GREEK PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS

A Historical Lexicon

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With Epictetus diairesis reappears in a moral context; see proairesis.

dialetike: dialectic

1. On the testimony of Aristotle dialectic was an invention of Zeno the Eleatic (D.L. ix, 25), probably to serve as a support for the hypothetical antinomies of Parmenides (Plato, Parm. 128c). But what was a species of verbal polemic (what Plato would call "eristic" or disputation; see Soph. 224c—226a, Rep. 499a, Phaedrus 261c) for the Eleatics was transformed by Plato into a high philosophical method. The connecting link was undoubtedly the Socratic technique of question and answer in his search for ethical definitions (see Plato, Phaedo 75d, 78d; Xenophon, Mem. 1, 1, 16, and elenos), a technique that Plato explicitly describes as dialectical (Crat. 390c). With the hypostatization of the Socratic definitions into the Platonic eidos (perhaps reflected in the transition from Phaedo ggd—100a to ibid. loid; see eidos) the role of dialectic becomes central and is the crown of the ideal curriculum described in the Republic: after ten years devoted to mathematics the philosopher-to-be will devote the years between thirty and thirty-five to the study of dialectic (Rep. 53id—534e, 537b—538e).

2. What is dialectic? The question is not an easy one since Plato, as usual, thought about it in a variety of ways. There is the view of the Phaedo and the Republic, which envisions dialectics as a progressively more synoptic ascent, via a series of "positions" (hypothesis, q.v.; the theory of Forms is one such in Phaedo 100b), until an ultimate is reached (Phaedo loid, Rep. s u e). In the Republic, where the context of the discussion is confessedly moral, this "unhypothetized principle" is identified with the good-in-itself (auto to agathon; Rep. 532a-b) that subsumes within itself all the lower hypotheses (ibid. 533c-d).

3. If the dialectic of the Phaedo and the Republic may be described as "synoptic" (Rep. 537c), that which emerges from the Phaedrus onwards is decidedly "diacritic" (see Soph. 226c, 253d). It is introduced in Phaedrus 265c—266b (compare Soph. 253d-e) and consists of two different procedures, "collection" (synagoge, q.v.) and "division" (diairesis, q.v.), the latter process in particular being amply illustrated in subsequent dialogues like the Sophist, Politicus, and Philebus. The earlier dialectic appeared similar to the operations of eros (q.v.), but here we are transported into an almost Aristotelian world of classification through division: ascent has been replaced by descent. While it is manifest that we are here still dealing with ontological realities, it is likewise clear that a crucial step has been taken along the road to a conceptual logic. The term of the diairesis is that eidos which stands immediately above the sensible particulars (Soph. 229/l), and, while this is "really real" (ontos on) in the Platonic scheme of things, it is significant that the same process, diairesis, ends, in Aristotle, in the atomon eidos, the hn·fima species in a logical descent (De an. 11, 414b); see diairesis.

4. Aristotle abandons the central ontological role given to dialectic in Plato’s Republic; he is concerned, instead, with the operations of the mind that culminate in demonstration (apodeixis). Dialectic is not strict demonstration (Anal. pr. 1, 24a—b; Top. 1, 100a-b) in that it does not begin from premisses that are true and primary, but from opinions (endoxa) that are accepted by the majority or the wise. The irony of this distinction is, of course, that Aristotle’s own procedure is most frequently what he has described as “dialectical” (see endoxon). But as a theoretician Aristotle has little love of dialectic (cf. De an. 1, 403a; Top. 105b), and suggests in Meta. 987b that it, or rather the confusion between thought and reality, may have been Plato’s undoing.

5. For the Stoics dialectic is reduced to logic, i.e., a study of the forms of internal and external discourse (D.L. v.n, 43; cf. logos, onoma), while in the same breath they extend its preserves to embrace ethics and even physics (ibid. v.n, 46, 83). The result is that logic is no longer an instrument (organon) of philosophy as understood by the Peripatetic school (the collection of the logical treatises into an Organon is post-Aristotelian, though Aristotle certainly foresaw the propaedeutic role of the Analytics; cf. Meta. 1005b).

6. The rehabilitation of dialectic in its Platonic sense was undertaken by Plotinus (Enn. 1, 3). It is once again, as in the Republic, a cognitive approach to the intelligibles (see noesis), but with distinctly Stoic overtones: dialectic is an education for virtue and so includes both actions and objects as well as the noeta.

dianoia: understanding

On the Platonic line dianoia is a type of cognition between doxa and noesis (Rep. 510d—511a; for the special objects of dianoia on the Platonic line, see mathematika). In Aristotle it is used as a more general term for intellectual activity. Where it is opposed to nous (= intuitive knowledge) it means discursive, syllogistic reasoning (Aristotle, Anal. post. 11,100b), and (ibid. 1, 89b) it is subdivided into the following species: episteme, knowledge pursued for its own sake (see also theoria), techne (knowledge applied to production), and phronesis (knowledge applied to conduct). In Stoicism it is identical with the hegemonikon (SVF 11, 459).

For its location in the general context of intellection, see noesis.

diaphora: difference, specific difference

1. The presence of diaphorai is explicit in the Platonic dialectical process of division (diairesis, q.v.) where the "generic form" is di-
mixin: mixture
See genesis, holon.

monas: unit, the one
The unit is either the primary arche of the Pythagoreans (D.L. vin, 25) or, together with the Dyas, one of the primary co-principles (Aristotle, Meta. 986a), ethically associated with the good (agathon), and considered a god (theos) (Aetius 1, 7, 18), even though the position of limit (peras) and aperius at the head of the list would suggest that they were more primary. Aristotle is quite explicit that number (arithmos) has its own more basic elements (stoicheia), i.e., "Even" and "Odd" (Meta. 986a). According to Aristotle all philosophers agree in making the monas the arche of number (arithmos), yet the Pythagoreans are peculiar in that their units have spatial magnitude (ibid. 1080b) that is indivisible (ibid. 1083b), a confusion between the arithmetical unit and the geometric point, which was cleared up later (Nicomachus, Arith. intro. n, 6 and 7). Aristotle’s own definition of the monas is "substance without position," clearly distinct from the "point" (stigme) that is "substance with position," Anal. post. 1, 87a; see arithmos, megethos.

