

ERIUGENA'S FIVE MODES (*PERIPHYSEON* 443A–446A)

MICHAEL FOURNIER

Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Eriugena's five modes of interpreting the first and fundamental division of all things have traditionally been under interpreted. The 'few words' (Sheldon-Williams' translation of *breviter dicendum* at 443A) meant to clarify the more obscure primary differentia are passed over quickly in most accounts of the argument of the *Periphyseon*, while interpreters linger long on the preceding division of *natura* into those things that are and those that are not, and the division of *natura* into four species which follows.¹ The question arises why, if as most interpreters agree, Eriugena sets out a clear plan for the entire work in these initial divisions, does he devote a hundred lines at the end of this schematic presentation to establishing the idea that, 'sometimes being comes out as greater than non-being, and sometimes it is the other way round.'² This endlessly perspectival reading of the five modes is representative of the common view that there is nothing which connects the five interpretations except a kind of 'family resemblance.' The five modes are usually regarded as dropping out of the main line of argument, to appear only sporadically in the roughly quarter million remaining words of the work.³

While Eriugena is clear that the interpretations presented do not constitute an exhaustive list, he is also clear that there is in them an order.⁴ He emphasizes the 'first mode, the second, the third, etc.' While Moran recognizes the priority of the first mode on just this basis,⁵ he does not acknowledge a similar rank order to the rest, and his reading would suggest that after the first mode Eriugena could just as well mean 'another mode, and another, yet another, etc.'⁶ In addition, the five modes are all interpretations of the original division at 441A, which is not *simply* perspectival. As Michael Harrington notes, 'the first and highest division of all things is not only perceived by the human soul, but created by it.'⁷ Harrington acknowledges the apparent tension between this position and the contrary assertion in the *Periphyseon*, that the divisions exist in nature itself. While the former would seem to confirm the idea that the division depends upon the perceiving subject, and that the first is therefore merely perspectival, Harrington cites Gersh's conclusion, that Eriugena's doctrine of a double creation resolves the difficulty.⁸ The idea that every creature was created in human nature (cf. 763C–773A) gives an entirely different sense to the idea that the divisions are created by the human subject. They are created in and in an important sense *by* the human nature, as real divisions in nature, independent of the perceiving subject.⁹

This original division then has an objective status relative to which the other, sometimes perspectival, modes must be read. Taken together these facts suggest that there is order and stability in this presentation and that the five modes are a key to the interpretation of the *Periphyseon*. In this paper I argue that the five modes are not independent and opposable,¹⁰ but follow in a logical way from the first division, a logic which is borrowed

from the Dionysian *cosmos*.¹¹ The five modes present the divisions of being and non-being within the logic of the divine names Good, Being, Life, Wisdom and the One.

The first mode is a reiteration of the initial division of ‘things which either can be grasped by the mind or lie beyond its grasp . . . into those that are and those that are not’ (441A). The Nutritor states that,

reason convinces us that all things which fall within the perception of bodily sense (*corporeo sensui*) or (within the grasp of) intelligence (*intelligentiae*) are truly and reasonably said to be (*esse*), but those which because of the excellence of their nature elude not only all sense but also all intellect and reason rightly seem not to be (*non esse*)—which are correctly understood only of God and matter and of the reasons and essences of all things that are created by Him (443A-B).

This interpretation is more detailed, identifying the three things which are understood in this sense of non-being, as well as dividing perception into ‘bodily sense’ and ‘intelligence.’ The initial division only makes reference to those things which can be grasped *animo*, which is variously translated as ‘by the mind’ or ‘by the soul.’¹²

The first mode is co-extensive with the processions of the Good according to the *Divine Names* of Dionysius. Among the divine names Good is properly the first, indeed it is preeminently set apart by sacred writers as a name for God, and alone applies to the entire *scala naturae*, from the intelligible and intelligent beings, intelligent souls, irrational souls, and lifeless matter. In fact its effect proceeds so far as to include non-being (*DN* 693B-697A).¹³ Eriugena’s first mode presents a similarly complete *natura*. This mode is comprehensive and includes God, the essences, matter and created nature. Eriugena even echoes Dionysius’ inclusion of non-being in the effects of the Good when at the end of the first mode he concedes that it is possible to conceive of privations of things that exist in opposition to or in the absence of certain beings. This recalls the way that, according to Dionysius, it is in virtue of repelling being that non-being longs for the Good (*DN* 697A). The Dionysian character of the first mode is confirmed by his quotation from a chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* which contains an exposition of the various extents to which created natures are capable of receiving from God the effects of the processions of Good, Being, Life and Wisdom.¹⁴

