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Iamblichus: on the cosmos, the human soul and theurgy

Tummers, N.S.

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This dissertation explores the teachings of the Neoplatonic philosopher Iamblichus (c. 245–325 CE). It investigates his views on the structure of the universe, the principles of causation, the concept of the human soul, and the necessity of ritual practices - commonly referred to as *theurgy*. The soul is an intermediary between the unified, transcendent cosmos and the fragmented, natural world. The soul can only ascend beyond the natural realm through (the practice of) theurgic rites and thereby becoming receptive to the divine intelligible orders - an experience of oneness that surpasses rational thought.

Although the cosmos is governed by divine powers, Iamblichus maintains that humanity is not unconditionally subjected to them. Our task is to aspire to an existence aligned with our true nature: as participants in the cosmic whole and as living beings entrusted with the care of the natural world.

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