

## TRADITIONAL AND COSMIC GODS IN LATER PLATO AND THE EARLY ACADEMY

This book sheds new light on Plato's cosmology in relation to Greek religion by examining the contested distinction between the traditional and cosmic gods. A close reading of the later dialogues shows that the two families of gods are routinely deployed to organise and structure Plato's accounts of the origins of the universe and of humanity and its social institutions, as well as to illuminate the moral and political ideals of philosophical utopias. Vilius Bartninkas argues that the presence of the two kinds of gods creates a dynamic, yet productive, tension in Plato's thinking which is unmistakable and which is not resolved until the works of his students. Thus the book closes by exploring how the cosmological and religious ideas of Plato's later dialogues resurfaced in the Early Academy and how the debates initiated there ultimately led to the collapse of this theological distinction.

VILIUS BARTNINKAS is an assistant professor at Vilnius University. He has published various articles on Greek philosophy and political theory, and Lithuanian translations of Plato's *Lysis* (2014) and *Alcibiades* (2016).

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VILIUS BARTNINKAS

*Vilnius University*



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To my grandmother Marija Zakarauskiė

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book has its roots in my work for an MPhil and a PhD at the University of Cambridge. It began as a study of Plato's political philosophy, but I gradually became fascinated with religion, theology and cosmology. For this transformative journey, I am first and foremost thankful to Gábor Betegh, whose supervisions were an endless source of discoveries, inspiration, guidance and care. I am grateful for continuing our conversation to this day. It nourished this book in truly exciting and unexpected ways. My thanks also go to Nicholas Denyer, who was a critical, but always patient and helpful, reader of my work. I could not have asked for better teachers.

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## Preface and Acknowledgements

fellowship was funded by Vilnius University. I am grateful to these institutions for making my research possible.

Throughout this book I use, slightly modified, Grube's (1974) translation of the *Republic*, Zeyl's (2000) translation of the *Timaeus*, Griffith's (2017) translation of the *Laws*, McKirahan's (1997) translation of the *Epinomis* and Guthrie's (1939) text and translation of Aristotle's *De Caelo*. All remaining translations from Greek and Latin sources are my own unless otherwise stated. The Greek texts of Plato's dialogues are from Burnet's (1968) edition, except for the *Epinomis*, for which I follow Tarán's (1975) edition.

A shorter version of Sections 3.2–3.4 is published as a paper titled 'Imitating the traditional gods: moral virtues and cult practice in Plato's *Laws*' in *Mnemosyne* (2021, advance articles). Its material was revised and adapted to the purposes of the present monograph. I would like to thank the publisher for the permission to reuse this article.

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## Preface and Acknowledgements

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## ABBREVIATIONS

**Ancient Sources***Aeschylus*

<i>Ag.</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>
<i>Th.</i>	<i>Seven against Thebes</i>
<i>Supp.</i>	<i>Suppliant Women</i>

*Aëtius*

<i>Plac.</i>	<i>Placita</i>
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*Alexander of Aphrodisias*

<i>In Metaph.</i>	<i>In Aristotelis Metaphysica commentaria</i>
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*Apollodorus*

<i>Bibl.</i>	<i>Bibliotheca</i>
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*Aristotle*

<i>Cael.</i>	<i>De Caelo</i>
<i>De An.</i>	<i>De Anima</i>
<i>GA</i>	<i>Generation of Animals</i>
<i>Metaph.</i>	<i>Metaphysics</i>
<i>EN</i>	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Politics</i>
<i>Top.</i>	<i>Topics</i>

## List of Abbreviations

*Asclepius*

*In Metaph.*     *In Aristotelis Metaphysicorum libros A–Z  
 commentaria*

*Augustine*

*De civ. D.*     *The City of God*

*Cicero*

*ND*     *De Natura Deorum*  
*Tusc.*     *Tusculan Disputations*

*Clement of Alexandria*

*Protr.*     *Protrepticus*

*Diogenes Laertius*

*D. L.*     *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*

*Euripides*

*Cyc.*     *Cyclops*  
*Hipp.*     *Hippolytus*

*Galen*

*QAM*     *The Capacities of the Soul Depend on the Mixture of the  
 Body*

*Herodotus*

*Hist.*     *Histories*

## List of Abbreviations

*Hesiod*

<i>Cat.</i>	<i>Catalogue of Women</i>
<i>Sc.</i>	<i>The Shield</i>
<i>Th.</i>	<i>Theogony</i>
<i>Op.</i>	<i>Works and Days</i>