A problem appears, however, when one considers the place of matter for Eriugena and Dionysius. Eriugena places matter along side God and the essences of all things (443B).¹⁵ Dionysius, presumably following Proclus (who ultimately follows Plotinus, if not on the question of whether matter is evil, at least on the place of matter), locates matter at the bottom of the scale.¹⁶ In one sense for Proclus matter is the exhaustion of emanations and the lowest point of the processions from the One. When Dionysius considers the nature of evil in the *Divine Names*, he reviews the *scala naturae* and excludes the possibilities that evil comes from God, the angels, rational souls, irrational animals, bodies or even matter *qua* matter. Thus, Dionysius too places matter at an extreme remove from God. How are we to understand Eriugena’s deviation from Dionysius on the place of matter? Some scholars would omit *materiaque*.¹⁷ Others would read it, in the light of Eriugena’s own hexaemeral reflections in book 3, as standing in apposition to the reasons and essences of things.¹⁸

My own view is that the *materiaque* can (and perhaps should) be preserved without identifying it with the essences. I would argue that while Eriugena understands the essences in Dionysian terms (cf. 622B-623C), he takes the notion of primordial causes from Augustine’s *De Genesi ad litteram*, the text he quotes immediately following the discussion of the five modes.¹⁹ There, Augustine places unformed matter (*informis materia*) (*De gen. ad lit.* 1,15) alongside the primordial reasons (*rationes primordiales*) (*De gen. ad lit.* 6,10-11)

insofar as both are logically but not temporally prior to the creation of everything subject to change (*omne mutabile*). It is this interpretation that Eriugena follows (cf. II 546C ff.), and which leads to the conclusion that 'the primordial causes mean one thing and unformed matters another' (548A). Thus, the objection that matter does not belong alongside God and the essences because it does not exceed perception *per excellentiam suae naturae* does not apply equally to the inscrutability of the matter of mutable things *qua* their mutability and to the *materia* which is logically prior to created natures. In his hexaemeral commentaries Augustine follows Plotinus in his account of matter itself as pure mutability, but like Iamblichus and Proclus he makes it in a sense 'first' rather than 'last.' Eriugena preserves Augustine's notion of 'heaven and earth' and the original 'formlessness' as 'essences and matter' in the first mode.

The second mode takes up that which in the first is said to be, i.e. created natures. Extending from the intellectual powers down to bodies, Eriugena has left God, essences and matter out of this mode. Thus the second mode is equal in extent to the processions and effects of Being in the *Divine Names*. Dionysius states that while all the names apply equally to God, he is not concerned with His transcendence but with the 'being-making procession,' so that he can distinguish the Good, as universal providence (*DN* 817A) from Being as the first gift of the transcendent Goodness (820D). The *scala* now runs from angels down to bodies. Matter itself and non-being, which had some capacity to receive the Good, are without the capacity to receive Being.

While the second mode seems to be the most perspectival, there are a few things to note about the way Eriugena describes created natures. First, while every order can be said to be and not be in virtue of affirmations and negations, there are two parts of created nature which are distinguished from the rest. The upward negations terminate in the highest celestial essence because 'its negation confirms the existence of no higher creature' (444C) and the downward terminate in bodies which have no inferior.²⁰

The activity of affirmation and negation from outside the order described by Eriugena is complemented by the activity of intellectual creatures within the order. Eriugena considers angelic and human nature, and the way that for them knowing, and not the dialectical exercise of affirming and negating, becomes the basis for ascribing being and non-being to the orders. This second aspect, which Eriugena distinguishes from the first when he says 'it is also on these grounds' (*hac item ratione*) (444C), has as a consequence that for the rest of the *scala* of created natures, the angels simply *are not*. They *are* in virtue of knowing themselves, but they are known by no superior (that is, Eriugena is not here concerned with God's knowledge of them, as is clear from his way of speaking at 444C), and from the perspective of souls, they are not. Since there is no reason or intellect below rational souls, these souls cannot truly be said *not to be* according to the specific terms described by Eriugena. They do not elude the grasp of inferior minds, since there are no such minds.

