

# MARSANES

NHC X

*Introduced and Translated by John D. Turner*

**M***arsanes* is a fourth-century Coptic translation of an originally Greek revelation discourse produced in the late third or early fourth century. Based on the labors of the original editor, Birger A. Pearson, it is generally accepted that Codex X contained only one treatise, *Marsanes*. It is badly damaged, and only a few blocks of continuous text survive on pages 1–10, whose numeration is certain, and on pages 13–22, 25–46, 55–58, and 61–68, with uncertain numeration; the other pages are either lost or survive in small fragments. Even the title “[M]arsanes” hardly survives. The text is written in what was formerly called Subachmimic (presently named L6) Coptic as a somewhat unclear translation of an original Greek treatise, whose traces remain in many Greek words and in the discourse on the phonetic properties of the Greek alphabet in the long section occupying pages 25–31.

*Marsanes* is a first-person revelation dialogue written to establish the authority of its putative author and central character, the prophet-mystic Marsanes—whose name seems to be of Syrian origin—as the inspired leader and teacher of a small group of relatively well indoctrinated Sethian Gnostics. In his account of a group of Sethian-like sectarians he calls the “Archontics,” Epiphanius mentions among their honored prophets “a certain Martiades and Marsianos, who had been snatched up into the heavens and had come down after three days” (*Panarion* 40.7.6), and chapter 7 of the untitled text of the Bruce Codex<sup>1</sup> tells us that “the powers of all the great aeons worshiped the power which is in Marsanes.” Birger Pearson<sup>2</sup> therefore concludes that “Marsanes” and “Marsianos” are almost certainly one and the same figure.

In addition to the figure of Marsanes, there are other interlocutors, mostly of a divine sort, such as Gamaliel in 64,19; an otherwise unidentified revealer, “the blessed Authority,” in 20,16; and even the Aeon of Barbelo itself in 10,12–29. There is also the putative audience of the treatise, referred to at various points in

1. Cf. n. 40 of the translation.

2. In Birger A. Pearson, ed., *Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X*, 230–33.

Marsanes' discourse by both the singular and plural second-person form of address, which presuppose a small community of Marsanes' disciples who have already received basic teaching about the structure and deployment of the transcendent realm typical of Sethian treatises like the *Three Steles of Seth*, *Zostrianos*, and *Allogenes the Stranger* as well as basic teaching concerning the powers and configurations of the zodiacal signs. This suggests a Sethian community that thrives on speculations about theurgic ritual, popular astrology and arithmology, the properties of language that symbolize the nature and relationships of the soul, and the nature and origin of the intelligible and sensible worlds.

Probably the latest of the four Platonizing Sethian treatises (along with *Zostrianos*, the *Three Steles of Seth*, and *Allogenes the Stranger*), Marsanes effected a rapprochement of traditions at home in Gnostic Sethianism with contemporary Greek grammatical theory and Middle Platonic/Neoplatonic metaphysics and epistemology as a means of expounding the true nature of the Sethian divine and cosmic hierarchy and assuring its recipients of their ultimate salvation. The author composed this treatise on the basis of both personal experience and mythologumena drawn from the theogonical, metaphysical, and ritual doctrine most evident in two Sethian treatises that in all probability were already at hand—*Zostrianos* and *Allogenes*—summarizing this in such a way as to claim that he or she has experienced the full measure and truth of this doctrine, and on this basis to advance beyond those treatises by propounding doctrine on subjects not treated in them. The initial enumeration of thirteen seals or levels of being extending from the earthly to the highest divine realms are given merely for the benefit of an audience already schooled in it; they are roughly the same as those mentioned in *Zostrianos* (and to a lesser extent in *Allogenes*). The highest of these levels are the object of a visionary ascent that the main speaker, presumably Marsanes, has just undergone (5,17–26). The following chart gives a visual impression of the relationships among these levels of reality and their inhabitants:

Seal 13	The Unknown Silent One
Seal 12	The Invisible Spirit
Seal 11	The Triple-Powered One
Seal 10	The Barbelo Aeon
Seal 9	(Kalyptos)
Seal 8	Protophanes (Mind)
Seal 7	Autogenes
Seal 6	The Self-Generated Aeons (incorporeal; the individuals?)
Seal 5	The Repentance (incorporeal; repentant souls "in Marsanes")
Seal 4	The Sojourn (incorporeal; disembodied souls)

Seal 3	The Third (noncorporeal but sensible; the planetary spheres?)
Seal 2	The Second (corporeal; the sublunar realm?)
Seal 1	The First (corporeal; the physical, material realm?)

All scholars who have had occasion to comment on *Marsanes* in relation to other Sethian literature have called attention to its unique postulation of a new supreme principle, the Unknown Silent One, which transcends the Invisible Spirit, who is otherwise the supreme principle of all the other Sethian treatises. This modification of Sethian theology is parallel to a similar phenomenon that occurs in Iamblichus (cf. Damascius *On First Principles* 1.21,11–14; 25,21–22) and his disciple Theodore of Asine (Proclus *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* 2.274,10–20), who placed an ineffable One absolutely unrelated to anything else at the summit of all reality—including Plotinus's supreme One, which was at least “present to” subsequent reality. Of course, at least in the case of *Marsanes* and Theodore, this supreme One nevertheless has some relation to its inferiors, since for Theodore, the “second One” was the aspiration (“breathing”), self-contact, and intelligibility of the first One, and for *Marsanes*, the Invisible Spirit (which “has no breath,” 15,1–4; 15,29–16,2) seems to share both the silence and the activity of the Unknown Silent One. On these grounds as well as the presence of the prophet's name in the Bruce Codex, one might date *Marsanes* to the late third or early fourth century, contemporary with Iamblichus and Theodore.

In the course of his visionary ascent, it seems that *Marsanes*, like Zostrianos, had posed various questions concerning the nature of the beings to which he contemplatively assimilates himself, such as Barbelo (4,24–10,29, especially 10,7–12), the Triple-Powered One (14,15–16,2), probably the Invisible Spirit, and the supreme Silent One (16,3–16). As in the *Three Steles of Seth*, the community's experience replicates that of the visionary (8,2–4): “Those that are within me were completed together with all the rest.” As in *Allogenes the Stranger*, true insight is achieved in a cognitively vacant knowledge (8,16–25): “I would contemplate a power that I hold in honor. When the third power (the Barbelo Aeon) of the Triple-Powered One contemplated him, it said to me, ‘Be silent, lest you should know and flee and come before me. But know that this One was [silent], and concentrate on understanding.’”

Even though *Marsanes* considers ultimate enlightenment to result from a visionary ascent to the highest realm, in 3,25–4,2 and 5,17–6,16 it mentions a saving descent of Autogenes through the instrumentality of Sophia into the lower world. Although this descent seems unrelated to the triple descents of Barbelo or her avatars in other Sethian treatises, it seems to function here as a prototypical anticipation of *Marsanes*' own function as a salvific prophet who ascends to the transcendental realm and descends to reveal what he has experienced there.

*Marsanes* contains traces of the Sethian baptismal rite. The terms “seal” (*sphragis*, 2,12–13; 34,28; 66,[4]; *sphragizein*, 66,[3]), “washing” (55,20), and “cleanse” (66,1) may suggest a connection between baptism and visionary ascent

similar to that found in *Zostrianos*. Pages 64–66 seem to narrate Marsanes' vision of certain angels, which include the traditional Sethian "minister" or "receiver" Gamaliel, who is over the spirit(s); just as he raptures baptismal participants into heaven in *Three Forms of First Thought* (48,26–30) and *Melchizedek* (5,17–20), he "takes" Marsanes to see an ever-flowing fountain of "living" water, a "cleansing," and an adornment with a "celestial" seal.

