



(*monoeides*; again a term that seems to be a Platonic coinage), ‘the forms are simple in such a way that they have no (even non-spatial) parts with independent functions or roles’ (147). It is thus that state the soul works towards. We then immediately learn that forms can have distinguishable ‘features’ (147). Now it may well be that we have to understand features as applying to the whole of the form such that we could not isolate a ‘structural feature’ (147) within the form. Nevertheless, is that not conceptually just what we do when we name the distinct properties a form possesses, e.g. simplicity or eternity? Again, given the importance of the concept of purity to the ethical project outlined here, readers might wish for further discussion on this topic. And what about that image of the pearl inside the shell? Does it lend itself to this conception of the interpenetration of soul and body? The fact that Ebrey’s book elicits such questions is a mark of its excellence.

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Cosmos and Perception in Plato’s Timaeus: In the Eye of the Cognitive Storm. By Mark Eli Kalderon. New York: Routledge, 2023. Pp. 348. \$128.00 (hardback). ISBN 9781032274706.

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This is an impressive and important book about perception in Plato’s *Timaeus*, but most of its readers will probably be researchers who are interested in much broader questions about the dialogue. There is nothing deficient or lacking about this treatment of perception, but this book should be put alongside Thomas Johansen’s *Plato’s Natural Philosophy* and Sarah Broadie’s *Nature and Divinity* in the sense that this is, for all intents and purposes, a monograph about the whole *Timaeus*, even though it is pitched as being focused on perception. There are only a few topics missing, such as the nature of the cosmic receptacle and psychic diseases. Virtually everything else, including the status of *Timaeus*’ so-called likely story, the generation of the lower gods, and the nature of bone, is discussed at length.

The chapters deliberately follow the unfolding of *Timaeus*’ story. The subjects of the chapters are as follows: the preface to *Timaeus*’ speech, the cosmogony, the creation of the world’s soul, the nature of the world’s cognition, the creation of human beings, the goals of vision and hearing, affections that are common to the whole body (e.g., hot and cold), affections that are common to particular sensory organs (e.g., colors and tastes), the anatomy of *Timaeus*’ theory of the

divided soul, and the soul-body union in the *Timaeus*. Each chapter helpfully concludes with a brief section that summarizes the central findings in two or three pages, and it greatly improves the reader's experience.

One quick methodological disclaimer: Kalderon talks about *Timaeus*, the character in Plato's dialogue, rather than Plato himself or Plato's philosophy. He avoids attributing the views in the dialogue to Plato. He acknowledges this methodology in his very brief preface to the book, but he does not give any motivation for it. He is aware of one major drawback of this approach, which is that, as a consequence of it, there is virtually no discussion of other Platonic dialogues. The discussion of pleasure and pain would have benefited from further investigation into the *Republic's* and *Philebus's* discussions of that topic, and the *Philebus's* account of perception is really quite pertinent to any understanding of the *Timaeus's*. That being said, there are benefits to Kalderon's approach too. It is very careful and prudent: after all, future scholars will benefit from a close reading of the *Timaeus* on its own terms and will thereby be positioned to connect it to the other dialogues.

One of this book's most important contributions to the scholarly literature is its pushback against the recent trends in the research on the *Timaeus*, namely, the growing view that *Timaeus* believes that the soul is literally extended in space. This interpretation has been defended by, among others, Gabriela Carone, Gábor Betegh, David Sedley, and myself; and Kalderon refers to it as 'literalism'. I am a partisan in this debate, and my own understanding of the *Timaeus* has been enriched by Kalderon's argument, although I will say below why I do not find his argumentative strategy convincing.

Generally, Kalderon points out the incoherence (and sometimes the outright impossibility) of a literal interpretation of the spatial characteristics of the soul. Let me give two examples, both taken from the third chapter of the book, which concerns the creation of the world's soul. The first: *Timaeus* says that the Demiurge generates the soul by cutting a portion of mixed ingredients lengthwise, which results in strips of equal lengths, which in turn are made into circles of equal diameter; then, *Timaeus* says that some of these circles are placed inside of others, such that one is the outermost, and the other circles are within that outermost one. The problem that Kalderon raises is that this makes no sense: there is apparently no way for circles, arranged concentrically, to have equal diameter *and* for some to be nested within others. The outermost circle would *have* to have the greatest diameter in order for it to contain the others. The second: *Timaeus* says that the world's soul extends throughout the body of the world and encompasses it from the outside. There are multiple problems with this claim. For instance, *Timaeus* is clear that nothing exists outside of the world at all, in which case it is impossible for the soul to encompass the world from the outside. As well, if the world's soul really did extend throughout the whole cosmos, then it would be a sphere with volume, but we just considered *Timaeus's* claim that the world's soul is a series of concentric circles, not one voluminous sphere. Kalderon concludes that the literalist interpretation is false on the grounds that

that interpretative strategy renders these claims simply incoherent. This discussion illustrates the breadth of this book and the way in which it extends well past the strict boundaries of perception in the *Timaeus*.

