6

CON(-)SEQUENCE: FRAGMENT 8

In both *Odyssey* 12 and Parmenides' poem, then, a female divinity with privileged access to knowledge, located in a special Beyond, signs out a *hodos* that her male mortal charge must travel in order to reach his destination. In both cases this features a choice between two *hodoi* where one is radically blocked and impassable, and, according to the logic of the exclusive, exhaustive disjunction or *krisis*, the traveller is therefore forced to proceed by way of the other. In both *Odyssey* 12 and Parmenides' poem, the goddess then provides detailed instructions for travel on the remaining route.[1] We examined

[1] The debt to the formulation at Mourelatos (2008b) 24 n. 38 (see also pp. 24, 92) is clear:

> In both cases, we have in this order: (a) an initial choice between two routes; (b) an explanation that one of these invariably leads to *planē* (cf. the very name *Planktai* in the *Odyssey*, the adjective *panapeuthea* in Parmenides); (c) a further explanation that the remaining route calls for expert navigation and that most mortals fail at it (Od. 12.73–110; cf. B6, B7); (d) detailed instructions for the correct navigation of this remaining route (Od. 12.115–26; cf. B8).
>
> It will be noted that I have omitted points (b) and (c) in my summary. That is because I think that the parallel between the *hodos* that Circe signs out to Odysseus and the one Parmenides' goddess signs out to the *kouros* may be even more precise than Mourelatos spells out. In the *Odyssey*, we actually have two successive exclusive, exhaustive disjunctions. The first is between the Wandering Rocks (which, *pace* Mourelatos (2008b) 92, do not somehow lead to or induce wandering, but, as we have seen, themselves 'wander' insofar as they move by snapping shut, thereby blocking absolutely any passage through them) and the Two Rocks. Then, as we have seen, we immediately get a *second* exclusive, exhaustive disjunction or *krisis* – passage by way of either Scylla or Charybdis (note that Circe does not use the word *hodos* to describe this disjunction here, as she does at *Od*. 12.57). Charybdis is of course no less radically impassable, and so Odysseus is forced to go by way of Scylla (see also Section 6.2.1 for further discussion). The parallel opens up a startlingly evocative vista on the vexed question of how many routes there are in Parmenides' poem. Scholars sometimes discuss a three-route option as if there were a choice between all three roads at once. But this need not necessarily the case, and it is certainly not the case that Odysseus must decide from the beginning whether to travel by way of the Planctae, Scylla, or Charybdis. Instead, as the text of the *Odyssey* makes very clear (Section 4.2.1), what we see are two consecutive choices between symmetrical, carefully balanced pairs that form an exclusive, exhaustive disjunction; the effect is a successive winnowing of routes available to the traveler rather than a free choice between three routes. Because the analysis I pursue in this book can accommodate a broad range of interpretations of Parmenides' arguments (see sections 6.3.1–4), I have been careful to remain agnostic on certain questions, such as how many routes are involved, that

the first part of this parallel in Chapter 5; now it is time to examine the second.

Putting matters this way underscores another benefit of analysing the structure of Parmenides' 'Route to Truth' not in terms of a rigid, one-to-one correlation, but with the greater flexibility afforded by the notion of the 'rhetorical schema' governed by the *hodos*. Rather than being forced (as Mourelatos is) to correlate fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8 with Circe's *hodos* as it is ordered in lines *Od.* 12.55–126, with the analysis of Chapter 3 in hand, we are now in a position to examine the possibility that Parmenides exploits the combinatorial possibilities offered by the entire *hodos* (*Od.* 12.39–141) and of the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* more generally. This points towards a core claim: as the catalogic entries 'Sirens', 'Choice/*Krisis*', and 'Thrinacia' are linked together in Circe's *hodos* according to the relationship we have been calling 'con-sequence', so the *hodos*-units articulated in fragments 2, 6 and 7, and 8.5–49 are linked together in the *hodos* outlined by Parmenides' goddess according to the same sequentially ordered pattern.

Before approaching the specifics of this claim, a few preliminary points should be stated at the outset. In what follows, I shall adopt several widely agreed-upon tenets concerning the best way to analyse the constituent elements comprising Fragment 8:[2] that the four *sēmata* of lines 8.3–4[3] announce a programme for the

might commit me to a specific interpretation of Parmenides to the exclusion of others. I intend to build on the points set out in this footnote in an appropriate setting.

[2] Those who advocate (or at least endorse) the following positions – at least in their basic outlines – include the seminal Owen (1960), from which a number of positions either originate or where they received their current form of expression; van Groningen (1960) 226; Guthrie (1965) 26–43; Mansfeld (1964), esp. 93–102; Mourelatos (2008b) [1970]; Stokes (1971); Lloyd (1979); Lloyd (2000); Barnes (1982); Kirk, Raven, and Schofield (2007) [1983]; Coxon (2009) [1986]; Austin (1986); Curd (1998b); Sedley (1999), with reservations at 122; Robbiano (2006) 109–19; Palmer (2009); Graham (2010) 237–38; Thanassas (2011); Wedin (2014). Notable dissidents include Tarán (1965) 191 and now McKirahan (2008), discussed below. Though I do not necessarily share his view of Parmenides' overarching project, my understanding of the specific arguments made in the course of Fragment 8, particularly their internal form and structure, is much indebted to Palmer's *tour de force* exposition (Palmer (2009) 137–59).

[3] Of the works listed above, Owen (1960), Guthrie (1965), Mourelatos (2008b) [1970], Coxon (2009), Curd (1998b), Sedley (1999), Robbiano (2006), and McKirahan (2008) consider the argumentation proper to beginning only at Fr. 8.6b; the status of Fr. 8.5–6a varies in these interpretations.

remainder of the 'Route to Truth';[4] that these *sēmata*, which name qualities of *to eon*, fall into four groups: (i) *agenēton kai anōlethron*, (ii) *oulon mounogenes te*,[5] (iii) *atremes*, and (iv) *teleston*;[6] and that these four qualities of *to eon* are taken up, and arguments offered in support of them, one by one in the course of lines (i) 8.5/6–21, (ii) 8.22–25, (iii) 8.26–31/33,[7] and (iv) 8.42–49, respectively.[8] Because my interest here lies in the formal principles of arrangement organizing the relationship between Parmenides' arguments rather than in the substance of the claims they advance, I will not attempt to prove the merits of viewing the structure of argument along these lines, which have been widely accepted since at least Owen's exegesis undertaken more than sixty years ago.[9] At this stage, we may simply note that the traditional hermeneutic concerns of the poetry critic – attention to the way that repeated words and images help define the structure, and articulate the units, of a poem – are in harmony with analyses that see the repeated use of words like *epei* as the key to understanding the articulation of the argument[10] (rather than, say, a strategy of combing through the body of Fragment 8 for

[4] For what constitutes a *sēma*, see discussion below.

[5] Kahn (1994) 157 n. 1; Tarán (1965) 88–93; Verdenius (1967) 116; Coxon (2009) 314–15, Palmer (2009) 382–83.

[6] See e.g. Owen (1960) 102; Tarán (1965) 93–95; Coxon (2009) 315; Palmer (2009) 382–83.

[7] Those in favour of the third argument encompassing 8.26–31 include: Mourelatos (2008b) [1970], Kirk, Raven, and Schofield (2007) [1983], Thanassas (1997), Curd (1998b), Austin (2002), Austin (2007), and Robbiano (2006). Among those who include lines 8.32–33 in the third argument are: Owen (1960), Lloyd (1979) 70 n. 60, Barnes (1982), Coxon (2009), and Palmer (2009).

[8] See esp. Palmer (2009) 352–54, who summarizes the argument of Ebert (1989); see also e.g. Thanassas (1997). My own view of 8.34–41 echoes Barnes (1982) 180: 'I cannot associate them with anything in the prospectus; and I have sympathy with the proposal to place them after line 49.' Wherever one places lines 8.34–41, the view taken here is of a continuous argument that spans fragments 2, 6, 7, 8.1–33, and 8.42–49.

[9] Owen 1960. Among those who agree about the four-part structure of Fragment 8, there is also the question of lines 8.32–33; see n. 7 above. For an entirely different analysis of Fragment 8, see e.g. Tarán (1965) and, more radically, McKirahan (2008); I shall discuss McKirahan's position at some length below.

[10] And this in turn has a bearing – though by no means a decisive one – on such questions as whether 8.5–6a should be considered part of the first *sēma* proper or an extension of the programme, or whether 8.32–33 should be read as part of the third or the fourth *sēma.* For an excellent analysis of the use of *epei* and other such words to structure the argument, see e.g. Palmer (2009) 136–59, esp. 156; see also Barnes (1983) for the more general point. On a similar note, the observations above regarding the role played by the discourse marker *autar* (and also, surprisingly, the classic epic combination *autar epei*) can perhaps help us

arguments that seem to line up according to our sense of what makes an argument good).[11]

Before moving on to the body of Fragment 8, it is worth observing three additional ways in which the analysis undertaken in the preceding chapters can shed new light on aspects of the use of the word *sēma* in the opening movements of the fragment. It begins (Fr. 8.1–3):

> . . . Μόνος δ' ἔτι μῦθος ὁδοῖο
> λείπεται, ὡς ἔστιν· ταύτῃ δ' ἐπὶ σήματ' ἔασι
> πολλὰ μάλ' . . .
>
> . . . As yet an account of a single *hodos*[12]
> Remains, that . . . is (. . .):[13] and on this *hodos* there are *sēmata*,
> Very many . . .

The precise meaning of the word here is debated. On one view, the four predicates listed in lines 8.3–4 (or 8.3–6)[14] constitute the *sēmata*;[15] on another, it is the arguments (i.e. lines 8.5/6–49) themselves to which the word *sēmata* refers.[16] In the first case, the emphasis falls on the notion of a *sēma* as a physical object

discern the shape and structure of the argumentative pattern in ways not yet appreciated – an issue I hope to explore elsewhere.

[11] So e.g. Tarán (1965) and McKirahan (2008) begin by formulating the points they think Parmenides attempts to make and work backwards to parcel up Fragment 8 into chunks that would support these, though McKirahan is, admirably, at pains to argue that it is a mistake to judge the quality of Parmenides' arguments according to contemporary understandings of what makes an argument good; see discussion below in this chapter's sections 6.3.4, 'Two Further Options', and 6.4, '*Sēma* IV: Accomplishments and Completions'.

[12] For the nuances of these possible translations and the very high stakes tied to the different possibilities, see Cassin (2011), esp. 65–79.

[13] See Cassin (2011), esp. 65–79.

[14] See n. 3 above.

[15] See e.g. Owen (1974); Mourelatos (2008b) 94; Coxon (2009) 312–15.

[16] See e.g. Cerri (2000) 214; Cordero (2004); Robbiano (2011) 218 and *passim*; see also McKirahan (2008) 221 n. 9. Against this view, see Mourelatos (2008b) 25 n. 40: 'the sense of a "signpost" or "marking on the route" seems more apt. The syntax of the passage makes Parmenides' "signs" into something physical: they are *on* (*epi*) the route.' Palmer's view is sage: 'the goddess's catalogue of *sēmata* functions with some degree of ambiguity, in that they can be understood both as markers or "signposts" defining the way to come and also as the attributes under which Parmenides will come to conceive of What Is itself' (Palmer (2009) 139). See also p. 296 below.

acting as a kind of landmark (as often in Homer);[17] in the second, the hermeneutic demands embedded in the word *sēmainō* – indicating a message neither immediately intelligible nor entirely opaque, but requiring interpretation – come to the fore.[18]

The first benefit: whichever construal of *sēma* one favours, we find here yet another benefit of reading Parmenides' poem against the backdrop of *Odyssey* 12. Parmenides' goddess's choice of words becomes less surprising, and more intelligible, when one recalls that Circe begins her account to Odysseus (*Od.* 12.25–26):

> . . . αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ δείξω ὁδὸν ἠδὲ ἕκαστα
> σημανέω . . .
>
> . . .But I shall indicate your *hodos* and each thing
> Sign out . . .

'Sign out each thing' is, in fact, precisely what she does in the course of *Od.* 12.39–141, just as Parmenides' goddess will do in the course of Fragment 8.5–49. Had Circe been moved to provide a synoptic overview of 'each of the things' she was to 'sign out', perhaps she might have provided just such a summary as we find in Fragment 8.3–4; she might even have referred to each of the things to be signed out as a *sēma*.

Second, the discussion undertaken in Section 1.1 may perhaps help us transcend the division between these two interpretations. Much of this book has proceeded from the premise that one of Parmenides' main strategies for thinking new thoughts and speaking in new ways is to mobilize and activate the full range of associations between old words – *hodos*, for example – and their physical referents, their semantic range, and their place in the mesh of discursive, sociocultural, and mythical associations. We will see below how Parmenides exploits the ambivalence between

[17] Owen's epigrammatic formulation – Parmenides 'is careful to call these *signs on the way* to [his] conclusion. Destinations do not contain the signs that lead to them, and travelers at their destinations have no use for the signs' (Owen (1974) 276, emphasis original) – is often cited by partisans of this view. Valuable Homeric bibliography includes Prier (1978), Lynn-George (1988), Nagy (1990a), Ford (1992), Foley (1999), also Katz (1991), Bergren (1993), Zeitlin (1995), Henderson (1997), Grethlein (2008), and Latona (2008) 218–19.

[18] Unsurprisingly, Heraclitus B93 – ὁ ἄναξ οὗ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει ἀλλὰ σημαίνει – is often adduced here (e.g. Robbiano (2006) 108–09); for an extended analysis of B93, see now Tor (2016).

the object-like and activity-like senses of the word *hodos*. Why should *sēma* and its word family be any different? Section 1.1 provided several fascinating examples of how both senses of the word *sēma* – a physical object that can guide, mark, or otherwise act like a road sign, and something whose significance requires interpretation – can intersect, overlap, or be (literally) coextensive. Consider again the inscription on the Altar of the Twelve Gods:[19]

> [ἡ πόλις] ἔστ[η]σ[έν με β]ροτ[οῖς] μνημεῖον ἀληθὲς
> [πᾶσιν] σημαίνε[ιν μέ]τ[ρον] ὁδοιπορίας . . .
>
> (The city) set (me) up, a true record (for all) men
> To indicate (the length) of the journey . . .

The physical object – a 'true record' or 'truthful monument' – itself 'indicates' or 'signs out' a message, but this message is directed to 'mortals' and is presented as meaningful in the course of the process of journeying that these mortals will, or at least may wish to, undertake.[20]

Even more arresting in this respect are Hipparchus' herms, which literally embody all at once the *sēma* as road sign, a physical object 'on the route' signing out the path and its measure ('you are halfway between the city and the deme of *x* or *y*'); the *sēma* as *interpretans*, a maxim verbally communicating an important insight about the world, be it moral (e.g. 'Do not deceive a friend') or ontological (e.g. 'what-is is ungenerable and imperishable');[21] and the *sēma* as *interpretandum*, something to be interpreted in the course of the journey that follows, be it on the road to the *astu* or the argument supporting the claim about what-is. Here would be one more advantage, then, of reading Parmenides as both a poet and a culturally and physically embedded denizen of the late archaic period, rather than as an analytic philosopher *avant la lettre* speaking Truth across the void of ages. In the semantic ambiguity of the word *sēma*, we see Parmenides

[19] See discussion in Section 1.1 above.

[20] That is to say, it also encompasses the qualities of the second interpretation of Parmenides' *sēma* that are deemed important by, for example, Robbiano: both an addressee and a sense that the relevance of the message is defined in relation to a journey and the action of undertaking it; Robbiano (2011) 217–19, 227–28.

[21] This is closer to the reading offered by e.g. Coxon (2009) 312.

the poet-thinker, having found only old words and old referents, hammering out new meanings and conceptual connections from the crucible of language upon the anvil of sense and reference.

Third, we may observe the relationship between the programmatic announcement of the *sēmata* in 8.3–4 and the notion of catalogic discourse discussed above (Section 3.1.4). This inventory of *sēmata* at lines Fr. 8.3–4 returns us to the characteristics of catalogic speech: the sequential enumeration of a set of items that, were they to form a series (rather than a list), would be ordered according to a specifically determined principle.

This brings us to the substance of Fragment 8 and Parmenides' argument itself. In brief, my interest lies in examining the types of similarities that obtain between the manner in which the four assertions about the nature of *to eon* are linked to each other and the *kris(e)is* in fragments 2 and 6/7, and the manner in which the episode of the Sirens is linked to the *krisis* between the two *hodoi* or the trip past Scylla is linked to the sojourn on Thrinacia.[22]

How might this work? Examining the possible answers to this question will form the bulk of the discussion in Section 6.3 below. A preview of one possibility, however, is as follows. The *hodos*, as a rhetorical schema, makes possible the linking of what we have been calling *hodos*-units according to a regular ordering principle: the *hodos*, that is, would play a decisive role in ordering the items of a catalogue into a series. On this view, in place of episodes dramatizing narrative encounters with mythological creatures (such as we find in Homer), in Fr. 8, Parmenides makes claims about the nature of *to eon*. Where in Homer episodes are sequenced partly on the basis of the spatial contiguity of the locations where the episodes take place in the story-world of the *Odyssey*, on this view, the claims about *to eon* would be sequenced on the basis of their 'spatial contiguity' in the underlying 'logical geography' of the story-world of fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8 (the physical dimension expressed in part through the *sēma qua* road sign, grave marker, or other physical object fixed in a particular place).[23] And

[22] Parmenidean analysts who prefer a one *krisis*, two-route reading can read 'Fragment 2' for 'fragments 2 and 6/7' – the underlying point remains the same; see n. 25 below.

