Section I: The Journey

I (i): Translation of Fragment 1 (Lines 1–21)

1  Mares which carry me, as far as *thumos* might reach, were sending me, when, leading, they set me onto the much-famed road of the deity, which bears the knowing man through all cities*; there I was borne; for there the much-discerning* mares bore me,  
5  straining the chariot, and maidens were leading the way.* The axle in the hubs was emitting the sound of a pipe,* Blazing,* for it was driven by two whirling Wheels at either side, when they were hastening to send (me), the maidens, daughters of the Sun, leaving behind the houses of Night,* into the light, having pushed away with hands their veils* from their heads.  
10  There are the gates of the paths of Night and Day,* And them a lintel and a stone threshold hold on either side; these ethereal (gates) are filled with great doors, and of them much-avenging* Justice holds the corresponding keys.  
15  Her (Justice) the maidens appeasing with soft words Persuaded wisely that for them the bolted bar* She push away swiftly from the gates; and, spreading open, they made of the doors a yawning gap, turning the much-bronzed posts in their sockets in turn,  
20  fitted with pegs and pins; then there straight through them the maidens guided along the carriage-road the chariot and horses.

I (ii): Textual Notes on the Translation of Fragment 1 (Lines 1–21)

1.3. “through all cities”: the text of this line is corrupt. The MS is nonsensical: *kata pant’ ate, aste,* “cities,” is a traditional conjecture (Diels-Kranz, etc.). However,
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recent editors move away from this reading of Parmenides’ line: Gallop\(^2\) (48) prints \textit{asînê}, “unscathed” (modifying “man”); Coxon\(^3\) (45) adopts Heyne’s conjecture, \textit{антên}, and translates “through every stage.” I argue in Chapter 6 that Plato’s \textit{Phaedrus} 230d5, in which Socrates journeys away from \textit{hoi d’ en te astei anthropoi}, “the men in the city,” resonates back to Parmenides and thus provides evidence for reading \textit{aste} here. “Cities” also resonates back to Homer, \textit{Odyssey} i.3: \textit{pollôn d’anthrôpôn iden astea kai noon egnô}. Cities, there, represent the sum of mortal achievement.

1.4. “much-discerning”: following Taran\(^4\) (see 12–13). The verb \textit{phrazô} also suggests intelligent speaking (cf. the related compounds of \textit{phrazô}, \textit{poluphrades}; \textit{LSJ}, s.vv.). This verb or its compounds appear frequently. See 1.16 \textit{epiphraideos} of the \textit{kourai}, 2.6 \textit{phrazô} of the goddess, 2.8 \textit{phrasais} of the youth. See also 6.2 note.

“a pipe”: syrinx. This is not a flute, it is a reed instrument which is closer to an oboe or a bag-pipe than a flute. It produces a squealing sound. Kingsley\(^5\) discusses (esp. 131–5) the role of this instrument in certain ritual contexts. The same word “sockets” recurs at 1.19.

1.7. \textit{aiðhomenos}: this appears to be the first metaphoric use of the word (see \textit{LSJ}, s.v.). Literally, it means burning, blazing.

1.9. The direction of the journey is clear: from darkness toward light. Kingsley, on the other hand, envisages a journey \textit{into} darkness; he holds that the maidens return with the \textit{kouros} to the house of Night. He follows Burkert’s influential view of a \textit{katabasis} (i.e., a descent into the underworld).\(^6\)

\textit{kaluptras}, “veils”: this word is related to \textit{kalupto}, “conceal,” a key concept in Heidegger’s notion of truth.

This is Gallop’s translation of this line. His and other translations have been of great help to me, but I have not been able to note down all places where they have influenced my phrasing.

1.14. \textit{polupoinos}: this is a very interesting epithet, especially in the context of Parmenides. On the one hand, it seems to be an expectable epithet of Dike, but, given the relationship the \textit{kouros} might hope to develop with her, a shift in meaning might be worth considering. So while \textit{poine} is often synonymous with \textit{dike}, meaning requital, vengeance, and so on, in Pindar, it appears to have the sense of “release, redemption” (P.IV.63).

1.16. “the bolted bar”: I adopt the words of Gallop (51). O’Brien (6) interpolates even more specifically, translating: “the bolt fitted with its pin.”

1.18. \textit{chasm’ achanes}: a \textit{lusus etymologicus} or a phrase that highlights the common etymology of the component words.
Section II: The Goddess

II (i): Translation of Fragment 1 (Lines 22–32) and Fragments 2–8 (Lines 1–50)

Fragment 1, continued: Lines 22–32

22 and a goddess received me kindly,* and she took my right hand
   In her hand, and thus she uttered a speech and addressed me:
O youth (kouros), companion of immortal charioteers,
25 With mares who carry you reaching* as far as our house,
   Welcome, since no evil fate (moira kake) sent you forth to travel*
This road (hodon), for indeed far outside the stepping-path (patou) of men
   it is (estin),*
But [rather] Themis (Right) and Dikē (Justice) [sent you forth]. You should
30 learn all things,
   both the untrebling heart of persuasive* truth (alēthēs)
and the opinions of mortals (broton doxas) in which there is no true trust
   (pistis alēthēs).
But all the same this too you will learn, how it was inevitable for things
   seeming to be (ta dokounta*)
to be (einaî) assuredly (dokimos), ranging throughout all things completely.*

Fragment 2

Come on, I shall tell, and you listen and keep well (komisai*) the narrative
   (muθon),
What the only roads of inquiry there are to conceive (noesai*):
The [first] one, that it is and that it is not possible for it not to be,
   Is the path of persuasion, for it accompanies truth (alētheia*);
5 The other [second road] that it is not and that it ought (khron* not be,
This I declare to you to be an entirely unlearnable (panapeuthēn*) path;
   For you would not know the non-being, for it is not possible,
Nor could you declare it.

