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The Theology of Iamblichus

[Sometime during the Neoplatonic period, 1970’s]
The principal challenge to Greek Rationalism was the fact and practice of ancient Greek Religion. In order to fully appreciate the importance of this truth, one should be first of all reminded of the nature of the rationalism in question. A complete analysis of the complex phenomenon of Greek Λόγος cannot, of course, be presented here; it will suffice for the present purpose to emphasize its objectivist character on the one hand, and its vigorous, mathematical discipline on the other. The history of Greek Rationalism can be seen as the interplay of these two main features, now the one dominating to the relative detriment of the other, now both corroborating with varying degrees of success into sustained attempts to present a unified and adequately articulated picture of reality matching, so far as this is possible, its transcendent unity, multiple variation and overwhelming intricacy – now the two coexisting (without real in-depth influence on one another) in a kind of formal compromise. It will be our endeavour to analyze the development of ancient Greek speculation on κίνησις from the beginning to Aristotle in the context of the congruence or dissonant antithesis between these major driving forces and requirements. And, similarly, that double character of Greek Λόγος will substantially help us to understand Iamblichus’ major position and significance in the History of Greek Thought.

Λόγος, for the Greek Mind, is πεφατισμένος in reality – to use the pregnant Parmenidean expression. It is ingrained in reality. The serious danger for the Greek is not that Λόγος, as an autonomous organon dissociated from reality, may turn idle and generate fantasies and deceptions of its own; but rather the problem is that, elaborate and sophisticated though it may become, it cannot capture the entire spectrum of a reality which in fact baffles the wildest imagination. To span, in typically characteristic Greek fashion, the lapse of centuries, Simplicius gives the best undeliberate commentary on that most significant Parmenidean word. The Greek trusts his Reason; not out of a naïve abandon to what his mind tells him, but because he feels profoundly that his Λόγος is attuned intrinsically to reality in all its wealth. Ultimately it is the naturalness, in the deepest sense, of the Greek which safeguards the operations of his reason, just as the same naturalness grants to him a moral eye pure and nonconventional simultaneously, and, what is more, a religion natural and sublime at once, not to speak of his manifestest achievement, the real idealism and ideal realism of his art. Form is the key to everything as revelation of being.

Seeing from its obverse side the same thing we can say that Greek λόγος is not subjectivistic; that the λόγος is ξυνός, is not a peculiarly Heracleitean attitude. It is the common conviction, conviction founded on the immediate experience of one’s own absolute acceptance of reality as it is, of all Greek thought. It would be
interesting to pursue this line of approach into the reverse direction and inquire whether the excessive, almost morbid, preoccupation of the modern European Mind with epistemological, procedural and methodological questions is not due to an inner feeling of insecure foundation in total reality, and to a sentiment of guilt towards (part at least of) it.

However this may be I summarized the natural abandon of Greek Δόγος to reality by calling it objective. But the safeguard of naturalness inherent in the Greek attitude as such is also supplemented by a different kind of guarantee. The two should work consonantly, and this is what they do when the operations of the λόγος are successful, and they do attain to what it is their function to generate, reality reproduced. But dissonances do actually occur, sharper or smoother as the case may be. The second guarantee I have in mind is what I may call the mathematical character of Greek thoughts. By this I do not mean a formal, mechanical borrowing of the mathematical procedure (there is no guarantee in them as such, as we can see from Spinoza’s Ethica); but rather the satisfaction of two conditions, deeply mathematical: firstly that there must exist absolute connectedness between the various parts of the thought, thorough and complete coherence is a condition (necessary and, for mainstream Greek thought, sufficient as well) of truth, because consistence is the essence of reality; and secondly that everything should be transparent to Reason, the connections as well as the connected. By transparence to Reason I mean a quality according to which Reason is not positing anything which he cannot justify or see through it; the only irrational parameter permitted, is what the very Reason perceives as its own limits; which are the very limits of reality, of being. No given assumptions from high above or from down below, from irrational revelation or from equally irrational in effect ordinary thought and experience – are allowed to influence the course of reason, the structure and harmony and order of the logos of being. The two aforementioned conditions ask for a closed system of Truth perspicuously and absolutely interconnected in its structured cohesion, like a deductive system we might envisage in modern terminology. The difference from that, is of course provided by the necessary “realistic” character of any Greek system, as contrasted to the merely formal, “typical” and mechanical constructions of modern axiomatic theory.

The intrinsic reality-orientated character of Greek Δόγος, and its required mathematical vigour, in harmonious combination, safeguard its non-subjectivist status. We may say, in short, Greek λόγος is ontological. It is logos of being. It is not capable of setting aside too easily any form of reality – this is what the modern eye sees as a disadvantage or even defect by calling it credulity and, in the cases that we will be concerned in the sequel, superstition.
The Greek Spirit prefers, if you like, to have a rich picture of objective reality, than to shrink that reality into the basic elements of a machine in order to aggrandize itself and its own significance as a “transcendental” or “transcendent” Subject. The Greek Spirit feels happy in the wealth of reality, not in the morbid atmosphere of a subject cut off from reality, and brooding over its own predicament. The Greek Spirit, in short, believes that it gets its significance from coming into contact with cosmic and divine objectivity, not that it gives (in some utterly incomprehensible way) meaning (if possible) to it. Subjectivism (of the Cartesian Ego type, of the empirical self, of the transcendental Kantian subject, of the Hegelian Spirit, or of the existentialist selfessentialising nothing) is a Modern European predicament. Classical “naïve” thinking is totally free from it.

Being so constituted by its fundamental orientation towards objective reality, and so protected by its mathematical vigour, it simply cannot conveniently steer away from the problem posited by ancient religion – a religion, especially, essentially ritualistic and mythological – and also mystic. The reality of such a religion was there, provocative and challenging. It was not possible for the Greek mind to simply set it aside or ignore it, as we are seeing the modern mind to do, particularly in our days. Greek λόγος had to absorb this reality. The history of the positive response of Greek λόγος to that reality has still to be written. For it can be shown that right from the beginning that reality influenced the movement of philosophical thought in individual thinkers and in schools.

I shall not attempt to draw here even the rudiments of that history. One thing must needs, nonetheless, be impressed: Philosophical thought although deeply influenced by religious feelings, attitudes and beliefs, was, so to speak, paying back for that powerful but subterranean influence by the rationalization of mythology and the aetiology of cultus: allegory was generated, and the various exegetical, often conflicting, interpretations of myths (one-to-one equivalences to physical and metaphysical theory) became the standard way to philosophically understand religion. And even though much was lost in this transaction; yet provided the religious feeling was still alive to offset the adverse effects of rationalization by infusing the products of this latter (sometimes unconsciously) with something of the real meaning to which it, as living feeling, bear testimony – the resulting dislocation was neither very severe, nor systematically pernicious.

The Stoic doctrine on the matter is an example of what I mean; so long, for example, as allegorizing Zeus as cosmic fire was not more of a naturalization of divinity than a divinization of an ultimate element of the world, the exercise in rational understanding of religion was, although still not capturing the whole of the reality it meant to reproduce, not very harmful. But even this much was not possible with regard to the other, and ultimately fundamental, moment of religion – ritual,
this rock bottom of ancient religiosity. Here rationalism was at a loss: it could
not gratuitously downgrade a primeval observance considered to be of the utmost
(indeed of crucial) importance, this is out of tune with ancient mentality; but it could
neither easily incorporate it into itself. There were, of course, attempts to rationalize
ritual; to explain it symbolically, and even suggestions to alter it if it did not conform
to the demands of ordinary thought or common morality. The quality of such
attempts varied and corresponded to the quality of the mythological interpretations.
But the important point is that however successfully they might explain the
symbolism of the religious act in the ritual, they could only very superficially analyze
the significance of the act as act, as ceremonial worship, as τελετή; why one should
do and perform, rather than think or feel that symbolism. This remained a mystery,
which the pious among philosophers were prepared to accept even if they could not
clearly and adequately understand1; whereas some could even bring themselves to
denigrate2.

The inexplicability of the rite as such, of its mysterious nature and efficacy,
was one of the two major issues which confronted philosophy in its attempt to
“comprehend” religion. The other regarded the proper understanding of the nature
of godhead, of the essence of divinity, as implicitly revealed in the worshipping
consciousness, in religious awareness. Since divinity is manifested in worship for the
ancient mind, the two problems are intricately connected. Thus a tendency to
downgrade rite can be expected to go hand in hand with a tendency to give inferior
status to the gods and daemons of traditional religion in which case the net result
was to substitute “spiritual” worship in thought and emotion for the liturgy of
religious Act on the one hand, and acceptance of philosophical principles as highest
divinities on the other.

The best, and most significant in our context, example of this attitude is
perhaps provided by Plotinus. We noticed his condescending (to say no more)
attitude to the actual ritual. He restricted the sphere of the occult to the magic
manipulation of powers residing in the World and related to its material constitution;
the foundation of this magic was for him the Stoic sympathy of the World parts

1 Following, say, Plutarch’s general advice.
2 Plotinus was probably one of them. Porphyry, Περὶ τοῦ Πλοτίνου βίου, 10. 33-8 Henry et Schwzyzer
p. 17: φιλοσοφοῦ δὲ γεγονότος τοῦ Ἀμελίου καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ κατὰ νουμηνίαν καὶ τὰς ἐστιν
ἐκπεριμονὰς καὶ ποτὲ ἀξιούντος τὸν Πλοτίνον σὺν αὐτῷ παραλαβεῖν ἐφῆ: “ἐκεῖνοι δὲ πρὸς ἐμὲ
ἐρχῆσθαι, οὐκ ἐμὲ πρὸς ἐκεῖνους”. Τοῦτο δὲ ἐκ ποιῶς ἀνοικιάς οὕτως ἐμεγαληγόρησην, οὐτ’ αὐτοῖς
συνείλεν ἐπινήμιται οὐτ’ αὐτῶν ἐρέοια ἐπολικόσαχον. Plotinus did not mean to call the gods
himself at his convenience in his home, as it were. For he was curious enough to go to the Temple of
Isis in order to have his own daemon invoked by the Egyptian Priest. (Porphyry, op.cit., 10.15-33). His
“sorcery” was a different thing. Cf. Enneads, V, 3, 17.28-38.
towards each other: whoever transcends this World by limiting himself to his purely psychical and intellectual self, is exempt from every occult influence. (Cf. the story of Olympius’ magic exertions on Plotinus, and the deflection of the influences upon the perpetrator himself, Porphyry, *op.cit.* 10. 1 – 15). For he has reached the true philosophical principles of the world, in which alone true divinity, mostly unknown to the traditional religion, is to be found. The gods and daemons of that religion are relegated to the status of inworldly forces, in the main Stoically interpreted.

Such a type of view may appeal to the modern mind, may even claim Platonic precedence, but it was really on the whole out of tune with ancient sensitivity. The aim of philosophy is to explain things as they are, not to explain away them, according to subjective fancy, into something which they are not. Even the Epicureans ascribed to the traditional religious pantheon supreme transcendental position. The Stoics saw in the gods of the religion the most powerful forces weaving the fabric of the World. Aristotle may have opted for the astral analysis of religion, but his spheres represent the highest beings in perfect intelligible order according to his theory, immutable and absolutely exempt from the defects of the sublunary world, - in fact and the very names of the astronomical bodies refer to the gods of traditional worship. In the Platonic tradition there is indeed some complication, having ultimately its source in a certain ambiguity in Plato’s himself position. I shall not enter here into a discussion of this most important topic. It may suffice that two relevant points should be emphasized: firstly, that Plato was deeply suspicious of the easy, physicalistic, rationalizations of divine matters; and secondly that his profound religiosity is evident in the systematic religious colouring which he gives to his

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3 Cf. *Timaeus*, 40d sqq. regarding the endocosmic existence of the gods of the genealogies, though the context there is astral.

4 Very characteristic, generalizing it, is what Plutarch has to say, *Quaest. Conviv.* V, 7, 1. The talk is about the evil eye and malign influence. And Mestrius Florus’ argument is that we should not refuse to believe things solely because we have no plausible explanation of them: 680C-D ...έφη τα μὲν γιγάντια τή φήμη θαυμαστώς βοήθειν. τῷ δ’ αἰτίας ἀπορεῖν ἀπεισείσθαι τὴν ἱστορίαν οὐ δικαίως, ὅπως, μνημόνια ἐμβαφῆ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐχόντων, ὧ τῆς αἰτίας λόγος ἡμᾶς διαπέσευγεν. "δ λος δ’" εἶπεν "ὁ ζήτων ἐν ἐκάστῳ τὸ εὐλογον ἐκ πάντων ἀναφεί το θαυμάσιον. ὅπως γὰρ ὧ τῆς αἰτίας ἐπιλείπεται λόγος, ἐκείθεν ἀρχεῖται τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν. ὡστε τρόπον τινα φιλοσοφιαν ἀναιροῦν οἱ τοις θαυμασίως ἀπιστοῦντες. δει δ’" ἔφη "τὸ μὲν διὰ τί γίγνεται τῷ λόγῳ μετέχει, τὸ δ’ οτι γίγνεται παρὰ τῆς ἱστορίας λαμβάνειν. ἱστορεῖται δὲ πολλά τοιαῦτα.


6 In the true sense of the world, not in a faded, explained away, awry, anaemic substitute.
speculations\(^7\), and in the sheer weight of religion in his last testament, the Laws. Not to mention the strong Pythagorean and Orphic influences. In fact what I have called ambiguity in Plato is essentially nothing more than his refusal to separate what ought to be kept together and unified in imitation of the pristine undifferentiated oneness of thought and feeling in primitive religion: namely true, profound rationalism on the one hand and deep religious awareness of Man and the World on the other. In their happy conjugation these two elements mutually interact upon each other and are consequently transformed to religiously coloured Idealism the former, and to mystic, arcane, “enthusiastic” religiosity the latter. This is the key to Plato’s enigma\(^8\).

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\(^7\) This was clearly no mere poeticy – as an unbelieving age like ours tends to suppose – but true conviction; the very regularity of the phenomenon on the one hand, and the close correspondence in details between the form and substance of his formulations and their religious models on the other – not to speak of the sincerity of feeling – testify to that effect. His overall idealistic tendency should not baffle us.