[23] See again p. 222 and Section 1.1 above for the range of meanings encompassed by the word *sēma*.

where in Homer the direction of this sequential ordering of episodes in the narrative is fixed by the necessity that Odysseus move in time from location to location within the story-world, in Parmenides the direction of this sequential ordering of claims seems to be dictated by the same consideration in logical space. Narrative time collapses into story time as this *hodos* of inquiry is explained to the *kouros* – and to us. On this reading, the rhetorical schema dictated by the figure of the *hodos* – and the specific mode of discursive organization we have been calling con-sequence – would then provide the basic framework governing the shape of the discursive architecture of fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8.1–49 (see Figures 6.1a–b).

Having thus previewed a 'strong' reading of the relationship between *Odyssey* 12 and Parmenides' 'Route to Truth',[24] it will be important to distinguish the relationships between Fragment 2, fragments 6 and 7, and Fragment 8.5–21 at the level of *hodos*-units (two

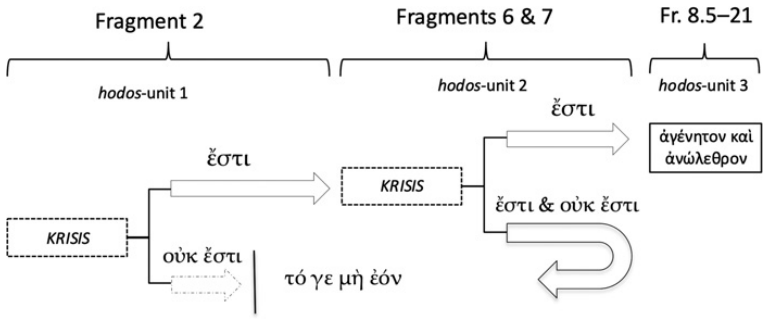

Figure 6.1a One possibility. Con-sequence: Ordered sequential linkage of discursive units (= *hodos*-units), frs. 2, 6, 7, and 8.5–21[25]

[24] This will be seen to coincide with the influential reading advanced in Owen (1960).

[25] This schema depicts a two-*krisis* rather than one-*krisis* map of Parmenides' arguments. But my arguments work just as well in either case, and in this book I remain agnostic as to whether there is one *krisis* or two in the course of fragments 2, 6, and 7, just as I remain agnostic here as to whether, for example, Owen's interpretation of the relationship between the *sēmata* in Fragment 8 (represented in Figure 6.1b) or Sedley's interpretation is to be preferred (see further Section 6.3, '*Sēma* III. *Hodopoiēsis*: The 'Route to Truth' and Fragment 8' below). Since my arguments do not hinge on committing to one interpretation or the other and, no less importantly, can accommodate a number of different interpretations, I have refrained from advancing my own views on several specific points of Parmenides' arguments, which is best done in another setting; I thank my PhD examiners for encouraging me to proceed in this fashion.

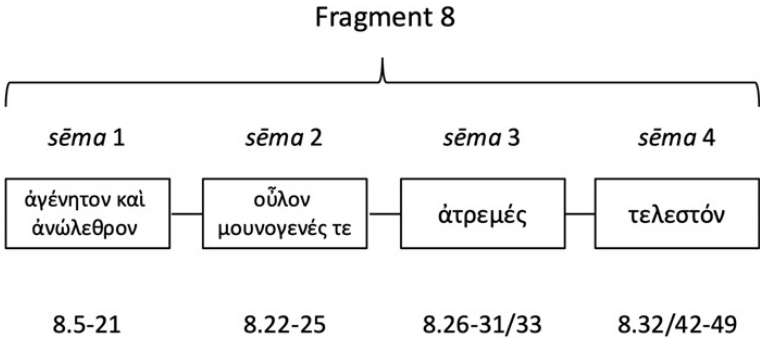

Figure 6.1b Articulation of Fr. 8.5–49 (after Owen = strong reading) according to rhetorical schema of the *hodos* (con-sequence)

kriseis (or one, if one prefers) and the first *sēma* down the path 'IS') from the relationships between lines 5–21, 22–5, 26–33, and 42–49 of Fragment 8. That the first grouping – fragments 2, 6, and 7 and Fragment 8.5–21 – is organized as a series is not today in serious dispute (see discussion at Section 6.3 below). The specific relationship between each of the different *sēmata* is, however, somewhat more contentious (again, to be discussed in Section 6.3 below). According to some interpretations[26] these, too, form a series; according to others[27] they are more list-like (though, as we shall see, even on these interpretations, they do not really comprise a list, strictly speaking). Ultimately, my goal in this book is not to plump for one interpretation or the other. Rather, I want to examine how my overall account of Parmenides' invention of extended deductive argumentation – with particular emphasis on his mobilization of the associations of the reference of the word *hodos*, the ambiguities inscribed in its polysemic nature, and, most of all, via the discursive architecture of the *hodos* – looks when paired with different plausible, internally consistent interpretations of these arguments themselves; it is to these I shall turn in Section 6.3 below. First, however, in sections 6.1 and 6.2, I shall cash out the previous discussions of narration and narrativity, description and descriptivity by examining Parmenides' tasks

[26] E.g. Owen (1960).
[27] E.g. Sedley (1999); the interpretations of both Owen and Sedley will be discussed at length below.

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and accomplishments in their intellectual and historical context. In Section 6.1, I place Parmenides in his historical and intellectual context and explore particular limitations that his predecessors confronted, thereby revealing the unique set of discursive resources the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* offered him. In Section 6.2, I consider these questions from the perspective of Parmenides' seminal ontological and epistemological innovations, and also their relationship to another set of narratologically complex manoeuvres he performs.

6.1 *Sēma* I: Systematicity and Argumentativeness

The best way to approach the arguments that make up Fragment 8 is to consider them alongside two crucial aspects of the larger intellectual milieu in which Parmenides may be seen to be working.[28] First is the question of what we might call discursive systematicity, an attempt to create a discursive structure in which claims are linked according to a regular pattern or underlying set of principles; second, the development of argumentation to support claims advanced (as opposed to a mere assertion of the claims themselves). This demands a brief discussion of earlier (or, in the case of Heraclitus, potentially contemporary)[29] thinkers.

Scholars have found the Milesians to be the most promising place to look for evidence of discursive systematicity among the immediate precursors of Parmenides.[30] Any evaluation of the discursive structure and argumentation exhibited in the works of the Ionian cosmologists is gravely constrained, of course, by the paucity of *ipsissima verba* coming down to us from Miletus.[31] A charitable reading, however, would see a certain level of discursive systematicity implied by their apparently systematic cosmological theories. The *communis opinio* remains that 'cosmogony is the heir of theogony', and that Hesiod's *Theogony* in particular provides the key model for the Ionians on two levels.[32] In the first

[28] However this should be best understood; see the Introduction and Ch. 2.
[29] Regarding this old, vexed question, little is at stake for the argument advanced in this book; for recent bibliography, see Introduction, n. 16.
[30] See e.g. Curd (1998a), and overviews such as Algra (1999) or Graham (2006) 1–27.
[31] See e.g. Mansfeld (1999) and Runia (2008), also Palmer (2009) 1–45 for discussion and bibliography.
[32] Phrase from Kahn (1994) 156.

place, it supplies a conceptual framework for understanding the world as one *kosmos*; in the second, it supplies a discursive framework for expressing this in a discursive unity (viz. a single, unified whole organized by a systemically applied rhetorical schema, the rhetorical schema of the genealogy).[33]

A genealogical mode of organizing discursive units does not, however, naturally suggest a role for argumentation that justifies the specific cosmological claims advanced.[34] (Although, again, any assessment of Milesian argumentation remains provisional on account of the lack of original source material.) And although Anaximander is credited with supporting his claims with argumentation rather than merely asserting them in two justly celebrated instances,[35] the scholarly consensus is that even 'where there is apparently genuine disagreement with a predecessor [and] we might expect specific arguments against' views previously espoused, a Milesian theory 'seems to be a matter of assertions with connecting links, rather than a system whose basis is argued for and in which the various elements are supported by demonstrations of their connections with first principles'.[36] A generous view of Milesian thought, then, would grant a kind of systematicity (at both conceptual and, potentially, discursive levels) to their cosmogonies and cosmologies, but detects scant interest in indicating why a particular assertion in this system should be accepted over a rival claim.

Xenophanes and Heraclitus cut rather a different pair of profiles. Here, too, we suffer from the patchy, haphazard manner in which their words have come down to us; in what survives we can catch some glimpses of argumentation, but any evaluation of the discursive architecture of these thinkers' expressions is necessarily speculative. What seems certain is that the argumentative

[33] In addition to Kahn (1994) [1960], see also the classics Cornford (1952), Vernant (2006g) [1957], Stokes (1962), Stokes (1963), more recent summaries such as Hussey (2006), and newer developments, such as e.g. Graham (2013) 41–80.

[34] At the level of types of dependence, it is difficult to imagine how the third level, allowing for instruction which shades into argument in the case of the rhetorical schema dictated by the figure of the *hodos*, would be occupied by anything but a narration in the case of a genealogical schema.

[35] See discussion in Lloyd (1979) 66–68; Mourelatos (1981); Makin (1993) 101–04; Kahn (1994).

[36] Curd (1998a) 5; the view is not held unanimously – Lloyd (1991a), for example, cuts somewhat against this grain.

support for individual claims advanced by these two thinkers is unquestionably more developed. Xenophanes uses *reductio* arguments, notably in Fragment 15;[37] Heraclitus uses various hypothetical arguments, as in fragments 7 and 23.[38]

Nevertheless, even one of the staunchest defenders of a rationalist Xenophanes admits that, while 'some fragments contain logical connectives … and take the form of hypothetical argument, on the whole Xenophanes offers little by way of argument in support of specific conclusions'.[39] Nor do those who would see in his corpus a systematic account of physical phenomena and their causes claim that he supports these daring assertions with much in the way of argumentative justification. Rather, the novelty of the claims lies in their ostensibly systematic nature and scope, not in their being systematically advanced or defended.[40]

It is not easy to assess from Heraclitus' fragments how systematic his argumentation was, or what the report that Heraclitus wrote a 'book' might imply.[41] The view summarized by Barnes three decades ago remains the generally received wisdom:

> Heraclitus was an aphorist; he did not produce periodic prose or write in continuous chapters; rather, he unburdened himself in the aphoristic form of instruction, by way of short and allusive sentences. No doubt he wrote 'a book.' But his 'book' was no treatise; rather, it had the outward look of the Hippocratic *Aphorisms* or of Democritus' collection of gnomes.[42]

[37] For Fr. 15, see e.g. Lesher (1992) 89–94, 114–19; for Xenophanes' argumentation, see e.g. Lloyd (1979) 68.

[38] See also fragments 99 and 4, and the discussion in Lloyd (1979) 68–69.

[39] Lesher (1992) 4–5: 'in spite of the non-argumentative character of most of the fragments, a philosophy of considerable complexity emerges from the corpus as a whole'. See Tor (2017) for a discussion of different views of Xenophanes, and Lesher's place on this spectrum.

[40] See esp. Mourelatos (2008a), also Mourelatos (2002).

[41] See e.g. Arist. *Rhet.* Γ 5, 1407b, Diog. Laert. 9.1, 5, 6, 7, 12.

[42] Barnes (1983) 97. Indeed, the chief dissenter is Barnes himself: see Barnes (1983) 104; but see now also A. Finkelberg (2017) 33–38. Most (1999a) 357 thinks it likely there was a 'lack of connection among many or all of the sentences that went to make it up'; each is 'effective more on its own terms than because of its place in a chain of argumentation'. Similarly, Kirk, Raven, and Schofield (2007) 184 opines that: '[t]he surviving fragments … do not resemble extracts from a continuous written work'; see also Hussey (1999), esp. 9, and Granger (2004), reprised at Granger (2008) 1–2. For more recent (and comprehensive) treatments of the topic, see e.g. Johnstone (2014) and A. Finkelberg (2017) 30–40 with up-to-date bibliography.

Even a leading proponent of the view that Heraclitus' corpus forms a carefully composed unity envisages this formal ordering of the whole 'on the analogy of the great choral odes, with their fluid but carefully articulated movement from image to aphorism, from myth to riddle to contemporary allusion'; on this view, supporting a presumed 'central theme, … *hen panta einai*', we find 'a chain of statements linked together not by logical argument but by interlocking ideas, imagery, and verbal echoes'.[43] Likewise, one of the most recent attempts to 'protect … the rationalism of Heraclitus' concedes 'a lack of intrinsic order among the fragments of Heraclitus' which may well 'stand to one another in no particular order or bear no intrinsic relation to one another, logically or syntactically'.[44]

What we find, then, in the case of the Milesians is, most likely, a relatively high degree of discursive systematicity but relatively little argumentation. In Xenophanes and Heraclitus, meanwhile, there are hints of a somewhat more developed level of argumentation, at least at the level of individual claims,[45] but what we do not seem to find is much evidence of discursive systematicity.

By contrast, the rhetorical schema dictated by the figure of the *hodos* offers a discursive framework that makes possible a single discursive unity that both accommodates a number of different textual units (unlike in Xenophanes and Heraclitus) *and* the linking together of these units in such a way as to suggest, and build upon, their necessary connection (unlike in the Milesian cosmologies). Studies of Parmenides' accomplishment emphasize both the systematicity of his discourse and its thoroughly argumentative character;[46] I suggest that it is his use of the figure of the *hodos* that, by providing a discursive framework that can accommodate both features, makes this combination possible.

[43] All quotations from Kahn (1979) 5–6.

[44] Granger (2004) 15, 6, respectively. See e.g. Graham (2008) 182, and 183: 'Heraclitus cannot provide an extended argument for inferences, but he can sharpen our perceptions … He can invite us to make inductive leaps in place of deductive inferences.' See also Mansfeld (1990) 20.

[45] See Curd's assessment: 'early Presocratic thought remains a series of *ad hoc* assertions' (Curd (1998a) 6); she continues: '[t]his is true even in Xenophanes and Heraclitus … their cosmological theories … are more assertion than argument.'

[46] See e.g. Curd (1998a) 6–7; likewise e.g. McKirahan (2010) 150–51 and McKirahan (2010) 173.

Importantly, Parmenides' use of argumentation operates at what we might deem to be two levels. Just as the decision in the *krisis* in Fragment 2 is supported by (condensed and skeletal) argumentative justification, so each of the four claims advanced in the course of Fragment 8 is defended by argumentative support of varying extensiveness and comprehensiveness (viz. at the level of types of dependence). But these claims – and their supporting argumentation – are also linked to fragments 2, 6, and 7 (viz. at the level of rhetorical schemata) and, on some readings, also to each other, a question to which we shall return in Section 6.3. It is the potential movement along both axes – down the level of dependence and across the level of rhetorical schemata – that helps make Parmenides' achievement what it is; and it is the *hodos* – which, unlike the genealogy or the stand-alone argument, accommodates and organizes relationships along both axes – that makes this possible.

6.2 *Sēma* II: Discursive Architecture and Temporality

What does this mean in terms of the discourse modes associated with the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* and the types of dependence it dictates? Before examining the specific relationships obtaining between the different fragments and the arguments of Fragment 8, it will be necessary to address aspects of Parmenides' *hodos* of inquiry in relation to two other dimensions of import for the history of thought. Against the backdrop of the deep continuities between the discursive architecture of the *hodos* in Homer and Parmenides, we may also note some changes of extraordinary significance.