mousike: the Muses’ art, music
See katharsis.

mythos: myth
1. The traditional attitude of philosophy toward myth is expressed in the contrast mythos-logos, where the latter is intended to signify a rational, analytic, and true account (see Plato, Phaedo 61b, Tim. 266e, etc.). It runs parallel to the distinction theologia-physikos (see theologos), but the relationship of the former pair is somewhat more complex. It is clear that both Socrates and Plato had strenuous moral objections to the traditional myths (Euth. 6a–c, Phaedrus 299c–230a, Rep. 3766–3800), a type of criticism that went back at least as far as Xenophanes (see fr. 11). One attempt to meet this type of attack was the belief that there was an underlying sense (hypothesis) to the old myths. This was apparently popular in fifth-century philosophical circles; see Prodicus (Diels, fr. B5), Anaxagoras (D.L. n, 11), and Antisthenes (Dio Chrysostom, Orat. 53, 4–5; compare Xenophon, Symp. i, 6). Plato will have none of hypothesis (Rep. 376d), but in the subsequent literature the use of an allegorical interpretation (allegoria), either moral, physical, or cosmogonical, to extract the hidden sense became a potent method of reconciling philosophy and the traditional material in the poets. The Stoics were particularly active in

allegoria (see Cicero, De nat. deor. n, 24, 25, 64, 65, and passim; the Stoic facility in etymologizing names was of considerable help here; see onoma), and with Philo allegoria passed into the service of accommodating philosophy and scripture (cf. Leg. all., passim).

2. But mythos was not quite so easily dismissed: Aristotle felt that there was a point in the early cosmogonies where logos and mythos overlapped (Meta. 982b, 1074b; see aporia, endoxon), but the presentation of the latter was childlike (Meta. 1000a; compare Plato, Soph. 243a), and Plato, for one, was sceptical of the results (see the heavy irony of Tim. 40d–41a). Yet the dialogues are filled with myths that play a central part in the development of the argument, as for instance, in the Phaedo and Republic (eschatological; see athanatos), Phaedrus (psychological), and Timaeus (physical). Nor is the technique new with Plato; it can be seen in Protagoras (if the myth in Protagoras 320c–323a is his own and not Plato’s), in the proem to Parmenides’ poem (fr. 1) and the half-disguised abstractions of Pherocrates’ myths (D.L. 1, 119; compare Aristotle, Meta. 1091b); see theos.

n
nèsis: the operation of nous (q.v.), thinking (as opposed to sensation), intuition (as opposed to discursive reasoning)

1. Subtle differences between the mere perception of an object or objects, i.e., sensation (aisthesis, q.v.) and another kind of psychic awareness that goes beyond the sense data and perceives less tangible things, like resemblances and differences between objects, is already present in Homer and is identified with the organ called nous. With the philosophers the difference becomes a problem. Heraclitus suspects the unreliability of sensation for the perception of the true nature of things. He is tireless in his assertion that "nature loves to hide" (see fr. 123 and logos 1), and this hidden reality is clearly beyond the reach of men who trust too implicitly in their senses (fr. 107). How the other faculty that is capable of discerning the hidden logos of things might operate is not immediately apparent, though we are told (Sextus Empiricus, Adv. Math. vii, 129) that the nous that is within us is activated by its contact, via the channels of sensation (aisthetikoi poroi), with the divine logos in the universe, a contact that is maintained in an atten-
uated fashion during sleep by breathing (see pneuma). The senses, then, are obviously some sort of condition for noesis, though not, as is clear from fr. 107 and its congers, identical with it.

2. Aristotle remarks (De an. in., 427a; Meta. 1009b) that the pre-Socratics generally made no distinction between noesis and aisthesis. It is easy to understand why he thought so since they all attempted to explain the operations of the psyche in purely physical terms, a procedure that, according to Aristotle (loc. cit.), cannot account for error (pseudos) since like must know like (see homoioas, aisthesis). From one point of view this is true; but it is likewise true that since Parmenides' assault on sense perception in terms of the instability of its object (see on 1, episteme) it became an epistemological necessity to distinguish between the obvious perils of aisthesis and a "true knowledge" more or less independent of the senses.

3. These attempts can be seen in Empedocles' doubts about the reliability of our sense perception and the need of divine assistance (Sextus Empiricus, Adv. Math, v.n., 122–124). But the limitations of sensation here seem to be due to our misuse of them rather than to any inherent weakness of their own (fr. 3, lines 9–13). When he comes to explain the possibility of error (called ignorance and opposed to phronesis; Theophrastus, De sens. 9), Empedocles resorts to a mechanistic explanation of how the effluences (aporrhoxai; see aisthesis) of one sense object are symmetrical only with the pores of its proper sense organ, and so cannot be judged by the others (Theophrastus, op. cit. 7). If thought is anything to Empedocles it is a special type of sensation that occurs in the blood by reason of its being a perfect mixture of all the stoicheia (ibid. 9).

4. It is somewhat more perplexing to find Anaxagoras, the eminent proponent of nous, in Aristotle's catalogue of those who failed to distinguish sensation and thought. In the fragments we do find the usual statements casting doubts on sensation (e.g. fr. 21), but there is no explanation of noesis. Indeed nous does not seem to be a cognitive principle at all but rather a cosmological one. It initiates motion (and in this it has obvious affinities to soul; see psyche 1, 7, and passim) and it guides and rules all (fr. 12). What Anaxagoras is obviously offering is the presence of some intelligent and hence purposeful principle in the universe. But it appears the nous is an immanent principle as well and we are told that it is not present in everything (fr. 11). Alcmaeon of Crotona, who had already sharply distinguished phronesis from aisthesis, maintained that the former was characteristic of men only (Theophrastus, De sens. 25), but we have no idea of the extension of the immanent nous in Anaxagoras. Presumably it would cover the same territory as psyche, i.e., the entire animate world.

5. For Diogenes of Apollonia, who also addressed himself to the problem, aer (q.v.), the intelligent and divine arche, is continuous and present in all things that are (fr. 5), but it is present in varying degrees. The degree is based on the dryness and warmth of the air, distinctions of texture that explain progressively higher cognitive acts (Theophrastus, op. cit. 40–43). In this way are explained the complete absence of cognitive activities in plants and the relatively higher degree of phronesis in man as compared to the other animals (ibid. 44).

