

## The Fourth Argument of Proclus the Successor

Fourth. Each thing generated from a cause that is unmoved according to its substantial reality is unmoved. For if the maker is unmoved, he is unchanged, and if unchanged, then he produces by virtue of his very being, given that he shifts neither from making to not making nor from not making to making. For if he shifts, he will experience change in the very transition from the one to the other, and were he to experience change, he would not be unmoved. If therefore something is unmoved, it will either never make or always make; otherwise, whenever it does make, it would be moved. Consequently, if something unmoved is a cause of something, causing neither never nor sometimes, then it is always a cause, and if so, it is a cause of something eternal.

If the cause of the all is unmoved, - for were it moved, it would be earlier incomplete and later complete (since every motion is incomplete actuality) and furthermore would need time to bring time into being - then the all must be eternal, because it comes to be from an unmoved cause. Consequently, if someone, intending to pay respect to the cause of the all, should say that the cause alone is eternal and the cosmos is not eternal, then in saying the cosmos is not eternal, he asserts that its cause is moved rather than unmoved. By calling the cause moved rather than unmoved, he says it is not always complete but is at one time incomplete, because every motion is incomplete actuality and so needs something inferior (I mean time) because of its being moved; yet because he says it is sometimes incomplete and not always complete, i.e., needing something inferior, he in fact shows great disrespect.

Proclus: *On the Eternity of the World (De Aeternitate Mundi)*; Greek text with introduction, translation, and commentary by Helen S. Lang and A.D. Macro; University of California Press 2001