We saw that in the *Odyssey*, the enumeration of an itinerary of a *hodos* is usually a narrative affair (Section 3.2). This is reflected at the textual level insofar as episodes are linked together by temporal adverbs (e.g. πρῶτα, κεῖθεν, ἔπειτα), and by verbs whose features are closely associated with narration: verbs in the aorist, or in the future or historic present tense; and verbs in the imperative mood and/or second person – the language of time-bound activities that unfold in the course of, and themselves constitute, narrative action. These features suggest that the manner in which the text itself progresses has an irreducibly temporal component: the sequence of items as they appear in the text unfold

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along temporal lines (i.e. they are related to the passage of time in the story-world). This in turn is connected to the fact that 'the temporal order in which events happen' – the underlying events depicted by the narrative, which in turn unfolds along temporal lines according to the passage of time in the story-world – 'is significant'.[47]

Parmenides' Fragment 8, however, bears little trace of these narrative textual features linking the 'episodes' of the *sēmata*. Instead of the hemistiches πρῶτα μὲν ἐς Πύλον ἐλθὲ (*Od.* 1.284), κεῖθεν δὲ Σπάρτηνδε (*Od.* 1.285), and νοστήσας δὴ ἔπειτα (*Od.* 1.291), or Σειρῆνας μὲν πρῶτον ἀφίξεαι (*Od.* 12.39), αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δή (*Od.* 12.55), and Θρινακίην δ' ἐς νῆσον ἀφίξεαι (*Od.* 12.127), the opening units of the *sēmata* in Fragment 8 begin, for example: οὐδέ ποτ' ἦν οὐδ' ἔσται (Fr. 8.5), and οὐδὲ διαιρετόν ἐστιν (Fr. 8.22).[48] We do not find the adverbial markers that indicate a temporal progression of text or event, just as we find none of the aorist, imperative, and/or second-person forms of narration or instruction that link the textual units of the *hodoi* of *Odyssey* 10 or 12. Although we do find verbs in the past and in future tense in line 8.5, these are both rejected in favour of the third person singular indicative timeless (or even eternal) present[49] (formally akin to what we find at line 8.22): ἐπεὶ νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν | ἕν, συνεχές (Fr. 8.5–6). And at the top level of dependence, we find few actions, and none for which the sequence of events depicted by them is significant. In the *hodos* detailed by Parmenides' goddess, the narrative framework that links the various units of the *hodos* to each other – expressed in *Odyssey* 12 in the second person future indicative verbs of prophetic utterance – has vanished (a dynamic to be discussed at greater length in Section 6.2.2.1 below; see Figure 6.2).

By contrast, verbs in the third person singular indicative omnitemporal present correspond perfectly to the characteristics attributed to 'description' given above (see sections 3.1.2 and 3.2.3). Moreover, the opening hemistiches introducing the first and second *sēmata* (*sēma-qua*-'argumentation proper') also fulfil the very same functions of description – namely, introducing

[47] See above Ch. 3, n. 21.
[48] Lines 16 and 26 to be discussed below.
[49] See discussion in e.g. Owen (1974), also Mourelatos (2008b) [1970]; Schofield (1970); Tarán (1979).

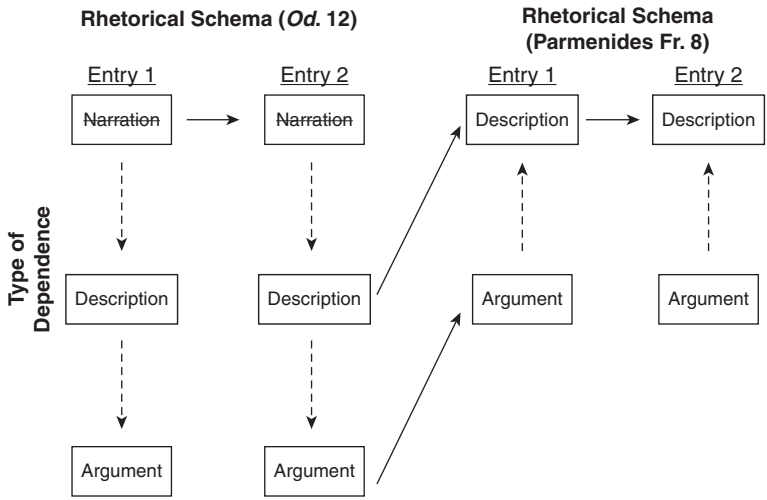

Figure 6.2 Levels of dependence: Transformation from Homer *Od.* 12.39–141 to Parmenides Fr. 8

elements of the story-world and attributing qualities to them – that we have identified (see Section 3.1.2). Not only are these opening hemistiches of *sēmata* 1 and 2 formally similar to the 'description' portions of Circe's *hodos* but they also perform the same function of attributing qualities.

These observations regarding description approach a larger nexus of topics which will form much of the remainder of the chapter. They can be examined from two perspectives. The first, to be addressed in the remainder of this section, concerns Parmenides' place in the history of thought: what is at stake in the deployment of the figure of the *hodos* at this particular phase of Presocratic thought? What possibilities and resources might it afford to one who exploits it, how do these work, and why might they be useful? Second, to be addressed in Section 6.3, '*Sēma* III': in what ways might this figure actually operate in the sequence spanning fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8 and in Fragment 8 itself? Finally, in Section 6.4, '*Sēma* IV', I shall attempt to draw some conclusions and assess their implications for our understanding of Parmenides' poem.

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6.2 *Sēma* II: Discursive Architecture and Temporality

6.2.1 Ontology, Epistemology, Discourse

6.2.1.1 Ontology: No Time, Like the Present

Eric Havelock considered one challenge facing the early Presocratics to be the following: 'aside altogether from the coinage of abstract nouns, the conceptual task . . . also required the elimination of verbs of doing and acting and happening, one may even say of living and dying, in favor of a syntax which states permanent relationships between conceptual terms systematically.'[50] This syntax, marked by the use of verbs in the third person omnitemporal present indicative, is in fact closely related to the kind we have been trying to capture under the rubric of 'description'.[51] More specifically: '[f]or this purpose the required linguistic mechanism was furnished by the timeless present of the verb to be – the copula of analytic statement. The angles *are* equal to two right angles. They are not born that way or become or are made so.'[52]

Complementing this claim at the level of individual words and discourse modes are others operative at the level of rhetorical schema. These centre around the benefits that arise from elminating the narrative frames formed by 'verbs of doing and acting and happening' (e.g. ἐλθέ, νοστήσας, ἀφίξεαι). Pertinent here are Kirk's observations concerning certain basic elements of epic and myth evolving out of the oral tradition: 'it is events, not permanent relationships, that are their currency.'[53] He continues:

> when tales concern themselves with the nature of the outside world, they do so in personal and genealogical terms of the kind used by Hesiod and his sources in the *Theogony*. That is not only because of the inclination of the tales . . . to animate, to anthropomorphize . . . but also because the development of action requires . . . diachronic not synchronic terms . . . history rather than philosophy or science . . . The language of the *Theogony* is, typically, the language of sequence; aorist rather than present tenses predominate . . . even when Hesiod is trying to set out the conditions of the present world, he is constantly driven back on

[50] Havelock (1983) 14.
[51] See also Havelock (1978).
[52] Havelock (1983) 14. That such a topic has been treated by works as varied as e.g. Kahn (1973), Kahn (2009b), Benveniste (1966), Havelock (1978), and Brown (1994), Heidegger (2000) and Derrida (1982), should give us pause regarding Havelock's claims concerning the 'copula of analytic statement'.
[53] Kirk (1983) 86.

personification and myth – on personification indeed *because of* the need for myth, not just because he is taking refuge in tradition but rather because he simply does not know how to describe (quite apart from vocabulary matters) a dynamic complex without interrelating its components in a historical manner.[54]

The verbal and other features of description do not merely provide a useful medium through which to express 'permanent relations between conceptual terms', that is; being liberated from presenting the world in terms of temporally pregnant events (which necessarily unfold according to a narrative sequence), it therefore becomes possible to conceptualize a reality not already woven from a temporally charged fabric, a warp of being not already meshed with the weft of becoming.[55]

Denarrativizing the framework within which an account of reality can be expressed and finding a discursive structure that both accomplishes this and maintains the ability to order its contents systematically (as discussed in the last section) are of obvious importance for a thinker who would abolish change and dynamic activity from reality.[56] The figure of the *hodos* plays the decisive role here.

First, regarding Havelock's claims, we may now return to the observations made in Section 4.2.2, concerning the high proportion of description and the frequency with which forms of *einai* (and *esti* in particular) appear in the *krisis* portion of Circe's *hodos*. In *Od*. 12.55–126, precisely what we *do* find are the ostensibly

[54] Kirk (1983) 86–87. Cf. in similar fashion: 'As far as Hesiod is concerned, one cannot speak of an antimony between the genetic myth and the structural arrangement. In mythical thought, any genealogy is also the expression of a structure, *and there is no way to account for a structure other than to present it in the form of a genealogical narrative*' (Vernant (2006c) 28, emphasis mine); see also 410 n. 10. Likewise: 'What characterizes Hesiod's thought . . . is the fact that the genetic myth and the structural divisions are not clearly opposed, as they are to our way of thinking, *but indissolubly linked*' (Vernant (2006b) 59, emphasis mine). Similarly Vernant (2006e) 119–20: 'This genesis of the world recounted by the Muses . . . does not unfold over a homogenous period . . . This past is punctuated not by any chronology but by genealogies. *Time is included within the relations of filiations*' (Vernant (2006e) 120, emphasis mine). There is a great deal more to be said on the relationship between discourse structured by the figure of the *hodos* and by genealogy. Likewise, it would be wrong to think that Vernant's points had settled the matter: see still e.g. Most (1999b).

[55] See n. 54 above.

[56] See esp. Nehamas (2002) 63: 'Reason says that the real does not change'; Popper (1998a) 154, 160 discusses a Parmenidean doctrine that centres on 'the search for invariants: the search for what does not change during change . . . he equated the real with the invariant, the unchanging'. See also e.g. Hankinson (2002).

permanent relationships whose importance Havelock stressed. Moreover, and evocatively, many of them are expressed via copula or copula-like forms of the third person present indicative form of *einai* (see Section 4.2.2.1.1, '*Einai*', above); whatever we may make of this fact, we may also observe that if Parmenides needed a model for expressing the kinds of enduring facts about the world discussed by Havelock, in this part of the *Odyssey* he would have found a very useful set of discursive building blocks waiting ready to hand.[57]

Second, the figure of the *hodos* provides for sections of indefinite length to be pegged onto, or depend from, the narrative framing that linked distinct units of text (Section 3.2.3), sections typically formed of description. These description portions in turn offer the possibility of articulating relationships between objects in the world that would be potentially unbound by temporal considerations; this in turn could also take on a particularly abstract, conceptual colouring (e.g. *Od.* 12.118–19, 12.109–10).[58] Parmenides exploits this possibility in the course of Fragment 8 and his *hodos dizēsios*. From a discursive perspective, what we find in Parmenides' reworking and reconfiguring of the Homeric figure of the *hodos* is (a) an elimination of the narrative frame, and (b) a corresponding expansion of the description sections, with their omnitemporal presents and frequent uses of *einai*, especially in the third person present singular indicative.

This moves us in the direction of Kirk's point. The language used in *Od.* 12.55–126 in particular suggests that the world Circe's *hodos* traverses is simply *there*, with stable, unchanging features that are simple *givens*: Scylla's rock simply *is* smooth (12.79); her cave, like the fig tree above Charybdis, simply *is there* (12.103). It simply *is not possible* to defend against Scylla (12.120); the evil she represents just *is* immortal (12.118). There is no question 'of verbs of doing or acting or happening' penetrating this timeless space of the *Apologoi*: the

[57] In saying this, I do not wish somehow to deny Parmenides' philosophical originality, or suggest that his use of *esti* and other forms of *einai* is not motivated primarily by his own philosophical agenda; see Section 4.3.2, '*Krisis*: Assessments and Cautions', above.

[58] Striking here is the shift in gender in the course of Circe's description of Scylla: '*She* is not mortal, but rather *the evil* is immortal' (ἡ δέ τοι οὐ θνητή, ἀλλ' ἀθάνατον κακόν ἐστι, *Od.* 12.118). See below for further analysis of this passage.

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syntax and diction suggest that this is a topography untouched by change, that its basic features just *are*.[59]

The point is underscored by Circe's rebuke to Odysseus when he asks what he can do to defend against Scylla. There is, the goddess makes clear, simply nothing to be done.[60] Circe goes so far as to couch her conclusion through negations and in a modally inflected idiom: οὐδέ τις ἔστ᾽ ἀλκή (*Od.* 12.120). That in turn stems from the brute fact that not only is Scylla unchanging, immortal, but in an abstract sense, 'the evil' itself just *is*, for it, too, is deathless, unchanging, indefatigable (*Od.* 12.118–19):

> ἡ δέ τοι οὐ θνητή, ἀλλ᾽ ἀθάνατον κακόν ἐστι
> δεινόν τ᾽ ἀργαλέον τε καὶ ἄγριον οὐδὲ μαχητόν.
>
> She is not mortal, but the evil is immortal,
> Terrible and grievous, wild and not to be fought with.

Would-be champions who want to protect their crew can do what they like, but Odysseus must confront the fact that not only does the landscape through which the two possible *hodoi* would take him not change, it appears in this case to be categorically *unchangeable*.[61]

This immutability plays an important role in articulating and establishing the limits of Odysseus' ability to influence the world around him.[62] But the limits of Odysseus' own powers are only half of this equation – it is the transcendent fixity, the absolute immunity to change of the world traversed in *Od.* 12.55–126 that defines these limits by imposing on Odysseus' powers insurmountable obstacles. The Planctae, Scylla, Charybdis: the landscape and its features not

[59] Related here are Betegh's observations, recorded *en passant*, regarding the 'journey model' of the soul-cosmos relationship; as he notes, 'the cosmic regions' through which the soul traverses in the afterlife 'offer a static stage on which the drama of the soul can unfold' (Betegh (2006) 34).

[60] See n. 62 below.

[61] Note again the surprisingly abstract language used here. Just as nothing from the category of 'flying things' 'could make it past (οὐδὲ ποτητὰ παρέρχεται) the Planctae' (*Od.* 12.62), so Scylla – or rather, the immortal evil that she is – is simply 'not to be fought' (οὐδὲμαχητόν).

[62] See e.g. Benardete (1997) 100: 'First, he learns he cannot know; next, he learns he cannot defeat evil; and finally he will learn the limits of persuasion . . . He is being forced to submit to his fate'; cf. also Austin (1975) 135: 'There are, then, a series of mythic representations for the elements or elemental forces . . . Some, like Skylla, cannot be outwitted at all.'

only simply *are as they are*, unchanging, they are, as far as Odysseus is concerned, *unchangeable*.[63]

6.2.1.2 Epistemology: Searching-in-Time and the hodos dizēsios

There is another side to this point. Although the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* offers a discursive framework that allows for the withdrawal of temporality, change, genesis, and destruction from the constitution of the landscape it traverses, and although the narrative frames linking the textual units that form the itinerary of the *hodoi* in the *Odyssey* have been removed from the *hodos* of Parmenides' goddess (see Section 6.2, '*Sēma* II: Discursive Architecture and Temporality'), we have also seen above (Section 3.2.2c) that an inherent feature of the mechanics of the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* is to order the entries it catalogues in a sequential way – to form a series, not a list.[64] Just how this works

[63] Intriguingly, there is one episode in the *Odyssey* where time *does* intrude, where the landscape through which Odysseus travels, while itself static and unchanging, is not, tragically for Odysseus' men, simply unchangeable. Moreover, in precisely this episode the questions of time, change, genesis, and destruction are explicitly foregrounded (indeed, thematized in the concrete form deemed a hallmark of Homeric thought; see, e.g. Finley (1965) 165). This is the episode on the island of Thrinacia, where the Sun stables his cattle; of these, Circe says (*Od.* 12.130–31; see here esp. Austin (1975) 134–35):

> γόνος δ' οὐ γίγνεται αὐτῶν,
> οὐδέ ποτε φθινύθουσι. θεαὶ δ' ἐπιποιμένες εἰσίν. . .
>
> But there is no birth of them
> Nor do they ever perish. Their shepherds are goddesses. . .

This final place Circe 'signs out' on her *hodos* is a place where, as Havelock long ago observed *vis-à-vis* Parmenides, 'coming to be and perishing had been banished' (Havelock (1958) 140); this is of course highly reminiscent of what we find in Fr. 8.5–21). Ironically, this is the only place on Circe's *hodos* where the passage of Odysseus and his men actually leaves an indelible imprint on the landscape they pass through, where, thanks to their presence, the mark of eventhood – and therefore temporality – is stamped irreversibly into the landscape and its denizens.

Parmenides, we might say, reclaims this lost paradise. Not only does his *hodos* also include in its itinerary a place where there is no perishing and no becoming, it resuscitates the slain cattle, beyond creation and destruction, change and time, and reincarnates them in the form of an absolute law, immortal as Scylla, that no man, however starved or disobedient, could break: by the end of the journey along his *hodos* not only will the cattle who are not born and do not die be restored by a law as beyond time as they are, but all things, or, rather, what-is itself, will have been as purified of flux and change as the cattle were before they were slaughtered.

[64] Lloyd (2013) proceeds along largely parallel axes (although the topic is mathematical deduction and the conceptual apparatus Aristotelian): 'Narratives . . . deal with events that have a chronological sequence, whether or not the narrative itself follows that

and what this means in Parmenides' poem we shall examine shortly (see Section 6.2.1.3, 'Discourse' below); in the meantime, we must observe that the temporal sequentiality, withdrawn from the inner workings and constitution of the story-world, does not, *pace* Kirk, disappear from the story of Parmenides' *hodos dizēsios*. Instead, what we find with respect to the place of movement and change in time in the *hodos dizēsios* is a kind of fascinating double move.

