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THE UNKNOWN 'KNOWING MAN': PARMENIDES, B1.3[1]

Commentators on Parmenides' poem have long read the words of B1.3, *εἰδότα φῶτα*, with the secure assurance that this phrase must identify and praise the recipient of the divine discourse that is shortly to come. The journeying speaker of line 1, whom the goddess will greet in B1.24 as a *κοῦρος*, is assumed to be the 'knowing man'; or, more precisely, it is anticipated that the goddess is about to make him so by revealing to him the heart of truth (B1.29). This 'knowing man' (so the received view goes) is the goddess's initiate,[2] in contrast to whom are the 'know-nothings', the *βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν* (B6.4).

But I argue here that this is all a mistake, and one that undermines at every turn our ability to understand what is going on in the proem. I offer a very different interpretation of this phrase, which interpretation helps make coherent other images and motifs in the surrounding lines, reinforcing in many cases one side or another of well-known arguments regarding these issues: why is the chariot pulled by mares; whose *θυμός* is meant in line 1; what is the *ὁδὸς πολύφημος*; is the *δαίμων* of B1.2 masculine or feminine, and who is it; what is the referent of *ἥ* in B1.3; how should we emend the best manuscript's crux *κατὰ πάντ' †ἄτη* in B1.3; what is the meaning of *πολύφραστοι ἵπποι*; is the journey a repeated one; what is its direction. Many of these questions and motifs have been discussed by others before me, and my interpretation of the proem often borrows freely from their suggestions. I do not claim to break new ground on all or even any one of these details save by providing a consistent and coherent framework for choosing among answers to them. For I submit that only the correct identification of the *φὼς εἰδώς* and of the two separate journeys, as proposed here, in which the speaker of line 1 becomes involved, ties those details together, makes sense of them, and unifies the opening of the poem. In what follows I first develop this interpretation without defensive interruptions, as though it were obvious, so that readers may envision from the outset the picture of the proem I have in mind. Of course, I am aware that my interpretation is very far from being incontrovertible. Accordingly, after the initial exposition, I shall circle back into the eristic thicket.

To be sure, on a first reading or hearing of the proem, the interpretation for which I shall argue would doubtless not come to mind. There is a more or less traditional way of taking the proem, at least initially, when reason to suspect its

[1] I am grateful to Herbert Granger, Brad Inwood, Alexander P.D. Mourelatos and *CQ*'s anonymous reader for insightful and very helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I also owe thanks to Gregory Nagy and the Center for Hellenic Studies for the hospitable use of the Center's library at a crucial stage in my research, and to my partner Kirsten Williams for her constant support of this project.

[2] If I employ the commonly used word 'initiate' at all it is as shorthand only, to designate the goddess's hearer who has taken her instruction to heart, well mindful of Gregory Vlastos's strictures against taking such a term literally. See his remarks on shamanism, for example, in his review of Cornford's *Principium Sapientiae*: Vlastos (1955), 70 [repr. in Furley and Allen (1970), 42–55].

imagery or the poet's attitude towards its elements has not yet arisen. But that is part of my point. As I shall develop in more detail shortly, it is my view that Parmenides intends his poem's opening to be recalled and understood in a new light, that cast by its following section, Truth. The proem then, in retrospect, will take on altered and more interesting meanings than would have been initially perceived, ones that cohere with what the goddess is about to say. This is especially true of its third line.

To show how that retrospective understanding of the proem's opening might take hold, perhaps some personal reminiscence might be excused.

My thoughts on this topic began many years ago when I was struck by how curious it is that Parmenides' expression for the supposed recipient of the goddess's discourse, for the 'initiate', as so many scholars refer to him,[3] should be εἰδότα φῶτα (B1.3). How odd, I thought, that the two words Parmenides chose are so redolent of the world of appearance. The word φῶτα: the accusative of φώς, 'man' but strikingly reminiscent of φῶς, 'light';[4] we know Parmenides was alive to this because he himself constructed a pun on the words in B14.[5] Using φάος to refer to a person was a familiar Homeric idiom.[6] And εἰδέναι, 'to know' in the sense of 'to have seen.' This is somewhat remarkable considering that the only other use of εἰδέναι in what has been preserved of the poem apart from the Doxa (where it is used of the 'knowledge' the κοῦρος will obtain of δόξαι [B10.1, 10.5] – a context that does *not* encourage positive semantic connotations, as I explain below [see p. 33]) is to denote the know-nothing mortals, βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν (B6.4). Of course, interpreters have universally been comfortable with the notion that this is a deliberate contrast: the knower versus the know-nothings. That the same appearance-laden word should be used by Parmenides for both sides of this alleged contrast has not appeared to trouble anyone so far. And yet, the real contrast lies not there but rather between εἰδέναι, on the one hand, with its original perceptual associations[7] – reinforced with the additional description of the εἰδότες οὐδέν as τυφλοί ('blind', B6.7), as well as with its use to denote becoming familiar with visually based δόξαι (B10.1 and 10.5) – and, on the other hand, the words the goddess uses for mind and knowing in connection with the insight she imparts: νόος and νοεῖν (B2.2, 3, 6.1, 6.6, 8.8, 8.34–6). The more I thought about it the curiouser and curiouser this became, until it 'dawned' on me (to use an expression reminiscent of the βροτοί) that perhaps Parmenides, who is normally extremely careful in his choice of words, was up to something,

[3] Bowra (1937), 109–10, as well as many others.

[4] As Alex Mourelatos once reminded me, the terms are distinct and are declined differently. Thus, I conclude that when Jaap Mansfeld writes of the 'φῶς εἰδώς' (instead of φὼς εἰδώς) in Mansfeld (1964), 224, 228 n. 2 and 231, this is a typographical mistake most untypical of this meticulous Hellenist. Tarán (1965), 27 and Günther (1998), 34 and 35 n. 13 make the same error.

[5] See e.g. Graham (2006), 179 n. 88: 'The phrase *allotrion phôs* [φῶς], "borrowed light," is a pun on Homer's *allotrios phôs* [φώς], "foreign man" (Homer *Odyssey* 18.219).' Diels (1897), 110, had already noted this Homeric imitation, as have others, e.g. Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 225.

[6] See *Odyssey* 16.23, 17.41. As Günther (1998), 35 n. 13, observes: 'angesichts von Anwendungen von φῶς "Licht" auf Menschen wie etwa bereits Hom *Od.* XVI 23 [kann man] kaum an der semantischen Möglichkeit der Verbindung zweifeln.'

[7] Snell (1924), 24–9, and Fränkel (1960), 343–4; transl. in Mourelatos (1974), 123–4; see especially n. 20. The point goes beyond Fränkel's contentious interpretation of Xenophanes and the opposition it provoked. I address the resulting controversy in so far as it bears on Parmenides, and the issue of Parmenides' usage of εἰδέναι, further below; see pp. 31–3.

specifically, something ironic. Suddenly it became 'clear': the φὼς εἰδώς is not the Parmenidean 'initiate' at all, but rather – aptly named by words that, in light of the Doxa, may connote an 'illuminated observer' – he is the traditional man of ἱστορίη, the Ionian cosmologist (cf. Heraclitus B35), a φυσικός (as he later came to be called), the *pre*-Parmenidean investigator of nature.