6. The Atomists' theories of sensible qualities (see aisthesis 11, pathos 4) demanded refinements in the cognitive faculties. Many so-called qualities are merely subjective impressions and the true nature of the atomon is not visible to sight. Hence Democritus draws the distinction (fr. 11) between a genuine and a bastard knowledge; the latter is sensation and the former, presumably (the text breaks off), reason, the operation of the logikon that is located in the breast (Aetius iv, 4, 6; see kardia and psyche 7). But even though phronesis and aisthesis have different objects and different seats, the mechanics of their operation are the same (Aetius iv, 8, 5; iv, 8, 10).

7. To resume the pre-Socratic attitude: there were solid epistemological grounds for making a distinction in kind between thought (noesis, phronesis; in the epistemological context, episteme) and sensation (aisthesis; in the epistemological context, doxa), and, indeed, the differentiation could be specified when it came to giving them different locations in the body (aisthesis tied to the sense organs; the higher faculty in a central location, though not always distinguished from the more generic notion of psyche; see kardia). But the operations of this higher faculty could be distinguished from those of sensation only in degree, e.g. finer or warmer in composition.

8. Plato, while adhering firmly to the Parmenidean epistemology (see episteme 2), has, in addition, a new spiritualized conception of soul that, though originally posited on religious grounds (see psyche 13), is incorporated in Plato's theory of knowledge (ibid. 14). It is this pure unitary soul of the Phaedo that becomes the epistemological correlative of the eide and, being absolutely different in kind from the body, can perform all the cognitive activities that the post-Parmenidean philosophers associated with nous but were unable to explain on the level of substance. But the problem is considerably more complex than this. Even in the Phaedo the soul is the arche of all cognitive activity: sensation is perception by the soul through the body; phronesis is an operation of the soul alone (Phaedo jgd; see aisthesis 15–16).

9. In the Phaedo the distinction between the two operations is largely in terms of the objects known; in the Republic it reappears, in a much more complex form, based as well upon the internal operations of the soul. This latter is now divided into three parts (see psyche 15) and the upper part, the logistikos (ibid. 16), is responsible for noetic
activity. But the psychology is far more sophisticated here, and in the Diagram of the Line in Rep. vi the noetic activity is explained in some detail. The distinction drawn previously (Rep. iv, 476a-480a) between episteme and doxa is maintained here, but we discover that there is more than one type of episteme. The upper part of the Line that represented knowledge of the noeta (ibid. 509c) is further subdivided into what Plato calls noesis and dianoia (ibid. 511d).

10. These two operations of the logistikos have been much debated; one school of thought sees dianoia as that activity of the mind which has as its object the "mathematicals," while the objects of noesis are the eide (see mathematika 2); the other school sees dianoia as discursive reasoning in general and noesis as immediate intellectual intuition, in much the same way as Aristole (see Anal. post, n, 100b; epagoge 3) and Plotinus (see 18-19 infra) distinguished between logosmos and nous. What is clear, however, is that the method of noesis is that known to Plato as dialectike; q.v.; ibid. 511b) and the way of life based upon it is philosophia (q.v., and compare phronesis, theoria).

11. There are certain passages in Plato, echoed by Aristotle, that give somewhat more of a purely psychological insight into the workings of the intellective process. Both men seek to derive episteme from the Greek word to "stand" or "come to a halt" (epistamai) and so explain intellec tion as a "coming to a halt" in the midst of a series of sense impressions, the "fixing" of an intuitive concept (Crat. 437a; Phaedo 96b; Anal. post, n, 100a; Phys. v.n, 247b). But this psychological approach is overwhelmed by a flood of "physical" considerations. Noesis is an activity and so must be located within the general categories of change and kinesis. Plato speaks of revolutions in the World Soul (Tim. 37a) and in the immortal part of the individual soul (ibid. 43a). This owes nothing, of course, to introspection, but is based upon considerations of the revolutions of the body of the kosmos that reveal the motion of its own soul (ibid. 34b) and provide a visible moral paradigm for the motions of our own soul (ibid. 47b, and see ourenos 2-3; for sensation as motion, see ibid. 43c; and for the larger question of motion in the soul, psyche 19).

For the operation of cosmic nous in Plato, see nous 5-6; kinoun 5.

12. Aristotle's treatment of noesis, like his explanation of aisthesis, is conducted within the categories of potency (dynamis) and act (energeia, q.v.). The nous before it knows is actually nothing but potentially all the things it can know; the eide are present in it but only potentially (De an. m, 429a). When the nous begins to operate it passes from a passive to an activated state by reason of its becoming identical with its object, the intelligible form (ibid. in n, 431a). There is in noesis a parallel with aisthesis: just as aisthesis extracts the sensible forms (eide) of sensible objects (see aisthesis 19), so noesis thinks the intelligible forms in sensible images (phantases), and noesis never occurs without these latter (ibid. in n, 431a-b). Noesis can be directly of essences (for the intuitive role of nous, see epagoge 3-4 and compare Meta. 1036a), or it can operate through judgments (hyplepseis), i.e., by the combination (synthesis) or separation (diairesis) of concepts, and it is only in this latter operation that error (pseudos) is possible (ibid. 430a-b; for the Platonic theory of judgment, see doxa 4).

For the operation of cosmic nous in Aristotle, cf. nous, kinoun.

13. The Atomists considered the soul, which was distributed throughout the body (Aristotle, De an. 1, 409a; Lucretius Hi, 370), to be the seat of all sensation (for the mechanics of this, see aisthesis 22-23). But given that soul (psyche) and mind (nous) are substantially the same (De an. 1, 404a), it would seem to follow that sensation and thought are identical, and so Aristotle concluded (Meta. 1009b; see Aetius iv, 8, 5; iv, 8, 10). As for its operation, since nous is nothing more than a kind of aggregation (see holon 10) of soul-atoms in the breast, it is reasonable to suppose that some of the eidola penetrate beyond the surface sense organs, reach the interior of the breast, and so cause this higher type of perception (see Lucretius iv, 722-731).

