THE CHALDEAN ORACLES

TEXT, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY

BY

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E. J. BRILL
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PREFACE

An earlier version of this work was presented as a Ph.D. Dissertation at the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1982. The present version (slightly revised) has benefited from consulting recent publications; e.g., Glenn Morrow’s and John Dillon’s translation of Proclus’ *Commentary on Plato’s Parmenides* (Princeton, 1987), Carlos Steel’s second volume of Moerbeke’s Latin translation of Proclus’ *Parmenides* (Louvain, 1985), and recent scholarship (through 1988) on the *Oracles*, Neoplatonism, and related material. Regretfully, volume five of Saffrey-Westerink’s Budé edition of Proclus’ *Platonic Theology* was not available to me when this manuscript went to press.

My thanks go to Birger Pearson, my thesis advisor, who first suggested this project to me and skillfully guided the original thesis to completion and who has remained a valued friend and colleague; to Joseph Margen and Alva Bennett, who also served on my doctoral committee and were instrumental in developing my early interest in Greek and Latin; to Gregory Shaw, for his insightful comments and stimulating conversation over the past several years; to Randi Glick and Marilyn McCarty, who carefully typed the original manuscript; to Randall Smith, whose expertise in both classical languages and computer technology made it possible (and pleasant) for me to convert this manuscript to Nota Bene. I also wish to thank H. S. Versnel and F. T. van Straten for accepting this work in their *SGRR* series and Julian Deahl, Brill religion editor, for his advice and patience. Mr. Theo Joppe is to be acknowledged for his skill and speed in bringing this book to completion.

Personal thanks of love and appreciation go to my family; my daughter, Andrea, and my sons, Christopher and Geoffrey and their families. Most of all, I wish to thank my husband, Richard Comstock, for his unfailing good humor, patience, and support. It is to him that this book is lovingly dedicated.
ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORT TITLES

For full citations, see bibliography.

AJP
Allogenes
Ann.
Anon. Taur.
ANRW
Ap. John
Arist.
De an.
Arnobius
Adv. nat.
Asclepius
Augustine
Conf.
BG
C.H.
CMAG
Cod. Bruce, Untitled
CR
Cremer
CQ
Damascius
Des Places
Des Places, “Notes”
Diot. 8-9
Dodd, “New Light”
Dodd, “Theurgy”
Enc. Univ.
Entretiens Hardt
Ex. Thed.
Eurip.
Iph. Taur.
Eusebius
P.E.
Festugière, Rép.
Festugière, Rép.

American Journal of Philology
Allogenes (NHC XI,3)
Annuaire pour l’encouragement des études grecques en
Frans
Anonymus Taurinensis
Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt
The Apocryphon of James (NHC I,2)
The Apocryphon of John (NHC II,1)
Aristotle
De Anima
Arnobius
Adversus nationes
Asclepius 21-29 (NHC VI,3)
Augustine
Confessions
Papyrus Berolinensis 8502
Corpus Hermeticum
Catalogue des manuscrits alchimiques grecs
The Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex
Classical Review
F. Cremer, Die Chaldäischen Orakel und Jamblich de
mysteriis (1969)
Classical Quarterly
Damascius, Dubitationes et Solutiones de Primitis Princi-
piis in Platonis Parmenidem
Damascius, Commentary on Plato’s Phaedo in L. G.
Weerink, ed., The Greek Commentaries on Plato’s
Phaedo, vol. II (1977)
É. Des Places, Oracles Chaldaïques (1971)
É. Des Places, “Notes sur quelques Oracles Chal-
daïques” in Melanges Delebecq (1983)
The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth (NHC VI,6)
E. R. Dodds, “New Light on the ‘Chaldean
Oracles’” (HTR, 54, 1961; rpt. Lewy², 1978)
E. R. Dodds, “Theurgy and its Relationship to
Neoplatonism” (JRS, 37, 1947; rpt. in The Greeks
and the Irrational, 1957)
Encyclopædia Universalis
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A.-J. Festugière, Proclus: Commentaire sur la Répu-
blique, 3 vols. (1970)
A.-J. Festugière, La Révélation d’Hermès Trismégiste,
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<th>ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORT TITLES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Geudtner</td>
<td>O. Geudtner, Die Seltenlehre der Chaldaïschen Orakel (1971)</td>
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<td>Geo. Eg.</td>
<td>The Gospel of the Egyptians (NHC III,2 + IV,2)</td>
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<td>Geo. Truth</td>
<td>The Gospel of Truth (NHC I,3)</td>
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<td>Hadot, Porphyre</td>
<td>P. Hadot, Porphyre et Victorinus, 2 vols. (1968)</td>
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<td>Hermias Phaedr.</td>
<td>Hermias In Platonis Phaedrum Scholia</td>
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<td>Hesiod Thang</td>
<td>Hesiod Thaugoria Hierocles</td>
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<td>In aur. curn.</td>
<td>Commentarius in aurum carmen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hipp. Haer.</td>
<td>Hippolytus Refutatio omnium haereticorum</td>
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<td>Homer</td>
<td>Homer Ilid Odyssey</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Parm.</td>
<td>In Parmenidem in In Platonis Dialogos Commentariorum Fragmenta, ed. J. Dillon (1973)</td>
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<td>De myst.</td>
<td>De mysteriorum Irenaeus Adversus haereses</td>
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<td>JRS</td>
<td>Journal of Roman Studies Lobec, Aglaoph. Julian (Emperor Or) Kroll</td>
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<td>Lewy</td>
<td>Hans Lewy, Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy (1956; new ed. 1978 = Lewy²)</td>
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<td>Lucian</td>
<td>Lucian of Samosata Philo Vis.-Paphl. Philostratus Philostratus Lydus De mens.</td>
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<td>Macr.</td>
<td>Macrobius In Somn. Marcius Victorinus Ad. Ar. H. Hymni Marsanes</td>
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<td>NHC</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The Chaldean Oracles are a collection of abstruse, hexameter verses purported to have been "handed down by the gods" (θεοπαράδοσα) to a certain Julian the Chaldean and/or his son, Julian the Theurgist, who flourished during the late second century C.E. Although the term "Chaldean" is generally understood in a metaphorical sense to designate Julian's "spiritual" affinity with the wisdom of the East, it has also been argued that Chaldea was the actual homeland of Julian pater, who may have migrated to Rome following Trajan's military campaigns in the East. Another possibility recently suggested by H.-D. Saffrey is that the Juliani may have been of Syrian origin. This suggestion is supported in part by the occurrence of the names "Ad" and "Adad" (the latter a corruption of the Syrian Hadad) in Chaldean material preserved by Proclus (see esp. notes to fr. 169). In addition, the striking parallels between several of the fragments of the Oracles and fragments of Numenius (who was both a contemporary of Julian fils as well as a native of Apamea in Syria) point in the same direction.

Saffrey would also understand the term "Chaldean" in a metaphorical sense, but with the specific meaning of one who is adept in magic (an association regularly made in Antiquity). Thus the citation in the Suda (no. 433) that Julian pater was both Χαλδαῖος and φιλόσοφος would mean that he was both a practitioner of magic as well as a speculative thinker (and not, e.g., a philosopher from Chaldea). However, it was Julian fils (or Julian the Theurgist; see Suda, no. 434) who was the actual "author" of the Oracles (λόγων 8' ἐπῶν) as well as the writer of works on θεοργικά and τελεστάχ. (The later Neoplatonists also attest to other prose works of Julian fils; e.g., several books on the Celestial Zones—see Proclus, In Tim., III, 27, 10. According to the Suda entry, Julian pater wrote only

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1 This was the opinion, e.g., of J. Bidez, La Vie de l'Emperateur Julien (Paris, 1930), p. 75; F. Cumont, La Théologie Solaire du Paganisme Romain (Paris, 1909), p. 476. H. Lewy, Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy (Cairo, 1956; Paris, 1978), p. 428, opts for a more general "Oriental origin."
3 See Saffrey, p. 216. Saffrey also notes here (following the suggestion of F. Cremmer, Die Chaldaischen Orakel und Jamblitch de Mystereis, Meisenheim am Glan, 1969, p. 132, n. 224) that the expression 8' in Chaldea bonus (as cited in Porphyry, De regresso animae, p. 29*, 16, Bidez) should be similarly understood as designating "a man worthy with respect to the Chaldean rites" and not (in the usual translation) as "a man of worth from Chaldea." (In this latter sense, see Lewy, p. 286 and n. 106, who identifies this unnamed man as Julian the Chaldean.)
INTRODUCTION

four books περὶ διαμόρφωσιν.) But Julian filis, like his father, was also a practitioner of magic or, more precisely, "theurgy" (and thus his surname "the Theurgist"). Indeed, as Saffrey notes, it may well be that the Oracles themselves were transmitted via the theurgic technique of "calling" and "receiving" (see discussion infra), with Julian the Theurgist functioning as the "medium" through whom Julian the Chaldean extracted oracles from Plato's "soul." (The crucial evidence here is a passage from Psellus. See esp. notes to frs. 84 and 130.) Saffrey would further distinguish between these Platonicizing or "philosophical" oracles and those he would label as "theurgy proper," i.e., the so-called "magical" oracles comprised of "older" material perhaps assembled or collected by Julian the Chaldean. Although the Oracles (in whole or part) may well have been "received" via mediumistic trance (other scholars would label the Oracles "forgeries"), a clear and precise distinction between "philosophical" and "theurgical" fragments is problematic (see further below).

Whatever the mode of transmission, of singular importance is the fact that the Oracles were regarded by the later Neoplatonists—from Porphyry (c. 232-303 C.E.) to Damascius (c. 462-537 C.E.)—as authoritative revelatory literature equal in importance only to Plato's Timaeus. (Cumont, I believe, was the first to refer to them as the "Bible of the Neoplatonists"). Unfortunately, what remain of the Oracles are only

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1 Saffrey, p. 219.
2 Saffrey, pp. 219-220.
3 This is the opinion, e.g., of P. Merlan, "Religion and Philosophy from Plato's Phaino to the Chaldean Oracles," HHR, 1, 1953, p. 174. E. R. Dodds also admits this possibility, but adds: "...their diction is so bizarre and bombastic, their thought so obscure and incoherent, as to suggest the trance utterances of modern 'spirit guides' than the deliberate efforts of a forger." (See "Theurgy and its Relationship to Neoplatonism," JRS, 57, 1957, p. 36 = The Orks and the Irrational, Boston, 1957, p. 284.) Dodds, then, like Saffrey, suggests mediumship as the "source" of the Oracles but, unlike Saffrey, assigns Julian filis only the role of recording these utterances (and not that of actual medium). But the true authorship of the Oracles must remain in doubt. Although a collaboration between father and son (as Saffrey suggests) is an attractive solution (see also, Lewy, p. 5 and Exc. I, pp. 443-447, who suggests the same possibility, especially as a way of accounting for the indiscriminate use of the terms ùευρουργι and ùλαυδιβασις by the later Neoplatonists when quoting the Oracles), nevertheless, the possibility of single authorship cannot be absolutely ruled out. In this regard, see the remarks of P. Hadot, "Bilan et perspectives sur les Oracles Chaldéens," Lewy, pp. 703-706, who delineates all the problems but with no hard and fast conclusions. Similarly É. Des Places, Oracles Chaldéens (Paris, 1971), p. 7, thinks it best, in the last analysis, to "protect the anonymity of the Oracles."
4 See F. Cumont, Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism (London, 1911; rpt. New York, 1956), p. 279, n. 66. Cf. W. Theiler, "Die Chaldäischen Orakel und die Hymnen des Synergos," Schriften der Königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft, 18, 1942, p. 1 = Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus (Berlin, 1966), p. 252: "...für die spätere Neuplatoniker die dem Orient fragments, quoted for the most part by the various Neoplatonists, although Chaldean notions are also found in the writings of such Platonizing Christians as Arnobius of Sicca (c. 253-327 C.E.), Marius Victorinus (c. 280-363 C.E.), and Synesius of Cyrene (c. 370-413 C.E.). The Byzantine philosopher, Michael Psellus (c. 1019-1078 C.E.) also wrote several commentaries on the Oracles, inspired by Proclus. Fortunately, much of Psellus' work is extant, providing us with an important interpretive model albeit often Christianized. The extensive commentaries of Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Proclus, however, are lost. But from the fragments we do have, we can securely locate the Oracles in a Middle Platonic milieu, especially that type of Middle Platonism which had affinities with both Gnosticism and Hermeticism as well as links with Numerius. John Dillon has aptly labelled this congruence of Gnostic, Hermetic, and Chaldean thought as the "underworld of Platonism,"

entstammende Bibel);" M. P. Nilsson, Geschichte der griechischen Religion, II (München, 1961), p. 479: "die Bibel der Neuplatoniker;" Dodds, "New Light on the Chaldean Oracles," HTR, 54, 1961, p. 263 = Lewy, p. 693: "...the last important Sacred Book of pagan antiquity." "G. Kroll, De Oraculis Chaldæis (Breslau, 1894; rpt. Hildeshein, 1962), p. 70, referred to the Oracles as a form of "pagan gnosticism." Recently, M. Tardieu has reaffirmed Kroll's position ("...the system of the Oracles is incomprehensible unless we see at its foundation the development of the Gnostic systems around Valentinus") while, at the same time, refusing to characterize the Oracles with the term "gnosis." (See "La Gnoise Valentinienne et les Oracles Chaldéens," in The Rediscovery of Gnosticism, 1, ed. B. Layton, Leiden, 1980, pp. 194-237.) Tardieu's study is a structural analysis focusing on five propositions which locate the Oracles and Valentinianism in a shared physics, albeit religiously appropriated. But Tardieu's claim that the Oracles were dependent on this type of Gnosticism is overstated. The striking parallels between aspects of the Oracles and, e.g., "Sethian" Gnosticism (see infra) would preclude such a conclusion. A better solution, then, is that of Lewy who, although noting (but unsystematically) numerous parallels between the Oracles and Valentinianism, opts for a common Middle Platonic milieu (see pp. 311-398). In this regard, cf. J. Dillon, The Middle Platonists (London, 1977), pp. 384-389.

10 At one time, Bousset (Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen, 1914, p. 713; cited by Lewy, p. 320, n. 27) had suggested that the Chaldean system was dependent on Hermetic thought; however, again, a mutual dependence on a common milieu best accounts for similarities between the two. And so Dillon, pp. 389-392; Nock-Festugière, Corpus Hermeticum, I (Paris, 1972), p. VII.

11 The parallels here, in certain instances, are so similar that some form of direct dependency is surely involved. See, e.g., Num. fr. 17 (Des Places) and Ch. Or., fr. 7; Num. fr. 15 (Des Places) and Ch. Or., fr. 8. (See, also, A.-J. Festugière, La Réalisation d'Immortalité, III, Paris, 1955, pp. 55-59 for additional parallels.) But in what direction? Festugière, "La Religion grecque à l'Epoque Romaine," REG, 64, 1951, p. 492 and J. H. Wasmink, "Porphyrios und Numerius," Entretiens Hardi, XII, 1965, pp. 43-44, argue for the priority of Numerius; Dodds, "Numerius and Ammonius," Entretiens Hardi, V, 1960, pp. 10-11 and Des Places, Numerius (Paris, 1973), p. 17, argue for the Oracles. Lewy, pp. 321-322 and Dillon, p. 364, would not, however, rule out the possibility of a common source. My own guess is that Numerius was posterior, but with the caveat that he borrowed selectively from the Oracles, as the differences in the two systems are often as striking as the similarities. See further comments in notes to fr. 7.
12 Dillon, p. 384.
an expression which nicely captures the rather murky quality of these various systems with a) their elaborate and often exasperating metaphysical constructions; b) an extreme derogation of material existence; c) a dualistic understanding of human nature that envisions the soul or mind as a "spark" of the Divine trapped in matter; d) a method of salvation or enlightenment that generally involves a spiritual and/or ritual ascent of the soul; e) a mythologizing tendency that hypostasizes various abstractions into quasi-mythical beings. This movement away from the school traditions of Platonism towards an unabashed religiosity is the hallmark of these systems, although all three retain a veneer of philosophical respectability by assimilating elements from the eclecticism of Platonic thought. For example, the highest God in all three systems is often described in Pythagorean terms as a "Monad" who either exists alongside of or extends into a "Dyad" (see fr. 8, 11, 12 and notes). However, in the "underworld" of Platonism, abstract philosophical speculation gives way at this point to mythic formulations and a complex proliferation of cosmic entities is introduced, with a dominant female principle, in each case, operating at all levels and directly responsible for material creation as we know it. In certain Gnostic systems, for example, she is Ennoia or Sophia; in the Chaldean system, Dynamis or Hecate; in the Hermetic (esp. C.H. I), Life or Nature. Despite the abstract quality of most of these names, a definite personal function is assigned to each: the Gnostic Sophia experiences feelings of grief and fear, she gives birth to the Demiurge, Ialdabaoth; the Chaldean Hecate generates life from her right hip; the Hermetic Nature entices and unites with the primal Anthropos.

This female principle ultimately reflects the World Soul of Plato's Timaeus, refracted in varying degrees through the prism of Middle Platonism; along the way, Plutarch will have assimilated this figure to the Egyptian Isis; Philo, to the Jewish figure of Wisdom; and Numenius will have split it into opposed good and evil entities. But it is only in the "underworld" of Platonism that philosophical speculation about this figure becomes part of revelatory myth, often to the extent that "knowing" the myth becomes an important condition of salvation (this is especially true of the Gnostic systems). In other words, knowledge for its

own sake passes over to "gnosis" for the sake of soteria, with spiritual enlightenment often coupled with magic and ritual as a means of freeing the soul. Although there is an ongoing debate as to what types of rituals may have been practiced in the various Gnostic and Hermetic communities (and, indeed, to what extent such communities even existed), it is clear that the Chaldean system included a complex aspect ritual involving purifications, trance, phantasmagoria, sacred objects, magical instruments and formulas, prayers, hymns, and even a contemplative element, all of which was practiced (most likely) in the context of a "mystery community." These and other issues are discussed in detail in the following outline.

I. THEOLOGY

A. First Principles

Chaldean theology largely reflects its Middle Platonist origins, with a stress in particular on the transcendence of the Highest God. In certain fragments, this transcendence approaches a via negativa, with the Highest God described as "snatched away" (fr. 3) or "existing outside" his products (fr. 84). In other fragments, however, the Highest God is positively characterized as "Father" (fr. 7, 14), "First" or "Paternal Intellect" (fr. 7, 39, 49, 108, 109), "Monad" (fr. 11, 26, 27), "Source" (fr. 13, 30, 37), and, perhaps even "One" (fr. 9, 9a). This vacillation between negating and affirming the Highest God is a common feature of Middle Platonism, a thoroughly transcendence in these matters achieved principally by Plotinus, whose "One" is not only beyond Intellect, but

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13 It should be noted here that the proliferation of entities in C.H. I (Poinndres) is less "fantastic" than either that of the Oribas or the various Gnostic systems. Although C. H. Dodds, at one time, had suggested that the Poinndres myth was a precursor of the system associated with Valentinus, "...the Valentinian system, apart from its definitely Christian elements, has the aspect of an elaboration of a system very like that of the Poinndres;" see The Bible and the Greeks, London, 1954, p. 208), any direct borrowing should be ruled out in favor of a mutual stream of influence.

14 On the role of cult and ritual in Hermeticism, see, now, J.-P. Mahé, Hermès en Haute-Egypte, I, (Quebec, 1978), pp. 54-59; L. Keiser, The Eighth Reveals the Ninth: A New Hermetic Initiation Disclosure (Seaside, CA, 1974), pp. 6-15; W. C. Green, Corpus Hermeticum XIII and Early Christian Literature (Leiden, 1979), pp. 40-43, 201-202; G. Fowden, The Egyptian Hermes, (Cambridge, 1987), passim. Other scholars, however, have argued against a cultic and/or ritual Hermeticism, suggesting instead only the existence of a literary phenomenon, with the texts read, perhaps, in the context of a "school" setting. See, e.g., Frasnètic, Rév., I, p. 84; W. Scott, Hermetica, I (Oxford, 1936; rpt. 1968), pp. 1-8. It should be no surprise, then, that the current debate among scholars on the problem of "Sethian" Gnosticism echoes this same division. See, e.g., F. Wisse, "Stalking those Elusive Sethians," Rediexory, II, pp. 564-577, who favors the "literary phenomenon" approach, arguing that there was no Sethian community as such, but only "like-minded Gnostics" reading various texts for the purpose of individual edification. In contrast, H. M. Schenke, "The Phenomenon of Gnostic Sethianism," Rediexory, II, pp. 588-616, not only posits the existence of a Sethian community or sect, but argues that the group was organized around a relatively coherent system of doctrine and cultic/ritual practice. A middle position between these extremes is now suggested by G. Stroumsa, Another Soul: Studies in Gnostic Mythology, (Leiden, 1984), e.g., pp. 4-8; 172 and passim.

beyond Being as well. In contrast, the Chaldean Supreme God is best characterized as Nous, albeit a self-contemplating Nous akin to Numenius’ First God (see fr. 8 and notes). But even here the Oracles vacillate: is the Father to be equated strictly with his Intellect or is the so-called Paternal Intellect to be regarded as the first emanation of the Father? And if so, of what substance then is the Father, if not intelligible? The fragmentary nature of the evidence does not permit any hard and fast conclusions on these matters; indeed, the Oracles elsewhere also designate the Father “Abyss” (a term especially familiar to the Gnostic sources; see fr. 18 and notes), as well as describing him in Stoic terms as essentially “fiery” in nature (see frs. 3 and 37), albeit totally transcendent. (Unlike the Stoic God, the Chaldean Father is in no sense immanent in the world.) Further, the later Neoplatonists also designated him ὀπαρχής, a notion which most likely derived from the Oracles, although only the verbal form ὀπαρχεῖν is found in the extant fragments (see frs. 1, 20, 84 and notes). In addition, the later Neoplatonists vacillated on the matter of his ontological status: Porphyry, for example, sometimes equated the Chaldean Father with the Plotinian One; Proclus, on the other hand, situated him beneath the One at the first level of the intelligible order (see fr. 3 and notes). In the last analysis, what can be affirmed about the Chaldean Supreme God is the fact of his transcendence, but not the precise nature of it.

In addition to this First God or Father (whose sole function is to “think” the Platonic word of Ideas; see frs. 37, 39, 40), there is a Second God or Demiurgic Intellect whose function is to fashion the intelligible (or Empyrean) world on the model of these Ideas (e.g., frs. 5, 33, 37). This Second Intellect is conceived of as dyadic in nature (see frs. 8 and 12) as he is turned both towards the intelligible and sensible realms (in the manner of Numenius’ Second God). In this regard, the Chaldean Second God is described as “Twice Transcendent” (διὰ ἑπτάκενα) whereas the First God is simply “Once Transcendent” (ὀπαρχεῖν; see fr. 169 and notes). These designations also underscore the notion that the Highest God (or “Once Transcendent”) exists as an indivisible unity, whereas the Second God (or “Twice Transcendent”) begins the process of division which ultimately leads to creation and generation. In the Oracles, this process of division is described in dynamic terms; the Second Intellect (as Demiurge) is said to project the Platonic Ideas (“divisions” or “lightning-bolts”) onto primal matter (or “wombs” of the World Soul) like Zeus hurling his thunderbolts (see esp. frs. 35 and 37). By this “action,” the initial movement towards material creation begins.

But this process entails the existence of a Third God, a feminine, generative entity, described either as “Power” (δύναμις) and situated as a medium figure between the First and Second Gods (e.g., fr. 4), or conflated with Hecate as the World Soul (e.g., frs. 6, 51-53, 56) and thus located (in traditional Platonic fashion) on the borders between the intelligible and sensible realms. In this last regard, Hecate is described either as a “girdling membrane” (fr. 6) through whom influences travel from one level of reality to another, or is depicted in anthropomorphomorphic terms as a goddess-like figure from whose right hip the particular souls of generation are said to issue (fr. 51).

The ambiguous localization of this feminine principle reflects an obvious truth: that a feminine element is necessary if there is to be a process of generation at all, whether at the highest or lowest levels. The figures of Ennoia and Sophia function in a similar manner in Valentinian Gnosticism. Indeed, the linking of “Power” with the Chaldean “Father” (or “Abyss”) suggests a primordial bisexual deity akin to the Gnostic Abyss-Ennoia or Abyss-Sigē (see fr. 4 and notes). Sigē or “silence” is also mentioned in the Oracles, but seemingly not as a fully hypostatized entity (see fr. 16 and notes). A bisexual First God is also a feature of C.H.—all these systems, then, underscoring the notion of an androgynous primogenitor who is the ultimate source of material creation, however dimly or darkly that creation is subsequently viewed.

Further, in the Chaldean system, the Father (or First Intellect), Power, and (Demiurgic) Intellect are regarded triadically; the Supreme God, in fine, understood as a triadic-monad or three-in-one deity (see frs. 26 and 27) whose Power and Intellect constitute, as it were, his immediate “faculties.” A “triple-powered” Monad is also a familiar figure in various Gnostic systems, sometimes understood as the Supreme God (e.g., Allogenes, NHC XI, 49,36-38), other times as a lesser being (e.g., Stelae Seth, NHC VII, 121,32-34). Of particular importance is the occurrence of the term τριδύναμος (or τριδύναμος) in several Gnostic texts (e.g., Cod. BruceUntitled, 3.15; 8.12; the Coptic equivalent would be πατριαμε οδαμ and variants; see, e.g., Marsanes, NHC X, 6,19) and the similar τριγλώχις and τριγλώχις in the Oracles (as descriptive of the Monad; see frs. 2, 26 and notes). Synesiou, who is dependent on the Oracles, prefers the term τριχάριος; see H. 9(1),66. Cf., also, our fr. 27: παρὰ γὰρ ἐν κόσμῳ λάμπει τρία, ἢ μονὰς ἢ οὐκ. In addition, in the Gnostic systems, this triple-powered One or Monad is said to be constituted of e.g., Existence (τὸ ζῶ, ὁπαρχής = η ἔτε παί ηε), Life (ζωή = ζωῆ), Thought (νοῆς = τίθεντες; see Allogenes, NHC XI, 49,26-31) or Existence (ὁπαρχής), Life (ζωή = ζωῆ), and Intellect (νοῆς; see Stelae Seth, NHC VII, 125,28-31), formulas which parallel the

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Neoplatonic triad Existence (ὕπαρξ), Power/Life (δύναμις/ζωή), Intellect (νοῦς). This Neoplatonic triad, in turn, reflects a conflation of the Chaldean παντήρ/ὑπάρξ, δύναμις, νοῦς with the Plotinian formula of Being (τὸ ὅν), Life (ζωή), Intellect (νοῦς). (See fr. 4 and notes and cf. Proclus, *El. Th.*, props. 101-103.)

Of further interest is the occurrence of the term τριδύναμον in the writings of Marius Victorinus as descriptive of the Christian God (e.g., *Adv. Ar.*, IV.21, 26). As such, the Christian Trinity is viewed by Victorinus as consisting of Father (or Being), Son (or Intellect), and a median, Holy Spirit (or Life) who is feminine in nature. Victorinus also refers to the “Spiritus” as mater (*Adv. Ar.*, I.58.12) and conexitio (*H., III*.242). A similar unorthodox understanding of the Christian Trinity is found in the *Hymns* of Synesius who, like Victorinus, views the “Spiritus” (or πνεύμα, not πνεῦμα; see, e.g., *H.*, 2(4),98) as a median, feminine entity, variously termed ὁδὸς (*H.*, 1(3), 238), μάντρι (*H.*, 2(4), 101), and ὑγιάτρι (*H.*, 2(4)), 103). Although this generative, feminine “Spiritus” (for both Synesius and Victorinus) is patterned on the Chaldean δύναμις (as mediated through Porphyry), the occurrence of similar triads in various Gnostic sources (e.g. Father, Mother/Spirit, Son; see, e.g., *Ap. John*, NHC II.2,14) reflects an important interchange between the school traditions of Platonism and the Platonistic "underworld."13

B. Lesser Beings

In the Chaldean system, a complex "chain" of lesser beings fills the spaces between the Primordial Triad14 and the world of matter. In the

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17 See P. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, Traité Théologique sur la Trinité, II (Paris, 1960), pp. 868; 874-875; *Porphyry and Victorinus*, I (Paris, 1968), pp. 455-474. Augustine, however (although influenced by Victorinus), clearly rejected (or misunderstood) this triadistic scheme at the ontological level. See De civ. dei, X.23: "Dicit (sc. Porphyry) enim deum patrem et deum filium quem Graece appellat paaternum intellectum vel paternum mentem; de Spiritu autem saecro aut nihil aut non aperit aliquid dictit; quamvis gisem alium dicti horum medium, non intelligo. Si enim tertiarm, sicut Plotinus, ubi de tribus principalibus substantias disputat, animae naturam etiam iste vellet intelligi, non utique dicet horum medium, id est patris et filii medium. Postponit quippe Plotinus animae naturam paterno intellectui; iste autem cum dicti medium, non postponit, sed interponit." However, Augustine's psychological trinity of mens, amor, notitia (in the view of Theiler and Hadot) may have been influenced by Chaldean notions (see notes to fr. 44).


19 Lydus, *De mens.,* IV, 122; p. 159, 5-8 W., suggests a divine Ennead as well, but the evidence is inconclusive. See Hadot, *Porphyry*, I, p. 262, n. 1.

extant fragments, the most important of these are the Iyne (ιυγγς), Connectors (συνοχεία), Teletarchs (τελετάρχας), angels, and demons, although other entities are named by various commentators (see, e.g., Psellus, *Hyposotos*). A similar "filling up" of divine space is also an important feature of Gnosticism and Hermeticism as well, where numerous quasi-mythic/quasi-abstract entities serve to separate the Highest God from the contamination of material existence.20 In the Chaldean system, these various entities, for the most part, apparently function as diverse aspects of the world of Ideas.

1. Iyne

The name ἀγγς, in Greek literature, is particularly associated with magic. Originally it designated a certain bird, the "wryneck," which was bound to a wheel by a sorcerer and spun around as a means of attracting an unfaithful lover. In some instances, the wheel itself was called a lynx. As such, the lynx functioned as a love charm. Later, under the influence of Plato's spiritualization of Eros, the word lynx came to mean the "binding" force between man and the gods.21 It is this definition we find in the *Oracle*, but under various guises. For example, in fr. 77, the Iyne are identified with the "thoughts" (= Ideas) of the Father; in fr. 78, they are said to be "couriers" between the Father and matter; in fr. 79, the Iyne are connected with certain cosmic entities called "Intellectual Supports;" in fr. 206, they are equated with the "magic wheels" used in the theurgic rites. The apparent confusion of function here is somewhat illusory as the Iynes, in each instance, function as mediating or "binding" entities between the intelligible and sensible worlds. Indeed, the Iyne can be viewed not only as the mediators of messages, but as the message itself.

For example, as the "thoughts" or Ideas of the Father, the Iynes are actually magical names (ονομα μυστικον) sent forth by the Father as "couriers" in order to communicate with the theurgist. At this end, the magic wheel spun by the theurgist attracts these celestial Iynes and enables the theurgist (who alone is privy to the divine language of the gods) to communicate with the Father. But the message communicated by the Iyne is none other than their own magical names which, when uttered, enabled the theurgist to acquire certain divine powers.

20 The paradox, of course, is that these powers not only separate but connect the various levels of the cosmos, forming a "great chain of Being." 21 See O. Geudtner, *Die Selenlehre der Chaldäischen Orakel* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1971), p. 42 ff.
In addition, the Iynes are connected with the Intellectual Supports, cosmic entities which play an important role in maintaining the regular movement of the planets. Such an identification undoubtedly occurred because it was believed that the Iynes—when invoked by the theurgist—became physically situated in the various planetary spheres. It was from this vantage point, then, that the Iynes mediated the message of their magical names back and forth between the two worlds.

In sum, then, the Iynes play both a cosmic and theurgic role in the Chaldean system: identified with the Platonic Ideas and Intellectual Supports they both inform and participate in ruling the Universe; identified with the magic wheels and voce mysticae, they aid the theurgic act. This double function is also characteristic of both the Connectors and Teletarchs, to which we now turn.

2. Connectors

As cosmic entities, the Connectors (σωιευσίς), like the Iynes, are said to issue from the Father (who, in one instance, is actually designated First Connector; see fr. 84 and cf. frs. 32, 80, 81); however, the principal function of the Connectors is quite different. Their chief purpose is to harmonize and protect the various parts of the Universe, a notion which builds on the Stoic concept of universal “sympathy” combined with a Middle Platonic re-evaluation of Plato’s Ideas. According to Lewy, this reinterpretation first occurs in Philo, where the Platonic Ideas are referred to as “invisible powers” which “hold together” the Universe. In the Chaldean system, these “powers” are equivalent to the Connectors, which perform the same harmonizing function.

In addition, the Connectors are said to perform a “protective” function (see fr. 82), but the exact nature of this activity is unclear. Perhaps the Connectors “protected” or “preserved” that very harmony which they themselves had created. In other words, the Connectors not only establish the “bond” of harmony in the Universe, they also preserve this concord by felicitously watching over it as guardians.

Lastly, the Connectors, like the Iynes, also have a theurgic function, as it is on the rays of the sun (called “Material Connectors” in fr. 80) that the soul makes its initial ascent. Seemingly, this theurgic dimension is mediated through the Teletarchs (see infra) as the Connectors are said to “assist” these three rulers during the course of the rites. This image of the sun with its “connective” rays can also serve as a paradigm for the role of the Connectors as a whole: at the theurgic level, the “connective” rays of the sun conduct the soul upward; at the cosmic level, “connective” currents emanate from the Father, the Primal Fire, like rays from the sun, disseminating stability and harmony throughout the Universe.

3. Teletarchs

Beneath the Iynes and Connectors are located the Teletarchs (τελετάρχαι, lit. “masters of initiation”; see frs. 85 and 86), divine entities which are assimilated to the θεομυσίαι of the three worlds of Chaldean cosmology. As noted below, these three rulers may well parallel similar notions about various ruling powers both in Philo and the Gnostic sources. Lewy suggests an ultimate dependence here on the “Cosmokrators” or “Archons” of late Babylonian astral religion. However, in contrast to the Babylonian Archons, who dominated the various planetary spheres, the Chaldean τελετάρχαι presided over the three worlds, a cosmogenic notion borrowed from the Platonic tradition.

The Teletarchs are also associated with the Chaldean virtues of Faith (πίστις), Truth (ἀλήθεια), and Love (ἔρως; see fr. 46), which function as faculties of the three rulers: Faith is connected with the Material Teletarch; Truth with the Ethereal Teletarch; Love with the Empyrean Teletarch. (A fourth virtue, “fire-bearing Hope”—πάθος πυρόφορος—is also mentioned; see fr. 47.) As such, these virtues are not to be understood as spiritual qualities (as is the case with the Pauline triad of Faith, Hope, Charity), but as cosmic entities involved in the very creation and maintenance of the Universe: “For all things,” says the oracle, “are governed and exist in these three (virtues)” (fr. 48). As cosmic forces, Psellus (Hypoty. 11) locates these three virtues at a middle point in the Chaldean “chain.”

In addition, Faith, Truth, and Love are also understood in a theurgic sense, as it is through these three virtues that the theurgist is said to unite with God (see fr. 48 and notes). Indeed, for Proclus, Faith is the supreme virtue, as it is Faith alone, as a “theurgical power” (θεορική δύναμις), which permits union with the One (see, e.g., Th. Pl., I.25; p. 112, 1-3, S.-W.; cf. In Parm. VII, p. 502, 9-12, C. Steel = p. 42, 14-16, Klibansky-Labowsky). But whether Proclus’ emphasis on Faith is authentic Chaldean teaching or his own innovation remains problematic. In the extent


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fragments, Eros, as both the first issue from the Father (fr. 42) and the ‘bond’ of all things (fr. 39), is clearly the chief virtue. Although Proclus attributes his understanding of Faith to ‘the gods’ and ‘the theologians’ (i.e., the Júlían), it may well be that his emphasis on Faith (as the prime virtue) was prompted by rivalry with Christianity. 25

Whether this is the case or not (the evidence is inconclusive), Proclan Faith is not, then, the same as Christian Faith nor even traditional Platonic Faith. Christian Faith is first and foremost faith in Christ as Savior and Lord; traditional Platonic Faith is based on δεξία and conviction from sense data and, as such, is the lowest virtue. Proclan Faith, on the other hand, is a ‘theurgical power’ which unifies the soul and unites it with God. This theurgical dimension, then, clearly links Proclus with the Chaldean tradition, as does his understanding of Faith, Truth, and Love as ‘purifying’ virtues (see fr. 46). 26

This last emphasis again connects these three virtues with the Teletarchs, as these three rulers are responsible for both purifying the ascending soul of material influences as well as guiding its journey upward. (As noted supra, it was through the medium of the Teletarchs that the rays of the sun—or ‘Material Connectors’—were conducted downward. It was on these rays, then, that the soul ascended, guided by the Teletarchs.) Further, all three Teletarchs have additional solar connections: the Empyrean Teletarch is associated with Aion (the transmundane sun) as the intelligible source of light; the Ethereal Teletarch is associated with Helios (the mundane sun) as the direct source of the earth’s light; the Material Teletarch is associated with the moon and, as such, rules the sublunar zone traversed by the rays of the visible sun.

It should also be noted here that the Iynges, Connectors, and Teletarchs were all regarded triadically by the Neoplatonists. Not only did the three together form a triad but each, individually, was triadically conceived; i.e., three Iynges, three Connectors, three Teletarchs. In Pselus’ interpretation (Hypotyp. 1-5), this triadization was a result of linking all three, in some way, to the three worlds. Earlier, Proclus (on whom Pselus was dependent), had already assimilated the Chaldean system to the ‘intellectual’ and ‘intelligible’ triads of his own system; thus, a triadic understanding of these three entities became inevitable. 27

4. Angels and Demons

Angels and demons are also part of the Chaldean system and, like the Iynges, Connectors, and Teletarchs, play a role in the theurgical elevation of the soul. In the first instance, Porphyry (De philos. ex or. haur., Wolff, pp. 144-145) quotes a hymn which designates three classes of ἄγγελοι ἄρτακτοι: those who remain in the presence of the Supreme God, those who are separated from him, and those who praise him with hymns. The first and third groups can be classed together and favorably compared to the Cherubim and Seraphim of Jewish angelology. 28 As for the second group, Lewy equates these ‘ministering angels’ (who aid the ascent of the soul) with the Iynges. 29 In addition, Pselus (Hypotyp. 17) distinguishes a class of ‘archangels’ in the Chaldean ‘chain.’ Although no such angels are mentioned in the extant fragments, the notice of Pselus in De aures caelae (ed. Sathas, Ann., IX, 1875, pp. 215-217) to the effect that Julian the Chaldean ‘prayed’ that his son-to-be (sc. Julian the Theurgist) would receive the soul of an ‘archangel’ suggests an authentic Chaldean origin. 30 In frs. 137 and 138, the soul of the theurgist is said to derive from the ‘angelic order’ in general.

The Oracles also mention demons, specifically evil demons, the presence of which was widely accepted in the popular imagination at the time. 31 Such demons were believed to inhabit all aspects of the sublunar world and be responsible for both the passionate element in humans as well as the source of sickness and disease. The Oracles identify the following types: terrestrial demons (frs. 88, 90, 91, 216); atmospheric demons (fr. 91, 216); water demons (frs. 91, 92, 216); and, perhaps, lunar demons (fr. 216). In addition, these demons are described as ‘bestial’ and ‘shapeless’ (fr. 89) and denounced as ‘dogs’ (frs. 90, 91). This last designation is also familiar to Synesius (e.g., H. I(3), 96-97; 2(4), 245-257); Proclus (In rem p., II, 337, 17-18) adds that these ‘dogs’ are ‘blind.’ Since the Chaldean tradition associated Hecate with Nature (fr. 54), it was a logical step to identify the traditional hounds of Hecate with the demons that inhabit nature. Hecate, then, became the mistress of these demons (see fr. 91 and notes).

27 See Lewy, Exc. VII, pp. 481-485 for a convenient synopsis of the Platonic, Orphic, and Chaldean systems as found in Proclus’ writings.
29 Lewy, pp. 162-163.
30 As cited by Lewy, p. 224 and n. 195; cf. Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 393; Cremer, pp. 65-68.
31 Neither Plato nor Plotinus admitted the existence of truly ‘evil’ demons, but such a development is found both in the popular literature of the period as well as in various strands of Middle Platonism; e.g., the ‘underworld’ of Platonism, as well as Plutarch, whose ideas about evil demons were largely dependent on Xenocrates. See Dillon, pp. 46-47; Cremer, pp. 68-86.
Of particular interest to the *Oracles* is negating the pernicious influence these demons were believed to have on the course of the theurgic rites. They had to be placated and driven off (generally by apotropaeic means; see *infra*) if the *anagōgē* was to be successful. An ascetic retreat from all bodily impulses was also demanded, as demonic matter was seen to be an active, aggressive force bent on destroying man, a theme which reaches its zenith in the "underworld" of Platonism.

Good demons are also part of the Chaldean system, but are seemingly equated with the angelic order. Psellus (*Hypotyp.* 23) tells us that good demons aid the ascent of the soul (like the ministering angels described above) and help fight off attacks from evil demons. Proclus (e.g., *In rem p.*, II, 296, 7-10) makes a similar distinction. Although heroes are not mentioned in the extant fragments, Iamblichus' classification of gods, angels, demons, and heroes is most likely based on Chaldean teaching (see notes to fr. 88.)

5. *Aion* and *Eros*

A word should be said here about two other divine beings which figure prominently in the Chaldean system: *Aion* and *Eros*. In the case of *Aion*, we immediately have the problem of deciding whether this hypostatized entity should be understood as separate from or conflated with *Chronos* or *Time*. On the face of it, the extant fragments seem to distinguish the two: cf. *άκουσθαι χρόνου*, fr. 37; *χρόνου άπέραντον*, fr. 39; *χρόνου χρόνος*, fr. 185; and the descriptions of *Aion* as *πατριγενές φάσις*, fr. 49 and *όλον φός*, fr. 59. Lewy, however, argues that all the expressions of *Time* in the *Oracles* should be understood as descriptive of *Aion* and, thus, *Aion* should be regarded as the "Chaldean God par excellence." But Lewy's argument, in part, is based on a parallel description of *Aion* in what subsequent scholars (e.g., Dodds, Des Places) regard as dubious Chaldean material (e.g., *Tübingen Theosophia* 13; see further *infra*). In addition, Lewy's contention that Proclus' description of the Chaldean *Chronos* (see fr. 199 and notes) actually applies to *Aion* (arguing that Proclus had to attribute to *Time* those epithets the Chaldeans attributed to *Aion* in order to reconcile the Platonic *Aion* with that of the *Oracles*) surely goes beyond the evidence. Lewy's tendency to over-systematize is apparent here and rightly criticized by Dodds, who would maintain a distinction between *Aion* and *Chronos* on the basis of what the fragments more obviously suggest; i.e., the existence of two separate divine be-

36 Lewy, pp. 405-409 and notes. Nock, however, ("*Aion*," 1934, p. 82 = 1972, p. 382) would discount any direct equation of *Aion* and *Zervan*.
terms that would suggest a true deity (with a cult, statues, etc., as is the case with Hecate). Proclus does say, however, that the Chaldean Chronos, as a god, was invoked during the course of a theurgic rite (or ἀντιφάνεια; see ibid., 20, 22-24) but he does not then (pace Lewy) refer to Aion in this way. The most that can be said, then, is that the Oracles, to some extent, conflated Aion (as a noetic entity) with the Oriental notion of a true Alionic deity, but the extent of this process remains in doubt.37

We find a similar problem with the Chaldean Eros (mentioned above in connection with the triad Faith, Truth, Love). In addition to this association, the Oracles also mention Eros independently as the “first” to “leap” from the Paternal Intellect (fr. 42). As such, Eros functions as a cosmic principle whose “binding” quality preserves a sense of harmony not only in the Universe but in the human soul as well (see frs. 43 and 44). As such, Eros functions in much the same way as the Connectors, Iynge, and Intellectual Supports; in Geuhtner’s analysis, these last three are all “held together” through the “binding fire” of Eros as “die ausführenden Organe des Eros.”38

As a cosmic principle, Eros also takes on a quasi-mythological dimension; in fr. 42, he is said to “mingle” his “binding fire” with that of the Ideas in various “Source Craters,” a reflection of the “mixing” metaphor in Plato, Tim. 41d (but here, of course, it is the Demiurge who does the “mixing”). But to what extent Eros functioned as a true god in the Chaldean system cannot be recovered from the extant material.

In any event, Eros’ function as an all-pervasive cosmic power which “leaps forth” from God towards man and the world goes beyond what Wallis calls the “normal Platonic ‘ascending form’ of Love”39 (as, e.g., reflected in fr. 48), but approaches, in some respects, the Christian notion of agapé, wherein God Himself is motivated by love. But the parallel, of course, is not exact. The Oracles, for example, have no figure analogous to Christ, in whom, for Christians, the love of God is most fully manifest. However, Proclus does develop the Chaldean notion of Divine Love to its fullest extent, envisioning both gods and men as moved by Eros to help those less perfect (e.g., In Alc., I, 15 [33,8-16 Cr.] W.).

II. Cosmology

The Chaldean concept of the cosmos envisions a triad of concentric circles which encompasses both the intelligible and sensible orders: the

[Notes]

37 Cf. Dodds, “New Light,” p. 266, n. 12 – Lewy2, p. 696, n. 12: “This Chaldean Aion strikes one as an abstraction rather than a personal god.”

38 Geuhtner, p. 47.


[Continued on next page]
that the Supreme God is beyond all categories of form whereas, at the lowest level, it means that matter, as utter sterility (see frs. 100 and 134), is devoid of all form and, thus, needs to be informed. In the Oracles, this informing process is depicted dynamically in terms of the Second or Demiurgic Intellect hurling the Ideas (as thunderbolts) into the "wombs" of the World Soul.

In addition to this association with matter, Hades may also have been regarced as a personal god in the Chaldean system. Although the extant fragments do not mention Hades in this regard, Psellus does: he attributes to Chaldean belief the notion that Hades is the ἀρχήν ὑπὸ παραγόντιον λίφνω τὸς Ἀχρίμαν (P.G., 122, 1152 δ 5-6). According to Lewy, this is an "authentic Chaldean concept" which ultimately reflects notions about the evil Ahriman. As such, argues Lewy, the Chaldean Hades (like Ahriman) would then be Lord of the demons which inhabit the Material World. A Prince of demons is also found in Synesius' De Providentia (in the figure of Typhon); Porphyry, as well, recognizes a Chief of demons (e.g., De abst., II, 37-43). Both of these writers, of course, are dependent on Chaldean demonology. (Julian pater, as noted earlier, wrote four books περὶ δαιμόνων.) But these observations must be tempered by the fact that the extant fragments evidently assign this dubious honor to Hecate (see fr. 91 and notes). Thus, the extent to which Hecate's role in this capacity was distinguished from that of Hades cannot be known, except to acknowledge the presence of both in the Chaldean system as Ruler(s) of demons.

III. Anthropology

Chaldean anthropology is essentially informed by a Platonic-derived body/soul dualism in which the soul is depicted as descending into matter (via the ether, sun, moon, and air—the rain of which make up the "vehicle" of the soul; see fr. 61 and further below) to "serve" the body ("our rushing vessel," see fr. 186) but, hopefully, with an "untamed neck" (see fr. 99). As described by Synesius, this is actually a two-fold descent in which the soul first "serves" (θητήσων) the body, and then becomes "enslaved" (δολοσίζων) to it (see H. 1(3), 571 ff., cf. De insomni., 139 c). This "enslavement" or submersion into matter is also referred to as a kind of "intoxication," wherein the soul is said to be "drunk" on material distractions and thus needs to 'sober up' and reflect on its divine origins and the nature of the Divine World (a familiar theme in the Platonic "underworld;" see fr. 15 and notes).

42 This monistic emphasis is also shared with certain "Sethian" tractates from the Nag Hammadi Library (esp. Marananners and Alogenes), both of which (in Pearson's words) have "virtually abandoned" the dualism of "more primitive forms of Gnosticism;" see "Tractate Marananners," p. 388. Schenke makes a similar observation with regard to Sethian Seth; see "Phenomenon," pp. 614-615.

43 See Lewy, esp. p. 390

44 See Lewy, p. 282, n. 90, who cites several sources.

45 Tardieu, p. 206.

46 Lewy, pp. 279-293.
The *Oracles* also distinguish two types of men: the theurgists (οἱ θεουργοὶ) and "the herd" (ἡ ἄγνωστη). The former are those whose souls are properly purified and thus saved; the latter comprise the mass of men who plunge headlong into the whirl of passions (see frs. 153, 154 and notes). Although no further types of men are mentioned in the extant fragments, Cremer argues that the three classes of individuals outlined in Iamblichus, *De myst.*, V.18 are based on Chaldean doctrine. The first group would constitute "the herd" (ἡ ἄγνωστη) or those totally involved with the material world; the third group would comprise "the few" (οἱ διάκοις) or those free of all material constraints (and thus equivalent to the theurgists); the second group would be made up of those in between or "the middle men" (οἱ μέσοι) who, according to Iamblichus, are midway between φύσις (= material world) and καθαρὸς νοῦς (= intelligible world). Although the extant fragments do not mention this middle group, Cremer points out that Iamblichus' tripartite division of men in V.18 exactly parallels a similar tripartition of gods (noeric, ethereal, hylic) in V.19. Thus, both gods and men would correspond to the Empyrean (= noeric), Ethereal, and Material Worlds of Chaldean theology. Based on this evidence, then, it is likely that a tripartite classification of men can be assumed for the *Oracles* as well, especially given the Chaldean fondness for triadic classifications of all types.

According to the fragments, the souls of the theurgists are said to derive from the angelic order, from which point they inhere with the purpose of aiding mankind (see frs. 122, 123, 138 and notes. The figure of Osiris in Synesius' *De Providentia* is clearly modelled on this idea.) But this descent is not simply an automatic one, but a willful choosing to reincarnate, as the theurgist has the option of remaining "forever" in the intelligible realm (fr. 138). Smith suggests that this latter idea may have influenced Porphyry, who affirmed the permanent release of the soul (see *De regressu an.*, p. 41*, 22-25 Bidez), but the seed of such a notion is also apparent in Plotinus; e.g., *Enn.* II.4.2.4-11; 4.6.30 ff. However, Porphyry was most likely influenced by that Chaldean doctrine which denied reincarnation in bestial form (see fr. 160). Porphyry accepts this doctrine (see, e.g., *De regressu an.*, p. 38*, 10-15 Bidez) against Plotinus, who had favored the idea of transmigration not only in animal but vegetable form as well (based on the premise that a soul which succumbs to its basest elements deserves a similar existence; see, e.g., *Enn.* III.4.2; IV.3.12.25-29). The *Oracles* happily reject this idea. Indeed, the *Oracles* apparently grant the lower soul (and its vehicle) a permanent post-

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47 Cremer, pp. 123-130.
49 Cremer, p. 20.
52 Boyancé, p. 191.
53 Smith, p. 83-141 passim.
54 See supra, n. 6
55 This has been the opinion of most scholars since the time of Bidez and Cumont. See, e.g., Bidez, *Le Vie Julien*, p. 369, n. 8; Cumont, *Origen Religieux*, p. 279, n. 58; S. Estrin, "La Théurgie chez les Néo-Platoniciens et dans les Papyri Magiques," *Symb. Ot.*, 22, 1942, p. 33; Lewy, Exc. IV, p. 461; Dodds, "Theurgy," 1947, p. 55 = 1957, p. 283; Cremer, p. 19.
Chaldean) could not have been understood, at least initially, as a tradition of theurgy. Thus, any tradition "handed down" from father to son (including the Oracles) might properly be labelled "Chaldean" but not, in every respect, necessarily "theurgical." That the two terms are closely related goes without saying, but any absolute identification (as Hadot notes) must remain problematic.

