It is Time: An Analysis of Platonic and Aristotelian Philosophies of Time and Their Reception in the Gospel According to Thomas

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Abstract:

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Mrdan Nakic

One of the central topics of all philosophical and theological thinking since the beginning of organized philosophical structuring and before is that of the position and nature of time, as well as its purpose, if existent, for "thinking" and "not-thinking" creatures, and whether it can or if it does exist independently. When approaching *Gospel According to Thomas* (GThom), both scholars and non-scholars try to "decipher" the meaning of this enigmatic collection of sayings. This fact emphatically leaves one with the impression that the GThom contains an important message to decrypt or to convey, and/or that human beings tend to see meaning or to look for understandings and search for it as a fundamental need. The following thesis proposes a reading which uses a Reader-Response method in order to be "free to imply" that Platonic and Aristotelian notions of time in the GThom can be both valid as a possible source in Neoplatonic times as still present as unmodified, despite the obviousness of the fact that Neoplatonic times did try to integrate both philosophies, due to the lack of secondary literature on the GThom and Aristotelianism. It is very important to note in this context, that the thesis was not aimed at proving such a position, but that the position came out of the investigation itself. This is and was my effort towards "objectivity" and "understanding" without a self-referential thesis or mindset in mind.

KEYWORDS: Aristotelianism, Aristotle, becoming, Being, being, Change, Cognition of Time, Cyclicality, Dialectic, Directionality of Time, Everlasting, Everlastingness, Gnosticism, Gospel According to Thomas, Hermeneutics, Kingdom, Magnitude, Middle Platonism, Movement, Neoplatonism, Number, Ontology, Parmenides, Philosophy, Philosophy of Time, Physics, Plato, Platonism, Potentiality, Reader-Response, Statesman, Temporality, Theology, Timaeus, Time

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Dedication:

For my mother Nada (Serafimović) Nakić and the road itself who made me into what I am and thereby this work possible.

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Introduction

a) S*tatus Quaestionis*

The *Gospel According to Thomas* (GThom) certainly invites the reader/listener to try to understand the message (meaning of the sayings) in a very explicit form already in saying 1:

"And he said: Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."[1]

This statement summons a lot of readers/listeners towards the discovery of the meaning of sayings. As we are aware, even in our times, certain ideas coming from earlier traditions are present in our cultural reality. Does this mean that we should remain in the analysis of those manifestations only in our own hermeneutic framework or how the ideas were used in the time of the writing, or is it equally interesting to know where certain ideas and concepts come from to understand the GThom, and, therefore, a more encompassing meaning behind these concepts? I would say that the latter is more prudent and therefore leads towards an analysis of earlier influences as *probably* still present in the environment, without change at the time of the writing of the GThom. Since the very beginning of my enquiry and analysis in the GThom, I had an interest in the temporal qualities of the text, in its relation to the idea of "the Kingdom" (found 22 times in the text) and other sayings. Although a much later text, already deeply embedded in Neoplatonic, Middle Platonic and other influences of its time, this thesis will explore how the notion of time in GThom resonate with Platonic and Aristotelian understandings of temporality as possibly preserved in later times, thereby analysing if one should, or not, be more careful in demarcating periods and intellectual influences as well as how they subsequently did or not influence thinking and acting of/in certain cultures by usage/appropriation or modification.[2]

The GThom is comprised of 114 sayings.[3] I recognize the notion or nature of time referred to directly or indirectly in 16 sayings. It is important to note that the idea of change, fundamental to the notion of time, is even more present. In my internal exposition about the linking of the idea of time with that of the Kingdom two questions arose: Is the text depicting an overarching Kingdom which is both in time and outside time? Is the depiction of time in it a positive element, a neutral element or even irrelevant or negative? Risto Uro, for example, noted that despite what seems to be a purely negative depiction of the created order in sayings like GThom 21, 56 and 80, he rightly concludes that sayings 12, 28 and 113 present a more positive picture of the created world, which is "not univocally an evil product or the source of evil."[4] Stevan Davies, as well, sees that "Thomas may regard the world within which Wisdom is omnipresent as a place containing hidden treasure and as a place which is the body of Wisdom," adding that "Thomas may not find the world evil at all, except in its social ramifications" and "views favourably the created world,

[1] All translations of the Gospel of Thomas are from André Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Vol. 16, Apocryphes (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers,2019), 43.
[2] My purpose is not to go into debates about the existence of Middle Platonism, Neoplatonism and other schools of thought in time as such, as these debates are not relevant for our context.
[3] The number of sayings, due to division principles may vary but this detail is irrelevant for our purposes.
[4] Uro Risto, *Thomas: Seeking the Historical Context of the Gospel of Thomas* (T & T Clark, 2003), 56.

and the Kingdom and light therein."[5] I have recognized that these observations make our temporal enquiry even more relevant. As such, it follows that for a proper understanding of the theology of the Kingdom, and consequently the possible intended message of the GThom itself too, one must understand how the text depicts the notion of time. This thesis will explore philosophical descriptions of time in Plato and Aristotle. Can we recognize these ideas in the GThom without modification and what understanding are we left with in the GThom in that case?

b) Methodology

The analyses of "time" in Plato and Aristotle have been recognized as most developed and influential on subsequent schools of thought when the GThom was written and will therefore be studied in separate chapters. The exploration of the Thomasine gospel itself will be offered in a separate chapter as well. The only elements to be repeated from the two initial chapters will be those found in common with our analysis of the GThom itself. I will begin with the presentation of Plato and Aristotle in order to point out the complexity of the establishment of ideas as univocally coming from a specific cultural/historical background. Subsequently, I will analyse if ideas on time found in Plato and Aristotle can be identified as such in the GThom, in its sayings on temporality. Our conclusion will summarize our findings and provide some prospective questions for future research on the philosophical interpretation of the GThom. I will not try to clearly delimit, point out, or claim an exclusive reading of the text. We will thus, in our case, have a different perspective on the notion of temporality in the GThom and a different view of the implied compiler of the sayings. I will therefore adopt a Reader-Response approach in my readings of Plato, Aristotle and the GThom. Gagné explains that the meaning of texts is also creatively constructed by readers,

> Mais il existe une autre manière d'aborder l'intertextualité en la plaçant du côté de l'*intentio lectoris*. Dans cette perspective, l'intertextualité est essentiellement une entreprise de lecture où les renvois intertextuels sont *arbitraires*. L'intertexte se construit à partir du rapport qu'un lecteur établit entre les textes. La vaste expérience de lecture d'un individu devient le catalyseur de l'intertextualité. Elle se manifeste lorsque « la mémoire est alertée par un mot, une impression, un thème [...] comme un souvenir circulaire » (Piégay-Gros 2002, 19). Ce faisant, l'intertextualité est le produit d'une lecture subjective, où tout le monde du lecteur interagit avec le texte... Les références intertextuelles proposées ne sont pas exclusives, mais constituent *une* lecture possible.[6]

We, therefore, admittedly *always* postulate a *hypothetical interpretation and intent* in an implied Thomasine community of readers/writers/listeners, and how certain Thomasine ideas resonate with philosophies mentioned above, noting also that interpretation and meaning also changes through analysis and integration, in order to be "free to imply" that Platonic and Aristotelian notions of time in the GThom can be both valid as a possible source in Neoplatonic times, as still present as "unmodified" for example, despite the obviousness of the fact that Neoplatonic times did try to integrate both philosophies, due to the lack of secondary literature on the GThom and Aristotelianism. It is very important to note in this context, that the thesis was not aimed at proving

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[5] Stevan L. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom* (Bardic Press, 2010), Kindle Edition. loc. 2465-2476.

[6] See André Gagné, "De l'*intentio operis* à l'intentio lectoris : Essai herméneutique à partir de l'épisode du démoniaque de Gérasa (Mc 5,1-20)." *Théologiques* 12.1-2 (2012) : 215-216.

such positions, but that the position came out of the investigation itself. This is my effort towards "objectivity," without a self-referential or predetermined thesis in intent, and as an unintended constructive critique that came as a consequence.[7]

The Concept of Time in Plato

Plato's thinking, like those of all previous thinkers, was deeply embedded in preceding schools of thought. His work has been, however, recognized as the first systematized description of temporality from a philosophical perspective. Plato's "corrective method" functioned as a systematic effort against the idea proposed by Parmenides, which denied reality to existence and painted the material world as secondary quality in comparison to the world of ideas. This is a very important point for our purpose due to the fact that Plato is usually understood as insisting on lower qualities of the created, while his framework does not get emphasized or explained as much. This distorts understandings, which is certainly an issue. Let's start by giving some more information to this effect. His ontology is referred to as Platonic Reductionism. In it, being results from atemporal ideas, which require an analysis of Plato's condition of pre-existent *noetic* Being. Plato argued that a world of underlying realities is, nevertheless, accessible, and intrinsically understandable, and is not a construct which is beyond human understanding.

Plato is also certainly one of the first philosophers to speak of eternity as a state of existence outside the usual notions of time, since it was typically understood as comparative observations with respect to a very long life,[8] and a very long period of time. As Plato contemplated the idea of "Eternity," it eventually led him to his philosophy of "time-in-itself." We should also note that, while the understanding of a timeless eternity might be Plato's, his development of the idea uses a language which developed from Parmenides and his description of the One as being "Now-All-At-Once." This notion of the "One" will be transformed in Plato, as it will not imply substantial unity but rather relational unity.[9] A substantial unity denotes, in this context, one substance in all, while relational unity implies a unity in relationships.[10] The idea of time in Plato is connected to the concepts of "likeness" (*eikon*) or image and number, and therefore, to the idea of a "likeness-of-eternity."[11] Thus, time is *not* to be contrasted with eternity because it is "intimately connected with it."[12] More specifically, in our section on Plato, we will focus on deliberations on time which can be found in *Timaeus*, the *Statesman and Parmenides*. We will develop Plato's Time as follows: The introduction will offer a wider ontological framework in which Plato gave his explanations as well as a description of the concept of time in some of his works, and then move onto the following subsections:

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[7] For more on Reader-Response Criticism see, Iser Wolfgang, *The Act of Reading* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

[8] W. von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, no. 54 (1964): 36.

[9] Raphael Demos, "Types of Unity According to Plato and Aristotle," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 6, no. 4 (1946): 538.

[10] This topic gets a little more complex and debated. Authors debate between "formal monism" and "formal pluralism" for example. From this perspective, we can read that Plato is to be considered a formal monist, while Aristotle is to be read as a formal pluralist. For more information see: Demos, "Types of Unity According to Plato and Aristotle," 534-46.

[11] For a better chronological understanding, it is relevant to point out that Aion (eternity) never initially meant eternity but rather implied an allotted period of life to humans or a living force in humans as found in Homer. This concept changed in the Pre-Socratic tradition to lastingness or infinitely long duration.

[12] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 38.

Time in Timaeus

a) Time vs. eternity and order
b) Eternity as expression in living being
c) Time as clock
d) Directionality of time
e) Time and numbers/cosmology/cosmogony

Time in The Statesman

We will see how Plato reflected on temporal concepts through deliberations, if time can go inversely as a result of alternating *Aeons*, how time is connected to a "letting go" of the Demiurge and the concept of *phronesis* and the notion of time as an ordered extension.

Time in Parmenides

Parmenides is interesting as well for our purposes, as it is representing time through an *aporetic* approach, in order to invite the listener to engage the topic more intimately. We will consequently see how Plato deliberated on the One partaking in creation, and therefore in time as well, how he explained the difference between Chronos and the One as well as how he debated the directionality of time and the notion of an "instant."[13]

[13] It should be noted that Plato's elaborate deliberation on time is mainly found in *Timaeus*. I will therefore dedicate most of my work in this section to it.

The Concept of Time in Aristotle

Aristotle, one of the giants of philosophy and constructive criticizers of Plato, has also systematically engaged the notion of time. His work is also seen as a reaction against ideas coming from Pythagorean teaching as well as those coming from Plato.[14] Aristotle explored the notion of time mainly in three important works: *Metaphysics*, *De Caelo* and *Physics*. His metaphysical enquiries, more connected to theological thinking, are less developed as ideas,[15] and in many respects also lean on his *Physics.* His approach and context is important as a framework and is, as such, usually referred to "Reductionism with Respect to Time." It is generally understood that Aristotle's conceptualization was such that time is not to be understood as type of change but rather as something dependent on change, making it ontologically subordinate to change. It is therefore often described as a "number of changes," when compared to the notions of "before" and "after." He tackles the notion of time in his context of ontological and metaphysical deliberations, and according to which, a proper analysis of nature has to contain change, place, the infinite, and time, as well as the position of the mind in it.[16] Aristotle's position in this framework is very unusual since he argues that a precondition for the existence of time has to include both change and mind.[17] However, the importance of the "Number" for a conception of time, was recognized as well, as we can see for example in Bowin, who points out the following: "What Aristotle's definition of time appears to tell us, in the light of this passage, is that it exists just in case there is a number."[18] Since change is the underlying unifying substratum of "All" for Aristotle, time is often regarded and analysed in this context, and in which change precedes time, as mentioned. This led him to try to understand the source of it and concluded that effectuated potentiality brings about time; whereby it is understood that despite our mental capabilities to mark out all time, the effectuation creates change and thereby time. Boudreault using more contemporary language, described potentiality as a term implying a reference to the state of full actuality in which the changing object *is* when the change is completed.[19] It is also mainly agreed upon, in this context, that time is not objectively real but rather connected to potentialities waiting to be realized, and that they are as such, part of the everlastingness of time as well. It is important to note that all these complexities did not turn Aristotle into a sceptic. He still concluded that despite it all, time can be observed and measured as such in existence.[20]

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[14] Catherine Rau, "Theories of Time in Ancient Philosophy," *The Philosophical Review* 62, no. 4 (1953): 515.
[15] This is, of course a debated statement, as many others related to these thinkers.
[16] Coope Ursula, *Time for Aristotle: Physics IV.10-14* (Oxford University Press, 2005).
[17] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 4.
[18] John Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," in *Philosophy of Mind in Antiquity*, ed. John E. Sisko, 1st ed. (Routledge 2018), 175-93.
[19] Boudreault Pierre-Luc,"*Aristotle's Account of Time*: A Moderate Realism" (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository 2020), 15.
[20] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 51.

We will mainly develop Aristotle's understanding of time from his *Physics*. The sections of the chapter will consequently be presented as follows:[21]

a) The Relationship between Time and Change/Movement
b) Time, Change and Magnitude
c) Continuity of/in Time
d) Before and After in Change vs. Before and After in Time
e) Time as Number
f) Time as Measure
g) The notion of Now in Aristotle's Deliberation on Time
h) Time as Essentially Ordered
i) The role of memory in Relation to Temporality

Time in the Gospel According to Thomas

We will at this point go into specific sayings of the GThom which have temporal descriptions in them, to see if any of them correspond to ideas developed by these two philosophers, all the while favouring a synchronic reading of the text as a whole. We will analyse the following sayings: GThom 3—6, 8–9, 18—21, 50–51, 57, 96–97, and 113.

[21] The complex topic of time in Aristotle will be developed mainly following Ursula Coope's dissection as presented in her book *Time for Aristotle: Physics IV.10–14*.

Chapter I: The Concept of Time in Plato

We will commence by offering a brief overview of key ontological terms and their historical position in order to subsequently move into Plato's ontological framework with the purpose of contextualizing and presenting, from a more informed position, his analysis of time as part of it. Such analysis will allow us to hopefully examine if Plato's philosophy of time can be found in the GThom.

Platonic Ontology: Key Terms and Platonic Interpretations

All philosophical deliberations on time are part of *ontology*. The word ontology (ὄντος and λόγος as being and logical discourse) was recorded for the first time in the 17th century.[22] However, the first categories referred to as *metaphysical monism* were laid out by Parmenides of Elea, who was living in the 5th and 6th centuries BCE. Accordingly, all being comes from an unchanging substance and the material world is understood as an appearance. Here, we begin to encounter predicates like perfect, eternal, unchanging and complete¸ in an effort to understand the nature of being, which from that point on permeate all subsequent theo-philosophical deliberations as such. It is equally important to note that the concept of *Logos* has also emerged from this tradition, although from a different perspective than found in subsequent interpretations. Heraclitus, under the influence of Parmenides, understood *Logos* itself from an atomistic perspective for example.[23] Consequently, deliberations on time and change found in Plato are reactions to and draw upon the Pre-Socratics.[24]

Plato's Ontological Framework

We begin our presentation of his ontological structure, being aware of its complexities and disputed positions surrounding it. Plato's position as a corrective method for the ideas proposed by Parmenides and which denied reality to existence,[25] painted the material world as secondary quality in comparison to the world of Ideas.[26] This is a very important point for our purpose since Plato is usually understood as someone who insisted on painting the created as lower qualities. At the same time, the framework in which he operated often gets ignored or overlooked. His ontology is referred to as Platonic Reductionism. In this system, "being" is a result of atemporal ideas, and

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[22] Jacob Lorhard (Lorhardus) used the term for the first time in *Ogdoas Scholastica* (1st ed.) in 1606, as Science of Being. Merriam Webster lists the year 1663 without specifying the source.

[23] Authors such as Glasson point out that the concept of the *Logos* as a doctrine might have not come from Heraclitus, if understood as a cosmic principle and that this misconception is coming from the Stoics. According to this understanding the *Logos*, was, for Heraclitus, referring to an argument, a discourse, theory, or description. T. F. Glasson, "Heraclitus' Alleged Logos Doctrine," *The Journal of Theological Studies* III, no. 2 (October 1, 1952): 232. https://doi.org/10.1093/jts/III.2.231. It is also relevant to point out that the concept of substance and which also gets developed later from a Christian perspective, is originally, in the pre-Socratic tradition understood as a chemical attribute. For a general but very precise overview of the development of the substance see: Howard Robinson, "Substance," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*,ed. Edward Zalta,(Stanford University,2014). 6.

[24] Some authors such as De Chiara-Quenzer point out the fact that the word itself can also mean an account See: Deborah De Chiara-Quenzer, "The Purpose of the Philosophical Method in Plato's 'Statesman,'" *Apeiron: A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* 31, no. 2 (1998): 116.

[25] See for example: Ronald Hoy, "Parmenides' Complete Rejection of Time," *The Journal of Philosophy* 91, no. 11 (1994).

[26] Ronald Hoy makes this relationship very clear by stating that, "unlike Plato, Parmenides extinguishes time and change altogether. Rather than trying to use the eternity of Forms as a model for Parmenides's reality, one should go in the opposite direction: use the atemporality of Parmenides's reality as a model for the atemporality of Plato's Forms." See: Hoy, "Parmenides' Complete Rejection of Time," 597.

such a hierarchical solution is usually referred to as Plato's pre-existent *noetic* being. It is significant in this respect to understand, because of subsequent Neoplatonic/Christian mis/re interpretations, that for Plato, the world of underlying realities is nevertheless, accessible, and intrinsically understandable, and not a construct that is beyond human understanding. Additionally, Plato recognized an underlying purpose of it which cannot be simplified into one definition, but which is generally known as *homoiosis*.[27] This was the reason for the development of a more unified system of ideas, which tried to encompass all lower incidents as well. Consequently, Plato(nists) tried to understand the nature of "beings" in the context of "becoming" and if one is able to identify something paradoxical in nature.

A useful summary of the relationship between "being" and "becoming" and consequently his cosmogony/cosmology and time can be presented in the following way:

1. Some things always are, without ever becoming (27d6).
2. Some things become, without ever being (27d6—28a1).
3. If and only if a thing always is, then it is grasped by understanding, involving a rational account (28a1—2).
4. If and only if a thing becomes, then it is grasped by opinion, involving unreasoning sense perception (28a2—3). [12]
5. The universe is a thing that has become (28b7; from 5a—c, and 4).
a. The universe is visible, tangible and possesses a body (28b7—8).
b. If a thing is visible, tangible and possesses a body, then it is perceptible (28b8).
c. If a thing is perceptible, then it has become (28c1—2; also entailed by 4).
6. Anything that becomes is caused to become by something (28a4—6, c2—3).
7. The universe has been caused to become by something (from 5 and 6).
8. The cause of the universe is a Craftsman, who fashioned the universe after a model (28a6 ff., c3 ff.; apparently from 7, but see below).
9. The model of the universe is something that always is (29a4—5; from 9a—9 e).
a. Either the model of the universe is something that always is or something that has become (28a5—29a2, also implied at 28a6–b2).
b. If the universe is beautiful and the Craftsman is good, then the model of the universe is something that always is (29a2—3).
c. If the universe is not beautiful or the Craftsman is not good, then the model of the universe is something that has become (29a3—5).
d. The universe is supremely beautiful (29a5).
e. The Craftsman is supremely good (29a6).
10. The universe is a work of craft, fashioned after an eternal model (29a6—b1; from 8 and 9).[28]

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[27] According to it, for example, the purpose of life is to become God-like, or as God-like as possible in terms of virtue etc. For more information and the subsequent middle platonic and Gnostic usage see: Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta, "A Way of Salvation: Becoming Like God in Nag Hammadi," *Numen* 60, no. 1 (2013): 71-102.

[28] Donald Zeyl, Barbara Sattler, "Plato's Timaeus," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2017 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2017). https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/plato-timaeus/.

For Plato, ontological and cosmological questionings do not exclude but in fact seriously deal with ethical and moral inquiries as well. It is therefore that the ontological framework presented is also focused on the interaction between the creation that has a purpose and needs to reach its full potential. Such a being is connected to the ideal form, and consequently, the philosopher's role is to properly understand being.[29] In such a framework, being results from an activity coming from the world of atemporal constructs. Authors disagree on the hierarchy of importance of these questions for Plato, whether the atemporal is the only important focus for humans or if the temporal questionings should be given an equal or higher position.[30] In Plato's development of Forms, he notices the difference between that which always is and never becomes and that what becomes and never is (27d5—28a1). It is the difference between understanding (*noêsis*) which needs and uses rationality (*logos*). The second is to be understood by opinion (*Doxa*). On the other hand, opinion also includes senses (*aesthesis alogos*). Goldin is explicit when he says: "One ideal attribute possessed by Forms is intelligibility, the possession of attributes that can be known. It is the instability of sensible things that renders them unknowable. Their characteristics are not intelligible. Because they change, they become, and are accordingly objects of *Doxa*, not *Episteme.*"[31] For Goldin, these are, from a Platonic perspective, characteristics of all sensible things. Eternity, therefore, is such a being but is not affected by temporal changes. Such a division is consequently central to the narrative seen in *Timaeus* as well.[32] Therein, created reality is connected to the upper/ideal through eternalness and the highest aesthetical ideals. Silverman, for example, points out explicitly that the generated implies not only connection to but dependence on an external cause, which is the *Forms*.[33] Such a notion is consequently connected to the concept of time.

Time in Plato

In order to summarize Plato's position on time, several key concepts and historical details need to be explained.[34] It seems that Plato was the first to talk about eternity as existence outside the usual understanding of time. It is through his contemplation of eternity that he develops his philosophy of "time in itself." Before Plato, all representations of eternity in Greek thought were compared and thought in reference to a very long life.[35] Cushman notes that all previous religious interpretations were about the concept of ἐνιαυτός which refers to a cycle of time or a year, such as everlasting cycles of seasons. He adds that Plato, in works other than *Timaeus*, usually uses time

[29] Whether this implies a complete understanding of being, is another question altogether and one which we cannot discuss in our context.

[30] Some authors see that a search for purpose and finality is the real focus of Plato, rather than observations about regularity itself, for example. Chlup noted explicitly in the context of physical observations and science that "nevertheless, Plato is not impressed by these regular connections at all. It is the *Nous* or intelligent purpose of all the encounters he is interested in." See: Radek Chlup, "Two Kinds of Necessity in Plato's Dialogues," *Listy Filologivke / Folia Philologica* 120, no. 3/4 (1997): 205.

[31] Owen Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," *Mathesis Publications*, Ancient Philosophy, 18 (1998): 130.

[32] Zeyl and Sattler, "Plato's Timaeus." 11.

[33] Allan Silverman, "Timaean Particulars," *The Classical Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (May 1992): 113.

[34] Some authors debate over questions about whether his exposé is Ontological or Cosmological in intent and nature. For information about these distinctions, see, for example, Walter Mesch, "Die Ontologische Bedeutung der Zeit in Platons Timaios," in *Interpreting the Timaeus-Critias.* (Sankt Augustin : Academia, 1997), 227–237. (My translation).

