CHAPTER I

At the limits of Hellenism
An introduction

Philosophers are interpreters of things that are unknown to most people.[1]

Even if they should make images of [God] in any way whatsoever and translate Him for us with a word – but He is beyond every word . . .[2]

HELLENISM IN THE THIRD CENTURY AD

The cultural history of the eastern Mediterranean following the conquests of Alexander and his Greco-Macedonian troops (in the fourth century BC) and then Pompey the Great and his Roman troops (in the first century) has for a long time been told as the story of a massive clash of cultures, in which Greek culture, under the sweeping term of "Hellenism," came to dominate the native cultural landscape of the East. Modern historians have often preferred to use the term Hellenism to designate a colossal cultural process in which an active and powerful Greek culture overwhelmed passive or only weakly resistant Eastern cultures. The first and most memorable phase had, according to this modern model, occurred during and following the campaigns of Alexander the Great, whose work as a missionary of enlightened Greek culture is enshrined in the picture of his sleeping with a copy of the *Iliad* under his pillow throughout his conquests; the second phase under the Romans merely solidified the Hellenizing impact for future generations. Rome, after all, had itself fallen under the cultural hypnotism of Greek culture well before its own acquisition of the East, as Horace's well-known dictum reminds us (*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit*, "Captive Greece captured her wild conqueror").[3]

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[1] Porph. *in Categ.*, CAG IV.I, p. 55.10.   [2] Anon., *Comm.Parm.* fr. 4, p. 9.21–23 Hadot.

[3] Horace, *Epistles* 2.1; cf. Pliny *Ep.* 8.24, which indicates the two-edged nature of Roman imperialism in submitting to and paternalistically creating the Greek heritage; see Alcock 2001: 323–350; C. R. Whittaker 1997: 143–163, esp. 152–160.

The modern temptation to develop such a master narrative of clashing civilizations and the generalized representations of a monolithic cultural triumphalism have, however, begun to be tempered by searching investigations into the complexity of ancient cultural engagements or criticisms of prevalent models of cultural interaction. Conflict schemas are still useful, but in recognizably limited ways, while nuanced investigations are now providing wonderfully complex and vibrant accounts of the multiple, sometimes ad hoc, cluster of accommodations, assimilations, manipulations, resistances, refractions, cleavages, and connections in the various interactions and articulations of cultural players who cannot be categorized as simply active or simply passive.

Importantly, many recent discussions have attempted to set aside modern definitions of Hellenism and have called instead for careful attention to ancient identifications: What did ancient Greek speakers suppose the terms *Hellēnismos* and *hellēnizein* denoted?[4] On the one hand, it is difficult to find ancient usage of these terms to mean quite what modern conceptions have envisaged. While many Hellenistic and imperial era authors certainly did offer literary representations of a cultural clash of world-shaking proportions, they usually continued to conceive of "Hellenism" in the rather narrow and prosaic terms laid down already in the classical period.[5] At least as early as Plato, the verb *hellēnizein* (from which *Hellēnismos* derived) referred to speaking Greek well;[6] and, at least as early as the late Hellenistic period the noun *Hellēnismos* similarly designated primarily the proper use of Greek.[7] On the other hand, ancient understandings of the Greek language and, in particular, the correct use of the Greek language, recognized its embeddedness within social, political, and intellectual matrices that were fraught with significance (and anxiety) for those intent on locating themselves at desired levels of authority, honor, and economic well-being. Properly contextualized, then, even the linguistically circumscribed domain for the term Hellenism (as "speaking Greek") begins to answer the

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[4] See the collection of essays in Said 1991.

[5] Significantly, it would be a Jewish text that seems first to have used the term *Hellēnismos* in a stronger sense, incorporating cultural or religious connotations; see II Macc. 4.13. While this is the earliest attestation of the term, it seems most likely that the linguistic usage was the original and more common, because of its derivation from the earlier well-attested use of *hellēnizein* (see the next two notes).

[6] Xen. *Anab.* 7.3.25; Pl. *Protag.* 328a; *Meno* 82b4; *Charm.* 159a; *Alcib.* 111a,c; Arist. *Rhet.* 1407a20, 1413b6; *Sophist.elench.* 182a14, 34; Philodemus, *Poem.* fr. 100.8 Janko; Dion. Hal. *Demosth.dict.* 5.21; Strabo 2.3.4; 14.2.28. See Casevitz 1991; Vassilaki 2007: 1118–1129.

