Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought

Essays Presented to the Rev’d Dr Robert D. Crouse

Edited by
Michael Trescohow
Willemien Otten
Walter Hannam

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Finally, as the world and all of human history originates from the eternal God, so the end or telos of the world, along with all time and history, is to return to the eternal and immutable Triune God in the joy of the everlasting City of God. All of the past, present, and future are present in this Divine Presence freely creating and redeeming humankind. The evil and sin of intelligent creatures cannot thwart the divine purpose. The City of God reveals through the visible mission of the Word Incarnate and his sacramental and biblical Church a divine intelligibility that guides all the ages of the world to its God-gifted end. Thus in the last book of the City of God Augustine begins with the creation of angels and mankind and the eternal Divine Wisdom ordering all things according to his purpose. Suffering and evil brought about by sin is overcome, not by removing them through power, but by the wisdom of the Cross whereon the Word Incarnate took into himself all the evil and powers of death and transforms evil into good, sinners into saints, and death into eternal life in the resurrection. Christians witness to this wisdom by martyrdom and by taking up the Cross of Christ in hope of eternal life.

Father Grousse was certainly correct when he averred that for Augustine to know God and his own soul involves a divine wisdom, goodness, and love that order the lowest and the highest to the Father, in the Son, and through the Holy Spirit.

THE ORIGIN OF DETERMINATION IN THE NEOPATONISM OF PROCLUS

D. Gregory MacIsaac

Philosophy has as its task not only the discovery of the determinations into which all things fall, but also the explanation of how these determinations arise. In Proclus we may distinguish three related sorts of determinations. First, there are the determinations which emerge within any given taxē in the hierarchy of all things and which may be thought of as its content, such as the intelligible genera in Intellect (Nous), or the various animal species in the material world. Second are the determinations which give a particular taxē its overall character, such as the simplicity of the henads, or the temporality of souls. Finally, there are the determinations which emerge through discursive thinking itself, the logoi through which we grasp the determinations of all things. What follows is an account of the character and origin of these related sorts of determination in Proclus’ system.

Proclus is the most important figure in Athenian Neoplatonism. Living in the fifth century AD, he was Diadochos, the Successor or Head, of the Platonic Academy, in the generation before its closure by the Emperor Justinian. His philosophy manifests the mature form of pagan Greek

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1 In order to present my argument clearly, I will use taxē, which means “order” or “rank,” to refer to the ontological level of henads, Nous, Soul, or Body. In this usage, taxē is contrasted with taxia, which means “chain” or “cord,” usually translated as “series,” and which refers to the causal chain descending from the henads, through all the lower taxēs. In doing this I risk giving a false impression, because Proclus’ own use of these terms is not so consistent, although his ontological distinction is clear. See Proclus, The Elements of Theology, ed. and trans. E.R. Dodds, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1963), prop. 21. What is needed is a detailed study of Proclus’ use of terms such as taxē, taxia, dunameis, and arithmos.

2 Damascius was Diadochos when the Academy was closed in 529 AD. Damascius has to this point not received as much attention as Proclus, although many of his texts survive.
thought, in which the principles of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy reached their fullest elaboration. In some ways Hegel’s judgement is fair, that Proclus’ philosophy is the culmination of Greek thought, in which “the sensuous world has disappeared and the whole been raised into spirit.” It is certainly true that in Proclus we often find a full working out of positions which are present in a more seminal form in earlier thinkers.

The first principle in Neoplatonism is the One, or Good, from which all things unfold. The One transcends all categories of Being, as Plato says in the Republic. We cannot oppose a pagan necessitated emanation to a Christian free creation, because the One is above any determination which could be imposed upon it by necessity. We find in Proclus the One as the first principle from which all things unfold according to a triadic rule of remaining, procession, and return. This triadic unfolding structures the universe, making a hierarchy of unity and multiplicity. Things which emerge from the One first are more similar to their principle than are later things, according to the Neoplatonic rule of similarity of effect to cause. Hence the universe is a hierarchy which begins from absolute simplicity, and unfolds stepwise into ever increasing multiplicity.

The One is also the Good. There is a general identification of unity and good, because the good of any particular thing is the unity that makes it be the sort of things that it is. Thus in hierarchically ordered causes and effects, the effects attain their good by receiving the unity which is appropriate to them from their causes, a unity which is less strong than that of their causes. So there is a two-fold motion in the unfolding of all things from the One. The procession (proodos) through which an effect emerges gives rise to a reversion (epistrophe), which is an erotic striving back after its cause.

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6 I speak here of the hierarchically ordered causation through which the universe unfolds. The sort of causation which holds within the natural world is not hierarchically ordered, and is only a dim image of true causation.

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such elaboration is like dividing Aristotle’s potentially infinitely divisible line. Therefore, the catalogue which follows is not exhaustive.

Immediately after the One come the principles of First Limit and First Unlimited. Limit and Unlimited run throughout the entire hierarchy, conferring upon all things their fixed identity as well as their productive power. After these principles come a class of unities, the henads. The henads are the first determinations into which the universe falls, and while imitating the absolute simplicity and fertility of the One, they differ from it in that there are many of them. From the henads proceed chains of causation, or 

\[ \text{causae} \], modelled after the trains of the gods from Plato's 'Phaedrus.' The henads are above Being, which for Proclus is the first moment in Intelligible (Nous). Nous for Proclus is divided into three primary orders (taxeis): intelligible (nooton), intelligible and intellectual (nooton kai nooton), and intellectual (nooton). These taxeis are identified as Being, Life, and Nous proper. Each of these taxeis is further subdivided. Being is divided into three intelligible triads, the One-Being, Eternity, and the Autocion. Life is divided

10 While there is controversy over the placement of Limit/Unlimited with regard to the henads, L. Strovanos argues convincingly for their place immediately after the One, and before the henads. He argues that there is a triad of principles, with Limit holding the place of oura, Unlimited as dynamis, and Providence holding the place of pneuma, as the analogical causes of these three elements in lower things. See L. Strovanos, *Proclus, Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Science* (New Haven, 1996), pp. 175–179. See also Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, proem. 87–92; Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3.72, pp. 93.26–95.10; 3.14, p. 51.6–7; 4.3, p. 15.6–10; Proclus, *In primam Euclidis Elementorum commentary*, ed. G. Friedlein, Leipzig, 1873, p. 6 (hereafter Proclus, *Commentary on the Elements of Geometry*); W. Beierwaltes, *Proclus, Commentaries on *Mathesis*,* pp. 50–60; A.D.R. Sheppard, "Monad and Dyad as cosmic principles in Syrius." 5 The Soul and the Structure of Being in late Neoplatonism, *Syrius, Proclus and Simplicius*, ed. H.J. Blumenhal and A.C. Lloyd (Liverpool, 1982), pp. 1–17; and C. D’Ancona, "PROCOLO. E NAMIB EAPSIN INNOMINE SOUVRASSIBILE," *Rivista di Storia della Filosofia*, 47.2 (1992), 263–95. D’Ancona argues that Proclus speaks in two ways about the relation between Limit/Unlimited and the henads. Sometimes the henads seem to be produced by this first pair or principles. But at other times the henads transcend any sort of otherness, because they are produced from the one laid foundation, or according to the mode of unification. Therefore Proclus is really speaking about two different sorts of things when he speaks in these two different manners. However, it seems to me that we have to admit at least one sort of otherness in the henads, namely the fact that there are many of them, even though in themselves they are simplices. Their multiplicity is due to their prothesis, or procession, which is governed by Unlimited.

11 From henas, or "unit," cognate with 

\[ \text{oun} \], or "one." There are various sorts of henads, but here I am speaking of henads which come before Being (interpretive Henads). Proclus also calls these the divine henads, or simply gods. See Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, prop. 119.

12 This is the Living Being from Plato’s *Timaeus* 30c. See Proclus, *Commentary on the Timaeus* 1, p. 416.6 ff.


14 Proclus assigns the various Greek gods to these different aspects of Nous, and to the henads. These mythological divinities reveal in symbolic form the various aspects of the spiritual world. See H. Lewy, *Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy, Mysticism, Magic and Platonicism in the Later Roman Empire* (Paris, 1978), pp. 485–486.