\(^8\) Already given in clear terms by the Scholiast to Phaedo, B, φο’ p. 123.3-11 Norvin: ὁτι οἱ μὲν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν προτιμῶσιν, ὡς Πορφύριος καὶ Πλωτίνος καὶ άλλοι πολλοί φιλόσοφοι. οἱ δὲ τὴν ἰερατικὴν, ὡς Ίαμβλίχος καὶ Συμπάντος καὶ Πρόκλος καὶ οἱ ἱερατικοὶ πάντες. ο δὲ Πλάτων τὰς ἐκκατέρωθεν συνηγορῶσιν εννοήσας πολλάς οὐδας εἰς μιᾶν οὕτως συνήγαγεν ἀληθεώς, τὸν φιλόσοφον βάκχον ὁμομάζω. Καὶ γὰρ ὁ χορὸς ἐαυτὸν τῆς γενέσεως εἰ τεθείη μέσος, εἰς ταύταν ἄξιε τῷ ἔτερῳ τὸν ἔτερον. Πλὴν δὴ λόγος ἔστιν τῷ βάκχῳ σεμνῶν τὸν φιλόσοφον, ὡς θεῷ τὸν νοῦν ἢ τῷ ἀποφήγματι φασί τὸ θητὸν. Cf. 96.7-10. The emphasis on the hieratic art and science on the part of Iamblichus is also testified by his introducing the hieratic excellences as the top-most order of “virtues”: v. Scholia in Phaedo, B, φο’, p. 114.22-5 Norvin: ὁτι εἰσὶ καὶ αἱ ἱερατικαί ἄρεται κατὰ τὸ θεοεὐδὲς ὑποστάμενα τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀντιπαρόκουσα πάσας τῶν εἰρημένων ὑστόρεσιν οὐδας, ἑναιαί γε ὑπαχουσα καὶ ταύτας δὲ τῷ Ἰαμβλίχος ἐνδείκνυται, οἱ δὲ περὶ Πρόκλου καὶ σαφέστερον. In qua Iamblichus is said to have introduced the paradigmatic virtues as well, i.e. excellences pertaining to the intelligible (as distinct from the intelligent) level. Perhaps Prophry, Sententiae, c. 32, p. 28.6 sqq. followed probably him in the triple distinction καθαρτικά - θεωρητικά - παραδειγματικά, corresponding respectively (a) to the soul purifying herself and severing, cutting herself up from the connection with this world, (b) the soul pure and separate functioning in accordance to Νοῦς, and (c) the noetic activity itself. Plotinus’ doctrine looks in effect much the same, except that he would not call “virtues” the archetypes of the virtues, as existing in Νοῦς, on the ground that an excellence is something belonging to something, and this differentiation between a thing and its property, be it essential, has no place on the level of Intelligence; cf. chapters 6 and 7 of his treatise Περὶ ἄρετῶν (Ι, 2) esp. 6.13 sqq. People are misled by this fact into supposing that the Phaedo scholiast is mistaken and the origin of the doctrine of paradigmatic virtues in Neoplatonism should be traced back to Plotinus. But there is, I submit, in reality a very significant divergence between the two views. Iamblichus does not hold that an entity of a certain order can actually “become” one of a higher (or lower for that matter) order – that soul can become in essence νοῦς (she can only act “like” νοῦς, subjugate herself to him completely in total abandon). Thus even where she acts noetically, soul does this not because she is transformed into pure intelligence, but because what is noetic in her gains the upper hand, so to speak, and controls her activities [cf. e.g. Proclus, In
Timeaeum, vol. III, p. 334.3 Diehl]. Notice for instance the formulation of the Scholiast in B ὃμα (p. 114.16-21 Norvin): ὅτι παραδειγματικά ἄρεται αἱ μηκέτα θεωροῦσα τὸν νοῦν τῆς ψυχῆς, τὸ γὰρ θεωρεῖν σὺν ἀποστάσει γίνεται, ἀλλ’ ἂν στάσεις ἐν τῷ νοον εἶναι κατὰ μέθεξιν, δός ἐστὶ παραδειγμα πάντων, διὸ καὶ αὕτη παραδειγματικά ὅτι προσηγομένως αὐτοῦ εἰσίν τοῦ νοον αἱ ἄρεται. ταύτας δὲ προστίθησιν ὁ Ἡμβλύχος ἐν τοῖς περὶ ἄρετῶν. And similarly for the hieratic virtues, they refer to the divine element in the soul, B ὃμβ, p. 114.22 κατὰ τὸ θεοεῖδες ψυχεῖται τῆς ψυχῆς. Iamblichus interpreted accordingly the Platonic allegory in Phaedrus (247c – 249d); v. Hermeias, Commentaria in Phaedrum, Ββ’ p.150.24 Courre, on 247c: οἱ θεοὺς Ἡμβλύχος κυβερνήτην τὸ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἀκούει, ἡμίονχον δὲ τὸν νοῦν αὐτῆς. τὸ δὲ θεατί αὐτὴν ἐτερότητα ἐπιβάλλει τοὐτῷ τῷ νοητῷ ἀλλ’ ὅτι ἐνοῦται αὐτῷ καὶ οὕτως αὐτοῦ ἀπολάμβανε. Τούτῳ γὰρ δηλοῖ τὸν κυβερνήτην τελεύτηρον τι τοῦ ἡμίονχον καὶ τῶν ὑπόπτων. Τὸ γὰρ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἐνοῦσθαι τοῖς θεοῖς πέφυκεν. Οὔδεν δὲ πέρι αὐτοῦ ἡ ἐνοτασία εἰς τὰς λέγου ταῦν Πλάτωνα παρακατατότα λέγειν ὅτι ἄτε οὗν θεοῦ διανοια νῦ τε καὶ ἐπιστήμη ἀκήρατος τρεφομένη. Ρηθήσεται γὰρ πρὸς τοῦτο ὅτι ἐκαστὸν οἰκείως τρέφεται, καὶ ἡ διάνοια ἐπιστημονικώς καὶ διανοητικῶς, καὶ ὁ νοῦς νοερῶς καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτῆς θείως. On the strength of the above interpretation, we can identify as Iamblichean §67 of Psellus’ De Omnificaria Doctrina. (Cf. also §§70, 71, 74). We see there that the theurgic virtue ( = the supremely hieratic) is the ultimate excellence possible to the human soul, posited above theoretical virtue, the one arising from and consisting in the contemplation of the Intellect. Beyond these ultimate human achievements lie the paradigmatic virtues, excellences of the noetic world, the intelligible order of being, and at the top, at the dark principle of everything, virtues suprapresential, the glories of the gods themselves: (p. 44.5-11 Westerink) ... ἢ δὲ θεωρητικὴ, ἢ θεωροῦσα τὸν νοῦν. ἢ δὲ θεωρητική, ἢ τὸ θεώτατον ἡμῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀναγεννοῦσα καὶ ἐνίκοισα τῷ θεῷ καὶ τὴν θείαν ἐνεργούσα μανιαν. Εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἐπέκεινα τούτων ἔτεραι ἄρεται, αἱ μὲν οἶνες παραδειγματα τῶν λοιπῶν ἄρετῶν, αἱ δὲ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν οὐσίαν. αἴτινες οὐ συμβεβήκατο εἰσίν, ὅσπερ ἐπισυμβεβήκασιν ἡμῖν αἱ λοιπαὶ ἄρεται, ἀλλ’ οὐσία νοερᾶ καὶ ὑπερούσιον. This is how we should also understand Marinus, Vita Procli, Ch. 3, sub initio – a clear Iamblichean influence on late Athenian Neoplatonism: πρῶτον δὴ οὐν κατὰ γένει διελάμβανοι τὰς ἄρετας εἰς τὲ φυσικὰς καὶ θεωρητικὰς καὶ πολιτικὰς, καὶ έτι τὰς ὑπὲρ ταῦτας, καθαρτικὰς τε καὶ θεωρητικὰς, καὶ τὰς σωματικὰς ὑπὸ καλουμένας θεωρητικὰς, τὰς δὲ ἐτὶ ἀνωτέρω τούτων συσσωρευμένες, ὡς καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀνθρωπόν ἢν ἐναγμένας, τὸ καίνους. – The composite picture that emerges is this. Iamblichus produced the more accurate and sufficiently elaborate scheme, a ladder of virtues. Above the lower grades pertaining to man as found and acting in the material world and in connection with it, lie the cathartic, theoretical, noetic = paradigmatic and hieratic virtues, levels of excellence achievable by the human soul by virtue of its pure psychic, intelligent and hedonic moments in its composition. What perfection lies above does not pertain to the nature of soul and is thus no proper virtue. Iamblichus’ paradigmatic virtues are in imitation of and by participation in the properly archetypal excellences and perfections belonging to the nous as such, not as psychic intelligence. Notice the formulations in the above quoted passage from the B Scholia to Phaedo (of Damascius affilitation): the Iamblichean “paradigmatic” virtues are to be found in a soul that has taken its stable stand (στάσεις) in its being nous by participation (κατὰ μέθεξιν). They (those virtues) are said to be paradigmatic because nous is the universal archetype, and its perfections of being are the paradigmata of being, and so similarly its Paradigmatic virtues are the archetypes of the “paradigmatic” virtues that can be found in a soul that has been consolidated in its unvarying participation of nous (διὸ καὶ αὐτὰ [the psychic paradigmatic virtues] παραδειγματικαί ὅτι προσηγομένως αὐτοῦ εἰσίν τοῦ νοον αἱ ἄρεται). Thus it is that Iamblichus introduced such virtues in connection with man – this must be what the scholiast (from Damascius?) means to say. And this is
A great deal of analysis is of course required to show the adequacy of this solution to the fundamental problem of Plato’s attitude towards religion; and much more will be needed to pursue the history of the Platonic tradition in these terms and from this point of view. But it is an absolute desideratum, that this should be done, and it will be highly illuminating. Equally illuminating it will be to study Presocratic philosophy in this perspective; the true situation will then emerge, and many supposed anti-religious standpoints will be understood in their true nature and natural context.

But however one may agree or disagree with the results of such an inquiry, this is indisputable: that Iamblichus presents us with the first known to us, major explicit case of elaborate philosophical support for unreformed traditional religion as such. And this is, on the general level, his chief contribution to the history of Greek philosophy. After him, this position becomes philosophical orthodoxy: that philosophy and religion are not at variance, that rational and mystic are not contradictory, that reason, if profound enough, can understand, after its proper fashion, religion, and therefore explain and justify it from the point of view of λόγος, without deforming and disfiguring it in the process in accordance with the requirements of a supposedly enlightened reformation: the light of reason is not hostile, not even neutral, not even independent from the divine splendor as manifested in traditional religion.

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the point that Macrobius makes more clear in his Plotinian based account of the quadruple division of virtues, In somnium Scipionis, I, 8, 5-10, v. esp. 1, 8, 10: quartae sunt quae in ipsa divina mente consistent, quam diximus voœv vocari, a quorum exemplo reliquae omnes per ordinem defluunt. Nam si rerum aliarum, multo magis virtutum ideas esse in mente credendum est. And he goes on to define those properly paradigmatic virtues in the divine Mind: illic prudentia est mens ipsa divina, temperantia quod in se perpetua intentione conversa est, fortitude quod simper idem est nec aliquando mutatur, iustitia quod perenni lege a sempiterna operas sui continuatione non flectitur. -- Confusion started probably with porphyry, who undecided as usually and, deep down, rather inconsistent, or at least simplifying, calls those paradigmatic archetypes in question “virtues”, although he correctly refers them to the Nous itself; he further, true to his intellectualistic bias, ascribes to them such an elevated position that he who would operate according to them would be father of Gods (p. 31.8). Naturally, since these “virtues” belong to the divine Nous! A Porphyrian formulatory confusion between highest improbability and categorial impossibility, that the Iamblichean schemes are free from. --- On the other hand, finally, Olympiodorus, in typically “weak” late Alexandrian Neoplatonism, combines the implications of such a statement as the one just noticed with Iamblichean stringent requirements, and comes up with a virtual identification of the paradigmatic and theurgic excellences. (Commentaria In Phaedonem, VIII, 2-10, v. esp. p.46.7-17 Norvin. ---- V. on the whole subject Απόστολος Πιερίτης, Περί Τέλους, II, Άρτες Τελειότητας και Αρετέσ Σωτηρίας, pp.69- 89, esp. the Table of Neoplatonic Ladders of Virtues appended at the end of the Chapter.)
As I said above the two main issues that philosophy had to face in trying to comprehend religion without altering it were a genuine understanding of the significance of ritual as such, and an adequate analysis of the nature of divinity as revealed in the actual worship. I have emphasized already that the two issues are intricately interconnected, but I shall here proceed with a brief analysis of Iamblichus’ handling of the latter one, in order to indicate the framework in which the study of De Mysteriis (addressed to the former issue) should be conducted. Unfortunately, we do not possess the theoretical works in which Iamblichus expounded his Theology – chief among which were the Περὶ θεῶν and his grandiose Περὶ τῆς Χαλδαϊκῆς Τελεωτάτης Θεολογίας – and to which the De Mysteriis is but the practical and pedagogic corollary. This loss has to be replaced by a close study of what Proclus and Damascius have to say about Iamblichus, especially since they represent the continuation of the Iamblichean tradition in Athens and late Athenian Neoplatonism.

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In order for a philosophical theology to present an adequate analysis of the nature of divinity (according to the demands and needs of the religious awareness) in the context of a naturalistic religion, it must satisfy the following conditions:

1) It must safeguard the divine transcendence. This is an elementary constituent of all, however primitive, religious consciousness and feeling. The god is proximate to us, is part of our world, only as a manifestation; He or It keeps simultaneously aloof, in Its substantial existence, from Its “occurrence”, so to speak, in a particular spot, time or way. It is and It is not what we meet when we come across It. This feeling of God as absent even in Its very presence, of His awesome Hiddenness in the midst of Its never ceasing Self-Declaration, of His Concealment and Proclamation, I call the feeling of divine transcendence.

2) In a natural religion there are necessarily many gods. Gods are the sources of all cosmic energy, the elemental, archetypal forces that weave the fabric of the World. And just as such immensely powerful potencies are many in what we will call their natural aspect, so they are many in their divine essence, for the ancient religious consciousness.

3) Their multiplicity is not, however, disorderly or chaotic. It may confound and frustrate our weak intelligence when it tries to comprehend the gods’ intricate interplay in the world – but behind the apparently inexplicable divine presence,
religious consciousness requires order, natural adjustment according to their several natures and characters. Since these, on the other hand, correspond to the elemental cosmic powers operating in World and Man, that order should possess the characteristic features of the organization of cosmic forces in the World-system. Now the relevant fundamental attributes of this organization of the cosmic domain are these two: that each power has a specific nature and a particular field of operations; and that some powers are subordinated in their character and activity to others. Thus similarly the pantheon of a natural religion tends to be organized according to these two principles; firstly, even though Gods are closely akin to each other in virtue of their common transcendence to everything worldly, they should *appropriate* to themselves a *particular field* of action, in which their divine peculiarity is to be exercised; and secondly some system of subordination is observed in their mutual arrangements. This requirement of subordination was very early projected in mythological thought resulting in divine genealogies, (where temporal succession expresses cosmic hierarchization and divine theogonies coincide with the cosmogony of reality); and later exhibited in philosophical garment as *hierarchization* and *derivation* of the latter from the former.

These then are the chief conditions to be satisfied by any philosophical theology which sets out to explain rationally the religious awareness of the Godhead in a natural religion, without deforming or altering it in any way to suit the impositions of an inadequately articulated reason. Iamblichus tackled the problem directly and firmly – at its foundation, as we shall see.

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Damascius gives us in a passage from his work *De Primis Principiis* a concise and perspicacious account of Iamblichus' originality and peculiarity in his doctrine of Gods. Damascius is markedly philo-Iamblichean, as is evident from his works and explicitly noticed by Simplicius; who in his *Corollarium de Tempore* from the commentary in *Physics* (p. 795.11 sqq. Diels) observes: οἱ δὲ μετὰ Πρόκλου ἐως ἡμῶν σχεδὸν τι πάντες οὐκ ἐν τούτῳ μόνον (sc. the question of the ontological status of time), ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἄπασι τῶν Πρόκλου κατηκολούθησαν. Ασκητισμὸν ἐξαιρῶ λόγου τὸν ἀριστον τῶν Πρόκλου μαθητῶν καὶ Δαμάσκου τὸν ἡμέτερον, ὅν ὁ μὲν δὲ ἀκραν εὐφυίαν καινοτέρους ἔχαρε δόγματι, ὁ δὲ Δαμάσκιος διὰ φιλοσοφίαν (not of course φιλοσοφίαν(!)) as in the text; perhaps φιλοσοφία might be considered. But φιλοσοφία gives good meaning:
Damascius did possess an earnestly industrious, even laborious quality in the examination of philosophical doctrines, nothing could escape his enormous capacity for dialectical reasoning) καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὰ Ἰαμβλῖχου συμπάθειαν παλλοίς οὐκ ἄκει τῶν Πρὸκλου δογμάτων ἐφιστάνειν⁹. This predilection for Iamblichean positions is well attested and explicitly manifested in such formulations on the part of Damascius as, for example, this one: αἰσχυνομίην δ᾽ ἂν καὶ τὸν θείον Ἰαμβλίχον, εἰ τι περὶ ταῦτα καινοτομοῦν, ἀνδρα τῶν θείων πραγμάτων ἄλλων τε καὶ τῶν νοερῶν ἀριστον ἐξηγητήν. δοκεῖ τοῖνοι ἐμοίγε κατὰ ἰχνῇ τῆς ἐκείνου πολυθεσάμενος γνώμης etc. (vol. I p. 291.23 sqq. Ruelle). It is precisely because of his high appreciation and attachment to Iamblichus, that the close study of Damascius’ work reveals such a significant insight into Iamblichean thought – in general terms and in specific doctrines alike.