[7] Diog. Bab. ap. Diog. Laert. 7.59; Philod. *Poem.* frs. 94.23, 100.12 Janko; Strabo 14.2.28; Sext. Emp. *Adv.Gramm.* 1.10–11; as well as grammatical handbooks bearing the title *On Hellenism* by Trypho, Philoxenus and others.

questions of cultural change, conflict, exchange, and absorption with which historians and classicists of the modern period have concerned themselves when using the term. Language was rooted in broader configurations of elite culture (*paideia*), historical traditions, conceptions of social life and practices, intellectual authority, political power, and so on.[8]

Any attempt to grapple adequately with these clusters of culturally formative activities and conceptual frames must include an inquiry into the question of Greek identity. Not only must we ask how classical and post-classical texts used *hellēnizein* and *Hellēnismos*, and how these conceptions worked within broader constellations of meaning and practice; the question must also be addressed regarding how they identified themselves as Greeks (*Hellēnes*). What did it mean to be Greek for self-ascribed Greeks (or, for that matter, for non-Greeks)?[9] Connected to this, who were the other peoples from whom Greeks were distinguished and what marks of difference had been articulated to affirm the distinction? The movement of modern investigation towards a more cautious attempt to isolate and assess the various expressions of Greekness, or Hellenicity, in antiquity is surely welcome in that it provides more rigorous checks on the application of inappropriate models that simplify or distort the otherwise variegated expressions of ancient conceptual and performative frameworks. Any history of Hellenism (understood as a cluster of often disparate cultural encounters and processes) in the Roman Mediterranean or in late antiquity more broadly requires (even though it need not be strictly limited to) a history of Hellenicity, that is, a history of the rhetorical formulations of the Greek self in contradistinction from – or even in conversation with – its others.

The present inquiry is meant to be a chapter in that history. Porphyry of Tyre (*c*.AD 235–*c*.305) probably would have used *Hellēnismos* in its common usage as a designation for the proper employment of the Greek language, though we cannot be certain since the extant writings of Porphyry do not contain the term. *Hellēnizein* fares only slightly better with a single, yet highly significant, occurrence in a fragment of his *Against the Christians* where it is applied to a Christian who adopted Greek interpretive strategies when reading the Hebrew Scriptures; hence, "to Hellenize" meant something like "to read like a Greek."[10] Numerous passages, however, discuss the Greeks (*Hellēnes*) and their history, literature, religious practices, and character traits. Yet, in none of these instances does Porphyry expressly

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[8] Whitmarsh 2001; Gleason 1995; Swain 1996.
[9] Hall 2002; Jones 2004: 13–21; Kaldellis 2007; Johnson 2011a.
[10] Porph. *c.Christ*. fr. 39 Harnack. The bibliography on this fragment is quite large. See Zambon 2003; Schott 2008b; Johnson 2011b: 165–181; *idem* forthcoming a; also, Chapter 7 below.

identify himself as a Greek;[11] and, indeed, in some cases he is clearly critical of the Greeks. This may come as something of a surprise since he has been dubbed an "apologist of the Greeks" by one of the greatest modern scholars of Porphyry.[12] But, before we simply reject the appellation, further parsing of its meaning might be possible.

When Joseph Bidez adopted this label for Porphyry, he may have wanted only to emphasize that Porphyry was a defender of "paganism."[13] In this signification, Bidez has been followed by most subsequent assessments of the philosopher whose infamous *Against the Christians* has received a great deal of attention – especially its reference to Hellenizing, which was just noted.[14] The observation that *Hellēn* came to mean "pagan" in late antiquity has been almost ubiquitously made in scholarly discussion of the religious history of the period.[15] If Porphyry were to defend paganism under the name of the "Greeks" or Greekness (either as *Hellēnismos* or as *to hellēnikon*) – or, even if he did not defend, but at least used the terms in this way – this would mark a noteworthy shift in the conception of religion as a cultural idea in late antiquity, and, indeed, he would stand as a precursor to the Christian adaptation of *Hellēn* as "pagan."[16] Two points need to be made, however, before we can countenance such a possibility.

