

GIOVANNI PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA ON ANAXAGORAS

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Abstract: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) focuses on Anaxagoras (ca. 500–428 BC) because he considers him as a precursor of the later Neoplatonic concept *all things exist in all things in their own mode*, which became the core of Pico’s metaphysics. Anaxagoras’s philosophy permits Pico to establish his doctrine that all things share a portion of God within them, in their own way. Pico rejects the fixed position of man in the ontological hierarchy. Man has the chance to become everything. Pico asserts that man contains all things in himself as their center, just like God contains all things as their origin. As a consequence, Anaxagoras’s principle is supportive to Pico’s metaphysics. Furthermore, Anaxagoras’s metaphysical principle is supportive of Pico’s method of allegorical interpretation, which is indispensable for his syncretism and his attempt to reveal hidden truths in every text or level of reality.

Keywords: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Anaxagoras, Plotinus, Proclus, Neoplatonism, Intellect, Demiurge, homoiomeria, metaphysics, *cum in ipsa ita sunt omnia, ut in ipsa omnia sint ipsa*.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) is well known for his attempt to enrich his sources by resorting to philosophical traditions that were not well known to fifteenth-century humanists so as to broaden his scope.¹ In the first half of the fifteenth century, Diogenes Laertius’s *Vitae Philosophorum* was translated in Latin by Ambrogio Traversari.² Earlier partial Latin translations of the work were probably produced during the Middle Ages by Henricus Aristippus in the twelfth century. At least one medieval version of Diogenes Laertius’s *Vitae Philosophorum* was available to Walter Burley (1275–1344/5), the Prehumanists in Verona, and Petrarch’s friend Dionigi da Borgo S. Sepolcro (d. 1342), as several sources attested.³ Diogenes Laer-

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¹ F. Borghesi et al., “Overview of the Text,” *Pico della Mirandola: Oration on the Dignity of Man, A New Translation and Commentary*, ed. F. Borghesi, M. Papio and M. Riva (Cambridge 2012) 90–96; B. Copenhaver, “Magic and the Dignity of Man: De-Kanting Pico’s Oration,” *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century: Acts of an International Conference. Florence, Villa I Tatti, June 9–11, 1999*, ed. A. Griego, M. Rocke, and F. G. Superbi (Firenze 2002) 295–320; B. Copenhaver, “The Secret of Pico’s Oration: Kabbalah and Renaissance Philosophy,” *Renaissance and Early Modern Philosophy, Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, ed. P. French, H. Wettstein and B. Silver, vol. XXVI (Boston 2002) 56–81; B. Copenhaver, “Number, Shape, and Meaning in Pico’s Christian Kabbalah: The Upright *Tsade*, The Closed *Mem*, and the Caping Jaws of *Azazel*,” *Natural Particulars: Nature and Disciplines in Renaissance Europe*, ed. A. Grafton and N. Siraisi (Cambridge 1999) 25–76; E. Garin, *History of Italian Philosophy*, ed. & trans. G. Pinton (Amsterdam 2008) 311–312; C. Joost-Gaugier, *Pythagoras and Renaissance Europe: Finding Heaven* (Cambridge 2009) 30–31, 87–92; B. Ogren, *Renaissance and Rebirth: Reincarnation in Early Modern Italiana Kabbalah* (Leiden 2009) 212–237; C. Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola’s Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (Cambridge MA 1989) 3–10; F. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago 1964) 84–116.

² E. Garin, “La prima traduzione latina di Diogene Laerzio,” *Giornale Critico della Filosofia Italiana* 33 (1959) 283–285; M. Gigante, “Ambrogio Traversari interprete di Diogene Laerzio,” *Ambrogio Traversari nel VI centenario della nascita, Convegno internazionale di studi, Camaldoli–Firenze, 15–18 sett. 1986, Atti di convegni / Istituto nazionale di studi sul Rinascimento (Book 17)*, ed. G. C. Carfagnini (Florence 1988) 367–459; J. Krayer, “The Revival of Hellenistic Philosophies,” *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. J. Hankins (Cambridge 2007) 98–99; C. Stinger, *Humanism and the Church Fathers: Ambrogio Traversari (1386–1439) and the Revival of Patristic Theology in the Early Italian Renaissance* (New York 1977) 30–34, 70–79.

³ L. Malusa, “Renaissance Antecedents to the Historiography of Philosophy,” *Models of the History of Philosophy: From its Origins in the Renaissance to the ‘Historia Philosophica’: Volume I: From Its Origins in the Renaissance to the ‘Historia Philosophica’*, ed. G. Santinello, F. Bottin (Dordrecht 1993) 7; J. T.

tius's work became an additional source on Presocratic philosophy in the fifteenth century and contributed to the revival of the interest in the field. In addition, Renaissance scholars derived indirect information about the Presocratics from the works of Aristotle and other ancient Greek philosophers, especially the Neoplatonists, who commented on the Presocratic philosophy. Pico della Mirandola writes that, without any kind of obligation, he decided to study all the teachers and schools of philosophy.⁴ Eclecticism is the bedrock of his philosophy. In addition to ancient Greek philosophy, his research also includes the Presocratic philosophy. Pico was contentious and he seemed to enjoy philosophical disputes, despite the different readings of his works. As a result, in his effort to engage in heated philosophical debates and promote human understanding, he is not afraid to challenge the established ideas and criticize even key theological doctrines.⁵ This article seeks to explore the ways in which Giovanni Pico della Mirandola treated the philosophy of Anaxagoras (ca. 500–428 BC), the philosopher who transmitted the Ionian tradition to Athens, so as to formulate his own philosophy. Pico focuses on Anaxagoras because he considers him as a precursor of the later Neoplatonic concept *omnia sunt in omnibus modo suo* (all things exist in all things in their own mode), which became the core of Pico's metaphysics. I will also attempt to identify Pico's sources and correct common misinterpretations of Pico's text in prior scholarship.

