
THE INVISIBLE CITIES

UNFOLDING IN SPACE AND TIME

AS “Come then, what must one think the city is going to be?

It just turns out that one of the Stranger’s companions is about to found a new colony on Crete. He asks the Stranger’s advice on what form the new city should take.

K “So now let’s do ourselves -- me and you two as well -- this favor: making a selection from the things that have been said, let’s construct a city in speech, just as if we were founding it from the very beginning; that way there will be an examination of the subject we are inquiring into, while at the same time I may perhaps make use of this construction, in the city that is going to exist.”

AS “You’re not declaring war, at any rate. . . .”

Note that Kleinias specifically says that he will make a selection of the previous speeches. This selection lets us know that we are going to recapitulate the selection by the lawgiver in the real city selecting instead of from the

variety of speeches when we construct a city in speech. This “construction” is really a design. They are setting out to design a city and designs are always logically separated from implementations. The Stranger says something strange when he says, “You are not declaring war.” This, of course, harkens back to the destruction which proceeds the genesis of the real city. With this metaphorical destruction of previous speeches, we move into the ideal realm within which the design of the city will take form. In that realm the stranger bids us think what the ideal city must be like. Necessity is involved here. There is a specific ideal form that the city must take.

This chapter will seek to sketch out the form of the ideal city, building on the work of others. The ideal city in *The Laws* is only one of a whole series of cities built by Plato in his works. Like Husserl, Plato attempts to relay the foundations over and over within the ideal or transcendental realm. Here we will begin with two books that show the space and time articulations of the various constructions by Plato. First Adi Ophir’s Plato’s Invisible Cities lays out the spatial implications of Plato’s cities but slights *The Laws* in doing so. In an otherwise brilliant work, the prejudice against *The Laws* on the part of philosophers is particularly evident. In this chapter an attempt will be made to correct this imbalance in what is

otherwise a wonderful exploration of spatial metaphor in the Republic. Second, Ernst G. McClain's The Pythagorean Plato lays out the temporal implications of Plato's cities in relation to their musical forms. These two books cover the space-time relations between Plato's various ideal cities. We must build upon these insights into Plato's work in order to understand the structure of the ideal cities, but here specifically within the context of the ideal city designed in The Laws. These two books, like The Laws, are too complex to deal with in their entirety, so here we will only explore some general themes. Two other books which will act as background resources are An Introduction to Plato's Laws by R. F. Stanley and Plato's Cretan City: An Historical Interpretation of The Laws by G. R. Morrow. These books give overviews of the structure of The Laws and some context in relation to the actual laws of Greece.

It is important to note that the new city is founded on the site where an earlier city was destroyed. Thus, the theme of cyclical return is carried from the real city to the ideal city. Many scholars contrast the city in The Laws (the *second best* city) with that in the Republic which is assumed to be the first best city. Scholars have ignored the city in The Laws and consider it to be in the realm of political science instead of philosophy. In terms of generating philosophical interest, the Republic is indeed

more interesting because of the context in which that city is developed. However, our aim is to show that certain structures relating to Primordial Being and Emergence are clearly present within the beginnings of the Western philosophical tradition. We believe that Plato is using structures which are very old as the means of forming his theories of cities. Most of these structures are even unconsciously applied and developed. Plato, by developing an elaborate theory of ideal cities, is showing many features of his worldview which remain hidden in shorter expositions which occur in the Dialogues or in the Republic. This is because The Laws is more like a formal system than any of the other theoretical structures Plato builds. Instead of a series of philosophical opinions and arguments, The Laws shows us a complete formal system in its entirety. The unity of The Laws and its completeness gives us access to many aspects of Plato's thought that would otherwise remain hidden. Thus the prejudice against Plato's laws by philosophers comes from their falling into exactly the trap that Plato warns us against. The Laws is like a foundation for the rest of Plato's works. It shows us what an entire system looks like from his perspective. In the rest of his works the system is hidden. There is an unspoken doctrine, as discussed in Plato and the Foundations of Metaphysics by Has Joachim Kramer. But philosophers who attempt to unearth the unspoken doctrine discard the major resource

at their disposal which is the complete system of The Laws. If we look at the system in The Laws and then apply the same principles to the rest of Plato's works, then we might be able to see the outline of the whole. This is not the aim of this investigation. Instead, we are exploring The Laws in order to show that what has been said about Primordial Being is actually exemplified in Plato's teaching in order to gain a starting point for further explorations into the structure of the Western worldview. From this point of view, The Laws becomes the key work because its systematic character as the structures of worldviews are really only accessible by looking at systematic patterns. The prejudice of the philosophers have blinded them to this aspect of Plato's thought.

Adi Ophir continues this trend of dismissing the city of The Laws. We are actually dealing here with a whole series of cities which, in The Laws is given in most detail -- in fact overwhelming detail which we do not normally expect from the authors of antiquity. The Laws is, in fact, in league with the Elements of Euclid for its detail and systematic treatment of a subject. In some ways we can say that it attempts to show that the same methods can be applied to human fields that are used to develop mathematical and musical sciences. This is a common theme, later in the Western tradition, where many

Humanists attempt to develop “scientific methods” for the human realm that are as good as those applied to physics or mathematics. In fact, it is clear that all the great methods of the last century, such as Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, Structuralism and Dialectics, are all of this nature. So *The Laws* in some ways is the first of a genre of methods which attempt to reduce the human realm to methods that work for other more precise realms, or to develop specifically human sciences. The city in *The Laws* is a design taken to the point where the next step is implementation, whereas Plato’s other cities, remain only very rough sketches of ideal cities far from detailed enough to realize in any way. The important point which seems to be missed is that there are multiple possible designs, and different cities are designed to get different points across. These multiple possibilities are in contradistinction to the actual historical form of the real city. The real city has its form set and cannot be changed by whim. It is only by founding a new colony that we have the chance to speculate on what form would be best for the new colony. Many designs might be tried, but some have a compelling form dictated by some form of necessity, like mathematical forms such as the Platonic solids (tetrahedron, octahedron, cube, icosahedron, and dodecahedron). Plato is searching for forms that have an inner logic which unfolds based on their own essential

structure. Plato finds this structure in music and in the fundamental differentiations inherited from Indo-European antiquity which had a certain caste structure that gave society its internal differentiation. Beyond this we see Plato attempting to approximate autopoietic unities which he recognizes as stable intersubjective organizations. It is this theme that I would like to pursue in this chapter, as it is very significant for the development of the Western worldview which lost its appreciation of autopoietic unities in its subsequent history until recently. Plato is very careful to create his second best city as a closed autopoietic unity in contrast with the open city sketched in the Republic. These two cities are opposites and cannot be understood properly in isolation. The ideal city formed in The Laws is on a different form from that in the Republic. The two are duals of each other. Considered in isolation, their dual natures cannot be appreciated, and the whole point Plato is attempting to make is missed.