In fact, it is not that temporality disappears from the picture altogether when it is withdrawn from the fabric of the world; rather, this temporal dimension is instead displaced to a *different* aspect of the story-world. Here we must pivot our attention from ontology to epistemology. Of the pre-Parmenidean epistemological history discussed at length in Chapter 2, scholars of the Presocratics emphasize one particular strand that may be summarized as follows.[65] An old 'poetic pessimism', to be found in Homer, Hesiod, and early lyric and expressing a kind of archaic 'folk epistemology', had posited a fundamental dichotomy between the severely constrained knowledge independently available to mortals and the comprehensive knowledge possessed by divinities. Divinities could, however, grant privileged access to knowledge to favoured mortals, such as a poet who has made a special appeal to the Muses. This access was to be granted all at once in the form of an instantaneous revelation rather than an incrementally unfolding process of enlightenment. For those who took him seriously, the epistemological critiques advanced by Xenophanes would terminate this possibility by making divinity and the divine perspective – characterized by certain knowledge, *to*

sequence. In mathematical reasoning, time in the sense of chronology is not relevant, since the truths revealed are indeed timeless. On the other hand, the reasoning does involve a *sequence of steps* that are essential to reveal . . . the truths that are there . . . . In the sense that the proof depends on a construction or procedures that are carried out at some point *after* the statement of what is to be shown, in the sense that mathematical reasoning *shares the sequentiality, if not the temporality, of narrative*' (402–03, emphasis mine). Lloyd's perspective is Aristotelian; by approaching the question from the other end chronologically, I attempt to show below that extended deductive argument and demonstration (if not necessarily mathematical proof *per se*) not only 'share the sequentiality of narrative' but that this sequentiality has its origins in – and is descended from – narrative sequentiality.

[65] Such as one finds in e.g. Lesher (1992), Lesher (1994a), Lesher (1999), and now Lesher (2008), developed in Mogyoródi (2006); see also Curd (2011) 10–13 and the works cited in Introduction, n. 15. See also Popper (1998b), esp. 115–19, and Graham (2006) 174–76. For Tor (2017), see Ch. 2 above.

saphes – radically inaccessible to mortals. Even in the best of circumstances, all that would remain to the mortals trapped beneath this epistemic ceiling is an inferior level of understanding: that of *dokos*, belief.[66] But though *dokos* is 'available to all' (Xenophanes' Fr. 34), not all *dokos* is created equal (Fr. 18):

> Οὔτοι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πάντα θεοὶ θνητοῖς ὑπέδειξαν,
> ἀλλὰ χρόνῳ ζητοῦντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον.
>
> Indeed not from the beginning did gods intimate all things to mortals,
> But as they search in time they discover better.[67]

Although what precisely 'searching' (*zēteō*) means here is disputed, the consensus is that the activity denoted has a distinctively empirical cast (akin, perhaps, to *historiē*).[68] If this 'searching' for knowledge can never exceed or transcend the realm of *dokos*, the possibility for intellectual progress is not ruled out, either: there is better and worse belief, and 'searching' in the right way still leads to advances within this domain of *dokos*.[69] What is more, this searching yields progress 'in time' (χρόνῳ ζητοῦντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον).

On this understanding, what we find in Xenophanes is: (a) a complete rupture between the domain of mortals and that of the divine, with severely constricting epistemological consequences for man;[70] (b) a claim that this rupture can nevertheless be mitigated (though never fully repaired) through 'searching'; (c) a claim that this searching yields better results gradually and in the course of time; (d) a conception of this 'searching' that takes on an empirical (though not necessarily systematic) colouring. Situating

[66] See esp. Mogyoródi (2006) 136–48 for summary of previous work and detailed analysis, also Curd (2011) 11–12. On the other hand, Tor (2017), discussed in Ch. 2 above, advances an important critical reassessment of this view, though not in ways that affect the present discussion.

[67] Translation from Lesher (1992) 27; see also Lesher (1992) 149–55, with further bibliography.

[68] See esp. Lesher (1992) 154–55 and Kahn (2009c) 147–48 for connections between this verb and *historiē*; Tor (2017) 104–54 is valuable both as a compendium of earlier scholarship and for its development of new ideas of what Xenophanes might mean by the verb *zēteō*. Notably, Granger sharply differentiates Parmenides' *hodos dizēsios* from *historiē*: while both are opposed to instantaneous revelation, the radical a prioricity intrinsic to the *hodos dizēsios* stands in pointed contrast to the empiricism of *historiē* (Granger (2008) 16–18; see also Mourelatos (2008b) 56–60).

[69] See e.g. the classic comments of Dodds (1973) 4–5.

[70] See again n. 66 above regarding Tor (2017).

Parmenides against this backdrop reveals the significance of his notion of a *hodos dizēsios* (as opposed to, say, an instantaneous revelation) in a useful light. If 'the radical archaic division between "full knowledge by divine revelation" and "complete human ignorance without it" is inimical to inquiry', then:

> So far as Parmenides accepted the human 'quest' . . . as our default mode of gaining knowledge, he endorsed an epistemic paradigm [viz. that posited by Xenophanes] that is conceptually in tension with one in which humans might be granted a sudden and complete insight into truth by divine help.[71]

That is, 'the central role of the interconnected motifs of "the route" and of "the quest" imply that . . . he subscribed to the new model of "seeking" knowledge' through an *incremental process* that plays out 'in the course of time'.[72]

Invoking Mourelatos's dictum – 'The image of the route mediates a new concept of the nature of thinking and knowing' – Mogyoródi suggests that part of this 'novelty . . . might also be found in its temporal (as opposed to some instantaneous) nature'.[73] Here we see the second part of the 'double move' mentioned above: the figure of the *hodos* allows Parmenides to withdraw temporality and dynamism from the constitution of the world and reality – that is, from the ontological and/or cosmological domain – by offering an outlet for this temporality at the epistemological domain, now conceptualized as a quest for knowledge in the form of the *hodos dizēsios*. For Parmenides, as for Xenophanes, knowledge is no longer something that can fall from the sky in an instant, but instead requires a temporally extended process; unlike Xenophanes' 'searching in time', however, this process does not take on an empirical cast – which Parmenides in fact flatly rejects (cf. fragments 6 and 7) – but operates instead through *logos* and the goddess's 'much-contested *elenchus*' through the form of the *hodos dizēsios*.[74] Finally, this *hodos*

[71] Mogyoródi (2006) 151. See also e.g. Sedley (1999) 114. For a view of Parmenides' relationship to both empirical 'questing' and the idea of revelation, see Vlastos (1993), esp. 162.
[72] Mogyoródi (2006) 151.
[73] Mogyoródi (2006) 151 n. 90; see also n. 66 above.
[74] See e.g. Lesher (2008) 472–76.

dizēsios repairs the link, severed by Xenophanes' critiques, between limited human knowledge and the certain knowledge possessed by gods; by travelling it, mortals *can* attain access to certain knowledge (cf. Fr. 1.28–29 and discussion in Section 2.4 above).

It is also stimulating to consider the matter the other way round. With the temporal dimension inherent to narrative safely displaced to the human movement of the epistemological quest or *hodos dizēsios*, the story-world itself is able to remain unaffected by the temporality and change inherent in a genealogical narrative of coming-to-be. Liberated from the need to form the narrative backbone of a genealogy, the constituent elements of the world are now left free to be as static and immutable as Scylla is to Odysseus. This in turn opens the door for what we might call, perhaps a bit grandly, a conception of the ontological as such, an understanding of things as things with stable, unchanging, or even potentially timeless qualities. And again, the rhetorical schema of the *hodos*, which accommodates description sections, even – or especially – long ones, in its levels of dependence, both makes this possible in the first place, and also (as *Od*. 12.55–126 shows) provides a language and a discursive means for this to be expressed.

6.2.1.3 Discourse: Another Narratological Sleight of Hand

There is a third, vital turn here. We examined above (6.2.1.1, 'Ontology') how the temporality inherent to narration functions differently in the story-world when the narrative in question concerns travelling a *hodos*, rather than expounding a genealogy (be it theo- or cosmo- gonical). The temporality woven into the genealogically based world of becoming is *withdrawn* from the objects in the world itself, notably the features of the landscape traversed. This temporality does not vanish, though, but is *displaced* to the human level of travel through the now-static landscape. In Parmenides' *hodos*, the temporal dimension of narration is thus channelled to the level of the human inquiry for knowledge, the epistemological story of the *hodos dizēsios*, leaving behind a static world available for conceptualization in terms of stable, unchanging beings or being (see 6.2.1.2, 'Epistemology'). But what does this mean for the question of the orderliness of the goddess's discourse, for its ostensible narrativity (despite its lack of narrative elements; see again

Section 6.2, '*Sēma* II: Discursive Architecture and Temporality') on account of its use of the rhetorical schema of the *hodos*, and thus its apparent status as a series rather than a list?

As in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4.4, 'Narrators and Voices'), addressing this question presents us with yet another astonishing narratological sleight of hand by Parmenides, one as discreet as its consequences are momentous. This complex narratological manoeuvre has a number of components that need to be unpacked.

6.2.1.3.1 Plot and Story

Recall that one of the essential features of the rhetorical schema governed by the figure of the *hodos* is that, at least in some fundamental respects, the movement of the plot tracks movement in the story-world (see Section 3.1.2 above). Though this is also true in a very important way in *Odyssey* 12, the underlying dynamics there are, in fact, considerably more complex. On the one hand, Circe's direct speech in *Odyssey* 12.37–141 looks forward to the journey that Odysseus must (and, as we see in the second half of *Odyssey* 12, eventually does) take to get back to Ithaca. On the other, this encounter with Circe takes place in the *Apologoi*, which Odysseus recounts to his Phaeacian hosts some seven-odd years after the events in question occurred.[75] *Od.* 12.37–141 is thus a prospective narration (by Circe) narrated retrospectively (by Odysseus). Finally, because Odysseus is himself a secondary narrator, the tales that make up *Odyssey* 9–12 are themselves ultimately embedded within the larger tale of the *Odyssey* narrated by the primary narrator, epic poet.[76]

Though they are similar in some respects to what we find in *Od.*12.37–141, in Parmenides' poem and the 'Route to Truth' portion specifically, the narratological dynamics and their attendant levels of temporality are at once both more and less complex. They are similar in that the goddess's speech in Fragment 2 and following is in some respects also a kind of prospective narration, as the goddess's remarks in the future tense, such as *mathēseai* (Fr. 1.31) and *ereō* (Fr. 2.1), intimate.

[75] See Lowe (2000) 132 for a useful table of the chronology of the *Apologoi*; absent from it, however, is Odysseus' long spell on Ogygia.

[76] See on these dynamics esp. de Jong (2001); also Lowe (2000), esp. the figure on p. 147, offers an insightful analysis of other dizzying narratological complexities one finds in the *Odyssey* that can also provide a useful model for the dynamics here.

Likewise, thanks to the framing device of the proem, which is rife with classic narrative elements, we also find a retrospective element to the *kouros*'s narration.[77] The narratological dynamics of Parmenides' poem are less complex, meanwhile, in that, unlike in *Odyssey* 9–12, the mortal first-person narrator is its primary narrator, not a secondary narrator embedded in a larger story told by an epic poet. But the scenario in Parmenides' poem is also *more* complex in that, as we noted above (Section 6.2, '*Sēma* II: Discursive Architecture and Temporality'), the narrative frames that introduce the individual *hodos*-units forming the itinerary of *Od.* 12.39–141 (12.39a, 12.55a, 12.127a) have been eliminated in Parmenides' *hodos dizēsios*. The goddess no longer tells the *kouros* what he will do, as Circe tells Odysseus what he is to do (and as, thanks to the retrospective quality of his narration, we see that Odysseus actually did); instead, she simply enumerates the items or 'places' that make up the itinerary, a series of facts about the story-world itself, rather than about the events to which they will be witness or party.

This shift is as radical as it is subtle. In *Odyssey* 12, it is the prospective journey of Odysseus that provides the temporal dimension of the rhetorical schema of the *hodos*.[78] Ultimately, Odysseus *does* move through the story-world of the *Apologoi* in *Odyssey* 12, a sequence of events of crucial importance for the rest of the story of Odysseus' return to Ithaca and the successful completion of his *nostos*. But what is the corresponding movement through the 'story-world' in Parmenides' poem? The goddess gives the *kouros* a map of the domain through which he must journey, but stating a sequence of facts about the poem's 'story-world' is not the same thing as saying that the *kouros* will or does actually make this journey in fragments 2–8 – and far less is it the same as hearing about the occasion in the past when he *did* successfully undertake this journey, as in the second half of *Odyssey* 12. In Parmenides' poem there is no clear equivalent to the events of the journey Odysseus needs to make, and does in fact make; the goddess does not mention the *kouros*'s

[77] See e.g. Robbiano (2006) for a good discussion of the ambiguities surrounding the temporality of the proem.

[78] Which, *qua* discourse, was underpinned by both a temporal and a spatial dimension to form spatio-temporal con-sequence, as we have seen (Section 3.2.3).

movement through the story-world whose layout she describes, nor do we ever hear of his moving through it. We saw above (Section 3.2.3) that it is the fact that the order of events is significant that gives narration the order characteristic of narrativity. But in Parmenides' 'Route to Truth', there are simply no events whose order could be significant in the first place.

The rather stunning upshot is that, rather than the movement of the 'plot' of Parmenides' poem tracking or corresponding to movement through the story-world, something close to the opposite happens. Stripped of any underlying movement in the story-world to track, the plot in effect *produces* such a movement as it progresses and *in virtue of its progressing*. In the 'Route to Truth', that is, it is the sequential, ordered movement of plot or discourse itself that replaces key aspects of the ordered sequentiality usually generated by the underlying actions and events in the story-world.

6.2.1.3.2 The Time of the Story-World and the Time of Narration

Why should this matter? If the last point concerned the relationship between the movement of plot and movement in the story-world, we must also consider the relationship between the story-worlds and the 'real time' of the poem's narration.[79] Again, we need to observe a few preliminary points, this time about the story-world of *Odyssey* 12 and Parmenides' poem. Unsurprisingly, the *hodos* we find in *Odyssey* 12 is defined by a great deal of specificity. The characters are specific – Odysseus, son of Laertes, father to Telemachus, hero and master spokesman and strategist of the Achaean army, is told by Circe, daughter of Helios, dread goddess endowed with speech, of the journey he must take to get back to Ithaca. The places that form the itinerary are also specific, being named and described in the laborious detail we have examined above (Chapter 4); some of them, such as the Wandering Rocks, might even have been well-known from other traditional myths, and whatever classic expositions they may have had.[80] And though the time frame of events is slightly less specific,

[79] Which might also be called the time of the poem's audience; see Hardie (1993) 2 and especially Kennedy (1997) for sophisticated discussion of the relationship between the temporality of plot, the temporality of the story-world, and the temporality of the time of the poet, audience, and/or narration in relation to the genre of epic.

[80] For e.g. the story of Jason and the Argo, see West (2005), also Heubeck, Russo, and Fernández-Galiano (1989), Reinhardt (1996), Currie (2016), Scodel (2017).

we know we are roughly one year and two months or so after Odysseus' departure from the ruins of Troy.[81]

Not so in Parmenides' poem. There, the specific identities of everything, everywhere, everyone is famously – or infamously – vague. Just who *is* the unnamed goddess?[82] Just where does one have to go to find her – up? Down? Beyond?[83] Who, really, is the *kouros*, about whom we know essentially nothing?[84] When is this all supposed to have happened? It is almost as if Parmenides, to much subsequent wailing and gnashing of teeth, had tried to keep matters as vague as possible.[85]

Whatever Parmenides' intentions may have been, the effects of this comprehensive, indeed almost systematic, vagueness are striking. Important here is the fundamentally dialectical structure of the poem from the moment the *kouros* makes contact with the goddess.[86] This is also a feature of Circe's speech to Odysseus, delivered in her own voice,[87] and directly to her interlocutor;[88] deeply embedded in the rest of the *Apologoi* and the rest of the *Odyssey* as this is, however, the audience would have had little occasion to forget that it is this specific divine character, Circe, who speaks to this specific mortal hero, Odysseus, and that she does so on her home island of Aeaea. By contrast, the relatively brief twenty-three lines of the proem that precede the speech of Parmenides' anonymous goddess, however, exert a far flimsier anchoring force than the eleven books of the *Odyssey* that precede the exchange with Circe; nor is this strengthened by the specific qualities of the Beyond she inhabits (for there are so few), nor by the goddess's specific qualities (for she has so few), nor by the specific attributes of the *kouros* to whom she speaks (for what are they?).