These two peculiarities of the orders of created nature set the angelic minds apart from the rest of the order. This explains the progression from the second to the third mode, since in a sense the angels can more truly be said *not to be* than *to be*. The third mode then takes up from the second what is more truly said to be, considering 'the visible plenitude of this world' and the causes of this plenitude in 'the most secret fold of nature' (444D). The angels have been omitted, as have bodies that are not composed of form and matter, which would have been at the extreme of the lowest order of created nature.²¹ If, however, we are to identify the third mode with the Life of *Divine Names*, we must explain why the angels are excluded. Dionysius' *scala* of the effects of Life extends from the angels down to animals and plants, and the angels are able to receive life to a greater extent than our

composite human souls. Why would Eriugena neglect them if he does in fact treat Life here? I suggest that Eriugena's departure from Dionysius can once again be explained with reference to Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*. In his discussion of the primordial causes Augustine notes of the primordial reasons that

under one aspect these things are in the Word of God . . . under another aspect they are in the elements of the universe, where all things destined to be were made simultaneously; under another aspect they are in things no longer created simultaneously but rather separately each in its own due time, made according to their causes which were created simultaneously . . . under another aspect they are in seeds, in which they are found again as quasi-primordial causes (*quasi primordiales causae*) which derive from creatures that have come forth according to the causes which God first stored up in the world (*De gen. ad lit.* 6.10.17).

It is in the third and fourth sense that Eriugena wishes to examine Life. His interest is in 'the potentiality of seeds, whether in animals or in trees or in plants' (445B). Augustine uses the example of seeds to distinguish the creation of animals 'according to their kind' from the creation of light, the heavens, water, earth and the heavenly bodies (*De Gen ad lit.* 3.12.18-19). This is why Eriugena omits a discussion of angelic life from the third mode. He has already considered the creation of all things simultaneously according to the primordial causes in the first mode. It is for this reason, and not because the five modes are opposable, that Eriugena explicitly compares the first and the third at 445B. It is in order to make clear that he is taking up only humans, animals and plants from the visible plenitude. In this way the third mode can be understood as an exposition of the Dionysian name Life.

An apparent problem with this characterisation of the third mode is that Eriugena says that he is concerned with the visible plenitude (*visibilis plenitudo*), its causes in the secret folds of nature and what is known of these causes as to matter and form. This would not appear to be limited to animate nature but would necessarily include all manner of inanimate, composite nature. On what basis does Eriugena exclude these from the discussion in the third mode? I would suggest that the third mode is once again determined by a reading of the *De genesi ad litteram*. Following the text of Genesis, Augustine accounts only for the creation of the four elements and the animate creatures. There is no discussion of any intermediate kinds, i.e. inanimate natures, except insofar as the four elements combine to form matter for living beings.²²

There is the question of inanimate nature as well as adventitious forms, e.g. artifacts. I would suggest that Eriugena had this possibility in mind when he phrased the third mode the way that he did. He begins by saying that he is concerned with 'whatsoever of these causes through generation is known to matter and form' (444D) and only later says that his primary example of this is the potentiality in seeds. Thus, he does not exclude the possibility that Life, insofar as it has to do with the generation of things in matter and form after the things created once and for all, could include inanimate nature and artifacts.²³ Dionysius reminds us that Life 'is the cause of *all* life . . . gives it *specific form*' and we must be sure that our idea of Life is sufficiently broad, since Life 'teems with every kind of life.' While Dionysius does not suggest that artifacts possess the capacity to receive Life in the *Divine Names*, perhaps the 'instruments and ornaments' Dionysius tells us he discusses in the *Symbolic Theology* (MT 1033B) or the ointments and sacraments of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* are not improperly thought of as artifacts that participate in Life, broadly conceived.