A further difficulty is a matter of definition: how exactly are we to define the word "theurgy?" One possibility (as suggested, e.g., by Eitrem and Dodds) is that theurgy should be understood in the sense of "working on" or even "creating" the gods, thus emphasizing the role of the theurgist as the principal agent in the theurgical ergon. But theurgy involves more than just "working on" the gods; it also involves the active participation of the gods themselves. Theurgy, then, can best be characterized as "divine action," since theurgy properly involves not only "divine actions" on the part of men, but the "action of the Divine" on behalf of men. As A. Smith aptly puts it: "Men are involved in the operation of ritual or divine action, but it is the Divine which achieves results." Theurgy as praxis, then, can be distinguished from theology as speculation (indeed, it may be that Julian fils "invented" the term theurgy to distinguish his activity from that of the θεολόγοι, or those who merely "think" about the gods), but how are we to distinguish theurgy from magic, which is more closely resembles? Is theurgy simply a form of "white" or "good" magic, in contrast to the "black" or "evil" magic associated with the name goëtia, as some scholars have suggested? Yes and no. Theurgy certainly appropriates many of the techniques familiar to the magician, but its purpose is quite different: whereas "common" magic has a "profane" goal (e.g., in its "white" form, influencing a lover or affecting the weather), theurgy has a specific religious or salvific end, namely, the purification and salvation of the soul (see, e.g., Iamblichus, De myst., I.12: τὰς φυχὰς σωτηρίων). In addition, and most importantly, theurgy emphasizes a passive attitude towards the gods (with the gods taking the initiative), whereas magic involves coercing or forcing the gods against their will. This aspect of theurgy is especially emphasized by Iamblichus, who repeatedly stresses that the rites of theurgy (contra goëtia) do not involve the forcing or drawing down of the gods but, rather, entail a free and willing bestowal of Divine power by which the gods purify the devout and draw them upward (see, e.g., De myst., I.12: 14; II.6: 11; III.1: 10; 18; IV.2). For Cremer, this distinction is so critical that he baldly states: "...ist eine Gleichsetzung von Theurgie und Magic nicht mehr möglich."

If magic is to be defined essentially as coercion, then theurgy can no longer be confused with magic, as both its intent (the salvation of the soul) and effect (a passive relation with the gods) are counter to magical practice as it is commonly understood. Theurgy, therefore, should be regarded basically as a religious phenomenon, albeit one that is comfortable with the outward forms of magic.

In this regard, Trouillard compares, indeed equates, theurgy with Christian sacramentalism, emphasizing a common principle of ex opere operato as well as a similar notion of Divine "grace." In the first instance, it is through "act" alone (e.g., gestures, signs, manipulation of objects) that the Divine reveals itself. In Iamblichus' words (De myst., II.11): "The tokens (συνθηκαὶ) themselves, by themselves, effect their own work." Secondly, the efficacy of any ritual act (theurgic or sacramental) depends not on constraint (as stressed supra), but on the willing, "gracious" presence of God. Based on these similarities, then, Trouillard concludes that theurgy and Christian sacramentalism are essentially the same, the only difference being that of orientation; i.e., Christian sacramentalism (especially the Eucharist, which Trouillard

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55 Smith, p. 100.
56 This was originally the conjecture of Bidez, La Vie Julien, p. 309, n. 8; and so Lewy, Ess. IV, p. 461, Dodds, "Theurgy," 1947, p. 55 = 1957, pp. 283-284.
58 Cremer, p. 20; cf. pp. 25-36.
59 Cf. Barb, p. 101: "The fundamental difference between magic and religion is still the same as it always was. On the one hand, we have the religious man, offering his adorations in humble supplication to the Deity; always careful to add to any supplication the reservation 'if it be according to Thy Will.' On the other hand, we have the magician, attempting to force the supernatural powers to accomplish what he desires and avert what he fears." For more recent assessments of the relation between magic and religion in Antiquity see, e.g., A. F. Segal, "Hellenistic Magic: Some Questions of Definition," in Studies in Gnosticism and Helenistic Religions, ed. by R. van den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren (Leiden, 1981), pp. 349-375; D. E. Aune, "Magic in Early Christianity," AWR, II.23.2, 1980, pp. 1507-1577.
60 See J. Trouillard, "La Théurgie païenne," Encyclopedia Universalis, V. 15, pp. 582-583; L'Un et l'Ame selon Proclus (Paris, 1972), pp. 171-189. Trouillard suggestively defines theurgy as "un symbole opératoire destiné à éveiller la présence divine." He also emphatically states that "la théurgie n'est pas la magie."
views as the "center" of the Sacraments) "continues the history of a
man-God," whereas theurgy is fixed in "mythic thought." This may
be so (although theurgic ritual, pace Trouillard, in no sense recalls the
adventures of any mythic personage; on this point, Trouillard confuses
theurgic ritual with that of the Mysteria, but a more important point
of contrast, I think, can be found in a fundamental difference in world
view. Christian sacramentalism, after all, is based on a theistic view
which assumes an essential difference between Creator and creation.
Thus, any sacramental act performed here below must ultimately depend
for its effect on an irruption of the Divine into an otherwise natural order.
In contrast, theurgy is based on an emanationist view which posits a
"sympathetic" link between all aspects of the cosmos; the emphasis here
is on sameness, not difference. Thus theurgy, unlike Christian sacramen-
talism, depends not on any inbreaking of the Divine but, rather, on a
recognition of the Divine's presence in even the basest matter. (In this
regard, see, e.g., Proclus, El. Th., props. 144 and 145.) It is on this
point, then, that theurgy and Christian sacramentalism part company.

In the following sections, the theurgical praxis associated with the
Chaldean system is outlined in detail, based on information from both
the extant fragments as well as relevant parallel material from other
sources. Lewy's attempt to systematize this material, of course, cannot
be applauded enough. However, many problems remain. Indeed, as
Hadot points out, if we agree that the Oracles (in whole or part) were
received via mediumistic trance over a period of time, then, in Hadot's
words, "toutes les expressions Chaldaïques ne peuvent être totalement
cohérentes, et les reconstructions systématiques doivent être menées avec
la plus grande prudence." Dods is similarly cautious, while at the
same time praising Lewy's attempt "to dovetail together the smallest
scrap of information." Such caveats apply not only to the theological
constructs which inform the Chaldean system (with its awkward fusion
of gods, goddesses, and philosophical hypostases), but to the actual prac-
tices which come under the rubric of theurgy.

Lewy broadly separates the latter into "magical ritual" and
"theurgical elevation," with the purpose of distinguishing certain
isolated rites from the anagogic proper. However, this separation is some-
what arbitrary, as Lewy himself admits, since no systematic presenta-
tion of Chaldean theurgical ritual is preserved in any of the relevant
sources. Nonetheless, it is more than likely that Chaldean theurgical prac-
tice was close, in many respects, to those traditions preserved in the
magical papyri (and reflected, as well, in various Gnostic and Hermetic
rites of ascent) and, indeed, as more recent scholarship suggests, may
well have included a genuine noetic/contemplative element at the highest
levels of these other issues are discussed below.

A. Conjunction

The term "conjunction" (σύνταξη), although it appears just once in a
questionable fragment (fr. 208), is familiar to us from its widespread use
in the magical papyri (as Eitrem has admirably demonstrated). The
term refers to the "communication" or "contact" (but not "union")
of the theurgist (or magician) with a particular god or spirit. It was via
this particular rite that Julian the Chaldean purportedly "conjoined"
(συντάσσε). the soul of Julian fils with that of Plato and all the gods" (see
notes to fr. 84). Proclus was also adept in the art of conjunction (see fr.
208) and reports that such practices were especially used by the Chal-
deans to "conjoin" with the various Time gods (e.g., Night, Day,
Month, Year) as well as with Chronos himself (see In Tim., III, 32, 16
ff.; 89, 15 ff.). The principal means of effecting this contact was through
the use of various invocations: the adept "called upon" the god by utter-
ing his divine names, which amounted to a lengthy recitation of unintelligible vowel and consonant sounds. Such nomina barbara (see fr.
150) or voces mysticae (equivalent to the συνθήματα) are found throughout the magical papyri as well as in certain Gnostic and Hermetic texts and are a staple of late Antique
magical practice. Although a cursory glance at these lists of sounds
reveals what appears to be a random selection of so much vocal gibberish,
closer scrutiny shows that there are definite patterns not only to the ar-
rangements of the vowels and consonants, but also in terms of numerical
equations, all of which had potent magical properties. By rhythmically

Or., 8, 1929, pp. 49-53.
66 See Eitrem, "Die σύνταξις," p. 50. Although Eitrem here rightly distinguishes the
ritual of "conjunction" from the anagogia of Plotinus, nonetheless, he claims elsewhere
that theurgy had its origins with Plotinus: "$... Plotin, dont, sans doute, dérive la
théurgie." (see "Théurgie," p. 50). But this is surely wrong. See Dods, "Theurgy,"
67 See e.g., R. Dornseiff, Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1925; rpt.
1975); M. Hirschke, Sprachphilosophie und Namenmagie im Neuplatonismus (Meisenheim an
Glan, 1979); P. C. Miller, "In Praise of Nonsense," in Classical Mediterranean Spirituality,
pp. 481-505. Cf., also, F. Wiske, "Language Mysticism in the Nag Hammadi Texts and
chanting these sounds (which equalled the “hidden” or divine name of the god), the adept was able to effect the proper conjunction with the god. The σύμπαν with a specific deity or spirit could also be effected via material means. Psellus, in a long passage (P.G. 122, 581 b-c), relates a Chaldean “covenant” involving the burying and digging up of certain purified “hylé” substances (e.g., spices, plants, stones) as a means of conjoining with the corresponding spirit of the plant or stone. The chief effect of this particular conjunction was to form a “compact” with the invoked spirit so that he would function as a ministering agent during the soul’s ascent (and thus help ward off demonic attack).72

B. Conjugation

Another rite involved the actual “conjuring up” of a specific deity who would then prophesy to the theurgist. This process of conjugation could seemingly proceed in one of two ways: either by animating the god’s statue or by a ritual of “binding” and “loosing.”

1. Animation of statues

This particular rite properly comes under the rubric of τελεστική, although (as noted above) both the term and the rite (like the term σύμπαν) have a wider application than Chaldean usage. Ultimately, the art of statue vivification goes back to an Egyptian origin.73 The actual term τελεστική, however, does not appear in the extant fragments; it is possible, then, that the later Neoplatonists derived most (but not all) of their information on the subject from the τελεστικα of Julian Ἕλλην.74

According to Psellus (see Bidez, Mélanges Camou, p. 95), this τελεστική ἐπιστήμη involved the placing of certain stones, herbs, even small animals (all designated as σώματα; cf. fr. 108 and notes) within the cavity of a statue to establish a “sympathetic” relation with the god. Iamblichus (De myst., V.23) makes a similar statement (although using the expression ἡ ἱστορικὴ γένεσις, stressing that these “sacred” (ἱεροδομία), “perfect” (τελεστική), and “godlike” (θεοειδή) objects provided a “complete and pure receptacle” (δοξὴ ἀληθινὴ καὶ καθορισμένη) for the god. A comparable rite is described in fr. 224 (although this is properly a “Porphyrian,” not Chaldean, oracle; see notes ad loc.), where Hecate gives instructions on how to fashion her “image;” in this case, from lizards and herbs “in the clear air under the waxing moon,” in conjunction with a prayer (missing from the text but probably composed, in part, from nomina barbara; cf., e.g., Mithras Liturgy, p. 23 ff., Meyer).

The operative principle behind all these procedures is that of συμπανθεία, a notion which assumes a direct correspondence between a given deity and his or her symbolic representative in the animal, mineral, and vegetable worlds. Thus, by properly fashioning and consecrating the god’s “material image” (and then placing it in the god’s statue), he or she could be persuaded to appear (generally in the form of light) and answer the questions put to him by the theurgist. The “illumination” from the deity also aided the purification of the soul and its “vehicle” (see further infra).

2. Binding and Loosing

This rite (like that of σύμπαντι καὶ τελεστική) must be largely reconstructed from sources outside the Oracles (including the “Doubtful Fragments”—especially the “Porphyrian” oracles—of our own text). Again, it is a matter of a common magical practice appropriated by the theurgists for their own ends.

The technique itself involved the “binding” of a god in a human medium (again, via the utterance of voces mysticae) and then “loosing” him (via similar formulæ) when the rite was completed. Fr. 141 suggests that the medium himself could effect the “loosing” (ἐλυσία) of the god simply by turning his thoughts to “earthly things.”

In any event, what is important to stress here is that it was not the theurgist, but the god invoked, who had ultimate control over the rite. Although (as Lewy notes) the Chaldeans freely used the current vocabulary of conjugation (e.g., δεσμοι, ἀνάθεμα, μηθ); cf. Psellus, Scripta minora = Des Places, p. 221: (οἱ Χαλδαῖοι) δεσμομεῖοι καὶ λόγοι (sc. τοὺς θεούς) they did not then claim to have power over the gods, as the gods themselves had communicated the very spells which would bind them.75

This point is underscored in fr. 222, where Hecate appears at the behest of an “eloquent prayer” which the gods had initially suggested. Porphyry uses the apt phrase “persuasive necessity” (παρακλητικὴ; fr. 219) to convey this same sense of gentle persuasion (as opposed to the active coercion of the magician; in this regard, cf. frs. 220, 221, and 223, where the gods invoked complain about being bound “against their will,” an important argument for a non-Chaldean origin for these particular fragments. See notes ad loc.).

72 See Lewy, pp. 230-238.
73 See Dodds, “Theurgy,” p. 63 = 1957, p. 293.
INTRODUCTION

Prior to the rite, the officiants—or "caller" (κλήτωρ) and "receiver" (δοχεύς; see fr. 211 and cf. Proclus, In Crat., 100, 21-22: αἰτία γεράτια τοὺς μὲν κλήτωρα καὶ τοὺς δοχεύς...προσκαλείσθων παρακελεύονται)—underwent preliminary purifications of some kind (probably via fire and water; see Proclus, ibid., and cf. fr. 133 and notes) and were clothed in special garments (cf. Proclus, In rem p., II, 246, 23-25). We might suppose that in certain instances, the "caller" himself functioned as the medium. This is apparently the case in the magical papyri. 78

The actual presence of the god was manifest in various ways. Iamblichus, for example (see De myst., III.5), describes several types of divine possession (ἐπίνοια, ἱδρομασία, θεορία), each of which could be verified by certain physical reactions; e.g., levitation, bodily and facial movements, complete immobility, changes in voice, insensitivity to fire, etc. In addition, luminous apparitions often appeared, sometimes seen entering or leaving the medium's body. In this regard, Iamblichus (De myst., III.6) distinguishes between apparitions seen by the "caller" (τῷ θεογονωτοῖς), those viewed by the "receiver" (τῷ δεχομένῳ), and those witnessed by all (τοῖς πᾶσιν θεωροῦσι)—this last apparently the most desired effect.

Although distinctions of this type are not made in the extant fragments, the information we do have generally confirms Iamblichus' statements. In fr. 146, for example, the deity invoked (probably Hecate) is said to appear in a variety of luminous shapes; e.g., as a "fiery child," "sumptuous light," "dazzling horse," even a "formless fire" (from which the goddess communicated with the theurgist; cf. fr. 148). Other fragments (fr. 144 and 145) stress that the gods are initially without form (ἀτύπωτα) but take on various shapes in order to become visible to human sight, this "forming" process taking place either in the Ethereal or Empyrean realm (see fr. 144 and notes).

The technical terms for these "self-manifestations" are also found in the extant fragments; ἀυτόπτον ἀγάλμα, fr. 101; ἀυτόπτος φάρμακαν, fr. 142 (but without clear distinctions). Proclus, on the other hand (following Iamblichus), distinguishes between autoptic visions (or those seen by the medium or receiver) and eptopic visions (or those viewed only by the caller; see the remarks of Psellus, P.G., 122, 1136 c-d). This vocabulary of self-manifestation is also found in the magical papyri, sometimes in conjunction with the term σύντασις; e.g., αὐτόπτος σύντασις (PGM IV 220; 930). 79 Whether these two terms were conflated in the Chaldean tradition as well is not known; Proclus, for one, suggests not. He tells us (Vita Procli 28) that Proclus, as part of his "theurgic labors" (θεοργικά ἀνήρτημα), first experienced luminous visions of Hecate (φαίμαξα Ἐκτωνικὸς φωτοσκευᾶν αὐτοπτουμένου) and then, as part of the "proper order" (ἐν τάξει), went on to experience the Chaldean "conjunctions" (συντάσσει; see fr. 208). Since the extant fragments do point to some sort of orderly theurgic progression (see, e.g., the use of τάξις in fr. 110; cf. βαθύς, fr. 164; cf., also, fr. 136 and notes), Marinus' remarks may well reflect a Chaldean Vorlage.

Now Dodds has likened these luminous visions to the "ectoplasm" of modern seances, and suggests that theurgic mediumship, in general, is not unlike that of present-day "spiritualism" (and even chides Lewy for not noting this "helpful analogy") 80. But is there really an analogy here? After all, the purpose of a seance is to communicate with dead friends and relatives, not to evoke a deity in the context of a "sacramental" rite. (The repeated insistence of the later Neoplatonists on this precise point cannot be overlooked.) Indeed, in what sense can we compare the "ectoplasm" of a deceased human with the luminous form of a god or goddess? Surely there is an important (even qualitative) difference here.

C. Magical Instruments and Objects

The "magical wheel" (τρόφανας; see fr. 206) of Hecate was mentioned above in connection with the Lynges. Although this association is not explicitly made in the extant fragments (but cf. ἀδάνῳ τροφοφάγητη, fr. 49

79 See "Théurgie," 194; pp. 66-69 = 1957, pp. 296-299; "New Light," p. 269 = Lewy, p. 698. Cf. "Supernormal Phenomena in Classical Antiquity," (chap. X, pp. 136-210 of The Ancient Concept of Progress, Oxford, 1973) where Dodds again emphasizes the similarities between theurgy and modern-day spiritualism but notes here, in addition, the point I make, viz. that "with all their similarities there is associated one fundamental contrast: what the spiritualists ascribe to the activity of a discarnate human mind the theurgists normally attribute to gods or non-human daemons" (p. 206). Dodds accounts for this discrepancy by stressing the pagan fear of the disembodied dead as "angry dangerous spirits" whose "company was not as a rule desired" (ibid.). The modern attitude towards the dead is, of course, far more benign. But I would still maintain that there is an important, indeed qualitative, distinction between communicating with a god in the context of a theurgic rite and communing with one's dead grandmother in a darkened parlor.
80 A closer "modern" parallel might be the ritual evocation of the goddess Astarte described by R. Ellwood, Mysticism and Religion (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1980), pp. 136-138. Ellwood claims that his experience culminated in "a powerful and unanticipated change of consciousness or bolt of ecstatic energy" which he likened (rightly or wrongly) to a "mystical experience."
and 87), Psellus equates the two (P.G., 122, 1133 a 8-9). As Psellus describes it, this “magic wheel” (or lynx) was a golden sphere embedded with a sapphire and swung around by means of a leather strap. On the surface of the wheel magical characters were engraved. By swinging this wheel, the theurgist would imitate the motion of the heavenly spheres and thus “sympathetically” attract the celestial Lynxes (which would then function as “messengers” between the theurgist and the gods). In addition, the swinging of this wheel could evidently be used for more profane ends. Marinus (Vita Procli 28; cf. fr. 208) tells us that Proclus, by using “certain Lynxes” (φυγα των) caused rain to fall in Attica, thus ending a serious drought. Julian fils, as well, was known as a prodigious rainmaker; see Suda, s.v.

Brass instruments of some type (as well as birds) may also have been used in the Chaldean rites (see fr. 210 and notes), probably as an apotropaic means of warding off evil demons. (One is reminded here of the clanging of brass pots and pans at the time of the Roman Lemuria. As for the apotropaic use of birds, see, e.g., Porphyry, De abst., 4.16.) Other apotropaic devices included the wearing of magical amulets, the offering of sacred stones (e.g., the minziotis stone of fr. 149), as well as animal sacrifices. None of this, of course, is original. Like all the rites discussed above, the use of instruments and objects was common magical fare. But in a theurgic context, these various practices take on salvific significance; the end result was not mere manipulation, but the very salvation of the soul.

D. Anagöô

Although the term ἀναγογή does not appear in any of the undoubted fragments (but cf. ἀναγογία, fr. 190 and notes), a developed doctrine of the ascent of the soul is clearly a Chaldean teaching. The term itself goes back to Plato, who used variants of ἀναγογή to describe both the “ascent” of certain heroes from Hades to Olympus (e.g., Rep. VII, 521 c) as well as the “leading up” of the soul via dialectical reasoning (e.g., Rep. VII, 533 d). It is in this latter sense that Plotinus develops this term—the Plotinan anagöô, in effect, understood as a contemplative process which brings the soul to greater and greater degrees of intellectual purification. In contrast, the Oracles regard the “leading up” of the soul as a ritual event; here, the soul ascends on the “rays” of the sun aided both by the theurgist and the gods. This difference in approach can be attributed to a fundamental difference in attitude towards the soul. Since Plotinus maintained that the higher (or rational) part of the soul remained unfallen, and therefore impasible, the individual need only recognize this fact, turn away (via his own moral efforts) from the material distractions of the lower soul, and return (via mental and philosophical disciplines) to his true nature—that of unfettered contemplation of the intelligible world. (Plotinus’ purported success at combining his contemplative and active lives would certainly be personal testimony to this optimistic view of the soul.)

In contrast, the Oracles place a much greater emphasis on the fall of the soul in toto; since the soul is in constant danger of becoming totally enslaved to matter (see discussion supra), there is a much greater need for aid, both divine and human, in restoring the soul to its elemental state. The Oracles especially place an emphasis on purifying the lower soul and its “vehicle” (οὐρείαν τοῦ καταδυθέντος; see, e.g., fr. 104 and notes), as it is this vehicle (formed of accretions from the ether, sun moon, and air; see fr. 61 and notes) which keeps the soul fettered in matter. Unhappily, the extant fragments do not give us any detailed information on the precise relation of this vehicle to the lower soul; it may even be the case that the two were sometimes conflated, but our evidence on this point is not secure (cf. fr. 158 and notes).

This doctrine of the ὀρείαν τοῦ καταδυθέντος, of course, does not originate with the Oracles. It is a general Middle Platonic and Neoplatonic theme, found in a variety of sources, and ultimately reflects a creative reworking of Plato’s statements about the “vehicles” (ὑπολαμάκα) of the stars combined with Aristotle’s reflections on the soul’s ἁρματον. (According to Dodds, the earliest extant passage where these two terms are linked is Galen’s De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis, p. 643 Muller.) The principle role of the vehicle was to join the soul to the body; it thus functioned (in Symeon’s words) as a “middle body” (μέσην σῶμα; De insomn., 135 d)

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80 Cf. Porphyry, De Vita Plut. 8; see, also, the discussions in Wallis, pp. 82-90; Rist, pp. 213-230.
82 Proclus: El. Th., p. 316.
which provided a mediating link between incorporeality and corporeality. The ὀνειρεύομαι was also regarded as the seat of both sensation and imagination; Simplicius, for example, refers to the ὄνειρα as both αἰθήματα καὶ φανερατά (De anima, p. 17).66

Now the later Neoplatonists all accepted the doctrine of the ὄνειρα, but with varying emphases. Porphyry, for example, believed that the vehicle was attached only to the irrational soul and that, after death, both would be resolved into their constituent elements. For Porphyry, only the rational or higher soul could truly be saved and only through the type of philosophical speculation espoused by Plotinus. In this regard, Porphyry—like Plotinus—argued that the higher soul never actually descended into matter, but remained eternally above in the intelligible order. Therefore, one need only exercise the power of his intellect via philosophical contemplation to revert back to his true nature. Although Porphyry conceded that theurgic praxis could purify the lower soul and its vehicle, the use of such ritual was of value only to the ordinary man who could not follow the entire Plotinian path. In any event, for Porphyry, theurgy could elevate the soul only to a position within the material world. It could never lead the soul back to the One.

Iamblichus, on the other hand, admitted that both the irrational soul and its vehicle were worthy of salvation (along with the rational or higher soul), and that all three could be purified by theurgy. Since Iamblichus maintained that the soul, in its entirety, was implicated in matter, the corresponding use of theurgy—at every level of the soul—could therefore elevate the soul beyond the material to the intelligible world and ultimately back to the One. This is also the case with Proclus who, in addition, further developed the theory of the soul’s vehicle, asserting an immaterial “luminous body” (αὐγοτριβόλος σῶμα) for the higher soul (not subject to corruption), as well as a perishable, material vehicle (πνευματικὸν ὄνειρον) for the lower soul (see refs. 119, 120 and notes). Although Proclus believed that theurgy could purify both parts of the soul and their corresponding vehicles, only the higher soul and its immaterial vehicle would ultimately be saved.

As for Chaldean doctrine concerning the salvation of the ὀνειρεύομαι, we are again on tentative ground. Dodds and Lewy, for example, have argued against its salvation.67 Geudtner, however, based on an acute interpretation of the terminology in frr. 128 and 129 (see notes ad loc.), argues the opposite view, i.e., that the vehicle not only survives death but secures a post-mortem dwelling place in the Ethereal realm.68 If this is the case (and other scholars would concur), then the Chaldean position would prefigure that adopted by Iamblichus.

The next problem, then, is ascertaining the Chaldean position vis-à-vis the purification/salvation of the higher soul. As noted above, both Iamblichus and Proclus argued that the higher soul could be purified via theurgy; Porphyry said no, maintaining that contemplation alone (in the Plotinian manner) was effective at this level. If we look at the extant fragments, it is clear that a majority allude to obvious ritual/theurgic procedures (as described above); however, frr. 1 and 9a, in contrast, suggest some form of contemplative experience. In fr. 1, for example, the theurgist is counselled by the gods to “extend an empty mind” (πέσα σεικόν ὕπο) towards the Highest God (or τοι νοητόν) in order to “perceive” (νοεῖ) him. Similarly, in fr. 9a, the advice is “to extend the perceptive faculty in the soul” (ανίμα λειτουργεῖ) “towards the One” (in unum)—both of these experiences understood as a movement away from concrete, sensible images (cf. multivarium allud, fr. 9a) towards an intuitive grasp of the Highest Reality. In fr. 1, this intuitive perception is achieved via the “flower/flame of mind,” i.e., that most discreet part of the mind which is akin to the fiery, intelligible essence of the Father.

Now this kind of language is strikingly reminiscent of Plotinus’ via negativa approach to the One. In Plotinian terms, (e.g., Enn VI.9.8-11), this ascent to the One involves a “stripping away” of multiplicity, a “putting away of otherness,” a “going forth from the self,” a “simplifying,” a “surrendering,” an “extension towards contact,” a “rest,” the “flight of the alone to the Alone.” For Plotinus, this ultimate experience—this “flight” of the solitary soul towards the solitary One—is specifically mediated through the “prime part of νοὴς” or “that element in νοῆς which is not νοῆς” but is akin to the One (see, e.g., Enn V.5.8.22-23 and notes to fr. 1)—an obvious analogue to the Chaldean ἀθος νοῆς.69 Thus, in both instances, the ultimate experience is that of a supra-rational state of unified intuition at the very highest levels of ascent. Given these parallels, then, how are we to reconcile this apparent inner, contemplative apprehension of the Divine with the type of external, ritual theurgy generally associated with the Chaldean anagôgê?

Several solutions have been proposed. Cremer, for example (based on the remarks of Iamblichus in De myst., VI.7), understands fr. 1 as descriptive of the passive mental attitude necessary for the theurgist to

66 This passage is cited by Kissling, p. 321.
67 See Dodds, Proclus: El. Th., p. 320; Lewy, p. 219, n. 166.
68 Geudtner, pp. 18-24.
achieve before he can proceed with his theurgic labors. In this analysis, 
τι γοητό would not signify the Highest God but be an equivalent expres-
sion for Iamblichus’ μόνος αὐτῷ θεός who, in contra-distinction to demons, 
must be approached “without violence” (οὐ σφοδρότητι, fr. 1 = οὐδεμιου 
ἀπειλή, De myst., VI.7)—that is, “passively.” Cremer would also equate 
Iamblichus’ expression καθαρός λόγος with the ἄνθος νοῦ of fr. 1 and thus 
understand this latter term as expressive of the theurgist’s “pure” 
(= “passive”) approach to the gods. Although this is a suggestive inter-
pretation, Cremer makes an important overlook—that Iamblichus else-
where (Comm. In Parm., frr. 2A and 2B Dillon; see notes to fr. 1) uses 
the ἄνθος νοῦ terminology precisely as it is most visibly used here; i.e., 
in connection with the contemplative apprehension of the Supreme God 
(or τι γοητό).

Lewy’s interpretation of fr. 1 is similarly problematic. Since Lewy, as 
Cremer, views the Chaldean anagōγε as strictly a ritual event, he, too, is 
forced to interpret the language of fr. 1 in like terms. Thus, for Lewy, 
the contemplative language of fr. 1 would not express a Plotinian-type 
experience as such, but reflect, instead, only the appropriation of 
Platonic philosophical terminology to express what, in fact, is a 
theurgic/ritual illumination. In Lewy’s words:

Plato compared the illumination accompanying the vision of the Ideas with 
that experienced by the initiate at the culminating point of the mystery. The 
Chaldeans, on the other hand, used the image of philosophical vision in 
order to represent the illumination of their initiate. Their equivocal mode 
of expression gave the Neoplatonists the possibility to interpret the injunctions 
of the Oracles concerning ritual ceremonies as figurative expressions of 
spiritual experiences; they could thus identify the Chaldean mystery of the 
ascend towards the divine light with the Plotinian intellectual process of 
self-perfection which is independent of all external action. The greater part 
of their injunctions relating to the accomplishment of the Chaldean mystery 
of immortality receive in the texts in which they have come down to us a 
spiritual interpretation.

Although Lewy is correct, methodologically, to caution against accept-
ing, prima facie, the various Neoplatonizing interpretations of the Oracles, 
he is guilty of overstatement when he suggests that most of these interpre-
tations must then be considered suspect. Indeed, it may be the case that 
the Neoplatonists gave a “spiritual” interpretation to many of the 
injunctions of the Oracles (including fr. 1) precisely because this was their intent in the first place.

90 Cremer, pp. 11-13; cf. p. 125.
91 Lewy, p. 176.

Hadot, for one, is aware of this and asks, in particular, whether the 
Oracles actually proposed two alternative methods of ascent: i.e., a 
theurgic method and a “purely spiritual” method. To reconcile this 
apparent contradiction, Hadot suggests that the Chaldean anagōγε may well 
have been close to Porphyrian conceptions, viz. theurgical purification 
for the lower soul, leading to union with the lesser gods; philosophical or 
contemplative purification for the higher soul, culminating in union with 
the One (or Chaldean Father).92 A. Smith makes a similar observation 
but prefers to speak in terms of a “lower” and “higher” theurgy, the 
former concerned with the “lower gods” and therefore “material in its 
ritual,” the latter addressed to the “transcendent gods” and, therefore, 
“less material” (if at all) in its “ritual elements.” Smith’s distinction is 
based primarily on his reading of Iamblichus’ De mysteriis, but suggests 
that some form of “lower” and “higher” theurgy may already have been 
present in the Oracles.

The problem here is that Hadot seemingly wants to maintain a distinc-
tion between theurgy per se and philosophical contemplation as an activity 
devoid of theurgical elements, whereas Smith wants to include a 
theurgic or ritual dimension at even the highest levels of ascent. How-
ever, Smith equivocates on this last point and admits (with specific 
regard to Proclus) that “one might suppose that the word theurgy was 
sometimes not applied to the very highest level of ascent.”93 Elsewhere, 
Smith notes that Proclus apparently “cuts theurgy short” at the level of the 
νοητό θεό, thus separating theurgic praxis from the activity of the 
ἀνθος νοῦ. At the highest level of ascent, there is only “silence” and the 
experience of νόης.94 Marinus (Vita Procli 3) alludes to the same 
dimension when he posits a grade of “supra-human” virtues over that of the 
“theurgic” virtues. Smith remarks: “It is noteworthy that the highest 
virtues are passed over in silence, perhaps not altogether fortuitous use 

93 Smith, pp. 90-99; 130-132. Cf. e.g., Iamblichus, De myst., IV.2: τις ἀληθής θεουργίας 
διότι τοις πρότεροις; V.15: πάλιν οὖν ἔρχεται τῆς θεουργίας ὁ ἑωτός τρόπος· ὃ μὲν τις ἐκεῖ 
ἄπλος ἀπωτός αγάμος ἀπὸ πάσης γενέσεως, ὃ δ’ ἀναπληκτικὸς τῶν σωμάτων καὶ τῆς 
δύναμις πάσης πραγματείας,
94 Smith, p. 115.
95 Smith, p. 115. Cf. A. Sheppard, “Proclus’ Attitude to Theurgy,” CQ, 32, 1982, 
pp. 212-224, who elaborates on Smith’s analysis by distinguishing three levels of theurgy 
in Proclus’ writings; forms of “white magic” (as esp. emphasized by Marinus in his Life 
of Proclus), forms of ritual theurgy that make “the soul intellectually alive” by elevating 
it to a level within the intelligible realm, and a non-ritual, “internal” theurgy akin to 
Plotinian mysticism. This last form of theurgy (following Smith) would principally utilize 
the “activating” power of the “one” as a symbol within the soul as the means of uniting 
the soul with the transcendent One. Such an analysis of the final stages of ascent may 
apply to the Oracles as well (see further infra).
of the word which recalls that region of silence at the summit of the noetic world.98

A similar distinction is made by Festugière who demonstrates that for Proclus, theurgy was a means of purifying the δύναμις-νεώμα in particular (and thus permitting union with the "traditional gods") whereas contemplation via the ἄθος vou permitted union with the "god of the philosophers," i.e., the One. Festugière's argument is further illuminated by a similar distinction in the writings of Hierocles, a contemporary of Proclus.99

As for Iamblichus, although he does not focus on union with the One in the De mysteriis, he nonetheless alludes to some sort of trans-theurgical moment in the ascent when he states in X.6 that τὸ τῆς ἑκτεταρχικοῦ (theurgic) ἀναγωγή is establishing the soul in the θλω τῷ δεμιουργικῷ ἰδέα and, therefore, at a level equal to that of the Supreme God. The same point is made in X.5. Elsewhere (as noted supra), Iamblichus (like Proclus) asserts the role of the ἄθος vou in apprehending the Highest God.

It is clear, then, that the later Neoplatonists were all trying to maintain some sort of distinction between theurgy and contemplation, with any attendant confusion arising more from their attempt to combine these two modes of ascent rather than rigidly separate them. (Porphyry would be the exception here.) If this is the case, then, did this attempt stem principally from a desire to wed Plotinus with the Juliani (as Lewy contends), or from a pattern implicit in the Oracles themselves? I would suggest the latter, and propose the following stages of ascent:

1. First of all, it is clear that the initial stages involved the purification of the lower soul/δύναμις-νεώμα via a series of material rites. Psellus, for example (P.G., 122, 1132 a 8-12), tells us that τὸ τῆς ἀκαίρες ἀναγωγή is "strengthened" (δυναμισθείσης) or "purified" (καθαίρεσθαι) via "stones" (λίθων), "herbs" (πάσας), and "incantations" (ἐπίθεσις), thus making it "well-wheeled" (ἐξόροφος) for the ascent. Marinus (Vita Procli 28; cf. fr. 206) tells us that Proclus was not only proficient in the use of the Chal-

98 Smith, p. 113.
80 This point is also noted by Finamore, Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul, p. 162, n. 66. On Iamblichus' demiurgic notions in general, see Dillon, Iamblichus Fragments, pp. 37-39; Festugère, Rév., IV, pp. 280-282.

dean "conjunctions," "prayers," and "magic wheels" (as well as experiencing autoptic visions of Hecate), but that he indulged in numerous lustrations (cf. fr. 133 and note). Elsewhere, Proclus himself mentions the use of "herbs" and "stones" in connection with "purifications" (καθάρσεις) by "sea water" and "sulphur" (De Magia; p. 151, 5-9 Bidez. Marinus, ibid., similarly mentions, in general, that Proclus θαλάσσησι καθαρύσας καθαρόμενος.) All of these rites, then, would correspond to certain of the theurgical procedures discussed above. However, to what extent all or just some of these rites were considered a necessary prelude to the main elevation cannot be recovered from our sources, other than to note some sort of orderly progression (most likely over a period of time). In this regard, cf. Iamblichus, De myst., V.20, who mentions "those in the beginning of theurgy," "those in the middle," and those "few" who attain the "summit of the hieratic art," but only after "great pain" and "late in life."

2. Now, part of this process involved what Lewy called "the central Chaldean sacrament;" i.e., the elevation of the soul on the rays of the sun. Again, the precise order of events here must be tentatively reconstructed from various sources, including the extant fragments. For the most part, I have followed Lewy's lead, but with certain modifications.

a. According to Lewy, a ritual "burying" of the body (as reported by Proclus; see Th., II, IV, 9; p. 30, 17 ff., S-W.) preceded the actual elevation on the sun's rays (which Proclus, ibid., alludes to as "the most secret of initiations:" ἡ τῆς μονήτωτά τῶν νεώτων). The apparent purpose of this rite was to mimic death, so that the soul (as in its actual post-mortem state) could be properly separated from the body. To this end, the head of the initiate was left uncovered, as this was where the soul was believed to reside. But Lewy's further interpretation of this rite as a "mystic, voluntary suicide"100 is surely wrong. Not only is the notion of death by violence (symbolic or otherwise) not attested as a Chaldean doctrine, but the one fragment which might support such a position is clearly misread by Lewy (see fr. 159 and notes). A better interpretation of this Proclian passage, then, is that of Safirey and Westerink (see notes ad loc.), who suggest that this symbolic burial would correspond to the sixth "kind" of death enumerated by Damascius (In Phaed., II § 149,7-8), viz.

98 See Lewy, pp. 204-207.
100 Lewy, pp. 205-206. But whether this elevation was further acted out in terms of an actual "fire cult" is problematic. Kroll (p. 35, and thus Dodds, "Theurgy," 1947, p. 56 = 1957, p. 285) thought yes, and suggested an analogy with the "fire cult" of the Zoroastrians. But Lewy (rightly, I think) discounts this analogy, principally citing lack of evidence (see p. 429, n. 104).
the “supernatural death” or “more divine way” of the theurgists, in which the elements of the body (symbolically) “dissolve” (thus assuring that the body, in its post-mortem state, will be free of demonic vengeance). b. Once the body was symbolically “dead,” then the soul could be properly separated from it; but the precise nature of this separation must be conjectured. Certain clues, however, are given by Syrus (as reported by Proclus; see In rem p., I, 152, 7-153, 20) who likens the Chaldean initiation to the funeral rites performed by Achilles at the burial of Patroclus. In this analogy (as interpreted by Levy), the officiant at the rite (modeled on Achilles) would perform the actual separation by “calling forth” the soul of the initiate; the initiate, in turn, would be “laid out” (or symbolically “buried”) in the manner of Patroclus.

Another possibility (perhaps performed in conjunction with the above) is that the initiate himself would aid in releasing the soul by engaging in certain breathing exercises. Fr. 124, for example, states that the soul is “thrust forth” (διαστήματος) by “inhaling” (ἀπάναθος). Similarly, in fr. 130, the soul (at a higher level of ascent) “draws in” (吸入) the “flourishing flames” (πυρήνας ἀκμάσιος) which descend “from the Father” (ἐκ πατρόθεο). Westerink, (see notes to fr. 130) thinks specifically here in terms of “feeding on” or “breathing in” sunlight. A similar process of “drawing in” or “inhaling” the sun’s rays or “breath” is found in the Mithras Liturgy (p. 7, Meyer): “Draw in (吸入) breath (πνεύμα) from the rays, drawing in (吸入) three times as much as you can, and you will see yourself being lifted up and ascending to the height, so that you seem to be in mid-air.” As Meyer notes (p. ix), this passage probably reflects some type of actual breathing technique, an observation apropos for the Chaldean material as well. Certainly, breathing techniques of one kind or another are a common feature of a wide variety of ascent traditions.

c. Following this initial release, then, the separated soul would be led upward on the rays of the sun (or “Material Connectors,” see fr. 80), making its way back up through the various spheres and elements which marked its descent (see fr. 110 and notes). This principal elevation would again be guided by the theurgist, with the aid of ministering angels (see frs. 122, 123 and notes) and the three Teletarchs (see frs. 85 and notes). In addition, the soul’s ascent would be aided by the singing of hymns (see fr. 131 and notes), the uttering of prayers (cf. fr. 140 and notes), and the chanting of voces mysticae. In Chaldean terminology, these last would be

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101 Levy, pp. 206-207.
102 See, e.g., M. Eliade, Yoga: Immortality and Freedom, (Princeton, 1958), pp. 55-65, for a discussion of such techniques in a variety of religious traditions.
103 Levy, esp. pp. 198-199.
104 Levy, p. 208; cf. pp. 184-204.
manipulation. (This contemplative element is importantly missing from the ascent described in the Mithras Liturgy.) If so, the ascent to the sun would not effect the final purification of the soul (i.e., that of the higher or rational soul) but, rather, would serve only to fully purify the δύσημα - the salvation of which is promised by the Oracles (see esp. irr. 128, 129, 158 and notes; cf. fr. 196).

Following this line of interpretation, then, the Chaldean anagēgē, as a whole, would parallel that of Porphyry (as Hadot suggests); i.e., theurgical purification for the lower soul δύσημα - intellectual or contemplative purification for the higher soul. This is the same model Festugière finds appropriate for Proclus. However, in Proclus’ case (as noted above), a clear separation between theurgy and contemplation is not always easy to determine. This caveat would also apply to Iamblichus, as both had theurgy, in some form, as extending to the higher soul. What needs to be determined now is just what theurgy means at this higher level, and is a “higher” theurgy operative in the Oracles as well?

A distinction between types of theurgy, of course, has already been noted by various scholars. We have already mentioned Smith’s “lower” and “higher” theurgy, the former restricted to material rites connected with the “lower gods,” the latter concerned with worship of the “transcendent gods.” Eitrem also distinguishes types of theurgy and, in terms of the Oracles, notes a “contemplative theurgy” (or “theoretical theurgy”), as well as a “practical theurgy,” the former corresponding to the theosophical speculations of the Chaldeans, the latter to the actual techniques of ascent. For Eitrem, then, there is no contemplative aspect to the ascent per se, but only those ritual practices which he analogizes to the systatēseis and epoptētai of the magical papyri.106

Rosan, in his study of Proclus, also speaks in terms of a “lower” and “higher” theurgy, understanding the former as “theurgy proper” (and thus relegated to the use of material objects), the latter equated with Proclus’ pistis.107 In this latter sense, Proclus, at times (e.g., Th. pl. I.25; p. 112, 1-3, S.-W.; Comm. in Parm., p. 502, 10-12, ed. C. Steel = p. 42, 15-16, Kl.-Lab.), regards pistis as the primary means of union with the One, arguing that it is “faith” (as a “theurgic power”) which properly engenders that “silence” within the soul which is the appropriate mode of response to the “silence” of the cosmic “deep” where the One (or Father) resides (cf. Th. pl., IV.9; p. 31, 12-16, S.-W.; see irr. 16, 132 and notes). Elsewhere, however (e.g., Exc. chald., IV; In Alc. I, p. 114 [248,3 Cr. ] W.; Th. pl., I.3; p. 15, 3-4, S.-W.), Proclus uses the ἄνθος νοῦς terminology to express the soul’s union with the One, this union understood in the manner described above, viz. as a supra-rational state of unified intuition.

Now, although Smith sees Proclus as sometimes distinguishing theurgy from the activity of the ἄνθος νοῦς (see supra), he also suggests that Proclus may well have regarded the ἄνθος νοῦς as that “token” or σύμβολον of the One within the soul (and, thus, would have regarded it, in some sense, as a “theurgic device”).108 As evidence, Smith (apparently following Bremond)109 cites In rem p., I, 177, 17-24, where Proclus speaks of the “unifying substance” (ἐναίας ὑποστάσεως) of the soul as the ἄρρητος σύμβολον which (based on the principle “like by like”) unites the transcendent One (οὐχ ὡς ὁ ὀρθὸν πάσαν καὶ ζωήν) with its proper “essence” (οὐσία) and “life” (ζωή) within the soul. Elsewhere (e.g., In Alc. I, p. 114 [247,7-248,4 Cr. ] W.), Proclus specifically describes the ascent to the One in terms of ascending to σύμβολον ὑπαρχον τῆς ἁμαρτίας, which, for Proclus, is the ἄνθος τῆς οὐσίας ἡμῶν or τὸ ἄνθος τοῦ νοῦ.110 At this point, the soul is unified by “becoming one” (ἐν γενόμενον) and “acting as one” (ἐνεργοῦντες).

In light of these passages, then, there can be no doubt that Proclus did indeed equate the ἄνθος νοῦς with the term σύμβολον and understood it specifically as the “unifying power” of the soul. Psellus corroborates this. In his commentary to our fr. 1 (= P.G., 122, 1144 b 11-12), he exactly states: ἄνθος δὲ τοῦ νοῦ ἡ ἐναία τῆς ἐναίας δύναμις. In addition, in his commentary to our fr. 110 (= P.G., 122, 1129 d 4-7), Psellus understands the ἄνθος λόγον of the soul as both ἡ νοερότατη ζωή as well as ἡ ἐντελέχεια δύναμις τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ἢ ἄνθος νοῦ ἐν ἐξερχόμενον ὑπαρχεῖ τέλος (from elsewhere, Psellus (quoting Proclus) states that the soul is formed ἀπὸ....

106 Smith, p. 120.

107 See Smith, ibid.; cf. A. Bremond, “‘Un Texte de Proclus sur la Prière et l’Union Divine,’” RSR, 19, 1929, pp. 460-462 who, like Smith, similarly equates the σύμβολον of unity within the soul with the ἄνθος νοῦς. Although Smith does not specifically cite Bremond here, he does cite this article in his bibliography. Cf., also, Sheppard, “Proclus’ Attitude to Theurgy,” p. 22: “…Proclus thinks of the ‘one in the soul’ as a σύμβολον of the First Hypostasis and that it is because of this σύμβολον-relationship that mystical union is possible…mystical union could be described as a kind of theurgy because turning the ‘one in the soul’ towards the supreme One was thought of as activating a σύμβολον in the direction of what it symbolized.”

210, 27-212, 1. Cf., also, Iamblichus, De myst., V.26, who similarly underscores the "elevating" (ἀναγωγών) force of prayer. It may be that Iamblichus' theory of prayer (on which Proclus is dependent) may ultimately go back to Chaldean doctrine; see fr. 121 and notes.

In any event, based again on the principle "like by like" (see Exc. chald., IV; p. 194, 10 Pitra), Proclus insists that the One (and the intelligible world as a whole) must be apprehended by the "like" part of the soul—the One itself apprehended here (ibid., p. 195, 4 Pitra) not by the "flower of mind" but by an even more refined essence, the "flower of the whole soul" (ἀνθός παντός τῆς ψυχῆς; see notes to fr. 1). Thus, for Proclus, the higher levels of ascent would involve not only a process of intelligible or noetic contemplation (in the Plotinian sense), but a type of "higher" theurgy as well, this latter involving the use of "perfect" prayer, σύνθεμα, noetic hymning, sacred silences, theurgic "faith," the ἄνθος νοῦ—all of which had the power to elevate the soul and effect union with various aspects of the intelligible world, including the One itself.

Such a model seems appropriate for the Oracles as well, principally because it would permit us to give full weight to the contemplative language of frs. 1 and 9a (cf., also, frs. 17-19 and notes) without negating those aspects of the anagogē which would remain properly theurgical. As such, we can suppose that the ἄνθος νοῦ of the fragments would similarly function as a σύνθεμα or theurgical device or "power" and not solely as an organ of contemplative perception. Although the terms ἄνθος νοῦ and σύνθεμα are not explicitly equated in the fragments, it may well be that the "pure Paternal token" (πατρικός σύνθεματος ἄγγειον) of fr. 109, as well as the τρίαδος σύνθεμα of fr. 2 should be understood in this sense. This would also be true of the Chaldean term ἄληξ ("strength")—an equivalent expression in the Oracles for the "spark of soul" or "flower/flame of mind" (cf. frs. 2, 32, 49, 82, 117-119). In fr. 3, it is specifically the "triple-barred strength" in the soul which is equated with the τρίαδος σύνθεμα as that theurgic force or power which functions as a "focusing" device to prod the soul upward. In fr. 117, certain adepts (probably the theurgists) are said to be "saved" through their own "strength," in fr. 119, the soul's "strength" is said to be "bind (us) to god" (τεσσαράκοντα ἄληξ) for the purpose of "exciting us towards the flight up there;" in fr. 109, the soul emerges from "forgetfulness" when it "remembers" the "pure, Paternal token" or, in Psellus' interpretation (see supra), that "sacred word" or "symbol" in the soul understood as the ἄνθος νοῦ. This evidence suggests, then, that in the Oracles, the soul's "flower/flame," "spark," or "strength," did indeed function as a "token" or σύνθεμα which specifically had the power to theurgically

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111 In terms of Proclus' text, Sheppard ("Proclus' Attitude to Theurgy," p. 220, n. 28) reads νοστίς λόγος here (following Jahn) rather than ἴσος λόγος (Des Places). Des Places' reading, however, remains the better choice as it is obviously based on confirmation from Psellus as well as the Oracles (cf. fr. 110: ἴσος λόγος; fr. 175: ἴσος λόγος). It is likely that the νοστίς of cod. B and V of Exc. chald. (cod. P has ἴσος) is a copyist's error based on "attraction" from the subsequent line: ἀπὸ τῶν νοστίων εἴδω.

112 Trouillard, L'Un et l'Amé, p. 178, likens Proclus' understanding of prayer to the "orison" or "ontological prayer" of the Christian mystics which, similarly, is not to be understood in terms of ordinary prayer but as the soul's turning towards and uniting with God. For further discussion, see E. Underhill, Mysticism, 12th ed. (New York, 1972), p. 306 ff.
"focus" and elevate the soul and, ultimately, to "bind" or unite it with its noetic counterpart, viz. the fiery, triadic essence of the Highest God or θεός τοῦ κόσμου. If so, then the teaching of the Oracles regarding the highest levels of ascent would prefigure, in many ways, the ideas especially elaborated by Proclus.

Now, a comparable process of ascent can also be found in various Gnostic and Hermetic texts, where patterns of noetic hymning and prayer, sacred silences, voces mysticae, etc., are combined with various forms of contemplative illumination as a means of prodding the soul upward. Of particular interest are several of the so-called "Sethian" tracts found in the Nag Hammadi Library (e.g., Allogenes, Marsanes, 3 Steles Seth, Zostrianos), some (or even all) of which may have been known to the schoo of Plotinus. As noted earlier, a similar Platonic philosophical vocabulary (familiar to the Oracles as well) is used in all of these texts to describe aspects of the intelligible world with an emphasis, in particular, on a "triple-powered" One or Monad situated at the heights of the noetic order. The ascent to this Deity, like the ascent to the Chaldean πάντοτε, similarly involves not only some form of philosophical or contemplative purification (the negative theology of Allogenes, NHC XI, 61,32 ff. is particularly striking), but the use of voces mysticae, hymnic prayers, sacred silences, "sealing," etc.

The thirteen "seals" (σφακτίδες) of Marsanes, NHC X, 2,12 f. are especially interesting. Here, the first three "seals" are specifically connected with the material world (and, perhaps, with the use of the "waxed images" and "emerald stones" mentioned later in the text; see 35*-1-6), the other seals apparently progressively concerned with various aspects of "incorporeal" existence (e.g., "conversion," "the self-begotten ones," "incorporeal being," "wisdom," etc), the thirteenth or highest seal related in some way to the Supreme God or "Silent One." Although the precise nature of these "seals" is not disclosed in the text, Pearson (notes ad loc.) suggests that they would correspond either to the voces mysticae or divine names associated with various angelic powers or to a ritual of "baptism". In either case, it is the "sealing" itself which apparently effects the soul's ascent and, consequently, permits the adept to attain "knowledge" or "perception" of the various levels of the intelligible order.

Now, in the Oracles, the συμβολα and σήματα function in a similar way. Not only do these "tokens" and "symbols" have a material association (identified with the stones, herbs, scents, etc. handled in some of the preliminary rites), but they have an immaterial manifestation as well (esp. in the form of voces mysticae. Indeed, Synesius uses the terms σύνθημα and σφαχτίς interchangeably in an analogic context; see notes to fr. 2.) Thus, to borrow Proclus' language, "participation" (μείγμα) in the συμβολα/σήματα—at whatever level—is the principal means by which the soul returns back to the gods and, ultimately, to the Highest God himself. (With regard to Proclus, Smith speaks in terms of ascending from "corporally immanent henads ou σύμβολα to those immanent on higher spiritual levels.") This seems to be the case with the Marsanes text as well. If so, then this text would provide a further link between aspects of Sethian Gnosticism and the tradition(s) on which the Oracles drew (with Syria, perhaps, as a common geographical locus).