This was only reinforced by the immediately preceding words (or, I should say, a conjecture to replace the manuscripts' meaningless reading), which then acquired new sense: the φὼς εἰδώς is someone who is carried κατὰ πάντ' ἄ<σ>τη, 'through all the cities'. (More on this conjectural reading in due course.) That Odyssean expression seemed to clinch it, especially since I had taken to heart Jaap Mansfeld's remark, 'Parmenides ist das Gegenstück zu Odysseus'[8] and had myself written an extended footnote to the proem in that vein.[9] And what carries him? The ὁδὸς πολύφημος δαίμονος (B1.2–3). As I argue in what follows, neither δαίμονος nor the relative pronoun ᾗ in B1.3 (which along with some others I take to refer to ὁδός not δαίμονος) have anything to do with the goddess who is to appear in B1.22. Rather, the φὼς εἰδώς is carried on the ὁδὸς πολύφημος of the δαίμων – as Cornford wrote, this 'clearly means the Sun'[10] – who imparts light (the sun god is the φανσίμβροτος δαίμων, Pind. *Ol.* 7.71; cf. φῶς, and the Doxa, B14) for human sight (just as the sun god himself oversees all things, *Il.* 3.277, *Od.* 12.323; cf. εἰδέναι and the βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν, B6.4) over all the cities of men (κατὰ πάντ' ἄ<σ>τη, B1.3, if that conjecture is correct). The entire opening of the proem then falls into place: a κοῦρος, an incipient man of ἱστορίη, while attempting to embark on the latter's customary pursuits, following the bent of his (or the mares'? on this see further below) θυμός on the sun god's path, the path that illuminates the peregrinations and investigations of the traditional naturalist or cosmologist, is interrupted and swept off course, once upon a time, and perhaps again and again, whenever the goddess's discourse is recollected and νοεῖν is able to triumph over εἰδέναι, and is taken beyond the gates of night and day (B1.11) and the accustomed haunts of men (B1.27), to arrive at the goddess's uniquely alien realm, there to be set on the route of a new and totally other sort of knowing. And this transported and transformed person, the κοῦρος after hearing the goddess's discourse, 'ist das Gegenstück zu' the φὼς εἰδώς whom he supersedes.

Correctly identifying who is being referred to in the phrase εἰδότα φῶτα – he is exactly that familiar figure whom the philosophically aware first-time reader might take him to be, the man of ἱστορίη – unlocks the meaning of the entire opening of the proem. On this interpretation those opening lines (B1.1–4) depict a journey within the world of appearance, one that is always open to a mortal (thus the present tense of line 1), but one that is in stark contrast to, rather than in continuum with, or the initial stage of, the passage to the goddess led by the Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι, which passage is about to intrude into and displace that accustomed journey's nature and all its deceptively enticing mortal elements.

That is my thesis in a nutshell. Now for its problematic aspects, and then its implications for our interpretation of the proem as a whole.

[8] Mansfeld (1964), 230.

[9] Cosgrove (1974).

[10] Cornford (1952), 118 n. 1. Guthrie (1969), 7 follows suit. I hasten to add that in adopting this identification I by no means adopt the allegorical interpretation of Sextus, wherein it originated; in fact, I completely reject that fatally misguided approach, which will become clear as we proceed.

At the outset, let me address with more particularity the doubts that readers may have regarding my conviction that Parmenides and his audience retained an awareness of εἰδέναι's etymological roots. My argument regarding the φὼς εἰδώς, and the original impetus to my interpretation of this phrase, both stem from the fact that εἰδέναι, etymologically and literally, means 'to have seen', and from my belief that this meaning remained more or less conscious, with the result that, once the goddess's discourse has been heard, the proem's use of εἰδώς becomes problematic. But received scholarly opinion has come to discount not just the persistence of, but even the possibility of echoes of, this original meaning. As noted above, it is now commonly held that, long before Parmenides, the verb simply came to mean just 'to know'.[11]

I am well aware of the scepticism expressed by Heitsch, Barnes and Lesher[12] concerning the persistence, among Greeks of this period, of sensitivity to εἰδέναι's etymological roots. However, I believe it is beyond question that the prevailing Anglo-American scholarly orthodoxy purportedly based upon the results of Heitsch's inquiries and the evidence he adduces overstates its case. Heitsch's research, and its objective, were quite limited: he intended to open the door to the possibility that, contrary to the Snell/Fränkel position, Xenophanes *could* have used εἰδέναι (in Xenophanes, B34) *without* reference to visual perception.

In contrast, I make no claim here that throughout the pre-classical period εἰδέναι specifically *always* denotes sense perception rather than cognition generally, or does so 'without exception', as Heitsch put it in attacking such a view.[13] Heitsch is surely correct in asserting that such usage was not 'ausnahmslos', as Hesiod, *Theogony* 27 attests.[14] Rather, I claim only that at the time of Parmenides εἰδέναι *could* still be used with echoes based in vision and that this was still recognizable to Parmenides and his audience, as it certainly was to Homer and his.

If Snell had overstated his case (particularly in connection with his developmental theory),[15] Barnes also overstates the contrarian case when he writes, 'Careful research does indeed show that, etymologically, εἰδέναι is a perceptual verb; but further extensive researches have incontrovertibly shown that even in Homer, the verb bears the general sense of "know" …'[16] For in Homer, equally 'incontrovertibly', those who 'know' often do so simply because they were there, and *saw* things for themselves. See, for example, *Iliad* 2.485. Although Lesher discounts this oft-cited passage on the grounds that elsewhere in Homer εἰδέναι does not require personal witnessing,[17] the three other uses that he cites in support of his view are either exceptions that prove the starting point, as when Aeneas says to Achilles 'we know (ἴδμεν) each other's lineage … *even though* our eyes haven't seen each other's parents', (*Il.* 20.203–4, emphasis added – a passage Heitsch and Lesher both cite, and which may well support Heitsch's limited thesis [that εἰδέναι could be used to denote hearsay knowledge and not just knowledge based on personal

[11] See above n. 7 and below nn. 12–16.

[12] Heitsch (1966), 210–16 (= Heitsch [1979], 106–12) and (1983), 174, Barnes (1982), 138 and Lesher (1992), 157 n. 3 and (1994*a*), 5–6 and nn. 12–13.

[13] Heitsch (1966), 210 (= Heitsch [1979], 106).

[14] For surely, although Heitsch does not put it this way, the Muses could not 'have seen' the ψεύδεα πολλά that they are capable of speaking as though true.

[15] See the review and discussion in Williams (1993), 21–49.

[16] Barnes (1982), 138.

[17] Lesher (1994*a*), n. 13.

witnessing] but does not support Barnes's overstatement of it), or else the cited uses involve 'knowledge' of future events (that is, what we still call 'fore*sight*' foretold by '*seers*') (e.g. *Il.* 13.665; 6.447). Even if (as Barnes continues), 'in Xenophanes, as in classical texts, *eidenai* simply means "know"', that is not dispositive of its connotations for Parmenides, whose diction, certainly in the proem, is, after all, Homeric. Thus I tentatively conclude that the 'Hörensagen' use of εἰδέναι and its forms, as opposed to the uses carrying echoes of its original meaning, are not necessarily as normative as Heitsch and his followers suppose, while recognizing that raising anew the issue of 'die Bedeutungsentwicklung von οἶδα' deserves more intensive scrutiny than can be provided here.[18]

But for the present we may at least ask: what evidence is there – in Parmenides – for the view that echoes of the etymology might have resonated with Parmenides and his audience? Whatever the word might originally have *meant*, how does Parmenides himself *use* it?[19] There is, in my view, considerable suggestiveness, among the surviving fragments, that in his usage the original meaning was still alive. We have three contexts.