The most even-handed and insightful treatment I have found of the relation between the Republic and The Laws is Cities of the Gods: Communist Utopias in Greek Thought by Doyne Dawson (Oxford: Oxford UP; 1992). This book treats the origins of the Greek penchant for ideal cities from their origins through the treatments by Plato and Aristotle onto later expressions of the same

urge in Cynicism and Stoicism. Here only the first two chapters about origins and Platonic utopias are relevant to this study. It is of great interest that the utopias are seen to have their origins in several very different phenomena including the idealization of life in the time of Kronos, in the Pythagorean community life-style, in the descriptions of the sexual communism of the barbarians, in the communal life of the citizens of Sparta, and in a play of Aristophanes. All these threads are drawn together by Plato's works, which are truly innovative in that they make what was an extreme oddity in the Greek universe of discourse into an ideal toward which it tends. The mark of this oddity is the related ideas of the community of property, community of women, and sexual equality. These ideas are ascribed to the *Other*. They are the practices of the barbarian, and of the time before Zeus' reign. They appear in limited form in the Pythagorean and Spartan communities as the community of property only. They are subject of wild and outrageous comedy which brings all the strands of otherness together and presents them as a single vision. Plato takes this vision of the Other and makes it the ideal toward which the Greek worldview is said to tend. Thus, the Other is brought within and shown to belong together with the Greek city. That otherness destroys the household (oikos) and makes the city the single reality by which the intersubjective pattern is measured. Another way to say this is to say that

the oikos is projected on the polis. The intersubjective pattern is homogenized within the city without households, or the whole city becomes one oikos. This happens, just as Plato describes, in the evolution of the real city where the Lawgiver selects certain metatropes over others and makes the culture of the city all identical out of the various family traditions of the nomads that came together to make up the city. Each of the parts of the utopian ideal plays a part in the destruction of the household and the elevation of the city as a sui generis unity. The fact that the anti-household city, or the single household city, first appears as an object of ridicule is very significant. We can, in fact, grade the levels of emergence of this idea. First it is something that the barbarians do. This is the recognition of an anomaly. One strand of it is seen as being part of the Golden age of Kronos -- i.e. community of property. This one strand appears inside the Greek world as the lifestyle of the Pythagoreans and as an aspect of the community of the Spartans. Thus, this strand is seen as part of the self, albeit an oddity. However, this shows the internalization of part of the anomaly. But in the comedy the whole idea of generalized communism as the destruction of the household is displayed, perhaps for the first time. Representing it in comedy in this way allows the Greeks to come to terms with something which is utterly foreign. In this sense the comedy is indeed serious as the

playwrights claim. It is a theoretical recognition, albeit comical, of the source of the anomaly. Plato then integrates this theoretical presentation of the source of the anomaly into the Greek world as a never to be obtained ideal. Thus, each of the stages of emergence are represented in the sources of utopianism. First anomalies are recognized. Then they are seen to be part of the Greek world in some ways. Then they are presented in an extreme formulation that allows the idea as a whole to be evaluated. That idea is utterly Other to the normal intersubjectively designated as real pattern of relations revolving around the household. Once this Otherness is identified, then Plato incorporates it into the Greek worldview as a never-to-be-obtained ideal state. The Other becomes the Same.

In this sequence the key stage is that in which all the ideas associated with communism are presented together by Aristophanes in his play *Ecclesiazusae*, variously translated but referred to here as *The Assembly Women*. This play is one of the last surviving plays of Aristophanes. It deserves some analysis which will be postponed until the next chapter. But, here it must be noted that the play, along with others by Aristophanes, has a deep significance because it presents the key ideas that are taken up and seriously dealt with by Plato in the *Republic* and *Laws*. These ideas first appear together in

the Dionysian setting of the theater. The ideas themselves are Dionysian in that they break down the family and corporate structure of the polis. This makes clear why the oldest chorus is Dionysian in nature in the city of *The Laws*. The internal structure of Plato's cities contain the seed of destruction of the order of normal society. They are Dionysian at their core. They contain disorder within the bounds of a new order. The relation between Aristophanes and Plato's works are not taken seriously enough. Both present the same key ideas in different modalities. Both center on the role of Dionysius in an Apollian context. Plato strives to perfect the laws as Aristophanes characters complain about the obsession with litigation among the Athenians. Obsession with law informs both men's works and speaks of a general obsession with that informs the metaphysical era. Once men start making their own laws, then the basis of the laws comes into question. Plato attempts to found his laws like a formal system, such as geometry, and Aristophanes speaks of the absurdities of living within a world constructed of man-made laws. The tension between these two views has not been exploited because of scholastic specialization. The extent to which they are speaking of the SAME remains unexplored. This is not the place for such an exploration, but only the place to note the importance of the common Dionysian element which is obvious in the one and hidden in the other, but

present in both.

Dawson attempts to delineate the relation between the Republic and Laws with a four-fold scheme.

WORLD OF MYTH --> 1) The time of Cronos

WORLD OF HISTORICAL REALITY (time of Zeus)

2) The high utopia of the Republic (Kallipolis)

3) The low utopia of The Laws (Magnaesia)

4) Practical reform programs in real cities¹

This schema shows us an intensification of the Dionysian element of communism in levels three and then two until the distinction between the mythic level one is reached. In the real city, property, including women, are privately owned, and there is no equality between the sexes. In level two, equality between the sexes is introduced to some extent and also ideas of communal property, which has some precedence in greek life. In level three, complete communism as it appears in Aristophanes is propounded, which makes the household and city identical. Here the Dionysian ideal is taken to its limit. All that can lie beyond that extreme is the mythic realm,

1. Cities of the Gods Doyle Dawson p76]

which is represented here as the time of Cronos. The real city, in its evolution, is completely confined to level four of this schema. When we move on to explore the rest of The Laws, and by association the Republic, it is necessary to see that we have entered a different realm altogether between “reality” and “mythos.” This is the realm of the ideal. The ideal has two layers. One layer is impractical to the extreme, and the other is more practical but still not real. Generally we know these layers through induction and deduction. The pragmatic and empirical are both still glosses on reality, floating over it, just not as high as the ideal. But neither is separated so radically as the mythic to which they are contrast. Plato is constructing the universe of discourse of Western philosophy as cities, in the air, similar to the construction of CloudCookooLand of Aristophanes’ Birds. We live in these realms which gloss the already artificial foundation of reality, and cut us off from the gods. Plato has built us these living quarters where we project the universe by means of the mechanism of ideation. It is a two-story metaphysical house, and each floor is explicitly constructed by Plato in his two great master works.