The fourth mode treats the knowledge of two kinds of objects, and it 'declares that only (*solummodo*) those things which are contemplated by the intellect alone (*solo*) truly (*vere*) are, while those things which in generation . . . are changed, brought together or dissolved, are said not to be truly (*vere*).' The repetition of *solummodo* and *solum* suggests that the first objects can *only* be known by intellect, i.e. the primordial causes, while the things subject to generation can be known intellectually and by the senses. This is the only case in the four modes where 'to be' and 'not to be' are said in a qualified sense. Eriugena says *dicunt vere esse* and *vere dicuntur non esse*. These must be qualified because he will speak here of a knowledge of both being and non-being. Unlike the other modes, non-being here is not the higher but the lower form. It is the non-being of the sensible and mutable, while being belongs to the immutable intelligible. It is correctly (*vere*) said of the world of generation and corruption that it *is not* in a significant sense. The character of the two kinds of knowledge is consistent with the Dionysian account of Wisdom. The angelic minds 'think the thoughts of the divine realm intelligently, immaterially, and in a single act' while human souls 'circle in discourse around the truth of things' (*DN* 868B). While humans can aspire in their own way to this angelic wisdom, 'our sense perceptions also can properly be described as echoes of wisdom' (*DN* 868C). Eriugena clarifies the way in which the angels contemplate the primordial causes immediately following the discussion of the five modes, and it is this assertion of a direct intellectual apprehension of the pure forms which provokes the Alumnus' question about Augustine's meaning in *De Genesi ad litteram* 4,24-32 (446A).

By returning to the primordial causes, and moving them from the category of things that are not (mode 1) to the category of those things that are (mode 4), Eriugena is able to take the whole of creation as it is found in the primordial causes and consider it in the form of human nature. The fifth mode is a division of the intellectual form of human nature contemplated by the intellect alone. It is the human nature in which God 'created all creatures visible and invisible.' Indeed, there is 'nothing naturally present in the celestial essences which does not subsist essentially in man' (763D-764A). Its limits are 'the upper and lower boundaries of Paradise' (825C). It is in human nature too that all creation falls and all creation returns to God. The five modes find their completion in the discussion of the being and non-being of human nature, and so represent the divine names Perfect and One (*DN* 977B-984A). The correspondence is less precise, but by the 'grace of the only-begotten Son of God' human nature 'is brought back to the former condition of its substance in which it was made in the image of God, it begins to be, and in him who has been made in the image of God begins to live' (445D). For Dionysius 'everything owes to the One its individual existence and the process whereby it is perfected and preserved' (*DN* 980C). The coincidence of the origin and the end in the One is adumbrated in the fifth mode.

Perhaps the most important consideration in the interpretation of the fifth mode is to correctly interpret the second part of the discussion. After distinguishing between pristine and fallen human nature in terms of being and non-being, Eriugena says that 'it is to this mode (*ad hunc modum*), it seems, that the Apostle's saying refers (*quod Apostolus dicit*): 'and He calls the things that are not as the things that are' (445D). Eriugena goes on to say that 'this (*hoc*) too may also be (*possit*) understood of those whom God daily calls forth from the secret folds of nature, in which they are considered not to be, to become visibly manifest in form and matter.' This is often interpreted to mean that this mode is related to the third mode.²⁴ This reading, however, involves certain difficulties. Not only does Eriugena set the second section apart from the first by saying *quanquam* (though, albeit,

notwithstanding), but the neuter pronoun *hoc* can only refer back to the *quod Apostolus dixit*, and not to the masculine *quintus modus*. In addition, Eriugena uses the subjunctive *possit*. This appears to be a potential subjunctive, indicating a possibility, and is not meant to be taken as an indicative.

CONCLUSION

The five modes correspond to the divine names Good, Being, Life, Wisdom and the One insofar as they are coextensive with the procession and effects of these as described by Dionysius. Eriugena's first mode is, like Dionysius' Good, totally comprehensive, extending from God to matter and even, in a sense, non-being. The second mode comprehends all that participates in Dionysius' Being. The third mode is concerned with all that has the capacity for Life, the fourth mode treats only those which receive a share of Wisdom, and the final mode treats of the complete return by treating the human nature that is for Eriugena the site of creation, the cause of the fall of all nature and the means by which everything is returned to God.

While Eriugena uses the divine names to index the five modes, the logic of the transition from one mode to the next is not drawn simply from Dionysius' Procline ordering of the names. Eriugena uses the primary distinction between being and non-being to explicate the diversity in the effects of the names that are for God equal. The difference in the extent of the procession and reception of the names has to do with the various interpretations of being and non-being.