Only the first twenty of *Marsanes'* sixty-eight extant pages delve into the transcendental metaphysics and epistemology expounded in *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes the Stranger* and presupposed in the *Three Steles of Seth*; the remainder seem for the most part dedicated to astral phenomena (the zodiac, stars, planets, and their powers), the configurations of the soul, the nomenclature for the gods and angels, and the judgment of souls. There are references to the use of waxen images and emerald stones (36,1–6) and extensive discussion of the theory of the letters of the Greek alphabet and their combinations (pp. 25–33), based on the speculative theories in the manuals on phonetics and grammar found in Dionysius Thrax and his commentators, as well as of arithmology (pp. 33–34), which seem to illustrate the construction of the cosmic soul and the incorporation of souls into human bodies in the psychogonia of Plato's *Timaeus* 35a–44d.

Among the Sethian treatises, discussion of the cosmic soul occurs elsewhere only in *Zostrianos* (31,2–11). The ability to classify the various configurations or states of the soul—both cosmic and individual, both disembodied and embodied—is related to the need for careful observation of the planets, stars, and zodiacal signs, characterized by qualities similar to those (shapes) of the soul and of the letters of the alphabet, and so on. The letters of the Greek alphabet symbolize not only the "configurations" of the soul, but also the celestial, angelic powers and the elementary constituents of the sensible world. Vowels and consonants are evaluated in terms of their stability (and thus superiority) both independently and in various combinations (prefixed and suffixed). In particular, the relations between the five spherical configurations of the soul and certain combinations of the seven vowels and the emphasis on similarity and difference suggest that these speculations are somehow based on the psychogony in Plato's *Timaeus* (35a–36d).

This theurgical material, which is reminiscent of the second-century teachings of Marcus the Magician (Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 1.21) and more distantly of Iamblichus's disciple Theodore of Asine in the early fourth century, focuses on the nature of the soul, both individual and cosmic, the nature of the astral powers that affect the soul, and the means by which the Sethian adept might manipulate these powers to his or her advantage by utilizing the appropriate nomenclature for these realities. Although previous treatises like the *Three Steles of Seth*, *Zostrianos*, and *Allogenes the Stranger* had concentrated on theology or the metaphysics of the highest principles and intelligible realities and the means of knowing these, *Marsanes*—even though it offers its own equally abstruse metaphysics—now offers a Sethian Gnostic physics and psychology based on astrology, theurgical technique, and a theory of language. In this sense, *Marsanes* offers a specific—theurgical—theory of natural language according to which the linguistic articulation of human thinking and contemplation facilitates or en-

ables not merely human knowledge of both the perceptible and intelligible cosmos, but in fact the self-knowledge of the higher realities themselves. Humans and their ability to articulate reality by linguistic means occupy a pivotal place in the scheme of things: human contemplation of the souls of the very stars themselves enables one to know their individual and mutual identity and the limitations set for them even before they were brought into being. Of all the Sethian treatises, *Marsanes* is the only one to raise the possibility that the perceptible realm of becoming and sensation might indeed be worthy of preservation (5,17–6,1).

Of the four Sethian Platonizing treatises, *Marsanes* and the *Three Steles of Seth* stand out as representative of an emphasis on the practices of an entire community, while *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes the Stranger* are much more concerned with the enlightenment of the individual reader. Moreover, although the *Three Steles of Seth* is basically a structured collection of ecstatic doxologies to be used in the course of a communal practice of visionary ascent, *Marsanes* not only encourages its recipients to engage in a similar practice of ascent as well as to master certain theurgical techniques, but is also clearly concerned with the behavior of members of a community and their interaction with those outside its immediate boundaries who earnestly seek the truth. The chief interest of the author seems to be the process of community formation and building.

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# Marsanes<sup>1</sup>

## *Exordium: The Steadfastness and Confidence of the Recipients of the Revelation (1,1–2,11)*

.....<sup>2</sup> [material] . . . and a [power]. They found him<sup>3</sup> with a pure heart without their being afflicted by evils. Those who have received you will be given a choice reward for their endurance, and [they will] endure the evils.

[But] let none of us be distressed and think [in] his heart that the supreme Father [is aloof], for he looks upon the All and takes care of them all. And [he] has shown them his [command] since it is [they] who speak . . .<sup>4</sup> [2]

## *Marsanes' Vision of the Nature, Structure, and Deployment of the All (2,12–18,14)*

.....<sup>5</sup> [the things I said] at first.

### The Thirteen Seals (2,12–4,24)

#### *Word of Confirmation (2,12–16)*

But as for the thirteenth seal, I have confirmed it together with the limit of knowledge<sup>6</sup> and the certainty<sup>7</sup> of rest.

#### *Seals 1–3: The Worldly Corporeal and Material Levels (2,16–26)*

The first [and the] second and the [third] are for the worldly and the material realms. I have [informed] you about these, that you should [guard] your bodies. And a perceptible [power<sup>8</sup>] will [conceal] those who will be at rest, and they will be kept [from the] passions and division [of the] union.<sup>9</sup>

1. Coptic text: NHC X: 1,1–68,18. Editions: *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices: Codices IX and X*, 87–140; Wolf-Peter Funk, Paul-Hubert Poirier, and John D. Turner, eds., *Marsanès*; Birger A. Pearson, ed., *Nag Hammadi Codices IX and X*, 229–347 (Birger A. Pearson); Hans-Martin Schenke, Hans-Gebhard Bethge, and Ursula Ulrike Kaiser, eds., *Nag Hammadi Deutsch*, 2,713–733 (Wolf-Peter Funk).  
2. First nine lines missing. 3. Probably the supreme

deity, the Father. 4. Last line missing. 5. First ten lines missing. 6. Gnosis, here and below. 7. Or “foundation,” Coptic *tajro*. 8. These perceptible powers would probably be the “glories” (described in *Zostrianos* 46–47), spiritual powers that manifest themselves in the sensible world. In *Allogenes the Stranger* 45 and 50, Youel identifies the power granted to Allogenes as Mind. 9. Either the incarnational union of body and soul or the sexual union of male and female.

*Seals 4-5: The Incorporeal Sojourn and Repentance (2,26-3,14)*

The fourth [and the] fifth<sup>10</sup> above it [are the ones] you have come to know [as divine. The fourth, concerns what] [3] exists above<sup>11</sup> the [corporeal type] and nature that [is divided in] three. You [were informed] about [these and the] three-[dimensional realm] by these [two].<sup>12</sup> You [were told that it] is incorporeal . . . . . and after . . . within . . . every . . . which . . . and the things within them.

*Seal 5: Repentance (3,14-18)*

The [fifth concerns the] repentance [of] those within [it] and those who sojourn in that place.<sup>13</sup>

*Seal 6: The Self-Generated Ones (3,18-25)*

The sixth concerns the self-generated ones, the incorporeal being that exists individually,<sup>14</sup> together with those who abide in the truth of the All [with] understanding and stability:

*Seal 7: Autogenes, the Self-Generated One (3,25-4,2)*

The [seventh] concerns the self-generated power, the third [perfect Mind, the second one]<sup>15</sup> who extended to [4] the fourth<sup>16</sup> for salvation [through] Sophia.<sup>17</sup>

*Seal 8: Protophanes, the First-Appearing One (4,2-7)*

The eighth concerns the [masculine] mind [that] appeared [in the beginning],<sup>18</sup> as well as [incorporeal] substance and the [intelligible] world.