The Damscian passage referred to belongs to a section of De Primis Principiis where the issue of (in Proclean formulation) imparticipable and participated multiplicity dependent on a principle is examined (chapters 100-110), in the context of a general discussion concerning procession in the realm of first principles. The primal and fundamental question regarding that issue is whether there exists at all around such given principles a multiplicity of self-subsistent entities (αὐτοτελῆ) or whether on the contrary there is only the principle and its radiations or illuminations (ἐλλάμψεις) in some subordinate field of entities which participate in that principle; vol. I, p. 258.6-8: ὅπερ οὖν λέγω πολλάκις, ἐπιζήτει ὁ λόγος περὶ ἐκάστου ἀριθμοῦ τοῦ ὑπὸ ἐκάστην ἀρχήν μονάδα λεγομένου τετάχθαι, πότερον αὐτοτελῆς ἑστιν, ἢ μόνον κατ’ ἐλλαμψὶν πληθυνόμενος. Thus, for instance, there is a Νόος as principle of all intelligence; are there many self-subsistent minds as well, existing not independently but in themselves and “outside” that principal Mind, and also ontologically prior to all souls and all their noetic activities – or is it rather that the

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⁹ Damascius, speaking of his preceptor and predecessor Isidorus, implies that he would consider Iamblichus second only to Plato: v. Vita Isidori, 33: αὐταῖς γε ταῖς Πλάτωνος ἀκηρατοῖς ἐννοίαις οὐ κατὰ τὰς συνήθεις τῶν πολλῶν φιλοσόφων ἐπιφολᾶ ἐνεφύετο, μετὰ δὲ γε Πλάτωνα καὶ ταῖς θαυμάσσαις Ἰαμβλίχου περίνοιαι. Notice here the subtle distinction ἐν-νοια / περί-νοια. The views of Iamblichus’ obstructors are indicated in the sequel by Damascius, 34: ὅτι οὐκ ὁλίγους τῶν φιλοσοφοῦντων ὀρῶμεν καὶ ἀκούσαν, τοὺς μὲν ἄβατον εἰναι τὸν Ἰαμβλίχον οἰκομένου, τοὺς δὲ αὐθάδει μεγαληγορία λόγωντα πλεῖον ἢ ἄλλης Πολιτείας πραγμάτων ἐπηρόμενον. -- That Iamblichus was second in time only to Plato is Emperor Julian’s opinion – clearly reflecting the prevailing new in the philosophical circles of Asia Minor at least; Oratio In Regem Solem 146A (Spanheim): οἶδα μὲν οὖν καὶ Πλάτωνα τὸν μέγαν καὶ μετα τούτων ἄνδρα τοὺς χρόνος οὕτω μὴν τῇ φύσει καταδεσσερεῖν (τὸν Χαλκιδέα φημι, τὸν Ἰαμβλίχον). This was probably Isidorus’ and Damascius’ opinion more or less, as well. -- A different attitude is illustrated by Macrobius, In Somnium Scipionis, 1, 27, 5: sed Plotinus inter philosophiae professors cum Platone princes etc. The question of later Neoplatonism was Plotinus or Iamblichus?
only multiplicity of minds is the one which exists in the illuminated souls as so many illuminations of these souls by the universal Mind? (v. Vol. I, p. 257.5 sqq.). The same problem reappears with every admitted and acknowledged principle of reality (v. Vol. I, p. 256.22-257.2). Illumination (ἐλλαμψις) is here used, of course, in a metaphysical sense.  

In this context, and after formulating the same problem with regard to οὐσία (p. 257.19-20), Damascius proceeds thus: τί δέι πολλὰ λέγειν ὅτε καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς οὐσίως ὑποτίθενται τοὺς πολλοὺς οἱ πρὸ Ἰαμβλίχου σχεδὸν τί πάντες φιλόσοφοι, ἕνα μὲν εἶναι τὸν ὑπερούσιον θεόν λέγοντες, τοὺς ἀλλούς οὐσιώδεις εἶναι ταῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνός ἐλλάμψεως ἐκθεομένους, καὶ εἶναι τὸ τῶν ὑπερούσιων πλῆθος ἐνάδον σώκ αὐτοτελῶν ὑποστάσεων, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἐλλαμπομένων ἀπὸ τοῦ μόνου θεοῦ καὶ ταῖς οὐσίαις ἐνδιδομένων θεώσεων. Thus Iamblichus was the first to postulate a supraessential, self-subsistent, multiplicity of gods. Previously, even the philosophers who had acknowledged a supraessential self-subsistent God as Ultimate Principle of everything had conceived of the many gods as beings divine, as beings which have received, in a certain sense, divinization (καὶ ταῖς οὐσίαις ἐνδιδομένων θεώσεων), in which case the godhead, strictly speaking, resides in the substantial beings and consists not in them as essential beings, but in the divinising radiance in them which proceeds out of the only both self-subsistent and supraessential God.  

Before proceeding with the detailed analysis and appreciation of the Iamblichean position, let us give an example, by way of contrast, of what Damascius opposes it to. The best case of a philosopher who on the one hand has conceived the supreme God as supraessential and supraintellectual, but yet has not drawn all the necessary inferences from the fundamental distinction and co-implication between unity and being, is, of course, Plotinus. And we can nicely illustrate through his views what Damascius means by his formulation of Pre-Iamblichean theology in this respect. In Enneads V, 8, 9 Plotinus enjoins us to conceive an imaginary sphere in which the whole world of sense is to be included, everything being luminous and transparent (so as not to hinder the view of anything else), while preserving its own identity, finite circumscription and character. Then he requires of us to conceive another sphere similar to the former one but without space, time and matter; θεὸν δὲ καλέσας τὸν πεποιηκότα ἢς ἐχεις (sc. the creator of the former sphere of the physical world) τὸ φάντασμα εὐξαι ἔλθειν. ὁ δὲ ἦκοι τὸν αὐτοῦ κόσμου φέρων

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10 It is that which comes or radiates out of something, and does not exist in itself, but in something else which receives the radiation.—For a metaphysical examination of the entire nexus v. my treatise on “Things and Predication”.

11 The formulation in Damascius depends, naturally, on the clear-cut and sharp distinction between ἐν and ὁν with all its extremely important implications, which was originally utilized in a systematic and crucial way by Iamblichus himself, as we shall see.
mete pantwn twn en autw theon eis oin kai pantes, kai ekastos pantes suneontes eis en, kai taiz men dunameien alloi, tij de mia ekinein tij pollh pantes eis, malloin de o eis pantes. Oy gar epileipeti autos, hinn pantes ekeinoi genvonta. omou de eisi kai ekastos xoris aiv en otasei adiastate oiv morphi aiosththi oindeian eixan - etc. (II. 13-21). This is the Noous and its articulation as Intelligible World12; and this being the World of true being for Plotinus, it is clear that the gods concerned are far from being supraessential. In fact gods are explicitly said to have their divinity consisting in their noetic subsistence; V, 8, 3, 18-23: seimoi men gar pantes theoi kai kaloi kai to kallos auton amixan. alla ti esti di o toioyto ienin; h nouns, kai oti malloin nouns energeian en autois, oiste orgasthai. Oy gar di oti auton kalta ta somaata.. kai gar ois esti somaata, oiv touto estin autois to einai theoi, alla kata ton noun kai outoi theoi. In fact gods are generated by the act of primal Intelligence; VI, 9, 9, 17-19: to de ekei zhen energeia mev noun. energeia de kai gennai theous en hti tij pro ekeino epafhi, gennai de kallos, gennai dikaiosunin, aretij gennai. They are the supreme Intelligences; VI, 7, 9, 20-22: Dionser ton voseseov aiv men theoi, aiv de deuterov ti genos, en o to logikon epikhen entautha, eizis di apo touton to alugon khthen. It is almost a difference in gradation which separates gods, from rational souls and them from the irrational ones. The intelligible gods are an offspring of the purest, primal Mind; V, 1, 7, 27-30: taun tos gennaeos o noun ouitos. Aexion de noun ton katharontas mii allosein hem ek

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12 For the intelligible gods as luminous parts of the whole Noous (which is the ekei ouvanos), cf. V, 8, 3, 30 – 4, 44. Even the celestial gods contemplate eternally, without involvement in anything lower, what exists in the intelligible heaven: V, 8, 3, 27-30. – Proclus (Theologia Platonica, IV p. 188.20 Portus) states that the heaven of the famous Phaedrus passage is, according to Plotinus, the intelligible domain, and this is fully supported by the above passages (cf. also V, 8, 10 sub in., where, by the way, it is made obvious that Zeus and the other gods are for Plotinus celestial gods of and in this World). But in IV p. 215.18 sqq. he refers to the view of Theodorus of Asine, according to which ouvanos is the absolutely first principle and the Platonic subcelestial arch (upouvavnoi aivs) is the proximate subsistence to the ultimate one. And there we read: o men gar ek tis Asinis philosofo, to Ploutinou peithomenon, to prosechous apo tov archonton proeleboun upouvavion aivida proseieken etc. This seems to contradict the former, and true, account of Plotinus’ position. I believe Proclus has in mind something like this: the upouvavnoi aivs is the prosechous apo tov archonton proeleboun as the first moment of that “movement” which constitutes the Noous according to Plotinus; it is the otherness which has to be turned towards the One in order to take shape, form and light as Intelligence and Intelligible. This may well visualized as the lowermost, so to speak, extremity of Noous. I accept that this interpretation is difficult in view of what immediately proceeds in Proclus, p. 215.13 sqq.: oti de kai ton pro timon oiv kleinvontai, tin upouvavion taun aivida theias diakosmiasin upo to vouranw tetaugemenei upovosantes, oiv men evuthis meta to proton autin taun hewson, ouvanw to proton eisontes. Oi de en to plastei ton vinos ekateron tattousin. But this may refer to Theodorus exclusively. Otherwise, we should rather emend Ploutinou, or add <ou> to Ploutinov peithomenon, which however seems to lack any obvious point in the context.
The encosmic gods are created by λόγος, not by νοῦς, let alone by the supraessential first principle; III, 2, 11, 6-9: οὖτως οὖν ὁ λόγος πάντα θεοὺς εἰργάζετο, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν θεοὺς, τὰ δὲ δαίμονας, δευτέραν φύσιν, εἶτα ἀνθρώπους καὶ ζώα ἐφεξῆς, οὐ φθόνῳ, ἀλλὰ λόγω ποικίλαν νοεῖν ἔχοντι. As a compendium of the order of gods according to Plotinus the following passage from his attack upon Gnostics and Christians may suffice; II, 9, 9, 30-39: (goodness prevails in this world in all its orders, and more so in the higher ones, so there are best men and good daemons), πολὺ δὲ μάλλον θεοὺς τοὺς τε ἐν τῶδε ὄντας κάκει βλέποντας, πάντων δὲ μάλιστα τὸν ἰγμέόνα τοῦτο τοῦ παντός, ψυχήν μακαριωτάτην. ἐντεύθεν δὲ ἢδη καὶ τοὺς νοητοὺς ὑμεῖν θεούς, ἐφ’ ἀπασί δὲ ἢδη τὸν μέγαν τὸν ἐκεῖ βασιλέα καὶ ἐν τῷ πλῆθεί μάλιστα τῶν θεῶν τὸ μέγα αὐτοῦ ἐνδεικνυμένους. Οὐ γὰρ τὸ συστέλλει εἰς ἐν, ἀλλὰ τὸ δεῖξαι πολὺ τὸ θεῖον, ὡσον ἐδείξας αὐτός, τούτῳ ἐστὶ δύναμιν θεοῦ εἰδότων, ὅταν μένων ὃς ἐστι πολλοῖς ποιή πάντας εἰς αὐτὸν ἀνηρτημένους καὶ δι’ ἐκείνων καὶ παρ’ ἐκείνου ὄντας. There are many encosmic gods, the supreme leader of the world, and Intelligible gods – but no one supraessential and self-subsistent except the One.

This sort of Henotheism, this is the type of theory (and a very advanced one from the Neoplatonic point of view) which is contrasted to the Iamblichean view by Damascius. Iamblichus was the first to posit a multiplicity of entities both supraessential (beyond being) and self-subsistent – these are the true Gods. In this way, the two beforementioned foremost requirements of the religious consciousness are satisfied in a drastic way. But before commenting on this fact, let it be made clear, how singular Iamblichus’ position is.

There has lately occurred some discussion concerning the system of Henads in Athenian Neoplatonism with regard to whether Iamblichus did or did not inaugurate the entire conception13; and the tendency is to deny the ascription of that doctrine to Iamblichus, interpreting the numerous testimonies to the contrary on the part of later Neoplatonists as simply cases of utilizing their own technical language and conceptual apparatus in order to describe the views of their predecessors14. But the question is not one of terminology; it is a question par excellence of doctrinal content. Did or did not Iamblichus posited many (a number, in the Neoplatonic

13 Cf. e.g. Introduction, chapitre I, vol. III of the Budè ed. of Proclus’ Theologia Platonica.
14 Aristotle, in his treatment of the Presocratic philosophers, is a good example of such an attitude, which, no doubt was prevalent and indeed very common among the Greeks; it is another question whether it is so misleading as it is usually taken to be.
terminology, of) self-subsistent unities *beyond* being, whether he called them ἐνάδες or not? To this question the answer cannot but be affirmative.

The *explicit* testimony of Damascius, is multifariously supported. Two points should be first of all clarified in this respect. (1) Did Iamblichus make a clear-cut distinction between ἐν and ὄν, between oneness and being?15 And (2), Did he apply it in connection to the divine transcendence over being for *all* gods? Is it, in other words, for him the (supra)essential character of godhead?

(1) The Iamblichean system of the uppermost, very first, principles is clearly drawn by Damascius in his *De Primis Principiis*. As he states in the extended intricate discussion of the Iamblichean position in the third section of his great work (chapters 42-54), Iamblichus was the only one16 to posit above the Intelligible Realm (*νοητόν*) two (and not merely the usual one) principles; vol. I, ch. 43, p. 86.3-6 Ruelle: μετά δὲ ταύτα ἐκείνο προβαλλόμεθα εἰς ἐπίσκεψιν, πότερον δύο εἰσίν αἱ πρώται ἅρχαι πρὸ τῆς νοητῆς πρώτης τριάδος, ἦτε πάντη ἀρχής καὶ ἡ ἀσύντακτος πρὸ τὴν τριάδα, καθάπερ ἡμέως ὁ μέγας Ιάμβλιχος ἐν τῷ ΚΗω βιβλίῳ τῆς Χαλδαικῆς τελειοτάτης *θεολογίας*, ἢ ὡς οἱ πλείοτοι τῶν μετ’ αὐτὸν ἐδοκίμασαν, μετὰ τὴν ἀρχήν αὐτίαν καὶ μίαν, εἶναι τὴν πρώτην τριάδα τῶν νοητῶν; ἢ καὶ ταύτης ὑποβησόμεθα τῆς ὑποθέσεως, κατὰ δὲ τὸν Πορφύριον ἔρυθμὲν τὴν μίαν τῶν πάντων ἅρχην εἶναι τὸν πατέρα τῆς νοητῆς τριάδος; These two Iamblichean principles are, first the πάντη ἀρχής (absolutely Unspeakeable) and second the ἀσύντακτος πρὸς τὰ νοητά (Uncoordinated to the Intelligible realm). Damascius presents the arguments in favour of the Iamblichean position in pp. 86.19-89.517. Very likely the substance of this argumentation is Iamblichean as well; in fact according to 94.22-24, the last (at least) piece of reasoning (88.16 – 89.5) must be ascribed directly to Iamblichus even in its details: ταύτα μὲν οὖν καὶ ὑστερον αὐτίκα δὴ μάλα

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15 The distinction was explicitly drawn by Plato, both in his written works and unwritten doctrines. Since Plotinus, in any case, it could not but do, and it did, play an ever-increasing role in the philosophical speculations of the Neoplatonists.