Fragment 3

For it is the same thing to conceive (noeîn*) and to be.

Fragment 4

Gaze upon things, absent though* they be, as steadfastly present to the mind;
For you will not sever being (to eon) from holding fast (echesthai*) to being
   (tou eontos),
Neither [being] scattering everywhere in every way throughout the universe
\((kata\ kosmon^{*})\),
Nor coming together.

**Fragment 5**
All the same to me it is
From where I begin, for to that place I shall return\(^*\) again.

**Fragment 6**
One ought \((khre)\) to say and to conceive \((noe\in)\) that being \((eon)\) is, for it is possible to be;\(^*\)
And nothing is not possible [to be]: I bid you consider\(^*\) these things.
For from this first road of inquiry I restrain you,
But then from this one (the road), on which mortals, knowing nothing,
\(5\) Wander two-headed \((dikranoi)\), for helplessness in their
Breasts guides their wandering thought \((nous)\), and they are carried,
Deaf and blind equally, bewildered, undiscerning \((aksi\tau\alpha^{*})\) tribes,
For whom to be \((to\ pele\in)\) and not to be are thought\(^*\) the same
And not the same, and the path of all is back-turning.

**Fragment 7**
For never shall this be forced,\(^*\) that things that are not are,
But do you restrain your thought \((noe\beta\alpha\ma)\) from this road of inquiry.
Nor let habit, much-experienced, force you along this road,
To ply an unseeing eye and an echoing hearing
\(5\) And tongue, but judge by reason \((logos)\) the strife-ridden refutation
Spoken by me.

**Fragment 8**
Yet one narrative \((m\ueth\alpha)\) of a road
Is left, that it is \((estin)\); on this road there are very many
Signs,\(^*\) that being \((eon^{*})\) is unborn and unperishing \((\beta\iota\iota)\),
Whole, one-of-a-kind \((mounogen\epsilon\sigma\nu)\), untrembling \((atremos^{*})\) and without end
\((atele\sigma\tau\o\nu^{*})\);
\(5\) Nor ever was, nor will be, since now \((n\u\nu)\) is, all together \((homou\ p\epsilon\nu\)\),
One, continuous; for what birth of it will you inquire?
How and whence grown \((aux\epsilon\theta\epsilonn)\)? Neither from non-being \((m\epsilon\ eontos)\) will
I allow
You to speak nor to conceive \((noe\in)\); for not sayable nor conceivable \((noe\tau\o\nu)\)
Is it, that it is not. And what necessity \((khreos)\) urged it,
Later or earlier, having begun from nothing, to come into being (phūn)?

Thus, it is necessary (khreon) for it either to exist all-in-all (pampan), or not.

Nor ever will the strength of trust (pistis) allow something from non-being

To be born (gignesthai) besides it; for this reason, neither to be born (genesthai)

Nor to perish did Dikē (Justice), loosening her shackles, allow,

But she holds fast; and the discernment (krisis) about these things is in this:

Is it or is it not? But now it has been decided (kekritai), just as necessary

(anangke),

To allow that the one road is inconceivable (anoēton), unnamed (anōnumon), for not of truth

is it the road, but [to allow about] the other road that it is, and is true.

How could what-is (to eon) be in the future (ēpeita)? And how could it come into being?

For if it came into being, it is not, nor if it is ever going to be.

Thus birth (genesis) is extinguished and perishing unheard-of (apustos).

Nor is (it) divisible, since (it) is all same.

Nor (is it) in any way more in some place, which would restrain it from holding together;

Nor (is it) in any way less, but (it) is all full of being.

Therefore (it) is all continuous; for being approaches to being.

But unmoved in the limits of great bonds

(it) is, without beginning (anarkhon) and unceasing, since birth and perishing have been driven very far away, and true trust (pistis alethes) thrust (them) away.

Remaining the same in the same it lies by itself

And thus will remain there securely; for powerful necessity (anangke)

Holds (it) in (the) bonds of a limit, which restrains it all around;

Therefore it is not lawful (themis) for what-is (to eon) to be without an end;

For it is not lacking; for if it were, it would lack everything.

And the same thing is (it) to think (noe) and wherefore there is thought (noema);

For not without what-is, in what has been stated,

Will you find thinking (to noe); for nothing else either is or will be

Apart from what-is (tou eontos), since Moira (Fate) shackled it at least

To be whole and unmoved; wherefore all things have been named

As many as mortals (brotoi) have established, trusting (pepoithotes) to be true;

To come into being and to perish; to be and not,

And to change place and to exchange shining complexion.

But since (there is) an ultimate limit, it [i.e., what-is] is perfect,

Everywhere like the bulk of a well-rounded sphere,

From its center equally balanced everywhere; for it is necessary for it

To be neither in any way greater nor in any way lesser here or there;

For neither is there not-being, which would stop it from approaching
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To [its] like, nor is being such that there would be
More of being here or less there, since it all is inviolate*;
For everywhere equal to itself, uniformly it falls* in limits.

