


Article

# Parmenides as a Thinker of Fate

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**Abstract:** Although some ancient sources relate Parmenides to the religious doctrine of fate, this concept is not usually prominent in the scholarly presentation of the Eleatic thinker. Here, we offer a tentative interpretation of the notion of necessity in Parmenides' poem, as a peculiar philosophical understanding of the presence of fate in reality. Necessity, divinised by Parmenides, implies that all things are bound together by the chains of fate. Therefore, his philosophical proposal consists in understanding this unity of reality originated by the connexion of fatal necessity. However, this presence of fate in all things is not bad news, but also means that everything is connected by Love.

**Keywords:** fate; necessity; myth; determinism; divinity; Greek mythology; Greek religion; pre-socratic philosophy

## 1. Introduction

As is well known, Parmenides' poem begins with a mythological scene in which the philosopher has a vision in which an unnamed goddess teaches him how to know the truth hidden from mortals. Such an introduction leads the renowned classicist Werner Jaeger (1947, p. 96) to understand Parmenides as a religious thinker and to give us the following description of the Eleatic thinker:

His mysterious vision in the realm of light is a genuine religious experience: when the weak human eye turns towards the hidden truth, life itself becomes transfigured. This is a kind of experience that has no place in the religion of the official cults. Its prototype is rather to be sought in the devotions we find in the mysteries and initiation ceremonies; [...] we encounter a highly individual inner experience of the Divine, combined with the fervour of a devotee who feels himself charged with proclaiming the truths of his own personal revelation and who seeks to establish a community of the faithful among his converts.

Undeniably, the strongly religious tone of Parmenides' poem cannot be ignored (Guthrie 1965, p. 34). Within this context, in this article, I intend to propose a key interpretation of its main philosophical statements as a defence of one of the main theses of the traditional Greek religious worldview, namely, that all things are connected by fate. Although fate takes on a central philosophical meaning after Plato and Aristotle, the importance of that concept, expressed by various terms, cannot be ignored in Greek religion and literature before and contemporary to Parmenides (Magris 2008, pp. 17–138).

Although it is not a central theme in the scholarship on Parmenides, it is not unreasonable to see Parmenides as a thinker of fate. Among the ancient sources, we can cite Aetius, who, despite expressing himself probably under the influence of Hellenistic philosophy, attributes to him a doctrine of fate: he attributes to Parmenides the claim that “everything happens according to necessity (πάντα κατ’ ἀνάγκην); and fate (εἰμαρμένην), justice, providence, and the creator of the world are identical.”<sup>1</sup> It is easy to recognise in this statement a certain anachronism (Mansfeld 2015, §9), but, since the importance of “necessity” (ἀνάγκη) within Parmenides' thought cannot be dismissed, the existence of a very notion of “fate” in his poem has received particular attention from Mourelatos (2008, pp. 25–29



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and 160–62) and Magris (2008, pp. 189–200), who goes so far as to affirm that “the Greek philosophical problematic of fate receives from Parmenides a fundamental contribution” (Magris 2008, p. 199).

In this paper, when I speak of “fate” (εἰμαρμένη or Μοῖρα), I mainly refer to the popular notion in Greek mythical thought (Greene 1944). Fate serves Homer to explain how events are determined by a kind of force that not even the gods can control. In tragedy, the heroes cannot escape their fate either, so this superhuman power prevents them from directing their lives with freedom. I do not intend to refer to a strong Stoic understanding of fate as a connection of causes. However, I propose that the notion of “necessity” held by Parmenides (which is not identical to the popular notion of ἀνάγκη) allows him to provide a kind of philosophical explanation of the popular notion of fate. Or perhaps, the reality is rather the opposite: the popular and mythical idea of fate and necessity permeate his philosophy and underlie his assertions about being. In any case, his philosophical construction prevails and, therefore, the notion of fate that I will attribute to Parmenides has not primarily an anthropological significance, as it seems to have in popular culture, but extends to all things (Robbiano 2006, p. 209) and is linked to his close association between the real, the being, and the recognition of reality by νόος.

In the following pages, I will first present the central elements of the “discovery” that Parmenides wants to communicate to us in his poem. Second, I will describe Parmenides’ conception of cosmic and metaphysical necessity understood as a theory of fate. Third, I will suggest that the thesis of fate allows Parmenides to grasp the unity of reality and to conceive his own philosophy as an exact interpretation of being.