16 V. Vol. I, ch. 45, p. 89.6-9: ἄρα οὖν οὕτω θετέον δῦο τὰς ἐπέκεινα τῶν νοητῶν τριάδων ἅρχαις, καὶ ἄλλας εἰσεῖν, τῶν ὄντων ἅπαντων, ὡς ἡμέως ὁ Ιάμβλιχος, ὅσου ἐμὲ γε εἰδέναι, μόνος ἀξίους τὸν πρὸ ἡμῶν ἁπαντῶν, ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἄπασιν ἀκολουθητέον τοῖς μετ’ αὐτοῦ; The structure of the Intelligible world according to Iamblichus will be explained below. Notice that these two principles are ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὄντων ἅπαντων, since they are before the first intelligible order itself. – Damascius will follow the rest of the Neoplatonists disagreeing, for once, with Iamblichus, but not with a note of respect and awful reserve: p. 89.9-11: τὸ μὲν οὖν ἀληθεύσατο θεός ἀν εἰδέναι περὶ τῶν τηλικούτων, εἶ δὲ χρῆ τὰ γε ἐμοὶ δοκοῦντα εἰπέν, οὐ μοι δοκεῖ ταύτα ἑχωρά εἶναι πρὸς τὴν προκειμένην ἀπόδειξιν.

17 Damascius’ criticism of the arguments is given in 89.10-95.12. His positive substantiation of the common position that only one principle subsists before the first intelligible triad begins at 95.12 and continues to 100.13.
διαφθορώσωμεν ώς οίνον τέ έστιν, νόν δέ ἀπλῶς πρός τά τελευταία τών ύπο Ἰαμβλίχου ἐπιχειρηθέντων ἐκείνο λέγομεν etc. By clear implication the rest of the preceding argumentation is virtually verbally Iamblichean as well. In any case much more can be elicited from Damascius’ discussion of these matters (as of numerous others) concerning the Iamblichean system; this is however not the appropriate place to do that. It may suffice here to notice that the main consideration in Iamblichus’ thought in positing his two pro-ontic and supra-intelligible principles was the following: for reasons similar to those exposed by Damascius in the first section of his work (chapters 1 to 24) he must have denied of the absolutely First Principle not only being and intelligibility, but everything conceivable, even its being a first or a principle, an origin or a case. Then he must have seen reality being organized in pairs of opposites, the most fundamental of which was identified as being (in Pythagorean and Platonic fashion) the one between πέρας and ἀπειρον, unity (the One) and indeterminate duality, or fatherhood and potency, to put the same thing into Pythagorean, Platonic and Chaldaic formulation respectively. But such an antithesis necessitated for him the subsistence of a principle of oneness distinct both (on the lower side) from that unity and oneness to which the principle of multiplicity provides a valid opposition and polar opposite on the one hand, and (on the upper side) from the absolutely unspeakable and inconceivable principle on the other; this is what Damascius brings out very strongly in his elaborate discussions of the third section of his work.

18 That in 87.16-7 Damascius presents an argument on behalf of the Iamblichian position (πολλῷ δὲ χρῆσαι τις ύπερ Ἰαμβλίχου καὶ τῷ προφηθέντι λόγῳ etc.) need not count against that direct ascription (one might have provocatively thought e.g. of changing the ύπο of the above-quoted 94.23 to ύπέρ), since it refers apparently only to the argument in 87.16-24. And even this incorporates the tendency to describe the second Principle as Μονάς – which tendency is Iamblichean as we shall see. Damascius connects this expression with μενεῖν in a typical piece of Platonic philosophical etymology, and this may be his contribution to the formulation there. – However, being aware of the Neoplatonic attitude to these matters, we must assume that, speaking generally, the arguments are inherent in Iamblichus’ position and more or less utilized by him, though the arrangement and exact formulation may in places be Damascian. Compare for instance, with reference to the very argument we are considering here (the last one, 88.16 - 89.5), 101.21-23: τοιαύτα γὰρ ἔλεγε καὶ ὁ τὴν Ἰαμβλίχου προεβλευὸν ἀρχὴν μείνῃ τεθεμένη τῶν τε δύναν (that is, of the two principles of everything, first two members of the first intelligible triad) καὶ τῆς ἀρχήτου παντελώς, ἐτὶ δὲ προσετίθει ετη. (Cf. 101.28-102.2: ἄμα γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος ἥξιον καὶ τὴ Ἰαμβλίχου ὑποθέσει συνηγονεῖ καὶ τῇ ὁπλωσόν ἀντιδιαφέρει τῶν δύναι ἀρχῶν, ἐπεὶ καὶ τάδε ἀν τις εἰσὶν τούτως ἀκολούθουν etc.). What all this shows is the occasional Damascian elaboration of Iamblichus’ arguments and positions – something very straightforward and natural, easily also discernible.

19 The whole issue is well illustrated, e.g. in 98.12-99.7, where Proclus is criticized (he is the τις of 98.12 and 20), for having in effect identified the πάντη ἀπόρρητον with the One: this is where he in fact diverges from Iamblichus’ positions – and this must be the meaning of 99.1-3: εἰ τοίνυν ταύτα καὶ τὰ
We can now properly understand the definitive statement in 103.6-10: καὶ γὰρ ἢ μία ἀρχὴ πρὸ τῶν δυεῖν, αὐτὴ μὲν οὖν τὸ ἀπλῶς ἐν, ὁ μέσον ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος τίθεται τῶν δύο ἀρχῶν καὶ τῆς παντάπασιν ἀπορρήτου ἐκείνης, αἱ δὲ δύο πέρας φέρει καὶ ἀπειρον, ἣ καὶ εἰ βούλεται τις, ἐν καὶ πολλά, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀντικείμενον ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς, οὐ τὸ πρὸ ἀμφοῖν καὶ ἀναντίθετον. The absolutely first principle is παντάπασιν ἀπόρρητος; next comes τὸ ἀπλῶς ἐν20, and then the two constitutive principles of the Intelligible order, i.e. of being – πέρας and ἀπειρον. That the νοητὸν is the realm in question, will appear in one moment; it is meanwhile called ἐν-ὑν in contrast, naturally, τὸ ἀπλῶς ἐν: it is not the Ἐν-simpliciter, but the One-Being, v. 101.13-15: δείν οὖν ... προϋποτιθέναι τὰς αἰτίας καὶ τοῦ Ἐνός Ὄντος καὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτῷ δυαδικῆς φύσεως τῶν στοιχείων. εἶναι τούτων τὴν δυάδα τῶν ἁρχῶν προδιηγημένην τῆς εἰρημένης δυάδος αἰτίαν, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ πρὸ τῆς δυάδος ἐν, ὡσπερ ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος τίθεται πρὸ ἀμφοῖν τοῦ Ὅντος Ἐνός αἰτίων προούπάρχειν (or προύπαρχον).

We have thus, so far, the following scheme of succession for Iamblichus according to Damascius:

πάντη ἀπόρρητος

| ἀπλῶς ἐν

| (the two principles, πέρας-ἀπειρον)

| ἐν - ὑν

But it should immediately be observed that however much Iamblichus used the formula ἐν-ὑν in this connection (the formula was, in any case, portentously available in the second hypothesis of Plato’s Parmenides, and Plotinus had already employed it for his own purposes), it appears even from Damascius that his favourite term in this connection was τὸ νοητὸν. Thus 145.6-9: πῶς δ’ ἄλλως ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος τὸ νοητὸν ἐξηγούμενον περὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ φησιν ὑποστήναι καὶ ἀνεκφοίτητον εἶναι τοῦ Ἐνός; ἢ συννοῶν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ λέγωμεν ἠνωμένον τε καὶ ἐν ὑν, ὡς οὐπω μὲν τῷ
tou εἶναι τις ὑπολογιζόμενος, ἁμα δὲ καὶ τῆς Ἰαμβλίχου δόξης ἐξεπτάμενος, τὸ ἐν ὑποτιθετέο μιᾶν εἶναι ἀρχήν πρὸ τῶν δυεῖν, ἀπαντησόμεθα πρὸς αὐτὸν etc. If, that is, ἐξεπτάμενος is the true reading. But ἐπιπτάμενος, the reading of an inferior manuscript, gives a tolerable sense either: in arguing from the polarity of πέρας-ἀπειρον to the necessity of a One which will transcend that ultimate opposition he is treading along the footsteps of Iamblichus. However the first must be the intended meaning.

20 As Proclus says, In Parmenidem, 1068.19 Cousin, ἐπέκεινα καὶ τοῦ Ἐνός τὸ πρώτιστον according to Iamblichus – for the lamblichean position is examined there.
οντι ον, ουδ' ετι μεντοι εν, δια μεσον δε αμφοιν тетαγμενον. The νοητον for Iamblichus was subsisting “round” the One (the ἀπλῶς εν, of course) having-not-really-left it but being in the process of leaving it; thus it is not still Pure One, but not yet Pure Being either. It was something between the two – but again not as a kind of mixture of the two, as Damascius makes clear immediately below; 145.10-14: προς δε τουτοις μετα το εν ον την ουσιαν αντιδιπτησι τω ενι, διακρινας αμφω κατα την ακροτητα των νοεθων (at the second level below νοητα), οπου και την θειαν έπερατητα συνεξεφηνεν. άπε τα προ τουτων ουκ ην διορισαι ως το μεν αυτων εν, το δε ον υποκειμενον τω ενι, αλλ' εν ον το συναμφωτερον, ουχ ως μιγμα εξ έκατερου, αλλ' ως μεσον αμφοιν και οιον προποδισμος εις το ον του ενος. Iamblichus thus did not distinguish and contrapose ουσια and εν in the νοητον; for this distinction “appears” for the first time on the level of the ακροτης των νοεθων – uppermost pinnacle of the noetic world – which is below the intelligible (νοητον) world and at a second remove from it

21 What follows in Damascius is an interpretation in effect of Plato’s Parmenides 142d-e, but evidently fits the lamblichean position.
The same doctrine is to be found consistently elsewhere as well\textsuperscript{22}. The crucial point is that for Iamblichus the νοητὸν, in being distinguished from the ἐν in the process of procession, refused, so to speak, to remain away from it and separate itself from the one, but stayed attached to it, “freezed” as it were around it thus checking its further ontological procession and existential dispersion; 255.24-256.5: εἰ δὲ καὶ τούτῳ τις ἐννοήσειν ὁ φησίν ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος, ὁτι περὶ τὸ ἐν ὑπέστη τὸ νοητὸν καὶ τάγαθῳ συμπέφυκε καὶ τῇ πρὸς ἐκείνῳ ροπῇ τῆς ὀλίγης φύσεως οἶον ἐπάγη, σαφές ὅτι σὺν ἐκείνῳ μένει καὶ ἀδιάκριτον καὶ ἀπρόδοτον εἰς τὸ ἔκτας. Εἴπερ δὲ ἀφαὶ καὶ ὑπασσοῦν ἐν ἐαυτῷ τινα ἄκραν ἐμφασιν υποβάσεις ἐπεδείκατο, καὶ ταύτην οὐκ ἀριθμῷ οὐδὲ πλήθει διακριθεῖσαν οὐδὲ μὴν ἐτερώθη, ἀλλ’ ὁ φησί πάλιν ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος, ἢ ἐκεῖ τριὰς οὐκ εἰσὶ τρεῖς μονάδες, οὐδὲ ἐπεγένετο τρισί μονάσιν, ἀλλ’ ἐστὶ μόνον αὐτό τὸ εἶδος τὸ ἐπιγενόμενον ταῖς μονάσιν. Μᾶλλον δὲ φητέον, οὐδὲ τὸ εἶδος, οὔπω γὰρ εἴδος ἐκεῖνο, οὐδὲ οἶον στοιχεῖον, οὐδὲν γὰρ τούτων ἑκεῖ, ἀλλὰ μόνον αὐτὸ τὸ τῆς τριάδος ἐν, καὶ ἐν οὐ τὸ διωρισμένον πρὸς οὐσίαν, ἀλλ’ ὁ πρὸ ἀμφοῖν εἶναι λεγόμεν ἡμωμένον. Thus, this νοητὸν transcends

\textsuperscript{22} 147.22-148.1: ὅθεν καὶ ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ μένειν τὸ νοητὸν ἀπέφηνατο, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἦνωτα πρὸς αὐτὸ καὶ κατ’ αὐτὸ εἰδοποιεῖται ἢ κατὰ τὸ ὅν. Ἀμέλει οὐδὲ διώρισται τι ἐν αὐτῷ, οὐκ οὐσία, οὐ νοητὸν, οὐκ ἄλλο οὐδὲν, ἐν τούτῳ δὲ ἐχεῖ τὸ εἶναι, ἐν τῷ πάντῳ εἰναι κατὰ συναίψειν. τούτῳ δὲ αὐτοθ’ ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ ὄντως νοητὸν: πάντ’ ἐστι γαρ, ἀλλὰ νοητῶς, φησὶ τὸ λόγιον (from the Chaldaean Oracles). Συνάγει γάρ εἰς ἐν πᾶσας ἡμῶν τὰς νοησίς καὶ ποιεῖ μιὰν συνελημμένην ἐκ πᾶσών παντελῆ καὶ ἀδιάκριτον καὶ ὡς ἀλήθες ἡμωμένην νόησιν, οίαν τοῦ νοητοῦ ἐκείνου τὴν νόησιν εἶναι βούλεται ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος. And then, immediately following up, about the later “occurrence” of the division between οὐσία and ἐν in the uppermost level of the intelligent order of reality, 148.4-9: εἰ δὲ ἐν ἄλλως ἐνδείκνυται οὐσίαν εἶναι τὴν ἀκρότητα τῶν νοερῶν ἢ ὁ Πλάτων ἢ ὑστούσα τῶν πεινῶν ἄνδρων, οὐδὲν ἀποτέλεσαν. ἦ γὰρ καθαρὰ οὐσία κατὰ Ἰάμβλιχον ἐν τῇ ἀνεφάνη τῇ τάξει, εἰ δ’ ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ νοερᾶ ἀκρότητος οὐσία νοερᾶ οὐσία, τούτῳ δ’ ἐστι διωρισμένη καθ’ αὐτήν, καὶ τῷ ἐν ἐν ὑπερσχεμένῳ ὡς ἐπέρα ἐτέρο κατὰ τὴν ἐκεῖ ἀναφαίρεσεν οὐσιώδη καὶ ἑνουνεν ἐτερώθη. – Cf. also 127.12-13: ὅτι δε ἐν τῷ νὶ καὶ περὶ τὸ ἐν τὸ νοητὸν οὐσίωτα, πολλαχον κηρύττει καὶ ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος, ὡς δὲ τὸ ἐν οὐ τοδ’ ἀναφημένον, οὐδὲ ὃ ἐπιβάλλει τις ἐννοια ἡμετέρα ὡς τοῦ τῶν πάντων, ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἐνδεικνύται τὴν ἀπὸ [corrected from ἀνὰ codex primarius; anw E Ruelle] τούτῳ εἰς τὸ πρὸ πάντων ἤμας ἀνάγουσα καὶ ὁ ἐστὶ πάντων μιὰ ἀπλῆ φύσες, οὕτω δὴ καὶ τὸ ἀπ’ ἐκείνου καὶ περί ἐκείνῳ συνιστάμενον καὶ ὁν οὐδὲν ἐστί τῶν πολλῶν, οὐδὲ τὴν ἡμωμένον, οὐδὲ ὃ ἐστί κατὰ τὸ εἶναι μόνον ὁρισμένον, ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἐνδεικνύται κατ’ ἐστί τὸν ὄμοι πάντα συνημμένην καὶ πάντα αὐτοπαθείσαι (sic codex primaries). The sense is that the intelligible one being is called being indicatively, in that it is the conflation in one simplicity of everything, an oneness that has selfstretched (αὐτοπαθείαν αὐτοτεσσειν) itself to comprehend in a singularly unified way everything. Failing to understand the Damascian coinage, the inferior mss. have αὐτοπαθείαν αὐτοπαθείαν or αὐτοπαθείαν or αὐτοπαθείαν. Closer to the required sense is Kopp’s suggestion αὐτοπαθοῦσαν] πρὸ πάντων γε τῶν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ διακρινόμενων, ὡς εἰρήτη πολλάκες. Kαι <ὡς> ὃν [Ruelle, pro ὃν, which if correct should be interpreted as ὃν <τρόπον>, Kopp] τοῖνυν ὄντα καλοῦμεν τὰ πάντα, οὐδ’ ὃν ἐκείνο πρὸ πάντων.
the distinction between ἐν and οὐσία. Cf. also 151.5-10: εἰ δὲ... τὴν τρίτην ἀρχήν ὡς ἠνωμένην κατὰ τὸ ὅν ἑτίθημεν καὶ τούτῳ δυτίκην ἐποιούμεν, τὸ μὲν οὐσιώδες τὸ δὲ ἐνιαίον, ἀλλὰ νῦν εἰς τὸ ἐν πρὸ ἀμφοῖν τὰ δύο συμπτυχάντες καὶ κατωτέρω τοῦ νοητοῦ τὰ διωχισμένα δύο τάξαντες, τῷ τε Πλάτωνι σύμφωνα λέγειν εδόξαμεν καὶ τῷ νοητῷ καὶ πάντη ἠνωμένῳ καὶ περὶ τάγαθον συνεσπειραμένον, κατὰ τὸν Ἴαμβλίχον τά σεμνότατα τῶν νοημάτων ἀνατεθείκαμεν. Pure οὐσία appears, as was said above, further down, at the summit of the νοερά. (Described also by Damascius as the summit of Ζωή, e.g. 293.17-294.4; esp. 293.19-20; 27; where see the rationale. But the realm of Ζωή being the realm of νοητὰ καὶ νοερὰ, it comes to the same thing, in the sense that οὐσία is manifested after the domain of the intelligible one-being).

