

PROCLUS THE SUCCESSOR
ON POETICS AND THE HOMERIC POEMS

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Proclus the Successor on Poetics and the Homeric Poems:
Essays 5 and 6 of His *Commentary on the Republic of Plato*

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Essays 5 and 6 of His *Commentary on the Republic of Plato*

Text, translation, notes, and introduction by

Robert Lamberton

Society of Biblical Literature
Atlanta

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	vii
Abbreviations.....	ix
Introduction.....	xi
1. Proclus: Life and Works	xi
2. The Commentary on the <i>Republic</i>	xiv
3. Proclus on Poetics and Allegory	xvii
4. The Defense of Homer	xxvi
5. The Text	xxx
Addendum 1: Table of Contents of Proclus's Commentary on the <i>Republic</i>	xxx
Addendum 2: Wilhelm Kroll's Preface to Volume 1 of His Edition of the <i>Commentary</i>	xxxiii
Proclus, <i>In Rempublicam</i> 5 and 6: Contents.....	xxxvii
Text and Translation.....	1
Proclus, On the <i>Republic</i> , Essay 5	1
Proclus, On the <i>Republic</i> , Essay 6	57
Bibliography.....	309
Index locorum	315
General Index.....	319

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANCIENT WORKS

<i>Alc.</i> 1, 2	Plato, <i>Alcibiades</i> 1, 2
<i>Anth. pal.</i>	<i>Anthologia palatina</i>
<i>Apol.</i>	Plato, <i>Apologia</i>
<i>Coel. hier.</i>	Pseudo-Dionysius, <i>De coelesti hierarchia</i>
<i>Def. orac.</i>	Plutarch, <i>De defectu oraculorum</i>
<i>Dub. et sol.</i>	Damascius, <i>Dubitaciones et solutiones de primis principiis</i>
<i>Enn.</i>	Plotinus, <i>Enneades</i>
<i>Gorg.</i>	Plato, <i>Gorgias</i>
<i>Il.</i>	Homer, <i>Ilias</i>
<i>In Alc.</i>	Proclus, <i>In Platonis Alcibiadem</i>
<i>In Phd.</i>	Olympiodorus, <i>In Platonis Phaedonem</i>
<i>In Somn. Scip.</i>	Macrobius, <i>In Somnium Scipionis</i>
<i>In Tim.</i>	Proclus, <i>In Platonis Timaeum</i>
<i>Lach.</i>	Plato, <i>Laches</i>
<i>Leg.</i>	Plato, <i>Leges</i>
<i>Met.</i>	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i>
<i>Od.</i>	Homer, <i>Odyssea</i>
<i>Or. chald.</i>	<i>Oracula Chaldaica</i>
<i>Orph. frag.</i>	<i>Orphicorum fragmenta</i>
<i>Phd.</i>	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i>
<i>Phdr.</i>	Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i>
<i>Plat.</i>	Apuleius, <i>De Platone</i>
<i>Prot.</i>	Plato, <i>Protagoras</i>
<i>Rep.</i>	Plato, <i>Respublica</i>
<i>Rhet.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Rhetorica</i>
<i>Sent.</i>	Porphyry, <i>Sententiae ad intelligibilia ducentes</i>
<i>Soph.</i>	Plato, <i>Sophista</i>

<i>Symp.</i>	Plato, <i>Symposium</i>
<i>Theol. Plat.</i>	Proclus, <i>Theologia Platonica</i>
<i>Tim.</i>	Plato, <i>Timaeus</i>
<i>Var. Hist.</i>	Aelian, <i>Var. Hist.</i>
<i>Vit. Isid.</i>	Damascius, <i>Vita Isidori</i>
<i>Vit. Plot.</i>	Porphyry, <i>Vita Plotini</i>
<i>Vit. Proc.</i>	Marinus, <i>Vita Procli</i>
<i>Vitae</i>	Diogenes Laertius, <i>Vitae philosophorum</i>

MODERN WORKS

Lampe	<i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> , edited by G. W. H. Lampe. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.
LSJ	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart Jones, 9th edition, with Supplement. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968.
PW	<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> . New edition by Georg Wissowa and Wilhelm Kroll. 50 vols. in 84 parts. Stuttgart: Metzler and Druck-enmüller, 1894–1980
Sophocles	E. A. Sophocles, <i>A Glossary of Later and Byzantine Greek</i> . Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences NS 7. Cambridge: Welch, Bigelow, 1860.

INTRODUCTION

1. PROCLUS: LIFE AND WORKS

Proclus's biographer Marinus made the arrival of the future Successor¹ at Athens into a parable of his promise and importance. After being met at the Piraeus and escorted to the city—with a stop at the “Socrateion”²—he meets the “gatekeeper” ready to close the city gate for the night, who says (and Marinus insists that these were his actual words): “Truly, had you not come, I was about to lock the gate” (*Vit. Proc.* 10).³

There are a number of rather surprising elements to this story. First, it requires that we imagine Athens in 430 C.E. as a walled, gated city, closed up at night against an at least potentially threatening hinterland. Second, the nineteen-year-old visitor is depicted as radiating an authority that not only impresses those on whose account he has come but even inspires in the gatekeeper an unwitting sententiousness with prophetic overtones. Proclus, as Marinus depicts him, came to an Athens where the study of Platonic philosophy (virtually to be identified with traditional Hellenic polytheism) had reached a low ebb and the “gate” was about to close forever. When he died there in 485, at least one more shrine (the Asklepieion) and the cult statue of Athena in the Parthenon were gone (*Vit. Proc.*

1. The leader of the school of Platonic philosophy at Athens held the title διάδοχος, or Successor. The precise claims inherent in that title were perhaps deliberately vague. The Successor was clearly the one to whom the chair was passed down and was the “successor” of his predecessor (see, e.g., Damascius, *Vit. Isid.* frag. 256 [Zintzen]), but the term suggests as well a (specious) claim to be the successor to Plato himself, the latest in an unbroken line of scholarchs reaching back to the founder.

2. An unlocated and perhaps fictional shrine. On the topography of the Platonists in fifth-century Athens, see Frantz 1988 and Fowden 1990.

3. Ἀληθῶς, εἰ μὴ ἦλθες, ἔκλειον. The biography as a whole, as its most recent editors remind us, belongs to the genre of the funeral eulogy (Saffrey and Segonds 2001, xlii).

29, 30), but the study of Platonic philosophy was, Marinus would have us believe, rejuvenated (*Vit. Proc.* 38).

Before his arrival in Athens, Proclus's career as a student (in Marinus's account) follows a pattern that is familiar in philosophical biography in the Roman Empire. Like Plotinus (Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 3) and many others before him, he traveled long in search of the right teacher before he arrived in the Athenian school in 430. What is striking about the trajectory that Marinus describes, however, is the enthusiasm Proclus demonstrated for rhetoric and the depth of his literary training (*Vit. Proc.* 8–9).⁴ In the long history of the later Platonists, only Porphyry, two centuries earlier, had a comparable commitment to language, style, and literary pursuits. It is striking that it is largely because of these two thinkers that allegorical reading is so firmly associated with Platonism in late antiquity.