## 2. The Discovery of Parmenides

The goddess in Parmenides’ poem exhorts us to “look” at the being through “persuasion” and discursive reasoning.<sup>2</sup> Although his insistence on argumentation is new, after all, our philosopher is still fully embedded in the cultural framework in which he was born, and it would not help us to consider him as such an innovative figure that we could not relate him to other ideas of his time. To understand his situation of continuity and discontinuity in the tradition of ancient Greek ideas, we can try to compare the relationship between Parmenides and Hesiod with that between Hesiod and Homer, from the philosophical point of view.<sup>3</sup> Hesiod completes the Homeric narrative in order to be etiologically interested in the origins, not only of a particular city or people, but even of the cosmos and humanity as a whole, despite the fact that he does not yet abandon the form of the mythical tale. Parmenides, who neither ceases to make use of myth nor renounces the hexameter, also provides us with an overall explanation of reality.<sup>4</sup> The main speech of the goddess in Parmenides’ poem is not, however, a myth, but a reasoning, which gives the listener the skill required to use his own natural means to attain a knowledge that is accessible to man, even though mortals are in fact ignorant of it. Moreover, Parmenides’ interests are not the same as Hesiod’s, because the problem of origins is postponed in order to give priority to the question of knowledge. His main motivation is to discover the right way to know the truth, discarding deceptive ways (O’Brien 2012, pp. 140–41). Finally, the method as such leads Parmenides to provide us also with a worldview to which I will refer in a moment.

Despite these differences between the thinker of Elea and mythological narrative, it would be a mistake to attach little importance to the fact that the poem is presented as a revelation, a manifestation of truth granted by a goddess to the mortal who speaks in the first person. In this respect, the tone of his work resembles that of other Presocratics, such as Heraclitus (Neuman Lorenzini and Torrijos Castrillejo 2023, p. 235). It is noteworthy that Parmenides conveys this revelation to us with the intention of communicating his own “discovery of a situation,” that is, a state of affairs, even though this “situation” encompasses the totality of reality.<sup>5</sup> The philosopher reminds us of the epic heroes who, awakening from their previous deception, take charge of what is happening in a given situation. As is well known, on many occasions, this notice takes the form of a tragic “recognition” (ἀναγνώρισις) (MacFarlane 2000). Recovering from the dulling of the

senses suffered by most mortals, Parmenides has come to learn of a “state of things”, about which it is easy to be deceived, despite its crucial significance for the lives of mortals. He therefore communicates it to us with the solemnity that the matter deserves, worthy of a contemporary of Aeschylus, which makes him be described by Plato as “at once venerable and terrible.”<sup>6</sup>

The first readers of Parmenides among the so-called Presocratics interpreted the poem as a treatise on cosmology (Barnes 1982, pp. 180–230; Palmer 2009, pp. 189–224), understanding in a physical way our philosopher’s statements about τὸ ἔόν (“what is”). The clearest example of this early interpretation is Melissus and, in a certain way, the so-called “pluralists” (Torrijos-Castrillejo 2014, p. 38). This reading conditioned the subsequent reception. Among contemporary interpreters, especially following a well-known work by Calogero (1977), the thesis that Parmenides did not want to use for any definite subject the verb to be, but deliberately omitted the enunciation of a subject, has enjoyed great success. Thus, as Néstor-Luis Cordero explains, “Parmenides is interested in the content of the verb, in the fact of being, and affirms that this fact imposes itself as an unquestionable and unavoidable reality from the moment that... one is.”<sup>7</sup>

The affirmation of being cannot be denied. The negation of being cannot be affirmed. Their opposites are impossible. Therefore, being and non-being are necessary. Here, we have a kind of inevitability that we have to link with the traditional concept of Necessity (Ἀνάγκη). However, with Parmenides, a new understanding of necessity appears. It is not, strictly speaking, a mythical force that opposes the energies of mortals, but is just as invincible as traditional Moira is invincible. It is a necessity of a *logical* kind (Cordero 2004, p. 173), but Parmenides’ discovery is that such a necessity dominates reality with the same inflexibility as a force.<sup>8</sup>

