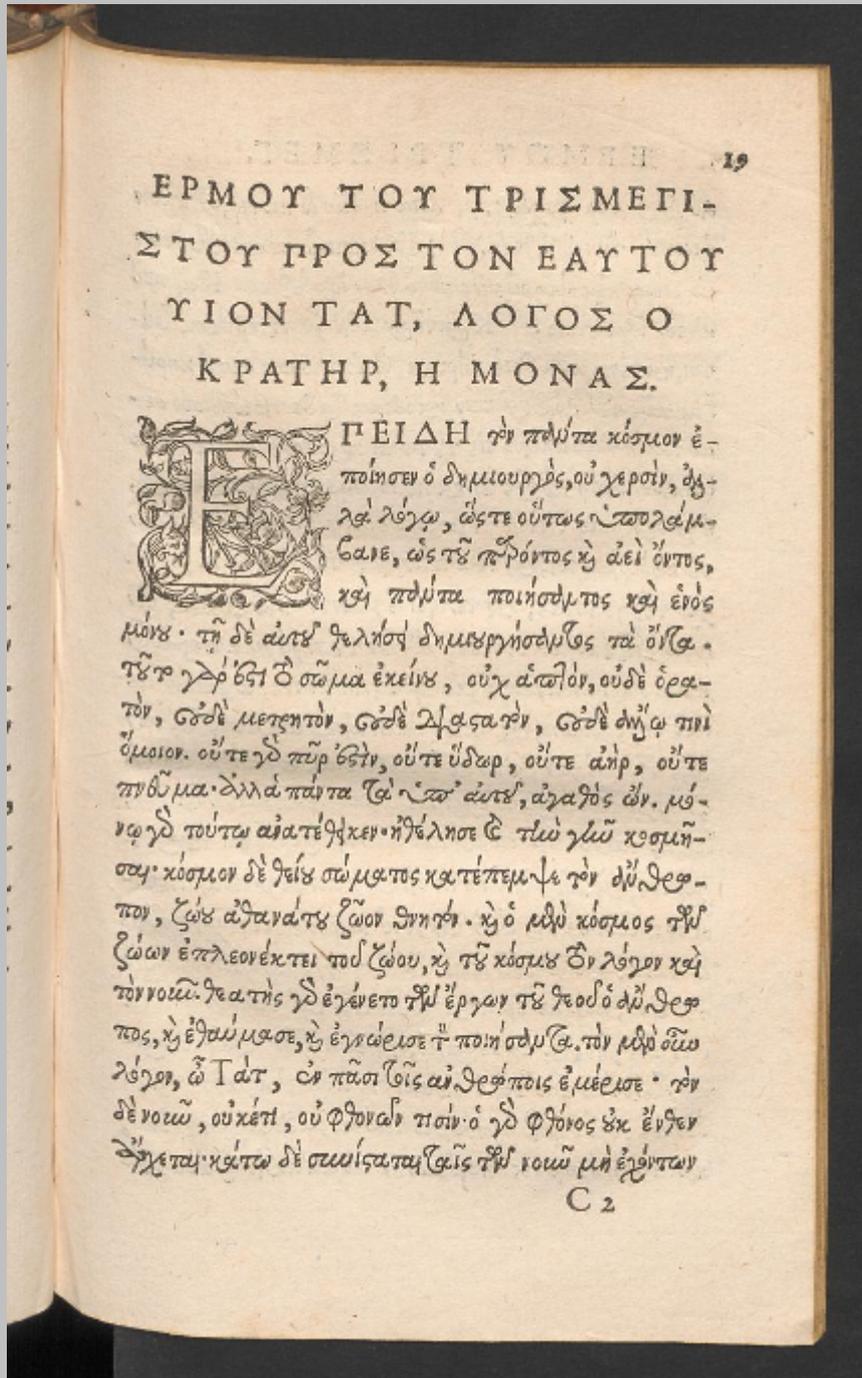


Chaldron Or Monas

A Translation Of And A Commentary On The Fourth Tractate Of The Corpus Hermeticum Ἑρμοῦ πρὸς Τάτ ὁ κρατῆρ ἡ μονάς



Introduction

The title given to the fourth tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum, Ἑρμοῦ πρὸς Τάτ ὁ κρατῆρ ἡ μονάς, requires some consideration if it is to be translated

without using English words that have, in the centuries since the text was written, acquired meanings which are not or which may not be relevant to or representative of the metaphysics, and the cosmogony, of such an ancient text; with an injudicious choice of words more often than not resulting in the modern reader projecting certain interpretations upon the text, as might be the case in translating, without some comment, κρατήρ as 'basin', cup, or 'mixing bowl', μονάς as 'monad', and Τάτ as Thoth.

In respect of κρατήρ, a more appropriate - and certainly more subtle - translation, given the esoteric nature and antiquity of the text, would be chaldron (an alternative spelling of 'cauldron'), since basin, cup, and 'mixing bowl' are not only too prosaic but also do not conjure the appropriate archetypal imagery: of the primal artisan-creator coagulating and mixing primal substances - cf. tractate III, Ιερός Λόγος - to produce, to bring-into-being by means of Logos, the cosmic order and thence mortal beings.

In respect of μονάς, the transliteration monas would be more appropriate - and certainly more subtle - than 'monad' given that the term monad is now so often associated with such weltanschauungen as those termed Pythagorean/neo-Pythagorean and Gnostic, an association which may or may not be relevant here. Furthermore, monas has a long and interesting esoteric usage, including (somewhat recently) by John Dee in his *Testamentum Johannis Dee Philosophi summi ad Johannem Gwynn, transmissum 1568* - a text included (on page 334) in Elias Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum, Containing Severall Poeticall Pieces of our Famous English philosophers, who have written the Hermetique Mysteries in their owne Ancient Language*, published in London in 1652 - who wrote "our Monas trewe thus use by natures Law, both binde and lewse", and who also entitled one of his works *Monas Hieroglyphica* (Antwerp, 1564), in which work he described (in Theorem XVIII) a septenary system somewhat similar to that of the Poemandres tractate:



In respect of Τάτ, while there is no disputing that Thoth is meant, what may

or may not be implied by the name Thoth is whether or not there is a primarily Egyptian genesis for the metaphysics and the cosmogony of this particular tractate. For what does 'Egyptian' mean in the context of the Corpus Hermeticum, written when Egypt was a post-Ptolemaic Roman province where Hellenism still thrived? That is, is the text propounding a metaphysics and a cosmogony primarily redolent of indigenous, pre-Alexandrian, times, with Hermes Trismegistus simply a Hellenic name for the ancient Dynastic deity Thoth, and thus with the Greek Hermes possibly being a son of that ancient Egyptian deity? Or is the text redolent of a classical metaphysics and a cosmogony; or of a Hellenic metaphysics and cosmogony; or of some syncretism of Egyptian (pre-Alexandrian) weltanschauungen with Hellenic mysticism? Or has the author (or authors) of Ἑρμοῦ πρὸς Τάτ ὁ κρατῆρ ἢ μονάς simply used the name of an ancient deity - Thoth - in order to appeal to an audience of Hellenized Egyptians, or Greeks/Romans dwelling in Egypt, or because it seemed to add some esoteric gravitas to the text? Or, as the title might be taken to imply - of Hermes *to* Thoth - is it a text intended to inform Egyptians (Hellenized or expatriate Greeks/Romans, or otherwise) about Greek/Hellenic metaphysics and cosmogony, with Thoth thus regarded, symbolically, esoterically, or otherwise, as the son of the Greek divinity Hermes?