Why does this matter? The action narrated in the *Apologoi*, and indeed the entire *Odyssey*, took place in the Age of Heroes, not long after the sack of Troy. It is separated from Hesiod's age, the

[81] See Lowe (2000) 132 for helpful table and discussion.
[82] See above, esp. sections 2.4.2, 'Whose Muse?' and esp. n. 124.
[83] See again Ch. 2 above, esp. Section 2.4.1, 'Contact with the Divine' and nn. 121, 123.
[84] See esp. Robbiano (2006) 60–88.
[85] See Ch. 2 above, esp. sections 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.5 and nn. 122, 125.
[86] See Ch. 5, and esp. nn. 52, 53, 65 above.
[87] See esp. sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.4 above.
[88] See Ch. 3, n. 72, also Ch. 5, esp. n. 65 above.

Age of Iron, by an unbridgeable gulf.[89] But what of the world of Parmenides' *kouros*? Is there any reason to think the world he leaves behind is so different from our own? Much more to the point: is the *kouros* himself so different from us, the audience, that we could not identify with him?[90] What, ultimately, separates him and his world from that of the audience? When the goddess speaks in the second person, what is to stop us from asking to whom she is *really* speaking? Without the ballast of nearly half of the *Odyssey* to precede it, untethered by the specificities of names, times, and places, could not her words mean as much to any audience – including ourselves – as they do to the *kouros*? The extreme generality of the dramatic scenario, which in many of its aspects seems so carefully wrought, in fact reduces, blurs, effaces the differences between the world of the story and that of the narrator as much as possible – or rather, thanks to this carefully crafted generality, no such gulf emerges in the first place. With these strategies – (i) the extraordinarily unspecific dramatic scenario and characters; (ii) the brief proem; (iii) the first-person narration unembedded in a poem about the epic past; (iv) the removal of the narrative frames between the episodes; (v) the efforts to encourage the audience to associate with the *kouros*; and, most of all, (vi) the goddess's use of second person forms in direct speech – Parmenides renders the divide between the story-world and the world of the audience as flimsy, insubstantial, and unobtrusive as possible.

With this in mind, the dialectical qualities of the poem take on a special new power in the portions of extended direct speech where the goddess speaks in the second person.[91] Once the opening twenty or so lines of the proem and their narrative frame fade from view, we find ourselves in a discursive scenario where the goddess effectively addresses herself directly to the audience – any audience, at any time – of the poem as much as to the *kouros*. (Indeed, her claim in Fr. 2.7–8 that 'you could not apprehend or indicate what-is-not as such'[92] would necessarily be just as true for you, reader, as for me, for the original audience, or the *kouros* –

[89] See e.g. Auerbach (1953), esp. 16; Bakhtin (1981), esp. 13.
[90] See here Furth (1974) 250–51; Mackenzie (1982); and esp. Robbiano (2006) 60–88.
[91] See nn. 86, 88 above.
[92] See Ch. 5, n. 46 for a discussion of the translation.

and this is the very source of its power.)[93] Taken all together, these manoeuvres produce the appearance of yet another collapse of temporalities, this time involving the reduction of *the temporality of the story to the temporality of the moment of narration* – or, better yet, a rendering *coextensive* of the temporality of the story with the temporality of the moment of narration.

6.2.1.3.3 Discourse: Conclusions

To sum up: since, as we have seen, movement in the world of the story is already produced by, and thus coextensive with, the sequential movement of discourse of the poem's 'plot', with the collapse between the time of the story-world and that of the time of the poem's narration, all three temporalities appear to collapse into each other. It is not just, then, that movement in the quest-story of the *hodos dizēsios* is at once produced by, and also constitutes, the level of plot or discourse; astonishingly, each time a listener hears the poem or a reader reads it, the listener or reader travels the same *hodos dizēsios* in the very act of proceeding through the 'plot' of the poem. In an important sense, the movement through the story-world of Parmenides' poem occurs any and every time the poem is heard or read.

Three consequences of colossal importance stem from this. The first is that it is the movement of plot in real time – in the time of narration, which is also the same as the time of the plot, and also, in effect, the same as the time of the story-world – that activates or imparts the temporal dimension to the underlying spatial order of the itinerary of the goddess's *hodos*. Narration-time, plot-time, and story-time become one; the *hodos dizēsios* that Parmenides offers in response to Xenophanes, that is, is undertaken in the very act of performing (or reading) the poem itself.[94]

Second, and related to this, is a more nuanced insight into the dynamics discussed above in Section 6.2.1.1, 'Ontology'. In embodying a temporally extended process of epistemological quest, Parmenides' *hodos dizēsios* allows the landscape through which it passes to remain static and uninfected by the time,

[93] See Ch. 5, and nn. 52, 53, 65 above.

[94] I explore these points further in relation to the emergence of the rationalist tradition in a forthcoming article.

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change, and activity intrinsic to narration (see Section 3.1.2). No narration is necessary in fragments 2, 6, 7, or 8, since the temporal aspect inherent in narration is played by the movement of the plot – that is the argument – in the 'real time' of its being narrated.

Third, and also a consequence of the first point, in the act of proceeding through the 'Route to Truth', any narrator or reader preserves the narrativity of this portion of Parmenides' poem – its series-like, ordered sequentiality – without requiring any narrative elements (as defined above – see again Section 3.1.2); the 'temporal' part of the spatio-temporal con-sequence that we saw above was a defining feature of the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* (see sections 3.2.2c, 3.2.3) is thus provided by the sequential movement of the plot, not the sequence of events of the story.

6.2.2 *Discursive Architecture and Temporality: Conclusions*

Putting everything together, we may say the following. With regard to Havelock's point, in *Odyssey* 12, the discursive organization dictated by the figure of the *hodos* offers a kind of syntax that allows for the expression of even quite abstract, ostensibly permanent relations, and not merely the depiction of actions. This is because, unlike a genealogically based conception of reality, the figure of the *hodos* offers a rhetorical schema that does not intrinsically require that the basic fabric of the world be constituted by time-bound, temporally pregnant entities; as a result, it allows for a kind of withdrawal of narrative dynamism – of agent and action – from a landscape whose fundamental features may be rendered inert, unchanging, fixed, and stable. It is this transition that opens the door to what we might call ontology proper, to a world of being, rather than, at best, genealogy's world of things-having-once-become. In short, the rhetorical schema of the figure of the *hodos* offers a discursive framework that *preserves* the rigorous sequential ordering of items – that is, the formation of a series, not a list – but allows for the elimination of narrative frames while preserving the textual features of description. This is a discursive framework, that is, that allows for narrativity without narration and description without the unordered, list-like quality of descriptivity. It is this that is meant when,

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cribbing Mourelatos, one asserts that the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* offers a discursive architecture mediating the transition to a new way of asserting, arguing, persuading.

6.3 *Sēma* III: *Hodopoiēsis* (the 'Route to Truth' and Fragment 8)

We have just seen how the movement of plot, not movement in the story-world, provides the temporal dimension of the spatio-temporal con-sequence that dictates the order in which the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* catalogues its entries. But what of the spatial side of that equation? Is there such a thing as spatial contiguity with respect to items in the underlying 'story-world' that makes up fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8?

Some readers of Parmenides' Fragment 5 would suggest not. Karsten, for example, understood the fragment to refer to the different *hodoi* on offer in the course of the poem;[95] as later scholars have pointed out, if one accepts that these number three, or at least that one of them corresponds to the *Doxa* section, this understanding of Fragment 5 'asks us to believe that Parmenides could have altered the order in which he examines these three Ways'.[96] There is no reason, then, that *Doxa* need be read after the 'Route to Truth', and it is not necessarily clear that Fragment 2 need precede fragments 6 and 7, nor that these in turn precede Fragment 8. The items that make up Parmenides' 'Route to Truth' – and indeed the post-proem poem proper – might well form a list, then, plain and simple. On this view, there would be no underlying geography to Parmenides' story-world at all.

Scholars of Parmenides rarely find time these days to refute this view, much less to hold it.[97] There are at least three reasons for this. Briefly: first, certain elements of the poem would become difficult to explain; were it not the case that all other possible *hodoi* (whether one or two) had already been ruled out by the time

[95] Karsten (1835) 74–76.
[96] Jameson (1958) 17 (see also 16–17).
[97] One finds brief rejections in mid-century publications (e.g. Jameson (1958) 16–17; Tarán (1965) 52), but rarely subsequently. For further discussion of Fragment 5, see Appendix below.

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Fragment 8 begins, what grounds could there be to declare (Fr. 8.1–2):[98]

. . . Μόνος δ' ἔτι μῦθος ὁδοῖο
λείπεται ὡς ἔστιν . . .

. . . As yet a single account of the *hodos*/[99] an account of a single *hodos* Remains, that . . . *is* (. . .)

Second, parts of Fragment 8 would appear to indicate expressly that they are to come *after* the *krisis* announced either in Fragment 2 or a combination of fragments 2, 6, and 7 (8.15–18):

. . . ἡ δὲ κρίσις περὶ τούτων ἐν τῷδ' ἔστιν·
ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν· κέκριται δ' οὖν, ὥσπερ ἀνάγκη,
τὴν μὲν ἐᾶν ἀνόητον ἀνώνυμον (οὐ γὰρ ἀληθής
ἔστιν ὁδός), τὴν δ' ὥστε πέλειν καὶ ἐτήτυμον εἶναι.

. . . But the *krisis* about these matters lies in this:
. . . *is* (. . .) or . . . *is not* (. . .): but it *has in fact been decided*, just as is necessary,
To leave the one unthought and unnamed (for it is no true
hodos), and that the other is and is genuine.

As the perfect tense (κέκριται) suggests, at this stage in poem, the decision between the two *hodoi* has already been made.

Third, as all commentators agree, the argumentation found in lines 8.5–21 (or 8.6–21), for example, depends entirely on the points established in these earlier fragments: the two arguments offered against coming-to-be, a 'semantic-epistemological' rejection of 'what-is-not' (Fr. 8.7–8) and the ban on genesis *ex nihilo* (Fr. 8.6–7, 9–10) both presuppose passage by way of the first (and potentially second) *kris(e)is*.[100] It is clear, then, that Fragment 8 must come after fragments 2, 6, and 7.

[98] See e.g. Kirk, Raven, and Schofield (2007) 248–49.
[99] See Cassin (2011), esp. 69–71.
[100] See the virtuoso analysis of Fr. 8.5–21 at Palmer (2009) 144–50; for a discussion of these points from the perspective of a one-*krisis* reading, see Mourelatos (2008b) xxviii–xxx and, originally, 98–102. We may also note that the analysis undertaken in Chapter 5 concerning the level of dependence could be performed here as well; like Fr. 2.6–8, description – statements of fact about the world – in the third person (Fr. 8.5–6) indicative (featuring *esti*, Fr. 8.5) is supported by argument featuring second-person verbs of action (Fr. 8.7–9) with a variety of modal inflections (e.g. 'I shall not permit you', Fr. 8.7–8), and the use of negated verbal adjectives with *-tos* suffix (Fr. 8.8).

What is more, on any interpretation involving a second *krisis* in fragments 6 and 7, it is crucially important that the second *krisis* (fragments 6 and 7) comes after the first (Fragment 2).[101] On many of these interpretations, the mutually implicated revelation of being and not-being in Fragment 2 is a necessary precondition to any consideration of the possibility mooted in Fragment 6; for scholars who advocate such a reading, it is only after having attempted to think or indicate *to ge mē eon* that it becomes possible to conceive of a path that features both 'IS' and 'IS NOT'.[102] On this reading, the three units, Fragment 2, fragments 6 and 7, and Fragment 8.5–21, *do* proceed according to a regular ordering principle. Put differently, since it seems essential that fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8.1–21 be placed in this order, we may say that there *is* some kind of a fixed, underlying map of the 'story-world' the goddess describes. The catalogue they form, that is, must be deemed a series, not a list.

So far, so good. But what about the relationship between the *sēmata* themselves? A goddess enumerating a *hodos* back home to Ithaca is constrained by the geography of the world this *hodos* traverses. Instead of events tied to places, however, the *hodos* of Parmenides' goddess orders claims, predicates that can (or, indeed, must) be predicated of *to eon*. But what dictates the placement of these claims in adjacent, contiguous locations in a *hodos dizēsios*? Is there also some underlying, pre-existing logical geography that dictates the sequence according to which these must be ordered? Or is it merely that the figure of the *hodos* imparts – imposes – the appearance of a reified necessity?

As at so many points of Parmenidean analysis, there is little consensus here. Perhaps the most prudent way to proceed is to examine readings that stake out two extreme positions on this question. Those advanced by G. E. L. Owen and David Sedley

[101] As follows from the discussion in the previous paragraphs, whether one settles on a one- or a two-*krisis* reading, that there is a necessary underlying sequence governing the itinerary of at least some components of the 'Route to Truth' is not up for debate; in this, the distinction between a one- and two-*krisis* interpretations with respect to the arguments here will resemble the difference between Owen's and Sedley's readings with respect to the ordering of the *sēmata* in Fragment 8.

[102] See e.g. Miller (2006) and Thanassas (2007).

come as close to forming just such a pair as perhaps can be found.[103] Furthermore, because these two readings share similar views of several major features of Parmenides' argumentative structure – each regards the argument of Fragment 8 as made of four distinct arguments corresponding to the four *sēmata* presented above (lines 8.5/6–21, 8.22–25, 8.26–33, and 8.42–49, respectively) – they are especially easy to compare.

It is worth emphasizing here yet again that my chief aim is not to provide a comprehensive, exhaustive analysis of Parmenides' specific *arguments* but to understand the larger shape and structure of the *argumentation*. Accordingly, the following discussion of Parmenides' arguments will be undertaken with a view to articulating the possible relationships between each of the different elements that form it – that is, the relationships between each of the four *sēmata*, and between different *sēmata* and the arguments of fragments 2, 6, and 7.

Sedley, who would rehabilitate the views that Parmenides is a 'radical cosmologist' and that *to eon* is 'the sphere that constitutes … the world of mortals', proposes an 'unashamedly spatial reading' of Fragment 8.[104] He extracts 'two Laws' from fragments 2, 6, and 7. The second of these crystallizes the substance of Fragment 2: 'No proposition is true if it implies that, for any *x*, "*x* is not" is, was or will be true.'[105] The first gestures towards a law of non-contradiction, and also seems to encapsulate Fragment 6: 'There are no half-truths. No proposition is both true and false. No question can be coherently answered "Yes and no".'[106] With these 'Laws' in hand, Sedley summarizes his view of the argumentative structure of Fragment 8 thusly:

[103] Owen (1960); Sedley (1999).
[104] Sedley (1999) 117. Sedley's justification for his view relies heavily on the distinction between the literal and the metaphorical: 'Taken *literally*, what-is will prove to be an everlasting, undifferentiated, motionless sphere … To put it another way, how far are we meant to *deliteralize* the description of what-is? … the Way of Truth is full of arguments. Most commentators are disappointingly silent on their structure and content. Only if we take them in *literally* spatial terms, I submit, do they prove to be good arguments' (117, emphasis mine); see also Introduction, n. 76.
[105] Sedley (1999) 117.
[106] Sedley (1999) 115.

Once the choice of paths was complete, the goddess took us through a series of largely independent proofs demonstrating each of the predicates of what-is. Only once did the conclusion of one proof serve as the premise for another, and that was (B8.27–28) when (a) the rejection of generation and perishing was invoked among the grounds for (c) denial of motion. Otherwise each proof was self-contained, its premises either presented as self-evident or relying on one or both Laws.[107]

On Sedley's interpretation of the arguments in Fragment 8.5–49, then, what we find is a scattering of separate, distinct points – points that, while 'hard won by argument', do not necessarily lead onto each other or rely on each other via an intrinsic sequence or pattern. Once one has traversed fragments 2, 6, and 7 in order, the *sēmata* in 8.3–4 could in theory be visited in any order (provided that *sēma* 1 is visited before *sēma* 3).[108]

Contrast Owen's assessment of Fragment 8: 'Parmenides' train of argument breaks into four main stages which are clearly distinguished and correctly ordered in the programme given at the start, and each succeeding movement is introduced by an *epei*-clause which ... shows how the argument depends on a proposition already proved.'[109] That is, as Lloyd puts it, 'the fragment forms a carefully articulated whole in which the later sections build on the conclusions of the earlier in an orderly sequence of argumentation'.[110]

There is in fact less distance between Owen's view and Sedley's than may be suggested by Sedley's characterization of Fragment 8 as consisting of 'largely independent proofs', each of which is 'self-contained'. For Sedley, as for Owen, there is no question that fragments 2, 6, and 7 (captured in his notion of two Parmenidean 'Laws') come anywhere but before the four *sēmata* of Fragment 8. Likewise, if, at least as the argument now stands, *sēma* 3 would seem to come after *sēma* 1, this already eliminates a number of the

[107] Sedley (1999) 122.

[108] This nuance will be addressed later (see Section 6.3.3, 'Back On Track' in this chapter and Appendix below). But one should not fail to notice the 'otherwise' that begins the last sentence quoted above, and that Sedley appears to have no problem whatsoever conceding that *sēma* 3 takes the conclusion of *sēma* 1 as its premise, and thus, at least as the argument Parmenides' elected to make now stands, presupposes it; for further discussion, see the Appendix, which addresses Fragment 5.

