seems that in the first construction, Proclus has more or less appropriated the opinion of his teacher. With indirect speech, Proclus creates some distance between himself and his teacher, and this construction is usually followed by some correction, however slight.

There is some history regarding textual emendation of this passage by Platonists. While the second ἀεὶ is omitted by the entire post-Platonic tradition, including Cicero and Calcidius, it is included by Philoponus and several others. It is interesting that, unlike Proclus, Syrianus does not address this issue of the meaning or relevance of the second ἀεὶ.

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5 Philoponus, In de An. 76.23f.; in Phys. 56.2ff., Eusebius, P.E. 11.9 and a probable reading in Pseudo-Justin, Cohort. See Dillon (1989) 60.

6 Proclus, In Tim. I. 233.18ff.: "Why, they say, did Plato not add ἀεὶ to γιγνόμενον also, as he did to ὄν, or ποτὲ ('at one time or another'), so that he could have a thorough-going antithesis to "ἀεὶ ὄν." On this passage, Whittaker takes Proclus' interpretation to mean that he knows a reading without the second ἀεὶ, while Dillon shows that there was "some
is temporal is stretched out along the infinity of time. The one which he said is “created” he said this would be destroyed, in order that we not understand the processions simply as creations, sometimes that is applied to the gods also beyond being, but those [other] processions which have destruction associated with them. Thus, these are the definitions presented. The being which always is, is “that which is apprehended by intellection joined to a definition”, whereas “what is coming into being”, is that which is apprehended by a conjectural judgement founded on an irrational sensation.

2 The previous opinion is possibly that of Iamblichus, and Syrianus is, in effect, arguing with him and expanding him.

3 In his quotation of the text, Proclus seems to leave out the second ἀεί.

Syrianus leaves the text but understands it differently—Proclus says that by rearranging the word order, the syntax emerges more plainly:

1. ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ δὲν (τὸ ὁν ἀεὶ δὲ οὔν ἔχον): The thing which is always unchangeably real.

2. γίγνομενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δὲ οὐδὲπότε ὁν (τὸ γιγνόμε- νον μὲν ἀεὶ ὁν δὲ οὐδὲπότε): The thing that becomes and passes away, but never has real being.

The terms to be defined correspond to the definitions (ὁρομοιώτι) so that the first part of the definition answers the first part of the question, and the second part of the definition answers the second part of the question:

1. τὸ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν: That which is apprehended by thought.

2. τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ ἀπόξημετ’ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστόν: That which is the object of belief with unreasoning sensation.

speculation on the matter, which may precisely have led to the inclusion of the ἀεί.” Dillon (1989) 61, note 26. While it does seem that Proclus may be arguing against a particular reading of the text, he does not use “hoi men”, “hoi de” to refer to other commentators, as he often does in the Timaeus commentary. Based on the fact that Proclus does not specifically address other commentators, I would agree with Dillon’s more conservative interpretation of Proclus’ remarks.

7 Taylor emends the text in his translation, so that the predicate is the subject which is to be defined.
The text now reads: The definition of “that which is always real” is “apprehended by thought”; and the definition of that “which becomes and passes and never has real being” is “that which is the object of belief with unreasoning sensation.” This sentiment is repeated again in 28 C: “as we saw, sensible things, that are to be apprehended by belief together with sensation, are things that become and can be generated.”

Syrianus’ arrangement of the text thus differs from the older interpreters. We are told that “some” (possibly pre-Plotinian) have made one proposition (λόγος) out of the two parts of the clause (νολον). For these interpreters, the definition of “being which is always” is “that which is apprehended by thought, always exists”, and the definition of “becoming” is “that which is apprehended by a conjectural judgement founded on irrational sensation, which comes and goes is never really existing” (240.18–22). Proclus criticises this interpretation for including the term to be defined in the definition. This group essentially defines “being which always is” by “being which is identical to itself” (240.24–25) and being which becomes is defined according to “that which comes and goes and is never really existent”, both of which contain the terms to be defined. Proclus calls this “a great ignorance of dialectic” (240.27–28).

The second group of interpreters (Porphyry and Iamblichus?) marks a division in each κόλασος and so separates the definition from that which is to be defined (240.28–241.3). They say that in the first part the definition is “that which is apprehended by intellect”, and what is to be defined is “always being”; in the second part, the definition is “that which is apprehended by a conjectural judgement founded on an irrational sensation”, while the other words are the subject of the definition (240.30–34). This group receives approval from Syrianus (241.4).

Syrianus makes a text-critical reference (241.15), where he praises Plato for clarifying his argument through the addition of ὄντος and (in 241.17) καθό. His point is that Plato’s text should be read carefully, as Plato argues precisely, using adverbs to clarify the meaning of important words. In this case, Plato shows, according to Syrianus, that coming into being is not “really” the same as being, whereas “always” refers to an eternal state.
Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιήτην καὶ πατέρα τοῦ τοῦ δήμου οὐκ οὕτως εὑρεῖν τε ἐργον καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς ἅπαντα ἀδύνατον λέγειν [Tim. 28 C].

Τὰ μὲν οὖν τῶν παλαιῶν ἐξήγητόν περὶ τοῦ δῆμου δύχια τοιαῦτα ἄττα ἐστίν ὡς συντόμως εἰπεῖν· ἀ δὲ καὶ τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι περὶ τοῦ τεθεώρηται, ἐρέει, συνελόντες ἀναγράφωμεν, ἀ καὶ μάλιστα στοχάζεσθαι τῆς τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἡγούμεθα διανοιάς. ἔστι τοίνυν ὁ δημοσιογράφος ὁ εἰς κατ’ αὐτόν ὁ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν ἀφορίζων θεός καὶ πληρούμενος μὲν ἅπας τῶν νοητῶν δυνάμει καὶ τῶν τῆς ζωῆς πηγῶν, προϊέμενος δὲ ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ τὴν ὅλην δημοσιογράφιαν καὶ προστησάμενος μερικωτέρους τῶν ὅλων πατέρας, αὐτὸς δὲ ἀξίνητος ἐν τῇ κοινῷ τοῦ Ὀλυμπού διαωνίως ἱδρυμένος καὶ διηγῶν κόσμων βασιλευόντων ὑπερουργάν τε καὶ ὕποραντων, ἀρχὴν δὲ καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλη τῶν ὅλων περιέχον τῆς γὰρ δημοσιογραφικῆς ἁπάσης διακήρυξιν τὸ μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν ὅλων ὅλικως δημοσιογράφων αἰτίαν, τὸ δὲ τῶν μερῶν ὅλικως, τὸ δὲ τῶν ὅλων μερικῶς, τὸ δὲ τῶν μερῶν μερικῶς. τεταρτάλης δὲ τῆς δημοσιογραφίας οὐσίας ἡ δημοσιογραφική μονάς εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἀνεδήσατο τὴν ὅλην τῶν ὅλων πρόνοιαν, ἐξήρθηται δὲ αὐτῆς ἡ δημοσιογραφική τριὰς ὅλικως ἐπιτροπεύουσα τὰ μέρη καὶ τὴν τῆς μονάδος διελμένη δύναμιν, ὡσπερ αὐτῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἑτέρας τῆς μεριστῆς δημοσιογραφίας ἡ μονάς ἤγειται τῆς τριάδος, ὡς δὲ ὅλα μερικῶς τῆς τὰς μέρας συμπλήρωσις τῆς δὲ καὶ πληρούμενον τὸ σύμπαν πληθὺς περισχορεύων αὐτὴν καὶ διαφορούμενον περὶ αὐτήν καὶ μεριζόμενον αὐτῆς τὰς συμβαίνουσας πληρούμενον ἄπτ’ αὐτῆς· ὡσπερ οὖν ἑκάστου παραδειγμάτων ἤγειται τὸ ἐν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν πολλῶν χώρων δημοσιογράφων ὁ εἰς, ἑναντίον ἀλλήλοις ἔπτεται, τὸ ἐν παράδειγμα τὸ νοητὸν, ὁ εἰς νοητὸς δημοσιογράφος, ὁ εἰς μονογενῆς αἰσθητὸς κόσμος.

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a ἀφορίζων—νοητῶν om N b μονὰς—δημοσιογραφικὴ om C c περὶ—πληρούμενον om C
Now to discover the Maker and Father of this Universe were a task indeed; and having discovered Him, to declare Him unto all men were a thing impossible.

Such, then, in summary form, are the opinions of the ancient commentators concerning the Demiurge; come now, let us recount the theories of our Master on this question, which we consider particularly to accord with the thought of Plato. The Single Demiurge, according to him, is the god who defines the (upper) limit of the noeric gods and who, being filled by the noetic monads and the sources of life, while projecting from himself the entire demiurgic creation and assuming leadership over the more particular fathers of the universe, is established eternally motionless on the “summit of Olympus”\(^1\) ruling at once over the two cosmoses, the hypercelestial and celestial, and embracing the beginning, middle, and end of all things.\(^2\) In the demiurgic order as a whole, there is a demiurgic cause of whole things holistically, of parts holistically, of wholes, partially, and of parts partially. The demiurgic operation being thus four-fold, the demiurgic monad has attached to himself the universal providential care of wholes and from this there depends the demiurgic triad which governs parts in a universal manner and divides the power of the monad, just as, again, in the case of the second demiurgic level which is partial, the monad rules over the triad, that which organises the wholes partially ruling over what organises the parts partially, and the whole multiplicity [sc. of secondary beings] depends upon the triad, dancing around it and dividing itself about it and apportioning between them its creative activities and being filled by it. Just as, therefore, the one Paradigm rules over the many paradigms, so the unique Demiurge rules over the many demiurges in order that all things may follow upon each other, the unique noetic Model, the unique noeric Demiurge, the unique sensible universe.

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\(^1\) \textit{Il. XX 22.}

\(^2\) \textit{Laws IV 715 E.}\n
Commentary

This fragment discusses the place of the Demiurge in Syrianus’ structure of the cosmos, as well as how the placement of the Demiurge corresponds to his function. Syrianus’ view is picked up by Proclus and appears in books 5 and 6 of the Platonic Theology which focus on the Syriac opinion that at the level of particularity, demiurgic triads divide the power of the monad.

Before Proclus propounds the view of his master, he gives a lengthy doxography of the opinions of eight Platonists on the identity of the Demiurge. He sets out to consider who the Demiurge is and in what sort of class he is placed in the range of beings (303.27–310.2).

The first opinion considered is that of Numenius, who posits three gods: the first is called “father”, the second “creator” and the third “creation”, relating how the universe is a god (πατήρ-ποιητής-ποίημα) (303.27–304.22). The first god is assimilated to the Good as primary cause. Numenius elaborates on this system in fr. 12 des Places, where he states that the first is not a creator, but is the father of demiurgic god (1–2). This primal god is “inactive in respect of all works” (ἄργος ἔργον οὐρανῷ ἵπταντος, 12, 13); however, the Demiurge leads through the heavens (ἡγεμόνειν οὗ οὐρανοῦ ἰόντα, 14). In 304.7–22, Proclus lodges his...

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3 This is included as Numenius fr. 21 des Places (Test. 24 L, fr. 36, Thedinga).

4 Dillon finds a problem with the identification of the “third god” here. Dillon says that while Proclus recognises the third god as the cosmos, it seems that in fr. 22 des Places it is identified with a world Soul as the lower aspect of the Demiurge. See Dillon, (2000) 341 note 8.

5 He is also said to call these three πάπτος, ἔγγονος, ἀπόγονος (304.4).


7 des Places argues that Numenius here contradicts Tim. 28 E 3 where ποιητής precedes πατής; cf. Festugière (1954) 276, n. 1: “Numenius a… tort d’assimiler ‘Père’ au Bien. Car, d’une part, c’est l’accoupler à ποιητής et, d’autre part, c’est le faire passer au second rang puisque ποιητής vient d’abord chez Platon.” See also Numenius fr. 16 des Places, where the primal god as Good is the first principle of Being, while the Demiurge is in the realm of becoming.

8 Οὔτε δημιουργεῖν ἐστι χρεὼν τὸν πρῶτον.

9 This dichotomy is continued in Numenius fr. 15 des Places, where the primary god is at rest and concerns himself with the intelligible realm, while the Demiurge is in motion and is concerned with the intelligible and sensible realms. For more discussion on Numenius and the Demiurge, see Dillon (2000) 340–341 and des Places’s introductory section on the theology of Numenius (1973) 10–14.
criticism against this understanding of the Demiurge. Proclus argues that in Plato, “father” is in the second rank after “creator.” Moreover, Numenius places the transcendent and that which is below the transcendent on the same rank. Proclus says that it is necessary that these be placed below the first. Next, Proclus argues that Numenius must not identify the paternal principle of the universe to the first principle, since the paternal principle should reside in the two classes that come after the First Principle. Third, Proclus does not accept a distinction between “father” and “creator”, and holds that Plato uses these two names for the same god.

The next opinions given are those of Harpocration, a student of Atticus (304.22–305.6), followed by Atticus (305.6–16). Harpocration follows Numenius in his doctrine of the three gods, naming the first god “Heaven” and “Chronos”, the second god “Zeus” and “Zan”, and the third “heaven” and “universe” (304.27–28). He calls the first God “Zeus” and “king of the intelligible” and the second “leader”. The first god is the father, first principle of the Parmenides of whom every property is denied. Atticus identifies the Demiurge with the Good, calling it “good”, but not “the Good.” In this way, the Good is the cause of every essence and is beyond Being. Proclus finds fault with this, however, in so far as the Paradigm is placed before the Demiurge and is more elevated in dignity to the Good.10

After the three Middle Platonists, Proclus gives an account of the Plotinian Demiurge (305.16–306.1), which appears to be based on Ennead III. 9. 1. In this treatise, Plotinus associates the Demiurge with Intellect, which gives form to soul, the maker of the visible universe.11 According to Proclus, Plotinus rightly posits two demiurges, one in the intelligible realm, the other the Leader of the Universe (305.19–20). He identifies the Demiurge with the encosmic Nous, the region between the One and the universe (305.25),12 and never associates the Demiurge with the One.13 Porphyry (306.31–307.14) agrees with Plotinus, but clarifies his thinking so that the Demiurge is not the Intellect, but the hypercosmic Soul.

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10 See Syrianus, In Tim. fr. 8 Wear.
11 On Plotinus’ Enn. II.1.9.1, see Armstrong (1983) 410, note 1. Armstrong says that nous and to zoön must be distinguished as Intellect from object. See Enn. V.5 on the relation of Intellect to ideas.
12 305.25.
13 Plotinus, Enn. II.1.5.5; II.3.18; II.4.7; IV.4. 9. He attributes the association of nous and Demiurge to Plato in Enn. V.1.8. See Dillon (2000) 342.
Plotinus criticises Porphyry and does not equate Soul with Demiurge (307.4–5).14

Amelius’ interpretation follows that of Plotinus (306.1–31); he imagines three demiurges, three intellects, and three kings: he who is, he who has, and he who sees (ἐστι-ἦχελ-ὁφη), an exegesis of Tim. 39 E 8.15 Amelius bases this on the three kings of Plato’s Second Letter, 312 E 1–4 (306.12) and the three Orphic gods: Phanes, Ouranos, and Kronos (OF 96).16

Iamblichus refutes the opinion of Porphyry (307.15–17)17 by showing that his understanding of the Demiurge is not Plotinian. Iamblichus calls the Demiurge the intelligible universe, which Proclus finds more Plotinian than Porphyry’s analysis (307.19). Following this interpretation, Proclus cites Iamblichus as having written a more accurate (ἀκριβεῖς) work on the Demiurge entitled, “On the Discourse of Zeus in the Timaeus.” In this treatise, which Syrianus parallels in his commentary of Tim. 28 C, Iamblichus makes the Demiurge the third among the fathers in the intellectual hebdomad, after the triads of intelligible gods and intelligible-intellective gods (308.19–23).18 As with Plotinus, Iamblichus places the Demiurge in the realm of Intellect as opposed to the realm of Soul, where Porphyry places it. More precisely, Iamblichus locates the Demiurge third in the intellectual triad of Kronos-Rhea-Zeus. Iamblichus says that the Demiurge “gathers into one and holds in subjection to himself” the intelligible realm.19 This hebdomadic structure of intellect reappears in Proclus’ Platonic Theology V 2. Here, Proclus describes a monad overseeing two triads, the first of which is “the fathers”

14 Porphyry appeals to Tim. 35 A, on the creation of the soul linked to the creation of the divided nature.
15 Dillon (2000) 342. See also Dillon (1969) 64.
16 Proclus, In Tim. 3.103.18 ff. on Tim. 39 E, Amelius’ source for his triad of demiurgic intellects—the first, “he who is” (based on the phrase, “the really existing living being”), the second, “he who possesses” (based on “existing in”), and the third, “he who sees” (based on the word “behold” in the text). See Dillon (1969) 65.
17 Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 34 Dillon.
18 “That Iamblichus was speaking more generally here, but dealt with the position of the demiurge more accurately elsewhere, may be gathered from the following: when composing his essay, ‘On the Speech of Zeus in the Timaeus,’ following on the intelligible triads and the three triads of [intelligible and] intellectual gods, he allots the Demiurge the third rank among the fathers in the intellectual hebdomad.” Translation: Dillon (2000) 343. It is interesting that Proclus’ hebdomadic structure finds its roots in Iamblichus’ demiurgic hebdomad, which seems to have been made into a structure of seven so as to mimic, or rather, to prefigure, the seven planets. See Julian’s Hymn to King Helios where the intermediate level is also hebdomadic.
19 Dillon (1973) 38.
who preside over the activity of the Intellect, the second are the “uncontaminated entities” (or implacable gods) who guard each father individually. In the first triad, the first father oversees essence, the second life, and the third father is the Demiurge proper, who oversees nous.

Syrianus’ interpretation of this passage appears to be drawn from Iamblichus, who returns the Demiurge to the realm of Intellect, rather than Soul. Syrianus states the following characteristics of the Demiurge which establishes his cosmic place: the Demiurge is at the upper limit of the noeric gods, he is filled by noetic monads; he assumes leadership over particular fathers; he is motionless; and he rules over the hypercelestial and celestial realms. Syrianus establishes that the Demiurge is at the level of Intellect—as such, he is transcendent, and hence, motionless—and his causal activity must be mediated. Because the activity of the Demiurge requires mediation, Syrianus mentions a series of “more particular” fathers in the hypercelestial and celestial realms. What follows, then, is a discussion of demiurgic activity based on the structure Syrianus sets forth. The demiurgic monad, who projects from himself creation, rules over the demiurgic fathers, who form a triad. This triad flows from the monad and depends upon it, so that the two levels are inter-connected. The relationship between monad and triad is described as a curious four-fold power, the demiurgic cause of:

1. Wholes holistically: τῶν οὐλων ὁλικῶς
2. Parts holistically: τῶν μερῶν ὁλικῶς
3. Wholes partially: τῶν οὐλων μερικῶς
4. Parts partially: τῶν μερῶν μερικῶς

These four powers are divided into two demiurgic levels (310.18–20)—that which pertains to the monad, and that which is particular to the triad. The first power listed is that of the monad—the monad has universal care of the whole (he imposes order on the whole universe in a universal manner); the highest element of the demiurgic triad orders the universals in an individualising manner (he distinguishes the totality

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21 Plato, *Tim.* 39 E 7–9; Intellect transmits power of the higher realm to the physical realm, which is precisely the activity of the Demiurge. As discussed earlier, Syrianus was not the first to place the Demiurge at the level of Intellect. Plotinus placed him at the hypostasis of Intellect, as did Iamblichus.
23 This is the reading Dillon (2000) 344–345, note 18.
of creation into genera and species); then, the two remaining demiur- 
gic “fathers” are said to engage in division into parts in a universalising 
mode (or to firm up the connections of species); and to link parts to 
wholes in a partial manner (establish the individuality of the individual). 
The partial forms of demiurgy associated with the triad are dependent 
on the monad.

Proclus readily adopts Syrianus’ demiurgic structure. In *Platonic The-

ology* V, Proclus describes an intellectual hebdomad, an elaboration of 
the one set forth by Iamblichus. The Demiurge exists in the Intellect, 
which is broken into a triad whose members are given the Orphic names, 
Kronos–Rhea–Zeus. The Demiurge is Zeus (the intellective-intellect, or 
lower limit of the first intellective triad) because it alone is capable of the 
reversion necessary to impose forms. The demiurgic function is lower 
because it needs a proper mix of distinction and unity for its creation. 
Zeus as the intellective-intellect is head of two triads of demiurges—one 
in the hypercosmic realm, the other in the encosmic—as well as “the 
seventh divinity,” separating the demiurges from the sensible realm. The 
internal structure of the two triads, moreover, mimics that of the monad’s 
relationship to its own place in the Intellect: namely, each triad has its 
own monad. The hypercosmic triad is headed by Zeus-Poseidon-Pluto, 
followed by a hypercosmic-encosmic triad, headed by Zeus-Poseidon-


Hephaistos. While Syrianus characteristically divides the function of the Demiurge 
into categories, he makes a point of having one Demiurge who presides 
over a multiplicity of demiurges (the Demiurge in the most specific sense 
being Zeus.) Syrianus holds true to the *Timaeus’* visible cosmos, which 
Plato describes as one because it is trying to be a copy of the Paradigm. The 
noetic cosmos is likewise one because the Demiurge contemplates 
it as a Paradigm, with the result that it possesses the uniqueness of the creator.

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26 Based on the *Gorgias* myth, whereby Zeus, Poseidon and Pluto divided the kingdom 
of fate into three parts (523A3–5).
27 Zeus is the third father, after Kronos (who could not be Demiurge because he is too 
29 Opsomer has drawn a nice chart of this (2000) 131.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 7

Proclus, In Tim. I. 314.22–315.4

Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητήν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον καὶ εὐφόρτα εἰς ἀπαντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν [Tim. 28 C].

eἰ τοίνυν ὁ Ζεὺς ἐστιν ὁ τὸ ἐν χράτος ἔχων, ὁ τὸν Φάνητα καταπιῶν, ἐν ὁ πρώτως αἱ νοηταὶ τῶν ὅλων αἰτία, ὁ πάντα παράγων κατὰ τὰς ὑποθήκας τῆς Νυκτός, ὁ τοῖς θεοῖς τὰς ἔξωνοις παραδιδοῦσς τοῖς τῶν ὀλλοις καὶ τοῖς τρισὶ Κρονίδαις, οὗτος ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ κόσμου παντός εἰς καὶ ὅλος δημιουργός, πέμπτην ἔχων ἐν τοῖς βασιλεύσι τάξιν, ὡς καὶ τοῦτο ἀποδέεικται τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι δαμνοίς ἐν ταῖς Ὄρφικαῖς συνονοιαῖς καὶ σύστοιχος ὁν Οὐρανῷ καὶ Φάνητι, διὸ καὶ ποιητής ἐστι καὶ πατήρ καὶ ὅλας ἑκάτερον.

Commentary

According to the Suda, Syrianus authored two works regarding Orphic theology: On the Theology of Orpheus and On the Agreement of Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato. The passage above is interesting because it alerts us to the fact that Syrianus held Orphic seminars in which the Theology was discussed.² In the following passage from Marinus’ Life of Proclus, it seems that Proclus’ own commentary on the subject was taken from notes on the writings of Syrianus:

² On Orpheus as a theologian, see Manolea (2004) 182; Hermias, In Phaedr. 147.18–148.1.
Now to discover the Maker and Father of this Universe were a task indeed; and having discovered Him, to declare Him unto all men were a thing impossible.

If then Zeus is the one who is holding unitary power, he who swallowed Phanes, in whom primally are situated the intelligible causes of the universe, producing everything according to the instructions of Night, and transmitted these powers to the gods, and in particular to the three offspring of Kronos, it is he who is the single and universal Creator of the entire cosmos, holding the fifth rank among the Kings, as has been demonstrated marvellously well by our master in his Orphic seminars,¹ and of like rank with Ouranos and Phanes, on which account he is both “creator” and “father”, and each universally.

¹ sunousia can refer to conversations; see Plato, Sph. 217 E, Smp. 176 E; La. 201 C; Phd. 111 B; as well as intercourse with a teacher and attendance at his teaching: Plt. 285 C. See Frede (2009) 29.

“Once when I was reading the works of Orpheus with him, and hearing in his exegeses not only what is in Iamblichus and Syrianus but further material, apter to theology, I asked the philosopher not to leave such an inspired poem unexplained but to write a fuller commentary on this too [in addition to the Chaldean Oracles].³ He said that he had often felt an urge to write one, but had been prevented by dreams in which he had seen his teacher deterring him with threats. I thought of a way round, and proposed that he should mark the passages in his tutor’s volumes which he approved. He acquiesced (image of goodness that he was), and marked the commentaries in the margins. We collected the passages together, and thus obtained his notes and comments on quite a number of verses of

³ On Proclus and the Chaldean Oracles, see Saffrey (1981).
Orpheus, even if he did not manage to make up the whole of the divine mythology or all of the *Rhapsodies*. Marinus terms the Orphic poems “Rhapsodies” after the *Hieroi Logoi in 24 Rhapsodies* listed in the *Suda* as a work authored by Orpheus. According to M.L. West, the Orphic theogony that was discussed by the late Platonists was based on this “Rhapsodic Theogony”, whose story differed somewhat from other prevailing theogonies. It appears from the Marinus passage above that the exegesis of Syrianus on the Orphic poems largely agreed with that of Proclus. Proclus’ comments that he feared writing a full commentary on the poems are strange. Centrally, they are in the form of dreams—which Proclus often uses to reinforce what he does or does not want—as a way to pay respect to his teacher. It seems that Syrianus’ teachings on the subject were not exclusively oral, as there existed “volumes” of his opinions on the topic. It is possible that the volumes were the products of Syrianus’ oral teaching, and that he did not want authority given to them through the use of a secondary commentary written by Proclus. This passage from Marinus is delightful because it tells us rather explicitly just how Proclus went about his method of commentary-making: he marked the passages from his master’s volumes (or notes from another student on Syrianus’ teaching) and then collected his own notes and commentary on his master’s teachings.

In this passage from Syrianus, as well as Proclus’ own recounting of Orphic theology, Zeus is named as the Demiurge, a monadic principle in the universe that preceded the other children of Kronos. He is the fifth king of the gods, after Aeon, Night, the noetic/noeric cosmos, and Aether.

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4 Marinus’ *Life of Proclus* 27, trans. Rosán (1949) 19. L. Brisson notes that this passage is difficult to translate because of the verb παραγράφειν, which he interprets as Proclus taking notes from lectures, which were then elaborated upon in the margins of the notes. See Brisson (1985) 49.

5 West (1983) 27.

6 Proclus mentions the *Rhapsodies* 139 times in the *Timaeus Commentary*. On Proclus’ use of the *Rhapsodies*, see Brisson (1985) 34ff.

7 Proclus’ marginal notes could have been considerable enough to be a commentary in themselves. Di Sarzana makes this argument (1978) 17–40.

8 See Scholia, p. 474, Diehl *In Tim*. 1:

πρώτος βασιλέως ὁ Φάνης· ὁ γάρ αἰών καὶ πρῶτος τριάς ὑπερ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως εἰσι τάξεν. δεύτερος βασιλέως ἡ Νὺξ, ἡ πρώτη τῶν νομίων ὀμι καὶ νοερῶν τριάδων. τέταρτος ὁ Αἴθηρ, ἡ τρίτη τῶν αὐτῶν τριάς. πέμπτος ὁ Ζεὺς.
According to the *Theogony*, Zeus first learns that he is destined to be the fifth king of the gods (OF 105, 107) when he is hiding in the cave of Night to escape Kronos’ swallowing him and he is instructed on how to overcome Kronos (OF 154). In *Orphic Fragments* 165–166, Zeus asks Night how he can order the world so as to preserve the unity of the world, while not destroying its individuality: “How shall all things be one, yet each divine?”

Night answered:

Catch all in infinite aither round about,
there in the sky, the boundless earth, the sea,
and therein all the encircling signs of heaven.
When you have strung a firm bond round them all,
to the aither fasten a golden chain.\(^9\)

This chain unifies all multiplicity in the world by placing the contents of the universe in a connected link of nature, soul and intellect that comes to represent a series of encosmic gods (314.14–27). Not only does Zeus as the Demiurge unify the universe through the golden chain, but he unifies the universe within himself because he contains all the forms.\(^10\) According to the *Rhapsodic Theogony*, Demeter arranged a banquet (OF 189) where Zeus castrated a drunk Kronos (OF 137). After this takeover, Zeus swallowed Phanes, reuniting aether, heaven, sea, and earth in his belly (OF 58, 82, 85, 129). Proclus’ refers to OF 167 in which Zeus contains the aether, heaven, water, earth, ocean and the gods, once he has absorbed Phanes (313.9–17). According to Brisson, who interprets this passage,\(^11\) the swallowing of Phanes is important in the exegesis of Syrianus, and later Proclus, because Phanes is identified not only with the intelligible model, but with the \(\alphaυτ\'ος\zeta\phi\nu\) (OF 167), the third member of the third triad of intelligibles\(^12\) who produces the sum of all the living things and who embraces all.\(^13\)

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9 C.f. Il. 8.19.
10 Chrysippus gives a Stoic account of this: “that the whole of existence is unified because of a breath which extends throughout it, by which the universe is held together and remains together, and whose changes it shares.” (SVF ii. 154. 17).
11 Brisson (1985) 78. See also his discussion on the place of Phanes in Syrianus’ thought in (2009) 481 where he looks at comments on the Phaedrus (Proclus, in Phaedr. 146, 24–147, 6), in particular, as a place where Syrianus corresponds the intelligible universe to Phanes, once he is swallowed by Zeus.
12 Damascius, *De Princip*. Ruelle I 317.6–7. Phanes is the primordial egg, the third member of the triad Metis, Erikopaio, and Phanes.
13 Brisson *ibid.*
swallows Phanes so that he contains everything as an ideal form (313.8; 17) and embraces the entire universe (OF 168). Zeus swallowing Phanes is thus the appropriation by the Demiurge of the intelligible model which directs creative action.\(^\text{14}\) In this respect, Zeus is the intellective monad because he contains everything (314.1–2). He is demiurgic in so far as he brings everything forth again to create the current world (OF 168).

This fragment relates to Fr. 6 above, as here what we really see is a further elaboration of the Demiurge as Intellect. Syrianus connects the Orphic tale of Phanes and Zeus with the *Timaeus*, and draws a more complex picture of the Intellect which he introduces in 1.310.3 ff. Proclus elaborates this further, making Phanes part of the second and third intelligible-intellective triads. In *Platonic Theology* V, 5–32, Proclus equates an Orphic divinity with each member of the hebdomad. He identifies Being, Life, and Mind with Kronos, Rhea and Zeus. He associated Kronos with Being (intellect fire) (OF 128, 137, 151, 155) and interprets Kronos’ castration of his father and his own castration.\(^\text{15}\) Rhea, Zeus’ wife, is the source of repose and motion, and Zeus is the source of identity and otherness (PT V, 12).

In 314.28 ff., Syrianus says that Zeus is the fifth king of the gods. While it is impossible to know whether Syrianus already had a detailed metaphysics in place regarding Zeus, Proclus explains such a structure.\(^\text{16}\) The first Zeus is the monadic demiurge, the ruler of the world, the third king, with Kronos and Rhea, of the intellectual hebdomad;\(^\text{17}\) kings four and five could refer to the second Zeus (monad of the hypercosmic triad) and the third Zeus (monad of the hypercosmic-encosmic gods).\(^\text{18}\) Both Syrianus and Proclus equate the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* with Zeus, who occupies the lower limit of the first intellective triad as the third position in the triad of Being-Life-Intellect. Syrianus, it seems, corresponds orphic figures to levels of the universe.\(^\text{19}\)

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\(^{14}\) Brisson *ibid*.

\(^{15}\) Brisson (1985) 76.

\(^{16}\) Proclus, *PT* VI, 6, p. 29.6–23; VI, 8, p. 37.4–10; VI, 9, pp. 17–20.

\(^{17}\) On Syrianus and the intellectual hebdomad, see Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 11 Wear. See also Dillon (2000) 343. Dillon summarises Iamblichus’ opinion on the subject in Iamblichus, *In Tim*, fr. 34 Dillon (= 1, 307, 14 ff.).

\(^{18}\) On the place of Zeus in Syrianus’ hierarchy of gods, see Manolea (2009) 502–503.

\(^{19}\) See the elaborate chart detailing the correspondence between Orphic figures and the Syrianic cosmos in Brisson (2009) pp. 496–497. On the place of Zeus in Syrianus’ hierarchy of gods, see Manolea (2009) 502–503.
Proclus, *In Tim. I*. 322.18–325.11

Τόδε δ' οὖν πάλιν ἐπισκεπτέον περὶ αὐτοῦ, πρὸς πότερον τῶν παραδειγμάτων ὁ τεκτηνάμενος αὐτὸν ἀπειργάζετο, πότερον ὡς πρὸς τὸ κατὰ ταύτα καὶ ωσαύτως ἔχον ἢ πρὸς τὸ γεγονὸς [*Tim. 28C–29A*].

ὁ δὲ γε ἢμετέρος καθηγεμὼν κατὰ τὴν ἐνθεον ἐαυτοῦ νοήσιν καὶ τόδε τῆς προσηκούσης διαίτης ἡξίωσεν ἐπεὶ γὰρ τῶν παλαιῶν οἱ μὲν αὐτὸν⁠ a τὸν δημιουργὸν ἐποίησαν ἔχοντα τὰ παραδείγματα τῶν ὁλων, ὡς Πλωτίνος, οἱ δὲ οὐχ αὐτὸν,⁠ b ἂλλ' ἤτων πρὸ αὐτοῦ τὸ παράδειγμα, ἢ μετ' αὐτὸν, πρὸ αὐτοῦ μὲν ὡς ὁ Πορφύριος, μετ' αὐτὸν δὲ ὡς ὁ Λογγίνος, ἠρωτά, πότερον ὁ δημιουργὸς εὐθὺς μετά τὸ ἐν ἑστιν, ἢ καὶ ἄλλαι τάξεις εἰσί νοηται μεταξὶ του τον δημιουργου και του ἐνος· ει μὲν γαρ μετα τὸ ἐν ὁ δημιουργος, ἀτοπον τὸ αὐτων ειναι των νοητων πλῆθος μετα τὸ ἀπλῆθυντον δια γαρ τῶν τῷ ἑν προσεχων ἀριθμον ἢ πρόδος ἢ ἐπι τὸν ὅλον ἀριθμον και τὸ ὅλον πλῆθος. ει δὲ και ἄλλαι μεταξι του ἐνος και του δημιουργου τάξεις εισι, πότερον ἐν αὐτῳ πρώτῳ τὸ παράδειγμα του παντος ἢ μετ' αὐτὸν ἢ πρὸ αὐτοῦ ξητητεον· ει μὲν γαρ ἐν αὐτῳ πρώτῳ, παν τὸ νοητὸν πλῆθος ἐν αὐτῳ δησουμεν· τὸ γαρ τῶν νοουμένων κάλλιστον τὸ παράδειγμα ἐστιν· ὡστε πάλιν ἐσται νοητος και οὔνομεν, ὁ μικρο πρότερον ἀπεδείκνυμεν.

καίτοι τὸ μὲν παράδειγμα μόνας ἰδέας ἔχει τέταρτας, αὐτος δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπι μερικοτέρας ἐκείνον, ἡλίου, σελήνης, ἐκάστου τῶν ἀιδίων. ει δὲ μετ' αὐτόν, ἐπὶ τὸ χειρὸν ἐστραμμένος ἔσται καὶ το ἀτιμότερον, ὁ

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a αὐτὸν CN: αὐτὸν P  b οὐ κατ' αὐτὸν N  c ή CN: εί P  d οὔ om C
However, let us return and inquire further concerning the Cosmos,—after which of the Models did its Architect construct it? Was it after that which is self-identical and uniform, or after that which has come into existence?

Coming to our Master, this time again, in virtue of his own divinely-inspired way of thinking, he has thought it proper to apply to the subject the appropriate treatment. For, whereas, of the ancients, some, such as Plotinus, have asserted that the Demiurge himself contains the Paradigms of the universe, while others have placed the Paradigm prior to the Demiurge or after him—prior, as Porphyry does, or after him, as does Longinus—Syrianus raises the question whether the Demiurge comes immediately after the One or if there are other intelligible intermediaries between the Demiurge and the One. If, in effect, the Demiurge comes after the One, it is odd that the total multiplicity of the intelligibles comes directly after a non-multiplicity. For it is through the intermediacy of numbers immediately contiguous to the One that there occurs the procession towards the total sum of number and total multiplicity. But, if there are other classes of being between the One and the Demiurge, we must ask if the Paradigm of the universe is in the Demiurge principally or after him or before him.¹ If the Paradigm is in him principally, we can place him in the sum of intelligibles: since the Paradigm is the most beautiful of intelligible beings. So that, again, the Demiurge would be intelligible, and not intellective, as we demonstrated a little earlier [310.29].

However, the Paradigm contains only four forms, while the Demiurge contains forms rather more partially than these: one of the sun, moon, and each of the eternal beings. But if [the Paradigm] [comes] after the Demiurge, it will be turned towards the inferior and less honorable,

¹ γάρ is used here with the nominative and indicative, possibly indicating Proclus’ agreement with Syrianus.
μηδενὶ τῶν θείων ὑπάρξαι θέμες· ὅστε πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸ παράδειγμα ἔστιν. ἀλλ’ εἰ πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, πότερον ὀράται ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ ἢ οὐχ ὀράται; τὸ μὲν οὖν μὴ ὄρασθαι λέγειν καὶ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἔστιν ἀνήκοον καὶ τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων φύσεως· ἀποτον γὰρ τὴν μὲν ἡμετέραν ψυχήν ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ λέγειν, νοῦν δὲ καὶ τὸν ὅλον νοῦν μὴ ὄραν. εἰ δὲ ὄρα τὸ νοητὸν ὁ δημιουργὸς, πότερον εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐστοαμμένος ὀρᾷ, ἢ ἔξω μόνον ἑαυτοῦ; ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν ἔξω μὸν ἑαυτοῦ, εἰδοκα ὄρα τοῦ ὄντος καὶ ἔξει αἰσθήσαντά νοῆσεος· εἰ δὲ ἐκ ἑαυτοῦ, ἐστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ νοουμενὸν· ὅστε καὶ πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸ παράδειγμα ἕστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ, νοητὸς μὲν πρὸ αὐτοῦ, νοερὸς δὲ ἐν αὐτῷ.

δοξεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πλάτωνος δήματα ποτὲ μὲν ἔτερον αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν τὸ παράδειγμα, ποτὲ δὲ ταύτον· ὅταν μὲν γὰρ λέγῃ [39Ε] τὸ· ἢπερ οὖν νοῆς ἐνοὔας ἱδέας ἐν τῷ ἐστὶ ζῷων, ὅσα τε καὶ οία καθοριθή τοιαύτας διενοήσας καὶ τὸ τὰ πάν σχείν, ὡς ἔτερον τοῦ παραδείγματος τὸν δημιουργὸν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτοξώμενον ἀνατείνεσθαι φησι, καὶ αὐτὸν φη [30Ε]· τινὶ τῶν ζῷων αὐτὸν εἰς ὁμοίωσην ὁ συνιστάς συνέστηση; τὸν μὲν ἐν μέρους εἶδε περιφυκότων, μηδενὶ καταμίσομεν· οὐ δὲ ἐστὶ τὰ ἀλλὰ ζῶα καθ’ ἐν καὶ κατὰ γένη μόρια, τούτῳ πάντων ὁμοίωσεος αὐτόν εἶναι τιθῶμεν· καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ διορίζεται τὸ συνιστάν ἀπὸ τοῦ παραδείγματος, ὅταν γε μὴ πάλιν διαρρήδην λέγῃ [29Ε]· τὸ· ἀγαθὸς ἢν, ἀγαθὸ δὲ οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδὲνος οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγνεται· φθόνος· τούτου δὲ ἐκτὸς ὅν, πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα ἡβουλήθη γενέσθαι παραπλήσια αὐτῷ, δηλοῦν φαίνεται τὴν τοῦ δημιουργοῦ πρὸς τὸ παράδειγμα ταυτότητα· ὅστε καὶ ὁ Πλάτων ἔστι μὲν ὁπη ταύτων, ἔστι δὲ καὶ ὁπη φησιν ἔτερον, καὶ τούτων ἕκαστον εἰκώτως· νοητὸς μὲν γὰρ εἰσίν αἱ ἱδέαι πρὸ τῆς δημιουργίας, τέταρτες ἱδεῶν μονάδες, πορευσί δὲ καὶ εἰς τοῦ δημιουργοῦ ἡ εἰδητικὴ τάξις, καὶ ἔστι μία τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ μονάδων ὁ τῶν ἱδεῶν ὀλὸς ἀριθμὸς.

ταύτα δὲ καὶ ὁ Ὀρφέως [frg. 120] ἐνδεικνύμενος καταπίνεσθαι τὸν νοητὸν θεῶν ἐφατο παρὰ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τῶν ὅλων· καὶ ὁ μὲν Πλάτων βλέπειν εἰς τὸ παράδειγμα τὸν δημιουργὸν ὑπέθετο, τὴν νόησιν διὰ τῆς

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a νοητὸς—αὐτὸ om P  
b οὐ CN: ο ὅ  
c ἐγγίγνεται N: γίνεται P
which is not lawful to assert about any of the divine beings, so that the Paradigm must be above the Demiurge. But if it is prior to the Demiurge, is it seen by the Demiurge or not? To say that it is not seen is to be ignorant of the doctrine of Plato and of the nature of reality. For if our soul sees that [Paradigm] and is able to speak about it, it is absurd to suggest that intellect, and especially the universal Intellect, does not see it. But if the Demiurge sees the Intelligible, does he see it by reflecting on himself or only as an object exterior to him? But if he only sees it as an object exterior to him, he sees images of being, and he has sensation instead of intellection. But if he sees it by reflecting upon himself, the thing that he is contemplating is also in himself. So the Paradigm will be both prior to the Demiurge and with him on the intelligible level, but in him on the intellec
tive.

And indeed the actual text of Plato sometimes makes the Paradigm different from the Demiurge, but on other occasions makes it identical to it. For when he says [39 E], “According, then, as Reason perceives Forms existing in the absolute living creature, such and so many exist therein, so many did he deem that this world should possess” on the assumption that the Demiurge is different from the Paradigm, he speaks of him as striving towards the Essential Living Being. And again when he says, [30 C 4], “In the likeness of which of the living creatures did the constructor of the cosmos construct it? We shall not deign to accept any of those which belong by nature to the category of ‘parts,’ for nothing that resembles the imperfect would ever became fair. But we shall affirm that the cosmos, more than anything else, resembles most closely that living creature of which all other living creatures, severally and generically, are portions.” Here he separates the “constructing” element from the Paradigm. But again, when he says the following explicitly [29E], “He was good and in him that is good no envy comes about concerning anything ever; and being without envy he desired that all should be, so far as possible, like himself,” he seems to indicate that there is an identity between the Demiurge and the Paradigm.

So that Plato says in one place that they are the same, while in another he says that they are different, and each of these statements is reasonable. Since the forms are prior to the Demiurge on the noetic levels, i.e. the four monads of the forms, but the system of forms proceeds also into the Demiurge, and one of the monads with him is the sum-total of forms.

This is what Orpheus [OF 167a Kern] indicates when he says that the noetic god is swallowed by the creator of the universe. And Plato postulates that the creator looks to the Paradigm, indicating intellection
οράσεως ἐνδεικνύμενος, ὃ δὲ θεολόγος καὶ οἶον ἐπιτηδέαν αὐτὸν τῷ νοητῷ καὶ καταπίνειν, ὡς ὁ μύθος ἐφησεν· ἐστὶ γὰρ, εἰ χρὴ διαφόρησθαι τὰ τοῦ καθηγμονὸς λέγειν, ὃ παρά τῷ Ὄρφεϊ Πρωτόγονος θεός κατὰ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοητῶν ἱδρυμένος παρὰ τῷ Πλάτωνι τὸ αὐτοξύζων· διὸ καὶ αἰώνιον ἐστὶ καὶ τῶν νοουμένων κάλλιστον, καὶ τοῦτ’ ἔστιν ἐν νοητοῖς, ὄπερ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐν νοεροῖς· πέρας γὰρ ἐκάτερος τὸν πάντων τάξεων, καὶ ὁ μὲν τῶν παραδειγματικῶν αἰτίων τὸ πρώτον, ὁ δὲ τῶν δημιουργικῶν τὸ μοναδικότατον· διὸ καὶ ἔνοικται πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ὁ Ζεὺς διὰ μέσης τῆς Νυκτὸς καὶ πληρωθεὶς ἐκείθεν γίνεται· ἀλλοιωθεὶς νοητὸς ὡς ἐν νοεροῖς.

ὡς τὸτε Πρωτόγονοι χανὼν μένος Ἦρικεπαῖοι τῶν πάντων δέμας εἶχεν ἐνι περιστερί κοιλή, μὴ ἔδει τοὺς ἐκεῖσιν ὅλους τὸν θεὸν δύναμιν τε καὶ ἀλκήν, τούνεκα σὺν τῷ πάντα Πλάτως πάλιν ἐντὸς ἑτύχη.

eἰκότως ἄρα καὶ νῦν ὁ Πλάτων εἰς τὸ παράδειγμα βλέποντά φησί δημιουργεῖν αὐτὸν, ἵνα τῷ νοητῷ ἐκείνῳ πάντα γενόμενος τὸν αἰσθητόν ὑποστήσῃ κόσμον· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐν τῷ νοητῷ πάν, αὐτὸς δὲ νοερὸς πάν, ὁ δὲ κόσμος αἰσθητός πάν· διὸ καὶ ὁ θεολόγος φησί·

πάντα τάδε κρύψας αὐθικής φάος ἐς πολυγυμνός μέλλειν ἀπὸ κραδίας προφέρειν πάλι θέσκελα ὑέξων.

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1 πρωτόγονο C sic: πρωτογόνων P: πρωτόγονος N
through talk of vision, while the theologian portrays the Demiurge as leaping upon the object of the intellect and swallowing it down, as the myth says. For, if we may refer directly to the teaching of our Master, the god Protogonos, according to Orpheus, established at the limit of the intelligibles, is the Essential Living Being, according to Plato. That is why he is, eternal and the “most beautiful of the intelligible beings” [30 D 2] and he is among the intelligible realities, just what Zeus is among the intellective. For each is the limit of their reproductive orders, the one being the first of the paradigmatic causes, the other the most unitary of the demiurgic causes. On account of this, Zeus is united to that one [Protogonos] through the intermediary of Night, having been filled from this source, and hence becomes an intelligible universe on the level of the intellective [OF 167a1–4], so

“As Zeus swallowed the force of the First-Born Erikepaios, he held in his own belly the body of all things, he mixes with his own members the power and strength of the gods, on account of which, together with him, everything comes to be again within Zeus.”

Quite reasonably, then, does Plato now say that he creates while looking to the Paradigm, in order that having become everything by intelligizing he should establish the sensible universe. The Paradigm, then, is all things in an intelligible mode, the Demiurge in an intellective mode, and the universe is everything in a perceptible mode. And hence, the Theologian says,

“After having hidden all these things, he was once more about to bring them into the joyful light from his heart, performing again wondrous acts.”
Commentary

This topic answers Plato’s question as to what class of being the Paradigm of the universe belongs. Prior to this query, Proclus established that the Demiurge is a god and the process of creation is eternal (319.1 ff.). He further postulated that the universe had been created following a Paradigm; this is because the creator, if he wishes to create according to an ordered plan, must have the idea of the object he wishes to create (320.21). Deliberation on the genre of the Paradigm for both Syrianus and his predecessors focuses on its relationship to the Demiurge and the metaphysical result of the Demiurge’s contemplation of the Paradigm (the Intelligible Living Being (αὐτὸν ζῷον) which contains all things).

The first issue addressed by Syrianus is the Paradigm’s location with respect to the Demiurge. Such a relationship is important as it dictates the relationship between nous and the object of its contemplation. Before giving the long citation from Syrianus, Proclus summarises the opinions of Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Theodore of Asine, without dissecting or disputing their arguments. Proclus begins by switching the usual chronological order of Porphyry-Iamblichus and begins with Iamblichus (321.27–30), who says that the Paradigm is separated from everything, so that the One-Being is placed beyond the Paradigm. In this way, Essential Being is superior to the Paradigm, but still co-ordinate with it. He defines the Paradigm of the universe as “being qua being” that is apprehended by intellection. While Proclus does not state where Iamblichus critiques Porphyry’s opinion, Iamblichus’ opinion is underscored by his doctrine being placed first. Porphyry (322.1–7) is reported to have identified the Demiurge with the unparticipated Soul and the Paradigm with the Intellect. Iamblichus was likely to have been criticising Porphyry for not making a proper distinction as to what part of the noetic world the Demiurge is contemplating. Theodore is the third of the ancients whose doctrine is reported (322.7–18). Proclus inserts Theodore into the common sequence of Porphyry—Iamblichus and then views his opinion as an oddity. Theodore, who inherited a love of triadic constructions from Amelius, divides into three each term of the demiurgic triad and distinguishes in each a first monad, a middle and a final term. The last term is the Essential Living Being (autozoön), which connects immediately with the other terms. The first principle is the Demiurge, who creates according to an inferior Paradigm (322.15). He likely bases this on Amelius’ triad of demiurges (In Tim. I. 306.1 ff.; In Tim. III. 103.18 ff.), where the first demiurge is true being, ὁ ὁὐ, the second is the one
who possesses the Intelligible within him, οὐκά, and the third possesses the contents of the second intellect and sees the first element, οὕρων.2

The opinions of Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Theodore all share an awareness of the relationship between nous and its object of intellection as it was first formally expressed in Enn. III.9.1, Plotinus’ commentary on Tim. 39 E. In his article “Plotinus, Enn. 3.9.1, and Later Views on the Intelligible World”, Dillon argues that οὐκά possesses the content of τὸ ἐξίσον, which is not nous, but the noêton. Such an arrangement would have nous contemplating the noêta outside of itself. Once these noêta are outside of nous, however, they are not real being, but eidôla, an impossible scenario.3 In Enn. III.9.1 Plotinus, after raising this aporia, solves it as follows:

“Now, even if the two are different from each other, they are not separate from each other except in so far as they are different. Further, there is nothing in the statement against both being one, but distinguished by thought, though only in the sense that one is intelligible object, the other intelligent subject; for Plato does not say that what it sees is in something absolutely different, but in it, in that it has the intelligible object in itself.”4

The ideas exist in nous, so that intellect and object of intellection are at once coordinate, yet retain individual qualities. Hence, while Amelius’ triads express such a distinction in triadic unity (nous as possessor and nous as the one seeing), Plotinus’ Intellect is simultaneously identical with and separate from its object of intellection. While Syrianus does not point explicitly to this debate, his conclusion as to how the Demiurge relates to the Paradigm clearly reflects Plotinus’ solution in Enn. III.9.1.5

Syrianus’ opinion on the Demiurge and the Paradigm follows the traditional line of argument on the subject of Intellect (here the Demiurge) and ideas (or the Paradigm as the sum of forms). Syrianus first establishes that the Demiurge would have to come after the One, as unity must precede total multiplicity, with an intermediary of numbers between the extremes. In an argument typical of Syrianus, he favors a series of

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2 Derived from Tim. 39 E.
3 Dillon (1969) 66.
4 Trans. Armstrong.
5 Plotinus develops this theory further in Enn. V.1, where nous cognises an outflow of forms. Numenius, meanwhile, postulated a higher nous. The divine for Numenius was nous at rest.
gradations rather than an infinite multiplicity. Next, he addresses the question as to where the Paradigm should be placed with respect to the Demiurge:

1. The Paradigm is after the Demiurge (the opinion of Longinus): but then the Demiurge would be contemplating something inferior to it, which is not lawful for divine beings.

2. The Paradigm is prior to the Demiurge (the opinion of Porphyry): but if the Paradigm is prior to the Demiurge, it must be seen by the Intellect as something external. For if our soul can contemplate the Paradigm, then so must the universal Intellect. However, if the Intellect does contemplate the Paradigm as something higher than it, the Paradigm as an exterior object would hence be, as it were, an object of sense perception, rather than intellection. This was Plotinus’ concern regarding nous contemplating the ideas as they exist in the prior living creature. Once the eidê are not nous, but an object of intellection, they are no longer cognised immediately, but as images:

τὸ τοῖνυν ζῷον αὐτὸ οὐ νοοῦς, ἀλλὰ νοητὸν αὐτὸ φήσομεν καὶ τὸν ἔξω φήσομεν αὐτοῦ ἀ ὡς ἐχεῖν. Εἴδωλα ἄρα καὶ οὐ τάληθή ἐχει, εἰ ἐκεῖ τάληθη. (III. 9.1, 7–9.)

Syrianus draws a similar conclusion:

Εἰ δὲ ἡ ἐκεῖνον ὁ δημιουργός, ποτέ οὐν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐστραμμένος ὡς, ἡ ἔξω μονὸν ἑαυτοῦ; ἀλλὰ εἰ μὲν ἔξω μονὸν ἑαυτοῦ, εἴδωλα ὡς τοῦ ὄντος καὶ ἐκεῖ αἰσθηθήν ἀντὶ νοίεσθε. (I. 323.16–19.)

3. The Paradigm is in the Demiurge (the view of Plotinus): Plotinus comes to the conclusion in Enn. III.9.1 that Intellect and the ideas are different as distinguished by thought: one is intelligible object, the other intelligent subject. Otherwise, the two coincide, and the forms exist within the Intellect:

Ἡ, κ’άν ἔτερον ἐκάτερον, οὐ χωρίς ἀλλήλων, ἀλλ’ ἡ μονὸν τῷ ἐτερα. ἔπειτα οὐδέν κολλᾶται διὸν ἐπὶ τῆς λεγμένης ἡν εἴναι ἀμφοτεροῖς, διαμοιραμένα δὲ τῇ νοήσει, οὐκ ἔτερον ὡς δὲν τὸ μὲν νοητὸν, τὸ δὲ νοοῦν· ὁ γὰρ καθότι οὐ πήσων ἐν ἐτέρῳ πάντως, ἀλλ’ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ νοητὸν ἐχείν. (3.9.1, 11–15.)

Syrianus likewise says that the Paradigm and Demiurge are the same in some ways, different in others, and cites Tim. 39 E and 30 C as evidence. Syrianus says that the sameness is due to how the Demiurge contemplates
the Paradigm—by reflecting upon himself (εἰ δὲ εἰς ἑαυτόν, ἔστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ νουμένον, 323.19–20). He adds, citing Tim. 29 E, that this sameness is due to divine goodness; an identity exists between Demiurge and Paradigm because the divine wanted everything to be as like him as possible (324.4–6). Thus, if the Demiurge had the forms in him primally he would be noêtos, an impossibility—the Paradigm cannot be in the Demiurge because the Demiurge contains the forms of heavenly bodies. The Paradigm thus must be noêtos above the Demiurge because he contemplates it as a prior model. The Paradigm is in some way superior to the Demiurge, which Syrianus explains using the Platonic theory of sight: there must be an intermediary between the thing seen and the organ of vision. Physical sight can only see images of reality, while nous cognises reality directly. The Demiurge knows the Paradigm through intellec tion.7

The Paradigm, thus, exists at the same time noerically in the Demiurge because the Demiurge is an intellective entity, and noetically above him. Syrianus elaborates this simultaneous sameness and difference of the demiurgic Paradigm—because the Paradigm exists at once as object of thought and as thinker itself through an act of reflective contemplation, Syrianus says: “πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸ παράδειγμα ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ, νοητῶς μὲν πρὸ αὐτοῦ, νοερῶς δὲ ἐν αὐτῷ” (323.20–22). Syrianus explains that the forms are prior to the Demiurge noetically as the four monads of forms (324.11–12). This refers to Tim. 39 E 10–40 A 2, in which the Demiurge planned to make in this universe the “four kinds”: gods, birds, fish, and land animals, representing the four elements, fire, air, water, and earth—a passage Syrianus alludes to in 323.6ff. The sum total of these forms, however, exists in the Demiurge noerically as an order of monads (324.12). In this way, the Demiurge differs from the αὐτοκτων, which contains the multitude of forms. These inherent monads allow the forms themselves to be real, rather than eidê, and they allow the Demiurge to comprehend the forms as being inherent within him. Moreover, the statement that “one of the monads with him is the sum-total of the forms”, implies that there are other monads within him. It seems entirely possible that the Demiurge has (the) active or creative principles in him that are not the forms.

6 Plotinus, Enn. V.3.
Both Plotinus and Amelius distinguish three elements in intellection: the living creature itself, the intellect, and the planning principle (all of which are διαιρομένα τῇ νοήμεν). Syrianus places less emphasis on the planning principle, collapsing that quality into the Demiurge as Intellect, hence increasing its superiority.

In the last section, Syrianus launches into an Orphic interpretation of the Demiurge’s relationship to the Paradigm. Syrianus describes how Protagonos is established as the limit of the intelligibles through Night to establish the intelligible on the level of intellectives. In his Commentary on the Phaedrus, Hermias recalls that Syrianus calls the “supercelestial place” Night in Orphic terms. The swallowing of Phanes, identified as the αὐτοκράτορ, by Zeus (identified with the Demiurge) establishes the present order of things.

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10 148.5–150.15; PT IV, 16, 48.15–22; PT IV, 8, 19–22; In Tim. III, 88.18–21; 90.6; Hermias, In Phaedr. 154.15–21.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 9

Proclus, In Tim. I. 374.2–375.5

Βουλήθεις γάρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθαὶ μὲν πάντα, φλαὐρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν [Tim. 30 A].

ἡ μὲν οὖν ἀποφίλλεται, λεκτέον δὲ αὐτῶν τὸν Πλάτωνος ἔφα-πτομένους κατά τὸν ἡμέτερον διδάσχαλον, ὅτι δὴ τρόπος ἔτερος τῆς τε θεοῦ πρὸς τὰ πράγματα οχέσεως καὶ τῆς ἡμῶν αὐτῶν καὶ αὐτῶν πραγμάτων πρὸς τὸ ἐνθεόν καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς· ἄλλον γὰρ ἐχει λόγον τὰ τὰ ὅλα πρὸς τὰ μέρη καὶ τὰ μέρη πρὸς ἄλληλα. θεῷ μὲν οὖν οὖν οὐ-δὲν ἐστὶ κακὸν, οὐδὲ τῶν λεγομένων κακῶν· χρηται γὰρ καὶ τούτους εὖ· τοῖς δὲ αὐτῷ μερικοῖς ἔστι τι κακὸν, ἡ καὶ πάσχειν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πέρφυκε. καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῷ μὲν μέρει κακὸν, τῷ δὲ παντὶ καὶ τοῖς ὁλοῖς οὐ κακὸν, ἀλλ' ἀγαθὸν· ἤ γὰρ ὅτι καὶ ἢ τάξεως μετέχει τινός, ἀγαθὸν ἔστι· τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ λεγόμενον κακὸν εἰ μὲν ἔρημον ἀγαθὸν παντὸς ὑπολά-βοις, ἐπέειναι ποιεῖς αὐτῷ καὶ τοῦ μηδαμῶς ὄντος· ὅς γὰρ τὸ αὐτο- αγαθὸν πρὸ τοῦ ὄντος, οὔτω τὸ αὐτοκακὸν μετὰ τὴν οὐδένειαν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος· τὸ γάρ πλείστον ἀφετότο τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τὸ κακὸν ἐστὶ καὶ οὐ τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν. εἰ οὖν τὸ μηδαμῶς οὐ μᾶλλον ἔστιν ἢ τὸ αὐτοκακὸν, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο τῶν ἀδύνατων εἶναι, πολλῷ ἄρα τούτῳ μειζόνος ἀδύνα- τον, εἰ δὲ μὴ πάντῃ κακῷ, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀγαθῷ συμπεπλεγμένον, δῷςεις τε αὐτῷ χώρον ἐν τοῖς οὖν καὶ τοῖς ὁλοῖς αὐτῷ ποιήσεις ἀγαθόν. πῶς γάρ, εἰπερ ὅτι τὸ γὰρ δὲν μετέχει τοῦ ὄντος· τὸ τοῦ ὄντος μετέχει καὶ ἐνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἐνὸς μετέχει· ἀγαθὸν μετέχει· τὸ ἐνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἐνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἐνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἐνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἐνὸς μετέχει. εἰ δὲ πάντα ἀγαθήναι καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ κακὸν τῷ

a θεόμεν C
For God desired that, so far as possible, all things should be good and nothing evil

This, then, is the difficulty. We may address it by fastening on to these actual words of Plato, in accord with our Master, and saying that the way in which God is in relation with things is not the same as our way, and again things do not relate in the same way towards the divine and towards us. For the relation of the whole towards the parts is different from the parts towards each other. For God, there is no evil, not even of the things that are said to be evil; for as to these things, God puts them to a good use. For the particular beings, which are of such a nature as to suffer from it, there is such a thing, as the same thing may be evil for a part, but for the whole and in wholes, it is not evil, but good. For in so far as it is a being and participates in a certain order, it is good. For this thing said to be evil, if you assume it is void of all good, you conceive it as beyond even absolute not-being. For even as the Good in itself is prior to Being, so evil in itself is posterior to the nothingness of non-being. For that which is furthest removed from the good is evil and not absolute non-being. Therefore if absolute non-being has more existence than Evil in itself, but that is an impossibility, then far more is this impossible. But if it is not evil, but is in conjunction with the good, you will grant a place to this among beings, and you will make it good on the holistic level. How might it [not be good], if it is being? For being participates in absolute Being. And that which participates in Being also participates in the One. But that which participates in the One participates in the Good; so then, Evil, if it exists, participates in the Good. That is why there is no Evil pure and simple, nor anything wholly disordered, nor indetermined. Who would make such a thing? Who would give measure to it and order and limit? It is clear, that it would be the Demiurge, who makes all
αγαθῶ χρώννυσιν, οὐδέν ἐστι φλαύρων κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν τε τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν τῶν δεχομένων· διττή γὰρ ἡ δύναμις, ἢ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦκαὶ τὴν πολυάρατον κακιάν ἀγαθύνουσα, ἢ δὲ τῶν δεχομένων (τῶν) μέτω τῆς ἑαυτῶν τάξεως τῆς ἀγαθότητος τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μεταλ-βότνων. ὁ ἄρα δημιουργὴς βουλομένῳ μηδὲν εἶναι κακόν οὐδέν ἐστι κακόν.