In this matter, I incline toward the view - based on some forty years of study of the Corpus Hermeticum and similar mystical and esoteric texts, classical, Hellenic, medieval, Arabic and otherwise - that what is imparted in this tractate, as with the Poemandres and Ἱερός Λόγος, is primarily a mystical, and - for centuries - aural, Greek tradition, albeit one possibly influenced, over time and in some degree, by the metaphysical speculations of later philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle. That is, that in Ἑρμοῦ πρὸς Τάτ ὁ κρατῆρ ἢ μονάς and Ἱερός Λόγος and Ποιμάνδρης, we have an intimation of the metaphysics and the cosmogony taught to initiates of that (or those) ancient and aural and paganus Greek mystical tradition(s) mentioned by writers such as Herodotus. And an intimation that is not - a few borrowed illustrative terms notwithstanding - in any significant and metaphysical manner deriving from or influenced by Biblical stories or by early Christian theology or by indigenous Egyptian culture. In the matter of a paganus Greek mystical tradition, the opening of the fourth tractate is, metaphysically, very interesting:

Ἐπειδὴ τὸν πάντα κόσμον ἐποίησεν ὁ δημιουργός οὐ χερσὶν ἀλλὰ λόγῳ ὥστε οὕτως ὑπολάμβανε ὡς τοῦ παρόντος καὶ ἀεὶ ὄντος καὶ πάντα ποιήσαντος καὶ ἐνὸς μόνου τῆ δὲ αὐτοῦ θελήσει δημιουργήσαντος τὰ ὄντα

Because the artisan crafted the complete cosmic order not by hand but through Logos, you should understand that Being as presential, as eternal, as having crafted all being, as One only, who by thesis formed all that is.

For it is incorrect and misleading to write about those three tractates - and some other tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum - as being in any way indigenously Egyptian. Rather, their genesis - the tradition they represented - was the Greek culture of post-Alexandrian Egypt, a cultural influence so

evident in the numerous papyri found in places such as Oxyrhynchus, containing as such papyri do verses from Homer, Sappho, Menander, Sophocles, and other Greek authors.

Commentary, Translation, and Text

The references in the commentary here to the *Pœmandres* and Ἰερός Λόγος are to my translations of and commentary on those texts [1] for, as I mentioned in my Ἰερός Λόγος,

I have retained the transliterations, and some of the English phrases, used and explained there, such as physis, phaos, theos. I have also, as there, occasionally used some particular, or some quite obscure English words - or forms of them - in order to try and elucidate the meaning of the text or to avoid using, in what is a metaphysical text, some commonplace term with various connotations (contemporary or otherwise) that may lead to a misunderstanding of the text. I have endeavoured to explain such obscure words in the commentary. There is thus in this translation, as in my translation of *Pœmandres*, a certain technical - or rather, esoteric - vocabulary.

As with my Ἰερός Λόγος, I have here, purely for readability, arranged the translation into (non-poetic) verses rather than long paragraphs. All translations in the commentary are mine.

The Greek text used is that of A.D. Nock & A-J. Festugiere, *Corpus Hermeticum*, Collection Budé, 1946, although I have occasionally followed the readings of the MSS rather than the emendations of Nock and others. In the translation, angled brackets < > indicate conjectural readings.

David Myatt
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Notes

[1] {a} David Myatt, *Pœmandres, A Translation and Commentary*. 2014. ISBN 9781495470684. A large print edition is also available entitled *Mercvrii Trismegisti Pymander: A Translation and Commentary*. 2013. ISBN 9781491249543. {b} David Myatt, *An Esoteric Mythos: A Translation Of And A Commentary On The Third Tractate Of The Corpus Hermeticum*. ISBN 978-1507660126.

Illustrations

1. First page of the Greek text of κρατήρ ἡ μονάς from the book *Mercvrii Trismegisti Pœmandres*, published in Paris in 1554.
 2. The septenary arrangement from the first section of Theorem XVIII of Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica*, published in Antwerp in 1564.
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Translation

[1] Because the artisan crafted the complete cosmic order not by hand but through Logos
You should understand that Being as presential, as eternal, as having crafted all being,
As One only, who by theosis formed all that is.

That Being has no body that can be touched or seen or measured or which is separable
Or which is similar to any other body: not of Fire or Water or of Pneuma
Even though all such things are from that Being.
Since that Being is honourable, the desire was to entrust solely to that Being
Such a cosmic order on Earth:

[2] A cosmos of the divine body sent down as human beings,
For just as the ever-living cosmic order had an advantage over them
So did they have an advantage over other living beings in their cosmos
Because of Logos and Perceivance.
Thus did mortals perceive the works of theos, admire them,
Gaining knowledge of their creator.

[3] Thus, Thoth, to all mortals logos was assigned, but not perceivance
Even though there was no ill-will, for such ill-will arrives not from there
But below, associated with mortals whose Psyche does not convey Perceivance.

On account of what, father, did theos not assign perceivance to all?

Son, the desire was to position it half-way between those psyches, as a reward.

[4] Where, then, was it placed?

In that large repletful chaldron which was dispatched down
With an envoy assigned to declaim to the hearts of mortals:
If you have strength enough, immerse yourself in the chaldron
Should you accept you can ascend -
Having discovered how you came-into-being -
To the one who dispatched down that chaldron.

The many who understood that declaration and were immersive with perceivance
Gained a certain knowledge, becoming more complete mortals
Through having received the perceivance
While the many who misunderstood that declaration,
Having logos without the addition of perceivance,
Are unperceptive regarding how and why they came-into-being.

[5] For they have the alertness similar to that of unthinking animals
And, having an angry and restive disposition,
Have no respect for what is really valuable
But instead follow bodily pleasures and their own desires
Confident as they are that mortals were born for such things.

And yet, Thoth, those who partake to that gift from theos become,
When set against their deeds, immortal instead of mortal
For they with their perceivance apprehend the Earthly, the Heavenly,
And what is beyond the Heavens.
Having gone so far, they perceive what is honourable, and, having so perceived,
They regard what preceded this as a delay, as a problem
And, with little regard for whatever is embodied and disembodied,
They strive toward the Monas.