[35]von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 36. Leyden also noted that, while the understanding of a *timeless eternity* might be Plato's, his development of the idea uses a language developed from Parmenides and his description of the One as being now all at once.

as a duration and an interval.[36] Time is only found in Plato as connected to concepts of likeness (*Eikon*) or image and number in its definition. Leyden is particularly clear about this and notices that Plato's definition of time is the first in Greek philosophy which mentions a "Number."[37] It is here that we find it connected to the idea of a likeness of eternity.[38] It is a truthful model of eternity while having its particular numeration as an order-inducing element. Leyden notes that order, as such, is to be connected to the concept of "proceeding by number as well."[39] Plato defined time as an everlasting likeness, moving by numbers of eternity that stand unified. The full quote gives us a better insight into how he developed this idea:

> Accordingly, seeing that that Model is an eternal Living Creature He set about making this Universe, so far as He could, of a like kind. But inasmuch as the nature of the Living Creature was eternal, this quality it was impossible to attach in its entirety to what is generated; wherefore He planned to make a movable image of Eternity, and, as He set in order the Heaven, of that Eternity which abides in unity He made an eternal image, moving according to numbers, even that which we have named Time.[40]

Plato's approach and deliberations on time is known as substantivalism or absolutism with respect to time. As Oliver Pooley puts it, it sees time as a fundamental constituent of existence.[41] This allows us therefore to say that for Plato, generally speaking, the temporal is similar to the world of the eternal.[42] The keyword, however, here is "similar," as it implies *a lack*. How do we understand this position of time being something that is lacking while at the same time pointing to permanence or being connected to it? Perl noted that Plato's theory of forms changed with time and that they were not in opposition to each other as they developed. They remained as a unified system of thought in which the "idea of sensible as images of the forms, in turn, is an expression not of transcendence alone, but rather of the conjunction of immanence and transcendence: the paradigm is at once transcendent to and immanent in the image";[43] the former implies the latter position. We will see how these conclusions are not univocal.

Time, as a topic gets mentioned or developed in a multitude of Plato's deliberation. We will focus on *Timaeus,* the *Statesmen* and *Parmenides* as it offers sufficiently developed and most commented concepts for our purpose of a subsequent analysis of the presence of those ideas in the GThom.

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[36] Robert E. Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," *The Journal of Religion* 33, no. 4 (October 1953):254.
[37] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 39.
[38] As mentioned earlier as well, and for a proper chronological understanding, it is relevant to point out that *Aion* (eternity) never initially meant eternity but rather implied an allotted period of life to humans or a living force in humans, as found in Homer. This concept changed in the pre-Socratic tradition to lastingness or infinitely long duration.
[39] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 38.
[40] Plato, *Timaeus*, 37d.
[41] Oliver Pooley, "Substantivalist and Relationalist Approaches to Spacetime," Preprint, 2012, http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/9055/.4.
[42] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 37.
[43] Eric D. Perl, "The Presence of the Paradigm: Immanence and Transcendence in Plato's Theory of Forms," *The Review of Metaphysics* 53, no. 2 (1999): 361.

1.1 Time in *Timaeus*

Time in *Timaeus* can be seen as one of the first attempts towards a scientific cosmology and one of Plato's most influential works, beginning with its influence on the Academy in Athens which remained until the 6th century CE.[44] As such, it is consequently directly connected to an analysis of temporality and time. This time-related quote from *Timaeus* calls for our attention:

> Time, then, came into existence along with the Heaven, to the end that having been generated together, they might also be dissolved together, if ever a dissolution of them should take place; and it was made after the pattern of the Eternal Nature, to the end that it might be as like thereto as possible; for whereas the pattern is existent through all eternity, [38c] the copy, on the other hand, is through all time, continually having existed, existing, and being about to exist. Wherefore, as a consequence of this reasoning and design on the part of God, with a view to the generation of time, the sun and moon and five other stars, which bear the appellation of 'planets', came into existence for the determining and preserving of the numbers of time.[45] And when God had made the bodies of each of them, He placed them in the orbits along which the revolution of the Other was moving, seven orbits for the seven bodies.[46]

We can clearly recognize several key components in this quote such as: time, generation, the concept of eternity, the relationship between the generated, numbers and the universe. These concepts require some clarification. In his astronomical observations, Plato tried to identify a container which exists independently of what (or of anything at all) is placed in it. In accordance with the concept of an overarching unifying time system, Plato discerns that the differences in celestial rotations, and by extension of times as well, must be observed from an overarching ideal time which encompasses all planets (movements).[47] Goldin noted explicitly in this respect that time does not exist only as a function related to becoming, but also presupposes a function of regularity that comes from the planets' motions.[48] For Cushman, *Timaeus* exhibits influences from fifth century astronomy[49] and accordingly, with the creation or generation of the heaven, days, months etc. At the same time, we should not forget that the "year" is not connected to "seasons" as in previous traditions; rather, it is in relation to the "sun's completion of the eclipse of its own orbit" while the month was the time required for the moon's phase to be complete. It is from this perspective that Plato speaks about the sun, the moon, and the planets as "determining and

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[44] Leon Crickmore, "A Possible Mesopotamian Origin for Plato's World Soul," *Hermathena*, no. 186 (2009): 5.

[45] The importance of numbers cannot be overstated, for mathematical, mystical and symbolic reasons in Plato and earlier traditions.

[46] Plato, *Timaeus*,38. We have to, at this point responsibly point out the complexity and debate about the meanings of numbers dating from Pythagoras to Plato and Aristotle. The multifaceted meaning of crucial and often repeated numbers in previous, those and subsequent traditions of One, Three, Seven and Ten for example cannot be ignored, The Monad, Dyad etc. It should however also be noted that author like Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, "Plato's Theory of Number," *The Classical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1983): 375 points out that that: "14), 'Number is (formed) from the one (unit, monad) and the undetermined (indefinite, unbounded) dyad (duality),' but what this apparently simple statement means has remained a mystery until modern times." Additionally, we should also point out Andrew Gregory, "Mathematics and Cosmology in Plato's Timaeus," *Apeiron* 55, no. 3 (July 1 2022): 359-89 which discusses the issues of numbers, mysticism as well.

[47] Nina Emery, Ned Markosian, and Meghan Sullivan, "Time," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University,2020, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entriesime/.

[48] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 130.

[49] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 256.

preserving the numbers of time" (see Tim 38c).[50] Cushman points out that when Plato discusses time as a cyclical phenomenon, the notion of directionality and becoming should be understood synonymously.[51]

For our purpose, it is crucial to understand these two points: (a) time shows properties of being and eternity; (b) the reflection on celestial numbers should help humans to refocus on the higher capacities, and achieve, through intelligence and knowledge their full potential by using calculations, corrections, and contemplations.[52] The reflection on celestial numbers should serve as a tool on that road for humans to correct their own lives.[53] Such positioning is aligned with Plato's general propositions which is, as such, oriented towards and/or to be compared to the ideal Form. Even earlier authors see Plato's work as twofold in intent: naturalistic and creative.[54] The purpose of the first is to understand nature as it is by perception, making hypotheses and explanations of the world as it appears. The second is more creative in its approach, as it tries to understand the universe's structure, ideas, first principles, etc.[55]

Plato developed time in *Timaeus* through his famous cosmogony/cosmology narrative*,* as an order inducing element into a changing universe. The purpose of time in it is to resemble its unchanging ideal model as close as possible by understanding it as order, as an ideal mathematical model. Not all authors agree with the idea that time was order for Plato.[56] It is relevant to underline the relationship between the concept and nature of numbers and that of time, and how he tried to understand the nature of both. Authors generally speaking, tend to take either the mystical or philosophical[57] approach without the effort to present both. Let us focus and analyse the concept of time in Plato through different yet interrelated sections.

a) Time vs. Eternity and Order

It is generally accepted that Plato contrasted "time" with "eternity" (Αἰών) by pointing out that time had a beginning.[58] In eternity, past, present, and future have no distinctions. Such an eternity is, in alignment with his philosophy, the ideal Form. Plato understood this ideal Form as order.[59] This is significant because time itself seems, from the outside, to resemble this ideal Form, represented as a superimposed structure onto chaos, while it should not be equated with the ideal.[60] Turetzky confirms to this effect that time belongs to the realm of the created, to the "realm of

[50] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 256.
[51] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 256.
[52] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 39.
[53] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 40.
[54] For a more contemporary debate about the concepts and subsequent usage see: Miroshnikov, *The Gospel of Thomas and Plato*, Chapter 5.
[55]See: J. E. Boodin, "Cosmology in Plato's Thought (I.)," *Mind* 38, no. 152 (1929):153.
[56] See for example: Richard D Mohr, "Plato on Time and Eternity," *Ancient Philosophy* v6 (1986): 40.
[57] For an interesting effort that tries to underline and develop his mathematics as well, see: Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, "Plato's Theory of Number," *The Classical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1983): 375–84. For example: " 'the "One" is no longer the unique and indispensable "equalizer"'; and he shows that 'it is by no means indispensable (though at first it seemed to be so) in the series of side and diagonal numbers…" 383.
[58] Giannis Stamatellos, "Aion (Αἰών) - ODIP Online Dictionary of Intercultural Philosophy," May 1, 2020.
[59] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 40.
[60] The superimposition of *order upon chaos* is one of the oldest concepts of God's properties/actions. It is mostly known from the Genesis 2 story. However, the same concept can be traced back to goes to older traditions. In the Babylonian myth *Enuma Elish*, Marduk does the same, and is, as such usually noted in this context. However, we know that even this myth borrowed significantly from older traditions where for example a god named Enlil does the same, by separating the heaven and earth. For a comparison of the narratives see Andrea Seri, "The Role of Creation in Enūma Eliš*," *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 12, no. 1 (May 2012): 4-29.

appearances" and that it is not part of the Forms.[61] This leads us to conclude that for Plato, Time—according to Turetzky—is part of the created, yet somehow still connected to the Form because concepts of "was" and "will be" do not apply to time and are connected to cyclical movements of planets and sequential order of nature according to numbers.[62] It is linking the intelligible order of the eternal forms with an orderly change as seen in nature.[63] Cushman also points to the correlation between "time and becoming" and further relates it to the notion of eternity and order, in the same way as Turetzky. He concludes that "time does not exist apart from the existence of ordered as distinguished from unordered motion…"[64]

b) Eternity as an Expression in Living Being

The relationship between eternity and the manifestation of the living being in Plato's *Timaeus* is quite complex. Leyden points out that in *Timaeus* 37 D, Plato significantly reduces the difference between the created and the timeless archetype, through his understanding of an "eternal model" of the living world as a living being.[65] Despite being under the influence of Democritus and of Parmenides, Plato did not agree with the teaching on the illusion of reality, which, thus, includes time.[66] Likeness in Plato is not a phantasmagorical occurrence. We should rather understand it as a complement to proposition about the likeness of eternity which does not require control and a science of measurement and numeration.[67] Walter Mesch debates whether Forms such as *Aeon* should contain change, and if so, this should include time by concluding that "it is thereby clear that *Aeon* cannot completely dismiss movement and multitude" which is implying that Eternity cannot either. He points to section 30d which reads: "For since God desired to make it resemble most closely that intelligible Creature which is fairest of all and in all ways most perfect, He constructed it as a Living Creature, one and visible, containing within itself all the living creatures which are by nature akin to itself." Mesch further notes that section 37d explicitly connects the *Aeon* to the created because the *Aeon* is not part of an unmovable, but rather as a property of a living being.[68] Plato points out that the everlasting is not to be equated with "that which was and always will be" but with that which "is" (38a).

Consequently, the complexity of the temporal quality defined as present extra-temporal properties of eternity becomes more explicit.[69] Plato insists on a difference between the eternal

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[61] Phillip Turetzky, *Time* (London: Routledge, 1998), 14.
[62] Time is act as standards of goodness and beauty. Turetzky, *Time*, 17.
[63] Turetzky, *Time*,16.
[64] "Time does not exist apart from the existence of ordered as distinguished from unordered motion", Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.
[65] *Timaeus* 37 D in von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 36.
[66] Plato noted in this context the difference between *what always is and never becomes*, and that *what becomes and never is*.
[67] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 36-42. Goldin points to Forms in this context, and concludes that the "sensible Cosmos" and time in it allow for contrary predicates since it is not a Form. See: Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 128.
[68] Mesch, "Die Ontologische Bedeutung der Zeit in Platons Timaios", 232.
[69] The meaning of this claim depends on whether or not the 'is' that is correctly said of everlasting being, is tenseless. If the *is* is tenseless, then the claim in which the *is* as an everlasting being is neither past, present, nor future (so that it is wrong to say of it that it 'is Now'). If the *is* is present-tensed, then the claim is that everlasting being is always present: it always is Now and never was nor will be. The latter interpretation seems to be more likely. Plato does not distinguish between the 'is' listed together with 'was' and 'will be' and the 'is' that is said of everlasting being. Moreover, at 38a1—2, he says only that 'was' and 'will be' are 'properly said about the becoming that passes in time. See: Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 12.

ideal, which is outside time and that which is in time. Mohr points to Owen for deliberations on how time can be permanent in some respect and not permanent in others.[70] Böhme, however, looks at the notion of time itself and concludes that it can be understood as something that will be, something that was. and that which is also presently. He also notes that that those concepts are not just to be equated with the sensual world.[71] He goes further to notice that it would be a mistake to understand change in the realm of the physical as pure movement in Being alone, as all ideas in Plato also have their corresponding representation in the physical realm as well.[72] Drozdek[73] also confirms the centrality of time in the concept of an imitation of perfection, by saying that the movement is what brings the created as close to perfection, according to *Timaeus* 37d. Plato according to Cushman, tries to explain, two central points:[74]

1. Everything in the cosmos, and maybe the cosmos in itself as well, is, in a most radical way, in a process that includes becoming and ceasing to be.
2. The never-existent is a contrast to the everlasting being that abides everlastingly, whereby he means to point out a deficiency of being in the never existent.

Temporality is, therefore, the sign of a "deficient being" which is in the process of becoming and ceasing to be, and consequently impermanent, while permanence is that of a complete being. This type of permanence is, in a sense, timeless and spaceless as well.[75] Such a view of a process of becoming and ceasing to be in the created will be beneficial for our later analysis of the GThom as well as other additional sources.

c) Time as Clock

Another metaphor in the context of time used by Plato is that of a clock. Authors such as Mohr focus on the nature of this description. He sees that Plato's Demiurge in *Timaeus* "makes a clock, nothing more, nothing less."[76] The same position of a "cosmic clock" can be found in Böhme, who explicitly notes that time should be understood as a "cosmic clock" by which we can both measure and which measures in itself.[77] When Plato discusses time, according to Mohr, he sees it as a built-in paradigm of the created. As such, it is pointing out the cyclical nature and should be understood as markers and not abstract concepts.[78] The Demiurge created time as this clock which can be experienced. Cushman also sees Plato's time as "clock time," a "measurable movement of anybody in uniform motion in space."[79] Coope's position states that "the demiurge

[70] Mohr disagrees with this position. Owen, "Plato and Parmenides on the Timeless Present." *The Monist* 50, no. 3 (July 1, 1966): 317-40.
[71] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 114.
[72] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 111.
[73] Drozdek Adam, *In the Beginning Was the Aperion; Infinity in Greek Philosophy* Vol. 94. (Palingenesia. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag,2008), 97.
[74] Cushman synthesizes these relational complexities in a pretty impressive way. Not everyone agrees with his conclusions, but it is still very concise and helpful for our purposes. He notices that "nonexistent" things do not imply a complete lack of being for Plato.
[75] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 255.
[76] Mohr, "Plato on Time and Eternity," 39.
[77] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 150.
[78] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 39.
[79] The Forms, at the same time, should not, according to Mohr, be understood as a type of timeless eternity, nor should they be equated with perpetual, or the everlasting, unchanging, as we noted earlier as well in Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.

creates time, together with the heavens, as a way of bringing order to the changing universe."[80] Von Leyden's position points to time as an "all-inclusive system of orderliness in nature."[81] The description of the relationship between order and time, in the context of a "clock," is like many other concepts highly debated in Plato.

d) Directionality of Time

Authors such as Goldin, however, focus on the directionality of time. He points out that an analysis of the direction of time is not present in the narration found in *Timaeus*. Additionally, he is explicit in saying that the text does not offer any insight into the directionality of time nor the direction of motion.[82] The same author develops the role of time in Plato and says: "For times' role in granting a kind of limited intelligibility to the changes undergone by sensible things does not depend on the existence of a flow of time, whether in one direction or another."[83] He additionally points out that time allows for a sharing of one or more properties of the ideal. Cushman sees "clock time" as purely physical and that is of importance for Plato if it moves in one direction or another.[84] The same author comments on *Timaeus* 38a, which says "Generation is an everlasting cycle, but everything circles according to Numbers," by concluding that "the Numbers or measure of generation is time, and time, accordingly, possesses the *cyclical nature of generation*."[85] Some more contemporary authors, such as Gartner and Yau, point to the fact that time is linear without any possibility for it to go backwards in *Timaeus*.[86] Sattler, however, as another more recent author, argues for the opposite position by noticing and developing quite convincingly and explicitly, that time could have gone in both and opposite directions for Plato.[87] Goldin noted these observations as indicative for a lack of a description for a temporal flow altogether when we read: "Thus far, the argument considers temporal predicates as static, and there is no allusion to a temporal flow, in one direction or in another."[88] The analysis and understanding of this concept is also highly debated even to the level of opposite opinions.

[80] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 3.
[81] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 40.
[82] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 133.
[83] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 133.
[84] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.
[85] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 256.
[86] Corinne Gartner and Claudia Yau, "The Myth of Cronus in Plato's Statesman: Cosmic Rotation and Earthly Correspondence," *Apeiron* 53, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 460, footnote 42.
[87] Barbara M. Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," *Études Platoniciennes*, no. 15 (May 15, 2019). 12.
[88] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 134.

e) Time and Numbers/Cosmology/Cosmogony

It is becoming somewhat apparent at this point that the connection between Plato's Cosmology/Cosmogony and his numerical and temporal observations, therefore, cannot be overlooked since they are necessary to understand *being* and the created. Drozdek noted in the context of the importance of numbers in Plato's reasoning that *Timaeus* does not offer an explicit statement to the fact that order in the created by the Demiurge should presuppose infinity. Drozdek however also reminds us that it is still safe to presume certain conclusions based on *Parmenides*. The creation of the "best finite world" would require infinite knowledge, and which can only be expressed numerically as proportion and harmony. Consequently, such a numerical expression of an order can only be infinite as the number of numbers is infinite itself.[89] Time, in this context, is part of the created and is connected through orderliness by numbers, which Plato observed and connected to the behaviours of the planets and the sun. This observation is therefore meant to connect the motion of planets, which were created before the creation of time, and the regularity of celestial movements through time, which is, as mentioned earlier, connected to the creation of an image of eternity, that is, time.[90] This type of deliberation which also includes numbers, can be found, for example, in *Timaeus* 38C6, which we quoted earlier.[91]

Böhme decided to focus on the cyclical in his analysis. He notes that for Plato, time was not to be equated with a circle, but rather that we should focus on the fact that it moves cyclically, as well as that it is connected to the "periodical reproduction of the heavenly order."[92] The same author points out that Plato was drawing his understandings from Homer, albeit modifying it. Homer understood time as cyclical, in such a way that "things repeat themselves." At the same time, Plato reacted to it by pointing out that they move cyclically but that this movement does not imply repetition.[93] The same connection between numericity and astronomical observations can be found in *Timaeus* 39b as well:

> And in order that there might be a clear measure of the relative speeds, slow and quick, with which they travelled around their eight orbits, in that circle which is second from the Earth, God kindled a light which now we call the Sun, to the end that it might shine, so far as possible, throughout the whole Heaven, and that all the living creatures entitled thereto might participate in number, learning it from the revolution of the Same and Similar.

Pleshkov sees this statement as relevant for the equalization of the motion of the planets with time: "It seems that Plato suggests that there is no fundamental difference between the heaven and time" … and goes on to say that "the motion of the planets according to their orbits is time."[94]

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[89] Drozdek Adam, *In the Beginning Was the Aperion; Infinity in Greek Philosophy*. Vol. 94. Palingenesia. Sttugart: (Franz Steiner Verlag,2008), 91.
[90] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 131.
[91] "Plato, Timaeus, Section 38c," accessed August 1, 2022, https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0180%3Atext%3DTim.%3Asection%3D38c.
[92] Tim 38a in Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 108.
[93] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 108.
[94] Aleksei Pleshkov, "Plato's concept of aiōn (eternity)," Понятие aiōn (вечность) у Платона, (January 2014), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270882945_Ponatie_aion_vecnost_u_Platona. (My translation).

Timaeus 47a also points to the connection between numbers and the notion of time: "But as it is, the vision of day and night and of months and circling years has created the art of number and has given us not only the notion of time but also means of research into the nature of the Universe." Once again, we can see that Plato connects time with astronomy and numbers as a means for proper research.[95]

Due to the fact that these astronomical observations and their numerical values, which, as noted in the introduction of this section, probably came from the fact that he was exposed to concepts which understood that time should be seen in relation to the observable (astronomical) seasons and the numerical precision as well, the only directionality of time we can find in Plato, should be seen as Cushman noted, as cyclical, repetitive.[96] Authors such as Cohen, for example, also point out that the observations on time found are essentially connected to the context of numbers and astronomical observations: "Plato repeats several times, that stars are 'necessary for the existence of time.' Their motion gives to numeric expression its regularity and power, and these are the characteristic features of time."[97] Pender also sees temporal observations in *Timaeus* as well as in the *Statesman* as cyclical.[98] Such a position stands in contrast to conclusions coming from some earlier authors and which are explicit in saying that Plato did not take time seriously because he was oriented towards the metaphysical, as explicitly noted by Rau.[99]

All these complex ontological, cosmological/cosmogonical, mathematical and ethical perspectives on time found in *Timaeus* will later be seen as part of and reinterpreted through the lens of a theological purpose of the human condition and are therefore epistemologically valuable for our purpose as we will see. We should keep in mind that the same complex concepts have been identified as coming from older traditions developed in Mesopotamia.[100]

1.2 Time in *The Statesman*

The work itself is part of Plato's Late Dialogues. It connects observations about political questions, physics, cosmology, etc., by applying what some authors recognized as a philosophical method called *diaresis*. Such an approach in logic tries to organize concepts into definitions. It starts with an all-encompassing concept in order to divide it further into subsections until a definition of a particular concept can be established.[101]

We can find reflections on the directionality of time which seem counterintuitive. This approach in the *Statesman* is usually referred to as the "Reversed Cosmos" myth. The relationship

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[95] It is therefore that Böhme developed the connection between numbers and astronomical observations in Plato and *Timaeus* as well Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*. 144-157.
[96] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.
[97] Robert S. Cohen, "Time: Selections From The Evolution of the Notion of Time," *Zygmunt Zawirski: His Life and Work*, (1994): 198.
[98] E.E. Pender, "Plato's Moving 'Logos," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, no. 45 (1999): 75-107.
[99] Rau, Catherine, "Theories of Time in Ancient Philosophy," The Philosophical Review 62, no. 4 (1953): 514–25. https://doi.org/10.2307/2182458. 514-515.
[100] For a more in-depth analysis of the role and concepts of numbers and geometry in Plato's philosophical analysis, language and origin, see: Crickmore, Leon. "A Possible Mesopotamian Origin for Plato's World Soul," *Hermathena*, no. 186 (2009): 90. Most of them got transposed into subsequent theo-philosophical debates of different varieties, giving them each their own meaning; from mystical to astronomical.
[101] At the same time, Plato also points out weaknesses of such an approach throughout the text. Because of such a warning about its weakness found in Plato's Statesman in the context of politics and philosophy, authors such as Rosen do not exclude the possibility that the text is applying *phronesis* and not necessarily *diairesis* as its approach. See, for example Stanley Rosen, "Plato's Myth of the Reversed Cosmos," *Review of Metaphysics* 33, no. 1 (September 1979): 67.

between motion and time is different when compared to *Timaeus*. Here too, however, we find that motion was necessary in the creation process to provide for a state in which sharing in the perfection is possible. Different authors see different reasons for Plato's reflection (ethical, the idea of achieving the best [in us], socio-political, and metaphysical observations alone.) This interconnectivity of topics is clearly expressed in the following statement by Owens: "The *Statesmen,* like all of Plato's political writings, rests on the notion that there is a good to human life and that the ultimate aim of the political art is to lead people to achieve this good, as much as is possible."[102] Horn noted the importance of metaphysical by saying, "not only is the myth of the *Statesman* not told merely with the claim to correct and put right traditional mythos, it also turns out to derive from serious metaphysical premises."[103] Horn also confirms such a position.[104]

The narratological/analytical approach itself has been laid out mythologically. For proper contextualization, we should understand three divine characters who, among other "duties," influence the directionality of time. *Zeus*, who is mentioned only once in the text, and who governs our universe and our development of time as we perceive it; *Chronos,* who administers the universe in which time goes in inverse; and finally, the *Demiurge* as the ultimate all-encompassing, all-powerful god, and who hierarchically stands above both Zeus and Chronos.

