

COULD THEMIS BE THE DEITY WHO «STEERS» PARMENIDES' COSMOS?

The identity of the anonymous *daímōn* (δαίμων) who «steers» Parmenides' cosmos and governs every birth and every mingling has been variously interpreted by the doxographers and commentators who handed down to us an account of frag. B12 and is still debated among modern scholars. The importance of this deity is not adequately reflected in ancient doxography¹, but in recent decades, following the reevaluation of Parmenidean cosmology, many scholars have reconsidered its role.

In this paper I argue that in Parmenides' poem this *daímōn* may play a relevant role in connecting the theological, ontological and cosmological planes. Furthermore, in spite of the reports of ancient commentators, who have attributed various identities to the *daímōn*, some very different from others, and of modern scholars, who in turn try to include them all in their exegesis, I believe that we should look instead for a single goddess whose mythological figure encompasses all those identities and attributes which specify the various (non-identical) spheres of influence that the *daímōn* has, one who has to appear in the other parts of the poem to be able to connect them.

I propose that this *daímōn* could be Themis, whom we encounter in the proem (B1, 28) as Parmenides' guide towards the revelation of *tò eón* (τὸ εἶόν; «being», «what is») and is echoed in frag. B8 as the norm of *tò eón* (v. 32). For my purpose, I will examine the different identities and attributes found in the accounts on Parmenides' *daímōn*, and I will compare them with the identities and attributes that the mythological tradition assigns to Themis. If I am correct, Themis' presence also in B12 would guarantee

* I would like to thank the anonymous referee for offering useful suggestions for the improvement and organization of my arguments.

1. cf. G. JOURNÉE, *Les avatars d'une démonie: à propos de Parménide fr. 28B13*, *Elenchos*, 35, 2014, pp. 5-38: 5. When not otherwise specified, for the text of Parmenides' fragments and *testimonia* I will refer to H. DIELS – W. KRANZ, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Berlin, 6th edition, 1951, vol. 1 (henceforth DK). For the English translation (when not otherwise specified) I will refer to A. LAKS – G. W. MOST, *Early Greek Philosophy*, Cambridge-London, Harvard University Press, 2016 (henceforth LM; see vol. 1, pp. 96-97 and 145-147, to consult the concordances between the two editions).

a hitherto unnoticed element of interconnection between the *dóxa*, the *alétheia* and the proem of the poem.

Let us start our investigation by presenting fragment B12, where Parmenides introduces the *daímōn*:

αἰ γὰρ στεινότεραι πλῆντο πυρὸς ἀκρήτοις,	1
αἰ δ' ἐπὶ ταῖς νυκτός, μετὰ δὲ φλογὸς ἴεται αἴσα·	
ἐν δὲ μέσῳ τούτων δαίμων ἢ πάντα κυβερνᾷ·	
πάντων γὰρ ² στρυγεροῖο τόκου καὶ μίξις ἄρχει	
πέμπουσ' ἄρσενι θῆλυ μιγῆν τό τ' ἐναντίον αὐτίς	5
ἄρσεν θηλυτέρῳ.	

We learned about the verses quoted above, which constitute the fragment we catalogue as B12, from Simplicius' *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*³ (6th century AD). We also have an account of their content from Aëtius (2.7.1⁴, which dates back to the 1st-2nd century AD), and other indirect testimonies, as we will see. It is still debated whether these verses describe a cosmology or a cosmogony and whether in Parmenides' poem there was a cosmogonic section distinguished from an analogous cosmological one⁵. For my part, I believe we should not search for such distinctions in a mythopoetic context and it should not surprise us that a cosmological description is proposed as a cosmogonic narration: to define a structure, a myth tells how it was born⁶.

2. Here I follow the *lectio* of the edition LM 2016, vol. 5, pp. 3-151. For completeness, I add that the DK edition reads: πάντα γὰρ <ῆ>.

3. *In Phys.* 39.14-16 = B12, 1-3; *In Phys.* 31.13-17 = B12, 2-6.

4. J. MANSFIELD – D. RUNIA, *Aëtiana V. An Edition of the Reconstructed Text of the Placita with a Commentary and a Collection of Related Texts*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2020, p. 852 («This account is an important witness to Parmenides' cosmology because it is presumably derived from his poem»). On Aëtius' sources on Parmenides' cosmological account see *ibid.*, pp. 737, 852-853. Cf. also: G. DE SANTILLANA, *Prologue to Parmenides*, Cincinnati, The University of Cincinnati Press, 1964, p. 18; F. FERRARI, *Il migliore dei mondi impossibili, Parmenide e il cosmo dei Presocratici*, Roma, Aracne editrice, p. 85; G. CERRI, *The Astronomical Section in Parmenides' Poem, Parmenides, Venerable and Awesome (Plato, Theaetetus 183e). Proceedings of the international symposium, Buenos Aires, October 29-November 2, 2007*, N. L. CORDERO (ed.), Las Vegas-Zurich-Athens, Parmenides Publishing, 2011, pp. 81-94: 86. L. TARÁN, *Parmenides. A Text with Translation, Commentary, and critical Essays*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1965, p. 247, instead, considers Aëtius' report «untrustworthy».

5. See J. BOLLACK, *La cosmologie parménidéenne de Parménide, Herméneutique et ontologie. Mélange en hommage à Pierre Aubenque*, R. BRAGUE – J. COURTINE (eds), Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1990, pp. 16-53; G. CALENDÀ, *Un universo aperto. La cosmologia di Parmenide e la struttura della Terra*, Bologna, Diogene Multimedia, 2017, pp. 12 n. 5, 95-97. Although an exhaustive survey of the different interpretations of these themes would not be possible, one can still find a synthetic but detailed bibliographic survey of these topics in M. KRAUS, *Parmenides, Frühgriechische Philosophie Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie. Die Philosophie der Antike*, F. ÜBERWEG – D. BREMER – H. FLASHAR – G. RECHENAUER (eds), Basel, Schwabe Verlag, 2013, pp. 441–530: 489-491.

6. Cf. H. VON DECHEND, *Il concetto di simmetria nelle culture arcaiche, Sirio. Tre seminari*

As we will see, the *daímōn* introduced by Parmenides in v. 3 was identified by Aëtius with Dike and Ananke, and with Aphrodite by Plutarch. Modern scholars follow them in these identifications, when they do not just leave her identity anonymous⁷. I will investigate the identity of the *daímōn* by comparing its theological and cosmological attributes, which emerge from the fragments and the testimonies referable to it, with those emerging from the mythological accounts concerning Themis⁸, a comparison that, to the best of my knowledge, has not been thoroughly investigated by any scholar to date. The aim of this paper is to determine whether there are enough clues to make it reasonable to identify the *daímōn* with the Titaness.