[6] This, Thoth, is the episteme of perceivance,
Of <considering the divine> and of understanding divinity,
For the chaldron is numinous.

Father, I also desire to be so immersed.

My son, primarily, unless you have a prejudice about the body
You cannot have affection for yourself, and when you have affection for yourself
You can acquire perceivance and, having perceivance,
You can participate in episteme.

Can you, father, explain that?

It is not possible, my son, to be of both the deathful and the divine.
For there are two kinds of existents, the bodily and the non-bodily,
Perceived as deathful and divine; a choice of one or of the other
Should there be a desire to do so. It cannot be both
With the decline of one uncovering the reality of the other.

[7] By choosing the higher not only is there a good ending - the apotheosis of the mortal -
For the one who chooses but also a numinous awareness of theos,
While, if the lower, although it has been the ruination of mortals
It is no termination against theos
But rather something garish that passes by amid us yet is unaffectionate
Even if an impediment to others
Just as those others are garishly worldly
Having been influenced by bodily pleasures.

[8] Because of this, then - Thoth - what is from theos can be and has been ours
So let what accompanies us be that now instead of later.
For it is we who select dishonour rather than honour
With theos blameless in this.
Do you, my son, apprehend how many celestial bodies we have to traverse -
How many groups of Daimons and sequential constellations -
So that we hasten to the Monas.

For the honourable is unpassable, without limit, and unending
Even though to us its origin appears to be the knowledge.

[9] But even though such knowledge is not the origin of it
It yields to us the origin of our knowing.
Thus should we apprehend such an origin and hasten upon our journey
For it is not easy to abandon what we have become accustomed to
And go back to what is elden and in the past.

What is apparent can please us while what is concealed can cause doubt
With what is bad often overt while the honourable is often concealed
Having as it has neither pattern nor guise.
Which is why it is akin to itself but different from everything else
For it is not possible for what is disembodied to be overtly embodied.

[10] This is the distinction between what is akin and what is different
With what is different having a privation of what is akin.

Since the Monas is the origin and foundation of everything
It is within everything as origin and foundation
For if there is no origin there is nothing
And the origin is not from anything but itself
Since it is the origin of everything else,

Just as the Monas, since it is the origin, enfolds every arithmos
Without itself being enfolded by any,
Begetting every arithmos but not begotten by any:

[11] Everything that is begotten is unfinished, partible,
Liable to decline, resurgence
Which do not befall what is complete
For what is resurgent is resurgence from Monas
But what is brought low is so by its own malady
Because unable to hold Monas.

This, then, Thoth, is the eikon of the theos
Insofar as it can be drawn:
If you - clearly, carefully - and with the eyes of your heart apprehend it
Then I assure you, my son, that you shall find the path to what is above:
In truth, the eikon will guide you
Since the seeing of it is uniquely your own,
For those who attain such a beholding are attentively held, pulled up,
Just as it is said lodestone does with iron.

Commentary

1.

artisan. δημιουργόν. See Poemandres 9. The theme of an artisan-creator, and their artisements, is common to the third tractate (Ιερός Λόγος) as well. That the tractate begins by using the term artisan, rather than theos, is perhaps significant.

that Being. The conventional and grammatical interpretation is "you should understand *him* as..." although how such a human-type gender could be adduced from or manifest by how the 'body' of the artisan-creator is described in subsequent verses is an interesting and relevant metaphysical question.

Can, or should, a 'body' that cannot be touched, that cannot be seen, that cannot be measured, that is not separable - οὐδὲ διαστατόν - and thus which is not conventionally 'human', be described as male? It is to suggest such metaphysical questions (and the limitations of ordinary language in describing and answering such metaphysical questions) that I have here departed from convention and used 'that Being' instead of 'him'. The term 'Being' also has the advantage that it avoids the gender bias implicit in translating θεός as 'god' given that 'god/God' implies a male entity.

There is also an interesting and perhaps relevant mention, in the second tractate of the Corpus, of the one, the being, who - like an artisan - constructs things: ὁ οὖν θεός <τὸ> ἀγαθόν, καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὁ θεός. ἡ δὲ ἕτερα προσηγορία ἐστὶν ἢ τοῦ πατρός, πάλιν διὰ τὸ ποιητικὸν πάντων.

πατὴρ γὰρ τὸ ποιεῖν. (Thus theos is the noble and the noble is theos, although another title is that of father because the artifex of all being. For it is of a father to construct.)

However, in terms of gender and Hellenic mythos and metaphysics, it is sometimes overlooked that Γαία, Earth Mother, in one of the Homeric hymns, Εἰς Γῆν Μητέρα Πάντων, is described as πρέσβιστος: the elder among beings, and the mother of the gods, θεῶν μήτηρ. Thus, while it might be of "a father to construct" it is "of a mother to bring forth life", to give birth to beings, including the gods themselves.

presential. πάρεμι. Presential - from the classical Latin praesentia - means "having or implying actual presence", as manifesting (as being presenced) in a locality or with an individual, and is thus more apposite here than the rather bland word 'present'. Cf. the use of 'presenced' in Ιερὸς Λόγος 2, et sequentia.

One only. ἐνὸς μόνου. A formulaic mystic phrase, implying uniqueness. Cf. ordinary usage in Plato, *Crito* 47, ἢ ἐνὸς μόνου ἐκείνου [...] ἐνὸς μόνου.

thelesis. θέλησις. Given what follows - τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ σῶμα ἐκείνου, οὐχ ἄπτόν, οὐδὲ ὀρατόν, οὐδὲ μετρητόν, οὐδὲ διαστατόν - a transliteration to suggest something other than a human type 'will' or 'desire'; such as 'disposition'. That is, Being (whatsoever of whomsoever Being is, in terms of gender and otherwise) is predisposed to craft - to presence - being as beings: as immortals (deities), as mortals (humans) and otherwise, γν. Ιερὸς Λόγος, Poemandres 8 ff, and Poemandres 31: οὗ ἡ βουλή τελεῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δυνάμεων (whose purpose is accomplished by his own arts).

formed. As an artisan forms their artiselements, and thus manifests their skill, their artistry, in what they produce. That is, the artisan-creator has formed, crafted, being (all existence) as beings.

(not) *separable*. οὐδὲ διαστατόν. What is not meant is 'dimension', given what the term 'dimension' now imputes scientifically and otherwise.

Pneuma. πνεῦμα. A transliteration for reasons explained in my commentary on the text of Poemandres 5:

given that the English alternatives - such as 'spirit' or 'breath' - not only do not always describe what the Greek implies but also suggest things not always or not necessarily in keeping with the Hellenic nature of the text. This particular transliteration has a long history in English, dating back to 1559 CE. In 1918, DeWitt Burton published a monograph - listing, with quotations, the various senses of πνεῦμα - entitled *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh: The Usage of Πνεῦμα, Ψυχή, and Σάρξ in Greek Writings and Translated Works from the Earliest Period to 225 AD* (University of Chicago Press, 1918).