This brings us to the matter of the text. Although I have based my ordering of the fragments on that of Des Places (Oracles Chaldæiques, Paris, 1971), unlike Des Places, I have also included the introductory formulae which, for the most part, are found in Kroll's edition (De Oraculis Chaldaicis, Breslau, 1894; rpt. Hildesheim, 1962). The exception here are those fragments from Psellus (P.G., 122, 1124 a - 1149 b) which do not include introductory material but only a given verse or verses with an appended commentary. Where applicable, Psellus' paraphrase of a given verse is included in our text. In addition, the present text also includes the Latin fragments from Moerbeke's translation of Proclus' Com-

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114 Although Pearson (Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X, p. 250) suggests a possible Syrian background for the author of Marsanes (as does Saffrey for the Julianis), this "Syrian connection" must remain tentative.

115 Prior to Kroll, G. Plethon (c. 1350-1452 C.E.) had evidently put together a collection of the Oracles but under the name of Zoroaster; see J. Bidez and F. Cumont, Les Mythes Helenèus, II (Paris, 1938; rpt. 1973), pp. 251-263. J. P. Migne placed this collection with Psellus' commentaries on the Oracles (P.G., 122, 1115 a - 1122 b). Apart from Lewy's study, the only other English translations of the Oracles are those of G. R. S. Mead, Echoes from the Gnosis, VIII (London and Benares, 1908) and Sapere Aude, The Chaldaean Oracles of Zoroaster, (Bothell, WA, 1984), but these are extremely unreliable "loose" translations and attempts at interpretation.
mentary on the Parmenides, VII (ed. C. Steel, 1985; cf. Klibansky-Labowsky, 1953) recently isolated by H.-D. Saffrey (fr. 9 and 9a), as well as three additions to the section on "Various Chaldean Expressions" now suggested by Des Places (fr. 210a-c). Fragments noted with an asterisk indicate that Tardieu (Lewy2, pp. 679-680) finds these fragments suspect (in addition to the "Doubtful Fragments" numbered 211-226). Since the present text is not meant to be a new critical edition, I have not excised these suspect fragments (as Tardieu suggests), but have included all of Tardieu's reservations in my commentary. Following Dodds and Des Places, I have also excluded those fragments from the Tübingen Theosophia (ed. K. Buresch, 1889) which Lewy had erroneously thought were Chaldean in origin.

The oracular fragments in the Greek text have been arranged in stichoi (following Des Places) with three dots at the beginning or end of a line of verse indicating a truncated hexameter.

111 It should be noted that Tardieu's edition includes some 220 pages of "Complements," including errata, addenda, indices locorum, verborum, rerum, an extremely useful concordance of the fragments, as well as the articles cited above by Dodds (n. 8) and Hadot (n. 6). See the review of G. Stroumsa, Numen, 27, 1981, pp. 167-172.

112 See Dodds, "New Light," p. 265 = Lewy5, p. 695, who rightly challenges several of Lewy's assumptions. The main objection to including the oracles from the Theosophia is that no ancient authority cites them (in part or whole) as belonging to the collection of the Chaldean Oracles. See, also, the introductory remarks to the Doubtful Fragments (infra, p. 217).
Moreover, (Iamblichus and his successors in their Commentaries on the Chaldean Oracles) invoke the gods as witnesses in those verses where they address the theurgist:

“For there exists a certain Intelligible which you must perceive by the flower of mind. For if you should incline your mind toward it and perceive it as perceiving a specific thing, you would not perceive it. For it is the power of strength, visible all around, flashing with intellectual divisions. Therefore, you must not perceive that Intelligible violently but with the flame of mind completely extended which measures all things, except that Intelligible. You must not perceive it intently, but keeping the pure eye of your soul turned away, you should extend an empty mind toward the Intelligible in order to comprehend it, since it exists outside of (your) mind.”

“Arrayed from head to toe with a clamorous light, armed in mind and soul with a triple-barbed strength, you must cast into your imagination the entire token of the triad, and not go toward the empyrean channels in a scattered way, but with concentration.”

And the oracle-giving god says such things about (intelligible knowledge).

For everywhere Power has been assigned the middle place; and among the intelligibles, it connects the Father and Intellect:

“For Power is with him, but Intellect is from him.”
"...οὐ γάρ ἐς ὄλην τῷ ἐπέλευσα τὸ πρῶτον ἔδραν δύναμιν κατακληλείε τὰς ἐξουσίας ἀλλὰ νόμον: νοῦ γάρ νόος ἐστὶν ὁ κόσμος τεχνίτης παρέχει." "

φησι τὸ λόγιον.

"ὁ γάρ ὑπεξωκύμος τις ὑπὲρ νοερὸς διακρίνει" kata τὸ λόγιον.

"πῦρ πρῶτον καὶ πῦρ ἔτερον σπεύδωντα μεγάλην.""  

καὶ μυστικοκτῆτη παράδοσις καὶ αἱ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν φήμαι λέγει ὡς "...διὰς παρὰ τόδε καθήται." "

καὶ φησιν: ""ἀμφότερον γὰρ ἔχει, νῦν μὲν κατέχειν τὰ νοητά, αἰσθάνει δὲ ἐπάγειν κόσμους.""

"For the First Transcendent Fire does not enclose its own Power in matter by means of works, but by Intellect. For Intellect derived from Intellect is the Craftsman of the fiery cosmos,

says the oracle.

But (Atlas) holds up the sky and separates it from the earth, so that the things above are not confused with the things below:

"For as a girdling, intellectual membrane, he separates," according to the oracle,

"the first fire and the other fire which are eager to mingle."

"For the Father perfected all things and handed them over to the Second Intellect, which you—the entire human race—call the First Intellect."

And the most mystical tradition—the Oracles from the gods—says that "...beside this one sits a Dyad."

And it says:

"For it has a double function: it both possesses the intelligibles in its mind and brings sense-perception to the worlds."

Rightly, then, it is impossible to attribute a name to (the One), as if a name were able to fit it. Thus, that which is beyond all things and can be indicated only by the term "the One" by those who desire to express the inexpressible, not only Plato alone but even the gods have spoken in this way. For the gods themselves give oracular responses as follows:

"For all things which issue from the One and, conversely, go back to the One, are divided, so to speak, intelligibly, into many bodies.""
et nobis consulentes se ponere quidem anime multitudinem, intelligentiam autem nostram sursumducere et circumducere in unum (dicentes):

"neque in tuo intellectu detinere multivarium aliud, sed anime noema in unum ampliare."

(p. 15 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1145 a 4)

"...elai pro ton endo puro engegata."

(p. 15 Kr. = Proclus, In Aic., p. 23 [51, 8-11 Cr.] W; cf. Proclus, In Eud., 98, 17 F.)

τριτών τόινυ τοις νοητοῖς καὶ κρυφοῖς θεοῖς ὑποστάσεως ὀσών καὶ τῆς μὲν πρώτης τῷ ἀγαθῷ χαρακτηριζομένης

"...tagnobon auton noosaa apo pateriki monas eis,*

τὸ λόγιον φησι.

(p. 15 Kr. = Damascius, II, 29, 15-18; cf. Proclus, In Eud., 99, 1-2 F.)

ως δι' ἐν τούτω μένοια (sc. ἡ δόλος) τῷ κυνείσθαι τε καὶ ὄρμαν καὶ πετάσθαι πρὸς γέννησιν αἰών ἐστιν.*

"...tanath (Γαρ) monas eis, h duo genos,"

(κατὰ τὸ λόγιον). Δίῳ καὶ τῷ μένειν αἰει τῇ ἄδικῳ στροφέλλεται πάσι χαριζεται, κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν χρησμοῦσιν.

("...for the Monad is extensible which generates duality," (according to the oracle). Therefore, all things are obliged to remain forever in ceaseless motion, according to this oracular tradition.

"For nothing imperfect runs forth from the Paternal Principle."

"The Father does not provoke fear, but imubes persuasion."
15
(p. 15 Kr. = Proclus, In rem pop., I, 27, 27-28, 2)
"πᾶς θεὸς ἀγαθὸς," καὶ τῶν λογίων τῶν ἄνθρωπων, ἐν οἷς αἰτίωμεν τῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλείας ἡμῶν;

"οὔδ' ὅτι πᾶς ἀγαθὸς θεὸς εἰδότες· ἀ, ταλαιπωροί, νήφατε..."

16
(p. 16 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 63, 25-26)
δηλαδὴ τὸν ὑπερουργόν τόπον καὶ ὑστερρημένον

"...τῇ θεοθρήματι σίγῇ
tῶν πατέρων..."

17
(p. 19, n. 1 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 18, 25)
"...τῷ δὲ νοσήματι τροφή τῷ νοσητῷ"
κατὰ τὸ λόγιον ἔστι.

18
(p. 18 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 57, 25-26; cf. Damascius, II, 15, 6 [ὑπὲρ κόσμων] + 65, 16 [ὑπὲρφθορον])
"οὗ τὸν ὑπερουργὸν πατρικὸν βουνὸν ἵστε νοσήματε,"
λέγει πρὸς αὐτούς (sc. τοὺς νοσητοὺς θεοῦς) ὁ ὅμοιος.

19
(p. 19, n. 1 Kr. = Damascius, II, 16, 15-16)
eἰρηται γὰρ (παρ' αὐτών τῶν θεῶν)
"τὸν δὲ νοεῖ πᾶς νοσὲς θεὸν..."

20
(p. 11 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 102, 10-12; cf. Damascius, II, 16, 20-21; 57, 26-28)
"οὖ γὰρ ἀνεν νῦν ἱστε νοσητοῖς, καὶ τῷ νοσητῷ
οὐ νοῦ χωρὶς ὑπάρχει..."
κατὰ τὸ λόγιον.

15
"Every god is good." The Oracles testify to this axiom in those verses where they blame the impiety of men and say:

"And you do not know that every god is good. O, drudges, sober up..."

16
Clearly the transcendent place and all those things

"...in the god-nourishing silence of the Fathers."

17
"...for the one who has perception, the intelligible is nourishment,
according to the oracle.

18
"You (gods) who know the supermundane, Paternal Abyss by perceiving it,"
says the hymn about them (sc. the intellectual gods).

19
For it is said (among the gods themselves) that

"every mind perceives this god..."

20
"For Intellect does not exist without the intelligible, and the
intelligible does not exist apart from Intellect..."
according to the oracle.
FRAGMENTS

20 bis
(Damascius, II, 16, 18)

For it is said that the Father is

"...intelligible, having within himself that which thinks."

21

"...for he is all things, but intelligibly,"

says the oracle.

22

Thus, in the Orales as well, the actions of the gods and of the Father himself are revealed by them through speech, as when it says:

"For the Intellect of the Father said for all things to separate into three, governing all things by the Intellect <of the very first> eternal <Father>. He nodded his assent to this and immediately all things were separated."

23

(The verses of the oracle are as follows):

"In order that a triad might connect the All while measuring all things."

24

And what is the dyadic middle? It is the connective and teletarchic nature which separates the cohesion

"into beginning, end, and middle in the order determined by Necessity."

25

Indeed, even as the oracle says:

"The Father thought these things and a mortal was brought to life by him."
26*  
(Lydius, De muni., II, 6; 23, 10-12 W.)

πρός γὰρ τὸν ἄπαξ ἑπέκεινα ο Πρόκλος οὐτω.

“μοναδία γὰρ σε τρισύχοιν ιδίων ἐσεβάσσατο κόσμος.”

27  
(p. 18 Kr. = Damascius, I, 87, 1-4; cf. II, 87, 14)

εἴτε πατὴρ ὡς καὶ δύονας καὶ νοῦς, εἴτε ἐν τῷ πρῷ τούτων, ὁ εἰς πατὴρ ὃ πρὸ τῆς τριάδος:

“παντί γὰρ ἐν κόσμῳ λάμπει τριάς, ής μοναδίς ἠρχεῖς,”

φησὶ τὸ λόγιον.

28  
(p. 18 Kr. = Lydius, De muni., II, 8; p. 28, 1-5 W.)

πάντα γὰρ τὰ νοητὰ ἐν τῇ τριάδι περιέχεται καὶ πᾶς ὁ θεῖος ἄρμοδος ἐν τῇ τάξῃ τούτῃ προελθὼν, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Χαλδαῖος ἐν τοῖς λόγιοις:

“τίθησθε γὰρ ἐκ τριάδος κόλπους ἑσταρατεί ἀπεντα.”

29  
(p. 18 Kr. = Lydius, De muni., II, 8; p. 28, 6-7 W.)

καὶ πάλιν:

“τίθησθε γὰρ ἐκ τριάδος πᾶν πνεῦμα πατὴρ ἐκέρασσεν.”

30  
(p. 19 Kr. = Damascius, II, 67, 1-3)

Διόπερ οὐδὲ πηγή μιᾷ τῶν πολλῶν αὕτη γε, ἄλλα

“πηγὴ τῶν πηγῶν”

καὶ πηγῶν ἀπαχθῶν, κατὰ τὸ λόγιον,

“μὴ τρίτα συνέχουσα τὰ πάντα.”

31  
(p. 15 Kr. = Damascius, II, 63, 20-23)

ἡ τρίτη τάξις ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης καὶ τῆς δεύτερας ὁμοία προέκυψεν.

“ἐξ ἀμφοτέρῳ δὴ τῶν δέως τριάδος δέμα πρώτης οὕτως οὐ πρώτης, ἄλλ’ οὗ τὰ νοητὰ μετατίθαι.”

For Proclus speaks in this way concerning the Once Transcendent:

“For the world, seeing you as a triadic Monad, has honored you.”

27

Whether there is Father, Power, and Intellect, there would be that which is before these, the Single Father, who is prior to the triad:

“For in every world shines a triad, ruled by a Monad,”

says the oracle.

28

For all the intelligibles are enclosed in the triad, and every divine number comes forth in this order, as even the Chaldean himself says in the Oracles:

“For in the womb of this triad all things are sown.”

29  
(continues fr. 28)

And again:

“For in this triad the Father has mixed every breath.”

30

Therefore, this is not one source of many things, but

“Source of Sources,”

and of all sources, according to the oracle,

“the womb which contains the All.”

31

The third order proceeds at the same time from the first and second order:

“From both of these flows the bond of the first triad, which is not truly first, but where the intelligibles are measured.”
32
(p. 19 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 420, 11-16)
"Η τρίτη τάτος τριάς ἢ νοητή τὸ αὐτοτζόνον, περὶ ἕτι καὶ τὰ λόγια φημων, ὡς
"ἐργάτης (ὅτι) ἔκδοτις ἐστὶν πυρὸς ζωοφόρον <αὐτή>,
(ὅτι) καὶ τὸν ζωογόνον πληροφορεῖ "Εκάτης ..., κόλπον
(καλ), ......ἐπερρεῖ τοῖς συνοχεύσιν
ἀλλήν ξειδώρου πυρὸς μέγα δυναμένον."

33
(p. 19 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 12, 16-19)
ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐν τῷ δημιουργῷ τέχνη μένει τε ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐστι, καθ’ ἤν καὶ
"...ἐργοτεχνίτης,"
ὑπὸ τῶν λογιῶν ἐπονομάζεται καὶ
"κόσμου τεχνίτης πυρὸν..."

34
(p. 20 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 451, 17-22)
οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὰ λόγια τοῦ μέγατον τοῦτον θεόν "πηγὴν πηγῶν" προσαγορεύει καὶ
μόνον ἀπογενήθηκα τὰ πάντα φημων.
"Ενθεν ἀποθεοίκει γένεις πολυποιέων ἄλης,
ἐνθεν συρμένος προτήριον ἁμαθροί πυρὸς ἀνθίος
κόσμουν ἐνθρόσκοις κοιλώματι πάντα γάρ ἐνθεν
ἀρχεται εἰς τὸ κέτω τείνειν ἀκτίνας ἄγεις."

35
(p. 20 Kr. = Damascius, II, 133, 1-6; cf. Proclus, In Crat., 58, 19-22)
ἡ δὲ καὶ αὐτοῦ τοις θεοῖς πρώτος "ὁ ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα" τὴν ἐβδομάδα προβάλλεται
τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις, ἀπὸ τοῦτο κατὰ μέθειν.
"τούθεν γὰρ ἐπιρρήσκομεν ἀμελλυκτοί τε κεράνων
καὶ προφητεροχόροι κόλποι παμφρεγγός αὐτῆς
παραγγειοῦσι "Εκάτης καὶ ὑπεξίωςς πυρὸς ἀνθίος
ἡ δέ κρατεᾶν πνεύμα πόλων πυρῶν ἐπέκεινα."
36

(p. 21 Kr. = Proclus, In Crut., p. 58, 11-15)

Therefore, even in the Oracles it is said that the Very First Source encloses the Implacables but “rides upon” all others:

“The Intellect of the Father rides upon the unshakeable guides which shine inflexibly by the furrows of the Implacable Fire.”

37

(pp. 23-24 Kr. = Proclus, In Parm., 800, 18-801, 5 Co.)

And (we must) recall the very (words) which are found in the Chaldean Oracles:

“The Intellect of the Father, while thinking with its vigorous will, shot forth the multiformed Ideas. All these leapt forth from one Source, for from the Father comes both will and perfection. But the Ideas were divided by the Intelligible Fire and allotted to other intelligibles. For the Ruler placed before the multiformed cosmos an intelligible and imperishable model from which, along a disorderly track, the world with its form hastened to appear, engraved with multiform Ideas. There is one Source for these, from which other terrible Ideas, divided, shoot forth, breaking themselves on the bodies of the worlds. Those which are borne around the frightful wombs like a swarm of bees—shining here and there in various directions—are the intelligible Thoughts from the Paternal Source, which pluck in abundance the flower of fire from the acme of sleepless Time. The first self-perfected Source of the Father spouted forth these primordial Ideas.”

38

(p. 24 Kr. = Proclus, In Parm., 895, 7-12 Co.)

At any rate, the Oracles, explaining to us the Ideas which exist primarily in (the Paternal Intellect), have called them “Paterna Thoughts:”

“These are the Thoughts of the Father, after which my fire is rolled up.”

39

(p. 25 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., II, 54, 5-16)

But this greatest and most perfect bond which the Father everywhere throws around the world...the Oracles have called “bond of Love, heavy with fire:”

“For after he thought his works, the self-generated Paternal Intellect sowed the bond of Love, heavy with fire, into all things.”
καὶ τὴν ἀλλιών προσθήκην.

"Ἅρωσι τὰ πάντα μὲν ἕνην χρόνον εἰς ἀπέραντον ἔρωνα, μηδὲ πέση τὰ πατρὸς νοερῷ ὄφραμένα φέγγει." διὰ γὰρ τοῦτον τὸν ἔρωτα πάντα ἐκμοστά ἀλλήλους:

"Ἅρωσι σὺν ἔρωτι μὲνεί κόσμου στουχεία θέοντα.""  

40  
(p. 37 Kr. = Damascius, II, 200, 21-24)  
ὀρμηθέντες...σαφῶς δε καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν λογίων εἰρηται γὰρ  
"ἀρχάς, αἱ πατρὸς ἔργα νοησάοι τὰ νοητὰ  
appointment ἔργοι καὶ σώματοι ἀμφικαλύφαι.""  

41  
(p. 65 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., II, 300, 10-14)  
ἐτε δὲ τὸ "ἐφάπαξαν" πρακτον τοὺς εἰρηται, διότι οἰκότητες ἢ σφυξταὶ καὶ ἀφέστεια τούτων εἰρηται καὶ εξηρτήσατο εὐγνώμονας τῆς ἐναργής, καὶ ἀδέσμου καὶ κατ᾽  
ἐπιβολὴν ὁμοίως ἐστῶσαν γνώσεις ἰδιολογίας καὶ  
"...καλοθήτα νοοῦσης/ώς ἐπαφητά,""  
5 φησὶ τι θεῶν.  

42  
(p. 25 Kr. = Proclus, In Parm., 769, 7-12 Co.)  
Διακέρτεται ἡμα καὶ συγκέρτεται (ἐν τὰ εἰρή τὰ νοιτεύτ) (κατὰ τὸ λόγιον)  
"θεσμῷ ἔρωτος ἄγνητο, ὡς ἐν νόσῳ ἐκθεὶς πρῶτος,  
ἐνσάμως πώρι πῶρ συνδέσμων, ὄραν χερσάτα  
πηγαίνους χροτήρας ἐνο πυρὸς ἀνθός ἐπισχόνων.""  

43  
(p. 26 Kr. = Proclus, Th. pl., I, 2; 11, 13-14 S.-W.)  
"...ἔρωτι (μέν) ὑβαθέ..."  
κατὰ τὸ λόγιον ἀνακλήσας τὴν ψυχήν.  

And the Oracles add the reason for this:  
"In order that the All might continue to love for an infinite time and the things woven by the intellectual light of the Father might not collapse."  
Because of this Love, all things are suited to one another:  
"With this Love, the elements of the world remain on course."  

40  
Inspired...clearly by the Oracles, for it is said that  
"the Principles, which perceived the intelligible works of the Father, conceal with sense-perceptible works and bodies."  

41  
Further, "to touch" is suitably stated, because of the proximate way the Soul presides over sense-perceptibles and is dependent on intelligibles, with the contact revealing a knowledge which is clear, immediate, and established according to a definite intuition, and  
"...perceiving sense-perceptibles as capable of being touched," says one of the gods.  

42  
(The intelligible Ideas) are separated and compounded at the same time (according to the oracle)  
"by the bond of wondrous Love, which leapt first from Intellect, clothing his bonded fire with the fire of Intellect in order to mingle the Source Craters while offering the flower of his fire."  

43  
Having filled the soul  
"...with a deep Love..." according to the oracle.
44

(p. 26 Kr. = Lydus, De mens., I, 11; 3, 12-16 W. + Schol. Paris. gr. 1853, f. 312 r*)

τὸ λόγιον ἀλλὰ τὴν ψυχήν τριάδα θείαν παραδίδωσι (sc. οἱ Χαλδαῖοι); ὁ δὲ καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς (sc. ὁ Χαλδαῖος):

"...ψυχαῖον συνεύρομεν διαφες κράσις ἀμονοίας, νῷ καὶ νεόματι θείας, ἐφ᾽ ὁς τρίτον ἄγνων ἔρωτα, συνθετικῶν πάντων ἐπιβηθοῦτα σεμνῶν, ἐθηκέν."

45

(p. 26 Kr. = Proclus, In rem p., I, 176, 22-23; cf. II, 347, 8; In Alc., 53 [117, 17 Cr.] W.)

οἱ θεοὶ

"...πονημὸν ἔρωτος ἀληθοὺς" προσευχήσαν (sc. τὸν ὑβριστὴν ἔρωτα).

46

(p. 26 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 212, 19-22)

(πει...)ἀρετάς τε ἀπὸ τῆς γενέσεως καθαρτικὰς καὶ ἀναγωγοὺς προβεβληθῆκαι καὶ

"...πιστεῖν κάλληθαι καὶ ἔρωτα," ταῦτην ἐκείνην τὴν τριάδα.

47


"Ελπίδα...τὴν θείαν καὶ ἀπὸ νοῦ κατοικοῦν καὶ βέβαιας, περὶ ὧς τὸ λόγιον ἔρη..."

"Ελπίς δὲ τρεφέτω σε πυρῆρος..."

48


"κάντα γὰρ ἐν τριαὶ τοῦτο χυτερεῦται τε καὶ ἐστι" (φησὶ τὸ λόγιον), καὶ διὰ ταῦτα καὶ τοῖς θεοργοῖς οἱ θεοὶ παρακελεύονται διὰ τῆς τριάδος ταῦτης ἐκουσί τῷ θεῷ συνάπτειν.

44

(The Chaldeans) hand down an oracle concerning the entire soul as a divine triad. For (the Chaldean) himself says:

"(The Father) mixed the spark of soul with two harmonious qualities, Intellect and divine Will, to which he added a third, pure Love, as the guide and holy bond of all things."

45

The gods have termed (wanton love)

"...a stifling of true Love."

46

(It is necessary)...to propose the virtues which, from creation, purify and lead back (to God),

"...Faith, Truth, and Love," that praiseworthy triad.

47

Divine Hope, which descends from Intellect and is certain, concerning which the oracle says:

"May fire-bearing Hope nourish you..."

48

"For all things are governed and exist in these three (virtues),"

(says the oracle). For this reason, the gods counsel the theurgists to unite themselves with God by means of this triad.
Therefore, (the order of Eternity) is said to be “Father-begotten light” by the Oracles since, indeed, unifying light shines upon all things:

“For (Aion) alone, copiously plucking the flower of mind from the strength of the Father, has the power to perceive the Paternal Intellect <and> to impart <Intellect> to all Sources and Principles, and to whirl them about and keep them forever in ceaseless motion.”

It is said by the gods that

“the center of Hecate is borne in the midst of the Fathers.”

It seems to me that the Oracles also speak about this light, when giving instructions concerning the principle of life by which the source of souls animates the All. It says:

“Around the hollow of her right flank a great stream of the primordially-generated Soul gushes forth in abundance, totally ensouling light, fire, ether, worlds.”

“In the left flank of Hecate exists the source of virtue, which remains entirely within and does not give up its virginity.”

Thus, even the Oracles call the divisible perceptions of the Demiurge “Thoughts:

“...after the Paternal Thoughts I, the Soul, am situated, animating the All with my heat.”
But even the theologians suppose that the source (of Nature) is in the generative goddess:

"On the back of the goddess boundless Nature is suspended."

"For her hair appears dazzlingly in shimmering light,"
says one of the gods.

Concerning Rhea, the generative source, from whom all divine life—intellectual, spiritual, and mundane—is generated, the Oracles speak as follows:

"Truly Rhea is the source and stream of blessed intellectual (realities). For she, first in power, receives the birth of all these in her inexpressible womb and pours forth (this birth) on the All as it runs its course."

How then do the Oracles say it:

"For the Father has inflated the seven firmaments of the worlds."

But having heard from the Chaldean theologians that God intercalated the sun among the seven (zones) and made the six other zones dependent upon it, and having heard from the gods themselves that the solar fire

"...was established at the site of the heart..."

I follow what has been revealed by the gods.
59
(p. 33 Kr. - Proclus, In Tim., III, 83, 13-16)
καὶ οἳ γε μυστικῶτατοι τῶν λόγων καὶ "τὴν ἀλληλείπεσιν" ἀυτοῦ τῆς ἐν τοῖς ὑπεροικοσιείς παραδεδόκεσαν ἐκεῖ γὰρ

"(δ) ἡλιαχικάς κόσμους (καὶ τὸ) ὄλον φῶς..."
ὁς αἱ τὰ Χαλδαίων φήμεια λέγουσι καὶ ἐγὼ πείθομαι.

60
(p. 33 Kr. - Proclus, In Tim., II, 9, 16-18)
καὶ τῶν θεολόγων ἀκούων

"πύρ τυρός ἐξοικεῖον..."
τὸν ἡλιον καλοῦντες

"καὶ τομίαν τυρός..."
καὶ πάσι τοῖς τοιούτοις ἀνώμασι.

61
(pp. 33-34 + 47 Kr. - Proclus, In Tim., III, 61, 8-25 + 234, 28-30 = vv. 14-15)
καὶ τῶν λόγων...πανταχοῦ μετὰ τὸν ἡλιον τὴν σελήνην ταττόντων καὶ μετὰ τὴν σελήνην τὸν ἄει...

"αἰθέριος τε θρόμος καὶ μήνης ἄκλετος ὀρμήθ,"
φησίν,

5 "ἡροίοι τε βοαί..."
καὶ πάλιν...καὶ ἐλλοις:

"ἡλιαχικῶν τε κύκλων καὶ μηναίων κακαχισμῶν κέλπων τ’ ἑρίων..."
καὶ ἔδη:

"...αἰθρῆς μέρος ἑλίου τε καὶ μήνης ὑβριστῶν ἐδ’ ἡροί...αἰθρῆς {μέρος} ἑλίου τε σεληναίης τε καὶ δς < σ > α ἡρίων συννήχονται...

15 καὶ ἄλλαχοι:

"...καὶ πλατὺς ὁρὸ
μηναίος τε δρόμος καὶ ἀεισίπολος ἥλιοιο."
Plainly, therefore, the

"...ethers of the elements..."
as the *Oracles* say, are there.

And the gods in the *Oracles* have taught us that a single line is

"...drawn in a curved shape..."

and they make a great use of linear shape.

For even the *Oracles*, not once but often, speak of the procession of the fixed stars:

"The lunar course and starry procession."

For the generative channel proceeds up until the center, as even the *Oracles* say when speaking about the middle of the five centers, which extends from on high straight through to the opposite side via the center of the earth:

"And there is a fifth in the middle, another channel of fire, where the life-bearing fire descends as far as the material channels."

"As the channels are mingled together (the highest life) perfects the works of imperishable fire," according to the oracle, and produces a single, divine bond and a unifying blend of participated and participant.
Moreover, the theology of the Assyrians teaches the same doctrines, which were revealed to them by the gods. For in that theology, the Demiurge is said to have made the entire world

"from fire, water, earth, and all-nourishing air."

And the Maker, while working with his own hands (is said) to fashion the world:

"For whatever other mass of fire there was, the All he worked with his own hands, so that the world-body might be fully completed and the world might be visible and not seem membrane-like."

(The sky), quite clearly, is said to have a body...and with this (position), again this oracle is in agreement:

"For (the sky) is an imitation of Intellect, but the product has something of the corporeal in it."

But the Oracles plainly state that Nature, advancing through all things, is suspended from the great Hecate...  

"For untiring Nature rules both worlds and works, in order that the sky might turn round, pulling down its eternal course, and that the swift sun might come around the center, just as it is accustomed to do."

(Apollo)...  

"priding himself on the harmony of light..." as one of the theurgists says.
And, again, for these reasons, it seems to me that Plato said the very things which were later revealed by the gods. And that which the gods have termed "armed from head to toe," Plato has praised as "adorned in full armor."

"For, I, the Divine, have arrived, armed from head to toe."

If this Zeus is said to be in heaven, it is possible to separate the ruling beings into heavenly and earthly, and in the midst of these are the three fathers, as even the Oracles testify:

"Among these is the first sacred course. Next, in the middle, is the course of air. Another, the third, is the one which heats the earth by fire. All things serve these three turbulent rulers."

They are Principles because they are the first to begin emanating their own sources. Therefore, the order is praised as

"...Principle Source."

At any rate, when (the oracle-giver) discusses the Principle multiplicity, he says

"...the Principle channel is inclined under them."

Likewise, the gods have taught us that there are numerous Iynges:

"Many of these leap forth and stand upon shining worlds. Among these are three summits: <that of fire, ether, and matter>."

"The (Iynges) which are thought by the Father also think themselves, since they are moved by his unspeakable counsels so as to think."
78

For the fathers who prescribe over magical operations cause all things to appear and then to disappear, since

"...they are couriers..."

to the Father and to matter, to speak according to the oracle.

79

"Every world possesses unbending, Intellectual Supports."

80

For that even...the gods...have taught us...there are many Connectors...these matters the Oracles make clear:

"But also, all those things which serve Material Connectors."

81

And need we say more, when even the Oracles, in reference to the very gods who exist prior to that intelligible-and-intellectual order, expressly use these names:

"All things yield to the intellectual Lightning-bolts of the intellectual Fire, serving the persuasive will of the Father."

82

Most of all, (the function of guarding) has been assigned to the Connectors, inasmuch as they encompass and connect all things within themselves. The gods also speak in this way:

"He has given the summits the protection of his (intellectual) Lightning-bolts, having mixed his own force of strength among the Connectors."

83

Therefore, it is imparted by the gods that the Connectors are the

"...unifiers..."
84
(p. 42 Kr. = Proclus, Th. pl., IV, 21; 64, 11-12 S.-W.; cf. Tardieu, Lewy, 1978, p. 521)

"πάντας γὰρ συνέχων"
(sc. ὁ πρῶτος συνοχεὺς) τὴ ἑαυτοῦ µὴ τῆς ὑπάρξεως ἀκρότητι, κατὰ τὸ λόγιον,
"αὐτὸς πᾶς ἔξω ὑπάρχει."  

85
(p. 42 Kr. = Proclus, Th. pl., IV, 39; 111, 18-23 S.-W.)

ὁ μὲν πρῶτος (τελετάρχης)...κυριεύει τὸν
"...ταραχὸν τοῦ πυρὸς..."
ὁ δὲ µέσος...τελειωτε...τὸν αἰθέρα...ὁ δὲ τρίτος...τὴν ὅλην τελειοτ.

86
(p. 49 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., II, 38, 7-8)

καὶ

"...ψυχοκράτωρ"
ὁ τοῦ αἰθέρας ἐπιμελητης ἦστι
"τελετάρχης."  

87
(p. 43 Kr. = Proclus, In On., 20, 26-30)

τρανέστερον δὲ οἱ θεοῦργοι διδάσκουσι, καὶ αἱ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν αὐτῶν φήμαι:
"ἀλλ' ἐννοια σιμφώνω καὶ ἀκοιμήτων στροφάλλητι
cόσμοις ἐνθρόσχοις κρατιην διὰ πατρός ἐνιστήν."  

88
(ip. 44 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1137 a 1-2)

"[ἡ φύσις] πείθει πιστεύειν εἶναι τοὺς δαίμονας ἄγνωστοι.
καὶ τὰ κακῆς ὕλης ἑνήματα χρηστά καὶ ἑσθλά."
That (race of evil demons) draws down souls, (a race) which is also called "...bestial and shameless,” since it is turned towards Nature.

"...from the hollows of the earth leap chthonian dogs, who never show a true sign to a mortal.”
The oracle is about demons involved in matter. These (demons) are called dogs because they are the avengers of souls.

Starting from the spirits of the air, irrational demons begin to come into existence. Therefore, the oracle says: "Driver (fem.) of dogs of the air, earth, and water.’’

Therefore, even the oracle calls these gods "...aquatic.”

Thus, also, concerning the "...multiflowing tribes” of demons.

The Oracles teach that (the Demiurge)...brings forth our souls and sends them into generation, a subject about which both the Oracles and Timaeus speak. For (the Demiurge) has placed "...Intellect in Soul, but in the sluggish body he has placed our <soul>, he, the Father of gods and men.”
95

(p. 47, n. 1 Kr. = Proclus, In rem p., II, 143, 22-27)

τοῦτον <τῶν> χαρακτήρα (sc. τὸ χ’) τῇ οὕσιν τῶν ψυχῶν

"...ἐγκαθίστασαν ἐν τῇ..."

πάσης ἰδιοῦ ὑπάρχει...ταύτα...θεαρτῶν καὶ θεῶν ἀγνώστα γραφόντων.

96

(p. 47 Kr. = Pselius, P.G., 122, 1141 c 7-9)

"ὅτι ψυχή, πῦρ δυνάμει πατρός οὐσία φασινόν, 
ἀδάνακτος τε μένει καὶ ζωης δεσπότις ἀεί
καὶ ἵσχει <κόσμου> πολλῶν πληρώματα κόλπων.
"

97

(p. 48 Kr. = Pselius, P.G., 122, 1137 a 11-13)

"<ἀμπταμένη> ψυχή μερώπων θεόν ἀγεῖ τῆς αὐτήν, 
<κέ> οὐδὲν θυσιάν ἔχουσα δή <θεόθεν> μεμέθυσται:
ἀρμονίαν αὔχει γὰρ, ὃ τε πέλει σώμα βρότειν.
"

98*

(Boethius, Philosophiae consolatione, IV, 6, 38; p. 82, Bieler)

Nam ut quidam me quoque excellantino:

"ἀνδρὸς δὴ ἱεροῦ δέμας αἰθέρες οἰκοδόμησαν."

99

(p. 48 Kr. = Proclus, In rem p., II, 99, 1-4)

<δς> καὶ οἱ θεοὶ φασιν τὴν γένεσαν ἐπιστρεφομένας

"...θητεύειν, ἀλλ’ ἀδαμάστῳ 
τούχην ὑπετευούσας..."

ἀνάγεσθαι πάλιν ἑνετέθην καταλπούσας τὴν γένεσαν.

100

(p. 48 Kr. = Proclus, In rem p., II, 156, 17-18; cf. 347, 1)

τὴν δὲ ὡλην

"...αὐχμηράν"

ὦς ἄγονον καὶ τῶν λογίων λεγόντων ἀκούομεν.
101
"...do not invoke the self-revealed image of Nature."

102
For the source of Nature and the very first Destiny is named by the gods themselves:
"Do not gaze at Nature; her name is Destiny."

103
"Do not aid in increasing Destiny..."
The wisest of the Greeks designate Destiny as Nature.

104
"...do not defile the pneuma nor deepen the surface."

105
The root of evil is the body...the descent to earth is the severing of ourselves...where both jealousy and envy must be rejected...for being material, they have matter as a nurse. And
"...not to quench in your mind..."
is said with regard to the shutting out, not the annihilation (of desire).

106
"...O, man, cunning creation of an impudent nature."

107
"Do not cast into your mind the huge measures of earth, for the plant of truth does not exist on earth. Do not measure the extent of the sun by joining rods together, for he is borne
along by the eternal will of the Father and not for your sake. Let be the rushing motion of the moon; she forever runs her course by the action of Necessity. The starry procession has not been brought forth for you sake. The wide-winged flight of birds is never true, nor the cuttings and entrails of sacrificial victims. All these are playthings, the props of commercial fraud. Flee these things, if you would open the sacred paradise of piety, where virtue, wisdom, and good order are brought together."

And another oracle is this:

“For the Paternal Intellect has sown symbols throughout the cosmos, (the Intellect) which thinks the intelligibles. And (these intelligibles) are called inexpressible beauties.”

“But the Paternal Intellect does not receive the will of (the soul) until (the soul) emerges from forgetfulness and speaks a word, remembering the pure, paternal token.”

“Seek out the channel of the soul, from where it <descended> in a certain order to serve the body; <and> seek <how> you will raise it up again to its order by combining (ritual) action with a sacred word.”

That is, seek the source of the soul, from where (the soul) has been led astray and has served the body; and how someone, raising it up and awakening it by means of the telestic rites, might lead it back up from where it has come.

The intellectual (faculty) is well-wheeled...that which is borne around the intelligible as around a center:

“Urging yourself onward to the center of the clamorous light,”

says one of the gods.
112

"Let the immortal depth of your soul be opened. May all of your eyes stretch upward on high."

113

And in this way, the Oracles decree that the soul "be held in check."

"A thinking mortal must hold the soul in check, so that it might not fall in with ill-fated earth but be saved."

114

(It is said) that Prometheus...foresaw our rational life, so that we would not be

"...submerged in the passions of the earth," and be destroyed by the necessities of Nature, as one of the gods says.

115

"You must hasten toward the light and toward the rays of the Father, from where the soul, clothed in mighty intellect, has been sent to you."

116

"For the Divine is accessible not to mortals who think corporeally, but to all those who, naked, hasten upward toward the heights,

as the oracle says.

117

And the more vigorous natures behold the truth by themselves and are more inventive,

"saved through their own strength..." as the oracle says, while the weaker ones need both instruction and reminders from others who possess perfection in those areas where they lack it.
FRAGMENTS

118
(p. 59 Kr. = Synesius, De insomn., 135 a-b)

ἀκουούσατω τῶν ἲερῶν λογίων, ἢ λέγει περὶ διαφόρων ὅδειν...καθ’ ὅν ἔχει τὸ ἐνδεδειγμένον σπέρμα αὐξήσαι:

‘τοὺς δὲ διδακτὸν ἔδωκε φάσμας γνώρισμα λαμβάνοντας:
τοὺς δὲ καὶ ὑπνοῦντας ἐπὶ ἑνεκάρπων ἀλλήλης.’

119

Δὲ σὺν τρόπῳ...καθάρισε τοῦ αὐγοειδοῦς ἡμῶν σώματος τῆς τῶν ὑλικῶν μελωμάτων ἀποθέσεως καὶ τῶν ἰερῶν καθαρισμῶν παραλήψεως καὶ τῆς ἐπεγερμοῦσῆς ἡμᾶς πρὸς τὴν ἐντεῦθεν ἀνάπτυξιν

‘...θεοσυνόδευτον ἀλλήλης.’

120

(δεόν)...καθάρισθος ἐπιμέλειαν ποιεῖσθαι τῆς περὶ τοῦ αὐγοειδοῦς ἡμῶν σώματος, ὡς καὶ

‘...ψυχῆς λεπτὸν ὅχθημα’

ὁ χρησμὸς καλοῦσιν.

121
(p. 53 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 211, 19-24)

ἐπὶ δὲ ταύταις ‘ὶ ἐμπέλασι’—οὕτως γὰρ αὐτὴν εκλέγει τὸ λόγιον:

‘τῶν πυρὸς ἀργότερος ἐμπέλασις θεάθετον φάσος ἔχεις.’

μεῖζον τὴν κοινωνίαν ἡμῶν παρεχομένη καὶ τρανσέτατον τὴν μετοχισάν τοῦ τῶν θεῶν φωτός.

122
(p. 53 Kr. = Proclus, Ex. chald., I, 192, 13-17 Pitra)

ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀγένελων μερίς πῶς ἀνόητη φυσικῆν;

‘...τῆν ψυχὴν φέργουσα πυρὶ...’

(φησι): τοῦτο ἐστὶν περικλάπτομαι αὐτὴν πανταχὶ, καὶ ἔλεγεν ποιώσα τοῦ ἀχράντου πυρὸς ὡς ἐνθάνετον αὐτῇ τὰς ἄκρους καὶ δύναμιν, δι’ ἵνα συμπληρώσῃ αἰς τὴν ὑλικῆν ἀκτιβίν ἄλλη συνάντηται τῇ φωτὶ τῶν θεῶν.

FRAGMENTS

118

Let him listen to the sacred Oracles which speak of diverging paths...according to which it is possible to increase the seed from within:

‘...To some, (God) has granted (the ability) to apprehend the symbol of light through instruction. Others, however, he has fructified with their own strength while they are sleeping.’

119

Therefore...for the purification of our luminous body there is a need to get rid of material deflements, a need to undergo sacred purifications, and a need for the

‘...strength that binds us to God’

exciting us toward the flight up there.

120

(We must)...take care of the purification of our luminous body, which the Oracles also call

‘...delicate vehicle of the soul.’

121

In addition to these things, there is the “approaching”—for the oracle calls it thus:

‘...For the mortal who has approached the fire will possess the light from God.”

(The “approaching”) allows us a greater communion and a more distinct participation in the light of the gods.

122

How does the order of angels cause the soul to ascend?

‘...By making the soul bright with fire...’

(the oracle says). That is, illuminating the soul on all sides and filling it with pure fire, which gives it an unswerving order and power through which it does not rush into material disorder but makes contact with the light of the divine beings.
123

(p. 53 Kr. = Proclus, *Esp. chald.,* I; 192, 17-19 Pitra)

καὶ ἀμιγὴς ποιεῖ πρὸς τὴν ὅλην τῷ

"...πνεύματι θερμῷ

κυψέληθος..."

καὶ ποιοῦσα μετέωρον διὰ τῆς ἀναγωγοῦ ζωῆς· τό γὰρ "πνεῦμα τὸ θερμῶν" ζωῆς ἐστι

μετάδοσις.

124

(p. 53 Kr. = Psellus, *P.G.*, 122, 1144 c 4)

"ψυχῆς ἐξωστήρες ἀνάπνεον εὐλυτοὶ εἰσίν."

125

(p. 17 Kr. = *Anecd. axiom.*, III, 182, 19-22 Cramer [in epist. 17, Michel Italicus])

ό δὲ δίς παρ’ αὐτοῦ (sc. τοὺς Χαλδαίους) ἐπέκεινα μεταβάθησιν ἔκατον τοῖς κόσμοις καὶ

καταστέρησε

"...εὕλυτα φέγγη,"

ἐνα καὶ τοῖς ἑκείνων χρήσασθαι ἐκένασιν.

126

(p. 53 Kr. = Proclus, *Th. pl.*, III, 1; 5, 15-16 S.-W.)

(παρὰ τῷ Πλάτωνι ἢ θεολογίᾳ)...-

"πυράδον ἀνάφασα..."

ἄφ’ οὐ δὴ μᾶλλον πρὸς τὴν ἀνώμασιν συνάπτονται τοῦ ἐνός ύπορχῆν.

127

(p. 53 Kr. = Psellus, *P.G.*, 122, 1133 c 9)

"πάντωθεν ἀπλάστω ψυχῆς πυρὸς ἑνία τείνον."

128

(pp. 54 - 61 Kr. = Psellus, *P.G.*, 1140 b 1-2)

"...ἐκτείνατες τίριον νοῦν

ἐργον ἐπ’ εὐσεβίης βευστῶν καὶ σῶμα σαώσεσι."
129
(p. 61 + n. 2 Kr. = Julian, Or. V, 170 u)

And the Oracles of the gods testify to these things. I mean that through the holy rites not only the soul, but even the body is thought worthy of much help and salvation:

"Save also the mortal covering of bitter matter,"

the gods announce to the most holy of the theurgists when they are encouraging them.

130
(p. 54 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 266, 18-23)

Therefore, (the souls), by perceiving the works of the Father,

"flee the shameful wing of allotted fate,"

as the oracle says,

"and rest in God, drawing in the flowering flames which come down from the Father. From these flames, as they are descending, the soul plucks the soul-nourished flower of fiery fruits."

131
(p. 54 Kr. = Damascius, In Phaedonem, 371 (244, 20-21 N.) W.)

Therefore, the oracle says that the souls, ascending,

"...sing a hymn to Paean."

132
(p. 55 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 67, 19-20)

For the Oracles concerning them point out that they are ineffable, and add:

"...keep silent, initiate."

133
(p. 55 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 101, 3-8)

Therefore, even the theurgist who conducts this initiation begins with purifications and sprinklings:

"Above all, let the priest himself who governs the works of fire, be sprinkled with the icy billow of the deep-roaring sea,"

as the oracle says about him.

129

("Sožete kai to píkrâs ὕλης περιβλήμα μαρτυρεῖν," 5

οἱ θεοὶ τοῖς ὑπεράγνωσι παρακελεύσμενοι τῶν θεουργῶν καταταγελόνται.

130

(διὸ καὶ νοήσασα [sc. αἱ ψυχαὶ] τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς

"μισρής ἐλευθερίας τὸ πτερών πειγόνυσιν ἀνακειθεῖτο," 5

ὡς ὴησεν τὸ λόγιον,

"ἐν δὲ θεῷ κεῖται πυρὸς ἐξ ἀθηρευτῆς ἀκαμής ἐκ πατρόθεν κατάντως, ἀρ’ ὄν τῇ πυρώ ἐρυθών ἐμπυρωτῶν δηρέτεται καρπῶν φυσιτρόφον ἄνθος.""

131

(διὸ καὶ τὸ λόγιον ὄρθη τὰς ψυχὰς ἀναγομένας

"...τὸν Πράγανα ἀείδειν.""

132

(καὶ γὰρ τὰ λόγια περὶ ἅκινων ὡς ἀφθηγμένων ἐνδείκτο, καὶ προσέβαλε τὸ

"...σιγὴ ἔχε, μόστα.""

133

(διὸ καὶ ὁ θεουργὸς ὁ τῆς τελετῆς τοῦτοῦ προκαθηγούμενος ἀπὸ τῶν καθάρσεων ἄρχεται

"...αὕτης δ’ ἐν πρώτοις ἱερεῖς πυρὸς ἔργα κυμασμένοι πύματα βασιλεύον ταχεῖα βαρυχείως ἄλμης," 5

ὡς ὴησεν τὸ λόγιον περὶ αὕτω.
134

(Schol. Paris. gr., 1853, fol. 68 r°, ed. H.D. Saffrey, RPh, 1969, p. 64)

"μηδ’ ἐπὶ μισοφρατή κόσμην σπεύδαν λάβρον ἴλης,
ἐνθα φόνος τάσσεται τε καὶ ἀργαλέων ψυχής ἄτμων
ἀχύμηραι τὸ νόσον καὶ στήσεις ξέραν τε βευτοῦ:
τάτα χρεών φυτεὶν τῶν ἔραν μέλλοντα πατρῆς νου.
"

135

1853, fol. 68 r°, ed. H.D. Saffrey, ibid., pp. 67-68.Intro. + v. 3: p. 55
Kr. - Proclus, In Alc., 18 [40, 6-7 Cr.] W.; cf. Paris. g., 1853, ibid.)

διʼ καὶ οἱ θεοὶ παρακαλοῦσιν μὴ πρότερον εἰς ἵκεινος (sc. ἱκέωνας) βλέπειν, πρὸς
ταῖς ἀπὸ τῶν τελετῶν φραξθόμεν δυνάμειν:

"οὐ γὰρ χρῆ καίνους σε βλέπειν πρὸς σῶμα τελεσθῆς:
δοντες γὰρ χθόνοι χαλκῶι κύνες εἰςν ἄνδεις.
"

καὶ διὰ τούτο τὰ λόγια προσέδιδον ὦτι

"τὰς φυγάς θέλγοντες ἀεὶ τελετῶν ἀπάγουσιν.
"

136

(p. 56 Kr. - Proclus, In Parm., 990, 27-37 Co.)

καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ θεωρίας καὶ ἐπὶ τελεστικῆς [καὶ] τούτο ἄτο καὶ ποιοῦν ἀφρατή καὶ ἐπικείμενον ἢ μὲν τὴν ἄνδον, ἢ ἐν τάξιν προδότας· ὡς τούτο θήκη καὶ τὸ λόγιον:

"οὐδὲνος εἰκεν ἄλοιο ἀποστίρεται θεὸς ἄνδρα
καὶ ζῆσεν δυνάμει κεναῖς ἐπὶ πέμπει ἀπροῦσ.
"

ὡς ὅταν ἀπάτοις καὶ πλημμελῶς ἐπὶ τὰ θειότατα τῶν θεωρημάτων ἢ τῶν ἔργων...ποιήσεωμέθα τὴν ἄνδον.

137

(p. 60 Kr. - Proclus, In rem p., II, 154, 17-9)

"...θεὸς ἄγγελος ἐν δυνάμει ζων."

φησίν τὸ λόγιον, ὡς ἀπτικὸς ἀνθεστικός.

138

(p. 60 Kr. - Olympiodorus, In Phaedonem, 149 [64, 2-5 N. ] W.)

"...ἄγγελικώς ἐνι χόρῳ."

Oracle:

"Do not hasten to the light-hating world, boisterous of matter, where there is murder, discord, foul odors, squalid illnesses, corruptions, and fluctuating works. He who intends to love the Intellect of the Father must flee these things."

Therefore, even the gods exhort us not to gaze at (these demons) beforehand, until we have been strengthened by the powers from the initiation rites:

"For you must not gaze at them until you have your body initiated. Being terrestrial, these ill-tempered dogs are shameless."

And for this reason, the Oracles add that

"they enchant souls, forever turning them away from the rites."

For in terms of both contemplative vision and telestic art, it is this which makes the ascent safe and sure for us—progress in an orderly fashion. At any rate, as the oracle says:

"For no other reason does God turn away from man and, with his living power, send him on empty pathways,"

as whenever, in a disorderly and incorrect fashion, we make the ascent to the most holy of the visions or works.

Whoever lives a truly sacerdotal life, says the oracle,

"...shines as an angel, living in power."

But he (sc. Plato) holds that the souls of the theurgists do not remain forever in the intelligible order, but that they, too, descend into generation, concerning whom the oracle says:

"...in the angelic order."
Therefore, even the oracle has advised that
“...the fire-heated thought...”
holds the very first order in sacred worship.

It is necessary...to take part continuously in the worship of the Divine:
“To a mortal tarrying (in prayer), the blessed ones are quick (to act).”

...stating that which is spoken by the gods, namely:
“It is the loosing of the god when the sluggish mortal inclines toward that place.”

And the gods say these things to the theurgists, for they say that although we are incorporeal,
“...bodies have been attached to our self-revealed apparitions for your sakes...”

It is clear that the Oracle say plainly to the theurgist that all the divine beings are incorporeal, but that for your sake, bodies have been attached to them, since you do not have the power of sharing incorporeality with the incorporeal beings because of
“the corporeal nature onto which you have been grafted...”

For in this (light)
“...the unformed are formed,”
it says according to the oracle.
145

(p. 57 Kr. - Proclus, In Crat., 31, 12-14)

"...voeis morphi fwtos protathetan;"

"...to perceive the shape of light which has been stretched forth."

For although it was without shape on high, it has become formed through procession.

