Mind's Commitment to the Real: Parmenides B8.34ff

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One need not know very much about the history of ancient philosophy, one might just barely make out and translate the words "same", "thought", "being", "Fate", "name", to sense that this is an important and fascinating text. Indeed, it is one of those topoi which regularly exercise the ingenuity of students of Greek philosophy. An interpretation of it often colors, or reflects, one's understanding of the metaphysics and epistemology of early Greek philosophy as a whole. In proposing to undertake here yet another argument on the analysis of the passage I do not aim for anything like certainty or finality of exegesis. This would be too much to hope for, when we are working at such small scale, and all the more so in the case of pre-Socratic studies, where the evidence itself is limited and fragmentary and our controls over language and background only too imperfect. Rather it is through an analysis of this passage that I can explain most clearly and directly a certain conception of the relation of mind to reality for which I also find
evidence in other texts, in some of the characteristic aspects and themes of Parmenides' poem, and which I consider philosophically and historically important. So let me proceed directly to the analysis, not pausing to review or to formulate the status quaeestionis, but taking up points of controversy as they arise.

I

Our text is not a fragment out of context: it occurs momentously in the climactic section of the poem's central argument, which we, more or less, understand. If we approach B8.34ff. as continuous with what has preceded, then we find ourselves in possession of two important clues for understanding the controversial first line: (a) The presumption is that ταύτον refers back to the subject under discussion in B8 as a whole, viz. τόν, "what-is." It must therefore function as subject in B8.34, not as predicate. (b) Since B8.34-41 is preceded by a deduction of the "completeness" of τόν it is only logical to check for a possible connection between the key words νοεῖν and νόημα of B8.34 and the argument that what-is is σῶς ἄτελευτητον, "not incomplete" (cf. also B8.42 τετελεσμένον).

If we pursue this second clue, what comes to mind immediately is the many passages from the epic in which a τέλος-word expresses the fulfilment of a thought, wish, or prophecy. The closest parallel is Il. 18.328: "But Zeus does not fulfill (τελευτᾷ) all thoughts (νοηματα) for men." Also of interest in this connection is the expression τελέωμεν μὴν, "let us fulfill the thought" (Od. 4.776-7), and the formula-line ἀδιά τε φρονεῖς τελέσαι δὲ μὲ θυμὸς ἀνωτεν, "speak what you intend, and my heart prompts me to fulfill it." In a recent study of the
Ambrose observes: "τελεῖν does not only mean 'to do'. It means 'to do, or make, or act in full accord with some plan, command, prayer, promise or prophecy'."\(^6\) Again: "The essence of the action of the Homeric verb τελεῖν ... is to transform concept into fact, whether this concept be a promise or a plan or a prophecy."\(^7\) All of this suggests strongly that the connection between B8.34-41 and the completeness proof from which it grows ought to be sought in the familiar idea of τελεῖν νόημα. Simplicius evidently saw this connection, as we may gather from his paraphrase: "for the sake of (ἐνεκά τού) the thinkable, and it would be the same to say 'of being,' is thinking, since being is its τέλος" (Phys. 87.17-18). Most critics would disregard this comment as a misleading Neoplatonist gloss.\(^8\) This is unfair to Simplicius, considering that the association of νόημα with τελεῖν is as old as Homer.

If we respect the presumption that ταῦτα refers back to ζόν, and if we do not ignore Simplicius' gloss, then the most plausible translation of B8.34 would read:

"And the same thing is to be thought (or 'to be known') and is wherefore the thinking (or 'knowing')."

I have construed the Greek as: ταῦτα ζόν (subject) ἐπὶ νοεῖν τέ (first predicate) καὶ ἐπὶ νοεῖν ἐπὶ νόημα (second predicate).\(^9\) It is only fitting that a man who conceives of νοεῖν as a "quest" should avail himself of the syntactic form ἐπὶ νοεῖν = "is to think of" = "is to be thought of." Statements of the form "it's there to know, to apprehend, to think of" are exactly what we should expect from Parmenides.

In his recent edition of the Parmenides fragments, L. Tarán avoids a similar construction ("The same thing can be thought and
is the cause of the existence of thought") on the grounds that it is "tautological and makes no sense in the context of Parmenides' argument." I frankly do not see the tautology in the translation cited by Tarán: the idea that the intentional complement and the cause of thought are one and the same is not a truism, but a metaphysical thesis which requires argument (cf. Descartes on the distinction between "objective" and "formal" reality). At any rate, I would like to show that the translation which I gave above, far from being tautological, is charged with a sense which is both striking philosophically and appropriate at this juncture of the argument.

There is an important difference between έστι νοσιν and οὐνεξεν έστι νόημα. The first tells us that έστιν "is there to think, to know," i.e. that it is accessible and available—perfect, complete and fully actual as it is—that nothing prevents our knowing it. In other words, the first half of B8.34 is a permission clause (though we need not translate "can be thought"). As a permission clause, it does not by itself exclude other objects of thought, nor does it oblige mind to be directed to έστιν. It has, in effect, the form of a hypothetical: If you should choose to seek έστιν, you will find it. But the second clause is stronger. It suspends the "if" and it cancels alternatives: thought is ένεξεν the what-is, i.e. the latter constitutes its goal, or constitutes the compelling authority to which thought must submit. The two clauses are complementary. The first guarantees the presence or the avail-
ability of a certain object. But it posits no obligation for mind to seek it. The second posits the obligation, but gives no guarantee of the object's availability. The first clause says "you may," the second clause says "you must." Already this gives a pregnant, far from tautological sense to B8.34. But we have only begun to draw out the significance of this very rich line.

