

Platonism in Soviet Russia: Reflections on Alexei Losev's *Essays on Antique Symbolism and Mythology*

Alexander Treiger
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

The outstanding Russian philosopher, theologian, historian of philosophy, classical philologist, and translator and commentator of Greek philosophical and patristic texts, Alexei Losev (1893-1988), is a towering figure in the history of philosophy and Classical Studies in Russia. Despite his profoundly mind-expanding insights for Classicists, philosophers, and historians of philosophy alike, as measured by any objective, language-independent standard, his writings remain virtually unknown in the West.¹ Only two of his major works – *The Dialectic of Myth* and *The Dialectic of Artistic Form* – and a few short essays have been translated into English.²

1 For a comprehensive annotated inventory of Losev's writings and Losev scholarship and a detailed outline of Losev's biography, see Алексей Фёдорович Лосев: Библиографический указатель к 120-летию со дня рождения, Москва: «Дизайн и полиграфия», 2013 (<http://old.losev-library.ru/?pid=5167>). The 1989 documentary about Losev can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQM4fnc_dCU (in Russian).

2 Aleksei Fyodorovich Losev, *The Dialectics of Myth*, trans. Vladimir Marchenkov, London: Routledge, 2003; Aleksei Fyodorovich Losev, *The Dialectic of Artistic Form*, trans. Oleg V. Bychkov, Munich: Otto Sagner, 2013. See also: Alexei Losev and Aza Takho-Godi, *Plato*, trans. P. Beryozkina, Moscow: Progress, 1990; Alexei Losev and Aza Takho-Godi, *Aristotle*, trans. Angelia Graf, Moscow: Progress, 1990; Aleksei Fedorovich Losev, "Twelve Theses on Antique Culture" (trans. Oleg Kreymmer and Kate Wilkinson), *Arion* 11.1 (2003): 55-70. *The Dialectic of Myth* can be said to be an international bestseller: in addition to English, it has also been translated into German, Spanish, Hungarian, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Arabic: *Die Dialektik des Mythos*, trans. Elke Kirsten, Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1994; *Dialectica del Mito*, trans. Marina Kuzmina, Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1998; *A mítosz dialektikája*, trans. József Goretity, Budapest: Európa, 2000; *Дијалектика мита*, trans. Илија Марић, Belgrade: Zepter Book World, 2000; *Дијалектика на мита*, trans. Емил Димитров, Sofia: Slavica, 2003; *Falsafat al-usfura*, trans. Mundiir Badr Hállūm, Latakia: Dār al-ḥiwār li-l-našr wa-l-tawzī', 2000.

Translations of Losev's other works and analytical studies of Losev's oeuvre in languages other than Russian are few and far between.³

The purpose of the present contribution is to introduce to a Western audience select chapters from Losev's magisterial analysis of Plato and Platonism: the 900-pages-long *Essays on Antique Symbolism and Mythology* (*Очерки античного символизма и мифологии*, 1930; second edition: 1993; hereinafter: *EASM*).⁴ I am, of course, fully aware that my exposition offers but an imperfect reflection of the complexity of Losev's thought. Nonetheless, I hope that it will be of some use to scholars who do not read Russian and have no access to Losev's *EASM* in the original.

3 In addition to the translations of *The Dialectic of Myth* mentioned in the preceding note, see, e.g., the Serbian translation of Losev's *The Philosophy of Name: Философија имена*, trans. Небојша Ковачевић, Belgrade: Plato, 1996; the Czech translation of Losev's *Music as an Object of Logic: Hudba jako předmět logiky*, trans. A. Černohous, Olomouc: Refugium Velehrad-Roma, 2006; the Bulgarian and Polish translations of Losev's "Twelve Theses on Antique Culture": "Дванадесет тезиса за античната култура," *Култура* 1 (1989): 55-64 [translator not indicated]; Teresa Obolevitch (trans.), "Dwanaście tez o kulturze antycznej," in: Lilianna Kiejzik (ed.), *Palamas – Bułgakow – Łosiew: Rozważania o religii, Imieniu Bożym, tragedii filozofii, wojnie i prawach człowieka*, Warsaw: Scholar, 2010, pp. 196-210. Studies in European languages include: Alexander Haardt, *Husserl in Rußland: Phänomenologie der Sprache und Kunst bei Gustav Špet und Aleksej Losev*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1993; Annett Jubara, *Die Philosophie des Mythos von Aleksej Losev im Kontext "russischer Philosophie"*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000; Holger Kusse, *Metadiskursive Argumentation: Linguistische Untersuchungen zum russischen philosophischen Diskurs von Lomonosov bis Losev*, Munich: Sagner, 2004; Jacek Uglik, Elena Tacho-Godi, and Lilianna Kiejzik (eds.), *Aleksy Łosiew, czyli rzecz o tytanizmie XX wieku*, Warsaw: Scholar, 2012; Teresa Obolevitch, "Onto-Theological Determinants of Aesthetics according to Alexei Losev," *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 66.3-4 (2014): 139-151; Konstantin Zenkin, *Music, Eidos, Time: Aleksey Losev and Scope of Contemporary Discipline of Music*, Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2018; and Aleksey Kamenskikh's and Oleg Dushin's essays referenced in notes 11 and 22 below. The conference "A.F. Losev and Twentieth-Century Human Sciences" (Columbus, OH, 18-20 October 2002) organized by Vladimir Marchenkov was a rare and memorable event that I had the pleasure of attending.

4 All the references below (typically in the form of page numbers in parentheses) are to the second edition: Алексей Федорович Лосев, *Очерки античного символизма и мифологии*, Москва: «Мысль», 1993; all the translations from Russian are my own.

1. AN OUTLINE OF ALEXEI LOSEV'S LIFE

I shall begin with a brief outline of Losev's life. Alexei Fedorovich Losev was born on 10/22 September 1893 in Novocherkassk, southern Russia. In 1911, he graduated with a golden medal from the classical gymnasium in Novocherkassk (a grammar school that provided in-depth training in Greek, Latin, and modern European languages). After graduation, Losev relocated to Moscow, where he studied Classics and Philosophy at the Moscow Imperial University (now: Moscow State University), earning a Master's degree in 1915 with a thesis on Aeschylus. Subsequently, Losev taught Greek and Latin at several of Moscow's schools.