In his quotes, Simplicius does not specify the subject of the first lines of B12, but Aëtius and Cicero (cf. A37) suggest that it is *stephánai* (στεφάναι), which I will translate «bands», following Mansfeld-Runia⁹. Actually, the first two verses of B12 describe these «bands» as «interwoven one around another» (περιπεπλεγμένοι ἐπαλλήλοισι; trans. Mansfeld-Runia) and the use of the term *stephánai* would suggest that Parmenides is referring to astronomical objects: in fact, we encounter the verb *stephanóō* (στεφανόω) in a passage of the *Iliad* (XVIII, 484-485), where it is used to say that the sun, the moon, and all the «signs in the heaven» (τείρεα, also «constellations»; LSJ) are ornaments «which heaven has all round it» (τὰ τ' οὐρανός ἐστεφάνωται; LSJ, entry στεφανόω). De Santillana has no doubt that Aëtius' summary of B12 «must make astronomical sense»¹⁰, a hypothesis shared by Cerri, who connects «Parmenides' depiction of the starlit sky» in B12 to the astronomical system described by Anaximander¹¹.

Parmenides tells us that a *daímōn* emerges «in the middle» (ἐν δὲ μέσῳ) of these *stephánai*, and Aëtius (2.7.1; cf. A37) specifies that Parmenides

sulla cosmologia arcaica, G. DE SANTILLANA – H. VON DECHEND (eds), Milano, Adelphi, 2020, pp. 79-126 / p. 123.

7. The reader may find a recent and thorough survey of the studies on the theological and mythical imagery present in Parmenides' poem, in S. RANZATO, *Il kouros e la verità. Polivalenza delle immagini nel poema di Parmenide*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2015.

8. To explore the mythology and theology of Themis, and of the other theological figures with whom I will correlate the Titaness in this paper, cf.: J. E. HARRISON, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1912; M. CORSANO, *Themis. La norma e l'oracolo nella Grecia antica*, Lecce, Congedo, 1988; A. LO SCHIAVO, *Themis e la sapienza dell'ordine cosmico*, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 1997; J. RUDHARDT, *Themis et les Horai*, Genève, Droz, 1999; I. BERTI, Epigraphical documentary evidence for the Themis cult: prophecy and politics, *Kernos*, 15, 2002, pp. 225-234; E. STAFFORD, Themis: religion and order in the archaic polis, *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece*, P. J. RHODES – L. MITCHELL (eds), London, Routledge, 1997, pp. 158-167; EADEM, Personification in Greek Religious Thought and Practice, *A Companion to Greek Religion*, D. OGDEN (ed.), Malden-Oxford-Carlton, Wiley Blackwell, 2007, pp. 71-85.

9. J. MANSFELD – D. RUNIA, *Aëtiana V*, *op. cit.*, p. 2093.

10. G. DE SANTILLANA, *Prologue to Parmenides*, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

11. G. CERRI, *The Astronomical*, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

considered the *daimōn* itself as «the most central» of the *stephánai*¹². Cicero (*De nat. deor.* I, 11; cf. A37) also tells us that Parmenides' god is «something similar to a wreath» which he calls *stepháne* [«coronae similem efficit (στεφάνην) appellat»]¹³. One should not be surprised at the identification of a deity with an astronomical object. As Von Dechend and De Santillana have shown, for the ancients what we distinguish nowadays as astronomy, astrology and cosmology were one and the same science of the divine, as the stars were considered divinities, and this science was transmitted and disclosed also through mythology¹⁴. Plato, in his *Timaeus*, uses the adjective θεῖος to indicate the fixed stars (40a 2) and he clearly indicates the planets as gods (40b-d). And Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1074b) writes that those ancient thinkers who handed down to posterity the myth that the heavenly objects were deities were inspired by the gods.

12. I should at least mention that there are commentators who think that the δαίμων is not to be found in the heavens but inside the earth, just like the Pythagorean goddess Ἑστία (cf. M. E. PELLIKAAN ENGEL, *Hesiod and Parmenides. A new view on their cosmologies and on Parmenides' poem: second impression*, Amsterdam, Hakkert, 1978, pp. 91-93; W. K. C. GUTHRIE, *A History of Greek Philosophy, 2: the Presocratic Tradition from Parmenides to Democritus*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 62-63; A. Ferrari, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-106). This account derives mostly by a *testimonium* of Anatolius of Laodicea (cf. A44) of the 3rd century AD, which links Parmenides' cosmology to that of the Pythagoreans and which is not believed to be reliable by all scholars (*i.e.* it is not comprised in the LM edition). Not only is it an isolated testimony but, as Tarán, *Parmenides. A Text with Translation, Commentary, and Critical Essays, op. cit.*, p. 247 n. 49, pointed out, Anatolius «attributes to the Pythagoreans a theory of the elements that cannot be pre-Platonic, as Philolaus B12 is spurious». Another argument supporting the position of Parmenides' δαίμων at the center of the earth is Simplicius' account that she would be «in the middle of all things» (*In phys.* 34.15) and the analogy that Simplicius proposes between the Parmenidean metaphor of the sphere in B8 and the Orphic myth of the silver egg (*In phys.* 146.29-147.2). As regards these arguments, I agree with Coxon that «Simplicius' systematic application of the Neoplatonist rule of understanding earlier thinkers sympathetically leads him to give an unduly Neoplatonic interpretation of Parmenides' thought» (A. H. COXON, *The Fragments of Parmenides. A Critical Text with Introduction and Translation, the Ancient Testimonia and a Commentary, Revised and Expanded Edition edited with new Translations*, R. MCKIRAHAN (ed.), Las Vegas-Zurich-Athens, Parmenides Publishing, 2009, p. 39; see also *ibid.*, p. 368. Cf. also J. BURNET, *Early Greek Philosophy*, London, A & C Black, 1920, p. 138; N. L. CORDERO, La aristotelización y platonización de Parménides por Simplicio, *Argos*, 38, 2015, pp. 32-51; P. HUBY, Simplicius, *On Aristotle Physics 1.3-4*, P. HUBY and C. C. W. TAYLOR trans., London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2011, p. 101 n. 294; I. A. LICCIARDI, *Parmenide tràdito, Parmenide tradito*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 2016, pp. 321, 459. *En passant*, I also remind CALENDÀ, *op. cit.*, p. 80 (cf. also *ibid.* pp. 97-99), who believes that at the center of the Parmenidean earth there is fire, as in the Pythagorean universe, but that the δαίμων does not coincide with it and is settled in «un ulteriore livello, in cui la materia è costituita dalla vita, animata da una forma del fuoco ...; livello che potremmo identificare con ciò che oggi, proprio con un termine di derivazione greca, chiamiamo biosfera».

13. «qui cingit caelum, quem appellat deum».

14. Cf. G. DE SANTILLANA – H. VON DECHEND, *The Hamlet's Mill. An Essay Investigating the Origins of Human Knowledge and Its Transmission Through Myth*, Boston, Gambit, 1969. See also M. L. GEMELLI MARCIANO, Oriente e Occidente, *La filosofia antica. Itinerario storico e testuale*, L. PERILLI – D.P. TAORMINA (eds), Novara, UTET Università, 2012, pp. 3-34.