*Seal 9: Kalyptos, the Hidden One (4,7-10)*

The ninth [concerns the name] of the power [that] appeared [in the beginning].<sup>19</sup>

*Seal 10: The Aeon of Barbelo (4,10-12)*

The tenth [concerns Barbelo, the] virgin [who is male]—that is, the Aeon.<sup>20</sup>

10. In *Zostrianos*, the fourth and fifth “seals” would be Sojourn and Repentance, temporary locations for disincarnate souls awaiting either reincarnation or final enlightenment. 11. Or “according to.” 12. These two are probably the fourth (Sojourn) and the fifth (Repentance) “seals.” 13. Probably the fourth “seal,” Sojourn. 14. Such individually existing incorporeal beings are the “perfect individuals,” probably located in the Self-Generated Aeons. According to *Zostrianos* 29, these souls alone have “self-generated power and eternal life.” 15. The Self-Generated One (*Autogenes*) would be the “second Mind” after and immediately below the “first Mind,” *Protophanes*, and is also the second one (after the *Barbelo* Aeon) to extend itself downward in order to save souls in the lower world of the first three “seals.” In Neoplatonic thought, the Self-Generated One would play the role of Plato’s

demiurge. For Neoplatonists, the transcendent deities do not themselves descend into the lower world, so the Self-Generated One here acts through the instrumentality of *Sophia*, the divine wisdom located at the lower boundary of the divine world. 16. The fourth “seal,” the Sojourn. 17. Wisdom. 18. “That which appeared in the beginning” translates Greek *prōtophanēs*, *Protophanes* or “First-Appearing One,” a divine masculine intellect containing distinct intelligences and souls unified with their objects of contemplation. 19. This level corresponds to the *Kalyptos* (“Hidden One”) Aeon of *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes*, the highest realm within the *Barbelo* Aeon, and contains the universal ideas or paradigms of Platonic metaphysics. 20. The *Barbelo* Aeon as the universal Intellect comprises the highest realm of pure, determinate being.

*Seals 11–12: The Triple-Powered One and the Invisible Spirit (4,13–19)*

[The eleventh] and [the twelfth] speak of the Invisible One who possesses three powers<sup>21</sup> and the insubstantial Spirit<sup>22</sup> who belongs to the first Ungenerated One.<sup>23</sup>

*Seal 13: The Unknown Silent One (4,19–24)*

The thirteenth speaks concerning [the Unknown] Silent One, even the foundation of the indistinguishable One.<sup>24</sup>

### Marsanes' Insight into the Nature of Incorporeal and Corporeal Reality (4,25–6,1)

For it is I who have [contemplated] that which truly exists. [Whether] individually or [as a whole], by discrimination [I knew] that they [pre]exist [in the] entire place<sup>25</sup> that is [5] eternal, namely: all those that have come into existence whether with or without substance; those who are unbegotten; and the divine aeons together with the angels and the souls without guile, and the soul-[garments], the images of the simple ones.<sup>26</sup> And [afterward they] were mixed with [those<sup>27</sup> that were distinct from] them. But [even the] entire [perceptible] substance still resembles the [substance that is intelligible] and insubstantial. [I have known] the entire corruption [of the former] as well as the immortality of the latter.<sup>28</sup>

I have discriminated and have attained the boundary between<sup>29</sup> the partial, sense-perceptible world and the entire realm of the incorporeal essence. And the intelligible world knew by discrimination that in every respect the sense-perceptible world is [worthy] of being preserved entire,<sup>30</sup> [for] I have not ceased speaking [of] Autogenes, [lest anyone] be [ignorant] [6] in turn of the entire place.<sup>31</sup>

21. This "Invisible One" corresponds to the "Triple-Powered One" of *Zostrianos*, *Allogenes the Stranger*, and the *Three Steles of Seth*. In *Marsanes*, it seems that the first of its three powers coincides with the Invisible Spirit, the second power with the Triple-Powered One itself (as the Invisible Spirit's own indeterminate emanative power), which ultimately issues in its third power, the Barbelo Aeon. 22. The Invisible Spirit, who in *Marsanes* is the first unbegotten power of the Triple-Powered One. 23. Probably a designation for the supreme principle identified as the Unknown Silent One in seal 13. 24. Probably the Invisible Spirit. 25. The divine world of "aeons." 26. Probably pure souls destined for enlightenment. 27. Their "bodies."

28. The "former" would be the "perceptible substance," while the latter would be the "intelligible substance." 29. Lit. "end of," probably in the sense of "boundary." 30. Or, on the hypothesis of the possible omission of a main verb in line 20 and third-person (rather than first-person) subject pronouns in lines 22–23 (so Pearson and Funk), 5,19–26 could be restored: "Part by part <I have (or "he has") come to know> the entire realm of the incorporeal essence, and <I have (or "he has")> come to know the intelligible realm, while <I (or "he")> was deliberating whether in any respect the sense-perceptible world is [worthy] of being preserved entire." 31. The divine world of "aeons."



The Saving Descent of Autogenes, the  
Self-Generated One (6,2-16)

He<sup>32</sup> descended; again he descended from the Unbegotten One who is in-substantial, who is the Spirit. The one who exists before them all<sup>33</sup> extends [to the divine] self-generated ones. The one who is [substantial] examines [the All]<sup>34</sup> and is [the All and] resembles [the All]. And from [the single one] they [are] divided, [so that] I experienced many things, it being clear that he saved a multitude.

Marsanes Inquires About the Aeonic Realm of the  
Triple-Powered One (6,17-29)

But beyond all of these, I am seeking the kingdom of the Triple-Powered One, which has no beginning. Whence did he appear and act to fill the entire place<sup>35</sup> with his power? In what way did the ungenerated ones come into existence without being generated? What are the differences among the [aeons? And] how many ungenerated ones [are there]? In what respect [do they differ] from each other?<sup>36</sup> [7]

The Triple-Powered One Actualizes the Silence of the  
Unknown Silent One (7,1-29)

When<sup>37</sup> I had inquired about these things, I perceived that he acted from silence. He exists prior to those that truly exist, that belong to the realm of Being. He is a preexistent otherness belonging to the one that actualizes the Silent One. And the silence of [the one who follows] him acts. For [so long as] the latter [acts], the former [acts also]. The [silence that belongs to the Un]begotten One is among [the aeons, and from] the beginning he is in[substantial]. But the activity of that one <is> the Triple-Powered One. The Unbegotten One<sup>38</sup> is prior to the Aeon, since he is in[substantial].

32. The subject ("he," "the one," "the one who is substantial") throughout this paragraph is probably the Self-Generated One. 33. "Them all" probably refers to those "below" the realms of the Barbelo Aeon. 34. The Barbelo Aeon. 35. The aeonic realm. 36. Cf. such questions with those of *Zostrianos* (e.g., 2-3; 7-8). 37. The probable antecedents of the pronominal subjects and objects of this complex passage may be as follows: "When I had inquired about these things, I perceived that the Triple-Powered One acted from silence. He exists prior to those that truly exist, that belong to the realm of Being. The Triple-Powered One is a preexistent otherness belonging to the Invisible Spirit that actualizes the Silent One. And the silence of [the Triple-Powered One who follows] the Invisible Spirit acts. For [so long as] the Invisible Spirit

[acts], the Triple-Powered One [acts also]. The [silence that belongs to the un]begotten Invisible Spirit is among [the aeons, and from] the beginning he is in[substantial]. But the activity of the Invisible Spirit <is> the Triple-Powered One. The unbegotten Invisible Spirit is prior to the Aeon of Barbelo, since he is in[substantial]. Now as for the summit of the Silent One's silence: it is possible <for> the Invisible Spirit, the summit of the Triple-Powered One's activity, <to> behold it. And the Unknown Silent One who exists, who is silent, [who is] beyond [insubstantiality], manifested [the Triple-Powered, first] perfect one." 38. Possibly "the Unbegotten One" is an appositive attribute of the Triple-Powered One rather than an epithet for the Invisible Spirit; in *Zostrianos* and sometimes in *Allogenes*, the two are sometimes indistinguishable.

