

lead in other interpretative directions. More importantly, Palmer's necessary being is not identified with mind, nor is it divine, nor does it act in any way on the contingent mortal world, but is merely coterminous with it; thus, one must ask what inquiry into such being might involve, and why that should be attractive, because it is as impersonal and empty as it is trustworthy. Aristotle's otherwise puzzling failure to recognize this supposed central principle of Parmenides's doctrine Palmer attributes to lost works.

Chapters 5 to 7 examine Zeno and Melissus, Anaxagoras, and Empedocles, with close attention to the sources, in an effort to debunk prevailing orthodoxies of them ("the aping Melissus" excepted) as "post-Parmenidean." This, too, is sure to evoke considerable resistance if not scorn. A final chapter summarizes Palmer's overall view of Parmenides's place among the Presocratics.

A very interesting textual Appendix critiques existing editions and supports Palmer's version of the fragments. Palmer pleads eloquently for European libraries to make available on the Internet scanned copies of the relevant manuscripts, to enable finally a proper critical edition of Parmenides (still lacking!). His adoption of earlier (but neglected) proposals by Calogero and Ebert to reposition DK B8.34–41 yields unconvincing results, but may inspire reexamination of this issue.

Argued with a wealth of detail, this is a serious, often frustrating study, with which all Greek philosophy scholars must now contend.

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Richard D. Mohr and Barbara M. Sattler, editors. *One Book, The Whole Universe. Plato's Timaeus Today*. Las Vegas-Zurich-Athens: Parmenides Publishing, 2010. Pp. viii + 406. Paper, \$87.00.

A new volume on one of the most influential and most discussed works from antiquity should offer something new. In this truly interdisciplinary volume, a great number of intriguing problems posed by Plato's *Timaeus* are given a fresh and lucid treatment. Contributors from an unusual range of backgrounds reflect on aspects of Plato's astounding synthesis of natural philosophy, including cosmology, theology, perception, physiology, and more. Plato's synthesis was original, reusing previous ideas for a new vision of the structure and coherence of the physical world: his "likely account" (*Tim.* 29bc) (as he preferred to call it) showed that a Maker or Creator used a form of "geometric atomism" to build up the universe from scratch (triangles as "atoms"). Such an account raises all kinds of questions about the nature of the visible world, its invisible foundations, its purpose, and its durability, but also about theology, teleology, and the possibility of a Grand Unifying Theory.

After a helpful introduction, thematic sections cover historical and intellectual context (its place, as well as the Presocratic conceptions of God, space, and motion) and philosophical problems (Aristotle's critique of the *Timaeus*'s exposition of the primary elements and of the receptacle as space/place), but there are also less traditional papers on the inspirational influence the work has had on visual media. The diversity of topics is not surprising, because the *Timaeus* offers a kaleidoscope of subjects and perspectives, of which I will highlight a few.

In chapter 2, A. A. Long gives an insightful and elegant analysis of the Demiurge (an "expert craftsman") in Platonic and Stoic thought, who produces a rationally structured cosmos in which a World Soul animates the universe, a notion alien to modern ideas of theology and cosmology. Here teleology, which "marks Plato as the world's first fully fledged theologian" (43), is highlighted as Plato's important contribution to the design of the cosmos. Crucially, "Demiurgic rationality is the exercise of paradigmatic goodness" (46). The Stoic account of cosmic craftsmanship differs in that it aims for a (pseudo-)scientific account based on physicalism. It translates more easily into a political agenda in which humans can strive to

perfect themselves, because the divine rationality is extended to humans. Chapters 3–6 also deal with the Maker, but from different angles: philosopher-kings and craftsman-gods (Allan Silverman); the place of cosmology in Plato's later dialogues (Charles H. Kahn); the interpretations of the Demiurge as "Maker or Father" in Platonism up to Plotinus (Matthias Vorwerk); and Thomas M. Robinson's brief look at the term 'mythos' ("story," "account") in response to Myles Burnyeat's influential paper on *eikōs logos* (also discussed in the papers by Gábor Betegh and Alexander Mourelatos).

Space, place, and motion are dealt with in chapters 7–11. Verity Harte (chapter 8) tackles the thorny question of creation at the physical origin: if the Demiurge finds a chaotic "primordial" cosmic body, where do the building blocks of the universe come from? The four elements needed are being harnessed by geometrical regular forms and numbers, but what is being formed here? She makes a convincing case for how we should read the "traces" (53b2) of the elements as instantiations of the Forms of space (not *in* space), hence sustaining the claim that it is not a creation from nothing. Stephen Menn (chapter 9) looks at the way in which the *Timaeus* adopts Presocratic topics and themes, with criticism of their notion of vortex. He concludes that Plato does not just present a Presocratic cosmogony, but an Empedoclean one (147). Ian Mueller's essay (chapter 10) presents some late Platonists views on matter, with a focus on the harmonizing interpretation regarding matter and basic material "chemistry." Zina Giannopolou (chapter 11) proposes to reject Derrida's denial of nameability of the receptacle.

Further essays of a more philosophical bent are found in the next few chapters: Thomas Johansen (chapter 12) considers Aristotle's analysis of Plato and his "oversight" of the final cause (though not in the *Timaeus*, as Harold Cherniss claimed in his 1944 book, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and of the Academy*). Aristotle was keen to have the distinction made explicit between final and formal cause, even if this function was performed by the same thing (e.g. soul is final, formal, and efficient cause of living beings [*De an.* II.4]). Thus, Aristotle states that Plato acknowledged only two causes (formal and material), mainly because his formal causes do not work as final causes, even if he intended them to do so (186). Thomas Kjeller Johansen successfully improves our "reading of Aristotle" and "Aristotle's reading of Plato."

The final section of the book, on visual elements inspired by the *Timaeus*, offers a fascinating look into architectural and fashion patterns: how Atlantis symbolizes lost origins of architecture in film, and how Timaeus geometric structures influence the aesthetics of science and fashion.

The readability of these essays and their variety in casting new light on this work make it an original contribution to the understanding of the *Timaeus*.

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Catherine H. Zuckert. *Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Pp. viii + 888. Cloth, \$45.00.

For most of the twentieth century, interpreters of Plato took little interest in the dramatic aspects of the dialogues, assumed Plato's teachings were directly expressed by their leading speakers, and sought to understand *prima facie* absences and inconsistencies among apparent teachings through a developmental picture of Plato's thought. Rarely did they explain why Plato occasionally used philosophical characters as different from each other and from Socrates as Parmenides, Timaeus, and the Eleatic Stranger, leaving Socrates present but largely silent. Nor did they address why, having returned Socrates to leadership in the "late" *Philebus*, Plato eliminated him altogether in favor of an Athenian Stranger in the *Laws*, taken as his latest dialogue. Platonic developmentalism has been receding for twenty years, but few interpreters have considered these other characters apart from the unsubstantiated and vague assumption that they all somehow speak for Plato.