II (ii): Textual Notes on the Translation of Fragment 1
(Lines 22–32) and Fragments 2–8 (Lines 1–50)

Fragment 1, continued: Lines 22–32

1.22. “kindly”: the word ἀφόρον etymologically means “with forward (pro-) mind.”

1.25. ἡμικόνε: the verb ἡμικόνε recalls line 1, where the θυμός “reaches”; here, however, the goddess attributes the κουρός’ arrival at her house to the mares (25), omitting any reference to his θυμός which propels him (1). I argue in this study that θυμός is the “mortal soul.” The goddess therefore ignores the mortal component of his journey.

1.26. ηεσθαί: it is worth considering whether the verb ηέσθαι carries some Homeric and Pindaric baggage here: with respect to the former, one cannot help but think of nostos (for this κουρός, is this journey a return home? Is this journey/revelation actually a return to a primordial state?); with respect to the latter, it is used for traveling the path of song (P.IV.427; also see Hymn to Hermes 451 for the οίμος αἰοίδης).

1.27. In this line, notice that words such as ἡδον and πατοῦ represent the journey in spatial terms. The word ἐστιν, “it is,” occurs at the end of the line as a copula; later, the goddess will focus exclusively on ἐστιν, rather than journey, in describing motionless being.

1.28. “learn”: the verb is πυνθανομαί which means “enquire about.” But it is equivalent to μανθανο in 1.31. Enquiring and learning are the same thing in philosophical activity.

1.29. “persuasive” (Sextus Empiricus): instead of this adjective Simplicius reads, and some editors adopt, εὐκυκλεός, “well-rounded”; see, for example, Gallop (52–3). 2.4 may support Sextus.

1.31, 32. Lines 31 and 32 are obscure lines, but rich in resonances of key terms.

dοκίμως: this word means “assuredly,” “certainly.” It seems as if it is formed from the same root as δοξα, the mortal “opinion” the goddess mentions in line 30 and criticizes in much of her speech. Yet, dοκίμως comes from δεχομαί “to accept” and δοκιμαζω which means “to test,” “to assay,” “to scrutinize.” (LSJ, s.vv.) Even more, what here exist “assuredly” are “things seeming to be,” τα δοκούντα, a participle formed from the verb dοκεω. Clearly, the philosophical problem for
Parmenides here is not merely textual. Things that exist spatio-temporally do exist in a certain way, although not as fully as being.

1.32. For the very difficult second half of this line, I have adopted wording from both Gallop and Coxon. Gallop (53): “how the things which seem / Had to have genuine existence, permeating all things completely.” Coxon (48): “how it was necessary that the things that are believed to be should have their being in general acceptance, ranging through all things from end to end.” Curd (21): “how it was right that the things that seem be reliably, being indeed, the whole of things.” Curd’s translation ignores the force of 

There are three different forms of necessity: logical necessity, circumstantial necessity, and external compulsion. Death is the best example of circumstantial inevitability: given birth, death is inevitable.

Fragment 2

This is Coxon’s fragment 3.

2.1. Compare page 44 (text and footnote) for discussion of the possibilities for komisai.

2.2. “inquiry”: diżesis also occurs at 6.3, 8.6, 7.2.

2.2. noesai (or noein): I translate “conceive” (as Coxon does). K. von Fritz writes: “The fundamental meaning of the word noein in Homer is ‘to realize or to understand a situation.’ . . . [Parmenides’] work marks the most decisive turning-point in the history of the terms nous, noein, and so on; for he was the first consciously to include logical reasoning in the functions of the nous.” By using the word “conceive,” I wish to stress the notion of “grasping,” etymologically present in the word “conception” from Latin concipio or cum + capio. I do not mean a purely mental representation. In fact, I see it as the passive reception of a situation by the mind; “conceive” should be understood as a grasping of phenomena, provided we remember this means a passive grasping, not an act of will. Schürmann translates forms of noein by “heeding,” in accordance with Heidegger; this also has the advantage of having a passive, receptive emphasis.

2.4. Some editors emend one word to make this line read: “for it (persuasion) attends upon truth.” So Gallop (54–5) and Coxon (53). However, the text reads aletheia (nominative, making “truth” the subject; see Sider and Johnstone, 12).

2.5. khreōn: unlike the previous usage of this word (line 28), she means here a logical necessity, as opposed to a conditional or ontological necessity.
2.6. *panapeutheia*, “entirely unlearnable,” contains a form of the verb *punthano-mai*, used already at 1.28 (*puthesthai*). There, the goddess said it was necessary for the *kouros* to know both truth and *doxai*. Hence, the unlearnable road of what-is-not, here, refers not to mortal *doxai* but to non-being. But in 8.21, the related word *apustos* describes destruction and death. Hence, in a different way, death and birth also cannot be learned, and a *logos* cannot be provided for singulars. It is interesting to interpret “truth” as used in John in this Greek sense (individual, singular) rather than the Hebrew sense (fidelity). *Aletheia*, as I have argued throughout this work, is not exclusively the domain of logical concepts and argumentation (*logos*), but is established on the existence of concrete singulars. Jesus himself is *logos* in this concrete, non-conceptual sense. Jesus, when asked by Pilate questions related to his identity and to “Truth” (John 18) remains silent. Singulars can only be pointed to.

**Fragment 3**

3.1. For *noein*, see note on line 2.2 above.

**Fragment 4**

4.1. “Gaze upon”: suggested by Coxon (56). *Homōs* can be used to delimit single words.