146

(p. 57 Kr. - Proclus, In rem p., I, 111, 1-12)

"...taut' (gár fhtsin) épithumhvas eis katafis týr ēkeivon skhmatidhνn ép' ἕρεσιν oýdwa títainos; eis katafis τuí práptous, òthēn fwnhνn prošsousan; eis katafis plousiōn amfē týr hōi bοiçaiōn elygen; allá eis ἵππον iðhēn fwtōs plēsios ãsτράπτοντα eis katafis thōi nótoins epoxhōmenon ἵππου, émpuropo ἤ ἤρμωμα pεπυκασμένον ἤ παλν γνωμόν, eis katafis tοξεύοντα ἤ ἕστησιν' ἐπὶ nótoins;"

And even the mystical doctrine handed down by the gods imparts these things:

"...after this invocation, (it says) you will either see a fire, similar to a child, extended by bounds over the billow of air, or you will see a formless fire, from which a voice is sent forth, or you will see a sumptuous light, rushing like a spiral around the field. But you may even see a horse, more dazzling than light, or even a child mounted on the nimble back of a horse, (a child) of fire or covered with gold or, again, a naked (child) or even (a child) shooting a bow and standing on the back (of a horse)."

147

(p. 57 Kr. - Psellos, P.G., 122, 1133 b 5-8)

"polyáis ἢν λέγει μοι, ἀθρῆσεις πάντα λέωνα. οὔτε γάρ εὐράνοις κυρίως τότε φάνεται δύος, ἀστέρες οὐ λάμπουσιν, τὸ μένην φῶς κεκάλυπται, χθόνιον οὐχ ἑστηκέν; βλέπεται δὲ <τε> πάντα xραυνοίς;"

"If you speak to me often, you will perceive everything in lion-form. For neither does the curved mass of heaven appear then nor do the stars shine. The light of the moon is hidden, and the earth is not firmly secured, but everything is seen by flashes of lightning."

148

(p. 58 Kr. - Psellos, P.G., 122, 1136 b 11 - c 1)

"'Hýika <δὲ> βλάβής μορφής ἄτερ εἴκος τοῦ κακότοσι κατά βένθηκα κόσμου, xλυθὰ τούρφω fωνήν;"

"But when you see the formless, very holy fire shining by leaps and bounds throughout the depths of the whole world, (then) listen to the voice of the fire."

149

(p. 58 Kr. - Psellos, P.G., 1148 b 14-15; cf. Nicephorus Gregoras, P.G., 149, 540 b 4-5)

"'Hýika δαίμονα δ' ἐρχόμενον πρὸς τευχαν ἀθρῆσεις, θείον λήθων μνήσουρι ἐπαυδών;"

"When you perceive an earthly demon approaching, offer the mnaiours stone while making an invocation..."
150
(p. 58 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1132 c 1-3)
"...ονόματα βάρβαρα μήποτε ἄλλαξσι..."
tών' ἔστων' εἰς γὰρ ονόματα παρ' ἐκάστος θεοπαράδοτα δύναμιν ἐν ταῖς
tιλετεῖσι δρήσεις ἔχουσαν.

151
(p. 58 Kr. = Proclus, In Eucl., 129, 6-8 F.)
διὸ καὶ τὰ λόγια τὰς γωνιακὰς συμβολὰς τῶν σχημάτων
"...συνοχήθαις..."
ἀποκαλεῖ.

152
(p. 19 Kr. = Proclus, In Crit., 59, 1-3; cf. Damascius, II, 43, 23; 59, 18; 148, 11)
ἔστω γὰρ (sc. ὁ ἀπάξ ἐπίθεσιν), ὡς φησὶ τὸ λόγιον
"...ἀμιστίλλευτος...
καὶ ἑναίδης καὶ ἅδικαιτος.

153
(p. 59 Kr. = Lydus, De mens., II, 10; 31, 16-19 W.)
ταύτῃ (sc. τῇ πεντάδι) τὰς ἀποκαθισταμένας φυχὰς ὑπερβάλειν τὴν εἰμαρμένην φησὶ τὸ
λόγιον.
"οὗ γάρ ὑπ' εἰμαρμένη ἀγέλην πίπτουσι θεοφρόθοι."  

154
(p. 59 Kr. = Proclus, In Alc., 113 [245, 6-7 Cr.] W.)
φευκτέον τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν
"...ἄγγεληθῶν λόγιων,"
ὡς φησὶ τὸ λόγιον.

155*
(p. 60 Kr. = In rem p., II, 77, 7-10)
οὔ δὲ καὶ ἢ τῶν παθῶν ἔστων φύσις, δυσνοθέτητι καθ' ὀσά καὶ λόγῳ
"δοκειμένου καὶ ὄπισθοβαρῆς καὶ ἄμοιρος,
ὡς εἰπέν λόγιον,
"φιετὸς,"

5 ὁντος.

"Do not change the nomina barbara;"
that is, the names handed down by the gods to each race have ineffable power
in the initiation rites.

Therefore, even the Oracle call the angular conjunctions (of Euclid) the
"...Connectors..."
of the figures.

For (the Once Transcendenz), as the oracle says, is
"...without parts..."
simple, and indivisible.

The souls that are re-established in this (pentad) come under the sway of
Destiny, says the oracle:
"For the theurgists do not fall into the herd which is subject
to Destiny."

We must flee the mass of men
"...who are going about in herds,"
as the oracle says.

Such also is the nature of the passions, which is disaffected and
"hard to bend"
by reason,
"and weighted from behind, and without a share,"
so to speak, of reason, which is
"light."
156

"οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐκ ἁπέχουσι κυνῶν ἄλογων πολὺ μέτρων,"  
oi ᾠντες πιηναν ζωήν, φησι τὸ λόγιον.

157

"οὖν <δὲ γὰρ> ἄγγειλον θάρσεις χθονος ὀνείρησασιν."  
"Ἀγγελῶν" μὲν ἐστι τὸ σύνθετον ἡμῶν κράσιμον τῆς ζωῆς "θάρσεις" δὲ "χθονος," οί περὶ  
τῆς καλλιτυπομένει δαίμονος.

158

(π. 61. 3 Κρ. = Πελλος, P. G., 122, 1141 b 10-11)  
"...βήδι διότι σῶμα λιπούντων  
anthrōpwn φυσικα κατάστατοι..."

159

(π. 62 Κρ. = Πελλος, P. G., 122, 1141 a 1)  
"...ποιεῖ μέρος ἀναφερόμενων  
anthrōpwn, ὡς ἐπὶ θηράν."
162

(p. 63 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1145 b 11)

"α ἄ τούσδε κατωφύται χθόνιν ἐς τέχνα μέχρις."

163


οἱ θεοὶ περὶ τοῦκάτω τοῦ κόσμου οὐ τὰ αὐτὰ χρησιμοδοθέντων;

"μηδε κάτω νεώτης εἰς τὸν μελαναγενέα κόσμον, ὡς βαθὸς αἰών ἀμορφός ὑπάεται καὶ ἄειδῆς, ἀμφικνητὸς βαθύων εἰσαλογικῆς ἀνάθετος
κρημνώδους σκολίως πτων βαθός αἰὼν ἐλίζων, αἰτε νομοφυός ἁφανές δέμας ἄργον ἀνεμεμον."

164

(p. 63 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1132 b 1-2)

"μηδε κάτω νεώτης κρημνώδις κατὰ γῆς ὑπάεται,
ἔπαθμορ τόρμων κατὰ βαθύδος…"

165*

(p. 65, n. 1 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1137 d 5-8)

"ζήτησιν παραδείσου…"

Παράδεισος ἔστι Χαλδαῖκος πᾶς ὁ περὶ τὸν πατέρα χορὸς τῶν θείων δυνάμεων καὶ τὰ ἐμπύρια καλλή τῶν δημιουργικῶν στηρῶν.

166*

(p. 5 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1125 d 1-4; cf. Plotinus, Enn. I.9 init.)

"…μὴ ἔκατος, ἵνα μὴ τι ἐχώσα ἐξή…"

Τούτο τὸ λόγον καὶ Πλατώνος ἐν τῷ περὶ ἀλόγου ἐξαγωγῆς τίθηναι.

167

(p. 65 Kr. = Proclus, In Eucl., 154, 27-155, 5 F.)

ὅ καὶ τὸ μαθηματικὸν κέντρον ἀποτυπώνεται, πάσας τὰς ὄρει ἐκατοσ πρὸς τὴν περιφέρειαν
γραμμᾶς περιττόν καὶ τὴν ἱσότητα κατασ τήν τοῦ ὀλίγου ἐννοείς παρέχον. όστις
δὲ καὶ τὰ λόγια "τὸ κέντρον" ἀφορίζεται:

"κέντρον, ὃν τὸ πάσαι μέχρις ἄνυσιν ἵκει ἔκασιν."
168

(p. 36 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 96, 6-18)

ο δὲ (κα.'Απόλλων) τὰς ἡλικιας ἄρχας τῆς μίν ἔκαστην ἐπιστρέφειν

"...κατέχον τὴν τρίτην ἄρχῃν,"

ὡς τὸ λόγιον φησιν.

169

(p. 16 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 59, 19-21; cf. 52, 1-3)

αἱ δὲ θεοπαράδοται φήμι τὴν θεότητα ταύτην τῷ "ἀπεξ" χαρακτηρίζοντων λέγουσιν

"...ἀπεξ ἐπέκεινα,"

tὸ γὰρ "ἀπεξ" τῷ ἕνι συγγενέσ.

170

(p. 65 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 121, 21-24)

τὰ δὲ, ἐξ ὑπέτευμην πνεύματος αὐτά ἰδέαντος ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπογείων τόπων, ὡς οἷον τὰ λόγια καὶ

"αὐτάνδροις πόλεις γ' ἀπολλεῖσθαι..."

φησιν.

171*  

(ε Proclo, Exc. chald., I; p. 193, 15-15 Pitra)

πατὴρ ὁδηγεῖ, πυρὸς ὁδοὺς ἀνατύφαζε

"μηδὲς ποτ' ἐκ λήθης βούσωμεν χείμα απεινόν."'

172*

(p. 63 Kr. = ε Proclo, In Tim., III, 325, 32-326, 2)

καὶ τὸ λάβρον τῆς ὀλη... 

"ᾼς κατασώροροι πολλοί σκολιοὶ πεθοῦσιν,"

ὡς τὰ λόγια φησιν.

173*

(p. 10, n. 1 Kr. = Lydus, De mens., II, 11; 32, 1-4 W.)

'Αφροδίτην δὲ ἀν τις εἴποι...

"...τὴν πρωτογενή ὕλην..."

ἤν καὶ ἀστερίαν καὶ ὀδρανίαν καλεῖ τὰ λόγια.

But (Apollo) turns the solar Principles around into a single combination,

"...holding fast the three-winged Principle,'"

as the oracle says.

But the Oracles handed down from the gods characterize this Divinity in terms of "Once," saying

"...Once Transcendent,'"

for that which is "Once" is akin to the One.

But what if the mountains should fall when the wind bursts them from the subterranean places, by which (action) the Oracles say that

"cities, men and all, are destroyed..."'

The Father guides us, opening paths of fire,

"so that we do not flow into a wretched stream from forgetfulness."'

And the turbulence of matter...

"...by which many are pulled down into twisted streams,'" as the Oracles say.

Someone says that Aphrodite is...

"...primordial matter..."' which the Oracles call both starry and heavenly.
174*

(Hermias, In Phaedrum, 110, 3-6 C.)

δήλον οὖν διὰ ἑαυτῆς δὲν παρέχει τὴν κίνησιν· ὁταν κινησθαι ἄρα ἐστίν.

"ἡ δ' ἐνεργεῖ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ζῆν, παλύ μάλλον ἑαυτῆς,"

φησὶ τὰ λόγια.

175

(p. 13, n. 1 Kr. = e Proclo, Exc. child., IV; 194, 31-32 Pitra)

περὶ τοῦ πρωτόστου πατρὸς ἐν ὅλοις ἔφησι:

"καὶ δύναμιν πρώτην ἑρεύ λόγου..."

176

(Damascius, Vita Isidori, § 137, p. 115 Zintzen = Suda, IV, 650, 30 Adler, s.v. ὑπερβάθμον)

οὖν

"...ὑπερβάθμον πόθεν ῥιπττῶν,

κατὰ τὸ λόγιον.

177*

(p. 43 Kr. = Damascius, I, 290, 15-17)

λείπει τὸν συνοχικὸν διάκοσμον ἄμα τῷ τελεταρχικῷ ποιεῖ τὸν μέσον. Καὶ τὴς ἡ τοῦ μέσου τρίας.

"...οὶ μὲν τελετάρχαι

τοῖς συνοχεύσας συνεῖληται..."

5 κατὰ τὸ λόγιον.

178*

(e Proclo, In Tim., III, 14, 14-15)

ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν <ἐν>

"...ἀξιότατος σηκώς (τῆς) διανοιας" ἀνελίττω.

179

(p. 18 Kr. = Damascius, II, 58, 20-21)

ἐφοβοῦσα τὴν νοητὴν τὸ μὲν

"...πάσης τιμήσιος ἄρχειν,"

κατὰ τὸ λόγιον.

It is clear, therefore, that she provides movement to herself; consequently, she is self-moved.

"To others she provides life; to herself, far more," say the Oracles.

Concerning the Very First Father it is said, among other things:

"And First Power of the sacred word..."

And not

"...throwing the feet beneath the step," according to the oracle.

It remains, then, to make a median of the connective order together with the teletarchic order. And what is the triad of this median?

"...the Teletarchs assist the Connectors," according to the oracle.

But these matters I interpret <in>

"...the inaccessible recesses of (the) mind."

We say that the Intelligible is the

"...Source of every division," according to the oracle.
180*
(p. 63 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 325, 29-52)
πάσαν τὴν γενεαθωργήν φύσιν, ἐν ἑάν…
“τῆς ζύλης ὁ λάφρον…”

181*
(p. 63 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 325, 29-326, 1)
πάσαν τὴν γενεαθωργήν φύσιν, ἐν ἑάν…
“…ὁ μισοφαθῆς κόσμος…”
ὡς οἱ θεοὶ λέγουσι.

182
(p. 27 Kr. = Damascius, II, 45, 10-12)
Διὰ τοῦτο, οὖν, καὶ ἐράνθησαν ἐν αὐτῇ (sc. τῇ μέσῃ τάξει τῶν νοερῶν) ἢ τε ἄρετῇ καὶ ἢ σοφᾷ, καὶ
“…ἡ πολύφρων ἀτρεχεία,”
κατὰ τὸ λόγιον.

183*
(Lylius, De mens., IV, 107; 147, 4-6 W.)
kατὰ γὰρ τὸ λόγιον
“…τὸ δ’ ἀτρεχεὶς ἐν βαθεῖ ἐστὶ.”

184
(p. 33, n. 1 Kr. = Psellus, P. G., 122, 1152, c 3-4)
καὶ ἄλλος (sc. κύκλος) μὲν παρ’ αὐτοῖς (sc. τοῖς Χαλδαίοις) ὁ ἡλιακὸς κόσμος τῷ
“δουλεύων βάθει αἰθέρει…”

185
(p. 33 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 36, 20-22; cf. 55, 30-31)
ὁ ἀληθέστερος ἴλιος συμμετείρει τὸν χρόνον τὰ πάντα
“…χρόνου χρόνος…”
ὡς ἄτεχνοι κατὰ τὴν περί αὐτοῦ τῶν θεῶν ὄμηρήν.
The river of Forgetfulness (signifies) all the flowing of material things and "...our rushing vessel."

Since (the soul) is "...a multiformed image..." which possesses the Principles of all that exists.
VARIOUS CHALDEAN EXPRESSIONS

187*
(Proclus, Th. pl., 264, 19-21 Portus)

άγηχρος

τῶν δὲ θεολόγων τὸ “άγηχρον” τῇ τάξι τεύχῃ προσήκειν λεγόντως, ὡς οὐ τε βάρβαροι

φασί, καὶ οὗ τῶν Ἑλλήνων θεολόγων Ὀρφεῖς.

188*
(p. 46 Kr. = Proclus, In Parm., 647, 6-7 Co. 2°; cf. In Tim., III, 43, 13)

ἀξύνος

οὐ τὰ τοῖς Ἀσσυρίοις ύμηνεν, ζώναι καὶ “ἀξύνοι” καὶ πηγαὶ καὶ ἀμελητοὶ καὶ

συνοχεῖς.

189
(p. 30, n. 1 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., II, 130, 23-28)

ἀμφιπρόσωπος

ἀμφιφροφιλείς καὶ “ἀμφιπρόσωπος” οὐσα...ὑποτεχνομένη δὲ τοῖς ἑαυτὶς κόλποις τὰς ἀπὸ

τῶν νοητῶν προδόσις...προτείμενη δὲ καὶ αὐτῇ τοῖς ἥχετος τῷ συμμετοχέοις ζωῆς καὶ

συνέχουσα τὸ κέντρον τῆς προδόσια τῶν ἰσότων ἀπάντων ἐν ἑαυτῇ.

190*
(p. 53 Kr. = Proclus, In Aft., 87 [188, 11-15 Cr.] W.)

ἀναγωγής

ὅτι δὲ καὶ παρὰ τῶν κρειττόνων ἐγγίζεται τὶς ἡμῖν γνώσεως τῶν πραγμάτων, αἱ τῶν θεῶν

αὐτοφίλαι καὶ ὑπηρετῆσαι ἑαυτῶς θηλάζειν, ἐφαρμόζει μὲν τὴν τάξιν τῶν ἔλλοις ταῖς

ψυχαῖς, προκεχεῖσθαι μὲν δὲ τῇ πρὸς τὸ νοητὴν πορείας καὶ τῶς πυρικῶς ἀνάπτυσσαι

τὰς “ἀναγωγής.”

191
(p. 40 Kr. = Proclus, In Cat., 67, 19-20; cf. 74, 26)

ἀρβεγκτος

καὶ γὰρ τὰ λόγια περὶ έκεινων ὡς “ἀρβεγκτον” ἐνδείκτο.

VARIOUS CHALDEAN EXPRESSIONS

187*

Unageing

Since the theologians say that “unageing” is proper to this order, as the barbaroi say, and the Greek theologian, Orpheus.

188*

Independent of Zones

Such (names) as are celebrated by the Assyrians—Zones, “Independent of Zones,” Sources, Impalacles, and Connectors.

189

Faces on all Sides

And she is visible on all sides and has “faces on all sides”...receiving in her womb the processions from the intelligibles...and she sends forth the channels of corporeal life and contains within herself the center of the procession of all beings.

190*

Leading Upward

That a certain knowledge of the way of things is engendered within us by superior beings, is adequately revealed by the autoptic manifestations and guidance of the gods, which disclose the order of the universe to souls, guide our journey to the Intelligible, and stifle the fires that “lead upward.”

191

Ineffable

For the Oracles concerning them point out that they are “ineffable.”
192
(Simplicius, In phys., 615, 6-7)

ένυλος

ὁ οὐρανὸς...καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν λογίων ὡς "ένυλος" παραδέδοται.

193
(Proclus, In Tim., II, 144, 27-30)

ἐποχεῖοι

ἐπεὶ τοῖς τε ἀπὸ τῶν λογίων ὁμοιόμοιοι καὶ ἐκεῖνοι οἱ φυχαὶ (sc. ὑπερκοσμίου) σώματα ἀμυνόμενοι "ἐποχεῖοι" ῥηθήσονται ὑπερκοσμίους τις τών, αἰθέριους καὶ ἐμπυριούς.

194
(p. 17 Kr. = Julian, Or. V, 172d-173a; cf. Proclus, In Tim., I, 34, 21)

ἐπτάκτης

ei δὲ καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς μοισχυγώς ἀφαιρεῖ, ἂν οἱ Χαλδαῖοι περὶ τῶν ἑπτάκτων θεῶν ἐβάσαγρεν, ἀνέγνω ὡς τοις ψυχαῖς, ἀγωνίστα τῷ καὶ μᾶλλα τῷ ἐγνώσα τῷ πρώτῳ, θεοφοροῦσά δὲ τοῖς μακαρίοις γνώριμα.

195
(p. 46 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 43, 12-13)

ζωναίος

ἀλλὰ τῶν χρόνον αὐτὸν ὠλνησαν (sc. οἱ θεοφόροι) ὡς θεῶν, καὶ ἄλλον μὲν τῶν "ζωναίων"...ἄλλον δὲ ἄξιον.

196
(p. 53 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 300, 16-20)

κχλής

τὸ δὲ μὴ γίγνετο...ἡ τελεστικὴ συμβάλλεται, διὰ τοῦ θείου πυρὸς ἀφανίζομαι τὰς ἐκ τῆς γενέσεως ἀπάσις "κχλής," ὡς τὰ λόγια διδάσκει, καὶ πάσαν τὴν ἀλλότρειον ἢ ἐφελικώσα τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἀλλόγνωσον φύσιν.

197
(p. 65 Kr. = Damascius, II, 126, 22-23)

κχλής

διὸ καὶ ἕκατέρα (sc. διαίρεσις) "κχλής" ἀνυμίνειται ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν τῶν θεῶν.

192

Implicated in Matter

And it is handed down by the Oracles that the sky is "implicated in matter."

193

To be Vehicled

Since for those who are inspired by the Oracles, even these (supermundane) souls are said "to be vehicled" to certain supermundane bodies which are both Ethereal and Empyrean.

194

Seven-Rayed

But if I should touch upon the ineffable, mystical doctrine which the Chaldean spoke in a divine frenzy concerning the "seven-rayed" god—that god through whom he causes souls to ascend—I would be saying unknowable things. Yes, certainly unknowable to the herd, but well-known to the blessed theurgists.

195*

Linked to the Zones

But (the theurgists) have praised Time itself as a god, and one (Time god) (they praise) as "Linked to the Zones"...the other as Independent of the Zones.

196

Defilement

The celestic (life) contributes the most by removing, through divine fire, all the "defilements" attendant upon generation, as the Oracles teach, and all the alien and irrational nature which the soul’s pneumatic (vehicle) has drawn to it.

197

Key

Hence, each (division) is praised as "key" by the gods themselves.
198*  
(p. 18, n. 2 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 430, 6-7)  
χρόφιος  
oútws ó “χρόφιος” diákhoimós eneideós periechē pán to noetón.

199*  
(Proclus, In Tim., III, 20, 22-26)  
kukholēiktos  
oi theouregoi...ýmwnaí proswpóteron kai neóteron kai “kukholēiktov” <τούτων> tóv theóv (sc. tón chrónov) kai aiónov.

200*  
(p. 39 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., III, 132, 32-33; cf. 63, 23; In rem p., II, 220, 12)  
mesembolēn  
perí de tón planounménon, óti Í oútoús ópôsthsi enwódhoi hílioú “mesembolēs” púr.

201  
(p. 47 Kr. = Proclus, In Tim., I, 5, 3-5)  
ðχήμα  
ψυχαὶ μερικαὶ...ἐγκόσμαι γίνονται κατὰ τὰ “δχήματα” τὰ ἑαυτών.

202  
(p. 52, n. 2 Kr. = Proclus, Ecc. chald., I; 192, 12-14 Pitra)  
pandoektikē aúllē  
καὶ ἡ “pandoektikē aúllē” τοῦ πατρὸς ἢ πατρική τάξις ἑστὶν, ἡ πάσας ὑποδεχομένη καὶ συνέχουσα τὰς ἀναθέλους ψυχὰς.

203*  
(pp. 22-23 Kr. = Damascius, II, 88, 21-22; cf. 87, 9; Psellus, Hqngorp., 28; 76, 2 K.)  
σειρᾶ  
ἔστιν τῶν στερεωμάτων “σειρᾶ” τὸ ἐμπύριον, καὶ αἰθέριον καὶ ὕλατον.

198*  
Hidden  
Thus, the “hidden” order singly encloses the entire intelligible order.

199*  
Unrolled in a Circle  
The theurgists...praise this god (sc. Chronos) as older, younger, “unrolled in a circle,” and eternal.

200*  
To Intercalate  
Regarding the planets, (Julian the Theurgist says) that (God) established them as six, “intercalating” the fire of the sun as the seventh.

201  
Vehicle  
Particular souls...become mundane through their “vehicles.”

202  
Court Open to All  
And the “court open to all” is the paternal order of the Father, which welcomes and contains all the souls which have returned on high.

203*  
Chain  
There is a “chain” of firmaments—the Empyrean, Ethereal, and Material.
204
(p. 48 Kr. = Proclus, In rem p., II, 335, 29-336, 2)

σκιδάνασθαι

τις (sc. ψυχής) ἐν κατατάξει διά τὴν ἐν τῷ σώματι τῷ "σκιδαρόμενῳ," κατάταξιν αὐτῆς ἑκατὸν σωλήνιν ἀθενοδοσίας.

205*
(pp. 31-32 Kr.; see fr. 57 for context)

στερεώματα

206

στρόφαλος

"Ενέργει περὶ τῶν Ἑκατικῶν στρόφαλων."

...Διδάσκει ὅτι τὴν τελετὴν ἐνεργεῖ, ἤτοι τὴν κίνησιν τοῦ τουροῦ του στροφάλου, ὡς δύναμιν ἀπορρήτην ἔχουσαν.

207
(p. 19 Kr. = Proclus, In Crat., 59, 1-3; cf. Damaecius, II, 148, 12 13)

συνοχέως

ἐστιν γὰρ, ὡς φησὶ τὸ λόγιον...πασῶν "συνοχέως" τῶν πηγῶν.

208*

σύστασις

tαῖς γὰρ τῶν Ἀχαλδαίων "συστάσει" καὶ ἐντυχίαις καὶ τοῖς θείαις καὶ ἄφθεχτοις στροφάλοις ἑκίθητο.

209*
(p. 39 Kr.; see fr. 59, introduction, for context)

ὑπερχόσμιος

VARIOUS CHALDEAN EXPRESSIONS

204

To be Scattered
Since (the soul), in its coordination, is too weak to sustain itself because of its coordination with a body that "is scattered."

205*

Firmaments
(See fr. 57 for context.)

206

Magic Wheel
"Operate with the magic wheel of Hecate."

...Therefore (the oracle) teaches how to operate the rite, truly the movement of such a magic wheel, since it has ineffable power.

207

Connector
For he is, as the oracle says...the "Connector" of all the Sources.

208*

Conjunction
For (Proclus) made use of the "conjunctions," prayers, and the divine, ineffable, magic wheels of the Chaldeans.

209*

Supermundane
(See fr. 59, introduction, for context.)
210a

(Lydus, De mens., IV, 126; 158, 10-12 W.)

μαλαχής ἀπέχεσθαι

κατὰ δὲ τὸν Ἁγουστον μὴνα "μαλαχῆς ἀπέχεσθαι" τοῖς γε βουλομένοις ὑπαίτειν τὰ ἀφάντα τὸ λόγον θεσπίζει.

210b

(Lydus, De mens., IV, 134; 161, 18-19)

γαλακτοποτεῖν

τὸ δὲ λόγον ἀνὰ πάντα τὸν Σεπτέμβριον μὴνα "γαλακτοποτεῖν" ὑπὲρ ἴσης παρεγγυῆς.

210c

(Proclus, In Crat., 101, 26-28)

χείρ

συνδιακοσμεῖ δὲ πᾶν τὸ αἰσθητὸν ταῖς δημιουργοικαῖς αὐτοῦ δυνάμεσιν, ὡς δὴ θεωργῶν παιδεῖς "χείρας" ἀποκαλοῦσιν.

210a

To Refrain from Mallow

The oracle advises those who wish to keep their joints healthy "to refrain from mallow" during the month of August.

210b

To Drink Milk

The oracle encourages us "to drink milk" for our health during the entire month of September.

210c

Hand

He sets in order the entire sense-perceptible (world) through his demiurgic powers, which the sons of the theurgists call "hands."
Doubtful Fragments

211
(p. 9 Kr. = Proclus, In rem p., I, 111, 28-112, 1)
"οὐ φέρει με τοῦ δοχήσης ἢ τάλανεο χαρδίαν."

212
(p. 58, n. 1 Kr. = Psellus, P.G., 122, 1145 b 1)
"Α καὶ δή λέγει νοῦς, τῷ νοεῖν δήποτο λέγει."

213
(Didymus, De Trinitate, III, 21; P.G., 39, 904 b)
'

214
(Didymus, De Trinitate, III, 28; P.G., 39, 945 c-d)
'

215
(Lylius, De mens., IV, 101; 141, 1-11 W.)
'

The wretched heart of the recipient does not support me,"
says one of the gods.

"Those things which Intellect says, it doubtless says by thinking."

Therefore, even the pagans warn about impulsive mindlessness:

"Flee swiftly from earthly passions, flee far away, you who possess the superior eye of the soul and the steadfast rays, so that the great, heavy reins of the body might be held in check by a pure soul and the ethereal radiance of the Father."

For (the pagans) have said:

"All splendid gifts come to mankind from God, whether He has produced something good and happy, or something excellent, or something lovely. Beautiful gifts from God are prepared for all."

And again:

"The power of an immeasurable God and (his) limitless strength hold sway over all things, and He rules alone over everything."

Because the oracle says:

"There are two demons according to men, and of these, there are two races. Those who roam over the ever flourishing earth
Doubtful Fragments

parimwnein meropesei <tetagrammoi> ek Dios archeis.
Zeus' gár to uiothn pánwv átahvov te kakkow te,
hi kai tuktoimwouv chrónon Zois arfrízei,
kaumwvàsí phalwos kaloistai te sówma bróteiai.
keínon wásumeis óstis ex sofí phrólouto,

216*
(p. 10 Kr. = Lydus, De mens., III, 8; 41, 7-13 W.)

217*
(Proclus, In rem p., II, 126, 14-26)

218*
(p. 58 Kr. = Synesius, De insomn., 151 c-d)

<are commanded> by the sovereignty of Zeus to assist men.
For Zeus is the dispenser of all goods and evils. He is the one
who determines the length of life for those who are brought
into the world and who mixes the mortal body with both
worthless and valuable things. Whoever in his wisdom would
conciliate these demons and know what works please them,
would excel all others in understanding and noble deeds,
bearing noble gifts from a noble (benefactor) and fleeing com-
mon things."

Because the moon, in a proximate way, presides over all of generation and clearly
governs all things there by herself, as the Oracles say:

"Nymphs of the springs and all water spirits; hollows of the
earth, air, and beneath the solar rays; male and female lunar
riders of all matter—heavenly, stellar, and fathomless."

And it is clear that the oracle teaches these things:

"A sweet desire takes hold of all (souls) to dwell forever on
Olympus as companions of the immortal gods. But not all are
permitted to set foot in these halls."

When the person who had received the oracle, which had been delivered to him
most fully, asked who it was, then, who achieved the ascent to the gods,
and if it was the individual who especially preferred the life of the haruspex, the god
added further:

"It is not whoever has thoughtfully placed his intention on the
entrails (of sacrificial victims) who will immediately go to
Olympus after the dissolution of the body, rising aloft on the
light wings of the soul, but whoever [is wise...]

"Ah! Indeed! They are exceedingly, nay, eminently, the
most blessed of all souls who pour themselves forth from
heaven onto earth. But most blessed are those who possess an
Do not hallucinate.

Doubtful Fragments

unutterable Destiny; all those, lord, who are born from your radiance and even from Zeus, himself, by the thread of a mighty Destiny.'"

And this is what Timaeus spoke darkly when he granted a kindred star to each soul.

For all (the gods) say that they have come by Necessity, not simply so, but in a manner—to speak—of persuasive Necessity. Earlier, we mentioned those (verses) of Hecate by which she is said to appear:

"After daybreak, boundless, full of stars, I left the great, unfulfilled house of God and descended to life-nourishing earth at your request, and by the persuasion of ineffable words with which a mortal man delights in gladdening the hearts of immortals."

And, again, another (god), being compelled, said:

"Listen to me, although I do not wish it. since you have bound me by Necessity."

And still, more clearly, (Hecate says):

"Why, from the eternally coursing ether, do you need to invoke me, the goddess Hecate, by constraints which bind the gods?"

And, again (Hecate says):

"I have come, hearkening to your very eloquent prayer, which the nature of mortals has discovered at the suggestion of the gods."
And next (Hecate says):

"Drawing them down from the ether by unspeakable spells, you brought them easily to this earth against their will. But (the demons) in the middle—the ones who stand on the midmost gales far from the divine fire—you treat (these) demons shamefully and send them to mortals as prophetic dreams."

That even (the gods) themselves have advised how their statues ought to be made and from what kind of material, will be clear from the statements of Hecate to this effect:

"But execute my statue, purifying it as I shall instruct you. Make a form from wild rue and decorate it with small animals, such as lizards which live about the house. Rub a mixture of myrrh, gum, and frankincense with these animals, and out in the clear air under the waxing moon, complete this (statue) yourself while offering the following prayer."

That the gods who are summoned hasten to withdraw, will be clear by statements such as these, where they (sc. the gods) say:

"Finally, loosen the lord. The mortal no longer makes room for the god."

And concerning the King, Helios, and the gods in that place, (the theologians) praise that Dionysos as

"associate of Helios, gazing upon the holy, celestial pole."

They praise that Zeus, Osiris, the solar Pan, (and) the other (gods) which fill the books of the theologians and the theurgists.
COMMENTARY

Fr. 1

2. τὸν θεορεῖν: Perhaps an allusion to Julian the Theurgist (see Lewy, Exc. IV, p. 463; cf. Saffrey, "Les Néoplatoniens et les Oracles Chaldaïques," pp. 218-219, who suggests that Julian the Theurgist was the "medium" through whom Julian the Chaldean extracted oracles from Plato's "soul."

3. τὴν νοησίαν: A reference to the Highest God of the Chaldean hierarchy. (Cf., e.g., fr. 20 bis; 21. See, also, the discussion in Lewy, pp. 165-169; 366-375; Festugière, Réé., IV, pp. 132-135.) Although this First God is generally described in Stoicizing terms as a primal, fiery Intellect (e.g., fr. 3, 5, 6), his nature is also regarded as essentially unknowable (e.g., fr. 3, 18, 84, 191). For Proclus, however, this term is not equated with the Plotinian One (who, of course, without qualification, is beyond Intellect), but with the "Father" of his first intelligible triad. (See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 483.) Cramer, p. 13, equates this term with μονος ὁ θεός of Iamb. De myst., VI, 17. See discussion in Introduction. (voces.)

4. τὸν νόμον: The repeated use of νομίσεως in this fragment and elsewhere (e.g., fr. 11, 18, 19, 40, 49) to designate the mental apprehension of the Highest God and/or the intelligible world suggests a genuine contemplative aspect to the Chaldean anagogé independent of any external ritual action. A process of contemplative perception is also an important aspect of both Gnostic and Hermetic patterns of ascent. On these matters, see detailed discussion in Introduction.

5. ὁ νόμος: The "flower of mind" is that discreet, fiery organ or faculty (the highest power of the soul and akin to the fiery essence of the First God) which permits apprehension and/or union with the Highest God. The principle "like by like," a commonplace of Hellenistic philosophy, is apparent here. And so Proclus, Exc. chald., IV, p. 194, 9-10 Pitra: τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα παντοκράτορος τὸ ὄνομα συναντάται πάντως. But for Proclus, it is not the "flower of mind" which achieves union with the Highest God, but the "flower of the whole soul" (ἄνθος πάνω τῆς ψυχής). Proclus' proliferation of hypostases and triads necessitated such a development, as he identified the Chaldean "Father" not with the Plotinian One, but with the highest level of his first intelligible triad. (See supra.) Thus, for Proclus, the ἄνθος νόμος could only achieve union with this level, with the ἄνθος πάσης τῆς ψυχῆς effecting union with the One. See Exc. chald., IV; p. 194, 27 ff. Pitra; cf. Kist, "Mysticism," p. 215 ff. See, also, the comments of Smith, Porphyry's Plato, p. 121, n. 20: "Although Proclus' profusion of stages between human nous and the One is in many ways unsatisfactory, nevertheless the idea of the "flower of the whole soul" looks like a determined effort to call a halt to the infinite regress (or rather progress). This stage differs from the others in being not a further refinement involving an even loftier part of man, but in attempting to reintegrate a whole." For Cramer, p. 13, the expression ἄνθος νόμος is equivalent to the καθαρός λόγος of Iamb. De myst., VI, 17.

6. ὁ νόμος: fr. 49, παρόν ἄνθος, fr. 34, 35, 37, 42; Synesius, H. 1(3), 140: ἄνθος φωτείας. Plotinus, Enn. V.5.8.22-23, speaks analogously of "that element in nous which is not nous" (τὸ ἄνθωτον μὴ νόμος; cf. V.3.14.5; VI, 7.35.19-24) but is akin to the One.


5. ὁ τὸν νόμον: i.e., as perceiving a specific mental object. In Proclus' paraphrase (Exc. chald., IV, p. 194, 22-23 Pitra): τὸν έπιλαμβάνεις ταῖς νοησίαις ἐπιβαλλείς εἰς τὴν πρὸς ἐκάτωτον συνεσίαν.

6. ἐπισταθμίζεις: Here, "strength" alludes to the fiery essence or "flower" of the First God. In this sense, the use of ἐπισταθμίζεις refers to the translation, in both instances, obscures the real sense of this important Chaldean term. This expression is also used frequently by Synesius in connection with the "strength" of God; e.g., H. 1(3), 527, 534, 581, 601; 2(4), 198, 205, 267; 3(5), 55; 9(1), 16, 66. See Guéneau de Montiban, pp. 50-53.

7. οὐ δὲ χρὴ οὕτως ἀναθέτεται νοεῖν κτλ.: In other words, the intelligible reality of the highest God cannot be perceived in any direct or aggressive manner (such as focusing on a specific mental object), but must be approached obliquely in a state of passive readiness. Cf. Damascius' interpretation, I, 155, 2-3: οὐ δὲ ἀναθέτεται νοεῖν κατὰ καταγωγήν, διότι κατηκόρη ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκείνου, ἀναθέτεται νοεῖν κατὰ καταγωγήν διότι κατηκόρη ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκείνου, ἀναθέτεται νοεῖν κατὰ καταγωγήν. Iamblichus, surprisingly, also states here
that the Intelligible (conta or fr. 1) cannot even be known by the “flower of mind” (cõnais tov ὁμοίου τοῦ φυσικοῦ). But, as Dillon notes, (p. 390), the contradiction here is “more apparent than real” in that Iamblichus—in this instance—is commenting on a passage from Plato’s Parmenides (see, also, Dillon, Fr. 2b and notes ad loc.)—and not exegesis of the Oracle. (Cf., also, Proclus’ paraphrase to line 4 v. 2, supra.) Cremier, however (p. 13), prefers to interpret this language as descriptive of the theurgist’s “passivity” in preparation for the theurgic ergon. See discussion in Introduction.

8. Ἀλλά: Dam.; ὡδ’ ὡδ’, cij. Kroll and Festugière (following Thilo). But ὡδ’ here, as Lewy notes (p. 166, n. 375), negates the sense of the entire fragment. τανάκος [τανάτοι]: Lewy (pp. 168-169, and so Des Places) translates this term as “subtle,” but Hadot (Lewy’s, p. 709, n. 36) is surely correct in arguing that this expression properly conveys the sense of “extension,” as reflected in the use of τεταρτά, infra, l. 11 (= v. 9). Cf., similarly, ἑκάστος πόρον νοῦ, fr. 128. sed anime nemoa in unum ampliare, fr. 9a. Cf. also, fr. 12, where τακτος describes the “extension” of the Monad into duality. For Synesius, τακτος is descriptive of matter: H. 1(3), 40: τακτος ἡ λάκα. My translation of the entire expression νοῦ τακτος τακτος φλογεί is based on Festugière, Rév., IV, p. 133: “tendant à l’extréme la flamme de l’intellect.” Cf., also, Chaignet, Damascius, I, p. 245, and n. 1: “la flamme infinie d’une raison infinie.” For Chaignet, τακτος conveys the sense of “extension without limit.”

9. πάντα μεταρρύθμισε πλην το νοετὸν ἵκετο: The point here is that the Highest God cannot be “measured” in any sense since he is without limit and absolute simplicity. (In this regard, cf. the description of the “Once Transcendent” in fr. 152.) The act of “measuring” (like «division») begins at the level of the Second Intellect. Cf. μετρείται, fr. 23; μετρείται, fr. 31.

10-11. ἰγνώστη δέμα ψυχής: The “eye of the soul” is a common expression for the “spiritual eye” in man and can be equated with the “flower/flame of mind.” Cf. δέμα τε κληρονομεῖ, fr. 112; ψυχῆς δέμα φέρουμεν, fr. 213.

11. τείνει καταράνων νοῶν: The “empty mind” is that which is free of all forms of normal cognition (i.e., it no longer “measures” or focuses “intently” on its object), but is in a state of passive awareness, ready to apprehend or intuit the unified simplicity of the Highest God. Cf. supra, l. 5. Cf. also, Numenius’ expression ἐνεποντεῖν ἱππεῖα, fr. 2 (Des Places), as the place where the Good is found.

12. ἐνεποντεῖν ἱππεῖα: In other words, since the intelligible reality of the First God is beyond any form of human thought, it can only be grasped indirectly by that organ or faculty (i.e., “flower/flame of mind,” “eye of the soul”) to which it is akin. This statement does not contradict fr. 20: το νοετὸν το νοῦ χωρὶς ύπάρχει (as Dodds thought; see Proclus: El. Th., p. 287) since fr. 20 is describing an ontological situation vis-à-vis the Second Intellect, whereas v. 16 of fr. 1 is concerned with human cognition (and so Kroll, p. 12; Lewy, p. 165; Hadot, Porphyry, l. p. 325, n. 1). Cf., also, fr. 84: ἐνεποντεῖν ἱππεῖα. But here, the one who “exists outside” is the Highest God, who is essentially beyond all categorization. For the later Neoplatonists, the noun ἑπαρχεῖ (Victorinus: existentia) became a regular designation for the Chaldean Father. See, e.g., Rist, “Mysticism,” pp. 217-225.

**Fr. 2**

1. φωτὸς κελάδωντος: This expression apparently alludes to the “rushing sound” of the revolving, celestial spheres. (Cf. ibid., fr. 111; Lewy, pp. 192-193 and n. 59.) In Lewy’s interpretation (p. 194), the raiments formed from the substance of the spheres make up the “defensive armor” (or “vehicle”) of the soul (cf. fr. 61 and notes) and serve as a form of protection when the soul makes its ascent (depicted in this fragment as a type of “magical assault”).

2. ἀλκή τριγλώσσων: An allusion to the triadic nature of the First God. Cf. Damascius, I, 254, and II, 62, 29 (where God is praised as τριγλώσσωι); Synesius, H. 9(1), 66: τριγραμμίου ἀλκος (as descriptive of the Monad). Cf., also, τριγραμμόν, fr. 26 and notes.


**Συνθήκη:** This technical term (fr. 109: συμβολή, fr. 108) is equated by Lewy (p. 195) with the voces mysticae or hidden, divine names of the gods. (As such, this term is also equated with the λύγες; cf. frrs. 76 and 77.) Here, the τριάδος συνθήκη of the “token of the triad” can be equated with the “triply-barbed strength” of v. 2 (as the see mystica of the Highest God) and thus be understood as a theurgical power which functions as a “focusing” device to prod the soul upward. In addition, Lewy suggests that the συνθήκη, in general, functioning as the “magical” means of controlling demonic powers during the ascent. In this regard, cf. Synesius, H. 1(3), 539, 620, where the “seal” (φυγάς) of the Father (equated in vv. 538 and 628 with the term συνθήκη) is said to ward off demonic attacks. But with Synesius, additional Christian imagery is also likely, as the term συνθήκη is both in both orthodox and Gnostic Christian sources to designate baptism, both in its usual lustral sense and, in the Gnostic sources, designating, as well, a “spiritual” baptism or “sealing” of the soul as it ascends. As such, Gnostic “sealing” is also a means of controlling demonic/archontic powers. Cf., e.g., I. Hen, chs. 44-52; Pet. Soph., esp. ch. 138; Marsan, NHC X, 2,12-14; 66,1-5; Trim. Prot., NHC XIII, 49,27-32.

4. ἐμφάνισις ἑρωτότοξα: These “empyrean channels” are the mystical rays of the sun on which the soul makes its ascent. Cf. frrs. 65, 66, 110; Synesius, H. 1(3), 306; 2(4), 203; 4(6), 36. See Geutner, pp. 53-56.

5. πεπτὸς ἅφτασις: In Damascius’ interpretation, this fragment refers to the acquisition of “intelligible knowledge” in the manner set forth in fr. 1. In this regard, cf. Proclus, In Parm. VII (ed. C. Steel, p. 512, 86-88=K.L.-Lab., p. 58, 22-24), where Proclus describes the via negativa approach to the One as a type of combat: “...que ab abnegationibus est via ad ipsum plane et ille (sc. Socrates) determinavit, dicens ‘ut in pugna oportere omnia ab ipso auferre et ab omnibus illud separare’” (Rep. 534 c 1).

6. χρυσομελας θεός: Probably Apollo; see Lewy, p. 6.

**Fr. 3**

1. ἀ πατὴ: A frequent designation for the Highest God (passim). The later Neoplatonists, however, had problems with this term, sometimes understanding it in the Chaldean sense (e.g., Porphyry, De regibus an., p. 327, 24 Bidez), other times equating it with the highest member of the first intelligible triad (e.g., Pro-
chus; see notes to fr. 1). See, also, the discussion in Rist, “Mysticism and Transcendence,” p. 218 ff.

ήρασας: This expression (Lewy translates it “rapt away”; see p. 78 and n. 45; cf. Hadot, Porphyry, II, p. 91 and n. 1: “λέῳς σὲ δέδεδε λόγος”) underscores the ontological separation of the Father, who exists apart from everything (cf. fr. 84). This radical transcendence approaches a έννοια νπεγιας, as the Father, ultimately, is beyond characterization (cf. frrs. 18 and 19). In the context of Psellus, this expression indicates that the Father is ἀκατάλειπτον and ἀπελεπίστευτον. Cf., also, Proclus, En. chald., IV, p. 194, 29-31 Pitra: Ei γὰρ ὁ πρῶτος πατὴρ ἀφαιρέσθω ἑαυτόν λέγεται του νοον και τῆς δύναμεως, τίς δ’ μπερ οὐς ἀφαίρεσθα δεινης καθον, ὄλλω ὑπερηπαθείνους ἀπὸ πάντων ἐπόλυος, και θεος πάνω τοιχοι μυ-
νομενος;

Plotinus also uses this expression, but in connection with the contemplative ascent to Nous; e.g., En. V. 3.4.11: συναρπασσαντα ξαυτόν εἰς τὸ ὄνομ. An analogous term is χωρίζως, which is “common not only to the later Neoplatonists (as well as Plotinus), but to Gnostic sources as well (in both an ontological and analogic sense). Cf., e.g., Maranthes, NHG X, 9.9 and 22, where the term ἀναχωρεῖν expresses, respectively, the ontological “withdrawal” of the Aecon Barbelo (apparently from two of the “powers” of the “Three-Powered One”) as well as the “withdrawal” of the Gnostic into his self. Similarly, in 9.9-10.2, the “invisible Spirit” is said to “run up” (παρεξειρομαι) to his “place” (τόπος), expressing this same idea of divine withdrawal or contraction. However, in the last analysis, it is only Plotinus who achieves a thorough-going transcendence with his doctrine of the One. See, in this regard, Dodds, “Parmenides,” pp. 129-142; Dillon, Middle Platonists, pp. 386-389.

A last analogy is found in Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians: οὐκ ἀφαίρεσθαι ἕτοσεν τὸ ἐνας Ματθ. 2:26. L. Abramowski would interpret this New Testament usage of ἀφαίρεσθαι as a similar expression of transcendence; see Drei christliche Untersuchungen, pp. 1-17.

2. δύναμες νοερα: An allusion to the Second or Demiurgic Intellect, who is directly responsible for shaping the cosmos according to the Ideas. Cf. frs. 5 and 7; Festugière, Rév., IV, p. 132.

τὰον πλατεῖα: i.e., the very essence of the Father which remains separate and distinct from the Second Intellect. Cf. ὑπο, fr. 62; Syrusiaus, H. 8.9, 34: ἄνθρωπος ἕξεσθαι (but here, with reference to Christ).

Fr. 4

3. ἢ μέν γὰρ δύναμις κτῆτος: On the basis of this oracle, the later Neoplatonists discerned a Chaldean triad of Father (ἐκένως; ἐκένως), Power, and Intellect. Porphyry, apparently, was the first to make this distinction; cf., e.g., De regressu an., pp. 36, 15-19; 37, 7-10 Bidez; Hadot, Porphyry, II, p. 91 and n. 2. This triad was also understood by the later Neoplatonists in terms of ὅπαρκες, δυνάμις, νοερα: cf. Tzaddik, “Orphism in the Chaldaean Oracles,” pp. 214-215), triads of this type anadated Porphyry, since similar triads appear in the Gnostic sources known to Plotinus and his school. Cf., in this regard, the triads ὅπαρκες, ὅπως = ζωη, νοερα (Stoas Seth, NHG VII, 72, 28-32); ὅτι ἐτε παλ νερ = ὅπαρκες οτό τὸ δε; ὅπως = ζωη; τονοκοι = νοερα (Allogenes, NHG XI, 49, 28-38). See Robinson, “Three Steles of Seth,” pp. 348-349. Pearson (Noua Hamburdi Codices IX and X, p. 246 and 275) suggests that the triad

γύος, ὃς ἀκρείς, ὃταν ἐν Maranthes, X, 9.16-18 belongs to this group as well. In terms of the Chaldean triad, Proclus (cf. Th. pl., 365, 3ff.) and Damascius (cf. I, 87, 1-4 = fr. 27; 108, 17-19) placed it beneath the One at the level of the first intelligible triad. (See Hadot, Porphyry, I, pp. 260-272; Rist, “Mysticism and Transcendence,” p. 218 ff.) In any event, the triadic understanding of this oracle (combined with the monadic-triadic language of frs. 26 and 27) resulted in an understanding of the Chaldean First God as a three-in-one deity, a notion congenial to both Syrusius and Victorinus, who granted the Chaldean triad (as mediated through Porphyry) onto the Christian Trinity. The result: a median, feminine hypostasis equated with the Christian Spirit. See further discussion in Introduction.

In addition, this fragment also suggests the possibility of a primordial, bisexual

4. πάρεικα δῶρον: As a “Transcendent Fire,” the Chaldean First God, although appropriating Stoic imagery, nevertheless remains removed from the lower orders of being and participates only indirectly in the process of creation. Cf., esp., Diogenes, fr. 5; ὑποδικαῖα, fr. 169.

5. δύναμες καταλαβέα: Here, “power” again alludes to the Second Intellect. Cf. ἀ δύναμες νοερα κλέας, fr. 3.

6. νος νοερα: i.e., the Second Intellect. Epithets of this type are common. Cf., esp., νοθέης τροπής, fr. 30 and notes. Cf., also, χρωμον, χρώμα, fr. 185.

3-4. ὁ κόσμος τειχίζεται τῷ πάση: The Second Intellect as Demiurgically fashions the intelligible or Empyrean World of Ideas. Cf. ὅταν ἡ θετικής τετηκής, fr. 33; νοερα, fr. 68 (here, it is the sensible world which is formed).

Fr. 6

3. ὅπαρκες: In the context of Simplicius’s expression is descriptive of Atlas. However, in a Chaldean context, the reference would be to Hecate as the “girdling” World Soul. In this regard, cf. ὅπαρκες πάροι ἁνδρος, fr. 55 and notes. Although Lewy (pp. 335-334 and n. 159; cf. p. 92 and n. 101) feels this “girdling” notion is dependent on Plato, Tim., 36 e, Dodds (“New Light,” p. 270,
n. 24 = Lewy2, p. 699, n. 24) contests this dependence as “over-ingenuous.” Lewy (p. 93) also notes that statues of Hecate often included a girdle (στερνή) wrapped about her hips, which the Neoplatonists interpreted in cosmic terms; e.g., Damascius, I, 242, 14 ff. Proclus (In Tim. p., II, 225, 1-5; cf. Lewy, p. 92, n. 102; Exc. VII, p. 484) situates ὑπέζωκος—as a poetic entity—at the lowest point of the intellectual order, and thus on the border of the intelligible and sensible worlds (in the manner of the World Soul). Tardieu (“Oracles chaldaiques,” p. 209, following Kroll, loc. cit., n. 1) equates ὑπέζωκος with the Valentine Horos, who performs a similar “girdling” function between the intelligible and sensible orders.

ὑμῖν: Damascius, II, 13, 29 (who quotes our line in full); cod.: ὑμῖν and ἑμῖν. Heiberg did not isolate this line as a Chaldean verse, but kept it as part of Simplicius’ text. Thus, for Heiberg, the line referred to Atlas as ὑπέζωκος τις, ὑμῖν to σεκαίρα. Bider (however, 1928, 1905, pp. 79-81), was the first to separate this line from Simplicius’ text (following Damascius), thus constructing our two-verse oracle. Kroll evidently overlooked Simplicius altogether, citing only Damascius’ text (and so Lewy). But then Festugière, in apparent ignorance of Bider’s research, “discovered” these two lines once more (“Un Vers méconnu des Oracles chaldaiques dans Simplicius,” Symb. Oe., XXVI, 1948, pp. 75-77), but neither Bider nor Festugière was able to connect the role of ὑπέζωκος with the Chaldean Hecate.

