which the soul apprehends it', attempting all the while 'to identify among [these processes] the transactions through which music can be instrumental in promoting the return of our psychic "revolutions" to their proper order' (p. 86): 'Timaeus on Music and the Liver', another important paper in the general area of Platonic psychology. Lesley Dean-Jones's 'Aristotle's Understanding of Plato's Receptacle and its Significance for Aristotle's Theory of Familial Resemblance' moves back and forth between Plato, Aristotle, and Greek ideas about reproduction; Jan Opsomer writes about 'Proclus on Demiurgy and Procession: A Neoplatonic Reading of the *Timaeus*', and does not in the end let Proclus off lightly (the 'only correct interpretation of Plato'—as its author would have thought of it—contains 'inexplicable' elements, p. 130).

However the volume reserves its best, or at any rate its most exhilarating, for last: Gordon Campbell, on 'Zoogony and Evolution in Plato's *Timaeus*: The Presocratics, Lucretius and Darwin'. The chapter begins and ends with Flann O'Brien, and *The Third Policeman*; Don Fowler also makes an early showing: '. . . in reality we are like Aeneas before the pictures in Carthage, seeing what we want to see and telling a story'. Just so, Campbell argues, 'Whether we like it or not, Darwin will be our source text and *Timaeus*, Lucretius and Empedocles our target texts, and so knowledge of Darwinism becomes crucial' (p. 166). But the most appealing aspect of the chapter is its treatment of the *Timaeus* as a 'subversive text' (pp. 165–6): the dialogue 'appropriates and subverts a tradition of Presocratic scientific cosmology' (p. 166). I myself think the dialogue rather subverts itself, as in the concluding passage on the origin of species (where what is subverted is already appropriated). Nevertheless, Campbell surely gets the general tone of at least parts of the *Timaeus* right—in the process giving a rather different dimension to the question that Rosemary Wright asked at the beginning of the volume: what kind of account is *Timaeus* giving? His closing story about how birds and other animals began is surely not so far removed from Sergeant Pluck's about bicycles, his great-grandfather, and his horse (Campbell cites from *The Third Policeman*, pp. 72 ff.). But that only seems to make the whole more mysterious; for it is surely not all subversive.

All in all, a book most people reading the *Timaeus* will find useful as well as provocative; in the absence of something more comprehensive (Johansen?), it might serve as a kind of commentary. But in any case it has some outstanding, even exciting, bits—which is a lot more than most such collections of papers achieve.

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THE *TIMAEUS* AND ITS INTERPRETERS

G. J. Reydams-Schils (ed.): *Plato's* Timaeus *as Cultural Icon*. Pp. xiv + 334, ills. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003. Paper, US$29.95 (Cased, US$59.95). ISBN: 0-268-03872-4 (0-268-03871-6 hbk).

This collection of essays arose from an international conference of the same name, held at the University of Notre Dame, from 30 March to 1 April 2000. Arguably, until relatively recently, no dialogue of Plato has been more influential throughout its *Nachleben* than *Timaeus*. This volume bears eloquent witness to this influence both by the range of its subjects and the scope of its chronology. Reydams-Schils has put

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together an impressive collection of papers that has much to offer to all interested in Plato, in classical and medieval studies, in the history of science, and, in general, in the history of ideas. It is to be expected that it will generate further work of the same quality.

The first two papers deal with *Timaeus* itself. Mitchell Miller, 'The *Timaeus* and the 'Longer Way': 'God-given' Method and the Constitution of Elements and Animals', explores the relation of this dialogue to the method of the earlier dialogues. Assuming (to my mind, correctly) that the first part of *Parmenides* attacks a misrepresentation of the theory of ideas, Mitchell proceeds to examine how the methods of collection and bifurcation and the non-bifurcatory god-given method of dialectic in the *Philebus* are applied in the *Timaeus*, with some rather surprising conclusions. Although the argument is mostly cogent and tightly knit, I would appreciate further explanation of the moves to and from the musical scales (pp. 28–9), and some consideration of how this model squares, in this case, with the method of collection and bifurcation.