By the early 1920s, shortly after the Russian Revolution, Losev was already a professor, simultaneously, at the University of Nizhny Novgorod (ca. 400 km east of Moscow) and at the Moscow Conservatory, as well as a member of the State Academy of Fine Arts. On 5 June 1922 (the feast of Ascension), Losev married the mathematician and astronomer Valentina Sokolova (1897-1954) at the church of the prophet Elijah in Sergiev Posad near Moscow.⁵ The priest officiating at their wedding was the famous philosopher and scientist Fr. Pavel Florensky (1882-1937), Losev's personal friend.⁶ Together with Florensky, Losev was an ardent supporter of Imiaslavie (*Имяславие*), a movement in twentieth-

5 The church of the prophet Elijah in Sergiev Posad was built in 1747. Interested readers can consult its website: <http://elijah.ru> (in Russian).

6 On Florensky, see, e.g., Victor Bychkov, *The Aesthetic Face of Being: Art in the Theology of Pavel Florensky*, trans. by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1993; Avril Pyman, *Pavel Florensky, a Quiet Genius: The Tragic and Extraordinary Life of Russia's Unknown da Vinci*, New York: Continuum, 2010; Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the Philokalia to the Present*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015, pp. 27-41. Several works of Florensky are available in English translations; see especially: *Iconostasis*, trans. Donald Sheehan and Olga Andrejev, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996; *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*, trans. Boris Jakim, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997; *Beyond Vision: Essays on the Perception of Art*, ed. Nicoletta Misler, trans. Wendy Salmond, London: Reaktion, 2002. Losev discusses Florensky in *EASM* (693-708).

century Orthodox theology that venerated the name of God.⁷ On 3 June 1929, Losev and his wife secretly received monastic tonsure with the names Andronicus and Athanasia, at the hands of their spiritual father, the Athonite archimandrite Fr. David Mukhranov (1847-1930), one of the leaders of the Imiaslavie movement.

In 1927-1930, Losev published his famous “Octalogy” consisting of the following works:

1. *Antique Cosmos and Modern Science* (Античный космос и современная наука);
2. *Music as a Subject of Logic* (Музыка как предмет логики);
3. *The Philosophy of Name* (Философия имени);
4. *The Dialectic of Artistic Form* (Диалектика художественной формы);
5. *The Dialectic of Number in Plotinus* (Философия числа у Плотина);
6. *Aristotle’s Critique of Platonism* (Критика платонизма у Аристотеля);
7. *Essays of Antique Symbolism and Mythology* (Очерки античного символизма и мифологии, reviewed herein);
8. *The Dialectic of Myth* (Диалектика мифа).

In 1930, following the publication of *The Dialectic of Myth* (into which Losev inserted unauthorized anti-Socialist and anti-materialist passages in defiance of Soviet censorship), Losev and his wife were arrested and sentenced, respectively, to ten and five years of labour camps.⁸ While at the labour camp (working on the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal), Losev all but lost his eyesight; his

7 On Imiaslavie, see Paul Ladouceur, “The Name of God Conflict in Orthodox Theology,” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 55.4 (2012): 415-436; Scott M. Kenworthy, “The Name Glorifiers (Imiaslavie) Controversy,” in: Caryl Emerson, George Pattison, and Randall A. Poole (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Russian Religious Thought*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020, pp. 327-342.

8 Losev was arrested on Holy Friday, 18 April 1930. His wife was arrested on 5 June, the eighth anniversary of their wedding and just three days after Fr. David Mukhranov’s death.

near-blindness was to further progress over the course of his life.

In 1932, Losev and his wife were pardoned and released; their civil rights were restored. In 1933, they re-settled in Moscow. However, being a former camp inmate, Losev could find only casual employment and was not allowed to engage in philosophical activity or to publish.

On 22 June 1941, Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union. On 12 August 1941, during German aerial bombing of Moscow, Losev's house was destroyed, his mother-in-law was killed, and his entire library (including drafts of many unpublished works) was lost in the fire. It was only in 1942 that Losev got a temporary teaching position in philosophy at the Moscow State University. In 1943, Losev received his PhD degree in philology *honoris causa* (without writing a dissertation). From 1944 until his death in 1988 he taught at the Moscow State Pedagogical Institute (now: Moscow State Pedagogical University), in the departments of Classical Philology, Russian, and General Linguistics. Losev's wife Valentina died in 1954. Soon thereafter, in accordance with her will, Losev married his long-time student, assistant, and fellow-classical philologist Aza Takho-Godi (b. 1922); though legally married in the eyes of the State, he remained faithful to his monastic vows.⁹

After Stalin's death in 1953, Losev was once again allowed to publish. His bibliography includes more than 900 items, over forty of which are monographs. His *magnum opus* is the eight-volume *History of Antique Aesthetics* (1963-1994; the last two volumes published posthumously) – a comprehensive analysis of all of Greek literature, culture, and thought from Homer to the Neoplatonists. In 1985, Losev was granted the USSR State Award for the first six volumes of this monumental work.

Losev translated into Russian works of Plato, Aristotle, Sextus Empiricus, Plotinus, Proclus, Dionysius the Areopagite, and Nicholas of Cusa and was the general editor of the

⁹ I use this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to Professor Aza Takho-Godi for her warm hospitality during my visit to The Losev House in Moscow in June 2003 and to Professor Ludmila Gogotishvili for facilitating this visit.

Russian translation of Plato's complete works (published in 1968-1972). He died in Moscow on 24 May 1988, the feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the enlighteners of the Slavs, in the year that marked the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia. He was buried at the Vagan'kovo cemetery in Moscow.

2. Losev's *Essays on Antique Symbolism and Mythology*

As mentioned above, Losev's *Essays on Antique Symbolism and Mythology* is the seventh instalment of his "Octalogy" published in 1930.¹⁰ *EASM* comprises six semi-independent essays:

- I. The Origins of Antique Symbolism (8-99);
- II. Symbolic-Mythological Features of Pre-Socratic Philosophy (100-135);
- III. The Terminology of Plato's Theory of Ideas (εἶδος and ἰδέα) (136-286);
- IV. Plato's Theory of Ideas in Its Systematic Development (287-708);
- V. Aristotle's Mythic-Tragic Worldview (709-772);
- VI. The Social Nature of Platonism (773-904).