4.2. *echesthai*, “to hold fast,” reappears at 8.6 (*hen suneches*, “[being is] one, continuous”), 8.23 (*sunechesthai*, “[being is not more or less here or there, which would keep it from] holding together”), 8.25 (*xuneches*, “continuous”).

4.3. *kata kosmon*: this phrase embodies a pun. It means both “in due order” (a Homeric phrase) and “throughout the universe” (since *kosmos* refers to the ordered universe). Also, Matt Newman suggests the following regarding the translation here: “Perhaps it is something more like ‘neither that which is being scattered throughout the universe, nor that which is coming together.’ This is rather troublesome, but I get the sense that the goddess is saying that no matter the movement of *to eon*, diffusion or concentration, it is always integral.”

**Fragment 5**

5.2. “Return” here translates *palin hixomai*, literally, “I will come back.” “Return” for the goddess cannot mean the same as it would for the mortal *kouros*. She employs the image of journey, but only in her language and only referring to her speech. She is stationary, her ontology is one of stasis, and her metaphor for being is a sphere. Therefore her circular *logos* cannot know the unidirectional finitude of mortals preserved in the latter’s life, journey, and narrative.
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Fragment 6

6.1. Heidegger misunderstands this line, wrongly reading τ’ έον, that is, τ(ε) έον, as to on (being); Schürmann repeats this. There is no doubt about the Greek here; the elided vowel must be epsilon, not omicron, and the phrase λεγειν τε νοειν τ(ε) demands a second τε (a correlative, “and”). This said, the line remains difficult and somewhat obscure. What interests me now is the goddess’ description of her subject matter, being, in terms of speaking and conceiving, what I call “logos.”

6.2. phrazesthai: the verb phrazo carries root meanings of “show, tell.” The middle form, found in this line, and meaning, “consider (to yourself),” implies that the listener (the kouros) internalizes the words of the goddess. I point this out because of the interest of various words for “thinking” and related activities. Here, thought is fashioned from logos rather than from phenomena or sensation.

6.7. akrita, “undiscerning”: the verb krino also appears in 7.5 (krinai de logō, “judge by reason”), 8.15 (krisis peri touto, “the judgement about these things”) and 8.16 (kekritai, “it has been decided”).

6.8. nenomistai: apparently the goddess puns on this verb, nomizo, and the word onoma (“name”), since later she describes mortals’ going astray in naming things as a defining characteristic of the mortal kosmos of division, plurality, and contrariness.

Fragment 7

7.1. “be forced”: borrowed from Taran (73) and Sider and Johnstone (15). Newman comments that, if this is passive (which it seems), it is not future, but aorist subjunctive, perhaps volitive given the following line’s imperative: “let this never be proven.”

Fragment 8

8.2. epi’ sēmat’ easi: the goddess refers to two different kinds of signs: those of the way of being, and others which names the birth-death trajectories of beings. See also 8.55 with the note there.

8.3. έον is of great interest here. Whether it is the grammatical subject of the Greek sentence is somewhat ambiguous, especially lacking the definite article τo. The word, the Ionic form of έον, is the neuter singular present participle of the verb είναι, “to be” (of which the third-person singular is estin, “he/she/it is”). As a participle or verbal adjective, it means “being.” My reading is closest to that of Barnes. He takes έον as a circumstantial participle: “that, being, it is
ungenerated and undestroyed.”

However, most scholars take the participle as a verbal noun (a gerund), “being.” Thus: “what-is” (Mourelatos, 94; Gallop, 65), “Being” (Taran, 85; Coxon, 60). This takes Parmenides’ usage as anticipating Aristotle’s use of *to on* for “being” (see also the note on 6.1, above). Indeed, we know this fragment 8 from Simplicius’ *Commentary on Aristotle’s Physics*. However, we must first inquire whether Parmenides does in fact use *eon (= on)* as a verbal noun (gerund). Although in 6.1 he does not use the definite article, in 8.19 he uses the article. In 8.46 and 8.47, he uses *eon* as a participle, and thus without an article.

Parmenides uses being with the definite article in several passages, for example, *tou eontos* (4.2, 8.35), *to pelein* (6.8). The articular infinitive does not occur in Homer. It is of some philosophical significance to my thesis that articular infinitives allow us to think about mortal actions in an abstract way. Parmenides uses articular infinitives elsewhere, such as 6.1 (*to legein*) and 8.36 (*to noein*). The first speech on truth, understandably, contains all occurrences of the articular infinitives in the surviving fragments.

8.4. The word *atremes* also occurs in 1.29 where it qualifies the heart of *aletheia*, “truth,” and here, being. Variant emendations exist for the ending of this line; however, *ed’ ateleston* is the reading of Simplicius, who is the unique source (see Coxon, 61, n. 4).

8.6. *suneches* describes being in 4.2, 8.23, and 8.25.

8.12. Instead of *ek mé eontos* (“from non-being”), Taran and Gallop accept Karsten and Reinhardt’s emendation *ek tou eontos*, “from being.” But this cannot be; the line would then mean, “nothing comes from being besides itself,” but being does not come from itself; this would be a banal and a tautological argument, perhaps even requiring infinite regress. I have translated the manuscript reading (Gallop, 66) with Diels, Sider, and Johnstone and Coxon; it means, “nothing can come from non-being.”

8.15–16. See note 6.7 for usage of *krisis* and related terms.