Following Aëtius' accounts, some scholars identify «the most central» of the *stephánai* with an astronomical band: either the Milky Way¹⁵, or the Ecliptic¹⁶, or the orbit of a planet¹⁷. The *stephánai* in B12 are said to be made of unmixed and mixed «light» and «darkness» and Aëtius provides us with a further specification about them, saying that they are made of *araiós* (ἀραιός; «rare») and *puknós* (πυκνός; «dense») textures. I believe that Aëtius' account is reliable because, as Coxon¹⁸, Cerri¹⁹ and Frère²⁰ have demonstrated, *araiós* and *puknós* are Parmenides' terms too and he uses them to refer to light and darkness in B8, 57-59²¹.

In B9, Parmenides invites us to conceive «light» and «darkness» (*araiós* and *puknós*) not as (cf. B8, 53-59) two «forms» (μορφαί) «separate from each other» (χωρὶς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων) and «opposite» (τάντια), but as two *dunámeis* (δυνάμεις; «potencies»; cf. B9, 2), which, together, are the necessary unique «form» that constitutes everything, «since in neither is there Nothing» [ἐπεὶ οὐδ'ἐτέρωι μέτα μηδέν; B9, 4, trans. by Coxon (fr. 11,4)]. In this perspective, if the *daímōn* in B12 coincides with the most central of the celestial bands it would therefore consist of the same *dunámeis* that make up everything.

Another clue that the constitution of the *daímōn* was not qualitatively different from that of everything else could come from the critical observation of Aristotle, who emphasized that Parmenides «did not posit anything outside of the substance of the perceptibles» (*Cael.* 298b 19-23). Furthermore, if Parmenides' *daímōn* coincides with an astronomical band, it would shed light on why Cicero and Philodemus state that she had neither a *figura divina* nor a body and soul²². Both Bollack²³ and Coxon²⁴ have no doubt that the deity about whom Cicero and Philodemus are speaking is a goddess and precisely the δαίμων of B12. Consequently, we

15. Cf. J. BURNET, *Early Greek Philosophy*, *op. cit.*, p. 138; and BOLLACK, *La cosmologie parménidéenne de Parménide*, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-47.

16. Cf. A. H. COXON, *The Fragments of Parmenides*, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

17. Cf. G. CERRI, *The Astronomical*, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

18. A. H. COXON, *The Fragments of Parmenides*, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

19. G. CERRI, *Parménide, Poema sulla natura*, Milano, BUR, 1999, pp. 248-252.

20. J. FRÈRE, *Parménide et l'ordre du monde*: FR. VIII, 50-61, *Études sur Parménide II: Problèmes d'interprétation*, P. AUBENQUE (ed.), Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1987, pp. 192-212: 206-207.

21. All the *mss* report *araiós* in B8, 57, in spite of Diels' decision to expunge it in his edition (cf. H. DIELS, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 4th ed., Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1922, vol. 1, p. 15; see also H. DIELS, *Parmenides Lehrgedicht, griechisch und deutsch*, Berlin, Reimer, 1897, p. 94). Diels' amendment is maintained in the DK edition.

22. Cicero writes about Parmenides' deity that «no one could suspect either a divine shape or sensation» («in quo neque figuram divinam neque sensum quisquam suspicari potest»). Philodemus [*Piet.* 67-68 GOMPERZ (*Dox.* 534)] accounts that «Parmenides ... seems to make the first god soulless» (trans. by McKirahan).

23. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 364.

may hypothesize that it does not have a well-defined *figura divina* if it corresponds to the astronomical band Cicero describes.

Actually, if we look at Greek mythology, there is a goddess whose figure was connected in two myths with an astronomical band, as we will see, and even if she had her own cult she was «never quite a full-fledged divinity» because she «was before the particular shapes of gods»²⁵. I am talking about Themis.

Aëtius describes the particular mixture of just one of the mixed *stephánai*: «the mixture of the dense [*puknós*] and the thin [*araiós*] produces the milky color [sc. of the Milky Way]» (A43a). We may assume that the Milky Way, among the other bands, must have played such a fundamental role within Parmenides' cosmology that the doxographer deemed it worth being accounted in detail. At least it seems to be the only band with which Parmenides was so concerned as to specify something more about its formation. It could be not just a coincidence that the first evidence in Greek literature in which we find the expression «heavenly milk» (γάλα τ' οὐράνιον) is fragment B11 of Parmenides' poem²⁶.

I believe that the importance of the Milky Way in Parmenides' cosmology is well testified also by the fact that Parmenides derives the main astronomical objects from the galaxy: it is Aëtius who tells us how the sun and the moon derive the mixture of that «heavenly milk» from the *araiós* and *puknós* (A43). We can easily imagine that Parmenides could have established a similar dynamic for the formation of the other astronomical objects (cf. *i.e.* A40a). Let us not forget that Cicero tells us that Parmenides assigned even the generation of the stars (cf. A37) to the *stepháne*, which he considered a deity.

We have an account of Aëtius (cf. A37) that tells us that «the most central» of the mixed *stephánai* is the cause of their generation. If we look at A43, one may agree with Burnet (*op. cit.*, p. 138), and Bollack (*op. cit.*, pp. 33-47), that the «most central band» could actually be the Milky Way²⁷.

Let us turn to the Titaness Themis. In a plausible modern conjecture, her name is related to the Milky Way in a fragment of Pindar (fr. 30 SNELL-MAEHLER²⁸), who tells us that the Titaness was led by her daughters, the Moirai, from the sources of the Ocean to the Olympus through a heavenly

25. J. E. HARRISON, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, *op. cit.*, pp. 485-486.

26. W. GUNDEL, entry *Galaxias*, in *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (henceforth *RE*), Stuttgart, 1910, vol. XIII, p. 560. Cf. also F. BERTOLA, *Via Lactea*, Cittadella, Biblos, 2003, p. 4.

27. I am aware that there is no strong evidence supporting this hypothesis but I do not see either overwhelming evidence or reasons against it.

28. A fragment whose comparison with Parmenides' proem has already been underlined (cf. M. MONTAGNINO, *Ἐλλήθεια* dell'«essere» nel cielo del proemio parmenideo (28, B1 DK), *Sileno*, XLIV, 2018, pp. 249-293: 263-264).

path which Gundel identifies with the Milky Way²⁹. Furthermore, we find her name in an account of one of Empedocles' doctrines which is believed to reach as far back as to Pythagoras, where Synesius (DK31 B121) tells us that, when the souls across the Milky Way are directed to their new life on Earth, their fates are decided by the «law of Themis».