(1) In B6 the mortals, who lack the activity of νοεῖν that the goddess will commend to the κοῦρος, are called εἰδότες οὐδέν. The perceptual connection here is explicit; note the linguistic parallel with Pindar, *Nemean* 7.23–5.[20] For as in the Pindaric ode, the mortals are τυφλοί, 'blind.' In both Pindar and Parmenides, the application of that epithet to mortals would be gratuitous were not the perceptual roots of the εἰδέναι verbs being recalled. But, in Parmenides, mortals are blind with their eyes wide open. They 'know' nothing (in εἰδέναι's sense of 'to have seen'), precisely because they *cannot* see – in the way that counts. Or, put another way, mortal sight does not yield knowledge worthy of the name. If they *could* 'see', but only in the relevant way, that is, with a properly guided νόος, they would partake of the divine insight that the goddess imparts to the κοῦρος, and would not be εἰδότες at all (perhaps not βροτοί, either, for that matter) – neither εἰδότες οὐδέν nor εἰδότες τινά – but rather they would be devotees of νόησις, as the κοῦρος is destined to be.

As I see it, the φὼς εἰδώς of B1.3 is not being contrasted, but is being assimilated to, the εἰδότες οὐδέν. That is because both, relying in the end on visual perception, make the same error and suffer the same wandering as a result. The traditional cosmologist, the man of ἱστορίη, no less than the normal βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν, posits two forms, as B8.53–9 and the Doxa will explain.

The very concept of εἰδέναι is being subverted here, in keeping with the overall undermining of perceptually based 'knowledge' in Parmenides. That is carried forward by the deductions of B8 and by the further uses of εἰδέναι in our next context, B10.

[18] Given the limited scope, intent and results of Heitsch's researches it is frustrating that, in the current climate of opinion he inspired, in order to establish that the possibility might have been open for Parmenides recognizably to use the verb with its original perceptual echoes, a full-scale examination of its usage immediately prior to and contemporary with Parmenides will be required. In any event, I address the developing usage of the verb in '*EIΔENAI* re-examined', a paper in preparation.

[19] I owe posing the question in this Wittgensteinian way to an objection put by Alex Mourelatos.

[20] There, most men are 'blind (τυφλόν) in their hearts'; whereas if they could 'have seen the truth' (ἀλάθειαν ἰδέμεν) about Ajax, he would not have been driven to suicide. The parallel is only partial because Pindar, of course, has no programme of subverting the concept of εἰδέναι in favour of νοεῖν, as I believe Parmenides does.

(2) In B10.1 and 10.5 of Doxa the κοῦρος is to come to 'know' certain mortal opinions (in part fulfilling the goddess's earlier promise that he will learn mortals' opinions so that none of their thought will ever outstrip him [B8.6]). Is there a perceptual connection here? Of course. The opinions at issue are based on astronomical *observations*.[21] Moreover, they concern a domain that is constituted by mortals' primal opposites, Fire/Light and Night – already problematic at best, on the goddess's terms, to qualify as 'knowledge', and, what is worse, they concern the heavenly bodies' *coming-to-be* (B10.3), a topic that violates the σήματα that are characteristic of τὸ ἐόν. Thus it would be a mistake to take B10 as presenting uses of εἰδέναι in a positive way; rather, its uses are ringingly negative.

(3) Lastly, there is the phrase εἰδότα φῶτα itself, in B1.3. Is there a perceptual connection here? It would be question-begging to cite this in direct support of my thesis. However, as indicated above (see p. 29), Homeric usage and Parmenides' wordplay elsewhere in the poem (see B14) suggest that here he may have been playing with the association between φώς, 'man' and φῶς, 'light', thereby highlighting the perceptual roots of the kind of would-be 'knowledge' for which he uses the word εἰδέναι, as opposed to the logical deductions of the goddess's elenchus in Truth, for which he reserves the word νοεῖν. If this should be lost on a *first*-time reader/hearer of B1.3, it is surely available in retrospect or re-reading/re-hearing, in light of the subversive use of εἰδέναι in B6 and the negative connotations of its uses in B10. In the light of these contexts, and in the case of a poet as linguistically alive as Parmenides unquestionably was, I suggest it would be tendentious (if not deliberately obtuse) *not* to regard the phrase εἰδότα φῶτα as *itself* indicative that a sensitivity to εἰδέναι's etymological roots was still alive.

I turn now to details of the proem and their controversies. But first some methodological remarks. As Kerferd observed, 'the first principle of all in every attempt to interpret Parmenides … [should be] the need to put oneself in the position of the destined reader or hearer'.[22] That is true, but – and this point is often overlooked – in order to understand what Parmenides is up to in the proem, we need to put ourselves in, and read and interpret from, two different positions or viewpoints at once. Both are available to any of Parmenides' readers (or hearers), whether in our time or his, but most people adopt only one. The two viewpoints are (1) as a first-time reader/hearer, encountering the proem without knowing where it is leading, and (2) as a subsequent reader/hearer (or recollector of the entire poem), that is, someone who re-encounters B1, particularly lines 1–10, having already learned, in B2–B8, from the goddess. It is the latter viewpoint from which the proem, and in particular its opening, is almost always interpreted. That is not incorrect, but only if we keep in mind the naïve, or first-time, impression of B1.1–10, thereby realizing that an ironic commentary[23] on the impressions and expectations raised there is, in retrospect (the viewpoint of a subsequent reading), at work. Unless that is done, a crucial aspect of the proem's relation to the whole poem is missed. In other words, the proem is meant to be revisited, and reconsidered, in view of

[21] As I explore in a paper in preparation ('What are "true" *doxai* worth, to Parmenides?'), the fact that these observations may have constituted genuine scientific breakthroughs does *not* remove them from the deceptive sphere of Doxa, which poses a problem for our assessment of Parmenides' attitude toward them.

[22] Kerferd (1972), 89, reviewing Mourelatos's *Route of Parmenides* and commending Mourelatos's approach as exemplifying this principle.

[23] See Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), ch. 9, and p. 37 below.

Truth. Then, its initial connotations take on new overtones, sometimes subverting the original ones (particularly, as I argue, with the phrase εἰδότα φῶτα), dramatically enhancing the poem's revolutionary impact.

To those sceptical of the notion that Parmenides intends the proem to appear weighted with irony once a reading of the entire poem is completed, I would point out that Doxa is evidently intended to be received in just this way, as Mourelatos has persuasively demonstrated.[24] But Truth, the central section of the poem, is framed by *two* sections from the mortal world of appearance. The goddess, in B7, cautions the κοῦρος and us against this world's familiarity. This warning obviously applies to the milieu to which the κοῦρος will return, the world of δόξαι, but also to that from which he comes to her, an equally mortal one – as the goddess's welcome to him reminds us.[25] Why should it – his journey to the goddess – be exempt from Truth's critique? Lack of πίστις ἀληθής applies not only to the poem's concluding frame, the Doxa, but to its beginning frame, the proem, as well. I believe this is why the proem contains such repeated, insistent emphasis on sensory phenomena. Setting aside the connotations of the phrase εἰδότα φῶτα, the very point at issue here, there is still the ὁδὸς πολύφημος, the πολύφραστοι ἵπποι (about which more shortly), the screeching axles of the chariot and the painstakingly perceived details of the gates through which the chariot is led. The elenchus of Truth invites us to rethink what, on first encounter, we would have taken at face value. In retrospect, Truth subverts not merely what follows it but what introduces it as well.