8.17. Naming is a significant feature of mortal activity. See 8.38 where all things are named by mortals (*onom’ estai*).

8.22. This line can be, and has been, read in two different ways. Gallop (16) argues, following Owen, that *homoion* is adverbial, and he translates “since [it] all alike is.” (That is: “since it all exists equally/in a like way.”) He argues that the argument demands this. (His reading requires accenting the verb *estin* with an acute accent on the penult.) But a natural reading of the line would be to take *homoion* as a predicate adjective: “[it] is all same.” I follow Mourelatos (111, n. 30).

8.25. Compare Plato, *Symposium* 195b: *homoion homoioi aei pelazei*, “like always draws near to like.” Mourelatos (111, n. 30) points out the “obvious echo” in
Parmenides (and then Plato) of Homer’s line, [hōs] aiei ton homoion agei theos hōs ton homoion, “god always leads like to like” (Odyssey xvii.218). Parmenides’ line contains the same suggestion of movement, although scholarly translators have been uncomfortable with this notion: as Gallop writes (16), “the goddess does not, presumably, mean to recognize two or more discrete entities adjacent to one another.” Taran translates (85): “Being is in contact with Being.” Gallop (69): “for what-is is in contact with what-is.” Coxon (66): “for Being is adjacent to Being.” By using the verb “is,” they suppress the idea of being “approaching” being; but that is the clear meaning of periázo (as Sider and Johnstone point out, 17). Note the fracture in Parmenides’ One, as the goddess recounts it. Even the translations quoted, while denying the hint of movement, nevertheless suggest a multiplicity in being. Parmenides’ doctrine of the “One,” contrary to first impressions, is in fact very fragile, and upon closer examination, reveals many fractures and joinings. The One seems to be an ultimate principle, but a precarious one.

In fact, this line already introduces, and requires, principles of the cosmology with (for example) the two cohering forces of periós and “mixing.”

8.28. eplakhthéisan, “have been driven,” inevitably recalls the second line of Homer’s Odyssey: Odysseus “mala polla / plangkhthé” (Odyssey P.1–2). In accordance with this, I translate as a passive verb, adopting Gallop’s (69) “driven . . . off” rather than Coxon’s (68) “have strayed.” Thematically, Parmenides reverses the point of the Odyssey. In being driven far from home, Odysseus encounters the goddesses Circe and Kalypso and lives with each of them for a time, but rather than stay with Kalypso and accept her offer of immortality, Odysseus longs for home and his mortal life. In Parmenides’ account of the goddess’ speech, the opposite: mortality is thrust away. If we are to understand that there is, in fact, some Homer in Parmenides’ use of neesthai, discussed above, one may wonder whether the goddess has somehow tried to obviate or fulfill the need to “go home” at 1.26.

8.29. Presumably, “remaining the same in the same (place).” Kirk-Raven-Schofield (KRS) translate this line as “remaining on its own.”

8.33. “for if it were”: I understand, bracketing mé (with KRS, Diels-Kranz (DK)) eon d’ an as “(it) being [so],” but I am uncertain about this half-line.

8.35–36. These lines may mean that thinking is dependent upon being (see Sider and Johnstone, 18).

8.41. khroa: both Gallop (71), and Sider and Johnstone (19), translate “color.” Not really. Khros means “flesh,” “skin,” or “surface of the body,” that is, of the human body exclusively or (even in Homer) its complexion. Parmenides here refers to something like “surface appearance,” but it is significant that he uses a word referring to human bodies. Coxon (74) elaborates on the notion of
“exchange”: “(to) alter their bright aspect to dark and from dark to bright.” Although a free translation, he brings out the implied meaning well.

8.48. *asulon*: “inviolable,” apparently the first occurrence of this word in extant Greek literature (Taran, 147). In ancient Greece, this word refers to the institution called (in English) *asylum*, the right of protection in a sanctuary. An individual who clung to a statue of a deity was protected from seizure or arrest. Here Parmenides subtly invokes the authority of the goddess for the truth of being: it is under her oversight. This line says that being (metaphysics) takes refuge under a divinity—from death.

8.49. *kurei*: this verb, “fall,” also contains a suggestion of motion.

**Further note on this section**

Some texts print another fragment, the so-called Cornford’s Fragment (= Sider and Johnstone’s fr. 20). I have chosen to exclude this fragment because it is incoherent and untranslatable by itself. The language echoes 8.38.

**Section III: The Kosmos**

**III (i): Translation of Fragment 8 (Lines 50–61) and Fragments 9–19**

**Fragment 8**

50 Here to you I stop (my) trustworthy speech (*logon*) and thought (*noéma*) about truth; from this point mortal opinions learn, listening to the deceitful ordering (*kosmon*) of my words, for to name shapes they (mortals) established (*katethento*) two knowings (*gnómas)*, of one which it is not right (*khreón*) to name*; in this they have wandered stray,

55 and they distinguished things opposite in body and established signs (*ethento sémata)* apart from each other: on the one hand, the aetherial (*aitherion*) fire of flame, being mild, immensely light, everywhere the same to itself but not the same as the other; and (on the other hand) this (other), in accordance with itself, the opposites, obscure night, thick in body* and dense.

60 I declare to you that this ordering (*diakosmon*) is entirely (*panta*) likely (*eüikota*), So that never any knowing (*gnômé*) of mortals might outstrip you.
Fragment 9

But since all things have been named light and night, And the (names*) [have been given] in accordance with their powers (dunameis) to these things and to those, All (pân) is full of light and obscure (aphantou) night together, Of both equally, since in neither does nothing have a share.