5. πῦρ πρώτου καὶ πῦρ ἐτερον κτλ.: Festugière (ibid., p. 77) understands this line as referring to the first and second “feux-intellects” who are separated by the median ὑπέζωκος. However, if ὑπέζωκος is understood as a World Soul figure, then the two fires of this line refer, respectively, to the poetic “fire” (or sun) of the intelligible world and its material counterpart, the mundane sun. Cf., in this regard, ἄλλο πυρὸς ἐτερος, fr. 65 and notes; πῦρ ἄλλος...ἐτερος, fr. 66 and note; ἐτερος, Kroll, ibid., p. 81. But either interpretation is possible, assuming a pervasive, median principle (Hecate/δύναμις/ὑπέζωκος) operating at various levels of reality.


μιγήνια: Cf. μιγήνια, fr. 66 (in an anaagogic context).

Fr. 7

1. ἐξετάλωσα: The “activity” of the Father consists of “perfectly” thinking the world as an intelligible model. Cf. οὐ...ἐπιγέλει, fr. 13.

1-2. πῦρ παράδεισος δευτέρον, δι’ κτλ.: Cf. Numenius, fr. 17 (Des Places): Οἱ ἀδρωμοί, διὸ τούτοις μὲν οὐκ ἢτοι πρώτοι, ἀλλ’ ἐτερος πρὸ τούτοις νοοί προεξήκτερος καὶ θεωτέρος. The problem of influence here is much discussed. Dodds (“Numenius,” p. 11, contra Festugière, “Religion grecque,” p. 482; see Waszink, “Porphyrios,” pp. 43-45) argues (rightly, I think; cf. Tardieu, “Oracles chaldaiques,” p. 234) for a Chaldean origin: “...the address to mankind is both natural and usual in oracles, whereas in a philosophical dialogue it is anything but usual and has in fact the air of being dragged in by Numenius.” But cf. Lewy (pp. 320-321 and notes 26-29), who argues for a third source, suggesting that both Numenius and the Oracles mutually borrowed a “paraenetic motif” from Platonists of “similar tendency.” (Cf. Dillon, Middle Platonists, p. 364, who, similarly, would not rule out a third source.) Lewy also points out that the “profound differences” between the Oracles and Numenius (e.g., Numenius’ dualism with its evil world soul in contrast to the monistic, “Father-generated” universe of the Chaldean system; the developed doctrine of Chaldean emanations which is missing in Numenius) further argue against direct borrowing. This may be true for both systems as a whole, but should not then preclude a process of selective borrowing in terms of certain congenial ideas. Thus, it may well be that Numenius has borrowed this particular verse (assuming his eclectic philosophical interests) as supportive of his “two Intellects” doctrine.  

Fr. 8

2. ὄνομα: An allusion to the dyadic nature of the Second Intellect, who functions both as a contemplative and active (or demiurgic) Mind; i.e., he both contemplates the intelligible world as well as directs his activity towards the sensible world. Cf. δοῦμαι, fr. 12; τι ὠνόμα, fr. 169 and notes. Cf., also, Numenius, fr. 15 (Des Places): ὑμῖν ὁ ἄλλος ὁ πρώτος περὶ τὰ νοητά, ὅτι δὲ δευτέρος περὶ τὰ νοητά καὶ καθισματικά. (See Lewy, pp. 114-115 and n. 187; Festugière, Révé, III, pp. 55-56; Des Places, pp. 125-126.)

τράγος: Most likely the Father or First intellect (and so Festugière, Révé, III, p. 55; Des Places, p. 121). But cf. Lewy (p. 114, n. 187), who suggests the Second intellect and translates v. 1 as “duality is attached to him,” viz. the Second intellect (and so Hadot, Porphyre, I, p. 201, n. 1). Cf., also, Dillon (“The Concept of Two Intellects,” pp. 177-179), who argues that fr. 8, as a whole, should be regarded as a continuation of fr. 7 (which Lewy had already suggested; see p. 112, n. 181) and, thus, would understand τράγος here as referring to the δευτέρος of fr. 7. This “Dyad” of fr. 8, then (as a Second intellect), would be third in rank after the Father and a First intellect distinct from the Father. But for Dillon, ibid., p. 81; Bider, ibid., p. 81; Kroll, ibid., p. 35; “two intellects” (situated after the Father) would differ from that of Numenius, for whom the First intellect remains supreme. But such a schematization of the Chaldean hierarchy (in terms of any well-defined doctrine) cannot be affirmed on the basis of the fragments. The most that can be said is that the Oracles, perhaps, were moving in this direction, but essentially remained fluid in doctrine.

It should also be noted that Dillon’s argument, in part, is based on the comments of Anem. Taur. IX, 1-5, where there is mention of the Father’s δύναμις, νοεις, and ἄλλον πάλαι γὰρ οὖν. But as Dillon states, this doctrine may well be a Porphyrian innovation (or even criticism) of Chaldean teaching, especially assuming Porphyry’s purported authorship of this “anonymous” document. In this regard, see Hadot, Porphyre, I, pp. 102-143; II, pp. 61-113.


5. αἰσθήσεως: Cf. αἰσθήσεως, fr. 40; αἰσθήση, fr. 41.

χόμασοι: A probable allusion to the stars. Cf. χόμασοι, fr. 34. See Kroll, p. 28; Festugière, Révé, III, p. 55, n. 5.

Fr. 9

Fragments 9 and 9a have been isolated as Chaldean by Saffrey (loc. cit.), but Saffrey does not attempt to reconstruct the Greek. Earlier, Theiler had reconstructed part of our fr. 9a (= fr. 9, Des Places), but his reconstruction is problematic (see infra.) Following Saffrey, then, no attempt has been made here
to reconstruct either the Greek or meter of these lines. However, the fragments have been separated from Proclus’ text by quotes to maintain the uniformity of our text.

2. le unum: Moerbecke has introduced the French article here rather than use a Latin demonstrative pronoun; see discussion in Steel, V. 1, pp. 44*-45*.

5. omnia enim ex uno entia: Cf. fr. 10: οὐάν πάντα ὅν ὁ κόσμος ἐκπεπάλατο. If the Latin here is an accurate reflection of the Greek text (and not a re-wording of either Proclus or his Latin reductor), then the Oracle apparently referred to the Highest God as One in addition to his other designations. But cf. notes to fr. 10.

5-6. omnia...secta sunt sicut intellectualiter: Saffrey (p. 233, n. 51) compares the expression noeicis omnia in fr. 1. Cf., also, ἔμμερθησαν νοεί ποι μοιρηθήσων ἐκ ὅλως νοειας, fr. 37, with regard to the "division" of the Ideas/Intellegibles.

6. in corpora multa: Cf., again, fr. 37, where (in a slightly different sense) the Ideas/Intellegibles are said to "break" (="divide") themselves on the "bodies" of the worlds (ῥηγούμενα κόσμων περὶ σώμασιν).

Fr. 9a

3. neque in tuo intellectu detinere: Theiler (p. 94, Kiliensky-Labowsky) reconstructs the Greek as: ...μηδένικαν νοικκαταχθέντων (＝fr. 9, Des Places; cf. νοικκαταχθέντων νοστια, fr. 8). But Tardieu (Lewy 2, p. 679) finds Theiler’s restoration problematic, suggesting (as Saffrey has done) that the Latin text should be cited here instead.

multivarium alium: Saffrey (p. 222) cites as a parallel πολυποικιαλος ὅλης, fr. 34 and, thus, would reconstruct the Greek here as: πολυποικιαλον ἄλλω.

4. anime noema in unum ampliare: Cf. fr. 1, v. 6: νόμων κακοὶ τοιαὶ λογία; v. 9: τινα κεινον νόμων εἰς το νοστιαν. Thus, this Latin fragment reinforces our contention that the Chaldean anagēgē consisted, in part, of a genuine contemplative (or via negativa) approach to the Highest God. But whether fragments such as these should be labelled "philosophical" (as opposed to "theurgical"), as Saffrey suggests (p. 219), is problematic. See further discussion in Introduction.

Fr. 10

1. ἐνιὸς ποσός: Whether the Chaldeans ever designated the Highest God simply as “One” is problematic. According to Anon. Taur. IX,1 (see Kroll, p. 12), the answer is no: ως και τὸ τὸ λέγην αὐτὸν εἶναι παντελῶς παρατείνεται. (See Hadot, Parphry, Π, p. 64 ff., who argues that Parphry is the author of this “anomalous” work.) But cf. Psellus, P.G. 122, 1149 c. 5-6: μᾶκ αἰχα καὶ τῶν πάνω δοξάζων, καὶ ἐν αὐτῆς καὶ ἀγάθῳ ἀνομοιότης, Ἰονν. 1: ἁγίῳ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ...παλ. (Psellus’ interpretations are, perhaps, based on a Procan exegesis of our fragment. See Lewy, p. 81, n. 54. Cf., also, fr. 9; omnia enim ex uno entia.) Hadot, ibid., p. 93, n. 3, suggests that the ambiguity here may simply reflect a tension between “the affirmation and negation of the notion of the One.” This tension is certainly borne out in those fragments where the Highest God is affirmed as Father, Monad, Intellect, etc., but then negated as essentially unknowable (e.g., fr. 3, 18, 84), but his affirmation simply as One remains inconclusive.

Fr. 11

1. ἐν τοῖς νοστιαῖς καὶ κρυψίας ϑεοῦς: Cf. Proclus, El. Th., prop. 162: παῦ το καταλαμβάνον τὸ ὄντος ἐν πλήθος ἐνάδων χρύσων καὶ νοστιῶν ἔστι. (See O’Neill, Proclus, Alc. I, p. 32, n. 102.)

τριτάρχων ἐνοπίστεπτῶν ἔοντων: In addition to the “Good,” Proclus mentions “Wisdom” (=σοφία) and “Beauty” (=καλός).

3. τάγηαθον: If Westerink’s reconstruction of this line is correct, then the Oracle characterized the Highest God as Good as well, perhaps, as One; see supra, fr. 9 and 10. But cf. Kroll, loc. cit., who cites only the final hemistich as oralac; and so Lewy, p. 80, n. 52. Cf. Proclus, In Eutcl., loc. cit., for the same attestation.

νοΘώς: c.f. Westerink; νοΘώς, codd.

πατρικῆς μονᾶς: Although Monad, the Father is also implicitly a triad. Cf., e.g., μουνάδα/τριοςκόκυς, fr. 26; τρικ/μονάς, fr. 27.

Fr. 12

1. τὸ ἄλητος: In the context of Damascius, “wholeness” is equated with Aion or “Eternity.” Cf., in this regard, τὸ ἄλων κως, fr. 59. For Proclus, however (loc. cit.), this term is understood in a Pythagorean context and thus equated with “the line” (ἡ γέμισι).
3. τανακηθαῖς μονᾶς εἴστιν ή δύο γενεια: Damascius equates this notion of “extensibility” or “tension” (τασαθέα, I. 1) into “duality” with Aion; for Proclus, the context is again Pythagorean, and thus descriptive of the “point” (as monad) extended into the “line” (as dyad). In a Chaldean context, however, δύο would properly refer to the Second Intellect. Cf. δύος, fr. 8; cf., also, τασαθά/τασαθ, fr. 1 and notes.
4. μένειν αἱ τὰ ἄλοχων στροφάλγυ: Cf. αἱ τὸ μένειν ἄλοχων στροφάλγυ, fr. 49 (with reference to Aion). Because Damascius quotes part of this oracular fragment here (in addition to his equation of “wholeness” with Aion), Lewy (p. 99 and notes 137-138) suggests combining these two fragments in the following manner: Άλων πατρικῆς μονᾶς ἐστιν, δύο γενεια <καὶ ἢ> τρικ /καὶ ἢ> σοφία, etc. For Lewy, then, fr. 12 means that Aion is a “subtle monad” with a “dual aspect,” viz. he is “sustained” by the “strength” of the Father while transmitting motion or “light” to the Ideas (or “Sources” and “Principles”; see fr. 49). This interpretation is a trifle over-ingenious. It is simpler to see fr. 12 as simply alluding to the “extension” of the Father or First Intellect (as monad; cf. πατρικῆς μονᾶς, fr. 11) into the demiurgic Second Intellect (or “Dyad,” see supra).

Fr. 13

1. πατρικῆς ἄρχιας: Another designation for the Highest God, who is the Source or Principle of all that exists. Cf. Syneusis, H. 1 (3), 172; (3), 62: δραχον ἄρχα. Cf., also, fr. 40 and 49, where the ἄρχα are the Ideas contained in the Paternal Principe. See, also, Lewy, pp. 115-116 and n. 192.

οὐ...ἄνελες: Cf. ἐξελέσσε, fr. 7. Psellus, loc. cit., connects this Chaldean notion of Paternal perfection with Jas. 1:17: παῦ δώρημα τελέων ἀνοῆθεν ἄσπιναταν ἐν τοῦ πατρικῆς τῶν φῶντιν.

τριχάτες: Cf. τριχάτωρς, fr. 56.
Fr. 14

1. πατὴρ οὐ φάκον κτλ.: The meaning of this verse is obscure. Lewy (p. 147, n. 295) thinks Psellus, loc. cit., incorrectly inserted πατὴρ here and suggests that the beginning of the line might have read instead: οὐ <μὲν γὰρ> φάκον, etc. In Lewy’s analysis, the verse is directed against the current magical belief that an invoked god inspired terror or fear. ἐνθρόμοις: Compounds of ἑνθρός are common in the Oracles; cf. frs. 34, 35, 37, 42, 76, 88. See, also, Theiler, 1942, p. 15 = 1966, p. 269.

πατὴρ: Cf. πατίνηδος, fr. 81 (as descriptive of the Father’s ‘will’). See Cremers, p. 17.

Fr. 15

3. πάς ἀγάθος θεὸς: Proclus here is commenting on Plato, Rep. II, 379 b-c to the effect that God is essentially good. According to Proclus, Plato’s remarks must be expanded to include the notion that “every god is good,” a view he then substantiates by quoting this verse from the Oracles. This Chaldean verse, however, is probably distinguishing between “good” or “true” gods who are helpful to mankind, and those spirits or demons who are evil and deceitful (particularly in the context of various theurgic rites). Cf. frs. 88-93 and notes; Iamb., De myst., III 31; Lewy, pp. 273-275 and n. 55.

4. νήσιον: This notion of “sobering up” is also found in the Hermetic (e.g., C.H. 1/27; VII 1, 2) and Gnostic sources (e.g., Cos. Truth, NHC I, 22, 16-20). The general idea here is that those who are “intoxicated” by the world and its passions need to “sober up” and reflect on the true nature of reality. But cf. fr. 97, where the soul is said to be “drunk” on god, a metaphor often expanded to the idea of “sober drunkenness.” In this regard, cf. Lewy, Sobria ebrietas, passim, who especially cites numerous references in the writings of Philo. Cf., also, Jonas, Gnostic Religion, pp. 68-73. Des Places would also now translate this expression as “sober up” (“degrissez-vous”) rather than as “abstain” (“jetez’em”); see “Notes,” p. 322.

Fr. 16


2. θεοβράμων: Lewy (p. 160, n. 355) cites Plato, Phaedrus, 247 d as the locus classicus of this term: θεοβράμων νῦν...τομβαον. Cf. τερας, fr. 17.

σιγῆ: “Silence” characterizes the supermundane “depth” or “abyss” where the Father dwells. Cf. Synesius, H. I (3), 82; 2(4), 83, 85; 5(2), 22, 65; 8(9), 61; 9(1), 75. Cf., also, σίγα, fr. 132; Des Places, testimonia, p. 70, for additional parallels. In the Gnostic sources, σιγη often designates the female syzygy of the Highest God (who, in turn, is often called Abyss). See, e.g., Iren., Adv. Haer., 1.1, 2.1; Val. Exp., NHC XI, 22, 26. Des Places now suggests that fr. 16, in its usage of σιγη, is “closer” to a Gnostic milieu than he had previously thought; see “Notes,” p. 323.

3. τῶν πατέρων: A reference either to the Father and Second Intellect (cf. frs. 22, 50 and notes) or to the rulers of the three worlds of Chaldean cosmology (cf. fr. 73 and notes). See, also, Lewy, p. 160 and n. 353; Theiler, 1942, pp. 9-12 = 1966, pp. 262-263.

Fr. 17

1. τὸ δὲ νοοῦν: In the context of Proclus, a reference to the perceptive capacity of the gods and certain “wise men” (= the theurgists? Cf. Festugière, Tim., I, p. 46, n. 3). See, also, Lewy, pp. 160-161 and n. 355, who suggests that the gods in question are the νοοῦρι θεοί (based on Proclus, In Ccr., 9, 12-14).

τερας: Cf. τερας, fr. 16.

Fr. 18

1. τὸν ὑπερορμος πατρικὸν βαθὸς: “Paternal Abyss” characterizes the noetic or “supermundane” home of the Father. Cfr., e.g., Synesius, H. I (3), 132: ἀφανίμενα βαθὸς; 189: βαθὸς ἀρατον; 5(2), 27: βαθὸς πατρίς; 9(1), 116: βαθὸς...βαθός βαθός. See, also, Lewy, p. 159, n. 35; Des Places, testimonia, p. 70, for additional parallels. In fr. 163, however, the terms βαθός/βαθός also designate the Material World. A similar equation is found in Plotinus as well, where both the One and matter are characterized in terms of absolute simplicity (e.g., Enn. VI 7.13.3-4). See Tardieu, “Oracles chaldaiques,” pp. 205-209, who also cites Gnostic parallels to what he calls this “apophatic characteristic of high and low.” Des Places now affirms that Chaldean usage of βαθός is closer to Gnostic usage than he had previously thought; see “Notes,” p. 323.

νοοῦτας: Again, knowledge of the Highest God is a matter of intelligible perception (cfr. e.g., frs. 17 and 19).

2. πάροικος ἄνωτος: For Proclus, the “intellectual gods” (cfr. notes to fr. 17). In Lewy’s analysis (pp. 159-161), the Chaldeans did not distinguish between intellectual and intelligible gods (as did the later Neoplatonists), but asserted only the existence of planetary gods situated beneath Aion. However, these planetary gods, in Lewy’s words, were “endowed with intellectual knowledge of the intelligible world” and thus were conceived of as “noetic entities.”

δ ὀρμος: Cf. τὸν πατεραν ἀέθες, fr. 131.

Fr. 19

2. τὸνος...θεῶν: A reference to the Paternal Intellect; see Lewy, p. 160, n. 354.

πᾶς νοει: i.e., “every divine mind” has the ability to perceive the Paternal Intellect; cf. fr. 18. From frs. 17-19, it can be inferred that ascent to the intellectual gods (or the Chaldean equivalent) imbued the soul with a similar noetic disposition, in preparation for the final “leading upward” towards the Father himself (as described in fr. 1).

Fr. 20

1-2. οὐ γὰρ ἐστίν νόος κτλ.: (Des Places’ text mistakenly reads νοεις.) This fragment suggests that the intelligible world of Ideas exists within the mind of the Second Intellect (νοεις) and not outside. (Cfr. fr. 8: νοεις καθεύγον ταν νοεις.) Such a notion is consistent with second-century speculation about the ontological location of the Platonic forms. See Lewy, pp. 167 and n. 379; 322-324; Festugière, Rés., III, p. 56, n. 3; Hadot, Porphyre, I, p. 325, n. 1.
Fr. 20 bis

This fragment is neither cited by Kroll nor designated as oracular by Chaignet, but Levy suggests the possibility; see p. 167, n. 379.


2. τῷ νοοῦν: The primary function of the Father is to "think" the intelligible world of Ideas. However, it is the Second Intellect who actively fashions the intelligible world on the model of these Ideas. Cf., esp., fr. 37.

Fr. 21

1. νοεῖν: Again, the reference is to the Father or First Intellect who is the intelligible source of all that exists. See Levy, pp. 81 and n. 55; 333 and n. 75. Cf. Marius Victorinus. Adv. Ar. I, 50, 20: "universaliter omnimodis omnia." Hadot (Marius Victorinus, II, p. 852, ad not.) sees a reflection here of this particular fragment.

Fr. 22

3. νοοῦ πατρός: Here, the Second or Demiurgic Intellect; cf. fr. 5 and 7. Festugrière (Rée, III, p. 55) compares frs. 5, 7, and 22 with Numenius, fr. 12 (Des Places): τοῦ μὲν πρώτου θεοῦ ἢν ἦν ἐρέμων ἑσύχασεν. Thus, the First God or Father remains removed from his creative "acts," which are the province of the Second Intellect.

εἴπη: The notion of speech as a creative "act" is more common in Oriental than Greek traditions. The best known example, of course, is the Biblical account of creation in Gen. 1. Note that Proclus, In Tim., loc. cit., l. 23, equates εἴπην with νοεῖν.

3. τῇ ἀπομονωσίᾳ: This initial division would involve just the intelligible world. Cf. νοοῖς τομαῖοι, fr. 1; τόμη, fr. 179. Cf., also, μεμορφωμένους, μεμορφωμένης, fr. 37.

4. 〈πρωτόστοιον πατρός〉: Des Places has added πρωτόστοιον to Kroll's emendation of πατρός. (Cf. πρωτόστοιον πατρός, fr. 179, intro.) The reference here is to the Father or First Intellect.

5. οὐ: codd.; οὐ, cj. Des Places (following Bideoz); φ, cj. Festugière (Rée, III, p. 55 and n. 3).

τῷ θελείν κατείχον: This expression reflects II. 1, 524-530; 8, 175, where Zeus "nods" to indicate his "will." (See Levy, p. 106, n. 165.) In the Chaldean system, "will" is a constituent of both the Father and the human soul. Cf. forms of ἐποίησις in frs. 37, 77, 81, 107. Cf., also, νέωμαι, fr. 44; Cremer, p. 102 ff.

In the Gnostic and Hermetic literature, "will" is also an active, even hypostatized, aspect of God. Cf., e.g., Iren., Adv. Haer., I, 29, 1; Cos. Truth, NHC I, 37, 18-34; C.I. I, 8; 31; VII. 5.

ξόν: The idea of simultaneous thought and action is also reflected in fr. 25. Cf., also, C.H. I, 14; X, 2; XIII, 19; Ascelpius, 8; Ap. John, NHC II, 7,4-9.

Fr. 23

1. (οἱ στῖχοι χρησιμοῦ): Didymus cites this verse as one of several oracles from different sources.

2. τῷ πᾶντι: Although forms of πᾶς are frequent in the Oracles, here (and in frs. 30, 53, 68) the substantive is best translated as "the All," a terminus technicus familiar to us from various Gnostic sources. (The Coptic form would be παντῆς.) In the Gnostic sources this term designates, as here, a general notion of universalitas as well as, more specifically, the hypostatized Aeons which, collectively, comprise the Gnostic pleroma. (See Logan, "The Meaning of the Term 'the All,'" pp. 203-208, who, in addition, includes the totality of the Gnostic "elect").

τρίας: Here, the activity of the Second Intellect (understood triadically) whose "measures" are the Ideas. (See Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 261 and n. 2, who points out that the Ideas were also understood triadically in the Chaldean system.) It is the function of the Second Intellect to delimit or measure the All by actively projecting the Ideas onto the intelligible world. See Levy, p. 108, n. 173; cf. p. 116. Levy cites as a parallel a similar "oracle" quoted by Hermias, Phaedr., 248 a; p. 157 Couvreur: τρίας κατὰ πάντα μετροῦσα. Couvreur mistakenly identified this verse as Oracle; and so Kern, Orph. Fr. 310. συνέχεια: An allusion to the "connecting" nature of this triad. Cf. frs. 24 and 30; δῦμα, fr. 31; κατὰ...μετροῦσα: tmesis; cf. πάντα μετροῦση, fr. 1; τὸ νοεῖν μετρεῖται, fr. 31.

Fr. 24

1. ἡ μέση δύνα: In the context of Damascius, a reference to the median intelligible-and-intellectual order made up of the Connectors, Telearchs, and Iynges. See Levy, Exc. VII, pp. 483-484.

συνοικισμός: Cf. frs. 32, 80, 82, 177, 207.

τελεστρατηγίας: Cf. frs. 86 and 177.

1 + 3. διορίσκομαι...ἀρχήν...τέρα...μέσα: The formula is Pythagorean. Cf., e.g., Arist., De cælo, A 1 268 a 10: καθίστατο γὰρ φιλοσοφόων τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὰ πάντα τὸς γενομένος τῶν ἐκ τῆς ἐκείνης γῆς καὶ μέσον τοῦ ἄρχουσαν τῇ ἐκείνῃ γησί καὶ ἀρχήν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐχθέν ἐξοντος γενομένων καὶ της της τριάδος (as cited by Levy, p. 109 and n. 174). Cf. also, Orph. Fr. 21 (Kern) τίς θεός: ἐν καθίστατο...ἀρχήν τοῦ τέρατος καὶ τῆς ἕκαστος τῶν θεῶν ἐκάλοντος ἐχθέος (Plato, Laws, IV, 715 e).

3. τάξεις ἀνάκτης: τάξει is equivalent to στιχρ (cf. fr. 203) and refers to one of the "orders" or "chains" which link all aspects of the cosmos. Cf. Proclus, In Parm., 904, 12-18, which is a reflection of this fragment: ὃ δὲ τοῖς τινινοῖς πάντων ἀναγορεύει τὸ μέτρον τῆς μεθοδίας...ἀρχήν τοῦ τέρατος καὶ μέσον τῆς ἐκείνης τῆς ἐκατέρω τῶν ἐχθέων ἀναγόμενιν ἀνάκτης τὴν ἴδιοτήτα τῆς ἐκ τῆς ἑκάστου καθίστησαν.

Fr. 25

2. ἐνεργεῖ: Analogous to εἴπη, fr. 22. Again, the idea here is one of simultaneous thought and action. See Levy, pp. 180-181 and n. 19.

βοστός δὲ οἱ ἱγνώστοι: The Father, then, is the ultimate source of particular souls. Cf. fr. 115; Psellus, Hypotyp. 24. Elsewhere (frs. 51 and 53), "ensouling," is associated with the World Soul.

Fr. 26

Levy, p. 106, n. 164, thinks this isolated verse from a hymn of Proclus (see Vogt, Hymni, fr. II, p. 84) is a Proclan "imitation" of the verse cited infra, fr. 27; and so Tarcisius, Levy's, p. 680. But Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 96, n. 2, accepts.
its authenticity, as does Des Places. Although Proclus is clearly dependent on Chaldean terminology throughout his hymns, this would be the only instance of an entire verse cited verbatim. In addition, Lydus states only that the verse is Procan, not Chaldean, in origin. As the verse stands, then, although inspired by the Oracles, it is most likely the finished creation of Proclus.

1. τὸν ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα: Another designation for the Father; see fr. 169 and notes.

2. μουνάδα: Cf. μονάς, fr. 11, 12, 27.

τριάδος: Cf. Damascius, I, 303, 23-25: καὶ οἱ προφήται ἐν κατώ τοῦ τριάδος ἥμαρσαν, πολλοὶ μεῖζον τὸ ἐν μείζον τριάδον κλ. Cf. also τριγλώφια, fr. 2 and notes. In the Gnostic sources, the expression τριετεροτετρακτεροτόμακμα (and variants; see, e.g., Marananta, NHC X, 6, 19, 4; 15-16; Allogenes, NHC XI, 45, 13; BG 27, 19-28, 2) conveys the same idea. The Greek equivalent would be τριδύναμος (ορ τριδύναμος), a term which appears not only in the Gnostic sources but in Marius Victorinus as well (e.g. Adv. Ar. IV. 21). Note that Hadot, op. cit. (cf. pp. 293-294 and n. 2), translates τριάδος as “triple-powered,” based on Victorinus’s use of τριάδος. See, also, Theiler, 1942, p. 12 – 1966, p. 265. In the Gnostic sources, however, the expression “triple-powered” is by no means used exclusively of the Highest God. See Pearson, Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X, pp. 266-268, ad nat.; cf. pp. 245-246, for a rich discussion of this material.

Fr. 27

1. πατηρ-δύναμες-νόης: See fr. 4 and notes.

1-2. ὁ ἐστὶ πατὴρ ὁ πρὸ τῆς τριάδος: i.e., the Father in his monadic aspect.

3. πατὴρ ἐν κόσμῳ: Damascius, II, 87, 11-15, understands here the three worlds of Chaldean cosmology. For Proclus, Th. pl., 271, 14-15, it is a matter of ἐν λόγῳ διακόμος (of the intelligible-and-intellectual world).

τρίας, ἦς μονάς ἄρχει: Thus, the oracle establishes a monadic-triadic principle which informs every aspect of reality. See Lewy, pp. 106-107 and n. 164.

Fr. 28

1. τὰ νοητά: i.e., the Ideas. Cf. ibid., fr. 8, 31, 40, 108.

3. τριάδος ἐν τῷ τριάδος: An allusion to the triadic nature of the Highest God; cf. ibid., fr. 29. See, also, Lewy (pp. 116-117 and n. 195), who points out that the later Neoplatonists understood this and related verses as suggestive of a divine triad consisting of a) the Paternal Monad with its Power and Intellect; b) a triad of “primordial” Ideas; c) a triad of “particular” Ideas. Although Lydus attributes this Ennead to the Chaldeans themselves (e.g., De mens., IV, 122; p. 159, 5-7 W.: θείος δ’ ἐννεάδος ἁρμόδιος ἐν τριάδοις πληροφόρως καὶ τὰς ἄκροσιας τῆς θεολογίας κατὰ τὴν Χαλδαίαν φιλοσοφίαν…ἀπόσωσις; cf. Damascius, I, 299, 17: ἢ ἐννεάκες ἐννεάκες, as explicit Ennead cannot be attributed, with certainty, to the Oracles. The innovator here is undoubtedly Porphyry. See Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 262 and n. 1.

κόλοσσος: A frequent expression in the Oracles. Here, it designates the ‘eminence (and thereby fecundating) power in which the Father “sows the All” (cf. μήτερα, fr. 30). Elsewhere, this term is especially associated with the fecundating power of the World Soul (e.g., fr. 32, 35, 37, 56, 96). For Synesius, κόλοσσος not only expresses the Father’s generation of the Son (H. 1(3), 406; 4(6), 7), but his generation of “light,” “mind,” “soul” (H. 3(5), 29-30), as well as life in toto (H. 24, 195-207). A similar diversity of use is found in the Gnostic sources: e.g., G. Trith., NH 1, 24, 10-11 (here, the Father’s “bosom/womb” is “revealed” as the Holy Spirit); Ap. John, NH 11, 5, 5 (here, Barbelo is referred to as the “womb of all things”); G. Eg., NH 33, 43, 1 (here, the Father, Mother, and Son = “three oogoads or powers” who issue from the Father’s “bosom/womb”). In the last analysis, what is being expressed in all these sources is the notion of a bisexual or androgyrous deity as the primogenitor of various aspects of creation.

Εὐροπαρτα: Cf. Εὐροπαρτα, fr. 108; Εὐροπαρτα, fr. 39 and notes.

Fr. 29

This verse continues the thought of fr. 28. Lewy, however (p. 179, n. 8), suggests (without explanation) that this verse may be a continuation of fr. 44. But this view is puzzling, in light of Lewy’s interpretation of νοματι in fr. 44 (for which see notes ad loc.).

2. τίθέα γὰρ ἐν τριάδος: Cf. ibid., fr. 28.

πνεῦμα: Here, a likely allusion to the “Breath” contained in the World Soul. In this regard, cf. πνεῦμα, fr. 35 and notes.) Des Places, however, (p. 126, following Theiler, 1942, p. 28 – 1966, p. 286), suggests an allusion to the ἄγαμος-πνεῦμα or “vehicle” of the soul. But this is unlikely, as the soul’s vehicle is acquired in its descent to earth (see fr. 61) and not fashioned by the Father in any direct sense.


Fr. 30

2. πιθή τῶν πατην: In the context of Damascius, a reference to the Highest God (αὐτοκράτορ) as the ultimate origin or “Source” of all existence. Cf. Synesius, H. 1(3), 171; 2(4), 63: πάντα πατην. Synesius continues his praise of God with a string of similar epithets: e.g., ἀρχήν ἀρχή; βίζων βίζα; μονάς μονάδων; ἁρμόδιοι ἁρμόδιοι; πάντα πατήρες. Epithets of this type are common; see, e.g., Des Places, p. 129, for additional parallels. Lewy, however (p. 82 and n. 59), understands the Chaldean verse as referring specifically to the Father’s δύναμις (and so Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 310 and n. 6). In this regard, cf. fr. 56, where it is Rhea, as World Soul, who is designated πατη.

πάτερ: Again, a likely allusion to the Highest God as a bisexual deity. Cf. notes to δύναμις, fr. 4, κολόσσος, fr. 28.

συνέχεσθαι: This verb conveys the double sense of “contain” and “connect.” Cf. συνέχεσθαι, fr. 25.

1. τάντα: Cf. ibid., fr. 23, 53, 68.

Fr. 31

1. τάξις: Cf. fr. 24, 110 and notes.

2. ἐμφάνισι: i.e., the Paternal Monad (cf., e.g., fr. 11 and 39) and Dyad (= Second Intellect; cf. fr. 8 and 12). Damascius equates the Monad and Dyad with the first and second intelligible triads of Proclus’ system. See, e.g., Proclus,
3. ἔνθεν: i.e., πηγή τῶν πηγῶν. Cf. πηγή τῶν πηγῶν, fr. 30. 

γένεσις...ἔλεος: Cf. esp. Psellus, Ἡρωδόρ. 27: ἢ μὲν ἤλθε παραγωγὴ ἐκτος. This monistic understanding of creation contrasts, in particular, with the dualistic tendencies of Neoplatonism and certain strains of Gnostic thought. See discussion in Introduction.


προτέτικ: An allusion to the noetic Ideas which are projected from the Patal Intellekt like bolts of lightning. Cf. προτέτικον, fr. 81 and 82; προτετοποθέτοι καὶ καταρασμοῦ, fr. 35; Synesius, H. I(3), 161: προτετοποθετήτω. The imagery undoubtedly goes back to the vision of Zeus hurling his thunderbolts. See Lewy, pp. 118-119 and n. 200.

πυρὸς ἄνθις: Here, an oblique reference to Hecate as the “girdling flower of fire” (see fr. 35; cf. fr. 37 and 49), the cosmic equivalent of the νόος ἄνθις (fr. 1). See also, Lewy, p. 92, n. 100.

5. κόσμων ἐνδροφένους κοιλώματα: The “hollows of the worlds” are the planetary spheres whose corporeal element “obscures” or “difs” (ἀμιράζ) the “flower of fire.” See Lewy, pp. 118, n. 200; 126 and n. 228. Cf. κόσμως ἐνδροφένησα, fr. 76; κόσμος ἐνδρόφων, fr. 87.


ἀκτίνας ἀκτίες: i.e., the “rays” of the sun which originate in the noetic fire of the Father. Tardieu (“Oracles chaldaïques,” p. 202) equates this term with the “spark of soul” (cf. fr. 44) which is akin to the noetic fire. Cf., similarly, doric, Treat. Reg., NHC I, 43, 31; Paraph. Smn., NHC VII, 4-5-6. Cf., also, ἀγάπης, fr. 35; ἀγάπη, fr. 115.

Fr. 35

1. ἅ ἀπείκουσα: For Proclus, the κατά τέξεως consisting of 1) ἅ ἀπείκουσα; 2) ἅ ἀπείκουσα; 4-6) οἱ τρεῖς ἀμαλκίτων; 7) ὁ ὑπεργός. See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 404.

2. κατὰ ἀπείκουσα: This doctrine of “participation” is Platonist in origin; e.g., Parm. 132 d: ἕμελθες τοῖς ἀλλοῖς...τῶν ἐβόλους.

3. τὸ ἀμαλκίτων: i.e., ἅ ἀπείκουσα.

ἐνδροφέσιμον: Cf. ἐνδρόφων, fr. 37; ἐνδρόφων, fr. 42.

ἀμαλκίτων κεραυνοί: A vivid image of the noetic Ideas proceeding from the Father (or “Once Transcendent”). Cf., analogously, προτέτικον, fr. 34; προτέτερον, fr. 81 and 82. Cf. also, ἀμαλκίτων πυρὸς, fr. 36. In Lewy’s words: “The attribute ἀμαλκίτων signifies that the Ideas are characterized as ἀμαλκίτως δημοσίοι (Heisiod, Theog. 658) which ‘bind matter in forms.’” (See p. 119, n. 201; cf. p. 121, n. 209.) As noetic entities, Psellus (᾿Ηρωδόρ. 10) locates the “Implicables” just above the cosmic triad of Faith, Truth, Love (cf. fr. 46). In Pro-
καὶ τὸ μέταβλητὸν αὐτὸν ἐξ ἐνυφάσΜῳ καὶ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ πρὸς τὸν θεοῦ ἡθοποιήσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ θεοῦ.  

3. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς ἄνω: Καὶ τὸ κατά τὸν θεοῦ ἡθοποιήσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ θεοῦ. Ἐν τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ.  

4. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

5. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

6. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

7. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

8. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

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17. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

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21. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

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36. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.  

37. τοὺς πρώτους ἁγιασμοὺς καὶ τοὺς πρώτους ἀνθρώπους.
In Tim., III, 20, 22-23; cf. fr. 199), Proclus states that of θεωρεῖν regard Χρόνος as a god. Similarly, in C.H. XI.5, Time and Eternity are also distinguished, but in an analogic context: καὶ πάντα χρόνον ὑπόκειται Αἴων γενούς, καὶ νοσθης τοῦ θεοῦ. This Time/Eternity distinction, of course, ultimately goes back to Plato, Tim., 37 d, where Time is understood as an “image” of Eternity. However, a clear and precise distinction between Chronos and Aion cannot be affirmed with certainty for the Chaldean system. See, also, Dodds’ discussion, Proclus: El. Th., pp. 228-229.

16. ἔφυλος: Cf. βάλειμ, fr. 51 (here, connected with Hecate).


ἐμὸν: The speaker is Hecate. The verse states that her place in the intelligible hierarchy is after the particular Ideas of the Second Intellect, thus conforming here to the Neoplatonic position of the World Soul. Cf., esp., fr. 53; Lewy, p. 91 and n. 97; Hadot, Paraphy, II, p. 71, n. 2.

τάλμην τοῦ: A probable allusion to Hecate as the “girdling fire;” cf. ὀλεοκωκικός, fr. 6; ὀλεοκωκικός πρὸς ἄνθρος, fr. 35. Lewy (pp. 91-92 and n. 98) translates “winding fire” and points to a serpentine image which draws on a traditional association of Hecate with snakes. Cf., in this regard, fr. 55.

3. ἔργα νοησίας: i.e., the intelligible “works” or model of the world “thought” by the Father. Cf. πατρός ἔργο τὸ νοητά, fr. 40.

πατρικός νός: Cf. fr. 49, 108, 109. Elsewhere (e.g., fr. 37 and 134), νοὶ of πατρός is used in an analogous sense. See, also, Lewy, p. 79, n. 48.

αὐτογένεθλος: Cf. αὐτοδίκη, fr. 32, intro.; αὐτοτελής, fr. 37 (expressions which are similarly descriptive of the Highest God). This notion of “self-generation” is also a common feature of various Gnostic systems, especially the term αὐτογενής. Cf., e.g., Goo. Eg., NHC III/IV passim; Man.ana, NHC X, 5,26; Allogenes, NHC XI, 46, 11; 51, 26; Paiad Sophia, I, 1; 28. Although there is a general tendency in the Gnostic systems to designate the second principle as “self-generated” and the first principle as “ungenerated” or “unbegotten” (cf., esp., the triad ἄγνωνων, αὐτογενεῖς, γνωστῶν of the Peratae as reported by Hipp., Haer. 5,12; see, also, Disc. δ-9, NHC VI, 57,13-15; ἄγνωνων, αὐτογενεῖς, γνωστῶν), this is by no means a hard and fast rule. In this regard, cf. God. Bruce, Untilled, e.g., chs. 1, 3; and 22, where the terms αὐτογενής/αὐτογενεῖς designate the Highest God, but in, e.g., chs. 2, 6, and 12, the similar αὐτοτάτω is descriptive of a lesser being. Cf., also, Synesius, H. 1(3), 145-147 re the Supreme God: πατέρων πάντων/πάτερ αὐτοτάτωρ μετατάτωρ ἀπάτωρ; Orph. Hymn. 10.10 (ed. Athanasiax) re Φώς αὐτοτάτωρ ἀπάτωρ; Iamb., De myst., VII,3 re the second principle: αὐτοτάτωρ αὐτογενής. Although this wide diversity of use suggests that this vocabulary of “self-generation” was simply “in the air” during the period of the Empire, Whittaker ("Self-Generating Principles," pp. 176-189) argues that the principle mode of transmission at this time may well have been via oralic literature (such as the Chaldean Oracles). Since "self-generating" language can be traced back to some of the choral odes of the Greek tragedians (e.g., Sophocles, OC, 698; see Whittaker, pp. 185-186), later transmission via the "poetical" mode of oracles (Chaldean and otherwise) is an attractive argument.

4. ἐνδεικτέαρι: Cf. ἐσπαρκα, fr. 20; ἐσπαρκ, fr. 108. Cf., also, Numenius, fr. 13 (Des Places), where the First God is described as a "Sower" (ὁ μὲν ή τε ψευiosity...οικείω), the Second God as a "Planter." (See Festugière, Rév., III, pp. 44 and n. 2; 57 and n. 1.) This "sowing" imagery is also found passim in the hymns of Synesius and, of course, is a common biblical metaphor as well.

δεμῖον πυριβρήθη ἔρωτος: Like the Connectors (cf. frs. 32, 80, 82, 177, 207), Eros functions as a "binding" force in the Universe whose "fiery" nature derives from the Father or Primordial Fire. Cf. δεμίου ἔρωτος τῇ συνθεσιν, fr. 42; ἔρωτα συνθεσιν, fr. 44. Cf., also, Orig. World, NHC II, 109, 4, where Eros is described as "fire from light." See Tardieu, Trais Mythes Gnostiques, pp. 149-150. See, also, Lewy, pp. 126-129 and n. 232; Geudtner, pp. 46-27; Des Places, “Notes,” pp. 324-325.

6. χρόνον ἀπέραντον: Cf. ἄκομψῳ χρόνο, fr. 37 and notes.


9. καθότι στοιχεῖα: An allusion either to the stars (Lewy, p. 127, n. 232; cf. Des Places, pp. 130-131) or the four elements (Proclus, loc. cit.).

2. ἀρχα: The "world-forming Ideas" of the Second or Demiurgic Intellect. (See Lewy, p. 115 and n. 190; cf. frs. 49 and 74.) The Ideas are called "Principles" because they derive from the Paternal Principle (πατρικὴ ἀρχή, fr. 13). Kroll, loc. cit., equates this term with the Young Gods of Plato, Tim., 42 a. πατρὸς ἔργα νοήσασα τὰ νοητά: i.e., the “primordial” Ideas or intelligible model thought by the Father. Cf. ἔργα νοήσας πατρός νοῆς, fr. 39.


4. ταίσθητα νοοῦς θέματος: The Chaldean context of this verse is obscure. Lewy (p. 115, n. 190) sees an allusion to fr. 40. In the context of Proclus, the verse is connected with the mediating activity of the World Soul. (Cf. Festugière, Tim., III, pp. 344, n. 1, who finds the entire passage unclear.) Elsewhere, Proclus understands both “knowledge” (γνῶσις) and “contact” (συναφή) as stages in prayer. See In Tim., I, 211, 8 ff.; cf. fr. 121 and notes.

2. δεμῖον ἔρωτος ἀγίτου: Cf. τῷ συνθεσίῳ, infra, I, 3 (συναφῆ, δεμῖον πυριβρήθη ἔρωτος, fr. 39 and notes. ἐκ νου ἔκθεσε πρῶτος: Eros is the first issue from the Paternal Intellect, even prior to the Ideas, as his binding quality is an essential ingredient if the Ideas
are to function properly in their capacity as connective entities. See Lewy, pp. 127-128 and n. 233.

3-4. κέρασις πυγαίας κρατήρας: A quasi-mythological image depicting Eros as actively working on (or "mixing") the Ideas (cf. "Source Craters"). Cf. ἐξέρεσθεν, fr. 29 and notes; κράσας, fr. 44.

4. πυρός ἄνθος: Cf. ibid., frs. 34, 35, 27.

Fr. 43

1. ἔρωτι (καρδ.) βουθ. codd.; τὰ βαβήθ: cf. Saffry-Westenriek, who suggest that the βαβήθ of the cods. is a corruption "by ionicism" caused by the falling away of τὰ and the attraction of ἔρωτι; see notes ad loc. But as Des Places notes (p. 131), the substitution of τὰ βαβή violates the meter.

2. ἀνάπλησις τῆς ψυχῆς: codd.; ἀνάπλησις τῆς ψυχῆς, cf. Saffry-Westenriek (based on the ms. archetype). Thus, argue S.-W., the object of ἀνάπλησις would be τὰ βαβή and the expression would parallel that of fr. 112; οὐράμωθα φυσικῆς βάθος ἀνάπλησις. Although this is an excellent conjecture, the problem of meter still necessitates the reading of the codices (and so the edition of Portus). In the context of Proclus, the soul is "filled with deep love" in an anagogic context. Cf. fr. 44; Lewy, p. 128 and n. 238.

Fr. 44

3. ψυχαίον σπυρήρα: The notion of a "soul spark" which is akin to the Divine is pervasive in the Platonic tradition. See, e.g., Tardieu, "ΨΥΧΑΙΟΣ ΣΠΙΝΘΥΡΠ," pp. 225-255 for numerous parallels. Cf. Synesius, H. 1(3), 562: σπυρήρα νόσων. In the Chaldean system, the "spark of soul" is equivalent to the "fire/flame of mind" (e.g., frs. 1, 34, 35, 37, 42, 49).

χράσας: Cf. ἐξέρεσθεν, fr. 29; κεράσας, fr. 42.

4. νοήματα; ἔρωτα: The problem here is νοήματα. Schol. paris. gr. (loc. cit.) has πνεύματα; Kroll had already conjectured; and so Festugière, Rép., III, pp. 57-58). On the basis of this evidence, Saffrey ("Nouveaux Oracles chaldéens," p. 62) affirms πνεύματα as the correct reading. But Saffrey then does not make it clear whether he understands the fragment as referring to the composition of the World Soul or the human soul. Kroll argued for the former, as did Festugière, the latter identifying "Breath" (πνεύματα) with Eros (and, thus, suggesting a four-fold hierarchy in the Chaldean system; i.e., Father, Intellect, Breath-Eros, Hecate-World Soul). But both Theiler and Lewy understand the oracle in terms of the human soul. Theiler, however, (see "Porphyrias und Augustin," 1933, pp. 51-52 = 1966, pp. 224-225), conjectures νοήματα (νοήματα) and sees a probable influence on the mens, amor, notitia triad of Augustine (as mediated through Porphyry). Hadot ("L'image de la Trinité," pp. 356-437) agrees with Theiler. But Lewy (I think rightly; see p. 180 and cf. p. 179, n. 8) prefers to keep the reading of Lydus and sees Kroll's and Theiler's conjectures as "unnecessary." In Lewy's summary (p. 180): "The Spark gives it (sc. the human soul) immortal life, the Intellect, the ability to think divine things, Will, the decision to descend to earth and to return from there to the realm of the noetic beings; finally, Eros, who binds together the parts of the soul, keeps alive the nostalgia for the divine." (Des Places, pp. 151-152, also keeps the reading of Lydus, but is then uncertain as how to interpret the oracle.)

But the oracle must refer to the human soul. If this is granted, then the reading πνεύματα becomes problematic, as this term is elsewhere identified with the soul's vehicle (cf. fr. 104 and notes) which is acquired in the soul's descent to earth (cf. fr. 61 and notes) and not as the result of any direct act on the part of the Father, which would be the case if πνεύματα is retained here. (Cf. Tardieu, "ΨΥΧΑΙΟΣ ΣΠΙΝΘΥΡΠ," pp. 243-245, who would also keep the reading πνεύματα and thus see ψυχή, νούς, and πνεῦμα as components of the human soul analogous to a similar triad of soul elements found in various Gnostic sources. But πνεῦμα, as a Gnostic term, is understood as the "spiritual" element of the soul (its highest part), not as the soul's "breath" or vehicle, as is the case with the Oracles.) Thus the evidence from paris. gr. is not conclusive. The copyist most likely miscopied Lydus' ms. here, and did not (as Saffrey suggests), find it "elsewhere" (either in the "original collection" of the Oracles or in a "lost citation") of another Neoplatonist). Such conjectures are unwaranted.

5. συντεταγμένον: Cf. συντεταγμον, fr. 42.

ἐπιθήρωρα: Cf. ἐπιθήρωρα, fr. 216.

Fr. 45

2. πνευμόνα: The image is that of being "stilled" by the passions of the body (τὸν ὑποχρήσαν ἔρωτα) under the influence of evil demons. See Lewy, pp. 264-265 and n. 17.

ἔρως ἀληθινός: This "true love" applies to the intelligible world. See Festugière, Rép., III, p. 305, n. 2.

Fr. 46

2. πίστεις καλήτεραι καὶ ἔρωτα: This triad comprises the chief virtues of the Chaldean system. As cosmic entities, Psellus (Hyposth. 11) locates this triad just below the ἀμφιστός. Lewy (pp. 144-148 and notes 291-295; see, also, Cremer, pp. 56-60; 139-143) equates each of these virtues with the three Teletarchs: i.e., Faith with the Material Teletarch; Truth with the Ethereal Teletarch; Love with the Empyrean Teletarch. As such, each of these cosmic virtues has an added anagogic function (cf. fr. 48 and notes), as these three Rulers aid the ascent of the soul (cf. frs. 85 and 86). In this light, these Chaldean virtues should not be confused, e.g., with the Pauline triad of spiritual virtues (Faith, Hope, Charity). See discussion in Introduction.

Fr. 47

2. ἐλπίς: This is a fourth virtue which probably formed a tetrad with Faith, Truth, and Love. Cf., e.g., Porphyry, Ad Marc. 24, who designates μαρτίας, ἀληθείας, ἔρως, ἐλπίς, as τέσσερα στοιχεῖα (Proclus, In Tim., I, 212, 21-25, also adds ἐλπίς to the verse cited supra, fr. 46). In addition, Lewy (p. 147 and notes 296-298) suggests that this virtue may have an eschatological referent; i.e., the initiate into the Chaldean rites "hopes" (as in the terminology of the Mysteries) for a blessed after-life.

πορφυρος: As a cosmic virtue, Hope ultimately derives from the Primal Fire or First Intellect (i.e., ἀπὸ τοῦ κατοίκου). Cf., also, πορφυρός, fr. 65.
FR. 48

1. ἐν τρισὶ τοῖς: i.e., in the three virtues of fr. 46.

καθευδοταί τε καὶ ἐστι: In the context of Proclus, these three virtues are not only instrumental in founding the universe, but are responsible for turning all things back to the Divine. This is particularly the case with Eros: “Proclus’ account of love...distinguishes two forms of love; the normal, Platonistic ‘ascending’ form, motivating lower principles to aspire toward their superiors, and a ‘descending’ or ‘providential’ form, promoting these superior forces to care for their products” (see Wallis, Neoplatonism, p. 154). Proclus’ distinction, of course, derives from the Oracles; cf. frs. 42-44.

2-3. ἔν τῆς τριάδος τούτης ἔκτα: For Proclus, then, the three virtues perform a unifying or theurgical function. Cf., e.g., Th. pl., I, 25; 113,3-8; S. W.: πίστις καὶ ἀληθεία καὶ ἐρως. Σύνη πέκτονα δε τούτων καὶ συνεπέται ταῖς προτομορφος αἰτίαις, τὰ μὲν διὰ τῆς ερωτικῆς μανίας, τὰ δὲ διὰ τῆς θείας φιλοσοφίας, τὰ δὲ διὰ τῆς θεορομείας δυνάμεως, ἢ κραίτοις εἰ ἐκάστης θυμονικὴς σωφρονίσκης καὶ ἐποίησις. However, unlike the Oracles, Proclus sees pisoic (not ἐρως) as the highest unifying or theurgical virtue. Cf., In Alc., loc. cit., I, 13: ἡ πίστις ἐθνούμα τῶν ὄντων ἐκάστῳ ἐν τῷ ἡγάθῳ. See, also, O’Neill, Proclus: Alc. 1, p. 33 and n. 106; Rosan, Philosophy, pp. 214-215; Rist, Platonic, pp. 231-246.