Dawson makes an important point when he notices that both of these ideal cities assume warfare and slavery. This is extremely significant for we have seen that warfare is the face of Reality. To eliminate warfare

would be to destroy the inherent relation between these ideal cities and Reality. Slavery, on the other hand, is the human embodiment of duality and transcendence in the master-slave dialectic as described by Hegel. As we have seen, the ideal cities appear as glosses on reality, covering it over. In the cities, the dionysian element increases as we move from The Laws to the Republic. But that increase has the effect of making the household and city identical in the Republic. Thus, we have, within our two cities, an inherent relation to identity. We can expect also that there is an equally ingrained relation to truth which appears in the relation to slavery. Truth appears through torture, as Page DuBois points out in her exposition of Torture and Truth. The relation established between torturer and tortured is the fundamental relation by which the truth is revealed. The torturer is the master, and the tortured is the slave.

- WARFARE = REALITY
- TORTURE = TRUTH
- DESTRUCTION OF DISTINCTION =
IDENTITY

The two cities are necessary to establish the difference between identity and non-identity in the ideal realm. But both cities are permeated by war and slavery, through and through. This is because they have an essential relation to reality and truth which must be exemplified, just as much as the difference of the ideal cities from the realm

of mythos must be made clear.

Both level two and three cities appear in the Republic, but only the level three city is elaborated in The Laws. The Republic deals almost entirely with the elite of these cities. In the level three city, this elite is the guards who develop the speciality of warfare. In the level two city, the elite are the wise philosophers who educate the guards. The producers are ignored, as are the slaves. In The Laws, on the other hand, as pointed out by Dawson, the emphasis is on all of the citizens including the producers, while the guards and the elite philosopher kings are not differentiated and dealt with separately. As Dawson makes clear, the citizens to whom the low utopian ideal is made to apply is a small portion of the entire population which is filled out by slaves and non-citizens (temporary residents). The citizens are themselves stratified in the city of The Laws into four classes. The important point is to realize that these stratifications of the ideal cities have deep roots in the caste system endemic in the Indo-European culture from time immemorial. The variations in the caste system for these ideal cities is not as important as its presence. It is a structuring vehicle which appears as the differentiation between rulers, guards, producers, and slaves in Kallipolis, and between the four classes in Magnesia. In one case, the Other is portrayed as merely slaves, while in

the second case, the Other is differentiated into slaves and non-citizens whose residence is made temporary by law. The Same is differentiated in both cases. In Kallipolis the normal way is to differentiate producers from guards and from rulers who include the priesthood (wise men) and the king. In the case of *The Laws*, these associations are not made explicitly, but may be assumed to be underneath the differentiation of the citizens into castes. Plato has attempted to turn such distinctions into purely economic differentiations, ignoring their cultural roots.

These cultural sources of differentiation of the ideal city are normally treated as unnecessary and arbitrary. However, as this study progresses, it is exactly these distinctions between castes that will take on the most importance. This chapter looks at the way that space and time are structured in Plato's ideal cities and in the dialogues themselves. However, this structuring of space and time is merely the stage-setting for a more basic ordering which is glossed by Plato and made inessential. We focus instead on the autopoietic structuring of the low utopian city of *The Laws*, or the celebration of identity in the high utopian city of the *Republic*. In the high utopia the Indo-European structures of society at large are still clearly visible, whereas in *The Laws*, only the number four remains in the economic classes to remind us of their origins. But when we consider the ideal cities as an

intersubjective formation which is based on ideation and projects the uni-verse where the essential relations of truth, reality and identity are preserved, then we get a different perspective on the importance of the survival of the class differentiations within both of these ideal cities. Each city is a structure for showing and hiding to the entire intersubjective unity, which is city and society in one. The ideal structures of showing and hiding are displayed there. In the later part of the Republic, the aim is complete showing with no hiding by the adoption of high utopian communism in which all barriers are torn down as they were for Gyges' ancestor. In the earlier part of the Republic and The Laws, the lower partially communistic utopia shows us a situation where showing and hiding are balanced in an autopoietic structure. But in both these cases, the showing and hiding is based on more fundamental structures of slavery (dualism) and war (artificially projected "reality").

Let's first look at speech itself, which is the medium in which we are building the ideal cities. From a mathematical point of view, speeches are not necessarily finite. Thus, speech itself has a vastness that few linguists rarely contemplate. An exception is The Vastness Of Natural Language by D. T. Langendoen and P.M. Postal. Here the transfinite possibilities of natural languages is explicitly considered. What becomes clear

in this sort of exposition is that speech is only finite because we, as human, are finite, but speech itself could be infinite whether considered as writing or utterance. From this flows the point that grammars are idealizations of the transfinite nature of language. Grammars are like our ideal cities -- they attempt to capture a generative structure. There are myriad possible grammars, which from different angles, attempt to capture the upwelling of language with varying success but all are ultimately flawed because grammars are finite, and what they attempt to capture is both transfinite and fuzzy as well as changing. Grammar is usually thought about in terms of law as an unchanging meta-pattern. But as Paul Hopper rightly points out in his article "Emergent Grammar" -- grammar is itself emergent within the social situation. He quotes James Clifford who says, "Culture is temporal, emergent, and disputed," and posits the same is true of grammatical rules or laws. Grammar is merely a stable meta-pattern. Plato, in *The Laws*, attempts to construct the ultimate stable meta-pattern by basing it on autopoietic structures. We forget that the meta-pattern changes from language to language or city to city. We forget that the meta-pattern emerges through the process of unfolding of real cities. We attempt to produce the meta-pattern ourselves and project it on cities. This is our hubris as self-made lawgivers to ourselves. But this process of making laws for ourselves is also part of the

emergence of laws -- that is the place where we become self-conscious of the laws that have emerged as “laws” or meta-patterns. To see an ideal law we must induct looking at the cultural patterns of many cities, or deduct from principles to build our own as Plato does. But we must never think that the laws are themselves eternal or stable. They are negotiated, arising in time as part of the social construction of reality, truth and identity -- i.e. Being. The fact that laws/grammars are temporal, emergent, and disputed makes us aware that we are discussing society and its meta-patterning which evolves many times with dislocations and discontinuities. Plato’s presentation of the ideal is only one moment in a long process which takes the rest of the metaphysical era. But we are just exploring the first moment in this dialectical progression. But that first moment is very important as it lays down the outlines of what is to come in vivid and bold strokes.