16 Being, Life, and Nous, in Nous as a triad of ouras, dynamis, pneuma.

17 For this division see Proclus, *Commentary on the Timaeus* 2, p. 125.10 ff. The divisions of the Soul in Proclus correspond to the following passages of the *Timaeus*: 33b1–33b2 (oura); 36b2–36b6 (dynamis); 36d5–36d6 (pneuma); 36d6–36c5 (schema/schisma/dien). For schema see 2, p. 127.2 and 9.

18 It is unclear whether or not there are other hypercosmic souls than the monad which generates all souls. Plato, *Timaeus,* 40c: cf. Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. and trans. E.R. Dodds, note to proposition 184, p. 290.
angels, demons, and heroes, and finally human souls.\textsuperscript{20} Below the \textit{axis} of Soul is Nature, as a sort of in-between hypostasis,\textsuperscript{21} and finally comes the \textit{axis} of Body. Below Body, Prime Matter has a sort of shadowy existence, as the last extent of the power of the One, being indeterminate by defect as the One is indeterminate by excess.

II

With the basic architecture of Proclus’ universe in front of us, we can begin to look at the emergence of the determinations of certain important \textit{taxes}. Here we will look at the determinations which could be thought of as the \textit{content} of each \textit{taxis}. In section IV we will discuss the determinations which give each \textit{taxis} its overall character.

The One itself is beyond all determination. Its need to transcend determination in order to be the source of all determinations is similar to Aristotle’s description of the indeterminacy of passive \textit{Nous}, or of the point which is able to observe the motions of all the sense organs, because it is determined to none of them. However, here it is a matter of power. The One is absolutely simple because it is completely powerful, and any determination would be a diminution of its power.\textsuperscript{22} Limit and Unlimited, likewise, seem to be above all determination as principles of the determinate, in the sense that it is the predominance of Limit or Unlimited which constitutes any given determination. Limit and Unlimited appear in lower \textit{taxes} as Same and Other, Rest and Motion, and other pairs of opposed terms, the combination of which makes a determinate “mixture” (\textit{miktion}).

The henads are really the first determinate principles in the universe. They are the result of the application to the One of the metaphysical rule that any monadic principle generates not only effects which stand as a lower \textit{taxis}, but co-ordinate terms that hold a lower place in the same \textit{taxis}.\textsuperscript{23} So the first term, or monad, of the \textit{axis} of \textit{Nous} generates lesser \textit{noeis}, and the monad of Soul generates souls. So too does the One generate henads. The monad of any \textit{taxis} is imparticpable by lower

\textit{taxeis}, so all things receive their unity through participation, not in the One itself, but in their proper henad. The henads are above being, so in the strict sense they cannot be thought. Any discussion of them is a discussion of their analogical counterparts in discursive speech. The character which makes the henads what they are is the simplicity which they share with the One. And it is this character which makes it very difficult to understand how they could be mutually distinct. Proclus thinks that each henad also has its own particular character.\textsuperscript{24} This character is often described in relation to the series (\textit{seira}) which depend from them. Sometimes this description is in terms of general cosmic functions, such as presiding over the remaining, the procession, or the return of things, or in terms of particular terms which manifest the character of the \textit{seira} as a whole, such as the god Apollo, or the visible sun, or the various levels of the Circle figure. In general, the henads are ordered insofar as they preside over more universal or more particular beings.

Seeing that the distinction between henads is often phrased in terms of subsequent entities, it is a very important question whether a henad is primitively the character which it bestows on its \textit{seira}, or whether in fact it is named according to the character which only emerges in its \textit{seira}. We will discuss this at length in a later section of this study. For the moment, however, we will anticipate our discussion, and say that the character which a henad possesses in common with its \textit{seira}, and which it somehow bestows on its \textit{seira}, both exists primitively in the henad and emerges with the \textit{seira} as a whole. It is this primary \textit{idola} which makes the henads mutually distinct. But how can things which are absolute simplicities have different characters in the first place? It seems that Proclus uses the pure principle of procession itself in order to explain how henads have different characters. If monads give rise to things which are similar to themselves before those which are dissimilar, then the monad which is the One itself will gives rise to henads which are arranged in a hierarchy.\textsuperscript{25} Those closer to the One preside over more universal beings, while those further away over more partial, and so some henads

\textsuperscript{20} Proclus’s technical term for the human soul is the “partial soul” (\textit{meriké pouche}).
\textsuperscript{21} L. Siourvanis, Proclus, Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Science, pp. 136–140.
\textsuperscript{22} Proclus, \textit{Platonic Theology} 3.5, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{23} Proclus, \textit{The Elements of Theology}, prop. 21; Proclus, \textit{Platonic Theology} 3.2–3, pp. 6–14.
\textsuperscript{24} He uses the term \textit{idola}, as well as \textit{dynamis} or \textit{syphoton}. See Proclus, \textit{The Elements of Theology}, prop. 123, 125, 131; Proclus, \textit{Platonic Theology} 1.19, and 3.5–6; and see discussion and references in L. Siourvanis, Proclus, Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Science, pp. 162–173.
\textsuperscript{25} Proclus, \textit{Platonic Theology} 3.5, p. 17.
The question remains, however, how things whose only character is simplicity could also have distinct characters. Should they not be identical in their simplicity? In fact, they should not. Edward Butler has argued that the distinctions which emerge in the next lower taxa, in Being, are such that they are mutually mediating; their identity is bound up with their difference. So Rest is Rest, not only because of its self-identity, but through its difference from Motion. Further, both Rest and Motion are identical through a third term, Being, insofar as they are both Beings. This sort of mutual distinction mediated by other terms, according to Butler, would destroy the operative character of the hexads, namely their simplicity. Hence he suggests a persuasive interpretation of the hexads: that it is precisely by being unique and individual that each hexad imitates the simplicity of the One. Their simplicity, like the simplicity of the One, is a sign of their excess of power. So it is by each being simple, like the


E. P. Butler, “Polytheism and the Hexadic Manifold,” *Dionysius* 23 (2005): 83–104. I find less persuasive his thesis that the One is nothing other than the hexads. His contention that an existent One before the hexads would remove their character of simplicity by making them subordinate, and so less ‘one’, is contradicted by Proclus’ ability to accept an order within the hexads, with some preceding over more universal and others over more partial beings, while still holding that each hexad is simple. See Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3.5–6. Indeed, Butler’s own promising thesis that each hexad’s simplicity lies in an *aidid* which is not reducible to ontological oppositions argues against his removal of the One as something distinct from the hexads. The *aidids* of the One itself is that it grounds all other things while transcending their oppositions, while the *aidids* of a particular hexad is that it grounds a particular sort of beings while transcending the oppositions within that *hexad*. Thus the One and the hexads transcend all oppositions, and so are not opposed to each other, and can all be called simple. So the order which holds between the One and the hexads can be described in Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, prop. 21, where each hexad issues from an unparticipated monad, and this relation does not make the hexads any less ‘one’ than the One.

More plausible, I think, would be a general thesis about the relation between an unparticipated monad and its coordinate manifold, holding that the monad and the manifold are really the same, but are considered from different perspectives. The One would be the principle as it is in itself, and the hexads the One in relation to others. However, this is not to eliminate the One or the hexads, because in Proclus’ system things are really different depending on the point of view from which they are considered. In other words, Butler is wrong to reduce the One to the hexads, because it is just as proper to reduce the hexads to the One, and at the same time say that they are distinct. The same seemingly paradoxical position, furthermore, should also be applied to the triangle of *Nous* and of Soul, and all others. This is why the position which Neoplatonists have held since Plotinus about the relation between an hypothesis and its coordinate particulars, where they are both the same and different from each other.

Only those things which are deficient in power lose the character of simplicity, according to Proclus. See Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3.5, p. 18.

One, that they have the power to confer on other things the character (Aiditis) which each has, and that they preside over more universal or more partial beings, just as the One itself as the first presides over all things. So this is the first sort of determination within a taxis which we find in Proclus: a distinction between simple hexads whose pure procession dictates that they have different characters, and whose superfluity of power establishes different sorts of beings.