As regards the relation between Parmenides' and Pindar's poetry, Bowra is quite sure that «either [Pindar] imitated Parmenides or both poets were influenced by a common source»³⁰. As for the relations with a Pythagorean myth, Parmenides could have learnt about it from his teacher Ameinias and could have developed his own idea of a connection between Themis and the Milky Way (different from the Pythagorean one, one has to suppose, because there are no traces of an eschatological doctrine in Parmenides³¹). Although I am aware that the equation *daímōn* = Milky Way = Themis may need more arguments to be confirmed, I do not think it is unreasonable to hypothesize that if the *daímōn* of B12 coincides with the Milky Way, or is settled in there, this could be another feature of her identity that could also be present in the mythology of Themis.

Δαίμων ἦ πάντα κυβερνᾷ (B12, 3). This is how Parmenides introduces the δαίμων: the one who steers all things. Aëtius (cf. A37) also tells us that Parmenides calls her *kubernêtis* (κυβερνήτις; «steerswoman»). According to Aristotle (*Phys.* 203b10 ff.), this metaphor was used also in Ionian physics: what is held to be the principle (ἀρχή) of all things was identified with the divine and steered everything (πάντα κυβερνᾷ).

If we turn to mythological accounts, we find the metaphor of a cosmic wheelhouse in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, where Zeus is indicated as the *oiakonómos* (οἰακονόμος; «steersman») of Olympus (v. 148) and the daughters of Themis, the Moirai, are designated as the *oiakostróphoi* (οἰακοστρόφοι; «helmswomen») of Ananke (Ἀνάγκη; «Necessity»; vv. 515-516) that not even Zeus can elude³².

We find the Moirai again with Ananke, this time as her daughters, in Plato's cosmological myth of Er (*Resp.*, 617b7 ff.). In this myth, as Burnet³³ and Morrison³⁴ hypothesize, there could be the «true explanation» of the identity of Parmenides' *daímōn*, because they think she plays a role similar to that of Plato's Ananke, who rules the heavenly order with the Moirai.

29. W. GUNDEL, entry Galaxias, in *RE*, vol. XIII, p. 563; F. BERTOLA, *Via Lactea*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

30. C. M. BOWRA, The poem of Parmenides, in *IDEM*, *Problems in Greek Poetry*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 38-53: 43. See also G. B. D'ALESSIO, Una via lontana dal cammino degli uomini (PARM. 28 B 1+6; PIND. *Ol.* VI 22-27; *Pae.* VIIIb 10-20), *SIFC*, 88, 1995, pp. 143-181.

31. Cf. M. MONTAGNINO, L'ἀλήθεια dell'«essere» nel cielo del proemio parmenideo (28, B1 DK), *op. cit.*, pp. 265-268.

32. AESCHYLUS, *Prometheus Bound*, A. J. PODLECKI (trans. & ed.), Oxford, Liverpool University Press, 2005.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 144, n. 59.

34. J. S. MORRISON, Parmenides and Er, *JHS*, 75, pp. 59-68: 67.

In Parmenides' poem, we encounter Ananke that «led and enchained» the heaven (ὄρανος) «to maintain the limits of the heavenly bodies» (B10, 5).

The fact that in the myth of Er the Moirai are presented as Ananke's daughters, and not as Themis', is a mythopoeic occurrence that might appear to be quite unusual had it not been for Proclus who, on two occasions –which seem to have been missed by Parmenides' scholars, including Burnet and Morrison– explicitly reveals to us the syncretism between Themis and Ananke: 1) *In Plat. Remp.*, II 94.15-22, Proclus explains that in Plato's myth «Ananke [617b 4] represents the only divinity who presides over destiny and steers the order of celestial phenomena, proving to be Themis according to theologians. And the Moirai represent the deities who divided among themselves the providence of the mother Themis (μήτηρ Θέμις)»; and 2) *In Plat. Tim.*, II 397.10-13, Proclus states that «Socrates in the *Republic* (616c 4, 617b 4) called [Themis] Ananke ... and had her revolve the cosmos 'on her lap', forever keeping [its] order immutable and unshaken»³⁵ (trans. by Runia and Share³⁶).

Moreover, Themis was also defined *ouranía* (οὐρανία), as attested by Pindar (fr. 30 SNELL-MAEHLER) and Sophocles (*El.* 1064), because of her father Uranus, thus she was already mythologically connected to the physical structure of the sky, to the order drawn in it by the constellations and to the regulating events linked to their manifestations³⁷.

Therefore, there should be no need, as De Santillana³⁸ and Cerri³⁹ do, to identify Parmenides' *daímōn* with Aphrodite Urania, a goddess who is not present either in the extant fragments of the poem or in the cults of the city of Elea⁴⁰. On the other hand, if one reads Themis instead of Ananke in Plato's myth of Er and if, as seems plausible, there is a link between this and fragment B12, one could find a further clue to support my hypothesis about Themis as the mythological counterpart of Parmenides' *daímōn*.

In Parmenides' B8 we find the same Ananke of B10⁴¹, «subordinated» to the *thémis* of *tò eón* together with a Moira (not the same «evil» one cited in B1, 26, I suppose) and Dike: in fact, because it is *thémis* of *tò eón* to be non-

35. To know more about the mythological connections between Themis and Ananke, see A. LO SCHIAVO, *Themis e la sapienza dell'ordine cosmico*, op. cit., pp. 72-140 / pp. 203-208.

36. PROCLUS, *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus. Vol. II*, D.T. RUNIA, M. SHARE (eds), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

37. Cf. A. LO SCHIAVO, *Themis e la sapienza dell'ordine cosmico*, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

39. G. CERRI, *The Astronomical*, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

40. Cf. J.-P. MOREL, Observations sur les cultes de Velia, *Les cultes des cités phocéennes: actes du colloque international Aix-en-Provence / Marseille 4-5 juin 1999*, A. HERMARY – H. TRÉZINY (eds), Aix-en-Provence, ÉDISUD, 2000, pp. 33-49: 44; and G. GRECO, *Strutture e materiali del sacro ad Elea/Velia, Velia. Atti del XLV Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia. Taranto – Marina di Ascea 21-25 settembre 2005*, A. STAZIO (ed.), Taranto, Istituto per la storia e l'archeologia della Magna Grecia, 2006, pp. 287-362: 361.

41. Cf. J. MANSFELD, Parmenides from Right to Left, *Études platoniciennes*, 12, 2015, mis en ligne le 15 février 2016; page visited on September 9th, 2021.

endless (οὐνεκεν οὐκ ἀτελεύτητον τὸ ἐὼν θέμις εἶναι; B8, 32), Dike (B8, 14-15), Ananke (B8, 26, 31) and Moira (B8, 36-38) hold τὸ εὼν within «fettters», «limits» and «bonds» so that nothing else either is or will be besides it.