*Homer*

<i>Il.</i>	<i>Iliad</i>
<i>Od.</i>	<i>Odyssey</i>

*Iamblichus*

<i>Theol. Ar.</i>	<i>Theologoumena Arithmeticae</i>
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*Pausanias*

<i>Pausanias</i>	<i>Description of Greece</i>
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*Philip of Opus [Pseudo-Plato]*

<i>Epin.</i>	<i>Epinomis</i>
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*Pindar*

<i>O.</i>	<i>Olympian Odes</i>
<i>P.</i>	<i>Pythian Odes</i>

*Plato*

<i>Ap.</i>	<i>Apology</i>
<i>Cra.</i>	<i>Cratylus</i>
<i>Criti.</i>	<i>Critias</i>
<i>Euthd.</i>	<i>Euthydemus</i>
<i>Grg.</i>	<i>Gorgias</i>
<i>Hp. Ma.</i>	<i>Hippias Major</i>
<i>Lg.</i>	<i>Laws</i>

## List of Abbreviations

<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Letters</i>
<i>Mx.</i>	<i>Menexenus</i>
<i>Phdr.</i>	<i>Phaedrus</i>
<i>Phlb.</i>	<i>Philebus</i>
<i>Prt.</i>	<i>Protagoras</i>
<i>R.</i>	<i>Republic</i>
<i>Sph.</i>	<i>Sophist</i>
<i>Plt.</i>	<i>Statesman</i>
<i>Smp.</i>	<i>Symposium</i>
<i>Tht.</i>	<i>Theaetetus</i>
<i>Ti.</i>	<i>Timaeus</i>

*Plutarch*

<i>De fac.</i>	<i>De Facie</i>
<i>De Is. et Osir.</i>	<i>De Iside et Osiride</i>
<i>De Procr. An. In Ti.</i>	<i>De Procreatione Animae in Timaeo</i>
<i>Quaest. conv.</i>	<i>Quaestiones convivales</i>
<i>Quaest. Plat.</i>	<i>Platonicae quaestiones</i>

*Proclus*

<i>In Prm.</i>	<i>In Platonis Parmenidem commentarii</i>
<i>In Ti.</i>	<i>In Platonis Timaeum commentarii</i>

*Sextus Empiricus*

<i>Adv. Log.</i>	<i>Adversus Logicos</i>
<i>Adv. Phys.</i>	<i>Adversus Physicos</i>

*Simplicius*

<i>In Cael.</i>	<i>In Aristotelis de Caelo commentarii</i>
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*Tertullian*

<i>Ad nat.</i>	<i>Ad nationes</i>
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## List of Abbreviations

*Themistius*

*In de An.*     *In Aristotelis de Anima paraphrasis*

*Theophrastus*

*Metaph.*     *Metaphysics*

*Xenophon*

*HG*     *Historia Graeca (Hellenica)*

*Mem.*     *Memorabilia*

**Reference Works**

- CC     Collard, C., and Cropp, M. (trans.), Euripides (2008) *Fragments: Oedipus–Chrysippus, Other Fragments*. Cambridge, MA.
- DK     Diels H., and Kranz W. (1952) *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th ed. Berlin.
- Fowler     Fowler, R. L. (2013) *Early Greek Mythography*. Oxford.
- IP     Isnardi Parente, M. (2012) *Senocrate e Ermodoro. Testimonianze e Frammenti*, rev. by T. Dorandi. Pisa.
- Kern     Kern, O. (1922) *Orphicorum fragmenta*. Berlin.
- LSJ     Liddell H. G., Scott R., and Jones, H. S. (1996) *A Greek English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement*. Oxford.
- MR     Mansfeld, J., and Runia, D. T. (2020) *Aëtiana V: An Edition of the Reconstructed Text of the Placita with a Commentary and a Collection of Related Texts*. Leiden.
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