

# PLOTINUS' PSYCHOLOGY

His Doctrines of the Embodied Soul

by

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MARTINUS NIJHOFF / THE HAGUE

## PREFACE

This book is a revised version, with some omissions, of a Cambridge doctoral dissertation submitted in 1963: I fear that it still bears marks of its origins. The dissertation itself was the result of an earlier scheme to identify the sources of Plotinus' psychological doctrines. In the course of this work it soon became evident that it was not sufficiently clear what these doctrines were. Students of Plotinus have tended to concentrate on the higher regions of his world, and there is still no satisfactory treatment of his doctrines of the embodied soul. It is the purpose of this book to provide a fairly extensive survey of these doctrines. It does not claim to be exhaustive. Nor does it claim to add a large body of new knowledge, since over so wide a field many points have been touched on by others, if only in passing. But I hope that it may remove some misconceptions, and bring the details of Plotinus' theories into sharper focus.

It had been my intention to add an introduction – mainly for the benefit of non-specialist readers – on the psychology of Plotinus' predecessors. In the meantime the *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* has appeared, and the reader who wants information on this subject may conveniently be referred to the relevant parts of the late Professor Merlan's chapters on the predecessors of Plotinus. Merlan has collected most of the relevant material, and I agree with most of what he says about it. Though I would wish to take issue with some points he has made, it has seemed better not to do so here. To have written the introduction I originally proposed would merely have led to unnecessary duplication, and I have therefore plunged straight into Plotinus.

To make as much as possible of this book intelligible to a reader with little or no knowledge of Greek, I have given in the text translations of words and passages wherever it has not seemed unnecessary or un-

desirable to do so. Thus I have not translated words whose meaning appears from the context, and have restricted the use of translations where the point at issue is the meaning of a particular term or text, since I felt that to translate here would only obscure the discussion or anticipate its conclusion. As a result parts of chapter 4 and the first half of chapter 8 are left without translations: at least the conclusions of these sections should, however, be comprehensible. A few Greek words, which have no English equivalents and which will be familiar to those with some acquaintance with ancient philosophy, have generally been transliterated: *pneuma*, *logos* – in Plotinus often a formative principle representing higher reality – and *nous*, the latter in particular because neither of the usual renderings, intellect and spirit, is adequate. On the whole I have aimed at clarity and utility rather than consistency.

For *Enneads* IV–VI the translations of passages are my own: for I–III they are, unless indicated, taken from the Loeb Edition. I am grateful to Professor A. H. Armstrong and the publishers of the Loeb Classical Library, Messrs. Heinemann and the Harvard University Press, for permission to use this version. Chapter 9 of this book is a modified form of an article published in *Phronesis*: I am grateful to the editors of that journal for allowing me to re-use it here.

For financial support while the original dissertation was being prepared I have to thank my parents, the Classical Faculty and General Boards of the University of Cambridge, the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, the Haberdashers' Company, and the French Ministry of Education who made it possible for me to spend three valuable months in Paris.

My academic debts are numerous. First to Professor F. H. Sandbach, who taught me most of what may be good in my approach to ancient philosophy while I was an undergraduate, and often helped me thereafter. Then to my postgraduate supervisors, Miss A. N. M. Rich and Professor M. D. Knowles, my Ph.D. examiners, Professor A. H. Armstrong and Professor D. M. MacKinnon, and to those others who read all or part of this work at various stages and in various capacities, Professor E. R. Dodds, Professor J. M. Rist and Professor F. H. Sandbach. All made valuable suggestions, not all of which I have followed. I need hardly say that I am myself responsible for the shortcomings of this book. Professor P.-M. Schuhl and Professor P. Henry helped me in various ways during my stay in Paris. My greatest debt, however, is to Professor Armstrong, who has been a constant

source of aid and encouragement from an early stage of this work, and more particularly since it has been my privilege to work in his department at Liverpool. He has also helped me read the proofs. Dr. W. Barr kindly undertook to read a further set. His vigilance shows only in the absence of the errors he detected.

A large chunk of the manuscript was typed with great speed and competence by my sister. Finally I must thank my wife for her tolerance, moral support and practical help. Had she not for a long time done many of the things I should have done this book would never have been completed: to her it is dedicated.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND CITATIONS

- AJP*            *American Journal of Philology.*
- Arch. Gesch. Phil.*    *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie.*
- Bréhier        *Plotin. Les Ennéades.* Texte établi et traduit par E. Bréhier. 6 vols. in 7. Paris 1924-38.
- Cilento        *Plotino. Enneadi.* Prima versione integra e commentario critico di V. Cilento. 3 vols. in 4. Bari 1947-9.
- CQ*            *Classical Quarterly.*
- CSEL*        *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.*
- Entretiens V*    *Les Sources de Plotin. Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique* (Fondation Hardt) V.
- Harder and Theiler    Refer to the relevant portions of *Plotins Schriften. Übersetzt von R. Harder. Neubearbeitung mit griechischen Lesetext und Anmerkungen.* Hamburg I 1956, Vc (*Porphyrios. Plotins Leben*) 1958; fortgeführt von R. Beutler (trans.) und W. Theiler (text and notes) II-V 1960-7. The translation in all volumes is substantially Harder's. N.B. Where Harder and Theiler are distinguished, Harder refers to the first edition of his translation, Leipzig 1930-7.
- H-S            *Plotini Opera* ed. P. Henry et H.-R. Schwyzer. Paris/Brussels I (*Enn.* I-III) 1951, II (*Enn.* IV-V) 1959. Vol. II also contains *Enn.* VI.7.1-14. Also I<sup>2</sup> (*ed. minor*) Oxford 1964.
- HLGP*        *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* ed. A. H. Armstrong. Cambridge 1967.
- Mus. Helv.*    *Museum Helveticum.*
- RE*            *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.*
- REG*          *Revue des Études grecques.*

<i>Rh. Mus.</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum.</i>
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> ed. H. von Arnim. 4 vols. Leipzig 1903-24.
Theiler	see Harder.

The text of Plotinus used is that of Henry and Schwyzer, *ed. minor* for Enneads I-III, *ed. maior* for IV-V, and Bréhier for Ennead VI. Figures in square brackets give the chronological order of the treatises.

The ancient commentators on Aristotle are cited by page and line of the Berlin Academy edition, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* and *Supplementum Aristotelicum*.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

At first sight Plotinus' philosophy is full of contradictions. The same entity will appear with different characteristics in different treatises, or even within the same chapter. These characteristics will change as it rises or falls through the levels of reality,<sup>1</sup> and it is sometimes difficult to see exactly where a given being is really to be placed. This is illustrated by the problems about the identity of man to which Plotinus repeatedly refers.

Associated with such difficulties we find another conflict, this time between different judgements of value which Plotinus passes on one and the same being in a given situation. On the one hand all the constituents of his world are necessary and good. On the other any departure from the state of the One is undesirable, and is viewed as increasingly evil as we descend lower in the scale of being. Hence the contrast becomes most marked at the lowest level, that of pure matter. Sometimes this is viewed as mere negation, lack of form or quality, the residue which is left when all else has been abstracted, or, from another point of view, when the creative forces emanating from the One have reached the limit of their expansion and degradation. None the less we also find "matter" given as the answer to the question "what is evil?", and here matter appears to have the status of a positive principle, a real force, evil in itself and the cause of evil elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> Which view did

<sup>1</sup> It may be objected that this is inevitable in any monistic system, but the point is that such change is a permanent feature of Plotinus' world, and not merely a set of processes necessary to explain the genesis or composition of the physical world, or the replacement of one cosmic order by another, as in the pre-Socratic systems.

<sup>2</sup> This is not to suggest that Plotinus was a dualist. Quite apart from his well-known opposition to Gnosticism, he was probably original among Greek thinkers in giving an account of how matter comes to exist at all instead of simply assuming its presence as an independent principle. Like everything else in Plotinus' world, matter depends on the One.

recourse to arguments based on the assumption that he might not always take account of all his doctrine. One cannot often say that Plotinus is at a given point interested only in one particular question and so not troubling to take into consideration some relevant part of his philosophy. The whole system is present almost everywhere.<sup>9</sup> Even a cursory reading of the *Enneads* is enough to show this. There is no room for debates such as that on whether Plato in the *Theaetetus* was taking account of the Theory of Ideas. And there is little or no development in Plotinus' doctrines.<sup>10</sup> This is not to say that there are no shifts of emphasis or cases where Plotinus will restate more carefully views on a problem he has handled before.<sup>11</sup>

The question of the soul's descent provides us with a case where Plotinus feels the need to harmonise a discord arising from the two

<sup>9</sup> Cf. P. Henry, "The Place of Plotinus in the History of Thought", Introduction to *Plotinus. The Enneads* transl. by S. McKenna<sup>3</sup> revised by B. S. Page (London 1962) xliii.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. most recently Ferwerda, *op. cit.* (1965) 197f., and Armstrong, *HLGP* (1967) 218. The thesis that there was a development in Plotinus' doctrines has recently been revived in connection with his relations with the Gnostics. H.-Ch. Puech thinks Plotinus modified his views on matter after the break with the Gnostics indicated by the treatises III.8, V.8, V.5 and II.9 [30-33], "Plotin et les Gnostiques", *Entretiens* V (1960) 184. Puech's thesis is convincingly refuted by Rist in the article cited in n. 3. E. R. Dodds suggests that after the break Plotinus changed his ideas about the sinfulness of the soul's descent, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (Cambridge 1965) 24-6. In connection with the descent of the individual soul Dodds refers to three early treatises where Plotinus describes it in terms of *tolma* (audacity) and a wish for self-assertion (VI.9[9].5.29, V.1[10].1.4, V.2[11].2.5). Of these however one, VI.9.5.29, is, as Dodds mentions in the note giving the reference (*ibid.* 25 n. 4), about *Nous* separating itself from the One. Dodds argues that after Plotinus discussed the Gnostic view that the soul created the world out of *tolma* (II.9.11.21f.) he dropped this way of looking at the soul's descent. The passage in II.9 is not in fact about the individual soul but about the world soul and, as Armstrong points out, *HLGP* 243, the Gnostics' use of *tolma* has different associations from Plotinus'. Similar language may be found about *Nous* at III.8.8.32-4 - originally part of the same treatise as II.9 - and about the world soul in the late treatise III.7[45].11.15-17. *A fortiori* one might expect that Plotinus would still be prepared to speak in such terms of the individual soul. What Dodds regards as Plotinus' mature view, that the soul descends as a natural act, can already be found in IV.8[6].6.6-9. I cannot follow Rist's argument that the attribution of self-assertion to the soul in III.7 is not the same as that in V.1 because the contexts are different, *Plotinus. The Road to Reality* (Cambridge 1967) 257, n. 3 to ch. 9. Rist argues against Dodds in a review in *Phoenix* 20 (1966) 350f.: his objections however are partly based on the contention that Plotinus never "held the Gnostic view that *tolma* was the *motive* for creation", a suggestion difficult to reconcile with passages like V.1 unless the stress be put on "Gnostic" rather than "motive".

<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. Guittou, *Le Temps et L'Éternité chez Plotin et Saint Augustin*<sup>3</sup> (Paris 1959) 71 n. 1, and below 40f.

approaches to one problem (cf. esp. IV.8 *passim*). Here Plotinus can trace his difficulty back to Plato. At IV.8.1.27ff. he points out that Plato appears to be inconsistent, and adduces a selection of texts which seem to represent conflicting views. We are told that the soul is imprisoned in the body (*Phaedo* 62b, 67d),<sup>12</sup> that we live in a cave (*Rep.* 514a ff.) – a passage hardly to Plotinus' point,<sup>13</sup> but close enough to be pressed into service – and that we are here because we have shed our wings (*Phaedrus* 246c). Yet Plato also says that soul is given to the world and to individuals by the gods (*Tim.* 30b). Two problems present themselves. Firstly, if it is bad for the soul to be in body, why do the gods put it there? Secondly, if the soul is *sent* down to the sensible world, how is its descent a culpable act, and why should it be punished? The first question is no real difficulty for Plotinus: it is better for the soul not to be here, but all levels of existence must be, and in that sense its presence here is good. The difference depends on the point of view. The second is far more difficult. It is to this problem that the treatise *On the Descent of the Soul* (IV.8) is largely devoted. The answer given there is that the soul must descend, but that it is nevertheless responsible because it does so by its own dynamism: it comes down by reason of its power to organise subsequent being, starting from an impulse of its own free will (ῥοπή αὐτεξουσίᾳ, IV.8.5.26). The explanation is hardly satisfactory. Nor is the difficulty overcome by the notion put forward in the following chapter (ch. 6, lines 6–9), and elaborated in IV.3.13, that the descent is simply a natural process. In fact this question of the soul's responsibility for its descent and the related question whether or not one is responsible for one's actions here were a real problem for Plotinus, and one to which he does not seem to have found a convincing solution. The picture which he gives us in the late treatise III.2[47], 16–18, of the actors in a play, each given his part but making contributions of his own, is a fine piece of Platonic persuasion, but no real answer.<sup>14</sup> The players would not be able to make changes in the plot. And Plotinus himself confesses that, unlike real actors, the actor in his

<sup>12</sup> The history of this notion between Plato and Plotinus, and also later, has been traced by P. Courcelle, "L'Ame en Cage" in *Parusia. Festschrift J. Hirschberger* (Frankfurt 1965) 103–116.

<sup>13</sup> Or at least not directly, since it refers to the attitude of the individual to the sensible world, not to his soul's presence in the body. But in Plotinus' philosophy this presence is a certain attitude, at least from one point of view.

<sup>14</sup> The comparison of human life to a play goes back to *Laws* 817b–d. It was much used by the Cynics and Stoics. For some of the references see Theiler's notes on III.2.15.22 and Marcus Aurelius XII.36, *Marc Aurel. Wege zu sich selbst* (Zürich 1961) 347.



analogy could not even be responsible for the quality of his performance (ch. 17.28ff.).<sup>15</sup>

All these remarks are necessary, not only to set the question of the relation of body and soul in its context, but also to justify an arbitrary selection of material for consideration under the heading "Plotinus' psychology", a selection that might otherwise appear as wilful neglect of a large and relevant part of the evidence. As far as possible it is intended to look at man from the static point of view, as a being with a certain composition and certain functions in the sensible world, and to refer to higher reality and his relations with it – where soul in any case changes its character – only in so far as they are relevant to his activities and identity here.

But it is not possible to treat in isolation the picture of man as a part of the sensible world, occupying a fixed place in the structure of reality. No form of being, in Plotinus' philosophy, is cut off from that above it. So *Nous* remains connected with the One, Soul, as a hypostasis, with *Nous*, and the individual soul with all soul. Our soul does not descend completely (IV.8.8.2f., V.1.10.13–18, VI.2.22.31–3), but a part stays up in the intelligible world. This is the main cause of Plotinus' difficulties in answering the question "who are we?". Two consequences of the view that the intellect is always transcendent led to its abandonment by most later Neoplatonists. If the highest part of our soul remains above, we need to explain how it comes about that we do not always think (*νοεῖν*).<sup>16</sup> Proclus, who maintained that if the higher part of the soul always thought it would be an entity of a different kind from the rest of the soul, argued that if it thought intermittently there would be a single substance composed of what always thinks and what sometimes thinks (*ἐκ τοῦ ἀεὶ νοοῦντος καὶ τοῦ ποτὲ νοοῦντος*); this was impossible, so the soul must descend as a whole.<sup>17</sup> The difficulty about perpetual

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Ferwerda, *op. cit.* (n. 8) 182. On the question of free-will or determinism in Plotinus cf. G. H. Clark, "Plotinus' theory of empirical responsibility", *New Scholasticism* 17 (1943) 16–31, who argues that Plotinus' system is really deterministic in spite of all his protestations. Henry, "Le problème de la liberté chez Plotin, I", *Revue néo-scholastique de Philosophie* 33 (1931) 50–79 *passim*, shows how Plotinus believed at the same time both that man is free and that he is subject to necessity. See now too Rist, *Plotinus* 130–8.

<sup>16</sup> For Plotinus' explanation see below 88f.

<sup>17</sup> *Elements of Theology*, 211, see too 184 and in *Parm.* 948.18ff. Cousin<sup>2</sup>. His teacher Plutarch seems to have held the same view, for he thought that we have a simple *nous* which sometimes thinks and sometimes does not, cf. [Philoponus], in *de An.* 535.13–16. Iamblichus and Simplicius also believed in a unitary soul that has descended, cf. Simplicius, in *de An.* 6.12ff. Theodorus kept in us an

intellection involved another, and Iamblichus and Proclus also found it necessary to detach the soul completely from the higher world to explain its imperfection. If the highest part of the soul is perfect, as a constantly thinking *nous* would be, then the whole must be perfect and happy, which clearly it is not.<sup>18</sup>

For these reasons, and others that will appear in the course of this study, it will be necessary to look upwards from time to time, but it is intended to restrict this to glances up from the level of man on earth and not to consider his periodical absorption into the world above, or rather, as Plotinus so often insists, within.

element that always thinks, cf. Proclus, *in Tim.* III.333.29f. Diehl, as did Damascius, *de Principiis* II.254.3-7 Ruelle.

<sup>18</sup> For Iamblichus and Proclus, cf. Proclus, *in Tim.* III.334.3ff. The point is also mentioned by Proclus at *in Alc.* 227 and *El. Theol.* 211: see too the note on this proposition in Dodds, *Proclus. The Elements of Theology*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1963) 309.

## SOUL AND BODY

Much light is thrown on Plotinus' view of the relation between body and soul by what he says about the various functions of the compound they form. It might therefore seem right to consider these first and then proceed to use the evidence so produced to reconstruct a picture of the nature of the compound. But this nature is such that a prior understanding of it is probably essential to a satisfactory examination of the compound's activities.

Plotinus was a Platonist.<sup>1</sup> He followed Plato in dividing existence into a sensible and an intelligible world. To this intelligible world man has access through the operations of his soul whose nature is akin to the intelligible, where alone it can act to the limit of its capacity. It follows that its union with the body cannot be a real union, but only an association. This will be seen to be the keynote of all Plotinus' psychology; it runs through all Neoplatonic thought, and so finds its way into the Neoplatonic commentators' interpretations of Aristotle's *de Anima*.

Some of the principles involved are brought out in Plotinus' criticisms of his predecessors, so that it may be helpful to start by looking at these. But before doing so it should be noted that the very question "how is soul related to body?" is not as straightforward as it seems.

<sup>1</sup> This is obvious. It must not be taken to mean that Plato was a Neoplatonist. Attempts to read Plotinus into the dialogues, such as those of C. J. de Vogel, e.g. in her articles "On the Neoplatonic character of Platonism and the Platonic character of Neoplatonism", *Mind* n.s. 62 (1953) 43-64, and "A la recherche des étapes précises entre Platon et le néoplatonisme", *Mnemosyne* ser. 4.7 (1954) 111-22, are unsuccessful and misleading. For a criticism of such views in A. J. Festugière, *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon* (Paris 1936) cf. Bréhier, "Platonisme et néoplatonisme. A propos du livre récent du P. Festugière", *REG* 51 (1938) 489-98. The case for a neoplatonizing interpretation of some key passages in Plato has been restated by H. J. Krämer, *Der Ursprung der Geistmetaphysik. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Platonismus zwischen Plato und Plotin* (Amsterdam 1964) *passim*, esp. 193ff.

We have already found it necessary to define soul in a special way. Coming to body we find that it is already a complex entity (IV.7.1.8-10), as are even simple bodies in so far as they consist of both matter and form (ib. 16f., cf. V.9.3.16-20): only pure matter is completely devoid of any of the form which all sensible substances have (II.4.5.3f.). Such form comes from the lower powers of the world soul sometimes called φύσις (nature).<sup>2</sup> So when we ask how soul is in the body we must remember that that body already has soul in a certain way (cf. VI.4.15.8ff.). The soul we are now to discuss is only that operative in the *living* being, above the level of mere body.

"And, in general, matters pertaining to the soul are wondrously different both from what men have assumed as a result of not investigating them, and from the easily available notions which they acquire from sense-data and which delude them by virtue of similarities." (IV.6.3.71-4).<sup>3</sup> The philosophers are clearly included in this censure. In the early treatise *On the Immortality of the Soul* (IV.7[2]) Plotinus passes under review a variety of theories about the nature of the soul.<sup>4</sup> He begins with some general arguments against the view that the soul is any kind of body (IV.7.2).<sup>5</sup> He argues that soul necessarily has life, so that this would have to be true of the body that one might claim is soul. It is not true of the elements, which always have life as something extraneous. Similarly any elements other than the usual earth, water, air and fire that have been put forward as even more basic constituents of these four, are described as mere bodies. And if none of these substances have life on their own account it would be ridiculous to claim that their coming together produced it. Those who do make this claim say that it does not apply to just any kind of combination or mixture, so that there must in fact be something that controls the mixture and is its cause. This would be soul. There would be no body of any kind without the presence of soul in the world: if it is a *logos* added

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes it is more than just form that we receive from the world soul; see below 27ff.

<sup>3</sup> Καὶ ὅλως τὰ περὶ ψυχὴν πάντα θαυμαστὸν ἄλλον τρόπον ἔχειν, ἢ ὡς ὑπειλήφασιν ὑπὸ τοῦ μὴ ἐξετάζειν ἄνθρωποι, ἢ ὡς πρόχειροι αὐτοῖς ἐπιβολαὶ ἐξ αἰσθητῶν ἐγγίνονται δι' ὁμοιοτήτων ἀπατώσας.

<sup>4</sup> Much of the material in chapters 1-8<sup>5</sup> of this treatise is traditional. This does not, however, detract from the validity of the arguments for Plotinus. For a discussion of the tradition, in connection with a similar treatment in Nemesius, *de Natura Hominis* ch. 2, cf. H. Dörrie, *Porphyrrios' "Symmiktá Zetemata"* (Munich 1959) 111ff.

<sup>5</sup> Some similar arguments, against soul as a combination of elements, appear in a compressed form at II.9.5.16-21: they are there aimed at Gnostics.

to matter which makes it body, that *logos* could only come from soul.<sup>6</sup>

There follows an argument against the atomists (IV.7.3.1–6). If the soul is produced by the combination of atoms, the result will not be a unity and, unlike soul, its parts will not interact (οὐ γιγγομένου . . . συμπαθοῦς) since it will be made of components which can neither unite nor be affected. The argument about the need for something other than just matter is used again, now mainly against the Stoics (ib. 6–35), and other arguments are added. From these we see that Plotinus regards soul as what holds bodies together, and in fact as necessary if there is to be any material existence at all. Significantly he says that there must be something which is outside and beyond all corporeal existence (ἔξω ὅν καὶ ἐπέκεινα σωματικῆς φύσεως ἀπάσης) that bestows life on matter – the product of this is body – or on body (IV.7.3.15–18).

After some *ad hominem* arguments against the Stoics Plotinus makes the point that if soul is corporeal its actions will be restricted by a given set of qualities: if it is hot it will heat and if it is cold it will cool. Soul can do all sorts of different things and initiate all kinds of movement (IV.7.4.22–5.11). And if it were a body it would have to grow with the body it besouls, which would involve problems about the nature of the additional volume of “soul” (IV.7.5.11ff.). Such an addition could be dispensed with if one accepted the Stoic notion of total interpenetration (χωρᾶσις δι’ ὅλου), but Plotinus does not. He refutes it in detail in a short treatise devoted to this question (II.7) and rejects it as a mode of soul’s being in body in IV.7.<sup>82</sup> Memory and recognition depend on the permanence of the soul, but if it is subject to loss and replacement, as the rest of our body is, they will be impossible (IV.7.5.20–4). Afterwards Plotinus produces another argument to show that there can be no memory if soul is corporeal. All sensations would have to be thought of as impressions: if they are impressions on a fluid they will be lost, whereas if memory is to be thought of as the retention of impressions on a solid, either those already present will be obliterated by subsequent ones, or these latter would be repelled by the ones that were already there (IV.7.6.37ff.). Earlier in the chapter other arguments have been put forward to show that an incorporeal principle is necessary if there is to be sense-perception. When different types of sensation are involved in the perception of a single object it must be possible for various sensations to come to the same point, and this they cannot do if the soul is a body. In consequence something different will be perceiving

<sup>6</sup> *Logos* in Plotinus often means a formative principle provided by a higher entity.

different parts of the object, and we should have a situation where one part of the soul will perceive one part of the object and another another; or each part of the soul would perceive the whole and we should have an infinite number of perceptions of the same object (IV.7.6.3-37). Nor could there be any accurate perception at the centre of, say, a pain in a toe, since each part of a material soul would be different, and so have a sensation different from that of the adjacent part from which it had received its own. So the recipient of the sensation must be something that is everywhere the same, and this is a property of something other than body (IV.7.7). As for pure thought (νόησις), this is concerned with immaterial objects, so that what thinks must be immaterial too (IV.7.8.7ff.). If thought were cognition through the body it would be no different from sensation (ib. 1-5).

Plotinus concludes his refutation of crudely materialistic theories by attacking the notion that soul can arise from nature (φύσις), the life principle below soul (ψυχή) in the Stoic scheme (IV.7.8<sup>3</sup>). To attribute priority to the lower entities – they have ἔξις prior to φύσις, and *nous* comes last, a product of ψυχή, he complains<sup>7</sup> – would involve the possibility that the higher ones might not exist at all: if they existed potentially they would need something above to ensure their actualization.<sup>8</sup> He then passes to two epiphenomenalist views. The first, that the soul is a harmony of the constituents of the body, is dealt with mainly by referring to a series of apparently traditional arguments, several of which are taken from the *Phaedo* (IV.7.8<sup>4</sup>). The point that the soul is a substance (οὐσία) is now introduced for the first time (IV.7.8<sup>4</sup>.14). It had already been used against the harmony view of the soul by Aristotle in the *Eudemus* in an argument which ran: harmony has an opposite, disharmony, but the soul has no opposite, for it is a substance.<sup>9</sup> Plotinus' brief allusion, (εἴρηται) ὥς τὸ μὲν οὐσία, ἡ δ' ἄρμονία οὐκ οὐσία, is probably to some form of this argument.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> For the Stoics ἔξις – roughly “state” or “condition” – is the structural principle of inorganic matter, φύσις that of organic matter and ψυχή that of living beings.

<sup>8</sup> Since the text here remains doubtful the exact form of this argument is open to question, but the general meaning is clear enough.

<sup>9</sup> Fr. 45 Rose<sup>3</sup> = fr. 7 Ross; the section in question is from Olympiodorus, in *Phaed.* III.i.129 = 173.20-2 Norvin.

<sup>10</sup> It seems rash to say that Plotinus is “using the *Eudemus* and not the *Phaedo*”, as does W. Jaeger, *Aristotle. Fundamentals of the History of his Development* (trans. Robinson<sup>2</sup>, Oxford 1948) 44 n. 3, apparently approved by Bréhier, note *ad loc.* Quite apart from the possibility that these chapters are based on a handbook (see n. 4), Plotinus may have got this argument from a commentary by Alexander, if it is he who is referred to as having discussed the arguments

There follows a criticism of the Peripatetic view that the soul is the entelechy of the body (IV.7.85). This section illustrates well the thorough-going dualism of Plotinus' approach. His discussion is to a large extent based on the Platonic view of the soul as a separate entity, and he does not seem to make a serious attempt to see how far Aristotle's view of soul as the principle of life is valid. There are also indications that he did not really bother to understand the theory as it was put forward. If the received reading for lines 2-3 is correct, or nearly so, Plotinus says there, "They say that the soul in the compound has the position of form in relation to the matter which is the besouled body".<sup>11</sup> In saying that the body is besouled before it receives the soul, as it is, in a way, for him, he would already have begun by

against the ψυχὴ/ἁρμονία view in the "someone might reply" at Philoponus, *in de An.* 144.25f., as Rose, who inserts *ait Alexander* (*loc. cit.* 50.6f.) and Jaeger (*op. cit.* 45 and n. 3) think. (The passage is quoted by Rose<sup>3</sup> under fr. 45 of the *Eudemus* and by Ross under fr. 7). There is a close parallel to IV.7.84.11-13 in lines 22-5 of Themistius' report of these arguments, *in de An.* 24.22-30. This could show that Themistius was using Plotinus, or be further evidence for the circulation of a manual: the fact that Themistius goes out of his way to refute one of Plotinus' objections to Aristotle's view of the soul at ch. 85.10f. (see below and n. 13) is similarly ambivalent. If Plotinus knew that the argument was Aristotle's he may have been conscious of substituting his own meaning of οὐσία for what he would probably have thought was Aristotle's. Though Aristotle here used the word in a Platonic sense, Plotinus would not have realized this since no one in the ancient world suspected any development in Aristotle's thought. On the Platonic character of the *Eudemus* cf. Jaeger, *op. cit.* ch. 3 and F. Nuyens, *L'Évolution de la psychologie d'Aristote* (Louvain/the Hague/Paris 1948) 81-90.

<sup>11</sup> Τὴν ψυχὴν φασι ἐν τῷ συνθέτῳ εἶδους τάξιν ὡς πρὸς ὕλην τὸ σῶμα ἐμψυχον ἔχειν. All MSS except one (I: εὐψυχον) have ἐμψυχον. The Greek is as strange as the sense is unexpected. Editors from Kirchhoff to Bréhier have attempted to make it easier by inserting τό: the language would perhaps more easily be restored to normality by following a suggestion made to me by Professor Dodds and writing ἐμψυχον <ὄν>. Simply to delete ἐμψυχον, as does Harder, removes a serious difficulty, but perhaps also an insight into Plotinus' methods. In any case there seems to be no good reason for doing so. How is one to explain its insertion? Moreover its presence might possibly explain the obviously wrong reading ψυχικοῦ for φυσικοῦ in line 4, since φυσικοῦ could have been corrupted to ψυχικοῦ under the influence of the preceding ἐμψυχον by a simple scribal error. Henry's suggestion, *Les États du Texte de Plotin* (Paris/Brussels 1938) 120, that this mistake may have been due to a slip of the tongue on the part of a scribe "dictating to himself" is rather unsatisfactory, while his attempt to show that the error may be attributable to Plotinus himself (*ibid.*) - this attempt is rejected by Cilento *ad loc.*, but the suggestion reappears in H-S - seems to be going too far in exploiting Porphyry's remarks about Plotinus' mistakes in pronunciation, *Vita Plot.* 13. Since the description of the subject's speech and writing was a commonplace in biographical writing, as Harder points out in a note on this passage in Porphyry, comparing Suetonius, *Aug.* 86ff., Porphyry may be exaggerating anyhow.

translating into terms of his own theories.<sup>12</sup> His criticism that if a part of the body is cut off a part of the soul too would be cut off seems to miss the point: one could answer that this was true in so far as the soul would be incapable of performing certain functions that depend on the part missing. So the entelechy of a man who had lost his legs in an accident would be different from that of a normal man. Such an answer could also be made to Plotinus' contention that the withdrawal of the soul into the root of a plant that has withered shows that it is not in the whole as an inseparable entelechy, and that therefore the definition is not even applicable to the vegetative soul (cf. lines 25-32). To make it a reproach that the withdrawal of the soul in sleep cannot happen since an entelechy must be attached to that of which it is the entelechy assumes the truth of a Platonic view, while to amend this objection to the statement that there can be no such thing as sleep at all (cf. lines 9-11) <sup>13</sup> ignores the word "first" (which Plotinus does not mention) in Aristotle's definition of the soul. In the same way Plotinus moves the discussion to his own ground when he says that to regard the soul as an entelechy precludes metempsychosis,<sup>14</sup> whose occurrence shows that soul "does not derive its existence from being the form of something, but it is a substance which does not take its being from its location in a body, but exists even before it becomes the soul of a particular living being . . ." (lines 40-2).<sup>15</sup> It is being in the true sense (*ὄντως οὐσία*), and not becoming (*γένεσις*) as is all corporeal existence (lines 46-8).

Herewith Plotinus passes from criticism to the exposition of his own views, though little is said that has not already emerged. In looking at his polemic we have seen many of the features that characterise soul as Plotinus conceived it. It holds body together and makes the existence of material objects possible. It is able to initiate a variety of actions and movements, and the functioning of sensation, memory and thought depend on its immateriality. Finally it is substance. Plotinus now makes the additional points that it is related to the more divine form of being and to the eternal, that is to *Nous* (IV.7.10.1f.), and that the soul which shares as little as possible in the activities of the body shows that

<sup>12</sup> A method of criticism not altogether dissimilar to Aristotle's own. On that cf. H. Cherniss, *The Riddle of the Early Academy* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1945) 51. On Plotinus' methods see also 51ff. below.

<sup>13</sup> This objection is discussed at length by Themistius, in *de An.* 41.11ff.

<sup>14</sup> For Plotinus' belief in this cf. VI.7.6.21ff., III.2.4.8f.; see also 95 and n. 22 below.

<sup>15</sup> Οὐκ ἄρα τῷ εἶδος εἶναι τινος τὸ εἶναι ἔχει, ἀλλ' ἔστιν οὐσία οὐ παρὰ τὸ ἐν σώματι ἰδρῦσθαι τὸ εἶναι λαμβάνουσα, ἀλλ' οὕσα πρὶν καὶ τοῦδε γένεσθαι . . .



all evils are mere accretions, from which it can free itself to possess the virtues that are akin to it (ib. 7-13).