14. But we have already seen that the earlier Atomists had attempted to distinguish, by the purity of its constitution and its location, mind from soul. The Epicureans preserved and refined the distinction and it is specifically present in Lucretius' consistent use of anima for psyche and animus for nous or dianoia (mens is somewhat too narrow in connotation for the latter since the animus is the seat of volitional as well as intellectual activity; III, 145). He clearly separates the two at in, 396-416 where he argues that part of the anima may be lost (e.g., in the loss of a limb) and a man still survive, but the loss of the animus means the instantaneous end of the organism.

15. For the Epicurean nous operates somewhat in the fashion of the senses. It too may directly perceive the eidola given off by bodies but that are not, in this case, grasped by the senses. Such are, for example, the accidental mixtures of eidola that give rise to the imagining of centaurs and chimeras (Lucretius iv, 129), visions seen in dreams (iv, 749-776), and the eidola of the gods (v, 148-149; Cicero, De nat. deor. 1, 49). These operations are akin to Aristotle's nous thinking of indivisible concepts (De an. 111, 430a); there is, as well, intellec tion componendo et dividendo, i.e., evaluating and passing judgment on the data of sensation. The images (phantasai) in which the eidola are grouped are passed along to the dianoia or nous where they accumulate into general "preconceptions" (prolepeis, q.v.). These in turn serve as a standard of comparison for judgments (hyplepseis) about individual sensible things (D.L. x, 33). This is the area...
16. The Stoic version of noesis, the operation of the hegemonikon (q.v.), is properly katalepsis or apprehension. The process begins with an impression (typosis) on the senses that results in a sensible image (phantasia; see aesthesis 24—25). These are borne, via the pneuma (q.v.), to the hegemonikon where it is first assented to (synkatathesis, adsenso) and is thus apprehended (katalepsis, q.v.; Cicero, Acad, post. 1, 40—42). In this way what was a sensible image (phantasia) becomes an intelligible image or concept (ennoia, q.v.). In the earliest years this is almost an unconscious process and the child builds up various "preconceptions" (prolepsis, q.v.) under whose influence the hegemonikon matures to the point where it is capable of creating its own conscious ennoiai (SVF II, 83; according to this same text, the full operation of the hegemonikon begins at the age of seven, or at least between seven and fourteen, a judgment not based on the observation of rational behavior in adolescents but on the onset of puberty and the first production of sperm; see SVF n, 764, 785). As in Epicureanism, noesis is not only of the aistheta but ranges freely over a wide area of thought, creating its own ennoiai by recourse to the principles of similarity, analogy, privation, opposition, etc. (SVF n, 87).

On the Stoics' primary prolepsis of good and evil, see oikeiosis.

17. This theory did not remain completely intact. Chrysippus made some important revisions that had as their effect the reunification of the psyche under the aegis of the hegemonikon so that even the pathē became intellectual judgments (kriseis; SVF in, 461) and, in direct opposition to Plato's vision of the tripartite soul, volitional activity was subsumed under the intellectual (SVF 11, 823; see aesthesis 25, pathos 12). This is followed by a strong Platonicizing reaction under Poseidonius who opposed Chrysippus on the intellectual nature of the pathē and restored the Platonic partition of the soul (Galeni, Placita Hipp, et Plat. 448, 460). There follows from this a sharper distinction between psyche and nous (particularly apparent in Marcus Aurelius in, 16; x n, 3) with emphasis on the divine and immortal nature of nous as opposed to the other parts of the soul (see sympatheia 5), and, by reason of the presence of this daimon in it (so Galeni, op. cit. 448; Plutarch, De genio Socr. 591c—f; Platonic inspiration in Tim. 90a and see daimon), a new interest in the medial position of the soul (see psyche 29).

18. Middle Platonism concentrated its attention on the cosmic aspects of nous (q.v.) and it is not until Plotinus that we have any significant contribution to the workings of the immanent nous. As did Plato and Aristotle, Plotinus distinguishes two types of intellectual activity, one intuitive and one discursive. The former, noesis, is, in the first instance, the life and energeia of the cosmic hypostatized nous. It is not, however, an activity of the One since for Plotinus even so self-integrated an act as noesis bespeaks duality and so is anathema to the One (Enn. vi, 6, 3, with passing reference to Plato's remarks in Soph. 254d and Parmenides 146a on the role of "the Other" [heteron] in being and therefore in intellection). What need, Plotinus asks (vi, 7, 4), would the eye have to see something if it were itself the light?

19. Noesis, then, is in its genuine form a unity of subject and object that, though they differ only logically, constitute a plurality (plethos). It is characteristically internalized: the noeta that are the objects of noesis are in the nous that knows them (vi, 2, 21). Noesis, which is the life of nous, casts forth its image (eikon) in the form of an energeia in the lower hypostasis of the soul. This is logismos or discursive reasoning, an operation that, unlike the immediate and internalized noesis, comprehends the phantasmata of objects outside itself offered to it by sensation, and makes judgments (krisis) concerning them by invoking rules (kanon) transmitted from nous (v, 3, 4), or, as he puts it elsewhere, by composition and division (synagogē, diairesis: v, 3, 2; see the Platonic antecedents of these terms under dialek­tike). What he refers to here is a knowledge of the eide supplied by the nous that contains them and that make possible our comparative judgments (cf. v, 1, 11; v, 3, 3; and compare Phaedo 74a ff.).

20. The soul is capable of two activities: when "turned upward" it gives itself over to noesis/logismos; when "downward," to aisthēsis and the operation of the other faculties (vi, 2, 22; see aisthēsis 26). Sensation uses a medium, an image (phantasma), separated from its model and yet different from the thing in which it resides; noesis is immediate: knower and known confront each other directly and become identified (v, 3, 8). But we do not have noesis in its purity. Noesis is a vision of unity; our image of it, logismos, deals with plurality, and the more one frees oneself from the composing and dividing that is our imitation of noesis and turns instead to a contemplation of self, the more one will be assimilating oneself to the true operation of nous (v, 3, 6). Why the soul is forced to endure this logismos is part of the general condition of its descent into a body (see kathodos). It is, like its external manifestation, language, a weakness, a sign of the soul's preoccupation with areas not akin to itself (iv, 3, 18).