Within the taxis of *Nous* as a whole, Proclus distinguishes between the intelligible, intelligible and intellectual, and intellectual *taxes*. Our discussion of the determinations which emerge within *Nous* will be restricted to the intelligible *taxis*. The intelligible moment of *Nous* as a whole is Being, but it is further subdivided into Being, Eternity, and the *Auzasion*. These three are not co-ordinate, but rather are hierarchically ordered moments, each called an intelligible triad. Being, as the first intelligible triad, is also called the One-Being by Proclus, as the unified principle of the sort of determinate existence which belongs to all beings, and as below the One itself. The One in the One-Being is not the One itself, but the One which goes with Being. The One-Being, or just Being, is not itself determined into different sorts of beings, but rather is the principle of the sort of determination by which one being marks itself off from another by having certain characteristics, unlike the sort of mutual distinction of pure procession possessed by the hexads. Being, as the principle of this sort of determination, gives rise to Eternity, as the moment of power (*dynamis*), which itself gives rise to the *Auzasion*. The *Auzasion* is the paradigm of the *Timaeus*, according to Proclus. It is the place of the primary forms, which are identified with the Greatest Kinds (*megista gena*) of Plato’s *Sophist*. So it is in the *Auzasion* that the multiplicity of intelligible genera, the primary determinations

27 E. P. Butler, “Polytheism and the Hexadic Manifold,” *Dionysius* 23 (2005): 83–104. I find less persuasive his thesis that the One is nothing other than the hexads. His contention that an existent One before the hexads would remove their character of simplicity by making them subordinate, and so less ‘one’, is contradicted by Proclus’ ability to accept an order within the hexads, with some preceding over more universal and others over more partial beings, while still holding that each hexad is simple. See Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3.5–6. Indeed, Butler’s own promising thesis that each hexad’s simplicity lies in an *aidid* which is not reducible to ontological oppositions argues against his removal of the One as something distinct from the hexads. The *aidids* of the One itself is that it grounds all other things while transcending their oppositions, while the *aidids* of a particular hexad is that it grounds a particular sort of beings while transcending the oppositions within that *hexad*. Thus the One and the hexads transcend all oppositions, and so are not opposed to each other, and can all be called simple. So the order which holds between the One and the hexads can be described in Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, prop. 21, where each hexad issues from an unparticipated monad, and this relation does not make the hexads any less ‘one’ than the One.

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Only those things which are deficient in power lose the character of simplicity, according to Proclus. See Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3.5, p. 18.

28 It is a triad of Limit/Unlimited/Mixed, or Remaining, Procession, and Return, the triadic moments which structure all spiritual entities.
30 Each hexad has its own character, but not through its difference from each other hexad, because they are all simple. Beings, on the other hand, differ from each other, in that each one is what it is by being what all the others are not. See Proclus, *In Platonis Parmenideum, in Opera inedita*, V. Cousin (Paris, 1864), 1047.24–1049.37 (hereafter Proclus, *Commentary on the *Parmenides*). This passage is cited and discussed in the introduction to Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3, pp. ixxi–ixxi.
into which all beings fall, occur. They do not occur in Eternity, which is the principle of their being brought to birth, and is a sort of principle of fertility, and they do not occur in Being itself. Rather, according to Plotinus, the intelligible genera strive for the unity of Being itself, but in failing to achieve its unity they make themselves many. This is the same as Plotinus’ account of Nous, in which Nous makes itself many through its failure to grasp the One, but Proclus’ more detailed analysis situates such a motion even within the intelligible moment of Nous itself.

One should never forget that for Proclus these elements of the spiritual world are not dead categories. The intelligible genera are living minds, which despite residing in the intelligible taxa of Nous as whole, share in the self-consciousness which emerges fully in the intellectual taxa, albeit in an intelligible manner. They are living minds which gain their respective determinations through a cognitive return on Being itself. They desire their cause, and they seek to be reunited with their cause in their grasp of it. However, the moment of return in Proclus is always both a success and a failure; it is the moment in which the power of the cause comes to be possessed by the effect, but possessed in a deficient manner, due to the deficiency of the effect. That there are many intelligible genera is due to the fact that none of them is able to capture all of what Being itself is. Each understands the unity which the One-Being is in its own manner, and makes itself to be only a limited grasp of Being, rather than the whole of Being. Of course, each also shares in each other, and as Plotinus says, each is all and are each. However, their limitation to a particular grasp of being is what determines them as different forms. In this sense, each of the primary forms can be thought of as a deficiency. Each fails to be the One-Being, and each fails in its own particular manner. As J. Trouillard points out, this is a general principle in Procline metaphysics. The effect multiplies the power of its cause, as a sort of compensation for its inability to instantiate the power of its cause in a singular manner:

Le procédant compense ainsi dans une certaine mesure l'écart de sa procession. Il faudrait proférer ses puissances et les diversifier, parce qu'étant plus faible que son principe il ne peut assimiler d'un seul coup la plénitude de

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33 Plotinus, Enneads 5.6.4. See also Proclus, Commentary on the Parmenides 1047.24–1049.37.

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The origin of determination in the Neoplatonism of Proclus

So the determinations which emerge in the Autōgōn are the determinations produced by thinking itself. Thinking itself is a return upon an object which precedes the thinker and is desired by the thinker. Insofar as the object is more unified than the thinker it is not grasped, but insofar as it is grasped it is made many by the thinker. Being is not only the One-Being. Being is a procession from the One-Being into the multiplicity of intelligible genera, so in that sense the intelligible genera in the Autōgōn do grasp being. More properly, in their failed grasp of the One-Being they generate themselves as the articulation of Being. It is this that Proclus means by giving the name Being (ousia) both to the first intelligible triad, and to the intelligible moment of Nous as a whole, which also encompasses the second and third intelligible triads. Further, Proclus thinks that each of the determinations which emerge in the Autōgōn stand in a series depending from the henadis, so that in some manner each form in the Autōgōn has as its principle not only Eternity and the One-Being, but a particular henad.

Like Nous, Soul has hierarchically ordered internal articulations. However, Proclus does not usually give the status of a taxis to these articulations. That being said, there is a similar relation between the essence (ousia) of Soul and its activity (energeia) as between the intelligible and the intellectual taxa of Nous. The ousia of the Soul is a fullness of logos, which stand as the object for the cognitive grasp which Soul has of itself through its energes. The energes of the Soul is a projection (probole), or throwing forth of logos, described metaphorically as an unfolding or unrolling of the hidden logos in the Soul’s ousia. Discursive reason, or philosophy, is for Proclus the projection of these logoi. So we can distinguish in the Soul two general sorts of determinations: the logoi in the Soul’s ousia, and the projected logoi. However, we should refrain

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35 Being is the first term of Being, Life, Nous. But the Being in Being, Life, Nous is itself a triad of Being, Eternity, Autōgōn.
36 Proclus’ phrase is προβολή τῶν οὐσιόδων λόγων.  
37 Discursive reason as the projection of the Soul’s essential logoi (Proclus’ phrase is προβολή τῶν οὐσιόδων λόγων) is the topic of D.G. MacIsaac, The Soul and Discursive Reason in the Philosophy of Proclus (see footnote 15).

προβολή τῶν οὐσιόδων λόγων
from thinking of these as two completely separate levels. Rather, Proclus thinks of the Soul as a self-development, from *ousia*, through *dynamis*, to *energia*. The *ousia* of the Soul is also its moment of remaining in *Nous*, so one could think of its *ousia* either as a point of origin for the unfolding of *Nous* which the Soul is, or as a divided reflection of *Nous*. The second description is prominent in Proclus’ discussion of the *Timaeus*, because in the *Timaeus* Plato describes the structure of the Soul’s *ousia* in terms of ratios (*logoi*) and proportions (*analogoi*). The first description is prominent when Proclus describes *dianoia* as an unfolding of *Nous*.38

The projected *logoi* are unfoldings, or unrollings of the Soul’s own *ousia*, which is its participation in *Nous*. Their production is a generation of a new level of determinations, one more multiple than the source which they seek to unroll. Proclus describes the Soul’s thinking metaphorically as a sort of circling dance around the centre which is *Nous*.39 Each of the *logoi* which the Soul projects is a point on the circumference of the circle, grasping the centre from its own perspective. For this reason the Forms which reside in *Nous* cannot be captured in philosophical thinking, but rather are the inexhaustible sources of philosophy.40 Here again we see the production of internal determinations as the function of an erotic reversion upon a higher unity. The Soul desires to have itself conscious to itself, and projects *logoi* through its desire to return upon itself. The success of this projection, and the fulfillment of this eros, is not some sort of sufficient grasp of *Nous* by dianoetic *logoi*. Instead, *dianoia* points the Soul beyond itself, to a *noesis* which leaves projected *logoi* behind altogether.

