The paper defends the view that the Proem of Parmenides' poem is a secular allegory. At the allegory's center is the unnamed goddess who in the body of the poem instructs the unnamed youth, through her use of a priori argumentation, about the nature of reality. The goddess provides the very symbol for a priori reason, and a central feature of Parmenides' expression of this symbolic value for the goddess is his confused presentation of her in the Proem. His presentation is intentionally vague, and it defies any definitive interpretation that clearly identifies the classification of the goddess and her circumstances within traditional or unconventional Greek religious belief. Instead, she recalls in an confusing fashion traditional revelatory goddesses, of whom the Muses and cult goddesses provide paradigm instances. Hence the youth's journey in the Proem to the unnamed goddess leads to no clearly identifiable circumstances, yet what it arrives at is still bound up within the medium of the standard epic style. Parmenides uses the old idea of the revelatory goddess in this unexpected way to try to show how it harbors something like the exercise of a priori reason. The reflection of the a priori does not reside merely in the similarity that the Muses bestow knowledge, which lies beyond the limited powers of human observation, about past, present, and future. The similarity is stronger and more significant when the Muses grant knowledge that lies beyond their own powers of observation in the form of insights into events they could not have possibly witnessed, such as the birth of the gods. Parmenides picks his unnamed goddess for his symbol for a priori reason because he takes himself to be demythologizing the philosophical truth reflected in a distorted fashion within the tradition of divine revelation. By placing a priori reason in the garb of the revelatory goddess who appears in a puzzling form, Parmenides indicates to his audience that this use of the power of reason has its antecedents in traditional practices that did not recognize this power for its true nature. There is a value in the tradition of divine revelation, which transcends the fictions of the poets in their story-telling, but revelatory deities must now step aside for the clear expression of the power of a priori reason. Hence the goddess abdicates her authority when she demands that the youth judge her words by his logos. Parmenides' verse conforms with his symbolic use of the goddess. It helps him mark his difference from his competitors among the new intellectuals, the so-called 'natural philosophers', who generally favor prose over verse. These intellectuals abandoned the Muses and their gift of verse, and they aspire to cosmologies that depend for their justification upon observation and inductive arguments that appeal to analogies and inferences to the best explanation. Verse as the medium of the Muses allows Parmenides to stress in a literary fashion how he adheres to a mode of thinking that does not rely upon the power of observation for the truth.