Apart from this last point there is little reference to the relation of the soul with the body in this treatise, whose aim is to establish the soul's immortality. For that its nature alone is relevant, and the enquiry into this remains in the forefront in the earliest treatises. The discussion of the passage on the ingredients of the soul in *Timaeus* 35a, which forms the substance of IV.2[4], gives some important indications on the position of soul in the system. In Plotinus' view four kinds of being (οὐσία) are involved, divisible (μεριστή), indivisible (ἀμέριστος), divisible in bodies (μεριστή ἐπὶ or ἐν σώμασι, also περὶ τὰ σώματα) and a fourth kind between the last two.<sup>16</sup> This fourth kind, which is soul, differs from the third in that it is not distributed in the same way as are the qualities that fall under that head. In their case there is no contact between the scattered manifestations, and sameness consists in an identity of accidents. In the case of soul it is the substance that is everywhere the same (IV.2.1.11-53, cf. VI.4.1.24-6). Thus soul is "one and many" (ἓν καὶ πολλά) while the qualities are "many and one" (πολλά καὶ ἓν) – as opposed to the bodies which are many and the highest kind of existence (i.e. of those in question, namely the indivisible, *Nous*) which is just one (IV.2.2.52-5). The important point is that soul is not to be viewed as properly divisible; in fact it is not divided before it gives itself to the body (IV.2.1.55-7). It is called divisible among bodies (μεριστή περὶ τὰ σώματα), says Plotinus, because it descends and is split up, and indivisible because it does not all descend (IV.1.9-13).<sup>17</sup> Its unity, unlike that of a body, does not consist in mere continuity, and it only appears divisible because it is in all parts of a given body (VI.4.4.27-32): it is indivisible because all of it is in each part (cf. IV.2.1.59ff.). The same can be said of soul's presence in each individual while it remains one and rules the world (cf. IV.2.2.39ff.). There is in fact a close parallel between the relation of soul to body in the individual and in the world (cf. IV.8.2 *init.*), though in the latter case the soul is less affected by the exigencies of its office (cf. IV.8.2.7ff. and 26-30). Our souls are of the same nature as the world soul (V.1.10.10-12). In fact

<sup>16</sup> It is important to note that there are four and not three. On this cf. H.-R. Schwyzer, "Zu Plotins Interpretation von Platon *Timaeus* 35A", *Rh. Mus.* n.F. 84 (1935) 360-8, esp. 363 ff.

<sup>17</sup> Soul is sometimes as here called περὶ τὰ σώματα μεριστή, usually when Plotinus is stressing that it is both divisible and undivided. The phrase is then a misapplied quotation from *Timaeus* 35a. As often Plotinus is inconsistent in his terminology but not in his doctrine.

they are essentially identical with it and with each other (cf. esp IV.9 *passim*). This at least is the theory, but we find that souls differ, and the world soul seems to stand apart. Their differences may, somewhat paradoxically, be a function of their involvement with body.<sup>18</sup>

It should by now be clear that soul is so different from body that considerable difficulties must be involved in giving an account of how they are together. Before looking at Plotinus' attempts to find a way to explain the conjunction, we should mention again that soul does not really come down to the body at all. What we are now to discuss is only an image, a reflection, of the real soul which remains at one with all other soul. Words indicating such a relationship between the soul in body and that above occur constantly.<sup>19</sup> They are also sometimes used of the lower faculties, as opposed to the higher, of those that work in the body (V.9.6.18f., VI.4.3.21f., II.1.5.6f., I.1.11 *passim*). In view of the similarity in the relations of the several orders of being with those above, it is not surprising to find the same terms used of the relation of *Nous* to the One (V.4.2.26), or of sensible objects to intelligible being (II.6.1.9). Closely parallel to the application to our soul is the description of the formal element in sensible objects generally as an image of what is (εἶδωλον ὄντος, V.9.5.17f.), and the use of "illumination" (ἐλλαμψις) to characterize the participation of matter in the Ideas (VI.5.8.6). From these other uses of the terms in question it can, however, be seen that the soul operating in our body is not something unreal, when taken in itself; it is its subordination to what is above that is being stressed.

<sup>18</sup> Plotinus' views on the extent of their identity may have varied according to whether or not he believed in Ideas of individuals at any given time. On this question see ch. 9 below, and, on the relation between souls, my paper "Soul, World-Soul and Individual Soul in Plotinus" in *Le Néoplatonisme* (Paris 1971).

<sup>19</sup> Εἶδωλον, ἰνδαλμα, ἐλλαμψις. "Ελλαμψις was also a Gnostic term, cf. Theiler *ad* VI.7.7.14. Theiler refers to II.9.11.1 and 12.30f. Plotinus' phraseology in the latter passage led A. Orbe, 'Variaciones Gnósticas sobre las alas del Alma', *Gregorianum* 35 (1954) 53 n. 96, to see in it an indication that he derived the expression ἐλλαμψις ἡ εἰς τὸ σκότος from the Gnostics: he compares Hippolytus, *Refutatio* V.19.4, from a report on the Sethians, and X.11.3 (presumably his V.17.4 and 11.3 are misprints). The simple term ἐλλαμψις in contexts like Plotinus' could come from the same source. The noun is not certainly attested in an earlier writer, the verb ἐλλάμπω only in different contexts, though a possible point of departure may be seen in expressions like Philo's ἕως μὲν ἐλλάμπουσι τῇ ψυχῇ καθαρεῖ φρονήσεως ἀγαθὰ . . . . (*Quod deus sit immut.* 3=56.9 Cohn-Wendland) or Plutarch's αἱ δὲ τῶν δαιμονίων (sc. νοήσεις) φέγγος ἐχούσαι τοῖς δαιμονίοις ἐλλάμπουσιν (*De Gen. Soc.* 589b).

It is not till Plotinus makes a concentrated attack on the questions involved in the operation of soul in the sensible world (IV.3-5[27-9]) that he considers in detail the actual mode of soul's presence in body.<sup>20</sup> The question is posed at IV.3.9.1. As in dealing with the descent of soul, Plotinus begins by looking at the problem on a cosmic scale. Here we see that soul and body are co-extensive, though if we are to think of one as being in the other it is rather body that is in soul. Body is compared to a net in the sea, which is already extended before the net is immersed in it. But the soul is such as to have no size, so that it contains all body and is always the same at any point where it does so. If body did not exist soul would have nothing to do with extension at all (IV.3.9.36-45). Earlier Plotinus has pointed out that soul does not belong to body but is only present to it, ruling body without being subject to it in turn (IV.3.9.29-34).

A detailed examination of the position in the case of the individual soul begins in IV.3.20. The problem, says Plotinus, is this: if we do not allocate a special place to each faculty the soul will no more be in us than outside the body, and it will be difficult to explain how those of its functions which it performs through the body's organs take place (IV.3.20.4ff.). But as we should expect he rejects any notion that the soul is in place, and then proceeds to attack a series of other ways in which it might be said to be in the body (IV.3.20.10-21.21).<sup>21</sup>

Place contains something, and what it contains is body. Moreover in place every part of a thing is just where it is, so that there is no question of a whole being in any one part, as must be the case with soul which is in any case the thing that contains rather than a content. It cannot be in body as in a vessel: if it were it would be concentrated on

<sup>20</sup> Dörrie believes that IV.3-5, in fact a single treatise, is the product of Porphyry's three day interrogation of Plotinus on πῶς ἡ ψυχὴ σὺνέσσι τῷ σώματι referred to in *Vita Plot.* 13, *Porphyrios' "Symmiktá Zetemata"* 18 n. 1. This assumption should be treated with caution. There seems no reason to suppose that this question – the Greek could in any case indicate a variety of questions – was not discussed at other times, or that Plotinus wrote on it immediately after any one discussion. And the product might at least equally well have been Porphyry's own ζήτημα on this question, whose title may have been just πῶς ἡ ψυχὴ σὺνέσσι τῷ σώματι; on this title cf. Dörrie, *ibid.* 17. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* III (Paris 1953) 66 and n. 4, thinks that the question was the descent of the soul, though he admits that it might have been the mode of union between body and soul.

<sup>21</sup> The whole discussion seems to be heavily dependent on Alexander, *de An.* 13.12-15.26. On this dependence and some other points of interest see my article "Plotinus *Ennead* IV.3.20-1 and its Sources: Alexander, Aristotle and others", *Arch. Gesch. Phil.* 50 (1968) 254-61.

itself, and only the contiguous parts of the vessel would be besouled. Anyhow place, strictly, is not a body but incorporeal. The objections to soul's presence in body as in a place cannot be overcome if we define place as an interval: here the definition may be in order, but, since an interval is a void, it is inapplicable to body.

So much for place. Plotinus then turns to other ways in which something can be said to be "in" something else. Soul cannot be in the body as in a substrate. If it were, that would mean that it would be a state of body, and so could not be separated from it, while soul is separable. It cannot be in it as part in a whole, since it is not a part of the body; nor, on the other hand, could it be in it in the sense that a whole is in, that is consists in, its parts, for it would be ludicrous to regard the body as the parts that make up the soul. A more serious suggestion, that the soul is in the body as its form, has already been refuted in the attack on the entelechy theory in IV.7.85. Plotinus now adds the objection that on this assumption matter would be prior to the form in it. This is hardly a very weighty objection, since the reproach could with equal justice be made against Plotinus' own view to which, however, the accompanying objection, that the form in matter is not detachable, is of course quite inapplicable. A more important criticism, from Plotinus' point of view, is that – as he thinks – the soul produces the form in matter but is other than this form. The criticism is based on Plotinus' view of causation. For him the cause is always other than the effect: τὸ αἴτιον οὐ τὸ αὐτὸν τῷ αἰτιατῷ (VI.9.6.54f.). This is illustrated right through the system. The One produces *Nous*, *Nous* Soul, and so on. But if those who say soul is in body as form in matter, Plotinus proceeds, mean not the form which has come into being (τὸ γενόμενον εἶδος) but the separate form (τὸ χωριζόμενον), which he would regard as correct, the question as to *how* it is in the body is still unanswered.

At this point Plotinus feels it necessary to explain why everyone does say that the soul is in the body (IV.3.20.41–6). Perhaps this is evidence that he was temporarily defeated by the difficulties arising from his dualistic view, but this is of course pure speculation. At any rate he does not abandon the search, and goes on to examine the suggestion that the position of the soul in the body is analogous to that of the helmsman in a ship. This he approves in so far as it takes into account the separability of the soul, but points out that as a seaman the steersman is on the ship incidentally, and asks how he is there in his special capacity. He concludes that the parallel is inadequate because the steersman is not in the whole of the ship. One might, he continues,

try to find a parallel by thinking of a craft being in its tools. One could then take the tiller as an example of this, and considering it as though it were ensouled, one could think of the steersman's craft moving it from within. But there is a difference in that the craft is really external. In any case, even if we accept the analogy and say that soul is in body as in a tool produced by nature, we still do not know how. So we must look further.

"Should one then say that when soul is present to body it is present as fire is present to air? For it too when it is present is not present, and when it is present all through a thing is mingled with none of it: it remains unmoved while the other flows by." (IV.3.22.1-4).<sup>22</sup> This is the next proposal. Its most striking feature is the repetition of the verb "to be present", six times in three lines. It had already been used in formulating the problem at the beginning of ch. 21: "If someone were to ask, 'how is it present?', without himself making any suggestion, what shall we say?"<sup>23</sup> It now becomes the most significant characteristic of Plotinus' discussion, showing as it does that he regards as misleading terms like coming into (ἐγγίγνεσθαι), and the use of "in" in general. At this stage he is thinking of fire as a source of light, not heat.<sup>24</sup> Here at last many of the requirements are met. Between light and air there is complete coalescence, and yet no real combination. Plotinus points out that when the light's recipient leaves it, it does so without retaining any trace of the light, whereas when it is within range of the light it is illumined by it. So one might correctly say that the air is in the light rather than *vice-versa* (IV.3.22.4-7). This last point makes the analogy particularly suitable for the body-soul relation as Plotinus conceived it. He had again, at the end of ch. 21, pointed out that it is really the body which is in soul, and he now says that the analogy shows why Plato is right to say that the world is really in its soul, and that while all body is in soul not all soul contains body.<sup>25</sup> He interprets this remark as referring to the powers or faculties (δυνάμεις)

<sup>22</sup> 'Αρ' οὖν οὕτω φατέον, όταν ψυχὴ σώματι παρῇ, παρεῖναι αὐτὴν ὡς τὸ πῦρ πάρεστι τῷ ἀέρι; καὶ γὰρ αὐ καὶ τοῦτο παρὸν οὐ πάρεστι καὶ δι' ὅλου παρὸν οὐδενὶ μίγνυται καὶ ἔστηκε μὲν αὐτό, τὸ δὲ παραρρεῖ.

<sup>23</sup> Πῶς πάρεστιν, εἰ τις ἐρωτῶν μὴδὲν αὐτὸς λέγων ὅπως, τί ἐροῦμεν;

<sup>24</sup> There does not seem to be sufficient reason for Kieffer's emendation (adopted by Harder, followed by Cilento and Theiler) of πῦρ to φῶς in line 2, though the use of φῶς in the rest of the passage and the substitution of heat for air later in the treatise (see below) make it attractive.

<sup>25</sup> Plotinus attributes all this to Plato, but it seems to be his own expansion of what Plato does say in *Timaeus* 34b and 36e, namely just that the *Demiourgos* enclosed the world in soul.

of soul that the body does not need, and applies it to the individual soul (ib. 7-12).

The powers which body does need are not actually established in the various parts of the body or even in the whole. Rather any power that is needed comes forward and puts itself at the disposal of the relevant parts of the organism for some particular activity. So one can speak of the power of sight being present in the eyes, that of taste in the tongue or that of touch in the whole body (cf. IV.3.22.12ff.).<sup>26</sup>

Though Plotinus seems to have found the answer to the problem of the soul's presence in the body, he does in fact amend it later in the treatise, possibly as a result of deficiencies observed in its application. In discussing the psychic principle of plants and animals (IV.4.14.2-10) Plotinus proposes as an alternative to the light:air analogy the suggestion that body is rather in the position of air that has been heated. In the case of light nothing is left when it goes, but here another kind of heat, an affection of what has been heated, stays behind when the source of the heat has been removed. Further on (cf. 29.1ff.) we find that he rejects the light:air picture in favour of the heat:air comparison.<sup>27</sup> The heat:air parallel is clearly more satisfactory since it shows that the soul does have a real effect on the body, and at the same time that the effect is different from the cause. But it still maintains the complete independence of the soul. In examining the activities of the compound of body and soul we shall see tendencies to the infringement of this strict autonomy.

<sup>26</sup> On how far the different powers are to be thought of as linked with certain parts of the body see below 33f., 38, and 75.

<sup>27</sup> He may already have brought forward the heat analogy as an improvement in ch. 14. This depends on the punctuation. I follow that of H-S which leaves the matter open. Otherwise Harder, Cilento and Theiler. Light makes a brief reappearance at I.1[53].4.14 where it is adequate for Plotinus' point that the soul pervades the body without being affected.

## THE FACULTIES (i)

The product of body and soul is called the living being (τὸ ζῶον), sometimes the compound (τὸ κοινόν, τὸ σύνθετον or τὸ συναμφότερον).<sup>1</sup> As one might expect from Plotinus' description of the union of body and soul it is not an entity in which the two are transformed,<sup>2</sup> but rather a partnership, albeit of unequals: "The living being is not some other thing resulting from the change or mixture of both in such a way that the soul is only potentially in the body (IV.3.26.20-2).<sup>3</sup> This compound is the subject of all those activities which involve both body and soul. It is the subject of the affections (πάθη: I.8.15.15ff.) and of perception (IV.3.26.1-8, cf. I.1.7.5f.). The vices and the lower virtues, that is those which arise from training and not from the activities of the intellect (I.1.10.11-14), are both conditions of the "living being". So too are the perplexities and wrong opinions which may be engendered by the affections (IV.4.17.20-28). In this partnership it is the soul, at least in theory, that is in command. The soul uses the body as an instrument, just as an artisan uses his tools, and receives and processes the stimuli which affect it (IV.3.26.2-8). But since the soul is here no more than a reflection of its higher phase, and the body is more or less heavily involved in all the activities in question, it is not unreasonable for Plotinus to regard the bodily element as the more characteristic.

<sup>1</sup> Since ζῶον also means "animal" it usefully indicates the combination of body and those faculties of soul which are not specifically human, i.e. those below the reason. All four terms are equivalent: ζῶον = συναμφότερον and κοινόν, IV.3.26.1-3; ζῶον = σύνθετον VI.8.2.13. There is however, some fluctuation in the amount of soul included, see below ch. 5, 61f. and n. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Though I.1.7.3-5, ποιούσης (sc. τῆς ψυχῆς) ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ τοιούτου καί τινος ὅλον φωτὸς τοῦ παρ' αὐτὴν δοθέντος τὴν τοῦ ζῶου φύσιν ἕτερόν τι, might at first sight give the contrary impression, the ζῶου φύσιν ἕτερόν τι refers to a φύσις *other than soul*.

<sup>3</sup> οὐ γὰρ δὴ μεταβαλόντων ἀμφοτέρων ἕτερόν τι ἔσται τὸ ζῶον οὐδ' αὖ κραθέντων, ὧς δυνάμει τὴν ψυχὴν ἐν τῷ ζῳῳ εἶναι.

Hence the exhortation to separate ourselves from accretions and not "be the composite thing, the ensouled body in which the nature of body (which has some trace of soul) has the greater power, so that the common life belongs more to the body; for everything that pertains to this common life is bodily." (II.3.9.20-4).<sup>4</sup>

In fact the soul that is in the body is by that very fact not fully free from the influences of its environment, though a soul that resists these has more effect on its body than it undergoes. The better the soul the more this is so (cf. III.1.8.10-20). But of this more later.<sup>5</sup> Certain difficulties in reconciling the principle that the soul remains unaffected with the need to explain the functions of the living being will appear when we consider these functions.

The soul that performs them is taken as being divided into certain parts or powers. How Plotinus conceived this division is not immediately clear, since we find both Platonic and Peripatetic doctrines, apparently left in more or less haphazard juxtaposition. Thus we sometimes have Plato's division into a desiring, a spirited and a rational part (ἐπιθυμητικόν, θυμοειδές and λογιστικόν) and at other times a division into faculties of the Aristotelian type. The latter is more appropriate to Plotinus' whole view of the soul, since it fits better with his insistence on its indivisibility and with the idea, already mentioned above,<sup>6</sup> that certain powers are actualized for specific purposes from a central reserve of what one might call undifferentiated soul.

On closer inspection it seems that the tripartite division is used only where the point is something other than an analysis of the operations of the soul, particularly in ethical contexts where it is used as the framework for the classification of virtues or vices.<sup>7</sup> So at I.2.1.16-20 the so-called civic virtues are apportioned to the parts of the soul: "... wisdom which is connected with the rational part, courage with the

<sup>4</sup> τὸ σύνθετον εἶναι σῶμα ἐψυχωμένον ἐν ᾧ κρατεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ σώματος φύσις ψυχῆς τι ἔχνος λαβοῦσα, ὡς τὴν ζῶην τὴν κοινὴν μᾶλλον τοῦ σώματος εἶναι· πάντα γὰρ σωματικά, ὅσα ταύτης.

<sup>5</sup> See below 56f. and 65f.

<sup>6</sup> See above 19.

<sup>7</sup> Kristeller, *Begriff der Seele* 33 n. 1, says Plotinus did not use the Platonic tripartition for purposes of systematization, but gives no discussion on this point. He prefers another tripartition, into λογιστικόν, αἰσθητικόν, φυτικόν. Such a division seems relevant only as a rough classification of faculties, and to regard the soul above the αἰσθητικόν as one is misleading. H. von Kleist, "Zu Plotinos Enn. III.4", *Hermes* 21 (1886) 481, whom Kristeller cites for this division, does no more than state a division of man which is in fact different, viz. νοῦς, λογικόν, αἰσθητικόν, φυτικόν.



spirited, temperance which lies in a certain agreement and concord of the desiring part with the reason, and justice which consists in each of these performing its own task." (*uy trans*).<sup>8</sup> Similarly in III.6.2, in discussing the view that virtue is a harmony and vice a lack of harmony (*Phaedo* 93e), which would accord with his thesis that the soul is impassive, Plotinus says that there must first be good or evil in the several parts of the soul. This is caused by the presence of virtues or vices, certain of which are characteristic of the various parts of the soul. So folly (*ἄνοια*) is the vice of the rational part, and it is asked whether the false opinions that cause this vice do not bring about a change in that part of the soul, if the spirited part is not different when it shows cowardice or bravery, and if the same is not true of the desiring part<sup>9</sup> in temperance (*σωφροσύνη*) or its opposite, *ἀκολασία* (lines 18–29).<sup>10</sup> Whether Plotinus thought the tripartition more appropriate, at least for the purposes of exposition, than the division into faculties for the discussion of ethical questions,<sup>11</sup> for which after all Plato invented it in the *Republic* (436a ff.), or whether he merely used it in deference to his master where it was not inconvenient to do so, we cannot definitely say, but the latter seems quite possible. Plotinus may have been the more inclined to use the tripartition in such contexts since it was so used in the school tradition. Albinus writes, "The perfection of the rational part is wisdom, of the spirited part courage and of the desiring part temperance."<sup>12</sup> The similarity of this and other remarks in *Didaskalikos* XXIX with the sentence from I.2.1 just quoted suggests at least the possibility that this allocation of the virtues had become no more than a commonplace. This is not the place to discuss whether Plato himself always or ever believed that the soul was really tri-

<sup>8</sup> φρόνησιν μὲν περὶ τὸ λογιζόμενον, ἀνδρίαν δὲ περὶ τὸ θυμούμενον, σωφροσύνην δὲ ἐν ὁμολογίᾳ τινὶ καὶ συμφωνίᾳ ἐπιθυμητικοῦ πρὸς λογισμὸν, δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκάστου τούτων ὁμοῦ οἰκιοπραγίαν.

<sup>9</sup> Here τὸ ἐπιθυμοῦν: the terms ἐπιθυμοῦν and ἐπιθυμητικόν seem to be interchangeable in both types of division; see below n. 18.

<sup>10</sup> θυμοειδές and ἐπιθυμητικόν recur later in the same chapter, and also at III.6.4.4, but there only in a reference back to the discussion in ch. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. F. Solmsen's remarks on Aristotle's use of the Platonic terms in the *Ethics* and *Politics*, "Antecedents of Aristotle's psychology and scale of beings", *AJP* 76 (1955) 149f. For his use of a looser analysis of the soul in ethical contexts see also D. A. Rees, "Theories of the soul in the early Aristotle", in *Aristotle and Plato in the mid-fourth century* (Gothenburg 1960) 195ff.

<sup>12</sup> τοῦ μὲν δὴ λογιστικοῦ μέρους τελείτης ἐστὶν ἡ φρόνησις, τοῦ δὲ θυμικοῦ ἡ ἀνδρία, τοῦ δὲ ἐπιθυμητικοῦ ἡ σωφροσύνη. *Did.* XXIX = 182.21–3 Hermann; cf. too the preceding lines.

partite,<sup>13</sup> but if Plotinus thought that he did not, this in itself might explain his use of the terminology. If Plato could use it when it was helpful without holding that the soul really had three parts, why should not he, Plotinus, do so too? In that case his criticisms in IV.4.28 (see below) would presumably be directed against fundamentalist Platonists like Atticus.

There is another occurrence of the tripartition at VI.1.12.6. Here it is only one of several suggestions which are mentioned as a possible basis on which to classify qualities but are not taken up. The point of all these suggestions is merely to indicate, by their apparent unsuitability, the difficulties involved in the Aristotelian categories. In such a context the use of the tripartite division has no great significance. A passage that might, however, be taken to show that Plotinus did himself believe in a tripartite soul is to be found in IV.7.14, where he talks of the embodied soul being tripartite (τριμερής), as opposed to soul in its true nature which is without parts. The exact wording of the passage may be obscured by corruption, but the contrast between the two modes of existence of the soul is clearly the point.<sup>14</sup> The discussion here is not concerned with the operations of soul but rather with establishing its real nature when discarnate in order to prove its immortality. So one must at least allow the possibility that "tripartite" is used because it is as good a label as any, for the present purpose, for the lack of simplicity which results from the accretion of extra, lower, powers when the soul is in the body. We do find the division by faculties earlier in the same treatise (IV.7.8<sup>5</sup>), but its presence there cannot safely be used for any deductions about Plotinus' views since it could be argued that in the chapter in question he is merely using it to attack Aristotle's entelechy theory on its own ground.

But in a further instance where two of the tripartition terms appear (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν and τὸ θυμοειδές but not τὸ λογιστικόν: IV.4.28.2 – just τὸ θυμοειδές – and 64f.) Plotinus is engaged in a scientific consideration of how anger<sup>15</sup> and the desires work, and it becomes clear that he

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of this question cf. W. K. C. Guthrie, "Plato's views on the nature of the soul", in *Recherches sur la tradition platonicienne* (Vandoeuvres-Geneva 1958) 3-19.

<sup>14</sup> Harder suggests that in line 9 we may simply understand the φήσουσι which some editors wish to restore with the alternative MS reading λυθήσεσθαι. This is perhaps all that is needed to make sense of the passage. But if H-S are right in suspecting that several words may be missing, these seem likely to have given the step in the argument which the reader must otherwise supply, viz. that the soul is really simple but becomes multiple on incarnation.

<sup>15</sup> "Anger" is one of the meanings of the word which forms the first part of the

regarded the division into faculties as the only correct one. For here, in discussing anger (IV.4.28), he criticises the division of the irrational part of the soul into a desiring and a spirited part and shows that it is unsatisfactory, and that it is the vegetative soul that is at least the executant of both emotions; he has already pointed out that it is the executant of the desires earlier in the discussion (IV.4.20.2off.). However anger arises, it is the vegetative soul that makes the body aware of it and produces the appropriate physical manifestations. An indication that anger is based on the same trace of soul as desire is provided by the fact that those who are less eager for bodily pleasures, and generally pay least attention to their bodies, are also less intensely moved to anger (IV.4.28.47–58). A division of the irrational part of the soul into a desiring and a spirited part in such a way that the desiring part is equivalent to the vegetative soul or faculty while the spirited part is a trace of it present to the blood, the bile or the compound, is not a correct division, since on this basis the one is made prior to the other – and so one could no longer talk of the two as parts of the soul in the same way. In fact, says Plotinus, one might make a division on the principle that both are products of one thing, but the division – that is, the one that should be made – is of impulses and their accompaniments,<sup>16</sup> and not of the entity from which they arise. This is not a form of appetite (ὀρεξις) – as anger and desire are – but what lends its force to the fulfilment of the requirement (cf. IV.4.28.63–72). This is the soul, or at least that part of the soul which deals with the objects of appetite, seen as a whole. The point is that it is wrong to infer from the different forms of its activity that there is a separate form of soul involved in each case. It is only such an inference that produces the belief that there is a spirited and a desiring part of the soul.<sup>17</sup>

compound that is translated “the spirited part” or “the passionate part”.

<sup>16</sup> I offer this translation of δρεκτικά rather than just “impulses”, as Bréhier and Cilento – Harder’s “Triebkräfte” is better but still insufficient – as Plotinus seems to be thinking of all the phenomena involved in anger and desire that he has just mentioned, as well as of the emotions themselves. If Plotinus meant no more than ὀρέξεις why did he use δρεκτικά? The use of such an adjective as an ordinary noun would in any case hardly be natural and I can find no examples of δρεκτικά with such a meaning. The most usual meaning of adjectives in -τικός is “pertaining to . . .”, cf. Buck and Petersen’s *Reverse Index* 637: so here the sense is “anything to do with (certain) ὀρέξεις”, cf. the use at *Nicomachean Ethics* 1139b4, where δρεκτικός νοῦς – i.e. νοῦς concerned with ὀρέξεις – is suggested as a definition of προαίρεσις. Aristotle’s technical term τὸ δρεκτικόν, the faculty “concerned with appetite” still shows the same meaning, but Plotinus’ δρεκτικά could not of course be a plural of this.

<sup>17</sup> In view of the considerations mentioned Schwyzer, *RE* XXI.i, 564, cannot

We see then that Plotinus rejected the tripartition as a basis for serious psychology. In fact it does not seem to appear at all after IV.3-5[27-29] except in the list in the treatise on the categories already mentioned. Since however some of its characteristic vocabulary does, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the occurrence of the terms ἐπιθυμητικόν, θυμοειδές and λογιστικόν does not necessarily indicate that Plotinus is using the tripartition. All three may refer to faculties, though only ἐπιθυμητικόν is commonly so used.<sup>18</sup>

Plotinus nowhere gives a complete analysis of the soul's faculties. This is perhaps not surprising in view of his insistence on the essential indivisibility of soul and his view that this indivisible soul provides the requisite power for any particular activity. Plotinus' word for faculties, when he uses something other than terms such as τὸ αἰσθητικόν, is δυνάμεις, which conveys better than any English equivalent that we should not think of divisions of the soul permanently marked off for the performance of certain given functions or groups of functions, but rather of unitary souls, though admittedly of different types, whose nature is such as to enable them to act in a given range of ways. But in practice he does often talk as if there were divisions, and it would clearly be most difficult to explain and discuss psychic or psychosomatic functions without doing so. The same is true too of references to a sensitive or vegetative soul. Thus vegetative soul may mean either a type of soul whose range of functions is limited to those necessary for

be right in finding the tripartition in IV.4.28, nor does he seem justified in seeing it in IV.4.20ff.; τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν there is only the relevant part of the soul *qua* desiring.

<sup>18</sup> Τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν is used interchangeably with τὸ ἐπιθυμοῦν for the desiring faculty, and is to be found in conjunction with the names of other faculties, e.g. with θυμικόν and ὀρεκτικόν at I.1.5.22f. Θυμοειδές appears to be used in this way only at IV.3.28.3. But since τὸ αἰσθητικόν and τὸ φανταστικόν are mentioned in the course of the same discussion, in this and the next chapters, it seems clear that it is the power that is meant and not the Platonic part, although this might be suggested by the proximity of the term ἐπιθυμητικόν. There is in fact a slight awkwardness about τῷ θυμοειδεῖ in IV.3.28.2f., where we should expect a verbal expression parallel with αἰσθανόμεθα, μανθάνομεν, ἐπιθυμοῦμεν in lines 1f. This is presumably why Harder at Heintz' suggestion deleted the words καὶ τῶν ὀργιστῶν τῷ θυμοειδεῖ altogether. This can hardly be right since the idea is taken up below, lines 13ff., as Cilento points out in defending the reading: but the suspicion that all is not well is perhaps justified. If θυμοειδές here were wrong, its absence from texts other than those mentioned (it appears besides at IV.4.41.10 but is there virtually equivalent to θυμός) would probably be due to its definite association with the idea of a *part* of a tripartite soul, whereas ἐπιθυμητικόν fits perfectly well with the faculty terminology. Λογιστικόν is sometimes the equivalent of λογισμός or τὸ λογιζόμενον, see below 103ff.

the preservation of life, or those activities of a soul with a wider range that are directed to this end.

Any such descriptions of soul may be seen as demarcations of sections of a continuum: in this sense types of soul, or parts of them, can be said to differ. The soul is "like a long expanse of life extended lengthwise, with each of its parts different from the next, but continuous with itself, always other by difference in such a way that the prior part is not lost in the second." (V.2.2.26-9).<sup>19</sup> There is of course no question of any real extension. It is the need to explain the manifold activities of soul while conforming to the principles outlined that leads to a certain overlapping of the divisions and thus to some lack of clarity.

This difficulty tends to be aggravated by the absence of any fixed terminology. We have already seen that the same terms are used in different ways in connection with anger and desire. Now we find the lower soul called by two different names, τὸ φυτικόν (vegetative) and τὸ θρεπτικόν (nutritive), both within a few lines (IV.9.3.21 and 23) where each is opposed to sensation and so clearly refers to the whole group of functions of the lowest soul,<sup>20</sup> while elsewhere θρεπτικόν is used in a narrower sense to denote one of the faculties of this lowest soul, or, if we prefer, sub-faculties of the lowest faculty. It is then given as what should be seen as one of several descriptions applicable to this part of the soul. Others are αὐξητικόν (promoting growth) and γεννητικόν (reproductive), and their cognates. We may refer to III.6.4.32f. and IV.3.23.35f. In the second of these passages Plotinus talks of the vegetative and growth-promoting and nutritive faculty: τὸ φυτικόν καὶ αὐξητικόν καὶ θρεπτικόν. This, although φυτικόν is not usually used in this way,<sup>21</sup> probably best represents the true situation, namely that there is no essential difference, but that either "vegetative" or "nutritive" is used on occasion to represent the whole range of functions for which this area of the soul is responsible. Θρεπτικόν might naturally be

<sup>19</sup> οἷον ζωὴ μακρὰ εἰς μῆκος ἐκταθεῖσα, ἕτερον ἕκαστον τῶν μορίων τῶν ἐφεξῆς, συνεχὲς δὲ πᾶν αὐτῷ, ἄλλο δὲ καὶ ἄλλο τῇ διαφορᾷ, οὐκ ἀπολλύμενον ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ τὸ πρότερον. These words are interesting. They contrast with Aristotle's view that the lower faculties are always present if the higher ones are, and exemplify the different approaches of the two philosophers: Plotinus in discussing any part of his world tends to look down on it from above.

