

Book Notes

Presocratics

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P. Curd's study of Parmenides and his influence on early Greek philosophy, first published eight years ago, has been reprinted with an introduction to the paperback version and supplementary bibliography (pp. xvii-xxix).¹⁰ C. follows Cordero and Nehamas in arguing that at Parm. frs. 6 and 7 DK two ways are distinguished, not three, which entails that the way 'that it is not and that it is necessary that it is not' of fr. 2.5-7 coincides with the way of mortals at fr. 5.4-9, that is to say with the world according to the opinions of humans which is announced in the proem, fr. 1.30-2, and described in the second part of the poem, beginning at fr. 8.50. The snag is that we are told at fr. 2.6 that the way 'that it is not and that it is necessary that it is not' is a path that is 'entirely indiscernible' (παναπευθής), or (as C. translates, p. 58) 'wholly without report'. I fail to see (and am not alone) in what way this epithet should be applicable to the second part of the work.

The new introductory pages clarify and restate C.'s position in the book of 1997, esp. her original and clever but somewhat mysterious argument about 'predicational being' (I hope I have got it right): something that 'is' has to be one of a kind, or basic entity; it must possess a unified nature (pp. xx-xxi). Only lonely Being (fr. 8), which is wholly of such a single kind, and complete, and unshaken, does have this character, but Fire and Night do not qualify, because each of them is merely what the other is not (p. xxv). I have not yet come round to this view because I believe that these elements do have specific qualities, viz. 'fire', 'fine-structured' etc., and 'night', 'heavy' etc. That they fail to qualify in the same way as Being has other reasons, into which I shall not enter now. The legacy of Parmenides according to C. involves that Empedocles *e tutti quanti* have to provide elements that not only are capable of the same behaviour as Fire and Night (mixing and separating to produce the phenomena), but also meet Parmenides' conditions for 'predicational' being: a revision of the quite general view that these substances have to meet some of Parmenides' conditions for being, in whatever special sense of being is argued in the context of a particular interpretation. This revision is consistent with C.'s interpretation of Parmenides' ontology.

S. Trépanier's monograph on Empedocles focuses on the relation between literary form and philosophical content in the verbatim remains of what, so he claims, was a single poem.¹¹ The fragments dealing in one way or other with metempsychosis and the ban on meat/flesh as well as the Eleatic passages are distributed over the space of 232 lines before fr. 17 we now know

¹⁰ P. Curd, *The Legacy of Parmenides*. Eleatic Monism and Later Presocratic Thought. Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing 2005 (distributed by The University of Chicago Press), pp. xxix, 280. Paperback, \$ 22.00, £ 15.50. ISBN 193097-215-6.

¹¹ S. Trépanier, *Empedocles: An Interpretation*. Studies in Classics, New York & London: Routledge 2004, pp. xiv, 289. Hardback, £ 50. ISBN 0-415-96700-7.

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