As the amount of material covered by *EASM* is vast, I shall limit the scope, focusing on Essay III and (a section of) Essay IV dedicated to Plato's theory of Ideas. These two essays together constitute ca. 65% of the book and form a thematic unity.¹¹

2.1. ESSAY III: THE TERMINOLOGY OF PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS
(εἶδος and ἰδέα)

Essay III provides a detailed analysis of Plato's uses of

10 As Losev indicates (5, 288, 694-708), *EASM* was written, to a large extent, approximately a decade earlier, ca. 1917-1921, when he was still in his twenties – an astonishing achievement.

11 For a brief account of Essay VI ("The Social Nature of Platonism"), see Aleksey Kamenskikh, "Aleksey Losev on Religious Essence and the Generative Power of Platonism," in: Teresa Obolovitch and Paweł Rojek (eds.), *Overcoming the Secular: Russian Religious Philosophy and Post-Secularism*, Krakow: Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow Press, 2015, pp. 149-155.

the terms εἶδος and ἰδέα in all his works. This is, no doubt, a philological *tour de force*: Losev scrupulously analyzes every single occurrence of either εἶδος or ἰδέα in each and every one of Plato's dialogues, paying meticulous attention to these terms' shades of meaning and to how they function in a given context.¹²

Despite this philological rigour, however, Losev insists that his method is not philological, but rather philosophical. In the following anti-philological diatribe, written in his trademark colourful style, he takes "pure philologists" to task for their blind trust in philological objectivity compounded by their philosophical ignorance:

Least of all do I consider this book of mine as a work of philology. This book, instead, is about the history of *philosophy*. I have met so many esteemed philologists who were complete ignoramuses in philosophy that it makes me laugh to think that a specialist in philology will be reading and evaluating my book. It is not for them that I wrote this book, and it is not from them that I look forward to receiving criticism. I am convinced that only philosophers and historians of philosophy will be able to comprehend my claims. [...] Philologists fantasize about precision and objectivity. [...] I am, however, perfectly aware that historians of ancient philosophy have always understood ancient philosophy within the limits and to the degree of their own conceptions. One must be completely congenial to ancient philosophy if one is to grasp correctly its meaning and content and to appreciate its various aspects. [...] Given that it is utterly impossible to understand Plato's terminology unless one has a certain philosophical culture of one's own, I would rather prefer *consciously* to depend, in my investigation, on one or another carefully thought-out philosophical system. This is better than making philology dependent – in actual fact, even if unconsciously – on ill-conceived and arbitrary philosophical prejudices or on this or that amateurish tradition, in the name of non-existent philological objectivity and fictional philological independence from philosophy. [...] Such conceptions are a morbid holdover of that amateurish, naïvely intelligentsia-esque, and philistine attitude to philosophy that has regarded philosophy not as a rigorous and, moreover, quite particular schooling of the mind but as [a concatenation of] adorably silly and emotional sentiments, such that any provincial young lady and any obdurately materialistic physician or natural scientist made it their favourite pastime to dabble in philosophy. Just as a linguist would laugh at an amateurish beginner's naïve opinions about grammar,

12 A complete inventory of the various meanings of these two terms is conveniently available at the end of the book (905-921). Losev's taxonomy of these meanings is too complex to present here.

so do I consider authoritative philologists' judgments about Plato to be laughable! They too only dabble in philosophy! Let us hope that better times will come when philosophical scholarship will abandon its current parochialism, and philologists will start paying attention to their own philosophical education (139-141; Losev's italics).

Which results did Losev's investigation lead to? One of his most significant contributions – judged against the backdrop of earlier scholarship¹³ – is, no doubt, the distinction he draws between εἶδος and ἰδέα. At their root, both terms mean, according to Losev, something like “visible look” or “appearance” (“visible” to the eyes *or* to the mind). The difference between them, according to Losev, is that εἶδος is “differential,” whereas ἰδέα is “integrational”: εἶδος characterizes the “appearance” of a thing or a concept in respect to how it *differs* from other things or concepts, whereas ἰδέα focuses on the totality of the components and traits of this “appearance” and on how they all *fit together* into one coherent whole, irrespective of other things or concepts.

Significantly, this helps explain why Plato always speaks about the *Idea* (rather than Eidos) of the Good. Losev explains:

Although dialectic treats of Eidoses, the Primal Unity, or the Good, is always presented as the *Idea* of the Good. It is completely unthinkable that Plato would have used, in this sense, the expression *εἶδος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ. We see, instead, one and the same expression employed in reference to the Primal Unity: ἰδέα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ (*Republic* VI 508e, 517b, 526e, VII 534b). This happens because the Good and the Primal Unity is the supreme integration of all being. If we were to say “Eidos of the Good” we would presuppose the possibility of another similar Eidos of that same Good, equipotent to the first Eidos. To use a simple example, if one were to ask “Give me an Eidos of a pencil,” this would mean that one is asking for some particular pencil, for example, a blue one, implying that there are also non-blue pencils. This is why only the expression “the Idea of the Good” is possible. This is a serious argument in favour of the theory that I am here defending: that εἶδος and ἰδέα are distinct (280).

13 Especially, Constantin Ritter's *Neue Untersuchungen über Platon*, Munich: C.H. Beck, 1910, which Losev used as his starting point (136-138).

Losev then illustrates this distinction with countless examples, including certain passages in which εἶδος and ἰδέα are employed in conjunction with one another and are therefore more easily comparable (144-145, 269-281). Here is one such passage from the *Phaedrus*.

[273d] ... ὥστ' εἰ μὲν ἄλλο τι περὶ τέχνης λόγων λέγεις, ἀκούοιμεν ἄν: εἰ δὲ μή, οἷς νυνδὴ δῆλθομεν πεισόμεθα, ὡς ἂν μὴ τις τῶν τε ἀκουσομένων [273e] τὰς φύσεις διαριθμήσῃται, καὶ κατ' εἶδη τε διαφείσθαι τὰ ὄντα καὶ μιᾷ ἰδέᾳ δυνατὸς ἢ καθ' ἓν ἕκαστον περιλαμβάνειν, οὐ ποτ' ἔσται τεχνικὸς λόγων πέρι καθ' ὅσον δυνατόν ἀνθρώπων.