Marinus's eulogy is our principal source for the life of Proclus, but it is supplemented by many passages in the later *Life of Isidore* (or *Philosophical History*) of Damascius.⁵ Even if Marinus's account of Proclus's success leads him to exaggerate both the paucity of students in 430 and the numbers of those who came to hear Proclus in the following decades,⁶ it seems that the middle of the fifth century was a relatively good time for the polytheist Platonists of Athens. The success of those years may paradoxically have led to their attracting first jealousy and then imperial disfavor two generations later, when the school lost its support and ceased to exist as a formal institution.⁷

The intervening years were, in any case, fraught with difficulties for the Athenian Platonic school. A divisive battle over the succession in the late 480s and the 490s was followed by a period of unknown length in which Hegias as scholarch attracted far too much attention to the school

4. The attribution of the *Chrestomathy*, with its unique summaries of much lost early epic, to Proclus seems, from this point of view, highly plausible. See Lamberton 1986, 177 with n. 51.

5. See Athanassiadi 1999.

6. Watts (2006, 98–99 with n. 95) doubts that the numbers were really so small at the beginning of Proclus's stay in Athens, but Synesius's testimony for about the year 400 supports the picture given by Marinus. Certainly the latter mentions only a few individuals in the anecdotes of Proclus's arrival in Athens, then concludes his eulogy with the claim that "many people came to hear [Proclus] from many places" (*Vit. Proc.* 38).

7. See Cameron 1969; Watts 2006, ch. 5.

through his flagrantly illegal religious observations.⁸ At some point in the first two decades of the sixth century, Hegias was in turn succeeded by the last scholarch, Damascius, under whose direction the school experienced a last burst of vitality, apparently both lowering its polytheist profile in the increasingly dangerous religious climate and in more properly philosophical matters turning away from the influential positions of Proclus and embracing the tradition of the fourth-century thinker Iamblichus.⁹

The details of these disputes, both religious and philosophical, go far beyond our concerns here, but it is worth noting that the reinstatement of an Iamblichean orthodoxy in the Athenian school may be thought to have marked a distinct falling off of interest in the material treated in the sections of Proclus's *Republic* commentary before us. Some of the reasons for this will be treated below in the next section, but for now suffice it to say that among Iamblichus and his followers there is little evidence of concern with the text of Homer or with poetics generally. Iamblichus is credited with hermeneutic insights of importance for the reading of Plato, as well as with the creation of a standard curriculum for Platonic studies (which, incidentally, does not seem to have included the *Republic*). But a concern with Homer, or other archaic poetry, as privileged texts seems to have had no place in the Iamblichean program, perhaps because less problematic and less ambiguous paths to the truth occupied his attention.¹⁰

During the half century Proclus spent in Athens, for most of which he was scholarch, he was exceptionally productive, though his remarkable output was cut short in his later years by senility.¹¹ He started early, in any case, and had completed his massive *Timaeus* commentary by the age of twenty-eight (*Vit. Proc.* 13), which would be in the year 438.¹² We have, in addition, commentaries (some only partially preserved) on the *First Alcibiades*, *Cratylus*, *Parmenides*, and *Republic*, as well as various other works, including the *Elements of Theology* and *Platonic Theology*. Proclus is also a prominent figure in the history of science in late antiquity; his surviving

8. Watts 2006, 118–28, esp. 125.

9. Watts 2006, 125–28.

10. Lambertson 1986, 134.

11. His powers were considerably reduced during his last five years (*Vit. Proc.* 26).

12. See Watts 2006, 100 with n. 102, for the idea that this gives us at least a ballpark figure for the date of Syrianus's death and (perhaps) for Proclus's succession.

scientific works include an *Introduction to the Physical Sciences* and a *Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*.¹³

The commentaries of Proclus all represent, in one form or another, the record of his teaching, which covered Plato, Aristotle (though his commentaries, if in fact ever written, are lost), Plotinus, and the Chaldaean Oracles, as well as mathematics (Euclid) and other scientific subjects. Of particular interest here are the commentaries on the dialogues on Plato, both the five extant ones and the further six that are known to have existed: *Phaedo*, *Gorgias*, *Philebus*, *Phaedrus*, *Theaetetus*, and *Sophist*. It was the tradition of the later schools of Platonic philosophy for the scholar to commit to writing his sentence-by-sentence notes on the dialogues studied, and it is this material that forms the core of the commentaries that survive.

We assume that the Athenian school followed in some form or other the curriculum for the study of Plato that was attributed to Iamblichus, in the early fourth century.¹⁴ As reconstructed by Westerink, this curriculum took the beginning student through the *First Alcibiades* (as general introduction), then the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Cratylus*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Politicus*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, and, finally, the *Philebus*. This will have constituted the elementary cycle, to be followed by the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*.¹⁵ In other words, Proclus published commentaries on ten of the twelve dialogues in the Iamblichean canon—all but the *Politicus* and the *Symposium*.

2. THE COMMENTARY ON THE *REPUBLIC*

The single dialogue of Plato on which Proclus wrote that has no connection to the Iamblichean canon is the *Republic*. It seems clear that the reason for the exclusion of the *Republic*—and the *Laws*—from the curriculum was a practical one. Their length and complexity made them unmanageable for

13. On Proclus's contributions to our knowledge of science on the eve of the Byzantine period, see Siorvanes 1996.

14. The "canon" is presented in its most complete form (though still requiring some restoration) in the "Anonymous Prolegomena" to Plato (Westerink 1990, 39–40 with nn. 215–24). Proclus himself, in his commentary on the *First Alcibiades*, cites with approval Iamblichus's assigning to that dialogue the first place in the list of "the ten dialogues in which he believes the whole of Plato's philosophy to be contained" (Proclus, *In Alc.* 11.11–13 [Westerink]).

15. See Westerink 1990, lxxvii–lxxiv.

classroom use, at least for purposes of the basic course. But there was also a question of priorities. From the time of Plotinus, at least, the Platonic schools tended to value metaphysics (and later, theology) at the expense of politics. In the hierarchy of “virtues” associated with the curriculum, the “political virtues” are the starting point, but the emphasis is clearly on the higher levels, the “cathartic” and “contemplative” virtues, which constitute the evident strength of the specifically Platonic curriculum. If the two long dialogues that address the organization of human society were added, the curriculum would be decidedly bottom heavy. For these reasons, or reasons like them, Iamblichus seems to have excluded them.