FR. 49

1. πατρογενής φῶς: A designation for Aion (or Eternity) who functions as the motion (= light) of the Highest God. (See Lewy, p. 101.) Lewy equates Aion with Chronos throughout the Chaldean system, but such an equation is problematic; see ἀναμομφή χρόνου, fr. 37 and notes. For Proclus, Aion was equated with the daimon or second moment of the Father (as a triadic Monad) and situated at the level of the second intelligible triad. See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 482. Cf., also, Lydus, De mens., II, 12; 36, 13-14 W.: τὸ ἀγένη τοῦ τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ πατρογενοῦς αἰῶνος. See Hadiot, Porphyry, I, pp. 385-386 and n. 1. Cf. πατρογενῆς Εὐκράτης, fr. 35.


3. ἀλήθεια: Cf. esp., I, 1, 2, 32, 82.

4. δεισιόμενος νόος ἄνθρωπος: Cf. δεισιόμενον πορευθήν ἄνθρωπος, fr. 37.


6. πυγισμάτω: i.e., the sum of the Ideas considered as a whole; cf. πυγίσμα πράγματος, fr. 42. See Lewy, p. 111, n. 178.

7. ἀρχή: i.e., the particular or divided world-shaping Ideas; cf. fr. 40; ἀρχή, fr. 74.

8. διενεῖν: Aion’s function here is to keep the Ideas in constant motion. See Lewy, p. 100 and n. 143.

9. αἱ ἡμέρες ἁδόνος στροφάλλυτος: Cf. ἀκουσμήσας στροφάλλυτος, fr. 87, where this same expression applies to the ἱγυς (which are equated with the Ideas in the Chaldean system). Cf., also, στροφάλλων, fr. 206 and notes; μένειν αἰὴ τῆς ἁδόνος στροφάλλυτος, fr. 12 (Damascius’ commentary).

FR. 50

1. μέσον τῶν πατέρων: Festugière, Rév. III, p. 57 (based on Neoplatonic exegesis), understands Hecate’s position here as situated between the Paternal and Demiurgic Intelligents (and thus equivalent to the δόμαι of the primordial triad); cf. τῶν πατέρων, fr. 16. Cf., also, Proclus, In Tim., II, 129, 25-27: μέσον γὰρ καὶ ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς ἔχει χώραν ἢ τῆς ψυχῆς αἰτία θεός, ὡς δοκεῖ καὶ τοῖς θεολογοῖς συναγωγῆς ὁδός τῶν δύο πατέρων. Lewy, however, (p. 142 and n. 283), understands τῶν πατέρων here as referring to the “Rulers” or “Fathers” of the three worlds. In this context, he identifies Hecate with the moon: “Hecate is named instead of the moon, her intramundane abode. The verse must, accordingly, be understood as identifying the ‘center’ of the moon with the ‘midmost’ of the three ‘Fathers’ (cf. fr. 73), that is to say, with the Ruler of the sun.” Tardieu (“Oracles chaldaliques,” pp. 214-215) appropriates both interpretations and demonstrates how the metaphysical interpretation (Father/Power/Intelllect) is based on the physical model (Empyrean/Ethereal/Material Worlds). But to conclude, as does Tardieu, that the Chaldean structure is dependent on a similar Valentinian model is surely rash. A common Middle Platonic milieu best accounts for similarities here.

9. ἐκάστης κέντρον: For Proclus, the “center of Hecate” designates ἡ ψυχήν τοῦ θαλάσσος (cf. fr. 32), the second term of Proclus’ intellectual order. See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 484; cf. p. 142, n. 283. Elsewhere in the Oracles, κέντρον is associated with the sun; e.g., fr. 70, 111, 167. Cf., also, Synesius, esp. H. 2(4), 99-100; 3(5), 65, where κέντρον is identified with the Holy Spirit as πνεῦμα (=Chaldean δύναμις).

FR. 51

1. ἡ πτητή τῶν ψυχῶν: Here, πτητή designates the World Soul (= Hecate). Cf. ibid., fr. 56.

2. δεικτής μὲν γὰρ λατόνος περὶ χρήσιμα χάριν: The image is obscure. Lewy (pp. 88-89 and n. 83) suggests an allusion to Hecate’s statue on which hollows were depicted on both hips. Cf. Proclus, In Tim., II, 260, 24-261,15; Festugière, Tim., III, p. 304 and n. 3. See, also, Lewy, pp. 361-364 re the symbolic interpretation of statues.


4. ἐκύρωσα: “Ensouling” is characteristic of Hecate; cf. ψυχώσα, fr. 53. In fr. 23, however, ἐκύρωσα is attributed to the Father, the ultimate source of all generation.

5. ἡ πρόκλος: Simplicius (In phy., 613, 1-5) equates these terms, respectively, with the Paternal Monad, Empyrean, Ethereal, and Material Worlds (contra Proclus, who had interpreted the last three terms in apposition to ἡ πρόκλος, cf. Des Places, “Notes,” p. 325). Although Lewy (p. 89, n. 94) accepts Simplicius’ interpretation, he argues that φῶς must be equated with Aion and not the First God, as the latter generates the World Soul, and, thus, cannot be “ensouled” by her (as the oracle suggests). Tardieu, on the other hand (“Oracles chaldaliques,” pp. 264-209), questions Lewy’s “insertion of a mythological entity” (i.e., Aion) into a progression of physical elements. Tardieu prefers to combine the terms in this fragment with the list of elements in fr. 67 (fire, water, earth, air) to depict a descending progression from light to matter, with a mixture of fire, water, earth, and earth between these two extremes.
Tardieu also demonstrates how both the Valentinian Gnostics, as well as the Chaldeans, developed numerous metaphysical patterns of structural oppositions based on this physical model. A case in point is the \( \psi \delta \delta \delta / \tau \alpha \sigma \epsilon \sigma \) equation of frs. 18 and 163. Cf., also, Hadot, Porphyry, I, pp. 396-398, who equates this progression of physical elements with a hierarchy of mythic powers (e.g., gods, angels, demons, heroes) who inhabit various levels of the physical universe.

Fr. 52

1. \( \alpha \rho \epsilon \tau \eta \varsigma \): In Lewy’s interpretation (pp. 88-90), a cosmic power associated with the moon (cf. \( \alpha \rho \epsilon \tau \eta \varsigma \), fr. 107) and thus with Hecate, whose dwelling place is the moon. By remaining “within,” “virtue” remains uncontaminated by the Material World.

\( \pi \lambda \lambda \varsigma \): Common to the Oracles; cf. fr. 69, 97, 214.

2. τὸ παρθένον: Cf. Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 275 and n. 6, who points out the “paradoxical” virginal/maternal nature of Hecate. Psellus, \( \Pi \rho \gamma \mathrm{C}. \), 1136 b 9-10, alludes to Hecate’s statue: \( \xi \omega \sigma \tau \eta \varsigma \κο\betaι\sigma\tauο\varsigma \tauο\pi\alpha\rho\tau\eta\iota\varsigma \). Cf. \( \upsilon \iota \tau \iota \varsigma \mathrm{C} \mathrm{W} \varsigma \), fr. 6 and notes.

Fr. 53


2. παρθένια δίονυσος: Cf. ἔνωνος νεωράλ, fr. 37; ἐνωσιον παρδός, fr. 38. But cf. Festugière, Rép., III, p. 58, who equates this expression with the “Father” of fr. 50 (and not with the Ideas).

3. ψυχή: i.e., the World Soul, which equates here mediating between the intelligible and sensible realms. See Lewy, p. 85 and n. 70.

4. θέρμη: Cf. fr. 123, where “heat” is said to be an analogic power. Hecate’s “heat,” of course, derives from the noetic fire of the Father.

5. ψυχούσα: Lewy, εφ. cit., sees a play on words here between θέρμη and ψυχούσα, as the latter can also mean “to cool.” Cf. Iambi., De myst., II.6: ἡ μὲν τῶν θεῶν παρασύρσα...τὸ μὲν ψυχρὸν ἐν ἡμῖν...ἀραντίζεται, τὸ δὲ θέρμων αὐτῆς. See Cremer, pp. 50-51.

Fr. 54

1. θεολόγος: i.e., the Juliani. However, this term is also used by the later Neoplatonists when referring to the Orphic tradition. See Lewy, Exc. I, p. 444 d.

2. τὸ ωογόνων...θέου: Cf. τὸν ωογόνου κόλπον (of Hecate), fr. 32; τὸν ωογόνου πηγής Ῥῖας, fr. 56, intro.


4. ψύξ: Although Lewy (pp. 90 and n. 91; 95-96) equates Hecate with Nature, it is more precise to think of Nature as proceeding from Hecate. Cf., e.g., Proclus, In Tim., I, 11, 19-20: τοιαύτη ὁδός (ἡ ψύξ) προσέλθουσα ἀπὸ τῆς ζωογόνου θεᾶς. See also, Festugière, Tim., I, p. 38 and n. 1. Cf., also, forms of ψύξ in frs. 70, 88, 101, 102, 106.

Fr. 55

1. χαίται μὲν γὰρ ἐς ὑπὸ κτῆ.: Lewy (pp. 90-91 and notes 94-96) suggests that this verse alludes to a popular notion that Hecate’s hair was made up of snakes, and attempts to connect this interpretation with his understanding of ἀνθρακόν in fr. 38. Festugière, Rép., I, p. 156, n. 4, prefers to emend the text: χαίται μὲν ἀνὸς ἐς ὑπὸ περίκλοσα φῶτα ἑλκύουσα. And translates: “sa chevelure semble celle d’un homme aux cheveux hérissés.”

Fr. 56

1. τὸς ζωογόνος πηγῆς Ρῖας: Here, it is Rhea who functions as a generative, World Soul figure. Elsewhere, both ζωογόνος (frs. 32 and 54) and πηγῆ (fr. 52) are descriptive of Hecate.

3. Ρεια: Lewy (p. 84, notes 65 and 66, contra Proclus) argues that this term does not refer to Rhea, but is the feminine of Ῥῖας (and so the pun Ῥαῖη/Ῥαίη). For Lewy, “Rhea does not figure in the Chaldean pantheon.” (Cf., Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 396, n. 2, who agrees with Lewy.) Lewy translates v. 1 as: “The Source and Stream of the spiritual Blessed ones is easy-flowing.” But Festugière (Tim., V, p. 117, n. 1) argues that “ce sens ne peut être que Rhea, et, s’il y a erreur, elle aura consisté à prendre pour chaldéiques des lâges orphiques.”

Rhea, of course, figures in a number of Orphic fragments. See Kern, Orph. Frag., Index III. Of particular interest is frag. 132: ἐν τοῖς κόλποις τῆς Ρ рейς, Damascius (II, 277, 5), who cites this fragment, attributes it to Orpheus. Although Kroll, loc. cit., and Des Places, p. 134, argue for a Chaldean origin (and, to be sure, the vocabulary of the oracle certainly fits a Chaldean milieu), an unqualified acceptance of Rhea as a bona-fide Chaldean deity remains problematic. Psellus, for example, only mentions Hecate, not Rhea, in his summary of the Chaldean system.

νοαρόν μακάρων: According to Lewy (p. 159, n. 350), a reference to the planetary gods. Cf. frs. 140 and 160.

4. ψύξ: This image of “streaming” or “flowing” is frequent in the Oracles in a variety of contexts. Cf. ἐλευσιν., fr. 31; καταυλίσθην, fr. 171; ἐβολον, fr. 146; ἐκεφαλάζωνται καὶ ἐβολεύονται: fr. 37; ἐβαλον, fr. 107; ὑβαλαι, fr. 61.

5. πρόντω δινάμει: Elsewhere, Power is assigned the median role in the primordial triad and is equated with Hecate. Cf. frs. 4, 50, 96 and notes. Lewy, however, (p. 159, n. 350), understands πηγὴ...πρόντω δινάμει as referring to the Paternal Intellect from which the planetary gods emanate (based on his translation of v. 1; see supra. Lewy identifies the “Source and Stream’ with the Paternal Intellect.”)

κόλποιοι: This term is associated both with the World Soul (e.g., frs. 32, 35, 37, 96) and the fecundating power of the Father (e.g., fr. 28; cf. μήτρα, fr. 30).

5. πάντα: Cf. τὰ πάντα, fr. 23 and notes.

προχώρησις: Cf. ἐμπρατ., fr. 32 and notes.

Fr. 57

2. ἐπὶ τὰ στερεόματα κοσμῶν: The seven planetary spheres. Psellus, P.G., 122, 1149 c, apparently conflates these spheres with the three worlds and comes up with ἐπὶ σωματικὸς κόσμος; i.e., 1 Empyrean, 3 Ethereal, 3 Material. Cf., also, Damascius, II, 88, 21-24; Lewy, p. 123 and notes 218-219.


πατέρα: Here, the Second or Demiurgic Intellect. Cf. πατέρων, fr. 16 and 50.

Fr. 58

1. ἐμεσεμβάθεσαι: Cf. μεσομελέσα, fr. 200.

4. κραδής τόπος: In Chaldean cosmology, the sun was situated in the middle of the seven spheres as the “heart” or “center” of the Universe. Cf. κέντρον, fr. 70; κέντρον, fr. 111. See, also, Lewy, pp. 124, n. 221 d; 409-413; Des Places, p. 82 and “Notes,” p. 325; Geudtner, pp. 55-56; Tardieu, “Oracles chaldaiques,” p. 195 ff. As such, the Chaldean order of the planets follows the “new cosmology” developed during the Hellenistic period. See, e.g., Nilsson, Greek Poetry, pp. 96-103.

Fr. 59

1. οἱ...μυστικάτικα τῶν λόγων: A circumlocution for the Oracles; see Lewy, Exc. I, p. 444 e.

ἐν τοῖς ἀπεροχάοις (κοσμῶν): ( = fr. 209). For the later Neoplatonists, the term “supermundane” could apply both to the Empyrean and/or Ethereal Worlds. Cf. τὸν ἀπεροχόν τόσον, fr. 16,intro.; ἀπεροχήν πατρικόν βύθον, fr. 18. Cf. also, fr. 193 and notes.

3. (δ) ἡλιακός κόσμος (καὶ τὸ) ἔλον φῶς: Synonymous expressions for the transmundane sun of the intelligible world (= Aion). As such, this noetic sun is the transmundane “copy” on which the visible sun is patterned. See Lewy, pp. 151-152 and n. 513. See, also, Proclus, El. Th., prop. 52, πάν τὸ ἐλέον ἔλος ἀπά λατεύν. In Dodds’ words: “Wholeness is intermediate in the logical order of universality, and therefore for Fr. [sic] in the metaphysical order also...It is associated with eternity...which occupies a similar intermediate position between Being and the eternals.” See Dodds, Proclus: El. Th., p. 239; cf. Festugière, Tim. IV, p. 110, n. 5.

Fr. 60

2. πυρὸς ἐκρήχεται: A reference to the rays of the sun, which function in both a physical as well as anagonic sense in the Oracles. Cf. ἄμπευρος ἄκητος, fr. 2; πυρόφορον, fr. 65; ἄκητον, fr. 66.

4. τομίαν: The visible sun is the “dispenser” of heat and light for the earth. In hymns to Helios, τομίας is used regularly with either πῦρ ἢ φῶς. (See, Lewy, pp. 154-155 and notes 324-329, who sees such hymns as influencing the Oracles.) Cf., also, Synesius, II, 1(3), 36, 693; 2(4), 182; 8(9), 71; 9(1), 53.

Fr. 61


5. ἡμέρα τοῦ βασιλέως: i.e., the winds. Cf. ἡμέρα ἀγορα, infa. l. 7 (= v. 3); Synesius, H. II. 2(4), 35: ἀγορά βασιλέως. See, also, bfr., fr. 56 and notes.

7. πνεῦμα σελήνης: Cf., esp., fr. 35 and notes, where πνεῦμα is associated with the World Soul (or Hecate, whose abode is the moon).

ἡμέρα ἀγορα: i.e., the winds. Lewy (p. 185 and n. 35) sees this verse as the beginning of a ἅμος κληρικος. In this regard, cf. fr. 216.


10. κάλπων τὸν ἄρημα: Cf. κάλπον ἄρημα, fr. 216.

12-15. ἀθρούσια...συνήχοιται: These verses refer to the raikments (etherial, solar, lunar, aerial) acquired by the soul in its descent to earth. These raikments make up the “vehicle” of the soul. And so Proclus, In Tim., III, 234, 26-30: καὶ δοκούσην ἑπέτρα τοῖς λογίσις εν τῇ καθόδε τὴν φύσιν λέγησεν συνέλλησεν αὐτῷ (i.e., τὸ ἄρημα τῆς φύσεως) λαμβάνουσιν “ἀθρούσια μέρος ἡλίου” κλ. On the “vehicle” of the soul, see frs. 104, 119-120, 129, 158, 210 and notes (as well as sources cited in n. 84 of Introduction). Cf., also, Hadot, Porphyre, I, p. 182 and n. 1.

14. μέρος: As Des Places notes (p. 134), μέρος here does not fit the meter.

18. μηνάδος τὸ δρόμος: Cf. μηνάδος τὰ δρόμος, fr. 61.

Fr. 62

This fragment (as well as frs. 91 and 208) is now attributed to Damascius, not Olympiodorus. See Westerink, Greek Comm., II, p. 15 ff.

2. τῶν στοιχείων: The stars. Cf. κόσμου στοιχεία, fr. 59; Lewy, p. 97, n. 131. In the context of Damascius, however, the “elements” mentioned here refer to water and air.

αἰθέρας: A possible allusion to the etherial raikments of the soul. Cf. fr. 61; Lewy, p. 193, n. 64. Westerink, however, note loc. cit., suggests that the word αἰθέρας alludes here to the “highest heavens” or Empyrean World, and that Damascius has transferred this expression to the elements, water and air, “to denote the highest and most refined part of each.” Westerink also thinks it is doubtful that the terms στοιχεῖα and αἰθέρας were ever connected in the Oracles, citing Proclus, In Tim., II, 57, 12-14 as evidence.

3. ἐκέι: In the context of Damascius, ἐκέι ἄκητον ἔλος ἔλος.

Fr. 63

2. χυμωνος σχήματα: In the context of Damascius, a possible allusion to the magical characters or signs used during some of the theurgic rites. (See Lewy, p. 252, n. 91.) Proclus (In Tim., I, 317, 22-25) also appropriates this expression, but in a cosmological context: διακάτε μὲν σῶν ἐκ τῆς τρίτης τῶν ἀρχαίων ὄντων ἔφασεν, τετελείωκαὶ ὁ κόσμος διδότας καὶ δημιουργηθέντα μὲν τὸν ἄναρχον, ἀρχων σχήματα περικλάομεν. See Festugière, Tim. II, 175, n. 1, who draws a parallel with Plato, Tim. 33 b. αὐτομεμψείν. Cf. fr. 34, 164.

Fr. 64

3. μηναίας τὸ δρόμος: Cf. μηναίας τὰ δρόμος, fr. 61.

ἀστέριον προσεύξεις: Cf ibid., fr. 107. Proclus uses our fr. 64 to support Plato’s theory concerning the forward motion of the fixed stars in contrast to the forward and retrograde movements of the planets.
Fr. 65

Lewy (pp. 153-154 and notes 320-328) understands these obscure verses as referring to the activity of the visible sun: “The five attributes prove that this fire designates the sun. For this luminary is situated in the fifth of the spheres, if these, including that of the fixed stars, are counted from above; it is the midst of the seven planets, in contradistinction from the noetic fire, it is called the other; it contains the transcendent fire, it is life-bringing...This solar fire descends from the transcendent fire in channels which attain the region of the material world and bring through their warmth life to the earth.”

1. κέντρον: Cf. forms of κέντρον in fr. 50 (with reference to Hecate); fr. 70, 111, 167 (with reference to the sun).

ζωογόνος: Cf. ζωογόνος, fr. 32 (with reference to Hecate); ζωογόνος, fr. 56 (with reference to Rhea).

4. άλλο πυρέχου: The term “other” characterizes the “fire” (or sun) of the material world as distinguished from its noetic counterpart. Cf., similarly, πόρε ἔτερος, fr. 6; πόρος δήχοε...ἐτερος, fr. 68. Cf., also, πυρβέρον, fr. 47 (with reference to the virtue “Hope”).

5. οὖσιν ἔχων: i.e., the rays of the mundane sun which reach the earth. Cf., also, frr. 2, 66, 110 where forms of ἔχω are used in an anagogic sense. ζωοποίησεν ἐν: Cf. πόρος ζωοποίησεν, fr. 32 (with reference to the Paternal Intellect). Cf., also, Synesius, H. 1(3), 601-602: ἐν τούτῳ ζωοποίησεν (in an anagogic context). See, also, Hadot, Porphyre, I, p. 402 and n. 11.

Fr. 66

1. μιμημένων δ’ ἑχοντων: i.e., a “mingling” of the ascending soul “spark” or “channel” with the mystic rays of the sun. Cf. Synesius, H. 1(3), 720: φωτι μιμηθαι: 727: φωτι μιμηθαι: 3(5); 47: μιμηθαι φωτι μιμηθαι. Cf., also, μιμηθαι, fr. 6 (in a cosmic context).

πόρος ἀριθτος ἔρχον: An allusion to the sacred activity of the theurgist. Cf. ἔρχον, fr. 110 and notes; πόρος ἔρχον, fr. 133. Cf., also, Synesius, H. 1(3), 639-641: πόρῳ δ’ ἐρχομοι. Lewy (pp. 196-197 and notes 79-83) understands this verse as referring to the final purification of the soul, i.e., that of the higher or rational soul (via the “divine work” of the theurgist). But this assessment must be qualified by the noetic language of, e.g., fr. 1, which suggests some form of genuine contemplative activity (free of external manipulation) at the level of the higher sovereign. See notes to fr. 1 and detailed discussion in Introduction.

2. (ἡ ἄρμοντα ἡμί) In the context of Proclus, it is a matter of the poetic life (ἡ ποιησθή ἡμί) at its most perfect level; i.e., when the soul is “filled with the Divine” (ἀληθὴς τῶν θεῶν). See A. Sheppard, Studies on the 5th and 6th Essays of Proclus’ Commentary on the Republic, esp. pp. 171-182, for an excellent discussion of this material in the context of Proclus’ theory of mysticism.

Fr. 67


Fr. 68


2. ἑτερος πόρος δήχος ἐτερος: A reference to the mundane sun. Cf. ἑλλό πυρέχον, fr. 65. Lewy, however, (p. 120 and n. 205; cf. p. 154) ignores the context of Proclus and makes this phrase the subject of the fragment.


4. οὐθεν θενοθεν οὐκομεν: In other words, the visible world (as opposed to the intelligible world) must be solid and corporeal, a notion derived from a similar description in Plato, Tim., 31 b. In both instances, it is the element of fire which makes the world invisible. See Lewy, p. 120 and n. 206. Cf. θαρ, fr. 6.

Fr. 69

1. (ὁ οὐρανός): Although Proclus, loc. cit., equates ὁ οὐρανός with ὁ κόσμος (based on his interpretation of Plato, Tim., 28 b), in the Oracles, “sky” is more properly the region of the fixed stars or Ethereal realm. Cf. οὐρανός, fr. 70; Lewy, pp. 125-126 and notes 225-227.

σύμβολο ἔχων: Cf. ibid., Plato, Tim., 28 b.

2. νόης μετάμετα: i.e., the corporeal sky is patterned after its intelligible copy.

Cf. Plato, ibid.

πέλει: Common to the Oracles; cf., e.g., frs. 52, 97, 214.

τοῦ νόμο: As a visible entity, the sky (= Ethereal World) is involved in matter, although not to the extent of the sublunar world, which is characterized as μισοφική (frs. 134 and 181) and μελάναυση (fr. 163).

Fr. 70

2. ἀνεργοθήσθαι: Cf. ἀνέργου, fr. 54.

3. ὲφος: Lewy (pp. 95-96 and n. 126) identifies “Nature” with Hecate. However, as Festugière suggests (see fr. 54 and notes), it is better to think of Nature as deriving or proceeding from Hecate (or “suspended from the great Hecate” as stated here).

κόσμοι: i.e., the stars. Cf., e.g., κόσμος, fr. 8; Festugière, Tim., I, p. 38, n. 9.

ἔργων: i.e., visible creation as a whole. Cf. αἰσθητος ἔργον, fr. 40; Lewy, p. 96, n. 120. Festugière, ibid. (and thus Des Places), translates “toute creature.” See, also, Proclus, In Tim., I, 11, 28-30, where the first two verses of this oracle are also quoted.

4. οὐρανὸς: The region of the fixed stars. Cf. fr. 69; Lewy, p. 96, n. 129.

δρόμον: This term is regularly applied to the movement of the stars. Cf. δρόμος, fr. 61 and notes for parallels.
Tardieu, on the other hand ("Oracles chaldéiques," pp. 213-214), translates the third course in the most obvious way (i.e., a "first, sacred course"); a "median" airy course; a "third course which heats the earth in fire"), but then mistakenly connects the "airy course" with the Ethereal World and the "third, other course" with the Material World (the problem Lewy attempted to correct with his translation). In the extent fragments, "airy" is regularly associated with the moon and, thus, with the Material (not Ethereal) World. (Cf. e.g., the sequence in fr. 61: ether, sun, moon, air.) Similarly, the "third, other course which heats the earth in fire" must allude to the sun, which rules the Ethereal (not Material) World. (Cf. ἄλλο, fr. 65; ἐτέρος, fr. 68. But Tardieu's understanding of Chaldean cosmology as based on the Stoic doctrine of "three fires" may well be correct.) Thus, none of the solutions so far proposed is entirely satisfactory. The fragment, as it stands, remains a puzzle.

2. ἄρχας τὰ τρια ταῖς κτίσεις ἐπὶ: For Lewy, ἄρχας τρια is analogous to τρις πάτερα (see supra, 1.2). Cremer, however (p. 73, n. 294), challenges this interpretation and translates ἄρχας as "Principles" (with an allusion to the Iynges). But Cremer's interpretation is erroneously based on Damascius, II, 201, 2-4 (see fr. 78 and notes). As Lewy has correctly shown (p. 140, n. 274), the verb διπλούεσθαι demands the sense of "ruler" here, and not "principle."

Fr. 74

1. ἀποτελεῖν: Cf. ἀποτελεῖν, fr. 32; προξεῖν, fr. 56.
2. χρώματος ἀρχῆς: Cf. Paullus, Ἰδρυτήρ. 28: ἐκάστης δὲ σειρᾶς ἢ ἁρχοντική πηγὴ ὀνομάζεται, τὰ δὲ προσεχεῖ κρησναί. All of these expressions—πηγή (see fr. 49); ἀρχαί (see fr. 40, 49); κρησνα—ultimately refer to the Ideas. See Lewy, pp. 115-116 and notes 192-193.
3. ομιλεῖται: Evidently the fragment constituted part of a Chaldean hymn.

Fr. 75

2. σύναξις: The feminine here alludes to the Iynges (άι ἱγνατις; cf. fr. 76; and so Des Places, p. 136; cf. Chaignet, Damastius, II, p. 281) and not the Telearchs (of τελαθῶρα; cf. fr. 85 and 86) as Lewy thought (p. 141, n. 281, who translates the verse as: "The ruling path subject to the Telearchs").

Fr. 76

1. τὸς ἱγνατις: Here, the Iynges function as noetic entities equivalent to the Thoughts or Ideas of the Father (cf. fr. 77). As noetic entities, Proclus locates αἱ ἱγνατις at the first level of the νοητή και νοερά διάκοσμος. See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 483. Elsewhere (e.g., fr. 206), this term refers to the "magic wheels" used in the theurgical rites. See discussion in Introduction.

2. ἐπιμεληθοῦντος: Cf. nomen agentis, ἐπιμήκηνα, fr. 44 (with reference to Eros).

Both the Iynges and Eros function as "binding" entities in the Chaldean

3. κόσμος καταπλάκασα: Cf. κόσμοι καταπλακών, fr. 34; κόσμος ψομακ, fr. 87; καταπλάκασα, fr. 35. Thus the Ilyges, like the Ideas (as "thunder-bolts"), "leap into the worlds" as fiery entities.

3-4. ἀκρότητις τρέξ: According to Leywy (p. 156; cf. p. 134, n. 256), another term for the Ilyges, who were associated with the three world circles. Cf. ἀκρότητας, fr. 82.


Fr. 77

1. α' γέ: cj. Leywy; ἥγετε, codd. But it is Peilus who has introduced ἥγελε here. See Leywy, p. 132, n. 249.

νοεράναι <ἐκ> παράθεν: ἐκ, cj. Leywy; ἐκ παράθεν, fr. 130. As Ideas, the Ilyges are "thought" by the Paternal Intellect.


καταπλάκασα: The "movement" of the Ilyges is their "leap" into the worlds (see fr. 76). This movement is a circular motion away from and back towards the Father (cf. fr. 87) and, as such, constitutes their "thinking." See Guettner, p. 43.

Fr. 78

1. τι ἐπι μαχητιών παράτερε: i.e., the Teléarchs or Rulers of the three worlds who play a role in the theurgical rites (ἐπι μαχητών). See Leywy, p. 139 and n. 274.

3. διαπρόκειται: These "couriers" are the Ilyges. (Cf. Proclus, In Crat., 33, 14: τὸ διαπρόκειται δομα τῶν ἱερῶν.) Damascius, however, has mistakenly applied this term to the "three fathers." (See Leywy, p. 133 and n. 254.) Cremers, however (pp. 73-74 and notes 295-296), accepts Damascius' interpretation. (See, also, notes to fr. 73.) As "Couriers," the Ilyges transmit messages between the intelligible and sensible worlds (κοινοὺς ἑνὶ κοινοὶς). But these messages are none other than their own magical names. (Cf. δομα σωμα, fr. 87.) See, also, Synesius, H. 1(3), 105-107: μελέτα τοιούτων/παρεμβολή σοφιάς/ἀγώνον ὄσμον; Guettner, pp. 44-45.

Fr. 79

1. παῖς κόσμος: Either a reference to the three worlds (cf. παινὲν κόσμω, fr. 27) or, more likely, to the stars (cf., e.g., κόσμος, fr. 8 and 76). See Leywy, p. 135, n. 259. Peilus, however, loc. cit., understands the "universe" in a general sense.

ἀνάχώσας: Noetic entities associated with the Ilyges. Cf., e.g., Proclus, In Crat., 33, 14-15: τὸ διαπρόκειται δομα τῶν ἱερῶν, διὰ πάσας ἀνάχως ἀνέχει τὰς σηγάς. As such, these "Supports" play a crucial role in maintaining the regular movement of the spheres.

ἀκαματίς: Cf. ἀκαματιόν, fr. 36.

Fr. 80

3. ὄλα οὐσίας συνοχέων: These "Material Connectors" are equivalent to the rays of the mundane sun. See Leywy, pp. 131, n. 246; 155-156.

δουλεύει: Common to the Oracle; cf. fr. 73, 81, 184.

Fr. 81

1-2. τῆς νοερας ἐκείνης καὶ νοεράς τάξεως: For Proclus, the median order (or the δεύτερος διάκομος) situated between the intelligible and intellectual orders (see Leywy, Exc. VII, p. 483). In the context of Proclus, the operative principle (for which he cites the oracular fragment) is that of dominance and dependence, i.e., each entity or divine being dominates the principle below it but, at the same time, is dependent or subservient to the principle above it.

3. πατρὸς νοεροῦ: Here, apparently the Father or First Intellect. But cf. νοεροῦ πατρός, fr. 37, where this term indicates the Second Intellect.

νοεράς προστήρινα: The Ideas; cf. προστήρινα, fr. 34; προστήρινα, fr. 82.

4. δουλεύειμα: Since this verb is used supra (fr. 80) in connection with the Connectors, it is possible that the "Lightning-bolts" can be assimilated to the Connectors in some sense. (Cf. fr. 82.) In the last analysis, the συνοχέων, προστήρινα, ἀνάχως, καὶ ἥγετε all function in diverse aspects of the class of Ideas. See Leywy, p. 156.

πιθηκοῦ βουλῆ: Cf. πεθυνία, fr. 14; βουλῆ, fr. 37 and notes.

Fr. 82

3. φρουρεῖν προστήρινα: This function of "protecting" is also assigned to the Connectors and Implants. Cf., e.g., Peilus, Ηρόδεριν, 10: ὅταν ἑλαμβάνει τὰ προστήρια τῶν συνοχέων δόμων, φρούροις τὴν ἐνάχω δόμω τῶν παράτερων.

ακρότητας: The "summits" are associated with the Ilyges. Cf. ἀκρότητας, fr. 76.

4. ἀνέργους: This "mixing" metaphor is common to the Oracle; cf. fr. 29, 42, 44.

ἀλήθει: "Strength" is a regular epithet of the Father; cf., esp., frr. 1, 2, 32, 40.

ἀθών: Cf. ibid., fr. 3, where this term is similarly descriptive of the Father. συνοχέων: Here, probably analogous to προστήρινα, supra, 1. 3 (= v. 1).

Fr. 83

2. ἔλασποι: Leywy (p. 155, n. 331) understands this term as a Chaldean neologism comprised of ἔλασ + ποῖος and thus translates as "endowed with quality entire." As such, Leywy wants to see a parallel with ἔλασ νοῖς in fr. 59 and thus understand the Connectors as the originators of the "entire light" of Aion. (Cf., in this regard, Proclus, In Tim., III, 18, 4-5: ὃ αἱρω...ἀς συνοχέως καὶ φρούρος.) But in the context of Damascius, ἔλασποι must be understood as constructed from ἔλας + ποῖος.
Fr. 84

Des Places, p. 87, following Kroll and Lewy, had originally cited only the second hemistich of this verse as oracular, but now affirms Tardieu's reconstruction (following Saffrey-Westenerk) and would replace it in his text as fr. 23 b. See "Notes," p. 324.


2. ὁ πρῶτος συνοχέως: i.e., the Father or Highest God, understood here as the ultimate source of the Connectors. Cf. Julihn the Chaldean's prayer to τὸν συνόχον τοῦ παγκόσμου as reported by Psellus, De aurea catena (ed. Sathas, Annuair, IX, 1875, p. 217, 2 fl.). Cf., also, συνοχέως, fr. 207.

3. έγινα ύπαρξις: Cf. ibid., fr. 1 and notes. See Hadot (Porphyre, I, p. 306 and n. 4): "L’Un ou Père représente le moment de la concentration, de l’union, dans lequel p’existent, sous un mode caché, non déployé, seminal, toutes les déterminations ultérieures." This expression thus describes the essentially ineffable nature of the First God before he is even deployed triadically. Hadot, ibid., cites Proclus, Th. pl., 268, 34 (Portus) as a parallel to this idea: ὁδόν μὲν ὁ πρῶτος (πατὴρ) τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ἀπογέννησιν. Cf., also, frs. 3, 18, 191 and notes; Lewy, p. 129 and n. 240.

Fr. 85

1. ὁ πρῶτος (τελετάρχης): The "first Teletarch" is the Ruler of the Empyrean World (identified with the transcendent sun or Aion). See Lewy, p. 149 and n. 303; Saffrey-Westenerk, notes ad loc.

2. ταράξον τοῦ παγκόσμου: i.e., the soul. This image reflects Plato, Phaedrus, 246. During the analagési, it was the function of the first Teletarch to conduct the soul upward (probably under the influence of Eros). Cf. fr. 46; Synesiuss, H. 9(1), 118-119: ταράξον τοῦ παγκόσμου ἁγιώτερον: 1(3), 617-618: νεορρόης ταράξος; 2(4), 285: ταράξος ψυχής; 3(5), 67: ψυχής ταράξος, and passim.

3. ὁ δὲ μέσος...τελετάρχης...τὸν θεόν: A reference to the Ruler of the Ethereal World (identified with the mundane sun).

4. τὸ τρίτον...τὴν...θανάτον τελετάρχης: i.e., the Ruler of the Material World (identified with the moon). Cf., also, Psellus, Hextymyin, 5: προσεκτικοὶ δὲ τοῦ συνωσι τοῦ τελετάρχης τιθέεται τρεῖς καὶ αὐτοῦ δύος, ὁ δὲ μὲν ἐμπόρος, ὁ δὲ αὐθεντικός, ὁ δὲ ἀλάρχης. Proclus locates the Teletarches at the third and last level of the intelligible-and-intellectual order. See Lewy, Exc. VII, pp. 483-484.

Fr. 86

2. ψυχοκράτωρ: i.e., the second Teletarch or Ruler of the Ethereal World. In the context of Proclus, "soul" is associated, in general, with the Ethereal World, "intellect" (ὁ νοῦς) with the Empyrean World. As the "Ruler of souls," the sun draws the soul upward on its rays. See Lewy, p. 149 and n. 304; Des Places, "Notes," p. 326.

3. ἐπεμβατόροις: Cf. ἐπεμβατόντως, fr. 76.

Fr. 87

1. οἱ...φύσεις: Proclus uses this term exclusively of oracles derived from individual inspiration (such as the Chaldean Oracles), in contrast to οἱ χρηστοὶ, or oracles received at established places such as Delphi. However, Porphyry, Damascus, and others make no such distinction. See Lewy, Exc. I, p. 446 p.


3. ἀκομηθὴντο στροφαλλίττονι: Cf. άκομηθήν στροφαλλίττον, fr. 49. This expression conveys the image of the Syriac as moving out from and back towards the Father in a ceaseless, circular motion. Cf., also, στράφαλον, fr. 206, with reference to Hecate's "magic wheel."

3. λαχήμας ἐννέονδας: Cf. λαχήμας ἐννέονδας, fr. 76. It is from the vantage point of the stars (or λαχήματα) that the Syriacs communicate their magical names back and forth between the sensible and intelligible worlds.

Fr. 88

1. [ἡ φύσις]: As Kroll suggests, loc. cit., ἡ φύσις is probably introduced here by Psellus from a preceding paragraph. Following Des Places, then, I have bracketed this term. Lewy, however, (p. 263, n. 14), following the parallel of Synesiuss (see infra), prefers to bracket θεὸς.

2. τῶν διαμέσων: In the Chaldean system, the sublunar world was believed to be inhabited by various demonic powers who pervaded all aspects of Nature. Cf., e.g., frs. 90-92, 216. In addition to demons, there were "orders" (ταξεύς) of gods, angels, and probably heroes. Cf., e.g., Psellus, Hextymyin, 20-21: εἰς δὲ θεῖαν τάξιν καὶ γένει περὶ ἑκατὸν τὸν στροφήν ἐπεί οἱ τῶν ἄνω ἐξήλεξαν ἄγγελοι...καὶ μετὰ τούτων οἱ ἤψετοι. Cf. Hadot, Porphyre, I, p. 397 and notes 2-4, who suggests that the order of heroes may well have been introduced by Porphyry. But Cremer, p. 39, thinks that the series including heroes is based on a Chaldean Forage. Cf., also, Festugière, Rép., III, p. 263, who is of the same opinion. Synesiuss, H. 5(2), 52-55, alludes to this nomy in a diabolical ψυχωκράτωρς ἐκποίησαν προς τὸν λαχήματος ἰδιοκτήτας. See Lewy, p. 264; Guédon, pp. 59-60.

2. κακῆς τῆς θλίψης: In the Chaldean system, matter is viewed as an aggressive, evil force and thoroughly demonized, a notion prominent in the Platonic "underworld." However, unlike most of the Gnostic and Hermetic systems, this hylophobia does not extend to the Ethereal World or region of the fixed stars. In this regard, esp. fr. 153 and notes and see discussion in Introduction.

3. τὰ...μεταστημάτα χρηστικά καὶ ἐνθάλα: The "offspring" here are evil demons associated with the earth. Cf. the χθόνοι κοίμων of frs. 90 and 91. In the extant fragments, there are no "good" demons per se, although Psellus (Hextymyin, 23) mentions such a class. It is likely that these so-called "good" demons (who aid the soul of the dead) are to be classed with the ministering angels of the Chaldean system. (See Lewy, pp. 260-261 and discussion in Introduction.) In the context of Psellus, this oracular fragment as a whole is directed toward placating
evil demons during the course of a theurgic initiation. Lewy (p. 269 and
n. 36) adds that the fragment probably constituted part of a “placatory prayer”
aimed at preventing these demons from despoiling the “chief theurgic action
of conjuring ‘Nature’” (which Lewy identifies with Hecate). But Nature,
more properly, should be identified as derivating from Hecate. Cf., esp., fr. 54 and
notes.

Fr. 89

2. θηρισωπλόν: Cf. δήρες χθώνος, fr. 157; χθόνιοι κόννε (and variations), frs.
90, 91, 135; κυνών αλόγων, fr. 156. Thus, the “beastly” nature of evil demons
lures the soul to a similar “animal” life.

άναβηκ: Cf. άναβηκ, fr. 135 (as descriptive of the χθόνιοι κόννε). In Antiquity,
“shameless” was a common description for the nature of dogs. See Lewy, p.
217, n. 41, who notes that the term άναβηκ was regularly associated with the
Cynics and their self-designated “dog-like” existence.

Fr. 90

1-2. κάλπων γένεσ: Cf., esp., χθόνιοι κάλποι, fr. 216. The “hollows of the
earth” are the specific location of terrestrial demons. Cf. Psellus, Ηρακλ. 23,
where evil demons are similarly said to be in το χαλώσατι. Lewy (p. 308, n. 186;
cf. p. 259, n. 3) sees a possible allusion to the caverns of Tartarus.

2. θράτσισκον: Cf. forms of άθράτσισκο, frs. 14, 34, 76, 87, εθράτσισκο, frs. 35,
37, 42.

χθόνιοι κόννε: Cf. frs. 91, 135, 156; Synesius, H. 1(3), 96-97: ψυχοδόρους
κόννες; 2(4), 245-247: στέγει δ’ άναβηκ/κόννε τον χθόνιον/διάμονα γαλας; Proclus, In rem
p., ΠΙ, 337, 17-19: άβ δη και το λόγμα “κυνε” άπεκαζε εξεδεμ (sc. το βασιλιόν
γένος) και “πηρεν” άπεκαζε αλον τον και δαιμονας άμορων. See Geueldner, pp.
56-63.

2-3. ἀληθῆς σῆμα: During the course of the theurgic rites, “true signs” (such as
the fiery apparitions described in fr. 146) preceded the arrival of the conjured
god or goddess. The danger here—as the fragment warns—is the always present
possibility of false or deceptive signs sent by evil demons to subvert the
theurgist’s “divine work.” Cf. Iamb., De myst., ΠΙ.5: τα σημεία των ἐπισκευηνων (i.e.,
the entranced medium) τα θέτει τιμήσει της αληθείας ἐνθουσασμος.

4. τιμωρός των ψυχών: This notion of “avenging demons” (which ultimately
goes back to the Erinnyes of Homer) is a common one, both in terms of
post-mortem punishments in Hades as well as vices which afflict the body
here and now. Cf., e.g., C.H. I.23; XIII.7; Asclepius, 28; Lydus, De mens., IV,
32; p. 90, 24-91, 5 W.; Iamb., De myst., ΠΙ.7. See, also, Cremer, pp. 77-78;
Nock-Festugière, Corpus Hermeticum I, esp. p. 24, n. 57.

Fr. 91

1. οἱ δ’ ἅλετεις δαίμονες: Cf. κυνών αλόγων, fr. 156.

2. ἅλετερα: A likely reference to Hecate, who is traditionally associated with
dogs or hounds. Porphyry (De philos. ex or. haur., p. 131, Wolff) equates the dogs
of Hecate with evil demons. Thus Hecate, as the source of demonic nature (cf.
fr. 54) becomes the “driver” or mistress of these demons. See Lewy, p. 271 and
n. 41, who thinks this verse formed part of a conjuration hymn.

HeaderCode...κυνών, χθόνιοιν ἃκα καὶ ῥητορικον: i.e., demons of the air, earth,
and water. Damascius, loc. cit., also mentions demons of the heavens (αύρασιοι),
eter (ανθέξωριοι), and Underworld (κυκλεύχων). In this regard, cf. Oph. Hymn:
ΠΡΟΣ ΜΥΣΩΝ (ed. Anthanasakis), 32-33: Δαιμονοισιν αύρασιοις καὶ ανθέξωριοις καὶ
χθονιοις καὶ κυκλευχων δ’ άμωρων. But see Lewy, p. 268, n. 34, who
argues that the classification heaven, ether, water, earth, Underworld originates
with Proclus.

Fr. 92

2. υδραβατικον: Lit. “water-walkers.” Cf. the κυνών ρητορικον of fr. 91. Proclus,
loc. cit., also uses the more common άνθεξωριον to describe these demons. In this
regard, cf. νόμμα ενθεξωριον, fr. 216. Festugière (Tim., IV, p. 143 and n. 4)
translates this expression as “qui se meuvent dans l’eau.”

Fr. 93

2. πολυχειμωνα: This term is descriptive of matter. Cf., e.g., βεσομενεν χειμα
καπνων, fr. 171 and forms of βεστις in frs. 122 and 134.

φύλα: i.e., evil demons. See Lewy, p. 260 and n. 4.

Fr. 94

3. νοην μιν ψυχή: Here, the World Soul. The locus classicus is Plato, Tim.,
30 b 4: νοην μιν εν ψυχή, ψυχήν, δε σα μαμεν σωστα το πονοσυνεκατον. See
Lewy, p. 182 and n. 24. Hadot, Periph. 1, p. 390, n. 5, sees this passage of
Plato’s as “the point of departure” for later speculation about the vehicle of
the soul.


3-4. ενω μαμενισιν εργῳ μελέτῃς: Here (in contrast to Plato), the
oracle is describing the particular souls of generation weighed down by the
material or “sluggish” body (or, perhaps, more specifically, the vehicle of the soul;
cf. e.g., the use of σαμώ in fr. 128). Cf., also, Synesius, H. 1(3), 564-568: Σαμ
νοην εν ψυχήν/κατακτήθη βαθινα δε ψυχήν/αυτοην σαμεν ευτερας; άλλα Απο
Geueldner, p. 70, n. 302; Theiler, 1942, p. 29 = 1966, p. 287.

4. πακτὴ ἀνδρόν τε των τε: In the context of Proclus, a reference to the
tο πακτη άνδρον τε των τε. See, also, Festugière, Tim., II, pp. 176 and n. 1;
282. The Chaldean reference, however, is to the Highest God as Plato. Cf., e.g.,
frs. 25 and 115.

Fr. 95

1. τοῦτον χαραγκετήρα: According to Plato (Tim., 36 b-d), the World Soul had
the shape of a Chi (Χ), the axes of which were bent and joined together to form
semi-circles. In Chaldean thought—since particular souls were patterned on the
World Soul—they, too, had the same configuration. In the context of Proclus,
knowledge of this "character" had magical significance, permitting the theologian to invoke the souls of certain heroes (e.g., Heracles, Pentheus) and even Plato himself. In this latter regard, cf. Psellus, De aur. cat. (as cited by Lewy, p. 253, n. 96): καὶ δὲ (Ἰουλιανὸν ὁ Χαλκίας) ταύτην (τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος φωνὴν) ἐπιστευόμενον ἐκ των τέχνης ἔρωτος ἐπιθυμάντο περὶ δὲ ἐξωκέλειται. Cf., also, Proclus, In Tim., III, 6, 13-15: δία χαρακτηρίων καὶ όνομάτων ἐκείνων τέλοστοι τὰ γίγαλανα καὶ ζῶντα καὶ ψυγόμενα ἀποτελούντες. (See Festugière, Tim., IV, p. 22 and n. 2; cf. Tim., III, 299 and n. 1.) As such, these "characters" and "names" can be equated with the "tokens" and "symbols" of Chaldean terminology as noxia mysticae.

2. ἐγκαίρως: i.e., the soul. Cf. Iamb., De myst., II, 7, where the expression ἐγκαίρως τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ θεός refers to the "inner light" of purified souls evoked during a eucharistic rite. (See Cremer, pp. 97-98.) Cf., also, Kroll, fr. 211; κραδής, fr. 58 (here, a reference to the sun as the "heart" of the universe).

Fr. 96

1. ψυχή, πόρος...οὔτα...φειδιμόν: In the context of Psellus, a reference to the World Soul (as in Psellus, p. 86 and n. 75; cf. p. 87, n. 76). Festugière, however, (Rev., III, p. 58, and thus Des Places, p. 90), understands a reference to the human soul. Cf., in this regard, Kroll, loc. cit.; Theiler, 1942, p. 33 = 1966, p. 291 and n. 129. But in either case, both the World Soul and particular souls (as feeble entities) ultimately derive from the Primordial Fire or Father.

2. δυνάμεις...παράδειγμα: "Power" is regularly associated with the Highest God. Cf. frs. 1, 3, 4, 5, 56, 136.

3. θεωρείτω: As "Mistress of Life," the World Soul animates the sensible world. Cf., e.g., frs. 32, 54, 56, 139, 145, however, loc. cit., understands here the particular soul which animates the body.

4. ζωοτρόποι: Cf. ibid., fr. 79.

5. σαρκών...νηστικά σώματα...οὖσα: Cf. τὸν ζωγόνον πληρότερον 'Εκάτος κόλπον, fr. 32. In Gnostic sources, pleroma is a technicus terminus designating the "fullness" of the Divine world as a whole.

Fr. 97

1. τὸ...δέξη: According to Lewy (p. 98 and n. 88), analogous to τὸ...δέξη...εἰς τὴν κραδήν, fr. 130. (Psellus, loc. cit., paraphrases: τὸ...δέξη...εἰς τὴν κραδήν...τὴν...ιωτήν.) Thus, for Lewy, God in the absolute sense—refers here to Aion as the ultimate "resting place" of the elevated soul. (See esp. pp. 20, 28, 104.) But fr. 1 suggests that, in addition to this ascent to Aion ("the light" of the Father; cf. fr. 49), there was a further ascent to the Father himself via some form of genuine contemplative activity (and not just externally manipulated theurgic ritual, as Lewy suggests. See detailed discussion in Introduction.)

2. θυσίαν... δέξη: i.e., the soul can now be considered free of all the material defilements associated with corporeality. But whether, as Lewy suggests (e.g., pp. 198-199), this expression refers to the "final purification of the soul" is problematic. It may well allude just to the purification and "salvation" of the lower soul/δύσμα...πνεύμα (see fr. 129 and notes) in preparation for the contemplative purging of the higher or rational soul.

Fr. 98

Tardieu (Lewy, p. 680) considers this fragment "dubious." (It is cited neither by Kroll nor Lewy.) Bieler, however, (Boethius, loc. cit., ad not.), suggests a possible Chaldean origin: "hexameter after ecclesiastical Chaldaico fortasse sumptus est." Des Places (p. 139) thinks the "sense" of the fragment is close to that of fr. 94 and 130.

2. ἄρδευσις...παρθένος: Cf. παρθένος, frs. 163 and 224. Des Places thinks the use of this term further affirms a possible Chaldean origin for this fragment (despite Tardieu's objections). See "Notes," p. 326.

3. θυσίας: Perhaps an allusion to the eucharistic raiments which make up the vehicle of the soul. Cf. frs. 62 and notes.

Fr. 99

1. τὸν...δέξη: Cf. Synesius, De insomniis., 139: θεοῦ γὰρ κατατούθεν τὸν πρῶτον μονοθεοῦνετο τούθησας...δεξιάττες...τινί...κύριον...δεξιάττες...τινί...κύριον. This "service" and "enlacement" properly constitute two phases in the descent of the soul. See, e.g., Théiler, 1942, p. 32 = 1966, p. 291; Cremer, p. 91 ff.; Gudertner, pp. 27-29; Hadot, Porphyry, I, p. 186 and n. 2; Lewy, p. 189 and n. 45.

2-3. διὰ ἐκείνου...δεξιάττες: The soul which serves generation with an "untamed neck" does not yield to the temptations of material existence, i.e., it does not become enslaved by matter. Its reward is an immediate return to its Divine home after death. See Lewy, p. 189 and n. 45.