<sup>20</sup> For θρεπτικός alone used in this sense cf. the division into θρεπτική, αἰσθητική and νοερά ζωή (VI.3.7.27f.).

<sup>21</sup> But cf. IV.4.28.49f.: παρὰ τοῦ φυτικοῦ καὶ γεννητικοῦ . . . κατασκευάζοντος, where the singular participle makes it clear that only one faculty is intended. There is another case at II.9.11.20, φυτική καὶ γεννητική. The context here is highly polemical. Plotinus means only to indicate an inferior type of soul.

used for this purpose as it indicates the most basic of these functions, the maintenance of life.<sup>22</sup> Φυτικόν, the usual term,<sup>23</sup> has of course the advantage of being clearly connected etymologically with what was the lowest form of life generally recognised, the plant (φυτόν).<sup>24</sup> And strictly it is more suitable in any case, in that it includes the function of growth, and also that of reproduction, for both of which maintenance is a prerequisite.<sup>25</sup> It is thus a more comprehensive term than the others, and so is normally used as a collective description, rather than an indication of any one of the powers of the lower soul. But there is one passage where τὸ φυτικόν does seem to be treated as a single power and opposed to τὸ αὔξητικόν. In IV.3.19 Plotinus shows how the sensitive soul can be viewed both as indivisible and as divisible in bodies (lines 11–19), and then says “and its vegetative power and its growth-promoting power likewise”: καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ φυτικὸν αὐτῆς καὶ τὸ αὔξητικὸν ὡσαύτως (19f.). But it is probably fair to say that this passage should not be pressed since the point of it is to show how soul in any of its aspects can be said to be undivided and yet divisible: Plotinus goes on to do the same for anger and desire. Whatever faculty of soul we take the hypothesis in question can be said to apply. Plotinus may well just be taking the various faculties at random.

Thus we see that the term for the vegetative faculty, τὸ φυτικόν, is generally used to describe the lowest faculties as a group. But we must also be prepared to find one or more of the faculties in this group taken to stand for all of them, or loosely used in juxtaposition with φυτικόν. In any case these faculties are really co-extensive. Any apparent inconsistency about the articulation of this part of the soul is due to the flexibility of Plotinus' terminology.

There is another problem about the lower soul that must be discussed. This arises from contradictions as to its origins and status. We are told that it comes to us directly from the world-soul, but also that it is added to the body in the same way as the higher faculties are taken to be, and it is usually treated as part of the unit to which these higher

<sup>22</sup> It could also be that θρεπτικόν is used because the processing of food is involved in both growth and reproduction – cf. H. H. Joachim's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford 1951) 62 n. 2 – but since Plotinus does not discuss the details of these it is safer not to argue from this.

<sup>23</sup> We sometimes find φύσις in an equivalent sense, c.f. e.g. III.4.1.2f.

<sup>24</sup> φυτά are given as the lowest form of life by Plotinus at I.4.1.18f.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Philoponus, in *de An.* 279.9ff. on why the φυτική δύναμις can be described as αὔξητική, θρεπτική or γεννητική.

faculties belong.<sup>26</sup> Since we are in the world order we have something of the world soul, and are subject to effects originating from the revolution of the universe, but to these we oppose another type of soul (IV.3.7.25-8), that is we act independently, or at least aim to reduce the importance of external forces by means of our higher psychic powers. Such is the language used elsewhere of resistance to the desires and appetites which, as we have seen, are activities of the vegetative soul, so that we have here something beyond the point that all body, in so far as it is body and not bare matter, has an element of soul which it receives from the world-soul.

Yet elsewhere Plotinus says that it is only at birth that the body becomes a living body. It then becomes suitable to receive a trace of soul beyond what it already had from the whole, by virtue of which it was a body and so not altogether devoid of soul. The receipt of this further element of soul is the beginning of desires, pleasures and pains (VI.4.15.8-17). All these, we know, are connected with the vegetative soul. Though it might otherwise be tempting to try to reconcile this passage with the others by claiming that this soul now receives the addition of certain higher faculties above the basic ones of nourishment and growth, which, one might maintain, are already present in the embryo, this seems to be ruled out here by the statement that the body only now becomes a *living* body.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps the key to this difficulty is to be found in the relation between all forms of soul, both the souls of individuals and the world soul. These are really all one and can be seen as manifestations of what one might call the general stock of soul. At IV.9.3.10f. Plotinus asks: "How comes it then, if soul is single, that one is rational, one irrational, and that there is a vegetative one too?"<sup>28</sup> He answers this question by attributing each type to different sections of soul: so the undivided

<sup>26</sup> This difficulty is noticed by F. Rösche, *Das Seelenpneuma. Seine Entwicklung von der Hauchseele bis zur Geistseele* (Paderborn 1933) 49-51. He makes no attempt to explain it but just attributes it to what he regards as Plotinus' frequent inconsistency: "Plotin ist in diesen Äusserungen schwankend und undeutlich, wie so oft auch sonst".

<sup>27</sup> One might perhaps get the impression that another view is the background of III.1.5.27f., where we are said to resemble our parents in some of the irrational affections of the soul. Anything we inherit would of course have to be there before the body becomes ensouled from on top, as it were, at birth. But the point here is that the character is influenced by the body's constitution (*χρᾶσις*). It is this, and not a psychic disposition as such, that we inherit. On this passage see below ch. 5, 57 and n. 29.

<sup>28</sup> Πῶς οὖν, εἰ ψυχὴ μία, ἡ μὲν λογικὴ, ἡ δὲ ἄλογος, καὶ τις καὶ φυτικὴ;

portion of it is the rational soul, while that which is divided in bodies, which provides the power of sensation, is to be taken as another power of the whole, and what moulds and produces bodies as yet another. The plurality of powers does nothing to infringe the unity of soul. The fact that not all are present everywhere is to be seen in the same way as the presence of different faculties or groups of faculties in so-called single souls. So sensation can be present without reason and the vegetative faculty without sensation, yet on separation from body they all unite (IV.9.3.11–23). “But the nutritive faculty, if the soul has it from the whole, belongs to that soul” (i.e. the world soul), continues Plotinus: τὸ δὲ θρεπτικόν, εἰ ἐκ τοῦ ὅλου ἔχει, καὶ ἐκείνης.<sup>29</sup> Here he seems to be bringing greater precision to the previous statement: “the nutritive faculty” refers back to the vegetative faculty, and the point seems to be that here there is no question of a reunification since this faculty has not become individualised in the same way as the others, for he goes on to ask why the nutritive faculty is not from our soul (lines 24f.). We have already seen that “our” soul is really no different from any other, so that the difference is only between soul acting in more or less individualized ways. It is in the light of this that we must see the answer: “the reason is because the object of nurture is a part of the whole, a part that is sentient in a passive way, whereas the sensation that makes distinctions in alliance with reason belongs to the individual: this (faculty of sensation) the soul has no need to use to form what already has its formation from (i.e. because it is a part of) the whole.” (lines 25–8).<sup>30</sup>

So the distinction between what belongs to our soul and what belongs to the world-soul seems to be based on the view that we, seen as bodies, are just parts of the whole of nature, and that our behaviour in this capacity is similar to that of the rest of the things in the world, while it is only above this level that we – and the same would be true of other living beings – can be said to exist as individuals at all.<sup>31</sup> The point would be clearer still if Plotinus had merely distinguished between the capacities for life and sensation, and not added the distinction between passive sensation and the active power of discrimination.<sup>32</sup> Since, however, the body belongs to us, it is also possible to

<sup>29</sup> I punctuate after ἔχει with all editors apart from H-S, who put the comma before.

<sup>30</sup> “Ὅτι τὸ τρεφόμενον μέρος τοῦ ὅλου, ὃ καὶ παθητικῶς αἰσθητικόν, ἡ δὲ αἰσθησις ἡ κρίνουσα μετὰ νοῦ ἐκάστου, ἥ οὐδὲν ἔδει πλάττειν τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ ὅλου τὴν πλάσιν ἔχον.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Harder's note on IV.9.3.23ff.

<sup>32</sup> The attribution of part of the process of perception to the vegetative soul is



speak of the faculties of soul attached to it as part of our soul, just as we could theoretically speak of the higher faculties as not ours, in so far as they are given to us from a single soul in which we all share. And if this is so it is quite reasonable to speak of the vegetative soul sometimes as a faculty of our soul and sometimes as an importation from soul in its capacity of informing the natural objects of which the world consists.

unusual, but does fit with the idea that there is a sensation involving an affection which is later diagnosed by the sensitive faculty; see below 70ff. We shall also see that the vegetative soul is the intermediary between a requirement of the body and our conscious perception of it; see below 60ff.

## THE FACULTIES (ii)

In considering whether or not Plotinus believed in a tripartite soul, we saw that he rejected the idea that there is one part of the soul concerned with the bodily desires, while another is the basis of impulses such as anger. Instead he maintains that we should attribute both sets of activities to the same area of soul. This fact by itself was sufficient for the purpose of assembling evidence to show that Plotinus did not hold that the soul was to be divided into three parts, but it still remains to examine more closely the identity of the faculty from which he decided that all the activities in question originate. Did Plotinus generally mark off a special faculty of appetite, and if so, did it cover all types of appetite? If the answer to either of these questions is no, what were his grounds for identifying the source of some or all types of appetite with one or more of the faculties that he defines?

Even the lowest desires, those that are concerned with the basic needs of the body, the need for food, for drink or for rest, would seem to involve some element of consciousness and perception. When the body needs food we only want it because we feel hunger. Yet all these desires are closely connected with the functioning of the vegetative soul: they are the means of providing it with the materials and conditions it requires for the continued and efficient performance of its duties. All this would lead us to expect to find a faculty below those of the sensitive soul, and yet other than those of the vegetative soul. Identification with either would fail to take into account all that was involved, so that it would seem necessary to attribute the desires to some different faculty intermediate, if we are to think in such terms, between the other two and containing some element of each. The considerations which lead to this conclusion in the case of the desires would also apply to certain types of anger resulting from damage or deprivation inflicted on the body: and with such anger Plotinus groups that caused by a

feeling of injustice, on the grounds that both produce the same physical disturbances in the blood and the bile (cf. IV.4.28.22-35).

The existence of types of appetite where we aim at something without having been stimulated to do so by the condition of the body is a further reason suggesting the need to set up a separate faculty. For we now have a phenomenon that can be seen neither as an operation of the vegetative soul, nor of the sensitive soul *qua* sensitive, nor yet as one of some combination of the two. It cannot be taken as within the province of perception since something beyond the mere perception of the need is involved, namely the urge to fulfil the requirement. This is an element such impulses have in common with those desires which are prompted by the needs of the body. Moreover this element, the impulse to acquire a thing felt to be necessary or desirable, can also be traced in the case of urges and desires set in motion by the results of reasoning and calculation; we may even see it in the innate drive to return to the intelligible and to the One itself. Hence Plotinus is able to use the same term for impulses of this type as he does in discussing anger and the bodily desires. He can talk of both of these as an ὀρεξις (appetite: IV.4.28.71f.) and also say that every soul ὁρέγεται the Good (I.6.7.1f.), or speak of souls turning back to their source ὁρέξει . . . νοεῖν χρωμένους (IV.8.4.1f.). Similarly the god of *Theaetetus* 176b, and our souls too, are said to be ἐν ὁρέξει . . . τῶν νοητῶν (I.2.1.14). Other words for impulse and desire (ἐφρσεις, πόθος, ὁρμή and their cognates) are also used in this way: each covers the whole range of drives and aspirations, from the highest to the lowest.<sup>1</sup> But one must be careful about identifying the meanings of these words, and in particular of ὁρμή and ὀρεξις which Arnou equates in his discussion of the terms conveying desire.<sup>2</sup> The evidence suggests that Plotinus did make some distinction, at least to the extent of regarding them as two facets of one activity, the need and the impulse to satisfy it. If there were no difference, it is hard to see why Plotinus should use both terms together, as he occasionally does (see below), instead of just one of them. On the other hand the greatest possible care must be exercised before finding in ὁρμή (impulse, or impulse to movement) a completely separate faculty in the lowest reaches of the soul as does Carbonara.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is pointed out by R. Arnou, *Le Désir de Dieu dans la philosophie de Plotin* (Paris 1921) 53-5; cf. too the references quoted there.

<sup>2</sup> "Ὁρμή vient rejoindre ὀρεξις", *op. cit.* 55.

<sup>3</sup> His ὁρμή seems to come below δρεκτικόν, ἐπιθυμητικόν and θυμικόν, and all four are separate: *La Filosofia di Plotino*<sup>2</sup> (Naples 1954) 239f., in the course of a somewhat unsatisfactory discussion of the faculties, 237-41. Carbonara ignores

There are few cases where *ὁρμή* or *ὁρμάω* are used with any sort of technical content outside the treatise *On Fate* (III.1).<sup>4</sup> In two of these *ὁρμή* and *ὄρεξις* seem to be bracketed, and describe a single power. In discussing the reason for the descent of the soul in IV.7.13 Plotinus says that the part of it that is only *nous* remains above, in the intelligible world. This, he inserts in parentheses, is because there is no *ὁρμή* or *ὄρεξις* in it. But the part that assumes *ὄρεξις* by virtue of this addition of *ὄρεξις* goes forth; and as it desires (*ὀρεγόμενον*) to order things in accordance with what it has seen in the intelligible it is eager to produce, and creates (lines 2–8). The results of what is described by *ὄρεξις* and *ὀρεγόμενον* are thus what cannot happen in the realm of *Nous* because *ὁρμή* and *ὄρεξις* are excluded from it. It seems fairly clear that (*ὁρμή* and *ὄρεξις*) and *ὄρεξις* are more or less equivalent.<sup>5</sup> Similarly at IV.3.23.32 (*ὁρμή* and *ὄρεξις*) are virtually equivalent to *ὁρμή*. Plotinus is there discussing the parts of the body where the sources of the various activities set in motion by the soul are to be located. He says that the source or principle (*ἀρχή*) of sensation and *ὁρμή* had been placed in the head because these powers belonged to the sensitive and imaginative soul: this is there because the mechanism of sensation – that is, the nerves – is based there. The sensitive faculty is in a way critical, and the imaginative faculty intellectual: *ὁρμή* and *ὄρεξις* follow on imagination and reason.<sup>6</sup> And so, because of its connection with these other powers which have been shown to be situated, in a way, in the brain, the reasoning faculty is to be placed there too (lines 9–35). (*Ὀρμή* and *ὄρεξις*) clearly picks up the *ἡ τοῦ ὁρμᾶν* (*δύναμις*) of lines 21f. and the *ὁρμή* of line 13, just as in the passage in IV.7 both words used together

the duality of *φαντασία* – which he describes as “una potenza quasi-intellettuale” – and memory (though he does refer to it later, 246ff.) and finds in I.1.8.22 an odd power that he calls *τὸ ἀποτελεσματικόν* and associates with the sensitive faculty; this although Plotinus has just said that the powers of which this is one are the *last* of a series of images of soul of which the sensitive soul is the first (I.1.8.17ff.). Surely the *ἀποτελεσματικὸν ἄλλου* here is no more than a description of the power of reproduction.

<sup>4</sup> In this treatise there are numerous occurrences, some of them technical, but these cannot be used in this discussion since the treatise is primarily directed against the Stoics. *Ὀρμή* is of course a Stoic technical term, and we seem to be dealing with arguments couched in the adversary's own terminology.

<sup>5</sup> Lines 3–6 run: – οὐ γὰρ ἐνὶ ὁρμῇ οὐδ' ὄρεξις – δ' δ' ἂν ὄρεξιν προσλάβῃ ἐφεξῆς ἐκείνῳ τῷ νῷ ὅν, τῇ προσθήκῃ τῆς ὀρέξεως οἷον πρόεισιν ἤδη ἐπιπλέον καὶ κοσμεῖν ὀρεγόμενον . . .

<sup>6</sup> This is the meaning if we do not place a comma after *ὄρεξις* in line 32: so Bréhier, Harder, Cilento, Theiler. H-S do: with their punctuation the sense would be that *ὁρμή* and *ὄρεξις* which follow on imagination and reason are also critical and intellectual. This is less likely, but the point here is not affected.

answer to ὁρεξίς. It does seem then that there is little difference in the content of the two terms. Nonetheless, although the evidence does not make it possible to be more specific on this point, there is probably some such differentiation as has been suggested earlier between feeling an impulse and acting on it. If there were none at all, why should Plotinus have used both terms, instead of just the one, in the cases discussed?

The way in which ὁρμή is coupled with αἰσθησις in the second of these two passages – τὴν τῆς αἰσθησεως καὶ ὁρμῆς ἀρχὴν at IV.3.23.12f. and ἡ τοῦ αἰσθάνεσθαι δύναμις καὶ ἡ τοῦ ὁρμαῖν in lines 21f. – suggests that ὁρεξίς/ὁρμή are here regarded as an operation of the sensitive soul. This is so particularly with the second example, where in the sequel the location of the reasoning faculty is apparently explained by its relation to the faculties of sensation and movement/appetition. These, it seems, are for this purpose almost taken as one, since their functions are based on the same part of the body.<sup>7</sup> But we should not assume from all this that the appetitive faculty is in some way co-extensive with the sensitive. While the discussion in IV.3.23 links the two fairly closely, it does mention that appetite depends on imagination and reasoning (lines 32f.), which is an important point. It is the recognition of the part played by the nerves in both fields of activity that leads Plotinus to place the centre of each in the same area: this local coincidence is responsible for the way in which the various statements are made equally applicable to both. But it would be wrong to conclude that the same faculty is the basis of both sensation and ὁρμή/ὁρεξίς.

So we may have some evidence for the establishment of a separate appetitive faculty. There are other indications that Plotinus set up such a faculty.

In VI.9.1, at the end of a discussion on how the essence of the soul is not unity, he points out that the soul is multiple even though it is not made up of parts. The reason for this, he says, is that it has many faculties, reasoning, appetite, cognition,<sup>8</sup> which are held together by unity as though by a bond (lines 39–41). Whether or not appetite here includes all that is involved in anger and desire we cannot say. Plotinus in any case tends to be imprecise when he gives information by

<sup>7</sup> I follow H-S' text, but not their interpretation of it, and take γειτονοῦσα and αὐτῇ in lines 23f. to refer to τὸν λόγον in line 23, with Plotinus now thinking of it as e.g. ἡ τοῦ λογίζεσθαι δύναμις. This, however, is difficult even for Plotinus and the text may be corrupt. Harder's τὴν λόγου for τὸν λόγον would give the required sense, but introduces an unusual expression.

<sup>8</sup> λογίζεσθαι, ὀρέγεσθαι, ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι.

way of example, and we cannot rely on the passage for more than a recognition that appetite and sensation do not coincide.

We must now consider a passage from VI.8 which one might be tempted to use as positive evidence for the existence of a separate appetitive faculty. In VI.8.2, where we again find *ὄρεξις* coupled with *ὀρμή* (line 3), *ὄρεξις*, while not explicitly presented as a faculty of the soul, is discussed in connection with certain other modes of activity which would normally be associated with specific faculties. It is associated with imagination as a motive force (line 17). Here, and elsewhere in the same chapter (cf. lines 11f. and 30ff.), Plotinus distinguishes *ὄρεξις* from reasoning (*λογισμός*) in examining the claim of reasoning coupled with *ὄρεξις* to be the source of action (cf. lines 2ff.). All this might suggest that he is talking about *ὄρεξις* as a faculty. But it is necessary to use the evidence from this passage with some caution. It is really the various activities that are under discussion. It does not follow that each activity is to be taken as associated with a separate faculty. Plotinus is trying to discover what is meant by saying that some form of action is within our power (*ἐφ' ἡμῖν*) and what is the basis of such action. The question is put in the vaguest possible way: *τοῦτο δὴ τὸ ἀναφερόμενον εἰς ἐφ' ἡμῖν ὑπάρχον τίτιν δεῖ διδόναι*; (VI.8.2.1f.). The way this question is couched must not be ignored. It is generally translated as though it asked which faculty is the basis of action within our power.<sup>9</sup> It could also be asking simply *what* is the basis of such action. Plotinus may well be dealing with the answer only in terms of the stimulus to an action without thinking about the faculty which might be the source of that stimulus. That such is in fact his procedure here is certainly suggested by the remarks introducing the question (VI.8.1.16ff.). The possibility is strengthened by the way Plotinus proposes desire or anger, as examples of *ὄρεξις*, as alternatives to calculation of what is beneficial together with *ὄρεξις* (*λογισμὸς τοῦ συμφέροντος μετ' ὀρέξεως*), as possible answers (VI.8.2.3f.). Moreover the following lines make it quite clear that anger and desire are excluded from proper appetite (*ὀρθή ὄρεξις*), with which the rest of the discussion is concerned. Here then Plotinus is distinguishing one type of activity from another. Both are kinds of appetite. So the choice does not seem to be between faculties at all. In other cases where *ὄρεξις* appears in the following chapters (e.g. ch. 3.23 and 26, ch. 5.30) the

<sup>9</sup> *τίτιν* is rendered as "a quale nostra potenza" (Cilento), "à quelle partie de nous-mêmes" (Bréhier) or "welchem Vermögen" (Harder). These translations obscure the indefinite way in which the question is put.

word is clearly not associated with the idea of a faculty. Thus we cannot use the passage to show that Plotinus believed that there was a special faculty of appetition. On the other hand, in showing that he is talking about activities and not about faculties we have removed a possible piece of negative evidence. For we can now see that where the passage appears to distinguish desire and anger from ὄρεξις it is distinguishing them only from certain types of ὄρεξις, namely ὁρθη ὄρεξις. It therefore leaves open the possibility that desire and anger may be regarded as functions of an appetitive faculty.

The next passage which we must consider, from I.1.5, clearly indicates that they are so regarded. The subject under discussion is whether certain affections are to be attributed to body, to soul or to the combination of both. It is maintained that the body plays a part in them, and this is shown by arguments based on various forms of appetition. Plotinus says that the body is involved in these because the blood and bile must boil, clearly referring to anger, and the body must be in a certain state to stir an ὄρεξις (I.1.5.24-6). Sexual passion, which is clearly to be classified as a desire, is then quoted as an example. The description of the physical conditions for anger is also to be taken as an example of the way in which an ὄρεξις is produced: the phrase πῶς διατεθὲν τὸ σῶμα (the body in a certain state) which follows it is a generalization of the previous words. That desire and anger are considered as kinds of ὄρεξις is indicated by an earlier sentence which is particularly important for our purpose, as the point made is specified as being applicable to the contribution of the soul (cf. ib. 23f.). We are told that desire is a function of the ἐπιθυμητικόν, anger of the θυμικόν and in general (ὅλως) an impulse to anything is an activity of τὸ ὁρεκτικόν (ib. 22f.). Any doubt as to whether ὁρεκτικόν is meant to include the ἐπιθυμητικόν and the θυμικόν – and the ὅλως leaves little – is removed by what follows.<sup>10</sup> So that here we have an appetitive faculty, τὸ ὁρεκτικόν, which appears to have the θυμικόν and ἐπιθυμητικόν, the passionate and desiring powers of the soul, as sub-faculties.

In the same passage appetite for the good (ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὄρεξις) is excluded from the affections common to body and soul and attributed to the soul alone. This shows that Plotinus' faculty, unlike Aristotle's,

<sup>10</sup> The passage reads: Πῶς οὖν κοινὰ ταῦτα; ἢ, ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία τοῦ ἐπιθυμητικοῦ καὶ ὁ θυμὸς τοῦ θυμικοῦ καὶ ὅλως τοῦ ὁρεκτικοῦ ἡ ἐπὶ τι ἔκτασις. ἀλλ' οὕτως οὐκέτι κοινὰ ἔσται, ἀλλὰ τῆς ψυχῆς μόνης· ἡ καὶ τοῦ σώματος, ὅτι δεῖ αἷμα καὶ χολὴν ζέσαι καὶ πῶς διατεθὲν τὸ σῶμα τὴν ὄρεξιν κινῆσαι, οἷον ἐπὶ ἀφροδισίων. ἡ δὲ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὄρεξις μὴ κοινὸν πάθημα ἀλλὰ ψυχῆς ἔστω.

did not cover activities above the level of the sensitive soul. We must still establish whether Plotinus held that the appetitive faculty was to be seen as part of the sensitive soul or not. We have seen that in IV.3.23 ὁρεξις and ὁρμή regarded as a faculty were associated with the sensitive soul, though not identified with sensation. Unfortunately we find that in the same chapter Plotinus goes on to discuss desire and associate it with the vegetative soul. For he justifies Plato's allocation of the desiring part of the soul to the liver on the grounds that the liver is the seat of the vegetative soul;<sup>11</sup> this brings about nourishment, growth and reproduction, and what does so must have a desire for these activities (cf. IV.3.23.35-42).

Desire, then, is necessary for the vegetative soul, and therefore Plotinus puts its operation in the same part of the body. Does this mean that the desiring faculty (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν) is a faculty of the vegetative soul? Similar arguments to that used to show that the desiring faculty should be placed in the liver are used to support the placing of anger in the heart, but here there is no suggestion that this emotion is to be attributed to any particular part of the soul. The point of the whole discussion is in any case to examine *how* certain faculties can be said to be in various parts of the body, rather than to clarify the relations of the faculties and activities of the soul. In view of this, and also, and this is more important, the lack of a definite assertion that the ἐπιθυμητικόν is a faculty of the vegetative soul, we may, for the moment, at least suspect that Plotinus does not mean us to understand that he so regarded it. His remark that it is put in the liver because the vegetative soul is there, and because this soul must desire to perform its functions, should perhaps be understood in the light of the remark earlier in the chapter, already alluded to, about the assignation of the reasoning faculty to the head. Reason is put in the head because sensation, on which it borders, is centred there. Since there is no question of reason and sensation being amalgamated, or even seen as activities of one part of the soul, it could be that the desiring and vegetative faculties are to be seen as separate too.

Yet the difficulty remains that ὁρεξις and ὁρμή, regarded as a faculty, have already been connected with the sensitive soul, and this has been placed in the head. So that whatever the exact relation of the desiring faculty and the vegetative soul that Plotinus may have in

<sup>11</sup> This does not of course mean that τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν here means to Plotinus what it meant to Plato. The rest of the chapter makes it quite clear that Plotinus is talking about faculties.



mind in IV.3[27]23, the different localizations of the desiring faculty and ὀρεξίς would suggest that ὀρεξίς is not here regarded as including desire, and possibly not anger either. Furthermore ὁρμή seems to indicate only the power of initiating motion. Its connection with this is shown by the reference to the role of the nerves in motion at IV.3.23. 10-13. There seems then to be a contradiction between this passage and that in the later I.1[53] which treats the desiring and passionate faculties as powers of an appetitive faculty (ὀρεκτικόν). Can we get any help from Plotinus' technical discussion of the workings of anger and desire in IV.4[28].20ff.?<sup>12</sup>

In these chapters Plotinus discusses in detail the actual operation of desire and anger, the contribution of body and soul in each, and the part or faculty involved. Here it seems clear that both are to be taken as based on the vegetative soul. In IV.4.20, where Plotinus is discussing what, within the compound, are the roles of body and soul in desire, he says that it is the φύσις – a term that is sometimes used as the equivalent of the usual term for vegetative soul, τὸ φυτικόν<sup>13</sup> – that is the part of the soul most immediately concerned in handling the requirements of the body. It takes note of the body's desire whereas the power of sensation becomes aware of the resulting image (IV.4.20.14-17). While the body suffers pain or deprivation, it is the φύσις that aims to satisfy its requirements and seeks the remedy for its distress: "while the body desires on its own account . . . the *vegetative soul desires* with a desire that stems from something else and through the agency of another" (IV.4.20.22-36).<sup>14</sup>

This passage still leaves open the possibility that ὀρεξίς is, as suggested by IV.3.23, different from desire and attributable to a different area of the soul. That this should be so might appear to be ruled out by a further passage in IV.4. This is the discussion of desire and anger in ch. 28. Here too, as in IV.3.23, it is said that the source of desire is in the area around the liver. The reason given, as in the earlier passage, is that the vegetative soul or faculty operates there in particular. But Plotinus now explains the connection between desire and the vegetative soul in a different way. It is the vegetative soul which provides the trace of soul that is present throughout the body, and it is the whole body which feels the craving for repletion which is desire: hence the

<sup>12</sup> Chapters 22-7 form a digression which is not strictly relevant.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. II.9.13.30f. and III.4.1.3f.

<sup>14</sup> "Ὡστε τὸ μὲν (sc. σώμα) ἐπιθυμεῖν ἐξ αὐτοῦ . . . τὴν δὲ (sc. φύσιν) ἐξ ἄλλου καὶ δι' ἄλλου ἐπιθυμεῖν (lines 33-5).

connection of the two faculties in one area (cf. IV.4.28.10-17). In the case of anger Plotinus argues that whatever may be the cause of the emotion its operation depends on the vegetative soul, for it is always this which makes the body aware of what has happened and produces the bile and bitterness. As evidence that the part of the soul involved in anger is the same as in the case of desire, that is the vegetative, Plotinus adduces the alleged fact that the people who care least for bodily pleasures are also less strongly moved to anger (cf. IV.4.28.22-58).<sup>15</sup> All this indicates that both desire and anger are to be associated with the vegetative soul. That this is so is made quite clear in an argument against the Platonic division of the irrational part of the soul into desiring and spirited *parts* which has already been discussed in detail.<sup>16</sup> Both emotions seem to stem equally from the vegetative soul.

In the course of this argument to show that anger and desire are both based on the vegetative soul it appears that they are both regarded as an ὁρεξίς (IV.4.28.70-2). On the evidence of this passage, then, it would seem both that ὁρεξίς is not to be differentiated from desire and anger, and also that it is an activity of the vegetative soul. Does this mean that the ὁρεξίς which was associated with the sensitive soul in IV.3.23 is now relegated to the vegetative soul where the desiring and spirited powers are to be found?

That the sensitive soul still has a part to play, at least in anger, is shown by Plotinus' answer to the question why trees, which do have the vegetative soul, do not have anger. In the first place trees lack the blood and bile which are its instruments. And even if they had blood and bile there would still be no more than a turbulence and a vague feeling of irritation. It is only the presence of sensation that leads to an impulse (ὁρμή) to act against the cause of the injury (cf. IV.4.28.58-63). So we find here that the ὁρμή component of anger is taken as at least dependent on the sensitive soul. And here the position is the same as in IV.3.23 where ὁρμή and ὁρεξίς are associated.

Let us now return to ὁρεξίς. One might be tempted to think that ὁρεξίς in IV.4.28 is connected with the vegetative soul and that this conflicts with the evidence from IV.3.23. But care is needed. We must distinguish ὁρεξίς as a general description of an activity and ὁρεξίς as a power of the soul. When in IV.4.28 Plotinus says that desire and anger are ὁρέξεις he is using ὁρεξίς in the former sense. We must not conclude that the description of desire and anger as ὁρέξεις means that ὁρέξεις in

<sup>15</sup> For his arguments here see below 57f. and 64.

<sup>16</sup> See above 23f.

the second sense is a power of the vegetative soul. "Ὁρεξίς as a power of the soul may still be separate from the vegetative soul, just as it appears to be in IV.3.23. And when we are told that the ability to turn the physical disturbance that goes with anger into action depends on sensation, we can see that there has been no change from the position apparently adopted in the earlier portion (IV.3) of the treatise. Both the sensitive and the vegetative areas of the soul are involved in the emotion.

We may recall that in the earlier discussion of desire in IV.4 sensation has a similar role. Though the vegetative soul is the basis of desire, we are not conscious of a desire till it reaches the sensitive faculty (cf. IV.4.20.14-17). A similar point is made in the treatise written just before IV.3-5, at III.6[26].3.19-22, and at IV.8[6].8.9-11 we are told that desire remains confined to the desiring faculty and we are not aware of it till the power of internal sensation, or that of judgement, becomes aware of it.

Thus we see that in IV.3-4 Plotinus maintains a consistent position, though this might perhaps be obscured by imprecision in his use of Ὁρεξίς, and the hesitation which he shows in placing functions of the soul in particular parts of the body in IV.3.23. In this treatise he regards the desiring and passionate powers as powers of the vegetative soul. The vegetative soul is primarily responsible for the operation of anger and the desires. But sensation too is involved in both. There is no sign that any single faculty is the basis of these emotions. This conforms with the distinction made between desire and the awareness of it in the earlier passages just cited, a distinction which implies, even where it is not specifically stated, that the process of satisfying the needs involved is allocated to a different part of the soul from that in whose immediate area the needs are operative.