Next, although efforts will be made here, to a degree, to identify allusions and pin down the significance of certain motifs, because Cordero is surely right in pointing out that many of them would have been instantly recognizable and meaningful to the contemporary audience,[26] I also believe Mourelatos was correct in observing that Parmenides adapts epic motifs for new purposes in a way that is sometimes meant to be more suggestive and evocative than precise, and that consequently exact identification of elements of the proem is sometimes neither possible nor desirable.[27] With that point in mind, I shall nevertheless push in an opposite direction as far as seems tenable.

We begin with line 1. First, the mares who carry me – ἵπποι ταί με φέρουσιν, B1.1. Why *mares*? It has been suggested that they were traditional for Homeric heroes: the traveller 'va en un carro tirado por dos yeguas, a la usanza de los héroes homéricos'.[28] Tarán notes that mares were preferred for chariot racing.[29] On the other hand, Cordero points out that some Homeric chariots are drawn by stallions.[30] In any case, I want to pursue Coxon's suggestion, which will move this discussion much further along. He wrote: 'P.'s choice here is motivated by his

[24] Mourelatos, ibid., 222–63; see also Mourelatos (1973), 41–2.
[25] See below, p. 41.
[26] Cordero (2004), 22.
[27] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 39–41.
[28] Gómez-Lobo (1985), 30.
[29] Tarán (1965), 9. Gemelli Marciano (2008), 29 n. 19, notes the same, but objects that 'these are inadequate parallels because their contexts diverge considerably from the context in Parmenides' poem' – only to go on to suggest a parallel with the mares of Hades' chariot from the *Hymn to Demeter*, which is the last thing that would occur to a first-time (or subsequent) reader of the proem's opening lines.
[30] Cordero (2004), 25, referring to *Il.* 24.326 and 11.615 – although the latter passage concerns mares (ἵπποι μεμανῖαι). Actually, any male chariot horses yoked together were probably

view (t. 34) that the female constitution is "hotter" than the male and therefore more akin to the element of fire or light, which is the source of "better and purer understanding" (t.45)'.[31] This comment illustrates Coxon's notion 'that the cosmology of the prologue is related to that of the "Beliefs"'.[32] I think that is correct, though not in the way that Coxon did. As his comment also shows, he applied this thought in a flawed way, unfortunately not uncommon: he associated 'fire or light' with 'better and purer understanding', that is, he chose one of the forms of the Doxa and, despite all that the goddess had to say on the subject, exalted one of them as though it were positively related to Truth.

This error, originating at least as early as Aristotle, and certainly replicated by Sextus, arises again and again in interpretations of the proem. But an error it is, and the point cannot be emphasized too much if we are to read the proem correctly. We must rid ourselves of this persistently encountered tendency to read the poem's imagery through a later, Platonic prism, the notion that for Parmenides, or for the goddess who delivers the discourse about what is, truth is somehow connected with light, knowledge with illumination, and so forth. That is an anachronistic mistake and moreover nothing could be less Parmenidean. These qualities (fire, light, etc.) are, for Parmenides, only one side of the world of Doxa. They are not positive polarities, they are not qualities of *τὸ ἐόν*. They are polarities of appearance, in which there is *no πίστις ἀληθής* (B1.30). That is why the reference to the traveller's initial way as the way of the *φὼς εἰδώς* is *not* a compliment of that way. Other images in the opening lines reinforce this relation between the proem and the Doxa, but they have been persistently misunderstood. Thus, the *Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι* hasten *εἰς φάος*, but not towards a realm of 'enlightenment', rather only 'to collect their passenger',[33] to fetch the traveller (who has started making his way under light's star) and to conduct him *away* from it, either back to the house of the goddess from which they came or else to some other indefinite location.[34]

Although earlier commentators, Kranz for one, were prone to regard 'the identification of light and truth as anciently Greek',[35] later and more searching studies by Treu and Classen do not bear this out.[36] (To the extent Classen does ascribe to Parmenides positive associations for Light, he explicitly links this to a development 'aus der alten Analogie des Erkennens zum Sehen und dessen Abhängigkeit vom Licht'.[37] This thesis of Classen's in fact reinforces my views of *εἰδέναι*'s perceptual associations, and the path along the sun's route of the *φὼς εἰδώς*, as well as echoes of the word *φῶς*, 'light', in the latter phrase.)

geldings, not stallions, if the driver hoped to survive his journey with team and rig intact. See below, n. 67.

[31] Coxon (1986), 157. A similar point was also made by Vos (1963), 30 n. 4 (referring to frr. A52 and B12): 'Die Rosse sind wahrscheinlich weiblich, weil im Weiblichen das Licht überwiegt'.

[32] Coxon (1986), 161.

[33] Gallop (1984), 6.

[34] Gallop (1984), 6. See also Furley (1973), 2. That the phrase *εἰς φάος* applies to the progress of the *κοῦραι* leaving the house of night and rushing toward the speaker of line 1, and not to the journey of that speaker, has of course long been recognized, I think correctly, by the proponents of a *κατάβασις* interpretation of a journey to the goddess. However, I differ from them as to where the *κοῦραι* and their charge are headed from there. See below, pp. 38–9.

[35] Owens (1979), 26 n. 4, with references. Kranz (1916), 1165, writes 'unser Proömium ist entstanden aus der geläufigen Vorstellung heraus, daß Licht und Wahrheit identisch sind …'.

[36] Treu (1965); Classen (1965); cf. Tarrant (1960).

[37] Classen (1965), 104b.

Moreover, as Mourelatos has recently emphasized,[38] certain key astronomical insights of the Doxa view the light of the sun in a far more complex way than the traditional picture would expect. Its glare has, in the Doxa's astronomical scheme, a far from entirely positive role, but instead certain actively deceptive and concealing functions. For example, the diurnal disappearance of the stars, the seeming difference of heavenly bodies whose actual identity is obscured by dimming effects, and the visibility of the moon, are all ἐ̔ργ' ἀΐδηλα of the sun.[39] Its cosmological role is not exclusively to illuminate, but just as much to 'make things unseen'.[40]

Nevertheless, it is with complete and untroubled openness that a scholar like Verdenius reads back into Parmenides, on the grounds that he 'possessed a mystical nature',[41] conceptions (which in part originate in Plato's metaphysics) associating religious truth and divinity with light, and notions of a cosmic battle between Light and Darkness, which became common coin only centuries later with the widening influence of Oriental mystery religions and the religions inspired by Abraham that so infected Western consciousness beginning in *late* antiquity.[42] So pervasive became these conceptions that it may since have become tempting to regard them as natural. This temptation must be resisted when reading Parmenides.

The temptation dies hard, however, as a relatively recent article by Kahn demonstrates.[43] I shall focus on him as perhaps the most eloquent of more recent adherents to the picture of the traveller's journey as a unified one towards the supposed light of truth. In that article, citing the formidable support of Vlastos, Kahn reiterates his earlier opposition[44] to κατάβασις interpretations of the journey to the goddess as promoted most prominently by Burkert[45] and Furley,[46] writing: 'As Gregory Vlastos showed long ago, Parmenides' voyage of enlightenment is a journey to the light, and the light imagery represents knowledge here, as it does later in the doctrine of the poem'.[47]

But Vlastos 'showed' nothing of the kind. His study of Parmenides' supposed 'theory of knowledge' is really, as Vlastos himself puts it, a study of a certain 'doctrine of sense-perception' as propounded in the Doxa,[48] developing the implications of fragment 16. It represents a version, a sophisticated one, to be sure, of the oft-made mistake, as I regard it, of supposing that the doctrine of the Doxa represents Parmenides' own attempt to get cosmology right *despite* what the goddess taught the κοῦρος. Crucially, it understands B8.53–4 as 'for mortals have

[38] In the Preface and Afterword to the 2008 revised and expanded edition of Mourelatos (1970); see xxxvii–xli.