I incline toward the view that πνεῦμα here - like λόγος - does not necessarily imply something theological (in the Christian sense or otherwise) but rather suggests an alternative, more personal, weltanschauung that, being a weltanschauung, is undoctinal and subtle, and which weltanschauung is redolent of Hellenic culture. Subtle and undoctinal in the way that early alchemical texts are subtle and undoctinal and try to express, or hint at (however obscurely to us, now), a weltanschauung, and one which is more paganus than Christian.

Even though all such things are from that Being. ἀλλὰ πάντα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. Literally, 'even though all are from that'. One therefore might understand it to imply 'even though all beings/things are from that Being.'

honourable. ἀγαθός. qv. Poemandres 22, where I referenced a quotation from the Corpus Aristotelicum:

τῆς δὲ φρονήσεώς ἐστι τὸ βουλευσασθαι, τὸ κρῖναι τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ κακὰ καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν τῷ βίῳ αἰρετὰ καὶ φευκτά, τὸ χρῆσθαι πᾶσι καλῶς τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ἀγαθοῖς, τὸ ὁμιλῆσαι ὀρθῶς [De Virtutibus et Vitiis Libellus 1250a]

It is part of wisdom to accept advice, to distinguish the honourable, the dishonourable, and all that is, in life, acceptable or to be avoided; to fairly use all resources; to be genuine in company.

Honourable - noble - rather than some abstract or dogmatically defined 'good'. That is, the Hellenic distinction is between good (honourable) personal character and bad (dishonourable) personal character rather than - as for example in Christianity - referencing some abstract, or God-given or dogmatically (Church) defined 'good'.

entrust solely to. I follow the MSS, which have μόνῳ, with οὐ μόνῳ being a fairly recent emendation which completely changes the meaning.

orderly arrangement. κοσμέω. In esoteric terms, a presencing, on Earth, of the cosmic order itself, qv. Poemandres 8: "having comprehended the logos and having seen the beauty of the cosmic order, re-presented it..."

Regarding 'presencing', qv. my translation of and commentary on section two of the third tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum, Ἱερός Λόγος:

ἀδιορίστων δὲ ὄντων ἀπάντων καὶ ἀκατασκευάστων.

With all beings unformed and not yet presenced.

2.

a cosmos of the divine body sent down as human beings. κόσμον δὲ θείου

σώματος κατέπεμψε τὸν ἄνθρωπον. That is, human beings re-present, presence, the 'divine body' and are, of themselves, a reflection of the cosmic order itself. This, and the preceding line, express a fundamental part of ancient and Renaissance hermeticism: human beings as a microcosm of the cosmic order and the divine.

Hence why the twenty-sixth chapter of the book *De Vita Coelitus Comparanda* by Marsilii Ficini (published in 1489 CE) has as its heading:

Quomodo per inferiora superioribus exposita deducantur superiora, et per mundanas materias mundana potissimum dona.

How, when what is lower is touched by what is higher, the higher is cosmically presented therein and thus gifted because cosmically aligned.

Also, in respect of ἄνθρωπος I have used here - as in my *Poemandres* - the gender neutral 'human being' instead of the more usual 'man', and also - as there - occasionally used the term 'mortal' when the context suggests it.

Regarding 'the cosmic order' (κόσμος) itself qv. *Poemandres* 7; 14, and *Ιερός Λόγος* 4:

The divine is all of that mision: renewance of the cosmic order through Physis
For Physis is presented in the divine.

a deathful life and yet a deathless life. This (including the borrowing of the terms deathful and deathless, in juxtaposition, from Chapman) is explained in section 14 of the *Poemandres* tractate:

θνητὸς μὲν διὰ τὸ σῶμα, ἀθάνατος δὲ διὰ τὸν οὐσιώδη ἄνθρωπον.

deathful of body yet deathless the inner mortal.

Logos and Perceiverance. In my commentary on the *Poemandres* tractate I have explained my reasons for transliterating (and sometimes capitalizing) λόγος as logos (qv. the commentary on section 5) - rather than as 'Word' or 'Speech' - and for translating νοῦς as perceiverance/perceiveration rather than as the conventional 'mind' (see for example the commentary on sections 2 and 10). Refer also to comments there regarding terms such as pneumatical logos (πνευματικὸν λόγον), phasal logos (φωτεινὸς λόγος) and θεοῦ λόγος.

Here Logos suggests 'reasoning', with perceiverance having its usual sense of 'awareness', of comprehending what is perceived, as for example, in being able to rationally or intuitively assess a situation, a person, or persons. As with (and for example) Logos, Psyche, and Physis, perceiverance - capitalized as Perceiverance - can also be personified and thus regarded as a fundamental quality germane to the life of deathful mortals.

3.

whose Psyche does not convey Perceiverance. It is possible to see in this an esoteric allusion to psyche personified, especially given what follows: τοῦτον ἐν μέσῳ ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὥσπερ ἄθλον ἰδρῦσθαι. In ancient mythology - such as the ancient myth of Psyche and Eros, retold by Apuleius in his *Metamorphoses*, which was written around the same time as this Hermetic tractate, and which story also involves Hermes - Psyche initially lacked perceiverance but through striving to succeed in the trials given to her by Aphrodite she acquires it.

Hence why here I have personified both psyche and perceiverance. I have also transliterated ψυχή so as, as I noted in my Poemandres, to not impose a particular meaning on the text. For whether what is meant is anima mundi, or the ancient paganus sense of the 'spark' - the source, or breath - of life, or what we now denote by the terms 'soul' and 'spirit', is open to debate, especially as the terms soul and spirit possess much later and modern connotations that may not be relevant to such an ancient text. Connotations such as suggesting the incorporeal, or immaterial being, as distinct from body or matter; or the Christian concept of the soul.

As an illustration of matters of interpretation, two subtly different senses of ψυχή are evident in the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles:

τῶνδε γὰρ πλέον φέρω
τὸ πένθος ἢ καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι.

For my concern for their suffering
Is more than even that for my own psyche.

vv.93-4

ἀλλά μοι δυσμύρω γὰρ φθινὰς
τρύχει ψυχάν, τάδ' εἰ κακοῖς κακὰ
προσάψει τοῖς πάλαι τὰ πρὸς σφῶν.