On the other hand in the passage from I.1 that we have discussed the activities of the passionate, desiring and appetitive powers appear to involve more than just the presence of the needs in some part of the soul. The words "the impulse towards anything belongs to the appetitive part" (τοῦ ὁρεκτικοῦ ἢ ἐπὶ τι ἔκτασις, I.1.5.23) probably refer to all the further stages as well. There is no suggestion of a further contribution from the sensitive soul which provides the impulse and appetite (ὄρμη and Ὁρεξίς) in IV.3.23. As we have seen, the appetitive faculty here in I.1[53] includes the desiring and passionate powers. So in this treatise these are to some extent themselves responsible for awareness and perhaps for action too. Here we have Plotinus' last

statements on this question. Are they to be taken as superseding the others, and if not, can they be reconciled with them?

There is hardly enough evidence to enable us to claim that Plotinus revised his earlier ideas. Any suggestion that there was a development in Plotinus' views must in any case always be treated with extreme caution. Less unlikely is the possibility that there was a change in the classification and terminology only, so that the terms for the desiring, passionate and appetitive powers covered rather more than they had been allowed to cover in IV.3 and 4 [27 and 28]. There would then be no need to assume any change in how the emotions in question worked. Instead we should say that the terms involved were now being used to cover the contribution of both the vegetative soul and the sensitive soul, instead of being confined to the former in the way we have seen in IV.3-4. It is possible, but no more, that in the passages in IV.3-4 Plotinus was sufficiently influenced by the ideas behind the Platonic tripartition, which he repudiates near the end of the treatise in IV.4.28, to be inclined to relegate whatever *ἐπιθυμία* and *θυμός* described to the lowest area of the soul distinguished in his own analysis. In this connection it is perhaps worth remarking that Plotinus does not seem to have allowed as much value to *θυμός* as did Plato. Apart from this we may suggest that Plotinus' preoccupation with the technicalities of the operation of the soul's functions in IV.3-4 led him to make more precise distinctions than he found necessary elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> In I.1, on the other hand, his aim is primarily to distinguish those of our activities in which the combination of body and soul is involved from those where the soul acts alone. For this purpose the looser classification would be sufficient, since whether we take the emotions and their satisfaction as involving sensation and a lower psychic component, or class both these under one head, the activities in question still fall under the same category, namely that of those involving both body and soul.

Yet we cannot be sure that Plotinus in I.1 did not mean to separate the desiring and passionate faculties from the vegetative soul, which, as we have seen, he regarded as concerned with the basic functions of preservation and propagation of life. While all the considerations adduced may reduce the extent of the inconsistency and possibly remove it, it is perhaps safer to allow the possibility that Plotinus did not come to a definitive view of what faculties should be distinguished in this area of the soul and how they should be grouped.

<sup>17</sup> See also below ch. 5, 6ff. and n. .36

The next group of faculties, belonging to the sensitive soul, is less problematic. Under the heading of sensation we may distinguish the powers responsible for the perception of external objects from the power of perceiving what goes on within us. Plotinus talks of a power of internal perception (ἡ αἰσθητικὴ ἢ ἔνδον δύνάμις) which becomes aware of desires (IV.8.8.10f.), a perception that announces the affections (IV.4.19.4-7): it is sometimes referred to as συναἰσθησις (e.g. III.4.4.10f.). But in a sense all sensation is of externals because the affections of the body which such a faculty cognizes are also external to the sensitive soul (cf. V.3.2.2-6). The activities of the sensitive soul that are directed to the cognition of what is outside us comprise the five senses and the common sense (κοινὴ αἰσθησις), which combines the information received from the specialized senses. Plotinus is careful to insist that these are all based on the same soul which provides the necessary power, as and when required, for the specific activities (cf. IV.3.3.12-16 and 23.1-9), so that we must avoid giving them independent status.

Ἀισθησις and related words referring to perception, and also παρακολούθησις, are used not only of awareness of physical conditions, but also sometimes in a way which brings their meaning very close to our idea of consciousness.<sup>18</sup> So in I.4.10.10ff. Plotinus discusses the awareness that we are thinking which we may have by a sort of perception (οἶον αἰσθητῶς). In the same passage he mentions absence of παρακολούθησις as a factor adding to the intensity of many activities, of which reading and courage are given as examples. The wide range of the activities mentioned, and in particular the inclusion of pure thought, seem to make this power of perceptive awareness transcend the sensitive soul. That this is in fact the power which provides knowledge of what goes on within us that we have already mentioned is shown by remarks in the preceding chapter about the activity of the vegetative soul not reaching the perceptive faculty, which form part of the same train of thought (cf. I.4.9.25ff.).

A further faculty that should probably be assigned to the sensitive soul, though it is in a way a bridge between this and the power of thought, is that of imagination. It receives the products of thought, in the form of *logoi*, and also those of sensation (IV.3.30.5ff.): the latter are passed on to the reasoning faculty for it to process (V.3.2.7-9). But it is also in contact with the lowest levels of the soul. Here, where it almost coincides with the internal sensation already referred to, it

<sup>18</sup> On this cf. Schwyzer, "'Bewusst' und 'Unbewusst' bei Plotin", and the discussion following, *Entretiens* V, 343-90.

arises from the affections of the body, and submits information on these to the higher soul which must decide what, if any, action is to be taken: it comes "as a sort of perception announcing and conveying the affection" (IV.4.17.11-14).<sup>19</sup>

This faculty by storing up images, which must not be thought of in any materialistic way, is also the basis of memory (IV.3.29.22-4).<sup>20</sup> Closely connected with imagination – with the higher form of which it is in fact identified at III.6.4.19f. – is the power of forming opinions (δόξα, δοξαστικόν).<sup>21</sup> Since it is particularly concerned with sense-percepts (cf. VI.9.3.27-32, V.5.1.62-5) it too should be placed in the sphere of the sensitive soul.

The range of faculties we possess in our strictly human capacity is completed by διάνοια, the power of reasoning and judgement, with which Plotinus often says we are to be identified.<sup>22</sup> Apart from the fact that it is concerned with the processing and evaluation of data received from the lower cognitive faculties, it is distinguished from *nous*, pure intuitive apprehension, by the fact that it is external to its objects. It is therefore discursive, and must work by division and combination, so that it can never contemplate its objects as a whole (cf. V.3.2ff.). Hence it is called the *nous* which makes divisions (νοῦς μερίζων) as opposed to the *nous* that is indivisible itself and does not split up the totality of being which is its object (cf. V.9.8.21f.).<sup>23</sup> And with this faculty we leave man in the sensible world. The pure intellect, though not detached from that part of us which is in the sensible world, is already beyond it, for it is entirely independent of all the other faculties and of all our activities here.

In summary the faculties of the soul which directs our lives in this world may best be shown in the diagram overleaf:

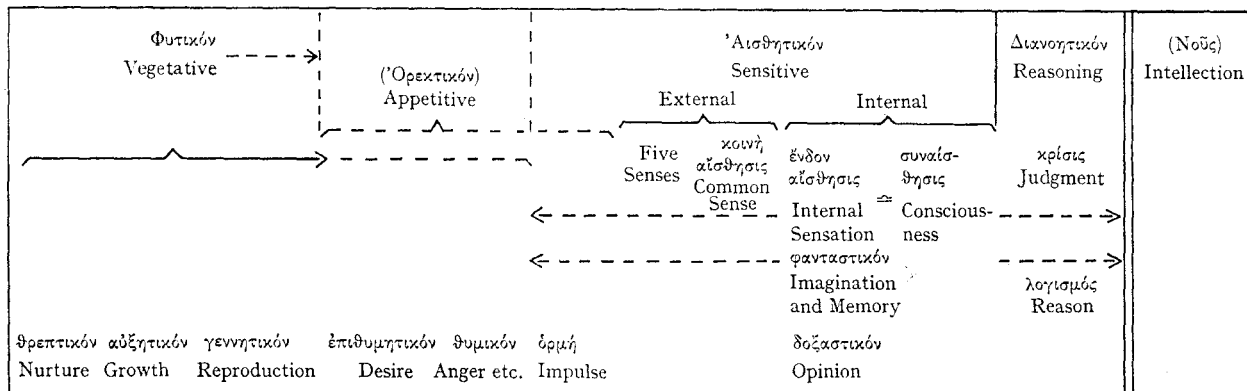
<sup>19</sup> οἷον αἰσθησις ἀπαγγελτικὴ καὶ μνηστικὴ τοῦ πάθους (lines 12f.).

<sup>20</sup> I omit for now the question of a certain duality in imagination, and so in memory. They are generally treated as one: as Plotinus says, the two forms of the imaginative faculty are united until there is some disagreement between its higher and lower activities (IV.3.31.9ff.). See further below 89ff.

<sup>21</sup> The term seems to preserve the somewhat derogatory sense it has in Plato; cf. I.1.9.5f.

<sup>22</sup> See below 109ff.

<sup>23</sup> With his usual disregard for terminological accuracy Plotinus sometimes refers to διάνοια simply as νοῦς, but the context usually makes it clear which he is discussing, cf. e.g. II.4.5.4ff.; see below 104f.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE AFFECTIONS

Now that we have examined the framework of faculties into which Plotinus fits the functions of the soul, we must go on to consider these functions in detail. The intuitive intellect, as we have mentioned, is independent of all the lower faculties of the soul, and thus independent of the body, with which these functions are to a greater or lesser extent involved. The extent of this involvement becomes greater as we descend the scale. At the level of those functions of the vegetative soul which are concerned only with the preservation of the body as a living organism, the furtherance of growth and the reproduction of the species, the involvement is virtually complete. Even here, however, we must bear in mind that Plotinus still regards the soul as separate from the body which it endows with life. But on how it performs these functions he has very little to say. Presumably they are for him just a part of the natural world's physical processes, in whose details he shows comparatively little interest except in so far as they are relevant to the causal structure of the universe.

On the next section of the continuum formed by the various powers of the soul, the section in which we find desire and anger, and the other emotions,<sup>1</sup> the body still has a very large part to play. Since Plotinus regards the emotions as undesirable, if perhaps necessary, it is not surprising that he seems very anxious to define exactly the role of body and soul in the processes which are included in the general category of affections (παθήματα). The less the soul has to do with them, the better. His concern with this problem of demarcation, to which he returns on several occasions, would naturally have arisen from the special diffi-

<sup>1</sup> In view of the conclusions reached in ch. 4 about how Plotinus classified these activities in his scheme of faculties, I prefer to avoid here any expressions which imply either that they belong to the *φυσικόν*, or that they form a separate faculty above it.



culty of separating the roles of body and soul in a context where the soul's activities are still very closely connected with the requirements of the body. The need to make such a separation is increased by Plotinus' wish to maintain as far as possible the position that the soul remains unaffected by the activities in which it participates.

Plotinus' approach to the question is well illustrated by a series of descriptions of emotions which he gives in the treatise *On the Impassibility of the Incorporeal*. Even in the case of those that would seem to be primarily psychic, we find that he maintains that any change that takes place is a change in the body. He recognizes that some form of change is involved, but says that the real point is the identity of the subject of the change (cf. III.6.3.1-7). In what looks like an echo of Aristotle's statement that to say that the soul is angry is like saying that the soul weaves or builds,<sup>2</sup> Plotinus writes that if we say that it is the soul that changes, we are in danger of making the same sort of assumptions that we should make if we were to say that the soul blushes or turns pale. We should rather say that the emotions – he has listed pain, anger, pleasure, desire and fear – are due to the soul but take place in the other structure, that is the living body (ib. 7-11).<sup>3</sup> To provide particular evidence for this general statement he then gives a brief account of various emotions:

*Shame*. This occurs when there is an opinion in the soul that something shameful has happened. The body which this soul controls undergoes a change affecting the blood, which is easily set in motion (III.6.3.11-15).

*Fear*. This begins in the soul. The pallor is caused by the blood retreating to the interior of the body (ib. 15f.).

*Pleasure and Pain*. In pleasure the spread of the sensation and its transmission to the perceptive faculty take place in the body. What

<sup>2</sup> τὸ δὴ λέγειν ὀργίζεσθαι τὴν ψυχὴν ὁμοίον καὶ εἰ τις λέγοι τὴν ψυχὴν ὑφαίνειν ἢ οἰκοδομεῖν. *de An.* 408b 11-13. Plotinus certainly knew this sentence, for he refers to it at I.1.4.25-7. Aristotle's aims are similar. He is trying to show that the soul cannot be in motion except incidentally. Plotinus' words are: Κινδυνεύομεν γὰρ περὶ ψυχὴν ταῦτα λέγοντες ὁμοίον τι ὑπολαμβάνειν, ὥς εἰ τὴν ψυχὴν λέγομεν ἐρυθριᾶν ἢ αὖ ἐν ὥχριάσει γίγνεσθαι . . .

<sup>3</sup> Here too there may be an echo of Aristotle, who continues after the words cited in n. 2. βέλτιον γὰρ ἴσως μὴ λέγειν τὴν ψυχὴν ἐλεεῖν ἢ μαρθάνειν ἢ διανοεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον τῇ ψυχῇ. Plotinus continues: . . . μὴ λογιζόμενοι, ὥς διὰ ψυχὴν μὲν ταῦτα τὰ πάθη, περὶ δὲ τὴν ἄλλην σύστασιν ἐστι γιγνόμενα. The resemblance here is less close; it may be coincidental, and would not have attracted attention if the contexts were not so similar. But if the words are taken with the first half of Plotinus' sentence, and the previous sentence in Aristotle, it does look as if Plotinus may well have had Aristotle's remarks in mind.

happens in the soul is no longer an affection. The same applies to pain (ib. 17-19). The pain and pleasure in question are clearly only physical pain and pleasure.

*Desire.* Here too when the start of the process of desiring is in the soul, it is only the state produced as a result which the perceptive faculty cognizes (ib. 19-22).

This statement differs from Plotinus' usual treatment of desire in that he usually stresses the bodily origins of the emotion. The point here seems to be to show that even in a type of desire that starts, so to speak, from above, the soul is not subject to change. That such are Plotinus' reasons for treating desire in this way is indicated by the sentence which follows: "In fact, when we say that the soul moves itself in lusts or reasonings or opinions, we are not saying that it does this because it is being shaken about by them, but that the movements originate from itself." <sup>4</sup> However important the part it plays might be, the soul itself remains exempt from any form of physical disturbance.

This exemption follows from the incorporeal nature of the soul. In III.6 Plotinus is concerned with the impassibility of incorporeal entities as a general principle, and much of the treatise is in fact devoted to matter. Matter too may undergo a sort of change in that it can appear in different guise according to the way it is informed, but it is not itself transformed. Its essential negativity remains constant, and there is no question of chemical or physical change. That it is physical change to which Plotinus wishes to emphasize that the soul is immune he makes clear at the beginning of the treatise. "In general", he writes, "it is our purpose to avoid subjecting the soul to such modifications and changes as the heating and cooling of bodies." (*my trans.* III.6.1.12-14, cf. 3.30-5). He recognizes that the main difficulty will arise in connection with the so-called passible part of the soul, but admits that explanations are also required if one is to maintain the impassibility of the higher part of the soul in the face of vice, wrong opinions and the stresses resulting from the emotions (III.6.1.14-25). In this introductory passage we find an explicit statement of the reasons why Plotinus is prepared to discuss the emotions so carefully. After remarking that if the soul were a body and had dimensions there would be no question of showing that it is not subject to change he says, "But if it is a substance without magnitude and must necessarily possess incorruptibility", -

<sup>4</sup> Καὶ γὰρ ὅταν λέγωμεν κινεῖσθαι αὐτὴν ἐν ἐπιθυμίαις, ἐν λογισμοῖς, ἐν δόξαις, οὐ σαλευομένην αὐτὴν λέγομεν ταῦτα ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐξ αὐτῆς γίνεσθαι τὰς κινήσεις. III.6.3.22-4.

which of course he now takes for granted <sup>5</sup> – “we must be careful not to give it affections of this kind, so as to avoid making it corruptible without noticing that we have done so.” <sup>6</sup> (III.6.1.25–30).

From the discussion of vice and virtue in chapter 2 of the same treatise it becomes clear that Plotinus is not here trying to deny that some kind of change can take place in the soul. Elsewhere Plotinus refers to the emotions to distinguish the movements of the soul from the spatial movements in the body which result from them (II.2.3.13–15). Here in III.6.2 he makes his point that no real affection (πάθος) is involved by referring to Plato’s scheme of special vices and virtues for the several parts of the tripartite soul. To avoid possible misunderstanding it is perhaps worth pointing out that, at least in the more precise parts of this passage, the tripartition applies only to the embodied soul, and not to the pure *nous*.<sup>7</sup> In any case it must not be taken seriously as an analysis of the soul.<sup>8</sup> The conclusions, however, are easily transferable to Plotinus’ own scheme of faculties. Does ignorance, Plotinus asks, change the rational part (τὸ λογιστικόν), are cowardice and bravery associated with different states of the spirited part, restraint and dissipation with different states of the desiring part? The last example might suggest that a real change is involved. Plotinus’ explanation is that the virtues are produced when each part acts in obedience to *logos*, that is when the lower parts obey the rational part (now τὸ λογιζόμενον) and that in turn obeys *nous* (cf. III.6.2.1–32, esp. 20ff.). Plotinus compares the effect of listening to reason with the process of vision, which he understands in Aristotelian terms. Vision, he explains, does not involve a change of form, but an actualization. The sense of sight, whether it is in potency or in act, is in essence the same. The act is not a change (ἀλλοίωσις): the sense makes contact with its object and cognizes it without undergoing an affection, which, he points out below (lines 53f.), is the function of the sense organs.<sup>9</sup> This, Plotinus says, is the relation of the rational part to *nous*: when the rational part is turned to *nous*, and, as it were, sees it, it somehow possesses its object without being marked by it (III.6.2.32–41). Since the point of the comparison is that the rational part is in a condition of

<sup>5</sup> His arguments against materialistic or quasi-materialistic views of the soul are most fully deployed in IV.7; see above 9ff.

<sup>6</sup> εἰ δέ ἐστιν οὐσία ἀμεγέθης καὶ δεῖ καὶ τὸ ἀφθαρτον αὐτῇ παρεῖναι, εὐλαβητέον αὐτῇ πάθη δίδόναι τοιαῦτα, μὴ καὶ λάθωμεν αὐτὴν φθαρτὴν εἶναι διδόντες (lines 28–30).

<sup>7</sup> See too ch. 8, 103f. and n. 8.

<sup>8</sup> On Plotinus’ use of tripartition see above 21ff.

<sup>9</sup> See below 70.

virtue when it conforms to *nous*, Plotinus appears to be assuming here the assimilation between subject and object of the Aristotelian theory of vision on which his own is based. If pressed this argument for the freedom from affection (*ἀπάθεια*) of the several parts of the soul – it is applied to the lower parts later in the chapter (lines 54ff.) – would imply that their normal state is disorder, but that they do not suffer if they behave virtuously under the influence of reason. This is not quite what Plotinus is meaning to convey. His point seems to be simply that any one state of the soul is related to any other state of the same part in the same way as the two possible states of a sense, in other words that both may be regarded as temporary modifications of a stable entity. The continuation of his argument indicates that this is what he is trying to show (cf. esp. lines 49f.). But if his words were pressed in the way we have suggested, it would still be open to Plotinus to argue that the meaning extracted from his statements was perfectly consonant with the principles of his system, in that any entity therein is only good in so far as it conforms with its ontological superiors.

When at the end of this chapter Plotinus comes to apply his conclusions to the two lower parts of the tripartite soul he admits causes of vice other than inattention to reason. Cowardice, the vice of the spirited part, can be caused by attention to a reason that is itself bad. It may also be due to deficiencies in the bodily instruments required for the exercise of virtue, or because the spirited part is somehow impeded from acting, or not aroused. Here again, Plotinus insists, no affection or change is involved (cf. III.6.2.54–60). He means, of course, no affection or change of the spirited part itself, as opposed to the limbs, for example, which may be unfit to meet the demands that the soul might make upon them. As for intemperance (*ἀκολασία*), the vice of the desiring part, this too is a result of that part of the soul acting on its own. But here Plotinus suggests that perhaps in most cases this vice may simply be the bad state of the body (ib 60–6).

In chapter 4 of the same treatise Plotinus gives the promised <sup>10</sup> discussion of the so-called passible part of the soul (*τὸ λεγόμενον παθητικὸν τῆς ψυχῆς*). That he takes this alleged passible part as having at least something in common with the spirited and desiring parts is shown by his remark that some account of the passible part has already been given in the preceding treatment of the affections which affect the spirited and desiring parts. Nevertheless, he says, some more needs to

<sup>10</sup> At III.6.1.17.

be said about it (III.6.4.5). The fact that some of the subsequent discussion covers points with which Plotinus has already dealt lends support to the impression that he regards it as particularly important to discuss as a whole the views implied by those attaching the label "passible" to some part or power of the soul (cf. *ib.* 5-7).

Plotinus writes that we must begin by deciding what is meant by the passible part and gives the general definition "that which seems to be the centre of the affections" (*περὶ ὃ τὰ πάθη δοκεῖ συνίστασθαι*). It is not, however, altogether clear what the passible part does mean in this chapter, or over what faculties it might extend. The term is not used outside this treatise, and seems simply to be taken over from the adherents of the kind of doctrines that Plotinus is trying to refute, to cover all that area of the soul which might be thought to become subject to affections. We might compare another division of the soul which Plotinus sometimes uses, that into a rational and an irrational part. This division too is not very precise, for "the irrational part" (*τὸ ἄλογον*), which should include sense-perception, may be used to describe the soul below that level (cf. IV.4.28.63ff.).<sup>11</sup> At III.6.4.7f. the affections are defined as what is attended by pleasure and pain (*οἷς ἔπεται ἡδονὴ καὶ λύπη*), and we can see from the discussion of fear which follows that pain refers to discomforts in the body which accompany the emotion, in this case the trembling, pallor and aphasia mentioned in lines 25f. The pleasure of the definition presumably therefore refers to the pleasurable sensations corresponding to pleasurable emotions.

The passible part, then, is the subject of the affections, and these involve pleasure or pain. An example of such an affection is fear, whose workings are described in lines 8-26. Fear is closely connected with the spirited part or faculty. So that must be included in the passible part. But further on Plotinus refers to the vegetative soul "which is the root and principle of the desiring and passible form" (*ὃ ἐστι ῥίζα καὶ ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἐπιθυμοῦντος καὶ παθητικοῦ εἶδους*: lines 32-4). What does "passible" mean here? Since it must include the spirited part it cannot merely be an alternative description of the desiring part. On the other hand it cannot exclude the desiring part with whose operations pleasure and pain are certainly associated, and which therefore falls under the stated

<sup>11</sup> On this passage cf. 24 above. "Ἄλογον ψυχῆς εἶδος is used at I.8.4.8 to describe that part of the soul whose defects produce intemperance, cowardice and other vices: it is not clear whether the reference is just to the vegetative soul and/or the desiring and passionate faculties in their sub-sensitive capacities, or whether sensation is included. At IV.9.3.10 *ἄλογος ψυχὴ* includes sensation but not the vegetative soul.

(in lines 7f.) definition of the passible part. Moreover the phrase "of the desiring and passible form" (τοῦ ἐπιθυμοῦντος καὶ παθητικοῦ εἶδους) picks up the reference to the desiring part (τὸ ἐπιθυμοῦν) at the beginning of the sentence in question, so that if anything is to be excluded it would have to be not the desiring, but the spirited part, and this, as we have shown, cannot be the case.

Thus it appears that Plotinus has not invested the references to a passible part with a definite content, and a *fortiori* that he is not concerned with an accurate picture of the Stoic view he is discussing.<sup>12</sup> We have already observed a possible case of such treatment of an opponent's views when we considered Plotinus' criticism of Aristotle's theory that the soul is the entelechy of the body.<sup>13</sup> We may compare two other cases of what one might be tempted to regard as merely careless reporting of opposing views. Both come in the course of Plotinus' discussion of Stoic views about the soul in IV.7. One is at IV.7.8.28f., where he argues against views about the virtues that would follow from the assumption that the soul is material, namely that they would be *pneuma* or blood. Now the Stoics certainly held that the virtues were material, and also that the soul was *pneuma*. They do not, however, appear to have said that it was blood, but only that the *pneuma* of which it was made was nourished from the blood or was an exhalation from it.<sup>14</sup> Is Plotinus deducing from this that the soul was blood, is he just unsympathetically lumping together as identical things that the Stoics merely connected, or is he saying, in full consciousness of the difference for them, that anyone who tries to maintain that the soul is *pneuma* or blood, or anything else of the sort, will be led into absurdity? The last of these explanations is attractive. But we must not of course forget the possibility that the identification may be due to some confusion in the doxographical tradition. One can see a possible source of such error in Nemesius. In a discussion of previous views which is apparently based on middle Platonic sources,<sup>15</sup> we find a series of arguments directed against the views that the soul is *pneuma* or blood.<sup>16</sup> Now Nemesius, or his source, have in fact distinguished the adherents of the two views, the Stoics for *pneuma* and Critias for blood.<sup>17</sup> But the attributions are separated from the discussion by

<sup>12</sup> Cf. SVF I, 202; III, 459.

<sup>13</sup> See above 12f.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. SVF I, 140; II, 781 and 782.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Dörrie, *Porphyrus' "Symmiktá Zetemata"* 111ff.

<sup>16</sup> *de Natura Hominis*, ch. 2, 72.14ff. Matthaei.

<sup>17</sup> *de Nat. Hom.* 67.6f. M.

several pages, so that a careless reader or compiler, concentrating on the refutations, might have forgotten them, or failed to reproduce, them. Thus he, in the first case, or his readers, in the second, may have taken the two views of soul in question as being part of the same body of doctrine. Moreover, since Nemesius', or his source's, attributions may stem from a doxography which was not originally attached to the discussions that follow,<sup>18</sup> these discussions may represent a stage where the confusion had already set in. Thus it is possible that Plotinus' source or sources may have failed to distinguish the two views of soul, and that he is not responsible for identifying them or for misrepresenting Stoic doctrine, whether deliberately or otherwise, by taking the soul as blood rather than as derived from, or sustained by the blood, as they in fact held it to be.<sup>19</sup>

In the second of the two cases no such explanation seems to be applicable. At IV.7.3.25-8 Plotinus is attacking the view that the unifying powers of soul are exercised by something which is in fact body. He specifies body with the words *ἀέρι καὶ πνεύματι*, air and *pneuma*. This is at first sight a clear reference to Stoicism. But the Stoics do not seem to have said that the soul is made of air and *pneuma*. The soul is *pneuma* or fire or a mixture of air and fire. A mixture of air and fire in fact amounts to *pneuma*, of which they are said to be the

<sup>18</sup> The doxography at the beginning of *de Nat. Hom.* 2 resembles, and is sometimes in verbal agreement with, the reports in the Aetius doxography, IV.3 (Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* 386ff.). But the parts of this incorporated in [Plutarch] *Epitome* and Stobaeus do not include the view that the soul is made of blood. In the extant doxographical material Critias' *placitum* is preserved by Theodoretus, *Gr. Aff. Cur.* V.18 = 127.13 Raeder, who, however, gives Critias as thinking that the soul was ἐξ αἵματος καὶ ὑγροῦ, Tertullian, *de Anima* ch. 5 = CSEL XX.i, 304.13, and Macrobius, in *Somnium Scipionis* I.14.20 = 59.9 Willis. Tertullian and Macrobius erroneously attribute it to Empedocles as well, presumably on the basis of fr. 105, line 3: αἷμα γὰρ ἀνθρώπους περιχάρδιόν ἐστι νόημα.

<sup>19</sup> In support of the view that Plotinus knew that the Stoics did not believe that the soul was blood, one might perhaps point out that he had read Aristotle's *de Anima*, which mentions that Critias and others thought that the soul was blood, 405b 5-7. But I know of no evidence which can prove that Plotinus had studied that part of the *de Anima* which deals with pre-Platonic opinions, and should be inclined to think that he might well not have bothered with it. Even if he had, Critias receives such scant attention that he could have been forgotten. Professor Dodds has suggested to me that Plotinus may have had Empedocles fr. 105 in mind. This is certainly possible, and if it were so he would not be alone in his mistake (see n. 18), but the apparently close relation between the first part of IV.7 and some doxographical handbook (see ch. 2, n. 4) suggests that if he did that too was in the source book. In any case the context in IV.7.8 does not suggest non-Stoic oponents. Apart from this Plotinus is likely to have accepted the opportunities Empedocles provided for not regarding him as a materialist.

constituents. The *pneuma* may be nourished by air or be an exhalation.<sup>20</sup> Was Plotinus thinking of *pneuma* and fire as equivalent, as they are said to be by Alexander at *de Anima Mantissa* 115.6, and so putting air and *pneuma*, instead of the usual combination of air and fire, on the same level? This seems unlikely, for he knew the difference between fire and *pneuma*, and mentions it in the next chapter of the same treatise, where he refers to those who endow *pneuma* with intelligence and say that it is an intellectual fire, that is a special kind of fire (IV.7.4.3).<sup>21</sup> All this suggests that when Plotinus talks about air and *pneuma* being given powers which are proper to soul, he is once again unconcerned with the exact statement of a doctrine which he is setting out to refute. It seems rather as if in all such cases of apparently loose or inaccurate statement of a position which he proposes to attack, Plotinus' aim is to attack any doctrine which is based on something like the view which he brings up for discussion.<sup>22</sup> Such a procedure would increase the generality and so the value of his arguments.

So both the internal evidence of III.6.4 and Plotinus' methods elsewhere support the view that the subject of his discussion there is the general thesis that some part of the soul might properly be described as passible. It seems clear enough, though perhaps this need hardly be said, that Plotinus himself does not seriously consider that there might be a passible part of the soul. What we have, then, in III.6.4 is a final attack on views that have already to a considerable extent been shown to be wrong by the examination of the affections in chapters I-3 of the same treatise.

In addition Plotinus now gives us some further points. While he has previously concentrated on affections which originate from states of the soul and does so here too, he does point out that affections may in fact arise in two ways. They may arise from an opinion, which leads to a movement elsewhere, or the affections may be at the start of the process and produce an opinion in the appropriate part of the soul (cf. III.6.4.8-13). Plotinus has already shown that no change is involved in an opinion (III.6.3.11ff.), and he refers back to his previous discussion on this point. But he does now say a little more on how the opinion comes to be expressed in physical manifestations. It produces a kind of awareness in the part of the soul that is said to feel fear. The opposition

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *SVF* I, 134-141 and II, 773-787 *passim*.

<sup>21</sup> ἐννοῦν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ πῦρ νοερὸν τιθέμενοι.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. now Rist, "On Tracking Alexander of Aphrodisias", *Arch. Gesch. Phil.* 48 (1966) 89.



say that this results in disturbance (ταραχή) and shock (ἐκπληξίς). Plotinus says it is clear that the primary act of imagination (φαντασία) which is opinion is in the soul, as is also its product in the lower part of the organism, which he describes as a sort of faint opinion and unexamined mental picture (ἀμυδρὰ ὅλον δόξα καὶ ἀνεπίκριτος φαντασία; cf. III.6.4.14-23). We might think of this as a kind of secondary φαντασία, for Plotinus does not usually talk of φαντασία moving from above the level of the sub-sensitive soul down to it. He compares it to the Stoics' imageless activity in nature. He continues by saying that while the images are in the soul, their product is a disturbance in the body, namely the physical signs of fear. All this is no longer in the soul (ib. 23-7), and that is of course the point of the analysis. In fact Plotinus goes on to argue, with doubtful validity, that if the soul were itself affected it would be unable to pass on the emotion to the body.

By breaking up the process into several stages Plotinus has now shown that the part of an emotion which involves physical upheaval takes place in the body. He also provides a more general argument against the view that the soul is involved in change. The alleged passible part of the soul is a form (εἶδος) and not a body, and no form is subject to disturbance or to any affection. It is only the matter which it informs that is subject to affections, while the form merely acts on the matter by being present. Even the vegetative soul is not subject to the movements it initiates, and if it is subject to any movement at all, this is some other form of movement or activity (ἐνέργεια). It does not, for example, grow when it causes growth. So the nature of this form must be an activity that works by being present. Plotinus concludes that the passible part is the *cause* of the affection, and is the source of a motion which may result from a perceptual image or take place without an image (cf. III.6.4.30-46).

