

PARMENIDES AND THE “FIRST GOD”:
DOXOGRAPHICAL STRATEGIES
IN PHILODEMUS’ *ON PIETY*
*Praesocratica Herculanensia VII**

The Herculaneum papyri hand down evidence of primary importance for Parmenides. Nevertheless, none of the existing collections of his testimonia takes them into account in any systematic way. H. Diels too, due to the precarious editorial state of the Herculanean texts at his disposal, had no way of properly completing the Epicurean section of the *Zeugnisse* concerning Parmenides. In this paper, I will attempt to study in depth Parmenides’ theology (and cosmology) as testified by fr. 13 of *PHerc.* 1428, which is the best-preserved roll among those to be ascribed to Philodemus’ treatise *On Piety*. Before providing a new critical edition of that column, along with a philosophical commentary, it might be useful to briefly inspect the content of all the surviving Herculanean texts containing pieces of information, more or less direct, about Parmenides and his thought. In fact, all of these testimonia belong to the Philodemean works, with the exception of one (a reminiscence not unanimously thought to be related to Parmenides) handed down by an uncertain book of Epicurus’ *Περὶ φύσεως*. I refer to fr. [38. 2–3] Arrighetti², where Epicurus seems to criticize the epistemological theories of other philosophers, most likely pre-Socratic authors.¹ Th. Gomperz saw in these fragments (viz. the final part of this book) a “Blick auf die von Parmenides angefangen viel verhandelte Frage nach der Möglichkeit des Irrthums und des Vorstellens von Unwirklichem”.² Nevertheless, G. Arrighetti, even though he recognized in these two columns of *PHerc.* 362 logico-epistemological

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¹ Epic. *Nat., Lib. inc., PHerc.* 362, fr. [38.2–3] Arrighetti² [= *IPPH* XXX, 140].

² Gomperz 1876, 96.

topics, considered the hypothesis that Epicurus alludes to Parmenides less well-grounded. As far as Philodemus is concerned, the first testimonium to be pointed out belongs to Book 4 of the treatise *On Rhetoric*. I refer to fr. 3 of *PHerc.* 224,³ a ‘scorza’ to be assigned to *PHerc.* 1673/1007, which represents one of the two copies of that book.⁴ Within a very rich doxographical catalogue, Parmenides, together with Melissus, is cited as a supporter of the monistic thesis of the unity of the whole (ἐν τὸ πᾶσι), while later on his name seems to reappear in relation to the ontological and epistemological problem of the deceptive δόξα as a consequence of the impossibility of the senses reaching the truth. A further piece of evidence is represented by fr. 2 Crönert of *PHerc.* 327, one of the papyri ascribed for palaeographic reasons to Philodemus’ *Survey of Philosophers*.⁵ In W. Crönert’s opinion, that fragment would represent “den Übergang vom biographischen zum doxographischen Abschnitt” within the section of the Philodemian *Survey* specifically devoted to the Eleatic school, and in particular to Parmenides. Just like Diogenes Laërtius – Crönert continues – Philodemus would have let the transition from Parmenides’ biography to doxography begin, ascribing to the Eleatic philosopher the ideas of the sphericity of the Earth and of geocentrism. Conversely, the long supplement at lines 4–6 of the fragment (Ξενοφάνης δὲ μᾶλλον εἰς ἄπειρον ἐρριζώσθαι | ἐδόξαζε) was justified by Crönert through Aëtius’ account of Xenophanes’ cosmology (3. 9. 4; 11. 1–2 = DK 21 A 47). Therefore, if for Xenophanes the Earth would have plunged its roots into the infinite, Parmenides, on the contrary, would have been the first pre-Socratic philosopher to have recognized Earth’s spherical shape.⁶

The last Herculanean passages on Parmenides all come from *PHerc.* 1428. Col. 15 of that papyrus⁷ was interpreted by A. Schober as a Philodemian polemic against the theological views of Empedocles as well as that of Parmenides. As we will see later, an unspecified doxographical source acknowledged by Plato (*Symp.* 195 c = DK 28 B 13 [I])⁸ counts

³ Philod. *Rhet.* 4, *PHerc.* 224, fr. 3 Vassallo (= II, p. 169 Sudhaus) [= *IPPH* XXX, 138 = Parmenid. DK 28 A 49 (= Meliss., DK 30 A 14) = test. 46 Coxon].

⁴ Cf. Vassallo 2015a.

⁵ [Philod.] [*Hist. philos.*], *PHerc.* 327, fr. 2 Crönert (p. 128 = p. 30 Cavalieri) [= *IPPH* XXX, 139].

⁶ On this Herculanean testimonium, cf. Vassallo 2014, 46–48.

⁷ Philod. *Piet.*, *PHerc.* 1428, col. 15 Henrichs (pp. 25–26 = 22, p. 89 Gomperz = p. 125 Schober) [= *IPPH* XXX, 143].

⁸ Could this be the early doxographical compendium by the sophist Hippias? Classen 1965, 175–178, detected Hippias’ influence in the successive citation by Phaedrus at Plat., *Symp.* 178 a 9 – c 1 of Hes., *Theog.* 116–118 and 120, Acusilaus, and

Parmenides, together with Hesiod, amidst those telling stories of battles and violence among the gods. Very probably, Philodemus relies on the same source and also alludes to Parmenides when he attacks those who ascribe to the gods an “implacable strife with longing for power” (ll. 11–12: μετὰ φιλαρχεῖας | πόλ[ε]μον ἄσπονδον), as we can read in this piece of evidence. But by far the most important Herculanian texts in this field are represented by frs. 12 and 13 of *PHerc.* 1428. Fr. 13, belonging to ‘cornice’ 2 of *PHerc.* 1428, was connected to Parmenides for the first time by H. Sauppe.⁹ The passage provides a major testimonium to Parmenides’ theology, which follows another equally important piece of evidence for the conception of god and for the problem of epistemology in Xenophanes’ philosophy, viz. fr. 12 of the same papyrus. According to Philodemus, Xenophanes maintained that god moves everything but, at the same time, is not moved by anything, and moreover that all human opinions on the nature of god (and similar phenomena) are untrue.¹⁰ Just at the end of fr. 12, a *diple obelismene* indicates the transition from the doxographical section on Xenophanes to that on Parmenides (l. 34: Παρμενείδης δέ).¹¹ Until now, only lines 28–34 have been edited, viz. nearly 1/5 of the average length of the columns of this papyrus. While the first 9 lines have been lost, lines 10–27 seem to be in such bad repair to have so far kept scholars from reconstructing or reading their significant words.¹² But a new autoptical analysis of the original manuscript preserved in the Officina dei Papiri of the National Library “Vittorio Emanuele III” in Naples, supported by its multispectral image and by an accurate manual transcription carried out through a binocular microscope, has allowed me, on the one hand, to shed light on the real stratigraphy (‘sovrapposti’ and ‘sottoposti’) of the surviving section of the column, and, on the other, to read some words not yet reconstructed in it. No doubt, among these words the name of Eros (Ἔρως) stands out, giving the starting point for new and interesting hermeneutical proposals. In particular, as I will explain in the commentary

Parmenides’ fr. 13 DK as confirmation that Eros is one of the most ancient divinities, the citations from Hesiod and Parmenides being reproduced in Aristot. *Metaph.* A 984 b 25–28. See also Snell 1944; Mansfeld 1983; Mansfeld 1986, 6; 12; 26–27; 30–31; Patzer 1986.

⁹ Sauppe 1864, 6.

¹⁰ Cf. Vassallo 2014, 50–56; also *infra*.

¹¹ Philod. *Piet.*, *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 12 Vassallo (p. 51 = 4^d, p. 67 Gomperz = p. 113 Schober) [= *IPPH* XXX, 141; XXXVIII, 183].

¹² Capasso 1987b, 144: “(...) in esse forse veniva descritta la cosmologia parmenidea. Di queste 27 righe (...) si scorgono tracce solo di 18, in cui per altro non è stato possibile cogliere alcunché di significativo, tranne forse ἀνθρώπων, leggibile tre righe prima di l. 1”.

which follows my edition, the reading (a) provides a further element for comparing this doxographical section of *On Piety* with the parallel pages of Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods*; (b) confirms, as a consequence, M. Capasso's assumption that the cosmology of Parmenides was at issue in that section, partly lost and partly unpublished, of this papyrus; and, finally, (c) better clarifies the close relationship between cosmology and theology in the Philodemean (viz. Epicurean) interpretation of Parmenides. Moreover, this last point gives us the opportunity to recall frs. 12 and 13 DK of Parmenides' poem, where, on the one hand, Eros is described as the first among the gods to be devised by Aphrodite (DK 28 B 13), and Aphrodite, on the other, is defined as the ruler of the universe as well as the balancing point of the astronomical mechanism governing the celestial spheres (DK 28 B 12). While the first part of *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 13 reveals cosmological, in addition to theological, content, the second part tackles Parmenides' theology involving – as we will see – philosophical aspects concerning not only the ontological status of divinity, but also the subjective perception human beings can have of it. As a matter of fact, Philodemus maintains that, in Parmenides' opinion, the “first god” (πρῶτον [θ]εόν) would be inanimate and that the gods generated by him would have, on the grounds of mortals' opinions, the same passions as human beings.¹³

Philod. *Piet.*, *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 13 Vassallo

desunt versus fere 9

- 10]ρως οὐ[. (.)
(.)]υς τα[. . . . (.)
 τὸν ᾽Ε]ρωτα . [. . . . (.)
]αία . υσθ[. . . . (.)
]δε τῶι . [. . . . (.)
- 15] καὶ εεκ[. . . . (.)
] . και . ο . α[. . . . (.)
] καὶ [αὐ]τῆς
] . ας· ἔτι δ[ὲ καὶ
 τοῖς] ἀ[θα]νάτοις [θε-
- 20 οῖς] . ω . . . α . . . [. . . . (.)
] . . ν καθ[. (.)
] . καὶ η . . . θ . . .
] πρᾶξας[. . . [. . . (.)
] κατὰ σήμα[τα

¹³ Philod. *Piet.*, *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 13 Vassallo (p. 186 = 5^a, BC 22, p. 68 Gomperz = p. 113 Schober) [= *IPPH* XXX, 142 = Parmenid., test. 47 Coxon (= *D.G.* pp. 534–535; deest in DK)]. Cf. *infra*.