Does the existence of Proclus’s commentary on the *Republic* mean that the Athenian Platonists’ curriculum deviated so significantly from the Iamblichean model as to include the *Republic*? The answer to this question is to be found in the commentary itself, which consists of seventeen essays of unequal length (of which the fifth and sixth are included here, representing roughly one quarter of the entire text). The sixteenth book, by far the longest (Kroll 1901, 96–359), consists of a sentence-by-sentence commentary on the Myth of Er in book 10 of the dialogue. Thus 263 pages of the commentary (39.6 percent) are devoted to just eleven pages (or roughly 2.7 percent) of the dialogue, and these are the only pages to receive the sort of treatment that is the norm for the other commentaries. It seems clear from this distribution of labor that the Myth of Er was the portion of the *Republic* that was taught in Athens, and it probably constituted part of the regular curriculum.¹⁶

The remainder of the *Republic* commentary, when the line-by-line commentary on the Myth of Er is set aside, consists of a series of essays and lectures on various topics relating to the interpretation of the dialogue. In the case of the sixth essay, the one concerning Homer, Proclus tells us explicitly that it was composed (no doubt in a somewhat different form from what we have) as a lecture on the occasion of the celebration of Plato’s birthday.¹⁷ Other sections of the commentary doubtless found their place in the pedagogy of the school as well, and quite possibly these lectures were more central to Proclus’s teaching than the long essay on

16. Westerink (1990, lxix) in fact restored the *Politicus* to the Iamblichean canon on a similar basis: he believed that the myth in that dialogue was the only portion that the Neoplatonists would have required and so presumably the only part that would have been taught.

17. See below p. 59 (K69) with n. 75.

Homer and its briefer predecessor (book 5) on Plato on poetics in general. If the *Republic* was too long to read sentence by sentence, and if large parts of it were far from the concerns of the Athenian Platonists, the dialogue nevertheless treated some issues that were very important to them, and although the bulk of the day-to-day work of the school doubtless consisted of sequential commentary on the (ten or) twelve dialogues that Iamblichus had singled out as containing “the whole of Plato’s philosophy,”¹⁸ we should beware of imagining that it was limited to that activity.

The subjects treated in the other topical chapters go some distance toward painting a picture of the *Republic* as taught (and understood) by the Athenian Platonists.¹⁹ The first is among the most interesting, because here Proclus addresses the pedagogical issue of how one is to present to students, not just the *Republic*, but more generally any dialogue of Plato. This lecture is clearly intended for advanced students, those about to become teachers themselves and in need of instruction in the relevant skills. The part of the commentary on the initial attempts to provide a definition of justice is not complete, but it is striking that the only other topic Proclus focuses on before turning to poetics and to Homer is “the theological principles articulated in Book Two.”²⁰

After the essays presented in this volume (representing the focus of interest of books 2 and 3 of the *Republic*), Proclus goes on to single out basic definitions (e.g., “The Demonstrations in the Fourth Book That the Parts of the Human Soul Are Three and the Virtues in Them Four”) and specific arguments (e.g., “The Three Arguments Demonstrating That the Just Man Is Better Off Than the Unjust Man”). This may well, as Anne Sheppard suggested,²¹ amount to a “course of introductory lectures” on

18. See n. 14, above.

19. See pp. xxi–xxxiii for a table of contents of the entire commentary. Sheppard has a similar table (1980, 203–5), where she emphasizes the coherence of fifteen of the essays as “a course of introductory lectures on the *Republic*” (203) and the independence of Essays 6, 9, 15, and 16 (as well as 17, on Aristotle, which she did not include).

20. In the brief preface to his scholarly translation of the commentary, Festugière suggested that the original may well have been divided into several smaller units, of which Essays 4–6 would have been one. The short fourth essay would then, with its discussion of the theological *typoi* of book 2 of the *Republic*, lead into the discussion of poetics (Essay 5) and finally the defense itself (Essay 6). The logic of this grouping is unimpeachable, but for purposes of the present volume the focus on specifically literary issues has been maintained by omitting Essay 4.

21. Note 19, above.

the *Republic*, and this may be the format in which a series of important topics concerning the *Republic* entered the Athenian curriculum, but clearly other possibilities exist as well.

What is beyond doubt is that several of these essays, including the sixth, stand out as “distinct units,”²² either exploring the relevant ideas of other thinkers (Theodore of Asine [9] or Aristotle [17]) or expanding on specific points to a degree that sets them apart from the remaining essays. Thus the pairing of 5 and 6 within the commentary may well have been an editorial decision, based simply on the fact that the voluminous exploration of the Socratic criticism of Homer is properly associated with the general principles of poetics and pedagogy explored in more modest format (and in the sequence of the “introductory lectures”) in 5. As we shall see in the following section, Essays 5 and 6 are based on two quite distinct views of poetics.

3. PROCLUS ON POETICS AND ALLEGORY²³

If we had only the fifth and not the sixth essay of the *Republic* commentary, Proclus’s place in the history of poetics would quickly dissolve into thin air. He would remain one of the early defensive commentators on Plato on poetics, a dry scholar, formulating modest questions and providing reasoned answers, sometimes calling upon relevant outside opinion. The first of the two essays explicitly denies what is most original and most valuable in the second, namely, the claim that poetry’s semiotic range extends beyond mimesis and includes modes of representation that make it possible for poetry to designate things and beings that are beyond expression in the mimetic mode.²⁴

22. Sheppard 1980, 203.

23. In this section I am particularly indebted to Anne D. R. Sheppard, who thirty years ago sorted out the tangled skeins of the fifth and sixth essays of the commentary. The debt is an old one, beginning with the chapter on Proclus in my own *Homer the Theologian* (1986). Building on and correcting the work of Carlo Gallavotti (1929, 1971), she did a great deal to clarify both the relationship of the two essays and the debts of Proclus to Syrianus (Sheppard 1980, esp. 15–38).

24. P. 7 (K44,1–2): μιμητικῆς ἀπάσης οὔσης τῆς τῶν ποιητῶν πραγματείας. Cf. p. 49 (K65,28–29) with n. 61. By contrast, at pp. 259–61 (K178–79), in the tripartite division of poetry, only the third and lowest kind of poetry is conceded to be mimetic.

Essay 5 fits nicely into the sequence of the chapters that form, at least potentially, a Neoplatonic introductory course on the *Republic*. It in fact illustrates the link to the classroom of such comparable collections as Plutarch's *Platonic Questions*.²⁵ Some of the questions explored would be classed as genuine problems in the interpretation of books 2 and 3 of the *Republic* today (though not, perhaps, the most important ones), some address contradictions that arise from what may be considered stylistic concerns (paradoxes, irreconcilable examples of ignorance on Socrates' part, and other ironies), and, finally, some seem to go beyond this lowly level of *explication de texte* by posing issues that are important to Proclus (and to later Platonist metaphysics) but, to our modern eyes at least, not dictated by the text of Plato. One example from each of these categories will suffice for our purposes.

The first question poses a problem central to the *Republic* and to the entire history of its discussion: Why does Plato prescribe both honor and exile for the poets?²⁶ Proclus dwells longer on the nature of the "divine" honors involved than a modern commentator would be inclined to do, but overall he patches together an acceptable answer, drawing on passages from the *Timaeus*, *Laws*, and *Republic* (and thus characteristically letting Plato interpret Plato where possible).²⁷ Proclus breaks down the problem to identify and define two characteristic types of failure of mimesis in the representation of gods and heroes, failures that make the resultant poetry unacceptable for purposes of education. It is one of the paradoxes of Proclus's assessment of Homer that he is consistently willing to concede this point to Plato (or to the Socrates of the *Republic*),²⁸ yet, Proclus insists, Plato does not reject poetry or Homer outright. With characteristic attention to context (and to the thought experiment of the state characterized by justice in the *Republic*), he argues at the end that Plato is right to exclude poetry from the "first ... state"²⁹—it is simply too anarchic—but would recommend poetry as desirable in lesser polities (not characterized by justice), where its vices would shine forth as virtues.