The determinations which emerge in the *taxis* of Body are not the project of an erotic reversion. As J. Trouillard often pointed out, the Soul is the centre of the Procline cosmos, as the point where the increasing complexity of the unfolding cosmos begins to turn into a dispersal. It is here that the power which flows from the One begins to fail and move towards the deficient indeterminacy of matter.41 The most important determination which emerges in the *taxis* of Body is three dimensional, or bulk. This determination is an image of the geometrical determinations which belong to the Soul’s discursive thought.42 Body does not desire or think, and so it cannot gain its determination through the sort of cognitive reversion which we find in Soul and *Nous*. Instead, Body is the external activity of Soul, like the radiant heat from a fire. This is a common description of the relation between *taxis* in Proclus, but unlike the higher *taxis*, any external activities which bodies may have are not such as to be hypostasized as a lower *taxis*.43 Proclus uses a beautiful image to describe the bulk of bodies as a sort of exhalation from their seminal *logoi*. Of course, there are other sorts of determinations which emerge with body: the multiplicity of individuals which fall under various animal or plant species, and all of qualities and relations, etc., which make up the sensible world. Although these determinations are not the product of a cognitive return, they still stand in relation to their causes as a deficient multiplicity to a higher unity. For example, the species dog includes the idea of having a certain range of colours. Individual dogs do not possess this range, but rather a particular colour or combination of colours. In this sense, the species is more unified, because it is not coloured, and more fertile, because it is the principle of the multiplicity of colours exhibited by individual dogs.

III

What this examination of the internal determinations of various *taxis* has illustrated is that for Proclus the entire universe is ordered according to the principle of *analogia*. The determinations which emerge in each *taxis* are an image of the determinations of the *taxis* which lies above it, so there is an analogy which holds between all *taxis* of his universe. A given *taxis* most often makes itself into an image of its cause through its cognitive reversion, but this is not always the case. In all cases, a given *taxis* is considered by Proclus to be, in a sense, the same content as its upper neighbour, translated to a greater level of multiplicity. This is expressed in another way by the doctrine of series, or *seira*, which depend from thehenads. Each term in a *seira* manifests the character of the entire *seira* in its own manner, a manner which is more multiple.

38 See for example, Proclus, *Commentary on the Elements of Geometry*, p. 16.
39 Proclus gives an etymology of *Timaeus* (chrowns, the measure of the thinking motion of Soul, as chrowned, i.e. the man which dances in a circle like the chorus. See Proclus, *Commentary on the Timaeus* 3, p. 9, 16–18; p. 28.
42 Proclus, *Commentary on the Timaeus* 2, pp. 24.31–25.23.
than the previous term. So each term in a *seira* is a multiple image of its predecessor, which is itself a multiple image, tracing the relation of image and paradigm back to the henad.

In Proclus's universe, all things below the One have a threefold existence: as a principle in their causes, in their own proper manner of existing, and as an image in their effects. Analogy works by similarity. Causes bring into existence like things before unlike, so the analogy which holds between all *taxis* is a function of the similarity of each effect to its cause in the previous *taxis*. Proclus occasionally gives examples of the analogy which holds in a given *seira*, such as his description of the *seira* of figure, and the *seira* of the circle. The passage which describes the *seira* of the circle, in particular, displays the similarity which holds from the highest to the lowest members, running through all of the *taxis*.

Proclus' doctrine of analogy has been discussed before, and we do not intend here to rehearse all of its aspects. But what we wish to point out is that Proclus' own emphasis, and that of his modern commentators, is on the identity which holds between different *taxis* due to their *analogia*. Proclus' description of the *seira* of the circle is intended to show how each member is somehow the same as all the others, in its own manner. What we wish to focus on in the remainder of this study is not the identity but the difference between *taxis*, and to see what being the same 'in its own manner' means.

IV

We have examined the determinations which could be thought of as the content of each *taxis*. Here we will look at the determinations which give each *taxis* its overall character. The character of a *taxis* as a whole is determined by its monad, whether that be the One, *Nous*, or Soul, or any one of the more intermediate monads. Causation in a *seira* is commonly referred to in the contemporary literature as vertical causation, while causation within *taxis* is called horizontal causation. This spatial metaphor is serviceable, as long as its limitations are realized. So we can been dissolved. Animals and plants owe to the circle the likeness between parents and offspring. For animals and plants are born from seed and produce seed in their turn; generation becomes reciprocal, with a recurring cycle of growth from the immaterial to the fully grown and back again, so that decay accompanies generation. On things that we call 'contrary to nature' the circle imposes order by limiting their boundlessness and regulating even them rightly by using the last traces of the powers resident in it. Hence such unnatural events recur at bounded intervals, and times of death as well as of fruitfulness are based on the revolutions of the circles, as the myth of the Muses has it. All evils may have been banished from the divine to this mortal region, yet even they are in revolution, as Socrates says [Theaetetus 176a], and have a share of the circular period and ordering. Hence nothing is unimportant or abandoned by the gods; rather the providence that perfects all things brings even the boundless variety of evils around to the limit and ordering appropriate to them.


49 Proclus, Platonic Theology 3.2, p. 8.
say that the determination of any given entity is to a great extent due to the confluence of vertical and horizontal causes. That is to say, because of the *analogia* which holds between *taxēs*, any given entity manifests the character which it has in common with other members of its *seira*, and which it receives ultimately from the head at the head of its *seira*. But it manifests this character according to the particular sort of determination which characterises the *taxēs* as a whole: henadically, noetically, noetically, discursively, mathematically, in bodily manner, or in a manner belonging to some intermediate *taxēs*.

What we should notice is that each *taxēs* gives rise to a new sort of overall determination, one which does not exist in any of the higher *taxēs*.* This is not the converse of the principle of *analogia*, but an important part of it. Similarity is not identity, but rather the togetherness of identity and difference. Hence the principle of *analogia* means that the same things exist in different *taxēs* in different manners. Proclus' description of the *seira* of the circle, for example, is intended to show the identity which holds between members. But it just as strongly shows their difference, and how each is circular in its own manner. Indeed, none of the members of this *seira* which he enumerates are in fact what we would initially think of as circles, because the mathematical circle is left out of the catalogue. Rather, they are each something else which may metaphorically be called circular.