Such a philosophical enquiry includes the concept of time from a different presupposition to effectuate a better, more encompassing introspection about its nature. Owen points to these paradoxical and counterintuitive suggestions on time in which Plato is creating a narrative that allows for time to go backwards but also contextualizes it by pointing out that Plato was trying to describe or understand the nature of the One.[105] This moment is occurring at the time in which the Demiurge is letting go of the control of the cosmos to its mind or thinking. The text itself is quite telling:

> … therefore, it is impossible for it to be entirely free from change; it moves, however, so far as it is able to do so, with a single motion in the same place and the same manner, and therefore it has acquired the reverse motion in a circle, because that involves the least deviation from its own motion. But to turn itself forever is hardly possible except for the power that guides all moving things; and that this should turn now in one direction and now in the opposite direction is contrary to divine law. As the result of all this, we must not say either that the universe turns itself always, or that it is always turned by God in two opposite courses, or again that two divinities opposed to one another turn it. The only remaining alternative is what I suggested a little while ago, that the universe is guided at one time by an extrinsic divine cause, acquiring the power of living again and receiving renewed immortality from the Creator, and at another time it is left to itself and then moves by its own motion, being left to itself at such a moment that it moves backwards through countless ages, because it is immensely large and most evenly balanced, and turns upon the smallest pivot.[106]

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[102] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 130.
[103] Christoph Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History? On the Myth of the Statesman," in *Plato and Myth: Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, ed. Catherine Collobert, Pierre Destrée, and Francisco J. Gonzalez (Brill, 2012), 404.
[104] Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History?" 394.
[105] Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History?" 127.
[106] Plato, *Statesman*, Section 296e.

Goldin proposes two possible interpretations for the issue of time which goes inversely: "According to the first, within the alternating *Aeons*, the direction of time itself is reversed. According to the second, in alternating *Aeons*, the direction of the sequence of events is reversed, but the direction of the timeline itself does not change."[107] The letting go of control of it from the side of the "God creator" is what follows at which point the directionality of it changes.[108]

Owen subsequently points out that the reading of the question of directionality of time, however, is not as evident in the given context. The myth should not prevent the reader from concluding that the progression of time itself is not inevitable, that it is including a "progressive decay."[109] Mason, however, points out the importance of the "letting go" for the myth and explains that the "own volition" can be explained through *phronesis*[110] as seen in 269e or innate desire, as seen in 272e:[111]

> … since every soul had fulfilled all its births by falling into the earth as seed its prescribed number of times, then the helmsman of the universe dropped the tiller and withdrew to his place of outlook, and fate and innate desire made the earth turn backwards. So, too, all the gods who share, each in his own sphere, the rule of the Supreme Spirit, promptly perceiving what was taking place, let go the parts of the world which were under their care.[112]

Accordingly, we should read Plato's notion on time in the *Statesman* as an "ordered extension" in which contradiction of predicates for a single subject is possible. Goldin sees that Plato argued that particular predications are organized before others in different periods of time. Horn, however, noted that Plato tried to create two opposite cosmic cycles in a rationalistic fashion.[113] He offers the following summary of Plato's positions to confirm his observation:

> —Something, which is not divine, but corporeal, cannot enjoy complete changelessness or uniformity (269 d5-7).
> —The heavens or the cosmos, while excellently endowed by its maker, cannot be free of all change due to its being corporeal (269 d7-e2).
> —As far as possible the cosmos tries to maintain a uniform circular motion in one direction, for this is the smallest deviation from self-motion (269 e2-5).
> —He who moves himself may not move in opposite directions; pure self-motion is a feature of the God alone, who steers everything which is in motion (269 e5-7).

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[107] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 138.
[108] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 137.
[109] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 139.
[110] *Phronesis* is, in Plato, a necessary condition for all virtue; it allows for moral and ethical strength, sometimes also found as moral understanding. The concept itself changes its meaning throughout his work. It is for our purposes important to distinguish *Sophia* from *Phronesis*, whereby we can say that Phronesis has epistemic value and is required for happiness and prosperity. It is complementary to *Sophia* or theoretical wisdom. For more information see for example Sahar Kavandi and Maryam Ahmadi, "Phronesis in Plato's Intellectual System," *Journal of Philosophical Investigations* 13, no. 26 (May 22, 2019): 317-37.
[111] Andrew J. Mason, "On the Status of Nous in the Philebus," *Phronesis* 59, no. 2 (March 4, 2014): 153.
[112] Plato, *Statesman*, Section 272e.
[113] Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History?" 403. The same author notes that a slightly different reconstruction of Plato's ideas can be found in Lane's *Method and Politics in Plato's Statesman* , Ancient Philosophy (New York : Cambridge University Press,1998) https://archive.org/details/methodpoliticsin0000lane.

Goldin points out that an organized extension is not ontologically significant, meaning that order might be reversed and implying that the difference between the past and future is psychological and is not what might be understood as ontological asymmetries.[114]

The philosophical debate also includes positions in which there is a place for a third epoch as presented by Brisson and Rowe. According to it there is a period between that of *Chronos* and *Zeus* and which is completely "abandoned by God and the daemons."[115] The same authors, however, noted in this respect that the majority of sources disagree with such a position. Other authors such as Rau, however, see this "mythical approach" and even his ontology of time generally speaking as childish: "Plato never discusses time in complete earnest; he even indulges, in the *Statesman* (268e-274e), in a childishly fantastic myth of periodic reversals of the course of time in the universe."[116] Such a position stands in sharp contrast to conclusions and deliberations from other authors on why Plato used a specific methodology in this work.[117] Owen,[118] for example, as well, finds it to be a curious mix of mythology and metaphysics.[119]

It is important to note that, unlike in *Timaeus*; here, we do not read about time as an order-inducing element but rather about the celestial motion in itself, which had to be manifested. Additionally, the cosmos does not participate in the changeless sufficiently in order for it to permanently keep its motion in the same direction it seems. As the Demiurge "lets go" of controlling of the created in its time, the created gets into problems because of "forgetting" at which point an intervention of the Demiurge is once again necessary, and he takes control of it again, including the temporal aspects of it. Pender confirms that the temporal observations in the *Statesman* are cyclical.[120] The section itself in the *Statesman* reads:

> … and towards the end of the time reached its height, and the universe, mingling but little good with much of the opposite sort, was in danger of destruction for itself and those within it. Therefore at that moment God, who made the order of the universe, perceived that it was in dire trouble, and fearing that it might founder in the tempest of confusion and sink in the boundless sea of diversity he took again his place as its helmsman, reversed whatever had become unsound and unsettled in the previous period when the world was left to itself, set the world in order, restored it and made it immortal and ageless. So now the whole tale is told; but for our purpose of exhibiting the nature of the king it will be enough to revert to the earlier part of the story. For when the universe was turned again into the present path of generation, the age of individuals came again to a stop, and that led to new processes, the reverse of those which had gone before. For the animals which had grown so small as almost to disappear grew larger, and those newly born from the earth with hoary hair died and passed below the earth again.[121]

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[114] Goldin, Owen "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 141.
[115] See footnote in: Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History?" 406.
[116] Rau, "Theories of Time in Ancient Philosophy," 514.
[117] See, for example, Rosen, "Plato's Myth of the Reversed Cosmos."
[118] Goldin, Owen. "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 137.
[119] Some arguments try to grasp what we like to call "objective" understanding (while recognizing how this notion in itself is problematic), as it is the only tool that we have at our disposal and which, as in Plato, does not have to exclude deliberations and/or speculations about acceptance of divine agency etc. in them. By doing so, we accept and try to overcome this *aporia* if possible.
[120] It is interesting to note that the representation in *Timaeus* as conforming to cyclical patterns as well. See: Pender, "Plato's Moving 'Logos," 75-107.
[121] Plato, *Statesman*, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0059.tlg008.perseus-eng1:273d-e. Accessed 25 October. 2021.

It is interesting to note that in the cycles, the notion of corruptibility and rejuvenating plays apparently a central role. Böhme noted in his analysis about the interconnectivity between time and the created in Plato, that the notion of "it was" and "it will be" only make sense in a framework that talks about a cyclical understanding of time.[122] Goldin noted the complex relationship between time and decay as perceived, and points out that nothing within the narrative would stop the reader from interpreting the notion of a "progressive decay" of the governance of the cosmos. It should be seen as unavoidable in history and as a "progression of time itself."[123] Horn appears to agree with this position when he notices that the *Statesman* explains how the interplay between chaotic decline and order is to be made better in the period of order.[124] He additionally points out the following notion:

> "If we compare Plato's causal analysis of the current non-ideal living conditions with the biblical story of the fall or with the gnostic myth of the fall of the soul it is conspicuous that neither human failure nor a divine drama plays any part in it. Rather what was depicted is a law-governed, quasi-natural process."[125]

It is interesting to note that authors such as Gartner and Yau point to Carone and draw our attention to the fact that during the time of *Chronos*, babies will be born out of earth, growing like plants, and that souls fell "into the earth as seeds," which strongly reinforces the seed language in the context of time and cyclical patterns, as we will see in our contextualization of the GThom.[126] The seeds themselves are known as *spermatikoi logoi* or principles, and were part of the cultural environment. For example, the Stoics were basing their observations on Heraclitus's concepts according to which fire destroys everything for it to regrow and to be restored.[127] While an overarching consensus is that Plato's most elaborate time-philosophy can be found in *Timaeus*, this additional deliberation allows for an even more-encompassing understanding of his thought process. A proper analysis of a given phenomenon should be internalized before coming to a clear presentation. Plato manifested this approach by adopting and analysing whether the flow of time might not be as evident.

1.3 Time in *Parmenides*

Parmenides can be presented as another example of such a mode of thinking in Plato. It has been recognized as one of his most complex works. For our purpose, we can point to Romano who explicitly noted: "It is the first and the only Greek thinker to have perceived, with incomparable penetration, the *aporiae* that results from grasping of time in light of inner-temporal determinations."[128] It has been noted explicitly that most academic disagreements about Plato's

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[122] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*.
[123] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 139.
[124] Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History?" 416.
[125] Horn, "Why Two Epochs of Human History?" 416.
[126] Gartner and Yau, "The Myth of Cronus in Plato's Statesman: Cosmic Rotation and Earthly Correspondence," 444.
[127] For an excellent overview of historical developments see: Theodoros Christidis, "Cosmology and Cosmogony in Heraclitus," *Revue de Philosophie Ancienne* 27, no. 2 (2009): 30–61.
[128] Claude Romano, *Event and Time*, 1st ed., 1 online resource (xvii, 269 pages). vols., Perspectives in Continental Philosophy (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), https://hdl-handle-net.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/2027/heb.32070.18.

Theory of Forms are related to this work.[129] Authors disagree as well on whether Plato did have in mind how his works should be read (whether as a whole or a developing corpus, for example).[130] Disagreements exist even about which work came earlier. For example, *Parmenides* is part of what has been recognized as Plato's middle period dialogues by some authors and therefore situated after *Timaeus* by authors such as Owen[131] and Rickless.[132] At the same time, Cherniss sees it as part of his Late Dialogues. It consequently should be placed before *Timaeus*. Prior argues that Owen's position cannot be proven.[133]

Dating aside, Goldin, also noted that the arguments laid out in *Parmenides* are *aporetic* in nature and intent, and "invite the listener or reader to analyse and evaluate them; in this way, they provide the opportunity for a kind of philosophical gymnastic."[134] Such an approach presents contradicting statements in order to try effectuating a deconstruction of usually accepted notions. Goldin is explicit in this by saying: "Parmenides presents several *aporetic* arguments, by which several incompatible characteristics are attributed to 'the One,'"[135] Walter Mesch also points to the apparent contradictions when compared to *Timaeus* and concludes that this problem should be seen as intentional on Plato's part.[136] He confirms that such an approach is necessary for a proper, all-encompassing ontological deliberation. The concept must be analysed from all possible perspectives to formulate a proper understanding of a particular phenomenon.[137]

The topic of time has been touched upon in the context of Plato's analysis of the model of the One and his deliberation about its formality. These sections present themselves as applicable when trying to understand temporal commentaries coming from Plato. As always, temporality is embedded into other investigations in Plato. Here we see those questions in the context of being as an ideal form or being as a manifested expression of the ideal. Sattler explicitly notes that he developed two most important positions (raised two questions or observations) about the One in this respect:[138]

1. The One has no parts; so that it cannot be understood and described as "many."
2. The One is whole and yet has parts.

The context of these arguments and analyses are equally important. It is generally accepted that it should be seen as a reaction and commentaries to positions as laid out by Parmenides. Debates still circle around questions of the full intent: if maybe it was not a critique *per se,* but instead even an effort to save some deliberation of Parmenides for our context, in the domain of

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[129] William J. Prior, "'Parmenides' 132c-133a and the Development of Plato's Thought," *Phronesis* 24, no. 3 (1979): 230.
[130] These different views can be presented as: A Unitarian View, a Literary Atomist View, a Developmentalist View, and the Historicist View. An explanation of the division and different approaches can be found at Plato | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, https://iep.utm.edu/plato/.
[131] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 230.
[132] Samuel C. Rickless, *Plato's Forms in Transition: A Reading of the Parmenides* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006),8, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/concordia-ebooks/detail.action?docID=281748.
[133] Prior, "'Parmenides' 132c-133a and the Development of Plato's Thought," 230.
[134] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 134.
[135] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 134.
[136] We will see later how Sattler points out similarities instead of differences.
[137] Mesch, Walter, "Être et temps dans le Parménide de Platon," *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* 127, no. 2 (2002): 160.
[138] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 9.

metaphysics using modification without a complete dismissal.[139] We will focus on two questions, as recognized by Sattler, about the being in time and its elaboration on the notion of "Now" and how it can be understood in the context of the past and future. When we approach the text itself, we find a relational commentary about the position of the One and time.[140] Sattler noted that this section is connected to previously concluded notions according to which the One can "neither be similar nor dissimilar to something," nor "Equal nor unequal to something."[141] The same author points us to the fact that the One therefore cannot participate in similarity/dissimilarity or equality/inequality of *Chronos* as it cannot be younger, older or the same age as something. It is important to point out a very relevant point about the Greek language as well made by Sattler, and which consequently relates to Plato's understanding and deliberation about time and the One. The Greek usage of reflexive pronouns allows for comparisons of changes in the subject itself.[142] The same author additionally points out two interesting arguments based on this. Plato only tries to refer to the fact that time is directional, but that this direction can be going in both directions: forward and backwards, just as in *Timaeus*, and he also makes a clear distinction between the notion of being older and younger and that of becoming, which is relative. This is, according to Sattler, relevant as well, because it makes a distinction between his temporal observations and points out the following section in Plato which she sees as the One partaking in time:[143]

> "And is 'to be' anything other than participation in being along with present time, just as was, is communion with being along with past time and 'will be' is communion along with future time. It is indeed." And since the One partakes of being, it partakes of time. (in both past, present and future tenses.)"[144]

Goldin, however, noted that the One does and does not participate in being as stated in 155e-156a. This is possible due to periods in which the One does and does not participate, while noting that this participation model is contradictory to those which talk about unchanging models in time. The same author, therefore, concludes that these "mistakes" in Plato are for *aporetic* purposes.[145] A refocusing from participation alone to the nature of something as seen for example in Bostock, however, leads to observations that we should not be talking about or describing the One temporally in any respect.[146]

Two additional points require elucidation: that of the "Now" and that of the "Instant." Unlike in *Timaeus*, the notion of Now, according to Sattler "has no special status or distinction with respect to the other forms of time," pointing to section 141e and then to 152b where we see that the One has to move through the Now. However, the same author notes that this is probably connected more to the concept known as the Zenos paradox than an original idea coming from Plato himself.[147] We additionally read for the purpose of historical contextualization that Plato

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[139] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 9.
[140]David Horan, trans., "Parmenides," accessed Sept. 14, 2021. https://www.platonicfoundation.org/parmenides/.151e-152b.
[141] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 9.
[142] "What we would express as "she is braver now than she used to be" could be phrased in Greek as "she is braver than herself" and points out that in also functions for temporal changes. Consequently, Sattler concludes that Plato talks about the One being older and younger than himself and the same age as well.
[143] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 12.
[144] Plato, 151e7-152a2 in Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 14.
[145] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 128.
[146] Bostock David, "Plato on Change and Time *in the Parmenides,*" *Phronesis*, 1978, 231.
[147] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 15.

took over the notion of "Instant" from Parmenides, while at the same time arguing differently for the notion of Now and which, as we saw, for Plato included concepts of Now and "will be." As such, it led to significant advances in natural philosophy. [148] It is also noteworthy that Goldin sees the account of time in *Timaeus* as a rejection of the flow of time as laid out in *Parmenides*, if the work itself was written after it.[149] The concept of an Instant that includes suddenness and the unexpected seems to Sattler more interesting as it points to a "central problem in natural philosophy:" how can we change states from one state to another (from rest to movement, for example.)[150] This transition in Plato occurs in "an instant" which is neither rest nor motion but rather a state of "in between." As such, it is not part of time because things of time are either in motion or rest.

We have, at this point, seen some of the complexities surrounding the notion of time coming from Plato. These complexities will be carried over into subsequent philosophical debates, which will allow for a creation of a cultural milieu in which many theological interpretations were created, including the one presented in the GThom. It is time that we move further to Aristotle's interpretation and commentary for our context.

[148] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 19.
[149] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 136.
[150] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 16.

Chapter II: Time in Aristotle

The subsequent and most influential deliberation on time after Plato's account is certainly that of Aristotle. His work *Physics* is considered to be the first treatise of natural philosophy. Rau points out that Aristotle's approach was mainly that of a scientist: "Aristotle is concerned with empirical time; his point of view is strictly scientific."[151] It investigates principles of change, motion and its properties in natural beings and in general, its division, and its relations to causes, movers such as first causes of the Universe, Unmoved Mover, the order, etc. Aristotle analysed the idea/concept of time, as related to these concepts as well. Authors such as Popa also note the intricacy of questions concerning time as laid out in Aristotle's Physics,[152] while others like Annas point towards the fact that Aristotle undertook the topic of time in other works, such as *Metaphysics* and *De Caelo* as well.[153] It is generally accepted, however, that the most elaborated development of the topic of time can be found in his *Physics*.

Key Terms and Introduction

Any analysis of nature has to include change, place, the infinite, and time.[154] It was observed that Aristotle's position is very unusual as he argues that a precondition for the existence of time has to include both change and mind.[155] His understanding of time is sometimes presented in broad terms as follows: All discussions about time can be reduced to discussions about events rather than time itself. Such a perspective is usually referred to as "Reductionism with Respect to Time."[156] If any discussion on the topic of time is to be made, it should only be done so by talking about temporal relationships between things and events.[157] Therefore, it is generally agreed upon that Aristotle was not concerned with time in questions about time or delimiting time's being. Harry also confirms the above understanding by saying that Aristotle acted and thought as a natural scientist interested in the being of natural things whose ways of being demand a discussion of time.[158]

Furthermore, Aristotle used his concept of potentiality to explain that to move in time/space, we do not have to cross an infinite number of points ("Nows") because it/they is/are not made of indivisibles.[159] Instead, motion (*kínisis*) is an effectuation of time from many potentialities (*dynameis*) which do not exists before the action of actualization. This analysis has to be understood in the context of change, which for Aristotle, precedes time. It is the effectuated potentiality that brings about time. Even though we have the mental capacity to "mark out" all time, the effectuation creates change and thereby time. Boudreault using a more contemporary language, described the concept of potentiality as a term that "implies a reference to the state of

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[151] Rau, "Theories of Time in Ancient Philosophy," 515.
[152] Popa Tiberiu, "On the (In)consistency of Aristotle's Philosophy of Time," *The Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy Newsletter*, (2007): 379. https://orb.binghamton.edu/sagp/379.
[153] Annas Julia. "Aristotle, Number and Time," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 99 (April 1975): 97.
[154] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 3.
[155] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 4.
[156] See: Emery, Markosian, and Sullivan, "Time".
[157] Emery, Markosian, and Sullivan, "Time".
[158] Chelsea C. Harry, *"Time in Context": Chronos in Aristotle's Physics: On the Nature of Time*, ed. Chelsea C. Harry (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 2.
[159] This analysis is a critique (Aristotle's solution) of Zeno's *Dichotomy* paradox. Zeno proposed several paradoxes as proof that the intellect can make mistakes and that senses should be trusted instead.

full actuality in which the changing object is when the change is completed."[160] Such a focus that integrates the concept of "Now" with that of "potentiality" in Aristotle gets confirmed by Anapolitanos and Christopoulou as well: "According to Aristotle, the 'Nows' are not parts of time and time is not made of them. They are mere potentialities waiting to be actualized."[161] Leyden also argued at the same time that space can be divided mentally into unlimited Nows, but not spatially.[162] Aristotle's thinking was historically speaking, showing the influence of Sophist Antiphon, who defined time as a form of understanding and as measure.[163] It also stands against previous Pythagorean schools and that of Plato.[164] Aristotle therefore, according to Leyden, did not conclude that time is objectively real.[165]

The relationship between the mind (soul) and time in Aristotle and the difference between the marking and the actuality of time in the mind gets raised in his questioning about the subjectivity of time as well when he asked: "Whether, if soul (mind) did not exist, time would exist or not, is a question that may fairly be asked; for if there cannot be someone to count there cannot be anything that can be counted…."[166] Anaploitanos and Christopoulou agree on the notion that time is not objectively real for Aristotle and confirm the idea that the analysis of the reality of it should be connected to Aristotle's examinations of distances between two points, with a conclusion that motion along a certain length is not to be equated with an actualization of any points waiting.[167]

The difference between the eternal and temporal becomes another important question for our context as well. Aristotle claims that there is no time outside the physical world but does not claim non-existence outside time as a consequence. Leyden's[168] effective summary is useful for our purpose: "(a) Since he believed that the everlastingness of time is merely potential or always in the making, eternity is for him precisely the total and perfect form of the durational extent of the first heaven and hence a unifying principle which sets a limit to everything it embraces; and (b) that time, for him, being something purely quantitative, is intimately bound up with the 'Now' as the unit of time-reckoning, which in this capacity is likewise, though in a different sense, a unifying principle and limit."[169] This everlastingness (*Aion*)[170] in Aristotle is therefore meant to represent "everlasting in time" or "endless duration" and as such, stands as a position, in contrast to Plato's understanding.[171] However, the concept can be identified as "supra-natural" as well, as

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[160] Boudreault, "Aristotle's Account of Time: A Moderate Realism," 15.
[161] Dionysios A. Anapolitanos and Demetra Christopoulou, "Aristotelian Time," *Metaphysica* 20, no. 1 (April 2019): 46.
[162] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 50.
[163] Diels, Vorsokratiker, in von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 50.
[164] Rau, "Theories of Time in Ancient Philosophy," 515.
[165] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 50.
[166] Aristotle, Physics, chapter 14.
[167] Anapolitanos and Christopoulou, "Aristotelian Time," 42.
[168] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 52.
[169] The complexity of interpretations and understandings can be clarified even further by presenting only two opposing views on eternity in Aristotle. Coope explains that Aristotle understood the eternal not as the *everlasting time*, but outside of time. Leyden, however, has a different understanding: For him, Aristotle understood *Aeon* as a combination of eternity (understood as everlasting existence or *sempiternity*) and time, creating his concept of *eternity* as *everlasting time*.
[170] The "problem" and complexity of the *Aeon* and historical development of its understanding can be found in Giannis Stamatellos, *Plotinus and the Presocratics: A Philosophical Study of Presocratic Influences in Plotinus' Enneads* (Suny Press, 2012).
[171] M. Heleen Keizer, *Le Temps Chez Aristotle* (Zoetermeer: Demetra Sfendoni-Mentzou, 2012), 135, and von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 46.

a container that encompasses all time and also as "immortal and divine."[172] Keizer and Leyden agree on the position that the notion of an *Aion* encompasses infinity as well.[173] Leyden noted that Aristotle ascribes a divine significance to *Aion* due to the fact that "for from it, he says, the life of all other things derived."[174] Additionally, the relationship between time and change gets developed in such a way that time does not influence change, as Leyden points out explicitly: " it cannot have any influence on change whatsoever, not even on that which leads to destruction."[175]

Furthermore, Aristotle, so it seems, while "being aware" that objectivity of time is a problem, did not shy away from the measurement of time nevertheless.[176] We see, for example, that his understanding is different here, from that of Plato, since he argued that there could not be several time systems, which Plato understood to exist (as a result of different rotations times of planets as seen in our section on Plato). Aristotle recognized here an important point. He identified differences in time as different measurements, while pointing out that the numbers which are unifying the measurement remain the same; thereby underlining the importance of numbers in his analysis, as we will read in more detail in the section "Time as Number."