21. In this passage (iv, 3,18) Plotinus makes use of the principle of attention (phrontis) to explain the degeneration of noesis into logis-
mos (compare the elaborate metaphor in iv, 3. 17 where the soul's preoccupation with the material is compared to that of a ship's captain toward his ship and its cargo; for the further degeneration of thought into activity, see physis 5) and he resorts to a similar type of explanation in confronting another problem. If nous is a faculty in the soul, how is one to explain the intermittent nature of noesis in man as compared to its continuous exercise in the higher principle? Aristotle had already faced the question and had suggested that while the objects of noesis are always in the mind, they are not always present to the mind; in short, man must choose to think (De an. ii, 417b). Further, this activity can last for only brief periods in man since it involves a passage from potency to act and so fatigues the thinker (Meta. 1050b, 1072b; Eth. Nich. 1175a). For Plotinus it is a question of awareness. The immanent nous is always in operation but we, because our attention is turned elsewhere, are not always aware of it (iv, 8, 8). This view, based as it is on a desire to keep the human soul perpetually linked, via the nous, to the kosmos noetos, Proclus finds a novelty in the Platonic tradition (In Tim. in, 333-334) and therefore returns to the position of an intermittent functioning of noesis in the "descended" soul (Elem. theol., prop. 211; see kathodos and psyche 35).

noeton: capable of being grasped by the intellect; the object of the intellect, the intelligible (opposite of aistheton)

1. The noeton is the object of the operation of the faculty of nous. Among the pre-Socratics, where the distinction of nous from the general cognitive principle of the psyche was a very gradual one (see noesis 7), the objects of the former faculty were not very closely considered. They do, of course, constitute "true knowledge" (episteine, q.v.), for Heraclitus the knowledge of "the nature that loves to hide," for Parmenides the knowledge of "true being." With Plato the distinctions become sharper. The noeta are the objects of the faculty of the soul called logistikon (see psyche 15-18); they are, in short, the transcendent eide. But for Aristotle the eide are immanent (see eidos 15) and so further distinctions are in order. The eidos in things can be considered from two points of view. With respect to the substance in which it inheres, it is the formal cause of that substance; with respect to the nous of another, it is potentially intelligible (noeton) by that Nous. But before it becomes actually noeton it must be carried to and presented to that Nous. This is the function of the phantasmata (De an. in, 431b-432a). In the final analysis, then, the noeta qua noeta are in the Nous, first potentially, then actually. This transition from potency to act occurs in the Nous pathetikos (see nous 11). But in terms of Aristotelian act-potency theory, the noeta should all be present in act in the Nous poietikos (see nous 12). But Aristotle never says this, resorting to a comparison of the operation of the agent intellect to that of a light source: the active intellect illumines the passive intellect (ibid. III, 430a).

2. During the period of Middle Platonism a number of revisions were made in the eidos-theory, part of what was very probably an extensive syncretizing of Platonism and Peripateticism (baldly put in Cicero, Acad. post. 1, 17-18) in such a fashion as to include both the Platonic transcendent eidos and the Aristotelian immanent eidos within the causality schema (its progressive development can be traced in Seneca, Ep. 65, 8 and Basil the Great, De spiritu sancto 76a). Authors of the period began to draw a distinction between the eidos that is immanent in things as their formal cause and the idea that is the exemplary cause of natural things (Seneca, Ep. 58, 19; Albinus, Epit. ix, 2; compare Aristotle, Meta. 1070a). They appealed to such Platonic proof-texts as Tim. 48c and 50C-d (see Chalcidius, In Tim. 304, 9 where idea = species intelligibilis and eidos = natura corporis; on the general question of the immanence of the Platonic eidos, see genesis 10-11), and the constant invocation of the example of the artisan, with its overtones of the Platonic demiourgos, seems finally to have led to the explicit description of the ideai as "the thoughts of God" (Philo, De opif. 17-20; D.L. in, 12-13; Seneca, Ep. 65, 7; Albinus, Epit. ix, 1: noeses theou). This was not, of course, a completely novel concept. It does seem alien to Plato for whom the nous-demiourgos, for all its being a God, was markedly subordinate to the transcendent eidos (see nous 6). But Aristotle speaks (De an. i, 429a) as if someone in the Academy was holding that the Nous was "the place of the Forms" (topos eidon) and, as we have already seen, the direction of Aristotle's own theorizing would seem to suggest that the noeta are actually present in the Nous poietikos and, possibly, in the cosmic Nous as well (see nous 9).

3. Two points are to be noted in the subsequent history of the transcendent noeta, the ideai of Albinus, which serve as the exemplary cause of things. First, since Albinus' first principle is a Nous and a demiourgos (see nous 15), there is nothing to militate against the noeta being the thoughts (noeses) of God. But between Albinus and Plotinus the transcendence of the One has displaced Nous from the first place in the hierarchy of hypostases, and the question immediately arises as to whether the noeta are the thoughts of the One and, indeed, whether there is any noetic activity at all in the One. Secondly, granting that the noeta are in the cosmic Nous, what exactly is their ontological status?

4. The question of the noetic activity of the One was almost
republica i 111, 33) that founds human laws. Its operation is most eminently visible in man's first "instinctive" (physikos) impulse toward self-preservation that gradually extends to embrace all of mankind (see oikeiosis).

3. This is what may be called the immanent tradition in natural law; the transcendent tradition, based on the nous of a "separated God" can be seen in Plato, Laws 7136-7143 and Philo, De migre. Abr. 32.179–181; see thesis, dike.
	nomothetes: law-given
See onoma.

nous: intelligence, intellect, mind
1. A search for order or an ordering principle is implicit in both Greek mythology and philosophy from their beginnings, in the myths by the application of a genealogical arrangement back to an original source or "father" to the welter of gods drawn from a variety of sources, and among the Milesian philosophers by their search for an arche (q.v.). This latter quest for a "father" of things received its initial check with the discovery of a "father" who consumed all his "sons," i.e., the on (q.v.) of Parmenides. But regress to a source is only one type of order, and thinkers with a very different cast of mind were investigating the problem in other directions. There is, Heraclitus insists, an order hidden under the appearances of things, an order that he describes as logos (q.v. 1). The Pythagoreans went further still: they discovered that this order could be expressed in mathematical terms (see harmonia) and, made explicit, that it could be applied to the universe as a whole (see kosmos).