Commentary

Syrianus argues that evil is necessary in the universe and not at all incompatible with the notion of Providence. The ideas in this passage reappear in a much more extensive treatment in Proclus’ De Malorum Subsistentia. Prior to reporting Syrianus’ opinion, Proclus states the aporia: if God is good, how could he have wished evil to exist? If he did not wish it, how does it exist? (373.28–373.30). Syrianus makes three points regarding evil: 1) that which we often consider evil in our partial universe is good with respect to the whole (374.7–12); 2) essential evil cannot exist, as all being participates in the good (374.12–374.25); 3) evil can exist in a limited sort of sense, in so far as degrees of nothingness get into the good (374.26–375.5). Syrianus approaches the problem by first arguing that evil exists with respect to particular beings. Syrianus says that just as God relates to us in a different way from how we relate to each other, so do the things that appear evil to us appear good to God. Moreover, the things that do appear evil to us on the level of partial beings

things like himself. For it is he who fills both wholes and parts with good. But if he makes all things good and tinges Evil itself with the Good, there exists no badness according to the power either of God or of the receptacles. For power has a double sense, on the one hand that of God which makes good even the much—detested evil, and on the other hand, there is the power of those receiving who participate in the Good of the Demiurge according to their rank. So, in accord with the will of the Demiurge that there should be no evil, there is no evil.

1 Tim. 29 E 1–3.

are actually good on the level of the whole (καὶ τὸ τῶν μὲν μέρων κακών, τῷ δὲ παντὶ καὶ τοῖς ὁλοῖς οὐ κακόν, ἀλλὰ ἁγαθόν). Syrianus argues that the problem is with the limited human perspective, rather than divine goodness. This idea appears both in Proclus’ De Malorum Subsistentia 58.35–36, which addresses the question of providence: “quod ex anima et idem malum quidem erit singularibus, totis autem bonum”, and 61.18 ff., where he says that Providence and evil have their place among beings—the gods produce evil qua good. The clearest expression of Syrianus’ view is stated by Proclus in 10.1–9 of On the Existence of Evils:

“Therefore, Plato in the Timaeus is right in saying that in accordance with the will of the demiurge, ‘all things are good and nothing is bad.’ In his discussion with the geometer [sc. Theat. 176A], however, he contends that ‘evil things cannot possibly cease to exist’ and that ‘by necessity’ they have come to exist among beings. For all things are made good by the will of the Father, and with respect to his productive activity, none of the things

3 Plutarch, On Stoic Contradictions, 34–35.
4 Proclus, On the Existence of Evils, 61.17–25: “Now, if we are right in stating this, all things will be from Providence and evil has its place among beings. Therefore the gods also produce evil, but qua good. The gods know evil, since they possess a unitary knowledge of evils, a unitary knowledge of plurality. For the knowledge of the soul differs from that of intellect, which again differs from that of the gods themselves. For the knowledge of the soul is self-moving, that of intellect is eternal, and that of the gods is ineffable and unitary, knowing and producing everything by the One itself. Souls have a limited understanding of knowledge, because they are able to cognise only a portion of the universe at any given time. Gods, however, see the entire universe and hence, see the place of evil with respect to the whole.” Trans. Opsomer-Steel.
that are or come to be are evil. However, when he distinguishes degrees in nature he does not escape the consequences that there is evil for particular things, evil which destroys the good [in them].”

Syrianus connects evil and will in lines 374.31–375.5. In 374.11–26, Syrianus, after presuming evil for particular beings, opens the ontological question of evil and argues that being or existence cannot be attributed to evil. This is a rather awkwardly constructed argument, and it would seem that this second point should come before points one and three, as they do in Proclus’ treatise on evil. Still, after arguing that there is no evil for God, only for particular beings, Syrianus delves into a discussion on the ontology of evil. He first argues against those who posit that evil is a deprivation, that it is a form of non-being. Syrianus says, if a thing is said to be evil and void of all Good, it must exist beyond absolute non-being. But, as the Good is prior to being, evil would then have to exist before the nothingness of non-being, making it ontologically prior (and hence, superior) to non-being—an impossibility for Syrianus. Anything that participates in being necessarily participates in absolute Being, which in turn, participates in the Good, as the Good is the highest principle (374.23–26: τὸ γὰρ ὁνὸς μετέχει τοῦ ὀντος· τὸ τοῦ ὁντος μετέχον καὶ ἐνός μετέχει· τὸ ἐνός μετέχον ἀγαθὸν μετέχει· τὸ ἀρα κακὸν, ἐπειδὴ ἐστὶ, ἀγαθὸν μετέχει· διόπερ οὐκ ἀκράτως ἐστὶ κακὸν οὐδὲ πάντη πλημμελὲς οὐδὲ ἀλλιτότως ἐστὶ κακὸν, εἴπερ ἐστίν ἀγαθὸν μετέχει· διόπερ οὐκ ἀλλιτότως· ὅτι κακὸν ὑπὸ πάντη πλημμελές οὐδὲ ἀλλιτότως).

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5 Trans. Opsomer-Steel.

Recte ergo Plato in Timeo quidem secundum conditivam voluntatem bona quidem omnia, pravum autem nihil esse ait; in sermonibus autem ad geometram neque utique perdi mala, et ex necessitate in entibus facta esse pretendit. Nam omnia bonificantur voluntate patris et nihil ad illius conditum malum neque entium nequeificentium; etnondiffugit malum esse partialibus quorum bonum perimit, naturam per gradus distinguens.

6 In Enn. III.2.1, Plotinus explains that Providence is at the level of Intellect and takes in the universe all together as one:

“Being is the true and first universe, which does not stand apart from itself and is not weakened by division and is not incomplete even in its parts, since each part is not cut off from the whole; but the whole life of it and the whole intellect lives and thinks all together in one, and makes the part the whole and all bound in friendship with itself, since one part is not separated from another and has not become merely other, estranged from the rest; and therefore, one does not wrong another, even if they are opposites.”

Evil, as it appears to beings in the partial levels of existence, has a place in the All that makes the universe good as a whole. Later, Plotinus analogises the universe to a play that needs both good and bad characters (Enn. III.1.17).
exist.7 Evil cannot exist in an absolute sense, but, rather in a limited, relative sense.

Syrianus’ last point is to argue that a limited sort of evil exists. Such an argument answers Plotinus’ notion that evil is a privation of the Good, but still exists. In *Ennead* I.8.5, 6–10 Plotinus argues that evil is a privation of the good—and what is absolutely deficient of good is, in turn, deficient of being, which participates in the good. Still, this is not to say that evil does not exist—in fact, matter exists without Being and without participation in the Good. Syrianus and Proclus argue that no absolute evil exists, for the Demiurge made everything good (374.28–29: ὁ δημιουργός ὁ πάντα ἑαυτῷ παραπλήσιον ἀπεργαζόμενος).8 Syrianus adopts the Iamblichean idea of evil as a *parhypostasis*9—something which exists together with another entity, a kind of parasite. Because there can be no absolute deficiency of the Good, Syrianus says that evil exists when it is mixed with matter. As Proclus puts it, Evil is limited to the particular:

“Thus, all things are good to the father of the All, and there is evil in those things that are not capable of remaining established in complete accordance with the Good; for this reason evil is ‘necessary’ as we have said earlier. In what sense evil exists and in what sense it does not is clear from our argument. For both those who assert that all things are good, and those who deny this, are right in one respect and wrong in another. Indeed, it is true that all beings are, but non-being, too, is interwoven with being. Therefore all things are good, since there is no evil that is unadorned and unmixed. And also evil exists, namely for the things for which indeed there is evil: it exists for the things that do not have a nature that is disposed to remain in the good in an unmixed way.”10

*On the Existence of Evils* 1.11–21.

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7 This line of argument occurs in Proclus, *On the Existence of Evils*, 3, 1–3: “Why should we say more? For if the One and what we call the nature of the good is beyond being, then evil is beyond non-being itself—I mean absolute non-being, for the Good is better than absolute Being”, trans.: Opsomer-Steel, and PT I, 18, p. 86, 20–21.
8 Matter is generated by God (*Philebus* 23 C) and is not evil. Proclus, *On the Existence of Evil*, 35.
10 Trans. Opsomer-Steel.

*Omnia igitur bona omnium patre, et est malum in non omnino secundum bonum stare potentibus; propter quod autem et hoc necessarium esse diximus prius. Qualiter quidem igitur est et qualiter non est malum, ex his palam. Omnes enim dicunt sic quidem recte, sic autem non recte, quique omnia bona dicunt et qui non. Et enim, quod omnia entia sunt, verum; sed et non ens est enti complexum. Omnia igitur bona per nullum scire malum inoratum et impermixturem; et malum est, quibus et est malum: est autem, quorum natura in bono manere impermixturem non est nata.*
While the Demiurge makes all things good, degrees of unlimitedness can enter the good when the beings do not use their own power to participate in the good (375.3–4: ἥ δὲ τῶν δεχομένων τῶν μέτρων τῆς ἑαυτῶν τάξεως τῆς ἁγαθοτητος τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μεταλαβόντων). Here, evil is the result of the free will of beings who choose to reject the good.\footnote{Also the view of Origen on evil. Proclus repeats this portion of Syrianus’ doctrine on evil in \textit{On the Existence of Evil}, pp. 33 and 58. This concept of providence and free will differs from Plotinus, who seems to wrestle with how blame can fall on the individual in a divinely-ordered universe. On Plotinian free will, see \textit{Enn.} III.3. Plotinus differentiates between the free will experienced only by the higher part of the soul and the fate common to the lower part.}
Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 441.15–443.8¹

"Ενα, εἶπερ κατὰ τὸ παράδειγμα δεδημουργημένος ἦσται [Tim. 31 A].

ὁ δὲ ἤμετερος διδάσκαλος καὶ ἄλλως τὴν ἀποφαίνει ταύτην διέλυε πολλαχῶς. ἔγειν δ’ οὖν, ὅτι πᾶσα μὲν ἡ νοητὴ οὐσία μονοειδῆς ἦστε καὶ αἰώνιος, τῶν δ’ ἐγκοσμίων πραγμάτων τὰ μὲν μᾶλλον ὁμοιούσθαι δύναται πρὸς τὰς ἐαυτῶν οὐσίας, τὰ δὲ ἦττον· δοσί μὲν γὰρ ἦστε ἀυλότερα καὶ καθαρότερα, μᾶλλον, δοσὶ δὲ ἐνυλότερα καὶ παχύτερα, ἦττον. ὃτιν όπο μᾶλλον παραδειγμάτων ἐν οὐσίαις μοναδικαῖς τε καὶ άδίδας τὰ μὲν κρείττων τὸν ἐν τῷ παντὶ μάλιστα μεμιμημένα τὰς ἐαυτῶν αἰτίας κατὰ πάντα τοῖς παραδείγμασιν ὁμοιότατα γέγονε, κατὰ τὸ μοναδικόν, κατὰ τὸ οὐσιώδες, κατὰ τὸ ἀδίδαν, τὰ δὲ χεῖρω ὑστερον εἰδὸς ὁμοιότης λαχόντα πῇ μὲν ὁμοίωτα τοῖς σφῶν αὐτῶν αἰτίοις, πῇ δ’ οὐ. τριῶν όπο όντων τούτων ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἶδεσι, τοῦ μοναδικοῦ, τοῦ οὐσιώδους, τοῦ διαιωνίου, πόσερον τὸ μὲν μοναδικόν αὐτῶν μιμήσεται καὶ τὸ ἀδίδαν, τὸ δὲ οὐσιώδες οὐδαμῶς; ἀλλ’ ἄτοτον δέδεται γάρ, ὅτι οὐσίας εἶναι χρή τὰ ἄτ’ αὐτῶν κατ’ αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι ποιοῦντων.

ἀλλὰ κατὰ μὲν τὸ μοναδικὸν καὶ τὸ οὐσιώδες ἦσται μιμήματα ἐκεῖνων, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἀδίδαν οὐ; ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο ἀδύνατον. ἀπολειπέσται γάρ ἐκαστὸν μοναδικὸν μὲν ὄν, μὴ ἀδίδαν δ’ διότι μὲν γάρ οὐκ ἀδίδαν, εἰς τὸ μὴ δὲ ὁμοίωτα, διότι δὲ μοναδικὸν, οὐκ ἦστιν εἰς τὸν γενήσθαι. καὶ ὅλως πάν τὸν τὸ εἰς ἀκίνητον αἰτίων ὑποστὰν ἀμετάβλητον ἔστιν κατ’ οὐσίαν, ἀκίνητα δὲ τά εἰδή νοητά γὰρ ἦστιν. ἢ τοῖς ἄπαντα μιμήσεται δυνατὸν ἢ τινά. πάντα δὲ ἀδύνατον τὰ γὰρ πορροτέρω τῶν ἀρχῶν ἦττον ὁμοιοῦτα πρὸς αὐτὰς· καὶ γὰρ τοῦ Πυθαγόρου πάσας ἐπιστήμης ἐξοντος δ’ μὲν ἐγνωτέρω πάσαν αὐτὸ τὴν γνῶσιν ὑποδέχεται δευτέρως, ὁ δὲ πορροτέρως¹ τὰς μὲν διδάσκεται τῶν ἐπιστημῶν, πρὸς δὲ τινὰς ἀσύμμετρὸς ἦστιν.

¹ ὁ δὲ πορροτέρως M fort. recte πορροτέρως M

The whole discussion of which this is a part continues for a number of pages; however, at 443.8 Proclus begins a new argument with “ἔτι καὶ κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον ἐπιχειρεῖν ἡμῖν δυνατόν”, indicating that he has merged his own opinion to that of Syrianus.
One it must be termed, if it is to be framed after its Pattern.

Our teacher resolved this aporia differently, and in many ways. He used to say, then, that the whole of intelligent being is unitary and eternal, but among cosmic things, some can be more assimilated to their own essences, but others less so. For such things as are more immaterial and purer are more so, but the more material and the crasser are less so. Whereas all models are characterised by the unique and eternal essences, the more superior in the universe mimic more closely their causes, have become the most similar to their models in all respects, with respect to unity, substantiality, and eternity, while those which are being allocated a lower, worse type of similarity are, in one respect, assimilated to their own causes, in another respect, not. Since there are three elements in the intelligible forms, unity, substantiality, and eternity, will they imitate their unity and eternity, but in no way their substance? But that is absurd. For, indeed, it has been shown that that which issues from the forms must be substances, since they create by way of their very existence.

But will they be copies with respect to unity and substantiality, but not in respect to eternity? This also is impossible. The remaining possibility is that each is unique, but not eternal. For if it is not eternal, it will dissolve into non-being, but if it is unique, there is nothing from which it can arise. But generally, everything brought forth into being from immovable causes is unchanging according to its essence, and the forms are immovable; for they are intelligible. So, either it is possible to imitate all aspects [of forms] or only certain ones. But those farther from their first principles are less similar to them: for example, while Pythagoras possesses all the sciences, he who is closer to him receives all his knowledge in a secondary way, whereas he who is farther away learns the doctrines of some sciences, but is unequal to other ones.

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2 Ἐλέγε δ’ οὖν, 441.17: use of the imperfect here, once again, possibly indicates that Syrianus said the things which follow in a lecture.
εἰ τοῖς πάντα ἀδύνατον, λείπεται τινά. καὶ εἰ τινά, τριῶν ὄντων ἐν ἔκείνοις τῶν νοητῶν εἰδῶν χαρακτηριστικῶν, ὡς ἔσται δήλον, τριῶν δ’ οὖν ὄντων, ὡς εἴσομεν, ἢ τὰ ἄγρα μεμιμημένα τοῦ μέσου γέγονεν ἁμωρά, ἢ τὰ δύο τα πρῶτα δεξάμενα τοῦ τρίτου φαίνοιτ᾽ ἀν ἀπολε- λειμμένα, ἢ τοῦ πρώτου μὴ τυχόντα τῶν μετ᾽ αὐτὸ μετείληθεν. ἀλλὰ μὴν δεδεικται μηδέτερον τῶν πρώτων ἀληθείας ὃν ἀνάγκῃ ἄρα τὸ μὲν μοναδικόν αὐτὰ μὴ ἀποτυπώσασθαι τῶν εἰδῶν, τὸ δὲ οὐσιώδες μόνον καὶ τὸ αἰώνιον, διὸ πάντα μὲν τὰ ἐγκόσμια εἴδη οὐσίαι καὶ αἱ ὀσαύτως ἔστηκα, οὐ πάντα δὲ μοναδικά· οὐ γὰρ πάντα πρὸς πάσας ἔχει τὰς τῶν παραδειγμάτων δυνάμεις συμμέτρως.

ὅτι δὲ πάν το νοητὸν εἴδος καὶ ὅλως παραδειγματικὸν αἰτίου πρώτως ὃν μοναδικόν ἑστὶ καὶ αἴδιον καὶ οὐσιώδες, δήλον· εἴτε γὰρ μὴ οὐσία εἰ, συμβεβηκός ἔσται, πὰν δὲ συμβεβηκός περὶ τὴν ὑλὴν ὑφισταται καὶ τὰ ἐν ὑλῇ ὄντα, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐν τοῖς χωριστοῖς αἰτίοις, εἴτε μὴ αἴδιον, οὐδ’ ἢ ἐν εἰκὼν αὐτοῦ αἴδιος εἰ, δεῖ δὲ, εἴπερ ἐκ πάντων αἱ τῶν εἰδῶν ὁ κόσμος. ἀρχὴς δὲ ἀπολογημένης οὐδεμία μηχανή οὐξεσθαι τὸ ἀτ’ αὐτῆς, εἴτε μὴ μοναδικόν, οὐκέτ’ ἢ εἰ ὁ πρώτος παραδειγματικὸς δύο γὰρ εἰναι το πρώτος ἀδύνατον, ὃς φησι καὶ ὃ ἐν Πολιτείᾳ [Χ 597 C] Σωκράτης. αὐτός γὰρ τούτος ἢ ταυτότης πόθεν ἢ ἄφ’ ἐνός τινος κοινοῦ εἴδους; ταῦτα ἄρα τὰ τρία πάσιν ὑπάρχει τοῖς πρώτοις παραδείγμασι, καὶ ἐσχε τὸ μὲν μοναδικόν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ πέρατος ὑπάρ- χειν, τὸ δὲ αἴδιον ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπειρίας, τὸ δὲ οὐσιώδες ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης οὐσίας.
Then, if it is impossible to imitate everything, it remains that one imitates some. And if some, then, there being three characteristics of intelligible forms, as it will appear—there being three, as we said—either they imitate extremes, without having a share in the mean, or taking on the first two, they might appear to be without a third, or not acquiring the first, they participate in those after it. But it has been demonstrated that neither of the first two are true; for it would be necessary, then, that they do not reproduce the unity of forms, but only the substance and the eternity, and for this reason, all encosmic forms are substances, and eternally established, but they are not all monadic, for not all have suitability to all the powers of the paradigms. 

So then, it is clear that every intelligible form and generally the paradigmatic cause firstly is a monadic being and eternal and substantial. For if it were not a substance, it will be an accident. But the accidental is always attached to matter and the things in matter, but not in the transcendent (i.e. separated) causes. And again, if it were not eternal, the copy of it would not be eternal. But it must be, if the universe is always composed of all the forms. But if the cause is being destroyed, there is no means by which that coming from it can be preserved. Again, if it is not unique, it would not be primally a paradigm. For it is impossible, as Socrates says in the Republic [597 C], for there to be two primal entities; for where would the similarity between these two come from other than some common single source? So then, these three characters belong to all the primal paradigms, and it is reasonable to assume that the monad springs from the Limit, the Eternal from Unlimitedness, and the Substantial from the Primal Essence.
Commentary

This is a rather scholastic look at the question of why some forms only produce one substantiation (e.g., the form of the sun produces only one sun) but others a multiplicity (the form of rabbit produces many rabbits)\(^3\) (Proclus’ aporia: 441.10–15). Syrianus tediously derives a solution, whereby not all products imitate their causes to the same degree.\(^4\)

The basis of this argument rests on the three characteristics of forms: unity, substantiality, and eternity (441.25). The first two of these characteristics must be passed on to their products, while the third term, referring to a kind of monadicity, is only passed from some forms to some products (442.19–25). Only beings that are suitable to uniqueness partake of the monadic quality. Syrianus explains that beings are more or less similar to their forms, depending on their level of materiality (441.16–21). Those less material contain greater similarity to their forms, while those more material contain fewer similarities. This concept relates to the theory that when the power of the forms (henads) processes outward, it decreases in power the farther it proceeds from its source.

Copies mimic their forms depending on which of the characteristics are granted to them, which is in turn according to their rank. Substantiality must be bestowed on their products: forms can only create substantial things because they create by their own substance (441.30–442.1). Eternity, moreover, must also be granted: if it were not, certain products—say, rabbits—would disappear (442.4). Syrianus argues that since we see all the products remain, they must partake of eternity: i.e., while individual rabbits die, the form of “rabbit” in matter is eternal—clearly, Syrianus did not believe in the process of extinction or Darwinism! A monadic quality, however, is not necessarily granted, as it requires that nothing further from it can arise (442.19–25). This seems an odd conjecture, as a generated thing with a monadic quality surely exists; it just exists alone as unique. This section also explains that there must be three forms, because there cannot be two extremes without a median.

In the last section (442.25–443.8), Syrianus steps backwards and explains why a form must be a monadic being, eternal, and substantial. If a form were not substantial, it would be an accident and hence linked

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\(^3\) See Proclus’ aporia, 441.10–15.

\(^4\) Syrianus gives a lengthy description of which things on earth are not associated with forms. See In Metaph. 107.5 ff.; Proclus, In Parm. 811.32, where Proclus discusses categories of forms; cf. Gersh (1978) pp. 88–89.
to matter, rather than existing as a transcendent cause (442.27–29). If it were not eternal, its copies would likewise not be eternal, and breeds of sub-lunar beings would continually cease existence (442.29–31). Finally, if it were not a unique monad, it could not be a paradigmatic cause. Citing Republic 597 C, Syrianus argues that there cannot be two different forms for the same copy: there would have to be a third, higher transcendent cause that acts as the cause of the similar two (443.2–4).

Lines 443.4–8 link the three characteristics of forms to the triad that exists in the realm of the One: peras, apeiria, and primal being (which must, in the context, refer to the “unified”, as τὸ ἕν ὄν). Here, monadicity is associated with peras, eternity with apeiria, and substantiality with prôte ousia. This is an in accordance with Iamblichus’ understanding of three entities (where peras and apeiria precede the One Existent, which is their product, the μικτὸν or ἠνωμένον). Proclus, in his turn, attaches the three to the principle of the Primal One, One-Being, and Eternity, as he explains it in In Parm. 831.27–832.1:

“The forms are of universal substances and of their perfections: for these are the most characteristic attributes of Forms: goodness, essentiality, eternity—the first being derived from the primary cause, the second from the One Being, and the third from Eternity. They descend into the first order of Forms, a rank, however, which is second to Eternity and third from the One Being but dependent, like all beings, on the cause of all good.”

Proclus descends further down the ranks of the One—placing the last form of the eternal into the noetic rank, just as he corresponds the characteristics of forms with their sources. Thus, the forms are not only in the realm of the One, but also in the Intelligible realm. This looks back to Iamblichus’ principle of the One Existent which was also known as the aeon: this was both the ruling monad of the intelligible realm and the last rank of the henadic realm. Proclus shows a return to Iamblichus’ more systematic ordering of the forms and a desire to connect them to the noetic realm.

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5 See Dillon (1973) 32.
7 Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 63 and 64 Dillon.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 11

Proclus, In Tim. II. 35.15–28

Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐπίπεδον μέν, βάθος δὲ μηδὲν ἔχον ἔδει γίγνεσθαι τὸ τοῦ παντὸς σῶμα, μία μεσότης ἂν ἐξήρξει τά τε μεθ’ ἑαυτῆς ξυνδεῖν καὶ αὐτὴν νῦν δὲ—στεφεοειδῆ γὰρ αὐτὸν προσῆκεν εἰναι, τὰ δὲ στεφεά μία μὲν οὐδέποτε, δύο δὲ ἄει μεσότητες προσαρμόττουσι [Tim. 32 AB].

eἰ μὴ ἄρα καὶ ἐκεῖνον ἀληθὲς, ὅπερ ἔλεγεν ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών ἔλεγεν δέ, ὅτι δέοι λαμβάνειν τόν αὐτόν ἐν ταῖς μεσότητοι λόγον, ὃς ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς πλευραῖς τῶν ἄκρων. ὄδοι εἰ ὁ μὲν εἰη χύβος ὀκτώ, ὁ δὲ ἐπτά καὶ ἐκοσι, τάς μεσότητας αὐτών εὐρίσκομεν, εἰ λάβομεν τάς πλευράς αὐτῶν, τὸν δύο καὶ τρία, καὶ ποιήσαμεν αὐτοὺς ἐπ’ ἀλλήλους καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἐξ ἁμφοτὲρον ἐξονταί γὰρ οί μέσοι διὰ τοῦ ἡμιλίου λόγου τοῦν ἀνάπτοντες τοὺς ἄκρους, ὃσπερ ἦν καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀρχές t] πλευράς τῶν χύβων, τοῦ τοῖνος αὐτοῦ λόγον ἐν τοῖς πλευραῖς αὐτῶν χύβων καὶ ἐν τοῖς μέσοις δύο ἐξ ἀνάγκης οἱ μέσοι, φαίη ἂν ὁ Πλάτων. καὶ τοῦτο συμφωνοῦσεν πρὸς τήν προσαρμοσμένην φυσιολογίαν καὶ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεις τῶν στοιχείων καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπλοῖς εἴδει πρὸ τῶν συνθέτων ἐντέθησαν ὁ δημιουργὸς τὴν κοινωνίαν.

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a τὸν ἡμιλίου λόγον P  b ἀρχαῖς P
Now if the body of the All had had to come into existence as a plane surface, having no depth, one middle term would have sufficed to bind together both itself and its fellow-terms; but now it is otherwise; for it behoved it to be solid of shape, and what brings solids into unison is never one middle term alone but always two.

Unless this also might be true, what our teacher said. He said that it is right to assume that the same ratio obtains in the middle terms as in the sides of the extremes. For example, if one cube might be 8, but another 27, we find their middle term if we were to take their sides, 2 and 3, and multiply them to each other and each both according to the product. For the middle terms will be joining the extremes in the ratio of \( \frac{1}{2} \) to 1, which was the ratio also of the original sides of the cubes. If then the ratio is the same, both in the sides of the cubes and in the means, the means will be by necessity two, according to Plato. And this is more in accord with the previously-stated account of nature. For the Demiurge established a common bond between the powers of the elements and the simple forms before he established composite things.
Commentary

This mathematical description of the cosmos shows the composition of the universe into its four elements (fire, air, water, and earth), each of which is related to and dependent on the others. The notion of suitable means, as derived mathematically by Syrianus here, shows how elements are necessarily proportional in the universe, so that all together, they form the cosmos as one.1 This is a nice example of Syrianus explaining Platonic arithmetic and geometry in terms of ontology, which is alluded to with the term “natural causes” (φυσιολογία) in 35.26. In In Met. 85.38–86.2, Syrianus says:

“The five figures which are discussed in the Timaeus and which are employed in the formation of the cosmic elements are, on the one hand, interpreted in mathematical terms, but on the other hand, hint at active and creative powers in nature.”2

This fragment, however, ends at the point where the connections are made between geometry and hierarchical metaphysics.

While the commentary tradition on this passage from the Timaeus is indeed thorough and plentiful, the Platonists tend, for the most part, to stay close to the text when explicating Tim. 32 A. In Tim. 31 B, Plato says that the Demiurge first made the universe from fire—to make it visible—and earth—to make it tangible, but needed a third to connect the two. This bond must be in perfect proportion to the two it is connecting. This concept is Empedoclean, who listed fire and earth as a requirement for its visibility and resistance to touch, and then demanded a third to bond the two extremes.3 In 32 A, Plato says that whenever there are three numbers, the middle one is first proportioned to the last, so that the last is in proportion to the middle, the middle to the first, and hence, the first is proportioned to the last. What follows both in the text of the Timaeus and Syrianus’ commentary on the Timaeus is an exposition on proportional mean terms both for square numbers and for cubes.4

1 The geometrical formation of the spheres is expressed in the souls of the world; the demiurge makes the soul in a straight line, cuts it lengthwise in two, curbs the two parts into two circles, and divides one of the circles into seven. These geometrical figures exist as forms at the level of intellect. See Steel (2007) 225–226.
3 Cornford (1997) 45. This is also cited by Nicomachus, Introd. Arith. ii, 24, p. 126 and Iamblichus, In Nicom. Ar. Introd. p. 100.
4 Proclus’ geometrical theology depends heavily on Philolaus whose fragments are found solely in Proclus. Philolaus dedicated angles of geometrical figures to gods, so that
the argument is that the four elements which comprise the cosmos create a “solid”, or cube. This cube and the four elements have two mean terms which allow them to inter-relate proportionately. With the rule of suitable means, the cosmos partakes in a continual existence as all its similar parts grant it unity.

While Syrianus’ explanation begins at the point of the three-dimensional cube, both Plato and various Platonists begin their query with the plane, or square numbers: 31 C 5: ὄποταν γὰρ ὄρθιον τριῶν ἐτε ὄγκων εἰτε δύναμεων ὑπερτινονοῦν. Here, δύναμις most likely refers to square and ὄγκος to cube.5 Drawing on theorems in Euclid’s Elements6 viii, 11, 12, Plato (and Syrianus) build on the statement that between two squares there can be one proportional mean, while between two cubes there are two means (Proclus also states this in 35.5).7 For instance, using the numbers for two cubes Syrianus shows us that the middle terms can easily be found if we take their sides: 2 (m) and 3 (n). By multiplying variations of the sides: 2×2×3 (m²n) and 3×3×2 (n²m), two middle numbers are found, 12 and 18, so that the two proportional means of 8 and 27 are 12 and 18: 8, 12, 18, 27.8 The progression for cubic numbers is thus 1½ to 1 (meaning that when one adds half of the present number to itself, one derives the next successive number).

Proclus describes an elaboration to this system, so that the cubic (or three-dimensional) structure of this world is found in ratios of the elements:9

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5 Both Cornford (1997) 46 and Heath, Thirteen Books of Euclid (1926) ii, 294, offer these meanings. Liddell, Scott, and Jones, A Greek-English Dictionary (Oxford, 1968), give for δύναμις the definition: “product of two numbers” and list this under usages found in Plat. Tim. 54 B; 32 A; Iamblichus. Theol. Ar. 11 and 33 and In N.C. p. 108P. ὄγκος is defined as “bulk, size, mass.” The citations are mostly from Plato, referring to numbers: Tht. 155 A; etc., although it is also listed as appearing in Empedocles fr. 20.1.
6 In his commentary on Euclid’s Elements, Proclus only refers to Syrianus once. See In Eucl. 123, 19 on the quantity and quality of angles.
7 In all fairness to his predecessors, Democritus, Archytas, Menaechmus, and Eratosthenes likewise note proportional numbers in cubes and derive solutions. They differ, however, on the number of means and manner of derivation.
8 This is explained in more detail by Proclus in 31.22–29.
9 Siordvanes discusses this passage, see (1996) 226.
fire = a²(a)
earth = b²(b)
air = a²(b)
water = a(b²)

Thus, the universe is comprised of elements fundamentally similar to one another, each being the product of the same components in different ratios. In his *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*, 97, 18 sq., Proclus uses the development from point to line to surface to volume to illustrate the progress from unity-dyad-triad-and tetrad. It is at the stage of volume, the “summit of beings”, he says, in which the tetrad (symbolic of the four elements) becomes generative of the total cosmic order.¹⁰ In this system, moreover, point engenders line, which causes surface, which engenders volume: just as every being in the universe is limited by its cause, so are the mathematical causes superior to their effects.¹¹ While after Syrianus’ fragment Proclus goes into much greater detail as to various cubic connections, his statement directly after the lemma encapsulates both his point and Syrianus’ “natural causes”. He argues that every generation indicates a change and a change indicates two terms: without the four elements and their unity there would be no generation and stability.

It is only after Proclus gives Syrianus’ explanation and his own account that he brings Iamblichus into the story (2.36.24ff.).¹² According to Proclus, Iamblichus finds one mean for the simple reason-principles and forms, but two means for the material bodies, which are composed of form and matter. A dyad presides over the latter’s composition.¹³

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¹⁰ Proclus, *In Eucl.*, 97, 19–99 and 114, 25–115, 8. Charles-Saget discusses such aspects of Proclus’ thought, (1982) 272. See also fr. II 4 Lang 28 Tarán Speusippus’ *On Pythagorean Numbers* (*Theol. Ar.* (84, 10–12)) which says that 1, 2, 3, 4 correspond to point, line, triangle and pyramid. This passage discusses the Pythagorean correlation between point, line, surface, and solid with 1, 2, 3, 4. See Mueller (1987) 341.


¹³ See Dillon (1973) 321–325.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 12

Proclus, In Tim. II. 95.18–96.7

Διδ δή κατά ταύτα ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐν ἑαυτῷ κυκλῳ κινεῖσθαι στρεφόμενον, τὰς δὲ ἐξ ἀπάσως κινήσεως ἀφείλειν καὶ ἀπλανῆς ἀπειράσαστο ἐκείνων. ἔτι δε τὴν περίοδον ταύτην ἀτε οὐδὲν ποιοῦν δεόν ἁσχελές καὶ ἀποῦν αὐτὸ ἐγέννησεν [Tim. 34 A].

Τὸ μὲν παράδειγμα τῆς κυκλοφορίας ὡς νόθος ἐστὶ καὶ φρόνημα, εἰρηται πρότερον τις δε ἐστιν αὐτή καὶ πῶς ἀπειράζεται πρὸς νοῦν, ἐν τούτοις παραδίδουσιν οἱ λόγοι· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ κυκλοφορία κινήσεως κατὰ τὰ αὐτά καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ περισχομένη, καθάπερ ἐν τούτῳ τέ φησιν ὁ Τιμιαος καὶ ἐν Νόμοις [X 898 A] ὁ Ἀθηναίος Ζένος· ὃν τὸ μὲν κατὰ ταύτα ταύταν ἐστὶ τῷ καθ’ ἑνα λόγου καὶ μίαν τάξιν.

τί γὰρ, εἰ κινοῦτο μὲν τὸ πᾶν κυκλικῶς, μεταβάλλοι δὲ ἄλλως ἄνατέλλον ἢ δύνον, ὡς φησιν ὁ ἐν τῷ Πολιτικῷ [269 A] μύθος; ἢν' οὖν μὴ τούτο υπολάβωμεν, τὸ κατὰ ταύτα πρόκειται τῶν ἄλλων περὶ αὐτῆς ῥημάτων. οὐκ ἀφανῆς ὁ Πλατωνικὸς Σευήρος—παρορισμόωμεθα γὰρ ἐνεπεθέν πρὸς αὐτὸν—τάς ἀνακυκλώσεις τάς μυθικάς προσέβουσας καὶ γενιτόν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀγένητον τῶν κόσμων· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πᾶν κατὰ ταύτα φησιν ὁ Πλάτων [Leg. 1. c.] καὶ ἀσαίτως κινεῖσθαι καὶ καθ’ ἑνα λόγου καὶ μίαν τάξιν· ἡ δὲ ἀνακύκλωσις ὡς ὁπερ λέγεται, τὴν μίαν ἀναφέρει τάξιν τῆς κινήσεως. ἀλλ’ αὐτὴ μὲν ὅπως διαμε-μυθολογίηται πρὸς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς εἰς ἑκείνον ἀναγε-γραμμέναις τὸν διάλογον εἰρηται τῷ Πλάτωνι κατὰ νοῦν.
Wherefore\(^1\) He spun it round uniformly in the same spot and within itself and made it move revolving in a circle; and all the other six motions He took away and fashioned it free from their aberrations. And seeing that for this revolving motion it had no need of feet, He begat it legless and footless.

That the paradigm of circular motion is Intellect and understanding has been said earlier (94, 17). What this same motion is, and how it is likened to Intellect, is set out in the present passage. For the circular motion is motion “going around in the same way and in the same place and in itself”, even as Timaeus puts it in the present passage and as the Athenian Stranger says in the Laws (X 898 A)—where the expressions “according to one ratio and one order” is equivalent of “in the same way.”

For how would it be if the universe were to move in a circle, but were to change by at one time or another moving clockwise or anti-clockwise, as the Myth in the Statesman presents it [269 A]? Therefore, lest we assume this, the phrase “in the same way” stands before the rest of the description of it. Thus the Platonist Severus—indeed, let us speak freely about this—was not correct in adopting these mythical alternations of cycles and making the cosmos both generated and ungenerated; for Plato says that the universe “moves uniformly and regularly, and according to a single rational principle and order” [Laws, ibid]; but the revolution, nevertheless, just as was said, destroys the ordinance of motion; this so-called alternation of cycles, however, destroys the single order of motion. But that that account is couched in mythical form has been explained by our Master in his commentary on that dialogue, in accordance with the intentions of Plato.

\(^1\) This translation is a modification of Dillon’s; see (1992) 367–368.
Commentary

This passage is a commentary on Plato’s six sublunary motions and a critique of the theory of alternating cycles (which implies that the world had a beginning in time).

To support his interpretation of Tim. 34 A, Syrianus addresses Laws 898 A and Statesman 269 A. The Laws passage looks to Book 10 on circular motion, which is characterised by movement in the same conditions, same speed and same angle (κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ περισσομένη, 95.22). The Statesman fragment is of particular importance as it is likely evidence that Syrianus wrote a commentary on the Statesman: not only does Syrianus refer to the Statesman in 95.29, but in 96.5–7 Proclus states that there was a written monograph on the topic (τοῦ καθηγμένος ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς ἑκεῖνον ἀναγεγραμμένοις τὸν διάλογον εἶχε τῷ Πλάτωνι κατὰ νοῦν), especially with respect to how the myth should be understood (“διαμεμφυλοχγητα” 96.5). While no Platonic commentary on the Statesman exists that we know of, it formed part of the curriculum for study in the Platonic Academy.2 The passage in the Statesman that Syrianus refers to is the myth in 269 A, “μεταβάλλον ἀλλοτέ ἀλλως ἀνατέλλον ἢ δῦν” (95.26), which discusses the changing, rising and setting of the universe—Kronos is said to wind the universe one way, while under the rule of Zeus, the universe winds in the opposite direction.

In 95.30 ff. Syrianus criticises Severus’ position on Statesman 269 A. Severus answers the problem of whether the universe was created or uncreated with the Stoic concept of apokatastasis, the periodic destruction of the world and its circles. Proclus summarises Severus’ position in In Tim. I. 289, 7 ff.:

“[Severus] says the cosmos is eternal in the absolute sense, but that this present one, moving in its present direction, is created. For there are two cycles, the one on which the universe is at present turning, and the other one which is opposite to it. The cosmos, in so far as it is turning according

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to this cycle, is created and had a beginning, but in the absolute sense it is not.”

In this sense, Severus gives a more literal interpretation of Statesman 269 A. While the universe is uncreated in eternity, the circuits of the universe are created in time. Both Syrianus and Proclus interpret the cycles to be simultaneous with each other. Proclus addresses Severus’ quotation in the lines that follow:

“You [Severus] are improperly transferring the riddling account of myth onto the level of a scientific discussion. Soul that originates movement could never leave off its activity and alter its original circuit. And how, then, if both moved and mover preserve their original states, is there any place for this alternation of cycles?”

Syrianus, likewise, criticises apokatastasis as destroying the concept of μία τάξις, or single order of motion as understood by Plato (95.31).

Syrianus bases his critique on the concept that alternating cycles would imply a change in the Demiurge—from creating to not-creating—, a critique that was taken up in the above passage by Proclus. Proclus, moreover, further allegorises cosmic cycles in the Statesman. The following two passages are worth examining in detail to consider Proclus’ adaptation of Syrianus’ Statesman interpretation. The position is stated in In Tim. I. 288, 13ff.:

“If the creator is one of the eternal beings, it cannot be the case that at one time he creates, and at another time he leaves hold of the rudder-handles, for he would not in that case maintain uniformity or unchangeability.”

Proclus does not accept that the Demiurge moves from one action to another—such a change in demiurgic activity would not be in line with the late Platonic notion of eternal creation.

With the problem of two separate activities for the Demiurge established, Proclus explains how the two ages of Kronos represent simultaneous metaphysical states. While he does not credit Syrianus, it is a most Syrianic concept. In In Tim. III. 309.20ff., he explains that a cycle of Kronos governs in the intelligible realm, while a cycle of Zeus rules in the physical realm. Platonic Theology V. 6, 25, 3ff. goes into this idea in more detail. Here, the cycle of Kronos is at the summit of the intelligible level of being on which the souls on the intellectual level of reality depend.

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3 Dillon (1992) 368.
4 Dillon (1992) 368.
The cycle of Zeus occurs simultaneously to that of Kronos, but it takes place at the physical level. Platonic Theology V. 6 (25, 3 ff.) explains this relationship between the two levels:

“There are, then, two sorts of life in the world, the one invisible and intellectual, the other physical and manifest, the former being defined by Providence, the latter proceeding irregularly according to Fate. Of these, that which is secondary and multiform and realised in Nature is dependent upon the order of Zeus, while that which is more simple and intellectual and invisible depends upon that of Kronos. And this is clearly indicated by the Eleatic Stranger when he calls the one of the cycles “Zeusian” and the other “Kronian”. In fact Zeus is also cause of the invisible life of the universe, and is the dispenser of intellect to it, and its leader to intellectual perfection, but he elevates all beings to the realm of Kronos, and it is because he is leader along with his father that he brings into existence the cosmic intellect as a whole. Indeed, if we are to tell the whole truth, each of the two cycles, I mean the visible and invisible, has a connection with both these gods, though the one is preeminently proper to Kronos, while the other pertains more to the regime of Zeus.”

These cycles comprise two aspects of the metaphysical universe. The realm of providence is governed by Kronos, while the realm of fate, which has immediate, but not supreme control over the natural world, is governed by Zeus. Proclus, moreover, finds evidence that the two cycles are ruled by Kronos and Zeus in Statesman 272 E 6–8, which he cites in In Tim. III. 273.19 ff. in a discussion of providence and fate. While Providence and Kronos have supreme control over the universe, actual control of the cosmos is governed by Zeus, the Demiurge, who acts as a catalyst using fate in the physical world.

It might be objected, in conclusion, that the present passage is a fragment, not of the Timaeus commentary, but of a Statesman commentary. One can only plead, in response, to that, that Syrianus may well have taken the opportunity, in commenting this passage, of alluding to his views on the Statesman myth, even as does Proclus.

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SYRIANUS, *In Tim. Fr. 13*

**Proclus, In Tim. II. 105.28–106.9**

Ψυχήν δὲ εἰς τὸ μέσον αὐτοῦ θείας διὰ παντὸς τε ἔτεινε καὶ ἔτι ἔξω θείαν τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆς περιεκάλυψεν [Tim. 34 B].

ό δὲ γε ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών προσφυέστερον τοῖς τοῦ Πλάτωνος δήμασιν ἐποιεῖτο τὴν ἐξήγησιν τῆς γὰρ τοῦ παντὸς ψυχῆς ἔχουσης μὲν τί καὶ ὑπερχόσμων καὶ ἐξηρημένων τοῦ παντός, καθό συνήπταται πρὸς τὸν νοῦν, ὁ δὴ κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς ὁ τε Πλάτων ἐν τῷ Φαίδρῳ [248 A] καὶ ὁ Ἄραχνος ἐν τοῖς περί τῆς "Ἰππας" λόγοις προσωνόμασεν, ἔχουσης δὲ καὶ δυνάμεων ἄλλο πλήθος ἀπὸ τῆς μονάδος ταύτης προίκα καὶ μεριδόμενον περὶ τὸν νοῦν καὶ πάσας οἰκείας παρὰ ταῖς μοίραις τοῦ παντός, καὶ ἄλλως μὲν περὶ τὸ μέσον, ἄλλως δὲ περὶ τὴν γῆν, ἄλλως δὲ περὶ τὸν ἄλλον, ἄλλως δὲ περὶ ἐκάστην τῶν σφαιρῶν, ταῦτα πάντα ὁ παρὼν ἐφ’ ἑκατὸν ἐνδεικνύμενος, ὡς ἄλλως μὲν ψυχήν τὸ μέσον, ἄλλως δὲ τὸν ἰδίον ὄγκον, ἄλλο δὲ τρίτων ἄφησιν ἐξηρημένον τοῦ παντός.

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*ἵππας: ἵπτας PQ*
And in the midst thereof He set Soul, which He stretched throughout the whole of it, and therewith He enveloped also the exterior of its body.

As for our Teacher, he produces an interpretation more suitable to the words of Plato. Whereas the Soul of the universe has on the one hand an aspect which is hypercosmic and transcendent over all the universe in virtue of which it is attached to Intellect, which Plato in the \textit{Phaedrus} (248 A) and Orpheus in his \textit{Discourse on Hipta},\footnote{This is a very odd reference. Hipta appears as a minor mythological figure, nurse of Dionysus after his rebirth from Zeus' thigh. She is equated by Proclus with the All-Soul. Her \textit{noeseis} are given substance in the highest form of movement. She appears in Kern's Orphic fragment collection, although the primary references are from Proclus. See \textit{OF} 199 Kern, \textit{Proclus In Tim.} 34 B (II 105, 28 Diehl) (sc. Iamblichus); "\textit{Ιπτας} Diehl (PQ) and vulgo; \textit{Proclus In Tim.} 30 B (I 407, 22 Diehl) (cf. \textit{in Tim.} 35 B) [II 198, 9 Diehl] et II 222, Herm. XXIV. XLIII; Lob. I 582; Luebbert \textit{De Pindaro theologiae Orphicae censore Index Bonnens.} 1888 / 1889 p. XX; Holwerda 364; Kern \textit{Genethliakon für Robert 90.} Hymn. XLVIII \textit{Σαφαζισου} (Quandt, \textit{De Baccho ab Alexandri actate in Asia minore culto}. Diss. Hal. XXI 1912, 257): \textit{Hymn.} XLIX \textit{Nutricis Bacchi nomen genuinum restituit Ios. Keil e duobus titulis dedicatoriis in Matrem Hiptam in Maconia repertis Eranos zur Grazer Philologenversammlung} 1909, 102 (Keil et de Premerstein \textit{Denkschr. Akad. Wien Phil.-hist.} Kl. LIV 1911, 85 n. 169) \textit{Μητηρά Μητηρί Οπτικαν Ρηηη Πητα ευχην} et 96 n. 188 \textit{Μητηρί Πητα και Δει} \textit{Σο} (\textit{βαζις}); v. Kern \textit{Genethl.} 90. Keil has confirmed that "Hipte", not "Hippe" is the correct form of the name on the basis of a number of inscriptions which name her as "Mother Hipte".} called the “head of the Soul,” and on the other hand, a multitude of powers coming forth from this monad and dividing themselves in one way around the centres, and present in the appropriate mode to all parts of the universe, in one way around the earth, in another around the sun, and still others around each of the spheres, the present utterance indicates all these, how in one way it ensouls the middle,\footnote{\textit{Tó µεσον} is used by Plato, but he seems to say this is what the Pythagoreans call the central fire of the universe. Syrianus takes this as the middle bulk of the universe.} and in another the whole bulk (of the world); while there is another aspect, prior to these, which he leaves as transcending the universe.
Commentary

After considerable doxography on the part of Proclus, Syrianus is shown to have adopted a portmanteau solution comprising the opinions of Porphyry and Iamblichus, as will be shown below. Syrianus argues that the Soul Plato speaks of here has a super-cosmic element in it that is linked to Intellect (the view of Iamblichus), but it also has a multiplicity of powers which are present in suitable ways to all parts of the universe (Porphyry’s opinion).³

The latter notion, that the Soul is in some sense the middle of the universe and wraps around its body seems to be the consensus prior to Porphyry and Iamblichus (104.17–30 ff.), because that is what the Timaeus says. Proclus reports that some say the middle is the center of the earth, and that the power of this center holds together the whole periphery; while others say it is the moon, in so far as it is situated between the sublunar beings and the divine being—here, it is a kind of connecting point between the generated and the divine which changes through its motion the sublunar generations;⁴ while a third group say that the sun, as being situated at the heart of the universe, heats and vivifies beings.

Yet another group of opinions understand “the middle” in an external way. One group says that the middle is the circle of the equator which divides the world in two, while a second argues that the middle is the cyclical passage of stars in the signs of the zodiac, also referred to as the circle of the elliptic. Dillon postulates that the above-stated five opinions—the practice of stating five pre-Plotinian interpretations is found to be typical of Procline exegesis—are pre-Plotinian and were originally collected by Porphyry, possibly summarised by either Iamblichus or Proclus.⁵

Both Porphyry and Iamblichus criticise interpretations which accept “middle” in a local and spatial sense. Rather, they argue that the Soul is present everywhere and has authority⁶ over all things according to its own movements (104.32). In the exegesis which follows, Proclus uses

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³ Porphyry says that the soul belongs to intelligible being and is consubstantial with divine Intellect because it is νοητὴ φύσις. This account can be found in Aug. De Civ. Dei. X 29 (= De Reg. An. Fr. 10).
⁴ Plotinus, Enn. II.1.7.1–6.
⁵ Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 50 Dillon.
⁶ Ἐνεξουσιωδον, 105.2: This is an Iamblichean word. Proclus is possibly reading Iamblichus’ monograph on the subject of the Soul. Cf. DM II, 3.71 and III, 17.143.
Iamblichus to obtain Porphyry’s opinions. Proclus reports that Porphyry has understood Soul of the All as a mean in respect of psychic essence (105.7). It is a median between the intelligible and sensible realms, and he cites Tim. 34 B that the Soul is in the middle and stretches it all around the periphery.7

Iamblichus (105.16 ff.) uses the notion of the transcendent (ἐξωθημενος), hypercosmic (ὑπερκοσμομος) Soul, as it was introduced by Plotinus in Ennead IV. 3. 4, εί μη τις το μεν έν οτιμειεν έψ έαιτου μη πιπτον εις σωμα ειτ’ εξ έκεινου τας πασας, την τε του ολου και άλλας, as an explanation for the unity of the Soul.8 Dillon connects this Plotinian concept to Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 54 Dillon,9 in which the Soul of the All derives from the principle of πάσης ταξεως ή άμετροτος έγειται μονας προ των μετακομηνων, which is, in turn, dependent upon μια και άτομα κοσμομον δικαιος at the level of Soul. Proclus, when discussing Iamblichus, goes into indirect discourse in 105.18: μηδε γαρ ειναι, which not only signals that he is quoting Iamblichus, but that he also disagrees with him. In this passage, Iamblichus describes Soul as an independent entity that has authority (ἐνεξωθημενοςασκουσαν) over all things, particularly encosmic souls. The monadic soul occupies a “middle” position in so far as it is present to and equally far from all things.10 Beings, however, are all not equally distant from it, as each participates according to its power and ability.11 Iamblichus’ transcendent soul seems to envelope the cosmos.

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7 Trans. Dillon, Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 50 Dillon (= Proclus, In Tim. II, 104, 30.8–18):

“Porphyry takes this soul as being that of this universe, and explains ‘the middle’ in terms of the essential position of the Soul, that is, its middle position between the noetic and sensible realms. But if the passage is taken in this sense it seems to contribute nothing to the progress of Plato’s argument; if we take it as meaning that the Universe is made up of Mind and Soul and Body and is a living Being possessed of Soul and Mind, we shall find the Soul to occupy a middle position in this arrangement. But since Plato has already said this, he would now seem to be merely saying again that the Soul of the cosmos is extended throughout the Universe, having been allotted in it the middle rank; for secondary things always partake of what is prior to them, as Body, the lowest essence, partakes of Soul, the middle one, and Soul of mind, which is prior to it.”

8 Dillon (1973) 326.

9 Proclus, In Tim. II, 240.4 ff.

10 The Soul is assigned a status in the middle of reality—according to Iamblichus, it is simultaneously Being and Becoming. Thus, Soul in its entire substance is divided and undivided; as such, it can constitute the middle reality between Being and Becoming. See Priscianus, In De Anima, 240. 37. Proclus, however, argues that the soul has its substance in eternity, but its activities take place in time. See Proclus, ET 106–107; 191. See Steel (1978) 32; 61–71.

11 Trans. Dillon, Iamblichus, Dillon Fr. 50 In Tim., (= II. 104, 19–27):
Proclus introduces the opinion of Syrianus with direct speech and γάρ, signalling that he adopts the views of his master in full, as an exegesis “more naturally akin to the views of Plato.” Syrianus offers a solution which combines that of Porphyry and Iamblichus in which the Soul has a super-cosmic element in it, but also contains a part which is in the universe. He explains the transcendent element which is linked to Intellect with reference to Phaedrus 248 A, a passage in which Plato discusses the transcendent part of the world soul.12 Syrianus discusses Phaedrus 248 A by mentioning Hipta (OF 199), whom the Platonists identified with the World-Soul, which is presented as having both a “head” and a multitude of other powers by which it relates to the universe. In 106.2–9, Syrianus adopts the Iamblichean understanding of the Soul’s middle position, namely that the soul is οἰκετικός, or suitably related to all parts of the universe.13 In this way, part of the Soul is transcendent, part is present around the earth, sun, heavenly spheres, and the bulk of the universe.

This description of the Syrianic soul raises the question of in what way the World Soul—which ensouls Soul from within—is different from the hypostasis Soul—the transcendent Soul. Here, it seems that Syrianus is conflating the two into one entity. While the Middle Platonists did not see a difference between these two, Plotinus differentiates them in Ennead IV,9, a treatise on whether all souls are one. Porphyry, on the other hand,

“...But the divine Iamblichus considers that we should understand here that Soul which is transcendent and hypercosmic and independent and exerting authority over all; for Plato is not here concerned with the Soul of the cosmos, but that soul which is imparticable and placed over all the souls in the cosmos as their monad; for such, he says, is the nature of the first Soul, and ‘the middle’ refers to it as being equally present to all things, through being the Soul of no body nor yet being relative in any way, both ensouling everything equally and being equally separate from everything; for it is not less distant from some things and more from others—it is, after all, unrelated,—but equally distant from all, even though all things might not be distant from it in the same way; for it is in the things that participate that degrees of more and less arise.”


12 “Of the other souls that which best follows a god and becomes most like thereunto raises her charioteer’s head into the outer region, and is carried round with the gods in the revolution” Phaedrus 248 A, trans. Hackforth (1972).

13 Iamblichus, likewise, discusses Phdr. 248 A: “What is meant by this charioteer? Is he not the most sublime and, as many say, the principal part of us (τὸ γεραλάων-δέστατον)? He governs our whole body and he may view the supercelestial sphere.” (Proclus, In Tim. III, 334, 26–27.) Trans. Steel (1978) 43. See also Hermias, In Phdr. 131, 2, where the Iamblichean doctrine appears, stating that the entire soul descends.
seems to conflate world Soul and the hypostasis Soul. Iamblichus, however, rejects the Porphyrian stance and separates them, distinguishing in particular the monad of Soul, which he characteristically identifies as a higher level of Soul than Porphyry. Proclus looks to the *Phaedrus* myth to show how only the faculties of the soul are in conflict when the horse and charioteer descend.\(^\text{14}\)

SYRIANUS, In Tim. Fr. 14

Proclus, In Tim II. 218.20–220.3

Μίαν ἀφεῖλε τὸ πρῶτον ἀπὸ παντὸς μοίραν. μετὰ δὲ ταύτην ἀφήρει διπλασιαίαν ταύτης, τὴν δὲ αὖ τρίτην ήμιολίαν μὲν τῆς δευτέρας, τριπλασίαν δὲ τῆς πρώτης [Tim. 35 B].

Ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων κατίδωμεν ἄλλον τρόπον λόγων, δὴ ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος, ἐνέχριε, καὶ οὐχ ἔνα τούτον, ἄλλα πολλάν ἡμῖν καὶ θεαμαστῶν ἐπιβολῶν γεννητικῶν, οὐ καὶ ημεῖς ἐδραταμεθα πρότερον λέγει γὰρ οὐν, ὅτι διψᾷ τὴν πρώτην ἑκαστὰ τούτων ἀκοουσέν, ἐφ’ ὅλης τε τῆς ψυχῆς ὡς μᾶς καθ’ ἔννοιαν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πολλῶν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγων καὶ τοῦ πλήθους τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ κατὰ διαίρεσιν ἔστι γὰρ ἡ σύνημα καὶ ἐν καὶ πλήθος καὶ εἰς λόγος καὶ ἄριστος παντοῖοι εἰδῶν, καὶ μεμέτα τὴν τε ὀλότητα τὴν δημιουργικὴν καὶ τὴν διάκρισιν τῶν δυνάμεων τοῦ πατρὸς. πρῶτον τοῖνοι αὐτὴν καθ’ ὅλην ἡμῖς ἐκατανοήσωμεν, μένουσαν τε καὶ προσώπουσαν ἐν ἑαυτῇ καὶ ἐπιστρέφοισαν, καὶ δὴ καὶ προσώπουσαν ἄλλως μὲν τῶν ἀύλων καὶ καθαρῶν εἰδῶν τῶν ἐγκοσμίων, ἄλλως δὲ τῶν σομάτων ἀπάντων καὶ τῆς μεριστῆς οὐσίας, καὶ νοησαντες μὲν αὐτὴν κατὰ τὴν μίαν μοίραν φῶμεν, προϊέναι δὲ κατὰ τὴν δευτέραν, τῆς προσόν θείας οὐσίας, ἀλλ’ οὐχί κατὰ πάθος ἡ ἀοριστίαν νοομενήν, ἐπιστρέφειν δὲ κατὰ τὰ τῆς τρίτης (τὸ γὰρ τελεσιγράφω ἀπὸ ταύτης παραγινέται τοῖς οὐσιν), ὁλοτελὴ δὲ οὐσιν καὶ ἐνδρυμένην τοῖς νοητόις καὶ μένουσαν ἐν τῷ νῷ διαωνίων προοειρικός καὶ τῶν δευτέρων, καὶ ἄλλως μὲν τῶν προοειρικῶν αὐτῆς ἐξημένων, ἄλλως δὲ τῶν στερεῶν αὐτῶν ὄγχων, ἐκατέρων δὲ διχῶς τα τὸ γὰρ προοειρικὸς αὐτῆς ἀπολαῖοντα καὶ προειρικὸν ἀπ’ αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς αὐτῆς, προϊόντα μὲν κατὰ τὴν γόνιμον τῆς τετάρτης δύναμιν, ἐπιστρέφοντα δὲ κατὰ τὴν τῆς πέμπτης ἐπὶ τὴν μίαν αἰτίαν ἀναγωγῆν. καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰ στερεὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἐν ὅρχοις νεωροῦσιν πάντα ἐδὴ πρόσειον μὲν κατὰ τὴν ὀχταπλασίαν τῆς πρώτης, δυαδικὴν οὐσιν καὶ στερεάν καὶ ἁμὰ μὲν γόνιμον, ἁμὰ δὲ ἐπὶ πάν προϊέναι δυναμενήν, ἐπιστρέφει δὲ κατὰ τὴν εἰςοσικαιεπταπλασίαν, στερεῶν οὐσιν ἐπιστροφῆν, ὡς

a πλῆθος P  b ἐξ αὐτῆς ἡμιμένων P
First He took one portion from the whole; then He took a portion double of this; then a third portion, half as much again as the second portion, that is, three times as much as the first.

Further to this, let us consider another line of argument, which our Master chose to pursue, a simple line at that, but one productive of many remarkable conceptions, such as we have actually drawn on earlier. Therefore, he says that it is necessary to understand, first, each of these things in two ways: 1) in reference to the whole Soul as one in a unified mode and 2) in reference to the many reason-principles in it (the Soul) and the multiplicity present in it by division. For the Soul is both one and many, both a single reason-principle and a sum-total of all kinds of forms, and it imitates both the demiurgic creation as a whole and the division of powers within the Father. First, then, let us consider what is the Soul as a whole, remaining within itself and proceeding and returning, and indeed exercising providence in one way over immaterial and pure forms within the cosmos, and in another way over all the bodies and partial beings, and having considered (this), let us say that it remains in respect of one “portion”, but it proceeds in respect of a second, since the procession is divine, but not to be considered as accidental or unlimited, while it returns in respect of the third (it is from this that perfection arises in beings), and thus, while being complete and established in the intelligible realm, and remaining in Intellect, it eternally exercises providential care over secondary things, in one way over those beings situated proximate to it, and in another over solid bodies, and each of these in two ways: for those things which draw immediate benefit from it, proceed from it and return to it, proceeding according to their productive power of the fourth “portion”, and returning according to the power of the fifth, which leads back to their first cause. And all these three-dimensional forms which are viewed as solid bodies, proceed according to that “portion” which is eight times the first, being dyadic and solid, and likewise generative and at the same time capable of proceeding in all directions, while it returns according to that which is twenty-seven times the first, being the return of
Commentary

In 35 B, Plato discusses the formation of Soul from a blending of the Same, Other, and Being. These are then portioned into seven parts arranged in two triads. As one might imagine, the Platonists certainly had a field day with this account. Proclus describes and discounts the customary astronomical interpretations of the five anonymous Middle Platonists (212.12 ff.). Dillon neatly summarises these as follows:1

1. οἱ μέν: wish to relate the seven numbers to the seven planetary spheres
2. οἱ δὲ: the distances of the seven planetary spheres to the center of the earth
3. οἱ δὲ, εἰς τὰς κινήσεις: the movement of the spheres
4. οἱ δὲ, εἰς τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἀστέρων: the various sizes of the planets
5. οἱ δὲ, εἰς τὰ τάχη τῶν κύκλων: their speeds of revolution.