It will be recalled that ἀνάφλεξα or ἀνάφλεξεν has three uses: (a) "wherefore"; (b) "because"; (c) "that" (= ὅτι, ὅτι); Use (c) is generally regarded as a specialized case of (b). Most recent critics would interpret the ἀνάφλεξεν of B8.34 under (c), whereas I have argued in favor of (a). Yet, I suspect that the other two senses are also involved in the thought of B8.34. What made possible the transition from (b) to (c) was precisely the conception of the subject-matter of an utterance or thought as the cause which prompts the thought or utterance. Note that we can say indifferently "final" or "efficient" cause: facts compel us to think of them as they are; and the object of our desire invites or elicits appropriate thoughts from us. An important feature of the translation which I favor is that it expresses a doctrine which a Greek speaker could formulate after reflection on the etymology of conjunctions such as ὅτι, ὅτι, and ἀνάφλεξεν. That reflection on etymologies (real or supposed) is one of the characteristic devices of pre-Socratic thought is familiar enough, and requires no argument. I am not suggesting, of course, that Parmenides simply recorded his understanding of the etymology
of οὐνεκεν = "that" in the line under discussion. What I am saying, rather, is that the line gains in poetical force by using a certain word to explain a conception which (conception) already controls another and familiar use of that same word.

Let us also not forget that this is a line about mind and reality. We learn something about each from it. Of reality it says that it is identically the same in expectation, or in anticipation, and in actuality. The very same thing which prompts thought (οὐνεκεν) is there for us to know (ἐστι νοεῖν). This obviously continues the argument for οὐκ ἀτελεύτητον, "not incomplete," in the section immediately preceding. Parmenides' ἐὖ has the integrity of Zeus' own word to Thetis:

οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλινάγαρτον ὁδὸν ἀπατηλὸν
οὐδὲ ἀτελεύτητον, ἀ τὶ κεῖν κεφάλῃ κατανεύσω.

(Π. 1.526ff.)

It is quite otherwise with the things of ὅξα. As Parmenides might have put it, ἄλλα ἐστὶ νοεῖν καὶ ἄλλα οὐνεκέν ἐστὶ νόημα, they are other in the knowing than they were in anticipation. This is an aspect of their "faithlessness" (cf. Bl.30). Conversely, ἐὖ shows its good faith (cf. Bl.29 ἀληθείης εὔπειθέους) in being identically the same as object given (ἐστι νοεῖν) and as object yearned for (δίκηςις, οὐνεκέν ἐστι νόημα). So the guiding idea of πίστις (cf. πείθειν Bl.16, 8.39; Πείθω B2.4; πίστις Bl.30, 8.12; πιστός B8.50) is implicit in B8.34, as well as the idea of the completeness of what-is.

From the viewpoint of mind, B8.34 contains the striking doctrine that νόημα is about, or for the sake of, or is compelled by ἐὖ. This is a new element in the argument. So far the ἐὖ has been presented as something unfamiliar and remote: something lying "far from the beaten track of men." The idea that
it is the ὁνεκεν of thought (without qualification) appears here for the first time. We should now examine B8.34 together with its sequel.

"And the same is to think of and wherefore is the thinking. For not without what-is, ἐν ὃ πεφατισμένον ἐστίν, will you find thinking. For no other thing, but what-is, either is or will be, since it was just this thing that Fate shackled to be whole and immobile." (B8.34-38)

We must, for the moment, leave the difficult expression, ἐν ὃ πεφατισμένον ἐστίν untranslated. The rest of the text can be constructed independently. What should not be missed is the emphatic concatenation of references to ἐὸν: ταύτων, "the same thing;" οὐ γὰρ ἢνευ τοῦ..., "not without the..." ἐν ὃ, "in ὃν, upon which;" ὃθέν... ἀλλο πάρεξε τοῦ..., "not any other thing except the..." τὸ γε, "specifically this." The phrase "you shall not find thinking without what-is" should be understood on the basis of a Platonic parallel, Soph. 237d, probably a deliberate imitation of Parmenides' language, put in the mouth of the Eleatic Stranger:

"We speak the word 'it' at each instance with reference to something-that-is (δέντι), for it is impossible to speak it all by itself, naked and deserted (γυμνὸν καὶ ἄπηγημομένον, as it were, by all the things-that-are."

To paraphrase Plato: you shall not find the word "it" naked, or deserted by the-things-that-are. To paraphrase Parmenides: you shall not find thinking naked or deserted by what-is.

Against this background it would appear, a priori, that the sense of ἐν ὃ πεφατισμένον ἐστίν is, roughly, "to which (sc. the ἐὸν) it (sc. τὸ νοεῖν) refers" or "to which it is addressed". But the usual translation, "in which it is expressed [or revealed]", is rather far from this sense. Most readers would concede that this is at best an unsatisfactory rendering. For it is not at all clear how we should interpret the doctrine that thought is expressed in what-is.17 Besides, the Greek πεφατισμένον ἐστίν carries the sense of the present perfect
much more prominently than does the English "is expressed". But the translation "in which it has been expressed" becomes even more strange.\textsuperscript{18}

The key to the phrase is, I believe, not in the participle \textit{πεφατισμένον} (from a rare verb, the semantics of which are unavoidably obscure) but in the phrase \textit{ἐν ὑπ... ἐστίν}. The usual translation assumes that \textit{ἐν} has vaguely locative or instrumental force. It has been overlooked that the \textit{ἐν} together with \textit{ἐνα...} can have an idiomatic sense "to depend on, to rely upon, to be under the authority of" (cf. English "it's up to").\textsuperscript{19} What is perhaps even more significant: this use appears to have its paradigm in the ancient image of God "holding" the fate, or the fulfilment, or the outcome of all things:

\begin{quote}
άλλ' ἣτοι μὲν ταῦτα ἡμᾶς ἐν γούνασι κεῖται.
"But these things lie on the knees of the gods." (Il. 17.514)
\end{quote}

Of special interest for Parmenides is the affinity of this conception with words such as \textit{πεῖρα} and \textit{τέλος}:

\begin{quote}

νίκης πειρατ' ἔχονται ἐν ᾠδαντοῖσι: θεσίοι.
"The \textit{peirata} of victory are held by the immortal gods." (Il. 7.102)

ἐν τοῖς γὰρ τέλοις ἑστιν ὁμίς ἀγαθῶν τε κακῶν τε.