2. The kinetic conditions imposed by Parmenides had led his successors to posit some sort of external mover to explain change in the sensible world (see kinesis 2, kinoun 1). To do so Empedocles had reached into the moral sphere for hypostatizations of the human motive forces of "Love" and "Strife" (see kinoun 2), but for his choice of a mover Anaxagoras turned to another tradition. What Parmenides had done in ontology had already been accomplished in theology by Xenophanes. Part of Xenophanes' struggle against anthropomorphism (see mythos 1, theos 1) was his insistence that God must be completely immobile (fr. 26; the argument here is based on "what is fitting," propon, a recurring aesthetic, moral, and theological motif) and one who accomplishes his ends by the power of his mind (nous) alone (fr. 25). These sentiments are pregnant with future developments. Apart from establishing, here at the onset of theological discourse, the intellectual nature of God, Xenophanes' view confronts the question of his activity in the world and draws the conclusion that this must take place without any change in God himself (see Aeschylus, Suppl. 96-103). How this difficult feat was to be accomplished was left to others to determine (see kinoun 9, pronoia 2, proddos 2).

3. Anaxagoras turns to Xenophanes' notion of God as nous in positing a motive force that causes the original "mixture" to rotate and separate off into the various elements (see genesis 7). For Empedocles' moral hypostases has been substituted an intellectual principle, nous, that is separate from the mass upon which it works (fr. 12; but it is also curiously immanent; see noesis 4). Its operation is described as "ordering" (diakosmos), and it knows all things, past, present, and future (fr. 12 cont.). Here, then, the Heraclitan and Pythagorean order in the universe, governed, according to Heraclitus (fr. 64), by the all-pervasive fire, is put under the tutelage of a purposeful intellectual force whose knowledge embraces not only the past and present but future events as well.

4. The aer of Diogenes of Apollonia, which in its warmed state is nous (see noesis 5), is more a Milesian arche than a post-Parmenidean kinoun (see noesis 4), but has an even more strongly developed sense of purpose (telos, q.v.). Both Socrates (Phaedo 97b) and Aristotle (Meta. 984b) had criticized Anaxagoras for his mechanical use of nous, but Diogenes is somewhat more careful in his handling of the problem. The operation of aer-nous is witnessed by the fact that all things operate according to a principle of measure (metron) and in the best way possible (fr. 3; his own example is the regular succession of the seasons).

For the subsequent history of these teleological motifs, see telos.

5. In addition to the nous immanent in human souls (the logistikos; see psyche 15, 18) whose operation is to know the eide and rule the other parts of the soul (see noesis 8-9), there is, in Plato, a cosmic nous. This cosmic reason emerges in Phil. 262z–2jc where it is called "the maker" (demiourgos, poion), the "cause of the mixture" that is the world of genesis. Almost the same terms are applied to the demiourgos (q.v.) of the Timaeus where the kosmos noetos is called the work of nous (47c). Now nous is an essential property of the gods shared by only a few men (ibid. 5ie) and it seems more than likely that this cosmic nous is divine (see Phil. 30d, Tim. 30b). It rules everything (Laws 875e-d), has ordered the universe (ibid. 606e), and its revolution, reflected in the motion of the heavens, is a moral paradigm for man (ibid. 87d-88a; see noesis 10).

6. But any attempt to locate this divine nous, the cosmic cause of the universe, within the framework of Plato's general metaphysics is greeted with frustration, and not least by reason of the "mythical" nature of the account in the Timaeus. On a number of occasions we are informed that nous must exist in a soul (see Soph. 244a, Phil. 30c,
Tim. 30b), and there are no grounds for thinking that this refers only to human intellects. If this is true it locates nous, cosmic or otherwise, beneath the eide. The intermediary status of the soul in the Platonic system is well attested (immortal and immaterial like the eide; plural and subject to pathe like the aisthetai: see psyche 14 and, for the later tradition, 29), and we are told quite specifically that nous has a dependent relationship on the eide that are the cause of nous” being in the soul: nous is the ability of the soul to perceive the eide (Rep. 508e). Thus are frustrated any attempts at finding a transcendent God or gods in Plato (in the Phaedrus Plato says the gods owe their divinity to their nearness to the eide), or to even identify it or them with the Good that is “beyond being” in Rep. 509b. Another school of thought, however, sees the cosmic nous as the nous of the World Soul (psyche tou pantos), dismissing as myth the fact that in the Timaeus the World Soul is created by the deimourgos (34c).

7. In this fashion, then, Plato fulfills the desideratum of Socrates’ complaint against Anaxagoras’ nous: first, it is stated in terms already formulated by Diogenes that the kosmos as it is because it is the work of an intelligent cause, framed to be “as good as possible” (Tim. 30a-b), and then, in a peculiarly Platonic formulation, that it is an image (eikon, q.v.) of the intelligible, a visible god (ibid. 92c; on the general theory, see mimesis).

8. Aristotle’s transcendent principle is first and foremost a "mover," developed out of a series of arguments that derive from the nature of kinesis and genesis (see kinoun 7—10) and that Aristotle, like Anaxagoras, chooses to identify with an intelligent principle, nous. But unlike Anaxagoras, he is now confronted with a “separation” between the material and the immaterial and so must resort, even in the case of this efficient cause, to the motive force of final causality (see kinoun 7, sympatheia 7). He has, as well, a more highly developed explanation of intellection (noesis) based upon his theory of energeia/dynamis and that he must also apply to his proton kinoun.

9. In the De anima Aristotle had described knowledge, in all its manifestations, as becoming another, but only with respect to its form, not its matter (in, 425b, 431b-432a). To speak more specifically of noesis (q.v. 12), it is a passage from potency to act (energeia) in becoming the intelligible form of another, and this is effected by knowing this intelligible in its sensible image (in, 431b). Now the proton kinoun is described as nous and its energeia as noesis (Meta. 1072b), but it is clear that this must somehow differ from the operations described in the De anima. In the first instance, cosmic nous is not activated by something else since this would be to say that it is in potency to something else and thus not an unmoved mover. The cosmic nous, then, does not become its object; it is its object, and this eternally since its object is always present (loc. cit.). God thinks himself; he is thought about thought (noesis noeseos; ibid. 1074b), pr perhaps thought about himself thinking. This activity is explicitly contrasted to all other forms of thought, episteme, aisthesis, doxa, dianoia, the first object of whose operation is "another" (ailon) and then themselves thinking, but this latter only incidentally (parergon; loc. cit.; for the corollary of this, developed by Proclus, that God knows himself directly and the plural noeta only incidentally, see noetan 4).

