

# Three Dimensions of Being in Plato and Their Operation within a Rationally Structured Domain of Becoming

## Abstract

Plato's metaphysics can be shown to affirm three fundamental dimensions of being – the **Active vs. Passive**, **Coming-to-be vs. Ceasing-to-be**, and **Visible vs. Invisible** – and to situate these dimensions within a rationally ordered realm of becoming. In the *Theaetetus*, Plato (through Socrates) explicitly recognizes *action* (πρᾶξις) and *generation* (γένεσις) as real ontological factors and criticizes those “uninitiated” who deny the reality of *comings-to-be*, *doings*, and *invisible* things <sup>1</sup>. He describes perception as an interaction of active and passive elements yielding emergent qualities in a process of *becoming* <sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>. These processes are not arbitrary or chaotic; rather, Plato implies that they occur in a structured medium that allows for conceptualization and truth. In the *Timaeus*, this medium is embodied by the World Soul's orderly motion: the “inner circle” of Difference, divided into the patterned motions of time, operates under the governance of reason (νοῦς) <sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup>. Even mythically, the *Republic's* vision of the three Fates (Lachesis, Clotho, Atropos) supervising the Spindle of Necessity (the cosmic axis) symbolizes an ordered cosmos where past, present, and future are woven together intelligently <sup>6</sup>. Textual evidence thus supports the conclusion that Plato acknowledges these three oppositional pairs as genuine ontological categories and that they function within a *rationally structured domain of becoming* – a realm of change governed by intelligible principles (ultimately, by *Nous* or reason) rather than mere illusion or brute flux.

## I. Affirming Three Ontological Dimensions in Plato's Metaphysics

**Active and Passive – Interaction as Fundamental:** Plato affirms an ontological polarity between active and passive forces. In *Theaetetus* 155e, Socrates refers to a secret doctrine holding that “all is motion,” which comes in two forms: *one active and the other passive* (δραστικόν/παθητικόν) <sup>2</sup>. Out of the “union and friction” of these active and passive elements arises an “endless progeny” of phenomena <sup>7</sup>. Each perceptual event, for example, is generated by an interaction between an active factor (the object or stimulus) and a passive factor (the perceiving organ). Plato illustrates this with the case of vision: when the eye (passive perceiver) meets the appropriate object (active source), *whiteness* and the corresponding visual experience are “born” between them; *the eye is filled with sight and becomes...a seeing eye* (not sight itself), while *the object is filled with whiteness and becomes...a white thing* <sup>3</sup>. Neither agent nor patient has the resultant quality in isolation; only through their interaction do visible qualities and sensations come-to-be. This strongly suggests that Plato regards *activity* and *passivity* as real ontological principles whose *interaction* underlies the emergence of worldly qualities (rather than viewing such language as mere metaphor or subjective impression). Indeed, he emphasizes that considered “in separation” from each other, an agent or a patient “has no existence” as such – each becomes what it is only in relation to the other <sup>8</sup>. Thus, the active/passive dyad is fundamental to how Plato conceives *becoming*.

**Coming-to-be and Ceasing-to-be – Reality of Generation and Destruction:** The dynamic of genesis and decay is likewise affirmed as an ontological reality. In the *Theaetetus* discussion of Protagoras and Heraclitean flux, Socrates marshals “many arguments” to show that *motion is the source of coming-to-be* (γένεσις) and life, whereas *rest (ῥαθυμία) is the source of perishing and destruction (φθορά)* <sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup>. He notes, for example, that friction and movement generate fire and warmth (the “parent and guardian” of living things) and even living creatures themselves <sup>9</sup>. Conversely, inactivity leads to dissolution: the body is ruined by idleness and preserved by exercise, and the soul’s knowledge likewise decays in the absence of activity (attention and study) <sup>10</sup>. Motion, he concludes, is a universal good (cause of life and *coming-to-be*), while stagnation is an evil (leading to *ceasing-to-be*) <sup>11</sup>. This is not presented as mere subjective opinion but as an objective principle – a causal law of nature. Plato even invokes a cosmic image: so long as the sun and heavens are in motion, “all things *are* and are preserved,” but if their motion ceased, “everything would be destroyed” <sup>12</sup>. Such remarks imply that *genesis* and *destruction* are real processes built into the fabric of the world, not illusory appearances. Indeed, at *Theaetetus* 155e Socrates pointedly describes the materialists who “believe in nothing but what they can hold in their hands” and “*will not allow that action or generation or anything invisible has real existence*” as the “*uninitiated*” – epistemic barbarians, so to speak <sup>13</sup>. By having Socrates ironically “guard the mysteries” from these unbelievers, Plato makes clear that *comings-to-be* and *ceasings-to-be* (birth, change, and passing-away) are, for the philosophically enlightened, essential components of *being* itself <sup>13</sup>. In other words, *Becoming* (γένεσις) is an ontologically valid category in Plato’s system, even if it is hierarchically inferior to eternal *Being*.