"On them (\textit{sc.} on Zeus and Poseidon) rests the \textit{telos} for good and evil." (Hes. Op. 669)
Zeü πάτεσε...πάν δὲ τέλος ἐν τιν ἔργων.
"Father Zeus...and the \textit{telos} of all labors rests with you."
(Pindar Nem. 10.29)
\end{quote}

If this is indeed the force of \textit{ἐν ὑπ... ἐστίν} here, then the relevant parallel out of the few occurrences of \textit{φατίζω} is obviously the one in which the verb has some of the force of "to promise": τῷ τῆς ἡμᾶς σήν παιδ' ἀλοχων φατίσας, "having promised your unwed daughter to the son of the goddess," (Burr. Iphig. Aug. 135). In Parmenides \textit{φατίζω} occurs once again at B8.60. The goddess uses the word to announce her description of the physical world "so that no mortal opinion may outstrip you." As used here the verb becomes still one more token of the relationship of \textit{πίστις} between her and the Kouros. The goddess \textit{φατίζει}: 

\textit{(cf. πεφατιστα)}
and the Kourôs is asked: νόµισαι: "guard, cherish, preserve" (B2.1). This clearly belongs with the πιστος λόγος (B8.50) and the solemn hand-shake (Bl.23). So in B8.60 φατίζω means not only "I explain, I show, I make plain" but also "I give, I bestow, I commit, I entrust." Correspondingly, a πεφατισμένον νόµα would be a thought not only "spoken or "declared," but also "bestowed" or "committed."

Now if the main connection of the phrase is ἐν ἡ... ἔστιν, then πεφατισμένον is a circumstantial participle. This makes any and all of the following translations possible:

"on which it depends, once solemnly declared;"

"on which it depends, having been solemnly declared;"

"on which it depends, as solemnly declared."

Or combining all three:

"to which it stands committed."

We should now look at the sequel of B8.34 from the double standpoint, once more, of ἔστιν and νοεῖν. With respect to the first, the themes of πιστείς and of the ὁκ ἀπελεύθητον are still recognizable, although subdued. At least part of the force of B8.35 is that ἔστιν will not desert or abandon its trustee, τὸ νοεῖν. Again, when we read that this is because "Fate shackled it," we think naturally of the bonds of trust (πιστείς), which, in this case, bind reality to its station, as well as to the other party, mind or discourse. Similarly, part of the force of "there is and will be [note the pairing of present and future] no other but what-is," is that in an imagined interval (per impossible!) between thought and its realization in ἔστιν, there will be no tricks, no substitutions, no adulteration. The reason given (ἐπεί) for the continued firm attachment of what-is to mind is immobility, just as the ὀνείκευ of B8.32 assigned the
complete or accomplished nature of what-is to the immobility deduced for it in B8.26-31.

But the more important points are made with reference to mind. It will be convenient to assign numbers to the clauses of the sequence so that we may study the logical structure:

1. And (ὁδί) the same is to think
2. and is wherefore the thinking.
3. For (γάγε) you shall not find thinking without what-is,
4. to which it stands committed.
5. For (γάγε) no other either is or will be except the what-is,
6. since (ἐπί) it was just this (τό γε) that Fate shackled, so as to be whole and immobile.

Clause 1 needs no explanation. The whole argument up to this point has the force of "it's there to think!" It is, as I argued earlier, the second clause which contains the radical suggestion: ἕν is not just available; it is that which always compels and attracts mind. It would seem to me that the entire sequel of B8.34, including (as I will try to show) B8.38-41, is elucidation and support for this radical claim. The most direct way to bring this out is to cast B8.34ff. into the form of a dialogue:

1. Goddess: And that very same thing is there to think, and is also the wherefore of thought.
2. Kouros: Yes, I see what you mean about it's being there. We have been talking in terms of a journey to it all along. But what's this about its being the "wherefore" of all thought?
3. G. You shall not find thinking without what-is.
   K. Why?
4. G. Because (γάγε) it stands committed to it.
   K. I don't see that. Why should mind be committed specifically to what-is and not, say, to X or Y or Z?
5. G. Because (γάγε) there simply neither is nor will there be any other thing (for it to be committed to).
K. Why not?

6. G. Because it is only what-is (ποιείς) that was properly bound by Fate to be whole and immobile. (Implication: All other Χ's, Υ's and Ζ's are loose and faithless.)

What makes me think that this, or something very like it, is the correct interpretation of this passage is that emphatic concatenation, which I pointed out earlier, of references to ζόν. It is natural to assume that this continued focus on the ζόν is intended to serve as an exclusion. It must obviously exclude candidates to the status of being the σύνεκεν ἔστι νόημα. The conclusion reached is that ζόν is the actual and implicit object of all thought because nothing else could possibly be its object. The whole argument amounts to this:

1. ζόν is a possible object of mind.
2. No other entities could possibly fill that role.
3. So ζόν is not only possible but a necessary object of mind.

It is important to appreciate the radical character of the doctrine of B8.34-38, as I have translated and explicated the text here. Parmenides is telling us that νοεῖν and νόημα as such (the text is unqualified) are necessarily implicated with, or bound to, ζόν. It is not simply the μῦθος or the λόγος of the goddess, but human thought as well, the νοεῖν of ordinary mortals no less than that of the privileged revelation to the Kouros, which is tied to what-is. So the revelation of the Parmenidean poem has the characteristically philosophical mood of making explicit that which is implicitly possessed or yearned for by all men.

Against this interpretation one could cite B6.5: "helplessness in their breasts steers their distracted mind (πλακτὸν νόον)." Moreover, in B16 we find a νόος which changes according to the state of "limbs that have wandered much (πολυπλάγκτων)," and in B7.2 and B8.17 νόος-words appear in contexts which imply that mind could
actually take the route not of "...is..." but of "...is not...". How can we reconcile this with the doctrine of B8.34ff. on the interpretation given here?26

Actually, the conflict is much less serious than it appears at first sight. Although νῶς and its derivatives is primarily an "achievement" or "success" word (in Ryle's sense), it is quite natural that, on occasion, it should appear in contexts which bear the sense of task or failure.27 So the oxymoron of the expression πλακτος νῶς does not involve a logical inconsistency. A similar oxymoron may be found in B2, where Parmenides announces plural routes which εἰσὶ νοησαι, "are for thinking," but then allows only one of them.28

Moreover, to say that mind is always "with," or "on account of," or "committed to" the real does not mean that these two entities exist all along and for all men in the same relation which was established for the Kouros as a result of the revelation. That would have made the revelation unnecessary. The relation belongs not to the realm of fact or to psychology, but to an ideal, or normative realm, at the level of one's logical subconscious.