Plotinus would now seem to have satisfied himself that the soul does not undergo any essential change as a result of the emotions. But he has not denied that they may influence it. And it is in this light that he will answer the question which opens III.6.5: Τί οὖν χρὴ ζητεῖν ἀπαθῆ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐκ φιλοσοφίας ποιεῖν μὴδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν πάσχουσιν; <sup>23</sup> This question is not quite as paradoxical as it seems, and is doubtless meant to seem, at first sight. Kristeller, for whom it exemplifies his sometimes exaggerated division into "aktuale" and "gegenständliche" philosophy thinks

<sup>23</sup> "Why, then, ought we to seek to make the soul free from affections by means of philosophy when it is not affected to begin with?". To translate this sentence necessarily obscures part of its meaning.

that it involves a complete contradiction.<sup>24</sup> He takes μηδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν πάσχουσιν as meaning quite generally "subject to no influence", and translates: "Weshalb muss man dann danach streben, die Seele unbeeinflussbar zu machen, da sie schon von vornherein keinen Einfluss erfährt?"<sup>25</sup> For him both πάσχειν<sup>26</sup> and ἀπαθής, with which he is primarily concerned here, are ambiguous. But the whole point of Plotinus' discussion in the previous chapters has been to show that the soul does not suffer change (πάσχειν) in the physical sense. What ambiguity there is is rather to be found in ἀπαθής, which could have either or both of two meanings. It could be a negation of πάσχειν in the sense of that word which we have just indicated, or refer to the soul's lack of concern with, or resistance to the effects of, the affections. With the first meaning the sentence is of course a paradox. With the second the paradox disappears. And the ensuing discussion resolves the paradox precisely by showing that our aim should be to make the soul ἀπαθής in the second meaning, that is, resistant to the affections.

There Plotinus says that the need to pursue this aim arises from the fact that a sort of image (φάντασμα) produced in the so-called passible part of the soul produces a further affection (πάθημα), disturbance, and that with this is associated the image of an expected evil (III.6.5.2-5). Plotinus is still using the example of fear which he used in chapter 4. There an opinion about an expected evil was given as the source of the emotion when Plotinus showed that fear need not involve changes in the "passible part" of the soul. Now he is concerned with the reaction of the rest of the soul. This reaction, with its own image of an expected evil, is also termed an affection (πάθος), and this, he now tells us, must be eradicated, for it is incompatible with the proper state of the soul which was free from affections when the image which causes the affection had not yet entered it. Plotinus then asks what is meant by purification (κάθαρσις) and the separation (τὸ χωρίζειν) of the soul from the body, when – as he has shown at length – the soul does not suffer corruption. His answer is that purification consists in the soul keeping to itself, not turning elsewhere, and not taking up opinions that are inappropriate to it, whatever these opinions or affections, for Plotinus has shown that opinions may cause affections, might be. Purification

<sup>24</sup> *Begriff der Seele* 40, cf. too *ibid.* 7.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 40. On p. 7 he gives a similar version which perhaps emphasizes even more the alleged equivalence of ἀπαθής and μηδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν πάσχουσιν by leaving ἀπαθής in Greek and then rendering μηδὲ πάσχουσιν by "es".

<sup>26</sup> Cf. too *ibid.* 31 and 33.

means not attending to images and producing affections from them. In the case of the soul which is not in the body in such a way as to belong to it, purification and separation are to look up and away from what is below,<sup>27</sup> to be like a light that is not in the midst of darkness. But even that which is in darkness is unaffected ( $\delta\pi\alpha\theta\eta\varsigma$ ), remarks Plotinus, so drawing attention again to the position that in one sense the soul is always  $\delta\pi\alpha\theta\eta\varsigma$  anyhow. For the passible part, he continues, purification is an awakening from ridiculous images and a refusal to look at them, separation lies in not inclining to any great extent to lower things, and not entertaining images of them. Separation could also mean the eradication of those things from which the passible part keeps itself clear when its vehicle is a thin body and it is not borne on the turbulent exhalations which result from gluttony (cf. III.6.5.5-29).<sup>28</sup>

We may assume that this last suggestion about the meaning of separation is meant to give but one example of a general principle, namely that all forms of over-indulgence in the body should be eliminated. We may recall that at III.6.2.65f. Plotinus mentioned the possibility that what is regarded as vice in the desiring part of the soul might, in most cases, be simply the unsatisfactory state of the body. Apart from these two references to the importance of the body Plotinus says no more about this in III.6 where he is mainly concerned, as we have shown, to separate the functions of body and soul in the emotions, and to define the ways in which the soul is free from affections. But it is clear from statements elsewhere that he usually regards the body as the principal source of the emotions, whatever part the soul, or some of its faculties, might have in their operation. A soul which is not free from

<sup>27</sup> That Plotinus is describing purification and separation separately for the higher soul and the so-called passible part is pointed out by Dodds, "Plotiniana", *CQ* 16 (1922) 95.

<sup>28</sup> This sentence is often taken as evidence that Plotinus believed in an astral or pneumatic body; so Dodds, *Proclus* 318 n. 1, and Theiler and Armstrong (Loeb edition, vol. III) *ad loc.* Rist, *Plotinus* 190 and 264 n. 12 cites it alone to support the statement that Plotinus' belief in a vehicle supporting the soul seems certain. All this is presumably based on the appearance of  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  and the verb  $\delta\chi\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  in the same sentence, since  $\delta\chi\eta\mu\alpha$  later became a technical term for such a body. But the reference to  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  may well be to a medical theory: it was often held that bad diet had an adverse effect on the  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ , cf. e.g. *Anon. Londiniensis* (= *Supplementum Aristotelicum* III) V.35 - VI.*fin.* As for  $\delta\chi\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ , Plotinus uses the compound  $\epsilon\pi\alpha\chi\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  elsewhere to describe the relation of higher to lower being (cf. I.1.8.9 and IV.2.1.21), hence it would be quite appropriate to the direct "supraposition" of soul on body. So Plotinus may well not be talking about pneumatic bodies at all here. For less doubtful references to the notion see below n. 19 to ch. 10.

affections in the way that Plotinus in III.6.5. says we must try to make it so, that is, one which does not turn away from the body, is a bad soul. Excessive association with the body produces desires, and all affections are due to the soul's involvement with the body (cf. I.6.5.54-6). The soul in the body may assume irrational desires, anger and other affections, if it does not reject them and dissociate itself as far as possible from the body (cf. IV.7.10.7-11). In another early treatise Plotinus says that we generally resemble our parents in respect of appearance and certain of the soul's irrational affections (τινα τῶν ἀλόγων τῆς ψυχῆς παθῶν; III.1.5.27f.). Here Plotinus is clearly thinking of these irrational affections as closely connected with physical characteristics, since the point of the remark is to show that not all the features of our physical make-up can be due to our environment.<sup>29</sup> Further, Plotinus makes it clear that he regards the body's condition as an important factor in the individual's susceptibility to emotions. If the soul makes any concession to the constitution (χράσεις) of the body, it will be forced to have desires or be angry (III.1.8.15f.). Differences in the body's constitution produce variations in the strength of the desires, which also differ in different people: καὶ σφοδρότεροι δὲ αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι κράσει τοιαύτῃ σωματίων, ἄλλαι δὲ ἄλλων (I.8.8.30f., cf. IV.4.31.39-42). As evidence in support of this view Plotinus mentions that temporary states produce similar variations (I.8.8.34-7). He points out that men who are sated are different both in their desires and their thoughts from those who are hungry and thirsty, and, moreover, that among those whose needs have been satisfied there may still be such differences, corresponding to the food or drink they have taken.<sup>30</sup>

All this might suggest that the body is almost entirely responsible for the emotions. So when he is discussing anger in IV.3-4, Plotinus notes that the proclivity to anger accords with the disposition of the

<sup>29</sup> That the factors in our *κράσεις* are partly derived from our parents may in fact be the sense of the clause preceding the sentence in lines 27f., if we accept Sleeman's emendation *γειναιμένων* (in *CQ* 20 (1926) 153). This is admitted into the text even by H-S, though not by Cilento who retains the MS *γι(γ)νομένων*. If the MS reading is retained the clause, which reads *λέγει δὲ καὶ παρὰ τῶν γ...* is translatable – Cilento renders "e influenze discendono ancora dal flusso del divenire" – but hardly provides the contrast which the context requires with the idea that geographical and environmental conditions influence our constitution. Sleeman says the context is much the same as in III.1.6, *in it.*, where he wishes to read *γειναιμένους* for *γινομένους*, cf. *loc. cit.* 152f. It is certainly similar and *γειναιμένους* would make good sense there, but so does *γινομένους*.

<sup>30</sup> This is an expansion of Plotinus' compressed statement: *πλήρεις μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ταῖς διανοαῖς, κενοὶ δὲ ἄλλοι, καὶ ταδί πληρωθέντες ἄλλοι, ταδί δὲ ἄλλοι.*

body, that those whose blood and bile are turbulent are quick to anger, while those who are not are described as cold and lacking in bile (κατεψυγμένοι, ἄχολοι). He also mentions that animals are angry only at what seems to hurt them. These points, he says, would lead one to refer anger to that part of the soul which is concerned with the maintenance of the body. So too, he continues, the fact that the very same people are more irascible when they are ill than when they are well, or when they are hungry than when they are not, indicate that anger, or the principle of anger, belong to the body in a certain state, and that the blood and bile are, as it were, ensouled, and produce certain movements, so that when the body is affected in a certain way the blood and the bile move immediately. Perception then takes place, and an image brings the soul into partnership with the body's disposition and makes it move against the cause of the pain (IV.4.28.28-43). This is one group of facts which Plotinus takes into consideration in trying to determine how anger works, but he gives equal attention to forms of anger that start from the soul. The discussion of pleasure and pain, desire and anger, from which the above section is taken is particularly valuable in that Plotinus is there concerned primarily with the operations of these affections, and especially the part played by body and soul in each. He is not, as in III.6.1-5, preoccupied with establishing that the soul is impassible. Neither, on the other hand, is he paying special attention to the undesirable influences which the soul may undergo through its association with body or matter, as he is in the passages from I.6, IV.7 and I.8 to which we have referred. But, while the emphases are different, we shall see that the doctrines are basically the same.

Plotinus begins his investigation with the question whether the body already has some soul that is peculiar to it and whether what the body has is just φύσις,<sup>31</sup> the vegetative area of the soul (IV.4.18.1-4). We may note at the outset that his approach here requires more precision in terminology than we found in III.6. He draws attention to the fact that the body to which ψυχή<sup>32</sup> and φύσις are attached is not itself devoid of soul but has a trace of it, and that it is the body so qualified that is the subject of pleasure and pain (IV.4.18.4-9). It is important to remember that Plotinus thus regards the body itself as ensouled, for it explains

<sup>31</sup> This word may be used as the equivalent of φυτόν, cf. ch. 3 n. 23.

<sup>32</sup> ψυχή is not translated here since in this context it does not mean simply "soul", but has a technical sense, namely the part of the soul above that which is described as φύσις.

how he can describe the body as feeling needs, pleasure, or pain even before these feelings are transmitted to the φύσις, let alone to the ψυχή. We, that is, the higher soul, perceive pleasure or pain in the body without being affected by it. Nonetheless we care for this body because it is attached to us, and the weaker we are, and the more we associate with the body and consider it important, the more we care. The affections in question do not really belong to the ψυχή, but to the body in a certain state – that is a body with soul added – and a sort of compound (κοινόν or συναμφότερον; IV.4.18.9–21). Plotinus argues for the view that pleasure and pain belong to the compound on the grounds that anything which is simple is self-sufficient, and so a soulless body, for example, could not suffer. Division would not affect it, but only its unity, by which Plotinus presumably means that the nature of the pieces would remain the same, whether they were together or not. Soul by itself, he continues, is exempt even from this affection. But when two different things are united, and the unity is extraneous, then, he suggests, an impediment to this unity might reasonably be considered to be the cause of pain. This would not apply if the two things in question were bodies, for then they would be of one nature. But when one thing wishes to come together with another, and the inferior one manages to retain something of the better of the two, but only a trace of it, and so becomes other than it was but has failed to attain what it could not have, the result is that it has entered into an unstable partnership with the higher. The result is fluctuation between greater and lesser unity (cf. IV.4.18.19–34).

It is in terms of the frustration or realization of this wish for unity that Plotinus explains pain and pleasure. We may recall again that Plotinus thinks of the body as having its own trace of soul, for this makes it easier to understand how he can think of the body having such a wish. This wish is, however, but one case of Plotinus' general principle that all things desire what is above them.<sup>33</sup> Plotinus defines pain as "cognition of the body's withdrawal as it is being deprived of a trace of soul", and pleasure as "the living being's cognition that the trace of soul is again taking its place in the body" (IV.4.19.2–4).<sup>34</sup> We may wonder how he conceives of the body being deprived of soul, for he does

<sup>33</sup> On this cf. Arnou, *Désir* 87ff. Arnou shows that difficulties are involved in talking of matter desiring, *ibid.* 89–91. The σῶμα with which we are concerned here is of course more than just matter.

<sup>34</sup> γνώσις ἀπαγωγῆς σώματος ἰσχύματος ψυχῆς στερισκομένου and γνώσις ζφους ἰσχύματος ψυχῆς ἐν σώματι ἐναρμοζομένου πάλιν αὖ.

not tell us here. The explanation is probably to be found in his view that all things receive as much of soul, or of the intelligible in general, as they are fit to receive (cf. e.g. VI.4.15.3-6). If the body is injured or hurt it could be considered less fit to be a receptacle for soul.

Having given his definitions Plotinus goes on to say more about how our awareness of pleasure and pain is a form of cognition free of affection (*γνώσις ἀπαθής*) a point which he has already mentioned at IV.4.18.9f. The affection takes place in the body, the perception of it is in the sensitive soul. This is enabled to perceive the affection and pass it on by virtue of its juxtaposition to the body. It is the body that is hurt, and by hurt Plotinus says, he means it is that which has undergone the affection (*πέπονθεν ἐκείνο*). So, for example, if it is cut. It is cut *qua* mass, but it suffers the ensuing distress by virtue of being not just a mass, but a mass of a certain kind, by which he means a mass associated with a kind of soul. The discomfort and inflammation caused by the cut take place in the damaged part. The soul perceives them and is able to say where the pain is. It does not suffer the pain itself. If it did, the fact that the soul is present throughout the body would make it impossible for it to locate the pain in some particular part of the body. It would rather have to report that it was in all the body, as the soul itself is. A toe or finger may hurt, and we talk of a man being in pain because that member hurts. Thus feeling pain involves perception of the pain in the body, but it is not the perception that is the pain. The perception is merely cognition of it (cf. IV.4.19.4-27).<sup>35</sup>

In this account of pleasure and pain Plotinus has been careful to separate not only the functions of body and soul, but also those of the various levels of soul. An understanding of the operation of pleasure and pain is a useful preliminary to the discussion of desire, which Plotinus now undertakes on the same principles. It follows from the previous discussion, he remarks, that the body's desires also originate in the compound and the body, these being such as they were there understood to be. It would be wrong, he argues, to attribute the source of the desire to just any body, or to attribute the craving for something bitter or sweet to the soul itself. We should attribute all this to a body which wants to be more than a mere body but which, by virtue of being a body, is endowed with more motions and urges than the soul. In its different states this compound has different requirements, which it would not have if it were just a body (IV.4.20.1-10). As in the case of

<sup>35</sup> On this view of perception see further below 70.

pain the soul takes note, and then acts to evade the cause of the pain, so here the sensitive soul and the lower soul called φύσις take note of the requirement. This lower soul notes the desire, which has become clear by the time it reaches it, for it is the terminal point of the desire that starts in the body. Sensation notes the resultant image and passes it on to the higher soul which meets, or holds out against, the requirement (IV.4.20.10-20).

The exact relation between φύσις, σῶμα (body), what Plotinus calls τὸ τοιόνδε σῶμα (the body so qualified) and the so-called compound has not always been immediately obvious in the course of the discussion. So at IV.4.18.20f, where Plotinus refers to the affections as belonging to the body so qualified and a certain compound or dual nature (σώματος τοιοῦδε καὶ τινος κοινοῦ καὶ συναμφοτέρου), one might be tempted to equate these terms. But in fact the κοινόν or compound is here a collective term for body plus φύσις.<sup>36</sup> The body in question is the body as modified by irradiation from the φύσις element in the combination. It is this body, which becomes a living body by the superimposition of φύσις that is "the body so qualified". This is the picture that emerges when Plotinus is thinking of φύσις as the lowest part of the soul that is added to a body to produce a "living being" (ζῶον). But when he is not concerned with making careful distinctions in the vertical section of the world which is a living being, then he does not explicitly distinguish between φύσις, or its equivalents, as the part of the soul that maintains life, and that reflection of it which forms matter and is responsible for the conformation of all the material in the world that is not alive, in other words what we should call inanimate nature.<sup>37</sup> When he uses "the body so qualified" or similar expressions, Plotinus is directing attention to the fact that this is a body which receives the extra psychic element derived from contact with φύσις *qua* principle of living bodies. The expressions in question do not, however, usually include as much soul as is included in the terms meaning compound and composite or dual nature. Unfortunately Plotinus is not

<sup>36</sup> Elsewhere κοινόν and ζῶον etc. include sensation as well, cf. IV.3.26.1-8, I.1.7.5. But this does not mean that κοινόν is almost equivalent to τοιόνδε σῶμα in IV.4.18, as suggested by Theiler in his notes on I.1.5.1 and IV.4.18.20. The discussion of the affections in I.1 is aimed only at showing that they involve no more of the soul than is included in the κοινόν as defined there. We do not there find such a close analysis as in IV.4, but the outlines are the same. It may be, however, that Plotinus did change his views on the arrangement of the faculties, see above 40f.

<sup>37</sup> The distinction is not made when Plotinus is thinking of the body and the lowest part of the soul as parts of the cosmos; on this see above 27f.



fully consistent in his terminology, and at some points in the discussion "the body so qualified" does seem to be used to indicate body plus *φύσις*, so for example at IV.4.18.11.

The expression is, however, used in the strict sense when Plotinus goes on to explain why he differentiates between a desire in the body and a desire in *φύσις*, rather than just taking the body so qualified to be the subject of a desire which the sensitive faculty perceives. His reasons are these. He assumes that *φύσις* pre-exists the body which it forms, and so that *φύσις* and the body so qualified produced by it are two different things. It cannot then be *φύσις* that starts the desire. This must be done by the body so qualified, which actually suffers pain or deprivation and wants their opposites. The *φύσις* on the other hand tries, as it were, to guess the requirements of the sufferer, and attempts to remedy the condition. In the search for a remedy it allies itself with the body's desire, and this passes to it from the body. The body, then, desires on its own account, and this might be called some sort of preliminary desire.<sup>38</sup> *Φύσις* desires for and through something other than itself. The soul which provides, or fails to provide, the object of the desire, is different from both (IV.4.20.20-36). To clinch the point that the body is the first stage in desire, Plotinus points out that desires may vary with age or health, while the relevant part of the soul, the desiring faculty, remains unchanged. The manifold changes in the body produce manifold desires (IV.4.21.1-6). To meet the possible objection that differences in the body are sufficient to produce different desires, Plotinus argues that this would not explain why the desiring faculty should have various desires when it did not itself profit from their satisfaction. The faculty itself receives neither the food, nor the warmth, nor any of the other things with which it is concerned. All these go to the body (IV.4.21.14-21). He provides a further argument which seems less helpful. He says that the whole process of desiring is not necessarily set in motion as a result of an initial desire of the body. He claims that we may refuse food or drink even before we have reasoned about the matter, and that this shows that the desire only progresses to a certain point, and that the *φύσις* does not take it up. The desire in the body cannot pass to the *φύσις*, which is the arbiter of whether or not a thing is natural (IV.4.21.6-14). Plotinus is apparently thinking of some instinctive reaction against certain kinds of food or

<sup>38</sup> This expression is deliberately vague, since the text is not certain.

<sup>39</sup> This seems to be Plotinus' thought, but exactly what he says is not clear. H-S' version of lines 12-14 is probably the only way of translating the text as it

drink,<sup>39</sup> but it is not clear that such a reaction does take place in man.

After a long digression Plotinus turns in IV.4.28 to consider whether anger, like desire, pleasure and pain, originates in the living body when it is in a certain state, or in some part of it such as the heart or bile.<sup>40</sup> He also enquires whether, as was the case with φύσις in the other affections, something else provides the psychic trace (ἔχνος) necessary for the emotion to work, or whether anger is complete in itself and no longer depends on the vegetative or sensitive faculty (ll. 1-10).<sup>41</sup> Plotinus remarks that desire is connected with the vegetative soul (φυτικόν) and can be said to have its principle in the liver where the vegetative soul, which provides the relevant trace of soul, primarily exercises its activity (ib. 10-17). He then goes on to ask exactly what θυμός is, here using the word to include a possible faculty of passion or anger<sup>42</sup> as well as the emotion, and what kind of soul is involved. He also raises

stands, but does not seem to fit the sense very well, nor to take sufficient account of the play on κατὰ/παρὰ φύσιν which appears to run through this part of the sentence. The sense seems to be that the φύσις rejects desires that are not κατὰ φύσιν, i.e. unnatural and/or unfit for the φύσις to assume. This sense can be rescued by putting a comma after ἐχούσης as does Theiler, though a genitive absolute here is perhaps a little difficult. Cilento wishes to delete ἐχούσης, which would certainly make matters easier, but it is difficult to see how it should have found its way into the text. Should we perhaps read ἐχουσας, referring to ἐπιθυμίας – admittedly not very elegant among all the accusatives agreeing with φύσιν?

<sup>40</sup> Some points from this argument have already been mentioned separately in other connections: they are repeated here to show the train of Plotinus' thought.

<sup>41</sup> In line 10 φυτικόν, suggested by Sleeman and adopted by Harder, Cilento and Theiler, also in *Die Vorbereitung des Neuplatonismus* (Berlin 1930) 158, seems almost certain to be correct since the whole point of Plotinus' investigation is to see whether θυμός, like ἐπιθυμία, depends on αἰσθησις and φύσις, which also provides an ἔχνος, for its operation. He concludes later that it does; cf. Sleeman's remarks in "Some notes on Plotinus", *CQ* 20 (1926) 153f. Hence H-S' explanation of the MS θυμικοῦ (B has μυθικοῦ), that θυμικοῦ *qua* psychic is opposed to θυμός *qua* corporeal, is not altogether satisfactory. Since, however, φυτικοῦ could quite easily have become corrupted to θυμικοῦ under the influence of the preceding θυμός, which is separated from it by only two words, it seems unnecessary to go to great lengths to defend the MSS. If φυτικοῦ is right there is no need for any punctuation before θυμός, or even αἰσθητικοῦ. Sleeman thinks ἦ in line 9 "doubtless conceals ἦν, a 'philosophical imperfect'", and translates "whether that which bestows the psychic trace is different, so that here we have this one distinct thing, θυμός, no longer deriving . . ." But this part of the sentence makes good sense as it stands: the question is "whether some other thing provides the psychic trace or (whether) here θυμός . . ." This completes the parallel with the discussion of ἐπιθυμία. As well as asking whether the ἀρχή of the emotion is in τὸ τοῖονδε σῶμα, Plotinus asks whether the ἔχνος of soul is provided by something else, viz. the φύσις or φυτικόν which provides it for ἐπιθυμία.

<sup>42</sup> Theiler actually emends it to θυμικόν because of the αὐτό which picks it up; see his note to line 18. But Plotinus is quite capable of using the neuter pronoun to pick up a masculine which he is using as the equivalent of a neuter.

the question whether a trace of soul from the *θυμός* works in the region of the heart or elsewhere to bring the motion to the compound, or whether in this case no trace is involved but the passionate faculty is itself sufficient to produce the act of being angry (ib. 18–21). From the fact that anger arises not only from bodily suffering, but also from the misfortunes or wrongful actions of others, Plotinus concludes that perception and some sort of awareness must be involved in anger. He points out that this might lead one to think that anger is not based on the vegetative soul (ib. 22–8). But he argues that there is a connection between the individual's bodily condition and his disposition to anger, and that this fact would lead to the opposite conclusion, namely that it is the principle which maintains the body that is the basis of anger, a conclusion also suggested by the immediate effect on the blood and bile of injury to the body (ib. 28–43).<sup>43</sup> Plotinus next returns to the idea that anger can also start, so to speak, from above, with the point that the soul may think about an injustice and call to its aid whatever it is that produces those physical manifestations of anger which he has previously described. He now shows that in both cases, when anger starts from above as well as when it is due to some pain or condition of the body, the emotion only works by means of parts of the body. A trace of the soul by its presence sets up the movement that leads to action. That the body must be involved in anger already suggests that its principle, the vegetative soul, must be involved, and Plotinus tries to show that this is the case by pointing to the relation between an individual's proclivity to anger and his concern with bodily pleasure (cf. IV.4.28.43–58). The desire involved in this concern has already, as we have seen, been shown to be connected with the vegetative soul. Plotinus concludes by arguing that any division of the irrational part of the soul which separates the spirited or passionate part (*θυμοειδής*) from the vegetative soul is erroneous. It is the same part of the soul which provides the trace which operates in both anger and desire (cf. IV.4.28.63–72).<sup>44</sup> Finally he says that it would not be unreasonable to think of the trace of soul which produces anger as functioning around the heart, for while the soul itself is not there, we do find there the source or principle (*ἀρχή*) of the blood in a certain state, which we have seen to be the proximate cause of anger (ib. 72–5).

From this discussion of anger, as from the previous discussion of desire, we can see more precisely how Plotinus saw the soul's part in the

<sup>43</sup> See above 57f.

<sup>44</sup> On this discussion see above, ch. 3, 23f. and n. 16.

emotions. Whereas in less technical expositions, such as that in III.6, he referred simply to ψυχή, soul in general, or rather vaguely to an irrational or a higher soul, we now see just what such references imply.<sup>45</sup> The "soul" which is directly involved in the affections is in fact merely the vegetative soul and that reflection from it which gives life to the body.<sup>46</sup> It is only in this body, when it is in certain conditions, and the φύσις directly above it, that disturbances take place. Even the φύσις, however, only serves to pass on impulses which originate outside it. Communication with the higher soul is assured by sensation and imagination (cf. IV.8.8.9–11, IV.4.17.11–14). This higher soul is sufficiently detached to decide whether or not to accede to the promptings of the lower partner (cf. IV.4.20.18–20), and may refuse to identify itself with the suffering of its colleague. It is in such terms that Plotinus is able to give an answer to Epicurus' alleged claim that it can be pleasant to be roasted in the bull of Phalaris.<sup>47</sup> The mistake, he says, lies in thinking that it is the same thing which suffers the pain and makes this assertion. In Plotinus' concept of the happy man the two are different, and while the one suffers pain the other contemplates the good (cf. I.4.13.7–12). If it restrains itself from taking more than the necessary minimum of interest in the things below it the higher soul may be considered free of the affections (cf. esp. I.2.5). If it involves itself intimately in the life of the lower soul, it will become corrupted in conformity with the law that each thing becomes what it does (cf. VI.7.6.17f.). In this situation, though the higher soul is still strictly free

<sup>45</sup> But see above 40f. on the possible fluctuation in Plotinus' classification of the lower soul.

<sup>46</sup> P. Merlan says that Plotinus tries to extricate himself from the difficulty involved in the soul's impassibility by sometimes assuming a higher and lower soul of which only the latter is changeable, and sometimes saying that what is present in the body is not the soul itself but only its image or trace, *HLGP* 46. It should by now be clear that these notions are in fact identical: the difference is one of terminology and not of doctrine.

<sup>47</sup> The version of Epicurus' doctrine which makes him say that the actual torture is pleasant goes back at least as far as Cicero, cf. *Tusc.* II.7.17 and Pohlenz' note *ad loc.*, and V.10.31, *de Fin.* II.27.88. It also appears in Seneca, *Epp.* 66.18 and 67.15. Harder's note on the passage in Plotinus seems to accept this version. What Epicurus did hold was that a man can still be happy, εὐδαιμων, while he is in pain: he does not deny that torture is painful; cf. Diogenes Laertius X.118. On his deathbed Epicurus wrote to Idomeneus that his joy at the memory of past conversations with him outweighed his present sufferings, Diog. Laert. X.22. Cf. C. Bailey, *The Greek Atomists and Epicurus* (Oxford 1928) 497f., and N. W. de Witt, *Epicurus and his Philosophy* (Minneapolis 1954) 242. De Witt thinks that Cicero's version is a deliberate misrepresentation of Epicurus; otherwise Pohlenz, *loc. cit.*

from affections,<sup>48</sup> the lower elements will assume the mastery (cf. IV.4.17.20ff. and VI. 4.15.23ff.). And when Plotinus is thinking of the soul from the dynamic point of view, he does tend to think of even the higher soul being somehow changed. But we must remember that such corruption cannot be more than temporary. It can be removed by a process of purification either in this life or in another. Nevertheless even at this level of soul, and more particularly at the level of  $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and its trace, Plotinus is not able to maintain that exemption from the body's influence which his dualistic view of the body-soul relation in fact requires. Theoretically nothing should ever happen to the soul. We have seen that some things may, and how.

<sup>48</sup> Dodds, *Proclus* 243, note to prop. 80, thinks that in two early works Plotinus appears to accept that the embodied soul is not impassible: V.9[5].4.12 and IV.8[6].2.29f. Dodds admits that the apparent inconsistency between these and later works may be due to ambiguities in the words  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  and  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$  rather than to a change of views, and refers to Kristeller, *Begriff der Seele* 40ff. But in a footnote referring to a point made just below Dodds still talks of "Plotinus' later position". Apart from differences in the meaning of  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$  and its cognates (see too 55 above) such apparent inconsistencies are not difficult to find if one does not bear in mind that  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  so often refers to the whole continuum, from discursive reason down to the lowest trace of soul, or to some part of it, rather than just to the higher soul, cf. e.g. II.9.2.4ff. It is only in discussions such as that in IV.4 which we have considered that Plotinus is careful to avoid this imprecision. In the passage from V.9.4 Plotinus seems to be considering all levels of soul as one for the purposes of the discussion, while at IV.8.2.28-30 we have an expression of the viewpoint from which soul is seen to adapt itself in accordance with its activities: as a result the human soul, considered as a whole, is not there viewed as impassible while the world soul is (cf. esp. IV.8.2.42ff.).

## SENSE-PERCEPTION

It has often been noticed that the Greek vocabulary was unable to distinguish between sensation and perception.<sup>1</sup> Both the receipt of a stimulus by the sense mechanism, and the cognitive act that may follow, had to be expressed by the word αἴσθησις and its cognates. This does not of course mean that such a distinction could not be made. While the early Greek thinkers, whose materialistic viewpoint would in any case have made it extremely difficult for them to distinguish sensation from perception, clearly failed to do so, both Plato and Aristotle advanced some way towards a differentiation, and it can be argued that they did in fact succeed in separating the two processes in a satisfactory way.<sup>2</sup> I do not intend to discuss this question here, but think it is safe to say that it is by no means immediately obvious that either of them did. Certainly they did not do so with the clarity that one might perhaps expect if the difference had been well marked in their minds.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. J. I. Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition* (Oxford 1906) 202, who says that Greek thinkers generally failed to make the distinction, and notes that αἴσθησις, when it did not mean feeling, usually meant perception; G. Nakhnikian, "Plato's theory of Sensation, I", *Review of Metaphysics* 9 (1955) 129; D. W. Hamlyn, "Aristotle's account of Aesthesia in the *De Anima*", *CQ* n.s. 9 (1959) 6. Hamlyn also says that the distinction would be impossible in Greek except by inventing new terminology, though he admits that Aristotle was to some extent aware of the difference, and takes his use of the word κρίσις in conjunction with αἴσθησις in numerous passages of the *de An.*, and various other statements, as evidence of this, *ibid.* 8. But Plotinus made the distinction within the framework of the existing terminology.

<sup>2</sup> For Plato cf. Nakhnikian, *loc. cit.* 130, where he announces his intention of treating Plato's theories of sensation and perception separately in his consideration of *Theaetetus* 151b-e (*ibid.* 131-48). But he seems to leave it to the reader to find the distinction in his exposition. So too in Pt. II of the same article, *ibid.* 306-27; also Beare, *op. cit.* 273f., but cf. 211, sidenote. For Aristotle cf. the remarks of Hamlyn referred to in n. 1.

With Plotinus the case is different. His constant insistence on the disjunction of body and soul, which we have repeatedly observed, already puts him in a good position to see the two components involved in the process of cognition by means of the senses. Professor Dodds has remarked that "Plotinus distinguishes sensation from perception more clearly than any previous thinker . . ." <sup>3</sup> It is hardly surprising that this should be so. Given his views on the nature of body and soul and their union, it would be strange if we did not find him making some sort of division between the processes that take place at the periphery of the body, where the first contact with the objects of sense-perception must necessarily be made, and the accompanying activity in the soul. For Plotinus there could hardly be any question of a single indivisible act linking the soul and the objects of the senses. He had, of course, to make do with one term to discuss both sensation and perception, and, as a result, it cannot always be clear apart from the context what exactly is meant by a particular statement. But the deficiencies in the terminology available, and the consequently wide range of meanings for which αἰσθησις had to be used, <sup>4</sup> did not prevent him from making and maintaining the distinction in question. That this is so will be apparent from an examination of some of the details of his theory of sense-perception.

As so often happens when Plotinus is discussing aspects of the sensible world, we find that the evidence is incomplete as well as scattered, and that the coverage of the subject is uneven. Thus we find that Plotinus has very little to say about smell, taste and touch, and not a great deal about hearing. There is a short but detailed treatment of the question why large objects appear small at a distance (II.8), a thorough discussion of the questions involved in the possible role of a medium between the percipient subject and the object of sensation (IV.5.), but nothing on, for example, the composition of the sense organs. Without wishing to deny that Plotinus had any interest in explaining the phenomena of the sensible world, we may perhaps keep in mind the possibility that the subjects he picks for discussion are at least to some extent those which will contribute to the study of the intelligible

<sup>3</sup> *Entretiens* V, 385.