Bollack is the only commentator among those I have dealt with, who translates the line B8, 32 without considering the noun *thémis* an abstract concept⁴². I agree with him that Thémis, in the poem, «est la loi d'une fondation primaire ou 'originelle'»⁴³. In almost all editions of Parmenides' poem, in B8, 32 the noun *thémis* (θέμις) is considered instead only as an abstract concept without any correlation to the goddess herself.

As Rudhardt *op. cit.*, pp. 15-43, points out, *thémis* is not just «une pure abstraction ni une simple figure allégorique» but also the name of a deity. The study of the common use of the noun *thémis* «éclaire la nature de la divinité». If *thémis* refers to the law that makes things be what they must be⁴⁴, the goddess Themis «n'est pas la loi mais la cause de la loi» (*ibid.*, p. 56). Greeks felt («ressentent») so deeply the divine character of the concept *thémis*, Rudhardt underlines, that adapted their behavior to it (*loc. cit.*).

The meanings of Themis and *thémis* are not the same but they are very closely related and in mythological talk we can imagine that they can be used more or less interchangeably. Actually, if the concept *thémis* refers to the way things must be, from this point of view everything can be referred to the goddess Themis.

If one supposes, in fact, as all scholars have done so far, that in fr. B8 Dike, Moira and Ananke are deities, and as such they are daughters or *alias* of Themis, why not also consider that in the same context the concept of *thémis* is linked to the goddess that in the proem (B1, 28) is told to guide Parmenides to the *theá* (θεά) who will reveal to him the truth of τὸ εὼν?

We also know from Aëtius' account that Parmenides called the *daímōn* with the eponyms Dike («Justice») and Ananke («Necessity») (cf. A37). I argue that these attributes may have been used by Parmenides as connotations and not as proper names of *daímōn*. Indeed, one identification would have excluded the other. But in Parmenides' poem there is a goddess that could bear more than one name and at the same time was connected both with Dike and Ananke: Themis, who was considered «one form with many names» (cf. AESCH., *Prom.* vv. 209-210⁴⁵).

There are scholars who argue that it is not possible to give any fixed astronomical location to the most central of the bands, so they consider

42. «par l'effet d'une loi de Thémis qui fixe que ceci, l'Étant, ne soit pas sans achèvement» (B8, 32; trans. by J. BOLLACK, *Parménide, de l'étant ou monde*, Lagrasse, Verdier, 2006, p. 166).

43. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

44. W. BURKERT, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1985, p. 273, writes: «what exists is *thémis*».

45. «Aeschylus' description of Ge-Themis as πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφή μία ['one form with many names'] (P.V. 210) is thoroughly Parmenidean both in expression and thought» (A. H. COXON, *op. cit.*, p. 281).

the *daímōn* ubiquitous, placed as an intermediary between Light and Night wherever they are in contact. It is what Bollack defines the hypothesis «de l'ubiquité»⁴⁶.

I do not reject *tout court* this interpretation. If we posit that Parmenides' *daímōn* is Themis, in fact, we could even explain how she could mythologically be settled in an individuated location as «the most central» of the *stephánai* and, at the same time, she could be in everything as its *thémis*. The *daímōn* governs the birth and the mingling of all things, as B12, 4 states, not as an external rule that transcends them, but precisely configuring their internal order, *sc.* their *thémis*, that makes every single thing be what it must be.

I have assumed that Parmenides' *daímōn* consists of the same *dunámeis* that make up everything. Better yet, it consists of the same *dunámeis* that make up everything whose mingling it generates and rules (cf. B12, 4). Cicero's controversial *testimonium* basically tells us the same thing, namely that the *daímōn* is not made of a «matter» different from the things it governs, but from the opposite perspective: everything is divine, Cicero argues, because the astronomical *stepháne* is a deity to which Parmenides assigns all things.

One of Aëtius' *testimonia* (cf. A53) seems to confirm that Parmenides linked the *dunámeis araiós* and *puknós* not just to the formation of heavenly bodies (cf. *supra* A43 and A43a) but even to the constitution of organic life: «for Parmenides: males grow in the north [*sc.* in the cold], for they have a greater share in what is dense; females in the south [*sc.* in the hot], because of the thinness» (A53 DK).

Coxon thinks that this account refers to «female [and male] animals», not only to human beings⁴⁷. Mansfeld goes further and assumes that in B12 Parmenides «used the differences between the sexes, sexual congress, and the ensuing generation of offspring metaphorically to describe the mixture of the elements and the formation of [cosmological] compounds»⁴⁸.

While Aristotle (*Met.*, 984b and 986b-987a) and Plutarch (*Adv. Col.* 13 1114B-C) do not provide any account of a deity in Parmenides' cosmology and just refer to two principles that I can consider analogous to Parmenides' *dunámeis*⁴⁹, Simplicius, describes the *daímōn* besides the

46. J. BOLLACK, *Parménide, de l'étant ou monde, op. cit.*, p. 39 (see *ibid.*, pp. 37-42).

47. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

48. *Ibid.* See also G. JOURNÉE, Les avatars d'une démons: à propos de Parménide fr. 28B13, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

49. Simplicius states that the verses B8,53-59 were followed by this brief statement in prose (whose authenticity is questionable by the way): «On the one side is the rare [ἀραιός], hot [θερμός], light [φάος], soft [μαλθακός] and the light [κοῦφος]; on the other, which is the dense [πυκνός] side, are named the cold [ψυχρός], darkness [ζόφος], hard [σκληρός], and heavy [βαρῶς]» (*In Phys.* 31.3-7; trans. by B. M. PERRY, *Simplicius as a Source for and an Interpreter of Parmenides*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1983).

principles *araiós* and *puknós*, as the unique common cause⁵⁰ of «the whole coming to be», including «incorporeal (ἄσῳματόων) things» (*in Phys.* 31.10-12) and even gods (*in Phys.* 39.12-19).

Is there a mythological «figure», among the divinities present in the poem, that could have inspired Parmenides to develop a cosmology where a goddess governs the generation of everything, from celestial bodies to the parts of animals, «incorporeal things» and gods, but is at the same time constituted of the same «matter» of the things whose generation she governs? If I come to Themis, I find that she is the goddess referred to by every *thémis* which in every single thing, even in the deities, makes it be as it has to be. Themis is «the substratum of each and every god»⁵¹ and also the «lex naturae»⁵².

Introducing fr. B13 in his *Symposium*, Plato states that Parmenides distinguished between a primordial goddess –Plato calls her *Génesis* (Γένεσις)⁵³– and other deities generated by her in a very particular way: the verb reported in B13, in fact, is *mētiomai* (μητιομαι): «contrive», «devise». So, Tarán has proposed that the creation of Parmenides' goddess is «a kind of 'ordering' of things»⁵⁴. Philodemus reports that a large number of secondary divinities were generated by the primordial deity and depended on it⁵⁵ and these generated gods had, «on the grounds of mortals' opinions, the same passions as human beings»⁵⁶. This account seems to confirm Cicero's *testimonium*, according to which Parmenides referred to the primordial deity «war, discord, greed, and the other things of this sort, which are destroyed by sickness, sleep, forgetting, or old age» (cf. A37).