In other words, when we speak of a "necessary relationship between mind and reality we ought to keep distinct the two aspects of "universality" and "norm" or "propriety" in this modal term.29 So to say "you shall not find thinking without what-is, to which it stands committed" need not mean that thinking is already there, attached to what-is. It's not everyone who is aware of the involvement--just you (the Kouros) and only from now on (the future tense may very well have this significance), as a result of a challenging argument. One might compare the familiar experience of hindsight: "That must be what I had in mind."30

Now like the subconscious of psychoanalysis, the logical sub-
conscious has its ways of making itself felt even at the surface. Elements in the factual or conscious level reflect and reproduce the ideal order which obtains in depth. Something of this sort can be seen in the structure of the argument in B2 to B8. The openly negative route is unquestionably wrong. No one wants to take it. But mortals think and speak in terms which obscure or disguise from them the fact that they have actually veered off course, that they are now travelling the negative route. The purity of their intentions, as it were, conceals their πλάνη, "error, wandering." The challenge of B6 and B7 was precisely that it confronted mortals with this fact. And it takes most of the argument of B8 to make good this "contentious challenge." Mortals are "two-headed" in just this sense: they really want τὸ ἔνν, but due to their ineptness (ἀπεριφέρεσαι) they land with τὸ μὴ ἔνν.

The concept of νοέῖν, νόος appears at three levels here: At the deepest level we come to see in a clear and rigorous sense that νοέῖν is of, about, because of, or for the sake of what-is (as the latter is understood after B8). At the surface level, this "ontological commitment" is felt as a preference for expressions couched in positive terms. But in between the two, a certain gap develops between intention and performance. The fault is not on the side of what-is, for it has πίστις. It is we who, somehow, violate our implicit pledge (cf. πεπατίσαμεν) to the real.

The interpretation I am developing here will be clarified if we consider some instructive parallels. The philosophy of Logical Atomism, formulated and defended by Russell and Wittgenstein in the early decades of this century, postulated three stages in the relation of thought to reality similar to the three stages distinguished above. At the most primary level, simple, primitive names stand in a direct relation of reference to the simple constituents of the world. The latter
are minimal sense data according to Russell; for Wittgenstein they are "atomic objects", entities which are defined only as the limit of analysis (Wittgenstein refused to commit himself on their nature). At any rate, these "atoms" are quite unlike the objects or things we acknowledge in everyday experience. At this familiar level, we operate with names such as "Tom" or "Fido" or "Homer." Names of this sort do not refer directly to real constituents; they are abbreviations for more or less elaborate descriptions. By successively analyzing these descriptions toward greater explicitness and precision, we finally reach the real atoms, which constitute their ultimate, although implicit, reference. It is in this transition that confusion sets in. We fail to understand our own tacit rules of translation from the familiar to the primary level.  

In an ideal or normative sense, all thought is "of" or "for the sake of" these elementary constituents. But it is only through philosophic argument and elucidation that we come to realize this. So the task of philosophy is to make explicit something to which we are already committed. This notion of implicit ontological commitment is formally analogous with the Parmenidean conception, expressed by means of the phrases: ὅνεκαν ἐστι νόημα and ἐν ᾗ πεφατικένον ἔστιν.  

There are, of course, even more ancient parallels for this conception of the relation of discourse to reality. We immediately recognize the analytical or reflective outlook of the tradition of logical atomism as one of ancient lineage; it goes back to Plato. What is especially interesting for an interpretation of Parmenides is that Plato employs the preposition ἐν ἐκα or ἐν ἐκαν at climactic points of philosophic argument to introduce the ultimate or supreme object of all inquiry. Moreover, in a number of these passages ἐν ἐκα appears framed by metaphors which one associates with Parmenides. This use of the preposition both illustrates and serves to mediate the characteristically Platonic conception of knowing as a process of retrieval or
recollection. The preposition points like an arrow to the object of our philosophic quest. We "know" it before we know it. We permanently belong to it and it belongs to us, but we have somehow become estranged. Whether at the small scale of a philosophic conversation, or at the larger scale of a life-long quest, it is the hold of this relationship which makes inquiry possible. The analogy between Plato's "recollec-
tion" and psychoanalysis (Freud), or philosophical analysis (Russell, Wittgenstein, Moore), is one that has been explored often enough. So I must not dwell on it here. What I wish to suggest is that something of this analytical or regressive conception of the nature of thought is already present in Parmenides.

I would further like to suggest that Parmenides was not the only one of the pre-Socratics to conceive of inquiry in these terms. Recall how Heraclitus speaks of the Logos: it is the common and permanent possession of all men; and yet, this, which is most intimately and secure theirs, is precisely what men fail to acknowledge (Diels-Kranz 22B72). Men are asleep: they are not alert to the realities of this one, common world (22B1 cf. 22B30). They are not aware of that which is most obvious (22B56), and this is absurdly paradoxical, for "how could one fail to notice that which never sets?" (22B16) They are like deaf people; they are present and yet absent (22B34). They are like travellers who have forgotten where the route leads (22B71). So the goal of philosophy must, of necessity, be one of self-knowledge (22B101).

I find it illuminating to place Heraclitus' B2 next to Parmenides' B8.34-36

22B2: όιο όει ἐπεσα: τῷ ἐννῷ τοῦ λόγου δ’ ἐόντος ἐννοοὶ ἐσούσιν
οὶ πολλοὶ ὡς ίδιαν ἔχοντες φιλονήσιν.
"For this reason it is necessary to follow the common; and while the Logos is common, the many live as if they had a mind of their own."

28B8.34-36: ταύτων δ’ ἐστι νοεῖν τε καὶ οὐνεκέν ἐστι νόημα;/
oῦ γὰρ ἀνευ τοῦ ἐόντος, ἐν ὦ πεφατισμένον ἐστίν, /ἐνθήσεις τὸ νοεῖν.
"And the same is there to think and is wherefore the thinking; for not without what-is, to which it stands committed, will you find thinking."