[273d] ... And so, if you have anything else to say about the art of speech, we will listen to you; but if not, we will put our trust in what we said just now, that unless a man take account of the characters of his hearers [273e] and is able to divide things by classes and to comprehend particulars under a general idea, he will never attain the highest human perfection in the art of speech.¹⁴

Losev comments on this passage as follows:

[*Phaedrus*] 273e deals with “differentiation” into Eidoses and with the capacity to circumscribe every element of being by a single “Idea,” a single ideal essence. The phrase μιᾷ ἰδέᾳ ... καθ' ἓν [sic] ἕκαστον περιλαμβάνειν refers to the comprehensive unity of the essence. This is an excellent example of a juxtaposition of εἶδος and ἰδέα: the text discusses a person who is unable to differentiate being κατ' εἶδη [=into classes] and to circumscribe every particular instance [of being] μιᾷ ἰδέᾳ [=by a single idea]. Just as the phrase μιᾷ ἰδέᾳ illustrates the unique character of the integrality of ἰδέα, so also Plato's technical expression κατ' εἶδη διαφείσθαι points to the unique character of the differentiability of εἶδος (168).

Having completed his “atomistic” analysis of individual texts, Losev moves on to a “systematic analysis” of the entire body of evidence (229-286). I shall highlight key aspects of this analysis.

1. As mentioned above, Losev argues that, at their root, the terms εἶδος and ἰδέα mean “visible look” or “appearance.” This is evident from these terms' etymology (cf. Greek εἶδον, Latin *vidi*, both of which mean “I

¹⁴ Here and below Harold N. Fowler's translation of the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* is used.

saw"). An intuition of vision, sighting, and contemplation is thus at the very core of Plato's theory of Ideas. In Losev's words: "Everything that exists, in respect to its being accessed by sight and contemplation, whatever its qualitative essentiality – all this is Eidos" (231).

2. Losev further argues that in addition to this fundamental intuition of vision, Eidos also displays "indivisible wholeness and unity." Combining these two intuitions, Losev argues that Eidos is a "sighting of a living organism and of a wholesome unity" (231). It is for this reason that when Plato uses εἶδος to refer to a physical look, in the majority of cases he does so in reference to a living human body.
3. Furthermore, Eidos has "an element of some kind of *essentiality*, of some kind of particular *meaning*"; it has this "meaningful essentiality," this "symbolic" aspect to it; as such, it is "compressed, saturated, soaked with meaning" (232; Losev's italics).
4. Combining the above three intuitions, Losev argues that the "common kernel" of the various meanings of Eidos is that it is "*the FACE of an object, the COUNTENANCE of a living entity*" (ЛИЦО предмета, ЛИК живого существа, 233; Losev's italics and emphasis). The "face," according to Losev, always reflects the concentrated symbolic and meaningful essentiality of a thing.
5. Losev then argues that Eidos "belongs to a completely different plane [of reality] than the notion of a thing or an event, and generally of fact." Eidos, in other words, "is not an 'object' or thing alongside other things or objects"; it is "extra-factual" (вне-фактично) (234). Moreover, and this is significant, Eidoses cannot result from an analysis of any *particular* objects or facts, because Eidoses are *not* abstractions of such objects or facts; Eidoses require a completely different, "eidetic" investigation (234; cf. Losev's illuminating discussion of the first half of Plato's *Parmenides*, which presents challenges to what Losev argues are incorrect understandings of the theory of Ideas, 182-190).
6. Elaborating on this, Losev argues that Eidos is *neither* a fact or an appearance (phenomenon) *nor* the abstract

meaning of such a fact or an appearance (phenomenon). Eidos, instead, is the “union of both into a single coherent and organic whole”; this is what Losev calls “Myth” (235). “Eidetic reality,” according to him, “is that symbolic and mythological reality which consists of symbols or groups of symbols. Therefore, Myth is a sign, as it were, of the ultimate fullness of meaning and of meaningful being, the ultimate gnoseological form of sighting the living Reality – as cognized in its Countenance” (235).

7. Restating this last point, Losev argues that Eidos is “a combination of an abstract λόγος [i.e., meaning] and of an actually fluid ὕλη [i.e., matter; in this case *intelligible matter*]”; Eidos is, thus, “the countenance of a logos that is hylically formed in such-and-such a way” (236). This point is absolutely crucial for Losev and it is also one of the most unique aspects of Losev’s interpretation of Plato’s theory of Ideas. *For Losev, Eidoses are not lifeless abstractions, but full-fledged entities that have their own (intelligible) matter.* By contrast, the world of appearances itself, for Plato, is a pale abstraction of eidetic reality. The Eidoses alone are real (236).
8. In virtue of its (intelligible) materiality, eidetic reality is thus a full-fledged “*sanctification and endorsement of the entire sensory world, and of this sensory world alone, this sensory world that is always brimming with life and is alive*” (236; Losev’s italics). Losev clarifies that the sensory world under discussion is, emphatically, *not* the chaotically fluid, blind, and mechanistically lifeless world of appearances, which Plato rejects, but *the Eidoses themselves* understood as *hylically formed logoi*.
9. Losev continues: “In actual fact, Platonism, as a dazzling manifestation of Greek *Paganism* generally, is an unceasing doxology to the flesh, to divine materiality, to the cosmic body of love and passion. This is a perpetual infatuation with the world and endorsement of its joys and sufferings. It is all about living and being active to the fullest. But this materiality is not the ordinary, heavy, extra-theic flesh and matter known to modern European culture. It is, rather, something divine. This is, in effect, Myth. Whenever Plato speaks of

‘another’ world, he refers either to this dazzling communion with Being in its unity and living wholeness ... or to Hades and Elysium, both of which are that same sensory reality albeit free from its pains and sufferings. It is in this way that Eidos gives rise to mythology” (236-237; Losev’s italics).

10. Finally, insofar as it is present in thought, “Eidos is always an organic unity and it requires that same unity with other Eidoses. *This gives rise to a particular kind of dialectic* which seeks to demonstrate that the world cannot be conceptualized except as an organic unity and as a living and comprehensive life. The dialectic of [Plato’s] *Sophist* and *Parmenides* shows how organically one Eidos gives rise to another and how this living unity is necessitated by thought, so that it is outright impossible to think otherwise” (237).