- 25 ἀν]θρωπίως . . . ν .
 . . .]ς καὶ τινῶν [] . .
 . .] . ινα . . [. .] . . ἔαυ-
 τῶν· ἔοικ[ε δ]ῆ τόν
 τε πρῶτον [θ]εὸν ἄ-
 30 ψυχον ποιεῖν, τ[ούς
 τε γεννωμένους ὑ-
 πὸ τούτου τὰ μὲν
 αὐτὰ τοῖς πάθεσιν
 34 τοῖς περὶ ἀνθρώ||-
 [πους

PHerc. 1428, cr. 2, pz. 1, fr. 13 = *O* Bodl. Libr. Ms. Gr. Class. c. 5, 5, fol. 1217 (fr. 22^{dext.}; C, c^{inf.}) = *Npc* fr. 13: *Nac* fr. 11 (3^{inf.}) = *VH*² II 5 10–27 primum dispexi 10 διαφό]ρως suppleverim e.g. 12 supplevi cf. DK 28 B 12, praes. B 13: πρῶτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων; etiam Cic., *N.D.* I 11, 28 (= DK 28 A 37 [II]) 19–20 τοῖς] ἀ[θα]νάτοις [θε]οῖς supplevi (cf. Hes., *Theog.* 120: ἦδ’ Ἔρος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι) 22 ἡλιθίως legerim dubit. 28 suppl. Diels ap. *D.G.* p. 534 (iam Gomperz in appar. dubit.) 29 [θ]εὸν suppl. Gomperz (θεὸν iam Sauppe) 30 suppl. Sauppe 32 τούτου corr. Hammerstaedt per litteras (sim. Sauppe et cett.): ταῦτοῦ Capasso, ut in pap. dispicitur 34 ἀνθρώ||[πους suppl. Sauppe (ἀνθρώ||[ι])||[πους Gomperz in app. dubit., Capasso): ἄνθρω||[πον Gomperz dubit. [πάσχειν Schober e.g.

(c. 9 lines missing) [in a different way not (?)] (c. 1 word, 1 line and 1 word missing) Eros (c. 1–2 words, 1 line and 1–2 words missing) to the (c. 2–3 words missing) and (1–2 words, 1 line and 1–2 words missing) and/also of her/herself/that (c. 1–2 words missing); and besides for/to [the] immortals [gods] (c. 2–3 words, 1 line and 1–2 words missing) and [foolish (?)] doing/having done [god (?)] (c. 2–3 words missing) according to [the] signs [interpreted] in a human way (c. 1–2 words missing) and of some things/someone (c. 3–4 words missing) of/by themselves; in fact, it seems that [he (*scil.* Parmenides)¹⁴] makes the first god inanimate and those (*scil.* gods) who are generated by the same entity (*scil.* the first god) as [subjected to], on the one hand, the same things as the passions concerning human beings (*continues on*)¹⁵

¹⁴ Cf. *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 12, 34 Vassallo: Παρμενείδης δὲ || κτλ.

¹⁵ The translation is mine.

As mentioned earlier, the name of Eros within the unpublished lines of this column allows us, first of all, to better compare Philodemus' text with the parallel passage of Book 1 of Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods*. As a matter of fact, in Cicero's dialogue, the Epicurean Velleius refutes the theological and cosmological conceptions of Parmenides as follows:

nam Parmenides quidem commenticium quiddam coronae simile^a efficit (στεφάνην appellat), continentem ardorum lucis^b orbem, qui cingit caelum, quem appellat deum; in quo neque figuram divinam neque sensum quisquam suspicari potest. multaque eiusdem monstra,^c quippe qui Bellum qui Discordiam qui Cupiditatem ceteraque generis eiusdem ad deum revocet, quae vel morbo vel somno vel oblivione vel vetustate delentur; eademque de sideribus, quae reprehensa in alio^d iam in hoc omittantur.¹⁶

Textual notes [cf. *sig. codd.* in Pease 1979, I, 62–82; for a simplified version of *N.D.* I's *st. codd.*, Dyck 2003, 17]. ^a) *simile* Dyck *OM*² sec.: *similitudinem* P: *similem* cett. ^b) *ardorum* B¹: *ardorem* ACNB² *lucis* Plasberg (ed. minor), Ax ω sec.: <et> *lucis* add. Plasberg (ed. maior): [*lucis*] del. Pease, Dyck. ^c) A similar charge is brought, in general, against the inventors of myths and terrible stories about gods by Philod., *Piet.*, *PHerc.* 229 (N), fr. 5, 8–15 Obbink: [οἱ δὲ | μύθους μὲν εἰσῆγον |¹⁰ ἀμέλει καὶ τερατείας, οὔτε δὲ τοῖς πρότερον ἐδόκουν εἰσκότα ταῦτ' εἰσφέρειν | οὔτε σωτηρίας ἀῖτ[ια]|¹⁵ πολιτείας. Cf. Obbink 1996, 576–579, esp. 578, who considers the word τερατεία as “a familiar way of designating a false μῦθος”. ^d) As already stressed by Pease 1979, I, 224 n., here there is an allusion to Alcmaeon. Cf. Cic. *ND* 1. 11. 27 (= DK 24 A 12 [II]): *Crotoniates autem Alcmaeo, qui soli et lunae reliquisque sideribus animoque praeterea divinitatem dedit, non sensit sese mortalibus rebus immortalitatem dare.*

As for Parmenides, he invents a purely fanciful something resembling a crown – στεφάνη is his name for it –, an unbroken ring of glowing lights, encircling the sky, which he entitles god; but no one can imagine this to possess divine form, or sensation. He also has many other portentous notions; he deifies war, strife, lust and the like, things which can be destroyed by disease or sleep or forgetfulness or lapse of time; and he also deifies the stars, but this has been criticized in another philosopher and need not be dealt with now in the case of Parmenides.¹⁷

¹⁶ Cic. *ND* 1. 11. 28 (= DK 28 A 37), with a few changes compared with Dyck 2003's text (see above, the textual notes).

¹⁷ Transl. by H. Rackham.

This testimonium is noticeably richer than that provided by Cicero within a similar doxographical account of *Lucullus*, where Parmenides is simply said to have considered fire the principle of the world.¹⁸ In *De natura deorum*, instead, a specific connection between cosmology and theology is clearly indicated. According to the source that Cicero here follows, god would be the farthest crown in Parmenides’ universe. Such a god, at the physical level, is a mixture of fire and light,¹⁹ while, at the theological level, it is an entity indescribable either through the criteria of traditional religious iconology or by way of human perception, because it does not possess sensation. If this is the correct method of interpreting the first part of Cicero’s text, we can argue that its doxographical source is the same used by Philodemus in the last part of *PHerc.* 1428’s fr. 13.²⁰ As a matter of fact, in the Herculanean passage as well the ‘true’ god of Parmenides seems to be devoid of the traditional theological and human attributes, for it is openly said that he has no soul and does not feel any passion. But as to the meaning of this text and its possible doxographical development, I will come back to it at the end of the paper. Here, I would rather like to highlight (and try to solve) a contradiction which the words of Velleius in Cicero’s dialogue seem to raise. Why, and in what sense, should Parmenides have associated such a god – *in quo neque figuram divinam neque sensum quisquam suspicari potest* – with war, strife, lust, and other (divine) entities of this kind (*ceteraque generis eiusdem*)? We can put forward two hypotheses. The first, which I lay out with reservation, specifically concerns not only the relationship of Parmenides’ god with *Bellum* and *Discordia*, but also the oxymoronic intercourse between these two entities and the peaceful and conciliatory *Cupiditas*.²¹ This hypothesis is that the second part of Cicero’s testimonium could be due to a doxographical confusion between Parmenidean and Heraclitean theologies. Such a confusion would find, on the one hand, significant

¹⁸ Cic. *Acad.* 2. 118: (...) *Parmenides ignem, qui moveat terram, quae ab eo formetur*. (...)

¹⁹ Parmenides describes indirectly *light* as *fire* in B 8, 56.

²⁰ On the *vexata quaestio* of *On the Nature of the Gods*, Book 1’s doxographical sources and the relationship between Cicero and Philodemus’ *On Piety* in this field, I refer mainly to Pease 1979, I, 36–50, esp. 39–42; Dyck 2003, 7–11.