**Visible and Invisible – A Bifurcation of Ontological Domains:** Plato also acknowledges a critical distinction between what is visible (or otherwise perceptible) and what is invisible (intangible or intelligible). In *Theaetetus* 155e, as noted, the “uninitiated” are those who refuse to admit “the existence of actions and generation **and all invisible things**” <sup>1</sup>. This indicates that Plato counts *invisible* realities (τὰ ἀόρατα or ἀφανῆ) – things that cannot be grasped by the hands or seen by the eyes – as genuine existents. Such invisible entities would include, most obviously, **souls, mental acts, and Forms**, as well as any causal or abstract entities not directly perceptible. In contrast, the *visible* (τὸ ὁρατόν) denotes the realm of bodies and sensible qualities, which **do** manifest to our eyes and other senses. Plato’s own metaphysical hierarchy gives primacy to invisible Forms and soul, but he does not dismiss the visible as sheer non-being; rather, the visible/sensible world *exists* in a mode of continual coming-to-be. Notably, in the *Timaeus* he describes the cosmos itself as having both a visible body and an invisible soul (σῶμα μὲν ὁρατόν, ψυχὴ δ’ ἀόρατος) <sup>5</sup>. The *Theaetetus* provides a nuanced view of visibility by showing that even “the visible” is something *achieved* through process. At 156d–e, as we saw, *seeing* arises when the eye and object interact such that the eye becomes a *seeing* eye and the object a *visible* white object <sup>3</sup>. The capacity to see (and thus to render something visible) emerges over time – implying that *visibility itself is an emergent state*, not an intrinsic property of a thing in isolation. This is underscored by the remark that if one tried to assign any fixed spatial *being* to a color (say, to think of whiteness as a thing that simply *is* in a place), “it would be at rest and there would be no becoming” <sup>14</sup>. In other words, to be *visible* (to appear as white, for example) is not to instantiate a static property, but to participate in an event of *becoming visible*.

Plato thus affirms all three oppositional pairs as real features of his ontology. Things *become and perish* in the world; their *appearance to the senses* (the visible aspect) is only one side of reality, complemented by invisible structures; and behind every event is an interplay of *active* and *passive* factors. To be “real” in the world of becoming is, for Plato, to be caught up in these three dimensions. The next question is: **what is the metaphysical status of this realm of becoming?** Is it mere chaos or *doxa* (appearance), or is it a *kosmos* – a governed, knowable order? Plato’s texts suggest the latter: these dimensions operate within a structured field that can be rationally understood.

## II. The Structured Metaphysical Status of the Realm of Becoming

Plato does not treat the coming-to-be of sensible qualities as a chaotic effusion of raw sense-data; rather, he portrays it as occurring within an intelligible *order* that allows emergent phenomena to be *meaningful and law-governed*. In the *Theaetetus* passage on perception, Socrates explicitly moves from the level of unstructured pathos (mere subjective feeling) to that of *qualified experience* by introducing conceptual categories like “cold” (ψυχρόν). He asks whether “the same wind, blowing on both of us, can make one of us cold and the other not” – and if so, “*is the wind in itself cold or not?*” The Protagorean answer he entertains is that “*the wind is cold to him who is cold (τῷ μὲν ῥιγῶντι ψυχρόν), and not cold to him who is not*” <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup>. Here Plato shows that to describe a sensory event, we inevitably invoke relational qualities (*coldness*, etc.) that bring a measure of structure to the experience. The raw sensation (shivering or not shivering) is being subsumed under a concept (*cold or not cold*) that situates the experience in a describable framework. This marks a transition from inchoate feeling to *qualified state*. As Socrates puts it, in such cases “appearance and perception coincide” – *what appears to each person (e.g. ‘cold’) is how it is for that person* <sup>17</sup>. But significantly, by using a common term (cold), we acknowledge a shared qualitative content, not just a private flux. This implies that the realm of perception is not utterly unstructured; it is amenable to being *carved up by concepts* and hence to rational discourse (even if only at the level of true opinion).