In his *Conclusiones*, Pico comments on Anaxagoras:

3>21. Per predictas conclusiones intelligi potest, que sit omiomeria Anaxagorae, quam opifex intellectus distinguit.⁶ (Through the preceding conclusions one can understand what Anaxagoras's homoeomeria is, which the demiurge of the intellect distinguishes.)⁷

3>22. Nemo miretur quod Anaxagoras intellectum appellauerit immixtum, cum sit maxime mixtus, quia maxima mixtio coincidit cum maxima simplicitate in natura intellectuali.⁸ (Let no one marvel that Anaxagoras called the intellect unmixed, although it is greatly mixed, since the greatest mixture coincides with the greatest simplicity in the intellectual nature.)⁹

Muckle, "Greek Works Translated Directly into Latin Before 1350," 2nd Part, *Medieval Studies* 5 (1943) 110; T. Ricklin, "Vorsokratiker im lateinischen Mittelalter II: Thales von Milet im lateinischen Diogenes Laertios von Henricus Aristippus bis zur lateinischen editio princeps (1472/1475)," *The Presocratics From the Latin Middle Ages to Hermann Diels, Akten der 9. Tagung der Karl und Gertrud Abel-Stiftung vom 5.–7. Oktober 2006 in München*, ed. O. Primavesi and K. Luchner (Stuttgart 2011) 111–156; Stinger, *Humanism and the Church Fathers* (n. 2 above) 71–72.

⁴ G. Pico della Mirandola, "De hominis dignitate," *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari a cura di Eugenio Garin (Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano)*, ed. E. Garin (Firenze 1942) 138; G. Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man, On Being and the One, Heptaplus*, trans. C. G. Wallis, P. J. W. Miller and D. Carmichael, intro. P. J. W. Miller (Indianapolis 1998) 21.

⁵ F. Borghesi, "A Life in Works," *Pico della Mirandola: New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge 2008) 215–216; S. A. Farmer, *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses (1486), The Evolution of Traditional Religious and Philosophical Systems* (Tempe 1998) 1–58; E. Garin, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: Vita e dottrina* (Florence 1937) 72–89.

⁶ G. Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones sive Theses DCCC," *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses (1486), The Evolution of Traditional Religious and Philosophical Systems*, ed. S. A. Farmer (Tempe 1998) 3>21.

⁷ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 405.

⁸ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 3>22.

⁹ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 405.

Pico focuses on homoiomereia (*ὁμοιομέρεια*), the original homogenous state of things according to Anaxagoras,¹⁰ who holds the view that objects are temporary mixtures of ingredients, while the original state is that of universal mixture.¹¹ Anaxagoras¹² shares with Parmenides¹³ the principle that what-is is without start or stop.¹⁴ The Intellect (*Noῦς*), a distinct cosmic entity, sets the mixture into rotary motion: everything is mixture and separation of ingredients.¹⁵ Pico correlates the philosophy of Anaxagoras with the conclusion that *cum in ipsa ita sunt omnia, ut in ipsa omnia sint ipsa* (when in itself all things exist in such a way that in itself all things are itself).¹⁶ The later Neoplatonic concept *Πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἐκάστῳ* (all things in all things, but in each according to its proper nature),¹⁷ as Proclus expresses it in his *Institutio Theologica*—and not in *Theologia Platonica* as S. A. Farmer inaccurately suggests in his edition of Pico's *Conclusiones*¹⁸—seems very interesting to Pico and becomes the core of his philosophy: *omnia sunt in omnibus modo suo*.¹⁹ The Neoplatonic concepts, especially that the whole is in the part and that all things are in all, are of crucial importance for Pico's philosophy.²⁰ According to Pico, there are four worlds: the ultra mundane, which corresponds to the intelligible realm of the Platonists or the angelic realm of the theologians; the celestial; the sublunary; and the human. Since everything

¹⁰ H. Diels, W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin 1952) 59 B1 25–27; *ibid.* DK 59 A45 (Aristoteles, *Physica*, 203a19–24); *ibid.* DK 59 A45a (Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria*, 9.460.4–26); *ibid.*, DK 59 A41 (Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria*, 9.27.2–12); *ibid.* DK 59 A46 (Aristoteles, *De generatione et corruptione*, 314a18); *ibid.* DK 59 A46a (Aetius I, 3, 5).

¹¹ Aristoteles, “Physica,” *Aristotelis physica*, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford 1950, repr. 1966) 187a26–b2; P. Curd, “Anaxagoras,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2011 Edition)*, ed. Edward N. Zalt, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/anaxagoras/>; P. Curd, trans. & ed., *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Fragments and Testimonia, A Text and Translation With Notes and Essays by Patricia Curd* (Toronto 2007) 222; D. W. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy, The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics*, trans. & ed. D. W. Graham (Cambridge 2010) 317–318; G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge 1983) 358; D. Sedley, *Creationism and Its Critics in Antiquity* (Los Angeles, Berkeley 2007) 13–19.

¹² DK (n. 10 above) 59 B17.

¹³ DK (n. 10 above) 28 B8, 27–28.

¹⁴ D. J. Furley, “Anaxagoras in Response to Parmenides,” *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, vol. II, ed. J. P. Anton and A. Preus (Albany 1983) 70–92; D. Graham, “Empedocles and Anaxagoras: Responses to Parmenides,” *The Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, ed. A. A. Long (Cambridge 1999) 159–180; R. D. McKirahan, *Philosophy Before Socrates (Second Edition): An Introduction with Texts and Commentary* (Indianapolis 2011) 199; R. Roeklein, *Plato versus Parmenides, The Debate Over Coming-into-Being in Greek Philosophy* (Plymouth 2011) 68–80; J. Sisko, “Anaxagoras's Parmenidean Cosmology: Worlds within Worlds within the One,” *Apeiron* 26 (2003) 87–114.

¹⁵ Simplicius, “In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria,” *Simplicii in Aristotelis physicorum libros octo commentaria, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 9 & 10, ed. H. Diels (Berlin 1882, 1895) 9.300.31–9.301.1.

¹⁶ DK (n. 10 above) 59 B6, B12; Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Fragments and Testimonia* (n. 11 above) 178–191; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 114, 405; Pico, *Conclusiones* (n. 6 above) 3.20; G. Mathews, “On the Idea of There Being Something of Everything in Everything,” *Analysis* 62 (2002) 1–4.

¹⁷ Proclus, “Institutio Theologica,” *Proclus. The elements of theology*, ed. E. R. Dodds (Oxford 1963, repr. 1977) 103.1; R. Chlup, *Proclus: An Introduction* (Cambridge 2012) 83–91.