²¹ The whole Ciceronian passage is grounded, from a theological point of view, on the action of opposites within the god. For this reason, I agree with Mansfeld 1964, 194, on whose opinion – as already W. Kranz and, implicitly, K. Deichgräber have done – it could be supposed “daß mit *cetera eiusdem generis* die Gegenteile von *morbus* usw. gemeint sind und daß *bellum* und *discordia* zusammen zu *cupiditas* im Gegensatz stehen”.

support in the renowned fr. 67 DK of Heraclitus concerning the coincidence of opposites in the god²² (a fragment which another passage of *De pietate* shows to be well-known by Philodemus²³) and could justify, on the other, the mysterious silence on Heraclitus' theology not only within the survey of pre-Socratic theories belonging to the long speech of Velleius, but in general over the whole of Cicero's dialogue. As a matter of fact, in *De natura deorum* there are only two brief allusions to Heraclitus. The first appears towards the end of Book 1, within the wide-ranging reply of the Academic Cotta to Velleius, where the reminder of Heraclitus' proverbial obscurity is only a rhetorical strategy for treating the Epicurean arguments on the nature of the gods as incomprehensible.²⁴ The second Heraclitean quotation can be read in Book 3 of the dialogue, which – as we know – itemizes Cotta's criticism against Stoic doctrines on the divine and providence previously explained by Balbus. In this passage, the Academic philosopher refers to the Stoic propensity to trace all things back to fire, following Heraclitus (a clear allusion to Zeno of Citium). In this case Cotta as well reminds us of the intentional obscurity of this pre-Socratic philosopher, giving the impression he (viz. Cicero) is doing so in order to justify omitting Heraclitus' theological theories within the work.²⁵

The other hypothesis considers the passage of *De natura deorum* in relation to its cosmological meaning. In this regard, *Cupiditas* would be the personification of Eros as a god rather than an unadulterated symbol of erotic passion.²⁶ But the role of Eros in Parmenides' thought becomes

²² Hippol. *Refut.* 9. 10. 8 (= DK 22 B 67 = Heraclit. fr. 77 Marcovich): ὁ θεὸς ἡμέρη εὐφρόνη, χειμὼν θέρος, πόλεμος εἰρήνη, κόρος λιμός (τὰναντία ἅπαντα οὗτος ὁ νοῦς), ἀλλοιοῦνται δὲ ὥκωσπερ <πῦρ>, ὅποταν συμμιγῇ θυώμασιν, ὀνομάζεται καθ' ἡδονὴν ἐκάστου. Cf. Coxon 2009, 373, who refers also to Hippol. *Refut.* 9. 9 (= DK 22 B 53 = Heraclit. fr. 29 Marcovich) and Orig. *C. Cels.* 6. 42 (= DK 22 B 80 = Heraclit. fr. 28 Marcovich). As far as this last fragment is concerned, cf. Philod. *Piet.* 433 II^a Philippson (= Heraclit. fr. 28^(b) Marcovich = test. 308 Mouraviev), a Herculanean text which I have decided to rule out from *IPPH* because of the too bold supplements.

²³ Philod. *Piet.*, *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 17 Henrichs (p. 94 n. 10 = 6^a, p. 70 Gomperz = p. 114 Schober) [= *IPPH* XIX, 102]: ἐν οἷς φησὶν [. . .] “κεραυνὸς | πᾶντ' οἶα|κίζει καὶ | Ζεὺς”. ἀποφ|αίνει δὲ | καὶ τὸ τὰ|ναντία | θεοῦ[ς] εἶ|ναι, νύκτα | [ἡμέραν Cf. Capasso 1987a, 87–94; Dorandi 1982, 348; now Vassallo 2017a and Vassallo 2017b, where a new reconstruction of this testimonium is given.

²⁴ Cic. *ND* 1. 26. 74 – 27. 75.

²⁵ Cic. *ND* 3. 14. 35. As we know, Diels 1965, 125–126, justified the omission of Heraclitus in Cicero's account with the resemblance of his position to that of the Stoics: “(...) cum concordantem videret cum Stoicis, vertendi laborem subterfugit”.

²⁶ Cf. Mansfeld 1964, 195: “*Cupiditas* ist zweifellos das lateinische Äquivalent von Ἔρως (cf. Fr. 13), das Prinzip kosmischer Vereinigung”.

more clear when rereading Velleius’ words in the light of the later testimonium of Aëtius, which at first glance seems to clash with Cicero’s evidence (Aët. 2. 7. 1 Mansfeld–Runia = *D.G.* pp. 335–336 = DK 28 A 37 = test. 61 Coxon):

Παρμενίδης στεφάνας εἶναι περιπεπλεγμένας ἐπαλλήλους, τὴν μὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἀραιοῦ τὴν δ’ ἐκ τοῦ πυκνοῦ, μικτὰς δ’ ἄλλας ἐκ^a φωτὸς καὶ σκότους μεταξὺ τούτων· καὶ τὸ περιέχον δὲ πάσας τείχους δίκην στερεὸν ὑπάρχειν, ὅφ’ ὅ πυρώδης στεφάνη καὶ τὸ μεσαίτατον πασῶν περὶ δ^b πάλιν πυρώδης· τῶν δὲ συμμιγῶν τὴν μεσαιτάτην ἀπάσαις <ἀρχήν> τε καὶ <αἰτίαν>^c πάσης κινήσεως καὶ γενέσεως ὑπάρχειν, ἦντινα καὶ δαίμονα κυβερνήτην καὶ κληδοῦχον^d ἐπονομάζει, δίκην τε καὶ ἀνάγκην. καὶ τῆς μὲν γῆς ἀπόκρισιν εἶναι τὸν ἀέρα, διὰ τὴν βιαιοτέραν αὐτῆς ἐξατμισθέντα πύλησιν, τοῦ δὲ πυρὸς ἀναπνοὴν τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὸν γαλαξίαν κύκλον· συμμιγῇ δ’ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν εἶναι τὴν σελήνην, τοῦ τ’ ἀέρος καὶ τοῦ πυρός. περιστάντος δ’ ἀνωτάτω πάντων τοῦ αἰθέρος ὑπ’ αὐτῷ τὸ πυρώδες ὑποταγῆναι τοῦθ’ ὅπερ κεκλήκαμεν οὐρανόν, ὅφ’ ὅ^e ἦδη τὰ περίγεια.

Textual notes [cf. *sig. codd.* in Coxon 2009, 47]. ^a The preposition ἐκ is omitted by Stobaeus [= S in Mansfeld–Runia 2009, 293] and was added by Heeren on the basis of Ps.-Plutarch [cf. Torraca 1961, 450]. ^b περὶ δ is a correction of Boeckh (περὶ ὃν F: περὶ ὧν P: στερεόν, <ὅφ’ ὅ> Diels), accepted by Diels–Kranz, but already in 1897 by Diels ²2003, 43 n. and 106, where it is rightly considered “in allgemeinerem Sinn vom unmittelbaren Anschluss an die innere Wölbung der Erdkruste”, viz. as a proof of the Earth’s sphericity in Parmenides’ cosmology. ^c <ἀρχήν> and <αἰτίαν> are Diels’ additions (<αἰτίαν> was already suggested by Krische and Wachsmuth) to Aëtius’ text on the basis of Simplicius (*in Phys.* p. 34. 16 Diels = DK 28 B 12). Cf. Tarán 1965, 247, n. 45; Untersteiner 1979, 178. The Greek particles τε καὶ of FP were corrected in τοκέα by Davis (accepted by Diels in *D.G.*, p. 335: ἀρχήν <τόκου> τε καὶ Zeller), in αἰτίαν by Krische (always in relation to Simplicius). ^d κληδοῦχον is a correction of Fülleborn (accepted in Diels–Kranz and now in Mansfeld–Runia, in the light of DK 28 B 1, 14: τῶν δὲ Δίκη πολύποινος ἔχει κληῖδας ἀμοιβούς; cf. also Orph. fr. 316 Kern = frs. 703 [I–II]; 704 Bernabé), instead of κληροῦχον of FP, which at the beginning not few scholars preferred to read, bringing the κληροὶ of Plato’s myth of Er (*Resp.* 10. 617 d 4; e 6) into question. Cf. Morrison 1955, 61; Untersteiner 1979, 179. ^e ὅφ’ ὅ is Krische’s correction of FP’s reading ὅφ’ οὔ.

Parmenides says there are bands wound around each other, the one made up of the rare, the other of the dense, while others between these are mixed from light and darkness. And that which surrounds them all is

solid like a wall. Below it is a fiery band. And the most central (part) is also (solid), around which there is again a fiery band. Of the mixed bands the most central is both the <origin> and the <cause> of all motion and coming into being for all the others. He also calls it directive *Daimôn*, Holder of the Keys, Justice and Necessity. And the air is what is separated from the earth, vaporized through the earth's stronger condensation, while the sun and the Milky Way are the exhalation of fire. The moon is a mixture of both, of air and fire. The ether encircles above everything else, and below it the fiery (part) is disposed which we call heaven, below which the earthly regions have their place.²⁷

As we know, Aëtius gives almost no role to divinity in questions concerning physics.²⁸ This is also so in this outline of Parmenides' cosmology, where, although Aëtius identifies the most central band as a directive δαίμων, the role of fire stands out as the physical principle which guarantees the balance of the cosmic order. For this reason, the theological role of Eros in Parmenides can be recovered only by putting together doxographical sources substantially in disagreement,²⁹ such as those of Aëtius and Cicero. In the last few decades, several attempts to reconstruct Parmenides' cosmology have been made.³⁰ Some say that this is one of the most difficult problems raised by studies on pre-Socratic philosophy.³¹ On the basis of the current state of research, there is enough evidence to make Parmenides a supporter of a geocentric structure of the universe. More specifically, he divided astronomical space into a series of concentric spherical crowns (στεφάναι), wrapped one around the other.³²

²⁷ Transl. by J. Mansfeld and D. T. Runia.

²⁸ Mansfeld–Runia 2009, 69; Mansfeld 2013, 332; Mansfeld 2015, 9.

²⁹ Pace Bollack 1990, 41.

³⁰ On this topic, Bollack 1990's essay gave a fundamental contribution. I also refer to Owen 1960, 95–101; Sedley 1999, 123–125; Graham 2006, 169–179; Cerri 2011; Mourelatos 2011. Especially in relation to A 37, see the *status quaestionis* outlined by G. Reale in Zeller–Mondolfo 1967, 264–268 n., and the deep analysis of Untersteiner 1979, 83–88 n.; 174–182; also Tarán 1965, 234–235, n. 15; Capasso 1987b, 147–151; Kraus 2013, 489–491.