To the expression "common", (ἐνώνον), in one text corresponds ταύτον, "the same," in the other. What Heraclitus says by way of polemic Parmenides says more as a diagnosis. The points registered are, of course, different: as different as the Heraclitean Ἰόγος is from Parmenides' ἦν. But there is common ground between the two passages to this extent: the Ἰόγος or the ἦν is not just there, it is not just a proposal or a challenge; it is, rather, the correct, and obligatory, and implicit object of all φαντασίας or νόημα.

II

Against this background, I now would like to argue in support of the reading ὅνομασται for the end of line 33. Leonard Woodbury, in an important article which, curiously, has not received the hearing it deserves from recent editors, pointed out that this reading is superior to the preferred ὅνομ(α) ἐσται by criteria both of paleography and interpretation. I will not undertake to repeat Woodbury's arguments here, but I will cite what he considers a telling weakness in the text ὅνομ(α) ἐσται, viz. that this is intelligible only in the translation "will be mere name," where the crucial word is the gloss supplied by the translator. The interpretation which Woodbury develops from the text ὅνομασται is not altogether convincing. He interprets τῷ as referring to an unnamed subject "the world", rather than to ἦν, which is the more obvious candidate; and he interprets the latter as the name of this subject—as if ἦν had to appear in quotation marks. But Woodbury's text is attractive independently of his interpretation: the translation would read:
With respect to this thing have all names been spoken.

I would add three more considerations in support of Woodbury's text with the translation just given: (a) With ἐν as the subject of the proofs of B8 there is the same presumption that τῷ refers to ἐν as there was at B8.34 that τῷτῷ has that reference. (b) After the emphatic τῷ γε, just one line above, the hearer or reader would most naturally take τῷ as the demonstrative pronoun. Indeed, the whole weight of that chain of references to what-is which begins at B8.29 (8 pronoun references, and ἐν featured 4 times) makes it most unlikely that τῷ should not be taken with that reference. The parallelism of ἐν τῷ at B8.35 and τῷ at B8.38, both after the B caesura, is especially strong. (c) The present perfect ἐμπάσται is very appropriately placed between the πεφασμένον ἐστί of B8.35 and the πεποιθότες of B8.39 and τετελεσμένον ἐστὶ of B8.42.

If we are to do justice to the translation given above, we should pause to clarify the logic of the Greek concept of "naming" or "calling". Expressed variously by verbs such as ὄνομαζειν, καλεῖν, λέγειν, it involves basically the same three part relation which we find in a familiar use of English "to call":

"And God (A) called the light (B) Day (C)."

Between (A) and (B) we have a subject-object relation which is roughly one of referring, pointing, singling out. The element (C) functions as an internal object of the verb: it spells out the "content" of the verb's action (it gives what the older grammars used to call, the "effected" as distinct from the "affected" object of the verb). This places (C) in a relation of apposition to (B). Indeed, this apposition amounts to identity. For it is precisely in the logic of the sentence given to authorize the statement:

"The light is Day."
In Greek this relation of (A)-(B)-(C) could be expressed in either of two ways. One would be the exact counterpart of the syntax with "to call" in the example given: Subject-Direct Object (accusative)-Internal Object (accusative). Another is the construction we find in B8.38: A ὄνοματε C (= the internal accusative) ἵππι (on, with reference to) B. 40

The most important thing to appreciate about either of these constructions is that the element C carries meaning prior to entering in this three-term relation. The same holds for "to call" in the sentence cited above. If we say "God called the light Day," we are allowed to ask "Why?". And we are entitled to an explanation of the form "because light is of such-and-such character." (The Bible, it will be recalled, proceeds to give just such an explanation in a vast number of similar passages: "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man"; "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." ) In other words, C is treated as an abbreviated description. This is born out by such permissible paraphrases as:

"It will be spoken of as Day."
"It will be known by the name of Day."

The name is understood here as a verbal recipe which will help us select or recognize the phenomenon. In Greek the tendency to give explanations after statements of the form "A called B-C" is very strong indeed. 41

To return to the text of B8.38-41: since ὄνοματα is passive, the element (A) will be understood ἐκ θεοτοκεῖον; "by men". The element (C) is in ὡς ἔρξοι etc., "the things which mortals etc." This relative clause attaches itself to an understood internal subject ὄνοματα. Finally, the element (B) appears in the dative τῷ. As we saw just now, "to speak names" does not in this context mean "to utter
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sounds", but rather "to (meaningfully) describe". The immediate para-
phrase is: It is this which mortals are describing when they say...; mortals have called it \( Y \), but it actually is \( X \).

On the translation defended here, B8.40-41 appears as a list of
types of utterance made by mortals. They say: (a) "...came to be..." and "...ceased to be..."; (b) "...is..." and "...is not..."; (c) "...alters its place" and "...transmutes color and/or shape."\(^{42}\) What makes these types of judgement "mortal", in the pejorative sense, is not so much that they conjoin contradictory ideas; rather each of the conjuncts is objectionable by itself. This holds for the "...is..." of mortals as well as for the "...is not...". The "...is..." of mortal thinking is one which can easily turn back into "...is not...". Similarly, they expect that "...is not..." could have a determinate sense. So the list is, in effect, a disjunction of six types of mortal judgement. Parmenides is telling us: no matter what it is that mortals say, they must say it with reference to what-is.