The enumeration of the properties of ἔόν<sup>9</sup> may lead us to hypostasise it, considering it as a certain reality distinct from some alleged appearances.<sup>10</sup> However, it is not necessary that Parmenides intended to deny the information provided by the senses (Curd 2004, pp. 111–26). Rather, his message seeks to convince us of the factuality of being. According to him, there is no middle ground between a thing being and not being, whether we understand “being” in a predicative or existential sense. Thus, Parmenides would exclude movement not because he denies the successive stages through which—as the senses show us—reality “passes,” but because he affirms that during each of these stages, it can only be affirmed one statement (a “being”) about the thing in movement. For example, the apple does not stop its change from “being” green to “being” red, but the statement “the apple *is* green” is incompatible with “the apple *is* red” and, in fact, this is true both when the former is true and when the latter is true. Each of the two stages (for Parmenides, they would be “beings”) is in a way absolute, for both the dilemma between “being red” or “not being red” can be posed, and for both only one possibility coincides with the truth. It would be misleading to interpret this thesis in the light of later philosophies, for example, to think that the Eleatic thinker denies the distinction between “substance and accidents” or, if one prefers, “subject and attributes.” This distinction is not denied but simply ignored or neglected, as it will also be the case among other authors, even after him (Torrijos-Castrillejo 2014, pp. 60–61).

### 3. Fatal Necessity

From what we have seen, it is clear that the core of Parmenides’ conception of being is its necessity. However, we should not immediately see in it a strict technical term, and his philosophy as a rigorous modal thought. Rather, we must understand Parmenides within his archaic mentality and see in it primarily an aspect of his worldview. This is the only way to understand the prominence of the goddess Necessity (Ἀνάγκη), to whom he repeatedly refers; similarly, both the Moira (Μοῖρα) and the goddess Justice (Δίκη) are responsible for the “enchainment” of being.<sup>11</sup> When talking of these divinities, Parmenides even employs the same vocabulary used for Necessity. These divine figures are to be identified as if they were one and the same (Drozdek 2007, p. 50; Mourelatos 2008, pp. 25–26; Guthrie 1965,

p. 72).<sup>12</sup> This is an epic way of expressing the same thing that is said in perhaps a more formal way through other expressions of “necessity.”<sup>13</sup> Underlying these personifications is a probable Orphic influence (Bernabé 2004, pp. 40 and 55–56; Guthrie 1965, p. 35).

Throughout the whole poem, there is always the same message: that all things are necessary, even those things that seem to us to have “come into being” or to be doomed to “perish.” The events that would seem to us to be “contingent” are also necessary: everything is determined in an unavoidable way. In other words, Parmenides’ main thesis concerning being is a fatalism and can only appear to be a denial of appearances if we accept the Aristotelian presuppositions of the distinction between substances and accidents, and between contingency and necessity. Parmenides, on the contrary, dispenses with these distinctions. If every event is inevitable, such a “necessity” cannot properly have the meaning that it would have in an Aristotelian paradigm. Parmenides’ necessity only coincides with the “necessity of the present” that Aristotle concedes in *De interpr.*, 19a23–24 (a text that I shall refer to shortly). However, the idea of necessity expressed in the poem does not seem to incorporate a notion of causality or mutability such as that involved in Aristotle’s different senses of necessity in *Metaph.* Δ, 5.

As can be seen, we are attributing to Parmenides a fatalism different from the Stoic one, because he does not sustain it by virtue of the intertwining of causes but by the facticity of being. The notion of cause also seems to be neglected by him in this respect. He states that “there are no two ways of being: either one is or one is not. There are no degrees of being. That is why Parmenides says that ‘what is’ is unique and complete (fragment 8.6).”<sup>14</sup> A similar interpretation of the remaining properties of being according to Parmenides could be proposed. Being “is neither generated nor corrupted,” and it is neither born nor perishes<sup>15</sup> because “what is” simply is, and all things are in the same way (DK 28 B 8, 29; LM 19 D 8, 34), i.e., in a necessary way.

It can be affirmed that everything is ‘one’ because of the complete homogeneity of being: each thing is comparable with any other thing since everything partakes a *similar necessity* (DK 28 B 8, 22; LM 19 D 8, 27). For this very reason, all multiplication of being is excluded, not because ‘being red’ and ‘being yellow’ are the same, but because, when both ‘beings’ are given, they are given in exactly the same way, namely, in such a way that they are endowed only with certain characteristics and lack others: the red is only red; it is not and cannot be yellow, and the yellow disposes of its yellowness in a similar way. Analogously, the reference to a ‘sphere’ (DK 28 B 8, 43; LM 19 D 8, 48) can be understood metaphorically;<sup>16</sup> also, the ‘roundness of truth’ appealed to at the beginning of the poem could be so understood.<sup>17</sup>