But ill-fated would be my breath of life - which the decay in this soil
Already wears down - if to those troubles of old
There was joined this trouble between you and him.

vv.665-667

In respect of ψυχή, the Hermetic text here implies that ill-will is associated with those whose nature is such that they lack the ability to rationally or intuitively assess and comprehend a situation or other people.

father. ὦ πάτερ is a traditional way of showing respect for an elder, in this

case of Thoth for Hermes.

position it half-way between those psyches, as a reward. Thus, while Logos is a gift to all mortals from theos, Perceivance is not and has to be earned, striven for, as an athlete has to strive to earn a prize. [The English word athlete is related to the Greek word used here - ἄθλον - via the Greek ἀθλητής and thence the classical Latin athleta.]

chaldron. κρατήρ. See the Introduction.

envoy. While the conventional translation here of κήρυξ is 'herald', I consider it unsatisfactory given what that English term now often denotes: either the type of herald familiar from the New Testament or the herald of medieval literature and stories (qv. Morte Arthure, and The Knights Tale by Chaucer). Given the Greco-Roman context (Hermes, Thoth) and classical antecedents (such as Hermes as the protector of mortal envoys and messengers) then 'envoy' is more accurate especially given that this is an envoy from the artisan-creator assigned to impart information to mortals.

Ascend to the one [...] how you came-into-being. There are similarities here to the Poemandres tractate in relation to the anados - the journey up through the spheres (Poemandres 24) toward theos - and the desire "to apprehend the physis of beings" (Poemandres 3).

and were immersive with perceivance. καὶ ἐβαπτίσαντο τοῦ νοός. That is, were or became characterized by having become immersed with - suffused by - perceivance.

Here, as elsewhere the understanding of νοῦς as perceivance/perceivance rather than as 'mind' makes the text understandable: for the mortals became suffused with a particular (and, for most, probably a new type of) perception, a new way of seeing the world, themselves, and other mortals, and thus acquire a particular type of knowing, whereas an expression such as "immersed themselves with mind" is obscure to the point of being either unintelligible or requiring a long discourse on the nature of "mind" based as such discourses invariably are on certain philosophical assumptions.

The sense of acquiring a new way of seeing the world, themselves, and other mortals is evident in the text that follows: οὗτοι μετέσχον τῆς γνώσεως (gained, acquired, partook of, a knowing).

more complete mortals. The sense of τέλειος here is not that of being 'perfect' but rather of being 'entire', more completed, 'more rounded', than others. Thus there is no sense of "perfect people" or "perfect humans" - with implied moral, and other, superiority - but rather of those who, having a different perception of things to most others, were akin to initiates of a mystical or an esoteric tradition: apart from others because of that particular knowledge that their new, initiated, perception, has brought, but still mortal. This sense is evident in the text that follows: τὸν νοῦν δεξάμενοι.

received the perceivance. It is possible that this is an allusion to 'the perceivance' - the gnosis - that initiates of a particular mystic or esoteric tradition acquire when certain esoteric, mystic, knowledge is imparted to them.

4.

declaim to the hearts of mortals. A figurative usage of 'heart', referring here as often elsewhere in Greek and Hellenic culture to the feelings, the emotions (qv. Iliad, Book IX, 646 and The Odyssey, Book XVII, 489) as well as to the ethos, the nature, and the understanding, of the individual.

See also "with the eyes of the heart" in section 11.

5.

alertness. αἴσθησις. For which see Poemandres 1. The sense is that they are always alert, and - like animals - react instinctively because they lack the objective awareness that perceivance (νοῦς) brings and which objective awareness (of themselves and others) makes mortals into complete human beings.

Confident. Given the context, πιστεύω here suggests 'confidence' rather than 'belief'; for this is the arrogant instinctive confidence of those who lack perceivance and who have no firm belief in anything other than their own bodily pleasure and fulfilling their desires and who thus reject - or who cannot intuit - the numinous perspective of the divine, a perspective which would reveal the possibility of immortality.

parten to that gift [...] when set against their deeds. The text suggests that the gift of immortality which theos gives is freely bestowed among those whose deeds reveal that they have understood what the chaldron is and does, with the fourteenth century English word parten [to have something in common with something or someone else] expressing the meaning here of the Greek μετέχω.

apprehend the Earthly, the Heavenly, and what is beyond the Heavens. An alternative - following the Latin version of the text - omnia complexi sua mente, et terrena et caelestia et si quid est supra caelum - would be "apprehend the terran, the celestial, and what is beyond the celestial."

(as a) problem. The context suggests that what is meant is that life before "having so perceived" was a problem, not that it was a 'misfortune' or a calamity. A problem - a challenge - to overcome, which challenge they accepted leading to them gaining the prize, for theos had positioned that prize "half-way between those psyches, as a reward."

The same sense in respect of συμφορά is apparent in Oedipus Tyrannus by Sophocles:

θεοῖσι μὲν νυν οὐκ ἰσοῦμένον σ' ἐγὼ
οὐδ' οἶδε παῖδες ἐζόμεσθ' ἐφέστιοι,
ἀνδρῶν δὲ πρῶτον ἔν τε συμφοραῖς βίου
κρίνοντες ἔν τε δαιμόνων συναλλαγαῖς

Not as an equal of the gods do I,
And these children who sit by your altar, behold you -
But as the prime man in our problems of life
And in our dealings and agreements with daimons.

vv. 31-34

disembodied. ἀσώματος - etymologically, a privation of σωματικός - occurs in works by Aristotle and, perhaps more relevant here, in writers such as Iamblichus who in *De Mysteriis*, V, 16 writes in general terms about the body in relation to offering to the gods and daimons that which, or those things which, might free the body from ailments and bring health, and the necessity in such matters as offerings of not considering the body in either non-bodily or noetic terms:

τότε δὴ οὖν οὐ δήπου νοερῶς καὶ ἀσωμάτως τὸ σῶμα
μεταχειριζόμεθα· οὐ γὰρ πέφυκε τῶν τοιούτων τρόπων τὸ σῶμα
μετέχειν· τῶν δὲ συγγενῶν ἑαυτῷ μεταλαγχάνον, σώμασι σῶμα
θεραπεύεται τε καὶ ἀποκαθαίρεται.

Thus the sense of καταφρονήσαντες πάντων τῶν σωματικῶν καὶ ἀσωμάτων ἐπὶ τὸ ἔν seems to be that what is important is a striving for the monas not a noetic concern for the difference between whatever is embodied and whatever is considered disembodied.

Monas. μονάς. A transliteration since it here does not necessarily, as I noted in the Introduction, signify "The One, The Only" (τὸ ἔν) of such weltanschauungen as those termed Pythagorean, neo-Pythagorean, or Gnostic; or 'the one God' of religious monotheisms such as Christianity.

6.

episteme. A transliteration of ἐπιστήμη, which could be - and has been - accented thus: épistémé. The meaning is 'a way', or a means or a method, by which something can be known, understood, and appreciated. In this case, perceivation, which the artisan-creator has positioned "half-way between psyches, as a reward."