Now as for the summit of the Silent One's silence: it is possible <for> the summit of the Triple-Powered One's activity <to> behold it.<sup>39</sup> And the One who exists, who is silent, [who is] beyond [insubstantiality], manifested [the Triple-Powered, first] perfect One.

### The Self-Manifestation of the Triple-Powered One (7,29–8,18)

[When he appeared] [8] to the powers, they rejoiced. Those that are within me were completed together with all the rest. And one by one they all blessed the Triple-Powered One, who is the First-Perfect One, [blessing] him in purity, [every]where praising the Lord [who exists] before the All, [who is the] Triple-Powered One.<sup>40</sup>

[It did not happen that] their laudations [were audible], but [it was my part] to keep on<sup>41</sup> inquiring] how they had become silent. I would contemplate a power that I hold in honor.

### The Barbelo Aeon Reveals Itself as the Triple-Powered One's Third Power (8,18–29)

When the third power<sup>42</sup> of the Triple-Powered One contemplated him,<sup>43</sup> it said to me,<sup>44</sup> "Be silent, lest you should know and flee and come before me. But know that this One was [silent], and concentrate on understanding. For [the power still] keeps [guiding] me into [the Aeon that] is Barbelo, the male [virgin]." [9]

### Marsanes Explains the Barbelo Aeon's Deployment from the Invisible Spirit (9,1–21)

For this reason the virgin became male,<sup>45</sup> because she had separated from the male.<sup>46</sup> The knowledge stood outside of him, as if belonging to him. And she who

39. Or perhaps "The exalted silence of the Silent One can be beheld by the exalted energy of the Triple-Powered One" (so Wolf-Peter Funk). 40. Cf. the untitled text of the Bruce Codex 7: "The powers of all the great aeons worshiped the power which is in Marsanes. They said, 'Who is this who has seen these things in his very presence, that on his account he (Monogenes) appeared in this way?' Nicotheos also spoke of him (Monogenes) and saw that he is that One. He said, 'The Father who surpasses every perfect being, and has revealed the invisible perfect Triple Power.' Each of the perfect men saw him and spoke of him, giving him glory, each according to his own manner." See also chap. 8: "And the triple-powered one came down to the places of the Autogenes. And they saw the grace of the aeons of the light which was granted to them. They rejoiced because he who exists came forth among them." 41. Funk takes 8,13–18

as the beginning of the following section: "But I (Marsanes) [continued to inquire] how they (the silent ones) had become silent. I was in the process of contemplating a power that I held in honor: the third power of the Triple-Powered. When <I (text: "it," feminine)> contemplated it, it said to me . . ." Here the first-person pronoun is taken as referring to the Barbelo Aeon. 42. The third power of the Triple-Powered One would be the Barbelo Aeon. 43. Probably the Triple-Powered One as the entire assemblage of his three powers. 44. Marsanes. 45. The Aeon of Barbelo emanates from the apparently masculine Invisible Spirit as an indeterminate and therefore feminine power (Greek *dunamis*), which finally becomes instantiated as a determinate (and therefore masculine) divine intellect (Greek *nous*), the masculine Aeon of Barbelo. 46. The Invisible Spirit.

exists <is><sup>47</sup> she who sought. She is situated just as the Triple-Powered One is situated. She withdrew from [these] two [powers],<sup>48</sup> since she exists [outside of] the great one,<sup>49</sup> [seeing what] is above [her, the perfect one<sup>50</sup>] who is silent, [who has] this [commandment] to be silent. His knowledge and his existence and his activity<sup>51</sup> are those things that the power<sup>52</sup> of the Triple-Powered One expressed:

### The Barbelo Aeon Describes the Praise of the Triple-Powered One (9,21–29)

“We all have withdrawn to ourselves. We have [become] silent, and when we [too] came to know [that he is] the Triple-Powered One, [we] bowed down; we [glorified and] blessed him. [He conferred] upon us [a great revelation].”

[Again]<sup>53</sup> the Invisible [Spirit] [10] hastened to his place. The entire place<sup>54</sup> was revealed, the entire place unfolded <until> he reached the upper region. Again<sup>55</sup> he went forth and caused the entire place to be illuminated, and the entire place was illuminated.

### Marsanes Receives the Power of the Barbelo Aeon (9,29–10,12)

And [I] was given the third part of [the spirit] of the power<sup>56</sup> of the Triple-[Powered One]! Blessed is [the Aeon]!<sup>57</sup> It<sup>58</sup> said:

### Through Marsanes the Barbelo Aeon Urges the Ascent Toward the Invisible Spirit (10,12–14,15)

“O [inhabitants of these] places!<sup>59</sup> It is necessary [for you to contemplate] those that are higher than these<sup>60</sup> and tell them to the powers. For you will become [better] than the elect [in the last] times. Upward mounts the Invisible Spirit! And you [yourselves], ascend [upward] with him, since you have the great

47. The manuscript reads *de*, “but,” for probable *pe*. Funk translates: “But the existing one, the one who sought, possesses also the Triple-Powered,” with the implication that Barbelo is also triple-powered. 48. The first two powers of the Triple-Powered One, perhaps existence and activity. 49. The Invisible Spirit. 50. The Triple-Powered One. 51. Perhaps the “existence” (*hupostasis*), the “activity” (*energeia*), and the “knowledge” (*gnōsis*) as the Triple-Powered One’s three powers are the equivalent of the “Existence,” “Vitality,” and “Mentality/Blessedness” triad in *Zostrianos*, *Allogenes*, and the *Three Steles of Seth*. 52. Barbelo. 53. Although *palin* here might have the contrastive sense of “on the other hand” rather than repetition, it is more likely a mistranslation of *palindromein*, “run back again”—i.e., “the Invisible Spirit

returned to his place.” 54. The aeonic realm. 55. Perhaps merely “the Invisible Spirit returned to his place.” 56. Knowledge, Marsanes’ name for the third power of the Triple-Powered One, probably identical with the Barbelo Aeon. 57. The Aeon of Barbelo, whose “blessedness,” as in *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes*, is equivalent to “self-knowledge,” which is the third of the Triple-Powered One’s powers that Marsanes has also received. 58. The Barbelo Aeon, now speaking to the lower realm through Marsanes. 59. “These places” would be the physical, sensible world. Funk supposes the text to have omitted Barbelo’s direct addressee: “O <Marsanes, tarry not among> those who inhabit these places.” 60. “These” would be the contents of the Barbelo Aeon.

[radiant] crown!<sup>61</sup> But on that day you will see [as you hasten to] ascend above [with him]. And [even] the sense-perceptible [things that are] visible [to you] . . . and they . . .” [13] . . . . .<sup>62</sup> the intellection. He<sup>63</sup> exists eternally without substance in the One Who Is, who is silent, the One who is from the beginning, who is with[out] substance . . . part of . . . indivisible. . . . consider a . . . . . [ninth] . . . for [14] . . . . .<sup>64</sup>

### Marsanes' Ascent to the Triple-Powered One

(14,15–16,3)

I [was dwelling] among the aeons that were generated. As I was permitted, [I] came to be among those that were un[begotten]. But I was dwelling in the [great] Aeon,<sup>65</sup> although I [was separate from it]. And [I saw the] three powers [of] the Triple-[Powered] One. The [first<sup>66</sup> power] . . . and . . . . .<sup>67</sup> [15] the Silent One and the Triple-Powered One, [and the One] that does not have breath.<sup>68</sup>

We took our stand . . . we [contemplated] . . . . .<sup>69</sup> we entered . . . breath<sup>70</sup> . . . . . [the Spirit [16] that] does not have breath, [and he] exists in [unknowability].