Kenneth Sayre, 'The Multilayered Incoherence of Timaeus' Receptacle', examines some problems arising from Plato's notoriously obscure notion of *chora*. Some of these problems are real enough, but some are often self-induced. The analogy of the reflection in a mirror is not problematic insofar as it is a spatial relation (p. 62); so is being in the Receptacle. Moreover, place, in the *Timaeus*, is not 'running' (p. 62); place *is* movement. The Receptacle is probably best interpreted in this context as pure mutability, as the substratum of motion 'in place'. It has 'traces' of the qualities it will accept, perhaps spatiality and sensibility as opposed to ideal (non-sensible) properties, but no actual qualities. Thus, Sayre cannot be right in arguing that numerical and geometrical properties are imposed on pre-existing qualities (p. 68). The account of transformations of the elements into each other is not physical (as on p. 69), but pure mathematical manipulations. I remain unconvinced by his conclusion that, for Plato, the notion of Receptacle failed and was finally abandoned.

John Dillon, 'The *Timaeus* in the Old Academy', argues that

> right at the beginning of the Platonist tradition, [there was already] a willingness to give a non-literal interpretation [to the *Timaeus*]. Second, . . . if the account of a creation . . . is deconstructed, then the . . . Demiurge goes up in smoke as well. What we are left with . . . is, rather, on the one hand a primal deity who is an intellect, the contents of which are a matrix of Forms . . . and a World Soul, holding a median and mediating position in the universe . . . As for the substratum, the Receptacle or 'Nurse' of the realm of generation, . . . it is always there as a postulate, but never in a state in which it is not being enformed by the World Soul. (p. 81)

Carlos Lévy, 'Cicero and the *Timaeus*', deals with the circumstances and the philosophical aspects of the Cicero's (probably unfinished) translation of the *Timaeus*, with special reference to the Demiurge, and the relation of model and image, where, following a close analysis of Cicero's text, Lévy finds indications of Cicero's own Stoic leanings.

Luc Brisson, 'Plato's *Timaeus* and the *Chaldean Oracles*', shows how the need for a more religious approach felt by some philosophers of late antiquity gave rise to readings of the *Chaldean Oracles* as a religious reinterpretation of the *Timaeus*, leading to a soteriology grounded in cosmology. Such an approach is, of course, absent from that dialogue, although it could have been inspired on the *Phaedo* (p. 121). Nevertheless, the *Timaeus* presents an ethics grounded in a teleological cosmology, which is not too far from such a soteriology.

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David T. Runia, 'Plato's *Timaeus*, First Principle(s), and Creation in Philo and Early Christian Thought', re-examines the impact of Biblical thinking on the interpretation of the *Timaeus*, from Philo to Augustine, especially the vexed question of *creatio ex nihilo* and the related problem of matter.

Richard Sorabji, 'The Mind–Body Relation in the Wake of Plato's *Timaeus*', briefly deals with Neoplatonist non-spatial interpretations of the movements of the soul.

The direct relevance of Stephen Gersh, 'Aristides Quintilianus and Martianus Capella', is not immediately clear. Although Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* expresses an undoubtedly Platonic sentiment in the discussion of the numerical composition of the soul, there is in the article no central point of interest in the *Timaeus*, except by general reference (briefly, in the notes) and spirit.

The name of the well-known Latin translator of the *Timaeus* is variously given as Calcidius or Chalcidius, a variation often taken as almost irrelevant. Paul Edward Dutton, 'Medieval Approaches to Calcidius', begins his careful examination of the translation by pointing to the spelling as a possible clue to the provenance of this otherwise unknown translator. He stresses the importance of Calcidius' Preface, separately from his Commentary (p. 189), and cautiously suggests that we should keep eyes open for evidence on a second part of the Commentary (possibly up to 53c), parallel to the existing Latin translation (p. 191). Dutton further stresses the trouble in separating, in the translation, Plato from Calcidius, and proposes instead to speak of 'the hyphenated figure Calcidius-Plato'. The article has important appendices on the extant MSS of Calcidius.

Cristina d'Ancona, 'The *Timaeus*' Model for Creation and Providence: An Example of Continuity and Adaptation in Early Arabic Philosophical Literature', examines Avicenna's conception of the first Principle as pure intellect, in which he is conflating *Metaphysics Λ* with *De anima* 3.4. For him, 'the contents of the divine mind are but the divine mind itself and the intelligible features of its effects'. D'Ancona traces this view back to Plotinus 6.7 [38]. 1.24–39: the *logismos* of the Demiurge in the *Timaeus* is the allegorical expression of the intrinsic rationality of the cosmos. Avicenna endorsed the Plotinian account of the mode of divine knowledge and providence as the very being of the First Principle. This is made possible by a substantial change in the paraphrased Arabic translation of his Greek source. In the Arabic, the status of the Plotinian *nous* is conferred to the One itself: 'it was the Plotinian interpretation of the demiurgic *logismos* in the *Timaeus* that provided Avicenna with the tools to solve the paradoxes involved in the picture of the First Principle as absolutely simple and shapeless, yet simultaneously knowing and provident'.