Each *taxēs* originates in a monad, which itself is unparticipated by lower *taxēs*, but gives rise to the participated members of its own *taxēs*. This monad possesses primarily (*πρῶτος*) and causally (*archichōs*) the character it confers on the *taxēs* as a whole, and there is only one such monad which possesses this character in this manner. That is to say, there is only one Being, one Life, one *Nous* and so on that is Being, Life, or *Nous* in the primary manner and such as to confer being, life, and *Nous* on other things. Proclus says that the same holds of each of the Forms. This means that even within each *taxēs* there is a hierarchical ordering, such that each member is both similar to and different from its monad. However, what interests us is the relation between *taxēs* as a whole. Soul possesses in a secondary manner the Forms which *Nous* possesses primarily, and so is an image of *Nous*. The *taxēs* of *Nous* itself originates the determination which we may call cognition, if we speak generally. The heads are above thought, so *Nous* is the first hypostasis which grasps itself in thought. Therefore it possesses this determination primarily (*πρῶτος*), so that the thinking of Soul is secondary (*δεύτερος*) with regard to *Nous*, and causally (*archichōs*), in that Soul's thinking is caused by *Nous*. So Soul's thinking is a secondary attempt to grasp the intelligibles in *Nous*, just as *Nous* thinking is a primary grasp of itself as intelligible. However, Soul also originates a character which it possesses *πρῶτος* and *archichōs*. This is the temporal division of its thinking. It is the temporality of Soul which marks in such a manner in which it possesses the Forms (*eidē*) of *Nous*. In other words, what *Nous* possesses *πρῶτος* and *archichōs* it confers on Soul in a secondary manner. But Soul possesses this noetic character secondarily according to the determination which it itself possesses *πρῶτος* and *archichōs*. My argument is that in Proclus each *taxēs* possesses an overall determination which is primitive to that order, because it is primitive to the monad of that order. Further, according to Proclus this primitive character is not caused by any higher principle. This is behind his striking doctrine of the self-constituted (*athypostasis*). The term self-constitution strikes us because it seems peculiar for something to give rise to itself. Self-constitution is really a form of self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency (*τὸ αὐταῖρος*) is a principle which is explained but not argued for in the *Elements of Theology* propositions 9 and 10. The self-sufficient provides itself with its own well being (ἐν). It is able of itself to fulfill itself with its own good. The self-sufficient still participates in the Good itself, and shows its secondary nature in that it needs to be fulfilled with good. The Good itself is above fulfillment.

How the self-sufficient can both be itself the principle of its own good, and be dependent on the Good itself is explained in the propositions on self-constitution in the *Elements of Theology*, and in a passage on the self-sufficient from the *Platonic Theology* which Dodds refers us to.

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59 Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, prop. 22.
60 Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, props. 194, 195.
61 Each monad confers its character on its subsequent, so all that has being has it due to the first Being, all that has life has it due to the first Life, and so on. Further, the power of the higher causes extends further than the lower, so that the Procline universe is organised according to nested loops of causation. E.R. Dodds gives a good chart of this in his commentary on props. 38–59 of the *Elements of Theology*, where the One, Being, Life, and *Nous* give rise to animals, plants, dead bodies, and matter, with Soul in the centre. See Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 3, 3–6.
In Plutonic Theology 1.19, Proclus explains that there are different sorts of self-sufficiency for each *taxis*. In effect, self-sufficiency is the ability to give oneself the good which is appropriate to one's *taxis*. For this reason the members of any *seira* do not step outside of their own proper station, but rather receive the good which is appropriate to their nature. And the self-sufficiency of the *hodos*, the wise, is natural, *huname* in Proclus' terms, and the visible cosmos is their ability to participate in their causes in such a way that they receive their good in their own manner. In this passage, Proclus even distinguishes between the different sorts of self-sufficiency appropriate to different levels, in effect applying the principle to the principle. If self-sufficiency is the principle that each *taxis* gives itself its good in its own manner, then in this text Proclus says that even self-sufficiency itself shows this variation among *taxois*, and is not identical for all things. For each of the *hodoses* is itself a goodness (*agathoeidēs*), and so is self-sufficient through itself, while *Nous* is self-sufficient through participation (*hunmēnon*), Soul through "irradiation" (*hunmēnon*), and the cosmos through similarity (*kath' homoiōsthai*). Proclus expresses this in another way. All *Nous* is *agathoeidēs*, but not autagathōs nor prótos agathon. In other words, because in Proclus one and good are convertible, each *hodos* is not only a one, it is a good. So good, as much as one, is the determination which the monad of the *taxis* of *hodoses*, which is the One itself, confers on its *taxis*. Therefore each of the *hodoses*, and only the *hodoses*, is a good prótos and archēklos. *Nous*, insofar as it confers upon itself its own good, does so in a manner which is marked by its own determination, which is Form and cognition. Therefore it is not itself good, but rather *agathoeidēs*, or "boniform," with the emphasis on Form.

The self-sufficient is not the same as the self-constituted, although everything that is self-constituted is self-sufficient. Proclus thinks the *hodoses* are self-sufficient, but it is not clear whether or not he thinks they are self-constituted. He only mentions self-constitution in relation to the gods in one inconclusive passage. I think myself that the *hodoses* are not self-constituted, because self-constitution is the sort of self-sufficiency which comes through reversion (*epistrophe*), and the *hodoses* are above reversion. Carlos Steel has argued persuasively that self-constitution comes through self-reversion, in Proclus. The causal motion by which *Nous* and Soul come to be is one of remaining, procession, and reversion (*mane, prōodos, epistrophe*). This triad is the parallel of *aros, dunamis, energeia*. The moment of *epistrophe* is thus the activity which issues from the *aros* and *dunamis* of *Nous*, or of Soul. This activity is an *epistrophe*, because it is the moment in which a cognitive being tries to grasp itself consciously. It is actually more proper to say that cognition is defined with reference to *epistrophe* than the reverse. For Proclus knowledge in the true sense is an *epistrophe* by which one comes to possess both oneself and one's cause. Reversion is always a reversion both upon oneself, and through oneself upon one's cause. It is through this *epistrophe* that *Nous* and Soul receive their good, so *epistrophe* is an erotic striving. If it is through *epistrophe* that *Nous* and Soul receive their good, and both are self-constituted, then it is through *epistrophe* that *Nous* and Soul tend to themselves their own good. One and Good are convertible, so the manner in which *Nous* and Soul receive their good is also the particular unity which belongs to them as *taxois*. In other words, for the self-constituted the particular determination which the *taxis* originates is their manner of *epistrophe*. Or to put it more strongly, the determination which *Nous* gives rise to is self-constitution itself, i.e., receiving one's good
through self-reversion, and the determination which Soul gives rise to is a secondary sort of self-constitution, i.e. temporal self-reversion. Because this self-reversion measured by Time is a motion from one intelligible object to another it is called self-motion, or autokinesis. Thus we find self-sufficiency, self-constitution, and self-motion as hierarchically arranged manners of conferring one’s good upon oneself. And it is through these three principles that the henads, Nous, and Soul confer upon themselves the overall determination which is primitive to their order, while Body gives itself its determination in a more deficient manner.

So it seems that the taxis of henads receives its overall determinate character from the One itself. Each henad is self-sufficient and possesses its good without need for the internal articulation which arises in Nous. Each is its own character through its own simplicity, just as the One is simple. In addition, the taxis of henads has another character than unity, and that is the fact that there are many of them. Each member of this manifold is simple, because the One is its monad, but that there is a manifold at all cannot be due to the character of the One. The One is the cause of the existence of the henads, for sure, but not of their multiplicity, because it confers unity on them. What has emerged is the numerical multiplicity which comes from procession itself, because they are ‘formally’ identical yet numerically distinct, and this multiplicity will increase with each successive taxis.\(^{30}\) And the principle of this numerical multiplication is not the One, but rather First Limit and First Infinity. This supposition, however, is controversial, as there are scholars who place Limit and Infinity below the henads.\(^{31}\)

Nous is self-sufficient through self-constitution, or through the multiplicity of self-reversion. So, Nous is self-constituted insofar as it gives itself its own good. But it also participates in the Good through the henads. Therefore self-constitution is not what it initially might seem. Nous does not bring itself into existence. Rather it determines for itself its own manner of existing. While it is due to the One that Nous is, it is due to itself that Nous is the way that it is.\(^{32}\) Nous produces itself both as Being and as Nous, as thought and thinker and the overcoming of this division. Note that the numerical multiplicity which emerged with the procession of henads is present in Nous as well, through the distinction between the monad of Nous and the particular nos. Each taxis originates its own overall determination, and passes it on to its effects.

So with Nous two overall determinations emerge which gives the taxis as a whole its character. Nous is both the generation of internal multiplicity and the overcoming of this multiplicity in the self-coinciding which is self-cognition. Its internal differentiation is seen both in the multiplicity of intelligible genera which are the Autozoon and in the internal articulation into intelligible, intelligible and intellectual, and intellectual moments. The multiplicity which marks the intelligible genera is overcome through the principle that each part of the intelligible interpenetrates each other part.\(^{33}\) And the triadic internal distinction is overcome because the third moment is the moment of return, or epistrophē. The intellectual moment of Nous, as we have seen before, is its erotic striving to coincide with itself. It is in this third moment thatNous is complete, so to speak, and constitutes itself as a divine mind, as the distinction between thought and being and their unity. Thus for Nous self-sufficiency is not the simple self-coincidence of a henad, but is rather a self-mediated coincidence through epistrophē. For this reason, I think, Proclus calls Nous self-constituted, distinguishing it from the higher self-sufficiency of the henads.

