

ELENCHOS 2014/1

STUDIE SAGGI

GÉRARD JOURNÉE

LES AVATARS D'UNE DÉMONE: À PROPOS DE PARMÉNIDE FR. 28B13

Abstract

It is a striking fact that the role played by Parmenides' female divinity (*he daimon*) in the Doxa is not adequately reflected in ancient doxography. While Parmenides' description, known from Simplicius' quotation of fr. B12, makes of her the main origin of generation (she steers all things and initiates the "odious birth and mixing of everything"), she does not seem to have featured as a cause in the ancient doxographical reports about Parmenides' causal principles, starting with Aristotle. Even more puzzling: while Simplicius reports that this female divinity was the one who "devised to make Eros, the first of all gods" (according to fr. B13, which Simplicius quotes in the wake of fr. B12), Plato and Aristotle, who also quote the fragment, leave the verb of this sentence without any clear subject, so that we can't elicit from them that the divinity in question was responsible for the origin of Eros. This paper tries to show how and why the status of Parmenides' female divinity in Plato and Aristotle and then in later doxography was reduced to that of a sheer metaphor.

Keywords

Parmenides, demoness, Eros, Plato, Aristotle

EDUARDO H. MOMBELLO

SOBRE EL PENSAMIENTO Y LA EXPRESIÓN DE LA EXPERIENCIA SENSOPERCEPTUAL EN PLATÓN,
PHILEBUS 38B-39D (PARTE I)

Abstract

In this essay I defend a reconstruction of the epistemological theory that, in a metaphorical way, Plato develops in *Philebus* 38b-39d. This theory explains how the human beings are capable of considering the experience's facts. At the core of this theory, the soul is the intermediate point of a general process that allows to emit a statement related to objects of the world. So this theory also registers as a part of the history of the philosophical contemporary semantics. I will argue that three analytically separable stages are distinguished in connection with this operational mediation of the soul. At the first stage, the human soul gets blindly the formal characters of those facts by means of a composite *pathema*, which corresponds to a *hexis* of *doxazein* (form an opinion) and produces a fundamental *doxa-logos*. The second stage is the moment of the doctrine that explains the reason why we are conscious of what we have grasped in the analytical previous level. At the third stage, one may emit the utterances of those facts. Every stage corresponds to a concept of *doxa-logos* which have different characteristics, and it is opportune that they are distinguished in the comprehension of that theory. I argue for this reading against a number of alternatives.

Keywords

Platonic epistemology, soul, semantics, philosophy of language, empiricism

FABIENNE BAGHDASSARIAN

ARISTOTE, *MÉTAPHYSIQUE* H 5: LA GÉNÉRATION DES CONTRAIRES ET LA MATIÈRE

Abstract

This paper intends to show how *Metaphysics* H 5, through a discussion about the generation of contraries, not only investigates the nature of matter as a subject of change and shows how its potentialities are distinct and well-ordered, but also contributes to the science of sensible substance that Aristotle develops in book H.

Keywords

Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, matter, contraries, potentiality

SYLVAIN DELCOMMINETTE

MÉTAPHYSIQUE H 6: UNITÉ DE L'*OUSIA*, UNITÉ DE L'*EIDOS*

Abstract

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* H 6 is a very disputed text. Though it is clearly devoted to the problem of the unity of definition, commentators diverge as to what the *definiendum* is supposed to be: is it *eidos*, as Book Z seems to imply, or rather *ousia* as a compound of matter and *eidos*? In this paper, I propose to examine this issue by offering a new translation and a careful reading of the text which aims at reconstructing its different argumentative steps. I show how the different problems identified by commentators are interwoven and in what sense their solution might be considered as literally identical, provided that Aristotle's leading concepts are interpreted as "concepts of reflection". This

interpretation also makes it possible to understand the difficult concept of “intelligible matter”, of whose mentions I propose a general assessment. Finally, it sheds light on the argumentative sequence formed by Books Z, H and Θ of the *Metaphysics*, and more precisely by their conclusive chapters.

Keywords

Aristotelian metaphysics, *ousia*, *eidōs*, matter, unity

DISCUSSIONI, NOTE E RASSEGNE

JEAN-CLAUDE PICOT – WILLIAM BERG

CLEOMBROTUS CITES EMPEDOCLES IN PLUTARCH’S *DE DEFECTU*: A QUESTION OF METHOD IN INTERPRETING FR. 24 DK

Abstract

The present article is meant to illustrate a method of analyzing an ambiguous citation with the help not only of its context, but also of literary parallels presumably known to the cited author. In an earlier article in this journal (*Along a Mountain Path with Empedocles* (31 B 24 D.-K), «Elenchos», xxxiii (2012) pp. 5-20), we concluded that Empedocles’ fr. 24 rules out the method, employed by other poets, of “attaching speech-summits to speech-summits” (κορυφὰς ἐτέρας ἐτέρησι προσάπτων μύθων) – fitting climactic points one to another – and instead favors the method of following a single path of discourse to the argument’s end (τελέειν ἀτραπὸν μίαν). In a subsequent issue of «Elenchos», xxxiii (2012) pp. 301-34) Denis O’Brien disputed our conclusions, suggesting instead that Empedocles was merely advising himself to make his way through the “speech-summits” without losing sight of the “single path” and its conclusion. The κορυφαί, then, would be not climaxes of disconnected discourses, but only topics – chapter heads – of a single discourse. The present article argues that this view not only underrates the ironic force of the plural *koruphai* applied to *muthon*; it also disregards the real function of *prosapton*, which elsewhere signifies a joining through physical contact rather than the figurative “passing by” that O’Brien suggests. Fr. 24 is not, as O’Brien supposes, Empedocles’ advice to himself; it is a critique aimed at rival poets who heap arguments one upon another in an absurd and ridiculous fashion, as if heaping Pelion upon Ossa. Cleombrotus’ citation of Empedocles, then, was an allusion not to the main points of his own discourse, but to the danger of being side-tracked into entirely new topics, a danger that Philip’s digression had just posed. Finally, we may have confirmation of this negative view of the “summits” in Aristophanes’ allusion to Empedocles’ “single path” at *Clouds* 76.

Keywords

Empedocles, Plutarch, Pindar, speech-summits, philological method

JOHN GLUCKER

MORTAL COMBAT: PLATO, *CRITIAS* 107B4

Abstract

For the difficult ἴσμεν ὡς ἔχομεν, C.F. Hermann proposed ἴστε μὲν ὡς ἔχομεν. But from what follows immediately, Critias’ audience does not yet know these issues, and an explanation has to be offered. Analysing the course of Critias’ introductory comments, and his uses of the contrast θεῖα/θνητά in these comments, I propose θνητῶν and δυσμενῶς ἔχομεν. In Plato and some contemporaries like Xenophon, Isocrates and Demosthenes, δυσμενής and cognates – contrasted with εὐνοῦς, εὐμενής, and φιλικός – refer to hostile or combative *attitudes of mind* rather than to the older sense of outright physical war. So is the only appearance of the adverbial δυσμενῶς, together with μαχητικῶς, in Plato: *Theaet.* 168b3, in the context of a philosophical debate. The words of encouragement to Critias uttered by the general Hermocrates at 108a5-b7 emphasize the need for a “fighting spirit” in what Critias is about to expose.

Keywords

Plato, *Critias*, “fighting” expressions, debate, textual criticism

STEFANO MARTINELLI TEMPESTA

LA NUOVA EDIZIONE DI DIOGENE LAERZIO

Abstract

Some thoughts about the new edition of Diogenes Laertius by Tiziano Dorandi.

Keywords

Diogenes Laertius, textual criticism, manuscript tradition