Proclus dismisses all five: 1) modern astronomical theories disprove them; 2) Plato only generally describes planets as being greater or smaller than one another; 3) Plato is describing the formation of the Soul rather than the cosmos.2

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1 Dillon (1973) 332.
2 Dillon (1973) 332.
solid bodies, as being triadic and of the nature of the same. For this is the nature of odd number. Therefore, there are three processions and three returns involved in the simple and fixed unity of the Soul. Because of this there are three even and three odd numbers, proceeding from one. And they are intertwined with each other, as the Soul proceeds and reverts, and in reverting, it creates the first receptacles of itself, and the primal object of structuring, and producing it, it gives to it dimension and volume, and in returning, it makes it spherical. And undertaking this, it makes an ordered structure in it, continuing its procession through even numbers, and its reversion through odd ones, and in each case to the level of cubes, because reversion is also a generation of solids. So then, the procession and the return are both triple, the first devoid of structuring, the second involved in a primary structure, and the third in secondary structures, but all in accordance with numbers.

Five later commentators reportedly deal more seriously with this passage: Amelius, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Theodorus, and Syrianus. Dillon deals with Amelius, Porphyry and Iamblichus in *Iamblichus Chalcides*. As Syrianus relies heavily on Iamblichus, we will repeat much of that argument; however, it is sufficient to summarise Amelius and Porphyry’s arguments. In 213.9 ff. Amelius arranges the series of seven numbers into a monad and three pairs, with the pairs representing better and worse daimones, men, and wild and tame animals. Porphyry (214.4 ff.) does not give individual characteristics to the seven numbers, but says that the numbers represent the scale of harmony in the Soul.

Syrianus’ interpretation closely follows the interpretation of Iamblichus, who identifies the seven numbers with an aspect of the internal mechanism of the Soul. Especially important is that both Iamblichus and Syrianus use 35 B to describe the process of μόνη-πρόδοση- ἐπιστροφή: for Iamblichus, this is a process within a given hypostasis, whereas we will see that, for Syrianus, 35 B denotes a process specific to Soul and particular to its own demiurgic, providential activity. Both are interpretations of numbers of the soul and ways of arranging the seven numbers. Syrianus’ commentary on *Tim*. 35 B closely follows Iamblichus’ interpretation of this passage, as reported in II.215.5 ff.:

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"The philosopher Iamblichus, on the other hand, sings the praises of the numbers (under discussion) with all his power as containing various remarkable properties, calling the Monad the cause of Sameness and Unity, the Dyad the organiser of Procession and Division, the Triad leader of Return for what has gone forth, the Tetrad the true embracer of all harmony, containing in itself all the reason-principles and showing forth in itself the second cosmic order, the Ennead the creator of true perfection and similarity, being the perfect product of perfect components and partaking of the nature of the same; he calls the Ogdoad the cause of Procession to all points and of Progression through all, and finally, the Hepatakaieikosad the force stimulating Return even of the lowest elements (of the Universe), in order that on each side of the Tetrad there might be a static, a progressing, and a returning principle, on the one side on the primary level, on the other, on the secondary level; for the Ennead has a relationship to the Monad, being 'a new one', and the Ogdoad to the Dyad, being the cube from it, and the Eikosiheptad to the Triad for the same reason. Through the former he grants to the simpler entities stayings and processions and returns, through the second to the more composite, and the Tetrad, being in the middle, through being a square has the quality of proceeding, through being filled with all the reason-principles coming from the monad, the quality of returning. And these are symbols of divine and esoteric things."4

Dillon draws an extremely helpful diagram of this process, whereby Iamblichus divides activity into two triads: one for the noetic world (represented by the monad, dyad, and triad), another for the world of becoming (ennead, ogdoad, and heptakaieikosad), with the tetrad as the mediator between the two triads, "the embracer of all harmony."5 The tetrad projects forth a second realm of reality as the ennead, for true completion and similarity. The second triad also partakes in the nature of the same as the cause of all procession. Iamblichus makes clear that there is a return even of the lowest level of reality. In his discussion, Iamblichus bases the two triads on Plato’s division in 35 B of the parts of the soul into three evens (2, 4, 8 as the second, fourth, and sixth portions of the soul) and three odds (3, 9, 27 as the third, fifth, and seventh portions of the soul).

Theodore of Asine offers a new theory (215.29 ff.). After the one, there is a triple soul: Soul in itself (ἡ καθόλου); another that is a universal Soul (ἡ καθόλου), and a third that is the Soul of the universe (ἄλλην τὴν τοῦ παντός). The soul engages in a motion in three stages, each of

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which corresponds to the motion of the three souls (216.20). Next, rather than discussing the seven portions, Theodore connects the division to celestial things in a series of doubles, and sublunaries in a series of triples (216.20ff.). He assigns the numbers to each of the elements: 7 to earth, 11 to fire, 9 to air, 13 to air. These elements are harmoniously connected through 1, 2, 3, 4, so that earth as seven is a combination of 1, 2, 4; water is a combination of 2, 3, 4; air is a combination of 3, 4, 6; and fire is a combination of 2, 3, 6. Theodore’s theory, thus, while displaying the Pythagorean connection between elements and numbers as found in Iamblichus’ thought, seems to accord more with that of Porphyry or the Middle Platonists than his immediate predecessor.

Syrianus possibly uses Theodore’s distinction between types of souls, although Syrianus limits his division to two: the whole Soul and the souls comprising it. Although he innovates by dividing the Soul into two categories, Syrianus imitates Iamblichus’ activity of the Soul as it corresponds to the seven Platonic portions. Because the Soul is both one, as a reason principle, and many, because it has division, it imitates the demiurgic completeness. The principle of oneness in the Soul allows for its triadic activity of remaining in itself, proceeding, and returning. This higher aspect is also responsible for exercising providence over pure forms in the cosmos. The aspect of many in the Soul reflects the Soul as the sum total of forms, or the souls comprising it.

This aspect of Soul presides over bodies and partial beings. This dual aspect, likewise, allows the Soul to imitate powers within the Father (who is at a higher level than the Demiurge proper) exhibited at the time of demiurgic creation. Imitating the holistic activity of the Demiurge, Soul remains in Intellect in respect of one portion and comes to the secondary things most close to it. Hence, being complete and rooted in the intelligible world and remaining in Intellect, soul exercises pronoia over secondary things. With respect to its second portion, it proceeds individually to preside over individuals. Syrianus clarifies that the Soul proceeds providentially, and is, hence, not affected by the procession as subject to pathos or Unlimitedness.

The last five portions relate to the functions of the first two. When the Soul does proceed, it proceeds with respect to 1) immediate secondary things; 2) the less immediate solid bodies. This idea governs the next series of portions. The third portion is moira, which endows completion over individuals, as a kind of revertive power proper to the second portion. The fourth and fifth portions are more specific kinds of procession and return with respect to the providential care of the most
proximate secondary things. Soul proceeds to proximate things according to the productive power of the fourth portion and returns in virtue of the fifth portion. With regard to the less immediate solid bodies, soul proceeds according to its eightness ($2^3$) and returns with respect to its twenty-sevenness ($3^3$). Procession thus takes place through even numbers, \textit{epistrophē} through odd, both of which are cubed.

Lines 219.4ff. describe the demiurgic function of Soul. Syrianus gives the Soul three processions and returns respective to its own self, proximate, and three-dimensional objects. As the Soul proceeds from the monad, it creates its own receptacle and the world. Producing it, it gives it dimensionality and bulk. By turning back, Soul makes the world spherical. Having produced this as such, it generates a cosmos.

Syrianus’ interpretation borrows from Theodore and Iamblichus. From Theodore, Syrianus derives the concept of dividing functions of Soul into categories. Much is borrowed from Iamblichus: the nature of the Soul’s procession, as well as the concept of the triadic motion of the soul, an activity divided into particular motions, each of which correspond to one of Plato’s seven portions.\footnote{See Syrianus, \textit{In Tim.fr. 13} Wear for a discussion of the Soul’s essence as middle. Iamblichus discusses the triadic motion of soul in Ps. Simpl. \textit{In De Anima} p. 6, 5 where the Soul processes from itself and returns to itself, while abiding in itself. Steel argues that in so far as Iamblichus’ Soul proceeds out of itself, it resembles the divisible world, but in so far as it remains, it is similar to the purely indivisible Being. See Steel (1978) 65 for a discussion of how the Iamblichean Soul remains in itself and simultaneously proceeds from itself as a whole, especially with reference to Proclus, \textit{In Tim. II}, 215.5–29 and Dodds (1963) xix–xxii and 220–221.} Syrianus’ two-fold division, however, occurs not in formulating two triads, as does Iamblichus, but in dividing the function of the Soul into two. The major innovation here seems to be the holistic and individual concern of the soul—Syrianus makes two activities out of one entity, which makes this structure seem primed for a division of Soul into a lower and higher order.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 15

Proclus, In Tim. II. 253.23–254.4

Καὶ τὸν μὲν ἔξω, τὸν δὲ ἐντὸς ἐποιεῖτο τῶν κύκλων. Τὴν μὲν οὖν ἔξω φορὰν ἐπεφήμιον εἶναι τῆς ταῦτ&#241; φύσεως, τὴν δὲ ἐντὸς τῆς θατέρου [Tim. 36 C].

Ἄλλ’ ἀποροῦσι πρὸς ταῦτά τινες, ὅτι τῆς ψυχῆς ὁμοιομεροῦς οὐσίας ὁ μὲν ταῦτοῖ τῶν κύκλων, ὁ δὲ θατέρου, καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐντός, ὁ δὲ ἐκτὸς ἀποπέφαντα τά τιτα γὰρ ἀνατρέπει τὴν ὁμοιομέρειαν.

ὁ μὲν οὖν Πορφύριος ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσθήματα φερόμενος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς μίξεις τὰς ἐνύλιους τὸ μελίκρατον καὶ τὸ οἴνωδεια μάλλον, καὶ τὰς μίξεις τὰς ἐνύλιους καὶ τὰς οἴνωδεια μάλλον ἄλλως δὲ ἄλλοις πάθοις ἐμπεσοῦν τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ή οἴνωδεια μάλλον, καὶ τοὺς δὲ ή γλυκύτης διατίθεσιν.

ὁ δὲ ήμέτερος πατὴρ ἠλίστιν πρέποντος τοῖς ἄυλοις καὶ ἀσωμάτοις τὴν μίξιν τῶν γενῶν θεωρεῖν. ἡ δὲ ἐστὶν οὐ κατὰ σύντομον τῶν εἰδῶν οὐδὲ κατὰ σύμφαρσιν τῶν δυνάμεων, ἀλλ’ ἐκείνων σοφομένων καθ’ ἐνοσίν τε καὶ τὴν δι’ ἀλλήλων χωρήσιν.
And the outer motion He ordained to be the Motion of the Same, and the inner motion the Motion of the Other.

But some at this point raise the difficulty how, if soul is the same uniform substance, one of the circles has been declared a circle of the same, the other circle that of the other, the one being interior, the other exterior; for these distinctions tend to undermine its uniformity.

Porphyry, being distracted in the direction of the sensible realities and material mixtures, rambles at length about mixtures of milk and honey and of wine and honey, which, although on the one hand they are homoeomeric as a whole, on the other hand, the different kinds produce each a different effect; some are more affected by the flavour of wine, others by the sweetness of the honey.

Our Father, however, preferred to consider the mixture of kinds in a way proper to immaterial and incorporeal entities. This (mixture) does not include a co-mingling of kinds nor a mutual destruction of their powers, but comes about with the preservation of their identity along with their mutual co-penetration.
Commentary

The two circles of the soul here refer to the construction of soul by the Demiurge out of the rings of Sameness and Otherness: the outer ring contains the nature of the Same, while the inner contains the nature of the Other. These two are joined together forming a cross shape and revolve in opposite directions from one another. What is of interest to Porphyry and Syrianus is how there can be two circles of soul in light of the fact that it is a uniform substance.

The survey in this *aporia* affords the rare situation, where Syrianus responds to an attempt at a solution from Porphyry without mention of Iamblichus’ opinion. It is highly improbable that Iamblichus had nothing to say on the topic; rather, Syrianus most likely adopted the Iamblichean position on this particular *aporia*. Iamblichus discusses the two soul-circles of *Timaeus* 36 C (II. 252.21), although nothing is recorded there on his view regarding mixture and the two souls.¹ In *In Tim*. 334.3 ff. Proclus says that Iamblichus argues against Theodore, who says that the soul is chained to the circle of the Same and shaken from the circle of the Other (334.1–3). Iamblichus takes these two circles as describing types of *Nous*. That is why he is excluded from this discussion presently.

Porphyry is criticised by Proclus for adducing examples from the physical world because the mixture of the physical involves diminution of physical powers in so far as both the wine and the honey have less potency when mixed (253.26–30). At the intelligible level, components of a complex entity maintain their unity and inter-penetration of powers, whereas honey and wine are thoroughly affected by each other and changed when mixed. Matter is an inappropriate example as it is not capable of preserving individual qualities. Syrianus argues that imma-


“These two circles the divine Iamblichus referred respectively to the Mind separated from souls and the unseparated Mind, as he does the ‘motion carried round in the same place’ which encompasses them round about, inasmuch as the former contains the two souls, while the latter is in them, and the former is unmixed with the other life and the powers of the Soul, while the latter is mixed with them and organises them, for which reason the Whole Soul acts in a state of rest and is united to the Demiurge himself.” The motions of the Same and Other are here analogous to νοῦς χωριστός and νοῦς χωριστός. Iamblichus makes *nous* inherent in souls and their motions types of souls. Iamblichus’ interpretation draws in levels of metaphysics in so far as the Unparticipated Intellect embraces the two souls, but remains distinct from them, while the immanent intellect acts within the soul and orders their lives and powers. Distinction and Mixture are addressed, but only with regard to Intellect and Souls.
Material things can be mixed with the peculiarity that each blending of the mixture remain unconfused. While a mutual blending of powers may occur, each power is preserved.

The argument about the mixture of the two circles of souls resurfaces in the discussion about the descent of the soul. Iamblichus makes the point that the soul does not remain above because the two circles of the soul are engaged in different activities which distorts the soul and moves it below.\(^2\) Damascius argues that when the soul descends, both parts of the soul descend (the circle of the other, which is thrown into confusion at descent, and the circle of the same, which is in a state of intellectual activity). Thus, the entire soul is bound up as one despite being engaged in different activities.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) Steel makes this point with reference to Proclus, *In Tim.* 333.28–30 in (1978) 38.

Τὴν δὲ ἐντού οὐκ έξαχώ έπτα κύκλους ἄνισους κατά τὴν τοῦ διπλασίου καὶ τριπλασίου διάστασιν ἐκάστην οὐδὲν ἐκατέρων τριών κατὰ τὰν ανατλία μὲν ἄλληλοις προοετάξεν λέναι τοὺς κύκλους, τάχει δὲ τρεῖς μὲν ὁμοίως, τοὺς δὲ τέτταρας ἄλληλοις τε καὶ τοῖς τρισὶ τῶν ἄνομοις, ἐν λόγῳ δὲ φερομένους [Tim. 36D].

εἰ δὲ δὲ καὶ σύμπασαν τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς οὐσίαν εἰς τὰς θείας ἀναπέμπτειν τάξεις—εἰκόνας γὰρ ἔχει πασῶν—ληπτέον τὴν ἄρχην ἀπ’ ἀυτῶν τῶν πρώτων περὶ αὐτῆς λόγων, ἐν οἷς ἔλεγε [34 BC] διδημουργήσεται τὴν ψυχήν οὐχ ὡς ἡμεῖς φαίμεν, νεωτέραν τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλὰ γενέσει καὶ ἀρετῆς προτέραν καὶ πρεσβείαν, ὡς ἀποκτότων καὶ ἀρξουσάν ἐκείθεν γὰρ ὁρμήθη λέγεται περὶ αὐτῆς ὁ Τίμαιος, τὰ πρεσβεία δοῦσιν αὐτῆς πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν τῆς σωματικῆς ὑλής συστάσεως.

λεκτέον δὴ οὖν ἀνάγεσθαι τὴν πρόοδον αὐτῆς ὡς μὲν ἄρχουσαν καὶ δεσπότιν εἰς τὴν πάντων ἄρχην, ὡς δὲ τριπλεκῆ καὶ ἀμα a ἡμωμένη ὑπόστασιν λαχοῦσαν εἰς τὴν ἀκρότητα τῶν νοιτῶν ἀναπέμφομεν, καὶ ὡς εἰς οὕσιας καὶ ταύτῳ καὶ διατέρου γενομένην εἰς πάν τὸ νοητὸν ὄντως πλάτος, οὐ τὸ μὲν ἄρχον ἢ οὕσια κατέχει καὶ τὸ ὄν, τὸ δὲ μέσον ὁ αἰών τῆς ἐν ταύτῃ διαμονῆς πάσιν αἰώνις ὄν, τὸ δὲ πέρα τὸ νοητὸν σῆμον ἐπεροιοῦσαν ἐαυτῷ ταῖς εἰς τὰ νοητὰ ζῶα προόδος, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ὀλὸν ἐκεῖ τὸ ἀνομοίων μέρων, ὡς ὁ Παρμενίδης [129 A ss] διδάσκει· τοσοῦτον δὲ καὶ τὸ τριπλεκὲς ὀλὸν τούτῳ στοιχεῖον ἀνομοίων φύσημα γεγονός.

ὡς δὲ ἀριθμὸν αὐτοῦ γραμμῆσαν καὶ νοητῶν εἰς τὴν ἀκρότητα τῶν νοητῶν καὶ νοερῶν διακόσιως· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ὁ πρῶτος ἀριθμὸς μετὰ τῆς ἐτερότητος, ἐπεὶ καὶ πρώτην ἐκείνην τὴν τάξιν, ὡς οἱ θεολόγοι φασί, τέθε- ἀμεθα σειρῶν οὕσαν αἰτίαν κατ’ ἀριθμὸν b δημοτικόν· ἐκεῖ δὲ καὶ ὁ

a ἀμα om Q  b ἀριθμὸν Ρ
Whereas He split the inner Revolution in six places into seven unequal circles, according to each of the intervals of the double and triple intervals, three double and three triple. These two circles then He appointed to go in contrary directions; and of the seven circles into which He split the inner circle, He appointed three to revolve at an equal speed, the other four to go at speeds equal neither with each other nor with the speed of the aforesaid three, yet moving at speeds the ratios of which one to another are those of natural integers.

But if we are to relate the entire structure of the soul to the divine orders—for the [soul] preserves images of everything—we should take our start from the first statement concerning the soul, in which he said [34 BC] that “the soul is created, not as we say, younger than the body, but prior to and older than the body in generation and excellence as befits a ruler and master,” for it is from this that Timaeus takes his start in talking about the soul, having given to it the dominant role for the generation of the entire corporeal structure (sc. of the world).

We must say, then, that the procession of the soul as “ruler and master” is to be linked back to the first principle of all things, but as being allotted a three-fold and at the same time unified existence, we refer it back to the summit of the intelligible realm; and as being composed from Essence and the Same and Other, in effect, to the whole noetic level of Being, of which Essence and existence occupies the summit, while Eternity occupies the middle as being the cause of remaining in the same state of all things, but Intelligible Living Being occupies the (lower) limit, as differentiating itself by its processions into intelligible living beings, since the whole there is [generated] from different parts, as Parmenides teaches [Parm. 129A ff]. Such is this three-fold whole, coming into being as a mixture of dissimilar elements.

But as a self-produced and intelligible number, we shall refer it to the summit of intelligible-intellective orders. For there is situated the first number that accompanies Otherness, since, as the theologians say, it is that class first that we can see as cause of series that are divided according
Παρμενίδης τὸν ὅλον ὑπέστησεν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν πάντα τὰ ὅντα

ὡς δὲ ἐκ τῶν τριῶν μεσοτήτων συγκειμένην καὶ ὅλον οὖσαν ἐκ μερῶν ὁμοίων—πάντα γὰρ ἐκ τῶν τριῶν ἔστι στοιχείων—εἰς τὴν ὁλοτήτα τὴν νοεράν τὴν συνεκτικὴν τῶν τε ὅλων καὶ τῶν μερῶν· αἱ γὰρ τρεῖς μεσότητες ἀπ’ ἑκατέρου τῶν συνεκτικῶν ἠπέν, ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ πρῶτου τοῦ περίεχοντος τοὺς λοιποὺς καὶ καθ’ ἑνα λόγον πάντα συνάγοντος εἰς ἑνα κόσμον καὶ μίαν ἔνωσιν, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ δευτέρου τοῦ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλῃ, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλῃ ἐνδιδόντος σύνδεσιν, μείζοις μὲν μείζονα, ἐλάσσοις δὲ ἐλάσσονα, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ τρίτου τοῦ τοῖς τρῖτοῖς ἐνδιδόντος ἀρ’ ἑαυτὸ κοινοῦν, παρ’ οἷς τὰ μὲν ἐλάττων κατὰ τὸν ὄγκον ἤνωται μάλλον, τὰ δὲ μείζονα ἐλασσόνως· τούτῳ δὴ τὸς ἀριθμητικῆς μεσότητος ἐξαίρετον.

ὡς δὲ ἰδέαν ἔχουσαν τοιάνδε καὶ διασχήματικον καὶ εὐθεία προδόω καὶ ἐπιστροφῇ κυκλικῇ χρωμένην, καθ’ ἑνα πρόερχομεν [p. 247] αἰτίαν, εἰς τὴν τοῦ νοεροῦ σχήματος τριάδα· τὸ γὰρ εὐθὺ πρῶτον ἐκεὶ καὶ τὸ περιφερές, διὸ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἰδέᾳ τῆς ψυχῆς γραμμαί τε παρελάμβανον καὶ κύκλοι μετ’ ἀλλήλων τε καὶ χωρίς.

ὡς δὲ δυνάμεις ὑποδεξαμένης μοναδικάς τε καὶ ἐβδομαδικάς εἰς τὴν ἐβδομάδα τὴν νοεράν, ὡς δὲ μέσην τῶν τε αἰσθητῶν καὶ νοητῶν καὶ ὡς ἄριστος αἰσθητος τοῖς νοητοῖς εἰς τὴν ἠγεμονικὴν σειρὰν αὕτη γάρ ἔστιν ἀριθμομοική τῶν δευτέρων πρός τὰς ἐνιαίας ἀκρότητας.

ὡς δὲ ἐνεργοῦσαν ἐνεργείας διττάς, τὰς μὲν προστάτιδας τῶν αἰσθητῶν, τὰς δὲ τῶν νοητῶν ἀντεχομένας, πρὸς τοὺς ἀπολύτους, οἵ καὶ ἀποτελοῦσαν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἰς τὴν ἠγεμονικὴν σειρὰν αὕτη γάρ ἔστιν ἀριθμομοική τῶν δευτέρων πρός τὰς ἐνιαίας ἀκρότητας.

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ὡς δὲ ἐνεργοῦσαν ἐνεργείας διττάς, τὰς μὲν προστάτιδας τῶν αἰσθητῶν, τὰς δὲ τῶν νοητῶν ἀντεχομένας, πρὸς τοὺς ἀπολύτους, οἵ καὶ ἀποτελοῦσαν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἰς τὴν ἠγεμονικὴν σειρὰν αὕτη γάρ ἔστιν ἀριθμομοική τῶν δευτέρων πρός τὰς ἐνιαίας ἀκρότητας.

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ὡς δὲ ἐνεργοῦσαν ἐνεργείας διττάς, τὰς μὲν προστάτιδας τῶν αἰσθητῶν, τὰς δὲ τῶν νοητῶν ἀντεχομένας, πρὸς τοὺς ἀπολύτους, οἵ καὶ ἀποτελοῦσαν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἰς τὴν ἠγεμονικὴν σειρὰν αὕτη γάρ ἔστιν ἀριθμομοική τῶν δευτέρων πρός τὰς ἐνιαίας ἀκρότητας.
to number. For it is there that Parmenides established number as a whole
and it is for that source that he revealed all beings.¹

But again, as being composed of three means and constituting a whole
of similar parts—for all things come from these three elements²—we will
refer it to the entire intellective realm, embracing both wholes and parts.
For the three means arise from the connective gods, the one deriving
from the first which embraces the remaining ones and, while according
to a single ratio, gathers all things into one ordered whole and a single
unity, while a second derives from the second, which grants to different
things different degrees of cohesion, greater to the greater, less to the less,
and the third derives from the third god, which beams cohesiveness from
itself upon the third level of being, among which those lesser with respect
to their mass are more unified, but those with a greater mass are less
unified. Indeed, this is the particular trait of the arithmetic mean.

But inasmuch as possessing such a form and shape as this and making
use of procession in a straight line and cyclical return, for the reason we
have stated earlier, we will refer it to the triad of the intellective order.
For both the straight line, first of all, and circle, appear on that level,
on account of which, also in the form of the soul, lines and circles are
included both with each other and separately.

But inasmuch as it receives both monadic and hebdomadic powers, we
will refer it to the intellective hebdomad, but as being median between
the sensible and intelligible realm and assimilating the sensible to the
noetic, we will refer it to the series of leader gods [129.29]. For this is
what assimilates secondary entities to their unitary summits.

But again, as acting according to a double activity, the one presiding
over the sensible, the other laying hold of the intelligible, we will refer
it to the absolute gods,³ who both fasten and are not connected with
the universe. Therefore, these brief remarks will serve as a reminder to
those who have studied the writings of our Master, in which he has truly
revealed on these subjects the secret thoughts of Plato.

¹ Sc. in the second hypothesis of the Parmenides, esp. 142 D ff.
² Being, Same and Other.
³ The reference is to Proclus, In Tim. II. 247.8 here. This is Proclus speaking, but that
passage, too, is possibly inspired by Syrianus.
This passage, on the Demiurge’s division of the circle of the Same into seven circles, is a fine panorama of Syrianic metaphysics. Elements of the soul are here linked to various levels of the noetic cosmos, emphasizing the relationship between the noetic and noeric cosmos, similar to that which is found in the Iamblichean and Procline universes.

The first explanations given to the lemma (263.26–265.28) are the astronomical accounts typical of the Middle Platonists who take a material account of the passage. Five accounts are listed, all confining themselves to purely astronomical considerations. The fifth account is most relevant to the passage at hand: this literal opinion states that Plato has said that the Demiurge has made the circles go in opposite directions so that the circle of the one (diurnal revolution) is opposed to the seven planetary circles. This explanation Proclus declares to be more akin to that of the truth, since it dispenses with the theory of epicycles and eccentric movements, which are alien to the doctrine of Plato (264.14). Proclus goes on to argue in 264.27 ff. that astronomical interpretations also include the factor of speed. Three circles are said to be of the same speed, including planets such as the Sun, Mercury, and Venus; while four are of unequal speed: Moon, Saturn, Mars, and Jupiter (Rep. X 617 AB).

After dealing with the astronomical data on the cosmic level, Proclus next applies the circles of Timaeus 36 D to the soul (265.29–267.8). The initial description relates the two circles to an astronomical explanation. Proclus here calls the circle of the Same that of the fixed sphere, which imitates the uniform and intellective power of the soul. The circle of the Other is that of the planets and is a multiform power. These circles are explained further in 267.8–268.14, whereby the circles and the soul are divided into another category—rather than Same and Other, Proclus

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4 1. Some say that the moon and sun move on their epicycles in motions opposite that of the revolution of the fixed spheres (264.1);

2. While the other planets perform a regular and uniform revolution, and an irregular revolution (264.3);

3. Or, alternatively, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars make their initial appearances, after their union with the sun in the morning, because the sun travels faster than they do along the elliptic (the sense of τὰ ἡγ/ομένα here) (264.5);

4. Or alternatively, planets experience pauses, progressions and return, and they make these motions in opposition to one another; some in a northerly direction, others, in a southerly (264.10).
introduces the division of monad and hebdomad. Monad and hebdomad represent an important division that relates both to the soul (with particular reference to the circles of the soul in *Tim*. 36 D) and the intellect. In *Platonic Theology* V, the hebdomad is the structure particular to the divine Intellect: the noeric realm is hence comprised of a seventh entity, the “membrane”, followed by two monadic triads.⁵ In *Platonic Theology* V. 4.19 ff., Proclus further relates that Plato divided the Soul into one circle and seven circles—a monad and hebdomad. The hebdomadic structure of the planets and soul are two images that are related to the noeric realm in *Platonic Theology* V.4, where Proclus shows how the intellective divinities are the causes of the soul as the Demiurge engenders the circles of the soul in a hebdomadic structure. Proclus stresses the relationship between the circles of the monad and hebdomad by explaining that the monad is the whole soul which precedes the hebdomad (*In Tim*. 267.10–15). Moreover, the circles of the same and other are also divided as monad and hebdomad, with the circle of the same as monad, in opposition to the hebdomad, as the circle of other (268.15–270.3). This structure of monad and dyad, with dyad being further divided into a monad and a dyad, is a bit confusing, but certainly in accord with Syrianus’ concept of the primordial monad and dyad. This is rather the point of *In Tim*. 273.15 ff., where the soul is intellective as it receives the monadic and hebdomadic powers.

The circles of Same and Other relate to the soul because the soul contains the causes of similarity and dissimilarity between the circles (268.3). The monad and hebdomad are the circles of the Same and Other which the Soul of the universe embraces as all the parts of universe (268.15). The hebdomad is a division of four odds (1, 3, 9, 27) and three evens (2, 4, 8).⁶

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⁵ For a discussion of Proclus’ numeric structuring of the universe, see Damascius, *In Parm*. R. II, p. 132, 5–4., whereby Damascius relates the following:

- noetic gods: divided into levels of monad, dyad, triad, depending on the power of the particular god
- noetic-noeric gods: divided into tetrad, pentad, hexad
- noeric: divided into hebdomad

For a discussion of Damascius’ critique of the Procline intellective hebdomad, see Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xviii.

⁶ These numbers have the following Pythagorean analogies: 1 = truth; 2 = beauty; 3 = proportion; 4 = stability; 9 = movement; 8 = sameness; 27 = otherness. See *In Tim*. 270.19 and Saffrey and Westerink (1968) 311, note 3.
In Syrianus’ discussion on *Tim.* 36 D, he first shows that soul is prior to body in generation (272.3–9) and then spends the remainder of the fragment relating soul to levels of the noetic world. In 272.11 ff., soul is related to three levels:

1. **The One**
2. **The summit of Noetic Being** (ἀκρότητα τῶν νοητῶν), as unified and triple (τριπλεκής), self-produced and intelligible number
3. **The whole level of the noetic being** (πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν ὀντὸς πλάτος)—composed of essence (οὐσία) and same and other. This level relates to the three levels of the noetic world:
   a. essence and existence (ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ ὄν): summit, cause of return
   b. eternity (ὁ αἰών): middle, cause of remaining
   c. Intelligible Living Being (τὸ νοητὸν ζῷον): lower limit, cause of procession.

Here, Syrianus sets forth that soul, in the noeric world, has analogues in the noetic level, which is further broken into triads of being, life, and mind. Soul, as noeric, relates to the One, insofar as it is unified, and to the noetic world, the first triad for which is listed by Syrianus as ἕν, αἰών and νοητὸν ζῷον. Soul participates in each level of νοῦς μεθέχτως and through it is joined to the divine intellect. The two are linked in particular, in so far as the lowest level of the noetic realm, according to Platonist metaphysics, is soul’s own highest element. Each of these levels, moreover, engages in the Platonic activity of remaining, procession, and return. The third element, τὸ νοητὸν ζῷον, forms in the Paradigm (the highest element of the noetic realm) and then projects itself in the physical world. Hence, Syrianus cites *Parmenides* 129 A as proof text of this activity, where the whole is said to be formed from like and unlike parts (τὸ ὀλὸν ἔχει τὸ ἐξ ἀνοικῶν μερῶν). The soul is further related to the triad of the intellect in so far as it progresses in a straight line and returns in a circular motion.8

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7 See Iamblichus on soul’s participation of Intellect in his exegesis of *Tim.* 36 CD, Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 55 and 56 Dillon.
8 The monad and hebdomad are numbers of circular movement and circular movement is particular to the intellect, see *In Tim.* II, 95.3–4 and Saffrey and Westerink (1987) xiv. Damascius, *In Parm.* p. 131.13–132.5 (W-C): Procession proceeds from a monad towards a triad. At the point of reversion, the monad becomes a hebdomad. Intellect leaves from the intelligible realm and then reverts towards it.
Lines 272.22ff. offer a survey of Syrianus’ metaphysics by way of his interpretation of the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides*. For the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides* he gives four different conclusions based on the single syllogism, “if the One is”. Each conclusion defines a degree of being according to a class of gods (henads) which participate in Being. Each class, moreover, is governed by a particular property: such as Whole, Multiplicity, Limitlessness, Limit. In this way, Syrianus demonstrates the uniqueness of each divine class, but also underscores their unity, in so far as they all relate to the premise, “the One is”.

Lines 272.22–29, for instance, concern soul as an intelligible and self-produced number, a notion which re-appears in proposition 189 of the *Elements of Theology*. Here, Syrianus alludes to *Parmenides* 143 C 4–144 E 7, which he interprets as a discussion of the summit, or first triad, of the noetic-noeric realm, to which he attaches the property of totality. Soul is related to the summit of the noetic-noeric realm in so far as it contains an intelligible aspect which allows it to be conjoined to the intelligible realm, just as the noetic-noeric realm unites to the intelligible realm through its summit. The first triad of the noetic-noeric realm is also characterised by essence and Eternity, also found in the remaining aspect of soul which allows it to move, on the one hand, to the higher realm (before descending again to the lower). The summit of the soul, thus, is particularly related to the first triad, in so far as its eternal aspect participates in the intelligible world.

In 272.30–273.9, referencing *Parm*. 144 E 8–145 C 4, Syrianus applies a scheme of wholes and parts to the degree of being. This degree of being, moreover, is the mark of the second triad of the noetic-noeric realm, a realm inhabited by the connective gods (συνεκτικοὶ θεοί). The second triad contains the συνεκτικοὶ θεοί which connect the intelligible realm with the intellectual realm. Soul relates to this realm in so far as it is an efficient cause for connection. While body is not able to make such a connection between disparate realms, souls, being incorporeal and self-moving, can unite the prior intelligible to the posterior intellectual realm.

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9 See Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xlix.
12 πᾶσα ψυχὴ αὐτόξως ἐστίν.
13 See *PT* IV, 3 on the first noetic-noeric triad.
14 See *PT* IV, 18.
15 See *PT* IV, 19, on the second noetic-noeric triad.
273.9–15 refers to the third triad of the noetic-noeric realm, a realm defined by shape (such as the straight line of procession or circle of cyclical return, 273.13–15), as presented in Parm. 145A4–B5. Again, soul is related to this realm insofar as it moves, both in a straight line (the mark of procession) and a circle (the motion of reversion).

273.15–16 mentions only briefly the first triad of intellective gods, the second triad of intellective gods, and the “membrane”, which comprises the noeric world. This passage concerns Parm. 145B6–147 B 8. This is a summary of realms following the noetic-noeric triad.

273.16–19 seems to relate the soul and the hegemonic gods, seen by Syrianus as the subject of Parm. 147 C 1–148 D 4, which concerns likeness and unlikeness.

273.20–26 relates to the ἀπόλλυτοι gods. This section is of particular interest because Proclus refers to his Master’s συγγράμματα, which, to judge from the phraseology, is most likely not a commentary on the Timaeus, but could perhaps refer to his Symphonia (see introduction, p. 4) This whole passage, therefore, constitutes further useful evidence for Syrianus’ system of identification for the various segments of the Second Hypothesis of the Parmenides.\(^\text{16}\)

SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 17

Proclus, In Tim. III. 15.11–16.1

Ἡ μὲν οὖν τοῦ ζῷου φύσις ἔτυχανεν οὖσα αἰώνιος, καὶ τοῦτο μὲν τῷ γενητῷ παντελῶς προσάπτειν οὖχ ἦν δυνατόν. εἰκώ δὲ ἐπινοεῖ κινητὸν τινα αἰώνος ποιῆσαι, καὶ διανοημένοι ἁμα οὕρανον ποιεῖ μένοντος αἰώνος ἐν ἐνί καθ’ ἀριθμόν ιοῦσαν αἰῶνιον εἰκόνα τούτον ὅν δηχότων ὄνομαξαμεν [Tim. 37D].

εἰ δὲ ὁ αἰών δυνάδα ἐμφαίνει, κἀν πολλάκις αὐτὸ κρύπτειν οπούδι-ζωμέν τὸ γὰρ ἄι τῷ ὑντι συνάπτεται κατὰ ταῦτον καὶ ἔστιν αἰών ὁ ἄι ὡν, ἐοικον ἦχεν τὴν μονάδα τοῦ ὄντος πρὸ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ἐν ὅν καὶ μένειν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ ἐνι, ὡς ἔτο σερ τούτου τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ ὁ ἕμετερος καθηγημένον, ἵνα καὶ ἄιτος ἐν ἐν τῇ δύνασθε, ἄτε τοῦ ἕνου μή ἀρι-στάμενος, καὶ ἥ μὲν ἐν αὐτῷ προσεμφαίνουσα τὸ πλήθος δυῶς ἐνίζηται τῷ ἐνὶ ὄντι, ἐν ἕνει μὲν αὐτῶν, τὸ δὲ πλήθος τῶν νοητῶν αὐτῶ τῷ αἰώνι περιέχονται αὐτῶν καὶ συνέχονται πάσας ἐξηθημένος καὶ ἐναίως τῶς ἀκρότητας· ἀν γὰρ ἡ τοῦ ὄντος ἐνὸς καὶ ἡ τοῦ αἰώνος ἐνοπία διαφε-ροσι, δήλον· τὸ γὰρ ἄι εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἄπλος εἶναι πάντως ἔτερον· εἴ τι γοῦν ἄι ἐστι, τοῦτο καὶ ἔστιν· οὐχ ἀνάπαλιν δὲ εἴ τι ἐστι, τοῦτο καὶ ἀν ἔστιν· ὅλωστερον ἅμα καὶ γενικώτερον τοῦ ἄι εἶναι τὸ εἶναι καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἐγγυτέρω τοῦ πάντων αἰτίων καὶ τῶν ὄντων καὶ τῶν ἐννάου τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὡσι καὶ αὑτῆς τῆς γενεσεως καὶ τῆς ὑλῆς. τρία οὖν ταύτα ἐστιν ἐξηθος· τὸ ἐν ὅν ὡς μονὰς τῶν ὄντων, ὁ αἰών ὡς δυάς μετά τοῦ εἶναι τὸ ἄι ἔχουσα, τὸ αἰώνιον μετέχου καὶ τοῦ εἶναι καὶ τοῦ ἄι καὶ οὐ τὸ πρώτος ἄι ὡς αἰών. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐν τῷ εἶναι μόνον αὐτίων πᾶσιν τοῖς ὀποιοῦνα τίτις ἐστε οὐκ ὄντως, ὁ δὲ αἰών τῆς ἐν τῷ εἶναι διαμονής.

a (ὀδηγοι) sensui sufficit QD 5.

1 Festugière (1968) 32, attributes 14.19–29 to Syrianus, citing Diehl, app crit and the Addenda of Diehl (1906) 504. The phrase “τῷ θεολογικωτάτῳ τῶν ἔξηθητών”, however, seems to refer not to Syrianus, who is generally “our Teacher” or “my Master”, but to Iamblichus. The content of the discussion, moreover, seems to concern a secondary One distinct from the first principle, which would certainly be an Iamblichean concept. The main point is that the first view is that Eternity rests in the One, whereas for Syrianus, it rests in the One-Being, summit of the noetic world.
But inasmuch as the nature of the Living Creature was eternal, this quality it was impossible to attach in its entirety to what is generated; wherefore He planned to make a moveable image of Eternity, and, as He set in order the Heaven, of that Eternity which abides in unity He made an eternal image, moving according to number, even that which we have named Time.

If Eternity reveals a duality, even though we often strive to conceal this (for the “always” is linked co-ordinately with “being” and aiôn is that which “always” is), so if that is the case, it would seem to have the monad of being prior to it and the One-Being, and that it is this “One” in which it is remaining, as indeed our teacher thought in reference to this One, in order that it itself should be a one prior to the dyad, inasmuch as it does not depart from the One. The duality which manifests its multiplicity in it in an anticipatory way is united to the One-Being in which Eternity remains, while the multiplicity of intelligibles are united to Eternity which holds together all of their summits transcendently and unitarily. That the concepts of the One-Being and Eternity differ, after all, is obvious: the concepts of eternal existence and of simple existence are certainly different. At any rate, if something exists eternally, this thing also exists; but conversely, if something exists, it is not the case that it always exists. Existence is a more universal and generic concept than eternal existence and for this reason it is nearer to the cause of all, both of true beings and of henads in the realm of true being, and of generation and of matter. So then there are these three entities in order: the One-Being as the monad of beings: Eternity as a dyad, containing eternity along with being; and the eternal, which participates in being and the eternal and is not the primal eternal being as is Eternity. And the One-Being is the cause of simple existence to all things which exist in any way, either real or unreal; while Eternity is the cause only of their remaining in existence.
Commentary

Here is a discussion of Eternity and its metaphysical place in the Syrianic cosmos. Syrianus proposes the etymological explanation that Eternity is the duality of “always” and “being” (ἀεί + ὄν). Prior to aiôn are, more immediately, One-Being (the product of peras and apeiria) and, at a higher rank, One. Aiôn is better understood as one aspect of One-Being: hence, at the level of One-Being there is a triad of to hen on, aei, and to aiônion, the first participant of Eternity (15.29–31). Lines 15.19–21 and 16.1 offer the puzzling description of Eternity as ‘Eternity which remains in the one.’ For Iamblichus, the “one” in which eternity remains is the Good (sc. the One). Syrianus, however, seems to argue that Eternity remains, rather, in One-Being as the summit of the intelligible realm. In this way, Syrianus makes use of the Iamblichean development that the lowest element of one cosmic level is the highest of the one following it; still, aiôn is distinct and secondary to One-Being.

It is perhaps helpful to compare Syrianus’ system here with that of Iamblichus, as the two are similar but deviate in slight ways. For Iamblichus, the One presides over the dyad of Limit and Unlimitedness, followed by the product of Limit and Unlimitedness, the henômenon or “Unified.” In the Syrianic cosmos, the One-Being is also the product of the Limit and Unlimitedness, as the summit of the noetic world. Syrianus’ one qualification is that the henads are the contents of the henômenon.

Lines 15.24–28: Being is a more general and more generic category than eternal being, in so far as it is nearer to the cause of all things.2

Lines 15.19–22: τὸ δὲ πλήθος τῶν αὐτῶν τῷ αἰῶνι περιέχοντι αὐτῶν καὶ συνέχοντι πάσας: the dyad in Eternity gives an anticipatory image of multiplicity. Aiôn contains the summit of forms—the monads of the forms, which are in beings and act as archetypes of beings—but is not mixed with them. In other words, it relates to them without them relating to it, and thus preserves its own unity while embracing their multiplicity.3

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2 Proclus, ET, prop. 57: lines 25 ff.: “For if it is a cause, it is more perfect and more powerful than its consequent. And if so, it must cause a greater number of effects: for greater power produces more effects, equal power, equal effects, and less power, fewer.” Translation Dodds (1963).

3 See Opsomer (2000b) 365. That Eternity holds an image of the forms is also evident in so far as the paradigmatic Model participates in Eternity: in terms of the three intelligible triads, the One and One-Being exist in the first triad, Eternity in the second, and the αὐτοκοιτός (the paradigmatic Model) in the third.
Iamblichus, on the other hand, argues that forms are not in the One-Being, but monads of forms are in the One-Being.\(^4\) In this system, Iamblichus’ henads are objects of intellect transferred as contents of the hen on—they are still noêtoi, but noêtoi in the intelligible realm.

Lines 15.8–15 and 16.1 ff.: Directly preceding and following Syrianus’ discussion, Proclus gives the opinion of the Peripatetic philosopher Strato of Lampsacus, who says that the eternal is joined to αἰών. This is of interest mainly because it is unusual that Proclus (or possibly Syrianus) was able to make a reference to Strato, the materialist leader of the Aristotelian school in the third century BC.

**Henadic realm**

Iamblichus and Syrianus

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Syrianus’ explanation

\(\text{Το παντελώς ἄρρητον} \) Monad (τὸ ἁπλώς εἶναι)

\(\text{Πέρας ἀπειρία} \) Dyad of ἀεὶ + ὁν (τὸ ἀεὶ εἶναι)

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\(^4\) Iamblichus, *In Philebum*, Dillon fr. 4 (Damascius, *In Philebum* 105, pp. 49–51 West): “Not even in the second realm is there separation properly so called. For the creation of distinct forms is a function of Intelligence in the first place, and the first Intelligence is the Pure Intelligence; for which reason Iamblichus declares that on this level one may place the monads of the Forms, meaning by ‘monads’ the undifferentiated element in each. Wherefore it is the object of intellection for the intellective realm, and the cause of Being for the Forms, even as the second element is the cause of Life in the intellective realm, and the third the cause of their creation as Forms.” Trans. Dillon (1973).

\(^5\) The One-that-is is the cause of the existence of beings.
Proclus’ doctrine of Eternity places eternity in the second triad of the intelligible realm, suitable to eternity’s dyadic character, as it likewise is dyadic. As with Syrianus, Eternity remains in the “One” of the first intelligible realm, to hen on, and precedes Intellect—residing in the third intelligible triad—in a causal way. Thus, Proclus says that eternity is substantially Being through participation and Intellect, in a causal way.

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6 Cause of existence as a whole—it unites intelligibles. Eternity unites the intelligible henads. Proclus, In Tim. II, 15, pp. 13–15. In In Tim. II, 12–22, 12 ff., Proclus says, “What else would eternity be but the one embracing principle of the intelligible henads and of the summit of their multitude (by henads I mean the forms of the intelligible creatures and the classes of all these intelligible forms); also the one cause of the unchangeable duration of them, not existing on the levels of the many intelligibles, nor assembled therefrom, but present to them transcendently, of itself arranging and as it were shaping them, and effecting this by their simultaneous totality.” Trans. O’Neil (1962).

7 Participates Being and everlastingness.

8 See O’Neil (1962) 162–164.

Proclus, *In Tim. III. 35.25–36.33*

῾Ημέρας γὰρ καὶ νύκτας καὶ μήνας καὶ ἐνιαυτοὺς, οὐχ ὄντας πρὶν οὐρανὸν γενέσθαι, τότε ἀμα ἑκείνῳ συνισταμένῳ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτῶν μηχανᾶται, ταῦτα δὲ πάντα μέρη χρόνου, καὶ τὸ τε ἦν καὶ ἐσται χρόνου γεγονότα εἰδή [Tim. 37 DE].

ἐστι τοίνυν, ὡς ὁ ἡμέτερος ἐφιλοσόφησε πατήρ, οὐχ ἐπ’ ἀναφέρει τῶν θανομένων ἀληθείας γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα ὁ Τίμαιος, ἀ καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς εἰσὶν ἐν τῷ ἐγερθαι, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τὰς χυρωτέρας ὑποστάσεις καὶ ταῦτα ἀνάγον, ὡσπερ εἰώθη ποιεῖν, ἡμέρα μὲν καὶ νύξ μέτοχο τοῦ χρόνου δημιουργικά, πᾶσαι διεγείρονται καὶ συνελίσσονται τὴν τε ἐμφάνη ζωῆν καὶ τὴν ἀφανή ἐμφάνη τε καὶ κίνησιν καὶ διακόσμησιν τῆς ἀπλανοῦς ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ μορία ἐστιν ἄληθεν τοῦ χρόνου καὶ πᾶσι κατὰ ταῦτον πάρεστι, καὶ τῆς θανομένης ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς τὴν πρωτοφανῆν αἰτίαν προείληφεν ἀλλής οὖσας ἐν τῷ ἐμφανεί χρόνῳ τούτων ἑκατέρως, εἰς ἦν καὶ ὁ Τίμαιος ὁ ὅρον ὑπομιμηθηκεί, πῶς ἀμα τῷ οὐρανῷ γέγονε χρόνος, διὸ καὶ πληθυντικῶς εἰπέν ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας, ὡς καὶ μήνας καὶ ἐνιαυτοὺς.

ταῦτα δὴ τὰ πρόχειρα πᾶσιν αἰ γὰρ ἀφανεῖς τούτων αἰτίας μονοειδεῖς εἰσὶν πρὸ τῶν πεπληθυνομένων καὶ ἐπ’ ἑπειροῦν ἀνακυκλομένων, καὶ ἀκαίρητοι προϋπάρχουσι τῶν θανομένων καὶ νοερά πρὸ τῶν ἀιδηθε- τῶν. ἡμέρα μὲν οὖν καὶ νύξ ἡ πρωτίστη νοείσθω τοιάδε τις ἑκατέρα. μὴν δὲ τὸ τὴν σεληνιακὴν σφαίραν καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἀποτελεύσιμον τῆς ἀπώρου περιφορᾶς συνελίσσον, θείον ὡς ἄληθῶς χρονικόν μέτοχον.
For simultaneously with the construction of the Heaven He contrived the production of days and nights and months and years, which existed not before the Heaven came into being. And these are all portions of Time; even as “Was” and “Shall be” are generated forms of Time.

Let us then, in accordance with the theories of our Master,¹ not for the purpose of denying the phenomena of the heavens (let us accept that Timaeus used this terminology also in the way that the many are accustomed to do) but referring these terms to higher levels of being, declare as he was accustomed² to do, that “day” and “night” are creative measures of time, stirring up and rolling together both the manifest life and invisible life, and the movement and ordering of the sphere of the fixed stars.³ For these (sc. night and day) are true parts of time and are present to all things (in the same way) and contain within themselves the primordial cause of the visible day and night, each of these being something different at the level of visible time, and it is with reference to this that Timaeus makes mention of how time came into being simultaneously with the heavens, for which reason he talked of days and nights in the plural, as also he did of months and years; for these are entities familiar to all. The invisible causes of these, on the other hand, are unitary and prior to their multiple products, involved as they are in endless cycles, and exist as motionless prior to what is in motion and intellective as prior to the sensible. So “day” and “night”, then, in the most primal sense may be taken to be such as this. As for the “month”, it is that which binds together the sphere of the moon and the whole completion of the circle of the Other, in truth a divine measure of time.

¹ Proclus uses the imperfect tense, possibly showing that a commentary on this passage was delivered in the form of a lecture by Syrianus.
² Use of the imperfect occurs again.
³ Usually τὸ ἀπλάνες refers to the sphere of the fixed stars.
ἐνιαυτὸς δὲ τὸ τὴν μέσην ὅλην δημουργίαν τελειοῦν καὶ συνέχον, καθ’ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἡμιος ὁρᾶται τὸ μέγιστον ἔχων χρότος καὶ πάντα σὺν τῷ χρόνῳ μετρῶν· οὔτε γὰρ ἡμέρα ἡ νύξ ἀνευ ἡλίου οὔτε μὴν οὔτε πολλῷ πλέον ἐνιαυτὸς οὔτ’ ἄλλο τι τὸν περικυκλοῦν μέτρον οὔδέν.

καὶ οὐ λέγω κατὰ τὴν ἐμφανῆ μόνον δημουργίαν τούτων γὰρ τῶν μέτρον καὶ ὁ φαινόμενος ἡμιος αἵτις’, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀρανή καὶ ἑπαναβεβηκάν ὁ ἀληθέστερος ἡμιος συμμετρεῖ τῷ χρόνῳ τὰ πάντα, χρόνον χρόνος ἄν ἀτεχνῶς κατὰ τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ τῶν θεῶν ὁμορῶν· ὅτι γὰρ καὶ Πλάτων οὐ τὰ φαινόμενα ταῦτα μόνον οἶδεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ θεῖα, οἷς ταῦτα ὁμώνυμα, δηλοὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ δεκάτῳ τῶν Νόμων [899 Α Β]· δείξας γὰρ μεστὰ πάντα θεῶν ἐπῆγαγεν, ὅτι καὶ Ὀμαρ θρα καὶ Μήνας θεῖα ἐροῦμεν οὕτως, ὡς ἔχοντα θείας ζωᾶς ἐφεστῶσας καὶ νόσας θείους, οὗ καὶ τὸ πάν, εἰ δὲ νῦν μᾶλλον λέγει περὶ τῶν φαινομένων, οὐ ἐφαμαστόν, διότι φυσιολογεῖν πρόκειται νῦν. ταῦτα μὲν οἶν ἐστω μόρια χρόνου, ὥν τὰ μὲν φιέωστοι τοῖς ἀπλανέα, τὰ δὲ τοῖς περὶ τοὺς πόλους τοῦ λαξοῦ στρεφομένους, τὰ δὲ ἄλλοις θεῖοι ἢ θεῶν ὑπαδοὶς ἢ ξύοις θνητοῖς ἢ ἀθανάτοις ἢ μερίς τοῦ παντὸς ύψηλότεραις ἢ χαμαιξηλότεραις.
Lastly, the “year” is that which brings to completion and holds together the whole median level of creation in accordance with which the sun is seen as that which possesses the greatest power and measures all things along with time. For, neither day nor night can exist without the sun, nor yet the month, nor, even more so, the year, nor any other of the measures of the cosmic circuits.

I do not speak in relation to visible creation only (for of these measures even the visible sun is a cause) but it is in relation to the invisible and more ultimate [creation], the more true sun measures all things in time, being the “time of Time” atemporally according to the oracle of the gods concerning this. That Plato did not know not only these visible things, but also the divine, of which these [visible things] are homonyms, is apparent from the tenth book of the Laws (899 AB). For he advanced the argument, after having shown that everything is full of gods, that we can call both seasons and months divinities, as being and presiding over divine lives and divine intellect, which is the universe. For if Plato now speaks of physical phenomena, there is nothing marvellous in this, since it is now his purpose to discuss physics. Let these things, then, be the ‘parts of Time’, of which some are appropriate to the fixed stars, others to those rotating around the poles of the ecliptic, and others to other gods, or to the followers of gods, or to living things mortal or immortal, or to the parts of the universe, whether more elevated or more base.
Commentary

The lemma here concerns the question of what is meant by day and night and seasons and months and whether they are parts of time. As Iamblichus had argued before him, time is here seen as a thing, not just a measure of motion; it is a mode of existence and its divisions are creative forces. Day and Night are the operative parts of time and function as both archetypes and the creative forces of physical days and nights.

Lines 35.27–28 provide a nice observation on Syrianic exegetical method. Proclus says that Timaeus generally uses the terms “day” and “night” in the sense in which they are usually taken, i.e., as physical phenomena. Syrianus keeps this obvious literal meaning, but adds to it a higher meaning—this method is typical of Syrianus. Proclus, moreover, contrasts Syrianus with the “majority” (οἱ πόλλοι) who are led astray towards the commoner, rather than more accurate meaning.

In lines 35.25–36.3 Syrianus postulates the form of day and night as the transcendent paradigms of Day and Night in the soul. He differentiates these from physical day and night, which are its products, not parts of time. They are true parts of time, present to all things in the same way even if they are participated in partially. In this way, Day and Night are in the fabric of time. This appears to be a development of Iamblichus’ transcendent time as distinct from eternity in the soul. The innovation on Syrianus’ part is in making days and nights the contents of transcendent Time.

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4 Iamblichus condemns the Aristotelian definition of time as motion. Iamblichus, In Tim. fr. 62 Dillon (Simpl., In Phys. I 702, 20 CAG): “Iamblichus, in the eighth book of his Commentaries on the Timaeus, contributed the following arguments on the subject:

If every motion is in time, many motions arise simultaneously. But the parts of time are different at different times. Motion takes place in relation to something static, but Time has no need of Rest. To motion there is opposed either (another) Motion or Rest, to general Motion general Motion (or Rest), to particular particular, but to Time there is nothing opposed.”

5 On the partlessness of Eternity, see Sorabji (1983) 111–114; Plotinus Enn. III.7.6.

6 Iamblichus, In Tim. frs. 62–68 Dillon distinguishes Time from Eternity. In fragment 68, Iamblichus places Eternity in the noetic sphere and time as the median between Eternity and Heaven. Time, thus, comes into being with the heavens and acts as an image of Eternity. Proclus states the distinction between Time and Eternity in terms of their participants in ET prop. 53: “Prior to all things eternal there exists Eternity; and prior to all things temporal, Time.” Thus, things with soul participate in Time or true Day and Night, while living things participate in Time.
“ἂμα τῷ οὐρανῷ γέγονε χρόνος” (36.3–4) (Tim. 37 D): Syrianus posits that a transcendent Time was formed at the same time as the heaven and is thus a real hypostasis. This phrase also concerned Iamblichus, who appears to give it a similar interpretation. Simplicius cites the following as coming from book VII of Iamblichus’ Commentary on the Timaeus:

“Its essence in activity we regard as the same as this setting in order which goes forth and is united with its creations and is unseparated from the things brought to completion by it. For the phrase ‘simultaneously with the construction of the Heaven he makes…’ signifies this, that the coming into existence of Time is conjoined with the setting in order which goes forth from the Demiurge…”

As archetypes of physical day and night, Day and Night are the actual creative forces (δημιουργικά) and contain the primordial causes (πρωτούργοι αἰτίαι) which cause time to divide itself, creating physical day and night. This point is likewise made by Iamblichus: “We too agree that there is an order of Time, not however an order which is ordered, but one which orders…”

That Day and Night are transcendent principles in time is further stressed by Syrianus discussing them in the singular (36.9–10). As unseen, singular entities they stand prior to and generate the endless cycle of days and nights. Day and Night as forms (intellectual entities) preexist what is in motion. The analogue of Day and Night, furthermore, is Month and Year, both of which function as archetypes when they are used in the singular (36.10–17). Month is the summation of the cycle of the moon and brings to completion the circle of the Same. Year is connected to the sun, which measures all things together with Time. It brings to completion the median creation (μέση δημιουργία). This median creation refers to the heavenly bodies as genera; the highest creation is the generic forms and the lowest are the physical bodies.

The last section, 36.17–36.33, elaborates on this, making seasons and months divinities, and showing how the sun and fixed stars measure time through the rotations which are visible and apparent. Proclus discusses

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7 Dillon explains Iamblichus’ interpretation of this phrase: “[Iamblichus] lays stress on its creation simultaneously with the heavens… Time proceeds not ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς κινήσεως ἢ ζωῆς but ἀπὸ τη. It is not a subjective phenomenon, but a real hypostasis.” (1973) 40.


this visible division of time in III. 53.6–55.7 in light of the second creation of the Demiurge (marked by visibility and multiplicity). He says that the first creation formed Time in its essence—itself eternal and a monad—and the second created the time which participates in the first—it is visible and multiple. The time of the second creation divides the power of the supramundane time and grants cycles to the sun, moon, and stars.\(^{10}\)

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\(^{10}\) Iamblichus distinguishes between higher and lower time: he posits an unparticipated universal, the participated universal which it generates, and the particular which it participates. See Proclus, *ET* prop. 23–24; 100; *In Tim.* II, 105.15–28; 240.4 ff.; 313.19–24. See also Sorabji’s discussion in (1983) 32.
Εἰς δὲ δὴ τέτταρες, μία μὲν οὐρανίων θεῶν γένος, ἄλλη δὲ πτηνόν καὶ ἀεροπόρον, τρίτη δὲ ἐνυδρον εἶδος, πεζὸν δὲ καὶ χειραίον τέταρτον [Tim. 39Ε–40Α].

τοιαύτης δὲ τῆς τῶν ἐξηγησαμένων διαφορὰς οὕσης δαιμάζομεν μὲν τὸν ϕιλοθεάμονα τῶν πραγμάτων, πειρώμεθα δὲ ἔπεσθα τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι καὶ φαμεν τὸ μὲν οὐράνιον τῶν θεῶν γένος πάντων εἶναι περιήλητικὸν τὸν οὐρανίον γενὸς εἰτε θείον εἰτε ἄγγελικων εἰτε δαιμονίων, a τὸ δὲ ἀεροτόρον πάντων τῶν ὑποσοῦν ἐν ἀέρι τεταγμένοιν εἰτε θείον τῶν τὸν ἀέρα κληροσαμένονοι εἰτε δαιμονίων ἐπομένων τούτοις εἰτε ἤφων θητόν ἐν ἀέρι διατωμένον, τὸ δὲ ἐνυδρον πάντων τῶν διαλαχθόντων τὸ υδωρ γενὸς καὶ τῶν ἐν ὑδατι τραγμένων, τὸ δὲ πεζὸν τῶν τὴν γῆν κατανειμαμένων καὶ ἐν γῇ συνισταμένων τε καὶ φυμωμένων ᾧφων.