The division within the first mode, i.e. within the Good's own effects, a division made on the basis of perception, is the difference between the effects of the Good and those of Being. Being's effects are those which are perceptible, and those effects of the Good which exceed Being's do so in virtue of exceeding perception. Being itself in the second mode is, unlike the simple distinction that belongs to the Good, articulated and variegated. The distinction between God and creation which characterises the first mode is complicated in the second when it is shown that everything both is and is not. This is the logic imposed by the logic of Being, i.e. the logic of non-contradiction, which emerges from Being. The determinations within created natures require this logic, and Eriugena expresses it in terms of the consequences of affirmations and negations concerning the various orders. Thus, from the logic of Being itself comes the appearance that every being also 'is not,' although this non-being is in fact the result of the absence of becoming in this order, the becoming which only emerges in the third mode. Absent becoming, Eriugena must ascribe Parmenidean logic to the static order.

The third mode takes up the intermediates between the extremes of the angelic natures and the simple, incomposite bodies. These are not involved in becoming in the same way that animate natures are. The angels, it is clear, are not subject to generation and corruption. As for the simple bodies, Eriugena seems simply to follow Augustine, who does, like Aristotle, speak of the elements being generated from one another.²⁵ However, for Augustine and then Eriugena, once the elements have been generated from earth, they are no longer subject to this sort of change. Thus, they are not becoming in the sense Eriugena attributes to those things which have the 'potentiality of seeds,' i.e. anything which procreates.

The fourth mode does not follow the pattern of taking up the side of 'being' from the previous division. Instead, the fourth mode turns from the lower human perspective which

produced the third mode, i.e. the perspective which cannot apprehend the causes of things and for which therefore they are not, and turns to a perspective on the same subject as the third mode, but with a crucial difference. While the angels were left out of the third mode in order to examine Life as the specific effects of certain of the primordial causes, when in the fourth mode the full extent of the causes is considered, angelic knowledge is brought back into consideration. Wisdom is not limited to the primordial causes which issue in the living part of the visible plentitude. The things 'known by intellect alone' include the full range of causes known by Wisdom. Thus while the fourth mode considers composite natures in generation, i.e. the same natures which belong to Life in the third mode, the fourth mode considers these from the perspective of human and angelic minds. They are from this point of view not absolutely said not to be, but can truly (*vere*) be said not to be. Thus, Wisdom is less extensive because it is received only by humans and angels, but its purview is greater because, for the first time in the five modes, what belongs to non-being is lesser and to being greater. The fullness of this being includes all of the primordial causes, and unites perfected human wisdom with angelic wisdom.

The fifth mode takes up the side of being from the fourth, i.e. the primordials, but it does so by considering the place of the forms, the form of forms, human nature. Human nature can most truly be said to be because it is the site of creation and the cause of the other divisions. The fifth mode is equal in extension with the first insofar as there is for Eriugena an equality between the human's creative potential and that of the Word. This view was suspicious to Eriugena's readers, but it is there in the text nonetheless.²⁶

The significance of the five modes for the *Periphyseon* is as yet unclear, and, given the literary character of the work, will perhaps so remain. The introductory discussion of the four species of nature (442Aff.) which promises to be formal and architectonic turns out to be seminal and genetic. Wayne Hankey sums up the character of the *Periphyseon* in this way:

Certainly Eriugena remained in dialogue with himself in the *Periphyseon*, just as he deepened his understanding of the first principle during his advance toward writing it. In 2003, Édouard Jauneau completed publishing the text with significantly differing versions owed to Eriugena himself; he showed that the author left, not a finished canonical work, 'but a text in perpetual becoming.' Revision was not only a feature of the completed work, but also of its initial writing. Because 'Eriugena has an irrepressible penchant for digressions and for returning to past subjects', the initial plan, in which the four divisions of nature would have been treated in four books, is modified so that a fifth book is added.²⁷

The analysis of the five modes found in this paper does lend support to a broader, less systematic, more thematic claim about the nature of the *Periphyseon*. Guy Allard relates the origin of his insight into the literary organization of the work that followed from a reflection on Eriugena's remarks about the interpretation of Genesis 1:1 at 545C.

