

Growing the Profile of Platonic Studies in Olympiodorus' Alexandria Harold Tarrant

A. Possible order of Olympiodoran commentaries, away from trust in syllogistic:

1. *Commentary on Plato's Gorgias*
2. *Commentary on Aristotle's Categories*
3. *Commentary on Plato's Alcibiades I*
4. =*Commentary on Plato Phaedo*
=*Commentary on Aristotle's Meteorologica*

B. Late period *eulabeia*. [thanks to Chiara Militello]

- a. προσέθηκε δὲ τὸ ‘σχεδὸν’ ἢ διὰ φιλοσοφίας εὐλάβειαν ἢ διὰ τὸ μὴ πάντα εἰρηκέναι τὰ σχήματα τῶν κομητῶν. (*in Meteor.* 268.26-28).
- b. οὐκ ἐνδοιάζων τὸ ‘εἰκός’, ἀλλὰ τοντέστι τὸ ἐοικός. ἐπάγει δὲ τὸ ‘ἴσως τὸ ἀληθὲς γνωσόμεθα’ δι’ εὐλάβειαν· ἐπεὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ λέγων ὅτι ‘ἀδαμαντίνοις δεσμοῖς δεῖ ταῦτα ἔχοντα κατιέναι εἰς Ἀιδου’ (*in Phd.* 6.14.1-3).
- c. Καὶ τι ἡνύσαμεν, ἐκεῖσε ἐλθόντες σαφές [*Phd.* 69d5]: οὐχ ὅτι ἡγνόει ὁ Σωκράτης καὶ διστάζων ταῦτα λέγει, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο διὰ φιλόσοφον εὐλάβειαν· (*in Phd.* 8.17.1-2).

C. Lack of trust in syllogistic (*in Phd.* 10.3.1-6):

ώστε τὴν συλλογιστικὴν μέθοδον, ἐφ’ ἢ ὁ Περίπατος σεμνύνεται, μῆθον ὁ Πλάτων ἐκάλεσεν.

cf. (*Prolegomena to Logic* 18.4-7) Olympiodorus prefers the Platonic concentration on proving things without attention to syllogistic figures to the opposite procedure that he associates with Aristotle.

D. The *Timaeus* and its Demiurge as key theological source?

Use of *Timaeus* in Olymp.: quotes 27d6-28a1 (*in Phd.* 13.1.4), 29e1-2 (5.2.5-6) and 47b1 (4.7.2, 4.8.7-8), mentions 30b1 (4.14.5) and 42d4-5 (7.4.4-5). While it lacks longer quotations, a similar range of uses is found in *in Alc.*, but only allusions are found in *in Grg.*

E. Asclepius on the young gods (*in Met.* 194.33-34):

μετὰ γάρ, φησί, τὸ ποιῆσαι τὰ οὐράνια εἶπε πρὸς αὐτὰ θεοὶ θεῶν, ὃν ἐγὼ δημιουργός and 194.17-18:

τοῦ τοίνυν ἀεὶ εἶναι τὴν γένεσιν αἴτιος, φησίν, ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, τῆς δὲ φθορᾶς καὶ τῆς γενέσεως αἴτια τὰ οὐράνια, τῶν δὲ καθ’ ἔκαστα Σωκράτους καὶ Αλκιβιάδου οἱ γονεῖς ως ἀτόμων.

F. Asclepius on the attributes, features, role of god:

Goodness (309.11-13):

διό φαμεν ὅτι ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθός· ἐν τούτῳ γάρ ἐστιν ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐσία·

(cf. 77.14-15) οὗτε γάρ θεὸς κακῶν αἴτιος οὗτε θέμις τοῦτο λέγειν.

Ideas as thoughts of the Demiurge (69.24-26):

ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐν ἄλλῳ καὶ ἄλλῳ ὄντι Πλάτωνι μάχεται, τοῖς ὑποτιθεμένοις τὰς ιδέας ταῦτας αὐτὰς καθ’ ἐαυτὰς ὑπαρχούσας καὶ οὖσας κεχωρισμένας τοῦ νοῦ.

Ideas give rise to the creative *logoi*, passed down to *Physis* (70.26-29):

ἡ γὰρ φύσις οὐδέν ἔστιν ἔτερον ἢ ἔλλαμψις ἐκεῖθεν προϊοῦσα καὶ καταλάμπουσα τὰ τῇδε καὶ ἔχουσα ἐν ἑαυτῇ τοὺς δημιουργικοὺς λόγους, οὓς μέντοι γε ἐπιστρέφουσα πρὸς ἑαυτήν· διό φαμεν καὶ ἀλόγως αὐτὴν ποιεῖν, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν φυτοῖς ὄρᾶται καὶ ἐν ἀλόγοις ζῷοις.

Asclepius compares these *logoi* as they function in god, in us and in nature (81.1-3):

ἔχουσιν οὖν καὶ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ ἡ φύσις τοὺς λόγους· ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν θεὸς ἔχει αὐτοὺς καὶ γνωστικούς καὶ δημιουργικούς, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ γνωστικούς, ἡ δὲ φύσις δημιουργικούς.