ο γαρ δημοφυγός ἄπαξ ἀπάντων ἐστιν αἰτίος τῶν ἐγκυσμίων εἰδῶν καὶ κοινὸς πάντων πατήρ, τὰ μὲν θεία γένη καὶ τὰ δαιμονία παρ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ μόνου καὶ δι᾽ ἑαυτοῦ γεννόν, τὰ δὲ θητά τοῖς νέοις παραδιδοῦσι θείοις [42 D], ὡς ἐκείνου προσεχύσ αὐτὰ γεννάν δυναμένου, καὶ τὸ παραδειγματικά οὐ τινὸς μὲν ἐστιν ᾧφων αἴτιον, τινὸν δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ πάντων ἔχει τὰς ὀλίκῳτάς αἰτίας καὶ γαρ αὐτὰ καὶ εἰ τῶν μὲν θείων γεννών αἴτιον εἶχαν καὶ τῶν δαιμονίων, τῶν δὲ θητῶν μηδαμός, οὐκέτι τῶν θητῶν μὴ γενομένων οὐρανός ἐπικλέσις ἐστιν γαρ ὁμοίος τῷ παραδειγματικῷ καὶ παντελῆς, τὰς τέτταρας ἴδεας τοῦ αὐτοκόσμου μυθοσάμενος.

a δαιμόνων Q εί: δαιμονικών D: em s
And these Forms are four,—one of the heavenly kind of gods; another the winged kind which traverses the air; thirdly, the class which inhabits the waters; and fourthly, that which goes on foot on dry land.

Such being the difference among the exegetes, we pay due reverence to the connoisseur of metaphysical reality, but we will venture to follow our Teacher and say that the heavenly race of gods embraces all the celestial classes, whether divine or angelic or daemonic, while in that class which goes through the air he wants to include all these entities in any way assigned to the air, whether gods which are allotted to the air—or the daemons following upon them, or the mortal beings that spend their time in the air; the “watery” combines all those classes of being which have been assigned the water and are nourished in water, and the footed class comprises those beings which roam upon the earth and which are established and grow in the earth.

For the Demiurge is the cause alike of all forms of beings within the cosmos and he is the common father of all things, generating the divine classes and the daemons from himself alone and through himself, while “the mortal classes he hands over to the young gods” (*Tim.* 42 D) on the grounds that they are able to create these things in the immediate sense. And the Paradigm is not the cause of some living things and not others, but it contains the most general causes of all. For after all, if the Paradigm were the cause of the divine classes, and of the daemonic, but not of mortals, then if mortals had not come into being, the heaven would not yet be complete (42 D), inasmuch as it would not have all the classes of living things. For it is like its Paradigm and complete in as much as it imitates the four forms present in the Essential Living Being.

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1 Φιλοθεάμονα is a slightly sarcastic term from the *Republic* (476ab) which possibly refers to Theodore of Asine here.

2 Such as fish.
Commentary

Interpreters of the four classes of being in *Tim*. 39E–40A take issue with Plato’s listing birds and fish before men, while to describe an order from gods to men with no intermediary would be an abrupt move. Later Platonists felt there should be some mention of an intermediary class between gods and men and often interpreted the categories of inhabitants of air and water as referring to the daemonic classes of being. Syrianus’ major innovation here is that he places all the races—gods, daemons and souls—within each of the higher cosmic levels. This practice, moreover, is noteworthy as it seems in accord with his custom of placing different manifestations of the same god at each level of the universe.

Prior to the stated opinion of Syrianus, Proclus gives us three accounts of interpretations of *Tim*. 39 E (107.26–108.5):

1. *oí μὲν* (107.28): The first group gives a literal interpretation of the middle categories, claiming that they are birds and fish. This group says that the Platonic text moves “εἰς θεοὺς καὶ τὰ θνητὰ γένη”.

2. *οί δὲ* (107.30): This second group refers to a more sophisticated class of intermediaries: “εἰς θεοὺς καὶ τὰ κρείττονα ἣμῶν γένη πρὸς τὰ πράγματα ἀποβλέποντες.” This perhaps refers to the Iamblichean stance, as “τὰ κρείττονα ἣμῶν γένη” appears elsewhere attributed to Iamblichus. The superior class pre-exists mortals, as the Demiurge was said to have made this intermediary class before mortals (107.32). Iamblichus did not identify the third hypothesis of the *Parmenides* with Soul, but declared that it concerned the kreittona genê, that is “angels, daemons, and heroes.”

3. *οί δὲ (108.1 ff.):* The final group combines the first two positions and creates a hierarchy, whereby gods have subsistence in the heavens; daemons in the air; demi-gods in the water; and men and living things on the earth. This hierarchy is connected to *Epinomis*

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3 Plato’s four forms are as follows: “the heavenly kinds of gods; the winged kind that traverses the air, the class which inhabits the waters, and that which goes on foot on dry land.” *Tim*. 39 E, trans. Bury (1929).

984 B⁵ on the four types of being between fire and earth: this makes the middle three classes intermediate between the heavenly gods and man. Syrianus uses the passage from the Epinomis on the four types of being, which he superimposes upon the Timaeus, but interprets it with the understanding that Plato proceeds in order from gods to men. A series of Middle Platonic philosophers likewise interpreted the Epinomis and Timaeus together, describing the inhabitants of the various orders, each of which contained different kinds of being.⁶

Syrianus, following a penchant for combining pre-existing opinions, derives a system of two intermediaries. As with group one, he includes the literal interpretation so that the ranks include birds and fish, but with the second group, he reads the text allegorically, so that the ranks include gods, daemons, and mortals. Syrianus differs from the third group, which also combines the first two methods of interpretation in a similar way, in so far as he includes various genres in each rank. His system is as follows:

1. among divine classes, he includes gods, angels, and daemons
2. in the air, there exist some gods, daemons, and birds
3. at the watery level, there exist spirits proper to water and fish
4. on land, however, there are only mortal creatures—animals, plants and humans.

As with group two (Iamblichus?), Syrianus argues that the Demiurge takes care of the divine classes, but the young gods fashion the mortals, as they are the more immediate generators of those. This system serves

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⁵ Epinomis (984 B): “Well then, for the present let us attempt so much in treating of the gods, as to try—after observing the two living creatures visible to us, of which we call one immortal, and the other, all earthly, a mortal creation—to tell of the three middle things of the five, which come most evidently, according to the probable opinion, between those two.” Translation Lamb (1927).

⁶ In the first century BC, Philo listed the inhabitants of the air and water, starting with gods and ending with men. He said that intermediate entities should be higher than those in earth, lower than gods (de Gigantibus 6–9). The primary argument for him was that no part of the world should be without a share in soul. See Dillon and Winston (1983). Alcinous (Didask. 15) says, “There are, furthermore, other divinities, the daemons, whom one could also term ‘created gods,’ present in each of the elements, some of them visible, others invisible, in aether, fire, air and water, so that no part of the world should be without a share in soul or in a living being superior to mortal nature. To their administration the whole sublunar and supercelestial sphere has been assigned.” Alcinous, The Handbook of Platonism, translation and commentary by Dillon (1993). See also Apuleius, de Deo Socratis (6–12) and Calcidius, In Tim. (139–146) on the four classes of being and Tim. 49 D 6 and Epin. 984 BC.
as a precursor to Proclus’ cosmos in *Platonic Theology* VI, where Proclus borrows Syrianus’ system whereby the same god exists, but in a different manifestation, at each cosmological level.

With this hierarchy, Syrianus thus criticizes transcendental predecessors because they do not give a thought to humbler entities, such as fish. Iamblichus, for one, argues that birds and fish are proper to earth. The debate between Syrianus and his predecessors can further be traced to their opinions about the Paradigm. For Syrianus, the only way the universe can be παντελής is for it to imitate all the classes of being in the essential Being—the divine, daemonic, and mortal class of beings (108.24 ff.).

In line 108.24, Syrianus first mentions that the Demiurge is the primal cause of all being, but that the young gods are the immediate creators. Next, he discusses how the Paradigm, which the Demiurge uses in his creation, contains the causes of all the classes of being. Syrianus here connects the αὐτοκοσμήτων—identified with the third intelligible triad as the Paradigmatic Model—with the four primordial species which are contained in it, based on an exegesis of 30 C 7–8 and 39 C 7–40 A 2.7 The four classes of being exist in the tetradic αὐτοκοσμήτων as an archetype, proceeding vertically to each level of the universe.8 The ideas of the levels of gods and the four classes are connected quite clearly in *Platonic Theology* III.19, where Proclus interprets the four classes as a monad followed by a triad, each related to levels of gods: 1) celestial gods; 2) air wandering class: connected to uniform and generative gods; 3) aquatic: gods that are suppliers of motion; 4) earth: generative gods.

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Proclus, In Tim. III. 154.16–156.3

Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων δαίμονων εἰπεῖν καὶ γνῶναι τὴν γένεσιν μείζον ἣ καθ’ ἡμᾶς [Tim. 40 D].

ἐπανελθόντες δὲ εἰς τὴν προφορὴν ξήτησαν λέγομεν περὶ τῶν γενεσιουργῶν θεῶν τούτων, ὡς ὁ λόγος, τί δήποτε δαίμονας ἐν τούτοις ἥρα τοῖς ἁμαν συνοδῶσαν.

ὁ μὲν οὖν Θεόδωρος ἄλλον τρόπον ταῦτα μεταχειρίζομενος δαίμονας μὲν ὡς ἐν σχέσει, θεοὺς δὲ αὐτούς ὡς ἀσχέτους καλεῖσθαι φησιν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνης τάττων αὐτοὺς μέρει τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου ἄλλους ἄλλος ψυχώσαντας τὸ πᾶν.

Concerning the other divinities, to discover and declare their origin is too great a task for us.

[Going back to the previous subject of inquiry, let us say about these gods in charge of generation which are the subject of the discussion here, why on earth he has termed them *daimones* in this passage.

Theodorus takes a different approach to this. They are called *daimones*, he says, as being in relation, but gods as being unrelated to what is below them, ranking them in the parts of the whole cosmos below the moon, as ensouling the universe in different ways in each case.]

On the other hand, our Teacher first of all deemed it fitting to understand them as *daimones* in distinction from the heavenly gods, for they are dependent upon them, and it is in conjunction with them that they exercise providence over their own allotments. This arrangement is Platonic. For, after all, in the *Symposium* [202 E, 203 BC] he calls Eros a daemon, as being a follower of Aphrodite and as proceeding from Resource who is truly a god, although in the *Phaedrus* [242 D] he postulates that he is a god, with regard to the life brought forth by him. Then, starting from another angle, he says that there are both daemons in the heavenly realm and gods in the realm beneath the moon, but in the former realm the whole class of them is called “gods”, wherefore also he called the formal grouping of the heavenly gods a “class” (39 E) although daemons are there also envisaged under that heading, but in the latter realm the whole group is called *daimones*, since there it is the divine characteristic which prevails, whereas here it is the daemonic, an exclusive concentration on which has led certain critics to divide the divine and the daemonic along the lines of the heavenly and the generated realms, whereas in fact one should rank both in both areas and say that the divine prevails there, the daemonic here, but the divine is present in this realm also.

For if the whole universe is a “happy god” [34 B], there is none of the parts which compose this god that are devoid of divinity and providence. But if all partake in god and providence, they have been assigned a divine
τάξεις θεών ἐφεστήκασιν αὐτοίς· εἰ γὰρ καὶ ὁ οὖρανός διά μέσων ψυχῶν καὶ νόμων μετέχει τῆς μιᾶς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ ἐνός νοῦ, τί χρῆ περὶ τούτων οἷον διεσθαὶ τῶν στοιχείων; πῶς οὖ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ταῦτα διὰ δή τινον μέσων θεών τάξεων μετείληψε τῆς μιᾶς τοῦ κόσμου θεότητος;

ἐτὶ δὲ κάκεινο ἄτοπον, τὸ τὴν μὲν τελεστικὴν καὶ χροστήμα καὶ ἀγάλματα θεών ἰδρύσθαι ἐτι γῆς καὶ διὰ τινῶν συμβόλων ἐπιτήδεια ποιεῖν τὰ ἐκ μερικῆς ἐλής γενόμενα καὶ φθαρτῆς εἰς τὸ μετέχειν θεοῦ καὶ κινεῖσθαι παρ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ προλέγειν τὸ μέλλον, τόν δὲ τῶν ὀλὸν δημουργῶν μή ἐπιστῆσαι τοῖς ὀλοίς στοιχείοις ἀφθάρτοις οὕτοι τοῦ κόσμου πληρώμασι ψυχὰς θείας καὶ νόσας καὶ θεούς· πότερον γὰρ οὐ βούλεται; καὶ πῶς οὖ βούλεται, πάντα ἐστὶν παραπλῆθος συμμέτρεια βουλόμενος; ἄλλ᾽ ἀδυνατεῖ; καὶ τί τὸ ἐμποδίζει; δρῶμεν γὰρ τοῦτο δυνατὸν ἐκ τῶν τῆς τελεστικῆς ἔργων. εἰ δὲ καὶ βούλεται καὶ δύναται, δὴ δὴν οτι καὶ ὑπέστησε τοῦς τῆς γενέσεως ἐφόρους λύξεις τε κεκληρωμένας. ἐπειδὴ δὲ πανταχοῦ τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων γένος ὅπαθόν ἔστι τῶν θεῶν, εἰσὶ καὶ γενειοσοφοι δαίμονες, οἱ μὲν ὀλὸν στοιχείων ἐπάρχοντες, οἱ δὲ κλαμάτων φύλακες, οἱ δὲ ἐθνῶν ἄρτοι, οἱ δὲ πόλεων, οἱ δὲ τινῶν γενῶν, οἱ δὲ καὶ τῶν καθ᾽ ἐκκατὰ ἐφόρου· κάτειοι γὰρ ἡ φρουρά τῶν δαιμόνων εἰς τὸν ἐσχάτον μερισμόν. τούτῳ μὲν οὖν ἐν προβλήμα περὶ όν μέλλει λέγειν ἐξήτησθο.
nature. And if this is the case, then designated orders of gods preside over them; for if the heavens partake through the medium of souls and intellects of the One Soul and One Intellect, what should we think about these elements? How would these not far more partake in the single divinity of the cosmos through the agency of intermediate divine orders.

And this also would be strange, that the art of theurgy, and oracles and statues of gods are established on the earth, and through the application of certain symbols should be made receptive, formed as they are from particular and corruptible material, and made capable of participating in god and being moved by him and foretelling the future, whereas the creator of all should not place in control of the elements as a whole, which are indestructible components of the cosmos, divine intellects, souls and gods. Is it that he did not wish to? And how would he not wish to, since he wishes to make all things like unto himself [Tim. 29 E]? Or is he perhaps unable to? But what is stopping him? For we see it is possible from the works of theurgy. So if he is willing and able, it is plain that he established gods as overseers of generation, with areas of interest allotted to them. But since everywhere the class of daemons is in the service of the gods, there are also daemons in charge of generation, some of whom preside over whole elements, others which are guardians of regions, others again are rulers of nations, others of cities, others of clans or whatever, and others are overseers of individuals; For the guardian role of the daemons descends to the lowest realm of specificity. So, let that be our discussion about one problem concerning what he is going to say.
Commentary

Syrianus discusses the relationship between gods and daemons with respect to why Plato calls gods *daimones* in *Tim. 40 D 6*. While Plato (and earlier thinkers, such as Homer) did not find the categorisation of gods as *daimones* problematic, later Platonists thought daemons were different entities altogether. We have a basic Syrianic principle at work in this passage, namely that the whole world is full of gods.

Before hearing Syrianus’ opinion, we learn Theodorus of Asine’s interpretation of the nature of *daimones* (154.19–23): Theodore labels *daimones* those beings which are subordinate to other gods, but still calls *daimones* gods, in so far as they are free from relation to what is below them. Here we see the Platonic distinction between levels of an entity or hypostasis, particularly the Platonic rule that lower ranks are related to higher, but higher ranks do not participate in lower.

In his discussion of the divine qualities of daemons, Syrianus first looks to a difficulty within the Platonic corpus: in the *Symposium* (202 D 9; 203 B 3), Eros proceeds from Poros as a daemon, but in the *Phaedrus* (242 D), Eros is a source of life and is viewed as a god. In the paragraphs which follow, Syrianus shows how the daemons are distinct from and related to the heavenly gods. They are distinct, in that they preside over generation; but related, because along with gods they exercise providential care over their own allotments—with this in mind, Syrianic metaphysics seem to call for mention of subordinate gods before daemons.

Lines 154. 32 ff. offer “another view-point”. Here, Syrianus discusses the placement of gods and daemons within the cosmos. Unlike Middle Platonist predecessors, he argues that gods should not be confined to the heavenly realm and daemons to the sublunar realm. While, generally speaking, gods are above the moon and daemons below, both entities are in both places as well. This is not to say that Platonists making such a distinction are entirely wrong: while gods and daemons inhabit both regions, god is the more dominant characteristic of the heavenly realm and daemon of the sublunar realm. The sublunar realm remains the place of genesis, the trait which defines it as daemonic.\(^1\)

Syrianus also makes clear that, just because daemons and gods share a cosmic place, they are not of equal status. In lines 155.11–12 ff., he says that in order to possess a divine nature something must first par-

\(^1\) Cf. Iambl. *DM*. I 8.
Commentary

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ticipate in the divine—a notion which relies upon a subordinate being or class of beings partaking in a higher divine realm. It is important to Syrianus, however, that the divine display pronoia to everything dependent upon it, so that the entire world is a god and all the parts of the world are divine. This is an attack against Aristotelians who denied providence to the sublunar realm. Again, we see the Syrianic principle that the gods are everywhere tempered by the belief that a distinction continues to exist between gods and dependent beings. Proclus discusses the differences between gods and daemons, with respect to Plato calling them both gods in In Tim. 166.5–167.31, as part of a more general discussion on angels, daemons, and heroes. At In Tim. 165.25, daemonic races are said to proceed according to the universal providence of the Demiurge. Each race of daemon, moreover, is suspended from its own class of god, so that generator gods suspend generator daemons (166.5 ff.). The entire generator class, although divine, remains subservient to the gods which give participation to it as sublunar beings (167.27 ff.).

Lines 155.13–18 emphasize (somewhat convolutedly) the point that inhabitants of the heavenly realm are gods and daemons. Syrianus draws the analogy that if the heavens relate to the hypostases of Soul and Intellect, which are outside the heavens, then the heavens should relate even more properly to the World Soul, to which it has an internal relationship. As a single organism, the cosmos inter-relates everything and deifies all through sublunar divinities.

The reason why Syrianus specifies that generator gods are daemons, unlike Proclus, who makes his discourse about the relationship between gods and daemons, is most likely that Syrianus is attempting what he considers a literal reading of Tim. 40 D. Generator gods were discussed by Iamblichus as part of a triadic succession of entities occurring in In Sophistam fr. 1 Dillon. Here, the sublunary, genesiurgic demiurge takes third place after the Father of demiurges and the heavenly demiurges. Iamblichus calls this demiurge creator of the sublunar world of genesis, from which depend the γενειομοιρογόι θεοί, or daemons, who administer a tertiary providence (In Soph. 1, 14).

The last section (155.18ff.) uses the analogy of the theurgist—if a theurgist can ensoul a statue, surely the god can ensoul the various cosmic elements. These lines accept Syrianus’ belief in theurgy. If his premise here is “if a theurgist can ensoul a statue”, it is assumed that it is a non-controversial subject for him.
Proclus, In Tim. III. 174.13–176.7

Γῆς τε καὶ Οὐρανοῦ παῖδες Ἡκεανός καὶ Τηθύς ἐγενέσθην [Tim. 40 E].

ταῦτα δὲ εἰδὼς ἤγονμα δείν ὡσπερ ἀσφαλοῦς πείσματος ἔχεσθαι τῆς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν παραδόσεως: διὰ γὰρ ταύτης τὰ μὲν πλημμελή τῶν δοξοσμάτων φευξόμεθα, ταῖς δὲ καθαρωτάταις ἐννοιαῖς Ἰαμβίο- χου συνεψόμεθα. πρῶτον οὖν ὑπομνήσουμεν ἡμᾶς αὐτούς, ὅτι περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ σελήνην θεῶν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ πανταχοῦ πάντες καὶ ὁτι κατ᾽ ἀναλογίαν προελθήσασι τῶν νοητῶν καὶ νοερῶν βασιλέων. ἐπειδ’ οὕτωι τούτοις πιστευόντες λέγομεν, ὅτι καθάπερ ὁ πρῶτίστος οὐρανός τῶν νοερῶν θεῶν ὁ ὅρος ἔστι καὶ συνοχείς τὸ μέτρον ἐκ τ’ αὐτοῦ (τάγαδού) καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν οὕτω αἰεὶ τοὺς νοεροὺς διακόμους ἤρχον συνέχον, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ οὐρανός ὁ ὅρος ἔστι τῶν γενεοουργόν θεῶν καὶ συνοχείς τὸ μέτρον τὸ δημιουργικόν καὶ τὸ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανίων θεῶν προελθόν εἰς τοὺς τὴν γένεσιν λαχόντας συνέχον ἐν ἓν πέρατι καὶ συνάπτον αὐτούς πρὸς τὴν οὐρανίην ἡγεμονίαν τῶν θεῶν ἀνὰ λόγον γὰρ ὁ δημιουργὸς πρὸς αὐτὸ τάγαδόν, οὕτως ἡ μία τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τοῦτο θεότης πρὸς τὸν νοερόν οὐρανόν. ὡσπερ οὖν ἐκεῖ τὸ μέτρον καὶ τὸ πέρα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐφῆκε διὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πάοι τοῖς νοεροῖς, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἐνταῦθα τοῖς γενεοουργοῖς θεοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς κρείττοις γένεσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀκράκτητος τῶν ἐγκοσμίων ὁ ὅρος ἐφῆκε, λέγω δὴ τῆς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τοῦτος συνοχικῆς μεσότητος: τεταύτην γὰρ ἔλαχε τὴν τάξιν ὁ πανταχοῦ προίον οὐρανός, ὡποῦ μὲν ἡμομένως καὶ κρυφῶς, ὡποῦ δὲ ἐκφανός καὶ διηθημένος, ὡποῦ μὴν γὰρ ψυχαῖς ἐπιφέρει τὸν ὅρον, ὡποῦ δὲ τοῖς φύσεως ἐφ- γοῖς, ὡποῦ δὲ ἄλλος ἄλλος, καὶ εorate μὲν πρώτος, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἐνυδρίας τάξεις δευτέρως, ὡς ὧ δὴ τῇ γῆς καὶ τοῖς γενεονσίας ἔφοιτος ἐσχάτως. εἰ δὲ καὶ συμπλοκαί τούτων ἄλλο γὰρ τὸ θεῖος ἐν ἅρη καὶ τὸ δαιμονίος [καὶ] ἐπὶ γῆς: ὡποῦ μὴν γὰρ ὁ τρόπος ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν διαφόροις τάξεσιν,

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a ὅρος – θεῶν om D  b ὡποῦ μὲν – διηθημένος om D
Of Gê and Uranus were born the children of Oceanus and Tethys

While realising this, I believe it is necessary to cling as to a safe cable [Laws X 893 B] to the account given by our Master; for through this teaching we will avoid the errors of false opinion, and we will follow the purest insights of Iamblichus. First, let us remind ourselves that the discussion concerns the gods beneath the moon, and that all are everywhere and that they have proceeded forth according to the analogy of the intelligible and intellectual kings.\(^1\) Thus, trusting in these, we say that even as the primal heaven is the boundary and the maintainer of the intellectual gods which holds together the measure which proceeds from the Good itself and from the intelligible gods to the intellective orders, in the same way this heaven too is the boundary and maintainer of the generative gods, holding together within a single limit the demiurgic measure which proceeds from the heavenly gods to those allotted the realm of generation, and linking them to the heavenly rule of the gods. For the same analogy obtains between the Demiurge and the Good itself, and between the single divinity of this heaven in relation to the intellectual heaven. Even as, therefore, measure and limit proceed from the Good through heaven to all the intellectual beings, so here too the boundary extends to the generative gods, and to the higher classes of being from the Demiurge and from the summit of the encosmic realm, by which I mean the connective median of this heaven. For this is the role that has been assigned to heaven, to proceed in all directions, in some cases unitarily and secretly, in others manifestly and dividedly. For it imposes a bound in one case to souls, in another to the works of nature, in still other ways to other things; and primally in the air, to a secondary extent to the watery orders, and at the lowest level to the earth and earthly productions. And there are links between these: for it is a different thing to exist in a divine but demonic mode in the air, and on the earth. In the

\(^1\) These gods would seem to refer to the triad of Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus.
ὁπον δὲ ὁ τρόπος ἐτερος ἐπὶ μιᾶς λήξεως. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν περὶ τῆς οὐρανοῦ δυνάμεως.

Ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν γῆν μετὰ τούτων τραπόμενοι καὶ παρακλαλέσαντες αὐτήν συνεφάσσατο τῶν περὶ αὐτῆς λόγων ἡμῖν πάλιν ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης αὐτῆς ἐκφάνσεως τῶν περὶ αὐτῆς ὁρον ἀποδόμεν. ἐκεῖνη μὲν οὖν ἐν ταῖς μέσαις τριάσιν ἐκφανεῖσα τῶν νοερῶν θεον ἁμα οὐρανοῖ τῷ συνοχεὶ τῶν ὅλων νοερῶν θεῶν ἀνὰ λόγων τε πρὸς τὴν νοητὴν γῆν, ἣν καὶ πρωτότητιν εὐφύσκομεν τῶν νοερῶν triάδων, καὶ ως ἐν ξιφόγνως τάξειν ἀφομοιοῦται πρὸς τὴν ἀπειρίαν τὴν πρώτην, ἔστι δὲ ὁ ἐκδόχυς κόλπος τῆς οὐρανοῦ γεννητικῆς θεότητος καὶ τὸ μέσον κέντρον τῆς ἐκείνου πατρικῆς ἀγαθότητος, συμβασιλεύονσα αὐτῷ καὶ οὐσα δύναμις αὐτοῦ πατρὸς ὅντος. ἢ δὲ ἀνὰ λόγων αὐτή καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνην προϊσταμένη γῆ οἴον δύναμις ἐστὶ γόνιμος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, τὴν πατρικὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑμνικὴν καὶ μετρητικὴν καὶ συνοχικὴν πρόνοιαν ἐκφάνουσα, καὶ γονίμος ἐπὶ πάντα διατείνουσα (δυνάμεον), αὐτὴ τὴν ἀπειρίαν πάσαν τῶν ὑπὸ σελήνην ἀπογεννήσαν, ὕπαρκεν ὁ οὐρανός τὴν τοῦ πέρατος ὑποτεθήν, ὁ τὸν ὅρον καὶ τὸ πέρας ἐπιφέρων τοῖς δευτέροις. αὐτὴ γὰρ πάντων ἐπὶ σελήνῃ ὑπετεθή, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς τῇ ἀτερίᾳ πάσης ὑπετεθή, καὶ καὶ δαίμονες καὶ θεοὶ καὶ ψυχαὶ καὶ σώματα συνέχεται, καὶ ἄνοιξε τὰ μιμοῦμενα τὴν μίαν ἑκάσταν τῶν ὅλων. ἢ δὲ ἀπειρία πολλαπλασιάζει τὰς ἐκάστων δυνάμεις· πολὺ γὰρ τὸ πέρας ἐν ἀπασι τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνην, πολὺ δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀπειρικόν διά τε θεοῦ καὶ τῶν μετα θεοὺς διατείνουν[τα ] πάντων.

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*a νοερῶν: νοητῶν ci t*
one case, the mode [of being] is the same in different classes, but in the other, it is different in the same class. So much, then, for the heavenly power.

Turning to Earth after this, and after having called upon it to accord with us in these discussions, let us define on the basis of this first manifestation its definition. That entity, then, being manifested in the middle triads of the intellective gods at the same time as the Heaven which is the maintainer of all the divine intellects, proceeds analogously with the intelligible Gê, which we discover to be first of the intellective triads, and at the level of the zoôgenic classes, it is assimilated to the primal Unlimitedness. It is the ‘receiving bosom’ of the generative deity of heaven and the center-point of that paternal goodness, ruling with it and being a power of it, it being the Father. But the earth which stands forth analogously to it in the realm below the moon, is, as it were, a fecundative power of Heaven, revealing its paternal and defining and preservative providential care, and extending to all things with its generative powers, produces all the Unlimitedness in the realm below the moon, just as the heaven produces the column of Limit, imposing bound and limit upon secondary things. Therefore, this boundary and limit determine the existence of each thing, in accordance with which (both) daemons and gods and souls and bodies are held together, and it unifies these, as they imitate the single henad of the universe. Unlimitedness, on the other hand, multiplies the powers of each thing; for there is much Limit in all sublunar things, and much Unlimitedness also, extending through both God and all things after the gods.
This fragment concerns the nature of Ouranos and Gē and does not touch upon the second half of the lemma, on Okeanos and Tethys, which Proclus discusses in 177.23–181.6. In the discussion, Syrianus concerns himself first with Ouranos as the Limit of the planetary gods, and then with Gē, as representing the force of Unlimitedness (apeiria).

While Proclus credits Syrianus with the “purest opinions of Iamblichus”, his interpretation on the face of it is somewhat at odds with that of Iamblichus, whose explanation encompassed Gē and Ouranos as forces proper to encosmic gods. Iamblichus talks of Gē as “τὸ μόνημον πᾶν καὶ σταθερὸν” (173.17–18) in the encosmic gods. Prior to the opinions of any named philosophers, Proclus outlines the interpretations of eight un-named exegetes. Their interpretations of Gē include the material and immaterial (173.8–12):

1. οἱ μὲν: understand Gē as solid earth;
2. οἱ δὲ: the earth represents matter, as the foundation for beings;
3. οἱ δὲ: Gē represents intelligible matter;
4. οἱ δὲ: it represents the power of intellect;
5. οἱ δὲ: Life;
6. οἱ δὲ: an incorporeal form inseparable from earth;
7. οἱ δὲ: Soul;
8. οἱ δὲ: Intellect

The following eight interpretations are given for Ouranos (173.12 ff.). It is assumed that the eight interpreters of Gē correlate to those of Ouranos, although oddly enough they are not given in the same order:

1. οἱ μὲν: understand Ouranos as the visible heaven;
2. οἱ δὲ: the movement around the centre;
3. οἱ δὲ: the power which proceeds in accord with this movement;
4. οἱ δὲ: the possessor of Intellect;
5. οἱ δὲ: the pure and separated Intellect;
6. οἱ δὲ: the nature of the celestial revolution;
7. οἱ δὲ: Soul;
8. οἱ δὲ: Intellect.

While these interpretations vary from a material to an intelligible understanding of Gē and Ouranos, beginning with Iamblichus, and after him, Gē and Ouranos took on the meaning of two principles, working in tandem at the intelligible level. For Iamblichus (173.17), Gē represents
aspects of permanency in the encosmic gods (this stable element being analogous to earth), while Ouranos refers to the total demiurgic activity, which acts as the limit of the entire universe. Earth and heaven thus function as the stable and active elements—two extremes—for the encosmic gods. Next, Proclus gives the opinion of Theodorus (173.24), who holds to the ancient opinion linking Gē with matter, but, along with Iamblichus, makes heaven a boundary, in this case an intellect which divides the lowest level from the first. Theodore’s proposal here is terribly complex, as he links Gē and Ouranos to two powers that relate to the soul of the universe (and, in turn, a triad of powers particular to the soul of the universe). Proclus dismisses this opinion, favoring that of Iamblichus, which he modifies so that Gē and Ouranos, while representing two extreme forces in the universe, indicate *peras* and *apeiria*, both in the intellective and in the sublunar realm (176.1 ff.).

The view of Syrianus given here represents a nice link between Iamblichus and Proclus, although Syrianus’ opinion is focused primarily on the sublunar gods (174.18: οἱ ὑπὸ σελήνην). These sublunar gods have proceeded from the intelligible and intellectual kings (174.20: νοητοὶ καὶ νοεροὶ βουλειεῖς), who seem to refer to the triad of Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus that guide the intellectual triad of ὅν, ζωῆ, νοῦς. Next, Syrianus draws an analogy between the primal heaven (174.21) (or noetic heaven) as the container of the intellectual gods and “this heaven”, which contains the encosmic gods. The Demiurge, as the single divinity of this heaven, keeps the ranks of the cosmos together. The connective boundary (ὀος) between the generative gods and superior gods comes from the Demiurge, at the summit of this heaven (174.25). The summit of the encosmic world is, thus, the connective mean of this heaven. In this way, the ἀκρότης of one realm is the lowest element of the previous realm. In the last section (175.5 ff.), Syrianus shows how the same *tropos* occurs in different *taxeis*.

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2 Iamblichus, *In Tim.*, fr. 75 Dillon: “I know, indeed, that the divine Iamblichus understands ‘Earth’ as that which encompasses all that is permanent and steadfast in the substance of the encosmic gods and in their activity and in their eternal revolution, and which encompasses the greater powers and universal life-principles, and ‘Heaven’ as the creative activity proceeding from the demiurge, which is whole and perfect and full of its own powers, and which subsists around the Demiurge as being a limit for itself and for the universe.”

3 See Festugièrè (1968) 30, note 3 on Theodore and his Amelian triads.
After Iamblichus, the interpretation of heaven and earth rest on Gē and Ouranos being dyadic forces which act as extremes of the universe. For Iamblichus, in an opinion not adopted by Proclus, heaven represented the activity of the Demiurge. Syrianus moves the discussion from the encosmic to the planetary realm. The opinions of Iamblichus and Syrianus manifest themselves in Procline thought in *In Tim.* 171.21 ff. In his argument at the beginning of the discussion on the lemma, Proclus says that earth and heaven function as two causes, with earth as mother and heaven as father, from which all beings spring (171.24 ff.). Proclus, hence, treats earth and heaven not just as two bodies encompassing others or marking boundaries, but as causative principles. His interpretation becomes more metaphysically complex towards the end of the discussion (176.10–11), where he says heaven and earth act as two which precede the dyad of Okeanos and Tethys. This is noteworthy as Syrianus’ *peras* and *apeiria* function as two preceding the dyad which comprises the rest of the universe.

As for Gē, she represents the element of Unlimitedness in the cosmos that is responsible for the multiplicity of individual entities, and the limitless productivity of the sublunary realm. Here we may note a difference between Syrianus and Iamblichus, since Iamblichus chose to emphasise rather the permanence attributed to the idea of earth.

It is notable that, at this point, Proclus himself seems to take over the expositions, but it is inevitable that Syrianus also presented his view of Gē, with which Proclus would have no dispute, so I feel justified in including at least the present passage. The influence of Syrianus may, of course, continue much further.
Proclus, In Tim. III. 203.32–204.32

Θεοὶ θεῶν [Tim. 41 Α].

ei ὃς ἐπὶ τῶν εἰρημένων ἀντιλαμβάνεται τῆς Πλατωνικῆς ἐννοίας, τί ποτε αὐτὸ δῆλον ὅπερον: κάλλον δὴ καὶ ἔνταῦθα πρὸς τὴν τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν διάνοιαν ἀνατρέχειν. λέγει δὲ αὐτῇ τοὺς ἐγκοσμίους πάντας θεοὺς οὐχ ἀτάλλος εἶναι θεοὺς, ἄλλα τὸ ὁλοκοῦντος μεθεκτοὺς θεοὺς: ἢς γὰρ ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ μέν τι χωριστὸν καὶ ἀφανές καὶ ὑπερφοσσόμον, τὸ δὲ ἐμφανές ἁγαλμα αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τεταγμένον. καὶ πρῶτος μὲν ἢς θέος τὸ ἀφανές αὐτῶν: νοεῖσθο γὰρ δὴ νῦν ὡς ἀδιάφρατον καὶ ἔν, δευτέρως δὲ τὸ ὁχήμα τούτῳ τὸ ἐξηρτημένον τῆς ἀφανούς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὑποσίας: εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἔφη ἡμῶν διττὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὃ μὲν ἐντὸς κατὰ τὴν ψυχήν, δὴ φανόμενος δὲν ὁρώμεν, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀμφότερα ὑπῆρχον καὶ τῶν θεῶν διττῶν, τὸν μὲν ἀφανῆ, τὸν δὲ φανόμενον;

τούτων δὲ οὕτως ἑχόντων τὸ ἢς θεῶν ὁ ὁπερον πρὸς ἀπαντᾶς λέγεσθαι τοὺς ἐγκοσμίους, ἐν οἷς συμπλοκὴ τίς ἐστὶ τῶν ἀφανῶν θεῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἐμφανεῖς: μεθεκτοὶ γὰρ εἰσιν. ὅλως δὲ διττῶν διακόσμων ὑπὸ τοῦ δημουργοῦ παραγομένων, τῶν μὲν ὑπερφοσσῶν, τῶν δὲ ἐγκοσμίων καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀμεθέκτων ὄντων, τῶν δὲ μεθεκτῶν, εἰ μὲν πρὸς τοὺς ὑπερφοσσίους διελέγετο νῦν, εἶπεν ἂν πρὸς αὐτοὺς θεοῖ πρὸς μόνον εἰς γὰρ ὁμοθετοὶ καὶ χωριστοὶ καὶ ἀφανεῖς, ἐπειδὴ δὲ πρὸς ἐγκοσμίους ὁ λόγος, θεοὶ αὐτοὺς ἀποκαλεῖ θεῶν, ὡς μετεχομένους ὑπὸ ἀλλών ἐμφανον θεῶν.

ἐν δὴ τούτοις περιλαμβάνονται καὶ οἱ δαίμονες· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς τάξιν εἰς θεοὶ, μετεχοντες ἀδιαφρέτως τῆς ἐκεῖνων ἰδιότητος· οὕτω τοι καὶ ἐν Φαίδρῳ [246 E] θεῶν καὶ δαμόνων

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a ἄλλα·θεοὺς om Q
But if none of the aforementioned views express the meaning of Plato, what are we to say reveals it? It is better here once again to take refuge in the opinion of our Master. This view states that all the encosmic gods are not gods in the absolute sense, but as a composite thing, participated gods. For there is in them one element that is transcendent and invisible and hypercosmic, but also another that is a manifest image of them arrayed in the cosmos.\(^1\) And what is god in a primary sense is their invisible part (which one can understand as their unitary and invisible aspect), while the secondary aspect is this vehicle which is attached to their invisible substance. For, after all, if, in our case, man is double, the internal aspect represented by the soul and the other visible, which we see, how much more in the case of the gods are both these aspects to be reckoned, and god taken as double, the one aspect visible, the other invisible?

This being the case, the phrase “Gods of gods” must be taken to refer to all encosmic gods, in whom there is a linkage of invisible god with visible ones; for they are participated. So then, since two orders have been created by the Demiurge, one of the hypercosmic gods and another of the encosmic gods, the one being unparticipated, the other participated, if he [the Demiurge] had been speaking to the hypercosmic gods now in the present instance, he would have addressed them simply as “gods” (for they are unparticipated and transcendent and invisible), but since his address is to the encosmic gods, he calls them “gods of gods”, as being participated in by other visible gods.

Among these are also included the daemons. For these, in respect of their relation to the gods, are gods, since they participate indivisibly in their characteristics. Thus, in the Phaedrus [246 E], when he talks of the

\(^1\) Kroll deletes αὐ, although Festiugièrê prefers αὐτῶν τῶν, referring to the hypercosmic, transcendent aspect of gods. See Festiugièrê (1968) 63, note 1.
Commentary

This fragment discusses the true meaning of the mysterious mode of address by the Demiurge to the young gods, “gods of gods.”

It may be helpful to begin with the phrase “gods of gods,” which proved controversial in late Antique Platonic thought, as prior to Syrianus’ opinion, Proclus gives an extensive survey of earlier exegetes of “θεοὶ θεῶν”:

1. (202.29 ff.): Some attach “of gods” to that which follows so that the entire phrase now reads: “Gods, of which gods I am the creator” (ὧν θεῶν ἐγὼ). These exegetes Proclus dismisses on the grammatical grounds that such a phrase would merely be a repetition and altogether superfluous. This seems to be the interpretation preferred by modern commentators, such as A.E. Taylor and F.M. Cornford.

While Cornford does not find it plausible that Plato would write

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2 For a review of ancient and modern scholarship on the meaning of θεοὶ θεῶν, see Taylor (1928) 248–230 and Cornford (1935) 140–141; 367–370. Taylor suggests that θεῶν is an ancient corruption of ὁςων, so that the text should read: “θεοὶ ὁςων ἐγὼ δημιουργός…” Among the opinions he counters, he lists the following alternatives: 1) gods sprung from gods, as interpreted by Cicero (“vos qui deorum satu orti estis”). Taylor objects to this interpretation as there is nothing to suggest the genitive is a genitive of origin. 2) Gods who are θεόι of other gods, as in the case of Zeus in 121 B 7 of the Critias (θεός ὑ θεῶν Ζεύς) who is the one being whom the other gods worship. This is the opinion Proclus attributes to his second category of exegetes (203,20 ff.). Cornford remarks that Proclus does not include this interpretation in his catalogue of ancient interpretations of 41 A. 3) Archer-Hind (1888) and Apelt (1922) suggest that θεοὶ θεῶν is intensive, i.e., that the gods of gods are a kind of superlative (Taylor [1928] 248–249; Cornford [1935] 368), an idea Taylor condemns because the gods in the text are being compared to the creator, to whom they are clearly not superior.
twelve gods as being “leaders of gods and daemons,” he nevertheless calls all those following in their train, “gods” \[247 E\], when he says below, “this is the life of the gods.” Therefore, all of them are “gods of gods” as having a visible element woven together with an invisible element, and an encosmic element woven in with the hypercosmic.

Let this much be said about the meaning of the mode of address in general.

\[θεοί \ θεῶν\] to mean “gods, of whom”, he does repunctuate the text to read τὰ for ἄ, with as the subject of \[θεῶν \ ἔργῶν \ τε\]: “Gods, of gods whom I am maker and of works the father, those which….”\(^3\) This revised form now refers to both gods and works, which comprise the whole universe. Taylor comes up with a similar explanation. He explains \[ἔργα \ ἁ\] by omitting the ἁ and replacing it with \[ἔργων\]:\(^4\) the text now reads, \[ἔργα \ ὦν \ ἔργων\] (“works whereof I am maker and father, inasmuch as they are my handiwork, are indissoluble”);\(^5\)

2. (203.8 ff.): Others have said that “gods of gods” refers to encosmic gods which are copies of intelligibles, so that the entire universe is “the image of eternal gods” (37 C 6). This interpretation is interesting as it provides insight into the Platonic opinion that, in a particular way, encosmic gods are inferior to or dependent on the noetic realm. This explanation may be from Porphyry,\(^6\) who discusses the encosmic \[eikones\] of the noetic world. Proclus, however, calls this interpretation incorrect, as encosmic gods do not have the exclusive right to being copies of the Intelligible—such a claim is also valid for mortal beings, who as “things of god” are copies of the Intelligible. Thus, all the gods, visible and invisible, are addressed.

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\(^3\) Cornford (1997) 369.
\(^4\) Cicero, “quorum operum ego parens effectore sum, haec sunt indissolubilia me invito”, which Augustine cites in \textit{De Civitate Dei} iii.16.
\(^5\) Calcidius offers another method. He retains the ἁ, along with ἔργων and ὦν “di deorum, quorum opifex idemque pater ego, opera siquidem vos mea”. See Taylor (1928) 249.
\(^6\) I think it is likely to be Porphyry because this commentator is the first part of a three part sequence culminating in Syrianus, which occurs typically in Proclus’ \textit{Parmenides Commentary}. 
3. (203.20ff.): Still others claim that Plato means by “gods of gods” the more universal henads of the encosmic gods. The henads here would be unificatory principles of lower gods. Proclus protests that all the encosmic gods are included among those addressed. This interpretation possibly stems from Theodore of Asine.

Syrianus in this fragment argues that when Plato says “gods of gods” he means the encosmic gods, the genitive indicating their participation in the hypercosmic gods. The encosmic gods are not called simply “gods” because they are participated in by other gods; as μεθεκτοι θεοί (204.4), the fact that they are participated in makes them a composite thing, τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο (204.4). Kroll suggests that this phrase be re-read as a genitive, τοῦ ὅλου τούτου, so that the phrase, rather than establishing the encosmic gods as a level of participated gods, instead indicates that they are participated in by the universe. Based on other uses of τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο in the Timaeus Commentary, Diehl’s usage, which makes the μεθεκτοι θεοί into a class of gods appears appropriate. This participation gives the encosmic gods a composite quality; hence they have an invisible, transcendent, unitary aspect, by which they participate in the hypercosmic gods, and a secondary, physical element, apparent in their physical manifestation as planets. By this element, Syrianus can only refer to the vehicles of the planetary gods, their fiery bodies. The vehicle is attached to the invisible essence in the encosmic god. The divine element is primarily the invisible aspect, while the visible aspect is not ἕν, but extended. Here we have a nice description of planetary gods as entities half invisible, half visible as pure fire.

In lines 204.24ff., Syrianus brings in daimones, whom he places in a subcategory of the encosmic gods as being “gods of gods” and being somewhere in-between the visible (ἀφανές) and invisible (ἐμφανές). Only the hypercosmic are purely ἔν, he proves this with a linguistic argument based on a reading of Phaedrus 246 E. Syrianus’ new theory

7 Cf. Proclus, In Tim. I, 125.19: “The races are in effect destroyed by the waters, which are created by the celestial revolutions and have for matter water, which is why this class [τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο] is called “a celestial stream.” Festugière notes that τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο is used in a way similar to III, 204.4, where he suggests τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο is the appropriate usage and that Syrianus says the μεθεκτοι θεοί is a class of participatable gods (1987) 63, note 1. See also III, 90.25, where planets are described as a class with the terminology τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο: τοιάστω ἐν γάρ αἱ πλανήται τῶν ὀφανέων, ἀπλανεῖς πλάναι τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο ὑπάρχουσα καὶ αἱ ἐν τέλει ὄνες καὶ πρῶς ἐν οὐσίαν τίλος.
here is that there are both celestial daemons and sublunar daemons. Proclus uses *daimones* and *theoi* interchangeably here, as all of them are gods of gods and mix the encosmic and hypercosmic.
SYRIANUS, IN TIM. FR. 23

Proclus, In Tim. III. 236.31–237.9

Τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ὑμεῖς αἰθανάτω ὑνητὸν προσυφαίνοντες [Tim. 41 CD].

μὴ τοῦτο οὐν κάλλιον οὕτω λέγειν, ὡσπερ ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος, τάς μὲν ἀκρότητας τῆς ἀλήγης τὸ πνεῦμα περιέχειν καὶ εἶναι ταύτας μετὰ τοῦ χήματος ἀδίους ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ παρηγμένας, ταύτας δὲ ἐκτεινομένας καὶ μεριζομένας ποιεῖν τὴν ψωίν ταύτην, ἢν προσυφαίνουσιν οἱ νέοι θεοὶ, ὑνητὴν μὲν οὐσαν διότι τὸν μερισμὸν τοῦτον ἀποτίθεσθαι ποτε τὴν ψυχήν ἀναγκαίον, ὅταν ἀποκαταστῆσα τυχοῦσα καθάρσεως, πολυχρονιστέραν δὲ τῆς τοῦ σῶματος τοῦτοῦ χωῆς καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ἐν Ἀιδοῦ καὶ τοὺς βίους αἴρομενην ἔχειν τὴν τοιαύτην ψωίν· κατὰ γὰρ αὐτὴν τὴν ὁπιότην προσλαμβάνει τὴν ὑνητὴν ταύτην ψωίν ἀπὸ τῶν νέων θεῶν.
For the rest, do you weave together the mortal with the immortal

Might it not be better to say, as does our Master, that the spirit comprises the summits of irrational life, and these are immortal along with the vehicle as being created by the Demiurge, but these when extended and divided create this life that the young gods weave on, which is on the one hand mortal because it is necessary for the soul at some stage to cast off this divided state when it attains purification and is restored (to its proper state), but on the other hand, is longer-lived than the life in this body; and it is for this reason that the soul possesses this sort of life both in Hades and when it chooses lives for itself, for it is in virtue of this tendency that it takes on this mortal life from the young gods.
This fragment understands the weaving together of the mortal and immortal as a discussion of how the soul relates to the body. Later Platonists, Porphyry in particular, thought the mortal and immortal could not relate, but also dismissed the concept of reconstitution mentioned in 236.10, which permitted the soul to remain intact (although disunified) through periodic renewal. Instead, Platonists developed the notion of the *ochêma*, a pneumatic vehicle of the soul that related soul to body, after Plato’s imagery in *Tim.* 41 E.1 The vehicle encased the rational soul when it descended from the noetic universe and, through its purification, enabled the soul to return to the higher realm.2 The concept appears in Aristotle3 and Middle Platonic sources,4 and is rather developed in the thought of Plotinus, although he never used the term *ochêma*.5

1 *Tim.* 41 E 1–2, “And when [the Demiurge] had compounded the whole he divided it into souls equal in number to the stars, and each soul he assigned to one star, and setting them each as it were in a chariot (*ochêma*) he showed them the nature of the universe…”, Trans. Bury (1929). Later Platonists understood the chariot to be the vehicle of the soul.
2 Finamore lists these two functions, along with a third which is not addressed in this fragment: that the vehicle acts as an organ of sense-perception (1985) 1.
3 Aristotle’s *pneuma* is in some ways quite unlike the Platonic *ochêma*, in so far as it exists in the body, but in other ways it provides a good example of the early concept of the *ochêma*—for example, it acts as a carrier for the irrational soul (*GA*, 736b27 ff.). See Dodds (1963) 316.
4 According to Dodds (1963) 316, the earliest extant passage which uses *ochêma* and *pneuma* together occurs in Galen’s *de placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, p. 643f. Müller. Origen (*adv. Celsum* II. 60, 892 A Migne) and Hippolytus (*Philosoph.* 568. 14 Diels) refer to an ethereal body. Atticus and Albinus are named by Proclus (*In Tim.* 234.9–18) as speaking of the *ochêma*, although Festugièbre and Dodds doubt that these writers were aware of the vehicle. According to Proclus, Atticus and Albinus say that the vehicle and the irrational soul are mortal, possessing life only κατὰ τὴν εἰς γένεσιν ῥ/ομιΛρ/ονπ/ηδ/ῆς (*In Tim.* III, 234.9–18). Dodds says that Proclus is perhaps “reading into these writers the belief in a pneumatic vehicle” (1963) 306, note 3. He explains that in the *Didaskalikos* (c. 23), Albinus speaks of the physical body as the *ochêma* of the embodied soul and the stars as the *ochêmata* of the souls without bodies. Dodds (1963) 306. The opinion of Atticus is as follows: *De Anima*, ap. Stob. § 28 379 Trans. Finamore-Dillon (2002):

“Atticus and (certain other) Platonists, however, do not agree with this view; they unite all souls with bodies by a single method of incorporation. Always in the same way in every embodiment of souls, they first posit an irrational, disorderly, enmattered soul and then introduce an association of the rational soul with this soul as it is being brought into order.”
5 Plotinus established that souls require a body through which means it can descend (*Enn.* IV.3. 19ff.). He connected souls to the body through a sort of vehicle in the form of a pneumatic encasement that souls take on or off during heavenly descent or ascent.
Lines 236.22 ff. contest Porphyry’s position on the ochêma:

“But will this be the case, what some say, that the same thing both remains intact and is dissolved through being reconstituted and because of this is at once mortal and immortal? But this suggestion is intrinsically unreasonable. When unity is destroyed how can we say that the same thing persists? For the irrational soul is not a collection of lives, but rather one single life of many forms. Furthermore, he [Plato] concedes that the heavenly bodies receive at one time diminution and at another time additions, which is completely alien to them. But are we to leave this life as destructible and scattered at the same time as the body? [Rep.X] If irrational soul dissolves, what about punishments, purifications, and how about the choice of lives, some in obedience to imagination, some to spirit, some to desire? And what about the entry into irrational animals? For the connection with the irrational is through the irrational Soul, even as connection to intellect is through Intellect.”

Here, Proclus refutes the opinion that soul cannot be a collection of lives, an opinion we know to be Porphyry’s, as it reflects the account Proclus gives in 234. 18 ff. Here, Porphyry and his followers deny the destruction of the vehicle and the irrational soul6 by claiming instead that they are reconstituted (ἀναστοιχισθῆναι) into their fundamental components and dissolved (ἀναλυθῆναι) into the celestial spheres which acted as their primordial homes.7 According to Porphyry, as the rational soul enters the body, it collects from each planetary sphere an element proper to each planet. What it collects are known as garments and the sum total of these garments are the soul’s vehicle—moreover, each garment collected adds to the vehicle’s visibility and shape.8 Conversely, when the body died, according to Porphyry, the garments were shed during the soul’s ascent through the spheres. Porphyry explained that the vehicle was gathered from heavenly bodies during ascent. The rational soul alone— unlike the irrational soul and vehicle—avoided the cycle of gathering and ridding itself of celestial bodies. The end result of the soul’s re-ascent

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6 Speusippus and Xenocrates had already posited the immortality of the irrational soul. See Olympiodorus, In Phl. 124.15.


8 Porphyry. de Antro Nymph. 11; de abst. II 47; Origen, adv. Celsum II. 60 (892 A Migne).
and dismissal of celestial bodies is the soul’s purification from evils and permanent union with the Father (De Regressu Animae fr. 11). It was a wide-spread concept that the soul added successive layers to its garment during descent, although Iamblichus, forever contrary to Porphyry, disagreed on that matter.

While Iamblichus accepted the concept of the vehicle, he attacked in particular Porphyry’s claim that the vehicle was multiform and dissolved itself as a series of garments. For Iamblichus, the vehicle was created from ether in its entirety, rather than mixtures from heavenly bodies (In Tim. fr. 84 Dillon), and survived as a whole—even when the soul ascended, the vehicle remained and waited to be reclaimed at the soul’s inevitable descent. The soul underwent judgement, punishment and purification in the vehicle and reascended in the vehicle. Both the ochêma and the irrational soul survived intact (i.e., do not dissolve) because they take their origins from the gods themselves (In Tim. fr. 81 Dillon). Iamblichus thus creates a system whereby the soul exists in different forms depending on which cosmic level it occupies. The soul first exists in a pure state at the highest, supercelestial level where it has a luminous vehicle. In its next stage, the soul is brought into the cosmos and sowed among planets and stars, at which point it takes on an ethereal vehicle. At the point when the soul descends into the material realm, it puts on a corporeal body. The major difference between Iamblichus and his predecessors is his rejection of the theory that one level of soul remains above.

9 Augustine, Civ. Dei x, 19; Bidez. Fr. 2, 28*3; purification of the pneuma conduced to the removal of φαντασία. See Smith (1974) 152. Plotinus refers to the progressive embodiment of the soul in Enn. IV.3.15 ff. Smith (1974) compares Plotinus’ use of βύσμαντας (idea of the soul’s weight forcing it down) and the concept of dragging (ἐκλέπωμένας) with the terminology in Porphyry, Sent. xxix, p. 13.7; p. 14.1; p. 14.4; p. 15. See also Ad Gaurum, p. 49, 16 ff.; de Antro Nymph., Nauck 64, 15.

10 The concept of the chiton appears in Empedocles, fr. 126 Diels, where the body is encompassed with flesh; Philo (Leg. All. III. 15 ff.), the irrational soul acts as chitones which envelop the logikon; Porphyry (de abst. II. 46), the pneumatic body is chiton. Dodds, 307.


14 Finamore and Dillon (2002) 150.

In lines 236.27 ff., Proclus argues that the irrational soul cannot merely dissolve, as we know from Republic X that it undergoes punishments and purifications.\(^{16}\) He argues, agreeing with Iamblichus,\(^{17}\) that the soul uses the immortal vehicle in Hades (235.11–17). Porphyry argued that vehicle and irrational soul survived bodily death, and could thus be punished, before return to the firmament.\(^{18}\)

Next, he makes an odd reference to entry into irrational animals, a phenomenon nobody seems to have accepted after Porphyry’s dismissal of it.\(^{19}\) Proclus is perhaps being rhetorical here, arguing that interactions require appropriate intermediaries.

Proclus arrives at the opinion of “our Master” in lines 236.32 ff. Syrianus reconciles the opinions of Porphyry—who says the vehicle dissolves—and Iamblichus—who argues that it survives—by positing a higher and lower ochēma.\(^{20}\) Syrianus here posits two vehicles, a higher ochēma, which is immortal and a lower one, which dissolves. Along with Iamblichus, he held that this upper vehicle undergoes creation first. The dissolvable vehicle endures bodily death, as does Porphyry’s, so that the irrational soul may undergo purification. The young gods constructed the lower vehicle, as the Demiurge cannot be held responsible for mortal material. In addition, Proclus adopts Porphyry’s concept that the soul obtains layers of elements during its descent, which are later removed during its ascent to the cosmos (297.21 ff.). Proclus construes a vehicle made of different elements and three distinct envelopes: the first always exists, as it is encosmic; the second exists before the body and after it; the third, the soul exchanges once it is on earth (298.31–299.4).

\(^{16}\) Iamblichus holds that the soul descends either voluntarily or involuntarily as part of its punishment.

\(^{17}\) Iamblichus argues that the soul is purified after death of the body in its ethereal vehicle. See Finamore and Dillon (2002) 47–53.

\(^{18}\) Dodds (1963) 307. Porphyry argues that that natural death is not the complete release of soul in Sent. xxix.

\(^{19}\) Mentioned by Nemesius, de Naturae Hominis.

SYRIANUS, In Tim. Fr. 24

Proclus, In Tim. III. 247.26–249.26

Καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸν πρῶτον χρατήρα, ἐν ὑ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ψυχῆς κεραννῦς ἐμισε, τὰ τῶν πρόσθεν ὑπὸ λοιπα κατεχεῖτο μίσγων [Tim. 41 D].

ὁ δὲ γε ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών, ἀνοικὼ ὡσπερ ἀπὸ σχοπάς τὰ ὄντα θεώμενος καὶ ταῖς τῶν θεολόγων ψηφηγήσεσιν ἐπόμενος, ἤδη μὲν καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ δημιουργῷ τῶν ὄλων τὴν γόνιμον ἀπετίθετο δύναμιν, καθ’ ἣν μικρούμενος τὸν νοητὸν θεόν καὶ πατρικὴν ἔχει καὶ μητρικὴν πρὸς τοὺς ἐγγομίους θεοὺς αἰτίαν, αὐτὸς οὐσιοποῖος, αὐτὸς ἀγαθογονός, αὐτὸς εἰδοποιός.

ἐπειδὴ δὲ δεῖ καὶ διωρισμένην αἰτίαν εἶναι τῆς ψυχικῆς ζωῆς τὴν συνδημιουργοῦσαν αὐτῷ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον καὶ ἀπογεννώσαν πᾶσαν τὴν ψυχικὴν οὐσίαν, καὶ ταύτην διὰ τοῦ χρατήρος ἐλεγεν ἡμῖν παραδίδοσθαι, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεολόγους, ἐν ἀπορρήτῳ λέγοντας ἀλλ’ ἁγιόν, γάμους καὶ τόπους ἐπινοεῖν θεόν, δι’ ὅν αἰνίσσονται τὰς ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς τῶν ἀπογεννήσεων ὁμονομητικὰς κανονιῶν, τὸν δὲ Πλάτωνα κράσεις τε καὶ συγκράσεις διαμυσθολογεῖν, τὰ μὲν γένη τοῦ ὄντος ἀντὶ τῶν σπερμάτων, τὴν δὲ μᾶζι ἀντὶ τοῦ γάμου παραλαμβάνοντα· καὶ γὰρ αἱ ψυχαὶ κατὰ μὲν τὸ ἐν αὐταῖς ὃν ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ παρήχθησαν, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ζωὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ χρατήρος αἰτία γὰρ ἐστὶ

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2 ἀ λέγουσι· αἰνίσσονται om D
And once more into the former bowl, wherein He had blended and mixed the Soul of the Universe, He poured the residue of the previous material, mixing it

But my Master, viewing reality as from a higher vantage point and following the guidance of the theologians, already places in the Father and the Demiurge of the universe himself the generative power, in accord with which, in imitation of the intelligible god, he possesses both a paternal and a maternal causal relationship with the encosmic gods, he himself producing their essence, he himself the generator of their life, he himself the creator of their form.

But since there had to be a particular cause of psychic life, which would assist him in creating the entire cosmos, and which generates the entire essence of soul, he said that this also was transmitted to us by means of the mixing bowl. The theologians, uttering their teachings in secret formulae, postulate marriages and births of gods, through which they hint at the harmonious union of generation among the gods, whereas Plato presents us with a mythical account of mixtures and blendings, positing the genera of being instead of seeds and the mixture as answering to marriage. For indeed, the souls in respect of the being inherent in them are produced by the Demiurge, while in respect of their life they are produced in the mixing bowl; for it is the vivifying cause of all truly

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1 Cf. *Rep.* IV 445 C: “And truly’, said I, ‘now that we have come to this height of argument I seem to see as from a point of outlook (σκόπων) that there is one form of excellence.” Proclus here implicitly compares Syrianus to Socrates.

2 Julian (Diehl, ed. 1.28); Festugière suggests that the “theologians” include *Chaldean Oracles*, (Or.ch. 249.12) and Orpheus (OF 249.3; Hesiod 249.16s.) based on Proclus’ account in 249.12ff. It seems that in 249.12, however, that Proclus is paraphrasing Syrianus and adding these quotations for authority, so I would not attribute the Chaldean or Orphic quotations to Syrianus here.

3 I.e., he contains within himself the triad of Being-Life-Intellect (= form).

4 Ἠλέγεν (248.5) governs ἐπινοεῖν (248.7) and διαμυθολογεῖν (248.9).