<sup>4</sup> J. H. Dubbink, *Studia Plotiniana. Onderzoek naar enige grondgedachten van het stelsel van Plotinus* (Purmerend 1943) 37f. and 42, distinguishes five meanings of αἰσθησις in Plotinus: (1) The sensible world, (2) the function of perception, (3) the result of the function (i.e. roughly perception as opposed to sensation), (4) perception as a characteristic of consciousness, and thus meaning consciousness and (5) a sense.

world and the relation of the constituents of the sensible world with higher reality.

Such an attitude would help to explain the very marked predominance of the treatment of vision over that of all other forms of sensation. Admittedly Greek thinkers had always tended to regard vision as the sense *par excellence*, and Plotinus is only following in the tradition when he does the same.<sup>5</sup> He describes sight as the clearest of the senses,<sup>6</sup> and so feels that the results obtained from its study may be transferred to the other senses as well (IV.6.1.11-14). But the very clarity and immediacy of vision which had helped to bring about the concentration on this particular form of perception made it the most suitable for illustrating the act of intellection. So we may suspect that Plotinus' interest in vision is at least some of the time motivated by the opportunities its investigation afforded for throwing light on the higher forms of cognition. The comparison between vision and intellection had already been made by Plato.<sup>7</sup> In Plotinus we often find statements about the operation of sight in the form of illustrations to a discussion of intellection (*νόησις*) or of the relation of one hypostasis to another. Each hypostasis contemplates the one above it, and is informed by it. The relation is analogous to that between the sense of sight and its objects. Thus we are told that *Nous* is formed in a way from the One and in a way from itself, like vision in act (*ὄλον ὄψις ἢ κατ' ἐνέργειαν*: V.1.5.17f.). Elsewhere soul is compared to sight: *nous* is its object. Soul is not informed before it looks at its object but its nature is to think, and so it is matter (i.e. the potentiality of being informed) in relation to *nous* just as the sense of sight is matter to its objects (cf. III.9.5.).<sup>8</sup> Similarly the presence of soul, and its presence as a whole, to anything that is able to receive it is compared to the way in which a sound which has been uttered can be heard by any ear that is present: the whole sound is in every part of the air that it fills (VI.4.12.1-32).<sup>9</sup> It is noteworthy that one of the two treatments of hearing that run to any length is to be found in this context.

The soul at the level of sense-perception preserves an independence from the material components of the sensible world which the lower

<sup>5</sup> Cf. e.g. Aristotle, *Met.* A, 980a 23-7.

<sup>6</sup> ἡ ἐναργεστάτη αἰσθησις, an echo of Plato, *Phaedrus* 250d.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. e.g. *Rep.* 517b-c.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. too III.8.11.1ff. and V.5.7 *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> This comes in conjunction with a parallel from vision which Plotinus says is less clear.



faculties do not quite maintain.<sup>10</sup> Plotinus is therefore true to his principles when he insists that the soul merely takes cognizance of what goes on in the body with which it is associated, without being directly affected by the external objects with which sense-perception is concerned. In the early treatise IV.7 he opposes sensation to intellection and describes it as the soul's cognition of sensible objects through the instrumentality of the body: τὸ σῶματι προσχρωμένῃ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν αἰσθητῶν (IV.7.8.2-4). This view of perception remains the key to his treatment of the processes involved. The interposition of the corporeal instrument allows the soul to retain its impassivity. Plotinus denies that any form of sensation is an affection (VI.I.19.46). Sensations are not affections but rather activities (ἐνέργειαι) concerned with affections, and judgements (cf. IV.4.22.30-32). The affections concerned involve some other thing, such as the body in a certain condition, while the judgement involves the soul: it is not an affection.<sup>11</sup> If it were, argues Plotinus, this new affection which is the judgement would require a further judgement, and this another, in an infinite progression (III.6.I.1-6). This seems to be a valid point, for a stage must come when we become aware of the original stimulus to the senses and make some sort of evaluation of it. But, as Plotinus goes on to point out, there still remains a difficulty in the question whether or not the judgement itself takes on some element of the object of its judgement (i.e. what affects the body or sense-organ). This would happen if the soul in making the judgement received any kind of physical imprint.

But any such idea would of course be incompatible with Plotinus' views on the nature of the soul. To be able to receive such an imprint the soul would have to be in some way material, and of this there can be no question. We have already seen how Plotinus attacked the view that sensation involved physical impressions on the soul when we considered his attack on materialistic theories of the soul's nature in IV.7.<sup>12</sup> One of the points made there was that memory would be impossible if in perception forms were somehow stamped on the soul in the way that seals are stamped in wax. The connection between memory and sense-perception is taken up again at the beginning of the

<sup>10</sup> See above 29f.

<sup>11</sup> Similarly Plotinus divides tasting and smelling into affections, sensations and judgements at IV.6.2.16-18: Γεύσεως δὲ καὶ ὁσφρήσεως τὰ μὲν πάθη, τὰ δ' ὅσα αἰσθήσεις αὐτῶν καὶ κρίσεις, τῶν παθῶν εἰσι γνώσεις ἄλλαι τῶν παθῶν οὔσαι.

<sup>12</sup> See above 10f.

treatise *On Sensation and Memory* (IV.6). There Plotinus points out that if perceptions are not to be thought of as impressions on the soul, memory cannot – as some would maintain – be taken as the retention of such impressions. The two views stand or fall together, and so Plotinus begins by examining the theory that sensations are actual impressions. He deals with vision, which, as we have seen, he regards as representative, and proposes to apply the conclusions to the other senses. Plotinus starts with the point that when we perceive an object by means of sight we see that object where it is, and direct our power of vision to that point; for it is clear, he says, that it is there that the perception takes place.<sup>13</sup> The soul looks outside just because there is no impression in it, and it takes on no stamp. If it did it would have no need at all to look outwards, for it would already possess the form of the object. Instead it would see by looking at the form that had already entered. Moreover the soul would not be able to report that the object was a certain distance away if it were in fact no distance away – as would be the case with an impression. Plotinus makes the further point that under such circumstances the soul would not be able to perceive the size of an object. It could not perceive that anything is very large, for example the sky, since no impression of such a size could be in the soul. The weightiest objection, in Plotinus' view, to the impression theory of sense-perception is that it would mean that we do not see the objects themselves but only some sort of images of them. In fact, as we shall see, the soul does not see the objects directly on Plotinus' own theory of vision. Finally Plotinus adduces the fact observed by Aristotle that we cannot see an object placed directly on the eye to show that whatever is marked with the impression would be unable to perceive the object in question.<sup>14</sup> So the percipient subject and its object must be separate if vision is to take place: the impression (τύπος) and the subject cannot be in the same place (IV.6.1).

Instead of being stamped the soul receives a kind of translation of the impression by which the body is affected: today we should think in

<sup>13</sup> This last remark is not fully consistent with the view that sense-perception takes place in us. Strictly Plotinus should say that the perception is of the object as being there. But his main point, that we perceive things as external, still stands, and if one wished to maintain complete consistency one could argue that Plotinus is here thinking of the two processes involved in sense-perception as one. He could thus legitimately talk of the perception as being external. The same may be said of the following words, πρὸς τὸ ἔξω τῆς ψυχῆς βλέπουσας (with the soul looking outwards, line 18), and the point that they introduce.

<sup>14</sup> *de An.* 419a 12f.

terms of electrical impulses travelling along nerves. It is these impressions in the body and its organs that the soul perceives. Plotinus holds that its power of sensation is not directed to the objects themselves, but rather that it cognizes the impressions produced in the "living being", the ζῶον. These are already in an intelligible form when they reach the soul: "And soul's power of sense-perception need not be perception of sense objects, but rather it must be receptive of the impressions produced by sensation on the living being; these are already intelligible entities (I.1.7.9-12).<sup>15</sup> This is how we – that is our true selves – perceive. The sensation that is directed outside is an image of this form of perception and belongs to the "living being", while the other is a truer form, an impassive contemplation of forms alone: εἶδον μόνων ἀπαθῶς . . . θεωρίαν (ib. 12-14). Here we can see well the distinction between conscious perception and the mere sensation which Plotinus shortly before (lines 5f.) has attributed to the "living being". It is important to be aware that Plotinus is making this distinction here, since the use of αἰσθάνεσθαι for the activity of both the "living being" and the soul by itself might otherwise make the passage seem puzzling and inconsistent. We may compare a passage in IV.3 where Plotinus tells us that what the soul takes up is the impression made on the body, or the judgement that it makes from the body's affections. This means that sense-perception is a function of the "living being" with the soul in the role of craftsman and the body in that of his tool, whereas memory is a function of the soul alone, since it has at this stage already received the impression, which it may retain or abandon (IV.3.26.1-12). If the verb for sensing and perceiving, αἰσθάνεσθαι, could have only one meaning these passages would be incompatible. As it has more they are not, though the second passage does seem to attribute more of the process of sense-perception to the "living being". But this may well be because Plotinus is there concerned with whether or not the body is involved in the operation of the activity in question, memory, rather than, as primarily in I.1.7, with the allocation of particular functions to specific parts of the individual. If this is so sense-perception as a whole would be given to the "living being" in IV.3.26 because there is a contribution from the body.

The impressions that are transmitted to the soul become some sort of indivisible thoughts: οἶον ἀμερῇ νοήματα (IV.7.6.23f.). Plotinus rejects

<sup>15</sup> Τὴν δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦ αἰσθάνεσθαι δύναμιν οὐ τῶν αἰσθητῶν εἶναι δεῖ, τῶν δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἐγγιγνομένων τῷ ζῳῳ τύπων ἀντιληπτικῶν εἶναι μᾶλλον· νοητά γὰρ ἦδη ταῦτα.

any suggestion of a transmission (διάδοσις) from one part of the body to the next till a central perceptive area is reached.<sup>16</sup> This, he argues, would mean that in the case of a pain one part would perceive only that the adjacent part has been hurt, so that the controlling part of the soul, the ἡγεμονικόν,<sup>17</sup> would perceive not the original pain but the one that is felt in the part of the body with which it is contiguous. And all the parts involved would have a different perception, so that an infinite number of perceptions would arise from a single pain (IV.7.7.7-22). The same point is treated at somewhat greater length in IV.2[4].2, where Plotinus is arguing against the idea that the soul is split up and distributed to various parts of the body. Since this would only be possible if the soul were corporeal, it is not surprising to find that Plotinus uses, with others, the same arguments which he had previously used in IV.7[2] to show that the transmission of sensations would be impossible on any materialistic view of how the soul is in the body. Plotinus starts by pointing out that if the soul were divisible no part would be aware of a sensation in any other. Only that soul which was in a particular part, for example in a toe, would perceive what went on there: this soul would be different from that in other parts and isolated. The result of all this would be that we should have a number of souls directing each one of us. To refer to the continuity of the parts is useless. Only complete unity will do (cf. IV.2.2.1-12). Plotinus then proceeds to mount another attack on the idea of transmission to a controlling part, here called ἡγεμονοῦν.<sup>18</sup> Apart from the points he had

<sup>16</sup> The Stoics, Plotinus' usual materialist opponents, seem most likely to be the target of this attack. But Professor Sandbach has pointed out to me that Pohlenz, in a note on [Plutarch] *de lib. et aegr.* 4 (Teubner edition, vol. VI.iii, 39), thinks the criticism of διάδοσις in IV.7.7 is aimed at Strato. If so, some followers would have to be included, for Plotinus writes φήσουσι in line 8. von Arnim prints IV.7.7.3-10 as SVF II, 858; cf. too SVF II, 854. F. Wehrli, in his note on the passage from [Plutarch], fr. 111 in his collection of the fragments of Strato (*Die Schule des Aristoteles* V, Basle 1950), accepts Plotinus' διάδοσις and his description of the process as referring to a Stoic view, and says Strato's is related to it. The truth of the matter may be that Plotinus is attacking both Strato and the Stoics. His refutations are not necessarily directed at schools or individuals rather than ideas, see above 50ff.

<sup>17</sup> Plotinus here, as often, uses the terminology of his opponents. The use of ἡγεμονικόν does not prove that they were Stoic. The Aetius doxography tended to use it indiscriminately, cf. e.g. IV.5, IV.8.4, IV.16.4 (Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* 391, 394, 406). It had become attached to Strato too though it is inappropriate to his doctrines, cf. Wehrli's note on fragments 110-11; fr. 110 is Aetius IV.23.3 (Diels, *Doxographi* 415), where ἡγεμονικόν is probably due to the stoicizing formulation of the report, cf. W. Capelle, "Straton", *RE* ser. 2. IV.i (1931) 303.

<sup>18</sup> This and not ἡγεμονικόν is the term he uses throughout the discussion in IV.2.2.

made before, he adduces the difficulties that would be involved in deciding which part of the soul is to function as the controlling part. What is to be the basis of the demarcation? And will the controlling part alone, or the other parts as well, perceive? If the controlling part alone, where is it to be located to enable it to receive the percept?<sup>19</sup> This in case the sensation strikes it directly. If it strikes some other part of the soul, this, on the hypothesis under discussion, is not able to perceive, and so cannot transmit the sensation to the controlling part. And then if the sensation does reach the controlling part directly it will reach a part of it – for Plotinus is here discussing a materialistic theory – and that part alone will perceive, or there will be an infinite number of percepts and these will all be different. This situation will be similar to that envisaged for the whole body in the passage in IV.7. If each part has a different percept, Plotinus continues, only the first of the series of parts would know where the original affection took place. Alternatively they will all mistakenly think that it is to be located where they are themselves. If on the other hand any part has the power of perception, why should any one be the controlling part? And how will any one thing be able to cognize the data produced by the several senses? (cf. IV.2.2.14–35).

The rejection of such views does not prevent Plotinus from thinking in terms of transmission within the framework of his own theory. Nor is it illegitimate for him to hold that some part of the process of transmission will take place before a sensation has become a purely psychic event. Some such view presumably lies behind the statement that there are cases where transmission does not take place owing to the low intensity of the stimulus, and that this is particularly so in the case of large bodies: he instances the alleged occurrence of this phenomenon in large marine animals (IV.9.2.12–18). Unfortunately Plotinus says no more about this; the point is only made to support the contention that the unity of all soul need not mean that all people have the same sensations.

While it is clearly correct to hold that not all stimuli received at the periphery of a living being are actually perceived, this might seem to conflict with Plotinus' view that the soul is present as a whole throughout the body. But, as we have mentioned before, the sensitive soul already has some measure of independence, which means that it need

<sup>19</sup> One cannot throw back at Plotinus his own localization of the sensitive faculty in the brain since this does involve sensation taking place elsewhere, i.e. at the nerves; see below.

not be affected by whatever affects the body. And when he comes to examine closely the relation of body and soul in the context of the various psychic functions (in IV.3-5), he does make the point that the soul is not fixed in any part of the body, or even in the whole: it is not present in quite the same way to all the body, but the various parts participate in it in different ways (IV.3.22.12-23.3). Moreover, as he holds that perception is an activity (*ἐνέργεια*) exercised at the discretion of the soul, he would be able to argue that the soul only shares in the condition of the body when it feels so inclined. Here we may refer again to his idea that the senses are not powered by some separate portion of the sensitive faculty marked off for each, but by a central reserve which becomes specified into the powers (*δυνάμεις*) needed to make the various sensory functions work. So we find the power that is in the eyes to be that of sight, the power in the ears that of hearing, and so on (IV.3.23.3ff., cf. VI.4.11.12-14). It is the different organs that produce the different kinds of sense-perception (IV.3.3.17f.).

Plotinus' careful separation of the original sensory stimulus and the subsequent processes was facilitated by the fact that he was able to take advantage of the discovery of the nerves by the physicians Herophilus and Erasistratus in the 3rd century B.C. and the later elaboration of their work by Galen.<sup>20</sup> The recognition of the nerves' function made is quite clear that there was transmission from the surface of the body to a central organ where the information could be, as it were, conveyed to the soul for it to note and evaluate. Hence Plotinus placed the sensitive faculty, or rather, as he is careful to point out, the starting point of the activity of that faculty, in the brain (cf. IV.3.23.9-21). The extra knowledge available to him meant incidentally that Plotinus was able for good reasons to follow Plato in putting the seat of the soul's higher activities in the head. Plato's ground for this had of course been no better than that it was more fitting and dignified for it to be so, whereas Aristotle's designation of the heart as the centre of sensation was at least based on the not altogether unreasonable – at that time – idea that sensory impressions were transmitted through the blood vessels.

We have repeatedly drawn attention to the fundamental difference between the soul and the constituents of the sensible world which are the objects of sensation. Somehow this gap must be bridged, and it was

<sup>20</sup> For an account of this discovery and its antecedents cf. Solmsen, "Greek philosophy and the discovery of the nerves", *Mus. Helv.* 18 (1961) 150-67 and 169-97.

in this light that Plotinus considered the role of the sense organs. For he thought of cognition primarily as a form of assimilation.<sup>21</sup> This can be seen at all levels of his world. So the One can only be known by complete union when all that the other levels of being contribute to the existence of the individual has been removed. Hence the famous exhortation to remove everything: ἀφελε πάντα (V.3.17.38). The soul contemplates the intelligible when it becomes *nous* itself: νοῦς γενομένη αὐτῇ θεωρεῖ, ὅλον νοωθεῖσα (VI.7.35.4f.). At the other end of the scale of beings the soul has difficulty in getting any knowledge of matter because to do so it must try to reduce itself to the necessary state of indetermination (cf. II.4.10): it cannot perceive matter through the senses since matter is devoid of all sensible qualities (II.4.12.26–33).

The Greek thinkers before Aristotle had always thought of perception as being either of like by like, or of unlike by unlike. Aristotle in his characteristic way offered a solution to the dispute by saying that there was an element of truth in both views, and that unlike perceived unlike by becoming like it.<sup>22</sup> Plotinus returns to the like by like (ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ) view but offers a new interpretation.<sup>23</sup> For him likeness is a prerequisite for cognition,<sup>24</sup> and all things are to some extent alike by virtue of their common origin, and, within the sensible world, by virtue of the universal sympathy existing between all the things that are ruled by one soul. But from being partly alike because they are both parts of the same world, subject and object become more alike by a process of assimilation. It is as a result of this fuller likeness that cognition takes place. Thus in the case of sense-perception there must be some means by which the soul can approach the sense-objects.

The proximate object of sense-perception is the quality (ποιότης) – and this for Plotinus covers all the content other than matter – of bodies. The soul marks itself with their forms (IV.4.23.1–3).<sup>25</sup> Plotinus insists, however, that the sense remains essentially unchanged by the act of perception (cf. III.6.2.32–7). He argues that the soul on its own cannot accept the forms of sense-objects, for when it is alone it will

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Arnou, *Désir* 143–5.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *de An.* 416b 35–417a 20.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. J. de Fraine, "Het principe der dynamische gelijkheid in de kennisleer van Plotinus", *Tijdschrift voor Philosophie* 5 (1943) 489–92. de Fraine's discussion of sense-perception on pp. 496–505 brings out well the way in which Plotinus thought of ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ as a relation involving change; cf. too 492–6.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Arnou, *Désir*, 142: "La connaissance . . . suppose une ressemblance, une sympathie, une affinité de nature, une parenté . . ."

<sup>25</sup> τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐστι τῇ ψυχῇ ἢ τῷ ζῳῳ ἀντίληψις τὴν προσοῦσαν τοῖς σώμασι ποιότητα συνιέσης καὶ τὰ εἶδη αὐτῶν ἀποματτομένης.

know only the objects it contains in itself, and so cognition will take the form of intellection. If the soul is to know any other objects it must first possess these, either by becoming assimilated to them or by being together with something that is so assimilated. But so long as it remains by itself it cannot become like the objects any more than, for instance, intelligible fire can be like sensible fire. Even if it were possible for the soul when it is on its own to focus on a sensible object, it would still finish with the understanding of an intelligible. The sensible object escapes it, since the soul by itself has no means of grasping the sensible. Even when the soul sees something at a distance, and what comes to it is most clearly a form (because the material content would then be less prominent than if the object were close at hand) what is at the soul's end may be more or less indivisible but it still goes back to an underlying colour and shape. This means, says Plotinus, that we cannot have just the soul and the external object. The soul could not be subject to any affection and so the necessary assimilation could not take place. There must, he goes on, be some third thing which is subject to change, and it is this that receives the form. It must interact with its objects and share their affections (*συμπαθὲς ἄρα καὶ ὁμοιοπαθὲς δεῖ εἶναι*) and be of the same substance.<sup>26</sup> This third thing must undergo the affection, while the soul takes cognizance of it. The affection must be of such a kind as to preserve something of what causes it (i.e. the object) but not become identical with this. Rather, since it is between the object and the soul, it must have some affection that is between the sensible and the intelligible: it is like a mean proportional touching both extremes and susceptible to assimilation to both, able to receive and transmit. As the instrument of cognition it should be identical with neither subject nor object, but capable of becoming like either: like the external object by being affected, and like what is within by virtue of the fact that its affection becomes a form (*εἶδος*). If all this is right, concludes Plotinus, perceptions must take place by way of bodily organs. And this, he points out, fits with the fact that the soul when completely detached from body is unable to know any sensible object (cf. IV.4.23.3–35).

After this discussion Plotinus refers to the related question of whether the object must be in contact with the organ, either directly, or, where there is a space between, through some medium. He postpones examination of this point till IV.5 (i.e. the end of the treatise IV.3–5).

<sup>26</sup> Plotinus' words are *ὅλης μιᾶς* (IV.4.23.22), by which he presumably means like the objects and not immaterial like the soul.



There he summarizes the passage with which we have just dealt, and goes on to discuss in considerable detail whether there is any need for actual contact with the objects. In the case of touch, as Plotinus says, there is no difficulty. But in the case of vision and hearing, where there is no question of direct contact, we must investigate whether there is any need for a medium (IV.5.1.1-17). Plotinus treats this question by passing in review a number of theories of vision and views about light; he also adds a consideration of hearing in IV.5.5. In the course of this discussion he manages to show that often a medium is unnecessary, even within the framework of the proponents of the theories which required it. He does, however, admit that for some of them it is indispensable.

The aim of all this is to show that the basis of all perception is the sympathy (συμπάθεια) that exists between the various components of the sensible world. For, if the sympathy between subject and object is what makes perception possible, anything that is interposed would only tend to weaken this sympathy and thus be a hindrance to perception rather than a necessary condition of it. Plotinus argues that if continuity were essential to sympathy it could, in the case of vision, only be supplied by a medium. But even in a single living being, where there is sympathy between the various parts, the continuity between these parts is merely incidental (IV.5.2.21ff.). Since the world as a whole, as Plotinus so often maintains, may be regarded as one living being, the same considerations apply to it too. The parts are in a relation of sympathy but need not be continuous for this relation to hold good. It is because the world is a single living being that it would not be possible, according to him, to perceive objects beyond the heavens. For if these objects were not part of the same living being the necessary sympathy could not exist (cf. IV.5.8).

Finally, something should be said about how the soul identifies the forms it receives. This it is able to do by virtue of the fact that its relation to the intelligible world equips it with a complete set of Forms. We are able to perceive a harmony in the sensible world by fitting what the senses receive to the intelligible harmony. So too the fire that is here will fit the fire there (VI.7.6.2-6,<sup>27</sup> cf. I.6.3.9-15). It is the possession of this set of Forms that makes the evaluation of sense-data possible. But while the sensitive faculty is in a way critical (cf. IV.3.23.31f.), evaluation really brings us into the province of judgement, and it

<sup>27</sup> On the text here see Cilento *ad loc.*

will be better to leave it to be treated when we come to examine the operations of reason (διδόνοια).<sup>28</sup> For it is the reasoning faculty that is able to pass definitive judgements, while at the stage of common sense (κοινή αἴσθησις) – that is the sensitive faculty working as a whole and dealing with the information provided by the various senses – illusion is still possible (cf. I.1.9.10–12).

<sup>28</sup> See below 105f.

## MEMORY AND IMAGINATION

Memory is the first psychic activity that takes place without a simultaneous affection of the body. It is, however, concerned with the changes that the body undergoes and the information obtained by the senses, as well as with ideas and reasonings which have no immediate relation to the body. This position on the frontiers of two realms of experience, which for Plotinus are strongly differentiated, leads to certain special difficulties which do not present themselves in connection with the other functions of the soul except imagination with which, as we shall see, memory is linked. The problem, in the framework of Plotinus' system, is to find some way of combining sensible and intellectual functions, or rather the after-effects of such functions, when the two are in fact quite different.

The difficulties do not, of course, arise from any need to combine the retention of some form of physical change resulting from sense-perception on the one hand with that of the purely psychical movements of thought and its conclusions on the other. We have already seen how Plotinus maintained that the non-physical nature of sense-perception was intimately associated with the conception of memory as something other than a collection of impressions in a pliable material, and set out his arguments against materialistic theories of perception.<sup>1</sup> But he is not content with such arguments alone. In addition he discusses some of the characteristics of memory and recollection to show how they are incompatible with any theory of memory that is couched in terms of impressions. The reason for this – apart from his constant preoccupation with the demolition of materialistic positions – is probably to be found in his dissatisfaction with Aristotle's views on memory, for some of the points he makes appear to be aimed at features of the exposition

<sup>1</sup> See above 10f. and 71ff.

in the *de Memoria*.<sup>2</sup> Thus, while Aristotle says that memory is weaker in children because their bodies are in a state of flux,<sup>3</sup> Plotinus argues that it is better, and that this is so because children have fewer things to remember and can thus concentrate on them better, whereas if memories were impressions a greater number of them would not cause any weakening of the power of memory (IV.6.3.21-7). Similarly, while Aristotle attributes the poor memory to be found among the aged to the same instability that he regards as responsible for this failing among the very young,<sup>3</sup> Plotinus says that it is due to a weakening of the power (*δύναμις*) that he holds memory to be. It is thus, for him, parallel to the decline in the keenness of old people's senses (IV.6.3.51-4). So Plotinus once more uses an analogy between sense-perception and memory to argue against an apparently materialistic view of the nature of memory.

Two points should, however, be noted. In the first place, Plotinus is only arguing from analogy. He is not equating the bases of memory and sense-perception, though he does often enough refer to features that would be common to both. This is his procedure when he argues against memory being the retention of sensations which take the form of seal-like impressions. It is a procedure which he adopts particularly in his destructive arguments, which brings us to the second point. This is that in the second of the two arguments mentioned at the end of the last paragraph Plotinus is no longer being merely polemical and destructive, but is concerned to make out a positive case for taking memory to be a power (cf. IV.6.3.55).

This is the real aim of the discussion in IV.6, and a variety of other arguments are adduced to establish the point. Plotinus compares mnemonic exercises to training which enables the hands and feet to perform easily functions which are not located in them, but for which they are prepared by continuous practice. As a result the power of the faculty increases. He produces more evidence to show that memory is the exercise of a power in answering the question why it is possible to remember something that was not absorbed at first or second hearing after it has been repeated several times, and moreover, to remember it much later although it had not been grasped at previous hearings. This cannot be explained by saying that it is due to someone having had at

<sup>2</sup> The connection between this work and Plotinus' treatise *On Sensation and Memory* has been noted by Bréhier and briefly discussed in the *Notice* to this treatise (IV.6), vol. IV.169-71.

<sup>3</sup> *de Mem.* 450b 5-7.

first no more than part of an impression, for then, as Plotinus quite rightly says, such parts should have been remembered. What in fact happens is that recollection takes place suddenly as a result of something that is heard, or some effort that is made, later. This, he maintains, shows that we are concerned with a stimulation of that power of the soul by which we remember. He finds further support for this view in the fact that the memory is not only able to retain matter on which a special effort has been expended, but is also more receptive to new material when someone has practised recitation. What else, he asks, could be the cause of this but a reinforcement of the capacity of memory? The persistence of impressions, on the other hand, would be a sign of weakness, since what is most easily impressed is so because it yields. Since the acceptance of an imprint is an affection, what is most readily affected would remember best. But this seems to contradict the facts, for training never makes the thing trained more susceptible to affections.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in the field of perception it is not a weak organ that sees, but one with a greater power of action. Here Plotinus makes the point about the decline in the faculties of the aged that has already been noticed (cf. IV.6.3.28-54). He then goes on to consider how his theory could account for the fact that we do not necessarily remember a thing immediately, but are only able to recall it later. He says that this happens because we must, as it were, focus the power and bring it to a state of readiness, and claims that this is also the case with other powers: these sometimes act immediately, sometimes only when they are concentrated (IV.6.3.57-63). He also takes as an indication that we are concerned with a power the way in which good memory often does not co-exist with intellectual acumen. This he regards as just one instance of how different powers are prominent in different people. He seems to think that there must be some sort of interference of one faculty with another, but why this should be so in the case of reason and memory is not quite clear. He is on better ground when he claims that if memories were merely imprints capacities in other directions would not be any obstacle to reading off these imprints (cf. IV.6.3.63-9).

Finally he says that the unextended nature of the soul shows that

<sup>4</sup> This argument seems rather weak: one might think of the heightened sense of touch of a blind man. But Plotinus would be able to answer this criticism by saying that the reason for this is an increase in the strength and activity of the active power of taking note of the body's impressions. For him no passivity would be involved in this.

soul in general must be a power (IV.6.3.70f.). So then must its faculties and powers, and in particular those under discussion. This is, of course, crucial. Given Plotinus' dualistic view of a living being, it would be very difficult for him to accept any other view of memory. He might perhaps have thought of the soul marking the body, which is its instrument, with some notation to represent sense-data, but this would be difficult in the case of immaterial notions. Yet it is not easy to see how a power can have any means of retaining information. Did Plotinus' elaborate criticism of Aristotle spring from some perplexity as to how to conceive the actual operation of memory? We have no means of telling. But it is a fact that Plotinus neither here nor elsewhere gives an account of how the soul – except in the case of the intelligible objects of direct intuition, which are outside the scope of memory – does retain and recall information. He does not go beyond the somewhat unhelpful statement that memories are not of something stored up inside, but that the soul stirs up the relevant power so that it possesses what it does not have (*ὥστε καὶ ὁ μὴ ἔχει ἔχειν*). This, he says, involves no change, unless one is to regard as such that from potency to act, and no addition (III.6.2.42–9).

We do, however, have a long and careful discussion of what it is that remembers, and, in close conjunction with this, of the kind of information that can be the content of memory as Plotinus conceives it. This discussion comes in the middle of IV.3–5 (IV.3.25–4.17). After some remarks about the inapplicability of memory to non-temporal entities (IV.3.25.10ff.), a point which Plotinus is to take up again further on, the first question to be tackled is that of the subject. Does memory belong to the "living being" (*ζῶον*), and if so, how, or to the soul, and if so, to which part or faculty? (IV.3.25.35–44). In view of the way in which memory is situated between two areas of experience it seems particularly significant that this problem should be raised at the outset. An indication of its importance is perhaps to be found in that this question has not been discussed in connection with the other faculties earlier in the treatise. Plotinus does not here, as he does later in I.1, ask of all the various faculties which of the components of the person they should be attributed to, though it must be admitted that he goes on to consider the affections from this point of view in IV.4.18ff.: it could be that this particular problem has come into prominence for Plotinus as a result of his examination of memory. But while it is not treated before IV.3–5, it must be remembered that previously little is said about the detailed operation of man's various functions.

Plotinus first examines the claims of the ζῶον, the "living being" (IV.3.26). He points out that if sense-perception is to be regarded as an activity of the "living being", it must be taken that it is so in such a way that the soul receives the stimuli imparted to the body. But while sense-perception may be said to belong to the compound (σύνθετον) in this way, there is no need for memory to belong to it, since the soul has already received the impression. It is the soul that retains or rejects it (cf. IV.3.26.1-12). While Plotinus admits that the condition of the body may affect the efficacy of memory, he denies that this is sufficient evidence for attributing it to the compound. The body may be a hindrance or may not, but memory nonetheless belongs to the soul. How, he asks, could it be the compound, rather than the soul, which remembers items of knowledge? (ib. 12-18).

The admission that the state of the body may affect the working of memory should not be allowed to pass without comment. For it shows how difficult it is for Plotinus to maintain the independence of the soul. The protestation that memory is still a function of the soul may be accepted, but should not be allowed to obscure the significance of the admission which makes it necessary. But, in accordance with his general position, Plotinus attacks the view that any change in the soul is brought about by its association with the body, and rejects the idea that the soul's presence in the body gives it some sort of quality that enables it to accept the impressions from sense-objects. Against this he produces his usual objection, that the impressions are not extended and that there is no question of any marking or pressure. Such materialistic or quasi-materialistic ideas are quite inappropriate to intelligible objects, and even in the case of sense-objects there is a sort of intellection.<sup>5</sup> In addition to these arguments Plotinus makes the point that the soul must be able to remember its own movements, which may not involve the body although they are such as to be concerned with it. He instances something that was desired but not attained, so that the object of desire did not arrive at the body. How, he asks, could the body say anything about things that did not reach it, or how could it be involved in remembering things of which by its nature it is unable to have any knowledge at all? (cf. IV.3.26.18-39). Here Plotinus seems to have shifted his ground slightly, for he now appears to be arguing against the idea that the body, or the bodily component of the "living being", is directly involved in memory, rather than against the sug-

<sup>5</sup> At the soul's end; see above 71f.

gestion that the soul is somehow able to remember through its presence in the body, which he attacked earlier in this section (lines 25-32).