This brings us to a point about Plato’s Good. We turn most commentaries about Plato on their heads because we make clear what the “Good” is. The “Good” is the single source of all causation. The “Good” is the source out of which pours infinite variety. It is an unseen source that, from one aspect, exists, and from another, does not exist. The “Good” is not an idea. The “Good” is not a form. It is the source of all natural variety -- the source of

all *Good* things (and bad as well) -- the source of infinite speeches and writings. Once you know what the “Good” is, then it places everything in Plato in perspective. Plato is not attempting to found any dead “ideal” cities, but an autopoietic city with access to its own wells or sources so they can withstand the siege of nihilism or internal and external war. The whole thrust of Plato’s design work is to create a city that encompasses and is supported by the “Good.” Because the city is autopoietic, it lasts indefinitely. Because it has at its heart the source of the “Good,” it remains vital and alive instead of immediately dying. Plato uses the stability of the autopoietic unity as a basis for focusing on the atemporal realm of the “Good” like a satellite dish focusing on a satellite. This is a lost ideal which Plato thought was made possible by the creation of conceptual (continuous) Being. Create the illusory continuity of conceptual fused Being. Place on it an autopoietic unity which binds intersubjectivity to a closed universe. Focus that autopoietic ring on “The Good” which is the source of all good things -- all variety. Live in a *holoidal* interpenetrating world which is perfect until it is sacrificed as all perfect examples are in order to force the source of variety to render up its good things. This is sympathetic magic. It fails because from one aspect “the good” does not exist. It cannot be effected by human machinations. Plato had a different type of “Apollo” project in mind. He wanted to go to the Sun of

the Good in the unseen instead of the Moon. He wanted the Western worldview to be full of good for all instead of the hollowness we have inherited. But hollowness and the *holoid* states are internally related as nihilistic opposites. Searching for wholeness and attempting to hang onto it is a fantasy deeply embedded in the Western worldview.

Plato realized an essential possibility that was created when Conceptual Being was produced as a gloss over Primordial Being. That was the possibility of the autopoietic unity that exists hovering between the identity of Conceptual Being, and the ground of Primordial Being. Before Parmenides produced, Conceptual Being this possibility did not exist. Once produced Conceptual Being created an ideal unity to which other things could tend. The autopoietic unity exists as a possibility, just this side of totalization. In Plato's works, the autopoietic unity is visualized as an ideal city -- the lower utopia below complete communism. It is visualized as an embodiment of musical principles in terms of the tone circle which has been explained by Ernest G. McClain. We might say that the autopoietic unity unfolds as a possibility just before the collapse into complete identity. It contains all the aspects of Primordial Being just before their fusion. In the real city, these elements are all present, but still, as

separate elements. In the autopoietic unity, they blend together in a continuous ribbon, not unlike an Escher waterfall or a mobius strip. The autopoietic unity is a knot of paradoxicality. It is the minimal structure before collapse into fusion or totality. It is a ring as expressed by the octave circle. The autopoietic unity represents the intersubjective nexus freed from both *holoid* and *ephemeron* given conceptual continuity, no longer bound by *epochs* and *novums*. In the autopoietic unity, *essencing* and eventities are the same as re the *holon* and *integra*. Plato glimpsed a possibility just before complete fusion. We need to explore this possibility ourselves because it hides within the Western worldview and provides much of its utopian flavor or as Earnst Bloch called it the Philosophy of Hope. We now know this as the internalized Other.

Plato builds ideal cities to exacting specifications based on a musical metaphor. We can learn a lot by examining these specifications. From the first, it is clear that Plato's ideal cities are all finite and built to resist change. They are modelled on the circle which we learn from Earnest McClain is a model of the octave of music theory. Within the octave there is a natural doubling as tones are produced by dividing or multiplying the octave again and again. This progressive bisection forms the framework of the tonal structure. We know this structure as the

successive bisection as the system moves toward chaos. The successive division or multiplication produces a more complex dynamical space until the system itself drops into chaos which is an ever present possibility. Plato's cities represent different tuning systems that attempt to integrate odd numbers into the framework of bisections without falling off into disharmony (the *ephemeron*).

For Plato the fusion of Being was like the discovery of a third dimension away from the plane of Primordial Being. As we move off into this new direction towards totality, we encounter a harmonic threshold which Plato describes in musical terms and posits as the ideal prototype for his city. This threshold teeters on the boundary between the progressive bisection and chaos. It can be approximated by several tuning systems that allow odd numbers to inhabit the interspaces in the progressive bisection. But the advent of these numbers signals eventual destruction of the whole which will degenerate into chaos with the appearance of the third. However, harmonization was possible, and in that harmony, all the separate elements of Primordial Being became fused but still differentiateable before it fell into complete totalization. Of, course falling into complete totalization and chaos were nihilistic opposites which ultimately were identical. An autopoietic unity is an ideal form --

paradoxically a continuity made up of discrete parts. In the case of Plato's city in *The Laws*, this unity had 5040 households or elements which is seven factorial. McClain develops the mathematics in which the 37 guardians are generated, 18 from the old city and 19 new tones that join them.

The autopoietic unity is a network which is self-generating. Plato's tonal system certainly fulfills this criteria because given the interval, the set of tones that may be generated is fixed by nature and occurs whenever that formulation of the tones within the octave is played. Thus, the structures of the musical system can always be generated and will organize themselves each time in the same way. The autopoietic unity is closed in on itself like the tone circle in which vibrations form standing waves of different frequency. The autopoietic unity is a ring in which feedback and feedforward loops of information are passed around and around. Thus, within the standing waves, there are also traveling waves which cause the autopoietic unity to fluctuate around some fixed points. But because it is a closed system, the range of interaction of the standing and traveling waves is a finite set of states.

We leave it to the reader to explore the complexities of the musical interpretation of Plato's allegories as

presented by McClain. What we need to take from them is the concept that Plato's cities are all rings in which certain structures spontaneously are produced, depending on which tuning system one imposes on the vibrations of the ring. The ideal cities are closed, hopefully far from the bad influence of the sea, and are dynamical systems of interacting standing and traveling waves. The Laws attempts to impose the standing order and to regulate the traveling information. By constructing a closed system like this, Plato blends all the elements of Primordial Being in a unique way to produce a unique structure -- the lower utopia. The autopoietic utopia has left the real city behind in the plane of Primordial Being, and has taken off toward totalization or fusion. In the autopoietic unity, each of the opposites of Primordial Being fuse into a minimal system of concepts which allow the autopoietic structure to appear a moment before this minimal system fuses into Conceptual Being.