5 I.e., the five genera of the *Sophist* and of the *Timaeus*. 
ζωγόνος τῆς ψυχικῆς οὐσιώδους ζωῆς. ἐπειδὴ δὲ μᾶλλον εἰσὶ ζωάι καὶ πρὸς τὴν ζωγονικῆς ὧκείοντας τὰξίν, διὰ τοῦτο ἀρχέται μὲν ἡ μῆξις ἀπὸ τοῦ δημουργοῦ, τελεύτατα δὲ ἐν τῷ χρατῆρι: πανταχόθεν γὰρ οὕτως περιέχει τὰ γένη τῶν ψυχῶν ἐν ἐαυτῷ καὶ μετὰ τοῦ δημουργοῦ συναπογεννά τὰς ψυχὰς. Τέτταρα οὖν ταῦτα ἐστιν, ὁ κεραννὺς, ὁ χρατὴς τὰ χιφάμενα τὸ κράμα, καὶ δὲ μὲν τὴν πατρὸς ἔχει ταξίν, ὁ δὲ τῆς γεννητικῆς καὶ ἀφορμικῆς τοῦ εἴδους τῶν ψυχῶν, τὰ δὲ πρόειοι μὲν ἀντ’ ἀμφότερον, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐκ τοῦ πατρός, τὸ δὲ εἰδοποιεῖται κατὰ τὴν γεννητικὴν αἰτίαν ἐν τι γεγονόμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ χρατῆρος.

εἰ δὲ δὲι παραγηγοῦσα τὴν τοῦ καθηγομένου ἡμῶν διάνοιαν, ἱστεόν, ὁτι τῆς ζωγονίου ϑεότητος πάσας τὰς πηγὰς ἐν ἐαυτῇ περιεχομένης τῆς ζωῆς, δοσὶ τε ψυχῶν εἰσὶ γεννητικαὶ καὶ δοσὶ τῆς δαμονίας τάξεως καὶ δοσα τὰς ἀγγελίας ἀποτίκτουσι σειρὰς καὶ δοσα τὴν φύσιν ἐπὶ ἐσχάτως παράγουσι, πρόειοι τις ἀν’ αὐτῆς μία δεότης ζωγονίνος, πηγὴ πάσης τῆς τῶν ψυχῶν προοδοῦ καὶ ἀπογεννήσεως, ἀν τοῦ δημουργοῦ συντατομενή συνεφιστήμην αὐτῷ τὸν ψυχικὸν ὅλον διάκοσμον, πᾶσαν μὲν τὴν ὑπερχώσιμον ἀπογεννώσα ψυχὴν, πᾶσαν δὲ τὴν ἐγχώσιμον, προούσα δὲ ἐπὶ πάντα καὶ ζωοποίουσα καὶ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον, ὃς μὲν Ὀρφεὺς [fr. 130] ἱστολή τῷ δημουργῷ καλεὶ καὶ συνάπτει καὶ συζευξάμα μίαν ποτεῖα κατά πάντων ὃν ὁ Ζεὺς πατήρ, ὁ δὲ Πλάτων χρατήρα προσείριζεν, ὃς πηγὴν ζωῆς ψυχικῆς

οὕτως γὰρ ὁ χρατήρ υποδέχεται τὴν γεννητικὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ πατρός τῶν ψυχῶν, καὶ κατὰ τοῦτον εἰδοποιεῖται τὸ εἴδος τῶν ψυχῶν, ὅθεν καὶ χραίμα προσηγορεύεται. ἔχει μὲν οὖν καὶ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐν αὐτῷ βασιλικῆς ψυχῆς, ὥσπερ εἰπὲν ὁ ἐν τῷ Φιλήβῳ [30 D] Σωκράτης, ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὴν πηγὴν ταύτην συνεφισμένην αὐτῷ τὸν ψυχικὸν διάκοσμον. καὶ οἱ μὲν βάσαροι τῆς ζωγονικῆς ταύτην αἰτίαν πηγαίαν ψυχὴν ἀποκαλοῦσι μετὰ τῆς πηγαίας ἀρετῆς ἀναφεύγαν ἀπὸ τῶν λαχράτων τῆς ὄλης ζωγονίου θεότητος, ἐν ὃ περιέχονται πάσης ζωῆς πηγαί, θείας ἀγγελικῆς δαμονίας ψυχικῆς, ὁ δὲ θεόλογος ὁ παρ’ Ἔλλην [Hes. Theog. 453 s] ὁ Ἰωάνην τήν προσείριζε μετὰ τῆς ἐστίας ἀναφεύγαν ἀπὸ τῆς μεγίστης Ρέας, ἤ περιέληπαν ἀπάσης τὰς ζωγονικὰς δυνάμεις, ἐπὶ τέλει καὶ αὐτὴν ἀποτίκτουσα τὴν Φώην, εἰ καὶ συντάτητε τῷ δημουργῷ τὴν Ἰωάν ὡς μητέρα πατρί, καὶ πάσης τῆς Τιτανικῆς

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α ζωγονίου—τῆς om D  
β πάσης ζωῆς—ψυχικῆς om D
existent psychic life. But since [the souls] are predominantly lives and assimilated to the life-giving order, on this account, the mixture originates from the Demiurge, but is brought to completion in the mixing bowl; for in every way this embraces the classes of souls in itself and, along with the Demiurge, assists in their generation. There are therefore these four: the mixer, the mixing bowl, the things being mixed, and the mixture. The first has the rank of Father, the second has the role of what is generative and definitive of the forms of souls, the things being mixed come from both of these, but more from the Father, but the mixture is given form in accordance with the generative cause, being made into one thing by the mixing bowl.

But if we must unveil the thought of our Master, one must know that, since the vivifying divinity encompasses all the sources of life in itself, both such as are generative of souls and such as are generative of the daemonic class, such as bring to birth the angelic series, and such as leads Nature down to the ultimate level, there springs from that one, a certain vivifying deity, the source of the entire procession and generation of souls, which conjoined to the Demiurge calls into existence with him the entire cosmos, generating both all the supracosmic Soul and all encosmic Soul, proceeding to all things and giving life to the entire cosmos, which Orpheus calls the ‘consort’ of the Demiurge, and limits it with him, and yoking them together, he makes it the unique mother of all beings of which Zeus is the Father, while Plato calls it the mixing-bowl, as being the source of all psychic life.

For this mixing bowl receives the productive activity of the Father of souls, and in accordance with that, produces the form of souls, whence it is called the mixture. Zeus, after all, has in himself ‘a royal soul’, just as Socrates said in the *Philebus*, but he has also that same ‘fount’ that produces with him the psychic cosmos. Even the barbarians (sc. Chaldaeans) call the life-producing cause the ‘fountal soul’ which manifests itself, along with the source of virtue, from the ‘flanks’ of the whole life-producing deity, in which are contained the sources of all life, divine, angelic, daemonic, psychic, and physical. But the theologian of the Greeks (sc. Hesiod) has called her Hera, appearing with Hestia from the great Rhea, who contains all the life-producing powers and she herself finally producing Nature, even if he links Hera to the Demiurge, as mother to father, and presents her as the originator of the entire Titanic

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6 Distinction between ὅν and ζωή.
Commentary

In this commentary on the mixing bowl, Syrianus explains how the mixing bowl acts as the generative cause of souls in so far as it transmits form to souls, while the Demiurge, as mixer, produces psychic life.

Before giving the opinion of Syrianus, Proclus lists the readings of Theodore of Asine, Atticus, and Iamblichus. Theodore (246.32–247.11) distinguishes two kratères: the first being portions of the mixture—the Soul itself (the universal Soul),7 the souls of the celestial gods, and our souls; the second being the mixture. Proclus condemns this interpretation because Plato only mentions one krater in which he mingles all souls. He finds little use for a second mixing bowl. Next-mentioned (out of chronological sequence), is Atticus (247.12–15), who, in his interpretation of the Phaedrus, also posited a two-fold krater. Proclus finds this out of character with Atticus’ usual interpretations of Plato, as he tends to stick close to the text. It is interesting that Proclus next discusses Iamblichus, who said there was only one mixing bowl, and skips over Plotinus’ discussion of two mixing bowls entirely.8 Iamblichus (247.16–26) posits one mixing bowl, which comprehends all life as “one vivific cause.” The penetrative logos pours out of the mixing bowl with directions on how to order life. He allots to each soul, depending on its lexis, a particular measure of connection (apparently to the mixing bowl or divine creation). Based on a passage in In Tim. 254.3–10, Dillon understands this as the Demiurge granting different proportions of being, sameness and otherness to divine, demonic, and individual human souls.9 These

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7 Cf. Proclus, In Tim. II, 274.29; soul in universal sense.
8 Plotinus, Enn. IV.8.4–36, where he mentions the products of Plato’s “second” mixing bowl.
division, as cause of the division according to Fate seen in souls. But Plato calls it ‘mixing bowl’—distinguishing from it the mixture and the fated portions. For that is the cause of the division of fated portions. It is on account of this that he did not make a division before he sowed the genera [of souls] into the mixing bowl.

are allotted an order by way of procession from the mixing bowl as they receive definitions of life. Iamblichus describes the relationship of the world soul to the individual soul by describing two mixtures, adopting the olive oil pressing imagery employed by Plato—there is a first pressing, in which the ingredients produce the World Soul, and a second pressing, in which the remnants of the first mixture produce the secondary souls. Proclus comes to the opinion of “our Master” in lines 247.26. He situates the creative power in the “Father of all things”, the title granted to the Father of the triad of demiurges. Syrianus places the γονμη δυναμις in the Father, here a νοερους divinity, so that this power is associated with the summit of the intelligible world. As an intellecutive creature, the Demiurge imitates the intelligible god and relates back to the intelligible god. The hierarchy Syrianus describes here can be outlined:

Noetic (intelligible)
Noetic-Noeric (intelligible-intellective)
Noetic: Demiurge/intellective level

Father of intelligibles in contact with intelligible “being”

Syrianus describes the Father as having a paternal and maternal relationship with the encosmic gods, by which he means he contains aitia of both—ζωη, as the maternal causality and ου as the paternal causality.10 He is the maker of forms (ειδοτοιους),11 the creator of essence

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10 There is a triad of demiurgic fathers, with the middle one actually being a mother (Rhea or Hekate). See Dillon (2000).
11 Damascius, In Parm 157.6; In Parm 170.11; In Parm 174.17; In Parm 175.15; In Parm 182.3; In Parm 185.25; In Parm 193.23; In Phil 177.1; Proclus, PT IV, 11.29; PT V, 88.5; In Parm 802.32; In Parm 836.36; In Parm 897.21; In Tim I, 300.9; In Tim II, 126.12; In Tim III, 248.2.
Syrianus next lists what the Demiurge generates: he is the generator of life, essence, and form—the Platonic triad of the second hypostasis, with εἴδος standing in for νοῦς. The Demiurge transmits these qualities to soul when he causes psychic life, in so far as he assists in creating the whole cosmos and generates the whole of psychic reality.

In line 248.5, we come to Syrianus' discussion of the mixing bowl. Syrianus compares Plato’s mixing bowl image to the theologians’ talk of marriages among the gods. While theologians say that marriages and births of gods are a form of mixing and blendings of genres, Plato replaces the concept of births with that of the genres of being and marriage with that of mixture. The mixture discussed here is the formation of souls—the mixture itself originated with the Demiurge but reaches perfection in the mixing bowl. The parts of the mixture seem to be essence and life, which relate to the mixer and mixing bowl in so far as ὁν is the Demiurge and ζωή, the mixing bowl. Because souls are more akin to ζωή than οὐσία (248.14–17), the process of the mixture of souls begins with the Demiurge and ends with the mixing bowl. The mixing bowl functions by transmitting and generating the essence of soul and is the life-giving cause of all ζωή. The mixing bowl’s role in creation makes it both the life-giving cause and the life-giving element in the soul. The maternal Demiurge thus plays a greater role than the paternal, with respect to elements in the soul. Syrianus outlines the four elements of this process further in 248.19ff.:

1. the mixer = Demiurge (Father)
2. the mixing bowl = the (female) power that is generative and definitive of form of souls
3. the things mixed (elements of soul); γενή τῶν ὁντων 35A–B: these proceed from both, although more from the Father
4. Syrianus, In Tim. fr. 24 the product (soul itself): given form from the generative cause having become one thing from the action of the mixing bowl.

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12 First used in Hermias on the Phaedrus, a transcription of Syrianus’ lectures, In Platonis Phaedrum scholia 170.1. The term is used later by Proclus and Damascius: Proclus, PT IV, 11.28; In Parm 856.35; In Parm 856.36; In Parm 939.10; In Cra 101.23; In Tim III, 248.1; In Euc 167.19; and Damascius, De Princ I, 190.25; In Parm. 16.12; In Parm. 69.18; In Parm. 70.4; In Parm. 147.1; In Parm. 201.24; In Phil. 69.5.
13 Orph. 248.5; 176.16. See Praechter (1932) 1745.37.
14 The allusion to the genres of being could indicate the five genres in the Sophist. In PT V, 30, p. 112, Proclus places the genres of being in the summit of the intelligibles because that is where the forms are located.
From 248.24–249.26 Proclus sets out to “clarify the thought of our Master” (εἰ δει παραγυμνῶσαι τὴν τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν διάνοιαν), noting that Syrianus himself adduced the Oracles and Orpheus. He rephrases the earlier statements of Syrianus, while taking note that, in addition to generating partial souls, the mixing bowl also generates the hypercosmic order of Soul and the World Soul. By broadening the function of the mixing bowl from creating partial souls exclusively, which is how Syrianus describes its function, Proclus argues that the mixing bowl contains all life, including the World Soul. He is also explicit with reference to the kind of partial souls created by the crater: these include the divine, angelic and demonic classes. This passage is a nice display of Proclus’ exegetical technique. It seems he paraphrases the gist of Syrianus’ teaching on the topic, then re-interprets it to fit a broader category than Syrianus had initially outlined. Once he extends the category discussed, Proclus gives authority to his interpretation by citing Orpheus, the Chaldeans, and Hesiod.

15 OF 130: He calls the mixing bowl a vivific deity equal in dignity to the Demiurge.
16 Or. Ch. 249.12: the mixing bowl is called the vivifying cause and the source of souls which comes from the Demiurge and contains the divine, angelic and demonic natures.
17 Or. Ch. 249.3; Hes. Theog. 453–454 identifies the vivific cause with Juno although all these analogies are probably derived from Syrianus, who after all composed a concordance (symphonia) of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato.
Proclus, *In Tim. III.* 278.9–32

"Οτι γένεος πρώτη μὲν ἐσοιτο τεταγμένη μία πάσιν, ἵνα μή τις ἐλαττωτικοῦ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ [Tim. 41 E).

ἄλλος δὲ ἄκριβεστερός καὶ τούδε λόγος, ὃν ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος παρεδίδει, πάσῃ ψυχῇ μερικῇ μίαν ἀφωρίζατα κάθοδον φησιν οὐχ ἀπλῶς, ἀλλὰ καθ’ ἐκάστην τοῦ θείου γεννητοῦ περιοδον’ οὐδεμίαν γὰρ ψυχήν οὔτε τῶν ἀχράντων καλουμένων οὔτε τῶν κακύνεσθαι καὶ πλανάσθαι δυναμένων πάσαν περιόδον ἄνω μένειν εἰκός: τὸ γὰρ καθ’ ὁλην περιόδον μίαν ἀκλινὲς καὶ ἄτρεπτην διαδέχεται ἄνω οὐδὲ κατ’ ἂλλην ἐπὶ κατελθεῖν εἰς γένεοι δυνατάν πάντα γὰρ ἀνελιττόμενα τὰ σχήματα τοῦ παντὸς ἄπτοτον διεφύλαξεν αὐτὴν’ ἂει δὲ τὰ αὐτὰ σχήματα πάλιν καὶ πάλιν. ἐπὶ δὲ ἡ ζωὴ τῆς μερικῆς ψυχῆς εἰς ἐκάστην περίοδον τοῦ παντὸς, ὡστ’ εἰ κατὰ πάσαν ταύτην ἥρησαν πρὸς τὴν ἀκλήνα διαμονήν, ἀποτελεῖ ἡ ὅλη τῆς νοερᾶς δύναμιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων κρόνων, ὡστ’ εἰ μηδὲν εἰς αὐτὴν καινοῦ ὡς κατὰ πᾶσαν καὶ πάλιν, κατ’ ἄλλην ἐπὶ κατελθεῖν εἰς γένεοι δυνατάν πάντα γὰρ ἀπελλαττόμενα τὸν ἄρχοντα, ὡστ’ εἰ μηδὲν εἰς αὐτὴν παντὸς οὐκ ἐξελεξάμενος, τὸν ἂεὶ μενοῦσαν ἐστιν ἐν τῷ κατὰ φύσιν.

ἀνάγκη ἄρα πάσαιν ψυχήν μερικὴν ἐν ἐκάστη περίοδο μίαν ποιῆσιν τοῖς καθοδον, πλείους δὲ ἄλλας ἄλλων, πολλῶ τοῦ αὐτεξουσίῳ χρησιμένως. ταύτην δὲ τὴν κάθοδον ὁ Πλάτωνν πρώτην γένεσιν προσέγγισεν στηλοὶ δὲ αὐτῷ, ὁπόταν διελεύθηες περὶ τῶν μετὰ τὴν πρώτην γένεσιν λήξεως ἐπάγγη [42 B]. ἄφαλείς δὲ τούτων εἰς γνωσίας φύσιν ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ γενέσει μεταβάλως, πρώτην ἄρα γένεσιν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ λέγει κάθοδον.

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\(^a\) ψυχῆς A: b (im): ζωῆς QDb
How that the first birth should be one and the same ordained for all, in order that none might be slighted by Him

But there is another account more accurate even than this, that our Master used to expound,1 which says that for every individual soul there is one descent designated, not absolutely but in the course of each circuit of the divine creation (Rep. VIII 546 B 4):2 for, it is reasonable to suppose that no soul, neither one of those termed “pure”, nor any of those prone to be corrupted and sent astray, remains above during an entire revolution. For that which remains above undeviating and unchanged throughout a whole period cannot descend into generation in any other period. All the configurations3 of the universe as they turn have preserved it unchanged, for the same constellations go round again and again. And further, the life of the individual soul is less than the circuit, so that if it lasted the entire revolution, it would have been allotted an intellectual power that is unchanging (for it would be living in an equal manner during the whole of time.) So that if the whole of time in its unrolling4 did nothing new to it, it would be in its nature one of those things that remain always.

It is necessary, then, that every individual soul in each cosmic period make one descent, and some do more than others, making use of more free will. It is this descent that Plato calls “the first generation.” He makes this clear when, concerning the allotment of lives following on the first descent, he says [42 B]: “If it fails in this, it changes into the nature of a woman.” He means, then, by the first generation the descent from the intelligible world.

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1 Παρεδίδου: Note the use of the imperfect.
2 “Now for divine beettings, there is a period comprehended by a perfect number…”
3 Σχήματα in an astrological sense.
4 Εξελίττομενος.
Commentary

Syrianus here describes the πρώτη γένεσις as the descent of the individual soul. Proclus gives two other opinions on the topic before that of Syrianus. Iamblichus appears first (278.2 ff.):

“As for the ‘first birth’ which the philosopher now relates, and which the Demiurge, in announcing the laws of fate, declares to the souls, what are we to say that it is? For more than one view is taken of it. The divine Iamblichus, for one, calls the ‘sowing’ (of souls) into vehicles the first birth, and admittedly what follows bears him out; for Plato added directly following on this passage the phrase ‘and how it was needful that they, when sown...’”

For Iamblichus, the sowing of souls into their γένεσις is the first birth. Regarding the ochêma, Proclus explains that souls, once in a primordial, non-bodily form, are sown into vehicles and given their allotments. After this point, souls are placed under fate and must descend and associate with generation. The second explanation of the “first descent” (278.5 ff.) is from an anonymous source, possibly Theodore or Plutarch of Athens, who argues that the first birth is the single descent of souls into

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6 See Iamblichus, de Anima, 26: Plotinus, Porphyry, and Amelius assign equal status to all souls and bring them forth from the supercelestial soul to reside in bodies:

“The depiction of the soul’s first coming into existence seems very different in the Timaeus. The Demiurge sows them among all the superior classes, throughout all the heaven, and into all the elements of the universe. Thus, the demiurge’s sowing of souls will be divided around the divine creations, and the first processions of souls will come into existence along with it and will comprise the receptacles for the souls.” trans. Finamore-Dillon. In section 29, Iamblichus says that there are three classes of souls, the first two descend willingly, while the third is forced to descend. It appears that even the pure soul descends, although he is not explicit in arguing this: “For the soul that descends for the salvation, purification, and perfection of this realm is immaculate in its descent. The soul, on the other hand, that directs itself about bodies for the exercise and correction of its own character is not entirely free of passions and was not sent away free in itself. The soul that comes down here for punishment and judgement seems somehow to be dragged and forced.” Trans. Finamore-Dillon (2002).

7 Finamore and Dillon (2002) 150: “The ‘first coming into existence’ (πρώτη ὑπόστασις) is the soul’s earliest and highest existence at the supercelestial level; the ‘sowing’ (σπορά) brings the soul into the cosmos and associates it and its ethereal vehicle with a soul and vehicle of a leader-god; the descent (κάρδιασίς) brings the soul into the world of generation and into its corporeal body;” See Finamore (1985) 89–90.

8 Proclus, In Tim. III, 275.26–277.5. Porphyry’s position on this is that only the soul of the philosopher can escape the cycle of reincarnations. De Regressu Animaæ (Bidez, fr. 11), 4, p. 41*21 f. See Smith (1974) 56.
generation—ἡ μία κάθοδος τῶν ψυχῶν (ἀπλῶς διορίζεται μίαν γέ τινα κάθοδον). Proclus addresses this opinion using γάρ with indirect statement (278.7), indicating that he disagrees with ἀλλός τις. The problem, however, is not with the chronology of the soul first being sown into the vehicle, followed by a descent into generation, but rather with denoting the sowing as “the first descent” in particular.

Syrianus’ interpretation, as the third listed, responds to the anonymous opinion (278.10). While he agrees with the anonymous interpreter that the “first generation” refers to the descent of the soul into generation, he argues that there is not one descent absolutely. Instead, Syrianus says that the soul descends once for every divine circuit. He gives the argument that if a soul were to descend for one circuit, it must necessarily descend with every circuit, as every circuit is the same, and it does not make sense that a soul would remain above for some circuits, but not others.

The difficulty with the argument rests with whether a soul can stay above for every circuit. That every soul descends is a lamblchean opinion that is contrary to Plato’s account in the Phaedrus. Nevertheless, Syrianus eliminates the possibility for a class of souls that does not descend with little explanation. The mainstay of the argument appears in 278.19–20 where Syrianus says that the life of the individual soul is inferior to the circuit of the all. If it were able to stay aloft throughout the whole circuit it would require an unchanging intellectual power—the argument Proclus uses to explain why every soul must descend.

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9 Rep. 46 B. Cf. Dam. In Phaed. II 147 West., a comment on Phaed. 1136b, where Syrianus is reported as holding, in a manner corresponding to this, that the assertion that the souls of the worst sinners never reascend from Tartarus must refer simly to any given cosmic cycle (περίοδος).

10 In passages 26–27 of the de Anima, Iamblichus discusses the descent of souls. He appears to argue that every soul must descend, either voluntarily or involuntarily, according to the Timaeus. Iamblichus, de Anima, 27: “Some of them [Taurus and his followers], consistently with the Timaeus, teach that this [the descent of the soul] occurs for the completion of the universe so that there will be just as many living things in the cosmos as there are in the intelligible realm.”

11 Phaedrus and the myth of the charioteer: 256 Aff. As the charioteer goes round the circuits of the universe, it is possible for him to command “the wicked horse” and not descend (254 E).

12 See Proclus, ET, prop. 211: “For suppose that some part of the soul remains in the intelligible. It will exercise perpetual intellection, either without transition from object to object or transitively. But if without transition, it will be an intelligence and not a fragment of a soul, and the soul in question will be one which directly participates an intelligence; and this is impossible (prop. 202). And if transitively, the part which has perpetual intellection and that which has intermittent intellection will be one substance. But this is impossible, for they differ in kind, as has been shown (prop. 184); and it is,
is thus in the nature of the soul to descend so that each soul in every
circuit must descend once using its own free will (278.25–26).

Although all souls make their first descent from the intelligible realm, some souls have a greater number of descents than others. According to Syrianus, in the second descent of the soul, the soul takes on the form of a woman—hence, it seems that while all souls must descend, the necessarily repetitious descents in some way weaken or diminish the soul. Proclus attaches the idea of the descent of the soul to the nature of the soul, which is mixed with good and strife. This is most clear in his exposition of the charioteer in the *Phaedrus* myth as it appears in *In Alc.* 227.8.

Moreover, unaccountable that the highest part of the soul, if it be perpetually perfect, does not master the other facilities and render them also perfect. Therefore every particular soul descends entire.” Translation Dodds (1963).


14 “The Socrates of the *Phaedrus* says that our faculties are mingled with the opposite of good and are filled with strife against each other and on this account sometimes the better prevail, sometimes the worse. And why waste words, seeing that the same speaker observes that even the charioteer is corrupted: ‘wherein, through the fault of the charioteer, many souls are lamed, and many have much of their wings broken.’ Yet what is nobler within us than the power of the charioteer? This it is which recalls things divine and uses the secondary and tertiary faculties as means towards recollection and this is clearly stated in the *Phaedrus.*” Proclus, *In Alc.* 227.8 ff., trans. O’Neill (1965). Two aspects of soul, when in conflict, cause the soul to descend. The soul descends in its entirety (see Proclus, *ET* prop. 120). This notion is contrary to Porphyry’s, which states that part of the soul remains permanently above. Porphyry, in turn, adapts Plotinus’ view that some souls never descend into the body but are able to govern their lower selves unaffected by trouble (*Enn.* IV.8.2). Human souls, however, through their own fault and boldness sink partially, although part of the soul remains in contemplation of the intelligible (*Enn.* VI.4.14).
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 1

Proclus, In Prm. 640.13–641.4

Οἵ μὲν οὖν παλαιοὶ περὶ τῆς τοῦ Παρμενίδου προθέσεως τούτον διέ-
στησαν τὸν τρόπον· δόσα δὲ συνεισήγαγε ταῖς τούτων ἐπιστάσεισιν οὐ
ήμετερος καθηγεμών, ἢδη λεκτέον. εἶναι μὲν δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς τὸν σκοπὸν
πραγματειώθη τοῖς διαλόγου τοῖς οὔτως ἐλομένοις τῶν προεβεβηκὼν
ώμοιον, τὴν τε ἀντιγραφὴν ὡς ἀπίθανον χαίρειν ἀφεῖς—τὸ γὰρ δει-
σθαι μὲν τὸν Ζήνωνα τοῦ Παρμενίδου τοὺς παροῦσι γυμνάσα τὴν μέ-
θοδον, ἐκεῖνον δὲ ἐν τῷ γυμνάζειν ἀμύνεσθαι τὴν Ζήνωνος πραγμα-
tειαν, πρὸς τοῖς ἐμπροσθέν εἰρημένοις παντελῶς ἀπίθανον—καὶ πρὸς
τῇ ἀντιγραφῇ ταύτῃ τῇ ἱρώδει τὸν περὶ τῆς γυμνασίας τῆς ἐκκει-
μένης σκοπὸν εἰ γὰρ ἔδει τινὸς παραδείγματος αὐτῷ πρὸς τὴν τῆς μεθ-
dου σαφήνειαν, ἄλλο τι τῶν προχείρων ἄν παρέλαβεν ἔξωρκον εἰς
παραδείγματος ἰδέαν, ἄλλ’ οὐχὶ τὸ σεμνότατον τῶν έαυτοῦ δογμάτων
πάρεφγον ἀν ἐποίησα τῇ κατὰ τὴν γυμνασίαν διδασκαλίας, καίτοι
νέοις προσήχειν ταύτῃ τῇ ἱρώδει, ἐκεῖνο δὲ πρεβυτηκής εἶναι δια-
νοίας καθορᾶν, καὶ οὔδε ἀνδρωπίνης, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ποιήμασι φησιν, ἄλλα
νύμφης Ὀψυτίλη τινὸς.

Τοιοῦτον δ’ οὖν οἰόμενος εἶναι τὸν σκοπὸν, οὔτε περὶ τοῦ ἄντις οὔτε
περὶ τῶν ὄντων αὐτῶν δ’ εἶναι μόνον διετείνον συγχωρῶν δὲ εἶναι περὶ
tῶν πάντων, ἥς οὖν προστιθέναι καθ’ ὅσον ἔνος πάντα ἐστὶν ἔχονα
καὶ εἰς ἐν ἀνήρτητα πάντων αὐτῶν...
These are the differences of opinion among the ancients with respect to the purpose of the Parmenides. Now we must say what our Master has added to their interpretations. He agrees with those of our predecessors who thought the aim of the dialogue is metaphysical, and dismisses the idea that it is a polemic as implausible. That Zeno should ask Parmenides to practise his method before the company and that Parmenides in exhibiting it should defend himself against the treatise of Zeno is altogether incredible in light of what has been said: and to make its purpose an exposition of method is as silly as the idea that it is a polemic. For if he had need of an example in order to make his method clear, he would have taken some other readily available topic as an illustration, instead of making the most august of all his doctrines incidental to the teaching of method, though he considered this method appropriate only to young men. To understand that august doctrine requires the intellect of an older man, and indeed an intellect more than human, as he says in his poem, and rather that of a nymph, Hypsipyle.  

Considering such to be the dialogue's purpose, our Master denied that it was about Being, or about real beings alone; he admitted that it was about all things, but insisted on adding “in so far as all things are the offspring of one cause and are dependent on this universal cause.”

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1 This is a very odd reference, which Proclus keeps a mystery. Dillon notes that this, Proclus’ name for Parmenides’ divine guide in the poem, is not mentioned elsewhere (1987) 36, note 23. The name is borne in mythology elsewhere by the queen of Lemnos, who had two children with Jason, but she is hardly relevant; cf. Apollodorus Bibliotheca I, ix, 17; III, 4; Apollonius Rhodius, Argonautica I, 609–909.
Commentary

In this fragment, Syrianus adopts the view that the subject of the Parmenides is metaphysical. Syrianus’ contribution to the topic was to set the One, rather than Being, as the topic for the first hypothesis of the Parmenides. Before giving his Master’s opinion, Proclus runs through previous commentators on the Parmenides, whom he groups according to their opinions on the subject of the dialogue; a grouping which also happens to be fairly chronological as well. There are those who approach the Parmenides as a dialectical exercise; those who give an ontological interpretation, focusing on the One Intelligible Being, in particular; those who give a henological interpretation; and others, including Proclus and Syrianus, who give a theological reading of the text. I will run through these rather cursorily here, as they have been adequately treated by Dillon in his introduction to the Commentary on the Parmenides.

The first group (630.37–633.12) which Proclus lists in his history of interpretation includes those who thought that the Parmenides was an exercise in logical method with a polemical aim. Proclus says that these interpreters suggest the Parmenides was an antigraphe against Zeno on the intelligibles, a suggestion he dismisses. The second view (633.12–635.27) argues that the dialogue could not have a polemical purpose as that is not consistent with its contents. This group claims that the dialogue is a logical exercise with the aim of offering practice in the exercise of logical disputation. It appears, on the other hand, that the first century CE Neopythagorean Moderatus appealed to a metaphysical interpretation of the Parmenides, making use of the first three

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2 These categories were created by Steel, who emphasizes the henological interpretation of the text in his article (1997) 16.
4 See Alcinous, Didaskalikos 6, where he finds in the Parmenides the ten categories of Aristotle. See Festugiére (1954) 93. On the Parmenides as a logical exercise, see Albinus, Isagoge 3; Diogenes Laertius III, 58; Philoponus In Anal. Pr. 9. 18–19; Alex. Aphr. In Topica, 28.23–29.5; and is the topic of Proclus’ Platonic Theology I, 9.
5 Dodds (1928) 129–142, argued that the following passage from a work of Porphyry On Matter presents us with an interpretation of the first three hypotheses of Plato’s Parmenides: “It seems that this opinion concerning Matter was held first among Greeks by the Pythagoreans, and after them by Plato, as indeed Moderatus tells us. For he (sc. Plato), following the Pythagoreans, declares that the first One is above Being and all essence, while the second One—which is the ‘truly existent’ and the object of intellection—he says is the Forms; the third—which is the soul-realm—participates in the One and the
hypotheses, at least, and it is possible that the practice of interpreting this dialogue goes back to Speusippus, though that must be regarded as speculative. In *Platonic Theology* I. 9, Proclus gives a lengthy discussion of why the *Parmenides* is a dialogue on Being, not a gymnasium of dialectic. In *Platonic Theology* I. 9. p. 38, lines 4–7, Proclus says, “We then have a reason to say that the *Parmenides* does not have logic as its aim, rather it seems to constitute a science of all the first principles as its aim.”

The next group identified by Proclus concerns those who hold that the *Parmenides* is a metaphysical dialogue. While philosophers since Plotinus declared that the first hypothesis concerns the primal Good, an argument existed based on what, if anything, to include with the One. This group is again broken into three groups, the third being the opinion of Syrianus, while the first two groups are attributed to “the ancients” by Syrianus.

The first group (635.31–638.2), which holds a doctrine of One Being, rather than the One, says that the subject of the *Parmenides* is Being. This group cites *Theaetetus* (183 E) where Socrates says that in his youth he heard an old Parmenides philosophise about Being. The supporter of this opinion claims that logical gymnastics are important, but only for elucidating the real purpose of the *Parmenides*. In 637.9 he brings up the point that no Platonic dialogue has the study of a method for its topic. Thus, Plato did not introduce logic as the subject of the *Parmenides*, but as a means of positing both existence and non-existence of the subject Being. It has been suggested that the proponent of this argument is

forms, while the lowest nature which comes after it, that of the sense-realm, does not even participate, but receives order by reflection from those others, Matter in the sense-realm being a shadow cast by Not-Being as it manifests itself primally in Quantity, and which is of a degree inferior even to that.” The first One is above Being and all essence, a view adapted and elaborated upon by Porphyry and Iamblichus. For a discussion of this Moderatus passage, see Dillon (1977) 347–348.

6 See Dillon’s argument (2003) 56–57. In the following passage in Plato’s *Commentary on the Parmenides* (VII, pp. 38, 32–40, 7 Klibansky): “For if the first One participated in Being in some way, although it is higher than Being and produces it, it would be a one which took over the mode of reality which belongs to Being. But it is not a one, and is the cause not just of Being but of everything, though of Being before the rest. And if everything must participate in its cause, there must be a “one” other than a simply One, in which Being participates; and this “one” is the principle of beings. This is also how Speusippus understands the situation (presenting his views as the doctrines of the ancients).” Proclus credits Speusippus with the doctrine of a first One followed by a second One, which Being participates.

Syrianus, in Parm. Fr. 1

Origen the Platonist. While Proclus refers to the doctrines of Origen anonymously in the *Commentary on the Parmenides*, he refers to Origen explicitly in the *Platonic Theology*. In *Platonic Theology* II. 4, Proclus refutes Origen, who did not accept the Plotinian One, but rather took the *Parmenides’* denial of all things posited in the first hypothesis to mean that the transcendent One did not exist. Origen maintains that the One is without existence and substance; Intellect is the highest principle; and absolute Being and the absolute One are identical.

The second group listed (638.14–640.16) likewise agrees that the subject of the *Parmenides* is metaphysical, but supposes that the dialogue is about the One Being (ἐν ὕ) and all those who get their reality from the One (περὶ ἁπανάντων τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνὸς ὑποστάντων). This group posits that all things attributed and denied of the One cannot be applied to the One Being alone, hence the discussion must be about all things from the primary cause down to the lowest (639.1–2). This view is consistent with that of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus. In *Platonic Theology* I. 10, Proclus explains the Plotinian doctrine as follows:

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8 See the introduction to the Saffrey and Westerink (1974) x–xx. See also, Dillon (1987) 8.

9 Saffrey and Westerink point to a number of passages in the *Parmenides Commentary* in which Proclus refers to “a certain one” who holds the doctrine that the first hypothesis is an impossibility. Saffrey and Westerink attribute these passages to Origen: In *Parm. VII*, P. 64.1–16; In *Parm. VII*, p. 36.8–31; and In *Parm. VII*, p. 64.25–66.24 are key passages.

10 See Proclus, *PT* II, 4, p. 31.15–17. The key passage for this interpretation is *Parmenides* (1.42A6–8). In Proclus’ commentary on this lemma, he regards Origen as follows: “Some people have therefore been persuaded by this passage to say that the first hypothesis reaches impossible conclusions, and so that the One is not a real subject. For they associate all the negations into one hypothetical syllogism: ‘If the One exists, it is not a whole, it has not a beginning, middle or end, it has no shape’, and so on, and after all the rest, ‘It has no existence, is not existence, is not expressible, is not nameable, is not knowable.’ Since these are impossibilities, they concluded that Plato himself is saying that the One is an impossibility. But this was really because they themselves held that there is no One that is impartipable by existence, and, therefore, that the One is not different from Being nor from the One-Being, and that ‘One’ has as many modes as being, and that the One that is beyond being is a mere name.” VII, 64.1–16. See 1065.2 ff. where Proclus introduces this discussion.


12 Proclus attacks Iamblichus in *PT* III, 23: “The argument in the first hypothesis is not, as some say, about God and the gods. For it is not lawful to connect the multiplicity with the One itself and the One with the multiplicity; for the primal God is absolutely transcendent above all things. But in the first hypothesis, he denies both being and the One itself of the first. This, however, does not befit the other gods, as is evident for everyone.” Translation Steel (1997) 20.
“But some people who follow the philosophy of Plotinus say that the noetic nature that is shown there, gaining its subsistence from the hyperessential cause of everything, and they attempt to harmonize all the conclusions deriving from this with the unique and perfect nature of the intellect”

(I. 10, p. 42, 4–9, S-W).

This is certainly consistent with Iamblichus, who derives a hierarchy of being from the One and who attributes a positive reference to all nine hypotheses. Iamblichus co-united henads with the One in the first hypothesis and placed intelligible beings in the second hypothesis. Iamblichus, furthermore, places the *hen on* at the summit of the intelligible realm.

The third metaphysical opinion is that of Syrianus. Proclus lumps the views of Syrianus’ predecessors together as those of “the ancients” (οἱ παλαιοί), emphasizing his own closeness in time and doctrine to Syrianus. Syrianus accepts the opinion of the second group that the dialogue is primarily metaphysical. While he does not mention the opinion of the first group that the dialogue is possibly logical in aim, he does dispute claims that the *Parmenides* is polemical. If Zeno’s purpose was to teach a dialectical method, Syrianus argues, he would not have chosen such a difficult metaphysical topic to use as an example (640.27–37). This is especially true as one usually teaches dialectical methods to young men, who would most certainly misunderstand the weighty doctrine of the dialogue. Next, Proclus reports that Syrianus believes (οἴσμενος εἶ-ναι τὸν σκοπὸν) the *skopos* of the dialogue is about neither Being nor about real beings only. Here, Syrianus accepts the view of his predecessor (Iamblichus?), but qualifies it in a characteristic way: the *Parmenides*...
discusses Being and all beings, in so far as all beings are the product of the One.\textsuperscript{15}

We see this opinion reappear in 1061.20ff., which, based on a statement in 1061.25 regarding Proclus’ guide of philosophy in Athens, appears to be Syrianus’ view on the matter. Proclus reports the following of Syrianus in 1061.32: “His view, then, also is that the first hypothesis is about the primal God, and the second is about the intelligible world”, and he takes up the issue again in 1065.1–1071.8, this time without crediting his teacher. In 1071.4ff., Proclus declares that the One, not One-Being, as transcendent cause, apart from the divine orders, is the subject of the first hypothesis. Thus, Syrianus recognizes the different attributes of being one are the different classes of gods such that the attributes coming from “the One that is” are the equal to the series of divine classes.\textsuperscript{16} Proclus, moreover, adapts this position expressed in \textit{PT} 1, 4, p. 20, 20–23.

\textsuperscript{15} Steel attributes this interpretation to Iamblichus (1997) 16.
\textsuperscript{16} Steel (2009) 204.
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 2

Proclus, In Parm. 1033.17–1034.22

"Ἡ βούλευσθε, ἐπειδήπερ δοξεὶ πραγματειώδη παιδιὰν παίζειν, ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἀρξόμας καὶ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ ὑπόθεσεως, περὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀυτοῦ ὑποθέμενος, εἰτε ἐν ἐστιν εἰτε μὴ ἐν, τί χρὴ συμβάγειν;—Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, φάναι τὸν Ζήνωνα [Parm. 137b1–5].

Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τάληθεστατα λέγειν, οὕτωι θήτουν ὡς ὁ ἡμετέροις ὑψηλεῖτο καθηγημένοι, ἀρχεόθαι μὲν αὐτόν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς (οὐνος)a—τὸ γὰρ εἰ ἐν ἐστιν, ἔχον πρὸς τὸ ἑν καὶ τὸ ἐστὶ, ταῦτα προσφέρει τῇ τάξει τῶν πραγμάτων—, ἀνατρέχειν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς οὖν ἐπὶ τὸ ἑν, δεικνύντα σαφῶς ὅτι τὸ κυρίως ἐν μόνον τούτο βουλεύεται τὸ ἑν εἶναι καὶ ἄρσαξει ἑαυτὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ οὖν· καὶ ὡς δεύτερον ἀπὸ τούτου τὸ ἑν ἀν διὰ τὴν ὑπεισιν εἰς τὸ ἑν ἐπεκλήθων, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ἑν ξείττον καὶ τοῦ ἑστὶ καὶ τοῦ εἰ ἐστιν ἀμα γὰρ τὸ ἐστὶν οὐ μὲνε τὸ κυρίως ἐν· ὡστε καὶ ὦτι τὸ ὑπειτεθα καὶ τὸ ἑν ἐν, ἄλλης· καὶ ὅτι διὰ τῆς ὑποθέσεως ταῦτης ἄνεισιν ἐπὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἑν, ὅπερ αὐτὸς ἀνυπόθετον ἐν Πολιτείᾳ προσονομάζει· δεῖν γὰρ φησιν ἄει δι' ὑποθέσεως χωρεῖν, ἵνα τελευτησμεν ἄνωντες ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνυπόθετον, τὸ ἑν· πᾶσα γὰρ ὑπόθεσις ἐκ τοιὸς ἐστιν ἄλλης ἀρχῆς· εἰ δὲ τοις τῇ τῇ ὑπόθεσιν ἀρχὴν ποίησαι, περὶ τούτου ταῦτα ὑπετεύθην, [α] περὶb τῶν γεωμετρικῶν ἐκεῖνοι εὐθείᾳ· ω γὰρ ἁρχή μὲν ὁ μὴ οἶδε, τελευτή δὲ καὶ μέσα ἐξ ὧν οὐκ οἴδε οὐδεμια μηχανῆ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπιστήμην εἶναι· μόνον οὖν ἁρχῇ καὶ ἀνυπόθετον τὸ ἑν, ὥστε τὸ ὑποτιδεμένον ἄλλο τί ἐστι καὶ οὐ τὸ ἑν· ἀνεισι δὲ ἀπὸ τούτου πρὸς τὸ ἑν, ὡς ἀπὸ ὑπόθεσεως ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνυπόθετον.

ὅτεν δὴ καὶ θαυμάσαειν ἄν τις τῶν Παρμενίδην τῆς ὁλῆς μεταχειρίσεως τῶν λόγων· εἰτε γὰρ [τὸ ἑν ὑπέθετο],c τὸ ἀνυπόθετον εἰς ὑπόθεσιν ἂν παρέλαβη, καὶ τὸ ἀναρχον ὡς ἐξ ἅρχης· καὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἠκολούθηκεν

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a ὁντος add. Dillon.
b ἂ perī Steel ex g (que de): ἀπὸ ΑΣ γεωμετρικῶν ΑΣ: geometris g (γεωμετρῶν Ι?)
c τὸ...ὑπέθετο add. Steel partim ex g (le unum supponibile) | ἄν add. Strobel| παρέλαβη Α ῥ] παρελάμβανε Σ
“Would you like me, since we decided to play out this laborious game, to begin from myself and my own hypothesis, hypothesising about the One itself, that is, what must follow if one assumes that the One is, or that it is not?” “By all means,” said Zeno.

But if one is to get nearest to the truth, one must follow the line of our Master, that Parmenides begins from the One (for the proposition “If there is a One,” since it contains besides “One” also the concept of existence, belongs to this rank of things), and ascends from the One-Being to the One, thus demonstrating clearly that the One in the strict sense wishes only this, to be One, and ‘snatches itself away’ from Being; and that the One Being is second to this by reason of its descent towards Being, whereas the One itself is superior even to the designation “is” and the hypothesis “if it is”; for as soon as we add “is”, the One in the strict sense will no longer remain. So that it is true that he hypothesises Real Being and One-Being, and that by means of this hypothesis he ascends to the One itself, which he himself in the Republic [VI 510 B] describes as “non-hypothesised.” For he says that it is necessary always to proceed through hypotheses, in order that we may culminate our ascent at the non-hypothesised One; for every hypothesis starts from a principle other than itself. But if one were to make the hypothesis a first principle, one would have to say about it something which he [Plato] said about geometry; if something has a first principle which one does not know, and a conclusion and middle terms, therefore, built up from what one does not know, in no way can such a thing be an object of scientific knowledge [Rep. VII 533 C]. The only thing, then, that is non-hypothesised is the One, so that whatever is hypothesised is something else and not the One; but he ascends from this to the One, as from an hypothesis to the non-hypothesised.

One might thus properly wonder at the whole structure of Parmenides’ discourse here; for if on the one hand, he had assumed as an hypothesis that which was non-hypothesised, and taken what has no first principle as proceeding from one, then he would not have been following
τῇ μεθόδῳ λεγούσῃ πάντως ὑποθέμενον τι σκοπεῖν τὸ ἐξῆς: εἴτε μὴ τὸ ἐν (οὐ) ὑπέθετο,⁵ ἀλλὰ τι τῶν πορφυρῶν τοῦ ἐνός, οὐχ ἀν τὴν ἐπὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἤρθιαν ἐποίησαν μετάβαιν, οὐδὲ ἀν αὐτοφυῷς καὶ ἀβιαστῶς ἀνέφην ἤμιν τὴν πρὸ τοῦ ὄντος αἰτίαν. ἣν οὖν καὶ τὸ ἐν ἀνυπόθετον μένῃ, καὶ ὁμοίως ἀπὸ τινὸς ὑποθέσεως οἰκείας αὐτῶς ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν ἀναδράμητη, τὸ ἐν ὁν ὑπέθετο προσεχῶς οὐκ ἔνατα τὸ ἐν, ἐν ὁ τάχα καὶ πρῶτως τὸ ἐν κυρίως ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐνός τοῦ ἐπέκεινα οὐδὲ τοῦτο κυρίως. Καὶ οὕτως ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκείας ὑποθέσεως, φημῶν, ἀρχεται τοῦ ἐν ὁν [όντως],⁶ καὶ τοῦτο ἐστι τὸ εἰ ἐν ἐστι καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνυπόθετον ἐγγύθεν μεταστάς, ἀναφαίνει τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐξηρημενῆς ἐνάδος τῶν ὅντων ἀπάντων ὑπόστασιν.

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⁵ ἐν... ὑπέθετο Strobel: unum supponibile g ἐνυπόθετον Σg ἀνυπόθετον Α.⁶ ἐν ὁν Σg: ἐνός Α | ὁντος delevimus ex g
his method, which calls for in every case hypothesising something and seeing what follows from it; or, on the other hand, if he assumed what was not hypothesised, but something more or less remote from the One, it would not have been easy for him to make the transition to it, nor would he have been able to reveal to us the cause of Being naturally and without strain. In order, then, that the One might remain non-hypothesised, and yet that it might ascend easily to the One from an hypothesis closely akin to it, he postulated the One-Being, as being next in order to the One, and in which the term “one” finds, perhaps, its first proper use; for in the case of the One itself which is “beyond”, not even this term is proper. And in this way, as he says, he both begins from his own hypothesis, which is the One-Being, and this is the significance of the hypothesis “If there is a One;” and moving thence to the non-hypothesised, he makes manifest the derivation of all things from the transcendent henad of beings.
Commentary

This fragment discusses the meaning of the second hypothesis, “if the One is”, in which Plato focuses on the fact that the One exists. Proclus questions why Parmenides calls his hypothesis an exposition of the One in this lemma, when it seems that he only discussed Being in his poem. Syrianus reasons that Parmenides can move his discourse from Being to the One based on the understanding that the postulation of the One involves Being. Syrianus invokes a modification to the more elaborate position of the predecessors that Plato is simply following a doctrine of the One or the historical Parmenides by arguing that all this can be derived from Parmenides’ own hypothesis.

Syrianus does not dispute with predecessors here, but begins with Parmenides’ hypothesis in the text. While Plato’s One in the Parmenides is a higher entity, Parmenides’ description of the One begins with One Being. He takes his start from the lower entity of One Being because he says he cannot begin with that which is unhypothesisable, if the One is indeed a remote and transcendent entity. Syrianus explains that Parmenides begins from his own first principle of the One Being and makes the premise the same in the first and second hypothesis: in the first hypothesis, he focuses on oneness and in the second, he focuses on the fact that it exists. He then ascends from the One Being to the One itself. He makes this move from One Being to One through a logical argument that if the One is just one, it is impossible to speak of it. Since it is possible to speak of the One, it exists and must partake in existence. The One Being, thus, for Parmenides is the One in the strictest sense.

In 1032.30 Proclus states the opinion of tines, lumping together the opinions of a set of people which may well include Porphyry and Iamblichus. Proclus begins the discussion by questioning how Parmenides could have called the One his own hypothesis when he never discussed the One. For Proclus, the postulation of the One cannot be a logical exercise, but the basis of an ontological metaphysics that encompasses all

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1 Syrianus says that both Plato and Plotinus propose that the One is ὑπερούσιον (In Met. N, 183, 1–3 Kroll). The interpretation of Plato’s Good as the One beyond Being is hardly new to Platonic thought. See Dodds (1928) 129–142 and Rist (1962) on the history and Neopythagorean background of the One in Platonism. See Steel (1992) 57, where he argues that Plato never intended for the One to be beyond One-Being.

2 Steel puts it nicely, saying that this is based on the premise that the first principle cannot be the One which is the object of the second hypothesis, the One which is. Steel (1992) 58.
other hypotheses. This group claims that Parmenides says nothing about the One. The question in the lemma, thus, is a deliberate correction by Plato of the historical Parmenides, who is made to present a doctrine of the One that is not being. These critics make three points: 1) Plato corrects Parmenides by drawing out the implications of Parmenides’ position; 2) Parmenides in his Poem only talks of Being because what is not (including what is above Being) cannot be discussed; 3) With Zeno, however, he discussed a higher principle. What follows is then an aporia by Porphyry on the historical Parmenides who argued that the first principle is the One that is Being, not hen. Plato, according to Porphyry, makes Parmenides say that the One is superior to Being by creating the Parmenidean hypothesis “if being is one”. Furthermore, Plato is possibly justified in doing this due to what may have been discussed between Parmenides and Zeno in unwritten discourses on higher being. Plato thus not only corrects Zeno but he reminds us of the unwritten Parmenides. With this, Plato presents a more refined Parmenides than what probably existed in reality; the Platonic Parmenides called his own hypothesis “the one which postulates the hen”.

In 1033.9ff., Syrianus, while not referring to his predecessors, responds to their argument that Plato was being non-Parmenidean by drawing on unwritten doctrines. Syrianus disagrees and comes to a different conclusion by incorporating everyone else’s solution into his own. Syrianus investigates the relation between One and One Being. One Being is an intermediary principle that connects the transcendent One with Being—as such, it acts as the first member of the second hypostasis. The One-Being is characterised by a multiplicity denied of the One3 that connects it to the rest of differentiated existence; the presence of One-Being, thus, allows Syrianus, and Proclus to create a fluid, connected universe, while protecting the transcendent nature of the One. That the One exists beyond Being is at the heart of both the Parmenides and Sophist for the Neoplatonists.4 Proclus uses both texts to show how the One is separated from the One Being because it exists beyond Being.5 One Being functions as the first member of the second hypothesis as it is the lowest aspect of the One as found in Intellect. The purpose of the discussion here is to relate One and One Being; Syrianus’ (and Proclus’)

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3 Steel (1992) 56.
4 See Sophist 244B6–245 D 11 on the existence of the One beyond Being.
argument for this states that 1) the first hypothesis is a reality and 2) the first hypothesis does not allow one to identify One and Being, something both Origen and Porphyry are responsible for doing, which leads to their proposition that Intellect is the first principle or, in Porphyry’s case, that the One is also the first element of the intelligible triad; thus, Origen and Porphyry’s positions are not the same.\footnote{See Proclus \textit{PT} II, 4.}
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 3

Proclus, In Parm. 1061.25–1064.10

Εἰεν δή, φάναι: [ε] ἐν ἐστίν, ἄλλο τι οὐχ ἂν εἴη πολλά τὸ ἐν.—Πῶς γὰρ ἂν;—Οὕτε ἄρα μέρος αὐτοῦ οὕτε ὁλον αὐτὸ δεῖ εἶναι. -Τι δή; [Parm. 137c4–6].

Δοξεῖ μὲν γὰρ δή καὶ αὐτῶ τὴν τε πρῶτην ὑπόθεσιν εἶναι περὶ θεοῦ τοῦ πρωτότοκον καὶ τὴν δευτέραν περὶ τῶν νοητῶν ἄλλ᾽ ἐπειδὴ πλάτος ἐστίν ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ πολλαί αἱ τάξεις εἰς ὁ τῶν θεῶν, ἐκάστην τούτων τῶν θείων τάξεων συμβολικῶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ὁνομάζεσθαι, καὶ πάσας δι᾽ ὁνομάτων φιλοσόφων ἐκφέρεσθαι, καὶ οὕτε τῶν εἰς ὁ τῶν τὰς θεογονίας γραφόμενων ὑμνεῖσθαι οὗτε τῶν τὰς ὑπάρξεις αὐτῶν δηλοῦντων, οία ὄτα εἰσίν αἱ αἱ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ἐκδοθέντα πάντα τῶν θείων ἡπονοῦμεν· ἂν, ὡς ἐφι, διὰ τῶν γνωριμῶν τοῖς φιλοσόφοις, οἷον ὁλότητος, πλήθους, ἀπερίας, πέρατος, οἰκείως ἕχοντων πρὸς αὐτὰς παραδίδοσθαι, τάξιν ἑχόντων πρέπουσαι, καὶ πάσας ἀπαραλείπουσας ἀφημιμενέσθαι τὰς θείας προοδοὺς, νοητάς, νοεράς, ὑπερκοσμίους· καὶ διὰ τούτου παραλάμβανειν τὰ ἐπόμενα πάντα, σύμβολα τῶν θείων ὄντα διακόσμοιν· καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις πάντα διὰ καταφατικῶς ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ λέγεται τῶν ὑποθέσεων, ταῦτα ἀποφασίζεθαι κατὰ τὴν πρῶτην εἰς ἐνδείξεις τῆς τῆς μὲν πρῶτην αἰτίαν πασῶν ἐξηκομισθεῖσα τῶν θείων διακοσμήσεων, ἐκείνος δὲ ἄλλας κατ᾽ ἄλλας ἀφορισμένας ἰδιότητας προεληλυθέναι· τὸ γὰρ ἐν ταύτῃ ἐν οὕτω τὸ πρῶτον ἐστὶ—συμπέπλεκται γὰρ πᾶν τῷ ὄντι—οὕτε τὸ ἀχώριστον τῶν ὄντων καὶ οὕτως ὡς ἔξεις τις ἐν αὐτῷ ὁν ὁ σαφῶς γοῦν αὐτὸ διαχωρίνει, καὶ χωρίς εἶναι φησι τοιοῦτον τὸ ἐν τούτῳ. δὴ δὴ ὅτι θείας ἐνάδος ἐστὶν αὐτοτελοῦσας σημαντικῶν· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ χωρισμὸν αἰτίας πλήθους ἡγομένον διττὸν ἀπογεννὴ πλῆθος, τὸ μὲν χωρισμὸν ἑαυτὸς ὁμοιὸν, τὸ δὲ ἀχώριστον τῶν μετεχόντων· ὃς γοῦν ἡ μία ψυχή τὰς μὲν ἐγγεννήσατο ψυχὰς σωμάτων χωριστάς, τὰς δὲ ἀχωριστάς, ὡς ὁ εἰς καὶ ὅλος νοῦς

\* τὸν Α:Σ τοῦ Α  
\* ἄλλας κατ᾽ ἄλλας corr. Steel ex g (alias secundum alias): ἄλλας κατ᾽ ἄλλην Σ (ἄλλας κατ᾽ ἄλλων R) ἄλλος κατ᾽ ἄλλας A | ἀφορισμένας Α: ἀφορισμένας Σ  
\* πάν… ὅτι Saffrey-Westerink: πάντα οὖν ΜΣg πάντα νῦν A3 πάντα τὸ ὄντι Cous3
“Well then,” said Parmenides, “if there is a One, of course the One would not be many.” “How could it?” “So there cannot be any parts of it, nor can it be a whole.” “Obviously.”

His view, then, also is that the first hypothesis is about the primal God, and the second is about the intelligible realm. But since there is a broad range in the intelligible realm, and there are many orders of gods, his view is that each of these divine orders has been named symbolically by Plato and all have been expressed by philosophical names, not by such names as are customarily celebrated by those who compose theogonies, but which do not reveal their essences, such as are the epithets of the divine classes given out by the gods, but rather, as I said, by names familiar to philosophers, such as Whole, Multiplicity, Limitlessness, Limit, which are suitable for application to them, all having their proper rank, and portraying without omission all the divine stages of procession, whether intelligible, intellectual or supracosmic, and that thus all things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of beings; and also that the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics. For the One in the second hypothesis is neither the primal One (for it is complex, being entirely interwoven with Being) nor is it that which is inseparable from Being and thus, as being a state of it, is in it. He thus clearly distinguishes this One from the first and declares that this One, being such as it is, is distinct. It is plain, in fact, that this term signifies an autonomous divine henad; for every transcendent cause at the head of a multiplicity produces a double multiplicity, one which is transcendent like itself, and another which is immanent in its participants. Even as the single Soul has generated some souls separate from bodies, and some which are inseparable, and as the one and whole Intellect has given substance to some intellects separate from souls, and others which are in them as functions of them, so also the One has produced
ὑπέστησε τοὺς μὲν νόας χωριστοῖς τῶν ψυχῶν, τοὺς δὲ ἐν αὐτὰῖς ὑπαρχούσαις καθ' ἐξίν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ ἐν παράγαγε τάς μὲν αὐτοτελεῖς ἐνάδας ἐξηρημένας τῶν μετεχόντων, τὰς δὲ ὡς ἐνώσεις ἄλλων οὕσας τῶν καθ' αὐτὰς ἣνωμένων καὶ ἐν ὧσ εἰσί πάσαι σὺν τὴν δευτέραν ὑπόθεται εἰργαίνει μὴν ἐνάδων πλῆθος αὐτοτελών, ὅν ἐξηρητίσχης ταῦτα περὶ ὧν διδάσκωσθηκαί, ὑπάρχοντας καὶ ἐν αὐταῖς ἐν άλλώτεροις διανέκηκαί, τὰς δὲ ὡς ἐνώσεις ἄλλων τῶν κατ' αὐτὰς ἡνωμένων καὶ ἐν ἐκείνως ἐπικύρωσθαι τὴν δευτέραν ὑπόθεσιν ἡμῖν ἑνάδων πλῆθος ἀποτελεῖσθαι, καὶ οὕτω δὴ καθ' αὖθις ποιεῖται τὴν τῆς δευτέρας ὑπόθεσιν διαφέρειν.

τὴν γε μὴν τρίτην οὐχ ἀπλῶς εἶναι περὶ πάσης ψυχῆς, ἀλλ' ὅση μετά τὴν θείαν προελήφθη τόσαν γὰρ τὴν θείαν ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ περιέχεσθαι: σαφῶς γοῦν ἐν ἐκείνῃ καὶ αὐτάς οἱ Πλάτων εὑρίσθην ὦτι ἀρα τὸ ἐν καὶ χρόνου μετέχει τὸ δὲ χρόνου μετέχειν ψυχώς προσῆκε πρότας, καὶ οὐ ταῖς νοεραῖς οὐναίς παρ' αἷς ὑπάρχει ἐν ἐκείνῳ τὸ ἐσται, ἀλλὰ μόνον τὸ ἐστὶ τὸ αἰώνιον.