Episteme, therefore, should be considered a technical, esoteric, term associated with some of the weltanschauungen that are described in the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Thus, in the *Poemander* tractate, the anados through the seven spheres is an episteme.

considering the divine. The MSS have ἐντορία and various emendations, recent and otherwise, have been proposed including ἐντορία and ιστορία.

Interestingly, the Renaissance Latin text published in 1554 has, for the line, 'scientia mentis est diuinorum contemplatio & intelligentia dei, diuino existente cratere' with Parthey's 1854 edition reading 'mentis scientia, diuinorum inspectio et dei comprehensio, quia diuinus est crater.'

I am inclined toward ιστορία, which conveys the sense here of considering, of obtaining information about - of contemplating - divinity, the numinous, and thus the relation of mortals to divinity. A sense which fits well with the following καὶ ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ κατανόησις.

For the chaldron is numinous. θείου ὄντος τοῦ κρατῆρος. For θεῖος here I have opted for the English word numinous (dating from 1647 and from the classical Latin term numen) to express the sense of inclusion - of/from the divinity and of itself being divine - that the word 'divine' by itself does not, particularly given the previous "considering the divine and of understanding divinity."

Primarily, unless you have a prejudice about the body. Ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον τὸ σῶμά σου μισήσης. To always - regardless of textual context and milieu - translate μισέω/μῖσος as "hate" is or can be misleading, given how the English word hate implies (and is understood as meaning) an extreme personal emotion, an intense personal aversion to something, and also a certain malevolence. Consider, for example, the following from Thucydides:

ἀπὸ τούτου τε πρῶτον Περδίκκας Βρασίδαν τε πολέμιον ἐνόμισε καὶ ἐς τὸ λοιπὸν Πελοποννησίων τῇ μὲν γνώμῃ δι' Ἀθηναίους οὐ ξύνηθες μῖσος εἶχε, τῶν δὲ ἀναγκαίων συμφόρων διαναστὰς ἔπρασεν ὅτῳ τρόπῳ τάχιστα τοῖς μὲν συμβήσεται, τῶν δὲ ἀπαλλάξεται. (4.128)

His reaching an agreement with the Peloponnesians while at the same time still being determined to be rid of his foe does not imply an implacable, intense, personal hatred in the first place, but rather a generalized dislike (in this case just a certain prejudice) of the kind that can be dispensed with if it is personally - or strategically - advantageous to do so. Thus to translate the relevant part as "it was then that Perdiccas first considered Brasidas his foe and felt a prejudice toward the Peloponnesians" seems apt, especially given the qualification mentioned in the text: τῇ μὲν γνώμῃ δι' Ἀθηναίους.

The preference for the metaphysical, for striving for immortality and for understanding the numinous, that this tractate describes is not, as some have assumed, an ascetic "hatred" of the physical body. Instead, it is just a positive bias in favour of such metaphysical, spiritual matters, and a prejudice against a fixation on bodily and material things.

This preference is also evident in Poemandres 19:

"they of self-knowledge attained a particular benefit while they who, misled by Eros, love the body, roamed around in the dark, to thus, perceptively, be afflicted by death."

For, as noted in my commentary on τὸν αἴτιον τοῦ θανάτου ἔρωτα in Poemandres 19:

The consensus is, and has been, that ἔρωτα here signifies 'carnal desire' - or something similar - so that it is assumed that what is meant is some sort of ascetic (or Gnostic or puritanical) statement about how sexual desire should be avoided or at the very least controlled. However, this seems rather at variance with the foregoing - regarding propagating and spawning - which inclines me to suggest that what is meant here is 'eros', not necessarily personified as the classical deity (ἡδ' Ἔρος ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι πάντων δὲ θεῶν πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων δάμναται ἐν στήθεσσι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν), although the comparison is interesting, but rather as an elemental or archetypal principle, akin to νοῦς and λόγος. Consider, for example, the following from Daphnis and Chloe, written by Longus around the same time as the Corpus Hermeticum: πάντως γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἔρωτα ἔφυγεν ἢ φεύξεται μέχρις ἂν κάλλος ἦ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ βλέπωσιν [Book 1, Proem, 4 - "no one can avoid or has ever been able to avoid Eros, while there is beauty and eyes which perceive"]. In modern terms, few - poetically, metaphorically, none - have avoided or could avoid, at some time in their life, the unconscious power of the anima/animus.

There are two kinds of existents, bodily and non-bodily. δύο γὰρ ὄντων τῶν ὄντων. This duality, in respect of mortals, is evident in the Poemandres tractate:

διὰ τοῦτο παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς ζῶα διπλοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ ἄνθρωπος,
θνητὸς μὲν διὰ τὸ σῶμα, ἀθάνατος δὲ διὰ τὸν οὐσιώδη ἄνθρωπον

distinct among all other beings on Earth, mortals are jumelle;
deathful of body yet deathless the inner mortal

(Poemandres 15)

This contrast between the deathful body and the immortality that is possible (the potential for immortality that lies within mortals) is essentially the same as the one described here: the bodily and the divine, the embodied and the disembodied.

7.

apotheosis of the mortal. Not here a literal making of "the mortal into a god" or even an actual "deification of the mortal" (by whomsoever) but rather a bringing about in the mortal an apotheosis - ἀποθέωσις - in the sense of an ascension toward immortality, a spiritual journey from earthly life, a figurative resurrection of, or actual elevation in, the life of the mortal.

This latter sense is evident in the use of ἀποθέωσις by Cicero in his

Epistularum Ad Atticum - videsne consulatum illum nostrum, quem Curio antea ἀποθέωσιν vocabat, si hic factus erit, fabam mimum futurum (Liber Primus, XVI, 13) - for this early use of the Greek word concerns the elevated rank of Consul, and thus the honour and privileges that such a privileged rank brings.

a numinous awareness of theos. In respect of εὔσεβέω as an "awareness of the numinous" cf. my Poemandres, 22.

termeration. From the Latin termero and thus appropriate here, given the context, in respect of πλημμελέω, suggesting as it can both a violation and a profanation, while avoiding the interpretation that words such as "transgression" (toward god), "trespassed (against god) and "offence" (against god) impute, especially given the usual translations of Christian texts written in Greek, such as translations of the following from the Septuagint: ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ περὶ ἐνδὸς ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν ἐποίησεν καὶ ἐπλημμέλησεν αὐτῷ (Leviticus 5, 26).

something garish that passes by. The exact meaning of πομπή here is unclear, with suggestions ranging from parade, pageant, to procession (religious or otherwise), which all seem out of context since they all can have an affect, a purpose, and can achieve things other than just being a hindrance to passers-by.