In our description of Aristotle's understanding of time, we will mainly follow the structure as developed by Coope with additional authors to enrich our analysis.[177]

2.1 The Relationship between Time and Change/Movement

The notion of change was somewhat central, if not fundamental, for Aristotle. He has focused on a better understanding of this phenomenon than previous thinkers who understood time and change to be the same, since they can often be perceived as such.[178] His deliberation on it is part of an effort to create a systematic understanding which is to stand as a reaction to certain concepts coming from Plato. In this case, we are looking at the concept of Platonic Forms which Aristotle countered with the concept of Primary Substances. Accordingly, Primary Substances stay permanent through change, not Platonic Forms.[179] Changes, according to Aristotle, are infinitely divisible and should consequently serve as a basis for physics.[180] As such, they therefore, along with the mind, also serve as a precondition for the existence of time as well.[181] We are at this point starting to perceive a hierarchical structure in which change has a more fundamental position when compared to time (In other words: time is something of change, and not the other way around, by which change is something of time.) Such an interpretation of Aristotle's thinking gets confirmed by Stein, for example, who noted that time of a change must be continuous in the same way, change

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[172] Keizer, *Le Temps Chez Aristotle*, 138.
[173] Keizer, *Le Temps Chez Aristotle*, 152.
[174] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 46.
[175] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 51.
[176] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 51.
[177] See Coope's structure in her elaborate presentation of these ideas.
[178] Plato has connected time, as we saw earlier, to the movement of planets, for example. Coope noted, however, that this description of Plato's position is not all-encompassing. See: Coope, *Time for Aristotle*,32 footnote 5. We have already seen how Aristotle also reacted to previous positions that held that time is change.
[179] Categories 5.4a 10–11 in Coope, *Time for Aristotle,* 2.
[180] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 3.
[181] Bowin additionally draws our attention to the relationship between potentiality and change as well: "since every potentiality is defined in terms of the single actuality for which it is a potentiality, potentialities are goal-directed by definition" to conclude that each individual change is defined in terms of single-potentialities, it follows that change is goal-directed as well. Bowin, "John Bowin, "Aristotle on the Order and Direction of Time," *Apeiron* 42, no. 1 (January 2009): 47.

is.[182] Coope confirms that changes are more ontologically basic than time for Aristotle as well, due to the fact that changes are more closely related to particular substances than time. We will see how this conclusion is made in the subsequent analysis. It is, therefore, that the relationship between time and a particular substance is less direct.[183]

Aristotle further identified change as an actualization of potentiality as such (Ex: Flour is not bread but is potentially bread.)[184] The possibility of dividing change and stopping it (because an interruption is necessary for it) is not possible.[185] Time, therefore, is also not divisible in the same way; and a potential division[186] of it is just a marking out of, otherwise indivisible parts of it (We cannot separate time into two parts without leaving some part of it between.) As mentioned, Plato and Aristotle did not agree on the number of time series. Authors generally agree that Aristotle insisted on the fact that there can be only one time series and that it cannot be equated with the movement of the Universe. This interpretation of Aristotle claiming one unique timeline is confirmed by Bowin, for example.[187]

Coope identified two main arguments in Aristotle's *Physics* against notions which imply that time is to be equated with movement or change, as found in previous traditions:

1. Movement or change is only in the changing thing. Time on the other hand is equally everywhere and in everything. (218b 10–13)
2. Change is faster and slower. Time is not. (218b 13–18)

Additionally, section 218b 10–20, interesting for our focus, reads: "But time is not defined by time, whether by its being so much or by its being of such a kind. It is manifest, then, that time is not change (let it make no difference to us, at present, whether we say "change" or "alteration.") Romano also agrees with Coope's position:[188]

1. The change and movement of each thing are only in the thing which changes or where the thing itself which moves or changes may chance to be, but time is present equally everywhere and with all things.
2. Again, change is always faster or slower, whereas time is not: for "fast" and "slow" are defined by time — "fast" is what moves much in a short time, "slow" what moves little in a long time; but time is not defined by time, by either a certain amount or a certain kind of it.

Boudreault noted that Aristotle used the term "motion in the broad sense of change"[189] interchangeably, until he showed in *Physics* 2, that generation and corruption are not movement.[190]

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[182] Nathanael Stein, "Aristotle on Parts of Time and Being in Time," *The Review of Metaphysics* 69, no. 3 (March 2016): 504.
[183]Coope further notes explicitly here that: "Aristotle defends the claim that simultaneous changes *are all at one and the same time* by drawing a comparison between the sameness of times and the sameness of numbers". Coope, "Time for Aristotle," 116.
[184] My example.
[185] *Physics*, VIII =.8.262a 12–263 b9.
[186] *Physics*, 222a 14.
[187] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 59.
[188] He is at the same time connecting it to the notion of Now which we will develop later in the text.
[189] Boudreault, "Aristotle's Account of Time: A Moderate Realism." 20.
[190] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 45.

Coope noted that even if we were to imagine a time that is taking part in an all-encompassing change, such a change would still not be time.[191] This position is thereby an explicit argument that tries to deny views which present that time *is* change. Another important point to note is that change is not to be equated with locomotion in Aristotle, as argued by Coope and as confirmed by Bowin, who points out that this argument is different from commentators in earlier times.[192] We also learned that time is different from change for Aristotle and that change is only seen in the object that gets altered: it is always associated with the thing that is altered.

For Aristotle, the perception of time and change was identified as not relevant to the passing of time itself.[193] One can be in a comatose state for example, without any sense of time passing and changes, yet the time and changes would have occurred nevertheless. The person would not have perceived the passing and changes unless exposed to new information that would help contextualize the difference between what has passed and what is, at the times when they woke up. The relevance of change and the "lower quality" of time in comparison was reaffirmed. However, this kind of thinking led him to conclude that the question of the relationship between them must be analyzed in more detail. Coope pointed out clearly to this effect that "the fact that the occurrence of any change is enough to show that time has passed supports the assumption that time is essentially related to change in general, rather than to some particular change."[194] In other words: Time is something of change, something related to it, but not change itself,[195] like we noted before. We can recognize different changes in substances while time remains the same. Therefore, we should conclude that we cannot define the nature of change by looking at its relation to time because time remains the same while changes are not, according to Aristotle.[196]

2.2 Time, Change, and Magnitude

Aristotle also related questions about time and change to that of magnitude in order to try to properly contextualize such complex notions and their relationships. Coope understands the magnitude to imply "spatial magnitude," "a magnitude over which a change occurs is a spatial path associated with the change."[197] Different readings of magnitude do exist and they might include "a magnitude associated with a qualitative change."[198] Boudreault pointed out as well that temporal notions in movement follow from that in magnitude.[199] At the same time, Coope posits a question which accordingly has not been answered yet: "Why then, does he claim that it is the path that is explanatory prior to the movement rather than the vice versa?" to conclude that based on 219a 10–11 we can at least establish that a spatial path is explanatory prior to movement when he says that:[200] "Now since what changes, changes from something to something, and every magnitude is continuous, the change follows the magnitude: it is because the magnitude is continuous that the change is too."[201] Such a conclusion about the nature of the relation between movement (which is consequently in time), and magnitude has also been confirmed by Boudreault,

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[191] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 35.
[192] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 50.
[193] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 39.
[194] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 39.
[195] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 41.
[196] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 42.
[197] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 50.
[198] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 50.
[199] Boudreault, "Aristotle's Account of Time: A Moderate Realism," 70.
[200] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 54.
[201] Aristotle, *Physics*, 219a 10–11.

where we read that: “the before and after are not in motion in virtue of what motion is essentially, but because they are in magnitude.”[202] However, it is important to note that the relationship between magnitude and change is not as evident due to the fact that Aristotle noted himself that change gets measured by magnitude and magnitude by change as pointed out by Coope as well and as we can find in 220b 29–32.[203] The quote itself says: “And we measure both the distance by the movement and the movement by the distance; for we say that the road is long, if the journey is long, and that this is long, if the road is long-the time, too, if the movement, and the movement, if the time.”[204]

2.3 Continuity of/in Time

The above developed exploration naturally leads us to the question of continuity and its relationship to change and consequently to the question of continuity of (in) time.[205] The interdependability between parts of spatial movement and the parts of its path, as well as between parts of spatial movement and parts of time of that movement has been noted by Aristotle.[206] Change will manifest itself and that it is going to happen continuously, as it is connected to spatial movement which in itself is continuing based on the fact that the movement of heavenly spheres will go on forever.[207] Coope noted in this respect that “the term continuous implies that there can always be time between two instants which can always be even more divided, due to the fact that there can always be another instant.”[208] Aristotle recognizes at the same time that a division of time is based on the fact that we can distinguish later and earlier stages in movement. Additionally, the path is also infinitely divisible. He goes on to clarify that continuity of time should be explainable because of its universality by which all time is continuous and not accidental. The same position about the universality of time gets also confirmed by Wagner who, in a somewhat different context, discusses the speed of time and motion in the context of universality and says that “Aristotle seems to consider it as a feature of time’s ubiquitous universality, that is everywhere and always the same (speed of time).”[209]

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[202] Boudreault, “Aristotle’s Account of Time: A Moderate Realism,” 83.
[203] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 48.
[204] Aristotle, *Physics* IV.12. Accessed Dec. 6, 2022. http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/physics.4.iv.html.
[205] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 57.
[206] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 55.
[207] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 57 footnote 23 which summaries the position laid out in *Physics* VIII.7–9.
[208] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 57.
[209] Michael F. Wagner, *The Enigmatic Reality of Time: Aristotle, Plotinus, and Today*, Ancient Mediterranean and Medieval Texts and Contexts, v. 7 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2008), 186.

2.4 Before and After in Change vs. Before and After in Time

Since Aristotle is trying to distinguish between change and time, the logical analysis he follows is that of the notion of "before and after." Coope noted in this respect that "because there is a before and after in place, there is a before and after in change, and because there is a before and after in change, there is a before and after in time."[210] The same author also lays out the importance of this notion in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in which he groups "before and after" in time, change and place together into a general type that points to an origin, which in the case of change points to the notion of the First Mover. This relational complexity gets further explained as a father/son relationship in which the father is the first mover. The same holds for the notion of time in which the origin is the concept of the present, from which we can go further into the future or past. This type of language of the First Mover is certainly interesting for subsequent Gnostic interpretations as well, as we know. Bodnar was also explicit when noting that the position of the First Movement for Aristotle is exceptional and that the First Mover "possesses nothing but actuality, but this actuality is not what is transmitted in the process of causation."[211] This notion of a first (prime) mover gets synthesized by Boudreault in a very digestible form. We read that any mover is moving, either by moving by itself or by something else. The prime mover, despite being the first mover of everything, was not moved by something else, even if this chain of interactions goes back into infinity. He, therefore, concludes that the First Mover is an immobile mover rather than a mover that moves in being moved by itself and that he is absolutely immobile and as such the First Cause of the motion in the Universe, which since then exists eternally.[212] It is interesting to note that very little is said about the notion of "before and after in change" in Aristotle.[213] Stein agrees with Coope on this analysis but is content with the fact that Aristotle's analysis shows how "*Chronos* can be integrated into a framework that treats existence in terms of ontological categories" and that it does so "by identifying a specific subject and what it means for something to have a time."[214] Aristotle noted the challenge of the concept "before and after" in the context of place as well.[215] Accordingly, what lies before and after in place is taking such a position only relative to a predefined starting point of observation. We will now present the analysis of time as a number in Aristotle to contextualize it further with the idea whether time might or not be equated with a measure of change and what that might imply.

2.5 Time as Number

Since Aristotle does define time as a type of a number, it is necessary to take a closer look at what this implies for him. The concept itself, according to Coope came from a Platonic exposition as read in *Timaeus*, about the explanation of planets guarding the number of times by regularity and which are therefore measurable.[216] The section in Aristotle's *Physics* explicitly

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[210] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 61.
[211] Bodnar Istvan, "Aristotle's Natural Philosophy," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2018), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/aristotle-natphil/.
[212] Boudreault, "Aristotle's Account of Time: A Moderate Realism," 25.
[213] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 65.
[214] Stein, "Aristotle on Parts of Time and Being in Time," 505.
[215] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 67.
[216] Leyden noted in this context that: "By 'number,' of course, both (Plato and Aristotle) meant 'rational number,' i.e., 'integer' and 'fractional number,' not 'real number' which includes irrationals. Therefore, there are difficulties for

states: "For that is what time is: a number of change in respect of the before and after. So, time is not change but in the way in which change has a number."[217] We consequently also learn the distinction Aristotle laid out and according to which: "Time is only a number that is countable, it is not a kind of a number by which we count."[218] Massie also points to the notion of temporality of numbers in the context of counting and underlines that their temporality does not depend on the act of counting when he equated the things which are in time with numbers.[219] Time as a number is different in kind from the number used for counting alone, due to the fact that it does not contain pluralities in it like a "usual number" does.[220] Coope also noted the position of numbers as superior when compared to time for Aristotle,[221] where the philosopher develops the idea about time as a "special kind of number" in his explanation about the nature of its countability and the fact that it is continuous too while being different in its "earlier" and "later" Nows. Aristotle has reintroduced the notion of potentiality to explain how time as something that is continuous, can still be used for counting or measuring as well. We can count and measure time because it is potentially divided; making time into such a thing that can be continuous yet still countable. Bowin, for example, is saying that "what Aristotle's definition of time appears to tell us, in the light of this passage, is that time exists just in case there is a number,"[222] while Popa is explicit in saying that the concept of number, as compared to the notion of measure, is used by Aristotle to point out the unity of time.[223] This observation leads us to the analysis of the idea whether we can talk about time as measurement in Aristotle.

2.6 Time as Measure

The act of measuring itself is connected to the notion of *Nous* in beings and its purposeful imagination, as pointed out by Bowin, and concluded that without the *Nous* and the *Fantasia*, time would not be measurable, nor would it be countable "by means of some determinate time" in Aristotle.[224] Popa noted too that for Aristotle and in the context of measurement, time cannot exist without beings that are capable of perceiving change.[225] As noted earlier, the hierarchical dissection of time in Aristotle places time as something of change and not the other way around, nor should it be equated with change. The relevant section for our analysis of measurement reads: "Not only do we measure change by time, but time by change also, because they are defined by one another. The time defines the change, being its number, and the change the time."[226]

Authors also focus and develop the difference between the notion of measuring and that of counting as different in Aristotle, and point out that for Aristotle, the notion of counting is continuous while measuring implies a less exact method.[227] Bowin's position, however, is explicit

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instance in Aristotle's views of the 'Now' and of continuity, which would not arise in connection with modern arithmetical theory." See: von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 52.

[217] Aristotle, *Physics*, 219b1-b2.

[218] Aristotle, *Physics*, 2219b 5.

[219] Pascal Massie, "Between Past and Future: Aristotle and the Division of Time," *Epoche* 13 (January 2008): 324.

[220] For more information on the concept of *arithmos* (number) inside the Greek tradition see: Coope, *Time for Aristotle: Physics IV.10–14*, 90.

[221]. The same author develops her ideas about why one should understand time as a number rather than a measurement in Aristotle at this point. Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 87.

[222] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 177.

[223] Popa, "On the (In)Consistency of Aristotle's Philosophy of Time." 2.

[224] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 190.

[225] Popa, "On the (In)Consistency of Aristotle's Philosophy of Time." 3.

[226] Aristotle, *Physics*, 220b 14-18.

[227] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 100.

in saying that: "Counting, I think, plays a much smaller role in *Physics* 4.10–14 than is often supposed. What is important for Aristotle is that numbers are countable, not necessarily that they are counted."[228] Coope further noted that Aristotle made quite an effort to point out that time is a countable number which should lead the reader towards an understanding of its nature: "To define time as something countable is not (for Aristotle) to define it as something measurable."[229] This leads us slowly towards the analysis of "Activity," due to the fact that Activity represents that which marks out time in both ways and is also delimiting the notion of Now in *Physics*, as "determinate time" (*Physics* 4.14), a time used as a measure because it is marked out by a regular motion."[230]

The conclusion that "what is marked off by the Now is thought to be time"[231] or such a deliberation on it (to be more precise) on Aristotle's part, had to include a proper understanding of the concept of Now in them, naturally guiding us towards to the section about the analysis of Now in Aristotle.

2.7 The Notion of *Now* in Aristotle's Deliberation on Time

The previous statement about the marking and the concept of time gets further developed in such a way that we can conclude that for Aristotle, time should be understood as what is between two potential divisions in change, while the potential division in itself is not divisible. This notion should be contextualized by understanding that Aristotle used the idea of potentiality to explain that to move in time/space one does not have to cross an infinite number of points (Nows), because it is not made of indivisibles which sees motion as an effectuation of time from many potentialities that do not exist before the action of actualization.

The central question for us is the analysis of the Now and how it should be contextualized or appropriately understood. Coope reminds us that Aristotle saw that the action of marking out of potentials in change implies that we also mark out two Nows, and that whatever is marked off by these two Nows is to be understood as time.[232] Trostyanskiy also synthesized this complexity nicely when he says that the Now is a potential divider and actual unifier of time, an extensionless instant that, nevertheless, secures the continuity of a temporal series.[233] A position about how the complexity of Aristotle's explanation should not be mistaken for "Now being in time" was explicitly noted by Romano as well when we read: "but of course to say that the Now is "in time" does not mean here that it is 'a part' of time, nor that it is 'in time."[234] Coope also noted, however, that in counting time, this difference is significant as the order of time inherits its order from the Nows that are being counted.[235] Romano likewise develops the centrality of the concept of Now in Aristotle's thinking. He points out that Aristotle's conception of time is entirely focused on the understanding of Now instead of speculating an "outside time."[236] He sees such an emphasis on antagonistic determinations, which are both at once the same and other, simple and double, and

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[228] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 180.
[229] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 104.
[230] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 185.
[231] Aristotle, Physics, 219a 29-30.
[232] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 85.
[233] Sergey Trostyanskiy, "Iamblichus' Response to Aristotle's and Pseudo-Archytas' Theories of Time," *Forum Philosophicum* 21, no. 2 (2016): 192.
[234] Romano, *Event and Time*, 40.
[235] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 91. This notion is also making *Aristotle's* Time into an order and number that is only countable at the same time.
[236] Romano, *Event and Time*, 38.

which represents both a limit and a number, an end and a beginning as an effort to ensure the division of time in power and its continuity in actuality.[237] This paradoxical approach is understood as putting the past and future in such a relation in which it unifies the temporal continuum as a limit within that continuum.

Let us take a look at two of Aristotle's accounts to that effect.[238] The Now is a link of time, for it links together past and future time, and is a limit of time, since it is a beginning of one and an end of another. But this is not manifest as it is in the case of the point at rest. It divides potentially, and *qua* such, the Now is always different, but *qua* binding together it is always the same, just as in the case of mathematical lines:

> "[a point is] not always the same point in thought, for if one divides the line, it is different in different cases, but inasmuch as [the line] is one, [the point] is the same everywhere. Hence too, the Now is on the one hand, a division of time, in potentiality and on the other hand, the limit and union of both [times]; the division and the unification are the same thing and in respect of the same thing, but their being is not the same."[239]

> "Further, it is necessary that, of everything that is resoluble into parts, if it is, either all the parts or some of them should be when it is. But of time, while it is resoluble into parts, some [parts] have been, some are to be, and none is. The Now is not a part, for a part measures [the whole], and the whole must be composed of the parts, but time is not thought to be composed of Nows."[240]

We see, therefore, that the actual numbers of "Nows" that need to be counted are not relevant, just like the number of objects to be counted is insignificant in that respect too.

2.8 Time as Essentially Ordered

Another important concept that might help us further in our trans-textual analysis is the concept of time as essentially ordered. Aristotle explains this position by comparing everyday objects with time. This analysis led him to conclude that the order of counting time is significant. While this order plays no role in the performed counting of objects in which we can interchange the order of the objects that need counting, it would still amount to the same number. Aristotle has additionally noted that while numbers in themselves might be the same, and that consequently, all simultaneous time is the same, as marked out by the concept of Now by which the changes in the same Now are different in different objects or situations, the sameness of numbers and consequently that of time remains.[241]

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[237] Romano, *Event and Time*, 38.
[238] Romano points to 222a10-11 at this place, while I see that the whole passage might be more useful.
[239] Aristotle, *Physics*, 222a10-20.
[240] Aristotle, *Physics*, 218a2-4.
[241] This idea is based on the notion *of universality of time, as found* in Aristotle. See: Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 115.

2.9 The Role of Memory in Relation to Temporality

It is interesting for our context to point out that Aristotle dealt with the role of memory in relation to the temporal as well. McNeill noted that for Aristotle, in his work *De Memoria*, the sense of time represents an "offspring of memory" and that it, as such, allows for temporal experiences. [242] He is explicit in saying that time was generated, and that memory presupposes its generation.[243] Furthermore, we also noted before how Aristotle developed the notion of Now in his *Physics* and his effort to explain temporality. It is, therefore, interesting for us to see that in *De Memoria*, there can be no memory of the Now in the Now.[244] As such, it represents the *hexis* or *pathos* of *aisthesis* or *hypolepsis* when time has been generated.[245] Bowin developed an overview of Aristotle's position of memory in relation to time as well. The concept of counting in Aristotle is overemphasized and the position of perceptions of time should be analyzed. Aristotle did not differentiate between the act of perception of time and that of remembering and points to *Physics* 4.11.[246] The relationship between memory and the perception of time as a determinate act is contextualized as well.[247] Measurability of time, therefore, is directly linked to memory in beings with νοῦς, without which the act of measurement would not be possible.[248] It is once again important to note that our focus, when reading these texts comparatively, is not centred around the precise linguistic usage or history of concepts such as νοῦς, πνεῦμα or the Coptic word ϩнт in the text, but rather temporality as a general concept.[249]

We have seen the complexities and analysis of Aristotle's physical approach, how it is connected to previous traditions, and how it reacted to certain understandings. We have additionally investigated how he tried to understand the nature of things, and consequently, the hierarchy and ontological priorities in it. Such an approach made him engage the question about the position of time as well.[250]

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[242]William McNeill, "A Sense of Time: Aristotle, Nietzsche, and Heidegger on the Temporality of Life," *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 48, no. 2 (2015): 47.

[243] McNeill, "A Sense of Time," 46.

[244] McNeill, "A Sense of Time," 46.

[245] The concept of *Aisthesis* is Sense-Perceptions, broadly speaking, while the concept of *hypolepsis* is multifaced and context-dependent, as pointed out by Theobald Werner, "Spuren des Mythos in der Aristotelischen Theorie der Erkenntnis: '*Hypolepsis'* bei Aristoteles, De anima und Anal. post.," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, 44 (2002),14. The meanings ranges from opinion to rationality. It is logical to conclude that since it is given in the context of *aesthesis*, it would only make sense that the author used it here as rationality. *Hexis* also has many meanings, which range from "way of being" to "stable disposition". For more information about this term, see: Rodrigo Pierre, "The Dynamic of *Hexis* in Aristotle's Philosophy," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 42, no. 1 (January 2011): 6-17. The term *pathos* is also multifaced but is usually connected to his rhetorical analysis in which it implies an emotional state of being.

[246] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 183.

[247] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 188.

[248] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 190.

[249] For these concepts and more see for example: Miroshnikov, *The Gospel of Thomas and Plato*, 76, etc.

[250] It is important to note that not all authors agree if the analysis of time should be considered as part of Aristotle's Categories as present in his Physics. For more information see: Istvan Bodnar. 2018 in "Aristotle's Natural Philosophy" in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2018. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/aristotle-natphil/.