Losev summarizes all this as follows:

Therefore, [Plato’s] theory of Eidoses and Ideas: (1) rejects the differentiated and mechanistic world of space and time as non-existent; (2) endorses the living, sensory, psychosomatic world of cosmic and divine flesh as the only world in which concrete and experiential [encounter with Reality] is possible; (3) posits in thought the existence of a living and necessary kinship of the Eidoses amongst themselves. It is on the cognition of these living εἶδη καὶ γένη that [Plato] then constructs his uniquely autonomous form of philosophical activity (autonomous in the sense that it is irreducible to mythology, religion, or science), namely dialectic. The starting point of dialectic is a transcendently phenomenological sighting of the Eidos. Indeed, ἐπιστήμη is precisely this “sighting” (υζρηние), in virtue of the meaning of ἐπί. Ἐπιστήμη is not science, as the majority of scholars translate it – as though one could really speak of science as a technical term before Descartes and Kant. Ἐπιστήμη, in Plato, is a technical term of his eidology (237-238).

2.2. ESSAY IV: PLATO’S THEORY OF IDEAS IN ITS SYSTEMATIC DEVELOPMENT

Essay IV is by far the longest in *EASM*: 422 pages, almost one half of the entire book. It covers, once again, all of Plato’s dialogues, dividing them into five “stages” (ступени) – arranged not in the chronological order of composition, but in the ascending

order of intrinsic dialectic complexity. These five “stages” are:

1. Naïvely realistic (*наивно-реалистическая*: *Theages*, *Apology*, and *Crito*, 297-309);
2. Descriptively phenomenological (*описательно-феноменологическая*: *Ion*, *Alcibiades I*, *Charmides*, *Protagoras*, *Laches*, *Euthyphro*, *Hippias Major*, *Lysis*, *Hippias Minor*, and *Euthydemus*, 309-365);
3. Transcendental (*трансцендентальная* [*sic!* this is Losev’s spelling of the term]: *Meno*, *Theaetetus*, *Symposium*, *Gorgias*, *Cratylus*, *Phaedo*, and *Phaedrus*, 365-475);
4. Dialectical (*диалектическая*: *Sophist*, *Parmenides*,¹⁵ *Philebus*, *Statesman*, *Republic*, and *Timaeus*, 475-603, with a brief note on *Laws* and *Epinomis*, 597-599);
5. Arithmological (*аритмологическая*; Plato’s unwritten doctrines, based on Aristotle’s discussions of Plato’s views, 603-619).¹⁶

Given that it is impossible to do justice, within the present survey, to such an extensive and complex disquisition, I shall concentrate on the relatively short but absolutely crucial chapter, called “Typological Analysis” (620-684), in which Losev lays out his own holistic interpretation of Plato’s thought.

As a kind of summary of all the preceding discussion, at the beginning of his “Typological Analysis” Losev performs an astonishing feat. He endeavours to express all of Platonism – understood, of course, through the prism of Neoplatonism, which for Losev is an organic actualization and explication of Plato – in this one phrase:

15 Losev attached a central importance to Plato’s *Parmenides*. Because the first half of the dialogue, with its challenges to the theory of Ideas, was already discussed in Essay III (182-190), in Essay IV Losev focuses on the second half: the famous “eight hypotheses” (514-541). In the illuminating section “The Main Thought of the *Parmenides*” (541-552), Losev works out the *implications* of the *Parmenides* for dialectic and highlights its place in Plato’s philosophical system.

16 On these five “stages” see 293-294, 623-629, and the introductions to each of them; on Plato’s “three methods” – phenomenological, transcendental, and dialectical – see 475-482; on the dialectical method, see also the sections “The Divisions of the Dialectical Stage” (482-490) and “The Main Thought of the *Parmenides*” (541-552).

[Platonic] Idea is the Eidos generated by the supra-essential ONE by way of its self-negational (through Number) self-confirmation; [this Eidos being] the Mind, which, in turn, generates the Soul in the same manner, and through the Soul, generates the Cosmos, and in doing so becomes a sophianic-symbolic Myth. In short: Platonic Idea is the dialectically grounded noetically-sophianically-intelligently-symbolic Myth (621; Losev's italics).¹⁷

This formula, according to Losev, is not simply an exposition, but an “analytical recapitulation of everything that is most central to [Plato’s] philosophy” (621). It largely rests on Losev’s earlier analyses of *Parmenides* and *Philebus* (especially 541-552 and 564-570 respectively).

What is there to do after the essence of Platonism has thus been captured? According to Losev, further tasks lie ahead. Losev argues that what has been achieved previously is merely a “logical analysis” of Platonism. In the course of this analysis, a particular pattern of thought has been distilled, but this pattern, central though it is, is yet to be expanded upon and fleshed out. Plato’s thought now needs to be analyzed *as a specific cultural type* with its particular *Zeitgeist* that sets it apart from other cultural types.

We now wish to preserve the *living countenance* of Plato’s philosophical activity, to describe its *antique style*, to characterize it not as an abstract system of categories shared by all humanity and held in common with Kant, Hegel, and Husserl, but as a product of a particular people, a particular period, and a particular geographical and social milieu. We now intend to describe not only those aspects of Plato which he holds in common with other philosophers, but precisely and especially those which *set him apart* from them, his absolutely unique and irreducible philosophical character and mode [of thought] (623; Losev’s italics).