25. See Sheppard 1980, 104.

26. Pp. 3 (K42) and 5–17 (K43–49). This is the longest of the ten discussions in essay 5.

27. See Sheppard 1980, 106 with n. 4; Lamberton 1986, 109 with n. 85.

28. See esp. p. 73 (K77) with n. 94, below.

29. P. 15 (K48,25).

The fourth question asks why Socrates professes ignorance of the modes—with some exceptions—and defers to Glaucon in matters of music, and the answer given depends upon an interesting view of Plato's own dramaturgy. It would have been possible simply to point to Socrates' characteristic irony (*eironeia*), but this is not the strategy that Proclus adopts. Rather, he puts the emphasis on Socrates' role in this particular dialogue—the role of the statesman—and answers that there is a certain limited knowledge of music that is appropriate to the statesman, but this falls short of comprehensive understanding. Still, the statesman (in the current argument) is very much concerned with education and so must have knowledge of music to the extent that it contributes to (or, on the contrary, might detract from) effective education. Proclus shows overall a great deal of sensitivity to literary form and diction, a sensitivity that is inseparable from a correct understanding of the content of a text. Again, it is his youthful enthusiasm for and exceptional education in rhetoric that comes out here, in the service of explaining Plato's text.

The last two questions, and particularly the final one, raise issues that do not arise in any obvious way from the *Republic* itself; they would seem to be dictated rather by the metaphysical concerns that constitute the core of later Platonism. The metaphysical model in question certainly arose out of the text of Plato (with a considerable admixture of Aristotle) and by the time of Proclus amounted to an orthodoxy, subject to endless adjustment and rethinking, but fundamentally unimpeachable, that impinged on every aspect of philosophical activity, including hermeneutics. We shall see that in Essay 6 these metaphysical givens inform the elaborate system of classification of kinds of poetry that is Proclus's most characteristic contribution to poetics.

In Essay 5 the closing question (“Who is the poet in the universe, to whom the poet in this world will look?”³⁰) is introduced as the logical conclusion to the enterprise of the essay.³¹ This, in other words, is the question that will bring closure to the entire enquiry by placing Plato's view of poetics into the largest possible context. It is necessary that all genuine good things in this world preexist among the “whole” (and eternal) entities that

30. Pp. 3 (K43,21–25); 53–55 (K68–69).

31. P. 53 (K68,3–4): τούτου δὲ ἡμῖν γνωσθέντος οἶμαι καὶ τὸ τελευταῖον εἶναι δῆλον τῶν προβληθέντων ἡμῖν εἰς ζήτησιν... This is the most emphatic of the phrases linking one question to the next. Far more characteristic is, e.g., τούτων μὲν οὖν ἄδη- τὸ δὲ ἐπόμενον σκοπῶμεν (p. 29 [K56,20]).

exist beyond change. Here, this model is applied in a rather simple and predictable way. Just as Zeus is the statesman of that realm, Apollo is its poet, organizing his creations according to Zeus's master plan. He presides over celestial mechanics and the various orbits of differing lengths along with the various speeds of the celestial objects borne in those orbits, and so can be described as "the poet of modal and metrical imitations"³²—which in turn must constitute, in his realm, the so-called music of the spheres.

These three examples from Essay 5 make it clear that, even in his most pedestrian classroom performances, Proclus's readings of Plato bore a characteristic and personal stamp. There is, however, some question whether this "stamp" is that of Proclus himself or a collective accent drawing on the teaching of his predecessors. Plutarch of Athens and Syrianus were both scholars, and both taught Proclus, but neither wrote commentaries on the dialogues of Plato that have survived, though Hermias's notes on the *Phaedrus* are heavily dependent on Syrianus.³³ Proclus in his own voluminous commentaries often tells us that a given interpretation or idea belongs to Syrianus, to whom he refers repeatedly as his "guide" or "teacher" (καθηγεμόν).³⁴ In the *Republic* commentary, Proclus invokes Syrianus at least seven times, exclusively in Essay 6,³⁵ and insists on his own debt to his teacher for much of the interpretive material presented.

Anne Sheppard addressed the question of Syrianus's influence on the *Republic* commentary³⁶ and concluded that "in his interpretation of particular Homeric passages Proclus is adapting and developing Syrianus rather than striking out in any new directions of his own. He makes no contributions in this area which are comparable with his teacher's devel-

32. P. 55 (K69,1): ποιητής ὦν μιμημάτων ἑναρμονίων καὶ ἐνρῦθμων. This phrase points up one difficulty of translating such prose. Apollo is a ποιητής in a more general sense ("maker") in his sphere, corresponding to the ποιητής in this world (whom in this context we can call a "poet"). He instills in his creations patterns of pitch (ἄρμονίαι) and rhythm (ῥυθμοί), which are the analogues of the modes and meters, the tools of the poet of this world. In other words, the three central terms in this phrase really require separate translations appropriate to the different spheres where they are applied.

33. Couvreur 1901.

34. On the term, see p. 61 (K71) n. 78, below; at p. 61 (K71,24), he is referred to as the ζηλωτής and ἱεροφάντης of Plato (p. 63 [K71] n. 82).

35. 61, 63, 147, 179, 215 (twice), and 307.

36. Sheppard 1980, 39–103 (= ch. 2, "Proclus's Debt to Syrianus").

opment of metaphysical allegory.³⁷ Thus the characteristic tone of Essay 6 is to be traced to Syrianus, as well as the specifics of many of the interpretations offered, but Sheppard maintained that the great accomplishment of the essay, the elaboration of a theoretical infrastructure to explain the capacity of poetry to designate its objects by other means than mimesis, is to be attributed to Proclus himself.³⁸ She attributed to Syrianus a division of poetry into inspired and uninspired, which provided Proclus with a springboard for his own threefold division of poetry, which in turn has proven extraordinarily suggestive and influential.

Rather than duplicate the existing descriptions of Proclus's analysis of poetry,³⁹ I offer here a tabular presentation of his model.⁴⁰

THE THREE LEVELS OF POETRY (ποιητική) AND THE THREE LIVES (ζωαί)
OR CONDITIONS (ἔξεις) OF THE SOUL, ACCORDING TO PROCLUS

SOUL

FIRST: Soul on the level of the gods, transcending individual mind (νοῦς) and attaching its "own light to the transcendent light and the most unified element of its own being and life to the One beyond all being and life" (*In Rep.* 257)

POETRY

NATURE: Absolute fusion of subject and object; inspiration, possession by the Muses; divine madness (μανία) filling the soul with symmetry (*In Rep.* 259, 261–73)

MEANS: Symbols (σύμβολα), which are nonmimetic [although Proclus is not consistent and sometimes seems to say that images (εἰκόνες) of transcendent patterns (παραδείγματα) occur in this, the highest poetry] (*passim*, esp. *In Rep.* 295)

37. Sheppard 1980, 79.

38. Sheppard 1980, 102–3.

39. See Sheppard 1980, 162–202; Lambertson 1986, 188–97; 1992.

40. Based on Lambertson 1992, 121 table 1. In the interest of brevity, the page references refer to the pages of this volume.