Plato further clarifies this in *Theaetetus* 182a–b, where he distinguishes between **transient qualified states** and **enduring qualities or Forms**. When a subject perceives and “becomes white or hot,” Theaetetus is careful to say the subject “*does not acquire whiteness or heat itself (οὐ ποιότητα), but becomes white or hot (θερμόν τι or λευκόν)*” <sup>18</sup>. In Greek, the phrasing indicates that the thing becomes “*of a certain quality*” (ποιόν τι), rather than literally becoming the quality (ποιότης) instantiated. The active element in the interaction *does not become Whiteness itself (λευκότης)*, but a *white thing (λευκόν)*; the passive subject does not become the abstract quality of Heat (θερμότης), but *hot (θερμόν)* <sup>18</sup>. This careful language shows that Plato views sensible properties as **relational and transient outcomes** of processes, not as stable self-subsistent entities. Yet, because these outcomes can be named (hot, white, cold, etc.) and understood as *instances* of intelligible qualities, they partake in an *orderly structure*. The phrase “οὐ ποιότητα” (“not a **Quality**”) implies that the emergent state is not a fixed Being, but it is nonetheless something real that came to be – a *qualified event*. Such events fall into patterns; for instance, the fact that *heat* in matter regularly arises from motion and friction is a law-like regularity Plato notes <sup>9</sup>. We see here a middle ground between pure flux and eternal Forms: the changing sensible world consists of *processes that produce orderly, nameable states*, even though those states lack the permanence of Forms.

Moreover, Plato insists that without some stability and structure in the flux of appearances, *knowledge and discourse would be impossible*. After exploring the radical Heraclitean thesis that “nothing ever is, but is always becoming” <sup>19</sup>, Socrates points out a fatal consequence: if *every* attribute is constantly changing in every respect, we could not even speak of “white” or “hot” at all, since even in the time we utter the word, the reality would have shifted to something else <sup>20</sup>. We would have to abandon all fixed names. This is in fact the critique he levels against the extreme flux doctrine: it **destroys the possibility of language and truth** <sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup>. The implicit conclusion is that the world of becoming must have *enough rational structure to permit stable reference* – at least long enough for us to form *true judgments* about it. Indeed, Socrates ultimately concludes that the Protagorean/Heraclitean identification of knowledge with perception fails, in part because it cannot account for how we reliably talk about objects and qualities (he introduces the notion of a measuring art to stabilize perception <sup>23</sup>). In sum, while sensible things are in constant flux, they do so *in patterned ways* that our reason can latch onto. Emergent phenomena occur within a *framework of interaction* set by those three dimensions (active/passive cause, coming-to-be/ceasing temporal process,

visible/invisible correlates) – a framework that is **intelligible enough to be analyzed** (even if not perfectly stable like the Forms).

To better understand what grounds this intelligibility, we turn to Plato's cosmological vision in the *Timaeus*, where he explicitly describes the *domain of becoming as ordered by reason*. Plato's cosmology provides the model of a "rationally structured field" in which change unfolds according to mathematical and divine principles, rather than as unruly appearance.

### III. Νοῦς as the Governing Principle in the Field of Becoming

For Plato, *Noûs* (Intellect or Divine Reason) is the architect and regulator of the cosmos – which is the grand embodiment of the realm of becoming. In the *Timaeus*, Plato portrays the universe as a living creature with a soul instilled by the Demiurge (divine Craftsman) according to a rational plan. Crucially, this World Soul is the internal source of order and intelligibility in the cosmos. It is fashioned from a mixture of Being, Sameness, and Difference, and set into precise mathematical motion <sup>24</sup> <sup>4</sup>. The result is that the cosmos is *not* a chaotic flux but a *kosmos* – literally an ordered arrangement – governed from within by something akin to mind.