The context suggests something metaphorical and similar to what Cicero wrote:

quem tu mihi addidisti sane ad illum σύλλογον personam idoneam.
Videbis igitur, si poteris, ceteros, ut possimus πομπεῦσαι καὶ τοῖς
προσώποις (Epistularum Ad Atticum, Liber Tertius Decimus, 32:3)

That is, similar to a showy or affected countenance or facade or personae, or an act, or some pompous attempt to impress which however is not effective as in Oedipus Tyrannus:

εἰπὼν ἄπειμ' ὧν οὔνεκ' ἦλθον οὐ τὸ σὸν
δείσας πρόσωπον οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου μ' ὀλεῖς

I shall go but speak that for which I was fetched, with no dread
Because of your countenance. For you cannot harm me. (448)

garishly worldly. I take the sense of κόσμος here to refer to 'that cosmos' - the world of mortals - previously described as "the cosmos of the divine body": the microcosm which the artisan-creator crafted and in which we mortals have our being. See the commentary in section 2 on the phrase a *cosmos of the divine body*.

Hence the poetic metaphor here: garishly worldly. Of living a garish - facile - life in our microcosm even though the artisan-creator has provided a means for us to attain immortality and thus, as described in the Poemandres

tractate, become a part of a higher, a divine, cosmic order.

8.

select dishonour For κακός as 'bad' and 'dishonourable' rather than 'evil' refer to my commentary on Poemandres 22 from which this is an extract:

"The usual translation of κακός here, as often elsewhere, is 'evil'. However, I regard such a translation as unhelpful, given that the English word 'evil' is (1) now often interpreted and understood in a moralistic, preconceived, way according to some theological dogma/criteria and/or according to some political/social doctrine, and (2) that it does not denote what the classical and the Hellenic term κακός does. Classically understood κακός is what is bad in the sense of some-thing rotten or unhealthy, or - the opposite of κάλος - what is displeasing to see. κακός is also what is unlucky, a misfortune, and/or injurious [...] When applied to a person, the sense is of a 'rotten' person; someone with bad, harmful, physis; a bad - dishonourable, weak, cowardly - personal character."

theos blameless in this. In respect of ἀναίτιος, compare Agamemnon 1505:

ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ
τοῦδε φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων

Is there anyone who will bear witness
That you are blameless in this killing?

celestial body. By σῶμα (body) here is meant the celestial body, the 'harmonious structure', which is described in terms of seven spheres in the Poemandres tractate and which mortals must ascend through in sequence in order to attain immortality and thus be in the company of theos. This ascension through the spheres is there described as an anados - ἔτι δέ μοι εἶπε περὶ τῆς ἀνόδου τῆς γινομένης - with Poemandres (in section 25) describing the journey in detail, with each sphere represented by one of the seven classical planets:

καὶ τῇ πρώτῃ ζώνῃ δίδωσι τὴν ἀύξητικὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ τὴν
μειωτικὴν, καὶ τῇ δευτέρᾳ τὴν μηχανὴν τῶν κακῶν, δόλον
ἀνενέργητον [...]

Thus does the mortal hasten through the harmonious structure,
offering up, in the first realm, that vigour which grows and which
fades, and - in the second one - those dishonourable machinations,
no longer functioning [...]

Plato, in Timaeus 32c, uses σῶμα to refer to the substance - the body - of the cosmos as being formed from fire, water, air and earth:

ὄν ἀριθμὸν τεττάρων τὸ τοῦ κόσμου σῶμα ἐγεννήθη δι' ἀναλογίας ὁμολογήσαν

sequential constellations. In context, συνέχειαν καὶ δρόμους ἀστέρω suggests a type of movement, a path, through certain stars or constellations. That is, a particular or ordered sequence: the anados through the septenary system, with it being possible that the use here of ἀστήρ (star) - rather than κύκλος (sphere, orb) as in Poemandres - implied an aural esoteric tradition associating each sphere with a corresponding star or constellation, an ancient tradition found in Renaissance alchemical and magical texts.

the honourable is unpassable. Reading ἀδιάβατον, which implies that what is honourable is always there, always around, always noticeable when it is presenced by someone. In other words - given the following καὶ ἀπέραντον καὶ ἀτελής - there are always some mortals who will (qv. sections 5 and 8) select honour rather than dishonour: who will (as described in section 4) "receive the perceiviation," having won that prize gifted by theos.

9.

Even though to us its origin appears to be the knowledge. The expression ἡμῖν δὲ δοκοῦν ἀρχὴν ἔχειν τὴν γνῶσιν is interesting given that it refers to 'the knowledge', which some have construed to refer to the gnosis of certain pagan weltanschauungen. However, since what this particular knowledge is, is not specified, to translate as 'the Gnosis' would be to impose a particular and modern interpretation on the text given what the term gnosticism now denotes. All that can be adduced from the text is that this particular knowledge may refer to and be the knowledge imparted in the text itself: the knowledge that Hermes is here imparting to Thoth.

The word translated here as origin is ἀρχή and which Greek term has various philosophical connotations in Anaximander, Plato, et al. What it here denotes, as evident in the text that follows (sections 10 and 11), is origin, beginning, source.

not the origin of it. Referring to what is honourable and its origin/beginning.

hasten upon our journey. While the text - λαβώμεθα οὖν τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ ὀδεύσωμεν τάχει ἅπαντα - is somewhat obscure it seems reasonable to assume that what is meant or implied is the necessity of beginning - of hastening upon - the complete, the entire, journey toward the Monas with all that implies in terms of everything encountered along the way.

not easy. The sense of σκολιόν here - in the context of leaving what one has become accustomed to and is comfortable with - suggests 'tangled', indirect, 'not straightforward', 'tortuous', and thus 'not easy'.

elden. A rather obscure English word meaning 'belonging to earlier times', and used to avoid the negative connotations that words such as 'ancient' can imply.

What is apparent can please [...] neither pattern nor guise. τὰ μὲν γὰρ φαινόμενα τέρπει, τὰ δὲ ἀφανῆ δυσπιστεῖν ποιεῖ. φανερώτερα δὲ ἔστι τὰ κακά, τὸ δὲ ἀγαθὸν ἀφανὲς τοῖς φανεροῖς

This is an interesting passage, often interpreted in terms of moral abstractions, of 'good' and 'evil'. However, as previously mentioned, I incline toward the somewhat iconoclastic view that there is a more Greek, a more Hellenic, and an essentially pagan, interpretation of ἀγαθός consistent with the Greek mystery traditions, with Homer, with the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles, and with how theos was generally understood in ancient Greece and in Greco-Roman, Hellenistic, times. Which is of ἀγαθός - and of κακός - (i) when referring to mortals as referring to personal character, of character being most often revealed by deeds, by what has been observed because done visibly, or to outward appearance in terms of τὸ καλόν, of what is considered beautiful or not beautiful; and (ii) when used of things - living or dead - as referring to the difference between 'rotten', 'bad', and what is not rotten, as in a rotten tree or a piece of food.