¹⁸ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 320.

¹⁹ Pico della Mirandola, “*Conclusiones*” (n. 6 above) 24.17; T. Leinkauf, *Mundus combinatus: Studien zur Struktur der barocken Universalwissenschaft am Beispiel Athanasius Kirchers SJ (1602–1680)* (Berlin 1993) 83–91.

²⁰ Michael Allen, “The Birth Day of Venus: Pico as a Platonic Exegete in the *Comento* and the *Heptaplus*,” *Pico della Mirandola, New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge 2008) 106.

is in every world, anything that occurs in one world has references to the others.²¹ The same Neoplatonic concept could also be traced back to Syrianus,²² who ascribed it to the Pythagoreans, as well as Iamblichus,²³ who ascribed it to Numenius.²⁴ It is worth noticing that Anaxagoras's principle that everything is in everything, according to Plotinus,²⁵ should be applied solely at the level of Intellect and not at the level of matter, a rather peculiar, although interesting for Pico's argumentation, interpretation.²⁶ Pico, at first sight, as modern scholarship suggests, seems to follow Proclus and ignore or disregard Plotinus' argumentation on the subject.²⁷

Notwithstanding the fact that Pico in *Heptaplus*, his biblical commentary, has certain doubts, he argues that Anaxagoras, as expounded by the Pythagoreans and the Platonists, holds that whatever is in any of the three worlds is at the same time contained in each:

*Quam Anaxagorae credo fuisse opinionem, si recte eum sensisse putamus, explicatam deinde a Pythagoricis et Platonis.*²⁸ (If we have understood him rightly, I believe that this was the opinion of Anaxagoras, as expounded by the Pythagoreans and the Platonists.)²⁹

Pico's interprets Anaxagoras's argument in such a loose manner in order to corroborate his own views. Pico, as his phrasing suggests, was not persuaded that the ancient, medieval commentators and he personally understood and interpreted properly the philosophy of Anaxagoras. Garin suggests that Pico draws on Simplicius, who is his main source for Anaxagoras.³⁰ Although Garin argues that Pico relies on a certain passage, in which Simplicius exposes Anaxagoras's fundamental doctrines,³¹ there is also another, at least, passage from which Pico would have drawn.³² Furthermore, Pico owned and had access to Aristotle's *Physics*, various copies of Simplicius's *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria*, and the eleventh-century Byzantine polymath Michael Psellus's *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentarium*.³³ Pico's reference to Pythagoreans and Platonists, in the plural, indicates that, besides Syrianus

²¹ G. Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus," *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari a cura di Eugenio Garin (Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano)*, ed. E. Garin (Firenze 1942) 185–188.

²² Syrianus, "In Aristotelis metaphysica commentaria," *Syriani in metaphysica commentaria, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca 6.1.*, ed. W. Kroll (Berlin 1902) 178.28–29.

²³ Joannes Stobaeus, "Anthologium," *Ioannis Stobaei anthologium*, ed. O. Hense and C. Wachsmuth (Berlin 1884–1912) I. 49. 32. 69–72.

²⁴ Proclus, *The Elements of Theology* (n. 17 above) 254.

²⁵ Plotinus, "Enneades," *Plotini opera*, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (Leiden 1951–1973) V. 8. 4. 5–11.

²⁶ G. Stamatelos, *Plotinus and the Presocratics, A Philosophical Study of Presocratic Influences in Plotinus' Enneads* (New York 2007) 149.

²⁷ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 86–87.

²⁸ Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus" (n. 21 above) 188.

²⁹ Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man* (n. 4 above) 77.

³⁰ Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus" (n. 21 above) 188.

³¹ Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (n. 15 above) 9.27.

³² *Ibid.* 9.460–462.

³³ P. Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola* (New York 1936) 172, 178, 181, 186, 188, 256, 264, 294; Anthony Grafton, "Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: Trials and Triumphs of an Omnivore," *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor 1997) 93–134.

and Iamblichus, Pico probably had read Psellus's text.³⁴ Pico, as well as other fifteenth-century humanists, thought of Psellus as the collector and purveyor of ancient mystic wisdom, including the Chaldean Oracles, the Orphic Hymns, and Pythagorean wisdom.³⁵ Pico in certain cases draws from Psellus's works on magic and the Chaldeans.³⁶ Besides the aforementioned works, Pico owned and studied several medieval commentaries on *Physics*, but these works certainly do not belong to the Platonic and Pythagorean tradition.

But Pico at the same time distanced himself from Anaxagoras. Pico argues, according to Farmer's translation, that there is a Demiurge of the Intellect, who distinguishes homoiomereia. In addition Pico contends that the Intellect is greatly mixed, because the greatest mixture coincides with the greatest simplicity in the intellectual nature.³⁷ On the contrary Anaxagoras is adamant: the Intellect is separate, unaffected, and unmixed. It does not contain a portion of everything, because otherwise it could not set things to move. If it mixes with one, it will mix with all. According to Anaxagoras everything which separates itself contains all things, besides the Intellect.³⁸ It is worth noting that Pico seems to follow Averroes and the Averroists on the Intellect, maintaining the unicity of the Intellect, despite the fact that he seems to endorse in a rather perplexed manner the personal immortality of the soul.³⁹

³⁴ Michael Psellus, "In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentarium," *Michael Psellos Kommentar zur Physik des Aristoteles, Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi, Commentaria in Aristotelem Byzantina*, ed. L. G. Benakis (Athens 2008) 1. 14. 7–30, 1. 15. 1–15, 3. 12. 20–35.

³⁵ N. Brann, *The Debate Over the Origin of Genius During the Italian Renaissance* (Leiden 2002) 84–86; D. Hayton, "Michael Psellos's De daemonibus in the Renaissance," *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. C. Barber and D. Jenkins (Leiden 2006) 205–227; S. Roszbach, *Gnostic Wars: The Cold War in the Context of a History of Western Spirituality* (Edinburgh 1999) 118–120; S. Toussaint, "Zoroaster and the Flying Egg: Psellos, Gerson and Ficino," *Laus Platonici Philosophi, Marsilio Ficino and His Influence*, ed. S. Glucas, P. Forshaw and V. Rees (Leiden 2011) 105–115; P. Zambelli, *White Magic, Black Magic in the European Renaissance: From Ficino, Pico, Della Porta to Trithemius, Agrippa, Bruno* (Leiden 2007) 46, 56, 67.