Plotinus concludes that we must say that all information that comes through the body ends up in the soul, while some is the concern of the soul alone, if the soul is to have any nature and function of its own. If so the soul has desires, and memory both of such desires and of their fulfilment or frustration. It is the soul that has memory because it is not like the body subject to flux. But if the soul has no nature and function of its own it could have no sort of consciousness, for there could be no question of getting it from the body. The position is that the soul has some activities which need the body if they are to be exercised: for these the soul provides the requisite powers (*δυνάμεις*), while for others it possesses the exercise in itself as well. Memory must be one of these since the body is a hindrance to memory. Once more we find Plotinus allowing some influence from the body. He explains it here by saying that since memory is a form of persistence the body, which is unstable, can only be a source of forgetfulness. And so he suggests that the river of Λήθη (Forgetfulness) from which the souls in *Republic* X drink before reincarnation should be interpreted in this light <sup>6</sup> (cf. IV.3.26.39-56).

Having thus disposed to his satisfaction of views involving anything other than soul as the subject of memory, Plotinus returns to the question already mentioned at the start of the discussion (IV.3.25.35-8), namely which soul it is that remembers. Is it the more divine <sup>7</sup> soul which gives us our real self, or the other which comes to us from the world? Or do both have memories, of which some are shared and some peculiar to one or the other of them? (IV.3.27.1-4). In this case all the memories will be together while the two souls are together. When they separate each would, if both persisted, retain its own, though it would also retain those of the other for a short time. The higher soul

<sup>6</sup> By this he seems to mean that it might be seen as an allegory of soul's involvement with the body.

<sup>7</sup> There is no difficulty about the MSS *θειότερας*. On the grounds that Plotinus seemed to be saying that our soul was more divine than the world soul, which he would never say, Dodds proposed *οικειότερας*, "Notes on the *περί ψυχῆς ἀπορίαι* of Plotinus (*Ennead* IV.iii-iv)", *CQ* 28 (1934) 48f. This conjecture is favoured by Cilento who nevertheless retains the MSS reading. Professor Dodds informs me that he would not now press it. In fact what Plotinus is saying is that our higher soul - καὶ ἡν ἡμεῖς - is more divine than the one we get παρὰ τοῦ ὅλου, viz. our lower soul (see above pp. 27ff).

For the use of *θειότερος* cf. VI.7.5.21. The term may be a vague reminiscence of [Plato], *Alcibiades I* 133c.



will retain those of the lower if the individual in question has allowed his higher soul to be affected by devoting himself to a merely practical life (IV.3.27.4ff.). All this is illustrated by reference to the stories of the shades ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\alpha\iota$ ) in the Homeric *Nekyia*. These, with the exception of a few which may remember something about justice, all have the same sort of memories of practical life as the shade of Heracles.<sup>8</sup> This shade only corresponds to his and our lower souls, for the Homeric underworld is peopled with practical men and women. But Plotinus notes that we are not there told what the higher soul remembers when it is, or has become, free from the effects of excessive association with the lower soul and the body. Before attempting to say what memories the higher soul might have he finds it necessary to come to grips with the problem of which faculty it is that enables us to remember. This is a problem that was bound to become acute for the reasons that we have already seen, and it must be solved if Plotinus is to be able to explain how the upper and lower souls could have different memories at all, to say nothing of deciding which memories are to be attributed to each of them.

Plotinus first examines the possibility that each faculty is able to remember its own activities. One might suggest, he says, that what enjoys a certain activity should remember it as well. It is clear that the desiring faculty is moved by memory when the object of its desire is seen again. Otherwise it could be moved in just the same way by something else, or by the same object if it appeared in some different way. But, he argues, if the desiring faculty itself could have the memory in this way, what is to stop us attributing to it perception as well, and, conversely, attributing desire to the sensitive faculty, and so on, so that each faculty would have the designation it has only because the act after which it is called is predominant in it? What really happens, says Plotinus, is that perception and awareness ( $\alpha\lambda\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ) come to each faculty in a different way. Thus the faculty of sensation actually

<sup>8</sup> If he knew about it Plotinus would have preferred to ignore the fact that the lines on which his remarks depend, *Odyssey* XI.602f., had long been recognized as a late importation, cf. E. Rohde, "Nekyia", *Rh. Mus.* n.F. 50 (1895) 626. Porphyry, in his capacity as a scholar, certainly did know about this. In comments on lines 568ff. he saw the difficulties in the lines in question (602f.) and accepted that they were to be athetized, cf. *Quaestionum Homericarum ad Odysseam pertinentium reliquias collegit etc.* H. Schrader (Leipzig 1890) 108. An interpretation of these lines based on the notion of different destinies for different parts of the soul may already be found in Plutarch, *de facie in orbe lunae* 944f. For other examples cf. Cherniss' note *ad loc.* in Plutarch's *Moralia*, Loeb edition, vol. 12.

sees, while the desiring faculty is moved by some sort of transmission from the percept without having any awareness of it as such. The same is true of anger. We may compare its working to what happens when a shepherd sees a wolf attacking his flock, while his dog actually sees nothing, but is stirred by the scent or a noise. The point of the simile is that the faculty which acts is made aware of the stimulus to action in a different way from the perceptive faculty. So the desiring faculty may have some trace of what it has attained, but only as some sort of disposition, and not as a memory. It is something else that observes the attainment and enjoyment of the object of desire and retains the memory thereof. This is shown by the fact that the memory of something that the desiring faculty has had is often unpleasant. If the desiring faculty which enjoyed a thing also retained the memory of it this would not be so (IV.3.28).

So much for the idea that each faculty has its own memory. But all this still leaves open the possibility that the sensitive faculty is also the basis of memory. If this were so, and the lower soul (*εἰδωλον*) had memories of its own, as it seems to do (cf. IV.3.27), the sensitive faculty would have to be double. If, on the other hand, it is not the sensitive faculty that remembers, whatever it was that did would have to be double in the same way, a consequence rather less unacceptable than a double faculty of sensation, which would clearly involve having two faculties to deal with the same objects. It is on these lines that the question will eventually be answered. A further objection to making the sensitive faculty the basis of memory is that it would have to deal with thoughts and knowledge. Plotinus thinks that, if it is the same faculty that perceives and remembers, one faculty cannot remember these and sense-data as well. This would only be plausible if there were one faculty that perceives both. But there is not, and so we should have at least two faculties remembering. This still on the assumption that the same faculty cognizes and remembers. And if both the upper and the lower soul had each of these two, we should find ourselves with four such faculties (IV.3.29.1-13).

At this point Plotinus removes the disturbing prospect of an ever greater multiplication of entities by making the point to which the discussion has been leading, namely that there is no reason why the same power should both perceive and remember percepts, or think and remember thoughts. The facts are against this, for those with the most acute minds do not necessarily have the best memories, and the same goes for sense-perception. One might object, says Plotinus, that if there

is a difference between what perceives and what remembers, the latter will have to perceive the percept before it can retain it. But this objection can be met, for there is no reason why the percept should not come to what remembers it as an image or representation (φαντασμα), and why the faculty of imagination which received it should not remember it as well. For this is the faculty to which a perception is relayed, and the percept is there when the act of perception is over. And if the image is of something that is no longer present, we already have memory, whatever the length of time for which it persists. Differences in the ability to remember may be attributed to different states of the power responsible, to the amount of attention paid to the objects in question, or to the presence or absence of certain conditions of the body. These may or may not cause changes and disturbances (cf. IV.3.29.13-26).

It still remains to say what happens in the case of thoughts. If all thought is accompanied by an image, the persistence of this image could account for memory here too, as in the case of sense percepts (cf. IV.3.30.1-5). It might be, says Plotinus, that the ~~discursive sequel~~ (λόγος) to an act of intuitive thought is received into the imaginative faculty. It could not be the thought itself that is received, for this is unsuitable for such reception. It lacks any differentiation of parts, and is not yet, as it were, externalized. The *logos* deploys the thought and shows it to the imaginative faculty as though in a mirror. The imagination is then able to apprehend it: the persistence of this image is memory. It is this presentation of thought to the imaginative faculty that makes us aware of the intellection (νόησις) that is always in progress (IV.3.30.5-15).<sup>9</sup> Plotinus often repeats that it is only necessary for us to turn our attention to the *nous* that is ours for intellection to take place (cf. e.g. I.2.4.25-7). Here he suggests, as if to emphasize the unity of the imaginative faculty, that the reason why we are not always aware of intuitive thoughts (νοήσεις) is that what receives them receives sensations too (IV.3.30.15f.). Similar ideas about the consciousness of thought that must precede its committal to the memory appear in the discussion of consciousness in I.4.10. There too intuitive thoughts are said to be reflected on to a mirror which, though Plotinus does not actually say so, is probably the faculty of imagination (τὸ φανταστικόν). For the mirror is not reason (διάνοια), whose proceedings are also

<sup>9</sup> The reason for this is of course that our *nous* remains in the intelligible world, cf. e.g. IV.8.8.2f.

reflected in it, the images are knowable in a way comparable to sense-perception (ὅλον αἰσθητῶς), and thought is said to take place without images (ἄνευ φαντασίας) when the mirror is disturbed. Such disturbance is said to be due to the disruption of the harmony of the body (cf. I.4. 10.6-19). Plotinus says no more about this disruption. Could at least one cause of it be the arrival of sensations, which, presumably after translation into psychic percepts, are said to prevent awareness of intellection in IV.3.30?

At this point we seem to have a fairly acceptable account of what remembers if we do not find the idea of pure thought being somehow translated into images too difficult. But the whole discussion was originally provoked by the question of what happens to our soul after death (IV.3.24), and it has been decided that both the higher and the lower soul have a memory. This means that there will be two imaginative faculties, which gives rise to a problem as to what happens when the two are together. If we say that they are in both the upper and the lower soul the images will always be double. Plotinus rejects the idea that the imaginative faculty of one soul should be concerned with intelligible, that of the other with sensible objects. His reason is that this would involve the co-existence of two "living beings" (ζῶα) with nothing in common (cf. IV.3.31.1-8). The suggestion here that the imaginative faculty, which, as we have already seen, passes on information received by the senses to the discursive reason as well as being the basis of memory, is somehow the bond between the upper and the lower soul, indicates how far Plotinus is able to consider the sensible world as a static reality for the purposes of his scientific investigations. For as soon as we come to the dynamic picture, and consider the lower soul as existing only as an outflowing of the higher while its attention is directed downwards, the problem of the connection between the two souls partly disappears. Only partly, because the lower soul would have access to the higher only by becoming re-identified with it, and the higher would not know the activities of the lower. But there is nonetheless a clear link which is lost when we consider the two souls as things in themselves, each directing its own range of activities.

Having found no alternative to establishing a double faculty of imagination, Plotinus tries to explain how it comes about that we are not aware of the duplication. He suggests that while there is concord between the two images, with the higher imaginative faculty in control, there is only one mental picture (φάντασμα) – presumably of any given object. One might compare the image of the lower faculty to a weak

light in the field of a stronger.<sup>10</sup> But if there is discord the lower faculty will appear too, though the fact that it is in <sup>11</sup> the other does not show, for as a general rule the dual nature of our souls does not come to our notice. This, Plotinus says, is because they are united with one on top: that is, the higher soul will be dominant in the manner that he has just suggested to explain how the duality of the imaginative faculties is obscured (cf. IV.3.31.8-16). All this seems rather unsatisfactory. The comparisons Plotinus makes are not really helpful, for the duality of the soul is hardly parallel to that of the two faculties of imagination. In the first place it is not obscured in quite the same way. In the case of the higher and lower soul it is the fact that there is a break that is not clear. But, except when the lower soul is absorbed into the higher in the act of contemplation or reasoning, there is no question of the differences between the two not showing. If we study the soul fairly superficially we shall see that it has its full range of faculties, vegetative, nutritive, perceptive and so on. And then there is no overlapping in the functions of the two divisions of the soul as there is in those of the faculties of imagination. Nor has Plotinus given any account of what is meant by concord and discord between them. The only possible answer would seem to be one in terms of the lower imaginative faculty being distinct when our attention is turned to memories of sensible objects, in the same way that the image (εἶδωλον) of the soul depends for its existence on the soul's downward glance. But to such an explanation one could object that memories of sensible objects are no different from higher ones, since both are expressed in images whose only difference seems to lie in their origin. Thus the higher imaginative faculty can be aware of all the contents of the lower. At the moment of separation which is death it may no longer retain the whole range, but it has seen everything: *έώρα . . . πάντα καί τὰ μὲν ἔχει ἐξεληθοῦσα, τὰ δ' ἀφίησι τῶν τῆς ἐτέρας* (IV.3.31.16-18).

If the two faculties are so similar, and the higher is able to know the contents of the lower, why did Plotinus find it necessary to make the division? For if the higher is able to abandon unsuitable memories when it leaves the body, it does not seem to be necessary to consign the others to a different faculty altogether as a means of preventing a

<sup>10</sup> Plotinus also suggests a comparison with an object and its shadow, but, since a shadow remains distinct from the object that casts it, this seems a much less helpful comparison.

<sup>11</sup> "In" in the sense that lower entities are always regarded by Plotinus as being in higher ones.

permanent contamination of the upper soul. The explanation may perhaps be found in some remarks in IV.3.32 about the kind of memories the two faculties might properly have. Plotinus asks what is the position about memories of friends and relatives, or of one's country, and other things that a respectable man might reasonably remember. He suggests that the lower soul would have those memories about these things which involve an affection, while the higher <sup>12</sup> has memories of them without undergoing affections (ἀπαθῶς). The affection would be in the lower faculty from the first, though respectable affections – presumably such things as a reasonable amount of love for one's children – would also appear in the higher in so far as it has some connection with the other. While the lower should wish to participate in the memories of the higher, the higher should be only too glad to forget those that come from the lower (cf. IV. 3.32.1–11). From this passage it appears that the function of the lower faculty is to enable Plotinus to maintain as far as possible the freedom from affections (ἀπάθεια) of the soul that his general theory requires. By means of introducing a lower imaginative faculty he is at least able to a large extent to keep the affections from the higher soul. He certainly seems to be uneasy about the retention of memories of affections, even though his theory of remembering images might have allowed him to say that no affection is any longer involved at this stage. But he was probably too good a psychologist to have gone as far as this: he knew that memories are not just objective records of fact, but may involve pain or pleasure as well (cf. IV.3.28.20f.). By first having memories of this kind presented to it by the lower faculty of imagination instead of receiving them directly, the higher is able to make a selection from material that it can observe in a detached way.<sup>13</sup> It is thus able to preserve only those memories which are not incompatible with its status as a constituent of the higher soul.

<sup>12</sup> It seems fairly clear from the sequel that the ἀστεῖος to whom the ὁ δέ in line 3 refers is now virtually equated with the higher man, i.e. the upper soul.

<sup>13</sup> There seems to be no warrant in the evidence for Guittou's statement, *Le Temps et L'Éternité* 117, that *each* memory is able to *select* from the stock of the other. Guittou appears to base this on Plotinus' statement that the lower soul may benefit from commerce with the higher, IV.3.32.6–9, assisted by his apparent interpretation of the remarks about memories of things here being forgotten in proportion as the soul makes an effort to move upwards (IV.3.32.13ff.) as applying to the lower soul. This is surely wrong: cf. the translations of Bréhier, Harder, Cilento. The idea that the lower memory may be influenced by the higher is surely no more than an application of the general principle that the character of a soul depends on the direction in which it exercises its activities.

This status does not of course mean that the higher faculty of memory is to be identified with the discursive reason, for one of its functions is to remember the products of this reason. Further, if we are right in identifying the mirror of I.4.10.6ff. with the faculty of imagination,<sup>14</sup> it would be clear that this faculty remembers these products in some ontologically lower – this is always the significance of *εἰδωλον* and similar terms<sup>15</sup> – form. Even if this identification is incorrect, the first point would cast suspicion on Inge's view that "Memory and Imagination (*φαντασία*) . . . belong to the Discursive Reason (*διάνοια*)." <sup>16</sup> This is to say nothing of the lower imaginative faculty and its memories, which are such as to make Inge's interpretation impossible. In fact Inge himself writes, a mere three pages later, "The faculty of forming pictures (he is here discussing imagination) is so independent of the judgement that illusions frequently occur." <sup>17</sup> Even if Inge did not wish to identify reason and judgement,<sup>18</sup> an identification demanded by the passage from V.3.3 which he quotes in his section on reason,<sup>19</sup> he could scarcely put judgement below this unreliable faculty of imagination, where it would have to go if imagination were put together with reason: above reason there is room only for *nous*.

The imaginative faculty's susceptibility to illusions to which Inge refers does, however, suggest another reason why not all imagination, and therefore all memory, could be placed in the upper soul. Plotinus would have been reluctant to allow the upper soul to harbour illusions produced by unprocessed reports from the senses. Whatever received these must be connected with the lower soul. Other characteristics of imagination would have led Plotinus to the same conclusion. For it is some form of imagination that is responsible for transmitting the demands of the appetitive faculty, or faculties, to the higher soul (cf. IV.4.20.14–20 and 28.35–43). Plotinus does in fact make a distinction between such images as arise in the regions of soul that are concerned with the body, and a higher kind which are opinions. This kind is primary imagination (*πρώτη φαντασία*), the other merely "a sort of

<sup>14</sup> See above 88f.

<sup>15</sup> cf. P. Aubin, "L' 'image' dans l'oeuvre de Plotin", *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 41 (1953) 353: "... chez Plotin la notion d'image est toujours liée a l'idée d'une dégradation et d'une irradiation."

<sup>16</sup> *Philosophy of Plotinus*<sup>3</sup> I, 226.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* I, 229.

<sup>18</sup> To keep them separate is the only way to free him from the charge of inconsistency.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* I, 234–6.

faint opinion and unexamined mental picture" (*ἀνεπίκριτος φαντασία*: cf. III.6.4.19–21). The aim of the discussion here is to show that the soul is not affected by events in the body: the passage is not concerned with the suitability of some or all opinions to be associated with the higher soul. And it is just possible that Plotinus had not yet been driven to the idea of a double faculty of imagination. If he had, and were pressed to explain how the distinction in III.6 fitted into the scheme, he might well have answered that apart from some approved opinions and images both the types of imagination mentioned there, being concerned primarily with the affections, are below the level of the upper soul and the images acceptable to the higher imaginative faculty: thus they would not need to be distinguished for the purposes of the discussion in IV.3–5[27–9]. He might even have said that the lower type in III.6[26].4 were not really images at all.<sup>20</sup> Then there would be no real difficulty. This would also be true if the description of the image arising in the section of soul attached to the body as unexamined opinion were meant to suggest that the opinions above this level have been subjected to identification and evaluation (*κρίσις*), and are thus the same as those in the higher faculty in the later discussion. But since the distinction in III.6 is made according to the source of the images and not their reliability, this is probably not the case. If it is not, the word *ἀνεπίκριτος*, unexamined, would refer only to the vagueness of the images involved: unlike some images they would not be identifiable with objects and therefore not subject to examination. That Plotinus did regard imagination as fundamentally spontaneous and outside our control is shown by the opposition of imagination to what is in our power in VI.8.2–3. It is this emphasis on the involuntary nature of imagination that leads him to say there that one might most properly call imagination the kind that arises from conditions of the body (VI.8.3.11f.), for this kind best exemplifies the difference which Plotinus is there concerned to show between action within our control and the results of imagination. If we are to explain the divergence of this statement from the view of III.6.4, we must think of Plotinus in each case stressing the kind that best makes his point. In VI.8 the opposition to free action is found most clearly in the lowest kind of imagination, while the soul's freedom from affections is more markedly apparent in the higher kind which Plotinus refers to in III.6. But perhaps it is better to accept that there is some fluctuation within the framework of a conception of imagination that remains basically the same.

<sup>20</sup> On this see above 54.



We have now seen the sort of considerations that would have led Plotinus to attach a faculty of imagination to the lower soul. But this in itself does not account for the establishment of two faculties of memory and imagination. For we may ask why Plotinus could not have attributed all memory and imagination to a faculty attached to the lower soul. Even images that resulted from the higher activities of the soul might be handled by such a faculty. The situation would hardly be different from that in which the imaginative faculty attached to the higher soul receives images which are degraded products of pure thought.

Such an explanation of memory would perhaps be adequate if Plotinus were concerned only with the memory of a person during his life on earth. Even here there would be the difficulty that it is the soul at the level of discursive reasoning that is usually identified with the individual person. The relegation of memory to the lower part of the soul would then mean that the individual's real self was not equipped with memory, and since the character of an individual seems to be determined to some extent by his memories, as Plotinus himself recognizes (see below), this would be unacceptable. A further difficulty arises with the introduction of the idea that the soul will retain some memories after it leaves the body. For the lower soul, whose *raison-d'être* is that it should give life to the body, will now depart.<sup>21</sup> It may account for the manifestations of life still appearing in the body of a dead man, but these are merely like the traces of heat remaining when a fire has been removed (cf. IV.4.29.2-7). The upper soul is no longer concerned with the body. The direction of energy towards it that produced the lower soul has ceased. Any memory that remains to the higher soul must then be attached to it. And since memory is to some extent extraneous – the stock of memories will diminish in time – it must have been so attached during life as well.

One might pursue this argument by asking why the soul should

<sup>21</sup> A few passages may indicate that Plotinus believed that even the lower soul is immortal, viz. IV.7.14.12f., VI.4.16.4off., IV.3.27 and I.1.12. The first two and the last of these are cited as evidence for this belief by Rist, *Plotinus* 230 and 268 n. 60 (The line references are mine). But apart from the first they all contain allegorizing about Hades or Heracles, or both, and their significance is not altogether clear: in part at least they probably refer to the status of the lower soul here on earth, cf. J. Pépin, *Mythe et Allégorie. Les origines grecques et les contes judéo-chrétiens* (Paris 1958) 202. The first passage need entail no more than potential existence for the discarnate lower soul. The last implies its early disappearance. All suggest that if it does survive it survives separately from the higher soul, cf. e.g. VI.4.16.41-3, I.1.12.18-20.

retain memories after death at all. A detailed answer to this question would bring us outside the scope of this treatment of Plotinus' psychology, but a brief indication of the reasons is perhaps called for. They are to be found in Plotinus' acceptance of the main features of Platonic eschatology. He believed in reincarnation.<sup>22</sup> The form in which a soul is reincarnated depends on its previous life and conforms to the characteristics of that life. The nature of the incarnate soul is determined not only by the body to which it is attached, but also by its conduct in former incarnations (IV.3.8.5-9, cf. III.4.2.1ff.). In this way justice is enforced (III.2.13.1ff.). And how else can a soul preserve its character between incarnations if not by the memories it retains? It is memory, says Plotinus, that makes soul what it is and controls its descent. Memory of the intelligibles prevents it from falling, memory of this world brings it down. The imagination which is memory involves identification with its objects: ἡ δὲ φαντασία αὐτῇ οὐ τῶ ἔχειν, ἀλλ' οἷα ὁρᾷ καὶ οἷα διάχειται (IV.4.3.7f.).<sup>23</sup> The characterisation of soul by its memories may be most strongly marked when these memories are in fact unconscious (IV.4.4.7-13). This remark is made with reference to the soul's condition before its descent is complete, but would probably be applicable to its earthly life as well. For only if there were such latent memories would it be possible to account for the fact, as Plotinus takes it to be, that when it is released from the body the soul will, with the progress of time, become able to remember the events of earlier lives (IV.3.27.16-18).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The views of Inge, *Philosophy of Plotinus*<sup>3</sup> II, 33f., who holds that Plotinus did not take this belief seriously, and P. V. Pistorius, *Plotinus and Neoplatonism* (Cambridge 1952) 98f., who thinks that he did not believe it at all, have been disposed of by A. N. M. Rich, "Reincarnation in Plotinus", *Mnemosyne* ser. 4.10 (1957) 232-8. Miss Rich shows not only that Plotinus did hold this doctrine but that it played an important part in his philosophy.

<sup>23</sup> The significance of this is well expressed by J. Trouillard's "Dis-moi ce dont tu te souviens, et je te dirai qui tu es." *La Purification Plotinienne* (Paris 1955) 38.

<sup>24</sup> Guitton, *Le Temps et l'Éternité* 115f., sees the establishment of two memories as a trick to evade the difficulties that he sees in the following alleged contradiction: (1) Holding that the body obstructs memory and insisting on the independence of memory *vis-à-vis* the body, Plotinus seems to favour its persistence in the next world. But (2) he has denied consciousness to the soul at this level; how can he then grant memory to "l'âme unie à l'intelligible"? So, according to Guitton, Plotinus distinguishes two memories, "L'une qui est liée à l'activité propre de l'âme, l'autre qui n'est que le reveil de la sensation." When he wants to remove from the body the memory of the mixed soul, he stresses the active memory, while when he wants to show that the discarnate soul has no memory, he takes memory as passive.

The following objections may be raised against this interpretation: (1) It does

A reader familiar with Plato might be surprised at the absence in Plotinus of the doctrine of recollection (ἀνάμνησις). But for this there are good reasons. The entities with which Plato's recollection is concerned are not for Plotinus possible objects of memory, which deals only with things placed in time (cf. IV.4.6.2f., IV.3.25.13-15). They are accessible only to direct intuition. And since our intelligence always remains active among the intelligibles, such intuition is always possible if the soul turns its attention in that direction. For *Nous* as a whole, and any part of it, is identical with the intelligibles. Plotinus himself mentions Platonic recollection as one of the ideas that this doctrine shows to be correct (V.9.5.32).<sup>25</sup> There is no need to explain the possibility of knowledge of the intelligibles by thinking of memories of them somehow stored within us so that they can be elicited by the correct dialectical procedure. For Plotinus we need only look and we

not seem to follow that Plotinus should think of activities obstructed by the body as therefore likely to exist in the higher world. This would certainly not apply to some kinds of memory which Plotinus would presumably consider respectable, and so not on that account to be dropped immediately, but which still have no place in the higher world, e.g. a friend's address. We should remember that when Plotinus says that the body obstructs memory he makes no exceptions. (2) It is true that Plotinus denies consciousness, in as far as consciousness involves a detached view of the self, to the soul at the level of *Nous*. But he also denies memory there. Guittou takes no account of the intermediate stage between incarnation and being a part of *Nous*, the hypostasis Soul, where there is sufficient differentiation between its components to allow the kind of individuality that would be determined by the retention of memories. Plotinus does not want to show that the discarnate soul at this level has no memories: Guittou's remarks would only apply to it when, or just before, it has been reduced, or raised, to being a part of *Nous*. (3) Plotinus would reject the suggestion that any type of memory was passive, though it is true that the lower memory has less active power than the higher.

<sup>25</sup> That Plotinus should say this does not of course mean that he held the doctrine to be true in the sense in which it was originally propounded. He has just said that the identity of Νοῦς and τὰ ὄντα shows the following statements to be right: Parmenides' τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶ τε καὶ εἶναι (fr. 3), Aristotle's identification of knowledge with its immaterial objects, and Heraclitus' ἐμαυτόν (sic) ἐδιζήσαμην (fr. 101) (V.9.5.26-31). That should be sufficient comment! Plotinus also notes that οἱ παλαιοί seem to call μνήμη and ἀνάμνησις the soul's activity with respect to what it already has, which should not strictly be called μνήμη (IV.3.25.31-4). The preceding remarks show that the reference is again to the intelligibles. The higher hypostasis can of course be described as within as well as above (cf. e.g. V.1.3.16f.). Merlan, *Monopsychism, Mysticism, Metacosciousness. Problems of the Soul in the Neoplatonist and Neoplatonic Tradition* (The Hague 1963) 58f., finds the connection Plotinus makes in V.9.5 between ἀνάμνησις and the identity of intelligence with the intelligibles puzzling. He explains it in terms of Leibniz' theory of unconscious thinking and Plotinus' own ideas on the unconscious. I hope I have shown that it is unnecessary to go to such lengths.

shall see (IV.7.10.30-5). The Platonic doctrine of recollection is replaced by the doctrine of the undescended intelligence.<sup>26</sup>

We have just noticed that Plotinus recognized that there could be unconscious memories. Unfortunately he says little about this interesting idea. But it does seem that he is referring to memories that remain with us although we are no longer aware of them, rather than to the retention by the memory of things of which we had never been conscious at all. Memory, he says, should be seen not only in the perception, as it were (ἐν τῷ οἶον αἰσθάνεσθαι), that one is remembering – the tense is present (IV.4.4.8). It is possible to have a memory without being aware (μὴ παρακολουθοῦντα) that one has it (ib. 10f.). Here there is no reference to the way the memory was originally obtained, but only to the mode of its retention. There is more room for doubt about the words following the first of these remarks, “but also when one’s disposition accords with what one has formerly undergone or seen”: while what one has seen (θεάματα) would usually seem to involve consciousness at the time the memories originate, what one has undergone (παθήματα) need not. But it seems safe to say that the passage is concerned with how memories are present rather than with their acquisition. Certainly Plotinus’ normal view is that we remember only those things of which we were conscious in the first place. This is brought out in his discussion of whether or not the heavenly bodies can be said to have memory. Since memory is of things that are past they cannot remember that they have seen God, for they always do see him (IV.4.7.1-3). Nor could they remember that they passed the earth yesterday, for any particular day in their revolution is not a distinct part of it, any more than the parts that one might produce by dividing the movement involved in taking a step (cf. IV.4.7.4-12). One might, however, ask whether they would be able to report that they had been passing through a particular section of the zodiac, and were now in

<sup>26</sup> Plotinus would probably have claimed that his doctrine explained what Plato meant by ἀνάμνησις. This would be sufficient to refute Pistorius’ argument, *Plotinus and Neoplatonism* 98f., that if Plotinus had believed in reincarnation he would have tried to disprove its connection with the doctrine of reminiscence which he did not hold. It is perhaps misleading to say, as does Miss Rich, “Reincarnation in Plotinus”, 233, that “Plotinus refrained from disproving the connection of the two theories by Plato because he did not wish to emphasize his divergence from his master on the question of Reminiscence”. Plotinus would not need to disprove the connection since his interpretation of ἀνάμνησις made this unnecessary. The divergence from Plato is hardly greater than in some other cases where Plotinus is “explaining” Plato. For Plotinus’ conception of his methods, cf. the manifesto at V.1.8.10ff. See too the remark at V.9.5.32 referred to above, and the previous note.

another. And if they watch over the affairs of men, could they not see that there were changes? If so, memory would seem to be involved in each case (ib. 12-17).

These questions are answered by a series of arguments showing that there are in any activity factors which would not be committed to memory. Firstly, one does not necessarily retain what one has seen. This may be so if there are no significant differences between objects or parts of an object, or if the power of sensation is moved by some difference without having turned its attention to it. In this case only the sensitive faculty is aware of the difference in question. The difference is not admitted to the inner part of the soul because it is irrelevant to its needs. And when the attention is turned to other things the memory of such differences is not retained, since the soul was not aware of the sensations originating from them even when they were before it (IV.4.8.7-16). The things which are entirely incidental to an activity need not reach the imaginative faculty at all, or if they do, not in such a way as to be preserved there. The impression of such a thing does not produce awareness (*συναίσθησις*). Plotinus illustrates this with the example of walking. If we do not deliberately set out to part successive sections of air as we move, we shall not remember that we have done so. In fact we shall not have noticed it at all. Similarly, if our purpose were not to cover a certain distance, and we could move through the air, we should not ask which milestone we had reached or how much of the road we had covered (IV. 4.8.16-27). Finally, when we think of an event as a whole we do not pay attention to the parts that make up this whole. Further, if one is constantly repeating the same activity, there would be no point in remembering all its separate details (IV. 4.8.30-34).

Plotinus uses these points to show that the stars do not have memory (IV.4.8.34ff.). For us their importance is in the connection they show between conscious perception and memory. Attributes and events which are not clearly seen in their own right, and in distinction from the activities of which they are constituents, cannot enter the memory. These characteristics of memory, together with the requirement, that it should be concerned with things situated in significant divisions of time, are but another indication that memory must be associated with the area of soul limited by the sensitive and discursive faculties. For reflexive consciousness appears only at the level of the former – it is not for nothing that it is called *συναίσθησις* – while above the latter time, which is vital to memory, is no longer applicable.

Yet these considerations in no way indicate any need for a duplication in the faculty which enables us to remember. The same might be said of other characteristics of memory that Plotinus has discussed. But we have seen that factors were involved that tended to pull the faculty in different directions. There were strong reasons for keeping it close to the sensitive faculty, and others demanding that it should be associated with the higher soul. In the end it split.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps we shall be less dissatisfied with this unique duplication if we think of the differences between the two imaginative faculties, and of the powers of selection of the higher which differentiate it from its colleague and almost make it a faculty of another kind.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> That there is a tendency for man to break in two was already noted by Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen* III.ii<sup>4</sup>, 642. We may now point out that from a certain point of view the break comes in the middle of a faculty.