In Plato's *Symposium*, the first of these generated deities was Eros, according to the character Phaedrus (178b2 ff.), or Ananke, according to another character in the dialogue, Agathon (195b-c). As Journée suggests, «dans la mesure où Nécessité n'est pas une divinité hésiodique, l'insistance pourrait en fait porter en réalité plutôt sur Parménide», so that «a un niveau général et seulement schématique, la Nécessité du discours d'Agathon vient avant Eros, de même que la Génération du discours de Phèdre le médite et, de ce fait, le precede»⁵⁷. I have already discussed the connections between Ananke and Themis, so I will not return to these, but

50. I am aware that the identification of the *daímon* with an «efficient cause» is part of Simplicius' «anti-Peripatetic stance» and it is a misunderstanding of Parmenides' meaning (cf. A. H. COXON, *The Fragments of Parmenides*, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 and 364).

51. J. E. HARRISON, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, *op. cit.*, p. 485.

52. cf. H. HEBELING, *Lexicon Homericum*, Lipsia, Teubner, 1885, s.v. θέμις.

53. Cf. A. H. COXON, *The Fragments of Parmenides*, *op. cit.*, p. 372, and G. JOURNÉE, Les avatars d'une démonsse: à propos de Parménide fr. 28B13, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10: 12 ff.

54. L. TARÁN, *Parmenides. A Text with Translation, Commentary, and Critical Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

55. C. VASSALLO, Parmenides and the «First God»: Doxographical Strategies in Philodemus' *On Piety, Hyperboreus*, 22.1, 2016, pp. 29-57: 49.

56. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 32.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

I wish to emphasize that, according to what Plato tells us through Agathon, Ananke could not even be the subject of B13, and therefore she does not correspond to the *daímōn* of B12, even though it is not certain that Plato refers to the latter when he introduces fragment 13.

On the other hand, by quoting B13, Plutarch writes that «Eros is the most ancient of the works of Aphrodite» (*Amat.* 756E). We will never know if the philosopher infers his identification from Plato's *Symposium*, but I can say that the context of Plato's citation of B13 does not warrant us to identify the subject of the Parmenidean fragment with Aphrodite⁵⁸. According to Pausanias, in Plato's dialogue, there are two Aphrodites, the «Heavenly [Ὀὐρανία]» and the «Common Aphrodite» (*Symp.* 180d-e). The latter is «far younger than the other Aphrodite» and the *eros* belonging to her is the one «that inferior people experience (181b)», so I will not deal with her here. Heavenly Aphrodite, instead, «does not descend from the female but only from the male» and «the Love who accompanies [her] ... is the love of boys», so that «those who are inspired by this love incline to the male» (181c). It is clear enough that Pausanias' Heavenly Aphrodite leads only male to male and, according to B12, 5-6, I believe one could not even imagine such a goddess in Parmenides' fragment.

On the other hand, I also find it hard to believe that Plutarch may have identified Parmenides' primordial goddess with the Common Aphrodite, so I agree with Journée *op. cit.*, p. 38, that «Plutarque, se référant à Aphrodite, se rattache à une autre tradition, qu'il ne devait pas trouver dans le texte même».

Let us analyse the last two verses of B12, which tell us that the *daímōn* leads «female to unite with male and male conversely with female» (trans. by Coxon). I have already pointed out, following Mansfeld and Coxon, that probably Parmenides uses this image metaphorically to describe the formation of all cosmological compounds. Furthermore, if I follow Aëtius' *testimonia* A53 and A43, I find that the female comes from the *araiós* texture, like the Sun, and the male, like the Moon, from the *puknós* texture.

Aristotle (cf. *Metaph.* 986b27-987a2) holds that Parmenides places the hot on the side of *tò eón* and the cold on the side of non-being, and Theophrastus (*Sens.* 1 et 3-4) reports that for Parmenides the better and the purer thoughts are produced when the hot prevails in the human physiology mixture. The *araiós* texture is hot and Aristotle once again informs us that for Parmenides women were hotter than men (cf. *P.A.* 2.2 648a29-31). Does this mean that Parmenides considered the female on the side of *tò eón* and the male on the side of non-being? Calogero already remarked that «contrariamente alla naturale opinione degli antichi ...

58. Simplicius also states that Parmenides «says that she [the *daímōn*] is also the cause of the gods, when he says, 'First of all gods she devised Eros (B 13)» (*in Phys.*, 30.17-19; trans. by PERRY, *op. cit.*) but the commentator does not identify her with any particular deity.

Parmenide ... mette il femminile dalla parte della positività e dell'essere respingendo il maschile in quella della negatività e del non essere»⁵⁹.

Coxon suggests that it could have been an implicit criticism of Pythagorean notions⁶⁰. The female was in fact catalogued by Pythagoreans on the «bad» side of the Table of Opposites (ARIST. *Metaph.* A5, 986a22–6). Both Riedweg⁶¹ and Hermann⁶² show that Pythagorean ethics with respect to women revolved around the relationship of total submission to their husbands.

In any case, I believe that in Parmenides' doctrine there could never have been such table of opposites as in Pythagorean thought, even if I cannot deny that maybe Parmenides linked the feminine to a kind of positivity⁶³, whatever this may have meant (this is not the place to discuss it) in his doctrine.

Instead, I wish to dwell on another issue that emerges from verses B12, 5-6. Scholars believe that these verses support the hypothesis that the *daímōn* governs the births and the mingling of all things indirectly, through Eros, who is the first god generated (cf. B13). But in Parmenides' poem there is already a deity who in Homeric mythology represented the primordial divine law that governs the unions between the two sexes, even before Eros, who in turn is not mentioned by Homer as a deity⁶⁴ –we refer to Themis once again. In fact, Kerenyi describes her as «la dea dell'ordine dei sessi, insito nella natura»⁶⁵, who «faceva sì che gli uomini e le donne si avvicinasero e si unissero in amore»⁶⁶.

There is something more to point out about this issue. If we look closely at the Homeric passages (*Il.* IX, 134, 276 and XIX, 177) in which Themis is quoted as the norm that rules sexual intercourse, we can see that the poet uses the formula: ἡ θέμις ἐστὶν [...] ἡ τ'ἀνδρῶν ἢ τε γυναικῶν («as is the norm between men and women»). Comparing this formula with B12, 5-6, one cannot fail to notice that Parmenides overturns the traditional order of thinking which brings the male first to the mind in an audience who knew Homer by heart. Also, the word *stugeros* (στυγερός; «hateful»), as De

59. G. CALOGERO, *Studi eleatici*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1977, pp. 57-58.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 343.