2.10 Summary of Aristotelian Temporal Analysis

While being aware that this summary might be contested as such and that metaphysical qualities of everlastingness as seen in his *Metaphysics*, for example, are not developed here, we nonetheless offer the following summary of Aristotle's temporal analysis:

1. One does not have to cross infinite numbers of points (Nows) when walking in time/space. Consequently, a marking out and an actuality of time is not seen as the same.
2. Potentiality is goal directed.
3. Everlasting is Potentiality.
4. There is no time outside the physical world. However, he therefore does not claim non-existence outside time. (The difference between temporal and eternal in Aristotle)
5. Perception of the passing of time is not relevant for the passing of it.
6. Objectivity of time is problematic, but time is still measurable, nevertheless.
7. There is only one time in the universe, and it cannot be equated with the movement of the universe.
8. Time is not movement.
9. Time is something of change, related to it, but it is not change. No matter how encompassing change is it is still not time.
10. Time still needs change in part as well in order to be defined.
11. Magnitude and Change are measured interchangeably. Magnitude is continuous—therefore change is too.
12. Change is fundamental, it is an actualization of potentiality.
13. Change cannot be divided and stopped. Therefore, time cannot be either.
14. Change is infinitely divisible and therefore fundamental while at the same time localized.
15. Change and the Mind are necessary for the existence of time.
16. Time is continuous; not accidental and not localized; it is a potential division, a marking out.
17. Because there is a before and after in place there is a before and after in change, and because there is a before and after in change—there is a before and after in time.
18. Time is a special kind of a number connected to continuity and order. As such, it is a unifying principle which is a number of continuity and order and not a number that is used for counting, and consequently not a number that is usually perceived and used.
19. Time as a potential division is order and it gets its "ordering" properties from Nows that are being counted.
20. The act of measuring time is only possible because of memory. Memory, however, hierarchically presupposes the generation of time.
21. Time is essentially ordered. (One can exchange places of "Nows" in counting and it would still amount to the same numbers and therefore time).

After these very condensed presentations of Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies on time, we will endeavour to contextualize these concepts with temporal descriptions found in the GThom. The goal is to pinpoint if these ideas might have influenced the interpretation of an implied reader/writer/community, etc. of the GThom, and whether both philosophies can be identified (interpreted) in same sayings, or if they strive towards one author more than other, in a more informed/ "objective" way.

Chapter III

Analysis of the Concept of Time in the Gospel According to Thomas from a Platonic and Aristotelian Perspective

We will now focus our attention GThom sayings which are centred around temporality implicitly or more explicitly. The goal is to establish whether the traditions on time in Plato and Aristotle might have influenced an implied reader/writer/community, etc. of the Thomasine gospel and if they can be more clearly identified as influenced by Plato or Aristotle. This chapter will present a re-evaluation of established understandings of the sayings, as if one would engage in the interpretation of this gospel's message in relation to time and the Kingdom.

Saying 3

Jesus said: If your (pl.) leaders say to you[251], 'Look, the Kingdom is in heaven then the birds of heaven will precede you; if they say to you, 'It is in the sea, then the fish will precede you. But the Kingdom is inside you, and it is outside of you. When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are the sons[252] of the living Father. But if you do not know yourself, then you dwell in poverty, and you are poverty.

Plato:

The inside and outside thus contextualized, present the birds and the fish as external manifestations, while the knowing oneself is what constitutes the inside. For our context and intent, the saying indicates that both are important based on the explicit notion that "both the inside and the outside" are significant for an overarching and complete understanding. Gathercole noted that "the reference to 'inside you' prompts mention of an interesting divergence from some other Christian teaching of Thomas's day, namely a theology of self-knowledge" while interestingly noting that the Kingdom as such is everywhere.[253] At the same time we find him stating that he disagrees with the idea proposed by Valantasis according to (interior self-knowledge as well as 'a new understanding of the mundane world') is what is communicated in this saying while at the same time seeing that "... you are poverty", "...in a Jewish context, poverty is often a positive metaphor when used in a spiritual sense and that he sense is clearly poverty in knowledge and lack of spiritual wealth." [254]

For our purposes when have to note that the language of everywhere as found in the saying, and philosophical analysis can be found in Plato as we saw earlier as well. Settler noted that Plato was explicitly saying that the One must partake in time since it partakes of being and draws our

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[251] It is worthwhile to note that Gathercole focused on the idea of "leaders" forcefully persecuting when translated as leading or dragging. In it he sees "a clear image of persecution" and duress. See : Simon J. Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas: Introduction and Commentary*, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study, Vol. 11 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2014), 211.

[252] Gagné noted that the phrase could be read as "children" instead of sons. Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 44.

[253] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 210.

[254] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 213.

attention to section 151 e7-152a2.[255] In this way, we can read that the Kingdom in saying 3 or the importance of understanding (of [in] it), as contextualized in this way, can be understood as the One, which is to be identified as inside and outside time, and therefore partaking in time. Such structuring as well as the positioning of time becomes clear due to the concept that the One has no parts despite its complexities, and the position of time becomes clear since it is part of the created, yet somehow still connected to the Form. It is that which connects the order with the eternal forms in Plato.[256] These positions in Plato allow us to see the temporal description of knowledge/self-knowledge and/or the Kingdom in this saying, as both inside and outside time as Platonic.

Aristotle:

None of the Aristotelian concepts we examined are to be found in relation to temporal ideas presented in this saying.

Saying 4

Jesus said: The old man will not hesitate to question a little child seven days old about the place of life, and he will live. For many who are first will be last, and they will become one and the same.[257]

Plato:

We can of course recognize deeply appropriated ideas and modified into dualistic perspectives known in Gnostic and Manichean teachings. The presumable Manichean analysis/appropriation is very interesting in this sense, in which the *Psalm-Book* reads: "The little children instruct the grey-haired old men; those who are six years old instruct those who are sixty years old." Falkenberg noted in this context that: "Of course, we are not dealing with a social context involving actual 'children'. It is more likely that they function as role models, as is the case here in logion 4, but also in logia 21 and 37. In logion 37, we hear that the disciples must behave *like* little children, when they disrobe themselves and tread on their clothing. Such a scene is replayed four times in the *Psalm-Book* (ii 64,23–24; 76,9–15; 99,26–30; 164,30)."[258] For our purposes however, one of the critical components in Plato's deliberation on time in *Timaeus* was certainly that it is a cyclical, order-inducing element in a changing universe. It is only to be grasped as connected with an order, which, as such can be understood as a mathematical model.[259] All these elements are present in this saying: The cyclical, mathematical model as expressed seems to indicate intergenerational communication in which the first can be last. It implies from this perspective that it wants to lead towards a "proper understanding of the One" (becoming one and the same in it). Accordingly, then, it might imply that an understanding of its cyclicality allows for

[255] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 717.
[256] Turetzky, *Time*, 14.
[257] Gagné pointed out that all phrasing like: one and the same, becoming of one etc., should be understood as expressions of transcendence. Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 80.
[258] For more information on this interpretation see: Falkenberg, René, "A Manichaean Reading of the Gospel of Thomas," in *Manichaeism and Early Christianity: Selected Papers from the 2019 Pretoria Congress and Consultation,* ed. Johannes van Oort. Vol. 99. Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies, (Brill, 2020):112. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004445468.
[259] Plato. *Timaeus* 37d.For further debates whether the model of the Cosmos the *Demiurge* created was a sphere or a torus based on an analysis of *Tim 34*, with a proposed conclusion, that it was a torus, and that as such it is compatible with Euclidean geometry see: Dmitri Nikulin, "A New Interpretation of Plato's Cosmology: 'Timaeus' 36 b-d.," *Methexis* 13. 113-118.This debate, however, does not change the cyclicality which we are developing as a concept.

one to "truly grasps the 'place of life." Since the intergenerationality of it implies cyclical perspectives, the notion of time is essential in all this as it allows for "a created" to become as close as it can to the Demiurge, as we saw in Plato. In our saying, this concept can be apprehended as expressed in this communication model between generations. Gagné pointed out as well, although in a broader context, that such temporal observations make sense for this saying and according to which the child is closer to the beginning.[260]In our section on the relationship between time and order and eternity and time as a clock, as well as the directionality of time and the section on time as related to cosmological perspectives, we saw all these concepts further developed. Gathercole points out that he disagrees with the idea of a child residing "in the perfect week, before the fall" as mentioned by some authors such as Kee and who points to a transformation of a person which becomes like a pre-fallen childlike state by saying that the child of seven days is "living in the perfect week, and therefore before the fall,"[261] seeing rather an anti-Jewish sentiment as it points to a time before circumcision of a child. He notes in this respect that the notion of "seven days old" implies that the baby was not circumcised as the circumcision is to occur on the eight day according to Gen. 17.12; 21.4; Lev. 12.3; Lk. 1.59; 2.21; Phil. 3.5.[262] In their analysis of the asexuality motif, DeConick and Fossum on the other hand, point to Clement of Alexandria as an earlier source who connected the idea of a child-like state to pre-lust, when Adam played like a child in paradise.[263] In Plato's deliberations, found in *Parmenides*, however, notions of being older and younger can be connected with the concept of becoming. The One partakes in time in it, due to the fact that it partakes in being and becoming. Furthermore, we have seen how, even in his work the *Statesman*, the difference between the past and future is psychological, as the order of it can be inversed as implied in our saying. This is seen as well when the elder can question the youth instead of the traditional model which infers the opposite. All the above can lead us to conclude that Plato's thought on time and consequently the manifestation of it can be seen in saying 4.[264]

Aristotle:

This saying can certainly be related to Aristotle's analysis of "The relationship between Time and Change/Movement," by which time is something of change and not *vice versa*. For our context, we can see that the "place of life" as it is represented can be seen as communicating that fact by drawing out the following: Since the old vs. young narrative represents change, and change is not something of time in Aristotle, we are left with the idea that time is something of old and young, as a truism. This understanding can lead the reader to conclude that both should be able to communicate and represent the idea of reality of being in Aristotle. When analysing the importance of the child symbolism, scholars mainly refer to the connection to Genesis, asexuality, and to the idea of self-knowledge. Kee points to the transformation of a person which becomes like the pre-fallen, child-like state. The child of seven days is "living in the perfect week, and therefore before the fall., as we noted earlier in the section on Plato.[265] From our perspective/context and purpose, the first and last are becoming (as an active temporal principle [being alive in our context]), as expressed directly in the phrasing of the saying. Their places can be interchanged as well inside

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[260] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 80.
[261] Kee, Howard Clark. "'Becoming a Child' in the Gospel of Thomas." *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 82, no. 3, Sept. 1963, 307–14.
[262] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 217.
[263] De Conick, April D., and Jarl E. Fossum. "Stripped before God: A New Interpretation of Logion 37 in the Gospel of Thomas." *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 45, no. 2, June 1991, 135.
[264] See for example: Miroshnikov, *The Gospel of Thomas and Plato*, 104-113.
[265] Kee, Howard Clark. "'Becoming a Child' in the Gospel of Thomas." *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 82, no. 3, Sept. 1963, 307–314.

such a unifying principle, as communicated in the second part of the saying, which uses the expression "one and the same/single one"; which implied a relational unity and not a substantial one both for Plato and Aristotle.[266] Gathercole although in a different context also points out that "this saying, however, is not ultimately about reversal, but envisages a unification of the opposites (rather than their exchange of status.)"[267] He too underlines the significance of the equalization of the child and the old man, after he has acquired the necessary knowledge and understands the character of the infant to be a disciple who is familiar with the "place of life," and the elderly soon to face death. Valantasis also noted in this context that "inversion drives the saying and finds concrete expression in the disparity between an elder "old in days" asking a 'little child seven days old.' This inverting strategy, however, goes one step further: the elder will indeed "live" as a result of being led by a child. The child leads toward life, not knowledge alone: the discovery of the locus of life from the child leads to life."[268] The idea of continuity of/in time as analysed in Aristotle can be inferred by reading into the text and by implying such notions, due to the relationships between the young and old and their unity in the One. According to Valantasis, "the 'one and the same' of the Greek version and the 'single one' of the Coptic refer simply to the unification of the polarities old and young, elder and child, first and last. The principle states that divergence, difference, and distinction will ultimately meld into singularity, union, and solidarity so that what was once categorized as elder or child, or as first or last, will become singular and united."[269] This, however, is not what we usually understand by the notion of continuity in/of time, as related to the motion of the heavenly spheres in Aristotle. Coope informs us that for Aristotle, the term "continuous" implies that there can always be time between two instants which can always be even more divided due to the fact that there can always be another instant.[270] The notion of One is coming from a pluralistic perspective in Aristotle. It therefore implies that there is no substantial unity but rather only a relational one. It points paradoxically to the concept that they are by themselves "united in*"* rather that they "are One*"* in this temporal observation of a universal time system. The position of time is such that it allows for communication between generations to become a "one and the same/single one," as a precondition for the notion of "they will live" to be possible. The universality of the temporal, however, should not be conflated with the idea of unity in Aristotle, as it can be easily done ("become one and the same"), since universality simply implies that it is everywhere and that its speed is constant for Aristotle.[271] One cannot, however, ignore the notion of Oneness/continuity in time by which the elder and youth are relationally One; and not substantially, like in Aristotle; while time itself remains universal (unchanging).[272] Consequently, wisdom seems to be derived from such an understanding. It paints acceptance and openness towards this fluidity as expressed through the reversal of social roles. Boudreault as well noted that time is to be understood as essentially ordered, as an order of motion as defined as a number and therefore connected to counting.[273] We can once again remind ourselves that one cannot responsibly dissociate the notion of change from time in Aristotle. Based on these relationships, time is connected to change and the notions of before and after.[274] Time is potentially

[266] Demos, "Types of Unity According to Plato and Aristotle," 534–46.
[267] Gathercole , *The Gospel of Thomas,* 216.
[268] Richard Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 1997), 60.
[269] Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 61.
[270] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 55.
[271] Wagner, *The Enigmatic Reality of Time*, 186.
[272] Wagner, *The Enigmatic Reality of Time*, 186.
[273] Boudreault, "Aristotle's Account of Time: A Moderate Realism," 4.
[274] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 61.

divided, making it continuous and countable.[275] We can therefore see how these concepts and analysis resonate with our saying. Consequently, we see a saying which points towards the nature of time, in which change, as the utmost underlying reality, is fundamental. Therefore, a "proper understanding of life" might, from an Aristotelian perspective, be such that it communicates the importance of time within such a system of analysis and in which, the intergenerational communication as presented might be pivotal since the communication itself is temporal. The saying thus resonates quite nicely with Aristotle as well.

Saying 5

Jesus said: Know what is in front of your face, and that which is hidden from you will be revealed to you. For there is nothing hidden that will not be manifest.

Plato:

Even in this saying, we can recognize the notion of an "order of things." The centrality of such an order is revolving around the notion of time. Time, so to speak, allows the manifestation/change to occur. Patterson noted that the focus of the saying is in its "revelation purpose" through perception, and that the saying circulated widely through various appropriations (he points to Q and as connected to Luke and Matthew in which it is hortatory).[276] Despite these deliberations, however, one can once again recognize that change is central to this saying. Consequently, as we saw in *Timaeus* as well, it is involved in underlying occurrences inside a changing universe. It is, as such, noted as a sequential order of things by which we should "recognize the things in sight" in order to grasp what the manifestation is to be in the future. In this way, as we noted, it is related to time because time is tied to the sequential arranging of things in Plato. Following the same logic, when we analyse the notion of time as means to understand the universe and its properties, as seen in *Timaeus* 47a, we can additionally recognize, although in the context of its cyclical manifestations, that time in it, was created in order to allow for an understanding of the nature of the universe. Such underlying understanding can thus be seen in our saying as well, as the manifestation or gradual understanding of things will occur in time. In the same context, when we go back to the notion of Forms in Plato, we can remember that *Aeon*, as a Form, should contain change, but that it, as such, does not exclude movement; whereby it cannot exclude time in it either, making this development understandable only if we are capable of conceptualizing time correctly. It can be contextualized as Plato's Clock as well, but only if we take the position that time is a system by which we measure, even though the saying does tend to convey a message about change more than measuring itself. We can also contextualize it with Plato's work *Statesman* in our effort to try to find potential intellectual influences from Plato's corpus in our text. The time of *Chronos* also points to change as its most fundamental element. Accordingly, all things change, and all things change in time. Our saying paints such an understanding as well. In *Parmenides*, in the context of an effort to "understand the One," Plato communicates that the One partakes in time, since the notion of being implies participation in the past, present and the future equally; an understanding of the One is possible only if the temporal development/property in (of) the Now is understood as well and not ignored.

[275] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 104.

[276] For more information see: Stephen J. Patterson, *Jesus Meets Plato: The Theology of the Gospel of Thomas and Middle Platonism* (Brill, 2013), 21 footnote 15.

Aristotle:

We can note two moments in this saying: 1. The importance of active recognition of "what is in sight" and 2. The centrality of this saying can be contextualized as "change" without which the message cannot be perceived but which, in itself, cannot be understood without a "proper understanding" of the manifestation of time. Meyer noted a connection with a Manichean Kephalaia (LXV 163,26-29) in which we can read "Understand what is in front of your face, and then what is hidden from you will be disclosed to you."[277] As such, it is, in its manifestation, connected to temporality in common thinking. Can we find Aristotle's deliberations similar to these presuppositions or structures? We have already noted that time is understood in Aristotle as something of change, and not *vice versa*. Additionally, we need to remember that Aristotle saw that we need time to measure change and change to measure time and that he did not claim that time is, in itself, measurable.[278] We already saw in his analysis that activity "marks out time." Moreover, the notion of such a marking out is impossible without an analysis of a Now as a concept and which renders this saying conceptually possible, leading us to the idea as developed in *Physics* where we read that "What is marked off by the Now is thought to be time."[279] Additionally, since Aristotle also introduced time as an order-inducing element through numbers, we can also recognize time as such a number and consequently as connected to continuity and order, therefore being at the core of the saying. We can connect these concepts as coming from Aristotle in the following way: The manifestation as we have it explained in the saying is a temporal development in which consequently the activity is that which marks out time in an orderly way, while not implying that time is change, but rather how change has a number.[280] *Ergo*, such an underlying perception is what makes the saying understandable since time is a number as connected to continuity and order; if we adhere to the position that a "gradual understanding if recognition is achieved"[281] is communicating in our saying about an understanding of an "order of things in time." For Valantasis, emphasizing the present and visible over the hidden and invisible argues against an esoteric provenance for these sayings. The "hidden things" and other revelations depend not upon some secret knowledge or process, but rather upon a simple understanding of the nature of apparent reality.[282] We can also go back to Massie's confirmation of Coope's position in which we see that Aristotle did not develop "temporality of numbers" as connected to the act of counting.[283] Consequently, we can understand that change itself is not dependent on temporal observations in our saying, in which change is underlying all, as mentioned earlier. This needs therefore to be "understood" since time and change are essentially related and not to some particular change[284] as the saying seems to imply in the context of active recognition. Hence, even this saying can be understood in Aristotelian terms.

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[277] Marvin W. Meyer, *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus* (Harper, San Francisco, 2004), 71.
[278] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 104, 106, and 107.
[279] Aristotle, *Physics*, 219 a29-30.
[280] Aristotle, *Physics*, 219 b1-b2.
[281] "Know what is in front of your face, and that which is hidden from you will be revealed to you."
[282] Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 62.
[283] Elsa Grasso, "Myth, Image and Likeness in Plato's Timaeus," in *Plato and Myth: Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, ed. Catherine Collobert, Pierre Destrée, and Francisco J. Gonzalez (Brill, 2012), 324.
[284] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 39.

Saying 6

His disciples questioned him and said to him: "Do you want us to fast? How are we to pray and give alms? What diet are we to follow? Jesus said: Do not lie, and do not do what you (pl.) hate, for all things are revealed in the face of heaven. For there is nothing hidden that will not become manifest, and there is nothing covered that will not be revealed.

Plato:

Like in our previous sayings, the underlying notion that needs to be understood is that of time as connected to change through which all things get unveiled when approached from Plato's philosophical stand. Here as well, we see that the message would be unclear to the reader/listener without the conceptualization of time. When we analysed Plato's deliberation on time, the same notions were recognized. The notion of time as developed in *Timaeus* as we saw, as the means to understand "regular development in nature" only this time contextualized ethically. This is possibly why most authors focus on the ethical in their commentaries. Such an ethical commentary has been recognized by Gagné.[285] Gathercole was also understood this as a critique of Judaic practices which need to be abandoned in this "Gnostic" setting.[286] For Lüdemann, the purpose of the saying is ethical/political and connects to Tobit 12, and states that: "The disciples' question is about fasting, prayer, almsgiving and the food laws. The first three also appear in the regulations about piety in Matt. 6.1-18 (cf. Tobit 12.8) and are discussed once again later ... In the present verse the question about food completes the sphere of the Jewish law."[287] From our viewpoint however, the sayings seem to be be physical observations on ethical questions. The concept of an *Aeon* as including movement and change can also be implied in the same manner because of temporal descriptions in change as bound to uncovering in this context. The notion of Change as connected to *Chronos* as we saw in the *Statesman* as the most fundamental element is also tacit. We can recognize that things get uncovered in time. Since the uncovering is understandable through this lens of Plato's influence, *Parmenides* as a possible resonance cannot be excluded. It communicates that the One is participating in all times, including potentiality as the future times as we saw, which the saying communicates as its focus.

Aristotle:

As we know, Aristotle analysed temporality as connected to change. The question of manifestation can be studied similarly for our purpose, without which the ritualistic aspect of the saying would not be evident. Like in our previous saying, we can take the position according to which the temporal development as connected to change is implied in it, thereby making an Aristotelian interpretation possible. All changes, as implied in the observation made in our saying, communicate a temporal manifestation and uncovering, and that change as we have it in the saying, implies a change that is particularly related to change (it is, in other words; temporal), if a reader/listener decides to see/understand it from an Aristotelian framework or if the decision/intent of the author was such. Finegan noted that the answer "what you hate, do not do" originated from Tob 4:15, 'And what you hate, do not do to any one,' with omission of the words, 'to any one,'

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[285] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 83
[286] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 225.
[287] Lüdemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years: What He Really Said and Did* (Prometheus Books, 2001), 593.

which reduces "the saying from a form of the 'Golden Rule' to a self-centered saying."[288] Valantasis as well, points to ethical questions/purpose by concluding that it is to convey that ritualistic aspects that are of lower quality, than the answer by which the ethical principles/answers are therefore given instead. If we, however, see it from an Aristotelian perspective, the temporal property of the saying in which "all things get revealed in time" teaches that the *order* of counting time (development/getting revealed in time, in our case) is significant in temporal analysis, unlike the counting of other everyday countable facts which resonates with Aristotle's thinking process.[289]

Saying 8

And he said: The man is like a wise fisherman who threw his net into the sea. He pulled it up from the sea filled with little fish. Among them, the wise fisherman found a good large fish. He threw the little fish back into the sea; he chose the large fish without difficulty. He who has ears to listen, let him listen![290]

Plato:

Saying 8 also seems to be centred around an underlying understanding of temporality, without which the saying itself would have no meaning. Most commentaries focus on the action of the fisherman, as related to questions of good and bad, and arguments for or against Gnostic ideas or related to biblical sources and historicity.[291] However, once again, we can see that temporal perceptions/understandings themselves are required for any/or all of those interpretations. Accordingly, we see that a "proper perception" requires "being and becoming". Thus, the wise fisherman understands the small fish as future growth and progression or change. The fisherman's wisdom lies in his proper understanding of temporality and consequently explains his preference/action (Growth occurs in time or is already a "bad catch" depending on the perspective the author). Heininger commented in this sense that the saying is implying that wisdom and understanding is required in dealings with the Kingdom.[292] From our perspective, however, the saying serves as an explanation of how wisdom can be achieved in a man, namely through time; without which, any subsequent analysis would be possible. Additionally, such an interpretation is aligned with the fact that fish farming and breeding of fish were known as practices and as an essential food and economic resource. The growth of small fish into big ones is only natural and logical in later environments, thereby making the symbolism of growth easily

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[288] Jack Finegan, *Hidden Records of the Life of Jesus*, (Pilgrim Press,1969), 254.

[289] See section: Time as Essentially Ordered, 35.

[290] Robert M. Grant and David Noel Freedman pointed towards the ideal Man (in a cosmic Adamic sense) "the Kingdom is like a fisherman" instead of the man, as pointed out by Simon J. Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas,* 236. My interpretation will use the translation "man" instead of the Kingdom as coming from Gagné, and which renders the reading of it differently.