If we think about the axes of Primordial Being, they form a minimal system of paired concepts. *Holoid/ephemeron* represent the relation between interpenetration and pure dispersion which could be seen as the underlying dichotomy between gatheredness and separation. Geometrically, the knot represents that aspect of the minimal system which displays this element. The single thread, when unknotted, represents gatheredness, while

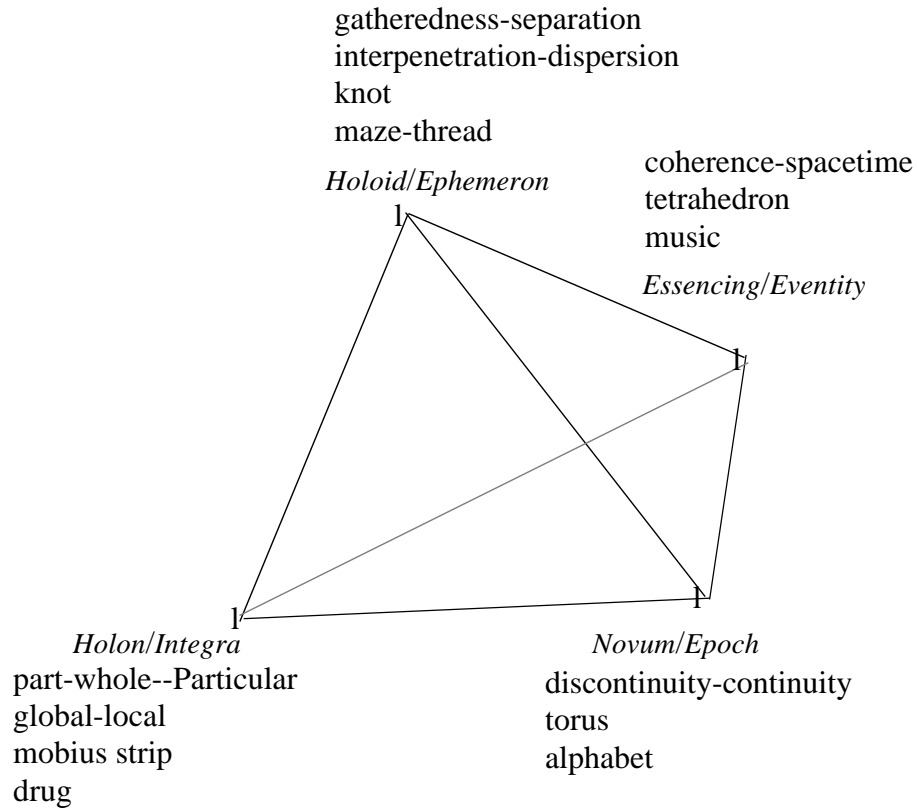
its self-interference represents separation. When Ariadne gives Theseus the thread to enter the knot of the labyrinth, she makes it possible to transform the Gordian knot into the unity of the unknotted thread.

The *holon/integra* dichotomy may be seen as the representation of part/whole relations as it plays against all the detail of particularity which makes each individual thing unique. This, in turn, may be seen as another way of approaching global/local seeming paradoxes such as we see in the mobius strip. Local views may be put together in such a way as to make the global structure seem paradoxical. Escher was a master of this type of paradox. It appears in Russell and Whiteheads Principia Mathematica as the class that cannot be a member of itself ruse which is meant to prevent all paradoxes of the type that grow out of local/global changes that create paradox. Thus, the mobius strip is the face of the minimal system that represents this most fully.

Novum/epoch dichotomy represents the problems of continuity and discontinuity. From the point of view of topology, the torus represents the simplest surface with a hole in it which is the fundamental type of discontinuity from a mathematical perspective. Thus, the torus (donut) is the face of the minimal system that best represents concerns with continuity and discontinuity.

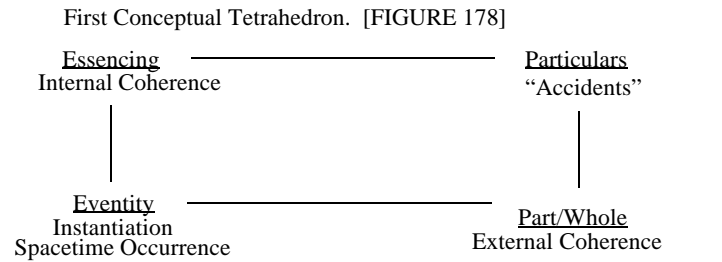
FIGURE 58

The intermediate step between Primordial Being and Fusion [FIGURE176].



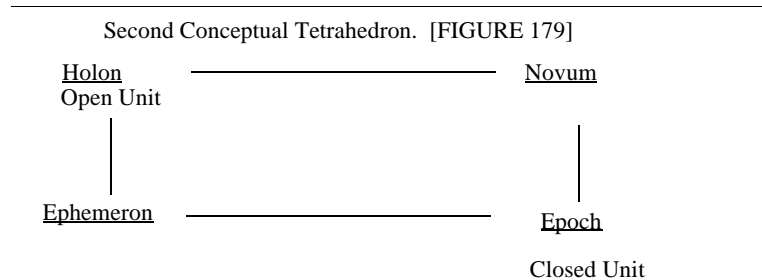
Essencing/eventivity really boils down to spacetime occurrence verses coherence. It is through coherent spacetime occurrences that structure becomes evident, and it is the tetrahedron which is the face of the minimal system that best represents structure in a geometrical presentation.

FIGURE 59



It should not be ignored that there are two interrelated tetrahedrons of concepts here. *Essencing* is really the display of internal coherence which is opposite of the external coherence of part/whole relations. *Essencing* can only occur through the veil of emanating particulars which are called “Accidents” by the followers of Aristotle which occur as instantiations in spacetime. Instantiation and particularization are similar opposites which appear crosswise or as contridictories separating internal and external coherence.

FIGURE 60



Likewise, the second conceptual tetrahedron that needs to be remembered is that in which the *holoid* stands opposite the *epoch* and the *ephemeron* stands opposite the *novum*. The *holoid* is the interpenetrating nature of things -- the jeweled net of Indra -- in which each facet

reflects all the others. The *epoch* is the closed box in which each *epoch* is the law unto itself. On the other hand, the *ephemeron* is turmoil and dispersion that breaks the closed box and creates erratic waves which obscure the interpenetration. The *novum* is a kind of internal disharmony where one gestalt pattern is broken and another instituted. The *novum* is a pure break with tradition -- the paradigm change, episteme change, change in an *epoch* of Being. It is temporal discontinuity where the *ephemeron* is somehow more a spatial and spread-out fog of separation. It is exactly the difference that makes interpenetration possible. Each thing can interpenetrate and be non-interfering because difference exists. The *novum* and *ephemeron* are the sources of that difference which also make it possible for the jewels in the net to remain or be seen as black boxes, like *epochs*, which have their own laws of nature.