[39] Mourelatos, ibid.

[40] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), xxxviii. Note especially Mourelatos's acute analysis of the goddess's use of 'the rare and curious adjective *aïdēlos*'.

[41] Verdenius (1949), 122.

[42] Verdenius (1949), 122–4. This despite the fact that Verdenius himself quotes Bultmann's study (at 117 n. 8), which observed that it was only in Hellenistic times that the conception, arriving from the East, of a cosmic contest between powers of Light and Darkness, first permeated the Greco-Roman world. See Bultmann (1948), 12.

[43] Kahn (2005), 219 and n. 3.

[44] Kahn (2002), 90–2.

[45] Burkert (1969).

[46] Furley (1973), 1–5.

[47] Kahn (2005), 219 and n. 3 (citing Vlastos (1946)).

[48] Vlastos (1946), 66 (= Vlastos [1995], 153). Further references to this paper contain the original pagination and, in parentheses, that of its reprinting in Vlastos (1995).

made up their minds to name two forms, *one of which should not be named*'.[49] For Vlastos, it is the *dark* that should not be named, while the mind 'would think *light* as pure Being'.[50] But the Doxa represents neither a positive doctrine – one that is offered notwithstanding Truth – nor one pole of a positive doctrine endorsed by the goddess. Rather, it presents instead a systematically ambiguous and ironic commentary on itself. This approach was first explored at length by Mourelatos.[51] Kahn's talk of a 'voyage of enlightenment' perpetuates an error traceable to Platonism's influence.[52]

Admittedly, my interpretation of the proem as offered here implies a related interpretation of B8.53–4, 'for they made up their mind to name two forms, *τῶν μίαν οὐ χρεών ἐστιν*', which has been the subject of extensive controversy. I believe the latter phrase in line 54 is to be translated 'of which it is not right to name [even] one' (with Cornford,[53] Stokes,[54] Furley[55] and Schofield[56]), rather than 'one of which it is not right to name' or 'of which it is not right to name one only' (or other variants of these latter two). It has become commonplace to remark on the notoriety of this line.[57] Bound up as its correct rendering is with one of the most contentious problems in Parmenidean studies, defending the translation I prefer would require presenting and defending a comprehensive account of the Doxa and its relation to Truth, obviously far beyond the scope of this paper. But a valid and coherent reading of the proem should not be expected to require deferral pending completion of a sophisticated research project delving into the complexities of what follows it. First-time readers/hearers should instead be expected to be capable of grasping the motifs, images and allusions of the proem based on their cultural background and the information provided in the proem itself, with subsequent readings informing that grasp in retrospect and strengthening or modifying initial impressions, based on what is learned from the body of the poem that comes immediately after. Even without a fully fledged account of the Doxa, therefore, I submit that my objection to the picture of Truth = Light, Knowledge = Illumination as anachronistically Platonic and un-Parmenidean, and not something that would occur to or be persuasive to Parmenides' contemporary audience, carries weight.

That flawed picture is not Kahn's (and others') only argument, however. He writes that the *κοῦραι* push back their veils from their heads because they have reached their natural habitation, the light. 'They drop their veils like Muslim women

[49] Vlastos (1946), 74 (160).

[50] Vlastos (1946), 72 (159); emphasis added.

[51] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 222–63; see also Mourelatos (1973), 41–2. I do not mean to suggest that Mourelatos would endorse my rejection of Vlastos's thesis.

[52] Of course it was Aristotle who first asserted that Parmenides 'ranked' Light with Being, *Metaph. A* 986b31, but that doesn't make this analogy any less inspired by Platonism. For an exploration of Aristotle's possible basis for this association, see Granger (2002), 111–14, who concludes that 'a confusion underlies Aristotle's ranking, either a confusion of his own making or one inherent in mortal thinking'.

[53] Cornford (1939), 46.

[54] Stokes (1971), 144–6 discusses the passage at length and defends this translation as that most naturally in accord with Greek idiom. I concede that such a perception would give way were interpretative considerations to supervene, leading to a conviction that a different translation is the more natural one. See e.g. Mourelatos's extensive discussion (1970, repr. 2008), 80–5.

[55] Furley (1973), 5.

[56] Kirk, Raven and Schofield (1983), 255–6.

[57] Cf. Furley (1973), 5.

returning home',[58] – a most inapt comparison for maidens who are approaching a young male stranger to escort him. The simile aside, I do not deny that the light is where these maidens, who are after all named Ἡλιάδες, may be most at home, or that in hastening from the house of night to fetch the κοῦροι they may have reached a familiar and congenial place; but this does not entail Kahn's leap, '[s]o now we know that the journey that leads a knowing mortal to the goddess is a journey from darkness to light, from a mortal realm near the halls of night to a place where Sun maidens are at home'.[59] No. It establishes nothing about the direction of the subsequent journey to the goddess, only the direction of the maidens as they approach the traveller's chariot.

Further, of the proem's opening Kahn continues: '… since we have had no clear indication of the traveler's direction so far, it is natural to take this [*eis phaos*] as answering our unspoken question: where is he going?'[60] But bearing in mind the assumptions and associations of the first-time reader, there *is* an indication of the traveller's initial direction, that is, along the customary route of the sun god.

The next prong of Kahn's argument is that the κοῦραι's reversal of direction (posited by the κατάβασις view) has no trace in the text,[61] but is 'an artifact of this [the κατάβασις] exegesis … generated by the assumption that "there" in verse 11 must locate the gates in or near the *dōmata nuktos* which the *Heliades* have left behind them'.[62] But this would be the most natural way to take the reference of ἔνθα, unless we were to have other reasons, as Kahn has, favouring as he does an ἀνάβασις interpretation of the direction in which the κοῦραι guide the chariot, to resist doing so.

At this point I agree with Mourelatos regarding the details of the journey and its direction. For, as he said, reasons lie close at hand for viewing the journey either as a celestial *or* an infernal one. This blurring of 'the topography of the journey … beyond recognition', he concluded, is intentional.[63] Parmenides did not shy from providing specific details when it suited him – take the lengthy depiction of the gates and their unlocking in B1.10–20 – but that is not the case when it comes to the question, just *where* are these gates located? Instead, his treatment of them provides what Granger has called 'an outstanding example of Parmenides' skill in confounding references to places within the traditional mythology'.[64] Such is quite likely to be deliberate if, as I take it, Parmenides wishes to avoid crediting either Light *or* Night with the positive associations of the goddess's discourse on Truth.

Neither ἀνάβασις nor κατάβασις, the journey to the realm of the goddess is better viewed as a unique ἀπόβασις.[65] Neither up nor down, but away from and

[58] Kahn (2002), 91.

[59] Kahn, ibid.

[60] Kahn, ibid.

[61] Kahn, ibid.; Mourelatos made the same objection to me informally, thirty-five years ago, in connection with Furley's depiction of a journey (back) to the House of Night (in Furley [1973], 1–5).