First, the claim that *Hellēn* came to mean "pagan" misleadingly simplifies the conceptual developments of late antiquity, *even among Christian authors*. In spite of Marius Victorinus' assertion that the Greeks (*Graeci*) were those "whom they call *Hellēnas* or *paganos*"[17] (a statement that deserves further interpretation within the context of Victorinus' corpus beyond simply invoking it as proof of the claim that "Hellene" means "pagan" in late antiquity), *Hellēn* continued to carry a cluster of ethnic identity markers among Hellenophone authors. Greeks continued to be identified as those who traced their lineage from Greek ancestors, bore a shared history, and possessed a common fund of writings, teachings, religious practices, theological ideas, and a language with various registers signifying levels of cultural and educational superiority.[18] Certainly, a religious valence could

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[11] The only exception might seem to be *Ep.Aneb.* 2, p. 29.19–20 Sodano; see Chapter 6 below.
[12] Bidez 1913: 6. The most balanced assessment of Bidez's contribution, though without reference to the issue of Greek identity, is Smith 1987: 717–773.
[13] Bidez 1913:154; an "apologista del paganesimo," in Girgenti 1994: 23.
[14] e.g., Sodano 1958: xxxvi; Evangeliou 1992: 111–128; Digeser 2006: 57; Schott 2008a: 52–78 2008b; Sellew 1989: 88; Maurette 2005: 63–81.
[15] Most importantly, see Jüthner 1923: 97–99; Bowersock 1990: 9–11; Chuvin 1990: 7; Van Liefferinge 2001: 247–255; Al. Cameron 2011: 14–32.
[16] Digeser 2006: 57.
[17] Vict. *De homoous. recep.* 1 (PL 8, 1137C), cited at Van Liefferinge 2001: 252.
[18] Johnson 2011b; *idem* 2006a.

receive greater priority when the term "Greek" was used in theological debate or apologetic efforts to differentiate a Christian and Hebrew identity from its non-Hebrew "gentile" (*ethnikoi*) others (especially after *pagani/ Hellēnes* begin frequently to replace the terms *gentiles/ethnikoi* in the fourth century to refer to polytheists).[19] Yet, throughout late antiquity Greekness rarely became a strictly religious identity (whether in the eyes of those who identified themselves as Greeks or those who attacked it), if a religious identity is understood to be an identity delimited by doctrinal or narrowly cultic elements alone. In spite of a heightened religious sense in works dedicated to theology, whether of a Christian or Neoplatonist stamp (i.e., whether of a Theodoret or a Proclus), the term *Hellēn* maintains its earlier breadth.[20] Though this conclusion may appear surprising, especially given the widespread assumptions to the contrary among historians, one is hard-pressed to find a clear instance of a "pagan" author of late antiquity who sought to limit the signification of *Hellēn* to a religious identity in any sustained way.

Even if we prefer the dominant interpretation (identifying Hellene with "pagan"), a second point needs to be made with respect to Porphyry in particular. His development of a "pagan" theological system and his philosophical appraisal of traditional religious activity deserve reassessment.[21] A fairly strong case can be made (and will take up a good deal of our attention in the following chapters) that Porphyry was not a defender of paganism, if the term is taken as a shorthand for the traditional religious practices, or "ways of the forefathers" (*ta patria*), traditionally understood and popularly performed in temples and shrines across the Roman Mediterranean.[22] Many of his works are filled with criticism or reserve towards popular

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[19] Van Liefferinge 2001.   [20] Johnson 2012.

[21] I agree with Pierre Hadot (1995:104–107, 267), who worries that looking for truly systematic thought (with the modern connotations of systematization) in antiquity has made obscure the fact that many ancient philosophical texts functioned as spiritual exercises within pedagogical and psychagogical contexts. I use system (and systematization) here and throughout this book only to refer to the philosopher's activity of ordering knowledge and developing a totalizing vision of the world, its peoples, its gods, and its collections of knowledge – all of this, however, in ways which carried great weight for what we might call spiritual development in the most wide-ranging and cosmic of senses. Thus, I allow for doctrinal variation, albeit within a coherent vision and consistent set of philosophical and cultural tendencies. For Hadot's approach to doctrinal variation within coherency in Porphyry's thought, see Hadot 1968: 1.87–90.