### Marsanes Sees the Supreme Deity (16,3–18,14)

And [through] him<sup>71</sup> I saw the great [unknowable power<sup>72</sup>. . . . . the one without] limit . . . and [I saw the one who exists] alone . . . . .<sup>73</sup> [17] is active? And why is there no knowledge [among the] ignorant? And . . . he runs the risk . . . that he become . . . . .<sup>74</sup> and . . . on account of . . . in . . . . .<sup>75</sup> those that are dis[similar].

But it is necessary that [that everyone who] is without image [be like] those of the [single] one [that] exists before [them all]. The thought that pre[exists] . . . the

61. For the crown, see *Three Steles of Seth* 120; *Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit* III, 42; and the figure of the glorious Esephech, child and crown of the Triple-Male Child/great Christ's glory (IV, 59; III, 49–50; 53–54; 55–56; 61–62); *Zostrianos* 56–58; and frequently in the untitled text of the Bruce Codex. 62. Pp. 11–12 are missing; top fourteen lines missing from p. 13. 63. I.e., as the third of the Triple-Powered One's powers, the Invisible Spirit prefiguratively exists also in the Unknown Silent One, which may coincide with its first power. 64. The last three lines of p. 13 and the first fourteen lines of p. 14 are missing. 65. The Aeon of Barbelo. 66. Restoring Coptic *šarp*, “first” power, the Unknown Silent One, or possibly *šamte*, “third” power, the Barbelo Aeon. 67. Last three lines missing. 68. The Invisible Spirit. Concerning the breathlessness (see also *Marsanes* 15–16) of the Invisible Spirit subjacent to the Unknown Silent One, Proclus (*Commentary on the Timaeus* 2.274,18–23) claims that Theodore of Asine (early fourth century) posited two highest ones, a first One, who—like *Marsanes'* Un-

known Silent One—is ineffable and uncoordinated with anything below it, and a second, intelligible (*noēton*) One (Greek *hen*), who is the aspirated breath of the inaspirate ineffability of the first One and defines an intelligible triad represented by the Greek word *hen*, probably conceived as a primal monad, dyad, and triad, consisting of its “elements” or letters: (1) an unpronounceable aspiration (*h*) represented in characters by a dimensionless point (in later Greek writing, a rough breathing mark); (2) a pronounceable vowel (*e*), whose one-dimensional outer arc symbolizes its own reversion upon itself (cf. Plato *Parmenides* 148e–149d); and (3) a final consonant (*n*) symbolizing its intelligibility (*noēton*) by means of the intersecting lines of the N that define a two-dimensional triadic surface. 69. Lines 6–12 missing. 70. Restoring “breath” (*pnōē*) or perhaps “intelligible” (*pnōē[tos]*). Lines 15–28 are missing. 71. Probably the Invisible Spirit. 72. Probably the supreme Unknown Silent One. Lines 6–11 missing. 73. Lines 15–29 missing. 74. Lines 12–14 missing. 75. Four lines missing.

one that . . . . .<sup>76</sup> [18] [Now] these [are the images that I] saw in nine [cosmic] Hebdomads [that are] in a [single eternal] day.<sup>77</sup> . . . . . thirty . . . . . [herself] . . .

*The Need to Know the Nomenclature of the Cosmic Powers and of the Soul (18,14–20,16)*

And [again after] many [years, as for me], when I saw the [Father,<sup>78</sup> I came to] know him, and . . . many . . . partial . . . forever . . . the material ones . . . worldly . . . above . . . in addition [19] . . . . .<sup>79</sup> a deity . . . from . . . the things that . . . them into . . . .<sup>80</sup> Name [them according] to their nomenclature, [and let no] one [think that you are] inferior to [their knowledge] and their [reality].<sup>81</sup> And [in addition, so that] [20] . . . . .<sup>82</sup> hidden . . . the third [power].

*The Blessed Authority's Instructions on Preparing the Soul (20,16–29?)*

And the blessed Authority said [to me], "Among these [may] she who [does not have it receive no glory]. For there is no glory . . . nor even the one who. . . . For indeed the one [without glory is] a . . . . For . . . . .<sup>83</sup> [21]

*The Configurations and Powers of the Zodiacal Signs (21,1?–25,21)*

. . . . .<sup>84</sup> and the [zodiacal signs] . . . and the . . . and . . . which do not have . . . acquire for . . . revolution . . . . And . . . soul . . . this . . . , namely, the celestial soul . . . [sur]rounds . . . . .<sup>85</sup> configuration . . . which is [22] . . . . .<sup>86</sup> [spiritual]. . . . And those that [have likeness] . . . those who . . . [the form] . . . all the images [of which I spoke. It is necessary that] all the forms [become] configurations, so that [a form may] be assigned to [the elements]<sup>87</sup> themselves, [including the smooth] and the rough,<sup>88</sup> [like the voices] of animals . . . and the . . . . .<sup>89</sup> [25] there. But their

76. Lines 23–26 are unrestorable; 27–29 are missing. 77. This suggests that Marsanes' vision culminated on his sixty-third year (nine times seven), the most critical climacteric stage (*klimaktēr*) in a man's life, here experienced as a single eternal day; see Auguste Bouché-Leclercq, *L'Astrologie Grecque*, 526–31, esp. 528, n. 2. Ages forty-nine through eighty-one that were divisible by nine (symbolizing the soul) and/or seven (symbolizing the body) were considered either most vulnerable or most auspicious. Lines 5–10 unrestorable and 11–12 are missing. 78. Pearson restores "Father"; also possible are "Spirit" or "Aeon" (Funk). 79. On p. 18, lines 25–26 are unrestorable; 27–29 are missing. On p. 19, the first twelve lines are missing. 80. *Marsanes* 19,4–18 might be restored: "[It is necessary that] a deity [transfer them] from [those who observe] the things that [act in] them into [actuality]." 81. Greek

*hupostasis*, in the sense of actual "status" or "reality." 82. On p. 19, lines 24–25 are unrestorable; 26–29 are missing. On p. 20, the first twelve lines are missing. 83. Last five lines missing. 84. Lines 1–12 missing. 85. *Marsanes* 21,20–24 may have read: "And [it is the] soul [that has] this [sort of] [corporeality], namely, the celestial soul [that sur]rounds [the world]." 86. On p. 21, the last three lines are missing. On p. 22, the first fourteen lines are missing or unreconstructable. 87. Greek *stoikheia*, the basic "elements," either of the physical world or of the individual letters or sounds of written language. 88. Smooth (unaspirated) and rough (aspirated) vowels/syllables of the Greek language are compared to animals that produce smooth (articulate) and rough (inarticulate) sounds. 89. Last two lines of p. 22 and all of pp. 23–24 missing.

powers, which are the angels, are in the form of beasts and animals.<sup>90</sup> Some among them are [polymorphous] and contrary to [nature]; they have [sounds] adapted to their names, that [is], they are [distinct] and [different] in [appearance] and [they are bi-formed].<sup>91</sup> But these that are [homo]phonic by a third originate from substance.<sup>92</sup> And concerning these, all of these remarks are sufficient, since we have already spoken about them. For [this] distribution takes place also in these regions<sup>93</sup> in [the manner] we have mentioned from the [beginning].

### *The Alphabet and the Configurations of the Soul*

(25,21–39,17)

#### The Soul and Its Configuration (25,21–22)

However, the soul too [has] its configuration, although it is diverse. It is [in its] form that the configuration of the only-begotten soul resides.

#### Vowels and Diphthongs: The First and Second

Configurations of the Soul (25,22–26,17)

Its configuration is [the second] [26] spherical part—EĒIOU—while the first goes around [it],<sup>94</sup> the self-begotten soul—AĒĪOUŌ.