³⁶ Pico della Mirandola, "De Hominis Dignitate" (n. 4 above) 128, 152; Borghesi et al., "Overview" (n. 1 above) 91, 133; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 486–487.

³⁷ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 3>21, 3>22.

³⁸ DK (n. 10 above) 59 B12; J. Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers, Volume 2: Empedocles to Democritus* (London 1979) 105–107; Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Fragments and Testimonia* (n. 11 above) 52, 121–122, 196–212; McKirahan, *Philosophy Before Socrates* (n. 14 above) 216–220; J. Magee, *Unmixing the Intellect: Aristotle on the Cognitive Powers and Bodily Organs* (Westport 2003) 58–60; C. J. Vamvakas, *The Founders of Western Thought—The Presocratics: A diachronic parallelism between Presocratic Thought and Philosophy and the Natural Sciences* (Springer 2009) 203–206.

³⁹ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 7.2, 7.4; *Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis 'De Anima' libros*. (*Averroes' Aristotle, Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi, Corpus Commentariorum Averrois in Aristotelem series—versio Latina vol. VI, 1*), ed. F. S. Crawford (Cambridge, MA 1953) III.5, 387.23, 388.56, 400.379–393, 401.419–423, 404.500–405.520, 412.724–728; J. Aertsen, "Aquinas's philosophy in its historical setting," *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. N. Kretzmann (Cambridge 1993) 25; R. Dales, *The Problem of the Rational Soul in the Thirteenth Century* (Leiden 1995) 113–137; H. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect* (New York and Oxford 1992) 282–294; L. Gauthier, "Saint Thomas, Averroes et l'averroïsme," *Aquinas and Problem of His Times*, ed. G. Verbeke and D. Verhelst (Leuven 1976) 161–177; D. N. Hasse, "The Attraction of Averroism in the Renaissance: Vernia, Achillini, Prassicio," *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, ed. P. Adamson et al. (London 2004) 131–147; D. N. Hasse, "Aufstieg und Niedergang des Averroismus in der Renaissance: Niccolo' Tignosi, Agostino Nifo, Francesco Vimercato," *'Herbst des Mittelalters'?? Fragen zur Bewertung des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, ed. J. A. Aertsen et al. (Berlin 2004) 447–73; O. Leaman, *Averroes and His Philosophy* (Oxon and New York 2013) 82–117, 163–178; C. N. Still, "Pico's Quest for All Knowledge," *Pico della Mirandola, New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge 2008) 187.

Aristotle, who follows in a certain point Anaxagoras's theory on the Intellect, although he shares Plato's criticisms,⁴⁰ notes that Anaxagoras failed to explain how Intellect comes to think.⁴¹ The immateriality of the Intellect is inconsistent with the materiality of its objects.⁴² Aquinas agrees with Anaxagoras that the Intellect should command all because it is perfectly unmixed.⁴³ Also Averroes subscribes to Anaxagoras's argument in his *Commentary on the De Anima*.⁴⁴ Pico probably follows Cusanus and the great majority of the medieval scholastics who tried to combine divine simplicity and creatural multiplicity, safeguarding God's indirect knowledge of essences.⁴⁵ In addition Pico argues that any contradiction in the intellectual nature is compatible,⁴⁶ a possible aura of the philosophy of Heraclitus.⁴⁷

Farmer suggests that Pico's vocabulary indicates that he is relying on a Neoplatonic commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* that Farmer could not identify.⁴⁸ I argue that Pico draws from Simplicius's *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria*. The similarity of the two passages is obvious:

Per predictas conclusiones intelligi potest, que sit omiomeria Anaxagorae, quam opifex intellectus distinguit.⁴⁹ (Through the preceding conclusions one can understand what Anaxagoras's homoeomeria is, which the demiurge of the intellect distinguishes.)⁵⁰

καὶ ὁ νοῦς δὲ παρὰ Ἀναξαγόρα διακοσμῶν καὶ κινῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς τὰς ὁμοιομερείας διακρίνειν αὐτὰς λέγεται.⁵¹ (And in Anaxagoras, Mind, which arranges and moves the homoeomeria from the beginning, is said "to separate" them.)⁵²

⁴⁰ Plato, "Phaedo," *Platonis opera*, vol. 1, ed. J. Burnet (Oxford 1900, repr. 1967) 97b8ff.

⁴¹ F. Brentano, *Aristotle and His World View*, trans. & ed. R. George and R. Chisholm (Berkeley 1978) 78–80; M. Nyvlt, *Aristotle and Plotinus on the Intellect: Monism and Dualism Revisited* (Lanham 2012) 108–109.

⁴² Aristoteles, "De Anima," *Aristotle. De anima*, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford 1961, repr. 1967) 405b19–23, 429a18–19, b21–29; J. Sisko, "Aristotle and the Modern Mind," *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, ed. H. J. Cleary and G. S. J. Gurtler (Leiden, Boston, Köln 2001) vol. XVI 2000, 185–187.

⁴³ T. Aquinas, "De unitate intellectus contra Avverroistas," *Aquinas against the Averroists, On There Being Only One Intellect*, trans & ed. R. McNerny (West Lafayette 1993) II. 20. 369–380, II. 92. 139–143; T. Aquinas, *Sententia Libri De anima, Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita, t. 45/1 Commissio Leonina* (Roma, Paris 1984) lib. 1 l. 3 n. 8, lib. 1 l. 3 n. 10, lib. 1 l. 3 n. 11, lib. 1 l. 5 n. 5, lib. 1 l. 5 n. 14, lib. 3 l. 7 n. 7lib. 3 l. 7 n. 7, lib. 3 l. 7 n. 8, lib. 3 l. 7 n. 9, lib. 3 l. 9 n. 1; T. Aquinas, *De substantiis separatis, Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita, t. 40 D* (Rome 1968) c. 1.