διηρημένης οὖν τῆς ὡλῆς οὐναίς εἰς τῇ τὴν ἐκθεομένην καὶ τὴν καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἄρσενὴν, πάσαν ἀπλῶς τὴν ἐκθεομένην ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ παραδίδοσθαι τῶν ὑποθέσεων, εἰτε νοητὴν, εἰτε νοερὰν, εἰτε ψυχικὴν ὑπάρξωσαν, ὡστε εἰπερ ἐθέλεος καὶ κατὰ τάσην<sup>a</sup> τὴν θεορίαν ἀκούσκαί τάς ὑποθέσεις ἐξῆς ὧσ τοις διετάσασθαι, τὴν μὲν πρῶτην ὑπόθεσιν τίθε περὶ τοῦ ἐνὸς εἶναι θεοῦ, πῶς γενναῖ καὶ διακοσμεῖ πάσας τὰς τάξεις τῶν θεῶν· τὴν δὲ δευτέραν περὶ τῶν θεῶν τάξεων πασῶν πῶς προελθούσαν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ (περί)<sup>b</sup> τῆς συνεξεργαζομένης ἑκάστας οὐναίς·<sup>c</sup> τὴν δὲ τρίτην περὶ τῶν ψυχῶν τῶν ὡμοιομενῶν μὲν θεῶς, οὐναίν δὲ ἐκθεομένην οὐ χληρωσάμενον τὴν δὲ τετάρτην περὶ τῶν ἐνύλων, πῶς παράγεται [καὶ]<sup>d</sup> κατὰ ποίας τάξεως ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν· τὴν δὲ πέμπτην περὶ ὕλης ὧσ ὧσ ὧσ ὧσ ὧσ ὧσ ὔμετοχὰς ἐστὶ τῶν εἰδητικῶν ἑνάδων, ἀνωθέν ἀπὸ τῆς υπερούσιου καὶ μᾶς ἐνάδος λαχοῦσα τὴν ὑπόδοταν· μέχρι γὰρ τῆς ὑλῆς τὸ ἐν καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἐλλαμψῆς<sup>e</sup> ἥκει, φωτίζουσα καὶ τὸ ταύτης ἀδριστον.

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<sup>a</sup> κατὰ τάστην Dillon: κατ' αὐτήν ΑΣ <sup>b</sup> περὶ add. Steel <sup>c</sup> οὐσίας corr. Steel ex g (substantia): οὐσίαις ΑΣ <sup>d</sup> καὶ add. Steel ex g (et) <sup>e</sup> ἐλλαμψῆς ἥκει inv. A
some autonomous henads which transcend their participants, and others which act as unifications of other entities which are unified in virtue of them and in which they inhere. The whole second hypothesis, therefore, he says, reveals to us a multiplicity of autonomous henads, on which are dependent the entities about which the second hypothesis teaches us, revealing to us in its terms all their specific characteristics in turn. If this is true, we must examine each of the conclusions to see to which of the divine orders it is appropriate, and thus make division of the second hypothesis “limb by limb” (Phaedr. 265 E).

As for the third, it is not about all Soul pure and simple, but such as has proceeded forth from the divine Soul; for the whole divine Soul is comprised in the second hypothesis. For Plato himself has clearly stated there that the One partakes also of Time; and partaking of Time is the property first of souls, not of intellectual beings, among whom there is neither “was” nor “will be”, but only the eternal “is” [cf. Tim. 37 E ff.].

So then, having divided the whole of Being into the divinised, and that which is taken on its own, he declares that the whole of the divinised Being is presented in the second of the hypotheses, be it intelligible, intellectual, or psychic. So if you would like to hear the subjects of the hypotheses in order according to this theory also, the first he declares to be about the One God, how he generates and gives order to all the orders of gods. The second is about all the divine orders, how they have proceeded from the One and the substance which is joined to each. The third is about the souls which are assimilated to the gods, but yet have not been apportioned divinised being. The fourth is about Forms-in-Matter, how they are produced according to what rankings from the gods. The fifth is about Matter, how it has no participation in the formative henads, but receives its share of existence from above, from the supra-essential and single Monad; for the One and the illumination of the One extends as far as Matter, bringing light even to its boundlessness.
Commentary

At the start of his discussion of the first hypothesis, Proclus traces the identification of the number and subject matter of the Parmenidean hypotheses in the history of the Platonic school. In a pivotal passage for our appreciation of Syrianic metaphysics, he arrives at Syrianus’ statement on the nine hypotheses in which Syrianus says that what is systematically denied of the One in the first hypothesis is affirmed of the One in the second hypothesis, so that each positive attribute corresponds in order to the preceding negation. This exegesis provides the shape of Proclus’ metaphysics as laid out in his *Commentary on the Parmenides* and *Platonic Theology*.

Proclus’ own statement on the nine hypotheses, as well as his survey of the philosophical history of the nine hypotheses, is well laid out by Dillon in *Proclus’ Commentary on the Parmenides* and Saffrey and Westerink in *Platonic Theology* I. Still, this survey should be summarised here to show the importance of Syrianus’ interpretation, especially where it differs from Iamblichus.

Proclus establishes that the *Parmenides* has nine hypotheses (five positive, four negative) expressing the different senses of One and Not-Being. The five positive hypotheses represent the three ways in which the One relates to Being (1041.22 ff.): 1) in so far as it is superior to Being (identified with One); 2) coordinate with Being (Intellect); and 3) inferior to Being (Soul). The two remaining positive hypotheses represent the two senses of Not-Being. It is “Not Being” in its relationship to others which participate it: 1) relative or contingent (physical world); 2) absolute Not-Being (pure matter). This system includes all meanings of the One, in so far as it is One, Being, or One and Being, or when it is not-existent in some senses or absolutely not-existence.

Thus, Proclus lists the nine hypotheses (5 positive, 4 negative) as follows (1040.1–19):
1st: relationship of the One superior to Being to itself and other things
2nd: One cordinate with Being
3rd: One inferior to Being to itself and other things
4th: relationship of others which participate in the One to themselves and to the One
5th: the relations the others which do not participate in the One have to themselves and to the One
6th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of existing in one way and not in another, to itself and to other things
7th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of absolute non-existence, towards itself and others
8th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as non-existent) in the sense of existing in one way and not in another
9th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as absolutely non-existent.)

Dillon identifies an early group of commentators who take the One in only one sense, which Proclus touches very briefly upon in 1041.15–1041.20. While he does not identify this group and it seems the group could be a rhetorical device, Proclus condemns the view, arguing that such a multiplicity of hypotheses—some arguing positively, others, negatively—would be impossible. The Middle Platonic delineation of the hypotheses is dismissed without discussion in 1051.34.

Proclus next elaborates on the views of three groups of Platonic philosophers before he gives the view of Syrianus. Proclus dismisses these groups as not looking at the structure of Parmenides’ procedure (1052.16). All three groups identify the hypotheses with divine ranks, although they differ with regard to the ranks and to the number of hypotheses. Again, these authors have been surveyed already with regard to their view of the number of hypotheses, and will be only briefly covered here. Iamblichus’ opinion on the matter, however, will be elaborated when we come to Syrianus’ discussion.

6 Dillon writes about possible identification of this non-Neoplatonic group in his introduction to book VI of the Parmenides Commentary. See (1987) 386.
7 He describes the subject of the first hypothesis as One, the second, as Intellect, the third, Soul. See Dillon (1973) 387–388. In Enn. IV.2.2.52–55, on forms in Matter and Matter alone.
The first group consists of Amelius, Porphyry, and Iamblichus (1051.34–1064.17). Proclus lumps these commentators into a single group, despite their differences, because they do not see that the first five hypotheses concern positive conclusions and the last four, negative ones (1056.1 ff.) and so attempt to identify a distinct level of reality for each of them.

According to Amelius⁹ (1052.31–1053.35), Parmenides describes eight hypotheses which correspond to orders of reality, structured as One, Intellect, Soul (two classes), and Matter:

1st: One  
2nd: intellect  
3rd: rational souls  
4th: irrational souls  
5th: matter in so far as it participates in forms  
6th: matter in its ordered aspect  
7th: matter in its aspect as totally devoid of forms  
8th: Form-in-Matter

Proclus agrees in principles with the subjects, but he finds fault with the number of hypotheses (1053.9–35). He also criticises the ordering of reality, arguing that Form is superior to Matter and should not be eighth, especially since Matter cannot receive Form (1053.20–26).

Next are the philosophers who identify nine hypotheses. The first among these is Porphyry¹⁰ (1053.38–1054.37):

1st: primal God  
2nd: Intelligible realm  
3rd: Soul  
4th: ordered Body  
5th: unordered Body  
6th: ordered Matter  
7th: unordered Matter  
8th: Forms-in-Matter, considered in their substratum  
9th: Forms-in-Matter, considered by themselves apart from Matter

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⁹ There is some uncertainty as to whether this figure is Amelius. See Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxx.

¹⁰ On the identification of Porphyry, see Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxxi–lxxxi. This fragment is further evidence that Porphyry wrote a commentary on the Parmenides.
Proclus approves of the order and principle of division, but criticises this scheme for being redundant in places (1054.10–18). Proclus argues that matter does not differ from unordered or ordered body. Also, Proclus says that Porphyry does not confine himself to the first principles of things, as ordered body is not a principle (1054.20ff.).

The next philosopher is identified as Iamblichus (1054.37–1055.26). Iamblichus identifies the following nine hypotheses:

1st: God and the gods (the divine henads)
2nd: intellectual and intelligible beings
3rd: superior beings (angels, daemons, and heroes)
4th: rational souls
5th: secondary souls woven onto the rational souls
6th: Forms-in-Matter and the seminal reason-principles
7th: Matter itself
8th: body in the heavens
9th: generated body beneath the moon

Proclus faults this view for including the superior classes of beings; if they are at the intellectual level, then they ought to be in the second hypothesis, if they are at the level of soul, they ought to be included in the hypothesis about soul (1055.17–23). This scheme, moreover, also includes products (sc. body), rather than only first principles, according to Proclus (1055.23–25).

The first commentator to arrange the hypotheses into positive and negative conclusions was the “the philosopher from Rhodes”, a mysterious figure who delineated ten hypotheses, which he divided into two groups of five (1057.5–1058.21). The first five describe the state of being if the

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11 On the identification of this commentator as Iamblichus, see Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxxii, note 1. See Iamblichus In Parm. Fr. 2 Dillon.
12 See Proclus, PT I, 11 on Iamblichus’ identification of hypotheses.
13 One of the few interpretations which does not say that the first principle concerns only the primal god.
14 Proclus finds this rather remarkable, as Iamblichus makes these classes of beings superior to universal souls. Damascius attributes this doctrine to Iamblichus in De Princip. II, p. 247.25–15 Ruelle (= Iambl. In Parm. fr. 12 Dillon).
16 For a discussion on the identification of this figure, see Saffrey (1984), who thinks it may conceal a reference to Theodore of Asine.
particular level in question exists, the second group shows what there
would be if it were not to exist. The second group of five concerns the
first five:

1st and 6th hypotheses: One (if the One were to exist, if it were not to
exist).

2nd and 7th hypotheses: intellect and intelligible (if the intellect and
intelligible realm exists, what may be true, if it
does not exist, that what was said in the second
hypothesis is now no longer true.)

3rd and 8th hypotheses: discursive intellects (if they exist, they are in
accordance with our conceptions, if they do
not exist, they are in discordance with them.)

4th and 9th hypotheses: embodied forms (if the One exists, these exist;
if the One does not exist, they do not exist,
either.)

5th and 10th hypotheses: receptacle of bodies (the receptacle is harmo-
nised through the existence of the One, the
receptacle is not harmonised because the One
is non-existent.)

Proclus praises the structural neatness of this passage, but criticises it for
describing ten hypotheses and calls some of the pairings absurd (1058.2–6).

The last commentator (1058.21–1061.20) before Syrianus is the only
one mentioned by name: Plutarch, “our grandfather”, returns to Por-
phyry and Iamblichus’ description of nine hypotheses. Plutarch, how-
ever, like the previous commentator, divides the conclusions into two
sets. Plutarch, most notably, divides the conclusions into “true conclu-
sions” if the One exists, and “absurd conclusions” if the One does not
exist. The first five concern those external to things and those immanent
in them if the One exists:

1st: God
2nd: Intellect
3rd: Soul
4th: Forms-in-Matter
5th: Matter

The last four show that if the One present in beings does not exist:

6th: If the One does not exist, only sensible beings will exist
7th: If the One does not exist, every mode of knowledge will not exist
8th: If the One does not exist, things are in a state of dreams and shadows
9th: If the One does not exist, things will not even obtain dreamlike
substantiality.

Plutarch’s system proves important for Proclus because it creates a hier-
archy whereby all orders of reality are connected to the One.17

Proclus admires this arrangement, as it makes the first hypothesis
about the One and hypotheses two through five about things eternally
existent, followed by four hypotheses which show the absurdities if the
One does not exist (1061.1 ff.).

The last opinion arrived at is Syrianus’ (1061.20–1064.12), who treats
the subject on the theological level.18 Syrianus uses the hypotheses to
describe the entire intelligible universe, including all the divine ranks.
As with Porphyry and Plutarch, he states that the first hypothesis is about
the primal God and the second, the intelligible world. The third hypo-
thesis concerns souls proceeding from the divine soul, the fourth, being
united to matter, and the fifth, matter. As with the other Platonic com-
mentators, Syrianus aligns the megistagen¯e with the divine orders, so that
“Limit” and “Unlimitedness” represent ranks of gods. As with Porphyry,
Iamblichus and Plutarch, he delineates nine hypotheses, dividing them
into two groups; the first five are positive, describing “if the One is”, the
next four are negative, describing “if the One is not”. Proclus lists the firstive as follows:

1st: One God—generates and gives order to gods
2nd: the divine orders and how they proceeded from the One
3rd: souls assimilated to gods19
4th: forms in Matter
5th: Matter, how it has no participation in the henads, but receives its
share of existence from above

This division of two groups, one five, the other four, which have a loose
correspondence with one another, is similar to the one the philosopher
from Rhodes and Plutarch describe (apart from, with respect to Plutarch,
reversing which group describes “if the One is” and “if the One is not”);
it differs in its content, that is, its hypostases outline divine beings as they

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17 Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxxvii–iii.
18 In his historical survey of the interpretation of the Parmenides in In Parm. 630.37–
645.8, Proclus says that Syrianus is the inventor of the theological interpretation of the
Parmenides (cf. 641.1; 1061.20 ff.).
19 The first three of these appear in Proclus, PT I, 11, p. x.
emanate from the One, and it differs in the way in which the hypotheses relate to one another. Perhaps Syrianus’ greatest contribution to the issue comes at 1062.10–17:

“… all things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of being; and also that the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics.”

What is negated of the One in the first hypothesis has a positive analogue in the second hypothesis. The hypotheses describe a complete universe. Unlike his predecessors, moreover, he argues that the hypotheses are connected to one another so that the higher produce the lower and contain the lower. Syrianus does not consider the One in its absolute state even in the first hypothesis; instead, Syrianus describes the One in its capacity for generating gods. What, one may ask, is Proclus’ objection to Iamblichus? I think it is two-fold: 1. Hypothesis I is not about the henads, it is about how the One generates henads; and 2. Iamblichus seems to have described his henads as noeta, objects of intellection, which would for Proclus be the subject of Hypothesis II.

In 1063, Proclus recounts Syrianus’ concept of the henads—that each intelligible level is presided over by a henad.

Syrianus clarifies the content of the second and third hypotheses. The second concerns the intelligible/intellective realm, including the pure Soul, while the third concerns souls which proceed from pure soul. This passage follows the subject of In Parm. 1062.3, with few substantial differences. Here, Proclus says that Syrianus shows the second hypothesis includes a discourse about the All-Soul, while the third hypothesis is about soul in itself. The three hypotheses relate in so far as the

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20 Trans. Morrow-Dillon.
21 In this way, Syrianus is similar to Iamblichus, who said that the first hypothesis is about God and gods. Unlike Iamblichus, however, Syrianus leaves a full discussion of divine orders to the second hypothesis. See Steel (1997) 20.
22 Whether debt is owed to Iamblichus on this theory or not has been the subject of much debate, although in a nod to Dillon, I will have to concur that Iamblichus seems to be the author of at least a basic doctrine on the henads. On the debate concerning the authorship of the henads, see Saffrey and Westerink (1978) ix–xvii, li–lxxvii, who attribute the doctrine of the henads to Syrianus. Dillon in (1973) 412–416, and (1993) identifies Iamblichus as the author of the doctrine.
23 Plato, Parm. 151E–155C.
24 Plato, Parm. 155E–157B.
second proceeds from the first, and the third from the second. The fourth hypothesis discusses forms in matter and the fifth, matter.

Proclus elaborates on Syrianus’ statement on the relationship between soul and time in *In Parm. 1217.13–15* (Syrianus, *In Parm. fr. 6* Wear) and in *Platonic Theology* I, 11, he discusses how time relates to the third hypothesis, especially how individual souls are characterised by participation in time.
Syrianus, In Parm. Fr. 4

Proclus, In Parm. 1114.29–1116.16

Οὐκοῦν εἰ μηδὲν ἔχει μέρος, οὐτ ἂν ἄρχην, οὔτε τελευτήν, οὔτε μέσον ἔχον μέρη γὰρ ἂν ἦδη αὐτοῦ τὰ τοιαῦτα (εἴη). ὧδε. [Parm. 137d5–7]

Εἶρθαι μὲν οὖν, διὸν ἔφην, καὶ ταῦτα ὀρθῶς. ἔτι δὲ τελειότερον ὁ ἰμέτερος καθηγεμέων ἔλυε τὴν ἐννοιαν, λέγων ὅτι μὴ ταῦτον ἔστιν ἐπισκεπτόν ἡμᾶς ὅπως ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτό καὶ πῶς πρὸς τᾶ ἄλλα τὸ ἕν, καθάπερ ἐπεσημηνάμεθα πολλάκις. τούτοις δὲ διασκειμένων τῶν προβλημάτων, εἰκότως ὁ Πλάτων νυνὶ θεωρών τίνα οὐχ ἔπέστα τῷ ἑν πρὸς ἑαυτό, καὶ ἄρχην καὶ μέσον αὐτοῦ καὶ τελευτήν ἀπέφησε ταῦτα γὰρ πλήθος ἂν ἦδη τῷ ἐνι συνεισήνεγκεν. ὃ δὲ γε Ἁθηναῖος ἐξένοις οὐ πῶς ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ὁ θεὸς εἰρθῇ, ὄλλα πῶς ἔχει πρὸς τὸ ἄλλα, καὶ ὅτι τὴν ἄρχην ἔχει καὶ τὰ μέσα καὶ τὴν τελευτήν, τούτοις μὲν ἐν τοῖς πάσιν ὄντως, ἄλλοις οὖξ ἐν τῷ θεῷ, τοῦ δὲ θεοῦ, διότι πρὸ πάντων ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦ ἔχειν ἄρχην καὶ μέσα καὶ τελευτήν [καὶ] καθαρεύοντος, συνεχόντος δὲ τὰ ὄντα πάντα, ἐν οἷς τὰ τρία ταῦτα ἐστίν. ὡστε, καὶ εἰ περὶ τοῦ πρώτου ποιητοῦ τὸν λόγον καὶ ἐν ἑκείνοις, οὐ μάχεται τοῖς ἐνταῦθα λεγομένοις—οὐ γὰρ ὅτι ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὸν τὴν τριάδα ταὐτὴν ὁ θεὸς ἔχει, λέγει ὁ Ἁθηναῖος ἐξένοις, ἄλλοις πῶς πάσιν ἐπιβεβήκε τοῖς οὕσιν ἐν οἷς τὰ τρία ταῦτα ἐστίν. εἰ δὲ ἐν Ἕπιστολαῖς περὶ τὸν πάντων βασιλέα τὰ πάντα εἶναι ἕρησι καὶ ἑκείνου ἐνεκέα πάντα καὶ ἑκείνου οὗτοι πάντων καλών, δήλων δὴ ὅτι καὶ ἄρχην πάντων ἐστὶν ἑκείνος καὶ τέλος καὶ μέσον, ἄλλοις οὔδε διά τούτο αὐτοῦ ἄρχην ἔχει καὶ μέσον καὶ τελευτὴν καὶ γὰρ ἑκείνου πῶς ἔχει πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα διακεκριμένα, καὶ οὐ πῶς ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτὸ. τῶν οὗν ἄλλων ἐστὶν ἄρχην, μέσον, τέλος τὸ πρῶτον, ἄλλοι οὗ καθ’ οὕτω διαφερέται εἰς ἄρχην καὶ μέσον καὶ τέλος καὶ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἄρχην μὲν πάντων, ὅτι ἄρ’ αὐτοῦ πάντα τέλος δὲ, ὅτι ἐπ’ αὐτὸ πάντα: πᾶσα γὰρ ὄψιν καὶ πᾶσα ἡ κατὰ φύσιν δρεῖς πρὸς τὸ ἐν, ὡς μόνος ἄγαθόν, ἀνατείνειται μέσον δὲ, ὅτι πάντα τὰ κέντρα τῶν

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a εἴη add. Steel ex. A PLAT. codd. (cf. infra, 1111.20): om. Σγ
b τελευτήν ΑΣ: finem et consummationem gl καὶ del. Steel cum M
c ποιητοῦ scrip. Steel: ποιοῦ ΑΣ
d ταῦτα ἐστὶν inv. A
e ἑκείνα scrip. Steel: ἑκείνα ΑΣg
“So then, if it has no parts, it has neither a beginning nor an end, nor a middle; for such things would already be parts of it.” “Quite right.”

These views, as I have said, are quite correct. But our own Master has solved the objection still more perfectly, saying that it is not the same thing for us to examine how the One is related to itself and how it is related to others, as we have indicated many times before this. Once these problems have been sorted out, it seems reasonable that Plato here, where he is considering what does not follow for the One in relation to itself, has denied it beginning and middle and end; for these would as far as we are concerned have introduced with them multiplicity into the One. The Athenian Stranger [Laws IV, 715 E], on the other hand, is not saying what relation God has to himself but what relations he has to others, and that he possesses beginning and middle and end, these things being present in the universe and not in God, while God himself, because he is prior to everything, is pure from having beginning and middle and end, but holds together all existing things, in which these three elements exist. So that even if the discussion does concern the first God in that passage also, it does not contradict what is said here. For the Athenian Stranger is not saying that god possessed this triad in himself and in relation to himself, but that he transcends all the beings in which these three elements are. And if in the Letters [II, 312 E] he declares that all things are about the king of all, and for his sake all things are and he is the cause of all nobility, it is plain that he says this because that entity is the beginning of all things and their end and their middle, but he is not because of this himself possessed of beginning and middle and end; for that passage teaches what relation God has to others, and not what his relation is to himself. Of other things, then, the first principle is beginning and middle and end, but he is not himself divided into beginning and middle and end; for he is the beginning of all things because all things are directed towards him; for all pangs of desire and all natural striving are directed towards the One, as the sole Good; and he is the middle because all the centres
οντων, ειτε νοητων, ειτε νοερων, ειτε ψυχικων, ειτε αισθητων, εις έν αυτα επερειδεται, α δοτε [και] άρχη και τελος εστι και μεσον παντων το εν αυτο δε προς έαυτο τουτων ουδεν εχει, διοτι μηδε αλλοτι πληθος. αλλα μην ουδε προς έτερον ουτε γαρ αρχην εχει, διοτι μηδεν αυτοι χρειττον μηδε απ' αιτιας εστιν ουτε τελος ουδενος γαρ εστιν ένεκα του, παν δε το έχον τελος ένεκα του παντως εστι, το δε έν μονον ου ένεκα, καθαπερ ή άλη και το έσχατον των ολων ένεκα του μονον ουτε μεσον εστι του ενος, περι ο εστι ως μεσον το εν, ένα μη πολλα ευ το εν ουν εστι μεσον. παντων αρα τουτων εξηρηται το εν και ουδεν δει τουτων αυτο προσφερειν, αλλε δοτε ο Πλατων όφηγεται, μενειν επι των αποφασεων. και γαρ, οταν αυτο λεγομεν εφετον ή τελος, την των άλλων δηλουμεν ανατασιν φυσεως γαρ άνάγκη παντα τα μετα το πρωτον εριεται του πρωτου και πως γαρ αν εγκεκεντρισμενα ε τω πρωτω και ενεργιζωμενα δυνατο μη εφευρθαι της έαυτων αιτιας; ταυτ' ουν εστι τα προς εσχεν την σχεσιν άναδεδεγμενα, εσεινο δε άπαντων ομοιως εξηρηται.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{a}}\text{ ἐπερείδεται} \text{corr. Steel ex g (firmantur): διαφείται ΑΣ (ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνίδρυται coni. Cous\textsuperscript{2})} \]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{b}}\text{ καὶ} \text{add. Steel ex g (et) \text{ε}γκεκεντρισμένα corr. Steel ex g (incentrata): κεκεντρισμένα ΜΣ κέντρα ἐπεται Α}^{4}\]
of existent things, whether intelligible, intellectual, psychic or sensible, are established in the One; so that the One is the beginning, the middle and the end of all things, but in relation to himself he possesses none of these, seeing that he possesses no other type of multiplicity; but not in relation to anything else either, for he neither has beginning, because nothing is superior to him, nor does he derive from a cause; nor does he have end, for he does not exist for the sake of anything, but everything that has an end in all cases exists for the sake of something and the One is only that for the sake of which things exist, even as Matter, and in general the lowest element in all things, is only for the sake of something; nor is there a middle of the One, around which as middle the One exists, that the One may not be a Many of which there is a middle element. The One is, then, transcendent over all these things, and one should not apply any of them to it, but, as Plato instructs us, we should rest content with the negations. For when we say that it is an object of striving or an end, we are indicating the efforts of other things towards it; for by the compulsion of nature all things after the First strive towards the First. How indeed, if they are centred and rooted in the First, could they not strive towards their own cause? These, then, are things which have acquired a relation towards it, but it is transcendent over all things equally.
Commentary

*Parmenides* 137 D raises the question of whether the One has parts and how these parts may or may not preclude it having a beginning, middle and end. This negative argument has its positive counterpart in the Second Hypothesis at 145a4–8, which argues that the One is an unlimited entity which contains wholes and parts in a transcendent fashion (see below, *In Parm. Fr. 5*.) In this first hypothesis, Syrianus argues that the One is beyond multiplicity and only contains beginning, middle and end “with respect to others”, i.e., in so far as it contains everything in the universe. Syrianus’ opinion is in answer to an aporia stated in Proclus’ *Commentary on the Parmenides* 1113.33 in which *Laws* IV 715 E and *Parmenides* 137 D are alleged to contradict one another on whether God can have a beginning, middle and end.

Before Proclus comes to the aporia, he addressed the geometrical and arithmetical problems raised by commentators on the lemma. First, he defines beginning, middle and end as parts, and then defines part. Proclus argues that the One can have no beginning, middle and end because these entities are parts and only more partial, inferior beings have parts. The first group of commentators argues that everything with a beginning, middle, and end must have this beginning, middle and end as parts of itself. Nothing with a limit, for instance, can have an unlimited number of parts. These commentators give the example of a line: a line begins and ends with a point, but contains an unlimited number of points. The line, then, cannot be comprised of these points, although points constitute its limits. Moreover, he says that because the One is unlimited, it could contain beginning, middle, and end as its parts. The discussion moves to an explanation of part, which is denied of the One.

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1 Proclus, *In Parm*. 1111; *ET* prop. 67 “that which causes all wholes to be wholes is prior to the parts”. Proclus says that each member of the triad is represented by beginning, middle and end. See also Proclus, *PT* II, 12, p. 67, 14ff.

2 Proclus, *In Parm*. 1111.23–35. See Nicomachus, *Intr. Arith*. II 6 p. 36: “Unity occupies the place and character of a point, will be the beginning of intervals and of numbers, but not itself an interval or number, just as the point is the beginning of a line, but is not itself a line or interval.”

3 The discussion of beginning, middle and end is an offspring of the much wider debate, which considers the relationship of wholes and parts. See Proclus, *ET* 67; *PT* III, 25, p. 165; for three senses of whole: whole before parts, whole of parts, whole in parts. In her article Glasner differentiates between division into parts and division into beginning, middle and end. Division into parts, she says, is interpreted in terms of “whole before parts” (1992) 198.
The One cannot be composed of different elements because it is a unitary entity.

Secondly, even if it were to have limits, these limits must be composed of parts with limits.\(^4\) Beginning, middle, and end are parts and hence limits. The conclusion to be drawn is that the One, as an unlimited body, cannot contain limits.

In *In Parm.* 1112.26–35, Proclus sets out the three definitions of part:

1. A part is that which contains the same elements as the whole,\(^5\) only in a partial\(^6\) manner.\(^7\)
2. A part makes up a totality.\(^8\)
3. A part is linked with other things for the completion of one entity.\(^9\)

Because the One is removed from all multiplicity, it can contain no parts, including beginning and end, in all three of the above senses.\(^10\)

After Proclus sets out the issue of the whole and part, he addresses the aporia raised by those who advance the statement of the Athenian Stranger in *Laws* IV 715 E,\(^11\) where he finds his solution with Syrianus. The problem lies in Parmenides’ apparent contradiction of the Athenian Stranger in the *Laws*, where the Stranger says that God possesses beginning, middle and end.\(^12\) Proclus gives the opinion of two sets of commentators in reply to this aporia. The first group of commentators

\(^{4}\) The argument also reflects a larger discussion regarding forms and matter. Proclus, *In Eucl.* 86.23–87.3: “In the forms separable from matter, the ideas of the boundaries exist in themselves and not in the things bounded... but the forms inseparable from matter, the limits surrender themselves to the things they limit, they establish themselves in them becoming, as it were, parts of them and being filled with their inferior character.” Trans. Morrow (1970). The One falls into the category of the first—an entity in which the idea of boundary exists in itself.

\(^{5}\) See Proclus, *ET* props. 66–69.

\(^{6}\) Theodore of Asine (Proclus, *In Tim.* II, 274.10): three modes of wholeness; see also Proclus, *ET* prop. 23 and 65.

\(^{7}\) Part is measure. See Euclid’s *Elements* VII, def. 3; Proclus, *PT* XXV.165: identifies the relation of whole before parts to wholes of parts with genus and species.

\(^{8}\) *pars qua quantum*, Aristotle’s *Met.* 1023b13, book V Euclid’s *Elements*. See *Parm.* 137 C: whole is the form where no part is missing.

\(^{9}\) Procl. 329 D: parts can be similar to the whole, like pieces of gold, or different like parts of a face. In the second hypothesis, the understanding of part is one being because of its parts. See Glasner (1992) 197. See also *Sophist* 244 E: a whole in the sense that it has the property of unity.

\(^{10}\) Proclus, *In Parm.* 1113.

\(^{11}\) “O men, that God who, as old tradition tells, holdeth the beginning, the end, and the centre of all things that exist, completeth his circuit by nature’s ordinance in straight, unswerving course.” Translation Bury (1926). Bury notes that this is probably Orphic.

\(^{12}\) Proclus, *In Parm.* 1113.
says that God contains beginning, middle, and end in a hidden mode.\textsuperscript{13} Proclus argues against the concept that the One contains parts in an expressible manner as only secondary entities can contain multiplicity. This idea is based on the connection between the term \textit{kruphiōs} (in a hidden mode) and \textit{diērēmenōs} (distinction). The concept seems particularly Iamblichean based on a comment in Iamblichus’ \textit{Phaedrus Commentary} where he says that forms are present at the higher level of \textit{nous} only as monads of forms, in a hidden manner. The second group,\textsuperscript{14} identified as Plutarch of Athens by Dillon—although the author could be Iamblichus—says that both the Athenian Stranger and Parmenides are talking about God, but the Athenian Stranger is discussing the Demiurge in particular. Proclus is polite about this group, which is to be expected, considering that Plutarch is Proclus’ spiritual grandfather. This group—in what seems to be typical Syrianiac mode—refers to how the Demiurge is divided into a triad, with its beginning, middle, and end compared to each member of the demiurgic triad.

In \textit{In Parm}, 1114.25, Proclus arrives at the view of Syrianus, who denies the possibility that the god discussed is the Demiurge. Instead, he argues that the one god is discussed in two different aspects in the two texts. In the \textit{Parmenides}, Plato looks only to how the One relates to itself and denies it a beginning, middle, and end. In the \textit{Laws}, however, the Athenian Stranger discusses how the One relates to the world. Syrianus’ solution to this apparent contradiction is that both parties are correct. Because it is impossible to believe that Plato contradicts himself, Syrianus conjectures that Plato gives a different emphasis to different things. In the \textit{Laws}, the relation of God is to creation—in this kind of external relation, God functions as a triad. With himself, however, as in the case of the \textit{Parmenides}, God acts as a monad.\textsuperscript{15} Syrianus’ explanation delves into the two aspects of God, with the purpose of denying multiplicity to the

\textsuperscript{13} In his introduction to book VI of the \textit{Parmenides Commentary}, Dillon tentatively identifies this commentator as Iamblichus, whereas Hadot connects him with Porphyry. Of late, however, Dillon retracts this, noting that it can perfectly well be Porphyry and the second commentator Iamblichus, as the philosophy actually fits Porphyry’s doctrine of the One being father of the noetic triad. See Dillon (1987) 398 and 457 note 93; Hadot (1968).

\textsuperscript{14} See Dillon (1987) 458, note 95.

\textsuperscript{15} This distinction between “with respect to itself” and “with respect to others” is prior to that of beginning, middle and end; see Glasner (1992) 98. In \textit{In Euclid} 98.13–14, Proclus says, “the point is twofold, because it exists either by itself or in the line.” The division into beginning, middle and end relates to the concept of part and boundary (Proclus, \textit{In Parm}. 1116; 1125; \textit{In Eucl}. 142.8–143.5).
One, but attributing all things to it as the cause of creation. Because the beginning, middle, and end are present in the universe, they must also exist in God. Syrianus explains that the One is the beginning as the source of all things, the centre of all things because all things are established in it, and the end, because it is the goal to which all things strive. Still, the One is not himself possessed of beginning, middle and end. Proclus uses this passage of the Parmenides to prove the existence of the absolute One. He makes the case in Platonic Theology II, 20 that the absolute One exists beyond the total (πᾶν), since the total relates to the parts that comprise it by encompassing those parts. Instead, the Absolute One is better called “entire” (ὅλον), a total entity that is not full of parts.

In Platonic Theology II, 12, Proclus associates whole and parts with the second triad of the intelligible-intellectual gods. The intelligible triads of the Parmenides correspond to the conclusions of the second hypothesis, with the first intelligible triad corresponding to the first conclusion (if the One is, it participates in Being: Parm. 142B5–C7—characterised as intelligible essence); the second triad corresponds to the second conclusion: if the One is, it is a totality and it has parts (Parm. 142C7–D9—characterised as intelligible life); the third triad corresponds to the third conclusion; if the One is, it is an infinite multiplicity of parts (Parm. 142 D 9–143 A 3). Beginning, Middle and End are thus relegated to the second triad of the second hypothesis, which concerns the intelligible. In In Parm. 1061.31–1063.5, a passage attributed to Syrianus (fr. 3 above), the divine classes are given names, such as “totality”, “multiplicity”; the names given to the intelligibles in the second hypothesis are precisely those denied of the One, as we see in In Parm. 1115.35 ff. Proclus uses the Parmenidean statements concerning which property denied of the One can be attributed to a divine class as it exists in the second hypothesis. These statements, thus, are used by Proclus to outline the world of divine beings.

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16 Syrianus cites Plato, Ep. 2 312 E.
18 The other two include hen on, holon, and pan.
19 Saffrey and Westerink attribute this passage to Syrianus in Proclus, PT II, 23–26; in Sophist 244B–245B, Plato has expressed the same doctrine of the triads in order to show that the One in itself transcends the summit of Being. Steel discusses this passage in (1992) 62.
20 Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xlv.
21 Saffrey and Westerink outline this in (1968) lxix and (1978) xlix. Proclus, following Syrianus, places the metaphysical attributes of the five genera at the intellectual level so
In what will become more clear in the fragments which follow, the different orders of the intelligible contain the five genres of Being; in so far as the *Platonic Theology*\(^{22}\) and the *Commentary on the Parmenides*\(^{23}\) discuss the ways in which the One transcends these genres and the second hypothesis affirms them, both texts act as Platonic interpretations of the *Sophist*.

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that they do not follow immediately upon the absolute unity of the One. See Van Campe (2009) 262.


\(^{23}\) Proclus, *In Parm*. 1173.7–1175.29.
Proclus, In Parm. 1118.24–1123.16

καὶ μὴν τελευτή γε καὶ ἀρχή πέρας ἐκάστου.—πῶς δ’ οὖ;—‘Ἀπειρον ἀρα τὸ ἐν, εἰ μήτε ἀρχή μήτε τελευτήν ἔχει.—‘Ἀπειρον. [Parm. 137d6–8]

Τὴν τοῖνυν ἀπειρίαν, ἵνα κάτωθεν ποιησώμεθα τὴν ἄρχην, θεατέον μὲν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ὑλῆς, διότι ἄρχιστος καθ’ αὐτήν καὶ ἀμορφός καὶ ἄνειδος, τὰ δ’ εἰδή καὶ αἱ μορφαὶ πέρα τῆς ὑλῆς. θεατέον [δε] b καὶ ἐπί τοῦ ἀποίου σώματος κατὰ τὴν διάφορον ἐπ’ ἀπειρον γὰρ τὸ οὗτο πρῶτον διαιρετέον, ἄτε πρῶτον [唳] c διαιστατόν. θεατέον δὲ κατὰ τὰ περὶ τὸ ἀποίου πρῶτσας ὑφισταμένας ποιήτας, ἐν αἰς τὸ μᾶλλον ἐστι καὶ ἢττον προῦτας τούτους γὰρ καὶ ὁ ἐν Φιλίβιῳ Σωκράτης ἐξασκήτησε τὸ ἀπειρον. θεατέον δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ πάσης τῆς γενεσίας γιγνεται καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἀριστως τῶν γεννητικῶν ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος ἀπειρία τὴν γένεσιν ἐγκαθίσταται μόνον ὑσια, πᾶσα δ’ ὄμοι h μηδέποτε ὑσια.
“And further, the end and the beginning are the limits of each thing.” “Obviously.” “So then the One is unlimited, if it has neither beginning nor end.” “It is unlimited.”

We, however, accept all these suggestions as having a certain attraction, even though we incline to some more than to others; but we are very strongly indeed influenced by our own Master, who in this passage as well has very accurately tracked down the intention of Plato, and we would recommend all lovers of truth to see first how many orders of Unlimitedness there are among beings, then what processions of Limit there are, as it were, set over against these, and after that to turn to the consideration of what Unlimitedness is being referred to here; for if one treats the inquiry into the present question in this way the whole intention of Plato will readily become clear.

Unlimitedness, then, if we start from below, may be reviewed in Matter because it is unlimited and shapeless and formless of itself, whereas the forms and shapes are limits of Matter. It may be seen also in unqualified body in respect of division; for this is the entity which is primally divisible to infinity, in so far as it is the first which is extended. It may also be viewed in the qualities which come into being primally about the Unlimitedness, which are the first things to contain the more and less; for these are the elements by which Socrates in the Philebus [24 B]\(^1\) characterised the Unlimitedness. It may also be seen throughout the whole of the realm of generation; for this possesses Unlimitedness, both in respect of its constant coming into being and in the ceaseless cycle of this, and in respect of the unlimited exchanges with each other of generated things as they constantly come into being and perish, among which also Unlimitedness in respect of multiplicity has its origin, since it only has existence in the process of coming to being, never attaining true

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\(^1\) Proclus cites Philebus in his discussion of how God produced beings through a mixture of Limit and Unlimited; see PT III, 8.
πρὸ δὲ τούτων τὸ ἀπειρὸν θεατέον ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κυκλοφορίας· ἔχει γὰρ καὶ αὐτὴ τὸ ἀπειρὸν διὰ τὴν ἀπειροδυναμίαν τοῦ κυκλοφορίας· σῶμα μὲν γὰρ, καθὸ σῶμα, δύναμιν ἀπειρῶν οὐκ ἔχει, διὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ νοῦ μετουσίαν καὶ τὸ σῶμα αἱ ἐστὶν, καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἀπειρῶν ἀκατάληπτος· οὐκ ὡστὶν γὰρ νοοῦσα, δύναμιν ἀπαύστου κυνήγεις ἔχει καὶ ἔστιν ἀεικύνητος, συν- ἀπτούσα τὰς περιόδους ἀλλήλας, καὶ ἄρτυτον ποιομένη τὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ μίαν ἀριστεύει καὶ ἀνέκλειπτον. ἔτι πρὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ κυκλοφορία τοῦ κυκλοφορίων τῆς ψυχῆς μᾶραν τοῦ μετρεῖ ταῖς περιόδους κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν· ὑδέπαρτας γὰρ ἀπειρῶν ὡλος, διότι ἡ ἐνέργεια αὐτοῦ, δ' ἢ ἀνελίπτε τὰς κυνήγεις τῶν ψυχῶν καὶ δ' ἢς μετέρα τὰς περιόδους αὐτῶν, κατ' ἴκριθμὸν ἰόους, ἀπειρῶς ἐστὶν κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν· οὐκ ἀρίστε τοῦ ἀπειρῶν ὡλος καὶ ἀπειρῶς ἐπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ νοοῦ καὶ τῆς νοοφέρους ἱερώς· αὐτὴ γὰρ ἀμετάκλητος καὶ ἄρθρος πάρεστι, αἰώνιος δὲ καὶ ἀπαύστων τοῦ γὰρ ἀκινήτων β' αὐτῆς καὶ ἀνέκλειπτον οὐδαίς ἐστὶ καὶ δυνάμεως ὡλο ἐπίλεπτος· ἀλλ' ἢς ἂν ἃν ἄγρυπνον ἐξουσιας· δ' ᾐν καὶ πᾶν τὸ κυνημένον αἱ δύναται αἱ κατεισθαί, μετεχόν ἐν τῇ κυνήσει τῆς ἐστώσης ἀπειρίας. καὶ οὐκ ἀρχά τούτων μόνων τὸ ἀπειροῦν, ἀλλ' καὶ πρὸ τοῦ νοοῦ πάντως αὐτοὺς ὁ πολυψυχιτός αἰών ἀπειρῶς, δ' καὶ πᾶσαν περιέχει τὴν νοερὰν ἀπειρίαν. πόθεν γὰρ τῷ νῷ τὸ αἰώνιος· ἤκ τοῦ αἰώνος· οὕτως οὖν ἀπειροῖ πρὸ τοῦ νοοῦ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν· μᾶλλον δὲ τὰ μὲν ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν ἀπειρα, ὃ δὲ αἰών δύναμις καὶ γὰρ οὖν ἄλλο τί ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις ὁ πρῶτος αἰών.

ἐπ' αὐτῆς δὴ τὴν πρωτότοκον πηγὴν τῆς ἀπειρίας ἀνάδραμε λουπὸν καὶ τὴν χυμόν αἰτίας πάντων τῶν ὀποιοῦν ἄπειρῶν γεννητικῆς καὶ ἀναδραμών ὄψει πάντα κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν (τῆν) ἐκείθεν ἄπειρα· τοιοῦτον γὰρ, εἰ βούλει, τὸ αὐτοάπειρον· τοιοῦτον παρ' ὁμοίου τὸ χάος, περὶ οὗ καὶ ἐκείνους, εὐφηκε τὸ οὕδε τι πείρας ὑπῆρην· ὁ μὲν γὰρ αἰών, εἰ καὶ διὰ τὸ ἄπειρος, ἀλλὰ ὡς μέτρον δήμου τῶν αἰωνίων καὶ πέρας ἐστί· τὸ δὲ χαὸς πρῶτος ἀπειροῦν καὶ μόνως ἀπειροῖ καὶ πηγῆ πάσης ἀπειρίας, αἰτητῆς, νοερᾶς, ψυχικῆς, σωματικῆς, ὑλικῆς.

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a Þeα corr. Steel ex g (vide); ßεδ ΑΣ b ἀγάπητον Σγ: ἀγάπητον Α1 d μόνον Σγ: μόνον Α d γεννητική命题 Dillon: γεννήτως ΑΣγ (cf. Theol. plat. V 22, p. 81.2). c τῆν add. Steel, que add. g (τὰ Γ?)
existence. And prior to these the Unlimitedness may be observed in the
circuits of the heavens; for it also possesses Unlimitedness by reason of
the unlimited power of that which moves it; for body, in so far as it is body,
does not have unlimited power but through the presence in it of intellect
even body exists eternally, and its motion is unlimited; it is unceasing
and continuous, having the same thing as its beginning and end. Prior
to these again, the Unlimitedness may be perceived in the Soul, for as
it thinks transitively, it possesses the power of unceasing motion and is
eternally mobile, joining its circuits one to the other and producing an
activity which is unwearied and always one and unfailing. Further, prior
to Soul, the Unlimitedness may be perceived in the case of Time itself,
which measures the whole circuit of the Soul; for this is limitless as a
whole because its activity, through which it unfolds the motions of souls
and through which it measures their circuits as it proceeds according to
number, is unlimited in its power; for it never stops resting and going
forward, both clinging fast to the One, and unfolding Number, which
measures the motions of all things. But indeed, even prior to Time,
behold the Infinite in Intellect itself and intellectual life; for this is non-
transient and always a totality and present as a whole and eternal and
infinite in power; its immobility and unfailing continuity is a mark of
an essence and power which does not give out, but always preserves
unsleeping life, through which also everything that is in motion is able
always to move, participating through its motion in stable Infinity. And
the Unlimitedness does not extend only as far as these, but also, prior
to Intellect, the much-celebrated Eternity itself is necessarily infinite,
seeing that it comprehends the whole intellectual infinity. For whence
would Intellect derive its eternal life, if not from Eternity? So then this
is Unlimitedness, prior to Intellect, in respect of power; or rather all the
things are infinite in power, but Eternity is power itself; for indeed the
primal Eternity is nothing else than Power.

Ascend then to the primal fount of Infinity, and the hidden cause
generative of all other infinite things of whatever kind, and when you
have thus ascended you will see that all things are infinite in respect
of power from that source. For such, if you will, is Essential Infinity;
such is what is termed by Orpheus “chaos”, about which he himself
has said, “Nor was there any bound beneath it” [OF 52 Kern]. For
Eternity, even if it is unlimited in respect of everlastingness, nevertheless
as being the measure of things eternal is also a limit; chaos on the
other hand is primally unlimited and solely unlimited, and is the fount
of all Infinity—intelligible, intellectual, psychic, corporeal, or material.
σύριαν, 
in par.

οὖν ὅσαι τάξεις τῆς ἀπειρίας καὶ ὡς αἱ αἱ δεύτεραι τῶν πρὸ
αὐτῶν ἐξήριστηναι· ἢ τε γὰρ ὑλικὴ ἀπειρία συνέχεται διὰ τῆς ἀειγε

νεσίας, ἢ τε ἀειγενεσία διὰ τὴν ἀειγενεσίαν τοῦ αἰθέρος ἐστὶν ἀνέκλει

πτος, καὶ ἢ ἀειγενεσία τοῦ αἰθέρος διὰ τὴν τῆς δεσίας ψυχῆς ἀπαντο

περίοδον ἀποτελείται· μίμημα γὰρ ἐστίν ἔκεινης, καὶ ἢ ταύτης περίοδος διὰ
tῆς τοῦ χρόνου συνεχῆς καὶ ἀνέκλειπτον δύναμιν ἀνέλιπτε, την αὐτὴν ἀρχήν
ποιομένη καὶ τελευτήν διὰ τὸ νῦν τὸ χρονικὸν, καὶ ὁ χρόνος ἀπείρως ἐνεργεί
dιὰ τὴν νοερὰν ἀπειρίαν τὴν ἀεὶ ἐκτῶσαν· τὸ γὰρ κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἢν, ὅταν ἀπειρῶν ἢ, διὰ τὴν μένουσαν ἀεὶ αἰτίαν ἀπειρῶν, περὶ ἢν ἀνελίπτεται τοῦτο καὶ ἢν ἀεὶ ὡσαυτώς περιχορεύει. 
καὶ ὁ νοῦς ἐπὶ ἀπειρῶν ἢν διὰ τὸν αἰῶναν πάοι ἐν τοῦ αἰῶνας, καὶ ὁτὸς ἢστιν ὃθεν ἐξήριστηται πάοι, τοῖς ἢστι (ἐναργεῖστερον, τοῖς δὲ) ἀμυδρότερον, τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ ἢν. καὶ ὁ αἰῶν ἀπειρῶν διὰ τὴν πηγὴν τῆς ἀπειρίας ἢ, καὶ ὡσαυτής πάοιας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ ἐνεργείας καὶ περίοδος καὶ γενέσεως ἀνώθεν χορηγεῖ τὸ ἀνέκλειππον. καὶ μέχρι ταύτης ἀνιώθει καὶ ἢ ταύτης καταστούσι αἱ τῶν ἀπειρῶν τάξεις, καὶ γὰρ ἢ τῶν καλῶν ἀπ' τῶν ἀπειρῶν ἀποτελεῖται πᾶσι ταύτης ἀπειρίας καὶ γὰρ ἡ τῶν καλῶν ἀπ' τῶν ἀπειριῶν ἀπειρίας. ἂλλα περὶ μὲν τῶν τοῦ ἀπείρου τάξεων εἰρήσθη τοῦτοι. τὴν δὲ τοῦ πέρατος σειράν ταύτη συμπροσόπουσαν ἀνώθεν ἐπισκεψετέον· δύο γὰρ ταύτας αἰτίας ἃμα παρήγαγεν ὁ θεός, πέρας καὶ ἀπειρῶν, ἢ εἰ βούλει λέγειν ἡμᾶς Ὁρφικῶς· αἰθέρα καὶ χαος. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀπειρῶν χαος ἐστιν, ὡς χορηγονδ' πάοις δυνάμεως καὶ πάοις ἀπειρίας καὶ ὡς περιληπτικὸν τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ ὁιον τῶν ἀπειρῶν τὸ ἀπειρώτατον· τὸ δὲ πέρας ὁ αἰθήρ, ὁτι καὶ ὡσαυτὸς ὁ αἰθήρ τά πάντα περατοὶ καὶ μετεί. πρῶτον ὁφν πέρας τὸ αὐτοπέρας· πηγὴ γὰρ καὶ ἐστὶ πάντων ἐστὶ

a ἐναργείστερον... δὲ add. Cous (cf. In Parm. III 803.3–4) b αἱ... τάξεις corr. Steel ex g (ordines): ἢ... τάξεις ΑΣ corr. Steel ex g (quare): τε θαν. Α d χορηγον cor. Steel ex g (elargitium): χορητικὸν ΑΣ χορητικόν Cous. e γὰρ add. Strobel f ἐστι στήριγμα Taylor
You see, then, how many orders of Infinity there are, and how in each case the secondary depend upon those prior to them; for material unlimitedness is held together through eternal generation, while eternal generation is unfailing by reason of the eternal motion of the aether, and the eternal motion of the aether is brought about by the unceasing circuit of the divine Soul; for it is an imitation of that entity, and the circuit of the Soul is unfolded through the continuous and unfailing power of Time, which makes the same things to be beginning and end by means of the temporal present, and Time exercises its activity without Limit by virtue of the unlimitedness of Intellect, which is always static; for that which proceeds according to Intellect, when it is infinite, is infinite by virtue of an eternally static cause, around which this unfolds itself and about which it performs its eternally uniform dance. And Intellect possesses eternal life by virtue of Eternity; for eternity comes to all things from Eternity, and it is this on which all depend, some more manifestly, others more obscurely, for their being and life; and Eternity is infinite by virtue of the fount of infinity, which from above provides unfailingness to all essences and powers and activities and circuits and generations. Up to this, then, there ascends, and from this there descends, the orders of things infinite; for even as the order of things beautiful descends from Essential Beauty, and the order of things equal from Primal Equality, even so the order of things infinite descends from Essential Infinity.

Enough has now been said about the orders of infinity. We must next turn to examine the chain of Limit which proceeds parallel with this. For these two causal principles were produced simultaneously by God—Limit and Unlimitedness, or, if you wish us to express them in Orphic terms, Aether and Chaos.\(^2\) For the infinite is Chaos, in so far as it is receptive of every power and every type of Unlimitedness, and insofar as it encircles everything else, and is as it were the most infinite of all things infinite. Aether is Limit because this (visible) aether too limits and measures all things. The primary limit is Essential Limit, the fount

\(^2\) Syrianus uses the Orphic principles of Aether and Chaos to express how all of reality is derived from the countering principles which exist as a dyad after the One. See Syrianus, *In Met.* 182.22–24; 9.37–10.7 and Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 176.23–177.2; 385.9–21; *PT* III, 8, 30.15–23. Cf. D’Ancona (1992) 274. The principles of *peras* and *apeiria* were revealed by Orpheus to Pythagoras, by Pythagoras to Plato. The key passage for *peras* and *apeiria* in the thought of Syrianus occurs in *In Met.* p. 165.33–166.6. See D’Ancona (2000) 216. On Syrianus invoking theological authorities on numbers, see O’Meara (1989) 137. See also Iamblichus, *In Tim.* Fr. 7 Dillon, where Limit and Unlimitedness are a dyad immediately following the One.
τῶν περάτων, νοητών, νοερῶν, ὑπερχοιμίων, ἐγκοιμίων, μέτρον αὐτὸ
tῶν πάντων καὶ ὄρος προοπάρχον. δεύτερον δὲ τὸ κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα·
αἰῶν γὰρ ὁμοῦ καὶ ἀπειροῦ ἐστιν, ὡς εἰσηθα, καὶ πέρας· καθὸ μὲν
gὰρ ἀνεκλειπτὸν ζωῆς ἐστὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ὡς δύναμις τοῦ ἀεὶ χορηγός,
ἀπειρός ἐστιν καθὸ δὲ μέτρον ἐστὶν πάσης νοερᾶς ἐνεργείας καὶ ὄρος
τῆς τοῦ νοῦ ζωῆς ἀνωθὲν αὐτὴν ὀρίζων, πέρας ἐστὶν καὶ ὀλος καὶ
αὐτὸς τῶν μικτῶν ἐστί τῶν ἐν πέρατος καὶ ἀπειρίας ὑφισταμένων,
ὅθεν αὐτὸν οὔτε τὸ πρώτος (πέρας οὔτε τὸ πρώτος)ἐπειρέουν ἠξιοθεμένη·
tὸ γὰρ πρώτος ἐκατέρω ἐξήθηται τῶν μικτῶν πάντων, ὡς
φησιν ὁ ἐν τῷ Φιλήβῳ Σωκράτης.

τρίτον τοῖνυν τὸ πέρας ἐν τῷ νῷ θεατέων· καθὸ γὰρ ἐν ταὐτῷ μέ-
νει κατὰ τὴν νόησιν, καὶ μίαν καὶ ἄει καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἐχει ζωῆν, ὄρισται
καὶ πεπέρασται· τὸ γὰρ ἀμετάνοιαν καὶ τὸ ἐστίς πεπερασμένης ἐστὶ
φύσεως· καὶ ὀλος ἀριθμὸς ὃν διηλονότα ταύτη μετέχει τοῦ πέρατος. τέ-
τατον τοῖνυν ὁ χρόνος πέρας, καὶ ὡς κατ’ ἀριθμὸν προῖων, καὶ ὡς μέ-
tρον τῶν ζωμικῶν περιόδων· πανταχοῦ γὰρ τὸ μετρῦν, καθὸ μετεί,
kαὶ τὸ ἀφορίζειν τὰ ἄλλα, τῆς τοῦ πέρατος αἰτίας μετέχον, μετρητι-
cόν ἐστιν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀφοριστικὸν. πέμπτον ἐπὶ τούτοις ἢ τῆς ἴσης
περίοδος, καὶ ὁ κύκλος ὡσαύτως ἀποτελεύμην μέτρον ἐστὶν ἀφα-
nές πασῶν τῶν ψυχῶν κινήματος· ὥσατο πάντα τῶν προῖων ἄνελθεν
καὶ πεπέραστε ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς περίδων, καὶ τὰ ἀπειράτων τῶν ἐνυλῶν
καὶ τὰ λακών ἀπειράτων τῶν εἰδῶν ὑποστησις, τῶν ἐνυλῶν λέγω,
καὶ τὰ μὲν [γὰρ] καὶ τὰ δὲ μέρη τοῖς καυσίς, τὰ δὲ μέρη τοῖς ὀλοὶς,
δείκνυ τὴν ἐνταῦθα τοῦ περιδος τῷ πολλάκις ἐστίν ἀπορίσεως. ἐβδομόν ἢ ἀνε-
κλειστὸς τῶν εἰδῶν ὑπόσταις, τῶν ἐνυλῶν λέγω, καὶ τῷ μηδὲν τῶν
ὀλον ἀπολύθαται καὶ τῷ πάντα ὁρίζατα· τὰ μὲν [γὰρ] καθ’ ἐκατά
toίς καυσίς, τὰ δὲ μέρη τοῖς ὀλοὶς, δείκνυ τὴν ἐνταῦθα τοῦ περι-
δος σὺν τὸν ἀντίθετον ἀπειραχῶς γὰρ ἐξαλαττομένων τῶν
γεννητῶν, ὡμοὶ ὁρίσται τὰ εἶδη καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ διαμένει, μήτε πλεῖο καὶ
and hearth of all limits, intelligible, intellectual, supracosmic, encosmic, preexisting itself as the measure and bound of all things. The second limit is that associated with Eternity; for Eternity is simultaneously both Unlimitedness, as it has been said, and Limit; in so far as it is the cause of unfailing life and the power which bestows everlastingness, it is Unlimitedness; inasmuch as it is the measure of all intellectual activity and the bound of the life of intellect, bounding it from above, it is Limit. And in general it is one of those mixed entities which are formed of Limit and Unlimitedness, for which reason we do not see fit to call it (either the primal Limit or) the primarily Unlimited; for that which is primarily anything is transcendent over either of every pair of all mixed entities, as Socrates says in the *Philebus* [23 C].

The third class of Limit is to be seen in Intellect; for in so far as it remains in itself in virtue of its intellection and possesses a life which is single and eternal and the same, it is bounded and limited; for that which is non-transitive and static belongs to the limited nature, and in general in that it is a number it plainly in this respect partakes of limit. Fourthly, Time is Limit, both in so far as it proceeds according to number, and in so far as it is the measure of the circuits of the soul; for everywhere the measuring element, in so far as it measures, and that which sets bounds to other things, partakes of the causal principle of Limit and is a measuring and limiting element of other things. Fifth after these comes the circuit of the Soul, and its cycle as it is uniformly completed, which is an invisible measure of all visible motions; for it is on the basis of the circuit of life that all the unfolding of those things which are moved by an external agency is given definition.

The sixth form of Limit is the motion of the aether on the same terms and in the same place and about the same centre, which bestows Limit from all aspects upon the disorderly element in material things, and rolls them together in one cycle and is itself limited by itself; for its unlimited element consists in its happening again and again, but not in its not turning back on itself, nor on the grounds that it is unlimited in one direction, nor does Unlimitedness here too consist in the fact that it is devoid of Limit; but the single circuit is unlimited in that it occurs many times. Seventh is the unfailing creation of the forms in matter, and the fact that nothing of all things perishes, and the fact that all things are bounded, individual things by common terms, parts by their wholes. All this shows in this realm the opposition of Limit and Unlimitedness; for although generated things alter in unlimited ways, nevertheless their forms are limited and persist the same, becoming neither more nor less.
In this fragment, we see how Syrianus develops the system of Platonic principles, in which reality results from the conjunction of two contrary principles, Limit and Unlimitedness. Proclus seems to adopt Syrianus’ view in its entirety, as a solution to the problem of how multiplicity derives from the One. Proclus divides Syrianus’ solution to the problem into two sections, with a third section based on Syrianus’ teaching, but coming from Proclus:

1. 1119.4–1121.21: the classes of Unlimitedness
2. 1121.22–1123.21: the processions of Limit
3. 1123.22–1124.37: solution of the exegetical question

For the first two sections, Proclus shows how Syrianus divides the universe into levels of Limit and Unlimitedness. Syrianus runs through all the levels of the universe to show how the aporia is seen at every level.

Commentary

4. On the development of this doctrine from Plato to Aristotle to the late Platonists, see Merlan (1965) 150 for a discussion of Syrianus’ use of Aristotle and the doctrine of dualism. According to D’Ancona, Syrianus uses the monism of Pythagoreans paired with the dualism of Aristotelian principles. See D’Ancona (2000) 197ff.
5. Proclus, ET, props. 89 and 90.
As an eighth type of Limit let us mention all quantity as it particularly appears in material things, even as quality was previously stated to be unlimited; for it does not allow of the more and less, as Socrates says in the *Philebus* [24 B]. Ninthly, unqualified body as a whole is Limit; for it is not unlimited in size, but it is of the same extent as the universe; for it must as a whole be said to be the substratum of the universe. A tenth type of Limit is the form in matter itself, which holds together matter and bounds its boundlessness and shapelessness, and it is this, indeed, solely that some people think of when they refer Limit and Unlimitedness to matter and form alone. So many, then, are the orders of Limit; to sum up, we shall see many different characteristics of these.

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3 The creation of Forms in Matter was dealt with at the seventh level, but to get ten levels in total (an important number in Pythagorean numerology/cosmology), Syrianus brings in Form in Matter here "in itself".

