

Tübingen, den 27.3.2008

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b) Vorgesehenes panel
11. The philosophical Significance of Cosmology and Theology

c) Titel des Beitrages
Plato's Cosmology as the Systematical Framework of His Theory of Time

d) Länge des Beitrages
20 Minuten

e) Skizze des Inhalts des Beitrages (maximum: 300 Wörter)

Ernst A. Schmidt

Plato's Cosmology as the Systematical Framework of His Theory of Time

Plato's theory of time in the *Timaeus* sums up and carries on the preceding Greek reflections on time. As the most important speculation on time it is the origin of all subsequent theories. His definition, "time is eternity's eternal image, moving according to number", must not be isolated but is to be interpreted in connection with the following elements of its cosmological context: the parts and the species or movements of time, the instruments of time, the construction of the world-soul.

The analysis will be divided into the following four theses to constitutive parts of Plato's theory of time.

(i) Plato's cosmical-physical time incorporates past, present and future.

(ii) Plato merges cosmical time and time of experience. For both number and image demand a counting and representing subject, the soul (of the world and of man), the world-soul and the cognate human soul.

(iii) The world-soul's capacity to count is grounded on the immobility of the centre of her spherical shape, which rests for ever in the One and the Same. Hence experience of time presupposes eternity. Time is the way of self-reflection of the unmoved-moved soul. The soul represents the movement of the cosmos, her living body, counting the planets' returns on their orbits, the circles of the Other.

(iv) Plato's time is not reduced to one direction; the soul does not accompany the movement of the sky. She counts either towards past or towards future. That is why past and future are called movements. The parts of time (themselves being time) are "moving according to number", the species of time (being themselves time) are "moving according to number".

(286 words, title included)