Nous, however, is a self-coincidence in which there is not perfect self-coincide. This must be the case, as Nous falls short of the simplicity of the henads. The internal articulation is overcome, but also remains. The intellectual moment of Nous does indeed grasp the intelligible moment, but it possesses it not intelligibly (noētikōs), but rather intellectually (noētikōs). So while Nous as a whole is one, its internal articulation into Being, Life and Nous does not disappear. Nous is a complete self-coincidence, but one in which each part possesses each other part in its own manner.

\(^{30}\) Remember that they are above the determination of form, so the term ‘formally’ applies only analogically. Remember as well that while each henad is identical in that each is a simplicity, they each stand at the head of a different series and confer a different character (diaphon) on their own series.

\(^{31}\) See note 10 above.

\(^{32}\) Proclus, Commentary on the Timaeus 3, pp. 215.25–216.4.
The determination which marks the \textit{taxis} of \textit{Nous} is passed on to Soul, and so Soul is also a self-constituted principle. It too is a principle which coincides with itself through a cognitive return on itself. However, the overall determination which Soul originates is the inability to coincide with itself completely. \textit{Nous} grasps its own multiplicity through its single cognitive act, while Soul grasps its multiplicity through a divided cognitive act. Its own essence, as its participation in \textit{Nous}, is present to it as an inexhaustible source of discursive projection, and so the \textit{epistrophe} of Soul is not a completed projection of discursive \textit{logoi}, but one which can continue indefinitely. For this reason Proclus calls it a motion from thought to thought, and Soul's self-constitution is called self-motion (\textit{autokinéthis}). Time as the measure of motion is for Proclus a particular \textit{Nous} which serves as the touchstone or measure of the Soul's divided projection.\textsuperscript{63}

There are two main differences between the overall determination which \textit{Nous} originates and that which Soul originates. First, the intelligible order of \textit{Nous}, comprised of Being, Eternity, and \textit{Autokinesis}, is a divided image of something which is itself beyond being. The heads are distinct through the pure mutual distinction which comes from procession, which somehow concerns each a simple \textit{eidos} which is not defined with reference to another \textit{eidos}. Being is determinate, however, precisely because each being is what it is both with reference to itself, and with reference to all other things. 'Rest' is the opposite of 'Motion', and 'Father' is the father of 'Son', and 'Part' involves a participation in 'Whole', for example. The Soul's \textit{logoi}, on the other hand, are not images of a simple source above Being, but are divided images of those primary determinations into which Being falls in \textit{Nous}. So although the Forms (\textit{eidos}) in \textit{Nous} are unified relative to Soul, they are not pure simplicity. This means that philosophy has as its source not simplicity, but determinate \textit{eidos} which have determinate relations to each other, and even though it cannot ever adequately the \textit{eidos} in its discursive projection, philosophy begins in the determinations of psychic being and turns the Soul towards higher objects which are still determinate beings. \textit{Nous}, on the other hand, as the producer of Being, is turned towards a source which has simplicity as its character.


The second main difference between \textit{Nous} and Soul is that while the internal articulation of \textit{Nous} is a completed finitude, that of Soul is not. Although \textit{Nous} has a logical dynamism it is also unchanging.\textsuperscript{64} There can be no new Forms in \textit{Nous}, even though there is perhaps an infinite internal triadic regress. So while the number of Forms is always finite because \textit{Nous} is a completed act of thinking, there may be a potential infinity of moments or aspects of the act of \textit{Nous} for Soul's divided thinking to pick out. So Soul, while always having projected only a finite number of \textit{logoi}, can continue projecting indefinitely. Its intellectual moment is always being produced, unlike the intellectual moment of \textit{Nous}.

We have described the overall determinations of the \textit{taxis} of heads, of \textit{Nous}, and of Soul in terms of self-sufficiency in its primary instantiation, and as the secondary sorts of self-sufficiency which Proclus calls self-constitution and self-motion. Below Soul is Body. Body also originates its own sort of overall determination, but it is distinct from the higher principles because it does not revert upon itself. So Body is not self-sufficient. The particular determination of Body is in fact exactly the failure to be self-constituted, which is a complete lack of self-grasping or self-coincidence. One part of a body cannot overlap with another part, and for this reason bodies don't think. Bodily things have only their own divided sort of image of self-coincidence. No individual can exhaust the fertility of the species under which it stands, according to Proclus, and so rather than the timeless perfection of the species, we find a succession of generations through birth, life, and death.\textsuperscript{65} This is likely what Proclus means when he attributes self-sufficiency to Body as a whole, but not to individual bodies, in the \textit{Platonic Theology}.

V

We have discussed the determinations which are the content of any given \textit{taxis}, as well as the overall determinations which give each \textit{taxis} its character. These two sorts of determinations in fact coincide in individual things. The internal determinations of an order, the \textit{eidos} in \textit{Nous}

\textsuperscript{64} See Stephen Gersh, \textit{KINÉSN AKNÉTUS}.

\textsuperscript{65} See the passage on the \textit{Circle}, \textit{Commentary on the Elements of Geometry}, pp. 148.5-150.12, quoted above in note 47.
or the ἔργα in Soul, are its manner of instantiating the internal determinations of the higher orders. This is what makes possible the principle of analogy, that each τάξις is an image of its cause and paradigm of its effect. The manner in which a given order is an image of its cause is determined by the overall determination which the order itself gives rise to, be it henadic, noetic, psychic, corporeal, and so with all of the orders within orders, such as the noetic vs. noetic, or mathematical vs. simply dianoetic. We can speak in this general manner about τάξις, or say the same thing by referring to the σειρά which depend from the henads. Each successive member of a series is what the previous member is, but in the more multiple manner appropriate to the τάξις in which it resides.

So if we consider an individual member of a τάξις, what it is depends on two sorts of determinations: the particular series in which it stands, depending from a particular henad, and the overall determination which gives the τάξις its character. The first sort of determination makes a particular soul Apollonian, or Dionysian, for example, but the second makes them both souls. But we shouldn’t divide these two aspects too strongly, because the overall determination of a τάξις just is the manner in which each member instantiates the members of the higher τάξις. Or to put it another way, each entity stands in a vertical series and instantiates the character which comes to it from the previous members of that series in its own way. But ‘what it is’ is not the sum of the character which comes from the higher members plus the character which it gets from its monad. Rather, ‘what it is’ is just its own manner of being the character which it receives from the series. Being an ‘Apollonian Soul’ means instantiating what it means to be Apollonian in a completely new way, a way not already found in Nous or the henads.

Similarity is the togetherness of identity and difference. But most often when similarity is discussed with regard to the principle of analogy the emphasis is on the identity which holds between all levels of the universe, not the difference. However, the difference in the relation of similarity is just as crucial. But where does the difference come from? Proclus thinks that the similarity which holds between orders is non-reciprocal, so that the lower order is similar to the higher, but not vice-versa. If you analyse similarity in terms of identity and difference, then insofar as a member of the lower order holds the same place as a member of the next higher order it is identical with it, and so the lower member has the requisite identity for the relation of similarity. However, its difference is the crucial aspect. Really the difference of the lower entity is its manner of being the higher entity, so from the lower perspective in a sense its difference is its identity. From the higher perspective, however, this difference is only difference. An example is likely helpful here. A coffee table is similar to the ἔργα of table in the mind of the craftsman, because a table is something you can put things on, and you can put things on a coffee table. However, the particular manner in which a coffee table is something you can put things on, its ‘way of being a table’, is in a low-to-the-floor manner convenient for the early stages of dinner parties. So while you can say that the coffee table is similar to the ἔργα of table, you can’t say that this ἔργα is similar to the coffee table because the ἔργα of table is not something low-to-the-floor for early on in the evening. And it is exactly this non-reciprocal relation of similarity that allows the same ἔργα to be the foundation also of the dining room table, and the side table, etc. In a sense if you ask the question of what the ἔργα is, each of the particulars are also that sort of thing. But the difference present in each particular prevents you from giving the same answer about the ἔργα. The ἔργα is not a sort of table, it is the ἔργα of table itself. What both the ἔργα and its particular instantiation are is defined with regard to what the ἔργα as a whole is, not with regard to what the particular as a whole is, therefore the particular is similar to the ἔργα, but not vice-versa. Another way of thinking of non-reciprocal similarity is the following. If we say that a son is like his father, it is because he has taken his father as a model and tried to become like him. However, if we then say that the father is now like his son, it is only because the son has come closer to being what the father already was.