What is expressed here is of how outward appearances can please, how we can be suspicious - doubtful - about what is concealed, what has not yet been revealed; with what is bad often outwardly obvious (as in the case of a rotten tree or a rotten person) but with what is good, honourable, often being concealed because it has no particular pattern or guise until it has been revealed, for example by noble, honourable deeds. Thus the suggestion seems to be that there is or can be a revealing of what is good when mortals seek the theos-gifted prize of perceiviation, which seeking of that prize, and winning it, is of itself a good, a necessary, an honourable, thing to do, leading at it does to a hastening toward the Monas.

The passage also invites comparison with one in Plato's Republic and one in Aristotle's Metaphysics.

In Book XII, 1074b, Aristotle wrote:

τὰ δὲ περὶ τὸν νοῦν ἔχει τινὰς ἀπορίας: δοκεῖ μὲν γὰρ εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων θειότατον, πῶς δ' ἔχων τοιοῦτος ἂν εἴη, ἔχει τινὰς δυσκολίας

The expression δοκεῖ μὲν γὰρ εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων θειότατον has led to disputations among some scholars with some considering the passage corrupt and in need of emendation, for their difficulty lies in Aristotle apparently stating that 'Mind' is, like other phenomena, perceptible to our senses. However, if one does not translate νοῦς as 'Mind' - with all the preconceptions, philosophical and otherwise, that have over centuries become attached to that term - and one also appreciates that φαίνω here as sometimes elsewhere is not a simple 'observing' - of seeing, of observing, phenomena - but rather a revealing, then there is little if any difficulty. For

instance, does the following interpretation of part of that passage make sense with respect to phenomena? "Perceivance, of all revealing, appears to be the most numinous."

Indeed so, because perceivance is a perception involving a certain awareness, a revealing to us, of what is observed; that is, an apprehension, and Aristotle's reasoning (insofar as I understand it) is that this awareness - νοῦς - is the most numinous, 'the most divine', revealing because we mortals can apprehend, be or become aware of, and thus have knowledge of, theos. Which is basically what Hermes has in this tractate of the Corpus Hermeticum imparted to Thoth.

In Book VII, 517β - 517ξ, of the Republic, Plato wrote:

τὰ δ' οὖν ἐμοὶ φαινόμενα οὕτω φαίνεται, ἐν τῷ γνωστῷ τελευταία ἢ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα καὶ μόγις ὁρᾶσθαι

Which brings us, again, to ἀγαθός invariably translated as it hitherto has been - in respect of the Corpus Hermeticum, and many of the writings of Aristotle and Plato - as an abstraction termed 'good', as well it might be in respect of Plato given that he posits an abstract (a true, ideal) beauty and an abstract (true, ideal) being, as in Phaedo 78b where he writes about αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν and about αὐτὸ ἕκαστον ὃ ἔστιν, and why in Symposium 210e - 211a he states regarding his ideal, his form, his ἰδέα/εἶδος, which he sometimes and confusingly uses interchangeably, that:

πρῶτον μὲν αἰεὶ ὄν καὶ οὔτε γιγνόμενον οὔτε ἀπολλύμενον, οὔτε ἀξανάμενον οὔτε φθίνον

Firstly, it always exists, and has no genesis. It does not die, does not grow, does not decay.

What, therefore, seems to have occurred, in respect of this and other tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum, is the assumption that ἀγαθός always refers back to Plato's ἰδέα/εἶδος (and to those influenced by him or are assumed to be his precursors) leading to moralistic interpretations such as that of Mead where ἀγαθός is divorced from the physis (φύσις), the character, the individuality, of mortals: "evils are the more apparent things, whereas the Good can never show Itself unto the eyes, for It hath neither form nor figure." Thus, that in respect of mortals, ἀγαθός, rather than having its genesis, its origin, its very being, in some individual mortals - and attainable by others because of the prize of perceivance offered by theos - is considered as something external which could be attained by, which has its being in, is embodied by, such abstractions (the 'politics') as Plato delineates in his theorized Republic and in such abstractions as were posited by the early Christian Church.

For it is not possible for what is disembodied to be overtly embodied.
ἀδύνατον γὰρ ἀσώματον σώματι φανῆναι. That is, it is not possible to discern who is honourable from their outward appearance, for what is honourable is manifest, revealed, through personal deeds.

10.

enfolds every arithmos [...] begetting every arithmos but not begotten by any. This passage, with its mention of ἀριθμός, is often assumed to refer to the Pythagorean doctrine regarding numbers since ἀριθμός is invariably translated as 'number' - thus implying what the English word implies, especially in mathematical terms - even though Aristotle, in discussing ἀριθμός, wrote: ἄλλος δέ τις τὸν πρῶτον ἀριθμὸν τὸν τῶν εἰδῶν ἓνα εἶναι, ἔνιοι δὲ καὶ τὸν μαθηματικὸν τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦτον εἶναι (Metaphysics, Book XIII, 1080b.20).

Given such a necessary distinction - and the discussion regarding ἀριθμός and Pythagoras in Book XIII, 1083b.10 et seq - as well as the fact that what ἀριθμός means here, in this tractate, and what it implies - such as the mathematical numbers 2 and 3 developing from the One - is not mentioned, I have transliterated ἀριθμός thus leaving open what it may or may not mean in relation to the particular weltanschauung being described. However, the context seems to suggest a metaphysical rather than an abstract mathematical notion, especially given what follows at the beginning of section 11: πᾶν δὲ τὸ γεννώμενον ἀτελὲς καὶ διαιρετόν.

begetting/begotten. It is interesting to compare the use here of γεννάω (beget/engender) with the use of γέννημα in Poemandres 8 (the birth of Psyche) and 30 (of Logos breeding nobility).

11.

resurgence [...] decline. The sense here, in context, is not as abstract, as impersonal, as a translation such as "increase and decrease" implies. Rather it suggests "resurgence and decline", as happens with living things.

what is complete. The reference is to the Monas.

eikon of theos. I have transliterated εἰκὼν as eikon since - for reasons mentioned in my commentary on Poemandres 31 - it implies more, in some ancient mystical tractates, than what the word 'image' now denotes.

eyes of your heart. A similar expression occurs in Paul's Letter to the Ephesians - πεφωτισμένους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας <ὕμων> (1.18) - although, as some scholars have noted (qv. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, Baker Academic, 2002. p.260f) the Greek syntax there is problematic.

the path to what is above. That is, the anados (ἄνοδος) mentioned in the Poemandres tractate, composed as the word ἄνοδος is from ἀνά (above) and ὁδός (path), the two Greek words used here.

the seeing of it is uniquely your own. What is being conveyed is that the eikon is of itself mystical - not an ordinary image or painting - and can impart

to the person, who "with the eyes of their heart" views it, something unique, personal, numinous.

lodestone. μαγνητικός λίθος. Lodestone, and not a 'magnet' in the modern sense.

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