The World Soul's structure has two fundamental circulations: the circle of the **Same** (τὸ αὐτό) and the circle of the **Other** or Different (τὸ θάτερον) <sup>25</sup>. The circle of the Same corresponds to the uniform, intelligible motion (associated with the sphere of fixed stars and the universal frame of reference), while the circle of the Other is associated with diverse, changing motions (in particular the orbits of the "wandering" stars, i.e. planets) <sup>25</sup> <sup>4</sup>. The Demiurge divides the circle of the Other into seven unequal circles, establishing the seven planetary orbits, each with its rational proportional speeds <sup>4</sup>. These regulated motions of the "inner circle" generate **time** itself, which Plato calls "a moving image of eternity" <sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup>. Thus, *temporal becoming is built into the world by design*: the year, months, and days began when the heavens were set in motion, each planet defining and "guarding" the numbers of time <sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup>. The coming-to-be of temporal periods and the cyclical "births" of seasons, etc., are all governed by the harmonic numerical ratios imparted by the Demiurge. This is a clear example of *Nous operating as an ontological force in the structure of becoming*. Time and change are not left to randomness; they unfold according to the **rational order** (λόγος) the creator imposed.

Moreover, Plato explicitly states that the World Soul, by virtue of its divine construction, *possesses reason*. After describing the formation of the soul's circles, the dialogue says: the creator "**set the soul (with its circles) in the body of the universe and spread it throughout, and the soul, revolving within itself, initiated the beginning of unceasing intelligent life (νοεῖν βίον) for all time.**" The body of the cosmos is visible, *but the soul is invisible and partakes of reason (νοῦς) and harmony, being the best of all things that have come to be, created by the best of intelligible beings (the Forms or the Demiurge)*" <sup>30</sup> <sup>5</sup>. This remarkable passage (*Timaeus* 36e–37a) affirms that the cosmos *itself* is ensouled with *nous*; the world is a rational animal. The governance of becoming is thus internalized: Reason is not merely an external spectator but is embodied as the guiding principle of the world's life. In consequence, every change that occurs in the heavens or earth is in principle comprehensible, since it follows from the rotations of the soul that "*circles back upon itself*" and compares *Same vs. Other* <sup>31</sup>. Whenever the World Soul's circle of the Other (the locus of change and sensation) aligns with the circle of the Same, the soul can form true **opinions** about perceptible things; and when the circle of the Same alone is engaged with eternal being, the soul yields **knowledge (nous)** of intelligible things <sup>32</sup>. Plato emphasizes that these mental states – opinion and knowledge – *arise in the soul* and nowhere else <sup>33</sup>. In other words, the structured motions of the soul

themselves generate understanding. The rational order of the cosmos is thus self-reflective: the cosmic soul's motion both causes phenomena *and* cognizes them. Nous is literally the *cause* of cosmic order and the *faculty* through which that order is grasped.

Therefore, Plato installs *intellect as an ontological component of becoming*. The realm of change ("the circuit of Difference") is not a blind torrent; it is "*ruled by*" the circuit of Sameness, which ensures all the wandering motions are coordinated into a single harmonious system <sup>34</sup>. The *Timaeus* likens the relation between the Same and the moving Others to a master controlling the subordinate motions: the faster (outer) motion of the Same makes even the slowest inner motions appear coordinated, producing a complex dance of speed that nevertheless follows a rational pattern <sup>35</sup>. Nous, embodied in the cosmic rotations and their mathematical ratios, is thus continuously operative "within the structure of becoming." Even at the level of human perception and thought (microcosm reflecting macrocosm), our ability to have true beliefs about the sensible world is due to the soul's orderly motion (a microcosmic mirror of the World Soul) <sup>32</sup>.

In short, Plato's answer to whether the field of emergence includes reasoning as an internal principle is an emphatic yes. The *Timaeus* presents **Reason (Noûs)** as the very *ordering power* that shapes the domain of becoming from chaos into cosmos. This reason-governed domain is neither purely eternal like the Forms nor anarchic like the hypothetical Heraclitean flux; it is a third ontological category – the *generated cosmos*, a living, rationally structured whole.

## IV. Models of the Intelligible Domain of Becoming: Plato's Inner Circle and the Three Fates

To illustrate Plato's concept of a reason-ordered realm of becoming, we can briefly examine two images he uses: the cosmological model of the *Timaeus* (the **circles of Same and Different**, especially the "inner circle" of Different that accounts for temporal change) and the mytho-symbolic image of the **Three Fates** in the *Republic*. Both images reinforce the notion that *becoming and temporal processes are subject to rational governance* in Plato's thought.