In his 'The Ficinian *Timaeus* and Renaissance Science', Michael J. B. Allen comes to the conclusion that 'For all his theoretical and interpretive sophistication, Ficino was not in the final analysis one of the founders, the necessary causes, of modern science'.

Rhonda Martens, 'A Commentary on *Genesis*: Plato's *Timaeus* and Kepler's Astronomy', points out that Kepler uses the *Timaeus* not as a source for his nested model of geometrical solids (anyway not used by Plato in astronomy), but as a defence of the use of mathematics in physical science, against the Aristotelian notion, well accepted in the Middle Ages, that mathematical properties are accidental and thus not explanatory in physics.

Werner Beierwaltes, 'Plato's *Timaeus* in German idealism: Schelling and Windischmann', examines the transformation of Plato's ideas in early German idealism into 'originative concepts in the divine understanding of the Demiurge, . . . the true a priori and thus at the same time—through their expression—the origin of

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the apriori (the freedom from αἴσθησις) of human knowing, through which this knowledge can become a pure conceptual actuality'.

It is unfair to criticize a book for what it does not have. Nevertheless, precisely because of the range of its topics, I may be excused for feeling the lack of a consideration of modern and contemporary developments, e.g. Heisenberg's view of the 'smallest building-stones of matter' (mentioned by R.-S. at the end of her Introduction), of a discussion of Plato's harnessing of his teleological biology to ethics (Miller takes up plants, animals, men and gods, but only within the context of the 'god-given method'), and especially of the modern and contemporary variations of Plato's use of pure (non-material) mathematical models in physics.

This book is well produced, except for some slips: the cover has Raphael's Plato holding the *Timaeus*, but the reference on the back cover identifies him as Aristotle. In the useful general index, the Arabic *wa-l-aqil* ('and the intellect') and *wa-l-maqul* ('and the intelligible') appear under *wa* ('and'); other Arabic words are correctly indexed.

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PLATO'S MYTHS

M. Janka, C. Schäfer (edd.): *Platon als Mythologe. Neue Interpretationen zu den Mythen in Platons Dialogen.* Pp. vii + 326. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002. Paper, SFr 55.30/ €32.90. ISBN: 3-534-15979-9.

The contributions to this collective volume deal with various subjects and adopt different points of view, but their authors all agree on one point: it is not possible to oppose *mûthos* and *lógos* term for term and consider that the movement of thought takes place once and for all from *mûthos* to *lógos*. In fact, Plato goes from *mûthos* to *lógos* only to return to *mûthos*. We observe this movement both in antiquity, where, immediately after Plato, the 'allegorical' interpretation practiced particularly by the Stoics enabled the transposition of mythical stories onto the level of philosophical doctrines, and in modern times, where Romanticism calls into question the rationalistic certitudes of the period of the Enlightenment, and in contemporary anthropological research, with its insistence on the difficulty of defining what *mûthos* is, and hence of distinguishing it from *lógos*. In this review, I will try to give a rapid idea of each of the contributions in this volume, which begins with a series of articles on general problems, followed by papers that concentrate on particular myths.

In the first article, Glenn W. Most ('Platons exoterische Mythen', pp. 7–19) shows how, in the educational project in which, for Plato, philosophical education consists, dialectic and myth are intimately linked. This characteristic renders the esoteric and the exoteric dimension of philosophical education inseparable, although Aristotle sought to distinguish these dimensions, with the consequence that all that now remains are his esoteric writings, since his exoteric dialogues now survive only in the form of fragments.

In the next contribution, Marcus Janka ('Semantik und Kontext: *Mythos* und Verwandtes im *Corpus Platonicum*', pp. 29–43), who evokes the association of *mûthos* with Latin *oratio*, and of *lógos* with Latin *ratio*, proposes an inventory of occurrences of the term *mûthos* and its composite and derivative forms in Plato's *Dialogues*. The result of the analysis of these occurrences that the term *mûthos* features several

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