The νοητὸν is not defined in its peculiarity of subsistence by οὐσία, by true being which has been distinguished from the unity and oneness which grants to it subsistence – or if one wishes to express himself in a way which associates οὐσία with the νοητὸν (following a venerable indeed tradition starting with Parmenides), he should be careful to observe that this ἀπλῶς οὐσία should be construed as transcending that distinction. Iamblichus ascribed to this νοητὸν a unity second only to that of the Ἐν-σιμπληκτής (the πάντη ἀπώροτην, precisely by virtue of its total dissociation from everything that comes “after” it, is not even considered as an oneness) – and explicitly argued against Porphyry that one should not introduce into the νοητὸν any distinction, not even the primal one between oneness and being, ἐν and ὁν23.

It should be recalled here, that despite its being tied up to the One in its proximate vicinity, so to speak, and therefore despite its extremely Unitarian character, the νοητὸν does involve the first trace of multiplicity. Iamblichus ingeniously tries to convey some notion of such multiplicity preceding any

23 V. 291.23-292.11: αἰσχυναίμην δ’ ἀν καὶ τὸν θείον Ἴαμβλίχον εἰ τι περὶ ταῦτα (i.e. concerning the articulation and hierarchies of the first orders of reality) καινοτομεῖ, ἀνδρα τῶν θείων πραγμάτων ἄλλων τε καὶ τῶν νοερῶν ἄριστων ἐξηγητῇ. δοκεῖ τοῖνεν ἐμοίγε, κατὰ ἰξοη τῆς ἐκείνου πολυθεάμανος γνώμης. τὸν μὲν νοιτὸν κόσμου ὑποτίθεσθαι τὸν ἠμωμένον ἐκείνου βυθὸν, οὐκ ὅντως οὐσίαν οὐσίαν περιέχοντα, τὴν διωχισμένην πρὸς τὸ ὁχούμενον ἐν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀπλῶς οὐσίαν, καὶ οὕτε ἐναι οὐτὲ μικτὴν, ἀλλὰ μονὸν οὐσίαν μιᾶν πρὸ ἑκατέρας. εἰ τὸν όν θεόν, ἢ εἰ τις ἀνθρώπος, ἐν οὐσία τοῦ νοητοῦ ὑπεστήματο κόσμον, ἐν τῇ ἠμωμένῃ ταύτῃ, πάς ἄκουσθε, συνομολογοῦν μὲν τοὺς εἶποις κατὰ τοιούτον, διακαθαύρων δὲ τῆς οὐσίας εἰς τὴν ἀπλῶς ἐκείνην καὶ ἠμωμένην καὶ παντελῶς ἀδιακρίτος. καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ πάντες οἱ ταῦτα λέγοντες ἐν τῇ πάντων ἀδιακρίτῃ ἐννοεῖ τοῦ νοητοῦ ὑπεθέντο, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀμφισβητεῖ περὶ τούτου, καὶ μάρτυς ὁ Ἴαμβλίχος δευτέραν τῷ νοητῷ μετὰ τὴν μιᾶν τῶν ὅλων ἀρχήν (this one principle of everything which enjoys supreme and absolute oneness is not the ultimate Unspeakable Subsistence, but the One which is the one-everything) παρεχόμενος ἔννοιαν, καὶ περὶ τὸ ἐν ὑφεστάναι αὐτὸ πανταχοῦ διατεινόμενον, καὶ πρὸς τὸν Πρεσβύτην (i.e. Porphyry) πολλάς τοιαύτας ἀντιρρήσεις ποιοῦμενος.
distinction, even the primal one between oneness and being. Thus Damascius, 255.27-256.2 in the above quoted passage. Cf. 299.26-27: τίς οὖν αὐτὴ ἢ τριάς (sc. ἢ τοῦ νοητοῦ); οὐ τρεῖς μονάδες, ἡς φησιν ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος, ἀλλὰ μόνον τὸ εἶδος ᾠόλον ἀνευ τῶν μονάδων ὁρώμενον. οὐ μέντοι οὐδὲ τὸ εἶδος (τίς γὰρ ἂν εἶπη περιγραφὴ ἐν τῷ ἡμωμένῳ;) ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ, ὅπερ ἀνθός ἐστι τοῦ εἰδούς. ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐδὲ τούτῳ τὸ ἐν, ὁ πέφυκεν ἐπανθίνει ἐνι τῶν εἰδών, οἰον τῇ τριάδι, οὐδὲ γε ὁ πᾶσιν ὁμοι οὐ πείθειν. τοῦ γὰρ διακεκριμένου ἐνὸς τούτῳ ἑστιν, ὡστε οὐδὲ οὗ τοῦ διακρινόμενου ἑστιν εἰπ ἃ ἂν ἄδικαρτον τριάδος τὸ ἐν. ἀλλὰ σημαίνει πάλιν ἢ τριάς τὸν ἡμωμένον τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ μέσον καὶ τὴν τελευτήν, ἀλλ᾽ ἡμωμένα καὶ ταῦτα.

This first trace of a distinction without distinction Iamblichus expressed by the triad through which Plato asks us to approach the ἀγαθὸν in Philebus:24 σύμμετρον-ἀληθές-καλὸν; he naturally found in oneness the essence and substantiating character of goodness – following unimpeachable Platonic tradition. Thus Proclus, Theologia Platonica, III (p. 43.19-44.5 Westerinck, Budé): ἐνταῦθα τοῖνυν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ μικτῷ (Iamblichus and Damascius would not call “mixed” the intelligible one-being, unless in the sense carefully circumscribed above) τὰ τρία ταῦτα πέφυκεν τὸ σύμμετρον, τὸ ἀληθές, τὸ καλὸν. καὶ τὸ μέν σύμμετρον τοῦ ἐν εἶναι τὸ ὄν αἴτιον τῷ μικτῷ, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς τοῦ ὄντος εἶναι, τὸ δὲ καλὸν τοῦ νοητοῦ εἶναι. νοητὸν ἁρὰ καὶ ὄντως ὁν καὶ ἐνοειδέστατον (better than the ἐνοειδέστερον of the mss) τὸ πρῶτος ὁν (again not strictly for Iamblichus and Damascius, since the first pure being appears further down in the ontological order of presupposition and derivation). καὶ συνήπται μὲν ὁ νοῦς πρὸς αὐτὸ κατὰ τὴν πρῶς τὸ καλὸν οἰκείωσιν, μετέχει δὲ ἐκαστα (so with Saffrey and Westerinck, or ἐκαστον, in place of the transmitted ἐκαστος) τοῦ εἶναι διότι τῷ ὄντι (ἢ ὄντως, better than the mss. τοῦ ὄντος; cf. v. 23) ἐστίν ὁν, ἀκρότατον δὲ ἐστίν ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐκείνοι διότι τῷ ἀγαθῷ συνήνωσεν. ταύτας (rather than the ms. ταύτα) δὴ μοι δοκεῖ τὰς τρεῖς τοῦ ὄντος αἰτίαις καὶ ὁ θεῖος Ἰάμβλιχος κατιδὼν ἐν τρισὶ τούτοις, ἀφορίζειν τὸ νοητὸν συμμετρία καὶ ἀληθεία καὶ κάλλει, καὶ διὰ τούτο τούτος νοητοὺς θεοὺς ἕκφαινεν ἐν τῇ Πλατωνικῇ Θεολογίᾳ.25 Cf. also p. 48.25-29.1: ὡ δὴ καὶ τὸν θείον Ἰάμβλιχον λέγειν ἀνέπεισεν ὡς ἁρὰ τοῦ νοητοῦ πάν ἐν τρισὶ τούτοις ὁ Πλάτων ἀφορίζει.26

24 ἐν προθύρους εἶναι τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, Philebus 64C; cf. 64A-65A.

25 The implication as to the ontic character of the first μικτόν (Proclus’ favourite expression for the ἐν-ὁν) constrasts well to the Damascian insistences above; once more Damascius is more philo-Iamblichean. Yet caution is needed: v. vol. I, p. 54.14-15 (Westerink, ed. Budé): (with reference to the hypotheses in the Platonic Parmenides) ἐν μὲν τοῖς τρισὶ τοῖς πρώτοις συμπεραγόμενοι αὐτάκριτον μένει τοῦ ὄντος τὸ ἐν etc. Proclus emphasizes the insistence of Iamblichus on a “later” ontological appearance of being, further away from the One. More specifically, the articulation of being, the highest forms of being, supreme ideas, the genera of being, are manifested at the end of the intelligent
It should be born in mind that such a distinction and multiplicity as this one between the three monads of intelligibility is, as Lamblichus said, the mere form, so to speak, of distinguishedness and multiplicity without its actuality. Not even the form of it, but rather its unified principle. True eidetic distinction and multiplicity, even in its most abstract and general form, namely as categorial distinction of the highest γένη τοῦ ὄντος and the consequent entire articulation of being, “appears” and manifests itself as subsistence only at the very end of the World of Intelligence,

order. V. I, 11, vol. I p. 52.3-9: ... ὁ θεός Ιάμβλιχος ἐν τῇ Περὶ θεών πραγματείᾳ τοὺς τὰ γένη τοῦ ὄντος ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ἀποτίθεμένοις ἦτανατο. καὶ γὰρ τὸν ἀριθμὸν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν ποικιλίαν πορφυτέρω βεβλήσθαι τοῦ ἕνος. ποῦ τοῖν παρά δῶγων ὑποτίθεσθαι προσήκει διδάσκων ἐτέχνηκε: πρὸς γὰρ τῷ τέλει τῆς νοερᾶς τάξεως ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκεὶ θεῶν ταῦτα παράγεται. 26 Cf. further Ανωμονούμενοι Κομιταρία in Philibun, 243 (p. 115, Westerink, who ascribes the work to Damascius): ὅτι καὶ ὁ Ιάμβλιχος τὰς τρεῖς μονάδας φησὶν ἀπὸ τάγαθου προελθούσας κοσμήσαι τὸν νουν. ἀδίκην δὲ ὄρθοιν νουν, πότερον τὸν μετὰ τὴν ζωὴν ἢ τὸν ἐν τῇ οὐσίᾳ νουν πατρικὸν ὑμνούμενον. ἔνοι γὰρ ὡς τοῦτον, ἀλλ’ ἔκεινον ἦκουσαν. καὶ μὴν ἐν τοῖς Ὀρφικοῖς ἐν τῷ μονοενμένῳ ὡς τὰς τρεῖς ἐκφαντάζεται μονάδας φησίν. The subject of φησίν is the lecturer and author of these commentaria, whose notes as taken down probably by a pupil are presented in the actual Commentaria. He may be Damascius. The congruence of Orphic tradition with Platonism and the Chaldaean Oracles is characteristic for the lamblichean – Damascian school. The Orphic Egg corresponds symbolically to the Chaldaean Intelligence of the Father, and this with the Nous of the Noetic order, the third moment of the first intelligible triad. lamblichus held, as we know, this position. Hence the ambivalence in the above quoted passage is strange and suspicious. Unless, the point is that the three monads (symmetry, truth, beauty) appear in unity in the intelligible order, and this unity being differentiated in the intermediate order articulates the world of being in the intelligent order. (The Plotinian position as to these monades, esp. beauty, (V, 9, 2, 24-27) is much simpler: nous in itself is beauty: καὶ πότερον δὴ ἠνταῦθα δεῖ στήναι ὡς πρῶτον, ἢ καὶ νον ἐπέκεινα δε ἕνα, νοῦς δὲ προσέτηκε μὲν ἀρχής τῆς πρώτης ὡς πρῶς ἡμᾶς, ὥσπερ καὶ πρόθυρος τάγαθος ἀπαγγέλλων ἐν αὐτῷ (sc. τῷ νῷ) τὰ πάντα, ὥσπερ ἐκείνου τύπος μᾶλλον ἐν πληθεὶ ἐκείνου πάντη μένοντος ἐν ἐνί. The Good as supremest principle and then the second one, the Nous as a single hypothesis without the elaboration of the complex theory of procession). – In Proclus Commentaria in Parmenides, 1090.13-25 (Cousin) the view exposed must be Iamblichus’. The question is about which multiplicity is negated of the One in the First Hypothesis of the Platonic Parmenides (137C); after a simpler view (1089.21-30), the Plotinian one is introduced (ἄλλοι δ’ ἐτε σεμνότεροι τούτων 1089.30 sqq.), and then the Iamblichean significantly by the formula: άλλοι τοῖν καὶ τούτων (sc. τοῦ Πλωτίνου) ἐνθεαστικέτεροι. The νοιται monades are, I think, the three mentioned above, which generate, at a lower level, that of the intelligent order, the entire variety of the “noeric” world, the intellectual order, which is ideal being in all its articulation. – Damascius, de Primis Principiis, vol. I, pp.305.25-306.2 Ruelle: τοιγραυν καὶ Σωκράτες ἐν τῷ Φιλήμῳ πρὸς τὸ ἐν ἐκείνῳ µὴ δυνηθεῖν αντωνήσα, δια τοῦρας αὐτοµ παρεδόλους τῆς ἐν προθυρίας αὐτού τεταγµένης, ὡς φησί, πάντως ὅτι ἤνωμεν κατιδῶν μαρμαρίζουσαν τὴν τράδα κατὰ τὴν μιὰν αὐγήν τῆς ἐνάδος, ὅλως δὲ ὡς τὰ ἄλλα καὶ τὴν τράδα κατὰ ἐνδείξειν εἰκε ἀνάγομεν. Both the doctrine and its expression is definitively Iamblichean because of the formulation πάντως ὅτι ἤνωμεν ... τῆς ἐνάδος (cf. the above quoted passages 255.27 sqq. and 299.26-7). Notice also the characteristic κατὰ ἐνδείξειν. And the style is typically lamblichean: μαρμαρίζουσαν, αὐγήν τῆς ἐνάδος.
there generated by the appropriate gods; in fact Iamblichus explicitly condemned those who would posite the γένη τοῦ ὄντος in the Intelligible World on the ground that their very multiplicity and variegation argues for their greater distance, so to speak, from the absolute One; v. Proclus, *Theologia Platonica*, Vol. I p. 52.2-9 (Westerink): Ἐκ τρίτων...παράγεται (v. the passage quoted in n. 25). In Book V, p. 313.13 (Portus), we must accordingly correct νοητῶν to νοερῶν, reading καὶ ὁ τε θείος Ιάμβλιχος ὀρθῶς που φήσην ἐν τῷ πέρατι τῶν νοερῶν (not νοητῶν) θεῶν ἐκφαινεσθαι τὰ γένη... τοῦ ὄντος etc. Since the Demiurge is the chief god at the end of the νοερὰ διακόσμησις (in so far as the νοεροὶ πατέρες are concerned [IV. Proclus *Commentaria in Timaeum*, Vol. I p. 308.19 sqq. Diehl: περὶ γὰρ... γράφων (sc. ὁ Ιάμβλιχος) μετὰ... δημιουργῷ τάξειν. My addition <νοητῶν καὶ> must be considered certain (cf. 309.16); hence Iamblichus did also postulate (whether in the same formula is immaterial) an order of hypostases between the Νοητόν and the Νοερὸν διάκοσμον. (This is consonant to his fully developed distinction between ὀν-ζωῆ-νοῦς, cf. Proclus *In Timaeum*, Vol. III p. 47.8-11). What follows in Proclus is easily recognizable, by its peculiar additive style, as Iamblichean (308.23-309.7): τοῖς γάρ εἶναι... κρίνειν, etc.).), we should expect that he must be associated with the γένῃ τοῦ ὄντος, and indeed this is what we are told by Damascius in his *Commentariade Primis Principiis in Platonis Parmenidem*, vol. II p. 149.25-28 Ruelle: Δεύτερον δὲ (sc. ἀναγκαῖον ζητήσαι), εἰ ἐν τῷ δημιουργῷ τὰ γένη τοῦ ὄντος ἴδρυται, ὡς ἥξιον ὁ μέγας Ιάμβλιχος, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὁ τούτω ὀπαδὸς Συριανός, ὡς νῦν ἱστορεῖ καὶ αὐτὸς τῷ καθηγεμόνι συνεπεσθαι όμολογῶν, καίτοι ἀλλοθι πολλαχοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ ταύτα τιθέμενος. (The αὐτὸς is Proclus, who, we are told, here follows as he admits his Master although he in fact disagreed with him in other works28). Similarly Proclus, *In Timaeum*, Vol. I, p. 336.17 sqq. confirms the fact (though he naturally accepts it only with reservations): ἀστε