10. In a number of places Aristotle compares human and divine noesis. Since man is a composite (synthetion) comprising body and a noetic soul, his noesis is intermittent and wearisome because it involves a passage from potency to act (Meta. 1050b, 1072b; Eth. Nich. 1175a). But noesis, for all the wearisome nature of its operation in us, is, nevertheless, the proper function (ergon, q.v.) of both God and man. And when we practice contemplation (theoria) we most approach the life of God and most contribute to our own happiness (Eth. Nich. x, 1177b—1178a, 1178b). But human noesis differs from its divine counterpart by more than its intermittency. The former is not only mediate (i.e., it knows the noeta in visible images), it is also discursive; it judges by combining and separating concepts (see noesis 12). Aristotle does have an intuitive form of human knowledge, which he calls nous, but it seems to be posited on epistemological grounds and never appears in a "mystical" context (see epagoge 3, gnorimon 2).

11. The functioning of the Aristotelian faculty of nous is clear in its general outlines, but the strict application of the principles of act and potency lead to a number of obscurities. There seems to be a distinction of faculty within the soul. The intellect must be potentially anything that it will know actually. But any passage from potency to act demands a principle already in act (the same argument that leads to the First Mover) and so Aristotle posits another intellect that "makes all things." These are distinctions (diaphorai) that occur in the soul and the two intellects stand to each other as matter to form (De an. H1, 430a). One, the passive intellect (pathetikos nous), later called "hylic" (hylikos), is perishable. The other, described as "a kind of state [hexis] like the sun," is separable (choristos), unaffected (apathes), unmixed (amiges), and essentially an energeia. When it is separated (choristheis), it alone is immortal and everlasting (aidion).

12. All of this occurs in one brief passage in the De anima (in, 5), and it, together with a parallel passage in the De gen. anim. 11, 736b that states that the nous, which alone is divine and has no commerce with any physical energeia, comes "from outside" (thyrathen), has provoked more comment than any other text in Aristotle. It appears clearly enough that we know because the nous pathetikos is energized, i.e., it becomes the intelligible form of the object known by reason of
the operation of another "part" of *nous* that is already in act (see *Meta.* 1049b). But the origin and precise nature of the operation of this latter *nous poietikos* or agent intellect, as it came to be known, was fiercely debated.

13. Most of the later complexities stem from a series of essays on the subject by the Peripatetic Alexander of Aphrodisias who distinguished another phase between the *nous pathetikos* and *poietikos*. This is the intellect in *habitus* that results from the purely passive intellect (also later identified with the imagination) becoming potentially intelligible by being illuminated by the *nous poietikos* and thus acquiring a "state" (*hexis*, *habitus*) of intelligibility (*De intellectu*, p. 107). He further measures the *nous poietikos* as it is described in the *De anima* against that of the First Mover in the *Metaphysics* and concludes that the agent intellect is, indeed, the first cause (*proton aition*; *De anima*, p. 89), an identification that was later to be accommodated to the Neoplatonic series in a series of intermediary intelligences, where the last emanation, Aristotle's *nous poietikos*, becomes the bestower of forms, i.e., the intelligible forms are not extracted from the material *phantasia*, as in Aristotle, but are given to the human intellect by a higher intelligence (see 20 *infra* and *noeton* 6).

14. The Epicureans recognized *nous* (*Lucretius: animus*) as a cognitive faculty distinct from *aisthesis* (see *noesis* 14), but in a materialist system devoid of providence (*pronoia* it is given no important cosmic role. In Stoicism, however, the human *nous* or *hegemonikon* (see *noesis* 15) is a manifestation of the cosmic *nous* or *logos* that pervades, directs, and governs all (*D.L. vn*, 135, 138). To call the *logos* both *nous* (in its providential aspect) and *physis* (in its creative aspect) is to blur the distinction that Aristotle had drawn between the two, but the more Aristotelian (and Platonic) view once more begins to prevail in the tradition from the time of Poseidonius when *nous* reappears as a characteristic of men alone, immortal, a product of the superlunary world (see *noesis* 17, *sympatheia* 5). The Platonists of the period, on the other hand, could assert the transcendence of *nous* without the immanentist restrictions imposed by the Stoic tradition.

15. Since the revival of the *eidos-theory* with Antiochus of Ascalon (see Cicero, *Acad. post.* 1, 30–33 where Varro gives the philosophical point of view of Antiochus) there was a new interest in the problems of causality in the *kosmos noetos*. To resolve some of the problems Platonic scholars of the period did not hesitate to have recourse to Aristotle. Thus the purely Platonic elements grow out of a synthesis of the Good beyond being of the *Republic*, the One of the *Parmenides*, the *nous* of the *Philebus*, and the *deimiorugos* of the *Timaeus*: the first cause is *nous*, the source of all good in the universe, beyond qualification and description (Albinus, *Epit.* x, 1-4; on the "unspeakable" cause, see *agnostos*). This *protos nous* of the *Philebus* is also the *deimiorugos* of the *Timaeus* who looks to the *eide* in his creation of the *kosmos*, save that the *eide* are now located in the mind of the *deimiorugos* (*ibid.*, xi i, 1 and *noeton* 2).

16. But there is an Aristotelian side to this as well. The first *nous* thinks himself, and, though he is himself unmoved (*akineto*), he moves others as an object of desire (*orekton*; *loc. cit.*). Aristotle had further designated the *proton kinoun* as God and his later commentators identified both with the *nous poietikos* of the *De anima*. Albinus, while he describes the *protos nous* as thinking himself in the prescribed Aristotelian fashion (*Epit.* x, 3), has a further subordinate principle, a second transcendent *nous* that is always energized and that is "the *nous* of the whole heaven," a description that at least suggests the *proton kinoun* of the *Metaphysics*. What seems likely is that Albinus has distinguished the final and efficient causality that Aristotle had united, and assigned the first to the *protos nous* that moves "as an object of desire" (*x*, 2) and the second to the subordinate *nous*. There is, finally, a third transcendent *nous*, a faculty of the World Soul (*x*, 3). Visible here are all the motifs of Neoplatonism: three transcendent hypostatized principles that may be denominated, in terms of their emphases, the Good, *nous*, *psyche*, all the causality proceeding from the first, even here described as "like the sun" or "Father."