Fragment 10

And you shall know both the nature (phusin) of the aithêr* and all the signs In the aithêr and the obscuring works of the pure brilliant sun’s torch, and whence they came to be, and you will learn the wandering works of the round-eyed (kuklopos) moon, and its nature, and you shall know also the sky (ouranon) all about, whence it came into being (ephu) and how Necessity, leading (it), bound it to hold the limits of the stars.

Fragment 11

... how earth and sun and moon and common air (aithêr) and the Milky Way and furthest Olympus and hot strength of stars were set in motion to come into being.

Fragment 12

For the narrower* ones [i.e., rings] are filled with unmixed (akretoio) fire, And those (next) to these with night, and a portion (aisa*) of flame radiates forth And in the middle of these a daimoness,* who steers all things; For she rules* over hateful birth and mixing (mixios) of all* things, 5 Sending female to mix (mîgên) with male and again the opposite (to enantion), Male with female.

Fragment 13

First, on the one hand, of all the gods she devised Love (Erôs)

Fragment 14 [of the moon]

Night-lighting,* astray around earth, a foreign* light

Fragment 15 [of the moon]

always searching* out the rays of the sun
**Fragment 15a [of the earth]**
rooted-in-water

**Fragment 16**
For as each* (man) has a mixing (krasin) of much-wandering* limbs, 
So mind (nous) is present in men; for the nature (phusis) of the limbs for men 
Is the same thing which thinks (phroneei),* 
For each and every one (man); for it is mostly thought (noema).

**Fragment 17**
on the right [sides] young men (kourous), on the left [sides] young females (kouras)*

**Fragment 18**
When woman and man together mix (miscent) the seeds of Venus (love) 
in the veins, from the diverse blood a shaping power (virtus) 
maintaining proper proportion fashions well-made bodies. 
For if the powers (virtutes*) war with each other when the seed is mixed, 
5 And do not make a unity in the body resulting from the mixture, (then,) 
   terribly 
   They will vex the growing sex with (i.e., through) the double seed.

**Fragment 19**
In this* way, for you, according to opinion (doxan), these things emerged (ephu) 
and now are, 
And henceforth, from now on, having been nourished,* they will perish. 
And men established a signifying (episemon*) name for each one.

**III (ii): Textual Notes on the Translation of Fragment 8**
(Lines 50–61) and Fragments 9–19

**Fragment 8**
8.53. Mortals establish names for things, not the phenomena themselves (morphas). “Forms” (morphas) should be understood as physical-phenomenal shapes or forms—not Platonic Forms (idea, eidos). Coxon translates “Forms,” ambiguously (76), without making a commitment to the physical reality of things. Of course, both morphe and eidos can be used pejoratively, “in appearance rather than in reality.” This use is found both in Homer and in Hesiod.
katethento, “established”: the verb often implies, “lay up for the future” (*LSJ*, s.v. II.4, “deposit,” “lay up”; II.6, “lay up in memory or as a memorial”): as in *Theognis* 717, with the object gnōmēn (a word I translate as “knowing” in Parmenides)—the closest verbal parallel to the current line. Memory plays a crucial role in mortal thought. The goddess excludes time; by insisting on the now, she excludes both the future and the past and thus, memory and anticipation of death: precisely what defines mortality. She also uses katethento at 8.39, in conjunction with mortals (brotoi) and their naming (8.38–9); and likewise, see 19.3: “And men established a signifying name for each one.”

katethento . . . gnōmas I have taken as “decided” (*LSJ*, s.v. gnōme IIIa). The standard reading separates duo from gnōmas. This is possible, as closing the phrase before the caesura. This problem has led some editors to prefer the emendation gnōmais, adopted by Gallop: “For they established two forms in their mind for naming.” Alternately, gnōmas can be read as a synonym for doxa, which is not my argument here. Many translate 8.53 as “for they decided (katethento gnōmas) to name two forms”

8.54. Following O’Brien and others, Taran translates mian as “a unity” (“for they decided to name two forms, a unity of which is not necessary”; 86), misleadingly in my opinion. This is an unnatural translation of mian.

8.55. demas echoes morphas in line 53; it refers to a physical, living body; see also the note on the word khrōs, in 8.41, in Section II. Kirk, Raven, and Schofield translate demas as “appearance.” I disagree, because demas means frame or structure; for example, in Homer, the human body. Demas is also used in 8.59, where it is used of the dense physicality of Night.

sēmata: this word, “signs,” was also used at 8.2, where the goddess says there are many signs pointing to the true road. Again, notice the frequency and variety of polysemic vocabulary in the poem: the “many signs” now hint at a new, mortal discourse taught by the goddess (see 10.1–2 note).

8.56. aitherion: see discussion in the notes to fragment 10.

8.59. Gallop, Coxon, and O’Brien take demas as a noun in apposition to nukta.

8.60. Sider and Johnstone (20) translate eikōta panta as attributive adjectives with diakosmon. My translation reads these words as in predicate position in indirect discourse.

**Fragment 9**

This is Coxon’s fragment 11. In other words, the ordering of these fragments remains uncertain. Simplicius places these lines “a few verses” later than 8.59 (Coxon, 232).