However, once these sub-systems of concepts are pointed out, it becomes clear that the fundamental minimal system represented by knot, tetrahedron, mobius strip, and torus is a fundamental structure that appears just before collapse into totality. It is this structure on which the autopoietic unity is built. The autopoietic unity is a ring. It is a closed circle of standing and traveling waves. The traveling waves are solitons which have no entropy. The standing waves are the structure of the octave which

arise as tones naturally. It appears to be locally discrete because of the standing waves, but globally it is continuous so that the global/local paradox of the mobius strip applies to the autopoietic unity as well. The discrete elements of the autopoietic unity have a structure which permuted in order to produce a faceted structure that moves toward the absolute continuity of Conceptual Being. Each tetrahedron is really a lattice which can be seen as going from null elements to encompass all the possible permutations of four things until on one gets to the totality of all four taken together. In this way the lattice of the tetrahedral structure represents the unification of the autopoietic unity in Conceptual Being. Finally the knot appears as the interference structure of the feedforward and feedbackward of the information circulating within the ring and also with information from the outside of the ring. Each node in the ring is really a knot of interference which is ultimately chaotic. So the autopoietic unity, like Plato's musical cities, is constantly on the verge of collapsing into disharmony. The autopoietic unity must hover on this threshold between fusion into totality and breaking up into chaos.

So we see that the autopoietic unity makes use of the holloid/*ephemeron* paired concepts in the way it controls the production of chaos within itself. These chaotic nodes at the heart of each of the rings segments are the

jewels which are eventually seen as interpenetrating. The *holon/integra* paired concepts are fused together in the autopoietic system because each of its parts are *holons*, but not in a hierarchy -- rather in a network. As such, they differentiate from each other just like the 37 guardians - tones- become different and recognizable to the musically trained ear. Thus, the cycle of *holons* produce particularities in which each - like and organ - contributes something unique to the whole. The *novum* and *epoch* paired concepts contribute the relation of segments of the ring to the discontinuities that demark them. Also the *novum* appears as spontaneous repatterning of the gestalt of the standing and traveling waves within the ring. So different *epochs* of gestalts are formed. Thus, the *novum/epoch* pair operate spatially and temporally to describe the autopoietic unity as a finite dynamical system. Finally, *essencing* and *eventivity* paired concepts appear in the autopoietic unity as its own internal coherence -- or essence which allows it to upwell in space and time as an entity. Thus, the autopoietic unity appears as a musical composition played on the ring itself, and as such, produces illusory cointinuity approximating the illusory continuity of Conceptual Being itself.

This analysis shows how Primordial Being, as it begins to fuse into Conceptual Being, produces the necessary

structure for autopoiesis to appear. Plato recognizes this possibility and posited it as the basis of his utopias or ideal cities. Each one attempts to use a different tuning to set up a perfectly harmonious blending of intersubjectivities within the heavenly city. Within Aristotle this possibility of resonating intersubjective structures disappears, and only Conceptual Being remains. Primordial Being begins to fade into history -- submerged below the illusion of continuity of Pure self-identical Being exposed by Aristotle and all those who came after him up to the advent of modern ontology. In modern ontology, Being has begun to fragment again, showing its ancient cleavages that were hidden by the illusory gloss of totalizing Conceptual Being.

We see in these four paired concepts the traces of the four inventions: Music, Maze, Alphabet, and Drug which Plato's Stranger mentions in the myth of the real city. The real city is not the autopoietic ideal city. The real city operates in the plane of Primordial Being. The autopoietic city operates outside that plain as Primordial Being collapses into totality or fusion. Already the knot has reminded us of the Maze and Thread of Daedalus. Likewise, the internal coherence manifesting in spacetime reminds us of music which was represented by four of the seven inventions. The *essencing/eventity* pair has this musical aspect. The continuity/discontinuity

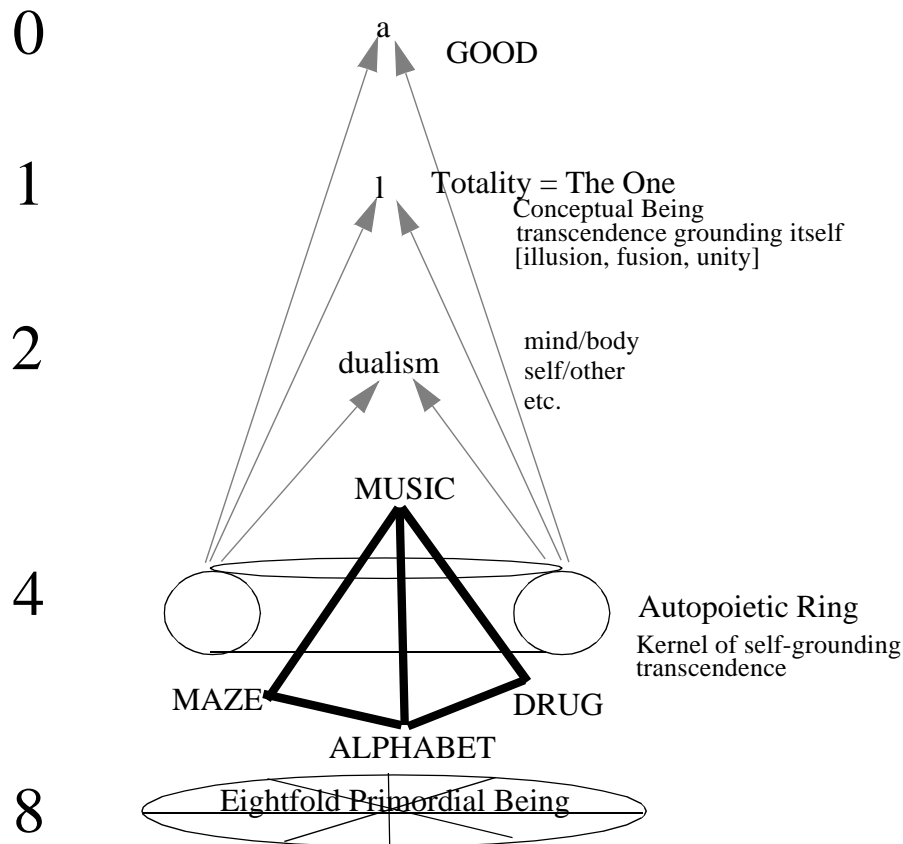
aspect of the torus reminds us of the Alphabet which can be seen as a differentiated ring. Finally, the local/global paradoxicality is like a drug. The paradoxicality is intoxication to the mind. It produces a trace. In the autopoietic unity, this paradox is still only an illusion. When the unity fuses completely and becomes self-grounding transcendence, then the paradox is fully realized. Note that Plato uses music, geometry, his dialogic written texts and the apoirs {?} of dialectical speech to make his points and to educate the reader. The text is written in the alphabet. It is made up of finite sentences which, as we follow the argument, break off abruptly. When you follow all those dead ends, out-thinking for yourself, you are led to a wondrous place inhabited by the Good. But you must use your geometrical and musical abilities and knowledges to follow the analogies of the argument. So in some way Plato is using aspects of the autopoietic system to describe the autopoietic system. He is ultimately saying what he does and has achieved the goal of the reflexive theorist.