17. Present too is another trait that is characteristic not only of later Platonism but of the entire philosophical tradition after Aristotle. Plato had considered the stars as intelligent living beings (see *ouranoi* 6) and Aristotle had given to each an intelligent mover (see *kinoun* 11–12; *ouranoi* 3). Middle Platonists incorporated this too into their systems. The planets are intellectual living beings dwelling in the *aether* (Albinus, *Epit.* xiv, 7) and beneath them are the *daimonones* of the *aer*, also gods, children of the "Father," more perfect than men and responsible for omens and prodigies (*ibid.*, xv, 2; Maximus of Tyre xi, 12; Apuleius, *De deo Socr.* 6; see *daimon* 3–4, *psyche* 35).

18. As has already been indicated (see 6 *supra*), the *nous-deimiorugos* in Plato seems to be subordinated to the *eide*, and thus to the Good of the *Republic* as well. Albinus' first *nous* embraces all of these entities, but thereafter new emphases are to be seen. The *protos nous* begins to yield to the *hen-agathon* of the *Parmenides* and *Republic*, and the *nous-deimiorugos* function to center on the second hypostasis. These are the views of Numenius (see Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.* xi, 356d–358b), as they will be of Plotinus, stolen, as some said, from Numenius (see Porphyry, *Vita Plot.*, xv i, 1). But there are differences as well. The second hypostasis of Numenius is twofold; its primary function, which is *noesis*, degenerating into discursive *dianoia* by reason of its involvement with matter (Eusebius, *op. cit.* xi, 537;
Proclus, in Tim. III, 103). In Plotinus, who also avails himself of the concept of "attentive" (phrontis; see noesis 21), the polarity is transferred to the third hypostasis; it is the cosmic soul that has an "upper" and "lower" side (see psyche ton pantos, physis).

19. Plotinus follows the general Platonic tradition in making nous the second of the three hypostases (q.v.). It is the demiourgos in that it supplies the psyche with the logoi that are the forms of sensible things (Enn. v, 9, 3), but in general the creative function belongs more properly to physis, the lower part of the psyche, whose contemplation lapses into activity (praxis; III, 8, 4). Proclus puts more stress on nous as the arche of this sensible world, but he agrees with Plotinus that creation (see also proddos) is a consequence of theoria or noesis (Elem. theol., prop. 174).

20. The first principle, the One, is perfectly self-sufficient and needs nothing; the cosmic nous, on the other hand, has a need of itself, a need of thinking itself, and so its operation of noesis is, in a sense, a return to itself (Enn v, 3, 13). Nous is the energeia and logos of the One (v, 1, 6; compare Philo's view under logos 5) and a type of pluralistic externalization of the absolute unity of the One, just as our discursive reasoning is an eikon of the relatively unified operation of the cosmic nous (see noesis 18). The proper activity of nous is a direct intuitive grasp of the noeta as a unity, not in the sense that the nous "thinks" the noeta, but rather it is the noeta (see noeton 5).

21. The cosmic nous, a Platonic heritage, is linked with the reasoning power immanent in man by a species of Aristotelian bridge. The Aristotelian distinction of dissolution of nous into an active energeia and a passive dynamis is taken up and modified by Plotinus. In Enn. v, 9, 3 Plotinus asks himself, in his usual aporetic fashion, if there is a nous charitos, and then proceeds to answer by distinguishing between a nous that is in the soul as an eidos in matter and a nous that "gives the form to the soul as the maker [poietes] gives form to the statue." Thus the Aristotelian nous poiethos is transformed into the dator formarum. The same passage goes on to draw a distinction between the eide themselves. The eide that the nous gives to the soul are "close to reality," those received by matter are "images and imitations" (eidola, mimemata; see noeton 6).

22. There are, then, three degrees of reality among the Plotinian eide. The lowest, the eide aistheta in material things, are eikones of the true Forms. They serve both a cognitive and paradigmatic end. As existing in others they form the basis of sensation on the Aristotelian model (see aisthesis 26); as existing in oneself they are the causal paradigms of the production of other beings (see logoi spermatikoi, physis). There are, too, the eide noeta or, as they are called from Middle Platonism on, the ideai, which exist primarily in the cosmic nous where they constitute the kosmos noetos (q.v.) or, after bestowal, in the immanent human nous where, as "traces of nous," they provide the grounds for certain of our judgments (see noesis 19 and, for a more comprehensive treatment of the ideai, noeton).

Och eama: vehicle, chariot, astral body

1. As appears from the history of the psyche (q.v.), a number of apparently irreconcilable strains were present in its development almost from the beginning: the materialist view that sees the psyche as a refined form of one or other of the elements, and eventually, as the pneuma, a kind of fifth element akin to aither (q.v.); the spiritualist view flowing from the Pythagorean doctrine of the soul as a divine substance different in kind from the body; and, finally, the Aristotelian entelecheia (q.v.) theory that attempts to explain the psyche in terms of the function (see ergon, energeia) of some body.

2. Later Platonism was, in effect, forced to come to terms with the entelecheia view by reason of Plato's interest in function in the Timaeus. This they attempted to do by means of a theory that, in its most general terms, states that the soul has another quasi-physical body or ochema, usually acquired during the prenatal "descent" through the heavens (kathodos, q.v.; see Plotinus, Enn. iv, 3, 15; Macrobius, In Somn. Scip. 1, 12). This becomes progressively heavier and more visible as it descends through the moist aer (Porphyry, De antro nymph. 11). With their usual textual piety the Neoplatonists professed to discover the origin of this doctrine in Plato, and particularly in Tim. 41d-e where the demiourgos sows each soul in a star, "as in a chariot" (ochema; compare Phaedrus 247b), preliminary to embodying some of them on earth and "storing" others in the planets (ibid. 42d). But when it comes to explaining the nature of these "vehicles," resort is made to Aristotel.

3. Aristotle had described pneuma (q.v.) as the seat of the nutritive (threptike) and sensitive (aisthetike) soul and analogous in composition to aither that is the material element of the stars (De gen. anim. 736b—737a). Thus the "vehicle" of the soul is described by the Neoplatonists as an aetherial (aitherodes) and light-like (augoeides)