EXAMPLES: The song of Ares and Aphrodite (*Od.* 8.266–366) and the Deception of Zeus (*Il.* 14.153–351) (*In Rep.* 193–99, 177–93, 283–85)

REPRESENTED IN HOMER BY: Demodocus (*In Rep.* 285–87)

SECOND: Soul turns within itself and focuses on mind (νοῦς) and systematic knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) (*In Rep.* 257)

NATURE: Again, fusion of knower and known—this poetry knows the essential truth and loves to contemplate beautiful actions and accounts of things (λόγοι). It is “packed with advice and the best counsel ... offering ... participation in thoughtfulness and the other virtues” (*In Rep.* 259–61, 273–77)

MEANS: Apparently still nonmimetic, based on ἐπιστήμη (*In Rep.* 261)

EXAMPLES: The description of Heracles in the *nekylia* (*Od.* 11.601–604) and unspecified Homeric passages on the parts of the soul and the arrangement of the elements of the universe (*In Rep.* 285)

REPRESENTED IN HOMER BY: Phemius (*In Rep.* 287)

THIRD: The lowest life of the soul, based on imagination (φαντασία) and irrational sense perceptions (ἄλογοι αἰσθήσεις) (*In Rep.* 257–59)

NATURE: This poetry is full of opinions (δόξαι) and imaginings (φαντασῖαι); it shocks and manipulates the audience and projects a false image of reality; it is a shadow painting (σκιαγραφία), appealing to the emotions. This lowest level of poetry is further divided into: (a) accurately mimetic (εἰκαστικόν); and (b) illusionistic (φανταστικόν) (*In Rep.* 261, 277–83)

MEANS: Mimetic, using (a) εἰκασία (representation) and (b) an apparent, but not real ἀφομοίωσις (resemblance) (*In Rep.* 261)

EXAMPLES: (a) Heroes portrayed fighting or performing other activities in character; and (b) descriptions of what *appears* to be; e.g., the sun

rising “out of the sea” (*Od.* 3.1) (*In Rep.* 281–83)

REPRESENTED IN HOMER BY: (a) The bard (ἄοιδός ἀνήρ, *Od.* 3.267) left to look after Clytemnestra; and (b) Thamyris (*Il.* 2.595) (*In Rep.* 287–89)

Based on a tripartite metaphysics that has its origins in Plato but is more obviously derivative from Plotinus, this analysis marks out a place for poetry in the map of the human universe. This impulse is already visible in Essay 5, at least in the final question explored (above), but here in Essay 6 the issues at stake are more intricate and engaging. The hierarchy of levels of experience gives birth to a hierarchy of modes of representation, in keeping with the general principle that, in the great translation and fragmentation that constantly generates the world of our immediate experience out of the unchanging, suprasensory realities, all the resulting phenomena are to be understood in terms of ourselves and of our lack of capacity to apprehend an unmediated reality.⁴¹

The concern with myth, with archaic poetry, and with their interpretation is pervasive in the works of Proclus, and he seems characteristically to have devoted a lost (perhaps early) work “On the Symbols of Myth”⁴² to spelling out the principles and procedures that form the basis of such interpretation. The richest articulation of these principles and their application to poetry is undoubtedly to be found in the text translated here, but this is complemented in the surviving corpus by methodological observations in the *Timaeus* commentary and in the *Platonic Theology* that clarify the relationship of these hermeneutic principles to other sorts of interpretive problems.

The *Platonic Theology* probably dates from the latter part of Proclus’s career and constitutes an exposition of Neoplatonic theology, largely organized around the interpretation of the *Parmenides*, the dialogue that constituted for the later Neoplatonic curriculum the summation of the theology of Plato.⁴³ Before turning to the *Parmenides*, however, Proclus needs to establish the range of modes of expression (τρόποι) of Plato’s theology,

41. See below, 81 n. 100.

42. Περὶ τῶν μυθικῶν συμβόλων, referred to by Proclus in the *Republic* commentary (Kroll 1901, 109,1) and so earlier (though on problems of dating the works of Proclus, see Beutler 1957, 190–91).

43. Saffrey and Westerink 1968, lx-lxxxix; Westerink 1990, 39 with n. 216.

which turn out to be four: (1) the symbolic (characteristic of Orpheus and of myths of the divine generally) and (2) that through images (characteristic of the Pythagoreans, who use number and diagrams as images of the divine); these first two modes use ἔνδειξις (indication, indirect representation)⁴⁴ to speak about the gods, whereas the two other modes express the truth regarding the gods in an unmediated, direct manner (ἀπαρακαλύπτως), either (3) through ecstatic inspiration (as in the mysteries) or (4) through systematic knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). Just as the mythic/symbolic mode is most characteristic of Homeric poetry (*In Rep.* 289 [K195], below), it is this last that is most characteristic (ἐξαιρέτος) of Plato.⁴⁵

As is often the case with Proclus, this characterization of Homer and Plato amounts to a very elaborate way of saying something quite simple. Plato, the philosopher par excellence, has a characteristic mode of expression for talking about the divine, and it is that of the philosopher, whereas Homer, the mythic poet par excellence, has his own characteristic way of expressing such things, which is that of what Proclus generally calls the “mythoplast.” Perhaps the terminology of the *Platonic Theology* is more clearly thought out than that of the *Republic* commentary. It is, in any case, clearer. Of course, both writers can use any of the modes in question, but each has one which he characteristically does use.

Strictly speaking, what is at stake in *Platonic Theology* 1.4 is a series of modes of expression, which correspond broadly with and throw light on the series of poetic modes described in the *Republic* commentary. In the commentary, the goal is explicitly the defense of Homer against Socrates’ criticisms and the reconciliation of Homeric and Platonic theology. The modes of expression easily lend themselves to translation into modes of interpretation, as we shall see, and the one hermeneutically problematic mode—the mythic/symbolic—will be found to require its own special technique, associated with what Proclus calls the “secret doctrine” (ἀπόρρητος θεωρία). The correct understanding of myths about the gods will turn out to depend on access to this technique and to the body of knowledge that lies behind it, and broadly speaking there seem to be three ways to understand a mythic poem: (1) literally (that is, remaining at the level of the “screen” [παραπέτασμα] of the fiction and thus missing the

44. See below, p. 63 with n. 83.

45. The material summarized here can be found in *Platonic Theology* 1.4.

point, with possibly dangerous consequences), (2) mistakenly (the most frequent examples of which are “physical” readings, which take the gods of myth to be representations of phenomena in the physical universe), and (3) “according to the secret doctrine.” This last category—the only correct mode of interpretation—requires either the previous acquisition of a considerable body of knowledge or the sort of hermeneutic assistance that the commentary provides (while reminding its audience that this is privileged information, not to be widely divulged).