61. C. RIEDWEG, *Pitagora. Vita, dottrina e influenza*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2002, p. 64.

62. A. HERMANN, *To think like God. Pythagoras and Parmenides. The origin of Philosophy*, Las Vegas-Zurich-Athens, Parmenides Publishing, 2004, p. 46.

63. Cf. G. JOURNÉE, *Lumière et Nuit, Féminin et Masculin chez Parménide d'Elée: quelques remarques*, *Phronesis*, 57, 2012, pp. 289-318: 308-310; and R. CHERUBIN, *Sex, Gender, and Class in the Poem of Parmenides: Difference without Dualism*, *American Journal of Philology*, 140.1, 2019, pp. 29-66: 42-43.

64. Cf. A. FERRARI, *Dizionario di mitologia greca e latina*, Torino, UTET, 2002, entry Eros, p. 299.

65. K. KERENYI, *Gli dei e gli eroi della Grecia*, Milano, Il Saggiatore, 2009, p. 67.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Santillana points out, «applied to birth [cf. v. 4] strikes one as the woman's point of view»⁶⁷.

Could Parmenides' verses 5-6 be an *imitatio cum variatione* of the Homeric formula to recall precisely Themis in the mind of his audience, but in a new order of thinking? I cannot say it for sure, but I argue that this assonance (with inverted terms) might be another clue for our hypothesis that Themis could be the mythological identity of the *δαίμων* we are investigating.

There is yet another attribute I need to discuss. According to Aëtius' account (cf. A37), Parmenides indicates the *daímōn* also as *klēroûchos* (κληροῦχος⁶⁸; «holder of the lots»). In Plato's myth of Er, the Moirai distribute the *klēroi* (κληροί; «lots»), that is future lives, to humans who return to the ecumene. Therefore, the attribute *klēroûchos* can also be referred to their mother Ananke because, as Proclus tells us about that myth, the Moirai represent the divinities who divided among themselves the providence of the mother Ananke who, in turn, is once again Themis, according to Proclus.

Moreover, I can add that in Aeschylus' *Suppliants* Themis is related directly to the concept of *klēroi*: the formula *Thémis Diòs klaríou* (Θέμις Διὸς κλαρίου; v. 360), which I translate as «the Themis of Zeus distributing by lot», means something like «the divine rule of distributing by lot». There are no overwhelming reasons, I believe, not to consider that *klēroûchos* could be yet another attribute for Themis.

In conclusion, although I am aware that it can only be provisional. We have learned about Parmenides' *daímōn* that: 1) it probably coincides with the most central of the mixed astronomical bands of Parmenides' universe, which may be the Milky Way; 2) it «steers all things»; 3) it is called Dike and Ananke; 4) it consists of the same *dunámeis* that make up everything whose mingling it generates and rules; 5) it leads the female to mingle with the male and vice versa; and 6) it is called *klēroûchos*.

While investigating the attributes of the *daímōn*, with regard to Themis I found that: 1) she could be mythologically connected with the Milky Way; 2) she presides over destiny and steers the order of celestial phenomena; 3) she is the mother of Dike and is called Ananke in Plato's myth of Er (and both Dike and Ananke are subordinated to her in Parmenides' fr. B8); 4) she is in everything as its *thémis*; 5) she makes men and women come together and unite in love; and 6) she is the *Thémis Diòs klaríou*.

Although one cannot come to a conclusive answer to the question I posit with this paper, I argue there are quite a few analogies that could lead us to hypothesize that the *daímōn* introduced by Parmenides in fragment 12 could be Themis, the goddess that I find twice in Parmenides'

67. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

68. We maintain, as the LM edition, the original *lectio* of the *mss.*

extant fragments: in the proem (B1, 28), paired with Dike as a guide for Parmenides to the *theá* who will reveal to him the truth of *tò eón*, and in the part of the poem called *alétheia* (B8, 32), echoed as the divine personification of the *thémis* of *tò eón* itself. If I am correct, it might be worth investigating the connections that could emerge between the parts into which Parmenides' poem has been conventionally divided, assuming that Themis could be also present in the last part of the poem, the so-called *dóxa*, as the *daimōn* of B12.

Translation of Parmenides' quoted fragments and *testimonia*

28 B12 DK = 19 D14 LM

[*Trans.* «For the narrower ones were filled with unmixed fire,

The next ones with night, and afterward [or: among these] there rushes a portion of flame.

And in the middle of these, the divinity who steers all things.

For she *governs*⁶⁹ the hateful birth and mingling of all things,

Leading the female to mingle with the male and again, in the opposite direction,

The male with the female».]

28 B13 DK = 19 D16 LM

πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων ...

[*Trans.* «She devised Eros as the very first of all the gods»]

28 A37 DK = 19 D15a + D18 + D15b + D17 + R59 LM

Αἴτ. II 7, 1 (D. 335; vgl. 28 B 12) Π. στεφάνας εἶναι περιπεπλεγμένας, ἐπαλλήλους, τὴν μὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἀραιοῦ, τὴν δὲ ἐκ τοῦ πυκνοῦ· μικτὰς δὲ ἄλλας ἐκ φωτὸς καὶ σκότους μεταξὺ τούτων. καὶ τὸ περιέχον δὲ πάσας <τείχους> δίκην στερεὸν ὑπάρχειν, ὅφ' ὧι πυρώδης στεφάνη, καὶ τὸ μεσαιτάτον πασῶν στερεόν, περὶ δὲ πάλιν πυρώδης [sc. στεφάνη]. τῶν δὲ συμμιγῶν τὴν μεσαιτάτην ἀπάσαις <ἀρχήν> τε καὶ <αἰτίαν> κινήσεως καὶ γενέσεως ὑπάρχειν, ἦντινα καὶ δαίμονα κυβερνήτιν [vgl. B 12, 3] καὶ κληιδούχον [B 1, 14] ἐπονομάζει Δίκην τε καὶ Ἀνάγκην [B 8, 30; 10, 6]. καὶ τῆς μὲν γῆς ἀπόκρισιν εἶναι τὸν ἀέρα διὰ τὴν βιαιοτέραν αὐτῆς ἑξαμισθέντα πίλησιν, τοῦ δὲ πυρὸς ἀναπνοὴν τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὸν γαλαξίαν [vgl. B 11, 2] κύκλον. συμμιγῆ δ' ἐξ ἀμφοῖν εἶναι τὴν σελήνην, τοῦ τ' ἀέρος καὶ τοῦ πυρὸς. περιστάντος δ' ἀνωτάτω πάντων τοῦ αἰθέρος ὅπ' αὐτῶι τὸ πυρῶδες ὑποταγῆναι τοῦθ' ὅπερ κεκλήκαμεν οὐρανόν, ὅφ' ὧι ἤδη τὰ περιγίγεια. Cic. *de nat. deor.* I 11, 28 nam P. quidem commenticium quiddam: coronae simile efficit (στεφάνην appellat), continentem ardorum <et> lucis orbem qui cingit caelum, quem appellat deum; in quo neque

69. For the translation of the verb ἄρχω I prefer to follow Coxon («to govern») rather than LM («to begin»), because I think it is closer to the sense that I believe Parmenides wanted to give to the action of the *daimōn*.

figuram divinam neque sensum quisquam suspicari potest. multaue eiusdem <modi> monstra: quippe qui <Bellum,> qui <Discordiam,> qui <Cupiditatem> [B 13] ceteraque generis eiusdem ad deum revocat, quae vel morbo vel somno vel oblivione vel vetustate delentur; eademque de sideribus, quae reprehensa in alio iam in hoc omittantur.