[62] Kahn, ibid.

[63] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 14–16. Granger (2008), 11–14, comes to a similar conclusion after extensively reviewing the journey's topographical details. The exhaustive attempt of Pellikaan-Engel (1978) to trace Hesiodic echoes in the proem also yielded, at best, indeterminate results, despite her ultimately tendentious and misguided conclusions.

[64] Granger (2008), 12.

[65] Thanks to Alex Mourelatos for suggesting this term, in place of my original παράβασις, which suffers interference from its use as a technical term in comic drama. As Mourelatos

beyond appearances and the world of the senses, beyond light *and* dark. Boeder got it exactly right when he said of the goddess's reception of the κοῦρος, 'Sie empfängt ihn in dem "Jenseits" zu allen Erscheinungen'.[66]

But to return to line 1 and the mares. With respect to them, Coxon may partially have been on the right track, though, as I have said, not for the reasons he thought. His suggestion that Parmenides believed 'the female constitution is "hotter" than the male' appears accurately to reflect certain of the ancients' own view of mares as exceedingly sexually excitable; Aelian calls them λαγνίστατας (*NA* 4.11).[67]

Added to this is a connotation of θυμός that has gone unnoticed. Although this word may refer either to the traveller *or* to the mares that carry him, commentators, with very few exceptions,[68] have found no reason to pursue the latter association. However, one of the principal meanings of θυμός is the wild excitement of sexual appetite,[69] which would fit very well with the mares if they are seen through Aelian's lens. Further add to this their description in B1.4 as πολύφραστοι, a word that several scholars have urged be taken in its literal sense of 'talkative'[70] and which – to the author at least – has echoes of the word φρυάσσομαι, to neigh or whinny.

What emerges from this cluster of associations is the picture of a high-mettled team, whose spirited nature the κοῦρος may well be at pains to rein in. This somewhat wild image of the mares, and the suggestion that θυμός in B1.1 refers to them (previously made, as mentioned above, by Stein and Mansfeld, though for different reasons), if perhaps rather fanciful (it is also not critical to my central thesis regarding the meaning of εἰδότα φῶτα), is worth pointing out, I believe, both because it has gone unremarked and because it does contribute to the portrait of the κοῦρος as essentially passive, something Kahn observed.[71] Moreover, the reassuring manner in which the goddess greets the κοῦρος, seeking to dispel his fears,[72] does not suggest that he has been brought to a place toward which his θυμός had been striving all along. Rather, the chariot bearing a κοῦρος who is a would-be investigator of nature may be virtually out of control, even at the mercy of a runaway team (perhaps reminiscent both of Phaethon and of the aimlessness with which the helpless and distracted mortals of B6 are borne) until charioteers (the Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι) arrive to take it in hand and provide guidance. (Remember

pointed out, in addition to the desired meaning of a journey 'off and away', ἀπόβασις has the apt equestrian meaning, 'alighting from a chariot' or 'dismounting'.

[66] Boeder (1962), 121.

[67] Griffith (2006) Part I, 198 and n. 53; Griffith notes that Aristotle used this term of both mares and stallions. However, male horses used in paired chariot work, whether in battle or racing, were probably geldings, not stallions, as anyone with experience of stallions can well appreciate. (Even *not* yoked together, uncut racehorses sometimes attack each other with their teeth when running abreast.) The ancient evidence, however, is sparse, and modern scholars are divided on how frequently geldings were employed. See Griffith (2006) Part I, at 197 and n. 47 and Part II, 327 and n. 62.

[68] Notably Stein (1867), 771 and Mansfeld (1964), 228–9.

[69] See e.g. *Iliad* 3.395, 14.316, *Odyssey* 5.126, 18.212.

[70] Havelock (1958), 136 ('much talking') and Francotte (1958) ('disertes'). Cf. the qualified reservations of Guthrie (1965), 8 (ad loc.). See also Lesher (1994*a*), 31 n. 63 ('rich in telling'). The objections of Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 22 n. 33, to such a translation no longer apply once the picture of a single continuous journey to the goddess is replaced by the approach argued here.

[71] Kahn (1970), 116.

[72] See below, p. 41.

also that the Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι who rescue – or abduct – the κοῦρος are Phaethon's sisters.)

My suggestion regarding the mares and their θυμός may be shocking in its departure from customary views, but that need not be problematic once we abandon the project of forcing every aspect of the proem's opening into the straitjacket of a single, consistent journey to the goddess. *That* journey, I contend once more, does not begin until direction of the chariot is taken *away* from the control of the πολύφραστοι ἵπποι by the sudden arrival of the κοῦραι in B1.5. It is from that point on, not at the outset of the journey when mares are carrying him as far as θυμός might strain (his or theirs – again, my interpretation does not hinge on the suggestion made above) – that κοῦραι δ' ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον. Given the static nature of this verb the imperfect tense may be read as having inceptive, rather than continuing, force.[73]

I read Parmenides' use of the particle δέ in that line as adversative, rather than as a merely neutral connective, as the traditional interpretation would have it. As Denniston notes, the use of δέ 'as a balancing adversative' does not require being preceded by μέν; he observes that 'μέν is sometimes omitted, particularly in verse, even when the idea of balance is clearly present'.[74] Parmenides' introduction of the κοῦραι in line 5 either implies their sudden arrival, as my interpretation proposes (taking δέ as adversative, which I believe lines 8–10 reinforce, suggesting that the κοῦραι hasten from their home to join or intercept a journey already under way), or else is belated and odd, as it is in the prevailing interpretation. Some readers may object that if the κοῦραι intercept and change the direction of the journey begun in line 1, we would expect more to be made of this; but a counter-objection may be made against the usual interpretation, which suffers from problems of its own. For on that interpretation, if the κοῦραι have been present all along, their mention in line 5 is a curious afterthought, all the more strange considering the conclusion of the proem, because while the narrative is exclusively about the mares up to line 5, when the goddess later greets the κοῦρος in line 24 what is emphasized is that he is the companion of immortal *charioteers*, and he and the mares are *both* welcomed, while the κοῦραι seem to be regarded, in contrast, as *her agents*, and the ones principally responsible for his arrival at her domain. As indeed they are; but had they been in charge of the chariot from the inception we would expect *them* to be featured in line 1, rather than the mares. In any event, the adversative δέ which my interpretation favours is at least as plausible as the alternative, given the context, and so the ambiguous meaning of the particle cannot itself dictate our interpretation, but rather must follow from it.

The journey depicted in the proem, therefore, has in my view two disjointed stages. The first begins to carry the κοῦρος on the typical tour – I won't say 'route' because it has nothing to do with the two routes for thought mentioned by the goddess,[75] the one mandatory, the other impossible; instead let me call it the typical *tour* along the ὁδὸς πολύφημος through all the cities of men (assum-

[73] I am indebted to a discussion with Alex Mourelatos for this point. He notes that with a verb such as ἡγέομαι an inceptive sense would not in fact require the aorist; rather, the aorist of ἡγέομαι would be purely preteritive. It is thus the imperfect, just as we have it, that one would expect in looking for inception. See generally Mourelatos (1978).

[74] Denniston (1954), 165.