Fr. 100

2. ἀκμάρνησις: Lewy (p. 297, n. 143, following the gloss of Proclus) translates this term as "ardent." Cf. Festugière, Rép., III, p. 101, n. 2: "ἀκμάρνησις = évidem-ment ‘qui a perdu sa fraîcheur, son éclat, qui est ternie, desséchée,’ comme une femme stérile." Des Places, however (p. 91), prefers a more ambiguous "sale," noting that matter properly contains a humid element.
Fr. 101

1. φύσεως...αὐτοποιοῦν δάγκαμα: In the context of Psellus, it is a matter of apari-tions, in general, evoked during the theurgical rites. Cf., in this regard, αὐτόπο-τος, fr. 142; Iambli, De myst., II.4: αὐτοποίων ἄγαλματος; II.10: αὐτοποιητικά ἄγαλματα. See Cremer, pp. 45; 143-144. But the original Chaldean context may well have been a specific reference to Hecate, who is connected both with Nature and the moon. Cf., e.g., Proclus, In Tim p., II, 153, 1-18: έκ τῆς ἀντικράσιας...ζυγών, ἐν ἐκ τῆς γενέσεως αὐτῶν πᾶσης καὶ κατά τινας τῆς ἀφάντους...τοιοῦτον αὐτοποιητικοὶ τῆς φύσεως. See Tim, III, 69, 15-16: αὐτοποιητικά...αὔτῳ τοῖς θεοίς τῆς φύσεως, τοιοῦτον αὐτοποιητικοὶ τῆς ποίμνης τῶν φύσεως. G. Lewy (pp. 98, n. 134; 271) finds the connection between this fragment with frs. 102-103 and 107 as interdictions against invoking Hecate “face to face,” in order to avoid attacks of demons (which Hecate controls; cf. fr. 91). Cf., also, Festugière, Rép., III, p. 77, n. 6; Tim, IV, p. 94 and n. 5.

Fr. 102

1. ἡ γὰρ τῆς φύσεως πτήσις: An allusion to Hecate as the “source” of material generation or “Nature.” Cf., esp., the role of Hecate in frs. 51-54.


Fr. 103

1. συναντήσεις: Cf. Proclus, De proso., 164, B: “neque causaes fatum, cuius finit...” Kroll (p. 30, n. 1) reconstructs the Greek as: μηδὲ συναντήσεις τὸ περίπτερον, ἀληθεὺς κεένθεν. See, also, Lewy, p. 266, n. 23, who conjectures ἀληθεὺς as the missing predicate noun.

εἰμιμένων: cf. Des Places (cf. fr. 102); τὴν εἰμιμένων, codd. Thus, the oracle admonishes “not to increase” or “add to” the influence of demonic Destiny which infects all aspects of material creation or ψεύς.

Fr. 104

1. μὴ πνεύμα μελάνης: According to Westerink (Greek Comm. Phaedo, II, Damascius p. 193, note), only these three words belong to the Oracle and should come after fr. 103 with the following reconstruction: ζήλου τοῖς φυσικῶν περίπτερον, μηδὲ πνεῦμα μελάνης. Westerink argues that Psellus “may unwittingly have added some extraneous material to the Oracle, as he did in other cases.” Des Places, however, notes that Proclus elsewhere attests to the second half of the verse (e.g., In rem p., II, 52, 5) as does Hermias (In Phaedrum, p. 130, 28 ff.), and would thus keep the verse as is. See, “Notes,” p. 327 and testimonia to fr. 104, p. 92. In the context of the Oracle, πνεύμα is synonymous with ἡμέρα as a term for the “vehicle” of the soul. The ἡμέρα-πνεύμα, then, would be com-

Fr. 105

3. προετοιμασθέντες: Lewy (p. 265, n. 18) suggests as objects either τὸν ἄγαν ἔρωτα, τὸν ψυχήν συμπόνιον (cf. fr. 44), or τὸ ψυχήν δήμα (cf. fr. 112). Cf., also, fr. 45, where the descent to matter is said to “stifle” the “true love” of the Divine. Kroll, loc. cit., compares this fragment to the series of injunctions enumerated by Proclus in De proso., 175 (144, 16-18 B.): “Te ipsum videns, vere et, iterum: Cognosce te ipsum! iam iustiti, et in alius: Extra corpus esse te ipsum crede, et e!” Kroll believes this last injunction is drawn from the Oracle. Cf. comments of Westerink in notes to fr. 104, supra.

Fr. 106

1. τολμήματα: In the context of Psellus, man is “impudent” because he deigns to comprehend the workings of Nature. (Cf. fr. 107; Lewy, p. 254, n. 98.) Lewy (p. 55, n. 175) suggests that the admonition was preceded by στρατ. (as in fr. 132). In Gnostic and Hermetic sources (as well as Numenius and some early passages of Plotinus), στρατ. generally describes the soul’s descent into matter as an ambitious act of self-will. But as Dodds has shown, the later Plotinus, in reaction to Gnostic thinking, views the soul’s direct descent as an inner necessity, free of deliberate willfulness. See Dodds, Pagan and Christian, pp. 23-26. Festugière, Rép., III, p. 83 ff.; Zande, Terminology, pp. 26-28.
Fr. 107

The oracle enumerates various types of divination, all of which are to be rejected in favor of theurgy. In Levy's words (p. 257): "As Iamblichus contends (e.g., De myst., III. 27-28; 31) theurgy is the only legitimate form of divination, as it is bound up with the apprehension of the noetic powers which are the real rulers of the Universe."

2. ἄγνωστος: "Truth" is associated with the sun. See Levy, p. 146 and n. 293; cf. p. 49, n. 158, where Levy cites examples of Apollo's (the sun's) association with "truth."


4. άδιός βουλή πατρός: Cf. ἁγιασθεὶς βουλή (of the Father), fr. 37; βουλάξ άθυκτος (of the Father), fr. 77; πατρός παθητὶ βουλή, fr. 81. Cf. also, <πρωτότοκος πατέρα> άδιός νοῦ, fr. 22.

5. ὀράτου: Cf. esp., ἔρημος, fr. 56 and notes, for parallels.

6. ἀντίτροπό ροσσάριμα: Cf. ibid., fr. 64. The entire verse is cited verbatim by Proclus, In Tim., III, 124, 31 in conjunction with fr. 64.

8. οὐ θυελίων σπάστιχον ἄνωτα: Cf. Synesius, De tim., 135 c, who cites this verse verbatim as a λόγος.


11. ἄριν: "Virtue" is an appellation of the moon. Cf. ἄριν, fr. 52; Levy, p. 221 and n. 181.

12. σοφία: "Wisdom" is associated with the planet Mercury. See Levy, p. 221 and notes 183 and 184.

13. εὐφορία: "Good order" is an attribute of the fixed stars. See Levy, p. 221 and n. 182.

Fr. 108

2. ὑμβολά: These "symbols" are equivalent to the "tokens" (συνήθησα; cf. frs. 2, 109) as voces mysticae. This expression also designates the sacred materia (e.g., stones, herbs, scents) handled by the theurgist during some of the Chaldean rites. In this regard, cf. Psellus, P.G., 122, 1132 a; Proclus, De Magia, p. 151, 10 ff.; Bidez. For further details, see discussion in Introduction.

πατρικός νόος: Here, the Father or Highest God. Cf. ibid., fr. 39; πατρικός νόος, fr. 109.

ἔσπευρεν κατά κάσιμων: "Sown in the cosmos," the symbol can be equated with the Platonic Forms (and thus with the Iymeus; cf. frs. 76-78). In addition, these "symbols" are also said to be "sown in the soul" (as voces mysticae). Cf. Proclus, In Tim., I, 211, 1-2: σμοβόλας ἁρπάν τῶν θεῶν, τῶν φυσῶν ἄριστα ἄνσωςι μνήμες; Psellus, P.G., 122, 1161 a: ὑμβολαὶ πατρικῷ νοῦ ἐστίν ταῦτα φυσῆς. See Festugière, Tim., II, p. 32, n. 1. Cf. also, ἐσπαρξαι, fr. 28; ἐνεπεστερήτο, fr. 39 and notes.

3. τὰ νοστή: The "intelligibles" are the Ideas. Cf. ibid., fr. 8, 31, 40.

κάλλη φάρσα: Descriptive of the Ideas. Cf. e.g., Philo, De Oper., 71: τὰς ἰδέας θεοσιμεῖας, ὑπερβάλλοντα κάλλη. See Levy, p. 191 and n. 55. The vocabulary goes back to Plato, e.g., Phaedrus, 250 b-d.

Fr. 109

1. τὸ θέλειν: Cf. τὸ θέλειν κατένεσε, fr. 22 (but here, as an act of the Father); Cremer, p. 96 and n. 506.

πατρικός νόος: Cf. frs. 39 and 108.

2. κατένεσε: i.e., the "forgetfulness" of the soul after it has "fallen" into the body. Cf. ἀπτῆ ζήσῃ, fr. 171. The image is common, going back to Plato, e.g., Phaedrus, 248 c, 250 a. See Levy, p. 190 and n. 53 for numerous parallels in a variety of sources.

3. πατρικὸς συνήθησας ἄγνωστος: Cf. esp., συμβολοῦ συνήθη, fr. 2, as a possible allusion to the triadic nature of the Highest God. "Remembering" or "focusing" on this token (< ἄγνωστος νοῦ> cf. notes to fr. 110 serves as an analogic device to prod the soul upward. See further discussion in Introduction.

Fr. 110

1. ψυχής ὕπατος: i.e., the "channel" or solar "ray" on which the soul both descends into the body and then ascends on high during theurgical rites. Cf. esp., ἕμφορος ὕπατος, fr. 2; ὑπάτος, fr. 66. This term is also analogous to both θύς, fr. 34 and θύς, fr. 115. Cf. Levy, p. 189 and n. 45.

2. ἀνακάθισεν τὰς τέχνας: For the later Neoplatonists, the term τάξις is used interchangeably with σειρά (cf. fr. 203; Bidez, C.M.A.G., IV, 1928, p. 144 and n. 1; Dodds, Proclus: El. Th., pp. 208-209). Levy (p. 190, n. 47) sees these two prepositional phrases as referring, respectively, to the initial descent of the soul via the ethereal order where the soul desires to return. In this latter sense, Levy (ibid.) understands ἁπάντα in fr. 158 as referring to the τάξεις where the soul ascends. See also, Geudten, p. 73 and n. 316; Tardieu, "Oracles chaldaïques," pp. 200-209. Cf., also, Dic. 8-9, NHG VI, 52,7-8, where τάξεις refers to the "order" of the tradition, understood here as the proper "order" of ascent through the eighth and ninth spheres, or higher levels of spiritual attainment.

2. σώματι δημιουργεῖ: Cf. (τὴν ἱππέας ἱππεῖ, fr. 99 and notes.

<ἀρρημοποιήσεις καὶ ποιύς> cf. Levy, p. 189, n. 45, based on Psellus' paraphrase.

3. καθή: In Tardieu's view ("Oracles chaldaïques," pp. 203-204), this term (analogous to πάλιν) underscores the "renewal," "rebirth," and "regeneration" of the soul.

ἰεροῦ λόγου: Psellus (loc. cit.) equates this term with the ἄγνωστος νοῦ as ἡ ἡφθαλήσει δόμων τῆς ψυχῆς. If this equation is valid, then the function of the ἄγνωστος νοῦ (as a "sacred word" or ἱερογλφμα; cf. ἱερομού σειράν, fr. 87) must, in some sense, be therapeutic (and not solely contemplative, as suggested in fr. 1). See detailed discussion in Introduction.

ἔργον: i.e., the sacred activity of the theurgist. Cf. ἔργα, fr. 66 and 133. Psellus (loc. cit.) specifically understands here the material rites (τῶν ἄλλων τέλευτον) aimed at purifying the vehicle of the soul: ὅτι εἰς θαυματουργόν την ψυχήν λίθον καὶ πόλεις καὶ ἐπορευτές, καὶ έστροφες εἰς τὴν ἀνάβασιν. Thus, it is both "word" and "action" which prods the soul upward. Cf., in this regard, Iambi., De myst., II.11: ἢ τῶν ἔργων τῶν ἀρτητῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ πάσων νόσημα θεομαχεῖς.
4. περίχρηστος: Tardieu ("Oracles chaldaïques," p. 201) suggests that this term properly conveys the sense of "dé-rangement" (παράκολ.), or "dé-citation" (παραπέμποντος) as found frequently in various Gnostic sources with regard to the "fall" of the soul. Cf. Des Places, "Notes," p. 327, who continues to prefer his translation of a été produite, contra Tardieu.


6. διὰ τῶν τελετουτῶν έργων: i.e., the various material rites of a theurgic initiation. See, esp., Lewy, Exc. X, pp. 495-496.

Fr. 111

1. εὐστράχον ὁ τὸ νεφελών: In the context of Proclus, the "intellectual faculty" of the soul is "well-wheeled" in terms of its ability to "revolve" around the Intelligible through various "perfective" means of intellection. Psellus, on the other hand, uses the expression εὐστράχον in connection with the vehicle of the soul and its ascent (see supra, notes to τρύγοντος, fr. 110).

2. κέντρον ἐπιστήρων: An allusion to the sun as the "center" (cf. κέντρον, fr. 70) or "heart" (cf. χρυσός, fr. 58) of the planetary spheres and, thus, the "center" of the anagogé as well. In Tardieu’s words, the sun functions as a "veritable anagogé." See "Oracles chaldaïques," p. 204, where Tardieu compares Ges. Text., NIC I, 45,36-39 (although here, the solar imagery is applied to Christ). Cf., also, fr. 174 re the "seven-rayed god." The literary model, however, is II, 23, 429 ff.: Άντιδρος άντι κατοί καλάννα ἐναυή κέντρον ἐπιστήρων. See Festugière, Tim., III, p. 358, n. 2; Lewy, p. 195 and n. 75, who equates ἐπιστήρων with ἐνοπτολογοῦντας σκιβαρίδον, fr. 2; Thielker, 1942, p. 20, n. 6 = 1966, p. 276, n. 87.

ψυχής κελάδοντος: Here, a reference to the sun. But cf. ibid., fr. 2, where this expression apparently refers to the "rushing" sound of the celestial spheres.

Fr. 112

1. ψυχής βάθος δύματον: Equivalent to the "eye of the soul." See Lewy, p. 169 and n. 388; cf. δυός, ψυχής, fr. 1; 213. Psellus, however, in loc. cit., understands this expression as referring to the "triple powers" or "faculties" of the soul, i.e., δυός, δυοήνος, δύοπλος. Psellus' explanation derives from Proclus. Cf. Exc. chald., III, p. 193, 1 Petra, where ψυχής βάθος is similarly interpreted in terms of these three faculties.

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Fr. 113

1. τοῦ εἰκότος θείου: Analogous to ἀπεικότου θείου, fr. 128; cf. τοῦ ἡλίου τών νόμων, fr. 1. See Lewy, p. 170. The metaphor is also found, e.g., in C. H. X. 5: ἀναπτάτον ἡμέρων τοῦ θρήνου; Philo, De Plant., 58: τὸ χιώνιον διαματικός· ἀκαδαμευμένος καὶ ἀνεπόταμος. Psellus, the faculties of the soul are "stretched" towards Christ.

Fr. 114

1. βασιλεύσας: The image is common. Cf., e.g., C. H. XII.2: οὐκοίσιν γὰρ συνιθέντο κατά τό χαμοῦ χωμαν ζώουν ἢ τὰ λατέα καὶ ἡ ἱερά, ἡ ἡς συνεκτεινύται πρὸς τὰ λόγια τῶν διακτύων διανύομεν. See also, Lewy, p. 277 and notes 76-77 for additional parallels; Hadot, Porphyre, I, p. 404 and n. 2. cf. σώμα σώμιον, fr. 128.

Fr. 115

1. ψυχής μανής χρώματος: Equivalent to the "eye of the soul." See Lewy, p. 169 and n. 388; cf. δύμα, ψυχής, fr. 1; 213. Psellus, however, in loc. cit., understands this expression as referring to the "triple powers" or "faculties" of the soul, i.e., δύμα, δυοήνος, δύοπλος. Psellus' explanation derives from Proclus. Cf. Exc. chald., III, p. 193, 1 Petra, where ψυχής βάθος is similarly interpreted in terms of these three faculties.

idebar.

Fr. 116

1. ψυχής βάθος δύματον: Equivalent to the "eye of the soul." See Lewy, p. 169 and n. 388; cf. δύμα, ψυχής, fr. 1; 213. Psellus, however, in loc. cit., understands this expression as referring to the "triple powers" or "faculties" of the soul, i.e., δυός, δυοήνος, δύοπλος. Psellus' explanation derives from Proclus. Cf. Exc. chald., III, p. 193, 1 Petra, where ψυχής βάθος is similarly interpreted in terms of these three faculties.

idebar.

Fr. 117

1. ψυχής μανής χρώματος: Equivalent to the "eye of the soul." According to Lewy, the hyperbolic πάντα (in an anagogic context), "is intended...to hinder the formation of any concrete association" (see pp. 373-374 and notes 235-239, where Lewy cites numerous parallels to this "eye of the soul" expression in a variety of sources). Cf., also, fr. 1, where the ἀνάθεος/φεός νος terminology similarly alludes to an immediate, intuitive apprehension of the Divine, free of concrete images. In Psellus' interpretation, ἄμακτα refers to the γνωστικαί ἐνέργειαι of the three soul faculties cited supra. Psellus goes on to say that the "eye" is the σώματος γνώσων.
Fr. 116

1. ἑρατικής τοις σῶμα νουδών: i.e., those who think in terms of sensible rather than intelligible realities. Lewy (p. 278, n. 80; cf. pp. 170-171 and n. 395) identifies the σῶμα νουδών with the μονάρχημα of Plato, Phaedo, 68c, who are “incapable” of φονεύον ἐθνῶν καὶ θεῶν (Tim., 90 c).

2. γυμνότητες: The “naked” soul is one that is free of its material accretions (or vehicle). The image is common. Cf., e.g., Proclus, In Alc., 63 at 139, 18 Cr. W.; 83 at 180, 2 Cr. W.; Plotinus, Enn. 1.6.7.7; C.H. 1.26; X.17; X.33.6; Pr. Paul, NHC I, 14.55-36; Ap. Jsr., NHC I, 20.30-32: ὁμον καὶ θεαν ἀνθρω. For a general discussion, see Rist, Plotinus, pp. 188-198.


Fr. 117

3. σωζόμεναι δι’ ἑτῆς ἀλήξης: Here, “strength” refers to the divine “soul spark” or “flower/flame of mind” which has the power of theurgically uniting the soul to God and thus effecting its “salvation.” In the context of Proclus, only certain exceptional individuals can be “saved” via this divine ἀλήξη (cf., similarly, fr. 118). In terms of the Chaldean tradition, these “more vigorous natures” (to borrow Proclus’ phrase) would be the class οἰκείων. Cf. Proclus, In rem p., 120, 3-4: ἡλιότοις ἡμεῖς γε φήμωμεν τὴν δι’ ἑτῆς ἀλήξης εἰς θεοῦ ἀνάτακτα τῆς τοπικῆς φύσης: ibid., 112, 21-25: καὶ φύσιν ἐχον σώματος ὑπερροώσαν καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἄνω μέλην ἐπιθυμίας καὶ δι’ ἑτῆς ἀλήξης, κατὰ τὸ λόγιον, χωρίζομένων ἀπὸ τῶν ἀληξην ἐφάρμοσιν καὶ εἰς τὸ δόξαν καθά τοῦ ὀρθονοῦ χωρίσματος. See Lewy, p. 194 and n. 67: “In these passages, ἀλήξη means the noetic power of the soul delivered from matter.”

Fr. 118

2. στέρμα: Cf. Synesius, H. I.3, 559-561: Σων στέρμα ρέων... σπειρών νῦσα; 580-581: οὐκ ἔσων ἐβδομάδεσιν ἀλήξην; 597-598: στέρμα...ἀναξίων ἐν ἐμῷ: De inv., 138 c: τὸ νοερὸν ἐν ἡμῖν στέρμα. This “intellectual seed,” “strength,” or “spark,” then, is that divine element within, which is freed once the vehicle of the soul is purified. It is this element (= the ἄνω/φύλη νῦσα; διάμοι φυσῆς) which has the power to elevate the soul as well as ultimately unite or “bind” it to God. See, esp., Hdt., Ph, 430, 1, p. 183, n. 4; Guerdiner, pp. 50-53.

3. φύσις γυμνοσύνης: According to Guerdiner (p. 52), this expression is equivalent to the συνθέσεις/σύμβολα. Lewy, however (p. 242 and n. 56), equates it with σημαία; i.e., those “signs” which precede the apparition of a deity during the theurgic rites. Cf. ἄληξης σήμα, fr. 90 and notes; Iamb., De myt., I.II.2: γυμνοσύνης θεῶν καὶ δαιμονῶν; I.II.2: τὰ ἁληξήν γυμνοσύνη (here, as with Synesius, in connection with dream divination). 4. ἑτῆς ἀλήξης: Cf., esp., δι’ ἑτῆς ἀλήξης, fr. 117 and notes.

Fr. 119

1. τοῦ αὐτόπεδος σώματος: i.e., the “vehicle” of the soul. See fr. 120 and notes. Although both Hierocles and Psellus (e.g., P.G., 122, 1317 c; see fr. 104 and notes) distinguish between a “luminous” and “pneumatic” vehicle of the soul, this distinction is Neoplatonic, not Chaldean, in origin. See Dodds, Pux.
1. η δε των ἁγέλων μερις: i.e., the angelic order is one of the “chains” linking various aspects of the cosmos. Cf. ἁγέλεικα χώρα, fr. 138; μερις, fr. 158; τάχις, fr. 24, 110; σιερά, fr. 203.

2-5. τῆς πυρσῆς πέταγμα που: i.e., once the soul is filled with “divine fire” it is no longer weighed down by matter. This analogic function of the angelic order parallels that of fr. 123.

3-4. τοῦ ἄρχάντου πυρός: In later Neoplatonic interpretation, the ἄρχαντος made up a specific class of angels who dwelled permanently in the supernmundane regions. See Lewy, p. 261, n. 8.

4-5. τῶν ἑρωδειώτερος εἰς τὴν ἐνελκήν άτομαία: Forms of body (in connection with matter) are common in the Oracles. See, esp., fr. 56 and notes to ἔκτοι for parallels.

5. συνάπτεται: For Proclus, “contact” (συναφή) is the third degree of prayer. See notes to fr. 121.

Fr. 123


2. πυρσῆς ἀφοία: In the context of Proclus, “heat” and “breath” are analogic powers. Cf., similarly, Hermias, In Phaedrus, 197, 2 C: θέρμη γὰρ καλεῖ τὴν ἀνάγωγον δύναμιν. See, also, Proclus, Exc. chald., II, 193,14-15 P.: where “heat” and “cold” are contrasted in an analogic context: Ὁ θερμὸς προσδέχεται τὸ πυρόν εἰρηνίκητοι. See, also, Iambli, De myst., II.6; Cremer, pp. 50-51. Elsewhere in the Oracles, “heat” and “breath” are associated with the World Soul (or Hecate) as the source of life. Cf., esp., fr. 35, 53.

3. κοισμείται: i.e., to “tighten” the soul from the weight of matter so that it is free to ascend. This fragment as a whole may well allude to a breathing technique of some sort. Cf. fr. 124, 130 and notes. See Lewy, p. 278 and n. 81.

Fr. 124


ἐλευθ.: i.e., “free” from material constraints and thus able to ascend. Lewy (p. 206, n. 124) understands this term to mean that “the purified soul is easily attracted by the ray of the sun.” Cf. Proclus, Exc. chald., II, 193,15-16 P.: ἐγόνοι εἰς καταλύτου ὅπως ἐν ἄπλωμα. Πιθανὸν δέχηται, πυρὸς ὁδόν ἀνασώκυμα. Cf., also, ἐκάτον ῥέγη, fr. 123 and notes.
also, σώματα περιβλήμα, fr. 129 (which the emperor Julian equates with σώματα) and the use of οἰκεῖος in fr. 158. With this evidence, then, the oracle may well be advising "to save" the vehicle of the soul and not the fleshly "body" as such. And so Geudtner, pp. 20-24; cf. Theler, 1942, p. 37 = 1966, pp. 296-297; Hadot, Porphyri, I, pp. 342-344 and n. 11. Such a position would accord with Iamblichus; see discussion in Introduction. One might also compare Marsanes, NHC X, 5:15-16, where "the entire defilement" (παραμέτρητος όργανος) is said to be "saved." Although, as Pearson suggests (Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X, notes ad loc.), "defilement" here may allude to the "sense-perceptible world" (αὐτόλογος όργανος) as a whole (which in lines 24-26 is specifically said to be "worthy of salvation"), it may also refer to the "soul garments" (πνεύμων όργανον) mentioned in lines 7-8. (In this regard, cf., again, fr. 104: μή πνεύμα μολόσσος. The verb μολόσσων is the equivalent of the Coptic μώσων.) Thus, in both instances, the notion of "defilement" can be connected with the "vehicle" of the soul (as πνεύμα or the "soul garments" of Marsanes). If this connection is valid, then the "salvation" of the soul's vehicle would be a doctrine common to both. On this notion, see further infra.

Fr. 129

3. σώζεται καὶ τὸ...περιβλήμα βρότειον: Here, the reference more clearly refers to "saving" the vehicle of the soul (contra Lewy, who again thinks in terms of "saving the mortal body" in a medical sense; see p. 214 and n. 151 and his similar interpretation of fr. 128). Cf., in this regard, C.H. X. 17-18, where the terms περιβλήματος, ἀνωτάτης, χτόνος, κυθώνας, κτίνων, κτισμάτων, κτίσματων are all used to describe the material vestures (or "vehicle") of the soul. Cf., also, Proclus, Et. Th., pp. 209: χτίσματος ἐνεπέλευσαν. Although in the context of Julian, σώματα may have a fleshly, corporeal referent (and so the interpretation of Lewy; but cf. the use of σώμα in fr. 128), the περιβλήμα of this fragment must surely refer to the vehicle of the soul. See Geudtner, pp. 20-24; cf. Tardieu, "Oracles chaldaiques," pp. 202-203. See, also, the "soul garments" of Marsanes, as cited supra, fr. 128. The locus classicus of these ideas is Plato, Crat., 400b: τοῦτον δὲ τὴν περιβλήματα, ἐνεκεῖνας σωματικά (in reference to the Orphic σῶμα-σῶμα equation.) πνεύματα ὧλες: Cf. ἤτει δὲ ψυχον τὸ πνευμα χάρις, Hipp., Ethicus, 5.10.2; p. 103, 15 W. (as cited by Tardieu, ibid., p. 207, who also contrasts the "bitterness" of matter with the "sweetness"—2αλασμόν, μητροσεσπόρου—of the Father in various Valentinian sources). Cf., also, Plotinus, Enn. II.3.17:24-25: ὧλες...πνεύματα καὶ πνεύματι πονόσας.

Fr. 130

1. νοσήματι τὸ ἔργον τοῦ ποτάρα: A reference to the intelligible perception of the Ideas. Cf., esp., ἔργα νοσήμα, fr. 39 and notes. Lewy (p. 212, n. 142) suggests this line may have made up the first verse of the oracle and proposes the following reconstruction: δηλοῦ ὃς ποτάρα ἔργα νοσήματα οἰκεῖον εἴλαθενται. (In the context of Proclus, however, the fragment is cited in the context of his discussion of Plato, Tim. 41 e ff., re the demiurgic creation of souls and their "star" vehicles prior to embodiment.)


3. άναδες: Elsewhere (cf. fr. 89, 135), descriptive of evil demons which, of course, pervade Nature/Destiny.

4. ἐν ὑπερ φυλαί: According to Lewy (p. 198, n. 88), analogous to σῶμα ἐκεῖ, fr. 97. Thus, in both instances, ὑπερ (in Lewy’s interpretation) refers to Aion. (See Lewy, esp. p. 201 ff.) The expression "to rest in God" is common. Cf., e.g., Synesius, Dio, 7, 46 B; Iamb., De myst., V, 26; Plotinus, Enn. IV,2.1-9. Cf., also, Augustine, Conf. 1,1: "Donec requiescat in te," and the eschatological "rest" (ἀνάπαυσας) of Marsanes, NHC X, 2.16. See Lewy, p. 197, n. 86; Cremer, p. 46 ff.; Geudtner, 76-77; Zandee, Terminology, pp. 33-38. Cf., also, the recent study of J. Helderman, Die Apanosis im Evangelium Veritatis, (Leiden, 1984).

5. ποσός ἀναμίλητος: An allusion to the noetic or intelligible "rays" of the Highest God, which correspond to the "flower/flare of mind" in the human soul. Cf. ποσόν, fr. 126; τοῦ ποσοῦ τοῦ ἀνακάτωτος, fr. 190.

6. ἐμπύριοι δρέπανα καρπῶν...ἀνθοῦς: The "flower of fiery fruits" is equivalent to the "flowering flames" (σοφα) as the noetic/empyrean source of the "flower/flare of mind." Cf. ἐμπύριοι οὐκ ἄνθροπος, fr. 37; δρέπανα...νοῦ ἄνθροπος, fr. 49; Proclus, In Tim., III, 82,12: ἐπιτρέπθη δὲ τὰς φύσεις τῶν ἐμπύριων καρπῶν; Exc. chald.; I, p. 192,20-21 Pitra: τὸ δὲ τῶν ἄνθρων ἡ κατανόησις τῶν θεοῦ καρπῶν; Synesius, H. II, (3), 639-641: πολύοι δ᾽ ἐργεῖν καὶ τῇδε ἄνθρωπον/μάρτυρα καρπόν. As a whole, the fragment suggests that the "rest" in Aion prepares the "flower/flare of mind" for the contemplative perception of the Highest God (suc) as described in fr. 1). See further discussion in Introduction.

Fr. 131

2. τῶν Παλαίνα: In the context of Damascus, a reference to Asclepius Paean. Lewy, however (p. 200, n. 102), suggests that a "paean" or hymn was sung by the ascending soul to praise the harmony of the universe. (Cf. ἀμφιώνοι fr. 97 and notes.) The singing of hymns (in both the ordinary and "indefeasible" sense) is a common element in apocalyptic experiences. See discussion in Introduction.

Fr. 132

1. καὶ...ἐνδέξασθαι: This line constitutes fr. 191.

2. στῇ ἔξω: In the context of Proclus, the initiative is called to be "silent" in the presence of the "indefeasible" order of the intelligible or Empyrean World. (See fr. 191 and notes.) "Silence" is not only the proper response of the initiate at this point, but characterizes the supercelestial realm as a whole. Cf., e.g., στῇ τῶν ποτάρων, fr. 16 and notes. "Silence" interspersed with prayers and/or
hymns) is also a common feature of both Hermetic and Gnostic patterns of ascen-
sect, see, e.g., C.F. XIII.16; Dice. 9-9, NHC VI, 58,20-25; 59,19-22; 60,1-5;
Suda, Stoth, NHC VII, 127,13-16; Allogenes, NHC XI, 60,15-18. Cf., also,
Symmios, H. 2(4), 82-86; Melihos Liturgy (ed. Meier), pp. 9; 13; 21.

3. ieros ( Equivalent to the "theoroi:"
υρος ήγα: i.e., the theurgic operations. Here, perhaps, an "photic expi-
ence; cf. fr. 146 re the "fiery" apparytions of Hecate. Cf., also, υρος όβιθου ήρα,
ς, fr. 66.

4. χωματις: Purifications via sea-water were widely practiced in Anti-
quity. Marinus (Vita Preli, 18) tells us that Proclus indulged in numerous
χαρακμεν (both Orphic and Chaldean), including bathing in the sea at least once
a month. Cf., also, Proclus, De Magia, 151,10-12 Biede, where Proclus mentions
purifications via πυρραιλιντος δαλτης and αναφης ("sulphur").

Fr. 134

2. μεθε σπειρας: One "hastens" or "flies" to the world of light, not to the
material world of darkness. Cf., esp., χρησιμες προς το φως κλ., fr. 115;
χρησιμες προς τον αντικλ., v. 5. Cf., also, μεθε κατω ναυσης, fr. 163 and 164.

κτισμα χαρακμον: The material world is described as "light-hating" because it is the
farthest removed from the intelligible world of light. Cf. Δ μορφος κόσμος, fr. 181;
τον μελανακην κόσμον, fr. 163; Psellus, P.G., 122, 1149
ς 5-4. δυο χθενος εκεινος και μορφη, διας ητων δ όπω σεληνη τοπος.

αληθης υλης: Matter is "boisterous" because of its passionate element. Cf.,
ibid., fr. 190.

4. αυχίμαρα: Cf. αυχιμαρον, fr. 100.

Εργα δεικων: "Flowing" is characteristic of matter. Cf., esp., μετανοι, fr. 128
and notes. See, also, the discussion of Saffrey, loc. cit. and p. 65, who suggests
that the inclusion of this line verbatim in Empedocles, καθαρμολ (fr. 121, Dids),
is not part of the original text but a later interpolation based on our fragment.

5. παρηκρας νου: Equivalent to παρηκρας νους; cf. fr. 39, 49, 108, 109. As
a whole, then, the oracle underscores the importance of disengaging oneself
from the thrall of matter if the ascetic to the intelligible world is to be successful.

Fr. 135

3. προι σωμα τελεσθης: A probable reference to the type of lustrations des-
cribed in fr. 133 (see Lewis, p. 227, n. 1). Another possibility, however, is that
the term σωμα here may allude to the vehicle of the soul (cf. the use of σωμα in
fr. 128 and notes), and thus the initiation mentioned here would include the vari-
qu "material" rites specified, e.g., by Psellus, P.G., 122, 1152 a 11-12. See
notes to Εργα, fr. 110.

4. δυτες γαρ χθενος...κυνης εισιν αναιδεις: Cf. χθενος κυνης, fr. 90 and
αιδεις, fr. 89, as similarly descriptive of evil demons.

Fr. 136

2. εν τοις: Cf. ϵν τοις ταξις, fr. 110 and notes.

4. ζωης δυναμεις: Cf. εν δυναμεις ζων, fr. 137 (with reference to the angelic
order). But the reference here is obscure. Lewis, p. 263 and r. 11, sees an allu-
son here to Hecate as δυναμεις, but such a possibility is unlikely; and so Cremer,
p. 64, n. 227.

κενας επι νεμπει ανεποποιητος: In other words, if the proper order of ascent is
not followed, the initiate is led astray by God (Aion) himself via demonic temp-
tation. See Lewis' discussion, pp. 262-263.

5. αντακτος και πλημμελος: Cf. fr. 2, where the initiate is analogously
counseled to approach the "empyrean channels" μεθ...παραλοθον...ιλλο
στιμπερθον.

Fr. 137

1. διγγελος: Angels made up one of the "orders" or "chains" (see fr. 138)
of the Chaldean hierarchy and performed an anagogic role during the Chaldean
rites (cf. frr. 122 and 123).

εν δυναμεις ζων: Here, "power" is clearly connected with the angelic order
(in contrast to the more ambiguous use of ζωης δυναμεις, supra, fr. 136).

2. ιερατικοις: Another designation for theurgy (cf. δια της ιερατικης θεωρησεως
αισθανομαι, Iamb., De myst., VIII.4), although the term has a broader appli-
cation. Among the later Neoplatonists, Iamblichus is regularly regarded as the
first hiratikos. See Lewis, Exc. IV, p. 464; Cremer, pp. 24-25.

Fr. 138

3. αντελακον εις γορος: In the context of Olympiodorus (which is a com-
tary on Phaedo, 72 b 1-3), the point is that the post-mortem soul of the theurgist
chooses to descend from the intelligible to the material sphere (via the angelic
order), presumably to aid the ascent of souls (cf., in this regard, fr. 122, 123).
See, also, Porphyry, De philos. ex or. haut., Wolff, pp. 144-145, where Porphyry
distinguishes a class of angels which remain in the presence of the Father (and,
thus, remain in the intelligible realm), and those which function as ministering
angels apart from the Father (see further discussion in Introduction). The im-
portant thing, then, is that the theurgist (as a member of the "angelic"
chain)—although not compelled to reincarnate (cf. fr. 160 and notes)—might choose to
do so in order to help others. In this regard, cf. Psellus’ report in De aurea catena
(as cited by Lewis, p. 224 and n. 125) that Julian the Chaldean "prayed" that
his son-to-be (Julian the Theurgist) would receive the "soul" of an "arch-
gangel." The figure of Osiris in Synesiou’s De Providentia is undoubtedly based
on this notion. See Hadot, *Porphyry*, I, pp. 394-395 and notes 2-3; Cremer, pp. 64-67; Smith, *Porphyry’s Place*, p. 152 and n. 18; Westerink, loc. cit., ad not.

**Fr. 139**

2. τὸν πυρικάλπην ἔννοιαν: A reference to the “kindling” of the “spark of soul,” or “flower/flame of mind” (see Festugière, *Tim.*, II, p. 33, n. 1; cf. πυρίκαλπην ἄναξαρα, fr. 126). Lewy, however (p. 87, n. 77), thinks this expression refers to the World Soul as a specific object of worship, but this is unlikely. Note, also, that Lewy mistakenly reads πυρικάλπην here, a textual error repeated by Des Places.

4. προσηύειν...τὰς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ θρησκείας: In the context of Proclus, a reference to the first stage of prayer (see fr. 121 and notes) which comprises knowledge (γνώσει) of all the classes of the gods.

**Fr. 140**

2. ἐθιδῦνειν: The proper sense of this verb is problematic. Lewy (p. 42 and n. 132, following Kroll) equates this fragment as a whole with fr. 141 (but in a positive sense) to mean that the “mortal” is “slow” to free the god in a meditative trance. Festugière (ibid., II, p. 34, n. 1) notes rightly that Lewy’s interpretation does not fit Proclus’ context and, thus, prefers to translate: “Les Bienheureux sont prompts à frapper le mortel lent à prier” (and so Des Places). But Festugière’s “à frapper” is gratuitous. In addition, since the context of Proclus is that of “continuous” (ἀδιάκοπος) worship, then the sense of ἐθιδῦνειν—

**Fr. 141**

2. ἔκλυνε...θεῷ: i.e., the “freeing” or “loosening” of the god bound by the medium. “Binding” and “loosening” are common magical techniques. See Lewy, p. 42 and n. 132 and discussion in Introduction.


1. ἐν τούτῳ (φῶς): For Simplicius, a reference specifically to the φῶς τὸ ἐπάνω τοῦ ἄνω ( = Paternal Monad; see notes to φῶς, fr. 51).

2. τὰ ἀκούοντα τοιούτου: According to Simplicius, it is in the supra(!)-Empyrean light of the Highest God that the gods take shape as τὰ ἀνθρωπικά θεότητα. Elsewhere, however (616, 18-20), Simplicius suggests that this “forming” process takes place within the Ethereal World. See Lewy, p. 246 and n. 68.

2. τὰ κοπάντων φῶς: Another reference to a luminous apparition of one of the gods (perhaps Hecate). See Lewy, p. 244, n. 63.

3. ἄνω: In the context of Proclus, a reference to the Empyrean (or intelligible) World. Cf., similarly, the use of ἄνω in frs. 112, 116.

3. ἀμφίτροπος: Cf. ἀμφώτορα, fr. 144; πῷ ἀμφώτορον, fr. 166; μορφὴ ἡντε, fr. 148. Διὰ τὴν πρόοδον ἐγένετο μεταμορφομένη: In Proclus’ interpretation, the “forming” or “shaping” of the gods takes place as a result of “procession;” i.e., the second movement of the process μορφής, πρόοδος, ἐπιτροπή. But this is a Neoplatonic, not Chaldean, doctrine. See Hadot, *Porphyry*, I, pp. 379 and n. 4; 407. Theiler, 1942, p. 18-1966, p. 273, cites Simplicius *H. 3(5), 59: χρῖς, ὅπως πατρός μορφὴ (with reference to Christ as the “Son”) as a reflection of this fragment. Similarly, cf. M. Victorinus, *H. 113, 151 ff.: “Forma filius...omnis forma Christus est.”

**Fr. 146**


2. The invocation alluded to here probably consisted of uttering nomina barbara combined with the offering of sacred mætra to the god invoked (in this case, Hecate). See Lewy, p. 240, n. 52.

3. πορ: The fiery apparitions of this fragment again suggest that the deity invoked is Hecate. Lewy (p. 241, n. 53) cites as a parallel, PCM IV.2727, ἐξήνεσθε, τριθύμοι, ποιήσαντες φάτνην ἔχωσα. As such, these fiery apparitions preceded Hecate’s epiphany.

4. πόρος ἄπιστον: Cf. τά ἄπιστα, fr. 144.

5. ἄφθονος: Lewy (p. 241, n. 53) suggests that the conjuration of Hecate took place in the open countryside. Cf. fr. 224 in this regard.

6. ἀξιόζον: Common to the Oracl. Cf., esp., πόρος, fr. 56 and notes for parallels.

7. ἐποχήμενος: Here, literally; but cf. frs. 36 and 193, where this term is used in a metaphysical sense.

8. τετέλεσθα: In Lewy’s interpretation (p. 242, n. 54), the “archer” here represents those unburied heroes who have suffered a violent death; therefore, like the παῖδες, they were doomed to accompany Hecate on her various wanderings.

Fr. 147

1. μοι: The speaker is Hecate; see Lewy, p. 242, n. 57.

2. ἐποχήμενος: codd. But Lewy, ibid., following Lobeck, Agmph., 1401 refers the reading πόρος ἀξιόζον to and thus understands the oracle as referring to various Hecatonic apparitions that preceded the manifestation of Hecate. In Psellus’ interpretation, however, ἀξιόζον is understood as a zodiacal reference. For Psellus, the fragment as a whole alludes to the invocation and manifestation of this “leoneine” source” during the course of a Chaldean rite. But a “leoneine” allusion to Hecate is also possible. Cf. Kroll, p. 30: “Leonese autem matris magnae currum vehunt.”

Fr. 148


2. ἐποχήμενος: Descriptive of the Empyrean World. Cf., e.g., ἄπιστον, fr. 73 and notes. See, also, fr. 144 and notes, where Simplicius states that the gods are formed in the Empyrean light of the Father. In Psellus’ interpretation, this fire is “very holy” ὡς ἐν καλῶς τοῖς ἑρματικοῖς ἄδιβασιν (sc. τοῖς θρούριοις) ὀρμώνειν.
Fr. 153

1. ταῦτα (sc. τῇ πεντάδι): In the context of Lydus, the equation of the number "five" with Heirmarmene is also cited as a Pythagorean doctrine.

τάς ἀποκατασταμάτας ψυχᾶς: This expression alludes to the Neoplatonic doctrine of the re-establishment or re-integration of souls at the end of a world-cycle (see Dodd, Proclus, El. Th., p. 302). But Lydus' use of this terminology in connection with the number "five" (as equivalent to Heirmarmene) is unclear.

2. υἱὸς εἰκοσικτήτων: In a Chaldean context, a reference to the corruption of matter. (Cf. Frs. 102 and 103, where εἰκοσικτήτων and ψυχᾶς are equated.) Thus, the fragment states that the thergetics are not subject to the passions of nature. Cf., Iamb. De myst., V.18: "οὐκ ἔχει ψυχήν τῆς σοφίας." See Proclus, In Tim., III, 157, 27. See also, Levy, p. 265 and n. 16.

3. οἵον τινάς συνήκαν ξανήν: Equivalent to the "herd" of frs. 153 and 154.

Fr. 154

1. ἀγαγιόν: Psellus correctly interprets this term (albeit circuitously) as referring to the human body. The image of the body as a "vessel" is common. Cf., e.g., Philo, Prov., 137; Migr. Atr., 193; 197. See, also, κοτός, fr. 186 and notes; Levy, p. 265 and n. 19.


Fr. 155

1. ἑρμηνευεῖν: Cf., esp., χρωμάτος, fr. 134.

2. ἄγαγιόν: Cf. ἄγαγιν, fr. 153. In the context of Proclus, the "herd" is comprised of those men who are embroiled in "opinions" as well as "irrational pleasures." See Levy, p. 53 and n. 171.

Fr. 156


2. οἵον τινάς συνήκαν ξανήν: Equivalent to the "herd" of frs. 153 and 154.

Fr. 157

1. ἀγαγιόν: Psellus correctly interprets this term (albeit circuitously) as referring to the human body. The image of the body as a "vessel" is common. Cf., e.g., Philo, Pot. Cen., 157; Migr. Atr., 193; 197. See, also, κοτός, fr. 186 and notes; Levy, p. 265 and n. 19.


Fr. 158

1. (τὸ πνεῦμα): i.e., the vehicle of the soul. Cf., esp., πνεύμα, fr. 104 and notes.

4. τὸ τῆς ἀληθὸς σκόπου: In the context of Synesius, an equivalent term for the πνεῦμα or vehicle of the soul. Psellus, however, loc. cit., mistakenly interprets this term as referring to the body (σῶμα) as a whole (influenced here by the Jewish view of the soul), though this notion of a corporeal resurrection is also the opinion of Kroll, loc. cit.

Lewy (p. 213 and notes 144-146), although rightly rejecting the idea of a corporeal resurrection as an authentic Chaldean teaching, nonetheless still uses the phrase σκόπος as referring to the body and not the vehicle of the soul. Lewy's interpretation is based on his erroneous understanding of οὐσία and κατάλοιπον as contrasting rather than equivalent terms (see infra).

καταλέξω: In Psellus' interpretation, a reference to the Material World (cf. χρυσός, fr. 164). Although Lewy (ibid) thinks that this term refers specifically here to Tartars (in the Underworld sense), the Chaldean conception of Tartarus with the world of matter (see fr. 164 and notes) makes such a singular judgement problematic.

5. σκόπος: In Synesius' interpretation, equivalent to τὸ τῆς ἀληθὸς σκόπου as descriptive of the πνεῦμα or vehicle of the soul. Cf. Porphyry, Sent. 29, p. 18 [13,7-14,1 M.], 3-12 L., where σκόπος and πνεῦμα are similarly equated. (See Lacombrade, Synéth., pp. 156; 164-169; Guettner, p. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; Dillon, Iamblichii Fragmenta, 373, n. 1; Des Places, p. 155, who all agree with Synesius' interpretation.) Since Psellus equates κατάλοιπον here with the irrational soul (ἡ θλογος ψυχή) and not the vehicle per se, it is possible that the Chaldeans may well have had confused the two without clear distinctions.

Lewy, however (p. 219), interprets κατάλοιπον here as referring to the soul in general, contrasting the κατάλοιπον (as soul) with τὸ σκόπος (as body). According to Lewy, the oracle as a whole promises the Chaldean initiate that his "body" (or "the dregs of matter") will be saved from post-mortem demonic persecution, while his "soul" (or "image") will travel upward. However, the oracle is not contrasting but equating τὸ σκόπος and κατάλοιπον. Thus, the oracle promises the initiate that his vehicle ("the dregs of matter" and "image") will also be saved (cf. frs. 128, 129 and notes in this regard). Since Lewy (p. 219, n. 168, following Dodd) rejects the possibility that the Chaldeans taught the post-mortem...
survival of the soul’s vehicle, he is necessarily driven to this particular reading of the fragment. But the majority of more recent scholars (see supra) accepts Synesius’ interpretation of this fragment as an accurate reflection of Chaldean teaching.


eis τούν αμφιγίαων: Descriptive of the Empyrean or intelligible World (cf. ἀμφιγίαων, fr. 1 and notes). In Synesius’ interpretation (141 b), the vehicle of the soul (here, the μέτων φῶν) becomes situated at the “summit of the elements” where it θέσεται ᾧ τοῦ ἀμφιγίαων (of the intelligible order). In Psellus’ interpretation, it is the irrational soul which finds a place “above the moon.” Thus, in both instances, the ἱεραμπωμα and/or irrational soul finds a permanent post-mortem dwelling place at the level of the Ethereal order.

Fr. 159

1-2. βία...κατάρατον: This fragment is particularly difficult and has been variously emended and interpreted. Psellus, for one, interprets the fragment in a Christian context and sees an allusion to Christian martyrdom whose violent deaths render their souls “purer” than those who have died by illness. Lewy (p. 205 and n. 122) keeps Psellus’ reading of κατάρατον (although omitting δρακόντων) and translates: “The souls of those who have left their bodies violently by this act are purified.” For Lewy, this statement refers to a “mythic voluntary suicide” on the part of the Chaldean initiate. But such a conjecture is gratuitous. As Dodds (“New Light,” p. 269 = Lewy’s, p. 698 and n. 21) points out, “Olympiodorus ( = Damascius, In Phaed., 369 [243, 4-6 N.] W.) distinguishes a “theurgic” death from that by suicide or violence. Dodds prefers Kroll’s emendation of κατάρατον (and sees a reference here to the βασιλεύοντας, i.e., the ghosts of those improperly buried, such as those killed in battle, who are doomed to restlessly wander the earth). I would agree with this interpretation and see a connection with fr. 146, where various ghostly apparitions are associated with Hecate.

However, another interpretation has been suggested by M. L. West (CR, N.S. 18, 1968, pp. 257-258) and subsequently adopted by Des Places. West has restored the second verse by using the line found in Schol. Arr. Epict., IV, 7, 27, p. 422 Schenk: ὣφθαν δρακόντοι καταρατέοντας ἣν ἐν νοοσὶ. However, the supposition that this is a Chaldean verse is unwarranted. The idea that death on the battlefield is superior to death by illness cannot be supported elsewhere as a Chaldean belief. (I am grateful to H.-D. Saffrey for this observation.)

M. Marcovitch (AP, 96, 1975, p. 30) has also found problems with West’s emendation. His objection is to ἀργήφασι, which Marcovitch finds redundant after βία. Marcovitch prefers to eliminate ἄργηφασι and keep the ἄργηφασι of the better class of Psellus’ manuscripts. On this last point, I would agree. However, Marcovitch would keep the reading καθαράτορας and supplement <ἄργηφως> (following West). But this reading still assumes that death by force (whether by suicide or other means)—as preferable to death by natural causes—is a Chaldean tenet. Once again, this is a dubious assumption. Therefore, Kroll’s emendation (with Dodds’ interpretation) remains the preferred reading of this admittedly problematic bit of verse.

Fr. 160

3. θείμων...όντως: According to fr. 138, the souls of the theurgists are seemingly exempt from this “law” of transmigration (unless they “choose” to reincarnate). Cf. C. H. X, 19: οὐδὲ θέμων έτέλεσεν εἰς ἄργηφασι τοῦ καθαράτορας κατατελείν. θείμων γάρ οὔτως ὀφθανέν τοῦ καθαράτορας ἀπό τῆς τοῦ καθαράτορας θέσεως. But cf. X, 7: 8, where the opposite view is expressed. See Nock-Festugière, Corpus Hermeticum, I, notes ad loc.; Lewy, p. 222 and n. 190. μαύρῳς: i.e., the gods. Cf., esp., máxaros, fr. 140.

5. αὐθεντὴ θερινός: Cf., on the other hand, Plotinus, e.g., Enn. III.4.2; IV.3.12, who asserts that a soul might be reborn in either animal or vegetable form as a consequence of yielding to its irrational nature. Porphyry (under the influence of the Oracles, no doubt) rejected this type of transmigration (see, e.g., De regissius an., p. 38*,10-15, Bidez; Lewy, p. 454, and n. 21). Porphyry, contra Plotinus, also seemingly maintained that the soul which had attained the intelligible order (via philosophical purification) would no longer be subject to reincarnation at all. This would also be true of the theurgists; see fr. 138 and notes. But Proclus (following Plotinus) rejected the permanent release of the soul (e.g., El. Th., prop. 206), but with the qualification that certain outstanding souls might spend several world-cycles in the intelligible order (e.g., In Orat., p. 68,10-69,3). See the discussion in Smith, Porphyry’s Place, p. 56 ff.

Fr. 161

1. ποιεῖν δρακόντος θετρικἐς: In Psellus’ paraphrase: αἱ παρακηγορητικὰ τῶν δαιμονίων φῶνας καὶ βασιλεύον τῶν ἄργηφασι τῶν ἀνθρώπων φῶνας. Lewy, however (p. 298, n. 151), understands ποιεῖν as a general, not personified, reference to post-mortem punishments in Hades. But either interpretation is plausible, as the Chaldeans conflate Hades with the Material World. In this regard, cf. C. H. 1.23, where the “avenging demon” (τιμωρός δαιμόνων) chastises them via the ἄργηφως τοῦ πυρός (in a post-mortem context) as well as “attacking” the authors. See Nock-Festugière, Corpus Hermeticum I, notes ad loc., for additional parallels in a variety of sources. See, also, notes to τιμωροὶ τῶν φῶνας, fr. 90.

Fr. 162

1. καταρατώτος: Lewy (p. 299 and n. 158) cites the “roaring” Erinyes in Eurip., Iph. Taur., 293; Kroll, loc. cit., refers to the “roaring” chasm of Tartarus mentioned in Plato, Rep. X, 615 e.

χιῶν: In the context of Psellus, a reference to Hades; i.e., ἐκ τοῦ καθαρὰτος τοῦ καθαράτορας ἐκ τῶν μέχρις. Cf. Plato, Rep., II, 366 a, where retribution in Hades extends up to the third generation. See Lewy, pp. 298-299 and notes 153-154; Des Places, pp. 182-183, for additional parallels.