⁴⁴ Averroes, *In de anima*, (n. 39 above) III, comm. 4, 5, 19; Averroes, *On Aristotle's "Metaphysics": An Annotated Translation of the So-called "Epitome"*, ed. R. Arnzen (Berlin, New York 2010) 243; Averroes, "Long Commentary on De Anima, bk. III, 1–5," *Basic Issues in Medieval Philosophy: Selected Readings Presenting the Interactive Discourses Among the Major Figures*, ed. R. Bosley and M. Tweedale (Peterborough 2006) 677; P. Huby and D. Gutas, *Theoprastus of Eresus: Sources for his Life, Writings, Thought and Influence, Commentary, Volume 4, Psychology* (Leiden 1999) 137–138; Averroes, "Long Commentary on 'The Soul' 3.5, 3.18–3.20," *Philosophy in the Middle Ages: The Christian, Islamic and Jewish Traditions*, ed. A. Hyman, J. Walsh and T. Williams (Indianapolis 2010) 304–305; M. N. Ovey, *Averroes' Doctrine of Immortality, A Matter of Controversy* (Waterloo 1984) 84.

⁴⁵ E. Cassirer, "Giovanni Pico della Mirandola," *Renaissance Essays*, ed. P. O. Kristeller and P. Wiener (Rochester 1968) 24–32; Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (n. 1 above) 100ff.

⁴⁶ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 3>13.

⁴⁷ DK (n. 10 above) 22 B10, B50; G. S. Kirk, *Heraclitus: The Cosmic Fragments, A Critical Study with Introduction, Text and Translation* (Cambridge 1954) 94–96.

⁴⁸ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 405.

⁴⁹ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 3>21.

⁵⁰ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 405.

Pico could also have drawn from John Philoponus's *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria*, although Philoponus's wording is slightly different:

Πανταχοῦ τὸν Ἀναξαγόραν ἐπαινεῖ ὅτι νοῦν ἐπέστησε διακοσμήσει τοῦ παντός, πάσας εἶναι λέγων τὰς ὁμοιομερείας μεμιγμένας καὶ κινεῖσθαι ταύτας ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦ διακρινόμενας.⁵³ (He praises Anaxagoras that he set Mind to arrange everything, claiming that all the homoiomereias, which are mixed, are put into motion while they are differentiated by the mind.)

But there is an important difference: Simplicius and Philoponus holds that the Intellect distinguishes the homoiomereias (ὁμοιομερείας), in the plural, while Pico supports that the *opifex intellectus* distinguishes the *omiomeria*, in the singular. Homoiomereia, in the singular, is mentioned in DK 59 A45a.⁵⁴ In this passage is obvious that homoiomereia does not refer to the original mixture or to something similar to the meaning that Pico gives to the word.

Aristotle, the ancient expert on Presocratics, cites the plurals homoiomere (ὁμοιομερή) and homoiomereiai (ὁμοιομέρειαι). Aristotle uses the word homoiomere consistently.⁵⁵ But subsequent authors and commentators, including several Middle Platonists and Neoplatonists, are not so careful in their writings leading to misinterpretations and chancy readings. Simplicius, who was familiar enough with Anaxagoras's philosophy, embraces the Aristotelian interpretation of homoiomere (ὁμοιομερή), while he equates homoiomereiai (ὁμοιομέρειαι) with seeds (σπέρματα).⁵⁶ Anaxagoras refers to seeds, which are present in the original mixture and contain, as the original mixture, at the same time the opposites and the natural essences.⁵⁷ Previous scholarship has demonstrated that Anaxagoras himself never used the concept homoiomereia.⁵⁸ After Aristotle, homoiomere, homoiomereiai, and other plurals were common in texts which refer to Anaxagoras. On the contrary, the singular homoiomereia was not so common. We can trace the singular homoiomereia mainly in Lucretius, Simplicius, Themistius, and John Philoponus, but the term does not reflect Anaxago-

⁵¹ Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (n. 15 above) 10.1318. 29–30.

⁵² Simplicius, *On Aristotle Physics 8.6–10*, trans. R. McKirahan (London 2001) 103.

⁵³ Joannes Philoponus, "In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria," *Ioannis Philoponi in Aristotelis physicorum libros octo commentaria, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca 16 & 17*, ed. H. Vitelli (Berlin 1887, 1888) 17.833. 2–4.

⁵⁴ DK (n. 10 above) 59 A45a (Aristoteles, *Physica*, 203a19–24); Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (n. 15 above) 9.460. 4–5.

⁵⁵ Aristoteles, "De caelo," *Aristote. Du ciel*, ed. P. Moraux (Paris 1965) 302a31–32, 302b13–16; Aristoteles, "De generatione et corruptione," *Aristote. De la génération et de la corruption*, ed. C. Mugler (Paris 1966) 314a11–29; Aristoteles, "Metaphysica," *Aristotle's metaphysics*, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford 1924, repr. 1970) 988a28; Aristoteles, *Physica* (n. 11 above) 203a20–23.

⁵⁶ Simplicius, "In Aristotelis quattor libros de caelo commentaria," *Simplicii in Aristotelis de caelo commentaria, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, ed. J. L. Heiberg (Berlin 1894) 9.603.17–19; J. Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (New York 1982) 250–253; R. M. Dancy, *Two Studies in the Early Academy* (New York 1991) 5–9, 57–59; Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (n. 11 above) 376–378; Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Fragments and Testimonia* (n. 11 above) 153–177; G. Vlastos, *Studies in Greek Philosophy, v.1: The Presocratics*, ed. Daniel W. Graham (New Jersey 1993) 303–327.

⁵⁷ P. Curd, "Anaxagoras," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (n. 11 above); Barry Sandywell, *Presocratic Reflexivity: The Construction of Philosophical Discourse c. 600–450 BC*, vol. III (London 2003) 374–376; J. Warren, *Presocratics: Natural Philosophers before Socrates* (Berkeley 2007) 132.