9.1–2. These are difficult lines, engendering confusing translations. Coxon makes “all names” the main point of lines 1 and 2, and thus removes light and
night from line 2 (84). The apparent difficulty is the plural in the second line 

tois and tois.

9.2. ta: literally “the things.” Sider and Johnstone interpret this as equivalent to 
tauta, light and night. I have taken this more broadly, to refer to things other than light and night. Kirk-Raven-Schofield take epi tois te kai tois to refer to night and light, translating “to each.” But the plurals must be broader, referring to two categories of things. Plutarch (Kirk, Raven, Schofield, fr. 304) understands Parmenides as assigning all phenomena to light or night, or a mixture.

**Fragment 10**

This is Coxon’s fragment 9.

10.1–2. Bicknell suggests that fragment 10 should follow the proem, that is, he places it after 1.32. Gallop approves of this idea (79) because “It can be read as part of a synopsis of topics that the goddess promises to cover in the second part of her discourse.” This may indeed be a good idea. If so, it is important to note that the goddess’ discourse on the “Way of Seeming” would (then) begin with the aithēr.

For the meaning of aithēr as “air” before the fourth century BCE, see Kingsley:15

“In the earliest surviving Greek literature, and in poetic tradition down to the fourth century BCE, aithēr was the basic term for what we call air. Aēr, on the other hand, was originally only a very isolated example of air: obscure mist or cloud . . . [and, he goes on, referring to Parmenides,] . . . it makes immediate and obvious sense when, as in the case of all other sixth- and fifth-century writers, aithēr is accepted as referring to the ‘upper and lower regions of the air . . . evidently thought of as a continuum extending from the earth’s surface to the stars or beyond.’

We have already seen that the gates Parmenides passes through, as he enters the realm of the goddess, are described as aitheriai (1.13). There, the kouros passed from the mortal cosmos to the limits of the aithēr. Now, after the goddess has completed her discourse on immortal being, she charts an opposite path. Having reached the limits of this being of hers, she crosses over, in her speech to the kouros, into the mortal realm, by reentering aithēr. "The kouros, in this way, reenters aithēr, that is, our mortal universe.” This represents his return, if only in discourse, to the cosmos.

“all the signs in the aithēr”: Taran (242) says that these can only be stars. Perhaps he connects the sēnata to astrōn in 10.7. But, “signs,” used also in 8.55 ( . . . established signs) and 19.3 (a function of naming . . .), induce mortals to differentiate all things (see notes ad loc).

10.5–6. phusin, “nature,” is significant in describing the aithēr; this characterizes it as mortal (cf. 10.1–2 note). Ephu, in line 6, is the verb cognate with phusis. “Nature,” as a translation of phusin, should not be understood to mean “essence.”
Appendix

The Greek word implies growth in the natural world, the life-process of coming-into-being and passing-away. Coxon translates “origin” (80), to convey the idea of coming-into-being.

10.6–7. Necessity shackles the mortal cosmos, just as Moira (Fate) binds being (8.37–8). We might expect this to be the other way around. Moira, “fate”, referred earlier to death (1.26). We might expect Fate to apply to the human realm, and necessity to being.

Fragment 12

12.1. “narrower” is a feminine adjective, steinoterai, whose noun has to be supplied. Stephanai, “crowns” or “crowning rings,” is supplied by Testimonium A 37 (from Aetius; conveniently printed in Gallop, 116; see also Gallop, 83).

12.2. aisa of flame: aisa means portion or fate (i.e., one’s allotted portion). Aisa, like moira (see preceding note), can refer to death. Here, it refers to fire ejected into night. Here in the cosmos, the opposites come together, which the goddess cannot keep separate.

meta . . . hietai: the reading of meta has been variously understood: “injected” (Guthrie, 61; that is, “of fire and darkness mixed,” 62); Coxon (86), “in which moves a proportion of flame.” Grammatically, they take meta either as an adverb (“among”) or as a preposition with an implied dative (meta + dative = “within”). I take the two words as an example of tmesis.

I understand the arrangement of the cosmos, here, in this way. Fire and night are two contiguous concentric rings. Night is thicker (not only less “narrow” in circumference compared with the ring of fire). This is because night is denser than light. From the inner infernal ring, flames are sent forth into the adjacent portions of the ring of night. Thus, a mixing of fire and night is found in this region. Beyond extends the remainder of the ring of night into which the flames of fire do not project. This accords with the testimonium of Aetius, 37, which speaks both of pure bands (both of rare, and of dense) and of mixed (light and darkness).

12.3. These words refer to a second goddess whom we may call Thea Physica, a daimoness (specified as feminine by the feminine relative pronoun) who steers all things.

12.4. Reading pantôn with Gallop (82). Others read pantē, pantēi, “everywhere.” Some conjecture is necessary as most MSS read panta (“all things”) which is impossible.

arkhei can mean both “rules over” (governing the genitive case, as here) or “makes begin,” “initiates.” This latter, implied, sense of the word would suggest a relation of this generative goddess with nature (phusis). Parmenides probably puns on the possibilities in this word. The verb is related closely to the noun arkhē, “rule” or “beginning.”
**Fragment 14**

*nuktipheres*: this unusual word also occurs in *Orphic Hymn* 54.10.\(^\text{16}\)  
*allotrion phōs* (*phōs* being contracted *phaos*): Parmenides here puns on the Homeric phrase, *allotrios phōs*, “foreign man.”\(^\text{17}\)

**Fragment 15**

*paptainousa*: the verb has the sense of “look about one with a sharp, searching glance” and “look round for, look after” (*LSJ*, s.v.). Sider and Johnstone write (22): “As examples of this verb in Homer show, the moon here is not ‘looking at’ but ‘looking for’ the light of the sun.” Gallop translates “looking towards,” which does not capture the full nuance of this verb.