Ce bref mais éloquent aveu me suggère l'idée de prendre le premier verset de la Genèse comme 'modèle d'intelligibilité' et comme 'structure fondamentale' des cinq livres du *De divisione*.²⁸

The Dionysian *Divine Names* are, in Eriugena's presentation in the five modes as well as in the elaboration of the names at 622B ff., identified with the primordial causes and thus explicitly with a hexaemeral account. Dionysius' names, coordinated with Augustine's work on Genesis, give to the five modes their hexaemeral character. Eriugena adds to this synoptic Hexaameron at the entry to his work the particular logic of being and non-being.

Notes

1 References to the Latin text are from Johannes Scottus Eriugena, *Periphyseon*, edited by Edouard Jeaneau (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996). English translations, unless otherwise noted, are from John Scottus Eriugena, *Periphyseon. The division of nature*, translated by I.P. Sheldon-Williams, revised by John J. O'Meara (Montréal: Bellarmin 1987).

2 Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scottus Eriugena. A Study of Idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 218.

3 On these appearances and the apparent use of a sixth, seventh and eighth mode, see Moran, *Philosophy*, 226-7.

4 The Nutritor begins by saying that the 'basic difference which separates all things' (*primordialis omnium discretiva differentia*) requires five modes (*quinque modos*). Moran notes that 'the word *quinque* may in fact be an addition or emendation to the manuscript, possibly in Eriugena's hand' (218). See Edouard Jeaneau and Dutton Paul Edward, *The autograph of Eriugena* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996). Jeaneau's text and O'Meara's revised edition of Sheldon-Williams' translation preserve the *quinque*, while C Schwarz omits the *quinque* and replaces it in his translation with 'certain modes.' See John Scottus Eriugena, *Periphyseon. The division of nature* (Montréal: Bellarmin 1987) and C. Schwarz, *On the Division of Nature*, Book I, Annapolis, 1940. Eriugena punctuates the five modes by saying that 'keener reasoning can discover some modes besides these' (*si quid praeter hos modos indagatio ratio invenire potest* 446A), which may suggest that the *quinque* is an emendation. It is, however, important to note that the Nutritor *does not* say that there are only five modes, rather that the basic difference 'requires for itself five modes of interpretation,' (*quinque suae interpretationis modos inquiri*). The reflexive possessive *suae* suggests that five modes are required for the interpretation of the basic difference, and does not exclude the possibility of more modes not here required.

5 Willemien Otten makes a similar point about the primacy of the first division in *The Anthropology of Johannes Scottus Eriugena* (Leiden: Brill, 1991). John J. O'Meara, *Eriugena* (Dublin: Heyl Thom Limited, 1969), 36, asserts that these are 'five different (and unrelated) ways or modes.' Dominic J. O'Meara, 'The Concept of Nature in John Scottus Eriugena (*De divisione naturae* Book I),' *Vivarium* 19 (1981), 134 argues that 'We might first note that the five modes are not presented as unrelated and possibly alternative modes of interpretation of the 'first and highest' division of *natura*, but that the first mode is described as the 'first and highest (*summus*)' of the modes (443C) and that the other modes must therefore be in some way subordinate to it.' On the subordination of the final four modes see also Francis Bertin, *De la division de la nature* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1995), 192.

6 Moran, *Philosophy*, 218 ff.

7 L. Michael Harrington, 'Human Mediation in Eriugena's *Periphyseon*,' MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 1997.

8 Harrington, 'Human Mediation,' 5.

9 The human is the site of creation because its nature is composite and straddles the intelligible and the sensible. As the Nutritor points out at 772 C-D, the angels do not sense. If the angelic nature were the site of creation, there would be only God and the angels. The *visibilis plenitudo* depends upon the dual nature of the human.

10 Moran sets up the eight modes he identifies in the *Periphyseon* in a series of oppositions (*Philosophy*, 217-227), but this seems to illegitimately continue the method of the prior section, where the Nutritor states that 'in the four species there are two pairs of opposites' (442A). While Eriugena does compare the first and third at 445B, he does not oppose the two modes. I make clear the need for the comparison at this point below in my discussion of the third mode.