⁵⁸ R. Brown, "Lucretian Ridicule of Anaxagoras," *The Classical Quarterly* 33. 1 (1983) 146–160.

ras's teaching in an accurate fashion.⁵⁹ It is very probable that Pico opted for the use of the concept *homoiomereia* following Lucretius, who uses the word as a stereotyped general expression in order to describe and refute Anaxagoras's philosophy.⁶⁰ Pico's interpretation of *homoiomereia* looks also similar to that of John Philoponus, who describes a single *homoiomereia* which contains all the beings in a way very similar to that of Pico.⁶¹

Furthermore, Anaxagoras never refers to a possible creator of the Intellect. As noted earlier, Pico's reference to the Demiurge and his phrasing suggests that he was drawing from Simplicius's commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*. But given that Pico pursued a systematic study of Neoplatonism, he should have been familiar with the idea that the Intellect (*Noûς*), the image of the One, is an emanation of the One.⁶² According to Plotinus, the One remains in his undifferentiated unity and is not the Demiurge.⁶³ Plotinus asserted that the Intellect is identical to the Platonic Demiurge (*Δημιουργός*),⁶⁴ as described in *Timaeus*. Intellect contains the world of the Demiurge and is not the result of emanation or creation from the Demiurge.⁶⁵ Moreover, Plotinus criticized Anaxagoras that the latter's Intellect (*Noûς*) could not be temporally prior to matter; instead it is concurrent.⁶⁶ Even in the later Neoplatonists the scheme of emanation guarantees that the One is not a Demiurge. The cosmos is a product of the work of the lower hypostases, namely Intellect and Soul (*Ψυχή*).⁶⁷ In the *Conclusiones*, according to Porphyry, Pico admits that the Demiurge of the world is the supermundane soul:

22.2. Opifex mundi est supermundana anima.⁶⁸ (The demiurge of the world is the supermundane soul.)⁶⁹

⁵⁹ Lucretius, "De rerum natura," *Titi Lucretii Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex*, ed. C. Bailey (Oxford 1947) I.830–834; Simplicius, *In Aristotelis quattuor libros de caelo commentaria* (n. 56 above) 7.605.18–31, 606.2; Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (n. 15 above) 9.172.1–21, 9.460.5–10; Themistius, "In Aristotelis physica paraphrasis," *Themistii in Aristotelis physica paraphrasis, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 5.2, ed. H. Schenkl (Berlin 1900) 5, 2.15.14; Joannes Philoponus, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (n. 53 above) 16.24.25, 16.103.20, 16.106.17, 16.396.22–25, 16.397.18–19, 17.833.11.

⁶⁰ Lucretius, *De rerum natura* (n. 59 above) I.830–834; W. E. Leonard and S. B. Smith, ed., *De rerum natura: The Latin Text of Lucretius* (Madison 1942) 282; D. N. Sedley, *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom* (Cambridge 1998) 124–126, 145–146; W. J. Tatum, "The Presocratics in Book 1 of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*," *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Lucretius*, ed. M. Gale (Oxford 2007) 132–145; J. Warren, "Lucretius and Greek Philosophy," *The Cambridge Companion to Lucretius*, ed. S. Gillespie and P. Hardie (Cambridge 2007) 19–32.

⁶¹ Joannes Philoponus, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria* (n. 53 above) 16.24.25, 16.100.32, 16.106.7, 16.396.24; E. Garin, *History of Italian Philosophy* (n. 1 above) 1.298.

⁶² Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) V. 1. 7, V. 1. 4. 6–8.

⁶³ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) II. 3. 18. 15, IV. 4. 9. 9, V. 2. 1, V. 6. 4, VI. 9. 6; Nyvlt, *Aristotle* (n. 41 above) 16.

⁶⁴ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) II. 4. 7, III. 9. 1, V. 9. 5.

⁶⁵ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) II. 3. 18, III. 8. 8. 32–39, V. 2. 1; F. Schroeder, "Plotinus and Language," *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, ed. L. P. Gerson (Cambridge 1996) 339–340; Stamatelos, *Plotinus* (n. 26 above) 62.

⁶⁶ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) II. 4. 7. 2–13.

⁶⁷ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) III. 8. 4, V. 9. 5, IV. 4. 11; Proclus, *Institutio Theologica* (n. 17 above) 28, 38, 57. 18–26.

⁶⁸ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 22.2.

⁶⁹ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 307.

Pico draws from Proclus's *In Timaeum*, where Proclus summarizes the basic arguments of Porphyry on the creation myth of the Platonic dialogue.⁷⁰ In the *Conclusiones* according to Iamblichus, Pico adds that the seventh of the intellectual hierarchy is the Demiurge of the sensible world.⁷¹ Apparently Pico traces in Proclus evidence that Iamblichus prefigured the henads.⁷² As a result, Pico's argument, according to Farmer's translation, that the Demiurge of the Intellect distinguishes the *omiomeria*, misinterprets Anaxagoras as well the Neoplatonists.

I believe that the problem arises not from Pico's text but from Farmer's translation (*opifex intellectus* = Demiurge of the Intellect), which is incorrect and misleading. In my reading, in Pico's phrase *opifex intellectus* the noun *intellectus* is not a genitive but a nominative form, since the noun *intellectus* belongs to the fourth declension. As a result, the correct translation is Demiurge-Intellect, as in apposition, which seems to be accurate according to the Neoplatonic philosophy. Plotinus associates the Demiurge with Intellect and not with the One,⁷³ despite Porphyry's slightly different view.⁷⁴ Iamblichus follows the general pattern of Plotinus's argumentation and places Demiurge in the realm of the Intellect. Syrianus follows respectively on the same path. Finally, Proclus supports that the Demiurge exists in the Intellect.⁷⁵ Moreover, if my reading is correct, Pico's argument no longer opposes the philosophy of Anaxagoras who claims that the Intellect sets the original mixture in motion and is not its Demiurge.⁷⁶ We have to bear in mind that Anaxagoras does not call the Intellect Demiurge nor does he conflate Intellect with God or divine principle, despite Iamblichus's quotation.⁷⁷ We must also have in mind that in the *Commento* Pico blames Ficino for the latter's attempt to compromise emanationism and creationism.⁷⁸ Moreover, Pico's endeavor to present Moses philosophizing on the emanation of all things from God remains on the level of verbal expression and is not a well documented and articulated view.⁷⁹ It is merely a rhetorical exaggeration, which aims to strength Pico's syncretism in the *Heptaplus*.⁸⁰ Thus, any attempt to justify Farmer's translation, with the argument that Pico tried, in the specific passage, to compromise emanation and creation, is doomed to fail. It is also worth noticing that according to Pico, as I mentioned earlier, being and One are coextensive, identical principles and must exist

⁷⁰ Proclus, "In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria," *Procli Diadochi in Platonis Timaeum commentaria*, ed. E. Diehl (Leipzig 1903–1906, repr. Amsterdam 1965) 1:300.