³¹ So Gigon 1945, 276. Cf. Bollack 1990, 18–21.

³² As Cerri 1999, 266 observes, the astronomical theory of the spheres in the Greek world was attested to for the first time in Homer, in particular in his description of Achilles' shield (*Il.* 18. 483–489), while, on the philosophical level, it could be dated back to the discovery of the armillary sphere, attributed to Anaximander by many sources (cf. DK 12 A 1, 2; A 2; A 6). On this point, cf. West 1971, 85–87. The theory of 'crowns' is accompanied by that of 'zones' in DK 28 A 44a (= Posid. fr. 49 Edelstein–Kidd *ap.* Strab. 2. 2. 1–3; Aët. 3. 11. 4 = *D.G.* p. 377), where Parmenides is considered the first to have divided the celestial sphere wrapping the Earth into 5 zones (εἰς πέντε ζώνας): a torrid (or equatorial) zone, which was double in extension for comprehending the two

These crowns would have provided, in turn, space for the motion of one or more stars equidistant from Earth. The outermost crown, surrounding all the others, served as a boundary of the universe. It would have been made of a solid layer of ether, immediately under which poured out a crown of fire, made of rarefied ether (οὐρανός)³³ and which corresponded to the “extreme Olympus” (Ὀλυμπος ἔσχατος) about which fragment B 11 of the poem speaks.³⁴ The innermost crown is earth itself, which should be of dark and dense substance surrounded by a fiery crown. But within such a cosmological system, the central crown played the most important role. According to Aëtius, Parmenides considered it the principle and cause of movement as well as the generation of all things and identified it with the goddess governing the universe. In this regard, it is still unclear whether this δαίμων, following Aëtius, was situated in the middle of the various crowns or, as Simplicius leads us to suppose, was placed by Parmenides in the middle of the entire universe.³⁵

In order to better appreciate Philodemus’ passage in question, we ought to dwell only upon the (philosophical) role of this Parmenidean divinity. In particular, we should investigate if it is possible to identify the goddess with a precise Olympic divinity, instead of reducing her, as Aëtius did, to the forces of Justice and Necessity recalled several times in the poem (cf. B 1, 14; B 8, 30; B 10, 6). The only hexameters where Parmenides refers to a δαίμων (the same utterance that Aëtius employs to describe the divine entity of the central crown) are represented by fr. 12 DK. As we know, Simplicius quotes this fragment in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Physics* in order to interpret the Parmenidean theory of the physical elements in the light of the (academico-peripatetic) notion of efficient cause.³⁶ However,

tropics, two temperate and two polar zones on the outside. In this regard, cf. Capasso 1987b, 147: “(...) il motivo delle zone sferiche concentriche probabilmente influenzò in séguito la cosmologia platonica, che gli epicurei respingevano per il suo impianto teologico, soprattutto nella versione datane dal matematico Eudosso di Cnido (...)”.

³³ Cf. DK 28 B 10, 5 (= Clem. *Strom.* 5. 138. 2, p. 419. 12).

³⁴ Simpl. *In Cael.* p. 559. 20: πῶς γαῖα καὶ ἥλιος ἡδὲ σελήνη / αἰθήρ τε ξυνὸς γάλα τ’ οὐράνιον καὶ Ὀλυμπος / ἔσχατος ἡδ’ ἀστρων θερμὸν μένος ὠρμήθησαν / γίγνεσθαι.

³⁵ Tarán 1965, 247, who recalls the opinion of P.-M. Schuhl as well, for whom Parmenides would have made the question purposely ambiguous in order to avoid infringing in some way on the Orphic conception of afterlife and the Pythagorean theory of the stars. *Contra* A. R., in whose opinion “Orphic ideas of afterlife were hardly of any interest for Parmenides”.

³⁶ Simpl. *In Phys.* p. 39. 12 (= Parmenid. test. 207 Coxon): μετ’ ὀλίγα δὲ πάλιν περὶ τῶν δυεῖν στοιχείων εἰπὼν ἐπάγει καὶ τὸ ποιητικὸν λέγων οὕτως ... (vv. 1–3); p. 31, 10 (= Parmenid. test. 204 Coxon): καὶ ποιητικὸν δὲ αἴτιον οὐ σωμαίων μόνον

by doing so he polemized with Alexander of Aphrodisias, who did not identify Parmenides' ποιητικὸν αἷτιον with the goddess but with fire as a material element.³⁷ Fr. 12 DK reads as follows:

αἱ γὰρ στενότεραι πλήντο πυρὸς ἀκρήτοιο,
αἱ δ' ἐπὶ ταῖς νυκτός, μετὰ δὲ φλογὸς ἵεται αἷσα·
ἐν δὲ μέσῳ τούτων δαίμων ἢ πάντα κυβερνᾷ·
πάνθ' ἦτα γὰρ στυγεροῖο τόκου καὶ μίξιος ἄρχει,
5 πέμπουσ' ἄρσενι θῆλυ μιγῆν τό τ' ἐναντίον αἵτις
ἄρσεν θηλυτέρῳ.

For the narrower rings became filled with unmixed fire
and those over them with night, in which moves a proportion of flame.
Between these is the divinity who governs all things.
For everywhere she initiates hateful birth and union,

5 sending female to unite with male
and male conversely with female.³⁸

According to A. H. Coxon, the disagreement on this fragment between Simplicius and Peripatetic doxography (in particular Alexander of Aphrodisias) could be reconciled by considering the role of fire in

τῶν ἐν τῇ γενέσει ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀσωμάτων τῶν τὴν γένεσιν συμπληρούντων σαφῶς παραδέδωκεν ὁ Παρμενίδης λέγων ... (vv. 2–6); p. 34. 14–17 (= Parmenid. test. 205 Coxon): πλὴν ὅτι καὶ οὗτος (*scil.* Ἐμπεδοκλῆς) οὐδὲν ἐναντίον Παρμενίδῃ καὶ Μελίσσῳ φθέγγεται ἀλλὰ γε τὴν τε στοιχειώδη ἀντίθεσιν ὥς καὶ Παρμενίδης ἐθεάσατο καὶ ποιητικὸν αἷτιον ἐκεῖνος μὲν ἐν κοινὸν τὴν ἐν μέσῳ πάντων ἰδρυμένην καὶ πάσης γενέσεως αἰτίαν δαίμονα τίθησιν, οὗτος δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ποιητικοῖς αἰτίοις τὴν ἀντίθεσιν ἐθεάσατο.

³⁷ Simpl. *In Phys.* p. 38. 18–28 (= Parmenid. test. 207 Coxon): ὁμολογεῖ δὲ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν μὲν τοῖς πρὸς ἀλήθειαν, ἅπερ ἐστὶ περὶ τοῦ νοητοῦ ὄντος, τὸν Παρμενίδην ἐν τῷ ὄν καὶ ἀκίνητον καὶ ἀγένητον λέγειν, “κατὰ δὲ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν δόξαν καὶ τὰ φαινόμενα”, φησί, “φυσιολογῶν, οὔτε ἐν λέγων ἔτι εἶναι τὸ ὄν οὔτε ἀγένητον, ἀρχὰς τῶν γινομένων ὑπέθετο πῦρ καὶ γῆν, τὴν μὲν γῆν ὡς ὕλην ὑποτιθεῖς τὸ δὲ πῦρ ὡς ποιητικὸν αἷτιον· καὶ ὀνομάζει, φησί, τὸ μὲν πῦρ φῶς, τὴν δὲ γῆν σκότος”. καὶ εἰ μὲν “κατὰ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν δόξαν καὶ τὰ φαινόμενα” οὕτως ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐξεδέξατο, ὡς ὁ Παρμενίδης βοῦλεται δοξαστὸν τὸ αἰσθητὸν καλῶν, εἰ δὲ ψευδεῖς πάντῃ τοὺς λόγους οἶεται ἐκείνους καὶ εἰ ποιητικὸν αἷτιον τὸ φῶς ἢ τὸ πῦρ νομίζει λέγεσθαι, οὐ καλῶς οἶεται. According to Coxon 2009, 364, “since Philoponus also once rejected the Peripatetic view [Parmenid. test. 195 Coxon = Philop. *In Phys.* p. 110. 17–23], although he later subscribed to it [Parmenid. test. 196 Coxon = Philop. *In Gen. corr.* p. 53. 2–7], it seems likely that both he and Simplicius derived their anti-Peripatetic stance originally from their common master Ammonius. Neither Simplicius nor Philoponus has anything to say about the constitution of the goddess in terms of the two elemental Forms”.

³⁸ Transl. by A. H. Coxon, who reads at v. 2 τῆς instead of ταῖς of the codices.

Parmenides’ cosmology and making, in a certain sense, the goddess herself “the primary body of fire”. This fact, among other things, led Coxon to consider Cicero’s version of Parmenidean cosmology, where the divinity coincides with the crown of fire *qui cingit caelum*, more reliable than Aëtius’ broad and detailed account, which, in contrast, simply identifies the goddess with one of the intermediate crowns.³⁹ But this conclusion is questionable. As for the relationship between Alexander and Simplicius’ accounts, it is not simple, and any attempt to harmonize them could prove counter-productive. Upon closer inspection, Alexander, on the one hand, tries only to exclude the goddess from Parmenides’ cosmological play; Simplicius, on the other, assigns to the goddess the role which corresponds to a Peripatetic cosmological or physical scheme, aiming to see the δαίμων, viz. Parmenides’ middle crown, as the active principle of the universe. As a matter of fact, in his view Parmenides’ δαίμων would be the force actuating (τὸ ποιητικόν) Light (Φάος) and Darkness (Νύξ) as material principles which, according to B 9, influence in equal measure all natural phenomena, from their genesis to their dissolution, in the same way as the pair Love/Strife (Φιλότης/Νεῖκος) in Empedocles’ thought.⁴⁰ As has already been shown, the point is that Simplicius’ reading does not rule out the other various meanings which the δαίμων can take on in different contexts.⁴¹ Moreover, the fact that Parmenides places it in a specific heavenly sphere makes its identification with a concrete astral entity most likely.⁴² So, the real doxographical puzzle consists in the contradictions raised by the testimonia of Cicero on the divinity of the outermost band, Aëtius on the goddess as the middle of the mixed bands, and Simplicius on the goddess as situated in the centre of the universe. The fact that Simplicius unduly stresses the role of the goddess as the universal effective cause does not help us choose among the three alternatives mentioned above. The goddess can be certainly considered as the (single) cause of mixing,

³⁹ Coxon 2009, 364.