[291] See for example, Funk who quotes Philoxenas in the context of previous similar sayings in *Philoxenas* in Robert W. Funk, ed., *New Gospel Parallels, Vol. 2: John and the Other Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 110, Dart who points to Hunzinger which argues that Man can be replaced as a "Gnosticism substitute" for "the Kingdom of Heaven; see John Dart, *The Laughing Savior: The Discovery and Significance of the Nag Hammadi Gnostic Library* (New York: HarperCollins,1976), 94-95.

[292] He additionally connects it with saying 76. See: Heininger, Bernhard. "Das 'Königreich Des Vaters.'" *Bibel Und Die Kirche* 2 (February 2007).

understood and consequently the essential role of time in it.[293] Can we identify Plato's philosophical influences in it? In our analysis of *Timaeus* from a temporal perspective, we have already discussed how time relates to astronomical observations as an order-inducing element connected to the likeness of eternity. In this "movement according to numbers," the everlasting likeness moves by numbers of eternity as unified. Time is as such connected to the sequential order of nature as to be perceived through his parable of the clock. Additionally, it circles according to numbers in his astronomical analysis. Generation is an everlasting cycle, but everything "circles according to numbers" and "the numbers or measure of generation is time, and time, accordingly, possesses the cyclical nature of generation."[294] These ideas/concepts can certainly be helpful for our contextualization. The rationale for the "wise" fisherman to throw the small fishes back and keep the big ones is that he understands "the sequential order" of things, by which the small ones will grow in time, or are a "bad catch" if the catch will not grow, and this, consequently, is how man acquires wisdom – in time. It also deploys a cyclical understanding in time since the generational observations can only be clear if their cyclicality and time is understood. The significance of the notions of becoming as laid out in our saying is emphatically interesting as a concept coming from Plato, since the notions of becoming and directionality should be understood as synonymous. Such a context renders our interpretation in which time is related to the cyclical phenomenon of becoming, into a temporal observation in our saying. It also implies directionality, which, in our case, is to be understood as the growth for future times, from small to big catches. Letting go of small fishes, for future times, or "bad ones" is wise due to the fact that the fisherman is wise, as it is explicitly stated. "Man" therefore requires a "gradual understanding in time" in order to become wise as the "wise" fisherman. In other words, the "wisdom of man" is achieved through time, which as a topic of the saying was introduced with when we saw that "The man is like ..."

Aristotle:

If we approach this saying from a perspective that communicates relational complexities as coming from Aristotle, we can see that it communicates temporal expressions, which, as we saw, are not to be understood as change alone, but as connected to it, and which additionally, should be understood as a "number of change" in the context of before and after. Authors such as Patterson point out that the purpose of the saying is to communicate that the worldly catch is less relevant, and that the purpose of the saying is to teach that the focus on the otherworldly is more important.[295] Valantasis points out that "the goal of this wise fisherman is not to eat the fish or to sell them, but simply to reject all the smaller fish when he has found the largest one. The value of the one big fish makes all other systems of valuing irrelevant. Such a narrative defines a wisdom alternative to the dominant norm."[296] As we saw in our Plato's interpretation of this saying, this position stands in opposition to "fish breeding practices" which were already known at those times. However, if we approach the saying from Aristotle's philosophical viewpoint, the fish, their number, and their position cannot be responsibly dissociated in our context from that of order and continuity and its temporal presentation as found in our saying. This makes our saying interestingly Aristotelian as well, as it can be understood in the following manner: It teaches the reader/listener

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[293] See, for example Maria Stella Busana, "Fishing, Fish Farming and Fish Processing during the Roman Age in the Northern Adriatic: Literary Sources and Archaeological Data," *Regional Studies in Marine Science*, Historical Ecology of Semi-enclosed Basins: Past, Present and Future of Seas at Risk, 21 (May 2018): 7-16.
[294] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.
[295] Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 144-145.
[296] Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 66.

that man requires time in order to develop wisdom, and in which a "proper understanding of temporal changes" as seen in "letting the small fishes grow in time or the bad ones" is, in fact, communicating "an order" of things in time; just like Aristotle did in his concept of an "essential order." Consequently, time is required for a man to become wise, just like the "wise" fisherman. Additionally, it seems to be teaching the reader/listener that time is not change, just like in Aristotle, but is rather related to change in an essential manner. Time is required for wisdom to be achieved (as understood by the wise fisherman who lets go of the small or bad fishes, due to the fact that he understands the importance of the future and the Now in as coming from an understanding of an "evident" change). Time is also to be understood in Aristotle as a number that is different in kind from a number used for counting, since it does not contain pluralities. Wisdom, which is to be acquired in time, seen through this lens, does not contain pluralities despite having "particular temporal properties" that are required for an overarching, all-encompassing "understanding," just like the concept of time in Aristotle entails. It is certainly noteworthy how in the case of this saying, similarities between Plato's positions and the one coming from Aristotle cannot be ignored. However, it is equally noteworthy to see that Aristotle's deliberation offer differences in the same way that their philosophy was debating differences. Consequently, we cannot dismiss Aristotle either.

Saying 9

Jesus said: Look, a sower went out, he filled his hand (with seed); he threw (them). Some fell onto the road; the birds came and gathered them. Others fell on the rock; they did not take root down in the soil and did not sprout up ears of grain to heaven. Others fell on thorns; they choked the seeds and worms ate them. Others fell onto the good soil; it gave good fruit up into heaven. It sustained sixty per measure and one hundred and twenty per measure.

Plato:

Let us analyse this saying with Plato's *Statesman* as it is using a language that is strikingly similar to what we have here, rooted in a seed narrative and an ordering of things as manifested. It is connected to a *phronesis* model, according to which it has to include temporal observations.[297] It can include what Goldin described as "letting go" without necessarily implying decay.[298] The relevant section in Plato reads:

> …since every soul had fulfilled all its births by falling into the earth as seed its prescribed number of times, then the helmsman of the universe dropped the tiller and withdrew to his place of outlook, and fate and innate desire made the earth turn backwards. So, too, all the gods who share, each in his own sphere, the rule of the Supreme Spirit, promptly

[297] *Phronesis* is in Plato, a necessary condition for all virtue. It allows for moral and ethical strength, sometimes also found as moral understanding. The concept itself changes its meaning throughout his work. It is for our purposes important to distinguish *Sophia* from *Phronesis*, whereby we can say that *Phronesis* has epistemic value and is required for happiness and prosperity. It is complementary to *Sophia* or theoretical wisdom. For more information, see for example Kavandi and Ahmadi, "Phronesis in Plato's Intellectual System," 317-37.

[298] *Phronesis*, as a concept he developed, also understands behaviours that can bring humans back to their essential nature as existing in the soul; and which were developed as a concept to stand in contrast to previous schools of thought as developed from the Socratic method and as present in sophists, who understood the same phrase as a development of an argument for its own sake.

> perceiving what was taking place, let go the parts of the world which were under their care.[299]

We see that it is debating temporality through a reversible model. As such, it is centred around temporal observations while using numerous key elements: the soil, the seed, and the notion of letting go. For our purposes, we clearly recognize the idea of change, the order of things despite obstacles (as represented by the imagery of the birds that eat the seed and the rock which gives no life, or thorns and worms which also prevent development, or are connected to the cycle of life, which the sower influences). This parable is thus profoundly linked to time as its underlying key element in change, as analysed by Plato. Gathercole notes that "there has also been discussion of the identity of the sower, but the sower figure is not particularly important in the parable: he initiates the story, but thereafter plays no role."[300] If contextualized with the *Statesman*, the sower becomes somewhat a central and consequently part of the cultural environment. Authors dealing with Gnostic interpretations, however, mainly compare sayings with sources found in the Synoptics such as Mk 4:2, Matt 13:4, Lk 8:4.[301] Patterson focuses on the comparison and differences found within narratives: "There are, or course, secondary features in the Thomas version of the parable that are not found in any of the synoptic versions: the embellishment of the yield to 120-fold (Thom 9:5).[302] Lüdemann concludes that "on the whole we must regard the version of Thomas as older than that of Mark, because its simpler."[303] If we go back to temporality as expressed, we notice that all main constituents of the saying are deeply rooted in the idea and manifestation of progress and development as present in the created as well. Therefore, the seed is unquestionably a symbol, but not only towards something bigger, but potentiality towards something better as it is clearly understood. It is, instead, pointing the reader/listener towards deliberations on time as ontologically essential within the hermeneutic framework it is proposing. As such, it includes the famous narratives of seeds that do not land on fertile land, etc. The proper soil as a symbol is also embedded in this temporal presentation. If we want to go as far as to combine Plato's philosophy with the text explicitly, we can see that it is not necessarily arguing against, but rather pointing out the progressive quality of the created since the good soil has always been a foundational symbol for growth in time as well. It is equally interesting for our analysis to note that authors such as Gartner and Yau, point to Carone[304] who draws our attention to the fact that during the time of *Chronos*, babies will be born out of the earth, growing like plants, and that souls fell "into the earth as seeds" which strongly emphasizes the seed language in the context of time by use of symbolisms which the saying is using as well. If we contextualize the text with *Timaeus*, we can, for example, point to the observation made by Böhme as well, by which Plato's observations serve as reactions to previous schools such as Homer, and according to which things in time repeat themselves. It is, so Böhme,[305] pointing towards the cyclicality of occurrences in

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[299] Plato, *The Statesman*, 272e.
[300] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 240.
[301] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 239. He also points to the Seed" language found in The 'Seed' in *Ap. Jas*. 8,3, *Ref*. 5.8.28–29 and Cf. also *1 Clem*. 24.5; Justin, *Dial*. 125, and possibly *IGT* 11.1; *P. Egerton* 2 fr. 2v in his footnote 2.
[302] Jeremias*, Gleichnisse Jesu*, 23: Monterfiore, "A Comparison," 225 in Patterson, *Jesus Meets Plato*, 23.
[303] Lüdemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years*, 28.
[304] Gartner and Yau, "Gartner and Yau,"The Myth of Cronus in Plato's Statesman: Cosmic Rotation and Earthly Correspondence," 444.
[305] For example, *Timaeus* 38a.130; see: Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 108.

time, which the seed language also profoundly embeds.[306] All these concepts, as developed, make Plato's philosophy/temporal analysis into a possible and unmodified, underlying philosophy for the author/community/compiler, etc.

Aristotle:

This saying can be seen through an Aristotelian lens similarly to the development for saying 5. Consequently, we can recognize that the description entails temporal observations that can be associated to change through the "seed growth" sub-narrative, without which the saying itself would not be able to convey meaning. We saw that change in Aristotle, according to some authors such as Bowin, is to be understood as "goal oriented" since each individual change is defined in terms of single potentialities.[307] We can also, in the same manner, identify, that Aristotle analyzed change in the framework of potentiality as well, and which he understood as an actualization of it; while noting that a "division of change" is not possible for him. Along the same lines, we already noted that time is that order-inducing element in his analysis of numbers. As such we can see that time is "a number of change in respect of the before and after. Thus, time is not change but in the way in which change has a number."[308] Where do these observations lead us in our contextualization? We can recognize, based on this, a saying as communicating a message about potentiality that is to be understood through numbers ("sixty per measure and hundred and twenty per measure")[309] and which in return communicates change which is underlying all, as seen in Aristotle as well, and which in this case is seen in the changeable nature in which some things grow and bear fruit, and some not in the same way that the manifested order in time is different from an essential order. Thus, the underlying growth or absence of it, can only be understood if temporality is contextualized with numbers and potentiality and manifested order which, even here, resonates strongly with Aristotle's ontological efforts.[310]

Saying 18

The disciples said to Jesus: Tell us how our end will be.
Jesus said: Since you (pl.) are asking me about the end, you have therefore, uncovered the beginning! For where the beginning is, there will be the end. Blessed is he who will stand in the beginning: he will know the end and will not taste death.

Plato:

This is yet another saying in which the concept of potentiality paints a temporal account inside a *didactical method*. In this case it is to be elaborated in the context of the All, and which explains to the listener that time or its manifestation in the All is cyclical; without necessarily

[306] The same position of Plato gets confirmed by Cushman as well. Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.
[307] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 47.
[308] Aristotle, *Physics*, 219 b1-b2.
[309] The critical-historical approach as found in Funk speculates on the "original numbers and its source." We can read that: "Originally, the yields were probably thirty, sixty, one hundred, as Mark records them, although the doubling of sixty to one hundred twenty may have been original." (Funk, *New Gospel Parallels,* Vol. 2, 478).
[310] This also explains why the saying also uses the "worms" symbolism: it is communicating temporality, decay, and cyclicality through it; and which is compatible with both Plato's and Aristotle's developments. Gathercole saw no meaning it when he says: "The worms are a distinctive feature of *Thomas*'s version of the parable, but it is hard to see any special significance in them." (Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 240).

implying repetitions, as mentioned earlier. For our purposes, we can go back to the following points as seen in Cushman's useful synthesis:[311]

1. Everything in the cosmos, and maybe the cosmos in itself as well, is in a most radical way, in a process which includes becoming and ceasing to be.
2. The never existent is, for Plato, a contrast to the everlasting being which abides everlastingly, whereby he means to point out a deficiency of being in the never existent.

We can go to Drozdek as well, who noted the centrality of time in the concept of an imitation of the perfection by saying that the movement (as part of time in this case) is what brings the created close to perfection and who goes on to quote *Timaeus* 37d.[312]Additionally, we can resonate the message of this saying with Plato's description of time as a clock, according to which the Demiurge created the clock (nothing more or less than this), and which is cyclical as a metaphor as seen in Leyden[313] as well in Mohr.[314] If we try to implement such an interpretation, Jesus is implying that temporality of existence is to be understood. We can also recognize cyclical temporal description which closely resembles Plato's Clock metaphor. Moreover, such a model, as explained by Leyden, seems to paint the importance of an underlying orderliness in nature. Such an order can be easily perceived from this saying unless we go with more recent authors who claimed that Plato did not argue for directionality of time in any particular direction.[315] Gathercole, points out the importance of security permanence which he sees in the idea of "standing at the beginning," and connects it to nature of the "trees in paradise" developed later in GThom 19.[316] Bruce noted similarities with 2 Esdras 7.30 ("the world shall be as it was at the first beginnings"), and Revelation 22.13, where Jesus says: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."[317] We, however, can also recognize that the notion of time being a number, as elaborated in Plato, is tacit. In *Parmenides*, for example, we see that numbers serve a sense of order, as observed in the cyclical behaviour of the planets and stars. Therefore, the most intimate description of them and their purpose is through the manifestation of orderliness, which, as we saw, gets to be directly connected to temporality in Plato. This saying can consequently, from such a temporal perspective coming from Plato, clearly draw our attention towards a "proper" way of understanding occurrences in it and therefore, towards time as intimately connected to; or required for it. The saying is implicitly connecting the beginning and the end into a cyclical model, in its temporal description and which the inquiring disciples want to know about and which does not necessarily imply repetition. They (the disciples) need to understand that the "beginning and end" are cyclical in creation; and as such a manifestation of change and temporality (beginning and end) in its relationship to the Demiurge. Consequently, the educator (philosopher) gives his blessing for the inquisitive mind, or as proof that they have it, and which, as the ultimate state will lead to "not tasting death" or understanding. In this manner, just as our saying, the topic of personal inquiry is

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[311] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257. The underlying philosophical debate in Plato was, itself, as we saw, centred around the cyclicality of temporal observation of cosmological occurrences.
[312] Drozdek, *In the Beginning Was the Aperion; Infinity in Greek Philosophy*, 97.
[313] von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 40.
[314] Mohr, "Plato on Time and Eternity," 39.
[315] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 134.
[316] "*Standing* denotes security and permanence which is particularly appropriate in this pair of sayings with the reference to immortality in GThom 18.3 as well as in GThom 19.4, and the nature of the paradisal trees in GThom 19.3. (On 'standing' in *Thomas*, see further in GThom 16.4 above.)." See: Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 287.
[317] Frederick Fyvie Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub Co, 1974), 133.

contextualized (or transposed) to a more general philosophical supposition (the personal question about their end is answered by a temporal and philosophical comment and their inquiry gets reinforced by the blessing) for the students (disciples), which were and are a very common *didactical*, philosophical, pedagogical tool/language in which the philosopher/teacher gradually increases complexities of personal inquiries into broader or more intricate philosophical concepts. Students follow previously developed structures/explanations/teachings after which they attain "the end" or understanding of the analysed phenomena. Plato is explicit in this when we read: "... for the feeling of wonder shows that you are a philosopher, since wonder is only the beginning of philosophy and he who said that Iris was the child of Thaumas made a good genealogy."[318]

Aristotle:

Even if we take on an Aristotelian analysis, we can use Stein's work, who noted that time of a change must be continuous in the same way of change.[319] At the same time, we know already that change was, for Aristotle, more ontologically fundamental than time. It is especially interesting in our context to read that Aristotle said: "The change and movement of each thing are only in the thing which changes or where the thing itself which moves, or changes may chance to be, but time is present equally everywhere and with all things."[320] When we approach the question of continuity of time in Aristotle, we should not forget that the relationship between time and change was such that "change is continuous," by which it is meant that there can always be another time between instant moments which can be even more divided in potentiality and not in actuality.[321] At the same time, concepts of "before and after" have not been developed entirely in Aristotle, which would certainly be interesting for our saying. If we move onto the notion of time as a number, we already saw that the underlying philosophy suggested that it implies unity,[322] while not forgetting that time in Aristotle is essentially ordered.[323] Additionally, there is a link between the mind and the measurability of time. Bowin noted that "Measurability of time therefore is directly linked to memory in beings with νοῦς without which the act of measurement would not be possible."[324] Consequently, we have numerous elements in this saying that can point to Aristotle's philosophical influence as well. What kind of interpretation would that leave us with? Once again, we can approach this saying as communicating temporal properties in change, without which the message would not be clear. The totality of "understanding" as implied, just like in Saying 4, is that a "discovery" should include both the beginning and the end, and not only one temporal aspect. The underlying notion, therefore, just like in Aristotle, is that of change, which needs to be contextualized "properly" and which can be seen in "For where the beginning is, there will the end be." Authors such as Lüdemann approach this from a different, "Gnostic" perspective. He points out that "'The beginning and the end' correspond to (cf. Logion 4). Brought back to the beginning, the Gnostic will not taste death. The latter is meant in a metaphorical sense. The non-

[318] Plato, *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, trans. Harold N. Fowler (London Cambridge, Harvard University Press: William Heinemann Ltd, Vol. 12. 1921) in http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0059.tlg006.perseus-eng1:155d. This quote is part of Plato's *Theaetetus* and deals with questions of knowledge and its dissemination, among other topics.
[319] Stein, "Aristotle on Parts of Time and Being in Time," 504.
[320] Aristotle, *Physics*, 218 b10-12.
[321] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 104.
[322] Popa, "On the (In)Consistency of Aristotle's Philosophy of Time," 2.
[323] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 100.
[324] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 188.

Gnostic does not live at all."[325] Gathercole elucidates that "As in GTh 49, the end is not a new reality; rather the disciples will return to it. 'The end' (for the disciples) will be located in the place of their origin. Knowledge of this origin is essential for the true disciple, not least because it will be part of the interrogation in GTh 50."[326] Accordingly to Aristotle however, as we saw, it is pointing towards time as ever-present for an "understanding." Additionally, the saying is "implying" unity which we saw in our section Aristotle's "Time as Numbers" as well, and which as such "is to be understood as essential order." Time is all-encompassing and connected to the complexity of change, as we read: "For where the beginning is, there will be the end". Additionally, just like in the Gnostic myths, the νοῦς as a concept can also be implied, without which we could not understand (measure) time as we saw in Aristotle; while all the pedagogical comments in the section on Plato hold for Aristotelian notions as well.

Saying 19

Jesus said: Blessed is he who existed before he came into existence.[327] If you (pl.) will be my disciples, listen to my words; these stones will serve you. For you have five trees in paradise, which do not move in summer and winter; and their leaves do not fall. He who will know them will not taste death.

Plato:

Just as we saw in Plato's temporal philosophy, this saying also makes a distinction between the nature of being and becoming. It relates to questions about the atemporality of Plato's forms—being and outside time. In Plato's system, being is a result of atemporal ideas, while keeping in mind that the world of fundamental realities is still manageable and fundamentally comprehensible; it is not an idea outside human grasp. A being is linked to the ideal form and the philosopher's role is to know being accurately. Being is an outcome of movement coming from the world of atemporal paradigms. Therefore, this saying and its concept of eternity seem to resonate with the idea that being is not affected by temporal changes when we read that "...do not move in summer and winter; and their leaves do not fall."[328] At the same time, the saying itself seems to underline the fact that the notions and structuring might still be understandable, just as Plato was implying, due to the fact that they are explainable and presentable through a saying. Additionally, just like this saying, Plato's ontological and cosmological analysis is deeply rooted in ethical and moral questioning as well. Therefore, we see that the ontological framework presented is also focused on the interaction between the creation that has a purpose and must reach its full potential (not tasting death). This potential, as purposeful, is possible due to temporality; it is intimately connected to it and is, therefore, understandable.[329] Furthermore, the same is also

[325] Lüdemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years*, 599.
[326] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 287.
[327] Other authors such as Stephen Patterson and Marvin Meyer translated the notion of existence as being, which Gagné used interchangeably as well. See Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 103. See also: http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gosthom.html.
[328] This position about the relationship between the form and the created and the complexities of eternalness gets further questioned by some authors, as we will see later.
[329] As pointed out earlier as well, the *sine qua non* of a progressive quality of learning, as a dialectic method present in Plato, is also tacit, as it implies the possibility of "comprehension," as seen in "listen to my words; these stones will serve you" for example.

applicable to the idea of Paradise. Perl noted that the "idea of sensible as images of the forms, in turn, is an expression not of transcendence alone, but rather of the conjunction of immanence and transcendence: the paradigm is at once transcendent to, and immanent in the image" and goes on to say that the former implies the latter position."[330] Similarly, the permanence in Paradise resonates strongly with the notion of outside time, as seen in Plato's speculations on the nature of time and its position regarding the notion of being and becoming. Plato comments that the everlasting should not be equated with "that which was and always will be." We should, according to Plato, refer to it as that which *is*, as we saw in *Timaeus* 38a. The same language can be recognized in our saying, as it seems to point to extra-temporality in its description of the nature of unchanging trees in Paradise. On this particular debate about extra-temporality in Plato, we can go to Tarán, who is explicit in saying that "Its (unchanging) eternity must exclude duration."[331] It is additionally interesting that numbers in Plato, are to be understood as unchangeable but can be interchanged while remaining valid in their expression. At the same time, this concept of a number is, in itself, permanent in change. Crégheur additionally refers to Plato's *Republic*, to point out that "la République arrive en effet à la conclusion que, s'il y a cinq espèces d'états, il doit y avoir aussi cinq comporements de l'âme,"[332] in order to show the complexity of the interpretation of the number five and that the number might be in this case not important *per se*, but that it rather implies a sacred property of the trees in question. This understanding stands in sharp contrast to ideas proposed by usual Gnostic readings as found in Konai when we read that it refers to five evil trees: "The sin which fell upon the dry part (of the earth) began to grow in the form of five trees."[333] The same author concludes that we cannot give a definitive answer to the symbolism of the five trees in this saying.[334] Thus, an understanding of this context, as "extra-temporality in Paradise" ("...which do not move in summer and winter"), complex as it may be in Plato, might be lying at the core of this saying as well.

Aristotle:

In our analysis of Aristotle and the relationship between time and change/movement, we learned that Primary Substances remain permanent through change for him.[335] Additionally, we saw that changes, in potentiality, can be infinitely divisible.[336] Our saying seems to point to unchanging trees as expressing those relationships. The saying does not seem to communicate change and consequently time through its formulation of "unchanging." Gathercole mentions a previous research done on the trees and the number five in the Gnostic tradition, where he states that,

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[330] Perl, "The Presence of the Paradigm: Immanence and Transcendence in Plato's Theory of Forms," 361.

[331] Leonardo Tarán,"Perpetual Duration and Atemporal Eternity in Parmenides and Plato," *The Monist* 62, no. 1 (January 1979): 44.

[332] Crégheur, Eric, "Le motif des cinq arbres dans l'Évangile selon Thomas (log. 19) et la littérature ancienne", *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum / Journal of Ancient Christianity* 19, no. 3 (2015): 430-451. https://doi.org/10.1515/zac-2015-0035

[333] Gathercole points to Konai. See: Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*,295.