⁷¹ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 23.2.

⁷² Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 311.

⁷³ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) II. 1. 5, II. 3. 18, II. 4. 7, III. 9. 1.

⁷⁴ Proclus, *In Timaeum* (n. 70 above) 307.4–5.

⁷⁵ S. Klitenic-Wear, *The Teachings of Syrianus on Plato's Timaeus and Parmenides* (Leiden 2011) 76–78, 87–89.

⁷⁶ DK (n. 10 above) 59 12. 14–17; Aristoteles, *Physica* (n. 11 above) 256b25 ff; G. Betegh, *The Derveni Papyrus: Cosmology, Theology and Interpretation* (Cambridge 2004) 278–305.

⁷⁷ Iamblichus, "Protrepticus," *Iamblichi protrepticus ad fidem codicis Florentini*, ed. H. Pistelli (Leipzig 1888) 48. 16–21.

⁷⁸ G. Pico della Mirandola, "Commento alla canzone d' amore," *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari a cura di Eugenio Garin (Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano)*, ed. E. Garin (Firenze 1942) 466; Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 94; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 21; Garin, *History of Italian Philosophy* (n. 1 above) v. 1, 305.

⁷⁹ Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus" (n. 21 above) 176.

⁸⁰ P. R. Blum, *Philosophy of Religion in the Renaissance* (Farnham 2010) 133.

in some mode in every level of reality; One is not prior to being.⁸¹ Pico reaches this conclusion through his explanatory method, which suggests that the words we use so that we describe the levels of reality can be linked to the same words we use in order to describe other levels.⁸² If this is the case, then the correct meaning of the phrase *opifex intellectus* is once again Demiurge—Intellect and not Demiurge of the Intellect. Pico simply denominates. Otherwise, we have to admit that Pico has no thorough knowledge of Presocratic and Neoplatonic philosophy or that his philosophy is not so concrete.

Although this a possible explanation, according to Pico's wording and the general meaning of the aforementioned passages of the *Conclusiones*, Pico sets forth another view in his *Commento*, a work which is written almost the same period with the *Conclusiones*. Pico holds that God creates Intellect, a perfect and unique creation. Despite the ambiguous wording of the passage, the last word is indicative:

dico che Iddio ab aeterno produse una creatura di natura incorporea ed intelletuale, tanto perfetta quanto è possibile e' sia una cosa creata.⁸³ (God from eternity produced a creature of incorporeal and intellectual nature, as perfect as is possible for a created being.)

In addition, Pico supports that Intellect, according to the Platonists, is the sole direct creation of God:

immediatamente non proviene altra creatura che questa prima mente.⁸⁴ (immediately no other creature proceeds but this first mind.)

But the problem still persists. Pico uses three times words that refer to creation, while in the specific and subsequent chapters he prefers *produsse*, *producere*, and other forms of the verb *produco*. Pico's terminology does not seem to be consistent enough. A possible explanation would be that in the specific chapter Pico's priority is the rejection of Ficino's argument that God creates directly also the human souls.⁸⁵ Furthermore, Pico mentions as his sources Plotinus, the famous Platonists, Aristotle, and all the Arabs, notably Avicenna. The harmonization of the opinions of the aforementioned philosophers on the Intellect is rather superficial and not the outcome of solid argumentation. In the mid-1480s Pico's philosophy was not coherent.⁸⁶ In addition, Pico's argumentation is ambivalent. He seems to lie simultaneously in Christian and Neoplatonic ground. Pico admits that, according to the Neoplatonists, the Intellect is

⁸¹ G. Pico della Mirandola, "De Ente et Uno," *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari a cura di Eugenio Garin (Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano)*, ed. E. Garin (Firenze 1942) 400–406, 426–434; R. Klibansky, "Plato's Parmenides in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: a chapter in the history of platonic studies," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies I (1941–1943)* 315–322; P. O. Kristeller, "Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and his sources" *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*, ed. P. O. Kristeller (Rome 1993) vol. 3, 254.

⁸² Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 28–29.

⁸³ Pico della Mirandola, "Commento" (n. 78 above) 465.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 466.

⁸⁵ S. Niccoli, trans. & ed., *Marsilio Ficino, El libro dell' amore* (Firenze 1987) 4.4; Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 94.

⁸⁶ Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 94; M. Sudduth, "Pico della Mirandola's Philosophy of Religion," *Pico della Mirandola: New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge 2008) 68–69.

an emanation from the One and not a creation per se.⁸⁷ According to Michael Allen, Pico adds that God created the Ideas in the Intellect.⁸⁸ But Pico's text does not offer any evidence to support Allen's argument. Pico once again prefers types of the verb *produco* instead of *creo*. The two verbs indicate different philosophical perspectives, as it is obvious. Although Pico seems to be confused, the use of words that refer to creation would be interpreted as rather loose interpretation of the Neoplatonic theory on the Intellect, since the general wording of the phrases suggests that *creatura* implies the emergence of One's thought and thinking. The same confusion could be found and in other passages of Pico's *Commento*.⁸⁹ But Pico insists. Later in the *Commento* he argues that Intellect (*mente angelica*) consists of potency and act. Potency, the unlimited is equated with matter and act, the limit, is form.⁹⁰ The Aristotelian flavor of his philosophy is obvious despite the fact that Pico mentions a passage from the Platonic *Philebus*.⁹¹ Intellect, like created things, is consisted of different principles. But potency is imperfection. Furthermore, as Allen suggests, Pico's view lacks consistency.⁹² Pico's contradictions have further implications. In another passage he describes the Intellect (*anima intellettuale e angelica*) in a different way: unformed substance, the original prime matter, took form by God and became Intellect.⁹³ This is not an act of pure creation, according either Christians or the Neoplatonists. In favor of my translation of Pico's phrase *opifex intellectus* as Demiurge—Intellect is Pico's unambiguous affirmation that the Intellect creates the universe: *dalla quale poi era prodotto el resto del mondo* (from which is produced the rest of the world).⁹⁴ Similar arguments are reproduced and in other passages of the *Commento*.⁹⁵

Anaxagoras's quotation is crucial for Pico. Pico found in Anaxagoras the oldest ancient source which supported his key thesis that all things exist in all things in their own mode, although he has the impression that Moses shared the same view.⁹⁶ Anaxagoras's philosophy permits Pico to establish his doctrine that all things share a portion of God within them, in their own way. As a result, humans are capable of achieving true knowledge and felicity. Philosophy is simply the ladder to God.⁹⁷ Despite the fact that Pico upholds the general pattern of medieval metaphysics, he rejects the fixed position of man in the ontological hierarchy. His anthropocentrism is prevalent. Man has the chance to become everything. Pico asserts that man contains all things in himself as their center, just like God contains all things as their origin:

⁸⁷ Pico della Mirandola, "Commento" (n. 78 above) 467–468.