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27 For Syrianus as genuine Iamblichean v. Damascius, *Vita Isidori*, (Photios 36 + Suda s.v.Συριανος, IV 479.2 Adler): Ἰσιδώρος ὁ φιλόσοφος, ὁς φησὶ Δαμάσκιος, τόν μὲν παλαιότατα φιλοσοφησάντων Πυθαγόραν καὶ Πλάτωνα θεωρεῖ, ... προσέχει δὲ τὸν νῦν ὡς τὰ μάλιστα μετὰ Πλάτωνα τῷ Ιάμβλιχῳ καὶ τοῖς Ιάμβλιχον φύλος δὴ καὶ ὀπαδοῖς, ὡς ἄρατον εἶναι δισχυριζέται τὸν εὐαίτων πολλαχοῦ Συριανόν, τὸν Πρόκλου διδάσκαλον. Proclus himself acknowledges the fact, *Commentaria in Timaeum*, vol. III, 174.13ff (Diehl).

28 Since the standard opinion of Proclus, as expressed par excellence in his *Theologia Platonica*, is much the same an effect as the one advocated by Damascius in his reply to this ἀπορία (151.22-152.6), we must suppose that Proclus followed Syrianus and Iamblichus in his *Commentaria* on the second hypothesis of Parmenides, now lost. The νῦν (= in this place) of 149.26 means this virtually certain. Another proof, if proof was needed, that Proclus did write a complete comm. on Parmenides – more in any case than we do know posses. – As to Damascius’ accusation, we must in fairness notice that Proclus explicitly wanted to bridge the difference between the two positions; cf., e.g., *Th. Pl.*, Book V p. 313.2 (Portus) to the end of chapter 30.
καὶ ὁ τῶν Δημιουργόν λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ παράδειγμα περιέχειν ἔστιν ὅπῃ ψηφίσει όρθῶς, καθάπερ ὁ θείος Ἰάμβλιχος διατάττεται, etc.29 We further possess a fragment from Iamblichus' commentary in Timeaeum preserved by Proclus in his Commentaria in Timeaeum, vol. I p. 307.19-25, which runs as follows: τὴν ὀντως οὐσίαν καὶ τῶν γιγαντιαίων ἀρχήν καὶ τὰ νοητά τοῦ κόσμου παραδείγματα, ὅν γε καλούμεν νοητόν κόσμον, καὶ ὅσα αἰτίας προωτάρχειν τιθέμεθα τῶν ἐν τῇ φύσει πάντων, ταύτα πάντα ὁ νῦν ζητούμενος θεός δημιουργὸς ἐν ἑνὶ συλλαβῶν υψ’ ἐωτὸν ἔχει. The Demiurge keeps together in unity under him the entire world of Platonic ideas: the ὀντως οὐσία, the intelligible exemplary of the things in this world, the sources and causes of all natural phenomena. The problem that Proclus envisages with regard to this passage is one of his own making. (He even thinks that Iamblichus agreed on that crucial issue with Plotinus! Clearly, as is reported, Proclus' commentary on Timaeus is a youthful work). He wonders whether Iamblichus wishes to maintain that the entire spectrum of hypostases between the One and this World is the intelligible realm identical with the Demiurge; he is misled into thinking of this possibility by Iamblichus' expressions ὀντως οὐσία, νοητά παραδείγματα, νοητὸς κόσμος, which, for Proclus, signify the domain of the Intelligible just after the One. Thus his only way out of his difficulty is to suppose that Iamblichus merely expresses himself somehow loosely (cf. 308.17-19) and really means that, since everything is in anything in its own mode, the νοητά are in a certain mode in the νοερός Δημιουργός (307.25 sqq.). – But there is no problem in reality; Iamblichus means by νοητά here ordinary Platonic Ideas, the whole realm of true being (ὁντως οὐσία) in all its articulations. For him this ontic determinateness and distinctness “appears”, as we have seen, very “late” in the ladder of reality – just by the Demiurge.

As we saw, the primal distinction, the bifurcation of the unitary and “homogeneous” (in the Parmenidean Presocratic sense) world of one-being into being and unity (unity unifying being and being unified by unity), takes place at the summit of the νοερόν, consequently upon, and “after”, the νοητόν. This first being, in its distinctness from the oneness which unifies it and constitutes it as a something (= a not-Nothing), is called καθαρὰ οὐσία (Damascius, de Primis Principiis, Vol. I,

29 Cf. also ibid. p. 431.23 sqq.: μέσος δὲ ἄμφοιν (sc. Αττικοῦ καὶ Πορφύριου) ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος, συνάπτων καὶ ἐνίκων τῷ δημιουργῷ τὸ παράδειγμα διὰ τὴν ἐνσωσίν τὴν τοῦ νοῦ πρὸς τὸ νοητὸν. The νοητόν here must be the νοητὸν which the νοερόν actually νοεί, the correlative νοητὸν to the Intellect, not the transcendent νοητὸν which, as we saw, does not even possess pure being, let alone its explicit eidetic articulation, but is beyond it. Proclus apparently confuses the issue, syncretistically conflating Iamblichus and Plotinus, a mark of the youthful origin of his work on the Timaeus.
p. 148.6) or by implication ὄντως οὐσία οὐσία (ibid. p. 291.26)\textsuperscript{30}. The νοητὸν is beyond such bifurcation, as Damascius explicitly maintains; vol. I, p. 108.23-109.1: (there is no distinction and differentiation there, not even the ultimate one between existence, power of existence and intellection of power (ὑποαξίως καὶ δύναμις τῆς ὑπάρξεως καὶ νόησις τῆς δυνάμεως), not the fundamental one between (ontological) cause and effect) οὔτε γὰρ ἐν τῇ ἀκρότητι τῶν νοητῶν οὔτε ὁ Ἴμβλιχος ἦξισθεν εἶναι διαφορισμένην ἄρχήν. μία γὰρ ἡ νοητὴ συνέχεια πάντων τῶν τοιούτων, οὔτε συνέχεια ἡ ἀντικειμένη τῷ διοικητῷ. πάλιν γὰρ ἂν εἶχε διαίρεσις ἀλλή πρὸ ἀμφοῖν, καὶ ἐτὶ πρὸ πάντων ἔνωσις ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ἡ ἦτης ἀπό τοῦ ἐνός καὶ περὶ τὸ ἐν οἷον πέπηγεν. The ἀκρότητι τῶν νοητῶν is here probably the lowermost grade of the Intelligible realm. Notice also the already quoted Iamblichian formulation about the “freezing” of the νοητὸν in its entirety round the One. Iamblichus even interpreted the two products of the division of the ἐν-όν in the second hypothesis of the Platonic Parmenides, as being each ἐν-όν again, not the one ἐν and the other ὄν. Damascius elaborates the point De Primis Principiis in Parmenidem, Vol. II p. 53.28-54.6, especially 54.4-6: οὕτω καὶ ὁ μέγας Ἴμβλιχος

\textsuperscript{30} V. the already quoted crucial passages p. 148.4-9 and pp. 291.23-292.11. – The Iamblichean doctrine (which Proclus testifies) that the πρῶτον ὃν is the ἀεὶ ὅν does not, I think, really relate to the same thing. The main relevant Proclean testimony is as follows; In Timaeum, Vol. I, p. 230.5-8: ἀλλὰ ὁ θεῖος Ἴμβλιχος ἐμβρῖος διαμάχαται τῷ λόγῳ, τὸ ἀεὶ ὃν κρείττον καὶ τῶν γενέσεων τοῦ ὄντος καὶ τῶν ἱδέων ἀποφαίνεσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ ἄκρο τῆς νοητῆς οὐσίας ἱδρύσαν αὐτὸ πρώτωσι μετέχον τοῦ ἐνός. The νοητὴ οὐσία here refers to the entire breadth of the suprapysic world (thus including the relatively lower realms of Life and Intelect) as is clear from the immediately preceding use of the expression νοητὸς κόσμος (230.4) to cover everything suprapysic including the divine Intelect (cf. also p. 229.11 sqq.). The ἄκρον τῆς νοητῆς οὐσίας is consequently the uppermost summit of the suprasensible domains – just “below” the One, as is evident from the following discussion (p. 230.8 sqq.), v. especially 230.31-231.9. (Proclus criticism of the view is based on the distinction between πρῶτον ὃν as the ἐν-όν on the one hand and ἀεὶ ὃν on the other; v. 231.9 sqq.). It follows that the Iamblichean ἀεὶ ὃν is precisely his νοητον, and that the formulation πρῶτον μετέχον τοῦ ἐνός is not to be construed in the Damascian sense of a distinct pure being participating in the One, but rather as the Proclean way of signifying a first self-cancelling differentiation from the One (which does not as yet amount to the separation of pure being from oneness) – a differentiation to a certain extent annulling itself in that the differentiated refuses, so to speak, to proceed further away from its source and freezes round it. - This interpretation is supported by the two other Proclean testimonies. Thus, in In Timaeum, 232.5 sqq., Proclus maintains that the ἀεὶ ὃν covers the entire domain from αὐτῶν downwards to the μερικὸς νοῦς, ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ... ὡς Ἴμβλιχος ἔλεγεν, οἶον... τοῦ ὄντος. Proclus clearly takes the ἀκρότατον τῶν ὄντων to be his ἐν-όν i.e. the first subsistence after the One and the dual principles of πέρας and ἀπειρον. And in p. 308.12-13: πῶς δὲ... ἐλέγομεν (sc. according to Iamblichus). – The ὅπερ ὃν to which the παράδειγμα of the World is identified by Iamblichus (as Proclus says, In Timaeum, Vol. I p. 321.26-30) is certainly “lower” than both the πρῶτον ὃν and the καθαρά οὐσία – it must be the world of Ideas associated to the Demiurgic Νόος (cf. In Timaeum, vol. I, p. 336.17 and 327.25; also Damascius, vol. II p. 149.25, and what has been said above).
ἐνόησεν τὸ ἐν ὦν ἐν μέρει ἐκάτερον, κατὰ τὸ πάντη ἤνωμένον καὶ ἀδιάκριτον τῆς νοητῆς γεννήσεως. [ Cf. also vol. I, p. 145.6-9; 15-23. The opposition to the φιλόσοφοι (Syrianus and Proclus are mainly intended) is more clear in p. 144.24-27: οὕτως ἀρα καὶ τὸ ἐν ὦν οὐ σύνθετον τι οὐδὲ δύο αὐτά, τὸ μὲν ἤγοιμένον τὸ δὲ ἐπόμενον, ὡς οἱ φιλόσοφοι έξηγοῦνται, ἀλλὰ μία φύσις ἁμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ <τε> ἕνος καὶ τοῦ [τε] ὀντος, ἢδη μὲν χαλάσασα τῆς τοῦ ἕνος ἀπλότητος, οὕτω δὲ προβαλλομένῃ τὸ τοῦ ὀντος συναισμα]. Iamblichus therefore steadfastly refused to accept any actual bifurcation of the νοητὸν into being and unity distinct from each other. Indeed, probably in consonance to this, he distinguished clearly between εἶναι (associated evidently to being as such) and ὑπάρχειν (reserved naturally to refer to the existence of a pre-being hypostasis, of the ante-being cause of being); v. Damascius, De Primis Principiis, vol. I, p. 132.12-18: ἀρα οὖν ἀλλο παρά τὸ εἶναι τὸ ὑπάρχειν, ὡς δοκούσι ποιεῖν οἱ φιλόσοφοι, καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ιάμβλιχος ἀλλοθεί πελλαχοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ περὶ θεῶν; ἡ τὸ μὲν εἶναι τῆς οὐσίας παρωνυμία, ἡ δὲ οὐσία, κάν τὴν πρὸ δυνάμεως λάβης καὶ ἐνεργείας, ἐκ τοῦ ἡ περί συνοισίωται ἰδιαμάτων, τοῦ ὑποστατικοῦ, ὁ καὶ ὑπάρχειν καλοῦμεν, καὶ ἐστιν ὦτε καὶ εἶναι, τοῦ δυναμικοῦ, ὅπερ τὸ γόνομον ἐστὶ ύπος ὑπάρξεως, τοῦ ἐνεργητικοῦ, ὅπερ ἡδῆ πρὸς τὰ ἐκτὸς ἀποτείνεται [καὶ] τὴν ἑαυτοῦ χρείαν ἐπιδεικνύμενον etc31.

I shall refrain from pursuing the matter further since it is not my purpose to reconstruct here the Iamblichean theory of First Principles in its details. Enough has been said to make clear that the distinction between ἐν and ὦν played a cardinal role in his system – indeed this is the most fundamental and primal distinction that is made in reality or can be made in thought. Furthermore, the highest principles transcend the domain of this distinction, each remaining in an unperturbed, though graduated, oneness to itself and unity with each other.

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2) And thus we come to the second main point. That being so, did the all-important distinction played an essential role in Iamblichus’ account of the divine nature?