[109] Owen (1960) 93.

[110] Lloyd (1979) 70, reaffirmed in Lloyd (2000).

possible sequences in which Parmenides might have ordered his *sēmata*.[111]

For his part, Owen summarizes his views as follows: 'in the third movement B 8.27 looks back to B 8.6–21 and especially to line 21'; 'in the fourth B 8.42 looks back to B 8.26–33 and especially to lines 26 and 30–31'.[112] Reading line 8.22 as ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἔστιν ὁμοῖον (instead of ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἐστιν ὁμοῖον) and taking ὁμοῖον adverbially (viz. 'exists without intermission', rather than 'is all alike'), Owen sees the proof elaborated in lines 8.22–5 as drawing its premise from the claims established at 8.11 and 8.15–18.[113] Of lines 8.6–21 he says less, but this is perhaps because the situation is in some respects more clear-cut.[114] Owen does not address the complexities surrounding the *epei* clause in lines 8.5–6, but in light of his earlier assertions,[115] a defender of Owen's position might say that this is because Parmenides himself so thoroughly stitches the claims of fragments 2, 6, and 7 into the argumentation of lines 8.6–21 (even recapitulating matters at lines 8.15–8.18) that the relationship between the conclusions secured in earlier fragments and the premises of the argument put forward in the first 'movement' in Fragment 8 is essentially self-evident.

Owen's view of the organization of Fragment 8, highly influential over the years but more contested of late, yields a striking vantage on the power the figure of the *hodos* exerts on the structure of Parmenides' fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8. This view, that only once one has attained the first *sēma* – meaning either 'signpost' or 'proof', or

[111] See n. 108 above. Of the twenty-four possible configurations theoretically available to Parmenides on this view, the need to make *sēma* 1 precede *sēma* 3 eliminates twelve options straight off the bat; for further discussion, see Appendix.

[112] Owen (1960) 93.

[113] See Owen (1960) 92–93 and 92 n. 4 for his discussion of the adverbial reading. For the overall force of the point: 'the argument for continuity in lines 22–25 depends on the prior elimination of *temporal* starts and stops in lines 6–21' (93, emphasis original); see also Owen (1960) 97.

[114] See e.g. p. 250 above.

[115] The complexity is a function partly of the claims that the qualities argued for in lines 8.22–25 take up the ἕν, συνεχές of line 6, and partly of the fact that there is no attempt to analyse how the claims encompassed by the *epei* clause ἐπεὶ νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν | ἕν, συνεχές (8.5–6a) derive from arguments elaborated earlier in Parmenides' poem. See here esp. Stokes (1971) 128–30; Austin (1986) 72.

both[116] – can one begin to make headway in relation to the second or the third, and only once one has attained the third *sēma* can one set off on the final stage of the itinerary for the fourth, coincides with what above was described as the 'strong reading' of Parmenides' Fragment 8; notably, it presumes a pre-existing underlying logical geography that defines the map of the 'story-world' of Fragment 8 in the way that a pre-existing underlying geography is presumed to define the story-world depicted by Circe in *Odyssey* 12. On Owen's reading, we thus see the *sēmata* concretize, reify, and take root in a domain that claims the same sort of material thickness and free-standing reality as the story-world of the *Odyssey*, with its Sirens' meadow, smooth cliffs, hardy fig tree, and so forth; now, however, this substantiality stands in the domain of the *hodos dizēsios* and the *sēmata* that mark out its course. Likewise, as the geography of the *Odyssey*'s story-world possesses a predetermined configuration within the universe of the story (so that Circe can map out the itinerary of Odysseus' next sequence of adventures, but cannot reconfigure the map), and as the Sirens' meadow only gives way to the pastures of the Sun's cattle by way of the Planctae, Scylla, or Charybdis, so on this view one would get to the third point in the itinerary, the third landmark, the third signpost or *sēma*-object, only by way of the first, and to the fourth only by way of the third.

6.3.1 A Detour: The Bonds of Necessity and Logical Consequence

Or perhaps *must* get to the third, and then the fourth point in the itinerary. Why so? Odysseus' journey is made by ship, across the trackless sea.[117] To cross this blank, unmarked space is to be perpetually threatened by the risk of *planē* – as nearly all the Achaean heroes returning from Troy can attest.[118] Where no path is visibly marked, aimless, directionless, backward-turning movement always remains

[116] At least insofar as the lion's share of the argumentation of the first proof comes in lines 8.6–10 (i.e. before 8.11), which Owen sees as yielding the conclusion serving as the premise for lines 8.22–25.
[117] Benveniste (1966) 297; Detienne and Vernant (1978) 152–53.
[118] See e.g. Montiglio (2005), esp. 1–10.

possible.[119] But the *kouros* in Parmenides' proem, as no one will have forgotten, travels by chariot. Furthermore, as is expressly specified in the proem, the chariot (ἅρμα, Fr. 1.5) travels on a 'much-famed' *hodos* (ὁδὸς πολύφημος, Fr. 1.2) and then, once through the portentous gates, 'along a road-suitable-for-wheeled-traffic' (κατ' ἀμαξιτόν, Fr. 1.21). And this, as we saw above (Section 1.1), is highly significant.

To unpack this significance most effectively, let us advert once more to Mourelatos's comments on the topic (discussed under the rubric of 'the motif of chariotry'). Having examined what he calls the 'motif of the-journey' and the 'theme of Fate-Constraint',[120] Mourelatos airs the following anxieties:

> The danger is that we may be left in the end with configurations of language which, although internally coherent when taken separately, might appear unrelated or even dissonant when compared to one another. Specifically, a combination of the-journey, chariotry, and binding has, at least prima facie, a certain baroque, eclectic, and syncretic quality; and that should make us suspicious. Can we in good conscience project a jumble of motifs into the imagination of a man who made his name in the history of ideas as an uncompromising defender of logic and unity?[121]

This impression is misguided, he reassures us: 'motifs which appear as dissonant or unrelated to us are, to the archaic mentality, strongly linked by ties of analogy and association'.[122] The connection between overland travel by wheeled vehicle and sea travel by ship is indeed no challenge to establish.[123] But Mourelatos struggles to connect the motif of chariotry and the motif of 'the-journey' to what he calls the theme of 'Fate-Constraint'. He cites a few parallels between the language used to describe Odysseus as he is bound to the mast in the Sirens episode, to describe Poseidon's hobbling his horses' legs (*Il.* 13.37), and to make the case for the *sēma akinēton* at Parmenides'

[119] For an example of the dangers presented by unmarked, pathless space, cf. the travails of the Persians in Scythia in Herodotus 4 (and excellent analysis by Hartog (1988) and Payen (1997)).

[120] Mourelatos (2008b) 12–13, Mourelatos (2008b) 16–25, and Mourelatos (2008b) 25–29, respectively.

[121] In light of his distinction between 'motifs' and 'themes' (Mourelatos (2008b) 11–12), this is perhaps not the title one would have expected for this subsection (see Mourelatos (2008b) 29).

[122] Mourelatos (2008b) 29.

[123] See the comments at Mourelatos (2008b) 29.

Fragment 8.30–31. This does not ultimately carry him very far, however: 'I am not suggesting that B8.30–31 envisages a convergence of the three ideas: hobbled horse, sailor strapped to the mast, sailor committed to his destination. My point is rather that the Homeric phrase has a certain suggestiveness and flexibility which allows modulation from one motif to another.'[124]

This, surely, is a weak point in the argument. Mourelatos attempts to bolster his case by examining the etymology and semantics of words derived from *telos*, which offers a slightly less precarious connection between 'the-journey' motif and theme of 'Fate-Constraint'.[125] Importantly, 'the result of the deity's "strapping" and "holding"' – as expressed through the theme of the 'Fate-Constraint' – 'is summed up, in the climactic section of B8, in the attribute *tetelesmenon*'.[126] The word may be seen to operate not only on the ontological level (as a description of the nature of *to eon*)[127] but also on the epistemological level: 'In the order of *knowing* or *thinking*[,] the correct "route" is a "steadfast," controlled route, "tied" or "committed" to its destination. This is the route that "consummates" the journey and "comes around" to the goal. On this journey the guide is the same Fate who bound what-is in straps.'[128] Finally, Mourelatos cashes out this analysis in the claim (complementary to the notion that 'the image of the route mediates a new concept of the nature of thinking and knowing') that 'the transformation of the theme of Fate-Constraint is a projection which reaches toward the concept of logical or metaphysical necessity'.[129]

As at several other important junctures, I both agree with Mourelatos on the larger questions (and draw inspiration from his pioneering analysis) and find the specifics of his interpretation unconvincing. By advancing this cluster of assertions – that 'in the

[124] Mourelatos (2008b) 30.
[125] Mourelatos (2008b) 30.
[126] Mourelatos (2008b) 30; for the relevant bibliography, see Mourelatos (2008b) 31 n. 61.
[127] Mourelatos (2008b) 30: 'That is: Justice has bound what-is so that it is "fully accomplished," "complete," "consummate," or "perfect".'
[128] Mourelatos (2008b) 32.
[129] Mourelatos (2008b) 40. Likewise: 'the very concept of knowing was based on an analogy with "questing" and "journeying," whose concept of logical-metaphysical necessity was in the process of being formulated on the model of the theme of Fate-constraint' (Mourelatos (2008b) 46). See Tarán (1965) 117, 151; see also: Verdenius (1964) 101; Austin (1986) 96–115; Dueso (2011) 283–84.

order of knowing or thinking, the correct "route" is a "steadfast," controlled route "tied" or "committed" to its destination'; that the notion of being tied to a destination is expressed through the theme of the Fate-Constraint;[130] and that this confluence of imagery (the motif of the-journey, the theme of Fate-Constraint) 'reaches toward the concept of logical or metaphysical necessity' – Mourelatos surely identifies a phenomenon of major importance for the development of deductive argumentation and the history of Western thought. But at just the moment Mourelatos isolates the key element establishing the connection between the motif of the-journey and the theme of 'Fate-Constraint' – namely, the motif of 'chariotry', which threatens to turn the mosaic of imagery into an 'eclectic' phantasmagoria – he also fails to capture the precise way this motif actually does forge the link between the other two dominant figures.

It is at this stage that reintroducing insights gleaned from the discussion of the physical nature of archaic Greek roads above (Section 1.1) can move the discussion much further forward. It is, in fact, *precisely* by shifting the journeying from travel by ship to travel by wheeled vehicle that this web of connections not only becomes possible, but indeed obvious and conceptually potent. Once the physical nature of archaic Greek roads is properly taken into account and the semantic density of the word *hodos* (encompassing both an activity and an object) acknowledged, the relationship between journeying, chariotry, and the implacable strictures of Fate not only ceases to be eclectic, but their deep unity at the level of both word and image, their mutual dependence and mutually reinforcing qualities, becomes irresistible. It is precisely *because* (and only because) the motif of the journey has been expressed through the motif of chariotry, precisely *because* (and only because) the motif of journeying has been transferred from sea to land, from ship to wheeled vehicle, that it not only can be tied to the motif of the Fate-Constraint, of binding, of a 'steadfast' route 'tied' or 'committed' to its destination, but it does so as naturally as if a latter-day Parmenides had made his goddess speak of a 'rail journey of inquiry'.

[130] See Austin (1986) 96–115, esp. 111–14, for further analysis.

Depending on one's interpretation of Parmenides' arguments, the point has implications of a potentially major scale for our understanding of the *hodos dizēsios*. First, imag(in)ing the *hodos dizēsios* described by Parmenides' goddess as a rut road inscribed into the earth underscores the degree to which this road *pre-exists* the travelling to be undertaken upon it. The world traversed by such a *hodos* has stable, fixed features that exist independently of, and prior to, a journey passing through it.[131] Such a road must have been constructed already in advance of the travel (and with the express agency of, and according to plans determined by, the constructor).[132] Such a route is, that is, *pre*scribed: the tracks, so far as the traveller is concerned, are always already *there*.

But such a route is also pre*scribed*. This point bears directly on 'the notion of logical or metaphysical necessity' that Mourelatos saw emerging from the theme of 'Fate-Constraint', and may also help us reconsider yet further the nature of Parmenides' argumentation as analysed by Owen. The discussion above considered the relationship between the *sēmata* of Fragment 8 as posited by Owen, which is to say, in reverse order. Attaining the fourth *sēma* presupposed attainment of the third; this in turn presupposed attainment of the first, as did attainment of the second *sēma*; and this itself presupposed passage by way of the first *hodos* of Fragment 2 and fragments 6 and 7. Imagining the *hodos dizēsios* as a rut road inscribed into the terrain of inquiry it traverses, however, we find grounds for a stronger, more suggestive understanding of the relationship between journeying, travel by wheeled vehicle, and the notion of binding and constraints, one with even more direct bearing on the notion of metaphysical or logical necessity articulated in Parmenides' poem. If the *hodos* described in Fragment 8 is seen as a rut road running continuously the length of the fragment (and, indeed, from Fragment 2 to 8 via fragments 6 and 7), this suggests that not only is each new point in the argument premised upon points previously established but also that, once one has arrived at a particular point on this *hodos*, one has *no choice* but to follow this prescribed track. Once one has

[131] See Section 6.2.1, also n. 4 above.

[132] This opens a horizon, too sprawling to be addressed here, onto the debate between 'realism' and 'constructivism'. Who is the constructor? How did the *hodos* get there?

been forced onto the first route in Fragment 2,[133] one has no choice but to arrive at the first *sēma*; and once one has arrived at the first *sēma*, if one continues the journey it is not only that one *can* reach the second *sēma* but that, locked into a predestined, preordained path, one *must* follow the track to the second point.[134] And this is true at every step of the way: having attained the second *sēma*, if one carries on with the journey one *must* arrive at the third, and from the third, the fourth. Returning to Mourelatos's point concerning the metaphysical or logical necessity expressed through the notion of a 'steadfast' path that 'ties' one who travels upon it to a particular destination, we may see how deeply appropriate, not to mention effective and powerful, is the image of travelling by wheeled vehicle along a rut road. For what route could possibly be more 'steadfast', more 'tied' or 'bound' to its destination – and the rest of the itinerary it encompasses – than a rut road one travels by wheeled vehicle?

So far we have discussed the strictly sequential ordering of discursive units into a series in terms of the phrase 'consequence'. In the *Odyssey*, units are connected in this manner partly on the basis of their spatial contiguity and partly on the basis of the temporal order in which they are reached in the course of travel, understood as a series of actions in time. In Parmenides' fragments 2, 6, 7, and 8, we have seen that, on Owen's reading, the four arguments that make up the *hodos*-units of Fragment 8's 'journey' are also connected partly on the basis of a kind of underlying logical 'contiguity' rooted in the logical geography of Fragment 8's 'story-world'; similarly, their being ordered into a sequence stems in part from the journey through them, the *hodos* (journey-in-totality) *dizēsios* one travels across this terrain. But, if we take the motif of chariotry seriously and attend to the language of the proem (and especially its reference to a *hamaxitos*, Fr. 1.21), what we find is a *hodos*(-journey) whose *hodos*(-itinerary) moves along a *hodos*(-object = rut road): along a pre-scribed track whose course allows for no deviation, no wandering, nothing but ordered

[133] And perhaps again forced onto the first route in Fragment 6 – and, if so, also as a result of the same kind of necessity.

[134] As one finds in e.g. Cordero (2004) 171 (emphasis original): 'The true way follows a *necessary* course. Thought is chained to it and no straying is allowed.'

movement along a predetermined path, whose inscription into the terrain demands that once one has attained a particular point one must travel to the next in the sequence, and do so unerringly and necessarily. On Owen's reading, what we see in the convergence of the motifs of journeying, chariotry, and the Fate-Constraint – three images compressed and condensed into, and encompassed by, this *hodos dizēsios*, a *hodos*(-journey) whose *hodos*(-itinerary) is connected by a *hodos* (rut road) – would thus be *the transition from narrative con-sequence to logical consequence*.