⁸⁸ Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 95.

⁸⁹ Pico della Mirandola, "Commento" (n. 78 above) 511.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 472.

⁹¹ Plato, "Philebus," *Platonis opera*, ed. J. Burnet (Oxford 1901, repr. 1967) 2.23c.

⁹² Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 97.

⁹³ Pico della Mirandola, "Commento" (n. 78 above) 480–481.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 511.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 472–473.

⁹⁶ Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus" (n. 21 above) 187–189.

⁹⁷ Pico della Mirandola, "De hominis dignitate" (n. 4 above) 118; Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus," VII, Proemium (n. 21 above) 324–338; Sudduth, "Pico" (n. 86 above) 61–80.

quod Deus in se omnia continet uti omnium principium, homo autem in se omnia continet uti omnium medium.⁹⁸ (God contains all things in himself as their origin, and man contains all things in himself as their center.)⁹⁹

As a consequence, Anaxagoras's principle is supportive to Pico's metaphysics.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, Anaxagoras's metaphysical principle is supportive to Pico's method of allegorical interpretation, which is indispensable for his syncretism and his attempt to reveal hidden truths in every text or level of reality.¹⁰¹

But the crucial question is if and to what extent Anaxagoras's philosophy influenced Pico's thought. Anaxagoras assumes that all things are found together in the original mixture and everything is in everything at all times. But this mixture was unlimited (*ἄπειρον*), undifferentiated and exists eternally.¹⁰² As a result, *creatio ex nihilo*, which Pico defends, in a typical Platonic vocabulary and fashion, especially in his *Heptaplus*,¹⁰³ is not compatible with Anaxagoras's model. In addition, it is not clear whether Pico was aware of the fact that Anaxagoras's Intellect is the only thing in which the principle everything in everything does not apply,¹⁰⁴ since the Intellect is not mixed, let aside that Anaxagoras's Intellect is corporeal.¹⁰⁵ Pico refutes instead Anaxagoras's argument and insists that the Intellect is greatly mixed, since *maxima mixtio coincidit cum maxima simplicitate in natura intellectuali* (since the greatest mixture coincides with the greatest simplicity in the intellectual nature).¹⁰⁶ Pico expresses a similar view in the *Commento*, where he argues that only God is without discord, while the Intellect, as a mixture of potency and act, is composed of discord and concord.¹⁰⁷ Anaxagoras's wording suggests that there are some things in which Intellect is present, while in others Intellect is not present.¹⁰⁸ It is possible that Pico, despite his reliance on Proclus's thought, follows Plotinus's and not Proclus's interpretation of Anaxagoras's philosophy concerning the principle everything in everything.¹⁰⁹ Plotinus's interpretation, although attempted in passing, is convenient for Pico's view that the greatest mixture coincides with the greatest simplicity in the intellectual nature.¹¹⁰ Farmer holds that Pico comes to that paradoxical conclusion so as to reconcile Averroism and Christianity on the thorny issue of personal immortality.¹¹¹ Once again Farmer's argument is doubtful, since Pico calls Averroes an infidel, whose

⁹⁸ Pico della Mirandola, "Heptaplus" (n. 21 above) 302.

⁹⁹ Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man* (n. 4 above) 135.

¹⁰⁰ Pico della Mirandola, "De hominis dignitate" (n. 4 above) 104–106.

¹⁰¹ Sudduth, "Pico" (n. 86 above) 69.

¹⁰² DK (n. 10 above) B12.

¹⁰³ Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 104; C. Black, *Pico's Heptaplus and biblical hermeneutics* (Leiden 2006) 214–225; Cassirer, "Giovanni Pico" (n. 45 above) 24; Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (n.1 above) 103–105.

¹⁰⁴ DK B11.

¹⁰⁵ Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (n. 11 above) 365.

¹⁰⁶ Pico della Mirandola, "Conclusiones" (n. 6 above) 3>22; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 405.

¹⁰⁷ Pico della Mirandola, "Commento" (n. 78 above) 495–496; Allen, "The Birth Day" (n. 20 above) 97.

¹⁰⁸ DK (n. 10 above) B11; Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (n. 11 above) 366.

¹⁰⁹ Plotinus, *Enneades* (n. 25 above) V. 8. 4. 5–11; Stamatelos, *Plotinus* (n. 26 above) 149.

¹¹⁰ Farmer, *Syncretism in the West* (n. 5 above) 321.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* 113–114.

views are interesting solely for academic disputation.¹¹² Despite Pico's intentions, Plotinus's interpretation is supportive for Pico's argumentation. Furthermore, Pico was forced to concede, although he did not do it, that, as Plato suggested,¹¹³ while Anaxagoras's explanation is not simply materialistic,¹¹⁴ is a solid physical explanation since there is no answer on the question why the intellect arranges things in the best possible way.

¹¹² G. Pico della Mirandola, "Apologia," *Opera omnia Ioannis Pici Mirandulae* (Basel 1557) 237; P. R. Blum, "Pico, Theology, and the Church," *Pico della Mirandola, New Essays*, ed. M. V. Dougherty (Cambridge 2008) 44.

¹¹³ Plato, *Phaedo* (n. 40 above) 95a–100a.

¹¹⁴ D. W. Graham, "Anaxagoras: Science and Speculation in the Golden Age," *Early Greek Philosophy: The Presocratics and the Emergence of Reason*, ed. J. McCoy (Washington DC 2013) 145–146.