There are similarities, of course, with the categories of Christian exegesis,⁴⁶ and it is impossible to eliminate the possibility that Clement and Origen lurk somewhere in the distant background of this analysis of poetic language. Certainly, medieval Christian Platonists were the heirs of this complex tradition, which absorbed the ideas of Proclus and the other fifth-century polytheist Platonists of Athens through the corpus of (Pseudo-) Dionysius the Areopagite. It is tempting to believe that some as yet undiscovered chain of influence may have led from polytheist philosophical hermeneutic theory and practice to Origen, who is generally credited with taking the first steps in the direction of the three- and four-fold theories of scriptural exegesis of the high Middle Ages in the West. Whether or not this is the case, Proclus is at least as likely to have been influenced by earlier and contemporary Christian hermeneutic ideas as the reverse, and the influence of Proclan ideas on late medieval Christian thinkers is best understood as stemming from a late antique intellectual world in which Christians and polytheists alike concerned themselves with the interpretation of texts. Their motivations were not the same, but their procedures sometimes resembled one another’s, and if indeed hermeneutic ideas were exchanged across the divide, no one seems to have chosen to talk about it.

The influence of Proclus’s hermeneutic model did not end with the Middle Ages. It was John Dillon who first noted the most amazing modern manifestation of this tradition: the remarkable resemblance between this system and Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotic triad: icon, index, and symbol.⁴⁷ This is unlikely to have been a coincidence, given that the founder

46. On the medieval systems of exegesis based on multilayered models, see Lubac 1959–1961.

47. Dillon 1976.

of modern semiotics had considerable knowledge of the Neoplatonists.⁴⁸ It is nevertheless striking that this influential innovation is to be found in such an unlikely place, a fifth-century commentary on the *Republic* concerned to defend Homer against Socrates' famous rejection of Homer in that dialogue.

4. THE DEFENSE OF HOMER

If the theoretical innovation that surfaces in Proclus's analysis of poetry is the most enduring accomplishment of this text, it nevertheless remains secondary (or ancillary) to the explicit aim of Essay 6, which is the defense of Homer against the Socrates of the *Republic*.⁴⁹

Socrates' points are familiar enough: held up against the theological principles of book 2 (a god is good, is the cause only of good, is unchanging, and does not lie, 379a–383c), Homer is found wanting again and again. The objections that follow are directed at the portrayal of men (in practice, the heroes, or demigods who are the characters in the poem), and these are based on the assumption that the audience will consider them exemplary and aspire to imitate them. If we want that audience (and we are talking here about the “guardians” of the state) to be brave, we must eliminate all references to death as something to be feared and, along with those, all depictions of these exemplary beings lamenting (book 3: 386c–388c) or overcome by laughter (388e–389b). Numerous examples follow of Homeric descriptions of obnoxious behavior by gods and heroes: Achilles' insubordination, the seduction of Zeus, Achilles' venality, his arrogance (389b–391c). Next comes a series of more difficult criticisms: the best poet should apparently stick to narrative, avoiding scenes where characters speak for themselves (that is, passages of mimesis; 391d–394d). Thus tragedy and comedy are eliminated as mimetic (394d–397e), and the virtuoso poet “able to imitate anything” is imagined visiting the city, meeting with lavish praise, and being expelled as inappropriate in that context. The story is taken up again in book 10, where we learn that mimetic art (the prime example now is painting)⁵⁰ is fundamentally defective because the images it creates are “third from the truth” (595a–600e). Homer, because his art

48. On Peirce and Neoplatonism and the link through Emerson, see Smyth 1997, ch. 2 *passim*. Other possible links include Victoria Lady Welby (Hardwick 1977).

49. See Kuisma 1996.

50. Annas 1981, 94.

is mimetic, was useless as an educator or an improver of mankind (600c, 606e–607a).⁵¹

Clearly there are at least two indictments here, and to many readers Plato's twofold attack on Homer and on mimesis has seemed to lack coherence.⁵² Proclus does not shy away from apparent contradictions, and it is very much characteristic of this commentary to point to apparent inconsistencies and then to demonstrate that there is an underlying coherence in Plato's thought.⁵³ In doing so, he taps a long tradition of commentary on Homer, which includes Neoplatonic material such as Porphyry's *Essay on the Cave of the Nymphs in the Odyssey* but extends back as well to Aristotle's collection of *Homeric Problems* and beyond.

Essay 5 is hardly a defense of Homer. His name is never mentioned, though he is once designated by the conventional circumlocution "the Poet."⁵⁴ The first question explores the paradox of Plato's simultaneous praise and rejection of poetry and poets, but though it may be obvious that Homer is in question, nevertheless the status of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is not put on the table.

Essay 6, by contrast, proclaims from the outset that its goals are the defense of Homer and the demonstration that "a single irrefutable truth is to be seen everywhere in Plato's position on poetics itself and on Homer," so that "each of them would be revealed to us as a thoughtful and knowledgeable contemplator of the divine beings, both of them teaching the same things about the same things, and both interpreters of the same truth about reality."⁵⁵ If Plato could reject Homer as a witness to the whole of the truth about reality, Proclus (following in Syrianus's footsteps) could not. He proposes to redeem Homer's credibility even as he restores the coherence of the apparently contradictory things Plato had to say about him. In one sense, the problem will turn out to have been one of rhetoric and of the problematic nature of Homer's language, which often appears to be saying one thing when it is in fact saying something quite different.

51. See Annas 1981, esp. 94–101, 336–344, for a synthetic overview of these arguments in the context of the dialogue.

52. Annas 1981 offers perspective on the issues, and Moss 2007 makes a thoughtful argument for reconstructing Plato's goal in the two passages.

53. Note the titles of the first, third, and fifth of the questions treated in Essay 5, as well as 59–61 (K70–71) in Essay 6.

54. P. 33 (K58,14).

55. P. 61 (K71,10–17).

This same ambiguity will form the basis for Proclus's conceding to Plato the unsuitability of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* for education.⁵⁶

It is worth remembering at this point that (according to Marinus) Proclus "used to say": "If I were in control, of all the ancient books I would keep in circulation only the *Oracles* and the *Timaeus*, and I would hide all the rest from the people of today because some of those who approach them casually and *without interrogating and interpreting them properly* (ἀβασανίστως) are actually harmed."⁵⁷ That is to say, Homer and all the other books of the classical tradition (with the exception of the *Timaeus* and the *Chaldaean Oracles*) required hermeneutical assistance. For some of those books, preeminently the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, hermeneutical assistance was available in every classroom in Greece, in the context of a thoroughly Christianized educational system. In Proclus's judgment, it would clearly have been better to do without the epics entirely than to wander into their outrageous fictions unprepared or to understand them in terms of the benighted and bigoted pedagogic orthodoxy of his own day.