[334] It is not to be ignored that the number five as found in the Pythagorean school represents the unity of masculine and the feminine (feminine as two and the masculine as three). The importance of the number five for the ancients cannot be overstated. Crégheur offers a detailed analysis of the motive itself from various perspectives. See Crégheur, "Le motif de cinq arbres dans l'Évangile selon Thomas (log.19) et la littérature ancienne," 430-451.

[335] Categories 5.4a 10-11 in Coope, *Time for Aristotle*,2.

[336] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 3.

> "... perhaps more promising is *On the Origin of the World*, where, although the number is not mentioned, five trees are listed in quick succession: the fig tree, the pomegranate tree, the tree of life, the tree of knowledge, and the olive tree (110,30–111,8). These may refer to a sacramental process, at least in part, since the olive tree is explained as the source of the chrism or anointing. We can additionally see that Manicheism had quite a few references that uses the same language of five trees, ranging from the *Psalm-Book*, to the *Kepahlia of the Teacher* as far as to Chinese preserved Manichean interpretations in which "'labourer' chops down 'les cinq sortes d'arbres empoisonnés,' and plants 'les cinq sortes d' arbres précieux lumineux.' These latter are interpreted as 'la pensée, le sentiment, la réflexion, l'intellect, le raisonnement'. This five-part division of the mind probably goes back to *Acts of Thomas* 27, with its νοῦς, ἔννοια, φρόνησις, ἐνθύμησις, λογισμός."[337]

In our context however, in which "unchanging" is expressing the notion of "Primary Substances" as found in Aristotle, those can be easily represented by the unchanging trees, which consequently are also aligned with Aristotle's take on time. They remain permanent/unchanging and do not express potentiality, as it would usually be depicted through the growth of the trees (due to the fact that potentiality is as such also temporal and goal directed in Aristotle). Instead, they express a *state*, because Aristotle's Primary Substances do not get influenced by time.[338] If we take this position/reading about time or rather the absence of it, we can conclude that Aristotle's philosophy echoes the ideas expressed in the saying. Consequently, "unchanging" implies Primary Substances and which cannot be experienced temporally, as Aristotle argued, and therefore suggests extra-temporality of the trees ("existed before he came into existence" and "not taste death"), just like his philosophy did and which can be understood by an implied reader/compiler/author/listener/community, etc. of the saying as well.

Saying 20

The disciples said to Jesus: Tell us what the Kingdom of heaven is like. He said to them: It is like a grain of mustard, smallest of all seeds; but when it falls on cultivated ground, it produces a large branch; it becomes a shelter for birds of the sky.

Plato:

There is an explicit expression of temporal development in the saying which necessitates a clear understanding of time as a required element for growth and change. Patterson points out the focus of authors is on the historical developments (connection to Canonical Gospels), and concludes that the connections are "a remote possibility at best."[339] Can we find Plato's cultural and philosophical residues/influences therein? This saying is very similar from a temporal perspective to Saying 9. It uses the seed symbolism to develop a narrative "from small to really big and good and useful for the birds of the sky" if the conditions are right.[340] Due to this, we can draw parallels, just like in the case of Saying 9, with narratives connected to future growth as found

[337] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas,* 293-296.
[338] Categories 5.4a 10-11 in: Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 2.
[339] Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 27.
[340] We can, undoubtedly, even here, recognize a *didactical* method, which implies a gradual (temporal) development of understanding (growth of seed on cultivated ground), as required, for an "understanding of the nature of the Kingdom" or as "present in it as a truism."

in Plato. It is, therefore, that we can once again remind ourselves that "Time is the moving image of the unchanging forms that act as standards of goodness and beauty."[341] The text specifies that the Kingdom "becomes," thereby semantically implying a change of state in time in that manner.[342]

Aristotle:

This saying can also be related to Aristotle's deliberations. The language is temporal and all the answers can be observed through the perspective of change, time, and potentiality. Like in Aristotle's reflection, change (as expressed through the seed symbolism here) is the most fundamental element in it, without which the understanding of the saying would be difficult to grasp. It is, therefore, very similar to sayings 5 and 9. Change is, just like in Aristotle, "goal oriented," which is defined through single potentialities.[343] Furthermore, we have already noted its actualization through a "positive manifestation," as expressed in our case in the parable of the plants as a shelter for the birds. Crossan however, points out, the complete opposite by noting that the seed in question, is poisonous and the growth of it would therefore be an undesired state.[344] If we adhere to this position, then even the fact of "cultivated ground" is something negative, as it "required" for such a growth to happen: "when it falls on cultivated ground".[345] We have already seen how for Aristotle, numbers represent that order-inducing element. Time is thereby "a number of change in respect of the before and after. So, time is not change but in the way in which change has a number."[346] Hence, where do these observations lead us in our contextualization? Based on this, we can see that this saying, from an Aristotelian perspective, is communicating realized potentiality which leads to the production of a great plant that becomes a shelter for birds of the sky; therefore, its underlying principle is change just like in Aristotle. The philosophical *didactical* method, which once again communicates that time is necessary for its "manifestation" or "development" or "understanding" is once again present. Consequently, growth can only be understood if temporality is contextualized with numbers and potentiality, which, as we saw earlier, resonates with Aristotle's ontological efforts, and should consequently not be easily dismissed.

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[341] Turetzky, *Time*, 17.

[342] While the text seems like it is focusing on change alone (from the seed to the branch for the birds, which is the traditional readings found in most commentaries), the description is, if not taken only analytically, but rather as a synthesis, a description of a state, a nature of things. It is also a description of *an temporal order* in a Kingdom. In it, all the constituents are necessary parts. A "usual gnostic reading" of Thomas is, so it seems, preventing readers from discerning the "birds of the sky" as part of the Kingdom, but not necessarily anything more than this. According to this reading, it is not an exclusive club in a "traditional Gnostic sense" which implies salvation only for the elect; but is rather describing the temporal as part of it. Miroshnikov came to a similar conclusion about the created in a somewhat different context, when he said at the end of chapter 2 in his Miroshnikov, *The Gospel of Thomas and Plato,* that the GThom was "engaged in dialogue with Platonism, accepting some ideas, while repudiating others," Miroshnikov, *The Gospel of Thomas and Plato,*76.

[343] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Order and Direction of Time," 47.

[344] John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*, (New York: HarperOne, 1993), 279.

[345] We can of course, "speculate and debate" on the "meaning of this" "until Kingdom comes," but we should not, as our focus remains temporality in Aristotle in this analysis.

[346] Aristotle, *Physics*, 219 b1-b2.

Saying 21

Mary said to Jesus: Who are your disciples like? He said: They are like slaves who occupy a field that is not theirs. When the owners of the field come, they will say: "Give us back our field." They strip-off their clothes in their presence to cause them to leave it to them, to give their field to them. This is why I say, if the owner of a house knows that the robber is coming, he will be alert before he comes and will not let him dig into the house of his kingdom to take his belongings. You (pl.), therefore, be alert, against the world. Arm yourselves with great strength, so that the thieves do not find a way to come to you; otherwise, the stress you are expecting will be found. May be an intelligent man among you! When the fruit was ripe, he came in a hurry with his sickle in his hand and reaped it. He who has ears to listen, let him listen!

Plato:

For the purpose of clarification, I will, at this point, re-emphasize that the function of my analyses is not ethical in a strict sense due to the nature of this saying. In terms of historical developments for example, Patterson noted that despite similarities with sources found in the canonical Gospels, he argues for a completely different source for it.[347] Finegan noted that the stripping of cloths is to be understood as death, which according to him, an "inside a Gnostic tradition" to be understood as "a desired state."[348] However, I will not try to establish what temporal qualifications bring about in terms of temporal manifestations. I will instead focus on the description of temporality as found in it. This parenthesis is, in this case, required due to the fact that temporal descriptions in it are deeply entrenched in ethical/eschatological deliberations. What are we left with to observe from this perspective? We can still recognize change as something which is not only connected to time but is rather foundational for temporality as it is in Plato. All portions of this saying require time to be understood. All its constituents communicate an interplay between future and present. Such deliberations have been seen in Plato as well, as he tried to understand the notion of being in or outside time, in all its temporal descriptions, including that of Now. We have also already analysed temporality as a sign of a "lacking being" in Plato. As such, it is in the process of becoming and ceasing to be, and therefore impermeant, while permanence is that of a complete being. We can recognize that the saying implies such a lack in which change is what is to be observed and in which the disciples receive an explanation. The notion of change in Plato however, as it was earlier developed, is to be understood in in the context of All. It is certainly interesting for our setting not to forget Drozdek's note about Plato's framework: "The imitation of perfection as close as it can get, gets established through movement."[349] Such a movement and the "seed language and reaping" is as such connected to saying 8, and echoes Plato's words: "since every soul had fulfilled all its births by falling into the earth as seed its prescribed number of times, then the helmsman of the universe dropped the tiller and withdrew to his place of outlook, and fate and innate desire made the earth turn backwards".[350] It seems obvious on some levels that the development in our saying cannot be understood without its temporal descriptions. It can, therefore, be read alongside Plato's notions in which temporality is embedded into other questionings. We see those questions raised, just like in GThom 3, in the context of being as an ideal form, or being as a manifested expression of the ideal as noted by Settler in his concise statement about the One in Plato: The One has no parts; so that it cannot be understood and

[347] Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 29.
[348] Finegan, *Hidden Records of the Life of Jesus*, 254.
[349] Drozdek, *In the Beginning Was the Aperion; Infinity in Greek Philosophy*,97.
[350] Plato, *The Statesman*, 272e.

described as "many."; The One is whole and yet has parts.[351] It is deeply immersed in temporality. This brings us to Sattler's position on being in time and how it can be understood in the context of the past and future. We can, therefore, recognize echoes of Plato's temporal analysis in our saying as well. The reaping, for example, implies the manifestation in time, as well as the disciples, in their current state. They have to be aware of their temporality, and not be necessarily understood as purely extra-temporal or focusing on it; they have to be conscious of these notions, as the saying seems to suggest (be alert before he comes...). It is certainly interesting to find all these speculations, diverse as they may be, in the GThom and not uniform, while still being perceivable without "a need for unification of the concepts," just like in Plato. We have seen how he tried to understand the underlying nature of reality without necessarily imposing one reading in the process of discovery; but rather as a philosophical method which allows for such inquisitive approaches.

Aristotle:

One temporal aspect of the saying in which "understanding" is related to a proper "discernment" is expressed at its end. The "person of understanding" is behaving in such a way that his behaviour reflects "a proper" understanding of temporal aspects, as communicated through the "ripening" feature of the narrative. Even here we see it as connected to the concept of change/movement and as such an actualization of potentiality. Change, which is predominantly expressed through a shielding against its "negative developments" in time as found in our saying, is in Aristotle related to the issue of an actualization of potentiality. Such a focus as part of the analysis of "Before and After in Change vs. Before and After in Time," if read as a "before and after in time" narrative, can be seen as connected to what Coope conveniently summarized as: "because there is a before and after in place, there is a before and after in change, and because there is a before and after in change, there is a before and after in time."[352] If we analyse the saying from the perspective of "Time, Change and Magnitude" we can also see that it is "compatible" with conclusions such as those that we saw earlier as coming from Boudreault in his comments on Aristotle, who developed the relationality between movement (which is consequently in time) and magnitude. He noted, as we saw, that: "the before and after are not in motion in virtue of what motion is essentially, but because they are in magnitude."[353] This makes echoes between Aristotle and this saying interesting. In it, the "wise person" needs to understand descriptions/developments of 'before and after' in magnitude and consequently the relationships with time and magnitude as we saw it suggested by Aristotle as well. Gathercole concluded in this context that "it is possible that the act of quick harvesting is the man of understanding's ready grasp of the truth because he has already laboured, but this is admittedly speculative."[354] If we move on to the analysis of continuity of/in time itself, we can conclude that this saying can be taken as depicting a model in which time is continuous since it is, according to Aristotle, to be understood as universal and not accidental by nature. However, such a reading would ignore the fact that Aristotle was debating these concepts in a particular and concrete framework and in which, as Coope noted, "the term continuous implies that there can always be time between two instants which can always be even more divided, due to the fact that there can always be another instant."[355] If we approach the saying as communicating notions of future, development, and critical apprehension, Aristotle's take on time as measure can be seen as resonating with it as well. The saying is communicating the advice

[351] Sattler, "Time and Space in Plato's Parmenides," 9.
[352] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 61.
[353] Boudreault, "Aristotle's Account of Time: A Moderate Realism," 83.
[354] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 306.
[355] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 57.

to 'perceive change' among other notions. Such a position aligns itself with Popa's summaries of ideas which we saw earlier in the chapter on Aristotle in the context of time and measurement and thereby the being of time. Consequently, we saw that time cannot exist without beings capable of perceiving change.[356] Therefore, activity is marking out time. The importance of such activity and thereby temporal observation could be inferred in the last section of our saying, which communicates that a man of "understanding… When the grain ripened, he came quickly with his sickle in his hand and reaped it. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear." The person of "intelligence" knows that the manifested in the temporal can be harsh and needs to take that into account.[357] Hedrick see that the saying is more about the "knowing of the right moment," when and how to act, and not necessarily as something "apocalyptic" and points out that the notion of "intelligent man" might imply an instructor who would lead the ascent of the soul and connects it to GThom 50.[358] This "instructor model" was certainly predominant in schools of philosophy, as mentioned earlier, which led the student through a didactic method, thereby developing those discernment skills in pupils. From this position, the notion of an "intelligent man among you" might be central and that kind of a figure. As in the argument for "time as measure" only understood by beings perceiving change and consequently time, the idea of an instructor that instructs on these ideas/concepts is quite relevant. All these temporal deliberations, even without such social contexts, still allow for potential Aristotelian influence.

Saying 50

Jesus said: If they say to you (pl.), "Where are you from?", say to them, 'We came from the light, the place where the light came into being by itself, established [itself] and it appeared in their image.' If they say to you, "Is it you?", say, "We are its sons and we are elect of the living Father." If they ask you, "What is the sign of your Father in you?", say to them, 'It is a movement and a rest.'[359]

Plato:

This is unquestionably another saying in which temporality plays an interesting role. At the time, movement and repose were connected to cyclical occurrences in astronomical deliberations as we already established. We can easily connect these ideas to concepts found in Plato's astronomical considerations. Plato concluded that the changes in celestial rotations and times must be observed from an overarching ideal time that encompasses all planets (movements).[360] Pleshkov reminds us that for Plato, the motion of the planets according to their orbits is time and that there is no real difference between the heaven and time.[361] We should, however remember that Plato was explicit in saying that the planets, stars and the moon are preserving the "numbers of time," making time into an agent and showing both properties of being

[356] Popa, "On the (In)Consistency of Aristotle's Philosophy of Time," 3.
[357] It is interesting that Gagné recognized the warning against the world in the saying itself and contextualized it as an instruction to keep it the secret knowledge a secret, from a "Gnostic" perspective, due to the fact that it is not only secret but exclusive and connects it to pearls/swine narrative found in Saying 93. Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas,* 107. This approach as well, requires the above-mentioned instructor(teacher) figure.
[358] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 306.
[359] Doresse translated the phrase as "a motion and a rest" as well, while Layton and Blatz used "movement and repose" without the indefinite article. The difference seems to be also linguistically induced as I do not see philosophical deliberations on this even though the underlying philosophy would make a difference between these two phrasing.
[360] Emery, Markosian, and Sullivan, "Time" https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entriesime/.
[361] Aleksei Pleshkov, "Plato's concept of aiōn (eternity)," Понятие aiōn (вечность) у Платона, January 2014, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270882945_Ponatie_aion_vecnost_u_Platona. (My translation).

and that of eternity as seen in *Parmenides*. Our saying seems to point towards such an astronomical analysis in which the cyclical and permanent plays a crucial part. Goldin pointed out that time does not exist only as a function that is related to becoming but also presumes a function of regularity which is connected to motions of planets.[362]. However, the saying communicates the question of "an origin and becoming" as well, just as Plato's deliberation on time did. Bruce noted that these observations should probably be connected to Gnostic concepts like the ascent "to the realm of light" and that the notion of rest implies "the goal of a true Gnostic."[363] A similar conclusion about the ascent as a purpose etc. as well, although in the context of a more explicit mentioning of the *Pneumatics*, can be read in Kloppenborg as well.[364] Gagné points out the ritualistic and social aspect of the "Elect," the confrontation with the "old establishment" which required a circumcision as the sign of the father when we read that: "In *logion* 50, the implied author asks about the 'sign of your Father in you.' This is in direct opposition to "circumcision" (*log*. 53), which is also the sign of 'their father.'"[365] However, observations, from a Platonic perspective, communicate cyclicality (the temporal) just like Plato when it uses the phrase "movement."[366] The "sign" of the father conversely communicates, "being which is manifested" (a being in time) while still being itself not only exclusively temporal but also extra-temporal (rest, as opposed to movement), a seen for example in "some things always are, without ever becoming (27d6)."[367] Synthesized into an explanation "about the sign of the Father in you" consequently shows "both movement and repose." Gagné noted that from a Gnostic perspective the notion of movement and rest are implying an existence and a subsequent return to rest when we read: "Le mouvement est en opposition à s'établir. Le mouvement et le repos, c'est le retour au lieu d'origine : le Royaume et la lumière. Le signe du Père chez les élus, c'est le fait qu'ils aspirent à une quête en vue de ce retour."[368] Interestingly, for our analysis however, even when we go back to Plato we can find additionally that Romano noted that in Plato's *Parmenides* the "sudden" represents the beginning from which changes "can be accomplished" in other words, from "movement to rest and from rest to movement."[369] In our context, the "sign of the children of the living Father is both movement and repose" which can be read as an astronomical and philosophical synthesis compatible with Plato's analysis and language.

Aristotle:

This saying is also interesting from an Aristotelian position. Time has been ontologically placed, into the same position as the "sign" of the Father (not the Father), since it is both in movement and repose. Freedman and Grant understood movement as connected to this existence, while rest is to be expected in the Kingdom. For them, the saying is communicating that "no startling miracle should be expected," which according to them emerged from the sect of

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[362] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 130.

[363] Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*, 133.
Kloppenborg, John S., Michael G. Steinhauser, and Marvin W. Meyer. *Q-Thomas Reader: The Gospels Before the Gospels*. Sonoma, Calif: Polebridge Pr Westar Inst, 1990. 96-97.

[365] Gagné, "Structure and Meaning in Gos. Thom. 49–54 an Erotapokritic Teaching on identity and Eschatology," Jens Schroter, ed., "The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology," *Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium*, 2013.

[366] We should however not forget that "Time," for Plato, is not "part of movement."

[367] For example: "Some things always are, without ever becoming (27d6)", on page 7 earlier for his ontological framework summary.

[368] André Gagné, "Des étrangers issus du Royaume et de la lumière (EvTh 49-50): Les solitaires–élus dans l'Évangile selon Thomas, selon une approche intratextuelle," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 70, no. 1 (January, 2015), 105–17, https://doi.org/10.7202/1028168ar.

[369] Romano, *Event and Time*, 35.

Naassenes.[370] If we focus on the fact that the notion of "movement and repose" is to communicate fundamental change which comes ontologically before the notion of time in Aristotle, we can also go one step further and connect it to potentiality, which leads us back to change as an actualization of potentiality. Gathercole as well, although in a somewhat different context points to this, for our purposes interesting conclusion about the saying:

> "As far as I am aware, there is no parallel in heavenly ascents to this particular answer. Scholars who propose characteristics of the disciples as corresponding to 'motion and rest' do not do justice to the fact that this is 'the sign of *the Father* in you'. These are not necessarily pure opposites, but can be compresent. In Plato's *Parmenides*, for example, the One is both in motion and at rest (καὶ κινεῖσθαι καὶ ἑστάναι, *Parm*. 145E; cf. 162B–163B). In Aristotle's kinematics, 'the eternal presence of motion in the universe, Aristotle argues, needs to rely on an eternal cause that guarantees its persistence.' This cause is itself an unmoved mover."[371]

This also reinforces the argument for a philosophical difference between the "sign of the father" and the father, as seen in Aristotle as well. Moreover, for our purpose, Stein, for example, notes that time of a change must be continuous in the same way as change.[372] The relational positions were confirmed by Coope who also added that changes are more closely related to particular substances than time.[373] These Aristotelian notions can thus be connected to our saying as well. It can consequently be read as follows: The sign (or the manifestation in the moving universe) of the Father (as the unmoved mover) is that of change and repose (in the created) just like in our Aristotelian analysis, thereby crucial for a proper understanding of temporality and extra-temporality and its role, just like in subsequent Gnostic interpretations as noted by Freedman and Grant.[374] It implicitly renders time into a crucial element, without which the saying would not be able to communicate its meaning.

Saying 51

His disciples said to him: On what day will the rest of the dead be, and on what day will the new world come? He said to them: That for which you (pl.) are looking has come, but you do not know it.

Plato:

At the centre of this saying, we can recognize the question "when," which is temporal and a reply to that question. Can we contextualize the answer as compatible with Plato's philosophy? As we have noted, the difference between the timeless and manifested is much less dualistic in Plato than usually perceived. We saw, for example, in this context that Leyden points out that in Timaeus 37D, Plato significantly reduces the difference between the created and the timeless by developing an "eternal model" of the living world as a living being.[375] We have also seen that Goldin pointed out, in the same context, that the "sensible Cosmos" and time in it does permit

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[370] Robert Grant, *Secret Sayings of Jesus* (New York: Barnes Noble Books, 1993), 160-161.
[371] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 409.
[372] Stein, "Aristotle on Parts of Time and Being in Time," 504.
[373] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 116.
[374] Robert Grant, *Secret Sayings of Jesus* (New York: Barnes Noble Books, 1993), 160-161.
[375] *Timaeus* 37 d in von Leyden, "Time, Number, and Eternity in Plato and Aristotle," 36.

contrary predicates since it is not a Form.[376] Additionally, we already noted that Plato says that the everlasting should not be implicitly described through everyday temporal observations but that it requires a rephrasing. It should accordingly be described as that which is, where the *is* is present-tensed, which makes the everlasting being as always present: it always is now and never was nor will be. It is interesting that from a temporal perspective, whether intended or not (as implied) and in a somewhat different quasi-historical context and analysis, the notion of an "over-realised eschatology" is related to Timothy 2.18 and connected to the idea that the Gnostics have "attained true rest already."[377] For some of the complexities of subsequent Gnostic thought-processes and hierarchical structuring of the universe and the meaning of "rest" which implied unity with the "*highest God"* we can consult Funk.[378] Plato however, as we saw, draws no difference between the "is" that is itemized with "was" and "will be," and the "is" that is said of everlasting being as we saw. If we observe this saying from such a perspective, temporality, and consequently the meaning of the saying, can be seen "through Plato's lens." It, as such, teaches about the temporal quality which *is*. The teaching itself becomes even more apparent as the everlasting is manifested, since, as we saw, it would be a mistake to understand change in the realm of the physical as "pure movement in extra temporal being" alone as all ideas in Plato also have their corresponding representation in the physical realm as well.[379] As such, the question about change that is to be seen and which they temporally anticipate is already manifested, but they do not recognize it, as they should understand the dynamics of temporal occurrences as part of it as well; and which are, as we saw earlier, in Plato, ontologically inferior to change.[380]

Aristotle:

The question itself, as we noted, is temporal above all. Without temporality, any level of perception of it would be impossible. However, can we, therefore, responsibly trace Aristotelian notions in it? If we start by analyzing the relationship between Time and Change/Movement*,* we can recognize that the understanding of change is, as we know, connected with potentiality in Aristotle. Nevertheless, if we take the Kingdom as an end state or unchanging source of everything, then our comparison ends due to the fact that primary substances in Aristotle are unchanging as well, and the question about a coming is therefore illogical. However, if we recognize that potentiality is goal-oriented as implied directly by Bowin,[381] then the question becomes more valid for our analysis. In it, we see the question rephrased as: the disciples as manifestations of Aristotelian potentiality, are asking, about the manifestation of potentiality. This request about the manifestation of potentiality or change – as the underlying concept which does not get recognized – expressed in the question about the forthcoming of the Kingdom in our context seems acceptable from this position. This, in itself, might be interesting to note due to the fact that, as we saw earlier as well, change is an actualization of potentiality and that it, once started, cannot be stopped. Valantasis noted that Patterson points out the rejection of the "future orientation" of the disciples, towards "rest and the new world," but from a clearly different focus, and goes on to say that Jesus

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[376] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 28.
[377] Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*, 133.
[378] Robert W. Funk, *The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say? The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*, (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1996), 502.
[379] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant,* 111.
[380] Authors also commented that the text has a *protological* approach, in which the eternal life begins at the beginning of life and not at its end. No matter which position one takes in this context, the question is undoubtably debating temporality implicitly and without which its meaning would escape. See for example: Stevan Davies, "The Christology and Protology of the Gospel of Thomas," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111, no. 4 (1992): 663-82.
[381] Bowin, John. Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 47.

represents that rest and new world which "has arrived," as well as that the "rest does not belong to the dead."[382] If we go back to Aristotle and the concept of Time, as found in the saying (the question: When?), Aristotle's deliberation cannot be stopped or divided, and seems to imply that time is different from change itself. Most importantly, however, we can once again go back to the fact that that the perception of the passing of time does not influence the passing of it in our saying (What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognize it), since, as we saw, it is essentially related to change in general, and not a particular change as such, which sounds Aristotelian.[383] Another component of our saying is the notion or concept of measuring, which is also an important component of temporal observations we saw in Aristotle's analysis. We saw that time is a countable number, which makes it measurable, and which thereby turns the question about the Kingdom into a clearly temporal question from the perspective of measurability when we find the question "When?" The same issue of temporality is contextualized/analysed through a Christological/Gnostic perspective by Gathercole: "the point in GTh 51 is not that an event has taken place by which the *Eschaton* has come, but rather that the kingdom is immanent. This is what crucially must be 'known' (51.2), though this knowledge and the 'rest' that comes with it need not be interpreted along 'Gnostic' lines in the technical sense."[384] It becomes clearer that interpretations of this saying by authors vary, even to the level of opposite opinions. The same concerns found in contemporary authors about the "forthcoming or realized Kingdom in the Now (as realized *eschatology* or upcoming *eschatological* awaiting) in the community at the time of the writing," are confirmed by Gagné as well.[385] We saw, however, that Aristotle approached the notion of "when" from a more physical perspective, as a way of marking out by a regular motion.[386] Such an analysis lead us to his concept of Now. Without it, temporality could not be adequately conceptualized because of the approach which affirms a state which is already realized in our saying, and which can be understood or read as Now as well. We saw that authors such as Trostyanskiy pointed out that "Now is a potential divider and actual unifier of time, an extensionless instant that, nevertheless, secures the continuity of a temporal series."[387] At the same time, the complexity of the question of the disciples and the answer as "not perceived" can also be related to Aristotle's position about how the Now should not be mistaken for "Now being in time," as pointed out by Romano: "but of course to say that the Now is "in time" does not mean here that it is 'a part' of time, nor that it is 'in time."[388] This leads us to the immeasurability of the notion of Now as a concept that is a "potential divider in time" inside a "temporal development," and consequently temporality in Aristotle. This issue, which is purely Aristotelian, also presents the reason for the inability of the disciples to perceive it as already manifested in the Now in the answer: "That for which you (pl.) are looking for has come, but you do not know it."