[75] I agree with Mourelatos that there is no 'third route', for the 'way' of mortals is no ὁδὸς διζήσιος, not a route but a πλάνη. Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 91, 24–5.

ing for the moment that contentious reading of B1.3). Were it completed, as I see it this would constitute one more apparently productive day in the life of the pre-Parmenidean cosmologist. But on this special occasion, which is one that can always be revisited in thought, resisting the temptation of habit to travel on that tour again (only in that sense is it that much-discussed 'repeated experience'[76]), it was interrupted. The maidens took over the direction of the chariot and led him to the goddess. That is phase two, the initial journey interrupted and diverted. It is not where the *φὼς εἰδώς* normally goes; it is emphatically not where the speaker of B1.1 initially thought he was headed. His (or the mares') *θυμός* was not striving toward the goddess's abode, a place beyond the gates of night and day, a terrifyingly unfamiliar place of unfamiliar discourse, so frightening that she must reassure him that he was not brought there by death, as Mourelatos glosses the words of B1.26, *οὔτι σε μοῖρα κακὴ προὔπεμπε νέεσθαι*.[77] Rather, it was presumably bent, for example, on continuing to uncover the secrets of nature and their underlying cosmological principles, precisely the mode of inquiry from which, to the extent he bears in mind the goddess's discourse, he will henceforth be barred.

The discourse of the goddess takes place 'far from the beaten path of men' (B1.27) but it also commends a route that remains so removed. This *ὁδὸς διζήσιος* leaves behind the *ὁδὸς πολύφημος* that was being travelled at the outset of the proem, a way 'where many voices are heard',[78] or 'route of much speaking'[79] or road 'rich in voices'.[80] Thus, as with the phrase *εἰδότα φῶτα*, on my interpretation the adjective in *ὁδὸς πολύφημος* is not a compliment either. Rather, as a *πολύπειρος ὁδός* it is where one finds prevalent an *ἠχήεσσαν ἀκουήν καὶ γλῶσσαν* (B7.3–5) – hence *πολύφημον*. Not surprisingly; since it is the path of the Sun, without which there would be no world of mortals. So I read B1.2–3 as 'the way of the [sun] god where much babbling is heard, which [way][81] carries the "knowing man" *κατὰ πάντ' †ἄτη*'.

This brings us to the notorious crux in B1.3. On the interpretation urged here, which finds in B1 two very different trips, there never would have arisen any difficulty with, or objection to, reading *κατὰ πάντ' ἄ<σ>τη*, which, after Sextus' editor Mutschmann printed it, was assumed to be 'the reading of the best MS of Sextus',[82] but which, ever since, commentators have sought to correct, having had a problem in reconciling such a description of '*the*' journey with the contrary char-

[76] Cf. Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 17 n. 21 and the concurrence of Furley (1973), 3 n. 5. Only in that sense would it be appropriate to translate *ὅτε* in line 8 as 'whenever' (as do Tarán [1965], 8 and Coxon [1986], 44) or to take *σπερχοίατο* iteratively. As Mourelatos observed, 'in Homer this particular form expresses enduring simultaneity or concurrence as well as iteration (perhaps even more the former …)' (with references to *Il.* 19.317 and *Od.* 12.22).

[77] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 15.

[78] Cunliffe (1924), s.v.

[79] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 41. See also his discussion at 41 n. 93.

[80] Lesher (1994*b*), 12.

[81] Apart from the identification of *δαίμονος* as the (male) sun god, reading *ᾗ* to refer to *ὁδός* is reinforced by the correlative *τῇ φερόμην* in the next line, as noted by Furley (1973), 3 n. 7. See also Coxon (1986), 158; Lesher (1994*b*), 1; Granger (2008), 10.

[82] Tarán (1965), 12.

acterization found in B1.27.[83] But it is not 'necessary to keep it' as Tarán thought,[84] because, as Coxon famously revealed after re-examining that manuscript,[85] the MS does not read ἄστη at all, but has instead the probably meaningless word ἄτη.[86] So we are back in the position of Parmenides' pioneering editors, in need of an emendation.

One of the first emendations was revived in Coxon's edition of the fragments. Christian Gottlob Heyne, the prolific eighteenth-century librarian and classicist, proposed in the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen* (as it was then called), in the course of reviewing in that journal an early edition of Parmenides, that we read κατὰ πάντ᾽ ἄντην, which he rendered as 'vorwärts, entgegen', defending it as more natural than κατὰ πάντ᾽ ἀϊδῆ, which Fülleborn had ventured in the book under review.[87] Perhaps it is that, but it is also, as Renehan has persuasively argued, devoid of sense, never meaning 'straight onwards' (vorwärts) – as Coxon took it in the first edition of his commentary[88] – but only denoting opposition or confrontation, which no one has argued would be intelligible in the context.[89]

However, in his recently revised, posthumously reprinted edition of the fragments, Coxon has proposed a different translation of Heyne's emendation, which he retains. He now would render it 'face to face', as in '[the road] which carries through every stage to meet her face to face a man of understanding.'[90] This evades Renehan's objection, and is of course a plausible translation of ἄντην, taken by itself. But in line three, long before any encounter with another personage has been suggested as in the offing, it is not how the word would be understood. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how on an initial reading it would be understood at all; there is as yet no context for 'face to face.' And it renders the prepositional phrase more than a little odd; it is hard to make any initial sense of κατὰ πάντ᾽ followed by ἄντην, for while Coxon translates it 'through every stage', there is no context for that either. The plausibility of this translation of line three, if any, requires that we supply a reference to the goddess ('her') as understood. But although I have,

[83] Jaeger (1945), 460 n. 149, among others; cf. Jaeger (1947), 225 n. 23. See Verdenius (1947), 284 n. 86, for citations to numerous earlier efforts. I find unconvincing the attempt of Guthrie (1965), 7 (ad loc.) to dissolve the problem by pointing out that since the chariot passes high above, 'over all cities', it is 'at the same time …"far from the footsteps of men"'. As Lesher (1994*b*), 14 n. 24 points out, for that meaning the appropriate preposition would be ὑπέρ (referring to Xenophanes fr. 31 and Heraclitus, *Allegoriae* 44.5, 'where the sun is said to move ὑπέρ the earth').

[84] Tarán (1965), 12.

[85] Coxon (1968), 69. Cordero (2004), 27 n. 92.

[86] I say 'probably meaningless', qualifying Coxon, having in mind the valiant but unconvincing efforts of Tarrant (1976) to save it. Apart from substantive implausibilities, Tarrant's view faces an unexplained syntactic difficulty, i.e. accounting for the subject of φέρει in B1.3. If it is Ἄτη, what is ᾗ doing there? See also Granger (2008), 11 n. 30, who finds Tarrant's effort too 'labored' to carry conviction.

[87] Heyne (1796), 23. Thanks are due to Daniela de Cecco for supplying a bibliography in the 2003 reprinting of Diels (1897), which the original edition lacked. Without it I should still be searching for Heyne's discussion. His emendation is often cited but I had never before encountered a bibliographical reference.

[88] Coxon (1986), 44.

[89] Renehan (1992), 401. Heyne evidently meant 'entgegen' in the sense of 'towards', not connoting opposition, and gave no further explanation for his proposal. Miller (2006), 12 n. 18 follows Coxon but without taking into account Renehan's objections.

[90] Coxon (1986 repr. 2009), 48 and 271. I am grateful to the anonymous referee of this journal for calling this change to my attention.

to be sure, argued above that first readings are recollected and given new meanings in the light of the poem once read as a whole, this presupposes that those initial readings should yield some normal, traditional sense, rather than initially no contextual sense at all. Instead, it is far more natural to expect an object of κατὰ, which ἄ<σ>τη provides.