What this all brings out is that the difference which emerges with each τάξις does not exist in the higher τάξις in any manner. Proclus states this in a number of ways, of which non-reciprocal similarity is one. Another way is by stating that the causation which holds from one τάξις to another is non-deliberative. Nous does not take thought of the particular manner in which Soul will come into existence. Rather, it thinks

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67 Proclus, *Commentary on the *Porphyrian*s 912.54–917.22.
68 Proclus, *Commentary on the* *Timaeus* 1, pp. 321.11–17, pp. 336.1–5.
itself, and Soul is the external activity which comes into being around it, like heat from a fire. Yet another way of stating the same point is to say that the existence of something in its cause (\(\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\iota\alpha\iota\alpha\iota\alpha\iota\mu\)) is a secret (\(\kappa\rho\nu\theta\phi\lambda\iota\delta\iota\)) existence.\footnote{See G. Strel, "Breathing thought: Proclus on the innate knowledge of the soul," \textit{The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism}, ed. J. Cleary (Leuven, 1997), pp. 293–305.} What this means is that insofar as what emerges from a cause pre-exists in that cause, it does not do so in the determinate manner which emerges only with the effect. So when Proclus says that something exists \(\kappa\rho\nu\theta\phi\lambda\iota\delta\iota\ k\alpha\tau\alpha\iota\alpha\iota\alpha\iota\mu\) he is expressing the relation of similarity which we have just discussed. The lower member exists in its cause only insofar as it is what the cause is. But it does not exist in a determinate manner in the cause, because its novel manner of being what the cause is is exactly how it differs from its cause.

We should think together the fact that the difference which each order manifests does not pre-exist in its cause, and that this difference is the manner in which a given order is an image of its cause. Then it becomes clear that the determination of any given \(\tau\alpha\zeta\iota\iota\) is due to itself, not to its cause. Of course it is due to its cause that we can say a \(\tau\alpha\zeta\iota\iota\) is an image of its cause, but with the very strong sense that what it is—its manner of being an image—is due to itself. This is what Proclus means by the doctrine of self-sufficiency/self-constitution/self-motion. Consider self-constitution. Self-constitution means not only that the character of \(N\alpha\iota\sigma\) its manner of giving itself its good, is determined by itself. It means that this character is determined through atemporal self-reversion, or desire of itself. Compare this with Body, which is also such as to determine its own character, but it does not do this through reversion. Body's deficiency in this respect is not a product of Soul. So self-constitution is not only the means by which \(N\alpha\iota\sigma\) (and Soul in \(\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\kappa\iota\kappa\iota\iota\iota\iota\)\)—determines its own character, it is itself the character which belongs to \(N\alpha\iota\sigma\). And because the overall determination of a particular order, or its character, dictates the manner in which the determinations within that order exist, we must conclude that according to the principle of \(\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\) each order, or each successive member of a series, comes to be what it is not because of its cause but because of itself. It is in virtue of its cause than effect exists, but it is in virtue of itself that it is exactly what it is.

What becomes clear here is that in the unfolding of the Procline universe there is a radical spontaneity at each moment when a new \(\tau\alpha\zeta\iota\iota\), or a new member of a series, comes to be.\footnote{I am speaking in terms of \(\tau\alpha\zeta\iota\iota\) or in terms of \(\sigma\iota\iota\alpha\iota\) depending on whether I am referring to a \(\tau\alpha\zeta\iota\iota\) as whole or its internal determinations. Really these are two ways of speaking of the same thing.} The henads are the first determinations to appear after the One, if you consider Limit and Unlimited to be not determinations but the principles of determination. The One dictates that the henads are simple, but the fact that there are many henads opens a gap between them, for this multiplicity could not have come about because of the One.\footnote{I am smoothing over here the status of Limit and Unlimited in order to make my general point.} What this means is that not only is it due to the effect that the effect exists in the manner that it does, it is due to the effect that what the effect is can be called an image at all. What it is to be an image is not dictated by the paradigm, but by the image itself. How are the henads images of the One? There is no criterion to use to judge their status as images except themselves, because the One is not similar to them. That a plurality of simple units is the first image of the One to emerge is because that is in fact what emerged. The same rupture holds at every level of the system, such that there is a radical spontaneity of the emergence of determination at every level, and each level defines itself not only as image, but defines for itself what it is to be an image.

Let us examine this spontaneity in terms of the \(\sigma\iota\iota\alpha\iota\) which depend from the henads. Each next term is similar to the previous term, which as we have seen means it is both identical to it and different from it. So each term cannot be wholly other than the previous term. Somehow in its difference it is also the same. How can this be? It cannot be that the various terms of a \(\sigma\iota\iota\alpha\iota\) are held together by some abstract quality, which can be predicated univocally of each member of the series.\footnote{J. Trouillard, \textit{La mystagogie de Proclus} (Paris, 1962), pp. 198–199: "... le derrière ne relèffe pas son principe de façon passive, mais... il s'assimile activement à lui. Quand nous reporrons le caractère sérieux sur la monade générateur, nous pouvons entendre la chose de deux manières: Ou bien nous voulons dire que ce caractère exprime effectivement l'origine et que chaque membre de la série lui ressemble par cette perfection même, et nous avons raison. Ou bien nous croyons que cette ressemblance suppose un élément commun abstraitement définissable et qu'elle peut se lire équivalemment dans le sens descendant ou dans le sens ascendant, et nous avons tort."} Take the
series of the circle as an example. The steadfastness of the gods, the continuous projection of ἅγιοι by Soul from Νοέω as its source, the geometrical circle, and the reproductive cycle of animals are not all universally circular. One can say that they are circular by analogy, but how that is possible is what we are investigating here.

The element of identity which each member of a series has is its common origin from the same henad, and from the prior terms in the series. In a sense, each term emerges and in emerging defines both itself and the entire series. The emergence of a term which is determined in a particular manner itself originates the fact that this particular thing is a novel manner of instantiating the character of the series. J. Trouillard makes this point with regard to the henads, but I think he goes too far. He claims that the henads are in fact only distinguished by their series. Regarded in themselves they are indistinguishable from the One. While this is a tempting interpretation, I think it can be rejected on Proclines grounds. In one sense he is correct, in that the only difference between the One and the henads is that they are the One as participated. But the same can be said of the monad of any order and the members of that order. The only difference between Νοέω itself, the monad, and individual nom is that the monad is imparicipable. They are really the same thing. But they are really also distinct, because each logical distinction in Proclus is an ontological distinction. And so the henads are the place in the system between absolute simplicity and determinate multiplicity. They are the pure idea of multiplicity in identity itself. So in that sense they are not distinguished by their series, but are mutually self-distinguishing. I think that is why Proclus says that each has a character, an ἴδιος which is not in opposition to any other. So although the henads are not distinguished only by their series, it is the case that the overall character which a series possesses, and which is "conferred" on the series by the henad, is determined just as much by the unfolding of each member of the series as by the henad.

However, we should not think of a series in terms of set theory. It is not a set defined by its members. A set can have any members and the set is just the sum of the members. What is missing is the idea of priority and posteriority which holds between terms of a series. Each member of a set is not what each other member is, in its own way, with them all ordered hierarchically from unity to multiplicity. The example of virtue and its exercise may be helpful here. A just man possesses a settled state of character such that he does just acts. However, no particular just act is the virtue itself. Nor is the virtue the set of all just acts performed by the man. Further, the man's possession of justice and his action is not merely a sum of just acts plus this thing called justice. Rather, the virtue of justice is such as to found the particular just acts, and as their principle is ontologically distinct from them.