11 This *cosmos* is made explicit in the sixfold division of human nature at *Periphyseon* 824C-825C.

12 These are the translations of Sheldon-Williams and Schwarz, respectively.

13 Dionysius completes the *scala* when he notes that he omitted the circle of the heavens in this initial exposition (*DN* 697B), although he does not mention the heavens in any of the other presentations of the *scala naturae*. Eriugena does not refer to the heavens in the discussion of the five modes.

14 The passage from which comes the quotation by the Nutritor, 'For the being of all things is the Divinity Who is above Being' (*CH* 177C) summarizes the discussion of *Divine Names* 4-7 concerning the various capacities of created natures to receive Being, Life and Wisdom.

15 See Deirdre Carabine, *John Scottus Eriugena* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 118, n.17, who following A. Wohlman, 'L'ontologie du sensible dans la philosophie de Scot Erigène,' *Revue Thomiste* 83 (1983), pp. 558-82, calls the origin of the inclusion of *materia* with God and primordial causes 'dubious.'

16 Proclus, *On the Existence of Evils*, translated by Jan Opsomer and Carlos Steel (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 50, n.62. It is on this the basis of this reading of Proclus and the general account of matter in Neoplatonism beginning with Plotinus that one might oppose the Platonic and the Augustinian views of matter. There is, however, another view of matter in Proclus, one which identifies matter with the 'unlimited.' As John Dillon notes, 'the One is not alone in its realm. Proclus also, following Iamblichus, finds a place at this level for the principles of Limit and Limitlessness (*peras* and *apeira*), derived from the *Philebus* (23cff.), and for a multiplicity of 'henads.'" *Proclus' Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, translated by Glenn R. Morrow and John Dillon with introduction and notes by John Dillon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), xxi.

17 Jeaneau omits *materiaeque*.

18 Moran notes that though it is a singles gloss which introduces *materiaeque* at this point, Sheldon Williams' assertion that this is contrary to Eriugena's intention 'in that he distinguishes *materia informis* as a privation from *nihil per excellentiam* of God in Book III' ignores the identification of *materia informis* of Scripture with the primordial causes at III.681C (Moran, *Philosophy*, 63).

19 Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, edited by Joseph Zycha, *CSEL* 28. English translations of the *De Genesi* are from St. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, translated and annotated by John Hammond Taylor, S.J. (New York: Newman Press, 1982).

20 René Roques, 'Remarques sur la signification de Jean Scot Erigène,' *Divinitas* 11 (1967): 251, also notes that 'Il y a cependant deux limites à cette loi'.

21 Eriugena elaborates the idea that visible bodies are made from invisible things (498C) in his discussion of the four elements (663B to 664A) which are incomposite (857D). Dionysius suggests something similar when in he sets up as the extreme counterparts of Good and Life as air or stone (*MT1033D*), and speaks of the extent of Power's inexhaustible effects to all of nature, down to fire and water (*DN892D*). Moran, *Philosophy*, 177, notes that, following Gregory of Nyssa, 'Eriugena explains that the soul creates the body by gathering together immaterial qualities and by adhering them to quantity, which acts as a kind of substrate for the qualities (II.580b).'

22 Augustine accounts for Scripture's silence on the creation of the element air at 3,6, and speaks of the bodily mass that is a mixture of earth and moisture (*magnitudo copia terrae humorisque congesta est*) as a matter that can be changed into wood (*matieres verti in ligni*). There is no reference to the creation of other kinds in the work.

23 Augustine does deal with the difficulty raised by the interpretation of John 1:3-4, specifically the idea that 'what has been made was life in Him,' but Augustine only specifically mentions the difficulty of saying that the earth itself and everything in it are living (*ipsa terra et quaecumque in ea sunt vita sint*) (*De gen. ad lit.* 5,14).

24 This is how Moran, *Philosophy*, 225, O'Meara, *Eriugena* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 81 and Carabine, *John Scottus Eriugena*, 40, read the fifth mode.

25 *De genesi ad litteram* 3,3.

26 On the charge of pantheism leveled against Eriugena, cf. Moran, *Philosophy*, 84.

27 Wayne Hankey, 'John Scottus Eriugena,' in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, forthcoming.

28 Guy-H. Allard, 'La structure littéraire de la composition du *De divisione naturae*,' *The Mind of Eriugena*, edited by John J. O'Meara and Ludwig Bieler (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1973), 148.