[22] For consideration of the continued viability of the label "pagan" because of its connotations of rootedness and tradition (in spite of the fact that pagans never adopted the label for themselves), see Chuvin 1990: 7–9; McLynn 2009: 573; Johnson 2012: n. 13. Van Liefferinge's critique of Chuvin (2001: 255) rests on the inadequately proven assertion that *paganus* was chosen in its sense of "civilian" in contrast to the "soldiers of Christ"; for criticism of the postulate *paganus* = civilian, see Al. Cameron 2011: 15–16, 19–21. Cameron, on the other hand, has adopted *paganus* = outsider (2011: 24).

religious expressions, and, even in those works that seem more open to
such phenomena, a more nuanced interpretive framework necessitates a
cautious evaluation of his pagan sympathies. A more flexible model of
pagan religious and theological conceptions thus becomes a desideratum,
so that we may adequately account for a philosopher who criticized pop-
ular religious devotion, pursued a heady rationalizing henotheism, and
yet maintained a polytheist theology and vocabulary. Though terms like
"pagan" and "paganism" remain convenient shorthand for discussing the
religious practices of those who refused to follow (exclusively) the God
of the Jews or the Christ of the Christians, it masks the great variety of
theological systems, conceptions, habits of speaking, and repetitious forms
of practice, at the levels of the civic, familial, and individual spheres of
cult.[23] The present book will attempt to delineate at least one possibility of
how a philosopher might go about making theological sense of his world
and the manifold religious expressions it produced; the degree to which
he broke with or perpetuated the strategies, questions, or formulations of
other ancient thinkers will play a significant role here.

Hellēn continued, therefore, to carry a more-than-religious significa-
tion and, furthermore, "paganism" (which is only our modern attempt
at a religious label) represented a mass of variegated and even contradic-
tory approaches to religion, all of which were engaged in various ways
with envisioning the embeddedness of religious cult within ethnic and
cultural frameworks. Instead of an assertion of religious affinity shorn of
cultural entanglements, then, we might find an alternative sense to the
label "defender of Hellenism." Porphyry's Greekness might better appear
to reside in his adoption of the Greek literary and intellectual heritage.[24] As
a *pepaideumenos* (one who had been educated, or was "cultured"), Porphyry
had been formed by educational processes that meticulously cultivated the
reading of Greek texts and the imitation of Greek literary (and moral and
philosophical) models.[25] If we take Hellenism (or Hellenization) to refer
to the processes of an individual's training in the Greek language and lit-
erary heritage then Porphyry stands as one of the most exquisite products

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[23] See Maria Cerutti's (2010: 15–32) comparable remarks in regard to "pagan monotheism."

[24] This seems to be what Mark Edwards (2006: 94) is getting at when he designates the scholarly
engagement with the Greek literary tradition as a "catholic Hellenism." Earlier claims emphasized
the philosophical nature of such engagement: "to be a philosopher [in the third and fourth centuries],
one must become a Greek," which entailed belief in "the sovereignty of intellect in the universe,
the freedom and immortality of the soul and the sufficiency of virtue" (ibid., 19); again, Porphyry,
Plotinus and others were "Greek in spirit" since they believed philosophy was the only means to
true good (ibid., 39).

[25] On this phenomenon in the centuries before Porphyry, see Whitmarsh 2001; Schmitz 1997; Vogt-
Spira 1999: 22–37.

of these processes. His wide range of learning and depth of philological knowledge are stunning. His *Commentary on the Timaeus*, *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, and also *Homeric Questions* combined philological attentiveness with allegorical sensibilities.[26] Though lost to us, treatises on the preface to Thucydides' history, the sources of the Nile, and grammatical problems are included among his works. His *Philological Lecture* recorded traces of plagiarism detected in various authors, while his *Against the Book of Zoroaster* compiled a "string of refutations" proving it to be a recently forged counterfeit.[27] He wrote learned commentaries on many of Aristotle's and Plato's works, as well as on more recent works such as Ptolemy's *Harmonics*. Porphyry's corpus exhibits a firm grasp of Greek language and literature.[28]

With such erudition, one might reasonably conclude that the Phoenician philosopher was clearly a product of Hellenism, even if he never explicitly claimed a Greek identity for himself. Hellenizing processes formed his corpus and the vision of the world it depicts, even if he refused Hellenicity. But how far did Hellenism reach? Recognizing his deep immersion in the texts and thought of Greek antiquity can scarcely mark the end of analysis. I have argued elsewhere that Hellenism might best be understood as a toolbox from which authors in late antiquity drew in crafting their own particular literary, rhetorical, scientific, or philosophical projects.[29] To continue the metaphor, Porphyry may have had an amazing facility with many (even most) of the tools provided by the Greek heritage, but this did not predetermine the scope or aims of his various intellectual projects, nor did it preclude the ways in which he would conceive of the Greek heritage itself. For Porphyry and his late antique contemporaries, Hellenicity was a manipulable and contested identity. What it meant to be Greek and what element(s) of Greekness mattered most at any given time and within any given social or rhetorical situation shifted depending on the various ways in which a speaker or author had been shaped by Hellenizing educational processes, the felt constraints of discursive channels, the pressures of power relations, and the specific projects over which one sought to exercise one's agency.