This, then, is the goal of Losev’s “typological analysis” in the chapter under discussion. He begins with a provisional inventory of some of the most salient features of Plato’s *œuvre* (624-628). Then he re-examines Plato’s theory of Ideas in light

17 “Идея есть порожденный путем самоотрицающегося (при помощи числа) самоутверждения сверх-сущего Единого Эйдос, Ум, который, в свою очередь порождая из себя тем же путем Душу, а через неё и Космос, становится софийно-символическим Мифом. Короче говоря, платоновская Идея есть диалектически обоснованный умно-софийно-интеллигентно-символический Миф.”

of this “raw material,” laying out the following seven theses:

1. PLATO’S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A “SYMBOLISM.” Plato’s three methods – phenomenology, transcendentalism, and dialectic – are all either symbolist or conducive to symbolism (629). This is especially true for Plato’s dialectic, because dialectic *construes Idea and Thing in their “absolute identity,” which is “meaningfully unfolded and manifested”*: i.e., *as a Symbol* (630). Construing Idea and Thing in their absolute identity, dialectic inevitably leads to what Losev calls “realistic symbolism” (631). Plato’s teaching about Eros is characteristic of this realistic symbolism: as a realist symbolist, Plato sees knowledge and being as inseparable from and fully united with one another: this is their “marriage” and “loving interaction” (631). As a realist symbolist construing Idea and Thing (or Essence and Manifestation) in their identity, Plato is opposed to both materialism and spiritualism (632-633). It should be noted here that Losev’s interpretation of Plato is emphatically monistic.
2. PLATO’S THEORY OF IDEAS IS AN “ANTIQUÉ SYMBOLISM.” In order to characterize this specific variety of symbolism, Losev draws a distinction between three types of symbolism. Symbolism = Idea and Thing (or Essence and Manifestation) in their Identity. Consequently, the three types of symbolism emphasize, respectively, these three components: [1] Idea, [2] Thing, and [3] their Identity. Christian symbolism belongs to the first type (because it regards the Incarnation as God’s *voluntary* act which is in no way necessary for God; and because it construes the flesh as being in need of transfiguration and redemption). Veneration of the material elements (e.g., fire) in some religious traditions belongs to the second type (because, though accepting the identity of Idea and Thing, it prioritizes Thing over Idea). Hellenic Platonism belongs to the third type; in it, Idea and Thing are not merely identical but are in a state of equilibrium vis-à-vis each other (635-637).

According to Losev, this type of symbolism is “*sculptural*” in that it correlates precisely *with the human body*, which demonstrates a perfect equilibrium of the

material and the spiritual (637-638). Similarly, Plato's cosmos, which (unlike the cosmos of modernity) is spatially limited and has a firm boundary, is precisely such a statuary, sculptural unity (640-641). The human soul (with its three faculties) and the society (with its three social classes) are also statuary, sculptural unities (642).

It is significant that in this "sculptural equilibrium," *the material is always grounded in the spiritual, and the spiritual is always grounded in the material*. As a result of this mutual inseparability, *both the material and the spiritual are "tamed"*: "Idea loses its intimate and unfathomable spirituality and becomes "formalized" [i.e., ossified]; whereas Thing, in its identification with Idea, loses its chaoticity and indefiniteness and, consequently, becomes beauty, a living shape, and a noble and exalted organism of life" (640). For Plato, in other words, there is never a pure and infinite spirituality, just as there is never a pure and infinite materiality: "Pure ideality becomes a more abstract and formal (i.e., more hollow) Idea, whereas body loses its warmth and vitality" (646). "The all too common spiritualization and idealization of Plato result from a lack of awareness of the specifically antique style, characteristic of the [variety of] Platonism under discussion" (646). Losev argues that because erotic ascent – presented, for instance, in the *Symposium* – is always grounded in the material, it necessarily "runs out of steam" at its apex. This is why the end result of contemplation is *nameless and impersonal*: "What does Plato contemplate at the peak of his mental vision? Who meets him there? With whom does he there engage in a mental conversation? *No one meets him there*. No loving countenance smiles at him with affection" (644; Losev's italics). Instead, he contemplates impersonal entities: "justice as such, temperance, and knowledge" (*Phaedrus* 247d), "the wide ocean of the beautiful" (*Symposium* 210d), etc. (644).¹⁸ Even the Greek gods,

18 Losev's analysis here is in creative tension with his earlier position that Eidoses are not lifeless abstractions, but full-fledged entities that have their own

according to Losev, are not personal (or, at least, not personal in the full sense): they are “*individuation[s] of this generic, formal, sheer spirituality which [in virtue of its being ‘tamed’, as argued above] does not go all the way into the infinite abyss (индивидуализация этого общего, этого формального, этого не уходящего в бездну чистого духа)*”. Plato himself says that in the ideal world the mind contemplates ‘justice as such’, ‘knowledge as such’, etc. Spiritualized, individuated, and lively though they are, the gods are nothing more than these generic ideal essences. ... Admittedly, they are persons, but persons that manifest something impersonal, just as in Hesiod’s theogony, shapeless and essence-less Chaos is at the root of everything, and the gods – though they are persons – are ultimately products and manifestations of this Chaos” (646; Losev’s italics).

In a striking passage, Losev argues that Plato’s theory of Ideas is intimately related to his preaching of “mystical pederasty” (especially in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*). According to Losev, Plato is not interested in the *dynamic transition* from Eidos as a male principle to Matter as a female principle, but only postulates them in their static plasticity. Therefore, he is not concerned with the “becoming” (*становление*, cf. German *das Werden*), i.e., with (heterosexual) marriage and the generation of offspring. In Plato, according to Losev, the becoming takes place not in the dynamic transition from Eidos to Matter, but *within the Eidos* (just as in the famous Greek sculpture “Laocoön and His Sons,” the becoming is *within* the marble composition, while the sculpture itself remains static and silent). According to Losev, “mystical pederasty” is thus not an accidental feature of Plato’s philosophy, but a core intuition at the root of his dialectic and theory of Ideas (650-654).

3. PLATO’S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A “LOGICALLY OBJECTIVISTIC ANTIQUE SYMBOLISM.” Losev argues that Plato’s antique symbolism can be further differentiated from other sub-categories of antique symbolism in respect to its specific “dialectical stage and chronological peri-

od" (658). Here Losev relies on Hegel. Hegel divided Greek philosophy into two periods: (1) philosophy from Thales to Aristotle and (2) post-Aristotelian philosophy. The first period, to which Plato belongs, is characterized by an emphasis on *objective reality*, while the second period focuses on subjective self-consciousness. (According to Losev, Neoplatonism attains an equilibrium of these two approaches.) Hence, Plato's theory of Ideas is: "antique symbolism of the logically objectivistic period" (659). Losev provides several examples illustrating this "logical objectivism" of Plato – e.g., Plato's "logical-mathematical proof for the immortality of the soul in the *Phaedo*"; this proof is, essentially, ontological, insofar as it is not grounded in any intrinsic (i.e., non-logical) features of the soul, but only in its purely logical similarity to numbers and Ideas (660). Another example: unlike Plotinus, who presents the One not only in objectivistic, but also in subjectivistic terms (as *ekstasis*), Plato's presentation of the One as "the Idea of the Good" is purely objectivistic (662).

4. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A "SYNTHESIS OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND ANTHROPOLOGY." This thesis is quite straightforward. Losev argues that, historically, Plato provides a synthesis of the natural philosophy of the pre-Socratics on the one hand and the anthropology of the Sophists and Socrates on the other (666-667).
5. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS AN "ARISTOCRATIC AND REACTIONARY PHILOSOPHY." According to Losev, Plato is profoundly anti-democratic and anti-liberal;¹⁹ he "hates everything that is democratic, everything that is petty-bourgeois, everything that is liberal, everything that is half-way, neither hot nor cold. The ecclesiastical community, more precisely, the *monastery*, which Plato constructs in lieu, and under the guise, of the state, is centred on the philosophers, who are contemplators

19 One is reminded of Karl Popper's characterization of Platonism as a totalitarian ideology that paved the way for Nazism and Stalinism. I believe Losev would be in full agreement with this assessment; despite this, however, he would not be a supporter of Popper's "open society." Cf. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, 2 vols., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962.

of the Ideas. These philosophers are elders who govern all the people. This is not even aristocracy. This is theocracy, a monastic abbot's rule. The monastic character of the theory of Ideas is undeniable" (669; Losev's italics).

6. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A "MYSTICISM." According to Losev, this authoritarian and reactionary aristocracy (or theocracy) is also a mysticism. What Losev means by this is that Plato's Ideas are not merely Symbols; they are "bearers of apophatic content, and their corporeality has a supra-celestial and divine origin" (669).
7. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS "SUBTLE AND REFINED DIALOGICAL POETRY." According to Losev, Plato is a "*genuine poet and artist* [...]; though logically and in a matter of principle, Plato is a most rigorous philosopher and systematic thinker, typologically, i.e., in actual fact, he is a genuine poet whose active pursuit of a beautiful and catchy phrase comes at the expense of his thought's clarity and methodical orderliness. The majority of researchers consider Plato's theory of Ideas along purely logical lines, while treating his style as a completely separate phenomenon, completely unrelated to his theory of Ideas. This is [...] extremely damaging for an accurate investigation and understanding of Plato. Plato's style must be construed, instead, as a typical feature of his way of doing philosophy and *as the specific style of his theory of Ideas*" (670; Losev's emphasis). Moreover, Plato's poetry is also "subtle and refined." Plato's dialogical form is nearly sophistic in nature and is engaged in subtle and endless mental games. "In its style and intonation, Plato's theory of Ideas resembles a weightless, beautiful, and eternally playful child, simultaneously wise and naïve, indifferent yet in charge of all, and at the same time perpetually inquisitive and creative. This is the same kind of blissful equilibrium and autonomy, this perpetual and orderly rotation of eternity within itself that we also find in the Idea itself, as well as in the Cosmos and in the soul. The same feature that characterizes the Idea, the Cosmos, and the soul is manifest also in Plato's style of *discussing* them. It is the same sculptural plasticity that we ob-

serve here. Here, as everywhere in Plato, the elemental reality that is cold to a degree, beautifully inaccessible, blissfully equanimous, indifferently playful, and joyfully smiling celebrates its victory and triumph" (673; Losev's emphasis).

This is not all. Having put forward the above seven theses, Losev now attempts to identify the "proto-myth" (*пра-миф*, cf. German *Urmythos*) behind this typology: to distill the primal intuition that ultimately determines the uniqueness of Plato's philosophy as a cultural type.²⁰ According to Losev, this primal intuition must be something concrete and expressible by a sensory image (675). Taking each of the seven theses, Losev argues as follows:

1. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A "SYMBOLISM." Symbol is always something manifest. In the sensory world, it is physical light that is at the root of every manifestation. Therefore, Platonism is a philosophy and mysticism of light. Losev references Plato's allegory of the cave and Plato's comparison of the Idea of the Good to the sun as the most obvious illustrations of this thesis.
2. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS AN "ANTIQUÉ SYMBOLISM." As discussed above, antique symbolism has at its root a sculptural, plastic intuition especially of a human body. Therefore, the Platonic proto-myth speaks of a statue of a human body illumined by light. Moreover, this human body must be impersonally fertile. This allows Losev to conclude that the Platonic proto-myth speaks more specifically of the erect male phallus illumined by light. This phallus is, however, non-generative. In line with what has been said above about mystical pederasty, for Losev, this phallus stands for "homosexual and impersonal love" (678). (In a remarkable aside, Losev indicates that he is not a Freudian and believes Freud's theory to be, "on the whole, quite erroneous"; 678.) The Platonic proto-myth can also be conceptualized as Eros, which according to Losev, is just such a personalized phallus (678-679).

20 This is quite similar to the above attempt to express Plato's theory of Ideas in a single phrase, except that here it is no longer the logical structure but the *cultural type and the specific Zeitgeist* of Plato's theory of Ideas that is being analyzed.

3. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A "LOGICALLY OBJECTIVISTIC ANTIQUE SYMBOLISM." According to Losev, it is a striking feature of Plato's philosophy (in contradistinction to Plotinus and Proclus) that Plato does not work out a comprehensive understanding of the intelligent mind (cf. 679). His philosophy is often based on "rhetoric and sophistical dialectic, oratorical devices, persuasion, constant attempts at trapping each other in unending arguments and debates" (679). Therefore, the Platonic personalized proto-myth Eros is also "a subtle dialectician, a skillful orator, and a dangerous debater proficient in argument and persuasion" (679); this corresponds perfectly to Socrates' (and Diotima's) description of Eros, in *Symposium* 203d-e, as "tak[ing] after his father [Poros] in scheming for all that is beautiful and good; for he is brave, strenuous and high-strung, a famous hunter, always weaving some stratagem; desirous and competent of wisdom, throughout life ensuing the truth; a master of jugglery, witchcraft, and artful speech."
4. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A "SYNTHESIS OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND ANTHROPOLOGY." Therefore, for Plato, in Losev's interpretation, "the entire Cosmos is nothing but a giant phallus, a giant Eros" (680). According to Losev, in this respect, Platonism is "a particular specification of Orphic cosmogony, in which, as is well known, Eros is also presented as one of the first cosmic principles" (680).
5. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS A "MYSTICISM."²¹ This is the mysticism of the giant Eros, namely a "Dionysian, Bacchic orgy" (681). Losev further highlights certain features of Plato's Eros, as expressed in the *Symposium*: Eros is "young and delicate" (*Symposium* 195c); "most delicate ... and withal pliant of form: for he would never contrive to fold himself about us every way, nor begin by stealing in and out of every soul so secretly,