After the foregoing reflection, it seems plausible to think that Aristotle was ‘correcting’ Parmenides’ main thesis when he wrote “it is necessary (ἀνάγκη) that what is, while it is, is, and that what is not, while it is not, is not.”<sup>18</sup> Of course, Aristotle introduces a temporal clause (ἕταν), which does not appear in Parmenides’ text and which the Eleatic thinker would reject, since he denies the difference between past, present, and future.<sup>19</sup> However, I believe that, in order to understand the meaning of Parmenides’ words, the discussion that Aristotle is holding there with the Megarics,<sup>20</sup> who considered themselves Parmenides’ disciples (Mársico 2013, vol. 1, §§ 83–84; Döring 1972, vol. 2, §§ 26A and 27–28), is relevant. While Aristotle is there attempting a modal articulation of being, Parmenides recognises only one modality for being—as we have seen—and that is necessity. This is not merely implicit in his words, but he restates it incessantly, also by recourse to the continuity, unity, homogeneity, and immutability of being. If we think of being by trying to reduce it to our mortal understanding, we shall see it as past, present, and future, but Parmenides’ discovery is the actuality of all being (οὐκ ἀτελεῦτητον<sup>21</sup>). He does not mean an actuality in *space* of all being, but the irrefragable actuality of all moments of *time*, all the events mistakenly conceived as successive by most mortals. This is how the following fragment could be understood:

See these things, which, remote though they are, are firmly present to thought.

For you will not cut off what is from cohering with what is,

Whether it is dispersed completely everywhere throughout the world  
Or is collected together.<sup>22</sup>

Thought makes it possible to discover the actuality of all being, both past, present and future. This aspect could be noticed in Gallop's (1984) version, since he avoids translating κόσμον as 'world' and instead writes, literally, 'order.' In this way, he eludes a merely local understanding of this fragment (which, however, I do not intend to exclude). Parmenides is also ruling out any temporal distension. Thus, whereas Aristotle would say that, once Socrates drank the hemlock, it was necessary to affirm that Socrates 'is' a hemlock-drinker, Parmenides' fatalistic thesis declares, on the contrary, that Socrates always 'was'—or, rather, 'is'—a hemlock-drinker. Hemlock-drinking and Socrates are bound together by the unshakable chains of Justice, and no one could or will ever separate them.

As a confirmation of this, we can mention the defence upheld by Marcinkowska-Rosó's volume in favour of the emendation of the above quoted text, proposed by Coxon (2009, p. 75). According to this reading, Parmenides would have even more expressly denied the existence of time in order to affirm the perennial actuality of eternity. With a couple of minor corrections, the author proposes the following translation:

[. . .] οὐδ' οἱ χρόνος ἐστίν, ἢ ἔσται/ἄλλο πάρεξ τοῦ ἐόντος, ἐπεὶ τό γε Μοῖρ' ἐπέδησεν/οὐλον ἀκίνητόν τ' ἔμεναι· τῶι πάντ' ὀνόμαστι. . .

Und für dies gibt es keine Zeit, oder es wird/etwas anderes außer dem Seienden geben, da eben dies Moira gebunden hat, ganz und unbeweglich zu sein. Damit werden alle [Dinge] bezeichnet. . . (Marcinkowska-Rosó 2010, p. 141)

And for this there is no time, or there will be/anything other than 'what is,' since Moira has bound even this, so that it is a whole and something immovable. By this, all [things] are named. . .<sup>23</sup>

Thus, Parmenides would have fixed, with the chains of the Moira, all past, present, and future events in a completely actualised eternity, considering all things necessary and inevitable, for, according to him, "there is no time."<sup>24</sup> Here, to deny motion means simply to declare that every event is fixed in advance. Though mortal minds perceive them little by little and successively, the gods and the well-instructed minds are able to see them in their perennial actuality.