One should expect an affirmative answer anyway, since in the context of Greek Philosophy, Theory of First Principles and Theology coincide. And the expectation is definitely confirmed by Iamblichus himself in his De Mysteriis. The

31 That Iamblichus employed the distinction in his Περὶ Θεὸν must be significant; as we shall see he identified divinity with oneness.
work is itself applied Theology, and it has a specific polemic character; thus we should not expect to find in it the Iamblichian higher Theology fully elaborated and argued. But fortunately we possess a very characteristic passage, I, 19, 59.15-60.8: Ἐπὶ δὲ γε τῶν θεῶν ἐν τῇ ἐνώσει πάντων ἐστὶν ἡ τάξις, τὰ τε πρῶτα καὶ δεύτερα αὐτῶν γένη καὶ τὰ περὶ αὐτὰ φυσικά πολλὰ ἐν ἑνί τὰ ὅλα συνυφέστηκε, τὸ τε πάν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ τὸ ἐν, ἀρχή τε καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλη κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἐν συνυπάρχει. ὕστ' ἐπὶ γε τούτων οὐδὲ χρὴ ζητεῖν πόθεν τὸ ἐν ἀπασιν ἐφήκει. αὐτὸ γὰρ ὁ τι ποτέ ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ εἶναι, τούτο αὐτῶν ὑπάρχει τὸ ἐν. καὶ τὰ μὲν δεύτερα μένει κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ἐν τῷ ἐν τῶν πρῶτων, τὰ δὲ πρῶτα δίδωσι τοῖς δευτέροις τὴν ἀφ' ἐαυτῶν ἐνώσιν, πάντα δ' ἐν ἀλλήλοις κοινωνίαν ἔχει τῆς ἀδιαλύτου συμπλοκῆς. What more conclusive could we wish than the formula (as advanced as late Athenian Neoplatonism): αὐτὸ γὰρ ὁ τι ποτὲ ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ εἶναι, τούτῳ αὐτῶν ὑπάρχει τὸ ἐν. The very nature and peculiar character of divinity consists in oneness. Whether Iamblichus called the gods ἐνάδεξ accordingly or not is immaterial. It is logical that he referred to them in this way; but in any case he did introduce, as we saw, the doctrine of divine henads, in essence if not in name.

In fact it is this very doctrine which provides the philosophical foundation for Iamblichus’ unique interpretation of the first hypothesis of Parmenides as being about god no less than about the Supreme God. Proclus, in criticizing this view, gives an

32 Cf. I, 8, 27.13-15: καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄντως ὅν καὶ καθ’ ἐαυτὸ ἀσώματον πανταχοῦ ἐστὶν ὅπως ἂν βούληται, τὸ δὲ θεῖον καὶ πάντα ύπερέχει, εἰ ύπερέχεται ύπό τῆς τοῦ ὅλου κόσμου τελειότητος καὶ ώς ἐν μέρει τινί ὅπως αὐτοῦ περιείληται, ἐλαττώται ἡμικυκλία καὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα μεγέθους. θεῖον is clearly above the ὄντως ὅν and καθ’ ἐαυτὸ ἀσώματον.

33 This supreme god of the first Parmenidean hypothesis is the One, not counting, of course, the πάντη ἀπόρρητος ἀρχή. That this last Ultimate Principle is to be left out of the class of hypostases referred to in the Parmenidean hypotheses is also the view of Damascius; v. De Primis Principiis, vol. I, p. 37.26-38.10 (cf. also p. 7.15-8.5). – For evidence concerning Iamblichus’ view v. Proclus, In Parmenidem, 1054.37-1055.2 (Cousin): oi δὲ μετὰ τούτους (Proclus has already distinguished two general plans of interpretation for the sequence of the Platonic hypotheses in Parmenides, (1) 1052.31-1053.37 and (2) 1053.37-1054.37; now he starts describing a third way) κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον εἰσάγωντες τὰ ὀντά (in two mss. the view there mentioned is ascribed to Iamblichus, and this is rendered certain by a number of confirmations on the part of Damascius for specific points), τὴν μὲν πρώτην (sc. hypothesis) λέγοντες εἶναι περὶ θεοῦ καὶ θεῶν (οὐ γὰρ μόνον περὶ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ πασῶν τῶν θείων ἐνάδων αὐτὴν ποιεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον ε. τ. l. There is a lacuna unfortunately at the end of the passage, to be supplied by something like: ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ πασῶν τῶν θείων ἐνάδων αὐτὴν ποιεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον <καὶ ιδία περὶ τῶν> νοητῶν <θεῶν> τὴν δὲ δευτέραν περὶ παντὸς τοῦ νοεροῦ πλάτους> τὴν δὲ τρίτην ε. t. For the first part of my addition v. Proclus Theologia Platonica, Book III, 23 (p. 82.4-22 Westerinck, ed. Budé), where it is implied that Iamblichus claimed that the negations in the first hypothesis apply to God and Gods in general, that is to the common superessential divinity of Gods, whereas the negated attributes refer to the intelligible gods in particular, i.e. the gods specifically associated to the Intelligible realm. Through the negation of attributes pertaining to the specifically Intelligible implicit multiplicity (the highest realm next to the One), the absolute transcendence of the
account of it which confirms what has been said above concerning the henadic nature of gods according to Lamblichus (confirms not merely as to the words, but regarding the fundamental requirements of the lamblichean system as well) In Parm. 1066.16-28: Ἀνάγκη τοῖνυν... τῶν οὐσιῶν (the passage quoted in the preceding note).

All Gods, and not only the Supreme Divine Principle, are thus beyond being – they are the first existences, all supraessential. In this way, their absolute transcendence, in all their multiplicity, is radically safeguarded. Consequently, they occupy the first rank of hypostatical reality, superior to even pure being, let alone to intelligences, ideas, souls or things of this World. This satisfies in a drastic and fundamental way the two former requirements of the ancient religious consciousness, as above analysed: divine transcendence and divine multiplicity.

But there was another crucial condition which ought to be fulfilled, in order for the system to naturally satisfy the religious reality without falsifying it. Gods

One is expressed. That the intelligible multiplicity is denied of the One in the First Hypothesis was in fact lamblichean’s view, as Proclus says In Parmenidem, 1090.13-25; but I suspect the correctness of the proclean presentation in the passage from Th. Pl. above quoted. Probably the νοητοί θεοί there meant refer to the intelligible multiplicity “appearing for the first time” within the last grade of the intelligible realm, the νοηταί μονάδες mentioned in the latter passage from In Parm. (See what has been said about them before). Or still better, what is meant is the first multitude which appears just after the intelligible world, at the uppermost summit of the intellectual realm (in fact, as the first order of the intelligible-intellective World. - Proclus did have the tendency to occassinally misrepresent lamblichus (cf. the above given example about the demiurge). - Damascius was a much better receiver of lamblichean orthodoxy, as has been already noticed. In any case these νοηταί μονάδες can be described (in view of the non-separation of being and unity in the intelligible realm) as inferior intelligible gods. Cf. further on the same subject, very clearly, In Parmenidem, 1066.16 sqq.: ἀνάγκη τοῖνυν, ἐπειγα μόνον καὶ ἀπαν τὸ θεῖον ὑπὲρ οὐσίαν ἐστιν, ἢ περὶ τοῦ πρῶτου θεοῦ μόνον εἶναι τὸν παρόντα λόγον (sc. the first hypothesis), ὡς δὴ μόνος ἐστιν ὑπὲρ οὐσίαν, ἢ περὶ πάντων θεῶν καὶ τῶν μετ’ ἐκεῖνον, ἰσόρροπο ἀξίωσι τινες τῶν ἡμίν αἰδών (sc. lamblichus in particular!). ἐπειδὴ γὰρ πᾶς θεός, καθὸ θεός, ἐνάς ἐστι (τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστι τὸ πάσης οὐσίας ἐκθεωσικόν, τὸ ἐν) – διὰ δὴ τούτῳ συνάπτειν ἀξίωσι τῇ περὶ θεοῦ τοῦ πρῶτου θεωσία τῆς περὶ θεων ἀπάντων ύψητιν. πάντες γὰρ εἰσὶν ἐνάδεις ὑπερούσιοι, καὶ τοῦ πλῆθους τῶν ὑπὸλον ὑπερανέχουσι, καὶ ἀκρότητες τῶν οὐσιῶν. There follows then Proclus’ objection to the lamblichean position, based on the distinction between the absolute One on the one hand, and the many participated henads on the other, the ἐνάδεις which by being partipated confer existence on the various orders of substantive reality. – As to the second part of my addition (following cousin), v. Proclus in Parm. 1055.20-21; and also Th. Pl., Book I, 11, p. 52.15-6 (the disjunction – ἐπὶ πάντα τὸ νοητόν πλατύν ἢ νοερόν – may well refer to the fact that, according to Proclus, if the negated attributes refer to the νοητάν πλήθος in the first hypothesis, then the same must refer to the νοερόν πλάτως in the second one, v. Th. Pl., Book III, 23, p. 82.17-22 – an already referred to passage ... Concerning the lamblichean view, that God and Gods are treated in the first hypothesis, see Proclus’ criticism in In Parm. 1064.21-1065.1; 1066.16-1071.8. Cf. also In Parm. Book VII, p. 36.8-18.
must possess peculiarities of their own, a specific character as well as a divine hypostasis. Of course such a distinction in the case of the henadic gods between hypostatic existence and its hypostatic character inadmissible in view of their eminent unity; it is not that they exist and exhibit a particular nature as well – to say the least, a character is a \textit{forma essendi}, and being has not as yet been segregated from oneness in Gods as we saw. Rather their very \textit{unitary existence} must be conceived as being \textit{modified} in each case in a way which corresponds to the being–peculiarities of the things over which they severally preside – constituting, preserving and perfecting them.

To this religious requirement Iamblichus answers with an elaborate doctrine concerning the \textit{Orders of Gods}. Their distinctions correspond to the divisions of substantial reality – in fact the Gods of a certain order prefigure in an absolutely unitary way the peculiarities of the order of beings which they produce. Thus we can only epistemologically conceive of the divine orders following the clues provided by the articulations of the essential reality (the reality of things or beings), whereas in reality and truth the procession of things follow the hidden, implicit differentiations of divinity. The hidden prefigures in unity what is manifest in the articulations of all being-determinations. The gods is the cause of the associated field of reality in each case.

I shall not attempt here to reconstruct Iamblichus’ system of divine orders from the existing, scanty information concerning it. What will be done is rather (a) to give what I believe the main divisions were, (b) to exemplify in a few instances the highly elaborate character of the system, and (c) to explain why does Proclus ascribe to his teacher Syrianus the highly articulate interpretation of the Second Parmenidean hypothesis as illustrating the entire divine procession from the One down to the lowermost orders of Gods.

(a) The succession of principles at the uppermost side of reality has already been given:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{πάντη ἀπόρρητος} \\
\text{ῶν \ ἐν} \\
\text{νοητόν}
\end{align*}
\]

This νοητόν is the principle “frozen around the One” as Iamblichus, we saw, put it. But below it there was another νοητόν, if we so wish to call it, reachable by “noeric” (νοερά), intellectual activity of the highest and most unified order, and thus itself somehow “noetic”, intelligent, in nature: this is what the Athenian Neoplatonists called νοητόν-νοερόν, intelligible-noetic (“noeric”) realm, and posited
between absolute intelligibles and pure intelligences\textsuperscript{34}. After it the World of

\textsuperscript{34} Very briefly, some evidence for the postulation of this hypothesis on the part of Lamblichus is the following. Sallustius, his follower, in the compendium \textit{Περὶ θεῶν καὶ κόσμου}, has the division of
gods, VI, 1: τῶν δὲ θεῶν οἱ μὲν εἰσὶν ἐγκόσμιοι, οἱ δὲ ὑπερκόσμιοι. ἐγκοσμίους δὲ λέγω αὐτοὺς
tούς τὸν Κόσμον ποιοῦντας θεοὺς. τῶν δὲ ὑπερκοσμίων οἱ μὲν οὐσίας ποιοῦσι θεοὺς (I athetize
tὸν θεόν – probably it came from a marginal gloss on ὑπερκοσμίων, to which it must be connected if
kept in the text by way of hyperbaton), οἱ δὲ νοῦν, οἱ δὲ ψυχὰς. καὶ διὰ τούτῳ τρεῖς ἔχουσι τάξεις καὶ
πάσας ἐν τοῖς περὶ τούτων λόγοις ἐστὶν εὑρεῖν. The οὐσία here is the katharà οὐσία, as we saw, is
“after” the Intelligible domain strictly speaking. And this is what Proclus calls νοητὴ οὐσία \textit{In
Parmeniden}, 1067.6-7. (In any case it corresponds to what was above called \textit{pure οὐσία}). The Proclean
passage is the immediate sequel to the one quoted in extensor above, n. 33. Proclus here purports to
discover an inherent contradiction in Lamblichus’ position concerning the interpretation of the first
hypothesis. He begins by invoking lamblichus’ agreement to what he will say, 1066.33: εἰ δὲ τὸ μὲν
πρῶτοτον ἐν, ὡς δοκεῖ ποι καὶ αὐτοῖς (sc. lambichus as is evident by the context, v. n. 33) μάλιστα,
pάντων μόνως ἐστί, καὶ ἀποντακτον πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα πάντα, καὶ ἀμέθερον φασίν αὐτῷ ἀρτάσαν
πρὸς τῶν ὅλων, καὶ ἄγνωστον τοῖς πάσιν ἐξηρημένον. And then he describes the lamblichean
position regarding the ἐναῖδεs other than the Supreme One, in these terms; 1067.4 sqq.: ἔκαστη δὲ τῶν
ἀλλῶν ἐνάδων μεθεκτή πῶς ἐστι καὶ ὦ μόνον ἐνάς ἄλλα καὶ πληθὺς οἰκεῖοι μετέχουσα (in the
loose sense in which the participated participates in the participating), καὶ οὐσίας ἡ νοητής ἡ νοερᾶς
ἡ ψυχικὴς ἡ καὶ σωματικὴς –ἐκέχρι γὰρ τεύχες προείναι ἢ μεθὲς. (Then follows the statement of
the inconsistency which he thinks he discovers in the lamblichean position). This νοητόν, therefore,
must be what one may call second or lesser νοητόν. – Concerning the likelihood of the existence of
two νοητά in lamblichus, I may adduce the following evidence. The νοητόν properly so called (at
least at its highest grade for Damascius, but lamblichus insisted on the eminently unified character of
the entire νοητόν, so we should probably apply the following remarks to the whole of it as such) was
for lamblichus beyond the reach of νοεις; Damascius, \textit{De Primos Principiis}, vol. I p. 151.18-22: ὅτι μὲν
tοίνυν οὔτε δόξη, οὔτε διανοία, οὔτε νῦ τῷ ψυχικῷ, οὔτε νοησίς μετὰ λόγου περιληπτῶν, ἄλλα
οὔτε τῇ τοῦ νοοῦ παντελεί περιστή, οὔτε τῷ ἀνδρὶ τοῦ νοοῦ αἰσθῶν, οὔτε ἐπιβαλῇ ὅλος, οὔτε κατὰ
ἐπέρεισιν ὄρησμενην, οὔτε κατὰ περιληπτὴν, οὔτε τίνα τοιοῦτον τρόπον ἐκεῖνο γνωστόν,
συγχαρητέου ταῦτα τῷ μεγάλῳ Ἰαμβλίκῳ. Damascius then proceeds to inquire, about this νοητόν,
whether it is at all γνωστόν (albeit by an absolutely unified supra-noetic intelligence), or completely
ἀγνωστόν. He suggests that lamblichus appears at times to be inclined towards either alternative,
though he really believes that this appearance has to do with our inadequacy at comprehending the
actual lamblichean thought (152.2-5). The question is thoroughly pursued in the sequel, and is
approached from various angles, before finding its highly elaborate and typically Damascian solution.
In the course of the discussion, Damascius repeats in more definite terms the apparent discrepancy of
the lamblichean positions concerning this matter; 154.7 sqq.: χωρὶς δὲ τούτων καὶ οἱ θεοὶ (sc. the
Chaldaean Oracles, as being the revelation of gods themselves) γιγνώσκεσθαι τὸ νοητὸν
ἀποφαίνονται σαφῶς, οὐ μόνον λέγοντες νοεῖται καὶ νοεῖν (in itself; cf. Proclus, \textit{Theologia
Platonica}, Book IV p. 179.9 (Portus): ὅσα νοεῖται νοεῖται κατὰ τὸ Λόγιον) - ἢ ἡ ἢς μὲν τάστα καὶ
ἄλλας ἔξηρονται οἱ φιλοσοφοί, τὸ νοησίς προειρήθη τῷ νῷ λέγοντες, οὐχ ἂς γνωστόν, ἄλλα ἂς
ἐφετόν, καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου πληροῦσθαι τὸν νοῦν λέγοντες, οὐ γνώσεως, ἄλλα οὐσίας καὶ τῆς ὅλης
καὶ νοστής τελειώτης οὔτω γὰρ πολλαχοῦ καὶ ὁ Ιαμβλίκος καὶ οἱ μετ’ αὐτόν ἀξιοῦσιν. (These
philosophers after lamblichus principally are syrianus and proclus. – That νοητὸν therefore,
according to this acceptance, does not give gnōsis and νόησιν to the subordinate entities but being and intelligible perfection. Thus it is not the intelligible of an intelligence). οὐς ἀεὶ δὲ οὕτως, ἀλλ’ ἐν ἀλλας καὶ τὴν γνώσιν ἐν τῷ νοητῷ καὶ περὶ αὐτὸ καταλείπουσι, ὡς ἐν τοῖς Ἑλληνικοῖς ὀμολογομενοῖς ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος (in his voluminous Commentaries on the Chaldaean Theology, cf. p. 86.5-6). The magnificent Fragment 1 (ed. Des Places) of the Chaldaean Oracles is then invoked, in support of the knowledgeability after a certain fashion of the νοητον.