[*Trans.* (Aët. 2.7.1) «Parmenides: there are wreaths intertwined with one another, the one made out of the thin [*sc.* element], the other out of the dense one; and others, mixed out of light and darkness, are between these. What surrounds them all like a rampart is solid, under this is a fiery [*scil.* wreath]; and this is also the case of the most central point of them all, around which once again there is a fiery [*sc.* wreath]. The most central of the mixed [*sc.* wreaths] is for all of them <cause?> of all movement and generation, which he also calls 'the divinity who steers' and 'the portion holder', 'justice' and 'necessity'». (D15a)

«The air has separated out from the earth; it has evaporated because of the very violent pressure exerted upon it, while the sun and the Milky Way are an exhalation of fire. The moon is a mixture of both of them, of air and of fire. The aether occupies in a circle the highest position of all; below it is arranged the fiery [*sc.* region], which is what we call the sky; and under this finally are located the [*sc.* regions] that surround the earth». (D18)

[Cic. *de nat. deor.* I 11, 28) «For Parmenides (*sc.* produces) a fiction: something similar to a wreath (he calls it *stephanê*), a continuous circle of the flames of [or: of the heat of the] light that encircle; he calls this god [...] but in this, no one could suspect either a divine shape or sensation. And he has many monsters too, for he assigns to a god war, discord, greed, and the other things of this sort, which are destroyed by sickness, sleep, forgetting, or old age; and the same for the stars ...» (D15b + D17 + R59)

28 A40a DK = 19 D23 LM

Π. πρῶτον μὲν τάττει τὸν Ἑῶϊον, τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ νομιζόμενον ὑπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἑσπερον, ἐν τῷ αἰθέρι· μεθ' ὃν τὸν ἥλιον, ὑφ' ᾧ τοὺς ἐν τῷ πυρῶδει ἀστέρας, ὅπερ <οὐρανόν> καλεῖ [cf. B10, 5]

[*Trans.* «Parmenides puts in first place the morning star, which he considers to be the same as the evening star, in the aether; after this the sun, and under this latter the heavenly bodies

of the fiery [*sc.* region], which he calls 'sky'»]

28 A43 DK = 19 D25 LM

Π. τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην ἐκ τοῦ γαλαξίου κύκλου ἀποκριθῆναι, τὸν μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀραιότερου μίγματος ὃ δὴ θερμόν, τὴν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ πυκνοτέρου ὅπερ ψυχρόν

[*Trans.* «For Parmenides: The sun and the moon were separated out from the Milky Way, the former from the thinner mixture, which is hot, the latter from the denser one, which is cold»]

28 A43a DK = 19 D24 LM

Π. τὸ τοῦ πυκνοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀραιοῦ μίγμα γαλακτοειδὲς ἀποτελέσαι χροῶμα

[*Trans.* «For Parmenides: the mixture of the dense and the thin produces the milky color (*sc.* of the Milky Way)»]

28 A53 DK = 19 D42 LM

Π. [...] τὰ μὲν πρὸς ταῖς ἄρκτοις ἄρρενα βλαστῆσαι (τοῦ γὰρ πυκνοῦ μετέχειν πλείονος), τὰ δὲ πρὸς ταῖς μεσημβρίαις θήγεια παρὰ τὴν ἀραιότητα.

[*Trans.* «For Parmenides: males grow in the north (*sc.* in the cold), for they have a greater share in what is dense; females in the south (*sc.* in the hot), because of the thinness»].

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ΘΑ ΜΠΟΡΟΥΣΕ Η ΘΕΜΙΣ ΝΑ ΕΙΝΑΙ Η ΘΕΟΤΗΤΑ ΠΟΥ «ΚΥΒΕΡΝΑ» ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΡΜΕΝΙΔΗ;

Περίληψη

Σκοπός τῆς παρούσας μελέτης εἶναι ἡ διερεύνηση τῆς ταυτότητας τοῦ *δαίμονος* ποῦ ἐμφανίζεται στὸ ποίημα τοῦ Παρμενίδη [B12, 3 DK] ὡς ἡ θεότητα ποῦ «κυβερνᾷ τὰ πάντα». Ἡ σημασία τῆς θεότητας αὐτῆς, μολονότι δὲν λαμβάνεται σοβαρὰ ὑπόψη ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρχαία δοξογραφία, ἀποτελεῖ ἀντικείμενο ἐκτενοῦς ἔρευνας τῆς τελευταῖες δεκαετίες σὲ μιὰ προσπάθεια προσδιορισμοῦ τοῦ ρόλου τῆς. Θεωρῶ ὅτι αὐτὸς ὁ *δαίμων* μπορεῖ νὰ διαδραματίζει σημαντικὸ ρόλο στὴ σύνδεση τοῦ θεολογικοῦ, τοῦ ὄντολογικοῦ καὶ τοῦ κοσμολογικοῦ ἐπιπέδου στὸ ποίημα τοῦ Παρμενίδη. Σκοπός μου εἶναι νὰ προσφέρω ἀρκετὰ ἐπιχειρήματα πρὸς ἐπίρρωση τῆς ὑπόθεσης ὅτι ὁ *δαίμων* εἶναι ἡ Θέμις, δηλαδή ἡ ἴδια θεὰ ἡ ὅποια στὸ ποίημα [B1, 28] ὀδηγεῖ μαζί με τὴ Δίκη τὸν Παρμενίδη στὴ Θεὰ ποῦ θὰ τοῦ ἀποκαλύψει τὸ «ἔόν», καὶ ἡ ὅποια στὸ μέρος «ἀλήθεια» τοῦ ποιήματος [B8, 32] ἀποτελεῖ τὴ θεϊκὴ συνιστώσα τοῦ οὐσιαστικοῦ «θέμις» ποῦ χαρακτηρίζει τὸ «ἔόν». Τέλος, ἐξετάζω τὰ διαφορετικὰ κατηγορήματα τοῦ *δαίμονος* ποῦ μποροῦμε νὰ ἀνιχνεύσουμε στὸν Παρμενίδη καὶ τὰ συγκρίνω με ἐκεῖνα ποῦ ἀποδίδονται στὴ θεὰ Θέμιδα ἀπὸ πλευρᾶς μυθολογικῆς παράδοσης.

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