We are now in position to appreciate a parallel, often noticed, between B8.38-41 and certain passages from Empedocles:

"Not for one of all mortal things is there a growing-to-be (\( \phi\upsilon\varsigma\varsigma \) ) nor is there attainment of baneful death; there is, rather, only mixing and alternation of the ingredients mixed; it is with reference to these that the name of growing-to-be is spoken among men (\( \phi\upsilon\sigma\varsigma\delta' \varepsilon\pi\iota\zeta \omicron\nu\omicron\alpha\omicron\acute{\epsilon}\tau\alpha\iota \iota\varsigma \alpha\nu\nu\beta\omega\omicron\omicron\iota \iota \iota \))." (Diels-Kranz 31B8)

"And when they [sc. the constituents] emerge in the air having been mixed on (the pattern of) man, or on that of the kind of wild beasts, or on that of plants, or on that of birds, that they then call getting-to-be (\( \tau\omicron\tau\epsilon\ \mu\epsilon\nu\ \tau\omicron\lambda\gamma\omicron\omicron\omicron\sigma\iota\varsigma \gamma\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma\theta\alpha\varsigma \) ) and when they fall apart, that, correspondingly, they call unhappy death. They do not speak by the Right of Justice (\( \upsilon\upsilon\epsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma \upsilon\upsilon \kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\omicron\upsilon\omicron\sigma\iota \upsilon \) ),\(^{43}\) but by Convention I speak so myself (\( \nu\omicron\mu\nu\delta' \varepsilon\pi\iota\iota\nu\nu\iota \kappa'ai\upsilon\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\omicron\sigma\varsigma\iota \) )." (31B9)\(^{44}\)

The Empedoclean doctrine involves the following logical steps:
(1) Men speak in terms of coming-to-be and death. (2) This language is untrue or unfaithful to the facts—there is no \( \theta\epsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma \) in it—be-
cause there are no such processes in reality; there is only mixing and unmixing. (3) These are the processes which the language of generation and perishing refers to, but which it misdescribes. But one may comply with accepted usage, provided he understands the true or real counterparts of expressions such as "birth" and "death".

Here, once again, we see the three moments in the relation of discourse to reality which we found earlier in the tradition of logical atomism, in Plato, and in Heraclitus. Empedocles is not simply attacking the language of mortals: he is also interpreting it. He shows how it is in touch, ultimately, with the real processes of the world, though prima facie it conceals and obscures these processes.

So in Parmenides B8.38-41 we have the culmination of the thought of B8.34, and of the proof of "completeness" from which this section on thought and reality grows. We might represent the course of the argument in a scheme like the following: (1) The ἑὸν is complete, accomplished. (2) The ἑὸν itself is available to mind but is also that which compels and attracts mind. (3) Mind is implicitly committed to the ἑὸν. (4) There could be no other object for mind to seek. (5) All human discourse has the ἑὸν as its only true and ultimate reference.

We see, then, that the three clauses at the end of lines 34, 35, and 38 are strictly parallel, indeed equivalent: ὅνεκεν ἐστὶ νόημα, "Wherefore is the thinking," = ἐν ὑ περατισμένον ἐστίν, "to which it stands committed" = τῷ πάντ' ὀνόμασται, "with reference to it have all names been spoken." The effectiveness of the whole passage lies precisely in this logical crescendo: the same thought is given successively stronger and more explicit statements.

To convey my understanding of B8.38-41 I gave, earlier, the paraphrase: Mortals call it Υ, but it actually is Χ. This is normally how we should understand the passage from what we know of the construction.
For as we saw, "to name \( X \) (as) \( Y \)" in Greek does not mean to attach the sound "\( Y \)" to \( X \), but rather to describe \( X \) in terms of \( Y \), which is thus assumed to already have meaning independently of its naming relationship to \( X \). So the relevant categories for interpreting this passage are not meaningfulness vs. meaninglessness but truth vs. falsehood. The parallel from Empedocles bears this out. Human discourse describes the world in terms which are false to the world's reality.

This parallel between Parmenides and Empedocles has a wider context. The standard conceptual frame for pre-Socratic speculation on the φύσις or ἀλήθεια of things was, what I would like to call, speculative predication: "\( Y \) really is \( X \)." Of this conceptual frame the following are simple variants:

(a) "What they believe to be \( Y \) is really \( X \)."
(b) "What they call \( Y \) is really \( X \)."
(c) "The so-called \( Y \) is really \( X \)."

To (b) and (c) the formula (d) is like a corollary:

(d) "It is really with reference to \( X \) that the expression '\( Y \)' is employed."

This verbal frame, in any of the four versions, must have appeared again and again in explanations of natural phenomena by the early "physicists". Recall Xenophanes B32:

> ἤν τ' Ἰριν' καλέοισιν, νέφος καὶ τούτο πέφυκε
> πορφύρεον καὶ φοινίκεον καὶ χλωρον ἰδέσθαι.

"What they call Iris [a goddess of such-and-such attributes] that too is in its nature a cloud which looks gleaming and purple and green."

What is absent from such "physiological" applications of the verbal frame is the element of extreme surprise, paradox, and irony which we find in Parmenides' text. It is this element which makes B8,38-41 such a fitting climax to the argument of B8 as a whole. The deductions
have taught us that what-is is ungenerable, indivisible, immobile, fully completed. And now we hear that it is that very thing which mortals describe as "coming to be" and "perishing" etc. The disparity could not be more dramatic. The gulf between implicit promise and actual performance could not be greater. This is precisely why ἄδιδμον appears without a connecting particle, in asyndeton. Like Heraclitus B2, these lines reveal the total estrangement of men from that which is most properly and intimately theirs. This point gets lost, of course, in the translation "mere name". For the whole rhetoric of this passage depends on a confrontation of task with performance. The absurdity of mortal thinking is that it misdescribes totally what it was intended to describe. It is not that human names are meaningless; they are, rather, widely off the mark—their mark. Mortals could not have found themselves farther from the goal—their goal. This is exactly what was meant by the "backward-turning route". With the words ἄδιδμον ὑπάρχοντας, "with respect to it have been spoken," and πείσοντες ἔνοιαν ἀληθείαν, "having trusted its mortals that they be true," Parmenides reminds us of the relation of πέπτωμα between mind and reality. With the list of mortal judgments he documents the failure of the human mind to live up to this commitment.

NOTES

1. This paper is based on Ch. V of a larger study I am completing under the title: The Route of Parmenides: A Study of Word, Image, and Argument in the Fragments. I am indebted to Professor Gregory Vlastos for criticism of an earlier draft of this chapter, and for his kindness in allowing me to read a paper of his, which remains unpublished, entitled "Names of Being in Parmenides."


3. Most critics would regard B8.34-41 a "digression" or "recapitulation"

4. We find ταύτον τ’ with reference to έδον only five lines above. To the continuous τ’ of B8.29 corresponds the continuous 'τ' of B8.34. The two lines are linked by what appears like a continuous chain of references to what is: ταύτον τ’ έν ταύτη...καθ’ έκαστο...μιν...το έδον...έον...ταύτων δ’.