#### 4. Understanding the Unity of All Things

In short, to conclude our reflection, we could affirm that Parmenides is giving a noetic approach to his philosophy, putting in close proximity his doctrine on being and his theory of knowledge. Within this framework, he conceives νόος ("intellect") as the factor that enables man to discover the unity of reality. Shortly afterwards, his successors, such as Anaxagoras and Diogenes of Apollonia, saw intellect as a feature for establishing the distinction between one thing and another. In doing so, they were inspired by the 'critical' (κρίσις) function of the intellect recognised by Parmenides, who already gave it the task of discerning between "is" and "is not" (DK 28 B 8, 15–16; LM 19 D 8, 20–21). But, for him, the intellect can only take the side of being (DK 28 B 8, 34; LM 19 D 8, 39) and, therefore, it sees everything in unity, because it recognises that the interweaving between one thing and another is such that all of them, down to the last of the events that happen in time, are linked and constitute an inseparable unity. Hence, the extent of the intellect's sight enables it to embrace all things and prevents it from perceiving them as scattered, as they appear to the careless intellects of mortals (DK 28 B 4; LM 19 D 10). Just as an experienced physician, however thoroughly and separately he may have examined each member of an animate body, will never deny that they are all interwoven and sustain life, constituting a single organism; so neither will Parmenides dare to discriminate any of the events that happen in the world, because they are all actualised beforehand and constitute the homogeneous unity of being. One cannot rank some things above others: the interweaving of all things

makes each of them equally representative of being, for everything has the same degree of actuality.

Consequently, although Parmenides does not develop an essential differentiation between “intellective” objects and “sensible” objects, it is necessary to note a certain distinction.<sup>25</sup> The νόος grasps what the senses grasp but, unlike them, it is able to perceive everything together and at the same time,<sup>26</sup> not separately and successively, like they do.<sup>27</sup> In this way, he seems to point to a certain differentiation between the intelligible and the sensible: intellect does not know objects of a specific nature (“intelligible” objects), but it knows these things that are before the senses (“sensible” objects) do in a new way. The intellect recognises its unity.

Likewise, another important feature of the poem, emphasised by [Marcinkowska-Rosół \(2010, pp. 215–25\)](#), is its “protreptic” status. Parmenides notes that most men err in judging reality, but this error is not invincible but requires particular attention and an application of the human psychic faculties available to any subject. He exhorts us, therefore, to a careful analysis of things which will enable us to discover the situation which he himself declares. Intellectual knowledge is possible for every human being, but it requires effort and carefulness. Therefore, the author believes that his exhortation is necessary.

Finally, although the “tragic” recognition of the real situation of things may be understood as “bad news”—as happened in the case of Oedipus, who recognised himself as doubly contaminated by patricide and incest—we must emphasise that Parmenides insists that the discovery of truth is to be attributed to a “propitious Fate,” (Μοῖρα: DK 28 B 1, 26; LM 19 D 4, 26). In that sense, such a discovery carries with it a genuine fascination for the good, marked by a distinctly religious character ([García-Lorente 2023](#)). A fortiori, this intertwining of things need not be seen as a distressing fate ([Oriol Salgado 2023, p. 521](#)). Let us consider that the goddess Necessity, which we have understood as a facet of Moira and Justice, also seems to deserve the name of Eros-Aphrodite, the divinity that directs all things.<sup>28</sup> The discovery of truth is thus considered beneficial for Parmenides. This truth constitutes good news, since the fact that “[a]ll things are chained together, entwined,” means—to use Nietzsche’s words—that they are “in love” ([Nietzsche 2005, p. 283](#)).<sup>29</sup> In this sense, I agree with [West \(2013, p. 17\)](#) when he says that “for Parmenides it is love that makes the world go round.”

In speaking here of Eros-Aphrodite, I do not want to bring in any new notions that we have not seen so far. Eros, like Moira or Necessity, are divine names to designate the situation of reality as a whole. Things and events cannot be different from the way they are. In that sense, they are all united. They are all in the same situation. It is in this somewhat abstract sense that one can speak of unity. Such a unity could be recognised as the work of Eros. It is clear that it is a unitive force in the fragments of Parmenides; this will become even clearer in a philosophy as marked by him as that of Empedocles, who will refer to Aphrodite to speak of Love ([Palmer 2009, pp. 324–27](#); [Warren 2007, p. 138](#)). The unity of Eros seems to be, for Parmenides, a “good Moira,” for it is good for things to be inextricably linked with being in the precise way they are.