⁴⁰ On this point, see Pease 1979, I, 223–224 n.; Cerri 1999, 267. Cf. DK 31 B 17–22; 26; 35–36. For an arrangement of these Empedocles’ fragments within the new philosophical perspectives opened by *PStrasb. gr.* Inv. 1665–1666, cf. Primavesi 2008, 24–46.

⁴¹ Cf. Pugliese Carratelli 1988.

⁴² Cerri 1999, 267. The final part of Cicero’s testimonium seems to lead to the identification between stars and gods (*eademque de sideribus*). On the Epicurean dislike for such an identification, cf. Capasso 1987b, 150–151 with n. 199; Woodward 1989; Essler 2011, 246–330. As far as Simplicius is concerned, also Untersteiner 1979, 174, declares himself diffident towards his account and notes a Pythagorean influence on it. In general, on Simplicius’ reception of Parmenides, see Bormann 1979; Perry 1983; Cordero 1987; Stevens 1990; Baltussen 2008, 69–74.

viz. of creation from opposite cosmic forces. Furthermore, we can also take for granted that, no matter where she is placed, she could be scarcely identified with the god of the fiery band encompassing all, as according to Cicero.⁴³ If so, who is Parmenides' δαίμων? And what kind of force does it embody? Perhaps a partial answer could be gathered from a passage from Plato's *Symposium*, added by M. Untersteiner to the Diels–Kranz collection within the testimonium A 37. First of all, from this text we can infer that Eros possesses a certain divine autonomy in Parmenides' poem. This fact already represents a hermeneutical gain in comparison with the elements offered by the other testimonia. More particularly, in the Platonic dialogue, Agathon criticizes the previous speeches of Phaedrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, and Aristophanes. In his opinion, they all wrongly limited themselves to listing the gifts lavished by Eros, without singing a true praise of him. However, such praise would presuppose a definition of this god. In Agathon's view, Eros would be the happiest of all gods for he is the most beautiful and the most virtuous. His unsurpassable beauty would derive from the fact that he is the youngest of the gods. For this reason, of the myths that refer to him we should reject both those which describe him as the oldest representative of divine descent, and above all those which cast him as the source of quarrels and strife among the gods. It is interesting to observe how, in both these cases, Platonic criticism towards myth is mixed with that towards Parmenides. As for the question of the god's youth, in *Symposium* Phaedrus had previously considered Eros as πρεσβύτατος, and adduced as proof of this Parmenides' fr. 13 DK, where, in my opinion with regard to Aphrodite, it is said that

πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων.⁴⁴

⁴³ A. R., to whom I am partly indebted for these last remarks, points out that, in his view, Simplicius would be entirely right here against Alexander, and adds: “as for goddess' place, Simplicius was probably misled by Parmenides' expression ἐν δὲ μέσῳ τούτων which he paraphrases”.

⁴⁴ The grammatical subject of this Parmenidean hexameter is controversial. Plato (*Symp.* 178 b), as well as Aristotle (*Metaph.* A 4, 984 b 23–31), do not specify it, even though some scholars maintain that the words of Phaedrus lead to the identification of that subject with the goddess Genesis, personified (Παρμενίδης δὲ τὴν γένεσιν λέγει κτλ.). So argued, for the first time, K. F. Hermann and, in his wake, G. Stallbaum, W. Kranz, U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, and G. Calogero. *Contra* Tarán 1965, 250 n. 56; while, in the opinion of Coxon 2009, 372, “it is not necessary to suppose, but it is not unlikely, that P(armenides) himself used Γένεσις [‘Generation’] as a proper name though the goddess herself has maintained in fr. 8, 21 that the noun is strictly a name of nothing”. In this regard, as A. R. points out, “the main difficulty raised by γένεσιν in Plato's text is that according to Phaedrus the parents of Eros had not been mentioned by

first of all the gods she (*scil.* Aphrodite?) devised Eros.⁴⁵

This aspect is strictly connected to the other quoted above. As a matter of fact, in Plato’s dialogue, Agathon frees Eros, exalting his youth, from the charge of having been the cause of bloody wars which supposedly raged during the first gods’ generation. Among those who would have spread such lies, Agathon (*scil.* Plato) counts Hesiod and Parmenides (Plat. *Symp.* 195 c 1–6 = test. 2 Coxon; test. 37* Untersteiner; cit. in DK 28 B 13 [I]):

τὰ δὲ παλαιὰ πράγματα περὶ θεοῦς, ἃ Ἡσίοδος καὶ Παρμενίδης λέγουσιν, Ἀνάγκη καὶ οὐκ Ἔρωτι γεγονέναι, εἰ ἐκεῖνοι ἀληθῆ ἔλεγον· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐκτομαὶ οὐδὲ δεσμοὶ ἀλλήλων ἐγίγνοντο καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ καὶ βίαια, εἰ Ἔρως ἐν αὐτοῖς ἦν, ἀλλὰ φιλία καὶ εἰρήνη, ὥσπερ νῦν, ἐξ οὗ Ἔρως τῶν θεῶν βασιλεύει.

(...) while those early dealings with the gods which Hesiod and Parmenides relate, I take to have been the work of Necessity, not of Eros, if there is any truth in those stories. For there would have been no gelding or fettering of each other, nor any of those various violences, if Eros had been amongst them; rather only amity and peace, such as now subsist ever since Eros has reigned over the gods.⁴⁶

any theogonic poet: Parmenides’ verse is introduced by the sentence which can mean either that he also did not name the parents, or that he is exception which however endorses the general rule. The μητίσαστο is strongly in favour of the latter opinion, and in that case it is plausible that this ‘parent’ is Γένεσις; otherwise the name is not mentioned, and Plato expects that his readers well know it (hardly probable for the second part of Parmenides). This of course does not preclude that Parmenides could identify Γένεσις somewhere with Aphrodite, but not in this context”. At any rate, in my opinion it is most likely that Plutarch’s testimonium (*Amat.* 13. 756 e–f) relates the passage to Aphrodite; while Simplicius (*In Phys.* 39. 18) associates the fragment directly with the goddess governing the universe of B 12. The other testimonia of B 13 are Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. math.* 9. 9) and Stobaeus (*Anth.* 1. 9): both of them, without specifying its grammatical subject, quote the Parmenidean fragment straight after recalling the parallel passage of Hesiod (*Theog.* 116–122), as occurs in Plato as well. Sextus, in particular, states precisely that both in Hesiod and in Parmenides Eros is used as a cause of movement and union of beings (κατασκευάζοντες γὰρ τὴν τῶν ὄλων γένεσιν ἔρωτα συμπαρέλαβον, τουτέστι τὴν κινητικὴν καὶ συναγωγὴν τῶν ὄντων αἰτίαν). On the evidence for Eros in Hesiod’s *Theogony* (vv. 120 and 201), see West 1966, 195–196; 224; Clay 2003, 16–20; Most 2006, 190–191 (T 45 = Luc. *Disp. cum Hes.* 1); 246–247 (T 117.c.ii = Aristot. *Metaph.* A 984 b 23–32); on its influence on Parmenides, Jaeger 1947, 93. Cf. also *Anecd. gr.* I, p. 388: Παρμενίδης γὰρ φησι τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν θεῖον δημιουργῆσαι τὸ πᾶν.

⁴⁵ Transl. by A. H. Coxon, with a few changes.

⁴⁶ Transl. by W. R. M. Lamb, with a few changes.

In Untersteiner's opinion, it does seem impossible to ascertain here exactly what Plato was referring to; thus it should not be ruled out that the passage may concern Hesiod rather than Parmenides. If so, Platonic criticism would be exclusively focused on mythical poetry and on its negative pedagogical effects.⁴⁷ But I think we cannot take this conclusion for granted. Even if Plato's text seems to refer only to Parmenides' narration of ancient divine misdeeds, it also takes into account the philosophical problem of their *cause*. Plato cites both Necessity and Eros, and says that these misdeeds are to be put down only to Necessity. Hesiod did not notice this last principle, and Parmenides' mention of it could probably be the real philosophical reason why he is adduced in this context. If Plato is here referring to Parmenides' poem, we should suppose that he reads into it either a coincidence of Eros and Necessity (which, on the other hand, Simplicius attests to) or the same aetiological function of these two forces (viz. Eros and Necessity both as potential causes of cosmical phenomena). In this second case, Eros and, consequently, the δαίμων generating him (B 13) would be different entities, provided with a specific divine peculiarity, beyond the cosmological one. The problem is strictly connected to the real identity of the δαίμων quoted in B 12. On the theological side, she can be nothing but Aphrodite. In order to confirm such a hypothesis, in addition to recalling some passages of archaic Greek tragedy,⁴⁸ we can compare Parmenides with Lucretius. As a matter of fact, in his *Hymn to Venus*, the Latin poet seems to put together, sometimes even to literally translate, the two fragments at hand. Therefore, one could suppose either that both authors obtained information from the same mythographic and religious source, or (more likely) that Lucretius also used Parmenides for composing his proem, in which however the main influence of Empedocles has been convincingly recognized (Lucr. 1. 19–23):⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Untersteiner 1979, 87–88 n., who furthermore observes: “forse la ripresa di qualche nome di dio esiodeo, autore di un βίαιον, può avere indotto Platone, nemico della poesia mitica, a pensare che Parmenide sottintendesse tale condannabile azione”.