Note 148.27-34 where the first cause is placed above both particulars and universals:

ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ καθόλου ἔστιν ἡ πρώτη ἀρχή· τὰ γὰρ καθόλου ἢ ἐν τῇ φύσει θεωρεῖται ἥγονυ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ. ἔχει γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ τοὺς λόγους ἐν ἑαυτῇ τῶν πραγμάτων γνωστικούς, ἡ δὲ φύσις δημιουργικούς· ὁ δὲ θεός ἔστιν ὁ

(30)

ἐνσπείρων ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς καὶ τῇ φύσει τοὺς λόγους τούτους τοὺς καθόλου· ὥστε καὶ ὑπὲρ τὸ καθόλου ἔστι, καὶ οὐδὲν δυνάμει ἔστι παρ’ αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ ἐνέργεια ἄνευ δυνάμεως ἐπὶ τοῦ νοῦ, ἡ δὲ πρωτίστη ἀρχὴ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἐνέργειάν ἔστιν.

Plato's demiurge using the Ideas as paradigms at 365.1-5:

πρὸς ἂν ἀφορῶν ὁ δημιουργὸς παράγει ἀναπάγει· εἰ μήτι γε διὰ τούτων λόγον τινὰ ἐδήλου καὶ οὐκ οὐσίας αὐτὰς καθ’ αὐτὰς ὑπαρχούσας, εἰς ἃς ἀποβλέπων ὁ δημιουργὸς παράγει ἀποιεῖ.

G. Rejected theory of the Demiurge as *skopos* of *Gorgias* (in *Grg.* proem 4)

ἄλλοι δὲ λέγουσιν ὅτι σκοπὸν ἔχει περὶ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ διαλεχθῆναι. καὶ οὗτοι δὲ ἀπὸ μέρους [sc. τὸν σκοπὸν] λαμβάνουσιν, ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῷ μύθῳ ὡς ἔχομεν μαθεῖν μέντοι τοῦ δημιουργοῦ.

Compare anon. *Proleg.* 22.57: περὶ τοῦ ἑαυτὸν ὄρῶντος νοῦ !!

H. Division of god and intellect? (in *Alc.* 217.17-21)

‘ἀποβλέπων δὲ εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν εὐρήσεις ἐνόντα θεῖα ἀγάλματα, νοῦν γὰρ καὶ θεόν· καὶ διὰ μὲν τοῦ νοῦ καθαρτικῶς ἐνεργήσεις, διὰ δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ θεωρητικῶς. ἔστιν γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ ὁ κατὰ σχέσιν θεός· καὶ διὰ μὲν τῆς τοῦ νοῦ ἐλλάμψεως ἔχομεν τὰς κοινὰς ἐννοίας, διὰ δὲ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ τοὺς ἐνθουσιασμούς’.

I. Other Olympiodoran passages on god:

The he shadow of *Metaphysics* lambda: (in *Grg.* 42.2)

δεῖ οὖν μιμεῖσθαι τὸν ὄλον κόσμον, ἐν δὲ τῷ ὄλῳ κόσμῳ εἰς ἔστιν ἀρχων· τίς οὗτος; ὁ θεός, εἴ γε ‘οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω’.

Oneness:

(a) ὁ γὰρ Σωκράτης μονάδα μιμεῖται πρὸς τὸ ἐν ὄρῶν· ἀπλοῦς γὰρ ὁ θεός ἐξ οὐδενὸς παραγόμενος ... (in *Grg.* proem 8)

(b) καὶ γὰρ ἴσμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν τῷ πρῶτον αἴτιον τὸν θεόν, οὐδὲ γὰρ πολλὰ πρῶτα· καὶ τοῦτο τὸ πρῶτον οὐδὲ ὀνόματος ἔτυχεν, τὰ γὰρ ὀνόματα ἰδιοτήτων τινῶν εἰσὶ σημαντικά· (in *Grg.* 4.3.11-14)

(c) ἐνὰς γὰρ ὁ θεός καὶ ἐνοειδῆς· (in *Alc.* 51.16-17)

Involvement in comos: (in *Grg.* 39.2)

φησὶ γὰρ ὅτι πόλις ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ὁ κόσμος, ἄρχων δὲ ὁ θεός· δεῖ οὖν ἔξομοιοῦσθαι τῷ τε θεῷ καὶ τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ πρὸς ἐκείνην τὴν πολιτείαν ζῆν καὶ μὴ πρὸς ταύτην.

Cosmic illumination: (*in Grg. 48.7*)

ώς τὸ φῶς αὐτῇ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ φωτίζει, οὕτως καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτῇ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ κοσμοποιεῖ

Goodness: (*in Phd. 2.5*)

πᾶν γὰρ ἀγαθὸν ἐκ θεοῦ, ὥσπερ καὶ πᾶν φῶς ἀφ' ἡλίου, διότι μονὰς ἀγαθότητος ὁ θεός.

cf. οὐδὲν δὲ μάτην οὐδὲ ὁ θεὸς οὐδὲ ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ. (*in Grg. 50.2*)

Eternal rather than everlasting: (*in Mete. 146.19-23*)

ὅθεν αἰώνιον μὲν λέγομεν τὸν θεὸν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐν χρόνῳ τὸ εἶναι ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ πάντα χρόνον καὶ ἐνεστῶτα καὶ παρωχηκότα καὶ μέλλοντα ως νῦν ἔχειν αὐτόν (αὕτη γὰρ ἡ φύσις τοῦ αἰώνιου)· ἀίδιον δ' οὐ λέγομεν, ἐπειδὴ οὐτ' ἐν χρόνῳ ἔχει τὸ εἶναι.