5. L. Tarán, pp. 119 and 191 argues, rightly, that lines 32-33 are a deduction of the attribute τελεστόν (B8.4).


8. Tarán, p. 120; Guthrie, II, p. 39.

9. For οὐδεκαν introducing a relative clause with the value of a substantive, cf. Od. 3.609p. ηγετάντα νέοσαι οὐδεκα ("that on account of which") δέως ἱκώμεσον. See Pierre Chantraine, Grammaire Homérique, vol. II (Paris, 1953) p. 286, and Pierre Monteil, La phrase relative en grec ancien, Etudes et Commentaires, no. 47 (Paris, 1963), p. 267. A good parallel is Plato Buth, 6. τοῦτ' ἐστὶν οὐδεκα τὴν γαρ ήμεν χειροκτόνων. In έστίν νοεῖν we have a case of the active infinitive in passive sense: cf. Chantraine, II, p. 300; Schwyzzer-Debrunner, p. 357. Examples from Homer are: βόεις ἢ καὶ ἐλαύνεις sep (Od. 18.371); ηγετΈροι πολεμείζειν ἦσαν Αχαιοί (Il. 18.258). Exact parallels are θάλασσα δ’ σύχετ’ ἢ έδειν (Aisch. Pers. 419) and ἀθάνατον ἔχον ἀρετήν, ὡς πάρεσθ’ ὄραν (Soph. Phil. 1.420). But what is by far the most striking parallel is in a text which obviously derives from Eleatic arguments, the Hippocratic Art. ch. 2: εἰ γάρ ὃ διπλοί ή ἠδείν τά μη έόντα, ἀδερτά τά έόντα, οὐκ οἶδ’ διδάξα τε τις αὐτά νοείς ή έόντα, ἢ γε εἴη και νοείς έδειν καί γνωριμη νοσείς ὡς στίν. The sense is clearly: "If non-beings are there to see, as beings (are), I know not how one could regard them as non-beings, those very things, which would be there (for him) to see with his eyes, and to know with his understanding that they are." No text could put more forcefully the idea: "It's there to see! Look at it." The temptation to render (bookishly and unimaginatively) the first έστιν and the εἴη of this text by "is possible" and "would be possible" should be resisted. The examples from Aeschylus and Sophocles ought to be sufficient as a deterrent. The construction which I adopt here resembles that given by Uvo Hölscher in "Grammatisches zu Parmenides," Hermes, 84 (1956), pp. 390 ff. But I do not share his argument for treating ταύτων as subject, viz. that if νοείς and εἴη were the subject they would be connected by καθ’ rather than τε καθ’. The argument is obviously mistaken; cf. Mansfeld, p. 66; and Tarán p. 44. Nor would I defend Hölscher's translation, "dasselbe kann gedacht werden und ist zugleich dasjenige, weshalb das gedachte seiend ist" (p. 394), which suggests that of the two έστι on the line the first occurs with the sense of possibility and the second with that of straight existential assertion. "Mansfeld, loc. cit., justifiably
criticizes Hölscher's translation for this shift.

10. Tarán, p.121. He considers it "possible," nevertheless, and his construction of the similarly worded B3 reads: "For the same thing exists for thinking and for being" (p.14f).

11. Indeed, we must not give this translation. For it obscures the syntax and erases the sense of presence in ἐστι νοεῖν.

12. Kurt von Fritz, in "Νοεῖν, Νοεῖν and their Derivatives in pre-Socratic Philosophy: Part I," Classical Philology, 40 (1945), pp. 237-238 argued that the δύναται here, which he interpreted as οὐ̣ δύναται, has the force of the "causa efficientis as well as the logical reason." I suggest that we interpret the word as suggesting ambiguously both a final and an efficient cause.


16. The particle γε in B8.37 makes necessary the paraphrastic translation: "since it was just this thing that...." The γε here surely has the force of "specifically" or "only".


18. For a review of interpretations see Tarán, pp.123-128. The translation, "for you will not find thinking without (finding) Being in what has been expressed," which he adopts from Albertelli, is not very plausible. It corresponds to a Greek text: οὐ γὰρ ἐφοδευόμενον τὸ νοεῖν ἀνείπον ένότος ἐν νόημα τῷ, δ ἐφαρματίσατο. It would be very awkward if ἐν γε, coming immediately after ένότος and emphatically after the main caesura, had to be construed as referring not to the latter but to a vaguely understood νόημα or λόγος.

19. Cf. ἐν σοὶ γὰρ ἐσμὲν (Soph. O.T. 314); ἐν ταῖς γαυραῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων τὰ πάρθενα ἐγένετο (Thucyd. I.74); ... ἐν δ' ἐμοὶ τέλος/αὑτῷ γένοιτο τίς, τίς μάχης πέρι, "let the telos of their fight be determined by me." (Soph. O.C. 422). For a discussion of this use see Schwyzer-Debrunner p.458.

20. The word may additionally have the connotation of "spread the word": cf. J. Mansfeld, "Fr. B21," Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, N.F., 109 (1966) pp.95-96. But the parallels he cites in
support of this are mostly fourth-century and later.

21. The participle is similarly interpreted in Diels-Kranz and Mansfeld, Offenbarung, p.84.

22. I take it, it is considerations such as the ones given above that motivate Guthrie's translation and gloss "in which l.e. in dependence on, or in respect of which it is expressed or revealed" (Vol. II p.39). I would also agree with Mansfeld's comment (p.85) that B8.35-36 amounts to the implication νοεῖν → ἐαν
For the sentence says, in effect, (νοεῖν · ἐαν), which is the classical definition of truth-functional implication. Now I say "amounts" rather than "ist klare implikative Bezeichnung" (p.85, his italics) since Parmenides' mode of expression is more concrete and more pictorial. But I find the rest of Mansfeld's account of B8.34-36 confused. His explication is: "Denken impliziert dasjenige, weswegen der Gedanke ist, weil es immer schon im 'weswegen', d.h. im Seienden, impliziert ist. Parmenides behauptet hier die Umkehrbarkeit der implikativen Beziehung zwischen Denken und Seiendem: p (Denken) imp q (Seiendes), weil q imp p." (p.85) That p→q because q→p (!) is a fallacy unworthy of Parmenides. Besides, the counterpart in the text of this double implication posited by Mansfeld is not clear. B8.35-36 is surely of the form p→q. The "Umkehrbarkeit" must be in B8.34. (Mansfeld often represents this, as well as B3, by the formula p→q. But on his implicational interpretation of these lines, the ταυτεύμονα must refer to a reciprocal relation.) If B8.34 is the coimplication p↔q then the p→q of B8.35-6 is not enough to support it, much less could it be "gleichbeteund," as Mansfeld remarks a few lines above the comment cited.