One of the most complex and illuminating projects to which intellectuals of the imperial and late antique eras dedicated themselves, and

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[26] Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 1.204.26–27 (on which, Pépin 1966: 252; *idem* 1974: 323–330); Bidez 1913: 32; Lamberton 1986: 108–114; Smith 1987: 744–745; Romano 1979: 152, 184.

[27] The *Recit. Phil.* survives only in the quotations of Eus. *PE* 10.3 (= frs. 408–410 Smith); the *c. Zoroast.* is mentioned at *V. Plot.* 16.1–18.

[28] See the conspectus of works at Smith 1993: L–LIII.   [29] Johnson 2012.

indeed, a project which went on in tandem with other projects, thus
shaping the contours of those more limited projects, was the task of cul-
tural translation. A vast series of incessant cultural engagements by Greek
(or at least, Greek-speaking) intellectuals has received the authentic-
sounding name of *interpretatio Graeca*.[30] Here both senses of the term
interpretatio come into play: not only were words found in Greek to match
those in other languages ("translation"), but the ideas, stories, and deities of
barbarian peoples were reformulated and reframed within a Greek concep-
tual apparatus ("interpretation").[31] Aided by the imperial conquests first
of Alexander and the Greco-Macedonian dynasties then of the Roman
Empire, and in turn becoming a significant expression of those conquests,
the *interpretatio Graeca* marked a cultural–intellectual hegemony over sub-
ject native knowledges.[32] Nietzsche's declaration that "translation was a
form of conquest" applies to a much broader frame of cultural engage-
ments than he had noticed.[33] The climax of this project of Hellenism was
thus the incessant inscription of local knowledge within a Hellenocentric
and panoptic framework. The universalism of Hellenism's all-embracing
gaze only served to bolster a Greek cultural centrism. In other words, even
when particular Greek authors sought to incorporate ideas or images that
were allegedly foreign into their own frameworks, this was no innocent,
inclusive universalism. Rather, the *interpretatio Graeca* was a translation of
non-Greek elements into a Greek frame of reference that perpetuated Hel-
lenocentrism. It was a universalism that masked a particular hierarchical
arrangement of cultural power.[34]

As will be shown in a later chapter, the first-century biographer and
philosopher Plutarch of Chaeroneia provides an example of this Helleno-
centric form of *interpretatio Graeca*.[35] Yet, if identities could be and were
contested and if, furthermore, Hellenism was not a single dominating
process, but one which allowed for differentiation and even centrifugal

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[30] And indeed, it is an ancient term, though of limited use; see Pliny, *NH* 16.249; Isid., *Etymol.* 1.30.1.
    For discussion, see variously Dillery 1998: 255–275; Fowden 1986: 45; see also, *mutatis mutandis*, the
    critical remarks about *interpretatio Romana* by Ando 2005: 41–51; cf. Moatti 2006: 109–140, esp.
    111–117; Davidson 1995: 3.

[31] Of course, it should be doubted whether "translation" is ever possible without "interpretation" as
    schematically expressed here; see Sturge 2007: 8, 10, 19–21; Moatti 2006: 111–117.

[32] Schott 2008a: 16–28.

[33] Nietzsche 2004: 67–68. One may compare Jerome's claim (*Ep.* 57.6) that Hilary's translation of
    Greek homilies and commentaries into Latin: "Like a conqueror he has led away captive into his
    own tongue the meaning of the originals" (trans. NPNF 6.114–115).

[34] For the relation of cultural translation to power, see e.g., Asad 1986: 141–164; Robinson 1997; Sturge
    2007: 6–10, *passim*.

[35] See Chapter 6.

proliferation of rival projects by variously educated (or cultivated and "cul-
tured") thinkers, then we must foster a sensitivity to translational activity
performed in Greek (i.e., in texts written in Greek), yet from other centers
of ethnic gravitational pull, that is, Greek translation in another (barbarian)
key.[36] Translation could be performed in Greek even while experimenting
with interpretive strategies that sought to develop a non-Hellenocentric
framework or a non-centrist framework altogether.