The reading of Homer, then, is for Proclus a curiously subversive process. The literature of Homer interpretation had blossomed in the centuries before his own time, and although Basil of Caesarea,⁵⁸ a century before Proclus wrote, had laid out a clear strategy for the use of polytheist texts in Christian education, it is difficult to date the ascendancy of a Christian pedagogy of Homer. That it was prevalent in primary and secondary education in Athens by 450 seems, however, unavoidable, and from Proclus's perspective it was these ham-fisted, literalist readers who learned to laugh at the surface of the fiction, and thence to scoff at the gods, who were burning their temples for lime. Hence the privacy of this interpretive discourse.⁵⁹ What Proclus is in fact doing is taking what had been for a thousand years the most popular and widely used of elementary textbooks and declaring it to be fit for study only by the equivalent of graduate students, and behind closed doors.

The principal issue, of course, is theology. The strategy of Christian schoolteachers, to judge by the principles set forth by Basil, would be to ignore the theology of Homer and direct their students' attention to the

56. P. 73 (K77,4–9).

57. *Vit. Proc.* 38 (the final lines of the biography), emphasis added. On the word ἀβασανίστως, see Saffrey and Segonds 2001, 44 and 181 n. 6.

58. See his essay *Ad adulescentes*.

59. P. 306 (K205,22–23), the conclusion of Essay 6.

edifying passages, those in which an ethical message compatible with Christianity could be read. Much of the behavior of the gods and heroes had been found offensive by the Socrates of the *Republic*, and the passages in question had already generated a substantial literature of commentary, much of it defensive. Proclus taps this literature, but it is important to realize the extent to which the stakes have changed from the time of Plato. For the interlocutors of the *Republic*, the rejection of Homer as a school text was an intellectually stimulating paradox not unlike the education of women, the one as alien to their own society and to any realistic (i.e., pragmatic) program for the reform of Athenian education as the other. In Proclus's Athens, however, Homer remained the "first author" and the core of the (essentially rhetorical) educational process, at the expense of denying that what he said about the gods was to be taken seriously. Proclus's response is not unlike what one might have expected from Julian, that defender of a holistic view of Hellenism.⁶⁰ He set out to restore the coherence of Homer and of Homer's account of the world and the gods, but he did so explicitly for a severely restricted group: the few advanced students of Platonism who came to Athens to study in a polytheist environment.

The original context of Essay 6 (or some part of it) was the celebration of Plato's birthday. Little is known about the celebrations of the birthdays of Socrates and Plato in the Platonist philosophical schools of the Roman Empire beyond some comments by Porphyry (relating to Plotinus's school in Rome in the 260s) and the reference here (to Athens, in the mid-fifth century).⁶¹ From this meager evidence, we may conclude that the practice was persistent and long-lived and that it combined a celebration of the lives of the founders with an extension of the intellectual work of the school into a decidedly symposiac setting. The presentations would seem to have been rhetorical performances (perhaps even explicitly taking their cue from Plato's *Symposium*) doubtless expected to be philosophically respectable but at the same time appropriate to the festive environment of the symposium. Nowhere is poetry, and Homer in particular, so at home as in the symposium. The bards of the *Odyssey*—the internalized self-portrait of the Homeric bard at work—sang for the feasts and symposia of the aristocrats of the Homeric age.⁶²

60. For Julian's insistence on Hellenism as an integral cultural whole, from which no single element could be removed (including religion), see Athanassiadi 1981.

61. See below p. 59 (K69,24–70,7) with n. 75.

62. Proclus is the first of many critics to take Demodocus as a self-portrait of

This is not to trivialize Proclus's symposiac address on poetry and on Homer—far from it. The symposium was a serious institution, in particular that hybrid, the literary symposium, which begins (in the preserved literature) with Plato. But it was also a celebration, with emphasis on the socialization of the participants and the elegance of their performances. Here, again, Homer is where he belongs. To know Homer backward and forward, to be able to cite from memory a vast array of passages, was an indication of high cultural literacy in Proclus's world, as it had been in Plato's. This is a side of the text that it would be a mistake to forget. What Proclus is doing here is to restore a coherent reading of a literary text that had been wrested from the culture that produced it and adapted to the educational needs of a new culture, at considerable cost. That is, certain aspects of the text, including its representation of the traditional gods of Greek polytheism, had been discredited or otherwise attacked. But the important point here is that it is a literary text that is at issue, and even if the matter in dispute is one related to its representation of the gods, the authority of the text is cultural, in the broadest sense, not religious. This is not, in other words, an exercise in exegesis of a scriptural text. It belongs to a society that had no such texts, in the sense that the monotheisms had and have scriptures. A claim might be supported that the poems attributed to Orpheus and the *Chaldaean Oracles* were treated by their adherents in polytheist late antiquity much the way contemporary monotheists treated their scripture, and there is reason to believe that the Athenian Platonists found a place for those texts in their curricula. But the same is not true of Homer, whose poems found themselves at the center of disputes such as these not as competing scriptures but because their immeasurable cultural authority—and most of all the fact that they were the common cultural property of every educated speaker of Greek—made them objects of contention.

The episode in the dispute between Christians and polytheists for the possession of the text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* represented by Proclus's essays was proclaimed not by a priest (whether from a pulpit or from a sacrificial altar) but by a philosopher serving as a symposiarch. He spoke in the service of truth rather than belief and in the service of poetry rather than scripture.

Homer. See his typology of the kinds of bards (and of poetry) in Homer, pp. 283–89 (K192–95).

5. THE TEXT

The text of Proclus's commentary that is presented here is by and large the same as that published by Wilhelm Kroll in 1899, with some conjectures and corrections raised from his apparatus to the text and some from his addenda, as well as a very few conjectures of my own. I have introduced a large number of paragraph breaks (in most cases corresponding to the paragraphs of the translation), in the interest both of clarity and of ease in passing from the English to the Greek and vice versa. This has led to some aberrations in the line numbering of the Greek, but I have attempted to retain as much as possible the numbering of the lines in Kroll's text, in order to facilitate reference to that text. Verticals (|) have been added to the Greek text corresponding to the beginning of lines 5, 10, 15, and so on of Kroll's text. Double verticals (||) in both the Greek and English texts represent page breaks in Kroll's text. All other deviations from the text printed by Kroll are underlined in the Greek text and accounted for in the notes. Some typographical errors have also been corrected. For the advisability of many of these improvements in the text I am dependent on the comments of the late A. J. Festugière (1970), to whom not only the text here presented but the translation and notes are deeply and pervasively indebted. The notation "[F.]" is used to indicate notes substantially dependent on those of his exemplary scholarly translation.

Kroll's preface to the first volume of the text he edited is brief (less than three pages), and I have translated what is relevant to the present text below (Addendum 2, pp. xxxiii–xxxv). This gives a description of the unique manuscript, now divided into two parts, of which the portions of the *Commentary* translated here are found in the Florentine codex (Laurentian Library [codex LXXX 9]).