**A. The Inner Circle of Difference in the *Timaeus*:** In *Timaeus* 36c–37a, as discussed, Plato describes the Demiurge splitting the soul-stuff into two concentric circuits. The "inner circle" – identified with *Difference* or the motion of the Other – is subdivided into seven orbiting circles, each corresponding to a wandering star (planet) <sup>25</sup> <sup>4</sup>. This inner circle is the seat of diversity, change, and time. However, it is *not* a realm of unguided mutations; it was carefully calibrated by the Demiurge. Each of the seven orbits was given a specific speed and direction (three in one set of speeds, four in another, all in mathematically proportional ratios) <sup>4</sup>. The outer circle of the Same, carrying the fixed stars, was left "single and undivided" and given supremacy, rotating uniformly to the right, while the inner circle(s) rotate to the left <sup>36</sup>. This ensures that even as the inner motions are irregular relative to one another (some faster, some slower, changing positions), they are **all yoked to the steady rhythm of the Same** – the one motion that defines the *day* and unites the cosmos. The result is an exquisitely ordered system of differing motions that create recurring patterns (conjunctions, oppositions, seasons, cycles of years) rather than random drift. The field of becoming (embodied by the inner circle of Difference) is *thus a rational domain*: it is literally the cosmic mechanism for regulated change. It "governs emergence" in the sense that all generation and alteration in the physical world happen in step with these celestial motions of Difference. Notably, when the World Soul "touches upon" things that are divisible (i.e. things that come to be and pass away) via the circle of Difference, it can render judgments about "in what way and at what time each thing is so" <sup>31</sup> <sup>33</sup>. This

implies that everything that *comes-to-be* in time is indexed by the movements of Difference and can be assessed by the soul in those terms (e.g. *when* and *how* it changes). The inner circle provides a kind of rational grid for temporal events. In modern terms, we might say Plato envisions the cosmos like a giant clockwork: time and becoming are not an amorphous flow but are segmented and measured by the rotations of the cosmic soul. Consequently, the oppositions of active/passive and generation/destruction unfold within this pre-set matrix. Any “coming-to-be” happens *in time*, and since time is the number [measure] of motion according to Plato <sup>27</sup> <sup>37</sup>, each event has its rational slot. The rationality (*Nous*) that crafted the cosmos is continuously *present* in the ongoing operation of the cosmic cycles. The inner circle of Difference, though the source of variation, remains an “*intelligible field of becoming*” because it is a part of the soul – which means it inherently contains proportion, purpose, and intelligibility.

**B. The Three Fates and the Spindle of Necessity (Republic 616c–617c):** In the eschatological *Myth of Er* at the end of the *Republic*, Plato offers a mythic tableau that symbolically encodes the order of the cosmos. Er beholds a “column of light” or spindle stretching from heaven to earth, which turns out to be the Spindle of Necessity – effectively the axis of the cosmos around which all celestial spheres rotate (the mechanism underlying the “inner” and “outer” circles described in the *Timaeus*). Attached to the spindle are *eight concentric whorls* representing the known celestial circles (the fixed stars and the seven planetary orbits) <sup>38</sup>. The rotation of these whorls is accompanied by the music of the Sirens, each Siren singing a single note to form a perfect harmony – a mythical image of the mathematical music of the spheres. Around this spindle sit **three thrones**, on which **the three Moirai (Fates)** – *Lachesis*, *Clotho*, and *Atropos* – are seated “at equal intervals” <sup>39</sup>. They are the daughters of Lady Necessity, “clad in white with garlands on their heads,” and they sing in unison with the cosmic music: *Lachesis sings of the past* (“*the things that were*”), *Clotho of the present* (“*the things that are*”), and *Atropos of the future* (“*the things that are to be*”) <sup>39</sup> <sup>40</sup>. Their very names mean “Allotment” (*Lachesis*), “Spinner” (*Clotho*), and “Unturnable” or “Inflexible” (*Atropos*). In the myth, these goddesses not only sing; they also *physically participate in turning the cosmos*. *Clotho* is described as periodically laying her right hand on the outermost rim of the spindle to help it turn, *Atropos* likewise lays her left hand on the inner circles, and *Lachesis* alternately assists with both the outer and inner rotations <sup>38</sup>. Through this imagery, Plato presents a vivid personification of **the governed cosmos**: even the “inner circles” (with their irregular planetary motions) are in hand – literally under the *left* hand of unerring *Atropos* – and the whole system is supervised by intelligences who ensure the continuous, orderly revolutions. The Fates symbolize that *time* itself (past, present, future) is integrated into a cosmic order guarded by Necessity and guided by Intelligence (after all, their harmonious singing suggests wisdom and concord with the rational Sirens’ song). The presence of three Fates might even be seen as allegorically mirroring the *three dimensions of being* we have discussed: for instance, one might imagine **Clotho (present)** correlating with the active ongoing spinning of events, **Lachesis (past)** with the “allotment” of what has come into being up to now (the thread already measured out), and **Atropos (future)** with the irrevocability of what is to come (the “ceasing” of possibilities as the future becomes fixed). While such one-to-one mapping is speculative, the *general triadic structure* of the myth – three agents governing the axis of time – resonates with the idea that Plato’s cosmos is governed along multiple coordinated axes (action–passion, becoming–being, visible–invisible). The daughters of Necessity ensure that the cosmic motions (and by extension, all events of becoming within those cosmic cycles) proceed according to fate and order, not chance. The *Republic* explicitly notes that souls, before reincarnation, approach *Lachesis* for their lots, indicating a metaphysical principle that each soul’s destiny (its coming-to-be in a new life) is assigned with order and reason <sup>39</sup>. In effect, the *Myth of Er* encapsulates the message that **the realm of temporal emergence is under an intelligible governance** – Necessity and the Fates stand for the law-like regularity and structure that pervade becoming. Plato thus uses myth to reinforce in imaginative form what the *Timaeus* conveys