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This section of the *Parmenides Commentary* begins with Proclus denying Limit to the One (1116.21 ff.). He first addresses how the One’s lack of Limit depends on it having no beginning, middle and end.6 In the passage being addressed here, Proclus, following Syrianus, sets out how Limit and Unlimitedness exist at every level of reality. Here, he elaborates on Plato’s argument in the *Philebus*, which regards Limit and Unlimitedness as existing in the Forms and acting as the ultimate elements of things.7 Syrianus describes the hierarchy of the universe with respect to the principles of Limit and Unlimitedness,8 particularly with respect to

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8 The concept of Sameness and Otherness as two principles upon which the universe is built finds its roots in the Pythagorean *peras* and *apeiria*. In their introduction to Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Introduction to Arithmetic*, Robbins and Karpinski give a brief history of the two principles (1926) 99–102. Nicomachus gives his statement on sameness and otherness in II. 18.1: "Regarding the solid numbers, this is for the present sufficient. The physical philosophers, however, and those that take their start with mathematics, call the ‘Same’ and ‘the Other’ the principles of the universe, and it has been shown that the ‘Same’ inheres in unity and the odd numbers, to which unity gives specific form, and to an even greater degree in the square, made by the continued addition of odd numbers, because in their sides they share in equality; while the ‘other’ inheres in two and whole even series, which is given specific form by two, and particularly in the heptometric numbers, which are made by the continued addition of the even numbers, because of the
the various ways Limit and Unlimitedness are used at various levels of the universe. It seems from his description that peras and apeiria are features of the henadic world that filter down in the universe—both exist at every level.9 This concept relates back to Iamblichus’ theory of peras and apeiria as two principles extending through the entire universe, located after the second One:

“For since all things derive both from the One and from the Dyad after the One and are united in a way with each other, and have been allotted an antithetical nature, so also in the major categories of Being there is a certain antithesis of the Same as against the Other, and of Motion as opposed to Rest, and all things that are in the cosmos partake of these classes, it would indeed be suitable to consider the conflict as extending through all things.”10

This passage parallels one in Syrianus’ In Metaph. 112, 14:

“Ἐλεγε γὰρ οἱ ἄνδρες μετὰ τὴν τῶν πάντων ἀρχήν, ἤν τάγαθον καὶ τὸ ὑπερόσυν ἤν ξίουν καλεῖν, δύο εἶναι τῶν ὀλον αἰτίας, μόνακα καὶ τὴν ἀπειροῦναμον δύανα, καὶ ταύτας τὰς ἀρχας καθ’ ἐκαστὴν τῶν ὄντων τάξιν ώσείως ἀπετίθεντο.

Syrianus places a monad (here, Limit) after the One, followed by a dyad (Unlimitedness). Syrianus’ doctrine of Limit and Unlimitedness differs from Iamblichus’ with respect to his use of the terms “monad” and “dyad”. While Syrianus makes Limit—the principle of unity—a monad, and Unlimitedness—governed by multiplicity—a dyad, Iamblichus postulates the second One of the intelligible world as the monad, with the dyad being Limit and Unlimitedness following the monad as a pair. Sheppard points out a difficulty with respect to Proclus’ use of terminology for Limit and Unlimitedness in her article, “Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus.” She notes that, depending on the text, Proclus sometimes uses “dyad” referring to the pair of principles together; other times, he speaks of peras as “monad”, apeiria as “dyad”.11

9 D’Ancona argues that Limit and Unlimitedness interact with the henads in two different ways: sometimes the henads are subordinated to Limit and Unlimitedness, in which case they act as the supreme principles of the intelligible world; other times they are independent from it, transcending otherness, and as such they act as the fundamental elements of the intelligible world. See (1992).


11 Proclus, In Tim. I, 175.2ff. (esp. I, 176.11–12): Proclus uses “dyad” of peras and apeiria together and of apeiria, as opposed to peras (implying that peras is a monad). In
Syrianus’ commentary on *peras* and *apeiria* responds to the aporia at the end of 1118, which asks in what sense the One is unlimited. Here, the One is a limiting agent, regarded as the measure of measures which comprehends both time and eternity. Next, he addresses how the One has no limit because it exists outside the chain of Limit and Unlimitedness. Proclus gives three ways in which the One is unlimited, according to commentators:

1. It is untransversable by us; it is the limit of everything else. The One is: 1) incomprehensible; 2) unencompassable by all ascending to it.  
   \((1118.9)\)
2. It is infinite in power: the power of the One extends throughout the universe. \((1118.19–25)\)
3. Intellect is Limit; One is above Intellect, so they have termed it Unlimitedness. One is also motionless; Soul is motion, above soul. \((1118.25–33)\)

Proclus does not give much credit to any of these opinions. While the theories attempt to explain the power of the One by showing how it is responsible for multiplicity while remaining unified, they leave the One open to degradation. Syrianus innovates here, by coming up with the solution that two principles placed immediately after the One (Limit and Unlimitedness) draw intelligible multiplicity from the One without exposing the One to multiplicity.

In 1118.31–1124.15, Proclus lists Syrianus’ levels of Infinity and Limit, which he seems to adopt without correction. Syrianus runs through the ten levels of Limit and Unlimitedness by moving from the lowest point of Unlimitedness to the highest, and then from the highest point of Limit

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the *Platonic Theology*, Proclus refers to the principles as *peras* and *apeiria*, and refers to them as a pair using “dyad.” Sheppard further points out that Syrianus, in his *Metaphysics Commentary*, uses ἀπειρ/οδύναμ/ος δύας for *apeiria*. See Sheppard on this and on Proclus’ terminology for Limit and Unlimitedness (1982) 6. Sheppard attributes the difference in terminology to the subject matter of the texts being interpreted.

12 Plato *Laws* 716 C.

13 Plotinus criticises this view; see Plotinus, *Enn*. VI. 96 and *Anon*. 120.

14 Possibly stems from Aristotle’s notion of the infinite, incorporeal power of the prime mover as it is extended to the finite heavens. See Proclus, *ET* prop. 96, where the potency of a finite body is never infinite. The first recorded use of *apeirodynamis* is by Porphyry (*Sent*. 37, p. 43.9 Lamberz), who uses it of soul. Dillon notes that Porphyry also describes *to ontos on as apeiron kai adexitetôn* (1988) 39.10–11. Still, he does not use it of the One. Dillon concludes that this commentator is most likely Iamblichus, see (1987) 461, note 97. See Dillon (1988) 33.
to the lowest. Every grade of reality is infinite in potency. For instance, Unlimitedness exists in matter; an unqualified body can be infinitely divided and so is unlimited, as the infinitely extensive is unlimited. At the level of physical body, physical number is infinite. With respect to Soul and time, Syrianus discusses the way in which Soul thinks discursively, so it is eternally mobile, and Time unfolds Soul and proceeds according to number, hence it is unlimited in power. Syrianus’ metaphysical mode of Time and Eternity are thus Iamblichean. Here, he places Time above Soul, at the limit of the noeric world—this is the metaphysical place granted by Iamblichus, which Proclus also later copies. Syrianus hypostasises Time and makes it the condition of Soul. While Iamblichus makes Time the life of the Soul (Soul falls away from Intellect and thinks discursively—this quality of Soul is Time), Syrianus holds that Time is its own entity, not just a quality of soul. At the level of the intellect and intellectual life (νοητος /dΦειαωῆς), the ranks of Unlimitedness begin with matter and work their way to Infinity itself, while the description of Limit begins at the highest rank (Limit) and works its way down.

According to Proclus, everything contains a mixture of Limit and Unlimitedness, with the exception of primitive Limit and Unlimitedness, because the first manifestation is said to be free from other characteristics. Infinite is “chaos”—in Orphic terms—because it is receptive of every power and limitation, while Limit imposes measure on all things visible and invisible. Limit and Unlimitedness reveal two natures of the One—the One as a perfect, transcendent entity and the One as the cause of all things. In his description of principles, he sets forth that all being descends from the two principles and that the two principles pervade being. Syrianus begins his discussion of Unlimitedness with matter and works his way upward to Unlimitedness in itself, while in his description of Limit, he begins with Limit in itself and works down to matter. The chart below re-configures the descriptions so they run parallel, with every level coinciding except for the extreme terms—Unlimitedness in itself and Limit in itself:

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15 We may suspect Syrianus here of seeking the perfect Pythagorean number of levels.
16 Proclus, ET prop. 89.
17 Proclus, ET prop. 90; PT III, 8. Proclus credits the Philebus and Philolaus with the concept that beings result from a mixture of Limit and Unlimitedness.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Unlimit (Chaos)</th>
<th>Limit (Aether)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matter</td>
<td>formless of itself</td>
<td>forms and shapes are limits of matter(^{19})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified Body</td>
<td>divisible to infinity</td>
<td>limited in size; body as a whole is limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualities</td>
<td>contain more and less</td>
<td>quantity is limited in material things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realm of generation</td>
<td>constant coming into being and ceaseless cycle</td>
<td>creation of forms in matter; nothing of all things perishes (forms continue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circuits of heaven</td>
<td>possesses unlimited power of that which moves it; happens continuously</td>
<td>places limit upon the disorderly elements in matter; turns back on itself and limits itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul(^{20})</td>
<td>power of unceasing motion</td>
<td>circuits of the soul are uniform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>measures whole circuit of the soul—power which unfolds circuits of the soul is unlimited</td>
<td>proceeds according to number; measure of the circuits of the soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellect(^{21})</td>
<td>eternal motion and unfailing continuity(^{22})</td>
<td>remains in itself; its life is single and eternal and same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternity(^{23})</td>
<td>comprehends the whole intellectual infinity. It is power itself</td>
<td>Measure of all intellectual activity and bound of the life of intellect (mixed entity, formed of Limit and Unlimitedness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinity/Essential Limt(^{24})</td>
<td>fountain of all infinity(^{25})</td>
<td>foundation of all limits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{19}\) Proclus, *ET* prop. 94. Spatial infinity exists because infinite body may be divisible at any point.

\(^{20}\) Proclus, *PT VI*, p. 33: soul depends on Limit, because it measures its own life by periods; because it never stops moving, it is Unlimitedness.

\(^{21}\) Proclus, *PT VI*, p. 33: intellect is limit in so far as it is uniform and total, it produces all things eternally—as intelligible measure it participates in limit; as essential power, it participates in Unlimitedness.

\(^{22}\) Infinitude in the intelligible world receives diversity of forms (is analogous to matter); cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* II.4.15; Dodds (1963) 247.


\(^{24}\) Αὐτ/ομονός and αὐτ/ονόμα are used in *In Met.* 112.14 to refer to the supreme dyad in relation to numbers. See Sheppard (1982) 4.

\(^{25}\) Proclus, *ET* prop. 92—Infinite descends from Essential Infinity. αὐτοοπειριά is neither the first principle nor Being, but between the two. Proclus, *ET* prop. 90: prior to all that is composed of Limit and Infinitude there exists substantially First Limit and First Infinity.
Limit is static, non-transitive, and all adjectives that can be said of a unified, unchanging principle. Syrianus makes use of the previous objection that the One has no limit, but gives limit to everything else.²⁶ Last on the chart is the transcendent Limit and Unlimitedness—the uncoordinated principles whence all divine beings first process. So, it seems the first two principles of beings exist in themselves as causes of the universe before un-participated Being and mixtures which constitute beings.²⁷ While the two, moreover, seem of parallel strength in this fragment, Syrianus argues that peras is superior to apeiria because it is more similar to the transcendent One in a number of passages in Proclus.²⁸ What Syrianus leaves out in his study, however, is a detailed discussion of just how the two principles work at every level of reality.²⁹

Syrianus’ enumeration of Limit and Unlimitedness as they exist at various levels of being occurs in Platonic Theology III 8, p. 33.3–34.11. Here, Proclus mentions six terms, as opposed to the ten terms listed in this fragment, and does not distinguish between Limit and Unlimitedness in his enumeration of the levels of being:³⁰

1. Eternity
2. Nous
3. Soul
4. the entire universe
5. the entire creation
6. form and matter³¹

The extreme terms have been omitted (Limit and Unlimitedness), as has the rank of time and body. Such an enumeration of levels is also found in In Met. 6.6–19, where Syrianus sets out the following five levels:

²⁶ Plato, Laws IV 16 E.
²⁷ Proclus, PT III, 8.
³⁰ Luna discusses this passage in (2000) 60.
³¹ Matter imitates the last of Unlimited. In In Met. p. 174.11–17, Syrianus affirms that matter is an image of the indefinite dyad. Proclus discusses the relationship between matter and form and form and limit in PT III, 8–10. Form and matter imitate the principles, with form imitating Limit and Matter, Unlimited. Cf. Syrianus, In Met. p. 48.25–26; Luna explains that matter and form play, in the universe of becoming, the same role as the principles play at the level of intelligibles (2000) 263.
1. the entire Intellect and divine realm
2. the psychic essence
3. the physis of all things
4. heaven
5. creation

τὸ αὐτοπέρας is the superior to ἡ αὐταπειρία because it displays unitary properties similar to the One’s unity. It is the supreme principle above all unity—everything has Limit, except for the One, which is situated above it and matter, which is below it. ἡ αὐταπειρία is the transcendent source of all plurality. While the uniformity of Limit is said to maintain the universe, Unlimitedness marks the beginning of procession from the One which culminates in a generative series that is the universe. Only the Infinite is absolutely infinite, for each grade of reality is said to be infinite in potency, according to Proclus. By “infinity in potency”, Proclus means that while it has a limit, its content is never exhausted, a notion he adopts from Syrianus, who inherits it from predecessors, such as Porphyry.

Proclus describes Limit and Unlimitedness as a relationship akin to the one between substance and potency. Intelligibles, thus, contain an infinite active potency, an infinite potency of becoming (in the realm of soul, heaven, animate and inanimate and material species), an infinite variability and infinite divisibility of body; pure passive potentiality is marked by indefiniteness and relates to pure matter. In Elements of Theology proposition 159, Proclus places the τὸ αὐτοπέρας and ἡ αὐταπειρία immediately after the One, a view which differs from Syrianus, who encapsulates peras and apeiria in the broader terms of monad and dyad. Syrianus, however, differs from other philosophers in so far as his monad and dyad, while conferring sameness and otherness on the universe, do not generate the universe. Still, these differences are minor.

Monad and Dyad exist in the universe after the single principle of all existence, and they reappear at every level of existence. Syrianus makes his most extensive discussion on the topic in his critique of Aristotle's

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32 Proclus, ET prop. 132.
33 Proclus, ET prop. 93.
34 Proclus, ET prop. 92.
35 Proclus, PT III, 8, p. 32.
36 Proclus, ET prop. 93.
Metaphysics, books M and N. The best statement on this matter occurs In Met. 112.14 ff.:

For these men (sc. The Platonists) said that after the first cause of all things was the Good and transcendent One, and they see fit to call it the One above being, while as second of the causes among the wholes, they established the Monad and the Dyad of infinite potentiality and they established these as archai in each rank of beings. For that which is analogous to the Good is present in every order of existence, and also those things akin to the first monad and dyad. (In Met. 112.14 ff.)

In this section of the commentary on Metaphysics, Syrianus discusses Met. M 1097a.15, regarding Aristotle’s views on the Platonic Forms. The essential Monad (archike monas) is the principle responsible for sameness, unity and eternal life, while lower principles, corresponding to the monad, make all things one. The Dyad is responsible for production, procession, and plurality while other levels of dyad are required for multiplicity at every level. In “Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus”, Sheppard notes that Syrianus does not always distinguish between the transcendent One and the Monad, placing emphasis instead on the difference between the One (or Monad) and the Dyad of infinite power (apeirodunamos dyas). It seems that it is Proclus who takes Syrianus’ terms of Monad and Dyad and refers to them as peras and apeiria. Syrianus, on the other hand, uses these terms in In Met. 10.2 ff. and 165.33 ff. for principles discussed by the other philosophers, including the Orphic pair of aether and chaos. The principle of the mikton is added to these, as Proclus uses terminology from the Philebus to reconfigure Syrianus’ principles of the Monad and Dyad. Sheppard attributes this different vocabulary to the nature of texts being commented upon—Syrianus comments upon Aristotle’s Monad and Dyad in Met. M and N, whereas Proclus, commenting on Plato’s Parmenides, uses Platonic language. Proclus, moreover, uses the term “dyad” to refer to peras and apeiria as opposed to the monad in the Platonic Theology and Elements of Theology; however, the pair of principles is called peras and apeiria in the Parmenides Commentary.

41 Proclus, In Tim. I, 176.11–12 uses “dyad” ambiguously.
43 Proclus, PT III, 8, p. 34, 16.
44 Proclus, ET prop. 89, 93, 159.
The place of matter in this system is worth noting, as the Monad and Dyad affect it in special ways. The discussion on the infinity of matter states that while a numerical series is infinite, it is actualised in successive finite parts: e.g., an infinite succession of animals maintains a specific existence. According to Aristotle, sameness of matter is one component of “Same”, the other being essence. Plotinus, building on Aristotle’s concept of the infinity of matter, refers to matter as the “fullest manifestation of infinity.” Syrianus, however, argues that the corporeal universe necessarily has infinite potency in order to be eternal. The corporeal universe, thus, has an infinite potency.

In the last section of this passage, Syrianus sets out how each rank in the universe depends on the rank above it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Dependent on one above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>held together through eternal generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eternal generation</td>
<td>eternal motion of aether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eternal motion of the aether</td>
<td>unceasing circuit of the divine Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circuit of the soul</td>
<td>unfolded through continuous power of Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>exercises its activity by virtue of the unlimitedness of eternally static intellect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellect</td>
<td>possesses eternal life by virtue of eternity, upon which all things depend for being and life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternity</td>
<td>infinite by virtue of the fount of infinity, which provides unfailingness to all essences and powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinity</td>
<td>order of all things infinite descend from Essential Infinity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the ranks of the universe function as conditions for each other. Chronos is superior to psychē, aiôn is superior to the noetic world—

45 Proclus, ET prop. 94.
46 Plotinus, Enn. II.4.15; See Syrianus, In Tim. fr. 4 Wear.
47 Aristotle, Metaph. IV. 8, 1018 a 4ff.: “And these things are called ‘same’ in the preceding way, but other things are called ‘same’ absolutely, as ‘one’ is. For ‘same’ is predicated of those things whose matter is one, either in kind or in number, as well as of those whose essence is one; and so it is evident that ‘sameness’ is a kind of ‘oneness’ of being, either of a plurality of objects or of one thing which employs it as a plurality, as for example when one says that a thing is equal to itself, for then he employs it as two things.”
48 Aristotle’s Phys. Γ 7.207. 35.
49 Plotinus, Enn. II.4.15.
51 Syrianus, In Met. 117.32 ff.; Proclus, In Parm. 1119.26; PT II, 2.82.
these entities function as conditions for each other. From this scheme, Syrianus comes to the conclusion that the One is not unlimited. Rather, an antithesis exists in the One between One and multiplicity, both and neither. Syrianus makes use of the previous objection that the One has a limit, but it gives limit to everything else (Laws IV 716 E) to show that the One is bounded by nothing. This section shows how levels of reality reflect its previous level.
Proclus, In Parm. 1142.9–1143.26

Ἐν ἂλλῳ μὲν ὅν κἄλλῳ που ἂν περιέχοιτο ὑπ’ ἐκείνου ἑν ἄ ἐν ἐνείη, καὶ πολλαχῇ ἀν αὐτοῦ ἀπτοῖτο πολλοῖς· τοῦ δὲ ἐνός τε καὶ ἀμεροῦς καὶ κὔλου μὴ μετέχοντος ἀδύνατον πολλαχῇ κύκλῳ ἀπέθεθαι.— Ἄδυνατον. [Parm. 138a3–6]

"ἀμεινον οὖν, ὡς ὁ ἡμέτερος ὑψηλεῖται πατήρ, κατ’ ἐκείνην τὴν ἐμφρονεστάτην καὶ ἁσφαλεστάτην όδόν, ταῦτα λέγειν τοῦ ἐνός ἀποφάσειν αὐτόν, ὡς ἐκείνος καταφάσκεται ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ τοῦ ἐνός ὄντος, καὶ ἀμεροῦς ἀποφάσειν, ὡς ἐν ἐκείνοις καταφάσκεται, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ ἐν ἂλλῳ τοιούτων θεωρεῖν, οἶον ἐν ἐκείνοις δῆλος ἔστιν ὁ φιλόσοφος λαμβάνων. οὐχὶς γοῦν ἐκεῖ τάξιν τινά θεὸν ἔκφαίνοι, καὶ ἐν ἐαυτῆς φησιν αὐτῇ εἶναι καὶ ἐν ἂλλῳ, καθότι καὶ ἔσται πρὸς ἐαυτὴν νοερῶς, καὶ μένει διανωνύμους ἐν τοῖς αἰτίοις ἐαυτῆς μοναδικῶς· μονάς γὰρ ἔστιν ἐκεῖνη τῶν νοερῶν θεῶν, μένουσα μὲν κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτῆς ὑπεροχὴν ἐν τοῖς πρὸς αὐτῆς νοετοῖς θεῶς, ἔκφαίνουσα δὲ καὶ τὸ ἱδίωμα τὸ νοερὸν κατὰ τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ περὶ αὐτῇ ἐνεργεῖν. τὸ τοῖνος ἐν ἂλλῳ τοιούτων ἐστιν, ὡς ὁ ἐν τῇ αἰτίᾳ μένον καὶ περιεχόμενον ὑπὸ τῆς ὀικείας αἰτίας, τοῦτο οὖν ἔστιν εἰκὼς καὶ τὸ πολλαχῇ καὶ πολλαῖς ἐαυτοῦ τῆς αἰτίας ἀπόκομον· διότι γὰρ περιέχεται ὑπ’ αὐτῆς, μεριστῶτερον ἔστιν ἀυτῆς. πάν δὲ τὸ μεριστῶτερον μᾶλλον πεπληθυνότα τῆς ἑαυτοῦ περιληπτικοτέρας αἰτίας· μᾶλλον δὲ πεπληθυνόμενον ταῖς ἑαυτοῦ ποικιλίας δυνάμεις συνάπτεται πρὸς ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἄλλως ἄλλας· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ πολλαχῇ· κατ’ ἄλλας γὰρ καὶ ἄλλας δυνάμεις ἄλλας καὶ ἄλλως ἐνοῦται πρὸς τὸ πρὸς αὐτῶν νοετῷ. ἅλλ’ αὐτῇ μὲν ἡ τάξις τῶν ὄντων, ἥ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ προσήκει μετὰ τοῦ ἐν ἂλλῳ, καὶ πολλὰ ἐστὶ· μετέχει γὰρ τοῦ νοετοῦ πλήθους— καὶ μέρη ἔχει—μετέχει γὰρ τῶν μέσων ἐν ταῖς πρὸς αὐτῆς αἰτίαις γενῶν— καὶ κύκλικὴ πώς ἐστὶ· μετέχει γὰρ τῆς τελευταίας τῶν μέσων τάξεως,
“If it were in another, it would be encircled all round by that in which it was contained, and would have many contacts with it at many points; but it is impossible for there to be contact at many points all round in a circle with a thing which is One and has not parts and is not round.” “It is indeed impossible.”

Better then, following the lead of my own Father, to proceed along that most sensible and safest course and say that he is denying of the One here just what is asserted of the One-Being in the Second Hypothesis, and he is denying it in the same way as it is asserted there, and indeed one should view the meaning of being “in another” as being the same as that which the philosopher clearly understands it to be in that place. Since it is clear, then, that there he is manifesting a certain class of gods, and says that this class is “in itself and in another” in virtue of the fact that it is both turned towards itself intellectually and remains eternally in monadic form in its causes; for that class is the monad of the intellectual gods, resting in virtue of its own superiority in the intelligible gods prior to it, but revealing also its intellectual characteristic by activating itself in itself and about itself—the sense of “in another”, then, is that of remaining at rest in its cause and being comprehended by its own cause. This, therefore is also the reasonable sense in which to take “in many ways,” and touching its own cause “at many points”; for because it is surrounded by it, it is more particular than it; and everything that is more particular is more pluralised than its own cause which comprehends it, and being more pluralised it is joined to it by its own various powers and in different ways by different of them, and this is what is meant by “in many ways”; for in virtue of its various powers it is variously united to the intelligible which is prior to it.

But this order of beings, to which “being in itself” along with “being in another” properly applies, is also a multiplicity (for it partakes of the intelligible multiplicity), and it has parts (for it partakes of the median classes among the causes prior to it), and it is in a way circular (for it partakes of the ultimate class of the middle gods—I mean the shape that
λέγω δὴ τοῦ ἔκει σχήματος. διόπερ οὔτε ἐν ἐστιν ἀπλῶς, ἀλλὰ πολλά, οὔτε ἀμερῆς, ἀλλὰ μέρη ἔχουσα, οὔτε ἐπέχεινα σχήματος παντὸς, ἀλλὰ χυκλικῆ, καὶ, ὡς μὲν πολλὰ οὖσα, δύναται πολλοῖς ἀπευθεῖα τῶν πρὸ αὐτῆς, ὡς δὲ μέρη ἔχουσα, πολλαχῇ αὐτοῖς κοινωνεῖν καὶ διαφόρως, ὡς δὲ ἐσοχηματισμένη, κύκλῳ περίεσθαι ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν τὸ γὰρ σχηματιζόμενον πάν ὑπὸ τοῦ σχηματιζοντος περίεσται τὸ δὲ ἐν οὗτε μέρη ἔχει οὔτε κύκλου μετείληθην, ὡστε οὐ δυνατὸν αἰτίαν εἶναι πρὸ αὐτοῦ τὴν πολλαχῇ καὶ κύκλῳ τοῦ ἕνος ἀπτομένην, ἀλλ’ ἐστιν ἐπέχεινα πάντων, ὡς [ἂν] a αἰτίαν χρείττονα οὔχ ἔχον· ἀδύνατον γὰρ εἶναι τι κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ πολλαχῇ ἀπτόμενον, ἕνος ὄντος καὶ ἀμερῶς καὶ κύκλῳ [μὴ] b metéxontos· ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα προσέδημην ἵνα φανῇ τὰ πολλά τὸ μέρη ἔχειν, τὸ κύκλῳ μόνον c metέχειν, ἡ δ’ πάντα προσώχηει ταύτῃ τῇ τάξει τῶν ὄντων, ἢ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ προσφέρομεν πολλά τε γὰρ ἐστιν ὡς πρὸς τὴν νοητὴν ἔννοιαν, καὶ μέρη ἔχει καὶ κύκλῳ μετείληθην, ἐπειδή τὰ δεύτερα δεῖ μετέχειν τῶν πρὸ αὐτῶν. ἐτει καὶ ὅταν λέγηται μονάς, ὡς ἐν νοεροίς ἐστὶ μονάς: εἰ δὲ μή, πλήθος ὡς πρὸς τὰς νοητὰς μονάδας· καὶ ὅταν λέγηται ὅλη καὶ ἀμερίστως, ὡς ἐν νοεροίς καὶ ταύτα λέγεται παρ’ ἡμῶν· εἰ δὲ μή, μέρη ἔχει πρὸς γε τὴν ὀλόσποτα τὴν νοητὴν· καὶ ὅταν ἀσχημάτιστος, πάλιν [ὡς] e ἐν νοεροίς, ἐπει πάντως αὐτήν ἀναγκαῖον μετέχειν τοῦ σχήματος τοῦ πρὸ αὐτῆς.

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a ἀμερῆς GPRg: ἀμερές A-F b ἂν add. Strobel ex g (utique) c μὴ add. Steel ex g (non) (add. οὐ ante κύκλῳ Cous²) (cf. Parm. 138a6) d μόνον corr. Steel ex g (solum): μὴ ΑΣ e ὡς add. Steel ex g (ut)
is proper to that order.) Wherefore it is not one absolutely, but many, nor is it partless, but has parts, nor is it beyond all shape, but circular. And, as being many, it is able to touch what is prior to it at many points; inasmuch as it has parts, it is able to communicate with its priors in many different ways; and as endowed with shape, it is surrounded in a circle by them; for everything which is shaped is surrounded by that which gives it shape, whereas the one neither has parts nor participates in circularity. So that it is not possible for there to be a cause prior to it which touches the One in many places and in a circle, but it is beyond all things, as having no causal principle superior to itself; for it is impossible for there to be anything which touches it in a circle and in many places, since it is One and partless and not partaking in circularity; all these things he has added in order that there should appear the characteristics of multiplicity, having parts and partaking in circularity, all of which are proper to this class of beings, in which we also locate the characteristics of being in oneself and in another; for this class is many in comparison with the intelligible unity, and has parts and partakes in circularity, since all secondary things must partake in what is prior to them. Since even when it is called a monad, it is a monad in a mode proper to the intellectual realm; otherwise, it is a multiplicity in comparison with the noetic monads; and when it is said to be whole and partless, that is in relation to the intellectual realm, and this is said from our perspective; and even if it does not have parts, yet it has parts in comparison with intelligible wholeness; and when we say it is without shape, once again this is in the intellectual realm, since in any case it is necessary for it to partake in the shape that is prior to it.
Commentary

In this discussion of the role of κύκλωμα in κύκλωμα ποιν ἀν περιέχομαι, Proclus lays out the Syriacian syllogism,1 “if the One is in itself/if the One is not in itself,” in order to prove that the One is neither in itself nor in another. The point Parmenides makes in 138 is that everything which is in something else is contained “in a circle” and it touches whatever contains it at many points. He argues that the One cannot be in another because, if it were, it would be encircled and would have contact at many points. The One, however, cannot be encircled because it is not round and it cannot have contact at many points because it does not have parts. Building on the previous lemma, moreover, he argues that because the One has no beginning, middle or end, it is not contained. What is of interest here is how Syrianus looks beyond issues of place and spatial extension with regard to en allò and en heauto. Syrianus addresses the lemma by working back from the second to the first hypothesis, showing that the various layers of the intelligible world are not attributable to the One. Syrianus wants to unite the positive statement of the second hypothesis with the negative statements of the first hypothesis, making the second hypothesis a description of levels of gods.

Prior to Syrianus’ opinion, Proclus presents two other commentators, likely to be Porphyry and Iamblichus. The first commentator (1140.26 f.) requires that the One be spatially extended in some way and denies that the One is “in a place”. Proclus says that he views the topic “in a restricted sense”—as in “in a place” or “in a container.”2 Proclus says that he reconciles the text well enough, but he still rejects this theory, saying the Platonist theory is that all higher entities, even individual souls, are not in a place3—when discussing the One, then, there must be more to the lemma than an argument based on place.4 The second commentator

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1 Here, the attribute “in itself” and “in another” is denied of the One. See Proclus, In Parm. 1140.4–1144.20 (a commentary on Parm. 138A3–7) which demonstrates that the One is not in another. For Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Syrianus, “in another” signifies “that which remains in its cause.” Saffrey and Westerink (1974) 129.

2 Dillon identifies the commentator as Porphyry based on the use of “in a restricted sense.” He cites Proclus, In Tim. I, 204.24 ff. where Porphyry treats a dialogue merikōteron, as opposed to Iamblichus, who treats it epoptikōteron. See Dillon (1987) 475 and Dillon (1988) 35.

3 Proclus, In Tim. I, 161.1–3; In Remp. 2.198.

4 Syrianus, and later, Proclus, regard space as a corporeal entity and only other corporeal entities could interact with space. Space was the physical boundary of corporeal bodies. On late antique views of place, see Sambursky (1978) II 8. Schrenk explains why
(1141.13 ff.), most likely Iamblichus,\(^5\) denies of the One every sense of being in something—just as a monad is a sort of point and a point is in a line, does not mean it is contained by something else, just as a point is not contained in a line (a point is not contained \(\kappa\nuλλω\) by the line, nor is it touched \(\piολλαχω\)). Proclus’ complaint is that this approach is far too literal: even if a point is not in a line spatially, it can be contained in other ways. The line, for instance, contains the characteristics of the point, such as its limit.

In 1142.10ff. Proclus gives Syrianus’ opinion that the lemma must refer to the \(\muονάς\ έν νοεροίς\) which experiences the higher participation of intelligible-intellectual gods and relates back to the source in the intelligible level. The monad at the intellectual level rests in its cause and is comprehended in the cause. Syrianus refers here to the second hypothesis, which was for him a blue-print of the whole intelligible world. All intelligible characters are attributed to the One, which, in turn, transcends the highest class of intellectual gods belonging to the One-Being at 145 B 6ff. in the second hypothesis.\(^6\) He works from the second to the first hypothesis, which expresses what is denied of the One. All characteristics denied of the One are references to a distinct section of the second hypothesis, which embraces layers of the intelligible, including: the noetic triads; noetic-noeric triads; and the noeric hebdomad.\(^7\) This element of the intellectual realm is the highest monad of the noeric gods. Syrianus denies this level of being to the One in order to assert that the One is both the cause of them and transcends them. Proclus reports his Master’s argument also in \textit{Platonic Theology} II, 12, placing emphasis on the One’s distinction from the summit of the intellectual world.\(^8\)

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\(^6\) Dillon (1987) 475.

\(^7\) See Van Campe (2009) 268: Syrianus interprets different attributes of Being as attributes of different gods; the deduction “that the One is” starts from the highest level of intelligible Being, “the One Being”, which comprehends all attributes in a unified way, while still acting as the procession of beings into multiplicity; Proclus, \textit{PT} I, 11, p. 50, 2–3.

\(^8\) Proclus, \textit{PT} II, 12, p. 68, 6–22: “Such is the One, says Parmenides, since it is neither
Syrianus here also presents a discussion on the nature of cause; notably, that a cause, as more general, is participated in by the more particular, which is joined to the cause in various ways. The One, as ultimate cause, is not comprehended by any entity. While it does remain in itself and process out of itself, it does not remain in another.

In Parm. 1142.38–1144.40 seem to be Syrianic, although it is less clear here that Proclus refers to his teacher directly. In this section, Proclus argues that the One does not derive from another cause—once it has been established that the One is neither in itself nor another. He says that the One is not many, as what is many can touch what is prior to it at many points and it does not have shape, as whatever has shape is surrounded by that which gives it shape. Hence, the One does not have points and does not participate in circularity. It is not possible for there to be a cause prior to the One which touches the One in many places and in a circle. The One is thus superior to self-constituted entities, including the monads which inhabit the intellectual realm, as well as wholes and parts.
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 7

Proclus, In Parm. 1174.18–1175.22

Οὐδὲ μὴν ταυτὸν γε (οὐτε) ἐτέρῳ ὦτε ἕαυτῳ ἔσται, οὔτε αὖ ἐτέρον ὦτε ἕαυτοι ὦτε ἐτέρον ἐν εἴη.—Πή δὴ; [Parm. 139b4–5].

Οὐτοὶ μὲν οὖν τοιαύτα διασωμοῦντες λέγουσιν. εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ διατίθεσαι τοὺς λόγους τῶν οὗτων κλεινοτάτων καὶ θείων ἄνδρῶν, καὶ ταυτά τῶν προσειμένων ἔξω τῆς τοιαύτης οὐσίας ἐν τῷ παρόντι ᾠδήπορος καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ἡμῖν διὰ πλεούς ἔξεται θεοθείας, ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν ὑψηλούς οἰστέον a καὶ τούτων b τὴν χρισίν αξίουσιν ἀμφοτέρων λέγειν ὀρθῶς, καὶ τοὺς πανταχοῦ τὰ γένη τιθέμενοι καὶ τοὺς μετὰ τὸ ἐν οὗ προσειμένους τοῦτον τετάχθαι τὸν ἀριθμὸν εἴναι μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοεροῖς τά γένη κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν τάξιν, ἄλλα ἄλλως μὲν ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις, ἄλλως δὲ ἐν τοῖς δευτέροις, ὅπου μὲν νοητῶς, ὅπου δὲ νοερῶς· τοῦτο δὲ ταύτων τῷ ὅπου μὲν ἑνοείδες καὶ ἀδιακριτῶς, ὅπου δὲ διακεκριμένος ἑιδὰ κατὰ τὸν οἰκεῖον ἀριθμόν. ὡστ' οὖν ἕν θαυμάσσεις εἰ ἡ μονὰς ἡ νοητὴ περιέχει τὴν νοερὰν πεμπάδα πάσαν ἀδιακριτῶς καὶ ἑνοείδες, ὅπου διὰ τὴν ἔνωσιν καὶ ἡ στάσις τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἡ κίνησις κατὰ την ταυτότητα καὶ ἑτερότητα, ἀδιακριτῶν πάντων ἐν τῇ ἑνώσει καὶ ἠ στάσει, ὡστὸ τις ἀπειρίζεται περιέχουσα τὸν λόγον οὗς δεκαδικῶς καὶ ἡ δεκὰς περιείλη. ὡστ' ἄλλος δὲ ὡς περιέχεται τὸν ἕνωσιν καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἑνοείδες κατὰ σκειρίας κατὰ ἑτερότητας κατὰ ἑνωσικήν ἔκτισιν, ῥήματι καὶ ἡ τῶν μοναδικῶν ἀριθμῶν αὐτία μονάς πάντας ἀποδείχνεται περιέχουσα τοὺς λόγους ὅροις ἀδιακριτῶς μὲν ἡ δεκάς περιείλη, τετραδικῶς δὲ ἡ τετράς, τι χρὴ θαυμάζειν εἰ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὄντων μοναδικῶς μὲν ἡ νοητὴ μονὰς περιέχει πάντα τὰ γένη καὶ ἀδιακριτῶς, δυαδικῶς δὲ ἄλλῃ τῇ τάξιν καὶ ἄλλῃ τετραδικῶς· ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰς ἰδέας εἶναι καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς, δῆλον δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον αὐτῶν ὑπερέντος ἐν τοῖς νοεροῖς ὑφεστάναι λέγομεν ὅλος, ἡμώνες, πατριός, ἔνταυθα δὲ δημιουργός, μερισμός, δημιουργικός, ἀνάγκη δὲ πανταχοῦ τῶν ἰδεῶν ἀριθμῶν ἔξεται τό ὄντος γενόμεν. εἰπερ οὖν αἱ νοεραὶ ἰδεᾶς μετέχουσι τῶν νοερῶν γενόν, δῆλον ὠτι καὶ αἱ νοηταὶ μεθέξουσι τῶν νοητῶν. εἰ δὴ κατὰ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοητῶν αἱ πρώταισται τῶν ἰδεῶν τέταρται, δεὶ πρὸ τῆς

a οἰστέον AFPRg: ιστέον MG  b τούτων ΑΣg: τούτων Cous3
“Further, the One cannot be either the same as another or the same as itself, nor yet other than itself or other than another.” “Why is that?”

On the basis of the teaching of our Master, we may at any rate make clear his judgment that considers both schools of opinion to speak rightly, both those which place the genera at every level and those who do not allow this number to be ranked directly after the One; for the genera are in the intelligible and in the intellectual realms according to the rank proper to them in each case, but in one way among the primal entities, and in another among the secondary—here intelligibly, there intellectually. And this is the same as to say here unitarily and indivisibly, and there divisibly each according to its own number, so that one should not wonder if the intelligible monad comprehends the whole intellectual pentad indivisibly and unitarily, where we find that subsumed under unity both Rest in some way and Motion are one, and also Sameness and Otherness, all being undivided “in the darkling mist”, as the theologian says.¹ For where also the monad which is the cause of monadic numbers is shown to comprehend all the reason-principles which the decad comprehends decadically, and the tetrad tetradically, why should one wonder if on the plane of beings, the intelligible monad comprehends all the classes of being monadically and indivisibly, while some other order comprehends them dyadically, and yet another tetradically, since the Ideas are also in the intelligible realm; but nevertheless we do not say that they exist in the same way as in the intellectual realm, but there as wholes, unitarily and paternally, whereas in this latter realm they exist separately, individually, and demiurgically, but it is necessary that everywhere the number of the ideas be dependent upon the genera of being? If, then, the intellectual ideas partake of the intellectual species, it is plain that also the intelligible ideas will partake of the intelligible species. If, then, at the limit of the intelligibles the primary ones among the ideas are four, there must be

¹ Orpheus, Hymn 6.6.
Commentary

In this fragment, Syrianus discusses how the genera of being in Plato’s *Sophist* 256 A ff. are related to the similar genera of being denied here of the One.2 Syrianus combines the Porphyrian claim that the genera exist at every level with the Iamblichean argument that these genera are not to be ranked directly after the One, but only in the intelligible realm, as they constitute a pentad, and nothing more than a triad would be proper to the intelligible realm.3 Syrianus posits that the genera are present at the level of the intelligible and intellectual realms, which is possible because the monad encompasses the intellectual pentad. This fragment builds on Syrianus’ claim that *Parmenides* 139 B 3 asserts the One is fixed beyond the intellectual realms. Syrianus identifies what is being denied of the One here as the demiurgic order of gods, the first level of the intelligible order.

In 1173.7 ff., Proclus gives the opinion of a commentator likely to be Porphyry.4 This commentator5 takes terms in an exclusively philosophical sense,6 and remarks that Motion, Rest, and Sameness and Otherness are denied of the One, but not all forms. This group identifies the forms with the genera of being, which, according to this authority, exist at every level. The Primally Existent, moreover, (*to protôs on*) comprehends all these genera, after proceeding forth from the supra-essential and becoming Being. The Primally Existent has Sameness, in so far as it

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2 For a general discussion of forms and the genera of being, see Gersh (1978) 96–97.
3 See Van Campe (2009) 262, where she argues that the five genera of Being are situated in the intellectual realm, rather than immediately after the absolute unity of the One.
5 Dillon notes that “ρηλοσόφος μονον ταύτα λαμβανόντες” sounds anti-Porphyrian. Porphyry is often criticised for not taking things subtly. See Dillon (1987) 524, note 35.
6 As opposed to the theological sense.
prior to the tetrad of forms a monadic creation of the genera; for thus also in the intellectual realm prior to the decadic generation of the ideas there exists a pentadic cause of the classes of being (genê).

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is similar to what produced it, and Otherness, in so far as it is different. It embraces both motion—as it proceeds forth—and stability, because it is established in the One. Dillon relates this passage to Plotinus’ *Enn.* VI. 2, but credits the authority with a great deal of innovation regarding Sameness as an imitation of the One’s unity, Otherness as the reflection of the One’s distinction from itself.7 The authority, moreover, associates Motion with procession from the One, and Rest with remaining. Dillon notes that we know from Marius Victorinus that Porphyry developed the triad of *monê-proodos-epistrophê,* and he goes on to say that Porphyry uses the genera of Being to distinguish Intellect or Being from the primal One.8

Proclus dismisses this commentator, saying that the genera should be understood in the context of the One and not of Being. The genera are symbols of actual divine orders and not just genera of being or forms.9 These genera, moreover, should be denied of the One, as it has no attributes and does not participate in transcendent negations.

The second commentator (1174.3), identified as Iamblichus by Dillon,10 places the genera in the intellectual realm and says that these are genera of Being and do not derive existence from the One. He argues that the multiplicity derived from the One is most akin to the One—while monads and triads might be found in the realms next door to the One; the pentad, however, is too different from the One to be found contiguous. In *In Tim.* fr. 29 Dillon, Iamblichus places τὸ αὖτι ὁν on a higher level than

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10 Dillon identifies this commentator as Iamblichus based on his use of vocabulary, (1988) 41.
11 This includes the whole reality down to the individual mind. See Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 29 Dillon, p. 299.
τὰ γένη τοῦ ὄντος, and places it at the summit of the noetic realm. For Iamblichus only triads are proper to the intelligible realm, while Syrianus argues that pentads can be seen monadically. He attributes characteristics denied of the One to the noetic realm—an innovation which sets the stage for Syrianus’ interpretations of the negations in the first hypothesis, which become assertions in the second hypothesis.\textsuperscript{12}

Syrianus, as is most frequently the case, considers both schools correct—he agrees that there are genera of being at every level of reality and says that these genera exist not directly after the One, but at the intelligible and intellectual levels. The genera are able to exist in both of these levels because they exist suitably according to whatever rank they inhabit. Thus, at the intelligible level, the genera exist intelligibly, at the intellectual level, the genera exist intellectually.\textsuperscript{13} Proclus here gives Syrianus’ hierarchy of the intelligible-intellectual universe, in which Syrianus characterises the intelligible and intellectual universes as places of opposition between unity and multiplicity. He describes the intelligible universe as a place of unity and the intellective universe as one of multiplicity. Syrianus posits that the intelligible monad subsumes within itself the intellective pentad. This pentad is said to contain Rest and Motion, Sameness and Otherness, as well as Being, because its chief characteristic is that of totality.\textsuperscript{14}

Later in the fragment, the genera come to represent the forms, so that the ideas exist in every level of the intelligible and intellectual universe, although in the former level, which represents wholes, they are taken up as wholes, and in the latter universe, representing multiplicity, they are

\textsuperscript{12} Dillon (1988) 42.
\textsuperscript{13} Van Campe (2009) 268; See Syrianus, \textit{In Met.} 5, 31–36, 3 where essential attributes descend from the intelligible realm above and spread overall beings.
\textsuperscript{14} Proclus, \textit{PT} II, 12, p. 66.18–67.3. \textit{PT} IV, 36, 36 proposes the following:

\textit{Intelligible gods:}
1st level: monad
2nd level: dyad
3rd level: triad

\textit{Intelligible-intellective gods:}
1st level: tetrad
2nd level: pentad
3rd level: hexad

\textit{Intellective:}
hebdomad.
taken up individually. While Proclus does not allude to this theory here, in *In Parm.* 764.32 ff. the *megista genē* of the *Sophist* are identified with the Intellect itself. The genera are situated at the first level so that they act as supra-essential forms, in which other manifestations in lower realms participate.

In *Platonic Theology* II, 12, Proclus gives an overview of same and different as it is applied to the second hypothesis. Here, the third order corresponds to the demiurgic order and sameness and difference is affirmed for the hypercosmic gods.

The placement of the genera of being has changed from Porphyry to Syrianus: Porphyry argues that the genera of being can be seen at every level, while Iamblichus says that they are only at the intelligible level, as only a triad can follow from the One, while Syrianus puts the thought of the two together, saying that pentads can be seen monadically—the group of the five *megista genē* are inherent in the monad of the intelligible world monadically. Proclus further systematises the thought of Syrianus, taking the five genera as properties of being and spreading them throughout the different orders of the intelligible universe. In *Platonic Theology* III 18, Proclus describes how the genera are situated in the three intelligible triads: the first triad contains “essence” and endows intelligibles with a stable power; the second is the cause of “movement and repose” and is the place where Limit and Unlimitedness exist, and the third, is characterised as “same and other”—here, the Intelligible Intellect, the Essential Living Being, also houses the forms.

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15 On the question of whether intelligible substances participate in the Ideas, Syrianus argues that some of the intelligible substances are only paradigms, while others participate in higher ones; Syr., *In Met.* 109.16–19. See D’Hoine (2004) 20.

16 In other places, Proclus says that the five genera merely characterise Intellect; see *PT* V, 1.4 and Steel (1992) 63.

17 Proclus, *PT* VI, 14 affirms the hypercosmic gods; *In Parm.* 1172.27–1191.9, denies them.

18 Steel (1992) 63.

19 See also *PT* II, 12, p. 69, 15 ff. and Saffrey and Westerink’s discussion (1974) 70. For a discussion of the relation between the three intelligible triads and the genera, see Opsomer (2000) 269.
Τί δέ; πρεσβύτερον ἤ νεώτερον ἢ τὴν αὐτήν ἡλικίαν ἔχειν τὸ ἐν δοξῇ τῷ δυνατόν εἶναι; — Τί δὴ γὰρ οὗ; [Parm. 140e1–2].

Μήπως οὖν ἀμείναν κάνταυθα τῆς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν μεμνήσθαι παραδόσεως, ὡς δὴ περὶ τῶν θείων ψυχῶν ὁ λόγος· αὕτη γὰρ ἐκθεούντα τῷ μετέχειν ἀεὶ τῶν θεόν· ταύτας δὲ προφήτευε χρόνος ὁ πρῶτος, οὖν οἱ προελθὼν εἰς τὸ ἐμφανές, ἀλλ’ ὁ ἀπόλυτος καὶ ἀσχετος, καθ’ ὅν αἱ περιόδοι πᾶσαι μετροῦνται τῶν ψυχῶν, καὶ περὶ τὸ νοητὸν χορείαν a (καὶ)b ἀνακυκλήσεις ἀνωθεν γὰρ ἀσχεταὶ μιμοῦμενος τόν αἰώνα τῶν πάντων περιεκτικῶν καὶ συνέχει πᾶσαν κίνησιν, εἶτε ψυχικὴν εἶτε ἵωτικὴν εἶτε ὑποσοῦν ὑφίστασθαι λεγομένην, καὶ ἀνελίττει καὶ τελεῖοι, καὶ ἐστὶ νοῦς μὲν αὐτὸς κατ’ οὐσίαν, χορείας δὲ ταῖς θείαις ψυχαῖς καὶ τῆς περὶ τὸ νοητὸν ἀπείρου κινήσεως αἴτιος· διὸ καὶ ἐν ταύταις ἐστὶ τὸ πρεσβύτερον (καὶ νεώτερον)c οὗ καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικίαν ἄγον καὶ ταύτα πάντα διχῶς· τὸ τε γὰρ πρεσβύτερον καὶ αὐτάς πρὸς μὲν ἑαυτὰς, καθ’ ὅσον ταῖς χορείττοντι ἑαυτῶν δυνάμεις μᾶλλον ἀπώλειον τῆς ἀπειρίας τοῦ χρόνου καὶ πλέον αὐτοῦ μετέχουσιν—οὐ γὰρ τῆς ὁμοίας πληροῦταν τελείοτιτος ἀπὸ τῶν θειοτέρων κατὰ πᾶσας ἑαυτῶν τὰς δυνάμεις, ἀλλὰ ταῖς μὲν πλέον, ταῖς δὲ ἐλλαττον τὸ δὲ πλείονος χρόνου μετέχον πρεσβύτερον φαμεν—, πρὸς δὲ τὰ ἄλλα, καθ’ ὅσον αἱ μὲν αὐτῶν τὴν ζηλήν ὑποδέχονται τοῦ χρόνου μετήρησι καὶ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐκτασίαν τῆς εἰς τὰς ψυχὰς προϊόνσαν, αἱ δὲ μετακινήσεις μετροῦνται περιόδοις· πρεσβύτεραι οὖν ὁ ἡ περίοδος ὀλίκωτέρα καὶ ἐπὶ χρόνον πλείω ἐκτεινομένη, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ νεώτερον, [τὸ μὲν ὡς

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χορεία ΑΣ: choreales g  καὶ2 add. A  διὸ corr. Steel ex g (propter quod): δι’ ὧν ΑΣ d  καὶ νεώτερον add. Steel.
“Well then, can it be held that the One can be older or younger than anything, or as the same age as anything?” “Why not?”

It is after all better, then, in this case also to call attention to the teachings of our Master, to the effect that the text here concerns divine souls; for these are divinised by participating eternally in the gods, and it is to these that the most primal time properly refers, not that which has proceeded into the visible realm, but that which is absolute and not-relative, according to which are measured all the circuits of the souls, and their dances and encirclings around the intelligible.\(^1\) For it takes its beginnings from above, imitating that eternity which comprehends all things and holds together all motion, whether it be psychic or vital or however it be said to arise, and it unfolds it and brings it to completion, and it is itself in essence an intellect, while acting as cause for divine souls of their “dance”, and of their infinite motion around the intelligible, and by means of which there also arises in them that which is “older” and “younger” and “of the same age”. And all these terms can be taken in two senses, for “older” in them can be understood in relation to themselves, in so far as by virtue of their superior powers they get more benefit from the infinity of time and take a larger share of it; for they are not filled with the same degree of completeness from the orders more divine than themselves in respect of all their powers, but more in virtue of some and less in virtue of others, and that which partakes of more time we call “older”; and in relation to other things, inasmuch as some of them accept the whole measurement of time and the whole extension of it which proceeds into souls, while others are measured by its more particular circuits. Those, then, are “older”, the circuit of which is more general and extended over more time.

πρὸς έαυτὸ τοιοῦτὸν ἔστων ὦν τὸ ταῖς ύψειμέναις δυνάμεις ἐλαττον χρόνου μετέχον—ἐαυτοῦ γὰρ τὸ τοιοῦτον νεώτερον], a ἄνω μὲν ὦν πολιούμενον τῷ συνεκτείνειν ἐαυτὸ πρὸς τὴν ὀλην τοῦ χρόνου δύναμιν, κάτω δὲ ἐπὶ νεάζον τῷ μερικώτερον ἀπολαύειν τοῦ χρόνου—ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα, κατὰ τὴν ύψειν τῆς ἐνεργείας τὸ γάρ δι' ἐλάττονος περιόδου μετρούμενην ἔχον τὴν ἐαυτοῦ περιφοράν νεώτερον ἐστι τοῦ διὰ πλείονος.

τὸ γε μὴν τὴν αὐτὴν ἡμικίαν ἄγον ἐαυτῷ τε καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις οὐχ ἀδήλου ὅποις ἐπὶ τῶν συστοίχων θεωρεῖται πραγμάτων, ἐφ’ ὅν ἡ αὐτή μεθεξις καὶ τὸ αὐτῷ τῆς τελειότητος μέτρον. πάσα δὲ θεία ψυχή, κἂν καθ’ ἐτερον χρόνον αὐτῆς ἡ περίοδος μετρήται, καθ’ ἐτερον δὲ τοῦ ἐξημενον ὀφιατος αὐτῆς, ἀλλ’ ἔχει τὴν ἰσην ἀποκατάστασιν, αὐτῇ τε κατὰ τὸν αὐτής ἄν χρόνον χάζειν κατὰ τὸν ἐαυτοῦ· διὸ πάλιν ἰσημικὸς ἐστιν ἐαυτῷ τε καὶ ἐκείνῳ κατὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον.

οὐχ ἄρα ἐπὶ τὸν συνεγνωσμένον χρόνον ἀναγρασθηρομέθη καταφευγείν διὰ τὸ γίγνεσθαι τούτῳ καὶ γεγονέναι—καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα ἐστὶν ἐν ταῖς περιόδοις τῶν θείων ψυχῶν—, οὐδ’ αὐτὶ ἐπὶ τὸν αἰώνα μεταβηρομεθῆ διὰ τὴν δευτέραν ὑπάθειαν καταφάσουσιν τὸν χρόνον· πάσαν γὰρ ἐκεῖ ρομέναν κατὰ τὸ ἐξῆς παραδεδομένα τὴν τοῦ δύο πρόδον, ἀνοιχθὲν ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν μονόδων διὰ τῶν νοερῶν τάξεων καὶ ὑπερχοσμίων καὶ ἐγχοσμίων ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκθεομομένην ἀσώματον οὐσίαν καταντήσασαν.

ἐπομεθα γε μὴν τῷ Πλάτωνι καὶ ἐν Τιμαίῳ τὸν χρόνον πάσης μέτρου ἀποφηναμένω ως υπερβαθητικῆς, καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀρξασθαι θείας ως καὶ ἐμφρονος βίου πρὸς τὸν σύμπαντα χρόνον, καὶ ἐν τῷ Φαίδρῳ διὰ χρόνου τὸ ὃν αὐτὰς λέγοντι καθοράν, διὸς χρονικῶς, ἀλλ’ οὖχ αἰνιγμός ὁ ὅτι καὶ ὑπερχοσμίων καὶ ἐγχοσμίων ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκθεομομένην ἀσώματον οὐσίαν καταντήσασαν.

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a τὸ ἢ...νεώτερον add. Steel ex g (hoc quidem ut ad se ipsum tale est quale quod submissis potentis minus minus tempore participat—se ipso enim quod tale iunius)
And indeed the expression “younger” has a similar range of meanings; in relation to itself, it is such as to participate less in Time than powers inferior to it; for being younger than itself, in its relation to what is above it, it is as it were grown ancient by extending itself in parallel to the whole power of time; while in relation to what is below it, it is still youthful by reason of its more partial enjoyment of Time. In relation to other things, the term has reference to the declination of its activity, for that which has its circuit measured by a lesser circumference is “younger” than that which has it through a larger one.

As for the concept of being “like in age”, both in relation to itself and to other things, it is plain how one should relate it to things at the same level, which enjoy the same method of participation and the same measure of perfection. Every divine soul, after all, even if its circuit is measured according to a different time from that of its dependent body, yet has the same period of return, and this is always measured by its own time, while that of the body is measured according to the time proper to it; for which reason in turn it is of equal age both to itself and analogously to the body also.

We will not then be forced to resort to the normal sense of time merely because of the mention of coming to be and having come to be; for these also are to be found in the circuits of divine souls; nor on the other hand will we have to resort to identifying it with Eternity, because the Second Hypothesis asserts time of the One; for we declare that there we find set out in order the procession of Being right from the intelligible monads through the intellectual and supracosmic and encosmic orders down to an encounter with divinised incorporeal being.

We are following here the doctrine of Plato, who both declared in the *Timaeus* [36 C] that Time is the measure for all things of transitive life, and that Soul is the first principle of divine life and intelligent living for the whole of time; and who has declared in the *Phaedrus* [247 D] that the souls behold Being because they view things in Time, not in Eternity. And there will be no need for us to understand the expressions “younger” and “older” and “of the same age” as referring to order of being and the difference between the cause and the caused, nor will we need to enquire what is the cause of that order, but we can take such expressions in their natural sense as referring to measures of time greater and less and equal to others, as the case may be.
Commentary

In this discussion of the One’s transcendence over Time, Syrianus relates Parmenides’ lemma that the One is younger and older and the same age as everything, to the divine soul which participates in primal Time. Syrianus’ doctrine of primal Time here relates to his concept of what takes place in the second hypothesis—he offers a determined effort to identify each level of divine entities.² The One, moreover, is denied of all levels in turn.

Regarding the lemma, Proclus wishes to prove that the One does not participate in Time by demonstrating that the One does not participate in being younger or older or of the same age. Proclus gives the views of five commentators on this topic, beginning with the view of those who believed that all things, including God, were comprehended by time (1213.17 ff.). This group of physical philosophers say that all things, including God, are comprehended by Time. The physical philosophers deny progress of time to the One, placing the intelligible world in a state of eternity and positing the Stoic position of the Soul as the supreme principle. There is, thus, no difference between higher and lower time. Anaxagoras reflects this idea with his concept of the soul, but more pointedly, this theory reflects Plotinus and the idea of holistic time—pure soul is not subject to our temporality, rather discursive thought is true of world soul. Proclus responds that the One is not in body (for it would have to be in another), not in Soul (for it does not partake in Time), and not in Intellect (for it does not experience motion or rest, the defining characteristic of Intellect).

Next, he discusses what Plato means by time in 1214.24 ff., dividing the discussion into the views of five groups of commentators. The first category, “[m]ost of those who have concerned themselves with this”, seems to include Plotinus (Enn. VI. 9.3.2), and says that Plato refers to the “obvious type of time”, explaining that Plato says coming to being is particular to those which participate in time (Parm. 141 A). This view is based on Parmenides 141 A where Plato says that coming to be is proper to those things that participate in time. Proclus points out that the transcendence of ordinary time is not particular to the One because Intellect transcends ordinary time, as well (1215.29 ff.). Because the One transcends Intellect, it must transcend Eternity, the realm of the Intellect.

² Steel (2009) 213.
The second group of commentators (1216.3ff.), who may possibly represent the opinion of Amelius, equates time with eternity. These commentators claim that in the second hypothesis (Parm. 152 A), the notion that the One participates in Time refers to Eternity. Proclus protests that Plato cannot mean Eternity here, because he uses distinctive temporal expressions, “older than oneself”, “younger than oneself”, and so on.

The third commentator (1216.15) uses the Neopythagorean identification of the primal god with kairos. This position says that the One exists in the level of being superior to eternity, in a state of instantaneousness. Dillon identifies this commentator with Porphyry, who describes the One as beyond Time and Eternity. Porphyry, moreover, fits the bill as this commentator with his description of the primal god (ho prôtos theos) as Occasion, the second god, Eternity and the third, Time. The One, meanwhile, exists beyond time and eternity. Proclus dismisses this opinion, remarking that it does not explain the ways that characteristics participate in one another.

The fourth opinion (1216.37) appears to be that of Iamblichus, who postulates an archetypal Time. He argues that the One is not Eternity, and is not established with Time. Time is, instead, the causal principle

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3 Dillon offers Porphyry, Iamblichus, or Amelius as the author of this opinion. Because the third group of commentators represents the opinion of Porphyry, while the fourth that of Iamblichus, I have taken the second group to be that of Amelius, given Proclus’ trajectory in offering school opinions. Still, it is perhaps best to defer to Dillon’s more cautious and educated identification.

4 According to Dillon, this is a Neo-Pythagorean deduction from the Philebus 66 A, Politicus 284 E, and Laws IV 709 B. For a discussion on kairos as the supreme principle, see Proclus, In Alc. 121; Plotinus Enn. VI.9.18.44; Damascius, In Phil. 253–254 p. 119.

5 See Proclus, PT I, 11 p. 51.4. In his περὶ ἀρ/Λhiῶν, Porphyry declares the highest aspect of nous (the supreme principle) to be προκαϊωνίος, while nous is αἰώνιος. See Dillon (1988) 559, note 81.

6 Proclus, In Tim. III, 30, 30ff.; see Iamblichus In Tim. fr. 63 Dillon.

7 Simplicius, In Phys. I 793, 23 CAG (Iamblichus, In Tim, fr. 65 Dillon):

“The notion of ‘before’ and ‘after’ in this order we do not understand in the sense of changes involving movements, nor in any other such sense, but we define it as the sequence of causes and the continuous combination of generations and primary activity and power which brings motions to fulfilment and as all things of this sort. Further, we say that Time, and at the same time the Heaven, were not created along with the motion or life proceeding from the soul, but from the intellectual setting-in-order proceeding from the Demiurge; for it is in conjunction with this that Time and the Cosmos are established in him. And indeed the ancient account unequivocally reveals God as ordering and producing Time at the same time as he makes the Heaven. And
of the intellectual order—terms such as “older”, “younger” and “the same age” reflect relative levels of intellect. In Simplicius’ *Commentary on the Physics*, Iamblichus argues for an ungenerated Now and a time of a higher order than temporal things. The relationship between Time, the soul, and intellect is evident in the following passage:

“Reasonably time is defined as the moving image of eternity inasmuch as it is modelled upon the intellect and its thoughts are made to resemble the intellections, as the indivisible Now which is in the soul is made to resemble the Now which rests in the One; as the time which encompasses all things in this world is made to resemble the time of the intellectual world which encompasses, simultaneously, and everlastingly, the things which really are (and do not become); as the moving time of this world is modelled upon the static time of the intellectual world, and as the measure of becoming is made to represent the measure of the essences (that really are).”

(Iamblichus, *In Tim.*, fr. 63 Dillon.)

An intellectual Time exists which transcends the cosmos and measures activities in the world of becoming. This transcendent Time governs the principles of the psychic world, as well. Iamblichus’ notion of prehistoric time influences Syrianus’ reading of the *Parmenides* on time.