There is definitely an idea of a meta-level in Proclus, to use a bad expression, in the sense that the hierarchy of things is arranged according to increasing degrees of unity and multiplicity, or what is the same, self-coincidence. This seems very much like a plan of unfolding, which might remove the radical spontaneity which each level has to define itself as an image. One might think of the unfolding of all things from the One as a sort of mathematical unfolding, in which each term is somehow a mere result of the previous terms and the application of a rule. Three is just two plus one, for example, in the same way that fifty-eight is just fifty-seven plus one. The idea that each next member of a series is more multiple than its predecessor could be the "plus one" rule.

If the unfolding of all things from the One followed a plan of this sort, then we have two possibilities. Either this plan is such that all of the emergent determinations pre-exist determinately in the first term. But Proclus denies this, as we have seen. Or the plan is merely a rule which is applied to each term, in order to get the next term as a result. But then we are left with the same radical spontaneity. If the rule which applied is that the emergent term is the next sort of multiplicity, what is it that determines exactly what shape the next sort of multiplicity takes? Is it not the cause, and not the rule, so it must be the effect itself. What we are speaking of is the emergence of what it means to apply the rule at all.

This spontaneity might seem to put philosophy itself, and the ordered cosmos which it seeks to grasp, in doubt. Ontologically it might seem that the cosmos is such that each order is simply other than all the others. However, if the relation between τέκτων were simply otherness, then relations of cause and effect would disappear, because in Proclus they
depend on similarity. And if the hierarchy of cause and effect disappears, then the order of the cosmos itself disappears, and it becomes a mere collection of things. Epistemologically, such a cosmos would be unknowable, because thought requires order, and cannot think simple otherness. Such a cosmos would be as unintelligible as a collection of featureless atoms.

However, this is not the case. What Proclus is describing is not the emergence of mere otherness, but the emergence of order itself. In Neoplatonism Being, Order, Intelligibility are not themselves the Absolute. Rather, the primary determinations of Being are the order which emerges from the free activity of the power which comes from the One. The emergence of the Greatest Kinds (megista genê), for example, is both the emergence of those particular determinations and the emergence of them as expressions of their hidden cause. In Proclus the fundamental determinations of Being are themselves a living activity. Far from being simply other than their cause, they are ordered toward it as the term of their striving. In defining themselves as an image of their cause, they also give themselves their ordered relation to their cause.

And Philosophy as discursive reason which exists primarily in souls has as its proximate aim to grasp the order of these primary determinations of Being. The fact that philosophical logos are not themselves those primary determinations, the Forms (eidos), is itself the source of the freedom which philosophical reflection has to make for itself an image of them. Discursive logos are not simply other than the eidos in Nous, but rather are a free living order which continually brings itself into being as the secondary image of the primary determinations of Being. The Soul at the same time brings its logos into existence as images of the eidos, and also makes it be the case that that is what it is to have a secondary possession of the eidos.

However, it might seem that just any discursive logos at all could stand as an image of a given eidos. How can we avoid making philosophy a pure act of will, contingently related to its source? I think the solution to this worry is to remember that each member of a series not only transcends its effect, it is also immanent in and so completely present to its effect. So while, in a certain sense, we can think and say anything about the Forms, the Forms themselves are completely present to the eye of our Souls, and we happen to say different things about different Forms, because our thinking is founded in and strives towards the variety of Forms.

To return to the example of justice, while there may be a great range of acts which are just, whose exact content is not dictated by the virtue itself, what makes each act just is that they are done with an eye to Justice itself. Each is an attempt to articulate what Justice is, and can only be performed by an actor who possesses the virtue, and only when he is not trying to act in accordance with some other virtue, such as Courage, or acting out of the lack of the virtue. Turning to the higher forms, such as Equality or Motion, while the manifestations of these are many and various, depending on which taxis they appear in, they are never manifested as an image without their own immediate presence as well. So if Equality as a Form excludes Inequality, this limits the sorts of manners in which the lower terms may be equal, because the Form can’t be manifested while its contradictory is present. However, this may be to raise the same question again, namely in which ways is the contradictory of a Form also manifested in a lower taxis, or in what ways is a higher Form immediately present to something lower. I think the real solution is fairly phenomenological. We should not be scared that the just man will lie, cheat, and steal, because we see that those actions in fact are also accounted for; they happen to issue from the absence, not the presence, of Justice.24

VII

This brings up the final of the three sorts of determinations which I list at the beginning of this study, the discursive determinations through which the Soul thinks all things. I will only discuss this sort of determination briefly.25 Philosophy itself moves completely within the sphere of

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24 One might think that Christian Neoplatonism is in a better position with regard to this problem, because the Christian God does in fact possess the exemplars of all created things. And so one could say that the order which emerges in creation does pre-exist as the divine plan. However, one can ask the same question in Christian Neoplatonic systems. How is it that creatures are patterned after their divine exemplars? Creatures are not themselves God’s thoughts, so what is it that determines that this finite thing, a tree for example, is exactly how it is? It isn’t the exemplar of tree, because that is a simple intelligible, and the material tree isn’t one of those. If you say that there is a plan which determines this, then you are saying that one simple intelligible gives rise to bark and leaves in three dimensions because of another simple intelligible, and you have the same problem.
25 See D.G. MacInnes, The Soul and Discursive Reason in the Philosophy of Proclus (see footnote 15).
psychic 

It has as its task to turn the soul towards its non-discursive source, and when the soul puts aside discursivity it also puts aside philosophy. So the Soul reasons about the determinations within each 

taxi,

and the overall determinations of the 
taxis,

by producing logos which belong to its own 
taxi,

and which symbolically stand for the ordered determinations of other levels. That these particular logos are images of the determinations of the henads, and 

Nous, and Body, is not due to the other orders, but rather to Soul itself. We can consider the hierarchical ordering of 
taxis itself only through a hierarchically ordered image of it in our own thought. J. Trouillard was pleased to say that this is in fact the particular determination which discursive reason adds to the series which depend from the henads, that it recapitulates in its own terms the members of the entire series. He says this with reference to the powers of the Soul in general, but it is most properly said of discursive reason, the power which we have been employing throughout this study.²⁶


PROCLUS, AMMONIUS OF HERMIAS, AND ZACHARIAS SCHOLASTICUS: THE SEARCH AFTER ETERNITY AND THE MEANING OF CREATION

Luca Obertello

The works of Zacharias Scholasticus (also known as ‘Zacharias Rhetor’) are of interest to us not only for the help they afford in forming an understanding of the religious and philosophical tenets of the schools of Gaza and Alexandria, but also for the light they shed upon the events that preceded the closure of the Platonic Academy at Athens in 529. Zacharias, who was younger than Autolycus of Gaza (d. 518) and an almost exact contemporary of his friend Severus of Antioch (born ca. 465), was born in Berytus, near Gaza, probably in 465 or 466. During Zacharias’s youth Gaza was a rich and cosmopolitan town, variously linked with other great cultural centres such as Alexandria, and it was here that Zacharias attended the famous school of rhetoric, which, together with the town’s schools of arts, philosophy, and poetry, made Gaza famous. Zacharias spent most of his life away from Gaza (in Alexandria, Beirut, and Byzantium), but he always maintained an allegiance to the place in which he received his first scholarly formation, and his writings bear marks of the basic eclecticism of a school inspired with a Christian vision, yet still partially imbued with pagan formulas.

Zacharias travelled to Alexandria, where he attended the courses of both Sopatros the Rhetor and the Philosopher Ammonius the son of Hermias. The courses of the *schola* of Alexandria constituted the preliminary training for those who wished to study for either a legal or administrative career at the Beirut law school, then renamed throughout the Middle East. In 487 Zacharias left Alexandria for Beirut, where for four years he attended the lectures of Leontius the Jurist. From Beirut he moved to Byzantium, where he served for a long period as a lawyer. After 512 we have no certain biographical data concerning Zacharias, as his *Life of Severus*,¹ which is also our main source of information for his own life, ends with that year. It seems that he continued to practice law