through philosophy: that the world's changes are not mere appearances but part of a grand, reasoned design.

## Conclusion

Through a close analysis of Plato's texts, we find strong evidence that he affirms a triadic ontology comprising (1) Active vs. Passive factors, (2) Coming-to-be vs. Ceasing-to-be processes, and (3) Visible vs. Invisible aspects – and that these three dimensions operate within a **reason-governed field of becoming** rather than a realm of sheer illusion or chaos. In the *Theaetetus*, Plato has Socrates acknowledge the reality of *actions* and *generations* and even chastise those who deny *invisible* realities <sup>1</sup>, thus asserting these categories as essential to what *is*. He further articulates how through the interplay of active and passive, perceptible qualities *come to be* in an intelligible way – *for a perceiver and in relation to a context* <sup>15</sup> <sup>3</sup>. The sensible world is not outright *being* (in the sense of eternal Forms), but neither is it unreal; it consists of emergent states that, while transient, can be rationally categorized and understood (as indicated by the distinction between *becoming hot/white* versus *the qualities Heat or Whiteness* themselves <sup>18</sup>). This points to an underlying order in the flux.

The *Timaeus* confirms that the entire realm of Becoming – the cosmos – is framed by *nous*. The “inner circle” of change is mathematically structured and subordinated to the intelligible “Same,” ensuring that all changes occur in an orderly temporal rhythm <sup>4</sup> <sup>34</sup>. The World Soul's possession of reason (νοῦς) and its self-rotations mean that the cosmos actively *maintains* and *contemplates* the rational laws of its own becoming <sup>5</sup> <sup>32</sup>. Plato's world is thus a living, intelligent order. Finally, the poetic image of the Fates in the *Republic's* myth symbolically underscores that *time-bound events and differences are governed by higher principles* – each thread of life is spun, allotted, and made irreversible according to the ordered turnings of the cosmos <sup>6</sup>.

In conclusion, the textual evidence strongly supports the view that Plato recognizes these three oppositional pairs as **genuine ontological categories** and not merely epistemological or linguistic distinctions. They characterize how things exist in the sublunary realm – a realm which, though not eternal, is *lawful and intelligible* because it is suffused with the rational structure imparted by *Nous*. The *realm of becoming*, for Plato, is neither a deceitful appearance divorced from reality nor a self-subsistent domain equal to the Forms, but an intermediate ontological plane: **a cosmos – an orderly, reason-permeated becoming**. In this rational cosmos, *active and passive powers continually interplay, things come-to-be and pass-away in discernible patterns*, and *the visible world is a manifestation of invisible principles*. Plato's metaphysics, therefore, affirms that the flux of phenomena unfolds within a *rationally structured domain*, governed by intelligible laws and divine intelligence, which makes the world amenable to understanding even as it changes. This realization is what allows the philosopher – the true initiate – to trust in the reality of generation, action, and the unseen, and to study the cosmos as a coherent, knowable whole rather than a chaos.

**Sources Cited:** Plato, *Theaetetus* <sup>13</sup> <sup>2</sup> <sup>9</sup> <sup>3</sup> <sup>18</sup>; Plato, *Timaeus* <sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup> <sup>32</sup> <sup>34</sup>; Plato, *Republic* <sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> <sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup> <sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> <sup>11</sup> <sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup> <sup>23</sup> Theaetetus, by Plato

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