Once the crucial objection to reading ἄ<σ>τη dissolves (namely, its supposed conflict with B1.27), as it does on my interpretation – which takes as separate journeys that of the φὼς εἰδώς, on the one hand, and, on the other, the journey on which the κοῦρος, after first setting out on the way of the φὼς εἰδώς, is removed to the goddess – the objection that Pelliccia regarded as 'irrefutable' and his motive for emending κατὰ πᾶν <τὸ ἐόν>[91] fall away. It remains to assess the reasons that have been put forward in favour of ἄ<σ>τη after all, despite its lack of manuscript authority.

In his exhaustive survey of this issue and related controversies, Lesher provided a relatively complete and coherent account of the proem's details and of the meaning of εἰδότα φῶτα that would seem to be quite at odds with the interpretation offered here.[92] But the critical point of contention between his interpretation and mine is really a narrow one. Lesher views the phrase εἰδότα φῶτα as descriptive of the κοῦρος both before he reaches the house of the goddess and, even more particularly, after he receives her instruction. Concomitantly, he sees the journey of B1 as a continuum rather than, as here, a traditional path that is begun only to be interrupted, diverted and replaced by a radical, new way of inquiry. Lesher's view (positing a single journey) becomes unavoidably convoluted and unconvincing, as it must, when trying to explain how the κοῦρος can be a φὼς εἰδώς from the outset. For the notion that the mares have already conveyed to the κοῦρος the knowledge they allegedly have[93] does not comport with the manner of the goddess's reception of them all in B1.24–5, where she recognizes the mares as having carried him, but nothing more. They are neither his guides (the κοῦραι as charioteers are that) nor his teachers (she will be that). Once the κοῦραι take over the chariot, the mares simply provide the horsepower for the journey wherever it may lead, as is made explicit in B1.21, when upon persuading Dike to unbolt the gates the κοῦραι drive both chariot and horses along the broad way towards the instructing goddess. Nevertheless, Lesher's discussion of alternative proposals for emending B1.3 and his preliminary conclusions regarding the reading ἄ<σ>τη[94] have a separate value and can be considered apart from his broader contextual view, with which I disagree.

Lesher's difficulties with Renehan's proposal to read ἄ<σ>τη based on Homeric parallels[95] were founded on the notion that the aptness of these parallels assumed a mistaken identification of the κοῦρος with Odysseus and of both as a φὼς εἰδώς. But if, as I have argued (above and elsewhere), following Mansfeld, the κοῦρος 'ist das Gegenstück zu Odysseus' and if we liken not the κοῦρος but rather Odysseus to the φὼς εἰδώς, and the κοῦρος to neither, these difficulties vanish. And, as Renehan has also contended, principles of textual criticism and palaeogra-

[91] Pelliccia (1988), 510–11. Pelliccia's proposal is discussed and rejected by Renehan (1992), 401–2.

[92] Lesher (1994*b*), 8–13.

[93] Lesher (1994*b*), 13 and n. 23.

[94] Lesher (1994*b*), 1–8.

[95] Renehan (1992), 402–3.

phy lend support to reading ἄ<σ>τη. Thus both literary parallels and philological craft underpin that emendation. I conclude, therefore, though not for the reasons Lesher advanced, that even having taken into account Coxon's MS discovery we should nevertheless accept the perhaps dominant contemporary view[96] that ἄ<σ>τη is most likely the correct reading.

Admittedly, ἄ<σ>τη also fits my interpretation of the φὼς εἰδώς well. The path of the sun naturally passes κατὰ πάντ' ἄστη, and more to the point it bears and illuminates the man of ἱστορίη, the φὼς εἰδώς, on his travels there. But although I prefer this reading for that reason, it is neither dictated by nor drives my interpretation.

What does drive the interpretation? To summarize: it develops within the context of Parmenides' manifest intention to aim a πολύδηρις ἔλεγχος against cosmology (at least as hitherto known), natural philosophy, Ionian ἱστορίη.[97] Whether it was Parmenides' sole or even principal intention to construct in the Doxa a corresponding paradigm of what is under attack,[98] or whether the Doxa has a more positive scientific role,[99] or yet some other function,[100] is an issue I leave aside for the present. But I take seriously the goddess's warning that the words setting out that section of the poem are '"deceptive" (B8.52 *apatēlon*) and … not worthy of "genuine credence" (B1.30 *tais ouk eni pistis alēthēs*)'.[101] Whatever the purpose of the Doxa, her discourse does not suggest that what follows the warning of B8.52 constitutes a resigned capitulation to the exigencies of mortals and their world, and an opening to 'save the phenomena' from her own elenchus, just so long as one pole of the Doxa, viz. Light, were to be endorsed.

Against that backdrop, this paper has argued that, accordingly, metaphors of light, enlightenment, illumination, etc. are counter-Parmenidean and not associated by him with knowledge and truth; and that therefore the words φὼς εἰδώς and the images surrounding the ὁδός typical of the φὼς εἰδώς are meant to be suspect, once the rest of the poem has been heard. For first-time readers, lines 1–4 of the proem would initially have a cluster of associations constituting a traditional sense; but dominated as those lines are by images reminiscent of the soon-to-be-rejected world of mortals, this sense would assume, in retrospect, or on subsequent readings/hearings, a negative and ironic cast.

Thus, the ὁδὸς πολύφημος of B1.2, the πολύφραστοι ἵπποι of B1.4, and above all the φὼς εἰδώς of B1.3, are all intended by Parmenides ironically, and any traditionally positive connotations are about to be subverted. Understandable and identifiable from within a traditional, ἱστορίη-oriented perspective on one's initial reading of the proem, they become suspect, are to be viewed askance, and

[96] Prior to Lesher and Renehan , it had been endorsed most prominently by Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), 22 n. 31. Hölscher (1969), 10 and n. 3, 72, adopted it also, despite Coxon, though without argument. See also Granger (2008), 11.

[97] See e.g. Boeder (1966); Furley (1987), 42–8; Graham (2006), 21–2, 148–85. Curd's minority position views Parmenides not as a rejecter but a reformer of traditional cosmology; see Curd (1998), 241.

[98] As to whether the Doxa epitomizes an actual historical exemplar, the literature on this contentious issue is surveyed in Granger (2002), who believes that Parmenides had Anaximenes in his sights. Graham (2006), 154–61, 182–4, argues that the target of the elenchus is the cosmology of Heraclitus, but that the purpose of the Doxa is another matter, 169–82.

[99] See e.g. Graham (2006), 169–82 and Mourelatos (1970 repr. 2008), xli–xlvii.

[100] See e.g. Curd (1992) and Curd (1998), 98–126.

[101] Mourelatos (1970, repr. 2008), xxxviii.

repudiated, in retrospect, once the goddess's discourse on Truth has been grasped. Far from honouring the traveller of the proem as a 'knowing man' and identifying him with the goddess's listener, the poem ultimately assimilates the path of that 'knowing man', the φὼς εἰδώς, to that of the 'know-nothing mortals', and renders it similarly one from which her listener, the κοῦρος, is barred.

The interpretation of the φὼς εἰδώς and the path he sets out upon proffered here may be not only controversial, but iconoclastic. But for those who are prepared not to let habit force them along a much-accustomed road, I submit that, for all my interpretation's initial oddity, in the end it will be found to open the gates to the integral sense of the proem.

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