**Fragment 16**

16.1. Instead of *hekastos*, some editors read *hekastoi* (Kirk-Raven-Schofield, Sider and Johnstone), meaning “at any moment” (*KRS*, 261). The subject of the line would then be *krasis* (reading the nominative instead of the accusative *krasin*), with *ekhei* meaning “is.”

*poluplangkton*: an interesting parallel occurs in a Greek inscription from Rome: *poluplangktoi prapides*, “much-erring wits” (*IG* 14.1424; *LSJ*, s.v. *poluplangktos* and *prapides*; *prapides* is synonymous with *phrenes*).\(^\text{18}\) Newman pointed out to me that, in this inscription, *IGUR* 1163 in Moretti’s collection, Zeus (whose identity is possibly both pagan and Judeo-Christian in this inscription) “once offered to the *poluplangktoi prapides* of men a deathless and ageless *psukhe*.” The inscription as a whole speaks to an extremely odd description of the deceased’s death—it seems to describe a multicultic ritual suicide and perhaps a deathlessness possibly achieved by, among other means, completion of an unqualified *oīmos*. See note on 1.26 for possible characteristics of journeys in Parmenides, here, and in Greek poetry.\(^\text{19}\)

16.2–3. Translators do not seem to understand this line. They have trouble with both the grammar and the sense. Gallop: “for it [*nous*] is the same thing / Which the constitution of the limbs thinks.” Coxon: “for it [*nous*] is the same as the awareness belonging to the nature of the body.” O’Brien’s take is somewhat different: “For what the limbs think of is just the same for all men and for every *man*.”

**Fragment 17**

Gallop supplies as subject “She placed . . .” explaining: “the subject of this line will be the goddess, referred to at 12.3 as presiding over birth” (89). However,
the testimonia mostly describe the sperm deposited by the male in the womb; see Testimonia A53 and 54 (DK; conveniently printed in Gallop, 122–3).

**Fragment 18**

This translation is from Latin, since this fragment is preserved only in the Latin translation by Caelius Aurelianus (a medical writer of the fifth century CE). Caelius himself took it as an explanation of homosexuality (Gallop accepts Caelius, see 103). Taran explains it that way (263–5), as referring, in his unfortunate words, to “abnormal sex” (265, n. 99). This imports more than the fragment warrants. Caelius, in explaining this passage, talks about “desire” as a psychosexual function of the individual. This notion is foreign to Parmenides. The passage does seem to refer to a mixture in the offspring of qualities from its father and its mother (see Taran, 264), but we should not go further than that.

18.4. *virtutes*: Diels and Kranz relate this to *dunameis* (9.2).

**Fragment 19**

This is Coxon’s fragment 20.

19.1. *houto*: *LSJ*, 507. In addition to the common meaning of “in this way, in this manner” this word also is used with a qualifying power: “so, only so, simply, no more than.” Here, I read the opening of this line as possibly meaning “only for you” as opposed to herself, the goddess. *Toi = soi = “to you*” (Sider and Johnstone suggest “for you, in your eyes”; 23). Thus, *toi* applies to the *kouros* whom she is addressing. Since her saying is *kata doxan*, she implies that the *kouros* is also a representative of the mortals whose speech belongs to the realm of mortal opinion (*doxas broteias*, 8.51). We might take *houto* closely with *toi* to mean “thus (only) to you (a mortal).” Earlier in the proem, she had taken him by his right hand and had said that he had come far from the path of mortals. Now, in the description of the mortal cosmos, the *kouros* returns home to his own kind, the mortals, with the goddess’ speeches still ringing in his ears.

19.2. *traphenta*: see Sider and Johnstone (23): an aorist passive participle from the verb *trepho,* “nourish.” Coxon translates it as “having received their sustenance” (92). This verb in the passive has two basic meanings: to grow and thrive as well as to receive nourishment. O’Brien adopts the former in his translation, and by rendering it finite he elicits the sense, against translations that maintain it as participial and circumstantial of death, that growth is simply coordinate to it (and birth, and present being) in accounting for temporal whole of mortal existence. The word can also mean “to thicken,” “to become firm,” “to curdle,” “to congeal” (*LSJ*, s.v. I). Observe how concrete the overtones of this word are.
Also compare this word with *auxēthen* (8.7) which means “grown,” “increased,” and so on. In addition, nourishment is closely linked to *thumos* (on which, see my discussion of the proem as a journey).

19.3. *episēmon*: *LSJ*, s.v., defines as: “distinguishing mark, device, badge; . . . device on a coin; . . . serial number; . . . generally, mark, imprint.” A related noun, *episēma*, can mean “grave-marker” (*LSJ*, Supplement, s.v.). *Sēma*, “tomb,” is part of the famous Orphic catch-phrase, *sōma sēma*, “the body (is) a tomb [i.e., for them, of the soul].” The point here is that the terminology used by the goddess also has allusions to mortality and not merely logical and semantic connotations. See also passages 8.55, 10.2.

**Fragment 20**

I have chosen to omit fragment 20 here; Sider and Johnstone (23) explain that many scholars regard it as “a restatement of 8.38.”