⁴⁸ Among the numerous examples, see Aeschl. *Supp.* 100 (πᾶν ἄπονον δαιμόνιον); Ag. 182–283 (δαιμόνων δὲ πον χάρις βίαιος / σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων). Cf. Calogero 1977, 326–327; Tarán 1965, 249 n. 52.

⁴⁹ Cf. Sedley 1998, 10–34, esp. 15–16; 22–28, and the earlier literature cited there; now Garani 2007, 37–43, who maintains that the intertextuality Empedocles/Lucretius works not only on a literary level, but also on a philosophical one. Parmenides is never directly quoted in Lucretius' *De rerum natura*. Nevertheless, some scholars have attempted to detect more or less direct references to Parmenides within the vv. 635–920 of Book 1. As we know, these verses represent a long and detailed criticism of pre-Socratic theories. Cf. Piazzzi 2005, 106–107; 142. For hidden reminiscences of Parmenides in other passages of Lucretius' poem, cf. Montaresse 2012, 222 with n. 689.

- (...)
 omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem
 20 efficis ut cupide generatim saecula propagent:
 quae quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas
 nec sine te quicquam dias in luminis oras
 exoritur neque fit laetum neque amabile quicquam
 (...)
 (...)
 striking fond love into the breasts of all
 20 thou constrainest them each after its kind to continue their race with desire.
 Since thou then art sole mistress of the nature of things,
 and without thee nothing rises up into the divine borders of light,
 nothing grows to be glad or lovely,
 (...) ⁵⁰

Furthermore, the *alma Venus* of Lucretius could also remind us of Caelius Aurelianus’ specific reference to Venus in his Latin translation of Parmenides in fr. 18 DK,⁵¹ and this fact could be more proof for supporting the argument that Parmenides’ cosmological goddess in B 12–13 is Aphrodite. It is impossible to tell, though, how much liberty the Roman doctor could have taken with his Greek source material, and the diverging takes on the goddess’ identity in our sources (Aphrodite, Necessity, Fate, Justice, Providence, e.g. A 32 and A 37) should perhaps give us pause on this point.

We can instead come back to the analysis of the Herculanean evidence in question. In the second part of the column (ll. 24–34), the reference to the “signs”, wrongly interpreted in the human way (κατὰ σήμα[τα | ὄν]-θροπῶς), and, immediately after, the specific treatment of the nature of divinity, open the door to two different readings: (a) the first, which can be considered strictly ‘theological’, is mainly focused on god and his attributes; while (b) the second, which can be defined (in the terms which I will explain below) as ‘epistemological’, is grounded on human beings and their false view of reality, slaves as they are to opinion and appearance.

In this regard, the remarks on *De rerum natura*’s proem above could represent a not secondary element for reopening the debate on the real presence of Parmenides in Lucretius.

⁵⁰ Transl. by H. A. J. Munro.

⁵¹ Cael. Aurel. *Tard. pass.* 4. 9. 134–135 (CML VI, 1, p. 850, 19–24): *Femina vir-que simul Veneris cum germina miscent, / unius in formam diverso ex sanguine virtus / temperiem servans bene condita corpora fingit. / nam si virtutes permixto semine pugnent / nec faciant unam virtutem in corpore dirae, / nascentem gemino vexabunt semine sexum.* Cf. Journée 2012; Mansfeld 2015, *passim*.

We should consider this second perspective. In the famous fr. 8 DK, the goddess, as she concludes her speech on Truth, says that Parmenides should learn human opinions (δόξας ... βροτείας) about the world order, without being led astray by their prejudices and methodological errors.⁵² As a matter of fact, humans have established specific *names*, for they focused their attention on naming two different *forms* (v. 53: μορφὰς γὰρ κατέθεντο δύο γνώμας ὀνομάζειν). As Coxon observes, “they are ‘names’ in the sense that human beings make them the subject of assertions, which are not true assertions about reality but expressions of what human beings believe to be true of what they believe to be real”.⁵³ In doing so, they fail to grasp the necessary unity of these μορφαί, but, above all, they are mistaken in considering them structurally opposite and in giving each of them respective *signs* (σήματα): on the one hand, light and ethereal Fire, on the other, dense and heavy Darkness.⁵⁴ Furthermore, an epistemological approach to Philodemus’ testimonium could also suggest a parallel between *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 13, 24–25 and the final section of Parmenides’

⁵² In the proem too, properly in DK 28 B 1, 28–30, the goddess informed the κοῦρος that he had to learn everything: both the “unmoved heart of well-rounded Truth” (Ἀληθείης εὐκυκλέος ἀτρεμῆς ἦτορ) and the “beliefs of mortals, which comprise no genuine conviction” (βροτῶν δόξας, ταῖς οὐκ ἐνί πίστις ἀληθείης). The translations are of A. H. Coxon, with a few changes. Cf. Curd 1998, 98–126.

⁵³ Coxon 2009, 344. According to Long 1963, 99, the two μορφαί would be Being/Not-being, not the opposites Fire/Darkness, with the consequence that “the fundamental mistake common to all mortal opinions consists in the naming, i.e. conceding existence to, what is not as well as what is”. Cf. also Cosgrove 2014, 8–9.

⁵⁴ DK 28 B 8, 50–61: ἐν τῷ σοι παύω πιστὸν λόγον ἡδὲ νόημα / ἀμφὶς ἀληθείης· δόξας δ’ ἀπὸ τοῦδε βροτείας / μάθανε κόσμον ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἀπατηλὸν ἀκούων. / μορφὰς γὰρ κατέθεντο δύο γνώμας ὀνομάζειν· τῶν μίαν οὐ χρεῶν ἐστίν – ἐν ᾧ πεπλανημένοι εἰσίν – / τάντ’ αἰετ’ ἐκρίναντο δέμας καὶ σήματ’ ἔθεντο / χωρὶς ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων, τῇ μὲν φλογὸς αἰθέριον πῦρ, / ἥπιον ὅν, μέγ’ [ἄραιον] ἐλαφρόν, ἐωυτῷ πάντοσε τωῦτόν, / τῷ δ’ ἑτέρῳ μὴ τωῦτόν· ἀτὰρ κάκεῖνο κατ’ αὐτὸ / τάντ’ αἰετ’ νύκτ’ ἄδαῃ, πυκινὸν δέμας ἐμβριθέες τε. / τόν σοι ἐγὼ διάκοσμον εἰκότα πάντα φατίζω, / ὥς οὐ μή ποτέ τις σε βροτῶν γνώμη παρελάσσει. The problem of cataloguing the whole phenomena through φάος and νύξ is resumed by fr. 9 DK. But not all the scholars agree with putting this fragment on the same level of the above-mentioned vv. 50–61 of fr. 8 DK. Untersteiner 1979, CLXXXII–CXCIX, thinks that there is a radical difference between them, because in B 8 the antithesis πῦρ–νύξ would be “assoluta e irriducibile” and would represent a “falsa cosmogonia”, while the couple φάος–νύξ of B 9 would indicate the homogeneous, inseparable but discernible physical elements belonging to a holistic reality entirely projected *into time* (viz. δόξα, which would not be different from ἀλήθεια from an epistemological point of view). On the contrary, other interpreters are inclined to believe the two passages to be complementary, although they underline their differences: see Mansfeld 1964, 148–156 (“der Schluß von Fr. 8 und Fr. 9 bilden zusammen die prinzipielle Einführung in die Doxa”).

poem. I refer in particular to fr. 19 DK, which, according to Simplicius,⁵⁵ would conclude the exposition of the order of sensible things (τὴν τῶν αἰσθητῶν διακόσμησιν). Here Parmenides establishes the temporal and semantic features of the doxastic perception of phenomena. In this way, he clarifies the consequences of the distinction between Light and Darkness for the field of knowledge: firstly, human opinion frames phenomena within the temporal succession of past, present, and future, against the advice of Being’s road;⁵⁶ secondly, it affixes to each phenomenon a name as a distinguishing mark (ἐπίσημον).⁵⁷

The other perspective, as I have said, has a properly ‘theological’ character. We can observe that Philodemus’ account of a god inanimate and deprived of human passions finds its textual parallel in the words of Velleius in Cicero’s *De natura deorum*. The Epicurean criticism against Parmenides’ god targets his lack of form (*neque figuram*) and sense (*neque sensum*). How could the σήμω[τα mentioned in the Herculanean passage be joined to Philodemus’ description of such a god? An answer, which, however, settles scores with the loss of the first part of the column, would derive from establishing a doxographical relationship between *PHerc.* 1428’s frs. 13 (on Parmenides) and 12 (on Xenophanes). In doing so, we would be able to ascertain how Philodemus depends on a source which reads Parmenides’ theology according to the patterns of the so-called ‘doxographical vulgate’.⁵⁸ Although other scholars do not directly mention Philodemus and assume an anachronistic character in Cicero’s testimonium, they have already highlighted the great influence of Xenophanes on Parmenides’ theological conception. For instance, according to J. Mansfeld, the gods of the Parmenidean Doxa would be *thoughts*, viz. *personified thoughts* of the δαίμων from which they come. In other words, they would be “richtige Philosophengötter”, without any connection to mythological tradition, and to which Parmenides would not have intended to give any place in his poem.⁵⁹ Actually, from the

⁵⁵ Simpl. *In Cael.* p. 558. 3. On the fact that these three hexameters surely represent the poem’s ending, cf. Cerri 1999, 288.