6.3.2 Other Implications: keleuthos

Appreciating the physical nature of archaic Greek roads and the semantic breadth and density of the word *hodos* also provides a potentially illuminating insight into another phenomenon identified by Mourelatos. In his analysis of the 'Fate-Constraint', he identified three 'faces' or 'hypostases': Anagke (Constraint), Moira (Fate), and Dike (Justice).[135] To these three, he adds a fourth: Peitho. In light of the semantics of the *peith-* word family in Homer, Hesiod, and Aeschylus and its role in parts of Parmenides' poem, and alongside the words *chrē* and *chreōn*,[136] Mourelatos sees *peith-* terms expressing not the externally imposed force of the other three terms but rather an 'inner-directed justice', an 'attitude of adherence or submission', a 'compliance or obedience' that represents 'an agreeable submission to the authority of Constraint-Fate-Justice'.[137]

This interplay of internal and external forces, of obedience and agreeable adherence and compulsion and imposition, makes excellent sense at an ontological level. But yet again, Mourelatos has more difficulty substantiating his epistemologically oriented claims, such as: '[t]he four faces of the polymorph deity are aspects of the modality of necessity that controls what-is, and of the same modality as it applies to the route "___ is____".'[138] In his

[135] See summary at Mourelatos (2008b) 160. The situation is in fact more complex: see Austin (1986) 95–116, esp. 111–14.
[136] See Mourelatos (2008b) 162, 277–79, and now Mourelatos (2008b) xxxi.
[137] From Mourelatos (2008b) 152, 155, and 156, respectively.
[138] Mourelatos (2008b) 161.

analysis of the relationship between these 'faces' or 'hypostases', he discusses the 'modality of *chrē*, "it is rightly necessary"', that pilots the 'route to reality'[139] and makes good use of his analysis of the *peith-* family while reminding us that the *hodos* of Fragment 8 was originally introduced with the phrase Πειθοῦς ἐστι κέλευθος (Fr. 2.4). Viewing this *hodos*(-itinerary) as moving along a *hodos*(-for-wheeled-vehicles) provides an elegant figuration of this interplay between internal adherence and external constraint at the epistemological level – in terms, that is, of the *hodos dizēsios* as 'Route to Truth'. On the one hand, the grooves of the rut road provide an externally imposed force constraining the movement of the wheels of the chariot that journeys along it: it holds them fast in its bounds; on the other, the grooves of the rut road also provide free, agreeable movement to the chariot whose wheels 'adhere to' or 'obey' the prescribed track. The image of a journey by wheeled vehicle along a rut road expresses a forceful element of imposition, constraint, limitation, binding, while also articulating its own distinctive version of a journey of *pistis* and persuasion and 'positive teleology' (a felicitous phrase here).

Finally, analysis I have undertaken elsewhere and touch on in Chapter 1 can make a further contribution.[140] Recall that where the word *hodos* addressed a journey viewed as a single, unified whole ('from the outside') and in relation to its structure, the word *keleuthos* emphasized the process of journey*ing* (viewed 'from the inside') and the series of actions and experiences that formed this process (Section 1.2). How fitting, then, that the *process* of travelling a *hodos* along a *hodos*, wheels locked into the track, should be referred to as a Πειθοῦς κέλευθος (Fr. 2.4): on Owen's reading of the poem, to be swept along on this *hodos* is to undertake a κέλευθος, a journey*ing*, that at every step of the way (or at every turn of the wheels) complies with, or adheres or submits to, the 'positive teleology' of the *hodos*-as-journey and the *hodos*-as-road.

[139] Mourelatos (2008b) 154.
[140] See Folit-Weinberg (forthcoming, 2022).

6.3.3 Back on Track: Towards Conclusions

This, at any rate, is the view that a proponent of Owen's reading of the poem's argument would advance. But what would a proponent Sedley's reading of Fragment 8 have to say? One should not forget that while Sedley sees Melissus' arguments as forming 'a single chain, with each predicate inferred directly from the previous one', he reads each of Parmenides' proofs as 'largely independent' and, with one exception, 'self-contained, its premises either presented as self-evident or relying on one or both Laws'.[141]

In fact, his reading also opens a surprising, even provocative, insight into the role played by the figure of the *hodos* in Parmenides' poem. In the present discussion, two points should be borne in mind. First, Sedley still places great emphasis on the importance of argument (rather than mere assertion) to the development of Parmenides' claims, of course.[142] Notably, in Sedley's analysis of the specific argumentation advanced in Fragment 8, none of the four claims are proved independently of the 'Two Laws'.[143]

This is to say that, second, the net effect of Sedley's analysis is to shift the bulk of the argumentative labour being done to the fragments preceding Fragment 8; if the claims of Fragment 8 are not built sequentially one upon the next, they depend even more heavily on fragments 2, 6, and 7. Law Two – 'No proposition is true if it implies that, for any *x*, "*x* is not" is, was, or will be true' – is, we might think, a crystallization of the principle expressed in Fr. 2.7–8 (and reiterated in 6.1–2).[144] For its part, Law One – 'there are no half-truths. No proposition is both true and false. No question can be coherently answered "Yes and no"' – is presented by Sedley as a paraphrase or gloss of 8.15–16, but he acknowledges that this is itself the product of the claims presented in Fr. 2.3–5 combined with those advanced in Fr. 6.4–9 (plus what has been understood as an implicit principle resembling the Law of

[141] Sedley (1999) 125, 122 (though see again n. 108).
[142] See Sedley (1999) 114.
[143] So lines 6–9 rely on Law Two, as do 11–13 (9–10 rely on the Principle of Sufficient Reason); lines 22–25 rely on both Law One and Law Two; lines 26–33 rely on Law One; and lines 42–49 rely on Law Two (although Sedley does not specify explicitly); see Sedley (1999) 118–21.
[144] Sedley (1999) 116–17.

Non-Contradiction).[145] In other words, Law Two is the product of the *blockage* of the second way (viz. the one articulated in Fr. 2.5), while Law One is the result of passing first by way of the first *hodos* presented in Fragment 2 (2.3–4) and then, possibly, via the further *krisis* expressed in fragment 6 and 7. The four qualities attributed to *to eon* come in *con-sequence to* (and/or are therefore the *consequence of*) the decisions at the various *kris(e)is* in fragments 2 and 6 and 7: once one travels by this way, it is *inevitable* that one arrive at the four conclusions represented by the four *sēmata* (even if the order in which one arrives at them is no longer very important).

On this view, the Two Laws become a pair of tracks, of preinscribed ruts, into which one finds oneself locked once one has passed through the *krisis* or successive *kriseis* of fragments 2 and 6 and 7. What does not (with the exception of the third *sēma* and its relationship to the first) have any inherent value is the precise order in which these conclusions are presented. Thus, intriguingly enough, if one accepts Sedley's reading, it is the *rhetorical* power invested in the figure of the *hodos qua* 'rhetorical schema' that becomes most striking. By using this schema, with its special capacity to systematize discourse and provide description without descriptivity, narrativity without narration, as a means of figuring this sequence of otherwise (potentially) unordered units of argumentation, it is as if Parmenides allows the sequence itself to take on the reified mass of a tomb midden (*sēma*) installed in the earth, or an altar in the agora, or a stone stele implanted *empedon* in the ground. Sedley's Parmenides would thus prove a virtuoso rhetorician, a master of imagery and polyvalent language. By marshalling the resources compressed and contained in the word and image of the *hodos*, Parmenides would invest the sequence of the claims advanced in Fragment 8 – which, provided they come after fragments 2, 6, and 7, might otherwise be listed in (almost) any order – with the appearance of the same necessity and pre-existing ordering, the same power and authority of the geography of the natural landscape, attached to an itinerary through physical space.[146]

[145] Sedley (1999) 114–15.

[146] In this case, he may have had a predecessor in no less a figure than Homer himself. For who is it, after all, who determines the order and sequence according to which the episodes following Aeaea appear? See esp. Reinhardt (1996) 103–04.

As noted above, my goal in discussing the competing interpretations of Fragment 8 offered by Owen and Sedley is not to advocate for the superiority of one or the other, but rather to explore two points. The first concerns the scope and applicability of the analysis above; what I hope to have shown is that the links I have constructed between Parmenides' poem and its physical, linguistic, and poetic context are compatible with each of these two positions that define the mainstream spectrum of views on the proper ordering of the *sēmata* that form Fragment 8. The second builds on this by exploring more specifically what these links might mean, were one to endorse either Owen's rigorously linear view of Fragment 8 or Sedley's view that the sequence in which the *sēmata* are presented is not intrinsically related to the arguments supporting them.

6.3.4 Two Further Options

If the interpretations of Owen and Sedley define between them a range of widely accepted readings of Fragment 8, there are of course other interpretations that deviate from aspects of their shared orthodoxies. Although it would be excessive to conduct an exhaustive survey of how each of these other approaches might be reconciled with my account of Parmenides' invention of extended deductive argumentation, briefly addressing two recent, exemplary interpretations of Parmenides' Fragment 8 is still a valuable exercise; doing so will help illuminate more precisely the nature and scope of this book's contributions to the study of Parmenides' poem and our understanding of the history of archaic – and Western – thought more broadly.

The first is the distinctive line of interpretation of Parmenides' poem pioneered by Scott Austin.[147] One of Austin's most valuable contributions is to delineate a pattern of assertions, negations, positions, and privations whose recombinations underlie – and perhaps even serve as a generating principle behind – Parmenides' arguments.[148] An attractive consequence of

[147] See Austin (1986), Austin (2002), Austin (2007), Austin (2013), and Austin (2014).
[148] Particularly helpful are Austin's charts and diagrams: see esp. Austin (1986), Austin (2002) 96, and Austin (2007) 10.

approaching Parmenides' arguments via this aspect of their formal construction is the original perspective it opens onto their content. More specifically, Austin's interest in the triadic pattern of position, negation, and recapitulatory double negation and his observations regarding the creation of dyadic pairings and triadic groupings in Fragment 8[149] reveal a subtly different way of grouping together the content addressed by the fragment's four *sēmata*. On Austin's view, the arguments in lines 8.6–15 address what-is in terms of time, lines 8.22–31 address being in terms of space or 'the occupation of place by mass',[150] and then in lines 8.32 and 8.42–49 'the conclusions developed during the considerations of time and of mass/place are recapitulated, combined, and rolled up into a complete statement'.[151]

What most catches the eye in the current setting is the extent to which, seen through the lens of Austin's interpretation, Parmenides' arguments advance in a fundamentally sequential, progressive manner. On Austin's reading, Parmenides' argumentation is defined by a necessary and inherent directionality; as a consequence, it is hard to imagine a scenario consistent with Austin's view in which Parmenides could just as easily have swapped the *sēmata* around or advanced them in a different order had he so desired.[152] As Austin points out, the successive interplay of dyads, triads, and singlets, assertions and negations, positions and privations elaborates 'the story of a gradual movement away from contrariety and towards unity . . . The logic and rhetoric of the "Truth-Section" are *cumulative*'.[153]

[149] See esp. Austin (2002) 96 and Austin (2007).

[150] As it is put in Austin (2002) 97 and Austin (2007) 57, respectively. Scott Austin does not always spell out where he demarcates the line boundaries between arguments, but at Austin (2007) 57 does specify that the second phase of the argument spans lines 8.22–31.

[151] Austin (2007) 57; at Austin (2002) 97, the heading given to this third phase is 'sphere'.

[152] This is particularly true in the case of the recapitulatory fourth *sēma*, where double negative and affirmative position formulations are ultimately shown to be coextensive; see also discussion in the Appendix below.

[153] Austin (2007) 14, emphasis mine. More specifically: 'The overall picture is, first, that dyadic contrariety is rejected; second, that it is incorporated into harmony; finally, that it is transcended altogether in favor of simplicity' (Austin (2007) 14). A very schematic version of the point is given in Austin (2002) 97: 'this sequence . . . [is] a story of *development in statement* from the rejection of dyadic contrariety, to the negation of and inclusion of that contrariety in triples, to the simplest positive and double-negative terms'.

There are many significant points of non-overlap between Austin's interests and orientation and those of the account of Parmenides' invention of extended deductive argumentation provided here. Austin is little concerned with Parmenides' poetic background, his pervasive use of road imagery, the dramatic setting in which the staging of the enumeration of the routes is embedded, and other 'poetic' aspects of Parmenides' poem; likewise, his extensive discussion of such things as negative predication, modal operators, and Platonic, Trinitarian, or Hegelian dialectics might seem to have little in common with the present book's concerns. This only makes it all the more striking, however, that Austin's analysis seems not only highly compatible, but indeed to align in neat congruence, with the analysis I have undertaken above. That the discursive architecture undergirding the *hodos* narrated by Circe to Odysseus should provide the larger organizing framework within which Parmenides could explore, in a manner both systematic and argumentatively rigorous, the complete array of possible combinations of assertion and negation, position and privation is not only plausible, but highly attractive. To put the matter the other way round: if what Austin's account reveals is a pattern of arguments formed from different combinations of privation and negation, position and assertion, the question remains as to how these different phases or stages in the argument are to be joined together: how to imag(in)e the relationship between them? But this is precisely what the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* and its associated types of dependence provides: a discursive framework to be filled in according to the pattern described by Austin. On this view, the two formal perspectives of Parmenides' construction of his argument – Austin's and the one offered here – would not only complement each other but, by triangulating key principles underlying their construction, could also provide an important and potentially guiding insight into *what* Parmenides' arguments mean.

Perhaps rather more difficult to reconcile with the historical account I have offered is the line of interpretation recently developed by Richard McKirahan.[154] McKirahan's presentation has its

[154] McKirahan (2008).

share of important virtues. Re-emphasizing that Parmenides 'lived before canons of deductive inference had been formalized', he sagely observes that 'the interpreter's job is not to aim for formal validity, but to attempt a reconstruction of Parmenides' train of thought, showing how he might have supposed that the conclusion follows from the premises he gives'.[155] While just what it means for a conclusion to 'follow' a premise (i.e. how we ought best attempt to 'reconstruct' Parmenides' 'train of thought' – or, better, *hodos dizēsios*) gets to the very heart of what is at stake here, on these points, at least, I find myself in fervent agreement with McKirahan – even as our different approaches, and answers, to this question get to the heart of our disagreement.

At this juncture, however, we part ways. Or nearly at this juncture, for, as with other interpreters, McKirahan also takes the lines following 8.2 to constitute a programme (he opts to include 8.5–6)[156] of points, or clusters of points, that Parmenides will set out to prove. McKirahan's list differs from Owen's, Sedley's, and those of other interpreters in several respects, however. First, McKirahan distinguishes six groups, rather than the usual four *sēmata* (he styles these 'Groups A-F'). Second, McKirahan's groups do not strictly track the sequence in which the *sēmata* are presented from line 8.3; the items that form the programme are clustered instead according to another organizing principle.[157] Thus, third, McKirahan's groups cut across the ordinary division of the programme, in some cases resulting in the pairing of qualities that are usually taken as distinct, while in others splitting up familiar pairings. So Group B, for example, is formed by 'whole' (οὖλον, 8.4), 'complete' (τέλειον, 8.4), 'all together' (ὁμοῦ πᾶν, 8.5; συνεχές, 8.6), thereby collecting under one heading attributes deemed by Owen, Sedley, and most other interpreters to

[155] McKirahan (2008) 189–90. Another way of framing my project might be to say that I have been attempting to trace out the principles underlying the tracks or ruts that form this train of thought – not to mention the material from which they are made and which gives them their tensile force. McKirahan continues: 'This is a matter of sensitivity and sympathy as much as of logic . . .' – a perspective with which I heartily agree.

[156] See n. 3 above.

[157] What does determine the groups? This is not stated, but the logic determining the groupings seems to stem from the arguments McKirahan discerns in the body of the argumentation itself, from which he evidently works backwards.

correspond to the second and fourth *sēmata* in the programme (*oulon* and *teleion*/*teleston*, respectively).[158] On the other hand, *mounogenes* (8.4), ordinarily read with the grain of the syntax of line 4 as being paired with *oulon* (and thus one half of the signpost for *ou diaireton*, viz. *sēma* 2, lines 8.22–25), is here glossed as 'unique' and paired with 'one' (ἕν, 8.6), which together form their own distinct cluster, Group F.

Since McKirahan's approach is geared towards his understanding of the content of the arguments he finds rather than the sequence of their presentation, this ultimately yields a sequence of Categories that does not track the movement of Fragment 8.6–49 any more than it does lines 8.3–6, another major difference between McKirahan's reading and most others. So, for example, the treatment of members in Category D: 'changeless, motionless' are to be found scattered throughout various parts of the poem, including lines 8.26, 38, 41, 'and possibly 8.29–30'.[159] Finally, another result of McKirahan's approach is that certain qualities identified in the programme – Group F: 'unique' (μουνογενές) and 'one' (ἕν) – remain entirely unaddressed in the remainder of Fragment 8,[160] while other portions of the body of Fragment 8, namely lines 42–49, lack any identifiable correlate in the programme.[161]

It is worth emphasizing one final time that this is not the place to assess the merits of specific interpretations of Parmenides' arguments. Rather, the more pertinent question here would be how a defender of McKirahan's view, which expressly – and rightly – underscores the need to remain alert to the risks of anachronism and to understand Parmenides' poem and its arguments in their historical context, would reconcile his or her approach and the results it yields with the historical question of how Parmenides developed his radically new way of speaking and arguing. If the resources offered by the semantics of the word *hodos*, the real

[158] And also, in Fr. 8.5–6 (*homou pan suneches*), perhaps even the arguments supporting the first *sēma*, that being is ungenerable and imperishable.
[159] McKirahan (2008) 191, see also 208–10.
[160] McKirahan (2008) 191, 214–16.
[161] This is also frequently true in more traditional readings of Fragment 8, according to many of which 8.34–41 remains a puzzle (see n. 8 above).

objects to which it referred, and the intertextual dramatic and discursive frameworks it conjures up do indeed play a crucial role in mediating the transition from Homeric narrative to Parmenidean argumentation, what does this mean for interpretations of Fragment 8 that do not see these arguments as formed from a series of distinct segments or phases of the itinerary of the *hodos dizēsios*, or the programme announcing a catalogue of these phases point by point as they will be asserted and argued for? Conversely, were we to accept an interpretation which did not respect this linear, sequential, cumulative structure,[162] would this imply that an account of Parmenides' invention of extended deductive argumentation different from the one offered here might be required?