21 Here, Losev inverts the fifth and the sixth theses, relative to his previous discussion, treating "mysticism" first and "an aristocratic and reactionary philosophy" second.

if he were hard" (196a); "gracious, superb, [...] father of luxury, tenderness, elegance, graces and longing and yearning; careful of the good, careless of the bad; in toil and fear, in drink and discourse, our trustiest helmsman, boatswain, champion, deliverer; ornament of all gods and men; leader fairest and best" (197d-e). Quite explicitly, Losev – here speaking from his confessional vantage point as an Orthodox Christian – identifies Plato's Eros with the Seducer, i.e., the Devil. Losev then cites the *Phaedrus*' famous description of the two horses in the Chariot Allegory, which represents the heavenly journey of the soul: "The horse that stands at the right hand is upright and has clean limbs; he carries his neck high, has an aquiline nose, is white in colour, and has dark eyes; he is a friend of honour joined with temperance and modesty, and a follower of true glory; he needs no whip, but is guided only by the word of command and by reason. The other, however, is crooked, heavy, ill put together, his neck is short and thick, his nose flat, his colour dark, his eyes grey and bloodshot; he is the friend of insolence and pride, is shaggy-eared and deaf, hardly obedient to whip and spurs" (*Phaedrus* 253d-e). These two horses, whose external appearance reminds Losev of a male phallus and a female vagina, are, for him, a vivid representation of how "the demon rapes the soul" precisely at the moment when the soul mystically contemplates the Ideas (681).

6. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS AN "ARISTOCRATIC AND REACTIONARY PHILOSOPHY." It presupposes that the society would be split into philosophers who contemplate the Ideas and workers who labour to support the philosophers: essentially, into monks and slaves. From the economic point of view, the theory of Ideas is, thus, inevitably, propaganda of slavery (682). Plato's "Eros is not only a sophist and a dialectician, but an aristocrat of the Spartan-Cretan type," who hates labour and cherishes leisure (σχολή) (682).
7. PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS IS, FINALLY, "SUBTLE AND REFINED DIALOGICAL POETRY." This allows Losev to re-articulate Plato's proto-myth in even more concrete terms: "Plato

construes man, the soul, cosmos, and divinity as this infinitely flexible, infinitely sophisticated, most intelligent and cunning, erotically exultant and handsome youth, whose body, actions, words, and life are all pleasantly looking; this is certainly a *charming* youth (*прелестный юноша*)" (683), yet this charm (*прелесть*) is precisely what is called *prelest'* / *прелесть* (=Greek *πλάνη*) by the Church Fathers, as well as by the nineteenth-century Russian theologian St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, Losev's direct source: i.e., a demonic deception. In Losev's own words: "The Platonic Idea is thus a marble and cold nothingness, an attractive erotic hallucination, the hypnotizing sharpness of the contours of a fornicating body, the anti-social ecstasy of mental dialectic, a demonic delusion (*прелесть*) and heated excitement, a devious and lustful werewolf" (684).

Losev concludes his typological analysis with a slightly modified phrase from Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, "How most obscenely boring!" (*Скучища пренеприличная*, though Dostoevsky has: *Скучища неприличнейшая*). Significantly, in *The Brothers Karamazov* this phrase appears in the chapter entitled "The Demon; Ivan Fedorovich's Nightmare." Losev thus drops another thick hint that, in his assessment, Pagan Platonism is, ultimately, demonic in inspiration.

One cannot help but ask the following question: Why is Losev so keen on "anathematizing" Platonism if he is so clearly invested not only in the *academic study* of Plato and Platonism, but in actually *doing* Platonic philosophy, so much so that he might be called (with appropriate qualifications) a Christian Platonist? It is only in light of Losev's other works – particularly, *Antique Cosmos and Modern Science* on the one hand and Essay VI of *EASM* ("The Social Nature of Platonism") on the other – that one can answer this question. Such an examination, however, cannot be undertaken here. I therefore refer to Ludmila Gogotishvili's insightful afterword to *EASM*, entitled "Platonism through the Twentieth-Century Looking Glass, or Climbing Down the Ladder That Leads Upward" (922-942). Her afterword presents such an answer, albeit in an extremely laconic form.

First, Gogotishvili points out that Losev divides Platonism into [1] Pagan and [2] Christian, and then subdivides Christian Platonism into [2a] “Catholic-Western,” [2b] “Barlaamite-Protestant,” and [2c] “Orthodox-Eastern” (=Palamism) (940; cf. Essay VI of *EASM*, 892).²² It is this last type of Platonism that Losev endorses. His polemic in *EASM* is therefore not directed against Platonism as such but specifically against Plato’s own *Pagan* Platonism. Second, Gogotishvili argues that, according to Losev, Platonism is *not* to be used in elaborating the God-world relationship. Nonetheless, Platonic dialectic is indispensable for working out the (according to Losev) *dialectical* relationship between the hypostases of the Trinity. For Losev’s highly original Trinitarian theology (what he calls theology of “Tetractyd A”), which is, indeed, thoroughly grounded in Platonic dialectic, one has to turn to Losev’s *Antique Cosmos and Modern Science* and other philosophical works.

22 On Palamism and its reception in the twentieth century, see Norman Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. For Losev, Imiaslavie (veneration of the name of God; cf. n. 7 above) is a direct extension of Palamism. See also Oleg E. Dushin, “St. Gregory Palamas and the Moscow School of Christian Neo-Platonism (A.F. Losev, S.S. Averincev, V.V. Bibihin, S.S. Horujy),” in: Constantinos Athanasopoulos (ed.), *Triune God, Incomprehensible but Knowable: The Philosophical and Theological Significance of St Gregory Palamas for Contemporary Philosophy and Theology*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015, pp. 102-113.