[The] second configuration—EĒIOU—derives from those [having] two sounds.<sup>95</sup> The first that suffixes them is [the upsilon], and [the iota is its companion. And these are the ones you know] in [the radiance] of the light. [Control] yourselves, receive the imperishable seed, bear fruit, and do not be attached to your possessions.

#### Tones and Accents (26,18–27)

But know that the long vowels<sup>96</sup> exist among the vowels and the diphthongs beside them. But the [short]<sup>97</sup> are deficient,<sup>98</sup> as well as the [other sounds that] originate through them. And those that [are drawn]<sup>99</sup> are intermediate.

90. The powers of the twelve signs (often animals) of the zodiac. 91. Perhaps the doubling of zodiacal signs by position or appearance (conjoined like Gemini, disjoint like Pisces, or composite of distinct parts like Sagittarius and Capricorn; Bouché-Leclercq, *L'Astrologie Grecque*, 151–52) or mere numerical doubling, e.g., of the twelve zodiacal signs into the twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet (Funk). 92. Homophony and the interval of the third suggest some theory of the harmony of the spheres (Poirier, referring to the dream of Scipio in Cicero *Republic* 6.18). 93. I.e., here on earth. 94. Lit., “follows it” (in a circle outside

it). 95. The diphthongs. 96. The text reads *netjasi*, “those that are elevated,” possibly meaning the *oxytonoi*, words with stress on the final syllable, but more likely designating the long vowels *ē* and *ō* as opposed to the short ones *e* and *o*. 97. The text reads *brakhu*, “short,” which may mean either “short vowels” or *barytonoi*, words with stress on the next-to-last syllable. 98. Or “weak,” “worse.” 99. Reading [takm], “drawn out,” possibly rendering Greek *perispōmenon*, vowels bearing a circumflex accent, occupying an intermediate value between long and short.

## Consonants and Their Combinations

(26,27-27,26)

Among the [consonants], the [semi]vowels<sup>100</sup> are superior [27] to the voiceless.<sup>101</sup> And those that are double<sup>102</sup> are superior to the changeless semivowels.<sup>103</sup> And the aspirates<sup>104</sup> are better than the inaspirates<sup>105</sup> <of> the mute consonants. As for those that are intermediate,<sup>106</sup> their combinations are many. They are ignorant [of] the good combinations and are combined with the worse<sup>107</sup> ones in the [middle. As] in the case of the nomenclature for the [gods] and the angels, it is [not that] the consonants are combined with each other indiscriminately, but only that they are combined so as to have a beneficial effect. It just didn't happen that their intent<sup>108</sup> was apparent.

Don't [sin anymore], and don't dare to have anything to do with sin. Now [I] speak to you [concerning the three configurations of the form] of the soul.

## Vowels and the Second and Third Configurations of the Soul

(27,26-29,2)

[The] third [configuration of the soul]<sup>109</sup> is [a sphere and] [28] a spherical one goes around it.<sup>110</sup> From the simple vowels <AAA>, EEE, <ĒĒĒ>, III, OO, UUU, ŌŌŌ, the diphthongs were as follows: AI, AU, [E]I, EU, ĒU, OU, OI, ĒI, [U]I, ŌI, AU EI, EU ĒU, OI OU, [GG]G, GGG, GCG,<sup>111</sup> AI AU, [EI EU], ĒU, OI, OU, ŌU, GGG, [GGG], AUEIEU, OIOU, ĒU—three times for a male soul. The third configuration is spherical; the second configuration, since it goes around it, has two sounds.<sup>112</sup> The male soul's third configuration consists of the simple vowels: AAA, EEE, ĒĒĒ, III, OOO, UUU, ŌŌŌ, ŌŌŌ, ŌŌŌ. And this configuration is distinct [from] the first, but [they resemble] each other [and they] make some [easy sounds] of [this sort: AĒĒ]ŌŌ. And [29] from these are made the diphthongs.<sup>113</sup>

100. Voiced consonants (Z, X, PS, L, M, N, R, S).  
 101. Mute consonants (B, G, D, K, P, T, TH, PH, KH), thought to be deprived of soul. 102. The affricatives Z, X, PS. 103. The liquids L, M, N, R. 104. PH, TH, KH. 105. K, P, T. 106. B, G, D. 107. Perhaps in the sense of weaker consonants. 108. The text reads *p-ouōse*, "the (or, with syncope, "their") will, intent," or perhaps *pou-ōse*, "their utterance, pronunciation." 109. On these configurations of the soul, see the introduction, and for more detail, the introduction in Funk, Poirier, and Turner, eds., *Marsanès*, 57-76. 110. The configurations of the cosmic and individual soul are represented as five concentric spheres, moving from the stability of the outermost to the instability of the innermost. 111. Perhaps the gammas are

the numeral three; thus 28,9 ([3-3]3 3-3-3 3-3-3), followed by 28,10-11 (3-3-3 [3-3-3]). The significance of the gammas is unclear; they may have some numerical significance, e.g., (3 x 3) + (3 x 3) + (3 x 3) = 27 and (3 x 3) + (3 x 3) = 18, having to do with certain phonetic repetitions. Perhaps the numerical patterns underlying this series of diphthongs is an adaptation of Plato's famous lambda (*Timaeus* 35ab), which symbolized the demiurge's sectioning of the stuff of the world soul into seven portions (1 2 3 4 9 8 27), which was schematized into two classes of intervals, the "double" (1 2 4 8) and the "triple" (1 3 9 27). 112. A diphthong. 113. By appending I or U to a single vowel. Funk translates: "And through the diphthongs (are) likewise also given/produced the fourth and fifth."

### Vowel Combinations and the Fourth and Fifth Configurations of the Soul (29,2–30,2)

So also the fourth and the fifth: with regard to them, not everything was allowed to be revealed, but only those things that are obvious. You were taught about them, that you should contemplate them in order that they too<sup>114</sup> might seek and find [what] they all are—either through themselves alone or through one another—or seek to reveal [limits] set from the beginning—either with reference to themselves alone [or] with reference to one another. Just as [the letters] coexist with each other [in] speech, whether individually or by similarity,<sup>115</sup> [they are] prefixed or [they] are suffixed. Either their [part] is derivative and similar, whether through [the long] vowels,<sup>116</sup> or [through] those of [dual time value,<sup>117</sup> or] through [the short vowels],<sup>118</sup> which are short . . . . [30] or the oxytones or the intermediate tones or the barytones.<sup>119</sup>

### Consonant-Vowel Combinations: Syllables (30,3–32,5)

And sometimes consonants exist with the vowels, and by turns they are pre-pended and appended. They constitute a nomenclature [for] the angels. And sometimes the consonants are independent,<sup>120</sup> and diverse—<they><sup>121</sup> are prefixed and are suffixed to the hidden gods.<sup>122</sup> By means of beat and pitch and silence and attack [they] summon the semivowels, all of which are subjected<sup>123</sup> to a single [sound]. Just as it is only the [unchanging consonants<sup>124</sup>] <and> the double consonants<sup>125</sup> that exist among the semivowels,<sup>126</sup> the aspirates,<sup>127</sup> [the inaspirates],<sup>128</sup> and the [intermediates]<sup>129</sup> constitute [the voiceless consonants. Contrary to nature, the consonants and vowels] are combined [with one another, and] they are separate [31] from one another. They are pre-pended and appended, and they constitute an ignorant<sup>130</sup> nomenclature. And the resulting syllables become one or two or three or [four] or five or six up to seven having a [simple] sound. These that [have] two [sounds]<sup>131</sup> are grouped with [the seventeen consonants. Among] the previously named, [some] are deficient and they are as if [they] had no substance, or as if [they] were an image [of] substance, [or] as if they separate the good nature [from the evil one] in the [middle].