## 5. Conclusions

This article intended to propose some suggestions to be developed in the study of Parmenides’ thought in future research. It seems that the great discovery of his poem is an idea of necessity of being and non-being, which provides a connection between all things. Everything, while it is, cannot be otherwise. This would mean a certain notion of fate insofar the beings cannot escape their very own existence, nature, and dispositions. They are “necessary,” since they cannot not be as they are. This can be interpreted as a view of reality intertwined by the bonds of fate, understood according to its traditional notion, as a certain impossibility for both gods and men to prevent things from being as they are. Now, this is not fate understood as a force, an efficient causality that subdues all things, or as the connection of efficient causes. It is simply the factual necessity of being what one is. Insofar this situation is the same for everything, there is a kind of unity in

the universe. Such a necessity entails the negation of time, so that all events, fixed from eternity, are part of an indestructible unity; in that sense, they are chained together. This situation of reality is expressed by Parmenides with theological names such as Moira or Necessity. The philosopher is able to grasp by his νόος the unity of all things as a fatal connection. However, these fatal bonds are perhaps called Eros and not just Moira, because this unity of things is good for them.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Παρμενίδης [...] πάντα κατ' ἀνάγκην· τὴν αὐτὴν δ' εἶναι εἰμαρμένην καὶ δίκην καὶ πρόνοιαν καὶ κοσμοποιόν (DK 28 A 32; LM 19 R 55a). In this paper I will use the abbreviation DK for Diels and Kranz (1951–1975) and LM for Laks and Most (2016); here I use LM's translation. There are other testimonies not collected by DK which attributes a doctrine of fate to Parmenides, such as, for instance, Plutarchus, *De animae procreatione in Timaeo*, 1026b; Theodoretus, *Graecarum affectionum curatio*, VI, 13 (LM 19 R 55b).
- <sup>2</sup> See DK 28 B 1, 29; 2, 4: LM 19 D 4, 29; 6, 4.
- <sup>3</sup> For an exploration of the composition of the Parmenides' poem in relation to its precedents in epic literature, see Robbiano (2006, pp. 35–60) and Tulli (2016).
- <sup>4</sup> For the interaction among reason and myth in Parmenides' thought see Morgan (2000, pp. 67–88).
- <sup>5</sup> My words are alluding to one of the meanings of νοεῖν in Homer: “[...] to realize or to understand a situation” (von Fritz 1943, p. 93). See also Lesher (1981, p. 15). It is obvious that the verb νοεῖν is very important in Parmenides' discourse.
- <sup>6</sup> Παρμενίδης δέ μοι φαίνεται, τὸ τοῦ Ὀμήρου, “αἰδοῖός τέ μοι” εἶναι ἄμα “δεινός τε” (Plato, *Theaet.*, 183e; Burnet 1900). See *Ilias*, III, 172; XVIII, 394; *Odyssey*, VIII, 22.
- <sup>7</sup> “Parménides se interesa por el contenido del verbo, por el hecho de ser, y afirma que este hecho se impone como una realidad indudable e insoslayable desde el momento en que... se es” (Cordero 2007, p. 271). See also Cordero (2004, pp. 64–69).
- <sup>8</sup> In this respect, the following words of Vlastos (1970, pp. 83–84) are illuminating: “When Parmenides speaks of *Dike-Ananke* holding Being fast in the bonds of the limit, his words echo Hesiod and Semonides, who speak of fate as a ‘bond of unbreakable fetters’; but his thought is far from theirs. In Hesiod and Semonides the source of the compulsion is external to the thing compelled. In Parmenides the compulsion is immanent. The first is a non-rational concept of *ananke*: the determining agency remains hidden from human reason. The second is so thoroughly rational that *ananke* merges with *dike*, and *dike* with logicophysical necessity: the order of nature is deducible from the intelligible properties of nature itself.”
- <sup>9</sup> See above all DK 28 B 8, 8-11.26-30.43-45; LM 19 D 8, 13-16.31-35.48-50.
- <sup>10</sup> Doxography has pointed out such a denial of appearances: see DK 28 A 25; LM 19 R 47; Plutarchus, *Adversus Colotem*, 1114c–f, etc.
- <sup>11</sup> Μοῖρα: DK 28 B 8, 37; LM 19 D 8, 42; Δίκη: DK 28 B 8, 14; LM 19 D 8, 19 (see also DK 28 B 1, 14.28; LM 19 D 14.28). Compare with Ἀνάγκη: DK 28 B 8, 30; B 10, 6; LM 19 D 8, 35; D 12, 6 (see also DK 28 B 8, 16; LM 19 D 8, 21).
- <sup>12</sup> The author of the Derveni Papyrus also indicates that different proper names of various divinities are but appellatives belonging to a single god: cf. LM 30, col. 21, 7. Robinson (2008, p. 493) suggests that Parmenides' Moira could be even identified with Zeus.
- <sup>13</sup> χρεώ (DK 28 B 1, 28; LM 19 D 4, 28), χρῆν (DK 28 B 1, 32; LM 19 D 4, 32), χρεών (DK 28 B 2, 5; B 8, 11.45; LM 19 D 6, 5; D 8, 16.50), χρῆ (DK 28 B 6, 1; LM 19 D 7, 1), χρέος (DK 28 B 8, 9; LM 19 D 8, 14).
- <sup>14</sup> “No hay dos maneras de ser: se es o no se es. No hay grados de ser. Por eso dice Parménides que lo que es es único y completo (fragmento 8.6)” (Cordero 2007, p. 283).
- <sup>15</sup> See DK 28 B 8, 5–6.21.27; LM 19 D 8, 10–11.26.32.
- <sup>16</sup> This interpretation was already proposed by Simplicius: see DK 28 A 20; LM 19 R 5b.
- <sup>17</sup> See DK 28 B 1, 29; LM 19 D 4, 29. In fact, LM discard DK's reading of the “roundness” (εὐκυκλέος) of truth and prefer to understand truth as “well-convincing” (εὐπειθέος), as Mourelatos (2008, pp. 154–58) had already proposed.