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[382] Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 129.
[383] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 39.
[384] *Pace* Vielhauer, 'ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ: Zum Gnostischen Hintergrund des Thomasevangelium', 281– 299, for whom 'rest' is understood as Gnostic (albeit Gnostic in a generalised sense) in Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 413.
[385] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 151.
[386] Bowin, "Aristotle on the Perception and Cognition of Time," 185.
[387] Trostyanskiy, Sergey. "Iamblichus' Response to Aristotle's and Pseudo-Archytas' Theories of Time:" *Forum Philosophicum* 21, no. 2 (2016):192. https://doi.org/10.5840/forphil201621213
[388] Romano, *Event and Time*, 40.

Saying 57

Jesus said: The Kingdom of the Father is like a man who had [good] seed. His enemy came in the night, sowed weed among the good seed. The man did not let them to pluck out the weed. He said to them, 'Lest (while) you go to pluck out the weed, you pluck out the grain with it.' For on the day of the harvest, the weeds will be manifest, plucked out, (and) burned.'

Plato:

This saying has temporality as a concept at its core. It resonates with Plato's thinking quite convincingly as well. Turetzky indicated that in Plato, time can be understood, among other ways, as an order-inducing element. It links the intelligible order of the eternal forms with orderly change as seen in nature.[389] Furthermore, the underlying cyclicality of temporal observances can also be perceived in this parable due to the language used and which is seasonal in character. It, therefore, relates to the concept of time as tied to the sequential ordering in nature while at the same time remaining connected to change, just like in Plato's thinking. Böhme confirmed that time in Plato has a systematic function connected with the concept of numbers as an order-inducing element.[390] The systematic function of time in change allows for a proper distinguishing between the weed and the good seed, when we read that, "the man did not let them to pluck out the weed." Commentaries by Lüdemann and Funk focus on the socio-political elements in the saying. Funk noted that from his position, Thomas kept the parable because it presented two types of people; whereby the one that are "members of the sect" are "in the know while the other cannot "hear."[391] Lüdemann remarked comparably that "Thomas twists the parable to see non-Gnostics and Gnostics depicted in the weeds and in the good seed in order to emphasize the dualism between" the gnostic and non-gnostic so as to "emphasize the lasting separation."[392] Gagné noted rightly, from a textual-critical perspective that he agrees with the question pointed out by Gathercole, by which it is unclear whether the saying is communicating something concerning the Kingdom (if the lesson is about it in its entirety) or the action of it.[393] Such an action is fundamentally a temporal question from our perspective. Time in *Timaeus* is interesting for all the above. Grasso noted, for example, that the concept of an *Eikon* in Plato's *Timaeus* is closely connected to questions of "being and becoming."[394] The created should consequently become (as an active; changing principle) as close to the image of the *Demiurge* as possible in time, as "time is that element" which allows it to happen,[395] and in which change is the underlying principle of all. Such a concept of temporality and its role and position in the created might potentially help the reader/listener to acquire a "proper understanding of the saying" due to the simple fact that the saying is communicating seasons as an underlying temporal observance, which technically, from this perspective makes the above socio-political commentaries less relevant. They ideally should instead focus on the changing and temporal in their contextualization Plato developed these concepts in his *Statesman* as well. The message is clearly denoting change as the utmost reality for any temporal description, as we saw in the *Statesman*, using a similar language and symbolism when we read: "since every soul had fulfilled all its births by falling into the earth as seed its

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[389] Turetzky, *Time*, 16.
[390] Böhme, *Zeit Und Zahl, Studien zur Zeittheorie bei Platon, Aristoteles, Leibniz und Kant*, 111.
[391] Funk, *The Five Gospels*, 505.
[392] Ludemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years*, 618-619.
[393] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 160.
[394] Grasso, Myth, Image and Likeness in Plato's Timaeus," 355.
[395] Grasso, "Myth, Image and Likeness in Plato's Timaeus," 355.

prescribed number of times, then the helmsman of the universe dropped the tiller...,"[396] to describe temporality and the relationship with the One. Time is part of the created, yet somehow still connected to the Form because concepts of "was" and "will be" do not apply to time, and because they are connected to cyclical movements of planets and sequential ordering of nature according to numbers, and as such, act as standards of goodness and beauty.[397] We should therefore not skip the "sequential order of nature" and "standards of goodness and beauty" in our observations. If we approach the text from a didactic perspective, it might indeed serve as an instruction about the "nature of life and its occurrences," so as to instruct the reader/listener on questions about time and life.

Aristotle:

We can, of course, recognize concepts of change as the actualization of potentiality as well as change in magnitude in the context of time. However, as we have it in this saying, this position is too far off from Aristotle's context and concepts. It is, as such, potentially Aristotelian but not Aristotle's notion on time.

Saying 96

Jesus said: The Kingdom of the Father is like a woman. She took a little leaven, [hid] it in dough (and) she made it into large loaves of bread. He who has ears to listen, let him who has ears hear!

Plato:

It is worth noting at the beginning of our analysis, that the description of the development in the saying does not depict the Kingdom. The action of the Kingdom or manifestation describes the act of the woman and not the woman herself in her totality. Her actions describe how the Kingdom is "acting". It thus requires an understanding of the nature of temporality. Gathercole noted that authors take mainly two perspectives: according to the first, as seen in Doran for example, the focus is on the action of the Kingdom (She took ..., hid ..., and made ...'), while authors such as "Grant & Freedman see a rather Pelagian attitude in such an emphasis," and Helderman who noted a "Manichean redactor 6–98 *en bloc*." The second group as represented by Nordsieck, Pokorny and Hedrick focus on the fact that the Kingdom "becomes disproportionately large."[398] We can recognize for our purpose that the temporal description offered could be identified as change or growth, which resonates with models already presented in saying 8, for example. In the same way, we can see that "being and becoming," as part of the manifested in Plato's model, also resonate with this saying. As noted earlier, the created should accordingly be as close to the image of the Demiurge as possible by allowing the becoming to be manifested, for which time is that element allowing that to be (come).[399] This coincides with Drozdek's position à on time in Plato in the created: "Time in it serves the function which allows a creation to get closer to the ideal."[400] It is confirmed by Turetzky where there is a connection of the comprehensible order of the everlasting forms to an orderly change as seen in nature.[401] We shall

[396] Plato, *The Statesman*, 272e.
[397] Turetzky, *Time*, 16-17.
[398] For more a detailed context see: Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 546.
[399] Grasso, "Myth, Image and Likeness in Plato's Timaeus," 355.
[400] Drozdek, *In the Beginning Was the Aperion; Infinity in Greek Philosophy*, 97.
[401] Turetzky, *Time*, 16.

not address the complexities arising from temporality as an impermanent cyclical manifestation at the same time, due to the fact that it does not deal with questions of cyclicality or the issue of transience, but only aspects of it. At the same time, time is in Plato as that which shows properties of being and eternity. Just like in this saying, it draws a picture about time and the manifested in such a way that time itself seems, from the outside, to be similar to this ideal form, represented as overlaid structure onto chaos, but should not be equated with the ideal, as pointed out earlier (and with all the distinctions between Plato's positions and that of previous schools, as already mentioned as well).[402] Therefore, if we take Plato's position on time according to which it is ontologically inferior to change, we can conclude that time, even here, allows for the change to be manifested. Furthermore, when we drew out the relationship between time and Plato's *Aeon*, we also saw that Mesch pointed out that the *Aeon* cannot entirely dismiss movement and multitude,[403] as section 30d of *Timaeus* reads: "For since God desired to make it resemble most closely that intelligible Creature which is fairest of all and in all ways most perfect, He constructed it as a Living Creature, one and visible, containing within itself all the living creatures which are by nature akin to itself."[404] Such a position is strikingly similar to the description found in this saying. All these positions lead us to conclude that the Kingdom exhibits actions as fundamentally connected to temporality and allows growth (in or of it) or is part of the manifested component of it. This makes Plato's philosophy into a possible source/cultural influence, and which might have potentially also been preserved as such reading, while even here, noting that the didactic function cannot escape since the saying ends with: "He who has ears to listen, let him who has ears hear."[405]

Aristotle:

Just like in the case of saying 20, we can recognize some ideas as coming from Aristotle. The Aristotelian centrality of potentiality, if connected to time, underlines that time is not objectively real, but is linked to potentiality in the same way that motion, along a certain length, cannot be understood as "points waiting."[406] All these aspects of this saying would be impossible to understand without the position of temporality in the context of "potentiality." This saying communicates such potentiality in its temporal description of the dough rising in time. This is interesting from a "Gnostic" perspective as well, as pointed out by Gagné. He focuses on "toiling" for the Kingdom to be actualized as manifested. We read about his points that a hidden property, or "inner property" requires toiling to be realized, which of course is a temporal observation.[407] The act of actualization in the temporal should be seen, for example, in the manifestation of "rising" as found in the saying. Valantasis, noted the centrality of time in the saying as well by quoting Crossan: "the Father's rule does not seem obvious at first, but its presence becomes manifested over time."[408] Without such an "underlying temporal understanding" the meaning of the saying would not be manageable. The saying, therefore, actively communicates potentiality and actualization in an Aristotelian manner. Time is unmistakably present or even central. The didactic quality (potential purpose) remains even from this perspective.

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[402] See section: "Time vs. Eternity and Order," 11.
[403] Mesch, "Die Ontologische Bedeutung der Zeit in Platons Timaios," 232.
[404] Plato, *Timaeus*, 30a.
[405] Gathercole noted that: "Here it perhaps signals the need to interpret this parable in an allegorical sense." Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 548.
[406] Anapolitanos and Christopoulou, "Aristotelian Time," 42.
[407] For an excellent and multifaceted overview, connection with other sayings as well as Gnostic concepts see: Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 214.
[408] Crossan 1973, 38 in Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 176.

Saying 97

Jesus said: The Kingdom of the [Father] is like a woman carrying a jar full of ground grain. As she was walking [on a] distant road, the handle of the jar broke (and) the ground grain spilled behind her [on] the road. She did not realize it; she did not know how to labour. When she reached her house, she put down the jar (and) found it empty.

Plato:

There are several interesting components that are to be observed from a temporal perspective. The saying describes an order of things which includes "conscious" and "unconscious" components, where the Kingdom is depicted like a woman carrying and reaching her destination "empty handed."[409] Let us contextualize its temporality with that found in *Timaeus*. Cushman pointed out in Plato's deliberations that "time does not exist apart from the existence of ordered as distinguished from unordered motion."[410] "The concept of the spreading out and not being perceived" is compatible with such a conclusion and the notion of "time in the Kingdom," as noted by Gagné as well where he connects it with Saying 113.[411] For Goldin, the concept of *Aeon* includes change and therefore has to include time in itself.[412] At the same time, we know that Drozdek saw that time is necessary for the "imitation of perfection" through movement in *Timaeus* 37d.[413] Gagné concluded similarly that "work and toil" are required for those who "seek" the Kingdom and experience "everlasting life."[414] It is certainly remarkable to note for our purpose that even these conclusions are temporal, which confirms temporal observations as the central underlying topic in change, just like in both Plato and Aristotle. The concept of time as required for the *Aeon* is highly debated but is nevertheless related to change. In the context of Plato's *Statesman,* Goldin noted it as connected to the concept of a "progressive decay,"[415] while authors such as Mason[416] noted the importance of "letting go" for the *phronesis* to be expressed (*Statesman* 272a). If compared to the *Statesman*, we can additionally reinforce our view that a subjective perception of a temporal development and its results is less relevant than presupposed. It is interesting to mention that Valantasis sees this development as "negative" from a social and psychological perspective. We read that: "Unrecognized emptiness characterizes the life lived in the world whose resources (thought to be carefully stored) leak away fruitlessly."[417] However, if we go back to commentaries on Plato, we can see that Horn, points to section 296e of the *Statesman* where time is required for a proper understanding of the nature of the One. Temporality in the saying can consequently imply all of the above concepts in its description of the Kingdom. It is connected to the notion of an ordered motion. It can thus depict the view of an *Aeon* as connected to change. Time is additionally also easily correlated with an "imitation of perfection," due to the fact that there is movement present, making the whole saying focused on the development of the Kingdom in time, regardless of how this development may seem to us. Lüdemann, again, from a perspective that focuses on the "didactic purpose" noted in this respect that, "how is it that the

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[409] Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 90 points to Bauer, *Echte Jesuworte*, 137 for a Naassene interpretation.
[410] Cushman, "Greek and Christian Views of Time," 257.
[411] In this context it is linguistically connected to the "Kingdom." See Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 216.
[412] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 128.
[413] Drozdek, *In the Beginning Was the Aperion; Infinity in Greek Philosophy*, 97.
[414] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 216.
[415] Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time," 139.
[416] Mason, Andrew J. "On the Status of Nous in the Philebus." *Phronesis* 59, no. 2 (March 4, 2014): 153. https://doi.org/10.1163/15685284-12341264.
[417] Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 178.

woman did not observe this? So, the parable must be interpreted in the light of these contradictions. The reader should always be on guard. . . . the parable is inauthentic, as it is an admonition to the individual Gnostic."[418] The model as seen in the *Statesman* is however compatible with the idea as found in the saying itself. The notion of the progressive decay and the importance of "letting go" seems to be present in the saying as well, which can explain why the woman did not stop nor deploys a "conscious action/reaction" to prevent a gradual loss on the road (in time). Instead, we see her continuing on her path because "she didn't know how to labour" or "behave," as shown in a *phronesis* reality as "letting go to its own volition" in Plato. It therefore teaches the importance of such an understanding and the property of the temporal itself in the Kingdom. All these would present the narrative as laid out "undoubtably," compatible with ideas about time that got "preserved" and as coming from Plato. This would certainly describe the whole purpose as communicating "temporality." It consequently, once again, underlines the complexity of a didactic approach which is present in this saying as well.

Aristotle:

We can thematically connect sayings 96 with 97.[419] The centrality of "a phenomenon of development" of/in time can once again be recognized. As such, we can contextualize it with the concept of time in potentiality, since it, denotes that time is not objectively real, in the same way as motion along a certain length cannot be understood as "points waiting," as depicted in a woman that arrived "empty handed." We can identify the notion of change, as represented through the development in time (spilling, walking, etc.) as "Aristotle's Time." Bruce noted that the saying is warning "against self-confidence," as the knowledge about the "saving" is gradually lost in time,[420] thereby, once again, implicity pointing out the centrality of the temporal, despite its socio-political\theological commentary. If we go back to Aristotle we find Coope's analysis of temporality, as something of change but not change itself.[421] Furthermore, just like in our representation of a woman unaware of the development, we saw that the perception of time is irrelevant for its passing in Aristotle,[422] emphasizing the possibility for the saying to be interpreted from an Aristotelian lens even more striking.

[418] Lüdemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years*, 637.
[419] Gagné noted that a common theme of "knowing" the true reality, and connects it in this way with sayings 5, 18, 19, 46, 51, 56, 65, 67, 69, 78, 80, 91, 103, and 105. Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 216.
[420] Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*, 148.
[421] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 200.
[422] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 39.

Saying 113

His disciples said to him: On what day will the Kingdom come?
It will not come by watching (for it). They will not say, 'Look, here' or 'Look there.' Rather, the Kingdom of the Father is spread out on the earth, and men do not perceive it.

Plato:

This saying uses the language of temporality, and answers questions about the "when" by pointing to the "where." Gagné and Meyer's observations are interesting as they recognize a similar language in the *Gospel of Mary* where we read: "Watch that no one mislead you, saying, 'Look, here,' or 'Look, there,' for the child of humankind is within you. Follow him. Those who seek him will find him. Go, then, and preach the gospel of the kingdom."[423] This saying has however, this distinct difference in which there is no instruction for the reader/listener, but rather remains an observation itself. It speaks of a state of already "spread out upon earth," which sounds like the seed questions/answers seen earlier in sayings 9, 20 and 57. Gagné noted that the "spreading out" is effectuated through the solitary-elect and connects it to saying 49 and 50 and a "return to the place of life for the elect."[424] What can we identify from a temporal perspective in this saying? It seems that the "property" of the Kingdom is such that it is already present as an "all-encompassing" property, which is "spread out" and for which the "waiting for" makes no sense. Is it, therefore, that the saying can be "understood" only if temporality is "understood"? Lüdemann noted in this context: "... it rejects all speculation about the date of its arrival, giving the reason that the kingdom of God is already spread out over the earth, but is not seen by people."[425] We have already noted that time, for Plato, is that which is " … linking the intelligible order of the eternal forms with an orderly change as seen in nature,"[426] as well as that it is connected to change as the underlying concept. Time manifests itself and can be understood through numbers, and it is connected to eternity in Plato, and does not necessarily stand in opposition to it. Therefore, time is understood as a truthful model of eternity while having its particular numeration as an order-inducing element. Consequently, these conceptualizations resonate with "descriptions" which we see in this saying as well, and without which, the saying would make less sense to the reader/listener. If we were to introduce these temporal descriptions coming from Plato, what are we to see in this saying? We are left with a description of a Kingdom that is spread out in such a way that it is "everywhere" but that is not "seen." This answer, in the given context which asks a temporal question "when" and whereby the answer is a spatial one, if analysed as connected to Plato's observations, does seem to be compatible with temporal descriptions through spatial analysis as investigated by Plato as well. For this, we do not need to go any further than Plato's description itself: "Time, then, came into existence along with the Heaven, to the end that having been generated together they might also be dissolved together, if ever a dissolution of them should take place; and it was made after the pattern of the Eternal Nature, to the end that it might be as like thereto as possible; for whereas the pattern is existent through all eternity."[427] It might also be interesting to be reminded in this context that Plato insisted on different qualities between "rational understanding" and "opinion" and by which opinion is also including instinctive observation. Such a position, if contextualized, might be read in this saying as well, and consequently, the asking

[423] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 108.
[424] Gagné, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 239 and Meyer, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 108.
[425] Lüdemann, *Jesus After 2000 Years*, 644.
[426] Turetzky, *Time*, 16.
[427] Plato. *Timaeus*, 38.

about a "when" can be even commented on by answering "where," which basically states that these are opinions and not the proper, or at least, not sufficient, way to understand the Kingdom as an All. Plato postulated the All in such a manner as we saw earlier.[428] Gathercole noted in a very similar way that "Jesus dismisses the 'when' question, stating that the kingdom is (as it always has been) accessible now."[429] We have also noticed how Plato analysed questions about being and becoming and how Grasso points out that time is that element which allows that to be (come).[430] Such positions, if we are to introduce these speculations, like many authors attempt to present as truths or understandings, would explain how and why temporal questions are addressed in commentaries in this respect. It certainly allows for us to see temporality as that element for the development of the Kingdom, something not perceived by the disciples.

Aristotle:

This saying is connected thematically to saying 51, and therefore, most observations we made there are valid for this saying as well. Even if we go back to saying 8, we can recognize time as essentially connected to change. However, we can also recognize that, once again, the perception of the passing of time does not influence its passing, just like in Aristotle.[431] Consequently, the temporal perception is not related to the passing of time, since the disciples are still awaiting (not perceiving) the manifestation of change through temporality, when asking "On what day" (Rather, the Kingdom of the Father is spread out on the earth, and men do not perceive it.) This makes temporality as part the Kingdom (or the Kingdom itself), and which manifestation is not perceived. Gathercole points to Zöckler where we can read that the Kingdom is not purely transcendental but still accessible, which resonates with the notion of temporality as found in Aristotle.[432] Valantasis makes a temporal observation in a different context as well: "The Kingdom does not function as an apocalyptic vision (see also Saying 91), or a temporal end, but as a state of being congruent with the existent world and present for those capable of seeing it."[433] For our purposes of contextualization, the most important aspect of it is to be connected to the fact that the Kingdom is not perceived; yet it is spread out everywhere, just like time. Time is not related to the perception of it in Aristotle, due to the fact that it is essentially related to change in general, and not a particular change as such.[434]

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[428] See: Plato's Ontological Framework on page 7, for a description of these relationships as found in Plato's ontological framework.
[429] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 604.
[430] Grasso, "Myth, Image and Likeness in Plato's Timaeus," 355.
[431] Coope, *Time for Aristotle*, 39.
[432] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 606.
[433] Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 93.
[434] Anapolitanos and Christopoulou, "Aristotelian Time," 39.

Conclusion

The inquiry began with a recognition that temporal descriptions play a significant part in the context of Kingdom sayings in the GThom. This led me to identify Plato's and Aristotle's notions of time and not remain in subsequent Neoplatonic times in the first chapters of my thesis. I have subsequently turned my attention to sayings in the GThom which focused on the temporal. I have contextualized/interpreted/looked at them through Plato's and Aristotle's temporal philosophy. My inquiry was making use of the Reader-response approach, to creatively, from an informed position, imagine how an implied reader/writer/community etc. might have used echoes of Plato and Aristotle in the Thomasine gospel.

This thesis aimed at offering a fairly synthesized approach to intricate notions in order to present a possible reading of the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions related to time in the context of the GThom. It is quite possible that for an implied reader/user/community/compiler, etc., temporality, in the context of the Thomasine sayings, echoes with concepts which Plato and Aristotle developed in their philosophies.

What are we to conclude about temporality itself in the GThom and time of/in the Kingdom in it? In understanding temporality, as communicated to the listener/reader of the sayings, readers are invited to pay attention to the nature of things in time, and not just to focus on the "otherworldly." This is an exciting find, since form this perspective, we are not dealing with a typical "Gnostic" text as some argue. Consequently, an understanding of time and therefore temporality in the created (existence) can be seen as a positive element, as it allows for an interpretation of a Kingdom that is progressing in time. These temporal observations certainly underline the complexity of the transmission of ideas. This requires a reader/listener of the GThom to focus on the all-encompassing understanding of the "nature of the Kingdom" to attain a complete interpretation of the Thomasine gospel and not "experience death," as promised in Saying 1.

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