And you [will assemble] the patterns that resemble each other, the vowels [together with] the consonants. Some examples are: BAGAD[A]ZATHA, BEGED[E]ZETHE, [BĒGĒDĒ]ZĒTHE, [BIGIDIZ]ITHI, BOGO]ZOTHO,

114. "They" seems to refer to these soul configurations, but might refer to either people in general (Poirier) or even the letters (Funk). 115. Perhaps "whether individually or formally" (Funk), reflecting the Platonic distinction between universal forms and particular copies. 116. Eta and omega. 117. Alpha, iota, and upsilon. 118. Epsilon and omicron. 119. "Oxytones" (*netjasi*) should perhaps be "long vowels," and "barytones" (*netcajb*) should perhaps be "short vowels." It is unclear whether the reference is to

vowel quantity (so Poirier) or accentuation (acute, circumflex, grave). 120. Or perhaps "self-existent." 121. The text reads "it." 122. "Hidden gods" may here designate the graphically unrepresented elements of speech. 123. "Subjected" in the sense of "prefixed." 124. L, M, N, R, S. 125. Z, X, PS. 126. Z, X, PS, L, M, N, R, S. 127. TH, PH, KH. 128. K, P, T. 129. B, C, D. 130. Perhaps "meaningless nomenclature" (Funk). 131. Diphthongs.



[BUGUDUZUTHU], BÖGÖDÖ[THÖ, and] the rest. [And some are]: BA[BEBĒBIBOBUBÖ]. [32] But the rest are different: ABEBĒBI[B]OB, in order that you might [assemble] them and become separate from the angels. And certain effects will follow!

### Arithmology (32,5–33,9?)

A good point of departure<sup>132</sup> is from the Triad, and it [extends to that<sup>133</sup> which] has need of [the One that] confined [it in] a shape. <The> Dyad and the Monad do not resemble anything; rather they are principles. The Dyad [constitutes] a division [from the] Monad, [and it] belongs to the hypostasis. But the Tetrad received the [elements] and the Pentad received concord, and the [Hexad] was perfected by itself. The [Hebdomad] received beauty, [and the] Ogdoad [attuned its constituents to harmony, and the Ennead is honored much more]. [33] And the [Decad revealed] the entire place.<sup>134</sup> But the Hendecad and the [Dodecad] have passed over [into the boundless, and] it [is higher than] the Hebdomad [which is bounded].

### Syllables and Nouns (33,10?–35,20)

. . . . .<sup>135</sup> [nouns] . . . promise that [the articulation marks] begin [to separate] them by means of a sign and a point, the [uninflected<sup>136</sup> one] and the [inflected]<sup>137</sup> one. So also [are the images] of being; they derive [from a joining] of the letters<sup>138</sup> in [a holy union] [34] according to a [juxtaposition] where they exist independently. And <they> exist with each [other] by generation or [by kinship]. And] according to [their own generation] they do not have . . . these . . . . .<sup>139</sup> [they have] . . . one . . . speaking the riddle. Just as in the sense-perceptible world there exists the temple [which measures] seven hundred [cubits], and a river which . . . within an eternity, they . . . three . . . to the four . . . seals . . . clouds [35] [and the] waters, and the [forms of the] wax images, and some emerald images.<sup>140</sup>

For the rest, I will [teach you] about them. This is the generation of the names. That which<sup>141</sup> [was not] generated . . . [from the] beginning . . . . .<sup>142</sup> with regard to . . . stand . . . however, . . . [three] times, when [closed], when lengthened, when [short].<sup>143</sup>

132. On this section, see Pseudo-Iamblichus *Theology of Arithmetic*. The Greek terms Monad, Dyad, Triad, Tetrad, Pentad, Hexad, Hebdomad, Ogdoad, Ennead, Decad, Hendecad, and Dodecad signify the respective groups of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. 133. The Dyad, or Two, the first even and feminine number (which lacks determinate shape), needs completion by the androgynous Monad, or One, to contain it in the first odd or masculine number (which alone supplies determinate form or "shape"), the Triad, or Three. 134. The aeonic realm. 135. Lines

9–16 unrestorable. 136. Lit., the "upright" one. 137. The comma. 138. The text has *stokheia*, "letters" or "elements." 139. Lines 8–15 unrestorable. 140. Such images often had cultic, sometimes apotropaic applications; cf. wax images of Hecate in Chaldaean theurgy (Porphyry *On the Philosophy Extracted from Oracles*, ed. G. Wolff, 134–35) or of Hermes in the magical papyri (PGM IV, 2359–2361; Karl Preisendanz, ed., *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 1.146). 141. A feminine entity. 142. Lines 9–14 missing. 143. Probably closed, long, and short syllables.

## Words (35,21–39,17)

But there exists a quiet [discourse] and there exists another discourse [related to free] <association><sup>144</sup> [by speaking] of [that which is invisible], and it [manifests] the difference [between the Same] and the [Different]<sup>145</sup> and] [36] between the whole and a [part] of an [indivisible] substance. And [that] power has a share in [the joy]—in both discord and [unity—of the honor], whether . . . body . . . .<sup>146</sup> [it is] possible [to know that the things that] exist everywhere [are honored] always, [since they] dwell both with the corporeal and the incorporeal ones. This is the discourse on the hypostases that one should [know] in this way. If [they do] not [speak] with one another, [how then] does the discourse help [those who] are troubled [with the discourse about that which is] visible? [Therefore] if one [37] knows it, one will [speak] it.

But there are words, some of which are [dual, and others] that exist [separately, the ones that pertain] to [substance]<sup>147</sup> . . . . and they . . . or those which . . . [according to those that endure] or according to [those that] have time.<sup>148</sup> And [these] are either separated or joined with one another or with themselves, whether the diphthongs, or the simple [vowels], or every . . . or . . . or . . . [exist] just as . . . [exist] . . . the [consonants] . . . [38] they exist individually until they are divided and joined. Now some are able [to generate the consonants letter] by [letter] . . . difference . . . .<sup>149</sup> become . . . [substance] . . . [They<sup>150</sup> will count] once [or twice] and thrice [for the] vowels, and twice [for] the consonants, and once for the entire ensemble, and unpredictably for [those] subject to change<sup>151</sup> [as well as those that] originated [from them] and [everything] thereafter. And they are all [the names at once. They] were [39] hidden, but they were pronounced openly. They did not stop being revealed, nor did they stop naming the angels. The vowels [are joined with] the [consonants, whether] externally [or] internally, by means of . . . they said . . . [teach you] . . . again [in this way they were counted] four times, and they were [engendered] three times, and they became [twelfefold].

*Being Worthy of and Safeguarding the Revelation*

(39,18–45,20?)

For these reasons we have acquired sufficiency; for it is fitting that each one acquire power for himself that he may bear fruit, and that we never heap scorn [on] the mysteries . . . the . . . For . . . which [is] . . . soul . . . the signs of the zodiac . . . .<sup>152</sup> [40] a new hypostasis. And the reward that will be provided for such a one is salvation. But the opposite will happen there to the one who commits sin. Only [the one who commits] sin . . . will be [in a] . . . in a . . . of the [remainder . . . these. Ponder them], so that even before you examine what one might [convey] to another, [you may re-

144. Emending *ousia*, "substance," to <*sun*>*ousia*, "association," "intercourse." 145. Cf. the mixture (and circles) of the Same and the Different in the cosmic soul according to Plato *Timaeus* 35a–37c. 146. Lines 9–14 unrestorable. 147. Substantives, perhaps common nouns. Lines 8–12 unrestorable. 148. Refer-

ring either to temporary versus eternal entities or perhaps to vowels that have "dual time" (A, I, U). 149. Lines 9–11 unrestorable. 150. The letters. 151. I.e., those that undergo change in the process of conjugation and declension. 152. Last two lines missing.

ceive] exalted power and divine knowledge and an ability that cannot be resisted. But you shall examine who is worthy that he should reveal them, knowing that they [will . . . down] to the . . . who sin. Therefore . . . .<sup>153</sup> [42] that which is fitting. Do not desire to empower the sense-perceptible world by not attending to me, the one who has received the salvation that comes from the intelligible world.