A differentiated picture of translational projects provides a helpful model
for making sense of the otherwise convoluted picture that Porphyry's largely
fragmentary corpus leaves us. Much of his work is best seen as a persis-
tent and wide-ranging series of cultural and philosophical translation acts.
In Porphyry, philosophy and culture are largely inseparable (in spite of
what he may have hoped to achieve ultimately): the task of doing philos-
ophy involved multiple cultural engagements, ethnic representations, and
religious investment and reformulation. For the purposes of our analysis,
however, we shall focus first upon what looks like more strictly philosophi-
cal systematizing moves (in the first half of this book) before turning to the
scattered and varied abundance of ethnic conceptions and representations
(in the second half). Put differently, we shall first attempt to discern what
may be called acts of "vertical translation" in Porphyry's writings and then
delineate his work of "horizontal translation."[37]

PORPHYRY AS TRANSLATOR

Brief consideration of a Renaissance text, which, in spite of being so distant
in time, develops a similar universalizing vision to that of Porphyry, may
prove helpful for conceiving the dual processes of vertical and horizontal
translation.[38] In Petrarch's *Letter to Dionysius* (*Ep.fam.* 4.1), we possess an
account of an ascent up Mont Ventoux that provided the author an apt
metaphor for thinking of the soul's progress towards God.[39] Unlike his
brother, who proved a wiser mountain-climber, Petrarch repeatedly sought
easy paths for reaching the peak, only to find himself lost in valleys and
unable to make the proper ascent.[40] It was only by pursuing a rugged
and difficult path that he belatedly attained the peak. The path to God

[36] *Pace* Romano 1979: 185, whose concept of philosophical translation is nonetheless suggestive.
[37] Stierle 1996: 55–67.
[38] Ibid., 65 (though here, Stierle argues that Petrarch's letter shows an eclipse of vertical by horizontal
translation).
[39] Text at Kallendorf 1986: 10–17; I am grateful to Guy Stroumsa (whose autopsy of Mont Ventoux
enriches my imaginary vision of Petrarch's letter), for conversation regarding the issues here.
[40] Petr., *Ep.fam.* 4.1.4.2–8.

was similarly difficult, the author surmised, and spiritual progress could be achieved only with difficulty.[41] Once atop the mountain, however, Petrarch turned his gaze towards the surrounding landscape laid out around the mountain's base and spreading into the distance.[42] Through the arduous verticality of the ascent the vast horizontality of the world stretching out below could be enjoyed.

Like many other ancient thinkers, Porphyry, too, portrayed the life of the soul seeking God (or pursuing virtue) as an ascent bound with hardship and rigor, which only a few would achieve.[43] As we shall examine in more detail in Chapter 3, the road of the blessed ones was "steep and rough," and the happiness at its peak was "found only with difficulty."[44] Yet, it was precisely in considering the paths of ascent that Porphyry would pause over the peoples of the world and their various relationships to the mountain of divinity and truth. While Porphyry's formulation does not express it as explicitly as Petrarch's, the understanding of truth (both theological and philosophical) was deemed essential for properly understanding the world. One understood the world rightly only insofar as one understood well the mountain heights of divine truth. From this conception arises the dual process of translatability: on the one hand, everything one experienced needed to be translated in terms of the sheer unicity and *verticality* of the Platonic One (i.e., translation as an act of universalism); on the other hand, from the vantage point of the universalizing gaze provided by the mountain, all the world and its peoples required translation in terms of its profuse multiplicity and *horizontality* (i.e., translation as an act of particularism).

Part I of this book explores the vertical translational activity exhibited throughout Porphyry's works, conceived as a path of theological ascent. His attempts to speak properly of the divine world (Chapter 2), to live properly in respect to ritual performance (Chapter 3), and to maintain connections between esoteric knowledge and social power (Chapter 4) are best appreciated as part of a broader project of systematic translation. Its designation as vertical translation is especially fitting since, as a Platonic philosopher, Porphyry's universalizing vision (i.e., his attempt to account philosophically, that is, truthfully, for everything in the world in terms of that which was beyond the world) was rooted in a hierarchical schema. The

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[41] Ibid., 4.1.5,10; it seems likely that Petrarch is drawing on an Augustinian motif here (he admits to having and reading the *Confessions* on his climb; see 4.1.9–10; also 4.1.7.4); see Nolhac 1907: 2.193–194.

[42] Petr., *Ep.fam.* 4.1.8.3; also 4.1.1.3–4; for context in Petrarch's geographical conceptualizations, see Montana 1988.

[43] On the "view from above," see Hadot 1995: 238–250.

[44] *Phil.Orac.* frs. 323–324; *Ep.Marc.* 6.99–8.137; see also *Ep.Aneb.* 2, p. 28.12–14 Sodano.