ADDENDUM 1: TABLE OF CONTENTS OF
PROCLUS'S COMMENTARY ON THE *REPUBLIC*

[Kroll]

Essay 1: What and How Many Are the Principal Topics That a Correct Interpreter Must Articulate Before Reading the *Republic* with a Group? 1:5

[Essay 2: The Arguments of Socrates against Polemarchus' Definition of Justice—MISSING]

Essay 3: The Four Arguments on Justice in the <i>Republic</i> Directed against Thrasymachus' Four Notions About It [BEGINNING MISSING]	1:20
Essay 4: The Theological Principles Articulated in Book 2 of the <i>Republic</i>	1:27
Essay 5: Plato's Position on the Art of Poetry and its Various Genres and the Best Mode and Meter	1:42
Essay 6: Proclus the Successor on the Things Said by Plato in the <i>Republic</i> Regarding Homer and Poetics	
Book 1	1:69
Book 2	1:154
Essay 7: The Demonstrations in the Fourth Book of the <i>Republic</i> that the Parts of the Human Soul are Three and the Virtues in Them Four	1:206
Essay 8: The Speeches in the Fifth Book of the <i>Republic</i> Showing that the Virtues and Education are Common to Men and Women	1:236
Essay 9: Theodore of Asine's Arguments Maintaining that the Virtue of Men and Women is the Same and an Examination of What Socrates Said [on this Matter]	1:251
Essay 10: The Argument in Book Five of the <i>Republic</i> Distinguishing Between the Love of Knowledge [φιλομαθία] of Philosophers and That of the Many	1:258
Essay Eleven: The Argument in the <i>Republic</i> Demonstrating What the Good Is	1:269
Essay Twelve: The Cave in the Seventh Book of the <i>Republic</i>	1:287
Essay Thirteen: "Melissa" on the Speech of the Muses in the <i>Republic</i>	2:1
Essay Fourteen: The Three Arguments Demonstrating That the Just Man Is Better Off Than the Unjust Man*	2:81

* Reading τὸν δίκαιον for τὸ δίκαιον at K. 1:4,22.

Essay Fifteen: The Principal Topics in Book 10 of the <i>Republic</i>	2:85
Essay Sixteen: Commentary on the Myth of Er	2:96
Essay Seventeen: An Inquiry into the Objections of Aristotle in Book 2 of the <i>Politics</i> to the <i>Republic</i> of Plato	2:360

ADDENDUM 2: WILHELM KROLL'S PREFACE TO
VOLUME 1 OF HIS EDITION OF THE *COMMENTARY*

I have little to insert as preface to this first volume of Proclus, containing what is in the Florentine codex; I shall have more to say in preface to the second.

The commentaries on the *Republic* of Plato are extant in a single codex, written in the ninth or tenth century and at some point split in two by some greedy individual, of which one is now in the Laurentian Library (codex LXXX 9) and the other passed from the books of the Salviati to the codices Columnenses and thence to the Vatican collection (Vatic. 2197). The latter lay unexamined for a long time, but the former, though it was available for everyone's use for more than four centuries, was nevertheless fruitfully consulted by virtually no one.¹ The only edition of the first part to appear, published in Basel in 1534 by [Thomas] Grynaeus, came not from the Laurentian manuscript itself but from the Oxford copy (Corpus Christi College 99 chart. saec. XV);² a few people have examined the archetype, but no one took down variant readings before Pitram (*Analecta sacra et classica V*, Rome 1888, part II pp. 197–264), concerning whose meticulousness it is best to say nothing at all.

I therefore collated the Laurentian manuscript as diligently as I could in 1891 and 1893 and reexamined a few passages in 1896 (of one of them,

1. I list as an exception Valentinus Rose, who published a list of the titles in *Hermes* 2, 96ff. [Kroll's note; see Rose 1867]

2. Grynaeus in the dedicatory epistle to John More, the son of Thomas, dated March 1, 1534, claims that he received the manuscript from John Claymund [master of Corpus Christi College] in 1531, but Coxe (*Catal. II* 35) [Henry O. Coxe, *Catalogus codicum MSS. qui in collegiis aulisque Oxoniensibus hodie adservantur* (2 vols., Oxford, 1852)] says that he bought this same codex from the heirs of William Grocnius in 1521. [Kroll's note]

my friend N. Festa obligingly replied to my request for a reading). The codex is parchment consisting of 164 written pages,³ 27 x 18 cm., written in the ninth or early tenth century with great care by the same man who wrote the Marcianus 246 of Damascius, the Parisinus 1807 of Plato (A), and the Palatinus 398 of the paradoxographers (I have nothing to report about the Parisinus 1962 of Maximus of Tyre and Albinus, on which cf. Duebner in his preface to Theophrastus, p. viii). Some librarian, from no other source but the archetype, made minuscules of the majuscules without adding accents or breathing marks. He was succeeded by a *revisor* who not only added these but collated the whole book with the archetype and removed nearly all the mistakes. At a later date, perhaps in the eleventh or twelfth century, a *corrector* came along who changed quite a few readings, in part from another manuscript and in part from his own conjectures. A recent hand has been active, chiefly in the first pages, working to restore the lost lines. In the apparatus I have designated the *revisor* as m² and the *corrector* as m³. However, if I had indicated all of his changes, I would have cluttered the apparatus with a great deal of trivia; it is not credible to say how many iotacisms and mistakes of this sort he introduced, especially since in those places where the color of the ink is the same, the one can scarcely be distinguished from the other. And if I had wished, I could with no damage have made my references to this man still less, but I thought it useful to alert the reader that someone of this sort had contributed no small amount to the composition of the manuscript. I warn the reader of one thing: wherever he erased individual letters or a whole word and had nothing to substitute, he filled the empty space with short lines, either plain or with dots above and below (— and —:—), by which certain scholars have been led to quite amazing opinions.

3. 165 are numbered, but 177 [??] occurs twice, 4 is entirely missing, and 1 has been added subsequently. After the first quire, four have fallen out, for the number A' appears on folio 5 and S' on folio 13 (cf. on 19, 25 [where it is observed that the missing pages create a lacuna encompassing the end of the first essay, all of the second, and the beginning of the third]). After quire 24 (folios 156–163) again some pages of the following quire have perished (cf. on 293, 22 [at least one folio is missing]), of which folios 164 and 165 have survived, now joined with two blank pages. Two folios from the 26th quire are preserved in the Vatican codex (folios 151, 152) but in the sixteenth century two more beside these were extant, which have twice been described but have now been removed and carried off somewhere (Diehl *mus. Rhen.* 54). [Kroll's note; see Diehl 1899]

I have designated the Basel edition with the letter b and added its page numbers in the margin; Grynaeus made several excellent emendations (unless he found the passages already emended in the Oxford copy—the question did not seem to me to be of sufficient importance to travel to Oxford).

In my notes “im.” is *in margine*, “ir.” *in rasura*, “ss.” *supra scripsit*, “exp.” *expunxit*, “uv.” *ut videtur*. Where I brought in the manuscripts of Plato, I made use of Schanz’s notes. It was often necessary to refer to my book on the *Chaldaean Oracles* (Bresl. phil. Abh. vii 1 [Kroll 1894]).

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W.K.