Some interpretations: 591 “What claim have you to esteem, at any rate in the eyes of men?”; 1021: ἀστεράκων (with Hyslop and Norwood) “where no garland is the prize” (as distinguishing war from athletic contests); 1044 ff. “the war-cloud crossed over even to the fertile lands of the Phrygians”; 1133-4: σφραγίς taken with ἐκλυτοι: “ἀμφώτεροι freed from slaughtered beasts” (Hermann).

Interesting comments are given on 341 (characterization as opposed to effective argument in tragic speeches); 504 (on childrens’ parts in Tragedy); 805 (on the concept of remorse vs. that of fear of immediate retribution); 599 and 943 (in the author’s opinion the poet here is not speaking for himself); 1008 (on the ambiguities about the movements of Orestes).

The reviewer ventures to point out that in the note on 14 reference might have been made to 652 ἰππειρώτης (see Kamerbeek’s note).—At 157 συγνούμαι δὲ ἁνδρὶ sexual incompatibility might be taken into account: the fact that Hermione is childless is explained by the fact that Neoptolemus does not have intercourse with his wife (cf. 33). By the same token 356 νηδὼν ἐξαμβλουμένει (not referred to in the Commentary) can hardly be taken literally (LSJ: “make to miscarry”): see 158.—229 φιλανδρία is not to be taken in bonam partem.—262 ἐναρτετέες δὴ θανατον: ἩΕ 1351, where the meaning is ‘to defy death’, is no correct parallel for the meaning ‘to face death with resolution’, i.e. ‘to accept death with fortitude’.—A note on 418 &c. ἡν would be desirable.—810: Hermione may be “exaggerating her danger”, but her relation to Neoptolemus (33, 157) has to be taken into account; moreover, I disagree with the qualification of 833-835 as “a frigid conceit”.—976: Orestes glosses over the cause of his exile.

Coevorden, Melkkade II

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With the sole exception of the so-called De mysteriis Aegyptiorum, of which the attribution was for a long time controversial, none of Iamblichus’ extant works expounds his fundamental doctrines or represents the characteristic methods to which he owed his strong influence on later Neoplatonism and the epithet ‘the Divine’. For a real understanding of his position in late ancient philosophy and

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theology we depend to a great extent on 'fragments' in the wider sense of the word, i.e. not only quotations (which are comparatively rare), but also reports (which are plentiful) in a variety of authors. Consequently, a collection of fragments has long been a desideratum.

The present volume contains what is left of the commentaries on Plato, with a translation and a commentary, and preceded by an introduction on Iamblichus' life, works and thought. The biographical part of it inevitably had to remain as sketchy as our information on the subject is. A provisional distribution of the works over a 'Pythagorean-Hermetic', a 'Porphyrian-Platonic', and a late (preponderantly Chaldaean) period is presented with so much reserve that it would be unfair to treat it as a definite theory. A satisfactory dating will probably never be possible, but if it is to be attempted, a more promising approach might be the degree of originality and the development of a philosophical personality, in which case the Pythagorean sequence, with its almost entirely mechanical proceedings, would be a very early work. But since the decisive books, those dealing with 'Pythagorean' metaphysics, are lost, it may still be a hurried compilation of a later date. The only concrete piece of evidence on the relative order of the works is a reference to the Πηθηθον in De myst. 271.12-17, which would flatly contradict Dillon's chronology, if Iamblichus-Abammon is really forgetting his role to the extent of citing his own (Iamblichus') book on the subject. This has often been questioned (see Des Places ad loc., p. 201, n. 1), but I believe it is nevertheless the likeliest explanation.

Ch. II of the introduction gives a lucid outline of Iamblichus' system. Especially interesting is Dillon's diagram (p. 32) of the 'Realm of the One'. If we eliminate from it the Absolute (the 'Totally Inexpressible', which for this very reason cannot be described as the 'First One'), what remains is: (1) the Transcendent One; (2) Limit, the Unlimited, and the One existent, together forming the intelligible order. There is independent confirmation for this structure in Proclus' Theologia Platonica, III 23, p. 162. 26-44 Portus: 'It has been shown, then, that we must divide the second hypothesis [of the Parmenides] into the universal processions of gods, down to deified being and starting on high from the most intimate union of things intelligible. For it is not true, as some [i.e. Iamblichus] maintain, that the first hypothesis [already] deals with God and (the) gods, since Parmenides had no right to coordinate the multitude with the One God and the One God with the multitude, for the First God absolutely transcends everything; furthermore, in the first hypothesis Parmenides discusses the intelligible gods, as they themselves [i.e., once more, Iamblichus] explain, arguing