⁵⁶ DK 28 B 8, 5: οὐδέ ποτ’ ἦν οὐδ’ ἔσται, ἐπεὶ νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν, κτλ.

⁵⁷ DK 28 B 19: οὐτῷ τοι κατὰ δόξαν ἔφυ τάδε καὶ νυν ἔασι / καὶ μετέπειτ’ ἀπὸ τοῦδε τελευτήσουσι τραφέντα / τοῖς δ’ ὄνομ’ ἄνθρωποι κατέθεντ’ ἐπίσημον ἐκάστω.

⁵⁸ Cf. Mansfeld 1987, who shows, *pace* Diels, how that “vulgata” does not derive from Theophrastus.

⁵⁹ Mansfeld 1964, 8–10; 166–167; esp. 196–197 (“Was Parmenides tut, ist die Herstellung eines physischen Zusammenhangs zwischen menschlichem Geist einer- und Personifikation andererseits”).

Herculanean sources, the link Xenophanes/Parmenides stands out in a perspective which goes beyond the mere anti-mythological polemics and appears instead as a strong connection to the doxographical strategies of Philodemus' *On Piety*. In *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 12, as already mentioned, the Epicurean philosopher maintains that Xenophanes would have, on the one hand, conceived of a god governing the universe, and on the other, would have theorized the impossibility of man's reaching the ultimate truth of physical phenomena and of god's nature.⁶⁰ The two parts in which this fragment could be conventionally divided can both be connected with Xenophanes' theology, as shown by a (Theophrastean-style) doxographical tradition, stressing its ontological features. In this sense, god's almightiness, together with the incomprehensibility of his very nature, would be the most tangible evidence that between Being (One) and appearance (plurality), there is a gap that cannot be filled. Obviously, the Epicureans acknowledged this doxographical tradition, which interprets Xenophanes in the light of Parmenides' stance.⁶¹ But if we add *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 13 to this picture, we realize that in Philodemus' source the 'fusion' of information concerning these two pre-Socratic authors shows an essentially reciprocal character. First of all, it seems to me that in that source the almightiness of god is no synonym of 'monotheism'.⁶² That kind of almightiness, in addition to requiring a dualistic vision of reality, appears quite compatible with an 'henotheistic' structure of Greek Olympus, where the leading role of one of the gods does not rule out the existence of other gods subject to him.⁶³ Precisely in relation to this process, the Parmenidean doxography used by Philodemus clearly interacts with that concerning Xenophanes. As a matter of fact, on the theological plane, the second part of *PHerc.* 1428's fr. 13 describes

⁶⁰ *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 12, 26–33 Vassallo: καὶ πάντα κεινεῖν μῆδ' αὖτως | δὲ κειν|εῖ-
σθαι τὸν θεόν, | [εἰ περὶ] τῶν ἄλλων λέ[γει] τις ἢ περὶ θεοῦ, μὴ[δὲν] ταύτας
ἀληθεῖς | [οὐσας] τὰς δόξας συμ|βέβηκεν γινώσκειν. On the philosophical and doxo-
graphical problems raised by this major Herculanean testimonium, cf. Vassallo 2014,
51–56; Vassallo 2015b, 176–186.

⁶¹ Mansfeld 1987, 301; also Vassallo 2015a, 101–107.

⁶² It is a confusion which, for obvious ideological reasons, the later Christian sources will create, giving in this way a completely new meaning to the coincidence of One and god in Xenophanes, testified, for instance, by Aristotle (*Metaph.* A 5, 986 b 18–27 = DK 21 A 30). Cf. Clem. *Strom.* 5. 109. 2, p. 399. 16 (= DK 21 B 23): Ξενοφάνης ὁ Κολοφώνιος, διδάσκων ὅτι εἷς καὶ ἀσώματος ὁ θεὸς ἐπιφέρει· “εἷς θεός, ἔν τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος, / οὐτὶ δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοίος οὐδὲ νόημα”. On this point, see West 1999, 32–33.

⁶³ Xenophanes' fr. 23 DK was interpreted by many scholars exactly in this sense. Cf. the *status quaestionis* sketched by G. Reale in Zeller–Mondolfo 1967, 84–88 n.

a divine Olympus strongly characterized by an ‘henotheistic’-style hierarchical structure. Within such a structure, in front of the “first god” (πρῶτον [θ]εόν), and unequipped with soul (ἄψυχον), there are a large number of secondary divinities, not only dependent on the “first god” but even generated by him.⁶⁴ Before these divinities, human beings are tempted to exercise their foolish anthropomorphic bents, ascribing to the gods the same passions from which they themselves suffer daily. It is, so to say, an ‘epistemological’ mistake, which, in my opinion, can be explained through the methodological vice denounced by Parmenides of ascribing false σήματα to all things of the Doxa world. But on a strictly doxographical level, this serious ‘epistemological’ mistake is perfectly in agreement with Philodemus’ testimonium on the so-called ‘scepticism’ of Xenophanes. As in *PHerc.* 1428, fr. 12 Xenophanes is said to make each human theory which tries to define the almightiness of god untrue, so in fr. 13 Parmenides is said to make each anthropomorphic appeal of men to the “first god” untrue.⁶⁵

But, as previously remarked, in spite of the fruitful comparison with Cicero’s *De natura deorum*, the incompleteness of the first part of the Herculean testimonium to Parmenides does not allow a reconstruction of Philodemus’ viewpoint (or of his source) on this point with a sufficient degree of certainty. In order to suggest a possible alternative reading to the doxographical perspective discussed until now, it could be useful to remember that the idea of a “first god” is not rare within the Orphic tradition. M. West has argued that Parmenides’ poem has numerous points of contact with the oldest of the Orphic theogonies: the so-called ‘Protogonos Theogony’.⁶⁶ He observes that “a theogony by definition relates the births of a whole series of gods; one cannot have a monotheistic theogony. But in this Orphic one a remarkable thing happened. On succeeding Cronus as king of heaven, Zeus swallowed Protogonos of Phanes, the bisexual god

⁶⁴ In addition to those in Epicurean doxography, the existence of several deities in Parmenides’ thought is confirmed by Plato (see *supra*).

⁶⁵ If so, the second part of *PHerc.* 1428’s fr. 13 could allow us to put in their theological and ontological framework both the starting reference to the doxastic epistemology (ll. 24–25: κατὰ σήμα[τα] | ἀνθρώπῳως) and the final polemical hint to the *human, too human* way of knowing and describing gods (ll. 33–34: τοῖς πάθεσιν | τοῖς περὶ ἀνθρώ[π]ου). The epistemological assumptions of Parmenides’ “first god” in the Herculean source alone make it something substantially different from the “first god” which Greek philosophy, from Aristotle (*Metaph.* A 7, 1072 b 28–30) to Middle Platonism (for instance, Alc. *Did.* 10, p. 164. 34), speaks about. A comparison between Xenophanean and Parmenidean epistemologies/theologies is given by Mogyoródi 2006, 156–157. See also Tor 2015.

⁶⁶ West 1983, 109–110.

who first appeared from the cosmic egg with the seed of the gods inside him or her. By swallowing him, Zeus swallowed the universe”,⁶⁷ becoming at once the *only* god:

- πρωτογόνου βασιλέως αἰδοίου, τῷ δ' ἄρα πάντες
ἀθάνατοι προσέφυγ μάκαρες θεοὶ ἡδὲ θέαιναι
καὶ ποταμοὶ καὶ κρήναι ἐπήρατοι ἄλλα τε πάντα,
4 ὅσσα τότε ἦν γεγαῶτ', αὐτὸς δ' ἄρα μόνος ἔγεντο.⁶⁸

- [So Zeus swallowed the body of the god,]
of the Firstborn king, the reverend one. And with him all
the immortals became one, the blessed gods and goddesses
all rivers and lovely springs and everything else
4 that then existed: he became the only one.⁶⁹

But after re-creating gods and world which he destroyed, Zeus became also the *first* god:

- Ζεὺς πρῶτος γένετο, Ζεὺς ὕστατος ἀργικέραυνος,
Ζεὺς κεφαλὴ, Ζεὺς μέσσα, Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντα τέτυκται·
Ζεὺς ἄρσην γένετο, Ζεὺς ἄφθιτος ἔπλετο νύμφη·
Ζεὺς πυθμὴν γαίης τε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος·
5 Ζεὺς βασιλεύς, Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἀπάντων ἀρχιγένεθλος.
(...)⁷⁰

- Zeus was born first, Zeus last, god of the bright bolt:
Zeus is the head, Zeus the middle, from Zeus are all things made.
Zeus was male, Zeus was an immortal nymph.
Zeus is the foundation of earth and starry heaven,
5 Zeus is the king, Zeus the ruler of all, god of the bright bolt.
(...)⁷¹

⁶⁷ West 1999, 34–35.

⁶⁸ Orph. (*Carm. theog.*), fr. 12 Bernabé (= deest Kern). Cf. fr. 241 Bernabé (= fr. 167 Kern): (...) / καὶ ποταμοὶ καὶ πόντος ἀπείριτος ἄλλα τε πάντα / πάντες τ' ἀθάνατοι μάκαρες θεοὶ ἡδὲ θέαιναι, / ὅσσα τ' ἔην γεγαῶτα καὶ ὕστερον ὀπὸς ἔμελλεν, / κτλ.

⁶⁹ Transl. by M. L. West.