6.4 *Sēma* IV: Accomplishments and Completions

It is time to bring this *pistos logos* to a close. The arrangement of words in Chapter 7 ('Mortal Opinions'), potentially deceptive in its own way, will offer an invitation to reflect on how our own criteria of knowledge, what we count as a valid contribution to it, and the *hodos dizēsios* of academic research that leads us there, all retain a fundamentally Parmenidean shape – for better and for worse. If part of this shape is defined by what Karl Popper has called the 'Parmenidean apology' of the *Doxa* and the questions it poses about the status of the 'Route to Truth', Part III (*Doxai*) will explore what this implies for the analysis undertaken in this and preceding the three chapters of Part II (Routes). By testing the limits of reading Parmenides alongside Homer, I hope to call attention to some of our own epistemic presuppositions, which are not always fully articulated or acknowledged, and to underscore their relationship to a Parmenidean, and Homeric, desire for certainty and closure – and to the difficulty of attaining it.

For now, however, it remains to ask what all this – this chapter, this Part (Routes), and the primary line of argument in this

[162] At least to a certain extent – the debate about the degree to which, and the manner in which, this is true is of course simply another way of viewing the debate between Owen and Sedley.

book – amounts to.[163] The answer to this question will depend quite considerably on the fields, methods, and aims of the scholar who happens to be reading this book; the analysis undertaken above will likely be valuable for different reasons to, and be used in different ways by, scholars working in different fields, or attempting to answer different questions. One way of organizing the range of possible implications of this book's claims for our understanding of Parmenides' arguments would be to discuss matters in terms of 'priority'.

Working on one level, for example, will be scholars whose main approach to philosophical texts begins with an attempt to understand and reconstruct the argumentative moves of a text in relation to what might make a 'good' argument by our own standards, regardless of whether these are expressed in ancient Greek, English, or any other language (perhaps including logical notation).[164] In this case, what might be called philosophical analysis of Parmenides' argumentation will likely remain 'prior

[163] For the 'accomplishments' in this section's title, see Section 1.2, esp. Figure 1.1. For 'completions', see e.g. Austin's translation of *tetelesmenon*, also Mourelatos (2008b) 125–29.

[164] To note that a scholar is committed to seeing in Parmenides' poem 'good arguments' is descriptive, not evaluative. Rather, the point is to mark the fact that this commitment, which is often taken for granted, is a strongly guiding hermeneutic principle which, as discussed above (Introduction, 8–11), plays a major role in shaping and justifying our readings of Parmenides; it is alive and well, and continues to orient much of the top scholarship on Parmenides. This is sometimes expressed in terms of our ability to formulate his arguments in such a way that they 'go through' (e.g. Barnes (1982) or, more radically, Wedin (2014); notably, both Barnes and Wedin render their interpretations of Parmenides in formal logical notation). But the impulse can also be expressed through vaguer criteria. Sedley's stance is exemplary; to justify the core plank of his reading of Parmenides, he says: 'I offer the following reason for retaining an unashamedly spatial reading. This final stretch [viz. Fragment 8.1–49] of the Way of Truth is full of arguments . . . Only if we take them in literally spatial terms, I submit, do they prove to be *good arguments*' (Sedley (1999) 17, emphasis mine).

If it is not an insult to observe that a scholar is committed to seeing Parmenides' arguments as good arguments, it need not necessarily be a compliment either. Skinner's relationship to Boden (Skinner (2002a)) or Hacking's to Paracelsus (in e.g. Hacking (2002a)) are salutary points of comparison. Discussing the 'incommensurability between Paracelsus and modern medicine', Hacking observes: 'Paracelsus's system of possibility is quite different from ours. What he had up for grabs as true-or-false does not enter into our grid of possibilities, and vice versa. This is not due to different articulated theories or systems of conscious belief, but because the underlying depth knowledge is incommensurable. This idea lessens the metaphor in the very word: we cannot lay some number of Paracelsus's possibilities alongside ours and have two sets that match at the end. This is not to say we cannot understand him . . . One can even go some way towards talking Paracelsan in English, once one has articulated concepts that

to' the aspects of Parmenides' poem discussed here. That is, one expects that such a scholar will likely decide first whether he or she finds, say, Owen's or Sedley's assessment of the poem's argumentation persuasive; then, having settled on one or the other, he or she can use the analysis presented here to explore aspects of his or her preferred interpretation in this new light. The questions that will exercise such a scholar will likely concern determining to what extent, and in which distinctive ways, Parmenides was influenced by the pattern of Circe's description of the *hodos*, or up to what point he relies on, and at what point he moves beyond, the physical features of Greek rut roads in developing his own arguments.[165] Did Parmenides conjure consequence from con-sequence, as a disciple of Owen might feel, as he travelled a *hodos* along a rut road of argument inscribed into a pre-existing logical terrain? Or was Parmenides a master rhetorician, deploying a discursive architecture with a capacity for a temporally unimpregnated systematicity and argumentativeness, narrativity without narration and description without descriptivity, as a Sedleian interpreter might have it? Or, rather, are the language and imagery used by Parmenides entirely irrelevant, and his arguments fitted together according to some other set of principles entirely – and, if so, what are those?

Working on another level, scholars more focused on Parmenides' place in the history of thought might approach his poem with a different set of presuppositions and commitments, especially as far as the relationship between language and the ideas it expresses, between signifier and signified, are concerned. Particularly if they are interested in Parmenides' role as the decisive figure mediating the transition to a conception of

Paracelsus was perhaps unable to. Translation is largely irrelevant. "Charity" and maximizing truth are worse than useless (I don't believe a word in all seventeen volumes of Paracelsus). "Benefit of the doubt" about what Paracelsus was "referring to" seldom helps. What counts is making a new canvass of possibilities, or rather, restoring one that is now entirely defunct' (Hacking (2002a) 97). The aspiration of the present book, and the commitment that guides it, is to try to 'restore' the 'canvas of possibilities' that Parmenides worked within, and strained to reshape, rather than to provide a reading of Parmenides' poem that makes his arguments 'good' or 'go through'.

[165] I thank one of the readers from Cambridge University Press for helping me see matters in these terms and for some of the phrasing in this paragraph.

knowledge predicated on extended deductive argumentation and the practice of demonstration,[166] the semantics of the word *hodos*, the imagistic force of the rut road, and, especially, the discursive architecture provided by the *hodos* (and Circe's *hodos* in *Odyssey* 12 in particular) may well maintain some degree of priority in their interpretation of Parmenides' arguments; this last component would provide the matrix of discursive possibility available to Parmenides within which to undertake his metaphysical or cosmological endeavours.[167] For their part, literary critics of the sort who study Pindar, perhaps, or even Homer – with perhaps still other commitments concerning the relationship between words and ideas – might go so far as to advance a form of the stronger claim that in some respects it is Parmenides' road imagery that plays an active role in driving his discursive structure, just as one might uncontroversially claim the same for either poet.[168]

Finally, working on yet another level, other scholars of ancient poetry might 'give priority' neither to the content of Parmenides' arguments nor to the role played by his imagery in shaping their form; rather, they might be more interested in the analysis undertaken above as a case study in reception theory, one that departs from the usual strategy of dissecting repeated phrases, or type scenes, or cleverly pointed allusions, and moves towards an approach oriented towards archaeological explorations of discourse. Or, similarly, they might perhaps find the above study more useful as another data point to be woven into a larger story about the diverse modes of engaging with, and reworking, Homer that blossomed in the late archaic era.[169] How best to incorporate the analysis undertaken here into one's understanding of Parmenides' poem is a choice that each scholar will make

[166] Whether this be a transition effected immediately, or only in the course of succeeding generations (see Introduction, nn. 13, 82).

[167] However painstakingly or effortlessly, tidily or messily performed these may have been, seen from our perspective; see e.g. Introduction, 7–9 and n. 43.

[168] For Homer, see e.g. Thalmann (1984), Ford (1992), 40–48, Bakker (1997), Minchin (2001) and, generally Section 3.1.1 above with footnotes, esp. nn. 11, 12, 18, 20, 22. For Pindar, see e.g. Sigelman (2016) and Spelman (2018a).

[169] See, for example, the topics and scholarship discussed in Section 2.2, 'Archaic Receptions of Homer'.

depending on his or her own orientations and methods, philosophical commitments, and aims and objectives.

It is also possible, however, that in the final analysis even the dichotomy between the philosophically minded and the history of thought- or poetry-minded analysts of Parmenides will not fully withstand deeper scrutiny. What should a member of the first group who finds McKirahan's reading of Fragment 8 compelling say to a historian of thought who defends the reading I have advanced here? Surely *some* account of Parmenides' invention of extended deductive argumentation and outline of demonstration is required; barring this, we find ourselves back in the Greek Miracle paradigm. And what should future interpreters who attempt to forge their own path, finding satisfactory none of the interpretations of Parmenides' arguments currently on offer, think of all this? Most crucially: to what factor or set of factors should *they* give priority as they do so?

This final nexus of questions takes on extra significance in light of the positive reception that McKirahan's analysis has received.[170] I noted above McKirahan's injunction that our interpretations of Parmenides' arguments should not be imprisoned by an anachronistic understanding of what makes Parmenides' arguments 'good'. Like McKirahan, I, too, wholly subscribe to the notion that one consequence of this is that 'the interpreter's job is not to aim for formal validity, but to attempt a reconstruction of Parmenides' train of thought, showing how he might have supposed that the conclusion follows from the premises he gives'. But needing to remain alert to the risks of binding our interpretation of Parmenides' arguments within the straightjacket of subsequent canons of argumentation does not imply free licence to interpret them without *any* consideration for the imagery or discursive architecture in which he chose to express himself. Put differently, that the rules governing their order and structure are not those of Aristotelian or Fregan logic does not mean that we can ignore larger questions concerning the ordering, patterning, and overall

[170] See e.g. Curd (2011) 21, Mourelatos (2013a), who characterizes McKirahan's article as an 'excellent analysis of the argument in Truth'.

structure of Parmenides' arguments *in toto*. As McKirahan's own phrase suggests, just what it means for a conclusion to 'follow' from a premise is precisely what is at stake in our different understandings of Parmenides' poem. That the sense of many words and phrases crucial to Parmenides' arguments in Fragment 8 (such as *eon . . . eonti pelazei* at line 25, for example, or *akinēton* at line 26) remain obscure and hotly contested is widely acknowledged. And if we peer through so dark a glass at the meaning of so much of Parmenides' language, one might ask just how comfortable we should be in giving priority to our speculations about the 'content' of this language – especially when considering what it meant to Parmenides for a 'conclusion to follow from a premise', or how best to reconstruct his 'train of thought'.

By contrast, what I hope to have shown here is that we have a much better foundation upon which 'to attempt a reconstruction of Parmenides' train of thought' – or, rather, as he himself called it, his *hodos dizēsios*. This is, of course, to study the nature of the *hodos* part of the *hodos dizēsios*. Why might Parmenides have used this term? What resources did it offer him? How might it have exerted its own influenced him in turn? These are the questions I hoped to have answered, or to have begun answering, in this book.

I opened this study by discussing the heavy price scholars have paid for anachronistically treating Parmenides' poem as if it were nothing more nor less than a sequence of extended deductive arguments as we understand that term.[171] Doing so not only cast aspects of Parmenides' argumentation in an unjustly unflattering light, but also obscured the seminal role he played in forging from the discursive forms he inherited a new and powerful way of speaking persuasively – one that shares decisive features with what Aristotle would later call *apodeixis* or demonstration (and, indeed, defines and establishes them). But detaching Parmenides from the story of what came after him for (well-intentioned) fear of anachronism is arguably no less dangerous, no less distorting – and no less

[171] See Introduction, 7–10.

anachronistic. Demonstration *does* have a direct progenitor and distinguished pedigree in the road-thought and road-speech that Parmenides explicitly invokes. And, much more to the point, as I have tried to establish in this book, Parmenides' road-thought and road-speech is in turn integrally related to the road-thought and road-speech of his predecessors, specifically Homer, especially what we find in *Odyssey* 12.37–141. It is precisely this inherited discursive infrastructure that Parmenides reuses and reworks to craft his own radical new way of thinking and speaking persuasively – and thus precisely what can offer us such a promising basis upon which to reconstruct his 'train of thought' and grapple with what it might mean to him for 'a conclusion to *follow* from a premise' in the movement of his *hodos dizēsios*.

It is, however, just this road-thought and road-speech, so definitive for the shape and texture of the design of the 'Route to Truth', that McKirahan must jettison to get his interpretation of its arguments to stick. One could say – no doubt somewhat idiosyncratically – that it is as if for McKirahan, Parmenides' arguments are a kind of jigsaw puzzle-baby that must be rescued from the bathwater of their argumentation in order to be assembled properly outside it; by contrast, I would contend that Parmenides' argument-baby has in fact been developed exactly to fit the bath.[172] It does not follow from this, incidentally, that the philosopher's, or historian of philosophy's, concerns must be rigorously secondary to those of the historian of thought or the literary critic. Rather, adequate attention to the structure of Parmenides' argumentation (thanks to the efforts of the latter) can be an invaluable guide in helping the former grapple with his or her quandaries. Likewise, insights divined by the former can help the latter to refine and improve his or her analysis – which can in turn help guide further study by the philosophers, and so on. By considering questions of form and content as deeply – inextricably – interrelated, we can better understand the shape of this bath and the nature of the philosophy-child that it holds, which is both the scion of

[172] Thanks to one of the readers for Cambridge University Press for encouraging me to think along these lines, and for some language in the previous two sentences.

Homer's line and the founding dynast of Western philosophical and scientific thinking.

Taking several steps back, we may also observe that trying to square the historical account offered here with the interpretive accounts offered by Owen, Sedley, Austin, and especially McKirahan is a valuable exercise in its own right. This enterprise highlights just how complex is the web of hermeneutic assumptions and interpretative priorities that any reader of Parmenides' poem brings to bear on his or her reading. When it comes to the Presocratics, to whom we are so indebted for the modes of thought with which we investigate them[173] and yet whom we still so little understand, the truism that what we get out of the hermeneutic circle depends on where we enter it is even more vertiginously true than usual. Are we invested in locating Parmenides in his physical time and linguistic context, or was his brilliance such that this is unimportant, that whatever the nature of his intellectual or discursive milieu might have been, he would not have been constrained – or perhaps even influenced – by it? If we do want to discuss language and imagery, is this to be done in relation to the Homer (or Hesiod) of Parmenides' past, say, or to the Plato (or Democritus, or Empedocles) standing in his future, or to Orphic or other religious – or legal, or what have you – language that may have been current in the Elea of his present? If we want to gain purchase on just what, precisely, Parmenides was arguing for, how much should we emphasize those against whom he might have been arguing (and should that be an Ionian cosmologist, or Heraclitus, or members of a competing mystery cult or religious sect, or some other under explored or still-unexplored possibility?), the specific language of the arguments themselves, their form, the way that Parmenides' different successors understood them – or the degree to which any of these factors might still have a bearing on our own contemporary issues, in philosophy or elsewhere? How important is it that Parmenides be understood to argue as we do today? If it is important, how powerful is our commitment to the soundness or validity of Parmenides' arguments? How much do we feel the need to 'salvage' them if we wish to

[173] See Introduction, 6–10 and n. 30 above, and esp. Part III, *Doxai*, below.

preserve Parmenides' standing among the giants in the history of thought?

These are important questions, each of which can be answered in a number of legitimate ways – and in each case we are likely to see a subtly or profoundly different Parmenides emerge. Ultimately, of course, how we answer will likely tell us more about our own theories of language, of the history of conceptual change, and of the process by which new modes of thought emerge than about Parmenides himself. For my part, I would urge that we spend at least some time viewing Parmenides as we would any other archaic Greek poet, taking care to historicize his use of language, its sense and reference; to re-embed him not only within his intellectual tradition, but also, especially, his poetic tradition; and to attend to the manner in which the form, imagery, and content of his poem are interrelated. Even for those interpreters who insist on giving hermeneutic priority strictly to content independent of form (on the premise that the one could be strictly independent of the other), these considerations must remain a powerful criterion in assessing the strength, persuasiveness, and credibility of philosophically oriented interpretations of Parmenides' arguments. Ideally, however, the historical question of how Parmenides came to argue as he did will become a top-tier consideration in its own right, assuming a well-earned place alongside questions such as against whom, or in favour of what, he might have been arguing. It should ascend, that is, to the status of a premier consideration orienting our hermeneutic stance to Parmenides' poem, and especially the arguments he advances in the 'Route to Truth'.