There is no doubt that Kalderon has made an important contribution to the literature with this line of argumentation. However, I *do* doubt that people who are partial to literalism, such as myself, will be convinced by his book. This is because Kalderon does not deal with all of the evidence *for* literalism, and I think that he slightly misrepresents some of the arguments that support literalism. For instance, he never engages with the passages in which Plato attributes diseases such as epilepsy to phlegm splashing against the soul or passages in which Plato attributes vices such as forgetfulness to interactions between bile and the soul. Moreover, he correctly notes that one of the main pro-literalism arguments is that some of Plato's explanations, such as for the shape of the head, have no explanatory power whatsoever if the soul is not literally extended in space: after all, there would be no need for the head to be so shaped if the soul were not *literally* a series of circles. However, when he sets out to knock down this argument, he says that this view positions the soul as an 'efficient cause' of the shape of the head (92). Kalderon detects a problem with the soul being an efficient cause of the shape of the head: as he puts it, 'it is hard to see how [...the soul could be] among the efficient causes of the shape of the skull' (92). This is an apt thing to say since it *is* hard to see. In reality, the literalist interpretation is not that the soul *shapes* the skull (which is what it would do if it were an efficient cause). The lower gods are the efficient cause of the skull and its shape. Housing the soul is that for the sake of which the skull is so shaped. The literalist argument is that there would be no need to so shape the skull if the soul lacked spatial dimensions and properties. The literalist could also point to Plato's explanation of the neck as an invention by the gods to distance the workings of reason from the activities of the mortal kinds of soul, such that the former is spared as much disruption as possible. Again, it is not obvious how Plato would be explaining anything if the soul were not extended in space. Kalderon does not consider the neck when he surveys the evidence for literalism. Still, none of this vindicates literalism or defeats Kalderon's powerful anti-literalist argument. Every literalist or would-be literalist is going to have to engage with Kalderon.

When it comes to perception, one central achievement is Kalderon's defense of a thought-provoking view of the *pathēmata* that are common to the whole body. These common *pathēmata*, such as heavy, light, cold, hot, hard, and soft, are *not* qualities of sensory objects, according to the author, but are instead the effects of those objects. They are liable to give rise to perception, but they are not the sensible qualities. By denying that common *pathēmata* are sensible qualities, Kalderon is challenging a view of the *Timaeus* that dates back to Cornford and Taylor. In addition, he prevents the long-standing attempt by those such as O'Brien and Cornford to find in the so-called secret doctrine of the *Theaetetus* Timaeus' theory of sensible objects. After all, the secret doctrine had argued that sensible qualities and the perception of those qualities always went hand in hand

with each other.

I shall conclude with one small complaint: the bibliography is rather limited. Specifically, it is limited to English-speaking research. The only non-English research that is included in the bibliography are two pieces of French scholarship, and even these are not really used to their full potential. For instance, Luc Brisson's *Le même et l'autre* (Academia Verlag, 1994) is one of those two pieces of scholarship, but when Kalderon is discussing the prevalence of agricultural and seed-sowing imagery in the *Timaeus*, the book is not mentioned or cited at all, despite the fact that Brisson's commentary features an important discussion of this, which I believe would have been beneficial. It is hard to believe that *no other* non-English research would have been helpful, too: Catherine Joubaud's *Le corps humain dans la philosophie platonicienne* (Librarie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1991) comes to mind.

Ultimately, Kalderon has succeeded at producing an important book on perception in the *Timaeus*. The breadth of its scope is so extensive, however, that it will be of great interest to just about anyone working on the *Timaeus*, but this by no means should take away from its importance on the subject of perception. In the course of writing a book that embeds Timaeus' view of perception within a larger cosmological framework, the author has written a book that touches on so many other research programs, too.

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Traditional and Cosmic Gods in Later Plato and the Early Academy. By Vilius Bartninkas. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. Pp. 300. \$110.00 (hardback). ISBN: 9781009322591.

Lewis Meek Trelawny-Cassity

This book is a study of the relationship between the traditional Olympian gods and the divine heavens and heavenly bodies as it is portrayed in the *Timaeus-Critias*, the *Laws*, and in the Early Academy. Bartninkas argues that while Plato initiated the transition to a fully cosmological view of the gods that can be found in Hellenistic philosophy, Plato's own view on the relationship between the cosmic and traditional gods is more balanced, integrative, and ambiguous. Focusing particularly on the works of Phillip of Opus and Xenocrates, Bartninkas shows how members of the Academy take up Plato's questions and positions and develop them in more consistent and systematic ways.

In examining its subject matter, *Traditional and Cosmic Gods in Later Plato*