⁷⁰ Orph. (*Carm. theog.*) fr. 243 Bernabé (= frs. 69 + 168 Kern; fr. 14 Bernabé = deest Kern). Cf. fr. 244 Bernabé (= pp. 203; 205 Kern): πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε (*scil.* Ζεὺς); also Damasc. *In Plat. Phaed.* 1. 540, p. 277 (= fr. 243 [XXIX] Bernabé, deest Kern): ἀπὸ παντὸς δὲ ἑαυτοῦ (*scil.* Διὸς) προάγει θεοῦς.

⁷¹ Transl. by M. L. West.

“In this poem”, West concludes, “there is still a full pantheon of gods, but they have all become creatures and emanations of Zeus, after an episode in which he was temporarily the only god”.⁷² Upon a closer examination, we can further observe how relevant philosophical consequences of such an Orphic theogony can be found in the renowned *Hymn to Zeus* by Cleanthes, where the criticism of human passions is one of the main topics of a new theological conception.⁷³ If Parmenides’ ἄψυχος πρῶτος θεός in Philodemus’ *On Piety* cannot be explained through inner doxographical strategies (viz. *pendant* between frs. 12 and 13 of *PHerc.* 1428), it could be probably justified, in my opinion, either through the influence of Orphic sources, probably mediated by a Stoic author, or with Philodemus’ dependence on a Stoic source *tout court*, all the more so because Stoic theology is widely criticized in the following section of *PHerc.* 1428.⁷⁴ Parmenides’ “first god” could also be considered stoically as an entity of mind absolutely distinct from the mythological gods. In this sense, it would be neither Zeus nor Aphrodite, especially since a picture of an “inanimate” Aphrodite would openly contradict all the theological tradition which made her the goddess of passion *par excellence*.

A last attempt: one figure who perhaps in general warrants consideration in relation to Philodemus’ remark that Parmenides’ “first god” appears to lack a soul (and also in relation to Velleius’ remark in Cicero that it is difficult to see how this god could perceive) is Melissus. Might

⁷² West 1999, 35. Cf. also West 1983, 88–90, who remarks that “at least three of these five verses (the first two and the fifth, in the same order) came in the Derveni poem”. Cf. *PDerveni* cols. XVI–XIX Kouremenos–Parássoglou–Tsantsanoglou, on which I refer to Betegh 2004, 182–223; Kouremenos–Parássoglou–Tsantsanoglou 2006, 213–233. Useful remarks on the relationship between Orphic theogonies and the Presocratics are to be found in Burkert 1968; Laks–Most 1997; Bernabé 2002; Janko 2008.

⁷³ Cleanth. fr. 537, *SVF* I, pp. 121–122 (= Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 1. 12, p. 52. 3): Κύδιστ’ ἀθανάτων, πολυνύμμε παγκρατὲς αἰεΐ, / Ζεῦ φύσεως ἀρχηγέ, νόμου μέτα πάντα κυβερνῶν, / χαῖρε. σὲ γὰρ καὶ πάντεσσι θέμις θνητοῖσι προσαυδᾶν / ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γένος ἔσμεν † ἤχου μίμημα λαχόντες / μοῦνοι, ὅσα ζῶει τε καὶ ἔρπει θνήτ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν / τῷ σὲ καθυμνήσω, καὶ σὸν κράτος αἰὲν αἰδῶ. / σοὶ δὴ πᾶς ὅδε κόσμος ἑλισσόμενος περὶ γαῖαν / πείθεται ἥ κεν ἄγης, καὶ ἐκὼν ὑπὸ σείῳ κρατεῖται / τοῖον ἔχεις ὑποεργὸν ἀνικῆτοῖς ὑπὸ χερσὶν / ἀμφῆκη πυρόεντα, ἀειζῶντα κεραυνόν / τοῦ γὰρ ὑπὸ πληγῆς φύσεως πάντ’ ἔργα ... / ᾧ σὺ κατευθύνεις κοινὸν λόγον, ὃς διὰ πάντων / φοιτᾷ, μινύμενος μεγάλῳ μικροῖς τε φάεσσι / † ὥς τόσους† γεγάως ὑπατος βασιλεὺς διὰ παντός. / κτλ. I follow here the new edition of Thom 2005, 34–36.

⁷⁴ In particular, it could be useful to make a comparison with *PHerc.* 1428, col. 7 Henrichs, where, among the other things, Philodemus says Chrysippus to have made Night “the very first goddess” (ll. 18–21: τὴν Νύκτα | θεάν φησιν [εἰ]ργα[ι] πρωτίστην) in Book 1 of his *On Nature*. Cf. Henrichs 1974; also Algra 2003; Algra 2009.

his arguments that what-is is not involved in suffering and passions,⁷⁵ and that it cannot be said to be alive or dead or to undergo the processes of becoming alive and becoming dead,⁷⁶ not play a role in this doxographical account? In *PHerc.* 224, fr. 3 as well, as previously stated, Parmenides and Melissus are mentioned together. As for the ‘pre-Socratic’ section of Philodemus’ *On Piety*, we have to bear in mind that between *PHerc.* 1428’s frs. 13 (on Parmenides) and 14 (probably on Empedocles) there were at least two other columns.⁷⁷ We could guess that in the lost part of the papyrus a testimonium to Melissus’ god/One (absent in Cicero) was handed down and that in this no longer existing account, the key for better understanding Philodemus’ reference to Parmenides’ “inanimate” god could have been found.⁷⁸

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⁷⁵ Simpl. *In Phys.* 111. 18 (= DK 30 B 7).

⁷⁶ Simpl. *In Cael.* 558. 19 (= DK 30 B 8).

⁷⁷ Cf. Vassallo 2016b; Vassallo 2017b.

⁷⁸ To this last remark, I would add only J. Mansfeld’s methodological warning (*per litteras*), which could also provide a historico-philosophical conclusion to such an inquiry: “Epicurean doxography is very polemical and so may paint a false picture, and one can only be relatively sure that something said by Philodemus or Cicero’s Epicurean spokesperson is reported in an objective way, when it is paralleled in a non-Epicurean source. Parmenides’ god without sense or soul seems to be quite dubious historically, and much more the fruit of Epicurean manipulation”.

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Among the several Herculanean testimonia to Parmenides, fr. 13 of *PHerc.* 1428 no doubt represents the most important piece of evidence for this pre-Socratic philosopher. A new autopsy of the papyrus made a reconstruction of the name ‘Eros’ at line 12 possible. Within the Doxa section of Parmenides’ poem, Eros is notoriously described as the first of the gods to be created by Aphrodite (DK 28 B 13). In fr. 12 DK, Aphrodite is defined in turn as the goddess governing the universe, who represents the balancing point of the astronomical theory of

celestial spheres. In the second part of the Herculanean fragment, Philodemus says that, according to Parmenides, the “first god” would be inanimate and that gods who were generated by him would have, in the view of mortal people, the same passions of human beings. The paper argues that Philodemus could have (a) either intentionally mixed his sources in order to create a *pendant* between *PHerc.* 1428’s frs. 12 (on Xenophanes) and 13 (on Parmenides); (b) gone back to an older tradition, later developed by early Stoicism, which exactly describes the “first god” as the ruler of the universe and absolutely devoid of human passions; (c) or mixed some attributes of Parmenides’ god with those ascribed to One by his follower Melissus.

Среди нескольких геркуланских свидетельств, относящихся к Пармениду, *PHerc.* 1428 fr. 13 несомненно является наиболее важным. Новая аутопсия этого папирусного текста позволяет надежно восстановить имя “Эрот” в ст. 12. В разделе поэмы Парменида, посвященной “мнениям смертных”, Эрот примечательным образом выступает в качестве первого из богов, сотворенных Афродитой (DK 28 B 13). Во фр. 12 DK Афродита в свою очередь предстает в качестве богини, управляющей миром, служа точкой равновесия для небесных сфер. Во второй части геркуланского фрагмента Филодем говорит, что, согласно Пармениду, “первый бог” лишен души, а боги, рожденные им, обладают, в глазах смертных, теми же страстями, что люди. В статье доказываемся, что Филодем (1) либо намеренно смешал указания источников, создавая параллель между *PHerc.* 1428 fr. 12 (о Ксенофане) и fr. 13 (о Пармениде); (2) либо использовал некую древнюю традицию, впоследствии развитую в ранней Стое, которая изображает “первого бога” как правителя космоса, полностью лишенного страстей; (3) либо, наконец, контаминировал атрибуты парменидовского бога с атрибутами Единого у последователя Парменида Мелисса.

CONSPECTUS

MICHAEL POZDNEV	
“Gehörnte Mutter Hirschkuh” (Anacr. F 408 <i>PMG</i>)	
in der antiken philologischen Polemik	5
CHRISTIAN VASSALLO	
Parmenides and the “First God”: Doxographical Strategies	
in Philodemus’ <i>On Piety</i>	29
J. G. HOWIE	
Stylistic Enactment in Pindar <i>Nemean Seven</i> (revisited)	58
NINA ALMAZOVA	
Daktylus und Enhoplös in Damons Rhythmuslehre	94
GIULIA MARIA CHESI	
A few notes on τοῦτο and τὸ τοιοῦτον in Plato, <i>Tim.</i> 49 d 4 – e 7	127
ROBERT MAYHEW	
Two notes on Aristotle and Aristarchus on the meaning	
of κέρως in the <i>Iliad</i>	139
VSEVOLOD ZELTCHENKO	
Ad Petr. <i>Sat.</i> fr. 16 Müller	150
ALEXANDER TSCHERNIAK	
<i>Germani</i> und <i>invento nomine</i> (Tac. <i>Germ.</i> 2, 3)	155
DARIA KONDAKOVA	
Les Épigrammes de Palladas d’Alexandrie (9. 173, 9. 489, 6. 85)	
et la tradition scolaire de l’Antiquité	164
Key Words	174