Fr. 163

2. μηδὲ κάτω κατοίκησις: Cf. ibid., fr. 164; τό κάτω, fr. 34; τάς τέκνα κατοικίας, fr. 141. Forms of κατοίκια are used regularly in both Middle Platonic and Neoplatonic sources to describe the fall of the soul into matter. See, e.g., Lewy, p. 294 and n. 136, for several parallels. Cf., also, Cremer, p. 82 and n. 371; Hadot, Porphyry I, p. 183 and n. 5. Occasionally, however, κατοίκια also describes the turning of
the soul above. Cf., e.g., Plotinus, Enn. IV.4.8.54: "prós ἐν τοιτῇ τῇ νεύσῃ. (Cf., also, VI.6.1.19; 9.9.11.) See also, Synesius, Dio, 45 A; 50 B: ἐὰν τῷ δῷ νεάσῃ. See Greuter, p. 10 and n. 47.


3 = 5. βαθὸς/βάθος: Here, identified with matter. Cf., e.g., Synesius, H. 1(3), 562; ὁ βαθὸς ὄλος; ψ.; 9(4), 54-55: βαθὸς, κόσμοι; Psellus, P. C., 122; 1140 e 5: τὴν ἥλιον ἐν καλύπτει βάθος. See, also, βαθός κοσμίου, fr. 148 and notes; Lewy, p. 296, n. 139.

3. ἄξομα: Dam.; ἀπόστος, Synesius. The idea of matter as "unformed" or "formless" derives from Plato, Tim., 51 a, where the "Receptacle" (ὑσοδήμος) of the "generated world" is referred to as ἄναρταν ἐνθάντα ἐν ἄμα—ἐν ἄμα ἂν λέγων. Cf. Phaedo, 80 d;Crat., 403 a. See, also, Lewy, p. 296, n. 142.

4. ἐξωσύμπνοις: Synonymous with μελαναγκυῖο, supra.

μαννός: According to Lewy (p. 296, n. 148), descriptive of the "filth" of the Underworld where, especially, the sinners of Orphic teaching were to suffer.

eἰδωλοχαρίῳ: In the context of Synesius, this term is equated with the (δυ-ναμίνα)νέμημα. (Cf., in this sense, eἰδωλο, fr. 158 and notes.) For Synesius, these three verses describe the descent of τὸ νοερὸν στέρμα (="spark of soul," "flower/flame of mind") into matter. Cf., also, H. 1(3), 90-94: δαίμονες ὄλος/φόρα, ψυχὴ, ἐνδολοχαρίῃς/ἐνδολοχαρίας/ἐνδολοχαρίας/ἐνδολοχαρίας. Des Places (p. 146, following Keydell, 1941) suggests that this term is descriptive of the "insubstantiality of matter." Lewy (p. 297) sees an allusion to the "shades" of Hades. ἄναρτα: Matter, as the antithesis of the intelligible world, is necessarily "without reason." Cf., e.g., fr. 156, where the "demons" or "dogs" of matter are similarly described as ἄλλων.

5. χρυσαρνώδες: Cf. χρυσαρνός, fr. 158; χρυσαρνός, fr. 164.

σκέλης: Cf. σκέλος, fr. 172; C.H. 1.4: σκότος (=matter)...σκέλος ἐνσυμμετροῦν, ψ.; See Nock-Festugière, Corpus Hermeticum I, notes ad loc. Lewy (p. 297, n. 147) sees further a allusion to the sinuous rivers of the Underworld.


6. νυμφώνων ἄναρτα δέσμως: According to Lewy (p. 297, n. 145), this image is developed from the above passages in Plato's Timaeus, e.g., 50 d; 51 a (see supra); 52 d, where matter is connected with female generation.

ἀργυρός: Cf. ἀργυρός, fr. 94.
been conflated with Plotinus, *Enn. I.*9: οὐκ ἐξαιρέτηκι, ἃ καὶ ἐξαιρέτητα γὰρ ἔρχομαι τι...Kroll, loc. cit., also denies the fragment’s authenticity, assigning it a Pythagorean origin. In this regard, cf. Dodds (“Theurgy,” 1947, p. 57, n. 26 a = 157, pp. 301-302, n. 26), who points out that the “fragment cannot come from a hexameter poem. The doctrine is Pythagorean.” Lewy (p. 74) also denies the fragment’s authenticity, arguing that Psellus misread his source (Proclus) at this point. According to Lewy, Proclus’ attribution was to the Orphic not Chaldean tradition (the confusion resulting from the common use of the terms θεόλογοι). Des Places, however (p. 165, following Psellus), accepts the fragment as authentic, but notes that this would be the only instance in the *Enneads* where Plotinus cites the *Oracles.* Finanmore, (*Jamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul*, p. 8, n. 10) also argues for the fragment’s authenticity, suggesting that Plotinus may well have become acquainted with “Chaldean beliefs” through his students and would not have found this particular bit of verse objectionable. But this is conjectural, as we simply have no direct evidence that Plotinus was familiar with the *Oracles.* (See notes to fr. 155 in this regard.) In addition, Des Places also admits that the meter is difficult, even with his transposition τι ἔρχομαι (codd.: ἔρχομαι τι). The best evidence, then, is that the fragment is not Chaldean in origin.

Fr. 167

My translation of this fragment and introductory material is a slightly revised version of that of Morrow, p. 123.

4. κέντρον: In the context of Proclus, it is a matter of the “mathematical center” which “typifies” πάσων ἄρχην τῶν πεπλησμένων προδώμων. In this sense, cf. fr. 189, where Proclus alludes to the World Soul (= Hecate) as containing τό κέντρον τῆς προδοίας τῶν ἄνω ἀκόμην ἐν λαύρει. Elsewhere in the *Oracles* (see fr. 50 and notes), Hecate is also referred to as κέντρον. (In frs. 70 and 111, however, κέντρον refers to the central position of the sun.) But Lewy (p. 97, n. 130) connects this fragment with the introductory material to fr. 65 and thus understands κέντρον here as a reference to the earth. Similarly, Lewy understands κέντρον in fr. 70 as referring to the earth. In both cases, however, Lewy contradicts what he is aware of elsewhere; that is the sun, not the earth, which occupies the central position in Chaldean cosmology.

Δύναμις: For Proclus, this term is equated with τῆς περιπέτειας (“circumference”) in a mathematical context. Thus, for Proclus, πάσων ἀκόμην would refer to τάς γραμμάς (I. 2). Lewy, however, would equate δύναμις (in a Chaldean context) with the “vail” of heaven. For Lewy, then, the fragment as a whole describes the “central” position of the earth around which the planetary spheres (Lewy would supply αἱ σφαίραι as a subject) are “equally” (πάσων ἀκόμην) situated “up to the vail” (of heaven). But again, this interpretation contradicts the “sun as center” cosmology of the Chaldean system. In addition, the term δύναμις here may not allude to the heavenly “vail” but to the “orbit” of the planetary spheres. In this regard, cf. Proclus, *H.* II. 17: ἐνε ἐκά καὶ ἐκά κώλον ὑπὲρ ἄνως αἰθροὶ ναΐσ (sc. Aphrodite). Although the fragment undoubtedly has a cosmological context, its precise meaning remains problematic.

Fr. 168

1. (Ἀπόλλων): Cf. fr. 71, where Apollo is similarly identified with the sun. τὸς ὁλικός ἄρχης: Descriptive of the Ideas. Cf. Psellus, *Hyporuf.* 12: καὶ ἐν τῷ ἡλίῳ πυθή πρὸ τῶν ἀλκασιῶν ἄρχης: ἔτι γὰρ τὸν μὲν ἄρχην ἄρχης ὑποστήθη χαρὶνες μέσον τῶν ἑπτά πλανήτων τάτην ἔδρα τοῦ ἡλίου, συνάγωντα καὶ συνάγοντα τὰ δὲ εὐκατέρτα αὐτοῦ τρόπια. Thus, as Lewy notes (ibid.), the fragment apparently alludes to the central position of the sun surrounded by each side on three planets (cf. fr. 200 in this regard.) However, cf. fr. 8, where κατίχεος is used with reference to τὰ νοεῖν (= the Ideas) contained in the Demiurgic Intellect. Since the Ideas, as a whole, were conceived triadically in the Chaldean system (cf. the “measurable triad” of fr. 23; see, also, fr. 31 and notes), the fragment may well be a further reflection of this idea.

Fr. 169

2. ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα: “Once Transcendent” applies to the Supreme God or First Intellect who is monadic in nature (cf. παρθρονικά, fr. 11). In the context of Proclus, this Highest God is also described as ἀμιστλλοῦς, ἔνοψης, ἀθανάτος (cf. fr. 152), and πάσων συνοχής τῶν πτημάτων (cf. fr. 207). In addition, Proclus identifies ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα with Kronos. As an indivisible unity, ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα is to be distinguished from ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα (or “Twice Transcendent” = Second Intellect), who is dyadic in nature: e.g., *In Crat., 52, 1-3: καὶ σελέρων; αὐτότων γὰρ αὐτοῦ προσχωρεῖσα διὰ ἐπέκεινα καὶ διὶ ἐκεῖ, καὶ ἄπαξ αὐτῶν διὰ τὶ ὑδάτις κύκλημε. Cf. διὰς, fr. 8 and notes. See, also, Lewy, p. 77 and n. 43; Hadot, *Porphyre,* 1, p. 262 and notes 2-3; Des Places, *Isotimia,* p. 107, for additional parallels. Elsewhere, Proclus equates ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα and δῖς ἐπέκεινα with the names “Ad” and “Adad” (see *In Parm.* VII, ed. C. Steel, p. 512, 1-7 = El.-Lab., p. 60, 1-9, “Adad” is an apparent corruption of the Syrian “Hadad.”) As Dodds notes (“New Light,” p. 272 = Lewy 2, p. 701, “Ad” (as an “invented name”) would correspond to ἄπαξ, whereas “Ad” + “Ad” (or “Adad”) would correspond to δῖς (ἐπέκεινα). See, also, Theiler, 1942, p. 6 = 1966, p. 238). Of further interest is Prophyry’s identification of the δῖς ἐπέκεινα with the God of the Jews: ὁ μὲνοι Πορφυρίου ἐν τῷ ὑπομένατι τῶν κοσμίων τῆς ἐπέκεινα τινὲς τῶν ὑδατιῶν ἔνθες ἄξον, ὁ δὲ Χάριτας δύναμιν ἀπὸ τὸ ἄπαξ ἐπέκεινα, τοῦτον τὸ ἐγγούθει, τιμητεί (as cited by Lydus, *De mens.,* IV, 53; p. 110, 18-22 W). But whether this citation derives from Porphyry’s *De philos. ex or. haur.,* or from another Porphyrian work, is much debated. On this problem, see Lewy, p. 9 and notes 23-24; Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre,* p. 70*,* no. 50; Dodds, “New Light,” p. 267 = Lewy’, pp. 696-697; Hadot, *Porphyre,* 1, p. 264, n. 6.
Fr. 170

1. 

1. πνεύματος...ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπογείων τόπων: The notion that subterranean winds were the cause of earthquakes was common in Antiquity. See, e.g., Proclus, In Tim., I, 188, 1-12; Festugière, Tim., I, p. 245, n. 2; Lewy, p. 259, n. 2. For the later Neoplatonists, these “winds” became identified with subterranean demons. Cf. the ἱερὸν κόσμος of fr. 90; Marcus, Vita Procl., 28.

2. 

2. οὐλότοις πάλαις γ΄ ἀπόλεσθαι: Elsewhere, similar “apocalyptic” visions are explicitly said to be the work of demons. See, e.g., C.H. XVI.10; Asclepius, 25-26; Kore Kosmon, 53; 67; Porphyry, De abst., II.40.

Fr. 171

2. 

2. μηδὲ ποί᾽ ἐκ λήψις βεσσάμενον κτλ.: Although this verse has been reconstructed by Theiler (1942, p. 32, n. 1 = 1966, p. 290, n. 127; codex: μη ταπεινόν ἐκ λήψις βεσσάμενον χείμα), its Chaldean origin remains problematic (and so Tardieu, Lewy2, p. 680.) Lewy, p. 493, conjectures that the line has been placed here by Psellus from another passage. The vocabulary, however, fits a Chaldean context.

ἐκ λήψις: An allusion to the “forgetfulness” of the soul after its “fall” into matter. Cf. λήψις, fr. 109 and notes.

βεσσάμενον: Cf., esp., βεστόν, fr. 128; βεστά, fr. 134. See, also, ἄρο, fr. 56 and notes for additional parallels to this familiar term.

χείμα: Cf. πολυαχθόμενα φύλα, fr. 93 and notes.

Fr. 172

1-2. 

1-2. (τῆς Ὑλής) ἢ κατασκόρουντει πάλινοι σκόλιαι ἔθθουροι: This line has been tentatively reconstructed by Lewy (p. 303, n. 170, and so Des Places). Kroll, however, loc. cit., identified only σκολιά βίθρα (of Proclus’ text) as derived from a Chaldean verse. In this regard, cf. Proclus, In Plat., 104, 6: τῶν τε σκολιῶν ἄνθρωπων τῆς Ὑλῆς ἀναφαίνομαι. See, also, Festugière, Tim., V, p. 208 and n. 1, who cites Kroll, but does not mention Lewy’s reconstruction. Thus, Lewy’s restoration of the verse must remain in doubt (and so Tardieu, Lewy2, p. 680.)

1. τὸ λόγον τῆς Ὑλῆς: See fr. 134 and notes.

2. κατασκόρουντει: Cf., esp., καταπρόον, fr. 70.

πᾶλιν: Equivalent to the “herds” of fr. 135 and 154.


βεσσάμενοι: Cf., esp., βεστά, fr. 171 and notes.

Fr. 173

2. 

2. τὴν πρωτογενὴ Υλῆν: Tardieu (Lewy2, p. 680, following Kroll, loc. cit.) claims this fragment is Orphic, not Chaldean, in origin. Cf., in this regard, Olympiodorus, In Alc., 15 [19] 6-7 Cr.]: ἔτη γὰρ καὶ ἔτος ὑποαστῶν χείμα τοῦ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀπεγραφὴ καὶ θάνατος (see infra). Although Aphrodithe (I. 1) does not figure elsewhere in the Oracles, Proclus, H. II (τὰ Ἀρχαία) identifies Aphrodithe with the World Soul (in the manner of Hecate). This hymn as a whole (although modeled on Orphic Hymn 55: σὲ Ἀρχαία) reflects a conflation of Orphic and Chaldean terminologies. However, in neither Proclus’ hymn nor the Orphic hymn to Aphrodithe is the goddess referred to as ἡ πρωτογενής Ὑλή. Thus, the actual source of our fragment remains in doubt.

3. ἀντερχαί καὶ ὑποκαίρια: Cf. fr. 216, where Lydus again attributes these terms to the Oracles, but Olympiodorus (see supra) to Orpheus.

Fr. 174

Tardieu (Lewy2, p. 680) identifies this fragment as Orphic; Des Places (p. 108), however, sees a possible Chaldean origin because of Hermias’ use of the formulaic φησι τὰ λόγια. For Des Places, then, the fragment—in a Chaldean context—refers to the activity of Hecate as World Soul. Kroll does not mention this fragment at all. Lewy, p. 356, n. 168, mentions this line in passing, but only as a commentary on the self-moved soul of Plato, Phaedrus, 245 c, and not as a Chaldean hexameter. In addition, the vocabulary of this line reflects no particular Chaldean “stamp.” Thus, the actual source of this fragment must remain in doubt.

Fr. 175

1. 

1. περὶ τοῦ πρωτότοκον πατέρας: In the context of Proclus, this expression designates the Highest God under the mode of γῆ. In this regard, cf. τῇ θεοθρήμοισιν συνὶ τῶν πατέρων, fr. 16.

2. δύσαμεν πρωτότητος ἐμοὶ λόγου: For Proclus, descriptive of the Father before he is actualized as λόγος or Word. In this sense, δύσαμεν here would correspond to the second movement of the Primordial Triad (i.e., Father, Power, Intellect = Word). Cf. fr. 4 and notes; Proclus, In Tim., III, 222, 13-14: διαδιδακτέο γάρ την...παρεξιφανκισθὲ δ ἐμοὶ τῆς λόγους. Hadot (Porphyry, 1, p. 295, n. 1) notes M. Victorinus’ similar use of “silentium-verbum” in Adv. Art., III. 7.28-29 (cf. I. 13.31; 41.49), but suggests that these passages most likely reflect a conflation of Christian and Chaldean imageries. In this regard, cf. Synesius’s use of πατριώτης λόγος in H. 2(4), 129-140.) In a Chaldean context, Lewy (p. 112, n. 181) suggests that the fragment “possibly refers to the relationship between the intellection of the formation of the world and its realization” and sees a parallel with fr. 212. (Metrically, Lewy, idem would reconstruct the verse as: ἔμελον ἐμοὶ πρωτότητι παρεξιφανκισθῶν...). See, also, Kroll, loc. cit., who sees a possible allusion to the lyres as πατριώτης δυσαμεις.

Fr. 176

2. 

2. ὑπερβαθμίαν πάθα μετάν: “To throw the feet beneath the step” is not to follow the proper order (τάξις) of ritual initiation. Cf. frr. 110, 136, 164 and notes; Marinus, Vita Procli, 13: ἔν τάξις καὶ στὰ ὑπερβαθμίαν πάθα, κατὰ τὸ λόγον, τύνοντα. See, Lewy, p. 262, n. 10, for additional parallels to this expression.

Fr. 177

3-4. οἱ μὲν τελείρχαι κτλ.: Tardieu (Lewy2, p. 680) considers the vocabulary of this fragment Chaldean, but questions Des Places’ reconstruction of the meter. Neither Kroll (loc. cit.) nor Lewy (p. 155, n. 334) attempted to isolate a hexameter from Damascius’ prose.
3. οἱ τελετάρχαι: The rulers of the three worlds; cf. fr. 86 and notes.
4. τοῖς συνοχείοις: The "Connectors" of the various parts of the Universe; cf. fr. 32 and notes. In Damascius' system (following Proclus), the 'Teletarch and Connectors (as well as Lynges) are situated in the "median" intelligible-and-intellectual order.

Fr. 178

2. ἅρματος σημαίας (τῆς) διανοίας: Des Places (p. 109, following Diehl) identifies these words as Chaldean (and translated "de la pensée"). Lewy (p. 59, n. 138) notes only that these words might "allude" to a "Chaldean phrase." Festugière, however (Tim., IV, p. 31 and n. 4), prefers to translate these words as part of Proclus' commentary ("de ma pensée"). Tardieu (Lewy, p. 680) is of the same opinion. In the context of Proclus, these terms sum up his comments on Aion (see fr. 49), but do not, therefore, demand a Chaldean origin. Forms of ἅρματος, e.g., are used elsewhere by Proclus, but not in any explicit Chaldean context. Cf., e.g., Th. pl., I.3; p. 14, 6 S.-W. Saffrey and Westerink, notes ad loc., point out that ἅρματος is a "metaphoric expression" which comprises part of the vocabulary of Neoplatonic "negative theology." Cf., also, Th. pl., I.11; p. 55, 5 S.-W.; I.20; p. 95, 23 S.-W.; In rep. p., I. 78, 31; In Aie., 149 [3.9,14 Cr.] W.

Fr. 179

1. τὴν νοητὴν: Analogous to τὸ νοητόν, fr. 1.
2. τιμήσας: In Lewy’s interpretation (pp. 106-107 and n. 168), it is the cooperation of the Father’s Intellect, Will, and Power which brings about the initial "division" of the intelligible world into triads. Cf. νοητοὶ τομαίοι, fr. 1; τιμαθεθήσατε, fr. 22.
(τὰ)...ἀρχῆς: Cf., esp., πατρικὴς ἀρχῆς, fr. 13.

Frr. 180 and 181

Des Places has isolated the words that comprise these two fragments from Proclus, In Tim., III, 325, 29-326, 1 (see fr. 172). Since these terms simply repeat the terminology of fr. 134, v. 1, Tardieu (Lewy, p. 680) rightly suggests that they should be excised here.

Fr. 182

1. (τῇ) μέσῃ τάξει τῶν νοερῶν): See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 484. This particular τάξις would be equivalent to Hecate as ἡ ζωγράφος θεά.
1-2. ἡ τε ἀρέτη καὶ ἡ σοφία: Cf. fr. 52, where ἀρέτη is said to reside in Hecate. In fr. 107, ἀρετή and σοφία are mentioned together in connection with ἀνθρώπως as planetary virtues.
3. ἢ πολὺ ἐρωτευόμενον ἀρχεία: Lewy (p. 50 and n. 160) translates this expression as "thoughtful truth," and notes that ἀρχεία is the equivalent of ἀλήθεια. This latter term is found elsewhere in the Oracle in connection with ἐπιστήμην and ἐρωτεύομαι (see fr. 46 and notes). πολὺ ἐρωτευόμενον, of course, is Homer’s epithet for both Odysseus (e.g., Od. 14. 424) and Hephæstus (e.g., Od. 8. 297). Chaïgnet

(Damascius, II, p. 208) translates the fragment as "la vérité avec ses pensées multiples." Des Places (p. 110) prefers "la rectitude ingénieuse." Cf., also, Synestus, H. 1(3), 156: ἀρχαιῶν σοφ.

Fr. 183

2. τὸ δ’ ἄρχειας ἐν βαθείᾳ ἑστι: Tardieu (Lewy, p. 680) identifies this fragment as a precept from Democritus and, therefore, not Chaldean in origin. The same suggestion is made by Cremer (p. 56, n. 152), who specifically cites Democritus, fr. 117 (Diels): ἐν ψυχῇ γὰρ ἡ ἀλήθεια. Lewy (p. 146, n. 293) was apparently unaware of the Democritean parallel and assumed the fragment was authentically Chaldean. Des Places (p. 110) remains uncertain. Although the source of the fragment is probably Democritus, this does not then preclude that the Chaldeans may have "borrowed" this fragment for their own purposes. The vocabulary certainly fits a Chaldean milieu.

τὸ ἄρχειας: Cf. ἀρχεῖα, fr. 182.
ἐν βαθείᾳ: Cf. βάθος, fr. 184; βυθόν, fr. 18; βυθὸς/βάθος, fr. 163.

Fr. 184

1. ὁ ἡλιακὸς κόσμος: In the context of Pselus, this expression refers to the mundane sun of the Ethereal World and not to the transmundane sun or "whole light" of Asion as Lewy suggests (see p. 151 and n. 313; cf. fr. 59 and notes). Lewy mistakenly understands Pselus to mean that ὁ ἡλιακὸς κόσμος is situated above the fixed stars (and, thus, in the Empyrean World). But Pselus simply does not make this distinction. Indeed, he suggests just the opposite, by describing—in descending order—the "chain" of Chaldean realities, placing ὁ ἡλιακὸς κόσμος after ὁ ἐπιστήμων κόσμος (and so on, not above, the fixed stars).

2. βουλεύουσας βαθεὶς αἰθέρας: Cf. Proclus, Th. pl., II.7 p. 54, 9-11 S.-W.: τὸν ἥλιον...ἀπὸ τῶν αἰθέρων προελθόντα βυθόν. But in what sense the ‘solar world’ or mundane sun ‘serves the ethereal depth’ is problematic. Forms of βουλεύουσας are common to the Oracles, but in other contexts; e.g., fr. 73, 80, 81.

Fr. 185

1. ὁ ἀληθετερος ἕλιος: An allusion to the transmundane sun (or Aion). See Lewy, p. 152, n. 314; cf. fr. 59 and notes.
2. χρόνου χρόνος: The inference here is that the “truer sun” (or Aion) functions as time source of Time. But to what extent Chronos, as a god, was distinguished from Aion in the Chaldean system remains problematic. See, esp., notes to ἄκουμενος χρόνος, fr. 57. Cf., also, Proclus, El. Th., prop. 53: δὲ μὲν ἄλοι παιῶν, δὲ δὲ τῶν χρόνων χρόνος; Synestus, H. 5(2), 67: σῶς δ’ ἄλοι παιῶν; PCGM IV. 2197-2198: τῶν ἄλοι διάπηξ, τῶν ἄλοι παιῶν. See, also, Dodds, Proclus: El. Th., p. 228 ff.

Fr. 186

2. βυθοῦ: i.e., the state of flux associated with corporeality. Cf. βυθότων σώμα, fr. 128.
κύτος: i.e., the human body. See Lewy (p. 277 and n. 72), who cites Plato, Tim., 44 a, as the locut classicum: τὸν ψυχήν ἄκουν κύτος. Cf., analogously, ἄγγελον, fr. 157.
2. σάμμαρον ἀγαλμα: This expression reflects the vocabulary of frs. 37 (παμμέρος νέας) and 101 (ἀφσέπτων ἄγαλμα). For Olympiodorus (cf. ibid., 157 [68,3 N.] W.), the expression refers to the individual soul which contains all of the “Principles” (= Forms) of existence. For this notion, cf., e.g., Plotinus, En., IV.3.10.10-13; V.7.1.7-8; VI.2.3.11-14; Proclus, El. Th., prop. 195 (as cited by Westerink, loc. cit., ad not.). The precise Chaldean application of this expression, however, is uncertain.

VARIOUS CHALDEAN EXPRESSIONS

Fr. 187

1. ἀγάλμα: Although Proclus associates this term both with the Orphic and Chaldean traditions, this term may properly be Orphic in origin (and so Tardieu, Lewy\(^2\), p. 680, contra Lewy, p. 79, n. 48). Cf., in this regard, Orph. Fr. 54 (Kern): χρόνος ἀγάλμα. For Proclus, the “order” (τάς) associated with ἀγάλμα is that of Kronos (≠ ἡ ἀγάλματα; see fr. 169). Cf., also, Synesius, H. 8(9), 67, where ἀγάλμα is descriptive of Αἰών. Elsewhere, Synesius uses forms of ἀγάλμας in a variety of contexts; e.g., H. 1(3), 344, 480; 2(4), 152; 9(2), 45. Although Synesius is primarily dependent on the Oracles, his use of this term may reflect a conflation of Orphic and Chaldean material (mediated, perhaps, through Porphyry).

Fr. 188

Tardieu (Lewy\(^2\), p. 680) wants to excise this fragment (as well as frs. 195, 199, 200) on the basis that these terms are derived from the prose works of Julian the Theurgist rather than from the Oracles. However, inclusion of these terms (although methodologically problematic) does enhance our understanding of the Chaldean system as a whole.

1. τοῦς Ἀσσυρίας: A circumscription for the Chaldean tradition. See Lewy, Exc. 1, p. 444 e. ζωήν καὶ ἀλλοι: These are “Time” gods associated with the planetary spheres—the ζωήν (or ζώων; cf. fr. 195) dependent on the planetary orbits, the ἀλλοι independent of these movements. Cf. Synesius, H. 1(3), 282-283: ζωήν καὶ ἀλλοι. Psellus Hypotyp., 18, situates these Time deities just below the Archangels in the Chaldean “chain.” In addition, the Chaldeans also recognized other Time gods associated with Day, Night, Month, and Year, all of which were invoked by various κλεισία. See, e.g., Proclus, In Tim., III, 40, 31-41, 5, 11, also, Festugière, Tim., IV, pp. 45-47, n. 1; 64, n. 1; Lewy, p. 135, n. 267.

πτημα: Cf. fr. 30, 37, 49, 56.
ἀμελείκτο: Cf. fr. 35, 36.
2. συνοχής: Cf. frs. 32, 80, 82, 177, 207.

Fr. 189

1. ἁμαρτάνει: Here, descriptive of Hecate who, as Kroll notes (p. 27, n. 2), traditionally held torches in either hand. For the later Neoplatonists, however, this expression has become a metaphysical term. Cf., in this regard, ἁμαρτάνει, fr. 1; ἁμαρτάνοντα, fr. 158. See, also, Damascius, I, 315, 20; II, 152, 23: ἁμαρτάνει Ἐκάτη.

ἁμαρτάνουσας: This term is also descriptive of Hecate who, as the mediating World Soul, has a “double” aspect, viz., she looks both towards the intelligible and sensible orders. Traditionally, statues of Hecate were depicted with three or four heads and known as τριπρόσωπος or τετραπρόσωπος. See Lewy, pp. 95 and n. 111; 355 and notes 164-166, who notes that ἁμαρτάνουσας was a term also used by Plutarch (e.g., Num. 19) to describe Ianus Bifrons. In this regard, note that Proclus addresses Ἱμνον VI in common to Hecate and Janus. See, also, Festugière, Tim., III, p. 170, n. 1.

κόλπος: Common to the Oracles. Cf. esp., Ἐκάτης κόλπον, fr. 32; προτρότικον κόλπον. Ἐκάτης, fr. 35; Ἕλεν...κόλπουν ἄρατος...δεπαγμένη, fr. 56.

3. τὸ κέντρον: Cf. esp., Ἐκάτης κέντρον, fr. 50; κέντρον, fr. 167 and notes.

Fr. 190

2. ἀνάκτορα: Cf. αὐτοπτος διάλεγμα, fr. 101; αὐτόπτος φάμας, fr. 142. 3-4. τοῖς πυρσοῖς ἀνάκτορας τοῖς ἀναγωγοῖς: Although these terms do not constitute a hexameter verse, it is probable that forms of ἀναγωγοὶ in connection with “fire/light” did figure in non-extant verses of the Oracles. In this regard, cf. Proclus, H. IV.2: ἀναγωγοῦν ἐφέμενον τῷ; III.1: ἀναγωγοῦν τῷ; Synesius, H. 1(9) 376, 594, 689: ἀναγωγοῖς, fr. 126; ἀναγωγοῖς, fr. 130. (See, also, Lewy, p. 261, n. 7c.) Tardieu, however (Lewy\(^2\), p. 680), feels that Des Places isolation of ἀναγωγοῖ as a specific τὸν Chaldeasion is unwarranted, as this term is also familiar to Platonism. See discussion in Introduction.

Fr. 191

1. περὶ ἐκείνων: In the context of Proclus, a reference to τὰ πρὸ τοῦ ὄρασιν. See fr. 132, which is a continuation of this statement.

ἀφθηγήτων: Cf. βουλεύεις ἀφθηγήτων, fr. 77; Bides, C.M.A.G. VI, p. 163, 9 (as cited by Lewy, p. 77, n. 38): Χαλδαῖοι ἐν παντὶ τῷ πρῶτῳ αἰῶνι, ἐδ οὐ καὶ ἀφθηγήτων ἔγκυον. The “ineffability” of the intelligible order, especially that of the Highest God, is common to Middle Platonism. Cf., e.g., C.H. 1.31; Tri. Trac., NHC I, 56, 3. 27, 123, 37; Zatt., NHC VIII, 74, 21; 126, 10; Val. Ex., NHC XI, 22[20]; 24, 39; 29, 31-31. See Lewy, p. 328, n. 59 for additional parallels. But whether the Chaldeans used the term “One” for the First God is problematic; see notes to frs. 9 and 10.

Fr. 192

1. ἰνολάος: Although Simplicius further identifies this term as Platonic, the locus classicus is Arist., De an., 403 A 25. Cf. fr. 69 and notes re the “materiality” of the sky.
Fr. 193

1. κλεοκι: (ὑπερχομένων): For Proclus, these "supermundane souls" μέσα νέονες εἶναι καὶ τῶν ἐγκριμών ζωήν. Fr. 193.

2. ἐποχεταίον: Cf. ἑποχεταίον, fr. 36 and notes. The sense of "being vehicled" approaches the notion of the δχιαςνείμα. See fr. 120 and 201.

1-2. ἐποχεταίον...ὑπερχομένων: τίνι, αἰθέροις καί ἐπιμορίοις: Proclus' language is ambiguous here and may reflect a confusion between the seven planetary spheres and three world circles. Cf. In Tim., II, 57, 12-14: τά ὑπὸ τῶν κόσμων στερεότατα τί φθάσαμεν, εἰτε Ῥώμηαν χρή καλλίτωπε, εἰτε ἐμπόρινω, εἰτε αἴθερας; See also, στερεότατα, fr. 57 and notes.

Fr. 194


3. θεώσων τῶν μακαρίων: Here, a reference to the Chaldean initiates. See Lewy, p. 463 and n. 15.

Fr. 195

1. τὸν χρόνον καὶ ζῶον (ἐκ τοῦ μεσογέα) ὡς θεόν: Cf., similarly, fr. 195: ὡς θεόν...δύναται <τούτου> τὸν θεόν (ἐκ τοῦ χρόνου). Cf., also, ἄκτινας χρόνου, fr. 37 and notes; χρόνου ἄπαντον, fr. 39; χρόνου χρόνον, fr. 185.

2. Κοινοτόν: Κοινοτόν: Equivalent to the ζησμάτων and ζησμάθων of fr. 188. In the context of Proclus, three additional Time gods are mentioned: an ἀρχαγγέλης χρόνον; an ἀρχαγγέλη (χρόνον); a πυθαγόρα (χρόνον). This sequence of five Time gods is related, respectively, to the planetary orbits, a third ethereal heaven, a second ethereal heaven, a first ethereal heaven, and finally the empyrean heaven. Beyond the planets and heavens lies the πυθαγόρα θεός, or Rhea-Hecate, as the source of this "chain." Cf. Psellus, Ἡρωδώτης, 16-19, where the same sequence is repeated. See, also, Festugière, Tim., IV, p. 64, n. 1.

Fr. 196

1. ἀνατάκτην θεοῦ παράσ: An allusion to the central rite of the Chaldean initiation; i.e., the purification of the δχιαςνείμα via the mystical rays of the sun. Cf., esp., fr. 66, 110 and notes.


3. τῆς ἄγνωστης πεύκεια: For Proclus, the "pneumatic" vehicle of the lower soul is distinguished from the "luminous" vehicle of the higher soul. But this is not a Chaldean doctrine. See, esp., fr. 119 and notes.

Fr. 197

1. κλεες: In the context of Damascius, the term "key" designates both the "intellectual division" (νοερή διάδοσις), understood in its totality as "connective" (κοινόσημον), and the "intelligible division" (νοερή διάδοσις), unconnected as "eternity" (αἰών). Indeed, κλεις may well have an Orphic origin. Cf., e.g., Orph. Fr. 82 (Kern), where Phanes is designated κλεις φῶς; Orph. Hymn 1. 7 (ed. Athanasakias), where Hecate is called χλεωδομόν. Cf., also, Proclus, H. 1.3, where it is the sun who ἔχει κλεις. See, also, Lewy, pp. 150, n. 393; 563, n. 200.

Fr. 198

1. ὁ κτένος κατακλύσιμος: This is most likely an Orphic expression (and so Tardieu, Lewy, pp. 680; Dea Placent, p. 113; Lewy, p. 78, n. 45; Hadot, Farbehre, I, p. 306, n. 4). In Orphic terms, this "hidden order" is symbolized by the Orphic "egg." Cf. Proclus, loc. cit., I. 5: ὡς τὸ γαίον τὴν συμπεριοτέτοναι αἰθανα τὸν ζῷον προτείγην. Festugière, however, (Tim., II, p. 307, n. 2, following Diehl), does not discount a Chaldean origin. In this regard, cf. Damascius, I, 284, 7: τὸν τούτου διάκοσμον...δω...τοις αἰонομεγέθειας. As such, the "hidden order" would correspond to the Chaldean Paternal Abyss as the source of all things. See Lewy, Exc. VII, p. 483.

Fr. 199

This fragment, although Chaldean in inspiration, most likely derives from a prose work of Julian the Theurgist and not from the Oracle. See introductory comments to fr. 188.

1. προσόντερος καὶ νεοτέρος: The locus classicus is Plato, Tim., 33 a, where these comparatives are descriptive of "forms of time" (χρόνου ἐθέλιον) which "imitate eternity" (ἀποθεόμετρον). Cf. Synesius, H. 8(9), 67-69: ᾿Αὔτον ἀγάπησεν Αἴων ο παλαμανής/νοερὸς ο θάμα καὶ θάμνοι. Lewy (p. 103, n. 154) feels that these lines from Synesius give further evidence that Aion and Chronos were equated in the Chaldean system. Dodds maintains, however, that the two gods were distinct (See notes τοῦ ἐκκοπητικοῦ χρόνου, fr. 37.) In this regard note that in ν. 63 of the aforementioned hymn, Synesius specifically mentions ἀκατακτοποιηθέν Χρόνος as distinct from Aion. Thus, pace Lewy, Aion and Chronos may well have been distinct in the Chaldean system as well, despite Synesius' free use of epithets, viz. "young and old;" "unaging." Kυκλακώτας: My translation is based on Festugière, Tim., IV, 39: "se déroulant en cercle." Des Places (p. 113) translates: "à la révolution circulaire." Cf. Lewy, p. 102 and n. 151: "moving in a circle." This expression is also found in Orph. Hymn 8. 11 (ed. Athanasakias): κυκλακώτας (but here, descriptive of the sun). Aion, of course, is equated with the transmundane sun in the Chaldean system.

2. ἀκατάστατος: Time is "eternal" in the sense that it "imitates" Eternity but, in Plato's words (Tim., 37 c), ἀκατάστατος.
1. **στροφέων**: In the context of Proclus, this term refers specifically to the "pneumatic" vehicles of embodied souls. The original text of Plato, however (Tim., 41 e), referred to the "vehicles" of the stars. See discussion in Introduction; Festugière, Tim., I, p. 28, n. 2.

2. **τῶν στερεωμάτων**: Cf. fr. 57 and notes, σικαρία: Kroll, loc. cit., (and so Tardieu, p. 689; cf. Lewy, p. 84, n. 66) identifies this term as Orphic. Cf., e.g., Ὀρθ. Fr. 166 (Kern): σικάρια χρυσοτιρί. (The loc. classicus is II, 8, 18.) Theiler, however (1942, p. 27, n. 4 = 1966, p. 285, n. 109; see, also, Des Places, p. 114, ad n.) argues for a Chaldean origin: "Die σικαρία...durfte...in den Orakeln gestanden haben, ja von da im Sinne von 'Abhängigkeitserreichte' zu den Neuplatonikern gelangt sein." Cf. Psellus, Hypotyp., 28: έκάστας δὲ σικάρια ἡ αὐτόντος πτήλη ονομάζεται. Kroll, loc. cit., argues that the Chaldeans substituted πτήλη for σικαρία, but such a conjecture is unwarranted. Cf., e.g., Synesius, H. 1, 289-290: ἀλτηλοκο...σικάρια. Proclus, In rem p., II, 255, 26: τῆς ἀλτηλοκοσικαρίας. Cf., also, τάξις, fr. 24, 110 and notes, which is analogous to σικαρία.

3. **συνοχείας**: In the context of Proclus, this term is specifically descriptive of ὁ σύνθετος άνθρωπος (see fr. 152, of which this fragment is a continuation). Cf., also, ὁ πρότερος συνοχείας, fr. 84 and notes.

4. **στροφάλοις**: According to Psellus, Hecate’s "magic wheel" was a golden disc embedded with a sapphire and inscribed with magical characters. (Psellus also equates this term with φυτίς.) Thus, by spinning this wheel, the transcendent lynges (see fr. 76, 77) were "called on" to participate in the Chaldean rites. In Lewy’s words (p. 290): "We may accordingly suppose that when the magical instrument was set in motion, it affected per analogiam the revolving spheres and attracted the celestial lynges." The spinning of the στροφάλοι/φυτίς could also affect the weather. Marinus, loc. cit., tells us that Proclus ended a drought in Attica by using φυτία τινα. Cf., also, στροφάλοις, fr. 49 and 87; C.M.A.G. VI, p. 201, 20 (Bidez): ἡ Ἐκτακτική δὲ στροφάλοι μετὰ τοῦ ταυροῦ Ἰάννου καὶ τῆς ἱερής ἐπέλευσες ἡμέρας μένων καθινή. See, also, Lewy, p. 249 and notes 78-80. My translation of the fragment is that of Lewy.

5. **στροφέων**: See commentary fr. 206.
Fr. 209

The term ὑπερχώσιος is part of the introductory material to fr. 59 and is discussed there.

Fr. 210

1. χαλκός/χύμων: In the Iliad (14. 291), χαλκός is a name given by the gods to an unknown bird, which men refer to as κύμων. But the precise Chaldean use of these terms remains problematic. However, since Proclus associates χαλκός with χαλκός ("brass"); Lewy (p. 291 and n. 124) surmises that brass instruments were used in the Chaldean rites to drive away evil spirits. The clanging of brass or copper instruments for apotropaic purposes was a widespread popular practice in Antiquity. In this regard, see Bailey, The Religion of Ancient Rome, p. 39 re the clanging of brass instruments to drive away ghosts at the time of the Lemuria in May.

Fr. 210a

Fragments 210a-c are now cited by Des Places as containing additional Chaldean vocabulary, although he notes that these terms are not exclusive to the Oracles. See "Notes", p. 328.

1. μαλάχης ἀτέξθατόν: "Mallow" is a plant known for its laxative effect. Evidently the Oracles prescribed various remedies for each month of the year. See fr. 210b and Des Places, *ibid*. On the relation of various Chaldean rites and the health of the body, sec, e.g., Iamb., De myst., II.6: ἐὰν τῶν θεῶν παρουσία δίδην ἡμῖν ἵματι σώματος, ψυχής δρετήν, νοῦ καθαρότερα κτλ.

Fr. 210b

1. χαλκοστατόσεν: On the medicinal value of milk, see PW, 15,2, s.v. Milch, esp. cols. 1573-1576.

Fr. 210c

1. δημιουργικαῖς δυνάμεισι: These "demiurgic powers" were responsible for creating the world. Cf. Proclus, Th. pl., 380, 51 ff.; Lewy, p. 92, n. 106.

2. θεορτύγων παιδεύ: Most likely a reference to theurgists, in general, who followed the teachings of the Julians.

2. χείρας: As "hands," these demiurgical powers were believed to contain certain properties peculiar to each hand. According to Proclus, In Tim., II, 260, 24-28, the Chaldeans symbolized the life-giving power of the World Soul through terms associated with Hecate; e.g., "temples," "hands," "joins," etc. See Lewy, p. 92, n. 107; cf. frs. 51 and 52. See, also, fr. 68, where the expression αὐτοφοργών ("working with his own hands") describes the creative activity of the Second or Demiurgic Intellect.

Fr. 211

1. τοῦ δοχῆς: Lewy (p. 41 and n. 126; cf. Exc. III, p. 458) argues that this *nomen agendi* is a Chaldean neologism; thus, despite the meter (trochaic tetrameter), Lewy feels this verse has a probable Chaldean origin. Dodds, however ("New Light," see *supra*), because of the meter, argues for a Porphyrian origin, noting that although the later Neoplatonists connected this term with the practice of theurgy, they probably learned it from Porphyry and not from the Oracles, despite Proclus’ use of the formula *φθανέ* τις θέων (See, also, Wolff, p. 160.) The more common expression is *κάτω* χορός. In a theurgical context, the "recipient" is the medium who "receives" the conjured god. (Proclus cites this verse in conjunction with fr. 146 re the conjuration of Hecate.)

Fr. 212

1. ἀδῃ λέγει νόες: cf. Des Places (for metrical purposes). Again, the problem with this verse (as a whole) is one of meter (which Des Places has constructed as an iambic trimeter). But Lewy (p. 112, n. 181) accepts a Chaldean (trochaic tetrameter), and understands this verse in conjunction with fr. 175. Kroll, loc. cit., also suggests a Chaldean origin, but admits that the verse may have been part of Psellus’ interpretation. In light of the metrical difficulties, this is a likely supposition. In the context of Psellus, the line refers, in general, to the communication between man and God ἐκατος καθος ἐχει φύσιςς ἐνέργων.

Fr. 213

On the basis of "terminology, form and contents," Lewy (p. 172, n. 403) considers this oracle authentically Chaldean. Des Places, however (p. 151), points out that the facility in phrasing contrasts with the "laborious composition" of the undoubted fragments. In addition, Diodorus’ expression of ἐξωμα is the source of the quote—is a general expression and not used elsewhere as a specific introductory formula for Chaldean material. The vocabulary, however, as Lewy notes, has points of similarity with the undoubted fragments.

2. φέστη τάξεω: The theme of "swift flight" is common to the Oracles. Cf. frs. 107, 115, 116, 130, 134.

5. αιθέρια πατρὸς αύλης: In the undoubted fragments, however, the Father's (Ierés) essence is associated with the Empyrean, not Ethereal realm. Lewy's explanation (p. 173, n. 405) is weak: "The designation of the noetic essence as αἰθέρια (instead of ἐξ ζυμος) πατρὸς αύλη is due to their (sc. "the vision of the Ideas") being mediated by the solar rays."

Fr. 214
Again, Didymus attributes these lines, in general, to οἱ ἔκαστοι ἔθνη. Des Places (p. 151), considers the oracle more Stoic than Chaldean in inspiration. Lewy, however (p. 86, n. 74), feels the last two lines may have a Chaldean origin because of the use of χάρις and ἔλεος. Although forms of ἔλεος are found passim in the undoubted fragments, χάρις is not similarly attested (but cf. χρησποίνοι, fr. 35). χάρις is found in conjunction with ἔλεος in Thes. 35, but Dodd has shown, contra Lewy, that a Chaldean origin for this material is problematic. See "New Light," pp. 265-266 = Lewy II, pp. 695-696; cf. Des Places, pp. 55-56. (Des Places would now consider placing Thes. 35 among the "Doubtful Fragments" of the Oracles, but with the same reservations expressed re fr 213 infra. See ANRW II, II.17.4, p. 2903.)

Fr. 215
Although Lydus uses the formulaic δ ἐρασμὸς (see Lewy, Exc. II, p. 446 p), these lines are most likely not Chaldean in origin. Des Places (p. 151) notes that the notion of God (Zeus) dispensing evil is congenial neither to the Oracles nor to Neoplatonism. The literary model is II. 24. 528-533. In addition, as with fr. 213. Des Places again contrasts the facility of composition with the "vigour Chaldaïque." Finally, the vocabulary lacks any distinctive Chaldean "stamp." The oracle is ignored by Lewy and Kroll.

Fr. 216
Lewy (p. 267, n. 25) argues that these verses are Chaldean, but an Orphic origin is also possible. See comments, infra.
3. ἐνοδία πνεύματα: Perhaps analogous to the κόσμον ὑπὲρ, fr. 91; ὑπερβασίτης, fr. 92.
4. κάλπης. <τε> καὶ θάνατος: Cf. κάλπην τ' θάνατον, fr. 61.
5. μακάμοι πάσης ἐπίθετος τελ.: Cf. Psellus, P. C., 122, 1137 a 5-7: μορφή διαμοιρώσεως...ἀπό πάντων ὑπὸ τῶν μερῶν τοῦ σελήνου κόσμου. Lewy (see supra) thinks Psellus' interpretation (which pertains specifically to fr. 88) alludes to the "lunar riders" (= demons) mentioned here. Cf. also, ἐπίθετος, fr. 44, with regard to Eros.
6. ἀληθεία ὁράσεως τελ.: Cf. fr. 173 and notes, where Olympiodorus attributes this line to Orpheus ( = Orph. Fr. 353, Kern; see Kroll, loc. cit.). Lewy (see supra) argues that Olympiodorus mistakenly attributed this line to Orpheus because his source (Proclus) probably ascribed it to οἱ θεόλογοι, a term applied equally by the later Neoplatonists to the Orphic and Chaldean traditions (cf. Lewy, Exc. I, p. 444 d). But the true source of this oracle remains in doubt.

Fr. 217
Kroll (app. crit. to Proclus citation) felt that these verses were "alienum" to the Oracles. Lewy, however (pp. 31-35 and notes 87-94), argues for authenticity, noting that the "form and style" of these verses are similar to the oracles cited by Porphyry (as reported by Eusebius). But as Dodd has rightly argued (see supra, introductory comments, p. 217), these so-called "Porphyrian" oracles should be distinguished from the Chaldean λόγος. The vocabulary of this fragment, however, has certain parallels with the undoubted fragments. See infra.

5. σπλάγχνοις: Cf. σπλάγχνων, fr. 107. Fr. 107, as a whole, similarly warns against the efficacy of traditional methods of soothsaying.


Fr. 218
Although Kroll, loc. cit., cites these verses, he doubts a Chaldean origin. (Lewy does not comment on them at all.) Des Places (p. 35) thinks the fragment is more "Orphic" than Chaldean in inspiration. In the context of Syenesius, these lines are an oblique commentary on Plato, Tim., 42 a-b (which Syenesius embalishes with the doctrine of the descent of the θύμη-πνεύμα.


Fr. 219
Frr. 219-225 are properly "Porphyrian" and not Chaldean in origin. Although Terzaghi, loc. cit., assigned them a Chaldean origin (based on their inclusion in Nicephorus Gregorios' commentary on Syenesius' De insign.; cf. Kroll, p. 5), Terzaghi was apparently unaware that these same fragments also make up part of Porphyry's De phal. ex or. haur.; Wolff, pp. 130-131; 155-158; 162. Des Places has included these fragments in his edition, but with the appropriate caveats (see his comments, p. 119). Lewy also rejects most of these fragments as "non-Chaldean" (see pp. 51-52 and n. 162), although noting certain similarities in style and form to the undoubted fragments. See additional comments infra in each case.

6. τετράμηνημοσύνης: Cf., in contrast, τϊῶν ὡποθησίων, fr. 222 and notes.
7. πεποθεμένην ἐπένων: Cf. πεποθηθήσχθεν, 1. 2. Both these expressions underscore the non-compulsive aspect of theurgy (in contrast to traditional magic), where the gods appear of their own volition and not at the command of the adept (see discussion in Introduction). But Lewy (p. 58, n. 184) notes that the use of this expression here (in a "non-Chaldean" oracle) indicates that theurgy (as a "passive" enterprise between man and the gods) was apparently not strictly limited to the Chaldean tradition. Cf. e.g., PGM I.51: λόγος θεολογομυντος πεισάντας.

Fr. 220
2. κλούθη μεν: This expression is Hemic; e.g., II. 1. 37. The god invoked here is probably Apollo (and so Theodoretus, loc. cit.).

ἐπέδικου: i.e., the "binding" of the god during the conjuration rite. Cf. fr. 41 re the "loosing" of the god. See, also, Lewy, pp. 41-42; 57-58 and n. 184.
Fr. 221
2. ἀπ’ αἰθέρος: Cf. ἀπ’ αἰθήρ, fr. 223.
3. θεϊδαμίος/ἀνάγκης: Again, this compulsive element argues against a Chaldean origin.

Fr. 222
2. ἡλθον: Cf. ἥξα, fr. 72 (with reference to Hecate).
3. θεῶν οὐσκημοσύνης: Here, contra fr. 219, it is the gods who convey their “binding” spells to man and not vice versa.

Fr. 223
2. ἀπόφρητος ξυγίζω: Here, the term ξυγίζω seems closest in sense to the συνθήματα/σύμβολα as voces mysticae. But cf. fr. 206, where the στρόφαλος/λύξις of Hecate is also described as ἀπόφρητος by Psellus. ἀπ’ αἰθήρ: Cf. ἀπ’ αἰθέρος, fr. 221.
3. ἀθάνατος: Cf. σὲθλονος, fr. 220 and notes.
4. μεσαίοις ἐπεμβαθοῖς (ἀκ. δαίμονος) ἄγατοις: i.e., demons of the air. Cf., e.g., ἡρώων κοινῶν, fr. 91.
5. πανσφαίρας ἀνείρως: Dreams were traditionally believed to be conveyed to men via demons of the air or moon. See Lewy, p. 93.

Fr. 224
Lewy (p. 51, n. 162) specifically argues that this oracle is “non-Chaldean” because the instructions here concerning the making and consecrating of Hecate’s statue contradict the descriptions of Hecate’s statue as gleaned from the undoubted fragments. Cf., e.g., ff. 51, 52, 55, 72, 89 and notes. However, in a general sense, the use of herbs, animals, scents, etc. figured prominently in theurgy practice. See, esp., Dodd’s, “Theurgy,” 1947, pp. 62-63 - 1957, pp. 292-293.
7. αἰθρίας: Cf. the invocation of Hecate in fr. 146, which also takes place in the open.
7-8. ὅποι μὴν ἀξίουσαν: Cf. the ritual described in the Mithras Liturgy (ed. Meyer), p. 23, which similarly takes place in conjunction with various phases of the moon.
8. ἐπευχήμενος τὴν ἐυχὴν: Cf. ἐυχής, fr. 222. The “prayer” alluded to here probably consisted of both ordinary prayers as well as voces mysticae. Cf., e.g., Mithras Liturgy, ibid.
II. Secondary Sources


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This new edition of the *Chaldean Oracles* includes, besides the Greek text of the fragments with facing translation, a detailed introduction and commentary. It is the first edition of the *Oracles* with this format to be published in English. In most instances, a given fragment includes appropriate frame material, either of an introductory or explanatory nature; the most recent critical editions of those sources in which the *Oracles* are quoted have also been used.

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