The autopoietic ring functions like a “satellite dish.” It is pointed at the Good, and it picks up the golden rays which emanate from the Good and focuses them on the totality. Plato knows that the One lies beyond totality. That totality, without provision from the source of all

good things, is empty and hollow. Thus, the city must be oriented toward the Good as it tends toward totality.

FIGURE 61

Collapse into fusion. [FIGURE 186]



We are really moving up a progressive bisection backwards, from the Eight of Primordial Being back to the four of the autopoietic unity: Drug, Maze, Alphabet, and Music. And we have already named the next phase in which there are two states corresponding to the two conceptual tetrahedrons. And finally we are led back to the One of fusion. At the autopoietic level in which there

are four phases, we see an isomorphism to phases of emergence of the real city. The autopoietic unity has the stature of the *novum* itself. It generates the *epochs* within itself. An autopoietic unity pops into existence or out of existence. There are no stages of arrival or departure. The autopoietic unity is either wholly present or absent. There is no middle ground -- no becoming. The autopoietic unity is self-articulated into *epochs* which produce the elements of its organization. The *epochs* are internal to it -- they are both its self-organizing capacity and the organization it imposes on itself. Thus, when we look at the autopoietic unity, we are looking at the *novum/epoch* conceptual pair embodied. So it is with the other conceptual pairs as well. The autopoietic unity embodies each of them (for instance, the *holoid/ephemeron*). The autopoietic unity interpenetrates with itself but is mediated by dispersion. So when we say it organizes itself, it is through the mediation of self-reference that organization spontaneously occurs. Thus, each node in the autopoietic network interpenetrates with all the others, but through the medium of its difference with them. Each produces some sub-component of the organization. All the subcomponents fit together to produce the organization. The difference between the subcomponents is the essential dispersion which is necessary to realize interpenetration within the autopoietic unity.

Another example is the *holon/integra* conceptual pair. The autopoietic network is composed of *holons* without a hierarchy, each of which has their own individuality. In the case of the autopoietic unity, the individuality is necessary as each network link is a part which produces the whole. Each part, in some sense, must produce the whole. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. So, for a whole to be produced, each must produce a surplus which makes that “more.” This surplus is the *integra* -- the parts’ teleonomic movement toward the whole without which unity could never be achieved. The last example is the conceptual pair, *essencing/eventity*. The autopoietic unity’s essence is its self-organization which is precisely the same as its nature as an *eventity* in spacetime. There is an exact isomorphism between the internal coherence of the autopoietic unity and the spacetime organization of that unity. This exact isomorphism makes the autopoietic unity extremely fragile. It is continually out of balance -- righting itself. The movement of continually righting itself is its *essencing* forth which creates its spacetime configuration. It has nothing other than its spacetime configuration. Because of this, the autopoietic unity is almost transparent -- a behavioral propensity that spawns a behavior which spawns a propensity. Nothing more.

We can see the autopoietic unity as continuously

emergent; continuously moving back to interpenetration from dispersion; continuously producing the whole greater than the sum of its parts as an overflow from each part; continuously rebalancing so that its internal coherence (organization) is expressed in spacetime. The autopoietic unity is the kernel of transcendence's self-grounding; illusion maintaining itself apparently without entropy. When this level snaps, then we get the two modes of dualism. -- mind and body, master and slave, male and female, self and other, Greek & barbarian. Within Plato's Melesian city it appears as the eighteen guardians from the original city and the nineteen from the other cities.

With the appearance of dualism, we enter the level of the discursive formation which Adi Ophir discusses with reference to the Republic. In the discursive formation, a whole series of opposites are set up to provide the framework for thought

TABLE 12

From Adi Ophir page 29 Figure 1.3

	Superhuman		Human		Sub-human	
Divine		Tame		Savage		Bestial
	Intelligence		Spirit		Desire	
Immune to civic space		Organized civic space		Unorganized civic space		Indifferent civic space

The discursive formation is based on dualistic distinctions which are all lopsided power relations which serves as a classificatory system for controlling the

world.

The radical oppositions of man/god, man/beast are intricately woven into a whole network of oppositions and homologues, such as death/life, savage/tame, memory/forgetfulness, civic/non-civic, erotic/tame/savage, forgetfulness/death/non-civic, or life/memory/civic. This network does not define or predicate objects such as “man,” “woman,” “polis,” “eros,” etc. Instead, it rather opens up but also delineates and confines, a field for a variety of possible discursive moves. Thus, for example, the whole nomos-physis debate is a theme allowed by the problematic distinction Greek/barbarian. . .

At the center of this network we have discovered - not man, for he can be grasped only through his others, only by negating what he is not -- but the organization of civic space. Man “in-itself” is a hole in the center of the web around which the lines of differentiations and correlations are woven. Man, as a key discursive unit, is missing from the center of the network woven around him. The missing space is precisely the one in which actual man appears, i.e. civic space. [page 43-44]

This “civic space” is the existential realization of intersubjectivity. The autopoietic unity is a peculiar

possibility of this space at which Plato continues to grasp. The autopoietic unity is one special configuration of the “hole” in the discursive web. So we see that the level of collapse occupied by dualism sets up the discursive field itself. That discursive field expresses itself as spatial and temporal distinction. In the Republic, Plato destroys all significant spatial distinctions for his guardians and imposes a totalitarian set of temporal distinctions. In The Laws, this discursive web is expressed as laws regulating human behavior. The extremity of the Republic is avoided in the second best city. We can see the Republic as a trial run by Plato in which extreme pressures are applied in order to restructure society to realize the autopoietic unity. The autopoietic unity itself is represented as Gyges’ ancestors’ ring.

The daily routine of a [well known/insignificant] man, a servant of the King of Lydia, is broken by an unusual [order of the king/natural phenomena]. Driven by a force he finds hard to resist, the man enters [a forbidden space in the king's palace/an enclosed space underground]. There he gazes at the naked body of [a woman/a dead man] whose [beauty/stature] surpasses [that of any other woman/that of a human body], and thereby transgresses [a sacred custom/law of nature]. Soon after, the man is seen by [one who was not supposed to see him/nobody, if he wishes]. The

[failure/power] to remain invisible leads the man, with the cooperation of the queen, to murder the king and take over the kingdom. [The man reigns for the rest of his life and dies peacefully; his crime is avenged five generations later. When told, the crime and its punishment are explicitly related to the Solonian conception of happiness/ Whether or not the man is happy, and whether or not he may suffer punishment for his crime are open questions to be dealt with in the rest of the text.] [page 15]

Ophir conflates Herodotus' and Plato's versions of the myth in this structurally explicit retelling. But Ophir does not attempt to answer the question who the large man is who Gyges' ancestor gets the ring from and what is the nature of the ring that confers invisibility.