Syrianus starts from Iamblichus’ concept that there is a higher kind of Time which relates to the level of divine soul. Adapting the Iamblichean concept that a level of divine souls participate in primal Time, Syrianus says that Time takes its beginning from above and imitates eternity. Syrianus, thus, presents a doctrine on time which is similar to Iamblichus’, as both give a non-temporal explanation for the existence of a transcendent Time. While Iamblichus identifies the levels of reality with the noeric realm—time itself is the ordering principle—, Syrianus refers it to levels of divine souls that participate in primal Time—primal time measures the circuits of these souls. He takes the concept of time unfolding eternity and extrapolates a lower level which unravels something contained in a concentrated form at a higher level. In apparent concordance with Iamblichus’ concept of transcendent Time as the ‘causal principle of the

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8 The “older” is superior in essence, “younger” is inferior, and those at the same level of being or those which have the same age, are at the same cosmic level.

intellectual order’ (τὸ τῆς τάξεως τῆς νοερᾶς αἰτίαν), Syrianus argues that pure Time acts as the cause for the divine souls of their dance! Syrianus’ proposal is thus equivalent to Iamblichus, who suggests an intermediate entity which is superior to ordinary time, lower than aiòn, the causal principle of the intellectual world. Proclus, however, disagrees with Syrianus that the lemma refers not just to beings who move cyclically, but all beings in time. ¹⁰

As regards the troublesome “temporal” expressions in the lemma, we know that we are dealing with souls that change or “dance”, progressing in their circuits. He proposes the following solution: those which are termed “older” in relation to themselves, those which get more benefit from infinity of time, and those which are “younger” in relation to themselves, participate less in time than those which are below them. That which is younger than itself is more youthful, while those which are older are in relation to intelligible entities and extend in infinity of time.¹¹ Those equal in age with each other have uniform circuits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Older</th>
<th>Younger</th>
<th>The Same Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relation to Themselves</td>
<td>Partakes more of infinity</td>
<td>Participates less in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation to Others</td>
<td>The whole measurement of time, measured by a longer circuit</td>
<td>What has its circuit measured by a lesser circumference is younger than what has a larger one (if measured by the moon, with a small circuit, it is younger than what is measured by Saturn, which has a longer circuit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Syrianus gives a non-temporal meaning to temporal expressions, just as Iamblichus makes older and younger matters of seniority and prece-

¹⁰ Steel (2009) 220.
¹¹ For Proclus, the phrases “in relation to themselves” and “in relation to others” direct his understanding of “older” and “younger” in his discussion here. See In Parm. 719.7f., where he says that the higher intelligible orders are older in respect to causes. For a discussion of tense and its relation to Eternity, see Plass (1993).
dence. Proclus, in his account of archetypal time, connects it to the noeric level, just above soul, so that it is not quite time. Proclus adopts the concept of Time as an intellectual entity which is measured by the motion of soul.

Syrianus thus gives a non-temporal meaning of time and lays out three modes of time: eternity, kairos, and transcendent Time, which he makes the causal principle of the intellectual order. When Proclus discusses time, however, he does not make time the ordering principle but thinks time orders circuits of souls (which, in turn, order the universe). Syrianus’ interpretation is another example of how Syrianus divinizes being in his metaphysics.

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12 See note 6 above.
13 Simplicius, Commentary on the Physics, p. 49, 15 ff.
14 Simplicius, Commentary on the Physics, p. 53, 30.
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 9

Proclus, In Parm. 1226.22–1227.24

Οὔκοιν τὸ γε πρεσβύτερον ἀεὶ νεωτέροι πρεσβύτεροι;—[Τί μήν;—Τὸ πρεσβύτερον]ᵃ ἁρα ἐαυτοῦ γιγνόμενον καὶ νεότερον ἐαυτοῦ ᾧμα γίγνεται, εἴπερ μέλλει ἐχεῖν ὅτοι πρεσβύτερον γίγνεται.—Πῶς λέγεις;— ᾮδε [Parm. 141a7–b3]

Πάλιν οὖν ἤμιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἰμέτερον καθηγεμόνα τρεπτέον καὶ τὴν ἐκεῖνην παράδοσιν εἰς μέσον ἀκτέον, φῶς ἀνάπτουσαν εἰς πάντα τὸν προκείμενον λόγον. διότι τῇ τὸ χρόνῳ μετέχον ἐστὶ, τὸ μὲν οὖν [κατ’]ᵇ εὐθείαν ὀδεύον, καὶ ἀρχόμενον τε ἀπὸ τινος καὶ εἰς ἄλλο καταλήγον, τὸ δὲ κατὰ κύκλων περιτομεῖμον, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ τὴν κίνησιν ἔχον, ὃ καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ πέρας ἐστὶ ταὐτὸν καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἀκατάληκτος, ἐκάστου τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀρχῇ καὶ πέρατος ὅντος, καὶ οὗ δὲν ἦττον ἀρχῆς ἢ πέρατος. τὸ δὲ κυκλικὸς ἐνεργοῦν μετέχει τοῦ χρόνου περιοδικῶς, καὶ ἐπειδὴ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πέρας αὐτῷ τῆς κινήσεως ἐστὶ καὶ ἀρχῇ, καθ’ ὦν μὲν ἀφιστάταται τῆς ἀρχῆς, πρεσβύτερον γίγνεται| καθ’ ὦν δὲ ἐπί τὸ πέρας ἀρίσκειται, νεότερον γίγνεται· γιγνόμενον γὰρ ἔγγον τοῦ πέρατος ἐγγύτερον γίγνεται τῆς οἰκείας ἀρχῆς· τὸ δὲ τῆς οἰκείας ἀρχῆς ἐγγύτερον γιγνόμενον νεότερον γίγνεται· τὸ ἄρα ἐπί τὸ πέρας ἀρίσκειται, νεότερον γίγνεται τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ κατὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ πρεσβύτερον γιγνόμενον· τὸ γὰρ τὸ ἐαυτοῦ πέρατος συνεγγίζον ἐπί τὸ πρεσβύτερον πρόειμον. ὃ μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ ἄλλο καὶ [τὸ] πέρας, τοῦτο καὶ τὸ νέωτερον ἐτερον ὃ τὸ πρεσβύτερον· ὃ δὲ ταὐτὸν ἀρχὴ καὶ πέρας, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον νέωτερον ἐστὶ [τὸ νέωτερον]ᶜ ἢ πρεσβύτερον, ἀλλ’ ὃς ὁ Πλάτων φησίν, ἀμα νέωτερον ἐαυτοῦ καὶ πρεσβύτερον γίγνεται· τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατ’ εὐθείαν κινοῦμενον οὐχ ἔχει, διὸτι πέρας καὶ ἀρχὴ διαφέρετον ἐτ’ αὐτοῦ, τὸ δὲ κατὰ κύκλων ἔχει τὸ νέωτερον ἐαυτοῦ τῷ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὡς ἀρχὴν καὶ ὡς πέρας γίγνεσθαι τὴν κίνησιν. πάν ἄρα τὸ χρόνου μετέχον, εἰ πρεσβύτερον ἐαυτοῦ γίγνεται, καὶ νεώτερον ἐαυτοῦ γίγνεται· τοιοῦτον δὲ τὸ κυκλικῶς κινοῦμενον. ὅθεν

ᵃ Τί… πρεσβύτερον² add. Steel ex Ag PLAT. codd.: om. Σᵇ κατ’ add. Cous² secundum gᶜ τὸ νεώτερον del. Steel ex g
“Does not, then, ‘older’ always mean older than something younger?” “Obviously.” “Well then, whatever is becoming older than itself, must also be at the same time becoming younger than itself, if it is to have something than which it is becoming older.” “What do you mean?” “This.”

We must therefore turn once again to our Master, and bring to bear upon the problem his discussion, which throws light upon the whole preceding argument. That which partakes in Time is of two sorts; the one which, as it were, proceeds in a straight line, beginning from one point and ending in another; the other which travels round in a circle and pursues its motion from the same point to the same point, so as to have a beginning and an end which are the same and a motion which is unceasing, since each point of its progress is both beginning and end, and is no less a beginning than an end. That, then, which enjoys cyclical activity partakes in Time by circuits, and since the same point is for it both an end and a beginning of motion, in so far as it departs from a beginning, it becomes older, whereas in so far as it arrives at an end, it becomes younger; for as it comes to be nearer to its end, it comes to be nearer to its own beginning; and that which comes to be nearer to its own beginning becomes younger. So then, that which arrives cyclically at its end becomes younger, while at the same time and by the same process also becoming older; for that which draws near to its own end proceeds towards being older; so for that which has a beginning different from its end, becoming younger is different from becoming older; but for that of which its beginning is the same as its end, its youngness is no younger than it is older, but as Plato says, “It becomes simultaneously younger than itself and older.” For that which is moved in a straight line does not have this characteristic, because end and beginning are different in its case, whereas that which moves in a circle has the quality of being younger than itself by reason of the fact that its motion comes about in relation to the same point as both beginning and as end. So then, everything that partakes in time, it if becomes older than itself, also becomes younger than itself; and what is of this sort is that which moves in a circle.
Commentary

Syrianus argues that divine souls (and their vehicles) move cyclically, which means that as they approach their end, they also approach their beginning. He applies this psychic circular motion to Plato’s premise that something becoming younger than itself also becomes older than itself, and something older than itself becomes younger than itself.

Proclus gives the opinion of three sets of commentators before launching into Syrianus’ teaching on the subject.

1. Some commentators (1226.2): dismiss the argument altogether, saying that Plato indulges in sophistry here.
2. Others (1226.4): say the same thing is at the same time younger and older—it is younger with respect to the future, and older with respect to the past. Proclus criticises this argument for concentrating on how something is simultaneously older or younger than another, but not adequately explaining in what way something is simultaneously older and younger than oneself.
3. The third group (1226.12): says that everything is both older and younger than itself; what is now existent is older, what used to be existent is younger. This argument addresses the relative aspects of a thing based on what that thing is at a certain time, so that what is older is older than what used to be younger. Proclus says that this misses the spirit of Plato’s argument, which looks at a thing being simultaneously younger and older than itself at one point in time.
For this reason the ancients were understandably disturbed lest this argument be in some way sophistical, since they were looking to things that moved in a straight line, whereas they should have made the distinction and considered what things have the characteristic of having their beginning and end the same, and what have them as different, and they should have considered that the subject of discussion now is divine souls, which partake in time in the respect that they have a periodic time of their proper motion, as indeed do the vehicles which are dependent upon them.

This, then, is the argument of our Master.

To Proclus, Syrianus’ opinion is the most credible. He says that souls partake in time through circuits, which results in cyclical motion and time for souls and their vehicles. Souls, thus, moving in circles, are simultaneously younger and older than themselves. For, as soon as they depart from a point, they become older, but simultaneously younger, as they move still closer to their own beginning. As souls move nearer to their end, they move nearer to their beginning, which is spatially next to the end on a circle. Proclus adapts Syrianus’ statement on souls in *Platonic Theology* II, 12, p. 71, 13 ff., where he notes that souls are peculiar in so far as they are both younger and, at the same time, older than themselves and other things. He then goes on to state that this phenomenon of being both older and younger occurs because they move according to cyclical time. Proclus, however, takes all of this a step further by saying that the ages of souls themselves are responsible for preserving the measures of time.

Syrianus’ discourse on circular motion and *Parmenides* 141 AB is significant, not least for its teaching on the behaviour of souls within Syrianus’ metaphysics. That circles and lines have a metaphysical importance beyond their geometrical aspects is evident in Chaldean thought,¹ and certainly reappears in Platonic thought. In his commentary on Euclid’s *Elements*, Proclus says that a circle and straight line are two basic types

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¹ The Chaldeans held that forms emanate from divine mind to matter through a tireless whirlwind (ἀκούμητος στροφάλαιζ). Cf. Gersh (1978) 75.
of line based on the fundamental principles of Limit and Unlimitedness (In Eucl. 103.21). The circle and circular line correspond to Limit, while the straight line corresponds to Unlimitedness. The spiral is a mixture of Limit and Unlimitedness (In Eucl. 104.7 ff.). The behaviour of a line under the influence of Limit and Unlimitedness displays the most elaborate role for lines and circles in the cosmos; looking at the process in another light, the processive and revertive function is, in fact, in the causal process of remaining, procession, and reversion. Gersh makes the case that the three geometrical shapes correspond to the three processes based on Proclus’ assertions that the point is most akin to remaining, the line to procession, and the circle to reversion.

This concept is reflected in Proclus’ discussion of generation in In Parm. 1131:

“One may also see on the level of generation these two qualities [line and circle]. One may view in the cycle of existence here (for generation returns to itself cyclically, as is written in the Phaedo [70 C ff.]) the circular; while the straight one may see in the procession of each thing from its birth to its decline, and the middle here, which is in front of the extremes, as its peak of development.”

Based on the Phaedo, Proclus argues that the process of generation is a cyclical one in which a being reverts upon itself for regeneration.

The concept of generation is particular to soul—souls are constructed out of straight lines and circles, because circles are only one type of line. In his Commentary on Euclid, Proclus says,

“It is because of the circular revolutions of the heavens that generation returns in a circle upon itself and brings its unstable mutability into a definite cycle. If you divide bodiless things into soul and nous, you will say that the circle has the character of nous, the straight line that of soul. This is why the soul, as it reverts to nous, is said to move in a circle.”

(In Eucl. 147.12.)

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2 Proclus, In Eucl. 103.2 ff.: “There is a line which is finite but does not have points as its limits. The circle is such a line, bending back upon itself and making no use of limits as does the straight line.” Trans. Morrow (1970).
3 Proclus, In Eucl. 88.2 ff.; 91.11 ff.
4 Iamblichus In Tim. fr. 49 Dillon; Proclus, In Eucl. 108.10–13, 164.8–11.
5 Proclus, In Eucl. 147.3 ff.
6 Gersh (1978) 73.
7 Sorabji makes the point that Parmenides was a member of the Pythagorean school and that Pythagorean thought said that everything will happen in cycles, precisely as it is happening now. The universe, though finite, will have no beginning or end. (1983) 107.
8 Proclus, In Eucl. 92.4; Tim. 53C–55C.
That soul moves in a circle because of its revertive tendencies is a common thought in Iamblichus’ *de Anima*. The soul, however, moves according to different shapes depending on in what action it is engaged:

“The demiurgic nous has set up these two principles in himself, the straight and circular, and produced out of himself two monads, the one acting in a circular fashion to perfect all intelligible essences, the other moving in a straight line to bring all perceptible things to birth. Since the soul is intermediate between sensibles and intelligibles, she moves in a circular fashion in so far as she is allied to intelligible nature, but in so far as she presides over sensibles, exercises her providence in a straight line.”

(*In Eucl. 108.13 ff.*)¹⁰

The soul moves in a straight line when it extends in generation, a circle when it returns during reversion. In this respect, the soul acts as an intermediate, binding together the intelligible and sensible realms.

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uated τὸ ἔν ταύτῃ οὕτως ἔχειν; οὐκ οὐκ έμοιγε δοξεῖ. [Parm. 142a6–8].

DICENDUM AUTEM ET UT NOSTER MAGISTER, QUOD ABNEGATIONES IN ENTIBUS EXQUISTE DICUNTUR ESSERE CIRCA ILLAM REM, CIRCA QUAM SUNT ABNEGATIONES, ALCUBI QUIDEM ET SPECIONALITER, ALCUBI AUTEM SOLUM SOLUM PRIAUTUÆ. PUTA IN EXEMPOLO, STATIONEM DICIMUS NON ENS—NON ENIM EST MOTUS NEQUE IDENTITAS NEQUE ALTERITAS—, ET MOTUM SIMILITER NON ENS UOCAMUS; NON ENIM EST ALIORUM ENTITEM NEQUE UNUM. ET TOTALITER UNUMQUODQUE ENTITM SINGULARITER QUIDEM ENS EST, QUA IPSUM, MULTIPICITER AUTEM NON ENS, QUA AB ALIIS REMOTUM EST. ATTAMEN ET SI ALIA ABNEGAMUS AB IPSO, SED ABNEGATIONES CIRCA IPSUM SUNT MIXTE ALIQALITER AFFIRMATIONIBUS. PARTICIPAT QUIDEM ENIM ET ALIORUM UNOQUOQUE; SERVANS AUTEM SUI IPSIO PURITATEM QUOD EST. SPECIONALES IGITUR ABNEGATIONES IN IPSO; NAM NON ENIM ILLUS ALTERUM ERI; HOC AUTEM SPECIES EST INTELLECTUALIS. OSTENSEM EST ENIM QUOD QUE ALTERIUS NATURA DISPARTITA FACIT QUOD IN ILLIS NON ENS; HOC AUTEM ERAT ABNEGATIO.

ITERUM IN SENSIBILIBUS SOCRATEN DICIMUS NEQUE EQVUM NEQUE LEONEM NEQUE ALIORUM NULLUM. OMNIA ENS OCCIDENTE ALIORUM HABIT PRIUATIONES. UNUM ENIM ALIQUOD ENS INFINITÀ ALIA NON EST, ET SUNT IN IPSO OMNIA PRIUATIONES, PRIUATIONES ENES SOLUM. NON ENIM PARTICIPAT ALIQUALITER ALIIS, SICUT IN INTELLECTUALIBUS DICEBAMUS, NEQUE PROPRER PURITAT EM LE NON PARTICIPARE, SED PROPRER DEBILITATEM MATERIALIS ET CORPORALIS

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1 This passage, forming part of the last section of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*, only survives in the Latin translation of William of Moerbeke (translated between 1280–1286). Klubansky, who discovered the work, and Labowsky published an edition and English translation of this work, *Parmenides usque ad finem primae Hypothesis nec non Procli Commentarium in Parmenidem pars ultima adhuc inedita interprete Guillelmo de Moerbeke ediderunt praefatione et annotationibus instruxerunt* (Plato Latinus, vol. III), London 1953. For this passage, I refer to the more recent edition of Steel (1982). Of interest is the Greek retroversion, originally the work of Rumbach, corrected by Steel, and published along with an English translation by Gregory MaClsaac 1997. This retroversion was revised in vol. III, Steel (2009).
Is it possible that all this is true about the one? I do not think so.

Following our Master, we must also say that negative propositions in the sphere of real beings have different meanings according to their subject matter, sometimes a specific significance, sometimes only a privative one. E.g., we say “is not” in speaking of rest because it is not movement or identity or difference, and similarly we say “is not” in speaking of movement because it is not any of the other things; and in general each thing is in a single way, inasmuch as it is itself, but in many ways it is not, inasmuch as it is distinguished from other things. But though we deny other things of it, these negative propositions are in a particular way tied up with the positive propositions. For it does also participate in each of the other things, yet it keeps its own integrity and is what it is. In this case, then, the negative propositions are specific, for not being that, it will be the other; and this will be an intellectual form. For it has been shown that it is the character of difference as distributed in this sphere that makes “not being” true in it; this is what constituted negation here.

On the other hand, in speaking of sensible objects we say that Socrates is not a horse and not a lion, and is not any of the other things, for he lacks all the other characters. For, being one particular thing, he is not an infinite number of others, and in him there are lacks, which are nothing but lacks, of all of those characters. For he does not in a particular way participate in the other things, as we said was true of intelligibles. And this non-participation is not due to the purity of the idea “Socrates,” but to the weakness of a material and corporeal subject, which is incapable
ypostaseos non potentis omnibus simul participare entibus. Igitur causa
intelligentialibus abnegationes circa ipsa sunt; qui igitur abnegantur et in
sensibilibus, ibi quidem specionaliter, hic autem priuatiue.

Que itaque unius abnegationes, non sunt circa unum. Nichil enim
totaliter illi adest, neque ut species, neque ut priuatio; sed sicut diceba-
mus quod nomen hoc, scilicet unum, est eius qui in nobis conceptus,
sed non ipsius unius, sic utique dicimus quod et abnegatio circa hunc
est, circa illud autem unum nulla est dictarum abnegatuarum conclu-
sionum; sed exaltatum est propter simplicitatem ab omni oppositione et
omni negatione. Merito ergo in fine apposuit quod abnegationes hee non
sunt *circa unum*. Aliud enim est esse de uno et aliud esse circa unum.
Etenim sermo circa unum quidem non est—indeterminabile enim est—,
de uno autem est, ipsum hoc dicentibus nobis quod indicibile. Quare et
dicte abnegationes non sunt circa unum, sed de uno. Neque ergo hiis que
intelligentialium neque hiis que sensibilium abnegationibus nichil ipse
assimilantur. Hee quidem enim circa hec illa sunt quorum utique et sunt
abnegationes, hee autemnullatenus sunt circa unum.
of a simultaneous participation in everything. For this reason negative propositions in the intelligible sphere really express something about the predicates. The same holds true also of negative propositions about objects of sense; but in the former case they are specific, while in the latter they are merely privative.

But negative propositions about the One do not really express anything about the One. For nothing at all applies to it, either specifically or privatively, but, as we have said, the name “one” names our conception of it, not the One itself, and so we say that the negation also is about our conception, and none of the negative conclusions that have been stated is about the One, but because of its simplicity, it is exalted above all contrast and all negation. So he rightly added at the end that these negative propositions do not express anything about the One.

It is not the same thing to refer to the One and to express something about the One. The argument does not express anything about the One, for it is indefinable. So the negative propositions that have been stated do not express anything about the One, but do refer to the One. This is why they resemble neither those which occur in the intelligible sphere nor those which are about the objects of sense. For the former are about the same things of which the negations also are predicated, while the latter do not in any way express anything about the One.
This fragment assesses the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* and debates what, if anything, can be said of the One—as so often, in response to an *aporia* which raised the question whether this final passage does not in effect nullify the whole previous enquiry.

Proclus gives the replies of two others on the matter. The first group (likely to be Origen the Platonist)\(^2\) says that there is indeed no positive subject of the first hypothesis. This account denies that the One acts as the subject matter of the first hypothesis because the first hypothesis reaches impossible conclusions. When dismissing the first hypothesis, this group of commentators deem the following hypothetical syllogisms impossible: “if the One exists, it is a whole, it has not a beginning, middle, or end, it has no shape”, and “it has no existence, is not existence, is not expressible, is not nameable, is not knowable.” Proclus replies that this group must attribute some kind of existence to the One because it holds that the One is participated by existence; the One is essentially the same as One-Being or Being. Proclus also criticizes Origen for this opinion in *In Parm.* 1065.1 ff., where he says that the group supposes that “the One in its absolute form is without subject (*anhupostaton*), and that this hypothesis produces impossible conclusions” (1106.31). Proclus’ criticism is based on the exegetical doctrine that Plato did not come up with any hypotheses which would lead to impossibilities; instead, Proclus finds Origen’s reasoning impossible.

The origin of the whole aporia, then, seems to derive from Origen’s account of the One, concerning which there has been much recent discussion.\(^3\) Origen connects the One to the Intellect, thus supporting the negation of the transcendence of the One.\(^4\) In Origen’s treatise, *On the First God*, he follows Numenius in making the first God *basileus*—the first principle of the universe, a supreme Intellect, and the second *poietes*—the maker of the universe. In *Platonic Theology* II, 4, Proclus says of those who want to make the Intellect the first principle of all beings,

“I find marvellous all those commentators of Plato who have admitted the kingship of the intellect over beings, but have not revered the unspoken

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\(^2\) Origen the Platonist is attacked for this view by Proclus in *PT* II, 4.


\(^4\) Saffrey and Westerink (1974) xi.
transcendence of the One and its transcendent existence over the entire universe, especially Origen who shares in the same teaching as Plotinus.” (p. 31, 8–9.)

As with this passage, the mainstay of Proclus’ criticism is Origen’s failure to make the One transcendent. Based on three key passages from Proclus’ Parmenides Commentary, Saffrey and Westerink summarise Origen’s theory on the relationship between the One and Intellect:

1. The One is entirely without existence or substance (In Parm. 1064.21–1066.16);
2. The Intellect is supreme (In Parm. VII. 64.1–6);
3. Absolute Being and Absolute One are identical.

For the third summation of Origen’s thought, Saffrey and Westerink credit In Parm. VII, p. 36.8–31. This section, however, discusses the relationship between the First hypothesis and the henads and seems better identified as Iamblichus, as Dillon notes.6

The second opinion, a group of commentators that probably comprises Porphyry, offers a literary solution. Porphyry does not reject the Plotinian One, but regards the first principle as being also the Father of the noetic triad when looked at in its relation to what follows it.7 Here, Porphyry’s proposal to move this statement to the beginning of the second hypothesis may be seen as an aspect of this strategy of linking the two hypotheses more closely.8 If the Father of the noetic triad is expressible,
characteristics can be attributed to it. Proclus describes the Porphyrian system as taking the first hypothesis to be about the One above all things, and the second as concerning the intelligible level of being (τὸ υἱὸν πλάτος), without any indication of the complexity of Porphyry’s position as postulated here, but we may suspect him of over-simplifying the situation. Proclus puts a positive gloss on Porphyry’s position, explaining that he thinks it helps to bridge the gap between the two hypotheses as an opening leading to the second hypothesis.

The third opinion, identified as Iamblichus by Dillon, says that the conclusion contains everything. With his usual method for comparison, Proclus compares Porphyry, whose theory is piecemeal and ethical, with Iamblichus, whose opinion looks towards the metaphysical truths. Iamblichus argues that whenever something is said of the One, this attribute is added to it, putting the One in danger of being “particular something” rather than simply One. To prevent this, Iamblichus says that the One contains all things as their cause. Any negation regarding the One, then, does not mean non-existence, but refers to the One as separate from its effect, but at the same time the cause of all existence.

Syrianus builds on Iamblichus but disagrees in a key area. Iamblichus says that the One is an entity in itself; if anything should be attributed to it, such terms would subtract from and diminish the One. Syrianus, however, says that negative propositions are tied to the positive, in so far as identifying that the One is not, is another way of attributing something

another. For a discussion of being in Porphyry and the One, see Smith (1994) 35–41. Damascius, reporting on Porphyry’s interpretation of the One, remarks how Porphyry makes the Father connumerated with the intelligibles and calls the One the Father of the first noetic triad, but as ineffable cause it still surpasses everything (Dub. Et Sol. I, p. 86, 9). Porphyry’s doctrine of the One is further complicated by the fact that statements in his Philosophical History seem to contradict those in Damascius’ account (frs. 221–222 Smith). See Hadot (1966) 128–140.

9 Dillon, who, along with Hadot, identifies the author of The Anonymous Commentary on the Parmenides as Porphyry, points to fragment 2 of that work as an example of the One’s transcendence over Intellect. While the Intellect is different from the One, One is not different from Intellect. Any traits such as Difference, would compromise the One’s simplicity (IV, 5 ff.). Cf. Dillon (1992) 357.

10 Cf. Proclus, In Parm. 1106.31–1108.19 for Proclus’ discussion of the One beginning with Amelius, Porphyry and ending with Iamblichus.

11 Iamblichus posits two Ones, the first a transcendent entity, the second, connected to the henads. For Iamblichus on the One, cf. Proclus, In Parm. 1066.17 ff.; Damascius, de Princip. I, 43, p. 86,3 ff.

12 Steel (1999) 356, says that Iamblichus avoids the real problem of the text by taking the ταῦτα to refer, not to the conclusions, but to the attributes listed in the conclusions: “whole”, “totality”, “in itself”, “in rest”.
to the One—i.e., negative statements specifically say that the One is other than all these things. At the intelligible level, Syrianus notes that we speak “εἰδητικῶς”, meaning that negative statements can be specificatory (on the level of the intelligible), rather than just negative; this approach looks back to the megista genē of the Sophist, where one type of being “is not to be”. At the intelligible level, each form has its own identity, so that we can say “is not” when speaking of rest, because it is not movement, or identity or difference. Each form is different and specific, but still communicates with other forms. Terms trying to characterize the One, then, are specifics that do not affect the integrity of the One.

In this passage, further, Syrianus discusses negation as it relates to sensible objects. On the sensible level, a negative proposition implies a reference to some reality for which we are denying the attributes. Unlike intelligibles, which participate in each other, sensibles, being particular things, are not in another. Syrianus gives the example that Socrates, being a man as a particular thing, is not a horse and not a lion—he lacks the characters of lion and horse. Hence, negation at the sensible level is not specificatory (like the forms, where negations maintain their identity), but privative.

This does not mean that the One is not, it just means that One is other than the listed negatives. The propositions about the One do not express anything about it, rather, they express our conceptions of it, i.e., negations of the One are the negations of our concepts about it. In other words, it seems that Syrianus credits negative statements with the same metaphysical weight as positive statements—both are limited manners of expressing the One. Syrianus distinguishes between referring to the One (περὶ τοῦ ἑνόμως) and talking about the One (περὶ τὸ ἑν). The construction with the genitive indicates a discussion where the noun in the genitive is the general subject matter, but does not imply anything about the subject matter. The construction with the accusative, however, indicates that something is being said about the subject matter in particular—such an accusative construction is, according to Syrianus, impossible when the

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13 Plato, Soph. 255 E: “And we shall say that (the character of difference) pervades all (the forms) ...” and 257 E: “The character of difference seems to me to have been parcelled out.”

14 On the sensible level, a negative proposition implies a reference to some reality for which we are denying the attributes. Steel (1999) 356.

15 Steel (1999) 356.

16 Steel credits Syrianus with being the first to understand 142A6–8 “as a request to deny all negations” (1999) 356.
“One” is the object in the accusative.17 Steel notes two parallels to Syrianus’ unusual distinction between περὶ τοῦ ἑνός and περὶ τὸ ἑν in *In Parmenides* VII, 1191.5–9 and *Platonic Theology* II, 8, p. 55.18 In the first passage, Proclus says,

“For that in fact we say nothing in the proper sense about the One (ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑνός), we will hear the philosopher demonstrating a little later. Nevertheless, we do talk about it (περὶ αὐτοῦ) because of the natural striving of the soul towards the One (περὶ τὸ ἑν).”

The first use of the genitive with ἐπὶ is rather like Syrianus’ use of περὶ with the genitive, in so far as it indicates the impossibility of a discussion about real qualities of the One. The second preposition, that of the genitive with περὶ however, is equivalent to Syrianus’ use of περὶ τὸ ἑνός in line 630; it indicates a discussion that merely refers to the One—such a discussion is entirely possible. The last use of a preposition with One, περὶ τὸ ἑν, is similar to ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑνός, as it indicates a discussion about the nature of the One, which is impossible. This last prepositional use is attached to the soul’s revertive journey to the One; it is described using the accusative construction as the soul’s return is towards the One’s absolute Nature (see Proclus, *In Parm.* 74.3). In *Platonic Theology* II, 8, p. 55,19 Proclus says,

“It is impossible to describe the One because it is indescribable, but whatever you may say, you will say something and you will talk of it (περὶ ἐκείνης) but not express it itself.”20

Use of περὶ and the genitive denotes general reference to the One, but not a discussion of its qualities—hence, this usage is similar to Syrianus’ mode of describing speech and the One. Syrianus concludes: first, that the statements do not mean that the One is not; rather, the One is other than the listed negations. Second, Syrianus says that propositions about

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17 For a grammatical explanation of this passage, see Steel (1999) 357. Steel says that the construction with the genitive is used for titles of works, e.g., “on the soul” and in the treatise of the sophist Gorgias, “περὶ οὐδενός” “on nothing.” Klibansky and Labowsky translate περὶ plus the accusative as expressing something about the One (1953) 357–358.


19 In Proclus, *PT* II, 55, 23 Proclus uses περὶ and the accusative (prefaced by alphaprive) to describe how discourse on the One is limited as it is “ἀπερίγραφον.” According to Saffrey and Westerink, this word is rare in negative theology and appears in the following passages: Proclus, *In Parm.* 51.18, *In Tim.* I, p. 371.13, *De Decem dub.* § 10.25 *incircumscriptibilem; De prov.* § 65.10 *incircumscriptibile.* See Proclus, *PT* II, p. 112, note 4.

the One do not express anything about the One, but are merely our conceptions of it.

Other explanations for this lemma follow this section; however, they do not appear to be attached to Syrianus. Proclus lists the following solutions, based in part on Syrianus’ explanation to the problem, (summarized in *Platonic Theology* II,12):

1. 72.23 ff.: Proclus interprets the phrase, “these things are not possible (δυνατόν)” to indicate that the One cannot be credited with the power (δύναμις) of generation, since it transcends such an activity.
2. 74.3 ff.: This solution shows how the soul approaches the One through a mystical ascent in which it must leave behind dialectical enterprise.
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 11

Damascius, De Princ. ch. 48, II p. 17, 1–17 W-C

ἐν εἴ ἐστιν, ἃρα οἶον τε αὐτὸ εἶναι μέν, οὐσίας δε μὴ μετέχειν; οὕτω οἶον τε. [Parm. 142B5–6].

"Ἀλλο μὲν τὸ ἡνωμένον, ἄλλο δὲ τὸ ἐν, ός δείκνυσι Πλάτων καὶ ἡ καὶ νή ἕννοια προσαπατεῖ. τὸ γὰρ ἡνωμένον τοιούτον ἐστιν οἶον πεπονθὸς τὸ ἐν. αὐτὸ δὲ ὁ μόνον ἐν ὑπάρχει ὑπὲρ τὸ ἡνωμένον· οὐ μέντοι ὑπέσπασται τὸ ἐτερον τοῦ ἐτερον παντελῶς, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἕνος μετέχει τὸ ἡνωμένον. ἔχει τινά ἃρα μεταξύ τῶν δύο σχέσιν θεωρουμένην, οἶον σύνδεσιν τῶν ἄκρων ταῦτα ἐφεξῆς· τὸ ἡνωμένον, ἡ σχέσις, τὸ ἐν, καὶ ὑπὲρ τὸ ἐν ἐσται μία ἀρχή, τὸ ἁρμητων. αἱ δὲ λεγομεναι δύο ἐν τε καὶ ἡ σχέσις, ἢ ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις (πρώτη γὰρ ἡ δύναμις σχέσεων ἀπασῶν)· τρίτον δὲ ὁ νοῦς καὶ ὅπερ ὅν ἀνυμνοῦμεν. ἅλλ' αὕτη μὲν ἡ ἀποδειξις Συριανῶ τε καὶ Πρόκλω γέγραπται εἰς τὸν Παρμενίδην· τὸ γὰρ ἐν ἐστιν ἐν ἀρχῇ τιθέμενον τῆς δεύτερας ύποθέσεως τὴν τριάδα σημαίνειν.
If the one is, can it be and not partake of being? No, it cannot.

The Unified is one thing, the One, another, as Plato shows, and as common opinion demands as well. For the Unified is something such as has oneness as an attribute, while that which is simply One exists prior to the Unified. The one, however, is not detached from the other completely, but the Unified participates in the One. There is, then, a certain relation perceived between the two, as it were a binding together of the extremes, these things forming a sequence: the Unified, the Relation, the One, and beyond the One there will be a unique principle, the Ineffable. The things that are spoken of as two are the One and the relation, which is potency (for this potency is the first of all bonds.) Third comes Intellect and the very thing which we celebrate as Being. This is the exegesis presented by Syrianus and Proclus in their commentary on the *Parmenides*; for the expression “the One is”, placed in the beginning of the second hypothesis, signifies this triad.
Damascius, in discussing the number of principles which exist before the noetic triad, comes to the lemma in *Parmenides* 142B5–6: “ἐν εἰ ἔστιν, ἄρα οἶν τε αὐτὸ ἔσται μὲν, οὐσίας δὲ μὴ μετέχειν;”—the opening of the Second Hypothesis. Here, he explains that the subject of the second hypothesis is the One as the unified principle, the lowest element of the henadic realm and highest of the noetic realm. He presents Syrianus’ interpretation of this, which amounts to a description of the first hypostasis in the form of two triads: 1) the One, the unified (*henomenon*) and the bond between them; and 2) the unified, *nous* and the bond between them.

Syrianus first presents the relationship between the One and the Unified; while the two are separate entities, they are related in so far as the unified participates in the One. This participation is a relation between the two, relating the two extremes of the One—the pure One at the summit, while the unified One functions at the lowest point, which is also the highest level of the noetic realm. This *henomenon* is a unified product of the *syndesis*. Beyond the One is an ineffable principle. Whether Syrianus actually presents a doctrine of two Ones seems rather doubtful, as we do not hear about it in other writings. It is possible, then, that either Damascius deliberately interpolates his own concept of the One into his discussion of Syrianus, or that he is presenting two aspects of the One—One as immanent, relating to the henadic world, and One as transcendent.

The triad presented here bears a resemblance to Iamblichus’ picture of the One (which Damascius likewise borrows from Iamblichus). In *Dub. et Sol.* 43 (I p. 86, Ruelle), Damascius presents Iamblichus’ theory of the two Ones: the first One is ineffable, the second One presides over the dyad of Limit and Unlimitedness. In ch. 51 (I 103, 6ff.), Damascius says the following of Iamblichus’ One:

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1 Damascius’ first intelligible triad occurs in a number of passages in *De Princ.*, especially in 117 (iii. 132–137): *De prim. princ.* 117 (iii.132.21–22). The first intelligible triad is marked by the unity between its three parts, which makes it, on the one hand similar to aspects of unity within the trinity of the Cappadocian Fathers, but still quite different as the henadic realm transcends distinction. Dillon discusses the *henomenon* as the ultimate moment of the henadic realm in (1997) 178.

2 See Proclus, *PT* III, 24, p. 15.14–20 where Proclus discusses the triad in the beginning of the second hypothesis, whereby One is connected with Being via One-Being. Proclus seems to adapt Syrianus’ view as depicted in this passage.
“For, indeed the one first principle is prior to the two; and this is the “simply One”, which Iamblichus postulates in between the two first principles and that absolutely ineffable (first principle). These two principles may be termed Limit and the Unlimited, or if one wishes, One and Many, the ‘One’ here to be taken as ‘One’ as opposed to ‘Many’, not the One which is prior to both these and has nothing opposed to it.”

Dillon notes that the *henomenon* is the *mikton* resulting from the union of *peras* and *apeiria*. Damascius, likewise, posits the following chain: the Ineffable, the One, Limit-Unlimit, followed by the unified. As in Iamblichus’ chain, there is no relationship between the ineffable and the unified.

Damascius next shifts the argument to report a second triad (17, 11 ff.): *henomenon*, and Being, and the relationship (*skhesis*) between the two. Damascius reports that Syrianus calls the relationship a *dynamis*, which acts as the second “person”. He also reports that the third person, Being, can be called *nous*. This second trinity of Syrianus’, then, resembles that which is found in Porphyry’s doctrine of the One.

In *Dub. et Sol.* ch. 43 (I 86, 8 Ruelle), Damascius presents Porphyry on this triad, reporting that “the single first principle of all things is the Father of the noetic triad”. This refers to Porphyry’s doctrine of the One as the Father of the intelligible triad of Being, Life, and Intellect and as the One, generator of all being. The head of the noetic world is the Father who is also the One, viewed in a different way. Porphyry’s first hypostasis is a condensed version of what later becomes expanded into several layers, as we see in Syrianus’s metaphysics. Dillon notes in his paper, “What Price the Father of the Noetic Triad? Some Thoughts on Porphyry’s Doctrine of the First Principle” that Syrianus’ triad differs from this Porphyrian One in so far as it is tempered by the first triad Syrianus mentions: One, *henomenon, skhesis*. Thus, by juxtaposing the two triads he makes clear that the *henomenon*, as first principle (or father) of the noetic triad, is not the pure One, in which it participates. Dillon also notes that *dynamis*, the *skhesis* between One (*henomenon*) and Being (*nous*), functions as a generative force which allows for creation, which Being, or Intellect, as a reflective element, cannot provide.

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3 Trans.: Dillon (1973) 31.
4 See Dillon (1973) 31. See Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 78, 6ff., on Iamblichus and the second One and the Dyad of *peras* and *apeiria*.
5 Translation Dillon (1973).
Damascius, *In Parm. ch. 238, II p. 75, 18–22 W-C*

ἀλλ’ εἶπε γέ, οἴμαι, ἐστιν, ἀνάγκη αὐτὸ ἀεί, ἔως ἕν ἣν ἦν, ἐν γέ τι εἶναι, μηδὲν δὲ ἀδύνατον. [Parm. 144c4–5].

Ἐνατον, τί τὸ ἐν γέ τι σημαίνει, καὶ τὸ τί προσκείμενον; ᾗ ἄρα ὅτι ἀντίκειται τῷ οὐδὲν τῷ τί ὡς Πορφύριος, ἤ ὅτι τὸ τί δηλοῖ τὸ μεθεκτὸν ἐν. εἰ δὲ γὰρ ἐν τὸ ἀμεθεκτὸν τὸ μεθεκτὸν τί ἐν· ἄμα γὰρ τί καὶ μεθεκτὸν, δὲ σημαίνει τὸ τί, ὡς ὁ φιλόσοφος Συριανός.

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* Commentary

In his commentary on *Parmenides* 144 C 5, Damascius asks what is meant by One with a ‘some’ added to it (ἐν γε τι), a ninth question in a series of ten questions on 143A4–144 C 8, which Damascius takes to be a discourse on the summit of the noetic-noeric realm. *In Parm. 112.16* represents Damascius’ enquiry into the significance of the τι. In a scholastic analysis of τι, Damascius accepts Syrianus’ solution that this “some” when added to the One seems to be specificatory. Damascius first cites Porphyry’s opinion, saying that the some (One) is opposite to saying that it is nothing—this is dismissed as too simple.1 Next, he gives Syrianus’ opinion, that the “some” indicates a participated One.

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1 Westerink notes (1997) 142, lines 18–20, p. 75 a parallel attributed to Porphyry (= fr. 171 Smith, 197). Here, the ‘some One’, an affirmative, has its contradiction with ‘the not some One’, the universal negative, in this sense of τι. See Hadot (1968) 102–103; 175; 177 and note 3; Dillon (1973) 393 and Iamblichus, *In Parm*, fr. 4 Dillon. Dillon says that the interpretation of Porphyry gives the literal sense of the expression ἐν γε τι. Porphyry considers this phrase in opposition to what immediately follows in the text of Plato (*Parm. 144 C 4–5*).
But if there is, it must, I imagine, so long as it is, be some one thing; it cannot be nothing.

Ninthly, what is the significance of “some one at least” (ge) and specifically the “some” which is attached? Is it that the “some” is opposed to “nothing”, as Porphyry says? Or is it that the “some” indicates the participated One? For if the One is imparticipable, the participated is “some One”. For it is at the same time “some” and “participated” that is signified by the “some”, as the philosopher Syrianus [says].

Syrianus argues that τι indicates a participated One (μέθεκτον). He says that if the unparticipated One is One simply, then the participated One must be “some One”. The “some One” and the participated One are thus synonymous, according to Syrianus. Thus, Syrianus shows that the One can be simple or participated, in so far as the participated One is participated in by Being, for instance.

In p. 75, 22 ff., Damascius quotes Iamblichus on this topic, who sees the τι as signifying a particular One. It is rather difficult to see what the difference is between them—Iamblichus gives a more detailed analysis, explaining the process of individualisation leading to the world of individuals. Iamblichus says that following “simply each thing”, there is a particular x—after “simply One”, there is the “particular One”. These particular ones should be applied, each particular one to its corresponding particular being. This theory relates to the Iamblichean concept of the henads, each individual henad having an analogue in every sphere of existence, here the sphere of being. The “some”, then, qualifies how the One refers to a henadic entity.

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2 Dillon uses this fragment as Iamblichus, In Parm. fr. 4 Dillon. Cf. Iamblichus’ comments on 142a above, pp. 297–298. He dismisses τι there also.
The question of how Damascius gains access to this teaching of Syrianus is of interest. While he usually quotes Syrianus with Proclus, in this fragment he bypasses Proclus, instead using Syrianus before he relays further information about Iamblichus. It appears that Damascius is doing either one of two things here: 1) either he has access to commentaries of Syrianus unavailable to us or 2) he could, as modern commentators of the Platonists do, infer from Proclus' text whom Proclus is referring to, and present those names as if they were stated in the text itself. In addition, if Damascius were supposed to be using a commentary of Syrianus', this would prove that there was such a commentary—alas, however, this is just speculation.
SYRIANUS, *In Parm. Fr.* 13

**Commentary**

This discussion of “in itself and in another” is part of Damascius’ sixth question on *Parmenides* 145B6–E6, which represents, in Syrianus’ system, the first intellectual order. In his discussion on the sixth question, Damascius contrasts his interpretation with that of Proclus, whom he dismisses, preferring the view of Syrianus, who understands the text be a discourse on the first order of the intellectuals; not only is the intellectual cosmos demiurgic, but the Demiurge contains within himself all the elements of the universe.¹

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¹ Opsomer gives an account of how Proclus connects the Demiurge (who imparts intellect to the cosmos) with intellect (2000) 17.
Then the one, inasmuch as it is a whole, is in other; and inasmuch as it is all its parts, it is in itself; and thus one must be both in itself and in other.

Therefore, it is better to accept the excellent notion of the philosopher Syrianus that there being three types of conversion, that which turns towards the worse is not suitable to Intellect—otherwise, as he might say of Kronos:

“For the primary fire which is beyond does not enclose its power as far as Matter.”

(Or. Chald. Fr. 5)

But the conversion into itself and into the better is entirely proper to him; and of these the former is categorised by “in itself”, while the latter is categorised by “in another”, and indeed for this reason is superior to the “in itself.”

Damascius discusses Proclus, who he says has already refuted the older commentators. In p. 11, 3–5 Proclus says that “in itself” refers to the implacable order of gods (ἀμέτακτοι) (see In Parm. fr. 14 below).

Damascius gives a thorough exposé of Proclus’ statement on the implacable gods in his response to the third question.2 Here, Damascius critiques Proclus’ divine hebdomad, which Damascius refuses to find in the Parmenides. Proclus’ interpretation focuses on the Demiurge, taking a broad approach to the intellective universe, which is demiurgic as the Demiurge contains within him all orders of the universe. For this passage, the association of Kronos with “in another” is notable, as Damascius keeps this identification.

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Damascius’ interpretation of Proclus seems to have been borrowed either directly from *Platonic Theology* V, 37 p. 136.20–137.5 and VI, 21 p. 95.1–7, or is based on the teachings imparted there. In this chapter, Proclus argues that there are two kinds of reversion:³ to self and to another. Reversion to another is considered superior to reversion to self because reversion to another always implies reversion to a higher entity.⁴ This argument is based on Proclus’ premise that divine entities can only revert to higher entities, which means that when they are in another, they are actually partaking in a higher rank.⁵ Kronos, the intellectual father and primal intellect, reverts to those above him because they contain the powers which he uses. Proclus elaborates that “in another” is excellent because an entity pertains to a higher entity as a whole, while an entity pertains to itself only in parts.

Damascius finds it better to accept the opinion of Syrianus, who gives a more metaphysical interpretation than that of his student. Syrianus says that “in itself” and “in another” refer to three types of *epistrophē* proper to the summit of the noetic world: towards the inferior, towards itself, and towards the superior.⁶ Damascius reports that Syrianus says that the first, inferior type of reversion has nothing to do with intellect, citing the transcendence of Kronos. He quotes the *Oracles* (*Or. Chald.* 5.1–3 p. 13 Majerck), to the effect that the first principle is not immediately related to matter and reversion is to oneself and other. Syrianus thus interprets “in oneself” as signifying *epistrophē* towards oneself—Nous reverts towards being and to self, but also to something higher. What Plato means by “in another”, according to Syrianus, is reversion towards something higher—“in another” is the superior reversion. Although Damascius reports that

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³ Proclus, *PT* V, 37.19 ff.
⁵ Proclus, *In Alc.* 20.7: “But reversion to the inferior is a misfortune of the soul that has ‘shed its wings’ and fallen into forgetfulness both of itself and at the same time of what precedes it; whereas reversion both upon self and upon the superior principle occurs not only in souls but also among the divine beings”; and further, 12 ff.: “Parmenides informs us, positing two kinds of reversion, and showing how on the one hand the divine is turned back upon itself and exists in itself, and how on the other hand it reverts to what precedes it, in which respect it is both embraced with another and united with the superior grade of being.” Trans. O’Neill (1965).
⁶ Cf. Proclus, *In Alc.* 20.8–13: “Now there are three kinds of reversion: everything that reverts either reverts to what is inferior to itself by falling away from its own perfection, or is elevated to what is superior through its own life and natural activity, or reverts upon itself according to the knowledge that is coordinate itself, and the middle form of movement.” Trans. O’Neill (1965).
Syrianus lists three kinds of reversion, he focuses on two which are most important for divine kinds: reversion to self and reversion to another. This is certainly in line with what we hear about Syrianus from Proclus in *Platonic Theology* V, 37, where Proclus reports Syrianus’ statement on divine beings existing “in itself” and “in another”. Syrianus says that “another” pertains to the first triad as the source of paternal power. All intellectual gods are united to the intelligible-intellectual gods as they revert back to them.

Damascius corrects this (μὴποτε), arguing that “not in itself” should not mean something superior but refers to the relationship towards inferior things. This reversion to inferior things marks Kronos’ (father of first noetic triad) reversion to himself and thus begins the reversion to inferior things to which Kronos relates in a transcendental way (p. 11 15–17). Damascius thus alters Syrianus’ account in two ways: 1) he places Kronos in the category of “in another” only, as opposed to Syrianus, who places him in the categories of—what he calls—the second and third reversions (both “in itself” and “in another” respectively); 2) Damascius identifies “in another” with the reversion to lower things.

This fragment also provides a nice comparison between Syrianus’ teaching on a topic and Proclus’. Chiefly, Syrianus’ discussion on reversion starts off with three categories, although the teaching quickly focuses on the last two kinds, reversion “in itself” and “in another”. By the time we get to Proclus, the first of the three reversions has been abandoned and we hear about two, both in Damascius’ account of Proclus and in Proclus’ *Platonic Theology*, although the three reversions do crop up in Proclus’ *Commentary on the Alcibiades*.

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7 Proclus, *In Alc.* 20.9–10: “... as Parmenides informs us, positing two kinds of reversion, and showing how on the one hand the divine is turned back upon itself and exists in itself, and how on the other hand, it reverts to what precedes it...” Trans. O’Neill (1965).
SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 14

Damascius, *In Parm. ch. 282, III p. 41, 1–7 W-C*

ἀνάγκη ἄρα τὸ ἐν, σεύτο τε ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἄει ὁν καὶ ἐν ἑτερῷ, ἄει κινεῖσθαι τε καὶ ἑστάναι. [Parm. 146a6–7].

Ἀλλὰ τίς ἡ στάσις καὶ τίς ἡ κίνησις; τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν τέταρτον τῶν προβλημένων. Ἄρα ἡ στάσις ὁ ἄμειλλικτος, ὃς ἐστι τούτοι τοῦ νοοῦ; ἐσται ἄρα κίνησις μόνον ἡ ξωογόνος [ἡ] ἀγίας καὶ πρόσθεν ἐλέγομεν, ἐκάστη ἀντίθεσις ἑκάστου ἕνας κατηγορεῖται. βέλτιον ἄρα ὃς ὁ φιλόσοφος Συριανὸς ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ νοοῦ ἐκάτερον ἀκοφεῖν, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἀνάγκη τοῦ κινούμενον ἑστὶς οὔτω κινεῖσθαι καὶ ἑστάναι καὶ ἑτερῷ μὲν τοῦ ἐν ἑστάναι, ἀντὶ δὲ του ἐν ἑτερῷ τὸ κινεῖσθαι.

α ὃς Westerink: ὃς (in ras.) A ἡ del. Westerink.

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**Commentary**

This regards question four on rest and motion: ‘what is rest and motion and which is superior.’ This fragment is connected to *In Parm. fr. 14a* below, which is a fragment from question four of the same lemma.

Damascius offers Proclus’ response first:

“Is *stasis* the implacable god who is attached to this Intellect? Will motion be only the vivifying goddess?”

According to Proclus, rest represents the implacable level of gods, while motion refers to Rhea, the vivifying deity. Damascius criticises this, claiming that each opposition must be attributed to both causes, whereas

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1 Proclus, *PT* V, 38, p. 142.1–19.
Then the one, being always in itself and in other, must always be in motion and at rest.

But, what then is repose or movement? This was the fourth among the problems. Is repose the implacable god, who is attached to this Intellect? And so will motion be only the vivifying goddess? And yet, as we said earlier, each opposition is affirmed of each one. Better then, as the philosopher Syrianus [said], to understand that motion and rest refer to the same intellect, since it is necessary that the thing being moved is moved after having been in repose; and it is possible to relate being ‘in itself’ to ‘repose’ (or ‘motion’), and being ‘in another’ to motion.

Proclus divides the antithesis, attributing one to one level of Being, another to another.²

Next, we have Syrianus’ solution the problem: it is better to understand rest and motion as referring to the same intellect. This solution says that both rest and motion refer to the primal intellect, just viewed in a different way. Rest refers to “in oneself”, while motion to “in another”, but both to Kronos as the primary intellect. Such a connection is possible, he further explains, because what is moved is moved from a state of repose. This connection of all levels of being is found in Iamblichus’ explanation of “in itself” and “in another”, which is referred to as two aspects of one thing. Iamblichus’ explanation of “in itself” and “in another”, as reported by Damascius in the thirteenth problem, unites both as describing the Intellect:

² Westerink and Combès (2002) 211, note 5.
“… and the phrase ‘itself in itself and in another’ demonstrates the synthesis of the antithesis; for ‘in itself’ and ‘in another’ are not two states, but the two are one, and the dyad here a monad, and what is ‘in itself’ is ‘in another’; and what is ‘in another’ is ‘in itself’; for thus does the great Iamblichus draw the whole antithesis into one unified conception.”

It seems that Syrianus, in this respect, follows Iamblichus’ line of argument, while Proclus deviates from the teaching of his master on the subject. Combès notes Syrianus’ similarity to Iamblichus, and attributes Proclus’ separation of the Parmenidean opposites as an innovation meant to conform better to his demiurgic hebdomad. It seems that Syrianus follows Iamblichus’ line of argument, while Proclus deviates from the teaching of his master on the subject. Combès notes Syrianus’ similarity to Iamblichus, and attributes Proclus’ separation of the Parmenidean opposites as an innovation meant to conform better to his demiurgic hebdomad.

Damascius suggests the following solution, introducing an additional complexity:

“Perhaps, the primal intellect was of the unique form, of the indivisible and of the substantial form, as expressed by the substance of the intellect, but the second in proceeding and being divided from itself is vital, is seen to be the sort subsisting in procession and on account of this it is in motion and in repose, just as the third, the entire procession of intellect already having come forward, is differentiated in sameness and otherness. But the second is differentiated in repose and in motion, but the first is undifferentiated, as is said of nous, consisting in a unified division.”

Damascius argues that: 1) the primal intellect is both unitary and essential and 2) that motion and rest can be viewed more distinctly with respect to Rhea, not Kronos.

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SYRIANUS, IN PARM. FR. 14A

Damascius, In Parm. ch. 278, III p. 34, 12–16

Δεύτερον δὲ, εἰ ἐν τῷ δημιουργῷ τὰ γένη τοῦ ὄντος ἱδρυται, ὡς ἢξίου ὁ μέγας Ἰάμβλιχος, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὁ τούτου ὀπάδος Συριανός, ὡς νῦν ἰσορεῖ καὶ αὐτός, τῷ καθηγεμόνι συνεπεσθαὶ ὁμολογῶν, καίτοι ἄλλοθι πολλαχοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ ταῦτα τιθέμενος.

Commentary

This addresses Parmenides 145 E 7–146A8—being in motion and at rest. While it is not immediately obvious what the γενή τοῦ ὄντος have to do with motion and rest, both concern the middle order, making it necessary to inquire about the Parmenidean categories of the genres of being. Namely, are Sameness and Otherness genera of being, and if so, are they in the Demiurge or superior to the Demiurge? I have added an “a” to the numbering of this fragment, for one, to connect it with its corollary, but also to qualify it: while Syrianus appears here, he appears in a most ambiguous way—a situation not helped by the fact that Syrianus does not appear in Damascius’ answer to the question.

Regarding the middle order of the intellective world, Damascius poses fifteen questions on the characteristics proper to the middle triad. The second of these questions asks if the genera of being are established in the demiurge. Damascius first states the opinion of Iamblichus, followed by that of Syrianus: Damascius makes clear that Syrianus is a follower of Iamblichus, and bases this relationship on Proclus’ authority. Syrianus here is said to agree with Iamblichus, which is, to Proclus, an unusual proposition; Proclus neither links his teacher with Iamblichus, nor does he represent Syrianus approving of Iamblichus by name. For Iamblichus on this question, Dillon outlines Iamblichus’ view of the Demiurge in his collection of Iamblichus on the Timaeus. In In Tim. fr. 34 Dillon,
The second question is whether the classes of Being are established in the Demiurge, as was the view of the great Iamblichus, and indeed also of his follower Syrianus, as he himself (sc. Proclus) now tells us, admitting that he is following his master, although in many contexts he places them also in the realms above the Demiurge.¹

Iamblichus describes how the Demiurge embraces within himself the genera of being, as he comprises the whole noetic world.²

The “αὐτός” in line 4 is ambiguous, although I, like Dillon, assume it refers to Proclus,³ this being Damascius’ way of referring to him.

Damascius’ reply is much more complicated and it is difficult to say whether Syrianus is in the background of the metaphysics presented here. Damascius says that genera of being are in both the intelligible-intellective realm and in the intelligibles themselves. While all exists in the Demiurge (who comprises Intellect), each appears in different ways the various realms. This, presumably, is a modification of Proclus’ proposition that the One exists in all things, and each receives it according to its own capacity. Most importantly, while Damascius’ reply actually refers to Proclus, the fragment is important because it indicates either that Damascius has access to Syrianus through Proclus or that he has access to a commentary by Syrianus.

³ Dillon (1973) 396.
Damascius, *Dub. et Sol.* section 402, III p. 259.1–4

τὸ ἐν εἰ ἔστιν ὁδὸν διεληλύθαμεν, ὥρ’ οὐκ ἀνάγκη αὐτό, ἐν τε ὑν καὶ πολλά καὶ μήτε ἐν μήτε πολλά καὶ μετέχουν ὁρόνου, ὃτι μεν ἔστιν ἐν, οὐσίας μετέχειν ποτέ, ὃτι δ’ οὐκ ἔστι, μὴ μετέχειν αὐτο ποτε οὐσίας; ἀνάγκη. [*Parm* 155ε, 4–8].

tο τοίνυν πέμπτον ἡδὴ μεν καὶ αὐτῷ μοι ἐδόκει, εὑρίσκων δὲ καὶ τὸν φιλόσοφον Συριανόν βουλόμενον καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ὑποθέσεις καὶ τὰ ἄρθρα διαφεί, ὡσπερ τὴν δευτέραν εἰπὼν δὲ ἀπέλειπεν τὴν διαίρεσιν. Ἔποτε οὖν ζείδη ψυχῶν ἐν τούσι παραδίδωσιν ὁ Παρμενίδης.

Commentary

Damascius discusses the third hypothesis, a commentary on *In Parm.* 155 E, the One which is one and many and neither one nor many in time. More particularly, Damascius is likely commenting on Proclus’ lost commentary on the third hypothesis, summarised in *In Parm.* 1063.1 Damascius follows Proclus in identifying the subject matter of the third hypothesis as the realm of the particular soul.2 In this fragment, Damascius

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1 “As for the third, it is not about all Soul pure and simple, but such as have proceeded forth from the divine Soul; for the whole divine Soul is comprised in the second hypothesis. For Plato himself has clearly stated that the One partakes also of Time; and partaking of Time is the property first of souls, and not of intellectual beings, among whom there is neither ‘was’ nor ‘will be’, but the eternal ‘is.’” Trans. Dillon (1987).

2 Iamblichus differs from most of the post-Plotinian philosophers by identifying the subject of the third hypothesis as the ‘superior classes’, that is, intermediate beings such as angels and daemons. Damascius’ interpretation of the third hypothesis is summarised in section § 398 of *Dub. et Sol.*, where the skopos is Proclus’ interpretation, that the “soul descends to becoming and ascends out of becoming.”
If the one is, such as we have described it, being both one and many and neither one nor many, and partakes of time, must it not, because one is, sometimes partake of being and again, because one is not, sometimes not partake of being? Yes, it must.

On the fifth question I already had my own view, but I discovered that the philosopher Syrianus proposed to divide up the other hypotheses and their sections, just as he had the second one, but having said that, he abandoned the division. So we may suggest that Parmenides proposes the six classes of souls in this passage.

credits Syrianus with wishing to divide the third hypothesis like the second and for identifying levels of the psychic realm, but laments that he does not seem to have delivered on this promise. Regarding Syrianus’ philosophy, this fragment is interesting as it indicates that Syrianus at least envisaged multiple levels of Soul, even if he did not have the energy to pursue the matter.
ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

i) Damascius


ii) Iamblichus

_Iamblich Chalcidensis_ Iamblich Chalcidensis in Platonis Dialogos Commentariorum Fragmenta, ed. J. Dillon (Leiden, 1973)

iii) Plotinus


iv) Proclus

_In Alc._ Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato, ed. L.G. Westerink. (Amsterdam, 1954)


_In Tim._ In Platonis Timaeum Commentarii, ed. E. Diehl. 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1903–1906)

_ET_ Proclus, Elements of Theology. ed with translation and commentary by E.R. Dodds (Oxford, 1933)

v) Syrianus

*In Met.*

*In Metaphysica Commentaria (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, VI:1)*, ed. W. Kroll (Berlin, 1902)


vi) Others

*SVF*


*OF*

*Orphicorum Fragmenta*, ed. O. Kern. (Berlin, 1922)

*Or. Chald.*

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