23. Tarán (pp. 136, 139-144 and 193) finds a deduction of the attribute μονογενὲς, "unique," in these lines. But the clause "since it was just this thing that Fate shackled" reads more like a consequence or a corollary of uniqueness, rather than a proof of it. The deduction of μονογενὲς is more plausibly found in the proof of "indivisibility" (B8.22-25). The weakness of Tarán's interpretation here is betrayed in his comment: "The characteristic of uniqueness follows by itself without a special demonstration" (p.141).

24. I translate "therefore." It is generally recognized that lines 32-33 constitute a proof of the "complete" or "accomplished" character of what-is. So ὅψεκεν must introduce an independent clause. Contrast: Tarán, p.118; Guthrie, Vol. II, p.34.

26. ibid. p. 236.

27. "We very often borrow achievement verbs to signify the performance of the corresponding task activities... 'Hear' is sometimes used as a synonym of 'listen' and 'mend' as a synonym of 'try to mend'." (Gilbert Ryle, p. 149f., The Concept of Mind [London, 1949].)

28. Cf. also the oxymoron in Pindar, P. 2.61: κενενεν ἐλπίδων χαονον τελος, "the gaping fulfilment of empty expectations."

29. By failing to draw this distinction von Fritz, p. 236, exaggerates the inconsistency between passages in which νοος etc. are connected with truth and others in which they are connected with error. Tarán's critique of von Fritz in "El Significado de NOEIN en Parménides," Anales de Filología Clásica, 7 (1959), pp.123, 134ff., is also vitiated by the absence of this distinction, and results in the unconvincing thesis that Parménides' νοεντ and νοος refer indifferently to a mind that knows the έν and to mind in error.

30. von Fritz's final solution is, therefore, correct: "even the πλάκκτος νοος of mortals cannot fail to be linked up inextricably with the έν." (p.239). But I would add the qualification that in the case of mortal opinion the link is felt as normative or jussive--as an unrealized obligation.


32. For purposes of brevity I have slurred over an important difference between Russell and Wittgenstein. The first is much more of a Platonist. For him the task of philosophy is correction no less than elucidation. In addition with the difficulty of understanding the rules of projection we must cope with the fact that a good deal of everyday language is out of touch with reality, or represents reality in a distorted or attenuated form: "The process of sound philosophizing, to my mind, consists mainly in passing from those obvious, vague, ambiguous things, that we feel quite sure of, to something precise, clear and definite, which by reflection and analysis we find is involved in the vague thing that we start from, and is, so to speak, the real truth of which that vague thing is a sort of shadow." (Russell, "Logical Atomism," Lecture I). Contrast Wittgenstein's view: "In fact, all the propositions of our everyday language /Ungangsprache/ the emphasis is on its 'everyday' characteristic, just as they stand, are in perfect logical order.--That utterly simple thing, which we have to formulate here, is not an image of truth, but the truth itself in its entirety." (Tractatus, 5.563, p.113.) It is, of course, this doctrine which is developed in Wittgenstein's later philosophy of ordinary language. Russell's, more so than Wittgenstein's, view is the one which bears comparison with the interpretation of Parménides I am developing here.

33. In Phaedo 67b the ὕ ἐνεκα points toward the ultimate fulfilment of a life-long quest which is metaphorically conceived as a journey. Similarly in Symp. 210a, 210e, 211c where ὕ ἐνεκα introduces repeatedly
"the beautiful itself." (Cf. Gorg. 499e-500a.) In Rep. 510d the preposition points toward the real or ultimate subject of mathematical thinking. The word also functions to remind interlocutors of the specific or main topic of a philosophic dialogue: Theaet. 184a; Laws 701c-d, 894b; Charm. 158e, 165a.


35. Ibid. pp.145-153. Woodbury's reading is also defended by Vlastos in the unpublished paper mentioned in n.1 above; it has been adopted by Joseph Owens, A History of Ancient Western Philosophy (New York, 1959), p.65. Hermann Frankel considers the passage corrupt. He proposes the emendation τῷ μαθηματικῷ (Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums /München, 1962/ p.408, n.20.)


37. For the construction see Woodbury, p.149.

38. This, however, also argues against Woodbury's view that the reference of τῷ is not to the ένώτερον see above n.34.

39. See LSJ: s.v. καλέω II.1; s.v. λέγω III.4; s.v. δηλομαχώ II.1.

40. For examples see Woodbury p.149. The two constructions appear side by side in Parmenides B9, in lines 1 and 2 respectively.

41. One thinks immediately of Hesiod: cf. Theog. 144-45; 207-210; 234-5; 281-283 etc. Recall also that Hesiod's long lists (e.g. of the Nereids, Theog. 240ff.) consist mostly of names which can be understood easily as descriptions.

42. There is a point to the periphrasis "bright surface" if we construe it as an indication that the διαμετρεῖν could involve either the surface, or its brightness, or both.

43. It is surely better to read ή rather than ἰ (Diels-Kranz), to match the dative νόμῳ in the second half of the line.

44. Woodbury cites the Empedocles fragment (pp.149, 160 n.38) only as one of the examples for the construction δηλομαχώ ἐπὶ τινί.

45. Tarán, p.143, takes note of the parallel with Empedocles B8 and observes that the latter "adopted Parmenides' thesis that the words of mortals when used to assert things which do not exist are empty names." But that the names are empty (without any reference) is precisely what Empedocles does not say.

46. Here I am conscious of echoing an argument developed by Vlastos in the paper mentioned in n.1 above.