The license of which I speak would best be realized if they should come into possession of the sort of power that it is said the ancestor of Gyges, the Lydian, once got. They say he was a shepherd toiling in the service of one man who was then ruling Lydia. There came to pass a great thunderstorm, and an earthquake; the earth cracked, and a chasm opened at the place where he was pasturing. He saw it, wondered at it, and went down. He saw, along with other quite wondrous things about which they tell tales, a

hollow bronze horse. It had windows; peeping in, he saw there was a corpse inside that looked larger than humansize. It had nothing on except a gold ring on its hand; he slipped it off and went out. When there was the usual gathering of the shepherds to make the monthly report to the King about the flocks, he too came, wearing the ring. Now, while he was sitting with the others, he chanced to turn the collet of the ring to himself, toward the inside of his hand; when he did this, he became invisible to those sitting by him, and they discussed him as though he were away. He wondered at this, and fingered the ring again, he twisted the collet toward the outside; when he twisted it, he became visible. Thinking this over, he tested whether the ring had this power; and that was exactly the result. When he tried the collet inward, he became invisible, when outward, visible. Aware of this, he immediately contrived to be one of the messengers of the king. When he arrived, he committed adultery with the king's wife and along with her, set upon the king and killed him. And so he took over the rule.²

Invisibility destroys the power relations in the intersubjective civic space. It gives ultimate power to one who would not have it otherwise. The discursive

2. pp37-38; 359c-360b Bloom *The Republic*

field is an unequal terrain of power relations. In that field some are servants, while one is king by accident of birth or circumstance. The field of distinctions is itself uninterested in who has which position within the web of its distinctions. But the one who can walk through the field of distinctions without being distinguished is he who has ultimate power, because whatever he does cannot be punished by others. Note, it is the body which is negated in invisibility. The body is the bearer of distinctions which is no longer recognized. What Gyges' ancestor achieves is the ability of the Jinn (gods) to act unseen. Here the intersubjective agreement on what is seen and what is not has broken down.

Plato is very precise about how visibility is turned off and on again. Turning the ring outward turns visibility on. Turning the ring inward turns visibility off. Thus, an essential feature of the story is the ability to CONTROL visibility and invisibility. Control is distinction. Thus, what Gyges' ancestor really obtains is the control of the ability to be distinguished or not. This meta-distinction (the distinction of distinction) gives control over self-manifestation. Self-manifestation is very similar to self-organization of the autopoietic system. It operates on the same meta-level. Autopoiesis is the organization of organization. The self organizes itself. Gyges' ancestor decides when to manifest himself. His control is over the

manifestation of manifestation. He is there, but they talk about him as if he were not there. He is manifesting, but they are not seeing this manifestation. Gyges' ancestor is organizing their appearances to either include him or not. It is his self that is being included or excluded on command. Gyges' ancestor is organizing his self in relation to the intersubjective views of him. But the self is only the sum of all those external views. So Gyges' ancestor is organizing his self by controlling what the others do or do not see. Power stems from control of the appearances manifesting to others. Gyges, ancestor redefines himself as king by those perceptions of others. How did he become king, by killing the real king? Invisibility also comes from the others misclassifying you -- when they see you as something different from what you are. Gyges' ancestors power -- apparently almost divine -- has the same place in the discursive field as the autopoietic unity has to the field of distinctions within philosophy concerning Primordial Being.

TABLE 13

The parallelism between the story of Gyge's ancestor and the Collapse to fusion. [FIGURE 200]

Collapse to fusion	Gyges Story	Bisection
One (without other)	King (has all Power)	One
Duality (self/other)	Visible/Invisible	Two
Autopoietic Unity	Gyges Ancestor power over visibility	Four
Primordial Being	Discursive Web	Eight

The autopoietic unity steals the place of the One, just as

Gyges' ancestor steals the place of the King. The King has all power without opposition, just as the One is a totality without otherness. Invisibility is a dualistic, lopsided power relation dominating visibility. It is the source of the field of distinctions, just as dualism appears to be the source of all the distinctions between components of Primordial Being. The King controls the generator of distinctions, and that is what makes him King. Between the generator of distinctions and the discursive field is the possibility of surreptitiously controlling the dynamic relation between the field and the generator. Gyges' ancestor fits into this place. He steps into the hidden places or shadows of intersubjective manifestation using his magical "stealth" technology. The level of Four in the progressive bisection, stemming from one through duality and on past to the eight of Primordial Being, has this possibility. It usurps power from the king (the One) because it is the inner structure of manifestation. Whoever controls the inner structure of manifestation controls everything else. It is meta-control over which the king, who uses manifestation, has no power. Notice how Gyges' ancestor so easily subverts the queen to aid him in destroying the king. The queen is the key to access to the king's vulnerability. This king reminds us of Agamemnon in the Orestia.

Gyges is the name of one of the first born of Uranus and

Gaia. The name of one of the Hundred-handed Ones. They, along with Cyclops, were the first creations. This gives some hint who the larger-than-life named man might be. He is possibly one of those sons of Uranus who was born before the Titans. He is naked because of the time of his birth before all arts were produced. The ring and the bronze horse could have been one of the creations of a Cyclops who were master smiths. Cyclops means “ring eyed.” But it reminds us also of the Helmet of invisibility of Hades. Gyges means “earth born.” So Uranus was born of earth and so were his sons. When one dons the helmet of invisibility -- Death -- one disappears again into the earth. Invisibility is the realm of the dead. Thus, when Gyges’ ancestor takes the ring of invisibility from a corpse, he is perhaps taking the ability to be like the dead -- those who return to earth.

The contrast of the Cyclops to the Hundred-handed Ones is important for us. It certainly signifies too much unity verses too much diversity. It reminds us of the nomads from whom the real city evolves who were compared to Cyclops. The Cyclops and the Hundred-handed Ones were born before the twelve titans and before the twelve gods associated with Zeus. They were six in all.

TABLE 14

Manifestation of the Cyclops and Hundred Handed ones [FIGURE 203]

CHAOS	ONE	Primordial Undifferentiated
URANUS / GAIA	TWO	Uranus arises from Gaia

citizens as if they were Hundred-handed Ones. The anomalous position becomes the focus of all our efforts. It has been realized that the worlds have an inner coherence. That is the coherence of the subjectivities which construct the world. If we can control the appearances to all these subjectivities, we will have ultimate power over them. By excluding -- rendering invisible -- all the worlds outside the one we designate as real, then we have power over what has Being and what does not. Man lives in a cave of his own making in this metaphysical era -- so within that cave -- the controlling appearances projected by the fire on the wall is crucial. He who controls appearances (say media) is king -- usurping the power of the real king and killing him.

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