ἔστιν γὰρ το νοητόν, ὁ χρή σε νοεῖν νόον ἀνθεῖ. ἢν γὰρ ἐπεγκλίνης σὸν νοὸν κάκεινο νοητής ὡς το νοῦν, οὐ κεῖνο νοητής. ἐστι γὰρ ἀλλής ἀμφιβασοῖς δύναμις νοησιν στράτευσαν τομασίν. Οὐ δὴ χρῆ σφαδρωτῆτα νοεῖν το νοητόν ἀκειν ἀλλὰ νῦστα ταναῦ ταναῦ φλογι πάντα μετρούση πλην το νοητόν ἀκείνο. χρεώ δὴ τοῦτο νοσῆι οὐκ ἀτενός, ἀλλ’ ἀγνὸν ἀποστρόφουν ὁμμα φέροντα σῆς φυσῆς τεῖναι κενοῖν νῦσν εἰς τὸ νοητὸν, ὅρθρα μάθη το νοητόν, ἐπει νῦσν ἐξω ὑπάρχει.

And indeed we can produce explicit evidence from Damascius that Lamblichus admitted a unique and very special kind of approach to, and contact, with the νοητὸν, when the Intellect combines all its νοησις into one unitary, basic, root-νοησις capable of somehow reaching out towards the νοητὸν; v. de primis principiis, vol. I, p. 273.17-21: τὸ μὲν οὖν ἀλῆθες ὡδὲ ἔχειν πειθομα παντὸς μᾶλλον, καὶ ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος πολλαχον πολλα πανεαναγκαιων ἡμῶν τὰς πολλάς νοησις σὸν εἰς ἐν κέντρον συνερείδεσθαι, καὶ τὴν περιφοράν κέντρον ποεῖν, καὶ οὕτω προσέξει τῷ ἱγμομένῳ καὶ νοητῷ ἤνιμμον καὶ νοητῶς μιὰ μεγάλη νοησεί καὶ ἀδιάκρισι καὶ νοητῇ. Similarly, but also contrastedly, vol. I, p. 147.22-148.3: ὥθεν καὶ ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος εὐ τῇ ἐνι μένειν τὸ νοητὸν ἀπεφήναι, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἤνωται πρὸς αὐτῷ καὶ κατ’ αὐτὸ εἰδοποιεῖται ἢ κατὰ τὸ ὄν. ἀμέλει ὡδε διώρισται τι ἐν αὐτῷ, οὐκ οὐσία, οὐ νοητὸν οὐκ ἄλλο οὐδέν, ἐν τούτῳ δὲ ἔχει τὸ εἰνα, ἐν τῷ πάντα εἰνα κατὰ συναιῆσιν, τοῦτο δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐστι καὶ τὸ ὄντως νοητὸν (sc. that it is pānta after the intelligible fashion).

πάντες ἐστι γὰρ, ἀλλὰ νοητῶς.

φησι τὸ λόγιον. συνάγει (sc. τὸ νοητὸν) γὰρ εἰς ἐν πάσαις ἡμῶν τὰς νοησις καὶ ποιει μιὰ συνεντημένην ἐκ πασῶν παντελη καὶ ἀδιακριτῶν καὶ ὡς ἀλήθες ἤνιμμεν ἡνοτις, οὐκ το νοητο ἐκεῖνον τὴν ἡνοσιν εἰνα βουλεῖαι ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος (that is, the νοητὸν acts on our νοῦς by conferring upon it “intelligible perfection” – to use the above quoted expression – something similar to, but far from identical with its own proper intellection). Finally, cf. also p. 109.10-15: καταχρωμηθα δὲ ὡς τος ὁνομασιν ἐπ’ ἐκεῖνων, οὐκ ἠχοντες ἀδέις ἐκείνων ἐπονυμίας (the general principle), οὐδὲ γὰρ νοησις ἐχομεν τουκας. οὐδὲ γὰρ αυτα τὰ νοηματα ἡγητα τας νοησις ἐστι τας ἡμετέρας. οὐδὲ γὰρ τας τὸν νου περισσας νοεται τὸ ἄκρον του νοητου κατα τὸν Ἰάμβλιχον - ἀλλὰ συμπυταξαι δει καὶ τον νου τις συκειας νοησις εις το νοητον ει μελλουν συνησιηομενων ων ἐπιβάλλειν καὶ ἰποσουν τω παντε συνησιημενων.

But the conflict is, as Damascius himself intimated, more apparent than real. (V. De primis Principiis, vol. I, p. 148.10-1, regarding the very issue we are considering: πολλα μενται αντελεξων δοκουντες εοικαινεν περι ὁνοματος μονον ποιεῖσθαι τὴν διαμάχην). For the above quoted Chaldaean Oracle probably refers to the νοητὸν νοῦς at most – it is the ἐνεργεια of the παντακε δυναμις, as is indicated by vv. 3-4.

---------- ἐστι γὰρ ἀλήθες
Intelligence comes (νοερόν), then the psychic realm and finally the bodily reality of material existence (κόσμος σωματικός). Schematically put:

καθαρὰ υύσια (perhaps a δεύτερον νοητόν)

| νοῦς
|
| ψυχή
|
| σῶμα

(b) Of course this schema would only give the basic framework of reality. Iamblichus did not stop there; he further articulated this structure according to the exigencies of higher Λόγος and the demands of the religious consciousness. Thus, for instance, he postulated three “fathers” in the noeric (νοερόν) domain; we are fortunate to have one actual fragment of his concerning them (it is not recognized by Diehl as such, but the style is absolutely unmistakeable). The passage is referred to above, and is in Proclus, *In Timaeum*, vol. I, p. 308.19 sqq: περί γὰρ τῆς ἐν Τιμαίω τοῦ Διός Δημηγορίας γράφων (sc. ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος) μετὰ τὰς νοητὰς τριάδας καὶ τὰς τῶν

[νοεραὶ τομαὶ refer of course to the properly intellective and intellectual activity. It is naturally against the context as well as the doctrine in question to take these lines as referring to human mind (with Kroll p. 11 n. 1), as Festugiere saw (*La Révélation d’ Hermès Trismégiste*, tom. IV, p. 133 n. 2)]. Ἀμφίφασις is usually (and especially from the cultic point of view) connected with Hecate (with the two torches on either side of her), and thus related to an even lower stratum of reality. The use in Fr. 158 (ἀμφιπάουντα) and Fr. 163 (ἀμφιπάνθης in the later passage) connected with Hecate (with the two torches on either side of her), and thus related to an even lower stratum of reality. The use in Fr. 158 (ἀμφιπάουντα) and Fr. 163 (ἀμφιπάνθης in the later passage) connected with Hecate (ed. de Places) does not imply the highest suprasensible domain specifically, quite the contrary. It is thus possible and indeed probable that the νοητόν meant in the given Oracle is not pure intelligibility, but highest Intelligence which is intelligible to proper intellects by supreme intellect and an Intelligent order which intellects by attenuated intelligibility. We have already referred to Proclus, *Th. Pl.*, Book IV, ὅτα νοοῦντα νοεῖται κατὰ τὸ λόγιον; cf. also Fr. 77 of the Chaldaean Oracles:

ἀι γε (sc. the magic ἱγνας) νοοὴμεναι <ἐκ> πατρόθεν νοεῖσθαι καὶ αὐταί,

βουλαῖς ἀθέθεκτος κινοῦμεναι ὡστε νοῆσαι.

Iamblichus probably means such a distinct realm of reality when he says in *De Mysteriis*, VIII, 3, 263.3-6: τοῦτον δὲ (τοῦ νοος) τὸ ἐν-ἀμερές καὶ ὁ φησὶ (sc. Hermes Trismegistos, Iamblichus is interpreting the Egyptian mysteries) πρῶτον μαίεμα προστάτει, ὃν καὶ Εἰκτῶν ἐπονομάζει, ἐν ὧν δὴ τὸ πρῶτον ἐστὶ νοοῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον νοητόν (as distinguished moments in identity), ὃ δὴ καὶ διὰ σιγῆς μόνης θεραπευται. – I should suggest that the relative comprehensibility of νοητόν refers to this realm rather than to pure and absolute Intelligibility which, for Iamblichus, is solidly frozen around the One. We might then suggest the identity of this realm with pure υύσια, which, as we have seen, lies just outside the strict νοητόν. But the whole subject needs, and deserves, much more and detailed study.
<νοητών καὶ>35 νοερῶν θεών τρεῖς τριάδας, ἐν τῇ νοερᾷ ἐβδομάδι τὴν τρίτην ἐν τοῖς πατράσιν ἀπονεμεῖ τῷ δημιουργῷ τάξιν τρεῖς γάρ εἶναι θεοὺς τούτους καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Πυθαγορείοις ὑμνημένους, «οἱ (sc. οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι) τοῦ μὲν ἐνὸς νοῦ (sc. the first and highest mind)», φησὶ, (sc. ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος), «καὶ τὰς μονάδας ὅλας ἐν ἑαυτῷ περιέχοντος τὸ ἄπλοῦν καὶ ἀδιαίρετον καὶ ἀγαθοειδές καὶ μένον ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ συνηγμένον τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα γνωρίσματα τῆς ὑπεροχῆς παραδεδώκασι, τοῦ δὲ μέσου (sc. πατρὸς νοεροῦ) καὶ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν συνάγοντος τῶν τριῶν τὸ γόνιμον τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὸ συναγαγόν τῶν τριῶν καὶ τὸ τῆς ἐνεργείας ἀποστηρωτικὸν καὶ τὸ τῆς θείας ἵππης γεννητικὸν καὶ τὸ προῖον πάντι καὶ τὸ ἀγαθονοῦν κάλλιστα δείγματα λέγουσι, τοῦ δὲ τρίτου καὶ δημιουργοῦντος τὰ ὅλα (this is the Δημιουργίκος Nous) τὰς μονίμους προόδους καὶ τὰς τῶν αἰτίων ὅλων ποιήσεις καὶ συνοχάς, τὰς τε ἀφορισμένας ὅλας τοῖς εἰδεσιν αἰτίας καὶ τὰς προϊόντας πάσας δημιουργίας καὶ τὰ ὁμοία τοῦτος, τεκμήρια κάλλιστα ἀναδιδάσκοντο».

I shall, as I said, give only a few examples in order to make clear the highly articulated theory of Gods introduced by Iamblichus. (The Athenian Preplatonists assumed such speculation from him). So he acknowledged μερικὴν πηγὴν τῶν ἀμελλάκτων θεῶν (Damascius, De Pr. Princ., vol. I, p. 241.26-7: σωτὸ δὲ καὶ ἀμελλάκτων πηγὴν μερικὴν ἐγκαταρτθηθεὶ ταῖς μερικαῖς πηγαῖς ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος, ἀσπερ χαίς ὅλαις). His general principle is that every order and function of reality is coordinated to a corresponding divine principle as its source, cause and sustaining factor. He even coordinated particular συμπεράσματα in the Parmenidean hypotheses to specific orders of gods, like the συνοχέες and τελετάρχαι (taken probably from the Chaldaean Oracles), v. Damascius, vol. II p. 200.16; 216.11. For a typical doctrine concerning intricate divine orders see Proclus, In Timaeum, vol. III p. 197.12 sqq. Such examples may suffice for our present point.

(c) One word may be finally said concerning the question, why then does Proclus explicitly mentions Syrianus as the originator of the view that in the Second Parmenidean hypothesis the particular συμπεράσματα correspond, in their orderly succession, to specific orders of Gods – the view of the κατ’ ἄρθρα διαίρεσις of the second hypothesis in correlation to divine hierarchies and theogonies (v. Theologia Platonica, Book I, pp. 41 sqq. Westerink, Budé ed.; cf. In Parmenidem, 1061.23 sqq.; 1063.4 sqq.; cf. Damascius, de primis principiis in Platonis Parmenidem, vol. II, 259.8 sqq., where Syrianus is said to have advocated a similar approach even for the third hypothesis). The inference from what has been said is clear, and the solution to this

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35 The addition is necessary. Diehl omits to mention it.
problem is very simple. Proclus means exactly what he says: not that Syrianus was the first to philosophise in detail about complicated divine orders, but the first to correlate them, one to one, to the particular succession of results in the Parmenidean second hypothesis.

Iamblichus, we conclude, was the first to try to satisfy _systematically_ the third, as well, of the above mentioned basic requirements of ancient religious consciousness. The various orders of Gods – henads philosophically speaking – proceed out of the Supreme Oneness and follow (or rather cause) the procession of reality to the very lowest grade. So there are even sensible gods with body (θεοὶ σωματικοὶ), gods immanent in this world. But all gods transcend being in another fundamental sense, for all gods are exceedingly unified to one another, and divinity is beyond being, godhead is above thinghood. We can see how the first religious requirement is meant in a wonderfully coherent and profound way.

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36 The best analysis of their unity in their very diversity (diversity not merely on the same level, but in a highly articulated _seriaic_ structure of subordination) is given by Iamblichus himself in _De Mysteriis_, I, 19. I have quoted above from this chapter p. 59.15 sqq. Cf. also there 57.16-58.8; the question is about the divinity of the bodily gods and their relation to the supreme intelligible godhead. Says Iamblichus: λέγω δὴ οὖν ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν παραδειγμάτων καὶ περὶ αὐτὰ ἀπογεννᾶται τὰ ἐμφανὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀγάλματα, γενόμενα τε παντελῶς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἱδρυται, καὶ πρὸς αὐτὰ ἀνήκουσαν ἔχει τὴν ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ἀποτελεσθείσαν εἰκόνα, ἐτέρως τε τὰ αὐτὰ ἄλλην διακόσμημεν δεδημοσχηματίσατα, συνεχή τέ ἐστι τὰ τῆδε πρὸς ἐκείνα κατὰ μίαν ἐνώσιν, καὶ τὰ μὲν παρόντα θεία νοερά εἰδὴ τοῖς ὀρφικῶς σώματί τῶν θεῶν χωριστῶς αὐτῶν προϋπάρχει, τὰ δ’ ἅμικτα καὶ ὑπερουργάνα αὐτῶν νοητά παραδειγμάτα μένει καθ’ ἑαυτά ἐνι ὀμοί πάντα κατὰ τὴν διασωμάν αὐτῶν ὑπερβολήν. Typically Iamblichean thought and expression! And in conclusion at the end of the marvelous chapter, 60.15-61.4: καὶ τοῦτο τῆς τῶν θεῶν αἰτίας καὶ διακοσμήσεως ἐστὶν ἐξαιρέτων, διότερ άνωθεν μέχρι τοῦ τέλους τῆς θείας τάξεως ἢ αὐτὴ δήμει πάντων ἐνώσις – οὐ (I correct from εἰ) δὴ τούτο ἄξιον ἀμφίβοηται, τούναντίον γὰρ ἢν θαυμαστόν, εἰ μὴ ὦτως εἶχεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῆς συναφῆς τῶν αἰσθητῶν θεῶν ἱδρυμένων πρὸς τοὺς νοητοὺς θεοὺς τοσοῦτα εἰρήσθω.