But as for these <discourses>,<sup>154</sup> beware your [divulging] them to [any]one . . . . .<sup>155</sup> lest [he succeed in understanding them] and take [them away].<sup>156</sup> And as for the remainder], I [will speak to] them of the [completion of my discourse] lest the sinful person [divulge them to others]. They did not understand them, namely, the embodied souls upon the earth, as well as those outside of the body, who are in heaven, more numerous than the angels. The topic that we [discussed] in [every] discourse, these . . . stars . . . say . . . whether already . . . into the . . . those who . . . [42] whether he observes the two<sup>157</sup> or observes the seven planets or the twelve signs of the zodiac or the thirty-[six] decans<sup>158</sup> . . . . . [which] are [the twelve zones]<sup>159</sup> that total three hundred sixty] lots,<sup>160</sup> [to] the [loci]<sup>161</sup> in [association] with [these] numbers,<sup>162</sup> whether [those in heaven] or those upon the earth, and those that are under the [earth], according to the sympathies and the divisions<sup>163</sup> deriving from these and from the remaining [three hundred sixty] degrees [according to kind and] according to [species] . . . . .

### Further Discussion in Severely Damaged Text

(42,26-46,20; 46,25-55,16; 55,20-60,28; 61,6-28; 62,11-29;  
63,23-29; 64,6-15.22-29)<sup>164</sup>

### Marsanes' Concluding Vision Concerning the Destiny of Souls (45,21?-68,18)

#### The Vision of Marsanes (45,21?-58,1)

[46] . . . . .<sup>165</sup> the voice of . . . names and . . . [for] ever . . . [names] . . . . .

153. Last four lines unrestorable. 154. Or "<words>." 155. Lines 9-10 unrestorable. 156. The antecedent of "them" is unclear; if it is the "discourses," perhaps the sense is to realize their significance and to divulge them to other (unauthorized) persons. 157. Most likely "the two" would be the sun and the moon. 158. The division of the zodiac into thirty-six decans, or "houses," of 10 degrees each. Lines 8-10 unrestorable. 159. The twelve zodiacal zones, signs, or "portions" of 30 degrees each, the *dōdekatemoria*. 160. "Lots," the *monomoiriai*, or distribution of planets among the 360 degrees, or "portions" (*moirai*), of the zodiac. 161. The twelve (sometimes eight) portions of the ecliptic successively occupied by the signs of the zodiac. 162. Numbers of the degrees traversed. 163. The text has *merismoi*, "di-

visions," which may also signify "allotments"; perhaps this is an attempt to refer to a doctrine of cosmic sympathies and antipathies. 164. The remainder of p. 42 and pp. 43-45 apparently contained discussion of intelligible or ideal entities, possibly also the cosmic soul; the remainder of p. 46 may have mentioned the significance of baptismal naming; pp. 47-54 are entirely missing; p. 55 contains the end of a discourse apparently addressed to Marsanes, who becomes silent and requests further teaching ("Now when I became silent, [I said], 'Tell [me] . . . what is the . . .'", possibly about baptism ("washing"), which may have occupied pp. 56-58; pp. 59-60 are entirely missing; and the top of p. 61 contains the phrase "[the] kingdom of [the Triple-Powered One]"). 165. First nineteen and last five lines unrestorable.

[55] . . . . .<sup>166</sup> Now when I became silent, [I said], "Tell [me] . . . what is the [power] . . . will wash . . . entire generation . . . . ."

### Marsanes' Response (58,1-62,4?)

[61] . . . for your daughters . . . . . for just as . . . the kingdom of [the Triple-Powered One]. But this one . . . . .<sup>167</sup> Don't . . . [62] [speak] on the basis of what [you] don't [know. And] . . . , for it is . . . that you . . . the one whose . . . [you did not] know . . . .

### Marsanes' Apocalyptic Vision of the Fearsome Angels

(62,4?-64,17?)

And I [said] . . . . .<sup>168</sup> for the . . . . .<sup>169</sup> [63] . . . in . . . the remainder down [against the] earth. And they spoke like the angels. [And one] was like the wild [beasts]. And he said, . . . . . [for] ever . . . beast . . . . .<sup>170</sup> beast . . . . .<sup>171</sup> from . . . of my [soul] . . . I saw a . . . [standing] . . . and his [image] was [fearsome]. And [his face] was . . . . .<sup>172</sup> [64] I . . . because I [saw] all of [the lights] around [me blazing with] fire. [And I looked at myself] in their midst . . . . .<sup>173</sup> angels [attending] me.

### Gamaliel Comes to Marsanes' Aid (64,17?-65,5?)

And . . . the [one] . . . Gamaliel, [the one] who presides over [those spirits . . . . .]<sup>174</sup> [65] the great] angels [who are those] that receive [all of them] . . . with their . . . .

### Gamaliel's Revelation (65,5?-66,16?)

And he [guided me down], and he [bore] me . . . . .<sup>175</sup> [her] members . . . the [invisible . . . . .<sup>176</sup> judgment] . . . thrown . . . every . . . [who is placed . . . . .<sup>177</sup> ever-flowing fountain] of the living [water] . . . the two . . . silent . . . [gods] . . . . .<sup>178</sup> [66] cleanse it<sup>179</sup> from . . . . . the one whom they [sealed] has been adorned [with the] celestial [seal] . . . . .<sup>180</sup> to his . . . great . . . . .<sup>181</sup>

### Marsanes' Vision of the Judgment of Souls, and the Title

(66,17?-68,18)

And I [saw . . . . . unmixed] . . . those who . . . . .<sup>182</sup> [67] they will become . . . of God . . . a woman . . . while she is in [travail] . . . after she begot . . . . .<sup>183</sup> all of

166. First sixteen and last seven lines missing. 167. Last twenty-four lines unrestorable. 168. Last twenty-four lines unrestorable. 169. Lines 6-29 missing or unconstructable. 170. Six lines missing. 171. Lines 11-16 unrestorable. 172. Last seven lines missing. 173. Lines 6-15 unrestorable. 174. Last

eight lines missing. 175. Lines 8-11 unrestorable. 176. Two lines missing. 177. Line 20 unrestorable. 178. Last four lines missing. 179. "It" (feminine) may here refer to the soul. 180. Lines 6-10 missing. 181. Lines 13-16 missing. 182. Last eight lines missing. 183. Lines 6-11 unrestorable.

them . . . thing . . . humans . . . and . . . women [and men of this sort] . . . it is others [that are upon the] earth. [Know] that they . . . every . . . them, . . . on these, [together with the] home-[born], for these will [be able to know] God<sup>184</sup> . . . . . aeons [68] with those who will . . . who have . . . God . . . from the [beginning] . . . in the . . . awful . . . fear . . . . . names . . . . .<sup>185</sup> mysteries . . . in . . . God . . . . .<sup>186</sup> manifest . . . those who will know.

[M]arsanes

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184. 67,21-22 as restored by Funk; lines 23-25 un-restorable; last four are missing. 185. Lines 10-11 un-restorable. 186. Line 15 un-restorable.