- 18 Τὸ μὲν οὖν εἶναι τὸ ὄν ὅταν ᾗ, καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ὅταν μὴ ᾗ, ἀνάγκη (De interpr., 19a23–24; [Minio-Paluello 1949](#)). My translation.
- 19 See DK 28 B 8, 5; LM 19 D 8, 10. For this reason, Parmenides' ἔόν has been characterized with eternity, ἀίδιον (DK 28 A 22–23; LM 19 R 29–30), although he does not use that term: see DK 28 A 30 (a testimony which does not appear in LM).
- 20 That in this passage Aristotle argues with the Megarics has been repeatedly proposed by critics ([Weidemann 2014](#), pp. 53–54). On the Eleatic background of Megaric philosophy, see [Mársico \(2012\)](#). The problems raised by [Cambiano \(1977\)](#) about the very existence of a Megaric school and its Eleatic filiation do not affect my argument, since what interests us here is the fact that the quoted passage of Aristotle (De interpr., 19a23–24) reveals some reflection on the thought of Parmenides. In any case, the modal question raised in it is certainly linked to the one expressed in *Metaph.* Θ, 3, 1046b29–32 with an unclear mention of certain “Megarics.”
- 21 DK 28 B 8, 32; LM 19 D 8, 37.
- 22 λεῦσσε δ' ὁμῶς ἀπεόντα νόῳ παρεόντα βεβαίως· οὐ γὰρ ἀποτμήξει τὸ ἔόν τοῦ ἔόντος ἔχθεσθαι/οὔτε σκιδνάμενον πάντη πάντως κατὰ κόσμον/οὔτε συνιστάμενον (DK 28 B 4; LM 19 D 10). LM's translation.
- 23 My English translation of Marcinkowska-Rosó's version. For the Greek text, see DK 28 B 8, 36–38; LM 19 D 8, 40–43.
- 24 This interpretation of time as a timeless present is also favoured by [Owen \(1993\)](#), [Rapp \(2007, p. 119\)](#) and [Conte \(2024, pp. 31 and 43\)](#). For a noteworthy critique of this view, see [O'Brien \(1980\)](#).
- 25 [Curd \(2011\)](#) has argued more vehemently than I'm going to do here for the discontinuity between sensation and νόος, but she believes that the proper object of νόος, unlike sensation, is Being. However, if Parmenides did not think that the senses do grasp Being (albeit only partially), then he would have affirmed that they do not inform us of anything; indeed, there would be no sensibility at all.
- 26 νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν (DK 28 B 8, 5; LM 19 D 8, 10).
- 27 See DK 28 B 4; LM 19 D 10.
- 28 See DK 28 B 12, 3; B 13; B 18, 1; LM 19 D 14b, 3; D 16; D 49, 1; R 56b.
- 29 “Alle Dinge sind verkettet, verfädelt, verliebt” ([Nietzsche 1988, p. 402](#)). Despite the characteristic ‘creativity’ of his understanding of the Presocratics in Nietzsche's youthful lectures, published under the title *Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen*, the fatalistic interpretation of Parmenides that I am giving does not appear there, although it is undoubtedly quite close to the personal philosophy of the German philosopher.

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