<sup>28</sup> Two recent articles on the subject of this chapter by E. W. Warren, "Memory in Plotinus", *CQ* n.s. 15 (1965) 252-60 and "Imagination in Plotinus", *CQ* n.s. 16 (1966) 277-85, seem to me to give an inadequate and in some places misleading account of Plotinus' views. I do not intend to criticize them in detail here but, *i.a.*, Warren refers only once to IV.6, he apparently fails to distinguish between ἀνάμνησις in the technical Platonic sense and the ordinary meaning of recollection, some of his discussion is based on the idea that there was an "apprehensive" power called ἀντίληψις, and he says little about why there are two imaginative faculties, for which he finds Plotinus' reasons difficult to understand: the same might be said of his suggestions for an explanation.

## THE DISCURSIVE REASON

The last of the faculties which form part of the compound that is man living in the sensible world is the discursive reason, τὸ διανοητικόν or τὸ λογιζόμενον. This faculty is more fully independent of the body and the lower soul than is the memory. Memory, though in its higher form it may reject certain things as unfit to be remembered, must accept the validity of the images presented to it. The reason is able to question their authenticity. But since some of its activities result from sense-perception or practical requirements, it may be regarded as more closely connected with the other faculties which we have described than with the intuitive intellect. For this has no necessary links with the rest of the complex of faculties. Its operations may become known to us through the mediation of reason or imagination, but they may equally well continue without so becoming known at all.

Before going on to describe the functions of the discursive reason we must, in order to justify the foregoing remarks, answer two preliminary questions. Firstly, Plotinus uses two sets of terms to discuss the reason and its operations: is it then correct to take διάνοια and λογισμός or λόγος, τὸ διανοητικόν and τὸ λογιζόμενον or λογιστικόν, as referring to the same processes and the same faculty? Secondly, is the faculty which these words describe fully distinct from the intuitive intellect or are they one, so that *nous* is subject to error in the same way as the discursive reason? <sup>1</sup>

The first of these questions might seem to be unnecessary, were it not that a distinction between the διανοητικόν and the λογιζόμενον has been made by so careful a scholar as H.-R. Schwyzer.<sup>2</sup> The texts,

<sup>1</sup> The discussion of these points cannot be made easily accessible to Greekless readers. They would do best to proceed to p. 105 where its conclusions are summarized.

<sup>2</sup> *Entretiens* V, 366, where the διανοητικόν is taken as being above the λογιζό-

however, do not seem to leave much room for such a view. With the exception of a significant passage in V.3, there are none, as far as I know, which give lists of parts or faculties of the soul and mention both *διάνοια* and *λογισμός* together. So in Plotinus' refutation of Aristotle's theory of the nature of the soul, he shows that it cannot apply to any of the several faculties which he examines from this point of view: the reasoning faculty (*λογιζόμενον*), the sensitive, the desiring or the vegetative (IV.7.85.17-28). In IV.9.3, where he is discussing which areas of all soul the various forms of the individual soul correspond to, he deals with *λόγος*, *αἴσθησις* and *τὸ φυτικόν* or *θρεπτικόν* (lines 10-24). But such lists cannot quite prove our point. To the first example, which is quoted because it gives more than the usual two or three faculties at a time, one could object that Plotinus is merely using Aristotle's own divisions for the sake of the argument against him. As for the second, and similar cases, one might say that Plotinus is discussing only the broad divisions of the soul and that there is still room for separate faculties within the area labelled "rational". Nevertheless the absence of two terms to refer to the area of the soul in question is typical, and significant when compared with the use in combination of, for example, *φυτικόν* and *θρεπτικόν*.<sup>3</sup> Another, and perhaps more serious, objection is that Plotinus nowhere gives us a complete catalogue of the faculties, so that the fact that *διάνοια* and *λογισμός* are not listed together might, without further support, give us no more than a rather unreliable argument from silence. This might be so even with such an extensive coverage as that in IV.3.19, where *αἰσθητικόν*, *φυτικόν*, *αὐξητικόν*, *λογισμός* and *νοῦς* are mentioned, with a reference to *ἐπιθυμία* and *θυμός*, whose exact status is left in doubt. For even here *φαντασία* is absent, as well as the other possible subdivisions of the vegetative soul.

We must therefore, at the risk of some repetition later, mention some of Plotinus' statements about the functions of the faculty or faculties concerned. A special difficulty for Schwyzer, who takes the *διανοητικόν* to be the higher of his two faculties, is that *διάνοια* is said to judge forms (*εἴδη*) presented to it as a result of sense-perception (I.1.9.8ff.). There would hardly be room for another faculty of thought and judgement, *λογισμός*, between sensation and *διάνοια*. This fact about *διάνοια* would

μενον, and 390. He does not here give any reasons for making the distinction, but seems to derive it from V.3.2-3, where we shall see that it is not in fact to be found. Theiler, in his notes on the passage in question, *Plotinus Schriften* Vb (1960), takes the terms as equivalent, but he has apparently not been able to take into account contributions to *Entretiens* V apart from his own.

<sup>3</sup> For similar examples see above 26f.



not by itself preclude the possibility that there are still two faculties with τὸ λογιζόμενον, rather than τὸ διανοητικόν, the higher of the two. But we find that a similar role in relation to sense-perception is assigned elsewhere to λογισμός. As opposed to the separate senses of sight and hearing λογισμός, which is set over them, is able to communicate as well as judge (VI.4.6.15-18).<sup>4</sup> Similarly we read that λόγος – Plotinus often uses this word as the equivalent of λογισμός or λογιζόμενον – may fail in the study of Being by dividing it in unsuitable ways (VI.5.2.1-6), while later in the same treatise it is argued that if one divides the δύναμις of Being to infinity by the use of διάνοια, one will still be left with the same unbounded power (VI.5.12.3-5). So we can see that higher reality is also dealt with by one faculty which may be given different names. Finally we may refer to the passage in V.3 which we have already mentioned. Plotinus is there considering whether the faculties of the soul, as opposed to *nous*, can have self-knowledge. When he comes to τὸ λογιζόμενον he points out that it works with the images produced by sensation, which has already been shown to deal with objects external to itself. It also works with impressions (τύποι) from *nous*, dividing and collecting them in the same way. Does this mean that the soul's νοῦς – a term used elsewhere for τὸ λογιζόμενον<sup>5</sup> – turns to itself and knows itself? No, says Plotinus, that is in the sphere of νοῦς. But if we do allow the lower faculty some knowledge of itself, we must examine what this knowledge is and how it differs from self-intellection, τὸ νοεῖν ἑαυτό. Then, resuming the position, Plotinus asks: τοῦτο τοίνυν τὸ διανοητικόν τῆς ψυχῆς ἄρα ἐπιστρέφει ἐφ' ἑαυτὸ καὶ αὐτό; He answers that it does not, but that it has σύνεσις of the τύποι that it receives from both sides (cf. V.3.2.7-25). The processing of τύποι from both sides, that is from both *nous* and sensation, is just what we have been told that τὸ λογιζόμενον does. And, moreover, Plotinus has said (lines 11-13) that the λογιζόμενον attains σύνεσις of the τύποι by fitting them to those that it has already. And this treatment of the τύποι is what Plotinus goes on to discuss in the next chapter when he answers the question proposed for discussion at the end of chapter 2, how the διανοητικόν has this σύνεσις.

This passage seems to make it quite clear that τὸ διανοητικόν and τὸ λογιζόμενον are to be regarded as equivalent. The rest of V.3.3 points

<sup>4</sup> On the basis of this text alone it might just be possible to argue that λογισμός is to be equated with what is elsewhere referred to as κοινή αἴσθησις, but such a view could hardly be taken seriously.

<sup>5</sup> See below 104f.

in the same direction, even though the indications are perhaps less precise. But one sentence there does appear at first sight to offer a difficulty. It is this: ἀλλ' εἴ τις φήσει «τί οὖν κωλύει τοῦτο ἄλλη δυνάμει σκοπεῖσθαι τὰ αὐτοῦ;» οὐ τὸ διανοητικὸν οὐδὲ τὸ λογιστικὸν ἐπιζητεῖ, ἀλλὰ νοῦν καθαρὸν λαμβάνει (lines 18–21). Is Plotinus referring to two different faculties after all? The general run of the discussion certainly makes this most unlikely. Λογίζομαι and διανοοῦμαι and their cognates seem to be used in free variation. So in this sentence the two words must be taken as synonymous. Once again one might wonder if the use of a term – here τὸ λογιστικόν – is perhaps to be explained by its Platonic associations.

This brings us to the second of our preliminary questions, the extent of the area of soul described by the terms λογιστικόν, λογιζόμενον and διανοητικόν. Whatever the explanation for the use of λογιστικόν in the passage just discussed might be, it is clear that when this term occurs in conjunction with the other two components of Plato's tripartite soul, it must not be taken too seriously as the description of a specific part of the soul. We have shown that Plotinus does not believe in a tripartite soul, and that when he uses the terminology appropriate to this doctrine he is not expounding serious psychological theory.<sup>6</sup> Failure to take account of this fact is largely responsible for the misconception that τὸ λογιστικόν may be understood to refer to the part of our soul which has not descended, and that therefore that part can be subject to the folly which is said to be the special vice of τὸ λογιστικόν at III.6.2.22f. This view, which is contrary to all that Plotinus normally teaches about the impassibility and impeccability of the undescended soul, is advanced by W. Himmerich.<sup>7</sup> Its significance for our immediate purpose is that it obscures the very important difference between the reason, which is a part of the sensible man, and the undescended soul, or νοῦς νοῶν, which is not; a difference that in fact appears later in the same chapter where Plotinus, who may now be talking more precisely,

<sup>6</sup> See above 21ff. 11f.

<sup>7</sup> *Eudaimonia. Die Lehre des Plotin von der Selbstverwirklichung des Menschen* (Würzburg 1959) 126. Armstrong complains about this in his review of Himmerich, *Gnomon* 32 (1960) 319f., and suggests that the passage from III.6 in question may well refer to the discursive-rational part of the soul; see also Rist, *Eros and Psyche. Studies in Plato, Plotinus, and Origen* (Toronto 1964) 177. On the perfection and stability of the undescended part of the soul cf. Trouillard, "L'impeccabilité de l'esprit, selon Plotin", *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 143 (1953) 19ff., and Armstrong, "Salvation, Plotinian and Christian", *Downside Review* 75 (1957) 132.

says that τὸ λογιζόμενον is virtuous when it acts in conformity with νοῦς (III.6.2.29-32).<sup>8</sup>

In fact if the passage which contains the remarks about folly and τὸ λογιστικόν is meant to be taken as a serious analysis of the soul, and to refer to a "thinking soul . . . that has its home in the realm of intellect",<sup>9</sup> it must mean that reason and intellect are really one. This is a view that might be encouraged by the laxity of Plotinus' terminology. It is quite true that we do find the same terms used for both, and more particularly νοῦς applied to the reasoning faculty. But there are few, if any, passages where it is not clear from the context which of the two is being discussed, and several which explicitly distinguish them. Thus Plotinus may point out that when he says νοῦς he means the intuitive intellect and not the lower faculty of the soul which comes from it: νοῦν δὲ λέγω οὐχ ἣν ἡ ψυχὴ ἔχει ἔξιν οὖσαν τῶν παρὰ τοῦ νοῦ, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν τὸν νοῦν (I.1.8.1-3). Elsewhere they are distinguished by the continuity of the activity of the true νοῦς, a continuity which differentiates this activity from the intermittent functioning of the soul. It is νοῦς that gives us φρόνησις: νοῦς δὲ οὐ ποτὲ μὲν νοῦς, ποτὲ δὲ ἄνους, ὃ γε ἀληθινός (V.9.2.21f., cf. V.8.3.9f.).<sup>10</sup> And later in the same treatise the difference is marked by their procedure: ἕτερος γὰρ ὁ μερίζων νοῦς, ὁ δὲ ἀμέριστος καὶ μὴ μερίζων τὸ ὄν καὶ τὰ πάντα (V.9.8.21f.). When the soul νοεῖ, it does so in a

<sup>8</sup> Rist, "Integration and the Undescended Soul in Plotinus", *AJP* 88 (1967) 416, correctly distinguishes τὸ λογιστικόν from νοῦς itself. But it may be incorrect to take the λογιστικόν of III.6.2.22 as definitely excluding the intellect, as he there does. In so far as Plotinus is here talking in terms of the Platonic tripartition, the expression could, and may well, be loosely used and include both intellect and reason, see above and also 21f. Thus the λογιστικόν in line 22 might not, as Rist implies, be the same as the λογιζόμενον in line 31 which does, as he points out, refer strictly to the reason. Though Plotinus normally uses λογιστικόν and λογιζόμενον indiscriminately, the fact that he uses λογιζόμενον in the rest of III.6.2 may be due to care to avoid confusion. It is in any case the commoner of the two terms.

<sup>9</sup> "... die denkende Seele . . . im Geistbereich beheimatet . . .", Himme-rich, *loc. cit.*

<sup>10</sup> For the expression νοῦς ἀληθινός cf. I.4.4.7f. It hardly needs saying that there was a precedent for the two senses of νοῦς in the Peripatetic tradition, but it is interesting to note that Alexander, whom Plotinus read (cf. Porphyry, *Vita Plot.* 14.10-14), talks of ὁ κυρίως νοῦς as opposed to that ἐν ἡμῖν, *de Anima* 89.19f. This is not to imply that Plotinus' νοῦς and διάνοια correspond to Aristotle's active and passive reason, though the idea of a *nous* that is separate and always active must have helped in the formation of Plotinus' doctrine of the undescended intelligence. Merlan, *Monopsychism* 10, in discussing similarities between Aristotle's account of *nous* and Plotinus', does not seem to realise that in Plotinus the so-called *nous* which operates as the result of the activity of another *nous* is in fact διάνοια.

different way from the entity above it, and the term νοεῖν, as Plotinus himself points out, is used in quite a different way in each case (I.2.3.24-7). Quite apart from the reservations about III.6.2 that have been mentioned, this ambivalent use of νοῦς should be sufficient warning against assuming that τὸ λογιστικόν must necessarily mean what it meant for Plato, and thus include the pure intellect. Finally we may refer to a passage where λογιστικόν and λογιζόμενον are equated and opposed to νοῦς. In describing the steps by which we may advance from knowledge of the material world towards an apprehension of the One, Plotinus says that after attaining knowledge of the nature of the soul, we must take a νοῦς that is ἕτερον τοῦ λογιζομένου καὶ λογιστικοῦ καλουμένου (VI.9.5.7-9). This remark shows quite clearly that τὸ λογιστικόν and its equivalents must not be taken to include the undescended intellect.

In the preceding section we have established that there is a single rational faculty, and that it is to be found within the area covered by the sensible man, that is, below the level of the intuitive intellect. From this it must be distinguished, in spite of the fact that Plotinus' language sometimes suggests that they are the same. We may now go on to look more closely at the functions of this faculty without needing to make constant reference to its identity when it appears under different names.

In the treatise *Against the Gnostics* the reason is aptly called τὸ μέσον, the middle part (II.9.2.9). Not only is its status intermediate between that of the merely living and sentient "living-being" and the intellect, but its operations too are based on those of its neighbours above and below. On the lower side it is responsible for the processing of sense-data. It is true that the sensitive faculty is said to be in a way critical (IV.3.23.3f.), and that the word κρίσις, judgement, is used to describe perception as opposed to mere sensation.<sup>11</sup> But it is a purely perceptual kind of "judgement" that is involved when the sensitive faculty tells us that it has seen a particular kind of object. This is what Plotinus means when he says in I.6.3 that it is best able to judge its own objects, even though the rest of the soul may add a judgement of its own. The sensitive faculty gives its report by fitting what it receives to the forms the soul contains.<sup>12</sup> These are a standard in the way that a ruler is a standard of straightness (cf. I.6.3.1-5). We perceive things in

<sup>11</sup> Cf. 70 above.

<sup>12</sup> In line 3 I follow most editors in reading αὐτῇ λέγει as opposed to H-S' αὐτῇ λέγει. αὐτῇ refers to δυνάμεις, cf. Dodds' review of Harder<sup>1</sup> I, *Classical Review* 45 (1931) 36.

the sensible world for what they are because they conform to intelligible archetypes to which we may fit them (VI.7.6.2-6).<sup>13</sup> Yet the common sense (*κοινή αἰσθησις*), to which the several senses report (IV.7.6.3ff.), is able to make mistakes so long as its reports have not been passed by the rational faculty (I.1.9.10-12). This shows that the judgements of the sensitive faculty cannot be more than general identifications. It might, for example, fit the information that comes to it through the sense organs to the internal form of a tree. The rational faculty, about which Plotinus says no more just here, could then reason that the percipient is in the midst of waterless desert and still has fifteen miles to go before the next oasis, so that the tree, which really is seen, must be part of a mirage, and is not really there. Such inference might be included in the examination (*ἐπίκρισις*) by collection and division which reason is said to perform with the images provided by sensation at V.3.2.7-9.

More specific identifications than the mere recognition of sense-data, as well as value judgements, are made by the reason. Such judgements are the work of the soul alone. Whereas perception works with information supplied through the body's organs, reason, when it deals with the forms (*εἶδη*) that result from sense-impressions, has no need of the body to enable it to exercise its activity (I.1.9.15-21). When the sensitive faculty perceives a man and presents the form of the rational faculty, this may do no more than take note of it. But if it had seen it before, it might ask itself "who is this?". Then, with the help of memory, it could say that it was Socrates (V.3.3.1-5). It may also say that he is good. If it does this it starts from the information it has received through the senses. But the statement that it makes about what it has so received is made on the basis of a standard of goodness that it already possesses. It is itself like the good (*ἀγαθοειδής*), and is enabled to perceive goodness by the illumination that it receives from *nous* (ib. 6-11). It contains everything inscribed, as it were, by the intellect of which it is a representation (V.3.4.20-22).

The standards which the reason owes to the intellect are, of course, used for purposes other than the evaluation of sense-data. They provide too a basis for its more general deliberations. If the soul is able to reason about justice and beauty, or to consider whether some particular thing is just or beautiful, there must be some permanent example of justice to make such reasoning possible (V.1.11.1-4). From a different point of view it could be said that the possession of reason makes it

<sup>13</sup> On the text of this passage see Cilento *ad loc.*

possible for us to think about the truths contained in *Nous* in a way applicable to the world we live in. Just as Being at the level of soul no longer retains the compactness it has in the world of true Being that is *Nous* (cf. IV.3.5.9f.), so reason deploys and separates the forms that are all together at the level of *nous* (I.1.8.6–8). The formulation (λόγος) in soul, in its relation to that in *nous*, might be compared with the spoken word as opposed to that still remaining unspoken within the soul. The spoken word is a divided representation of what is in the soul: it is in this way that the formulation in soul is related to that before it, of which it is the interpreter (I.2.3.27–31, cf. V.1.3.7–9).<sup>14</sup>

The division of what is united in *Nous*, and the consideration in succession of what must there be simultaneous, is characteristic of reasoning. We have already seen how the procedure by division is used to distinguish the so-called *nous* of the soul from the intuitive intellect.<sup>15</sup> Such division may be the cause of error if it is conducted on the wrong principles. When the reason comes to examine the nature of Being it may use material existence in its investigation. In this case, since it takes its premises (ἀρχαί) from the sensible world, it is led to split up Being and treat it as the same kind of existence that it finds here. The premises used are not those appropriate to the subject under examination. The correct ones should be intelligible premises linked to true Being (cf. VI.5.2.1–9). These would, of course, be such as reason derives from above, the sort of impressions (οἶον τύποι) produced by the images that come from *nous* (V.3.2.9f.). *Nous* provides clear premises for dialectic to anyone whose soul is able to receive them (I.3.5.1f.). For the intellect, on the other hand, the kind of error described in VI.5.2, and indeed all other kinds, are impossible. Here there is no question of truth or falsehood being equally applicable to a conclusion, but simply one of access to an unalterable truth: "The intellect either grasps its object, or it does not, so that it does not make mistakes" (*my trans.* I.1.9.12f.).<sup>16</sup>

This access is obtained by assimilation to the intellect. We then think the intelligibles themselves: we no longer have impressions or

<sup>14</sup> In both passages Plotinus uses the expression λόγος ὁ ἐν προφορᾷ for the spoken word. The phrase recalls the Stoic term λόγος προφορικός, cf. SVF II, 135. Rist, *Plotinus* 265, n. 12 to chapter 15, thinks, probably rightly, that these passages indicate that Plotinus was familiar with the Stoic distinction between λόγος προφορικός, the spoken word, and λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, the unexpressed thought. But cf. too Plato, *Sophist* 263e.

<sup>15</sup> See above 102 and 104f.

<sup>16</sup> ὁ δὲ νοῦς ἡ ἐφ' ἧσατο ἡ οὐ, ὥστε ἀναμάτητος. H-S' text is secured by citations in the commentaries on Aristotle's *de Anima*. The references can be found in the *index testium* of their edition.

images of them but actually are the intelligibles, and instead of just receiving them in us we take a place among them (VI.5.7.1-6, cf. 10.40-2). We thus participate in an activity that is always in progress (V.8.3.9f.), but is only ours when we are aware of it (IV.3.30.7-15). We possess *nous* when we use it (cf. V.3.3.26-9, I.2.4.25-7). Not that it is something separate, for all reality is present within us: "Just as these three things we have mentioned (the hypostases) exist in nature, so must we believe that they exist in us too." (V.1.10.5f.).<sup>17</sup> Immediately we have, so to speak, switched on to *nous* we necessarily have full knowledge, for there thought and its objects are identical (cf. e.g. V.4.2.44-8). There is thus no need for demonstration and persuasion, for *nous* need not seek its objects: truth resides in the real existents (*ὄντα*) that are both its object and itself. This means that there is no need for the truth to be found in conformity with something external. Rather it is included in any statement, for there are no higher criteria (V.5.2). *Nous*, all Being and truth are the same (V.5.3.1f.).

Reason, on the other hand, deals with external objects (V.3.4.14-16) and must move gradually towards its conclusions. Unlike the true *nous*, the "*nous*" in the soul must work from premises and conduct its investigations by moving from one consequence to the next, so that through a series of logical connections it can arrive at knowledge that it did not have before (I.8.2.10-15). It is a quest that is completed with the acquisition of its object: "What else is reasoning but a search for wisdom and for the correct account which accords with the true intellect? . . . For the reasoner seeks to acquire that knowledge whose possessor is wise . . . The reasoner himself shows this: when he has what is necessary his reasoning is over." (IV.4.12.5-12).<sup>18</sup>

In the treatise *On Dialectic* (I.3) we are told more about the methods that reason may follow in the course of philosophical enquiry. It can give an account of the nature of each thing, how it differs from others, and what it has in common with them. It can say in which class, and where in this class, it belongs, whether or not it is a real existent, and enumerate real existents and things that are of a different kind. It can discuss good and evil, and what is to be classed under each, and say what is eternal and what is not. It leaves behind the error attached to

<sup>17</sup> "Ὡςπερ δὲ ἐν τῇ φύσει τριττὰ ταῦτ' ἐστὶ τὰ εἰρημένα, οὕτω χρὴ νομίζειν καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν ταῦτα εἶναι.

<sup>18</sup> Τὸ γὰρ λογίζεσθαι τί ἄλλο ἢ τὸ ἐφίεσθαι εὗρεῖν φρονεῖν καὶ λόγον ἀληθῆ καὶ τυγχάνοντα νοῦ τοῦ ὄντος; . . . Ζητεῖ γὰρ μαθεῖν ὁ λογιζόμενος ὅπερ ὁ ἥδη ἔχων φρόνιμος. . . . Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ λογιζόμενος· ὅταν γὰρ εὕρῃ δὲ δεῖ, πέπαυται λογιζόμενος.

the sensible world, and uses the Platonic method of division to separate the Ideas, to make definitions and to reach the primary kinds (πρῶτα γένη). Then it makes combinations, and, analysing these in turn, it can go through all intelligible reality till it returns to its starting point (I.3.4.2-16). At this juncture the dialectic seems to pass from the province of reason to that of intellect, for it ceases to be a progress, and becomes a restful contemplation of a unity, and the logical method of dealing with premises and syllogisms is left behind (ib. 16-20).

The premises were drawn from *Nous*, and when the process has arrived at an articulated view of *Nous* it has found what it sought, and may come to an end. For *nous* does not apply itself to extrinsic material, acquire new facts or go through objects that are not already spread out before it. To do this is the work of the soul (V.9.7.8-11, cf. V.3.17.23f.). The thinking of our soul cannot be like that in *Nous*, since we always have different requirements, and so must always direct our thinking to different objects, all of which are external. We are subject to a multiplicity of images, often conflicting, and the promptings and requirements of our lower faculties. Desire may make demands that must be met or resisted. Anger, and the needs of the body in general, call for action. The affections produce constant changes in our opinions (IV.4.17.1-17).<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless the reason need not give way: in a good man, as in a good city, the best elements can control the rest (ib. 35-42, cf. VI.4.15.32-8).

The psychic level at which the reason works is for Plotinus usually the level at which a person's identity is to be found.<sup>20</sup> This was a concept for which Greek had no word.<sup>21</sup> Plotinus deals with it in the form of answers to questions like "what are we?" and "what is the self?". His answers are never of the complex kind that we should tend to give now, but are given in terms of a certain part of the soul. The problem is usually discussed in terms of what constitutes the "we", τὸ ἡμεῖς or simply ἡμεῖς, which becomes virtually a technical term. This question has been discussed at some length by Himmerich.<sup>22</sup> Himme-

<sup>19</sup> In line 17 I read δοξάζειν.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Trouillard, "La médiation du verbe selon Plotin", *Revue Philosophique* 146 (1956) 69, and Schwyzer, *RE* XXI.1, 566f. Bréhier's "L'entendement, c'est nous-mêmes", *Philosophie de Plotin* 77, misleadingly suggests that this is always so.

<sup>21</sup> The lack of suitable terms need not mean that the concept did not exist; cf. A. Lesky's remarks on this problem in Homer and tragedy, *Göttliche und menschliche Motivierung im homerischen Epos* (Heidelberg 1961) 9.

<sup>22</sup> *Eudaimonia* ch. 8, "Bereich und Funktion des menschlichen Ich", 92-100.



rich's discussion is helpful, and he has dealt with most of the important texts. But in his commendable desire to reduce the separation between the static and dynamic aspects of Plotinus' philosophy he has tended to over-emphasize the extent to which changes in consciousness may imply changes in being. As a result he sees such changes taking place as the "we" moves from one level to another,<sup>23</sup> and perhaps links it more closely with the soul than is always warranted by the evidence. This leads him to go so far as to talk of the "we" transcending itself.<sup>24</sup>

If we think of it in such terms the usefulness of Plotinus' concept of the "we" would be seriously diminished. For some of its value lies in the fact that it helps him to maintain, without doing violence to the phenomena of the sensible world, the view that changes in activity are accompanied by changes in being. If the "we" were identical with the soul, its activity at a certain level would tend to imply the disappearance of other levels and not merely their relegation to the unconscious. And whatever Plotinus' attitude to the sensible world may have been, he certainly did not go so far as to hold that its appearances were as completely illusory as they would in such circumstances have to be. It thus seems more helpful, and more correct, to regard the "we" rather as a focus of conscious activity that can shift as such activity shifts without causing violent disruptions of the world around us.<sup>25</sup>

Such a view would seem to explain best how Plotinus can, within the space of no more than a few pages, make the following statements. He says that the "we" is multiple (I.1[53].9.7), and also that it may be taken in two ways, depending on whether or not the merely animal component of our being is included (I.1.10.5-7). Yet "we" are really to be found at the level of rational and discursive thought (I.1.7.16f.). The things below this, which form the "living being", belong to us, but we are above them (ib. 17f.). A similar view is expressed in a treatise written slightly earlier, (V.3[49]). There we are told that we are the discursive reason and sensation, since, unlike *nous*, it is always in use, is

See also P. Hadot, *Plotin ou la simplicité du regard* (Paris 1963) 25-39, and Armstrong, *HLGP* 224f.

<sup>23</sup> *Loc. cit.*, esp. 94-6.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* 99.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Dodds, *Entretiens* V, 385f.: "Soul is a continuum extending from the summit of the individual  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ , whose activity is perpetual intellection, through the normal empirical self right down to the  $\epsilon\iota\delta\omega\lambda\omicron\nu$ , the faint psychic trace in the organism; but the *ego* is a fluctuating spotlight of consciousness."; cf. also *Pagan and Christian* 77 n. 3. On the mobility of the "we" cf. too Trouillard, *Purification* 26f., and Hadot, *op. cit.* 31.

ours (V.3.3.34ff.).<sup>26</sup> But these are not the only answers that Plotinus gives. In VI.4 his answer to the question "who are 'we'?" is that before the coming-to-be (γένεσις) that brought us into this world we were "other men ... pure souls and intellect conjoined with the whole of Being".<sup>27</sup> But now, though we are not cut off from Being, another man has come to join us and we have become a combination of the two. Sometimes we are the one that we were, sometimes the other that has been added. In the second case this is so because the first man is at the time inactive, and so in a way not really present (VI.4.14.16-31).<sup>28</sup> This passage, and the remark that the "man"<sup>29</sup> coincides with the rational soul *when we think* (I.1.7.21f.), show clearly how the "we" is not bound to any particular level, or to a restricted range, as might be suggested not only by the statements that we are to be equated with our rational faculty, but also by the less common ones that we are really our *nous*. But it is generally put in the sphere of the higher soul. In the treatise on the soul it is this higher soul, to which the pleasures and pains of a body that belongs to us, but with which we are not identical, are reported, that is the "we" or "man" (IV.4.18.9-15, cf. IV.3.27.1f.,<sup>30</sup> IV.4.43.7f.).

It is clear then that "we" are usually to be found at the level of the reason. We have seen that the operations of this faculty are directed both towards the processing of sense-data, for which it may use the knowledge that it derives from above, and to the consideration of such knowledge in itself. It may thus be regarded as the meeting place of the sensible and intelligible worlds. And this is where we should expect to find Plotinus' man, a being who must live in this world but whose thoughts and aspirations are directed beyond it.

<sup>26</sup> The view that the reason is the real self may already be found in Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1166a 16f., 1168b 31ff. and 1177b 31ff. (these passages are noted by Theiler, *Entretiens* V, 448, with others which raise the question whether the man is the soul or the soul and body). Possible origins for Plotinus' use of *ἡμεῖς* and *ἄνθρωπος* (cf. n. 29 below) may be seen in [Plato], *Axiochus* 365e and *Alcibiades I* 130c respectively: in both these passages we are equated with our soul.

<sup>27</sup> *ἄνθρωποι ἄλλοι . . . ψυχὰι καθαρὰι καὶ νοῦς συνημμένους τῇ ἀπάσῃ οὐσίᾳ.*

<sup>28</sup> On this passage, and its relation to others in VI.4-5, see below 123ff.

<sup>29</sup> "Ἀνθρώπος: this word is sometimes used in a technical sense in the same way as *ἡμεῖς*, cf. I.4.14.1.

<sup>30</sup> On the text here see n. 7 to ch. 7.

## IDEAS OF INDIVIDUALS

We have now moved through the range of faculties that make up the sensible man. While a part of his soul always transcends this sensible man, it is at the summit of his being, the reason, that Plotinus generally says that we exist. Here the "we", the *ἡμεῖς*, is normally to be found. But it can also, as we have seen, have a place in the intelligible world. Since it is thus mobile,<sup>1</sup> it cannot be the ultimate basis of the individual's existence or personality. To find this basis we must look at the transcendent area of the soul, and see how far up the scale of intelligible being man's individuality can be traced. Does the individual exist as such only at the level of Soul, or can he be found in the world of *Nous* as well?

Since the contents of *Nous* are Forms, this question is equivalent to asking whether or not Plotinus believed in Ideas of individuals as well as of species. This at first sight is a question that can only present itself with reference to the period before he apparently decided finally that the undescended part of the soul reaches only as far up as the hypostasis Soul, as he seems to have done in his latest treatises.<sup>2</sup> But it does not necessarily follow that the existence of Forms of particulars is incompatible with the demotion of the individual's intellect. It remains possible that Plotinus could even at this stage have thought in terms of some further transcendent principle of the individual's being, a Form that would not be a part of his structure, but on whose existence that structure would nevertheless depend. Like the One, though of course in a different way, it might transcend the highest part of the individual and yet be essential to his existence.

<sup>1</sup> On this mobility see above 110f. and n. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Armstrong [and R. A. Markus], *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy* (London 1960) 57 and *Downside Review* 75 (1957) 132 and n. 11. On the passage to which Armstrong refers in n. 11 see below 121 and n. 21.

Unfortunately the evidence as to Plotinus' views about Forms of particulars does not seem to admit a clear answer. We have one treatise which states clearly that there are such forms (V.7), and two passages that may support it (IV.3.5 and IV.3.12 *init.*). On the other hand we have what seems to be an equally clear denial in V.9.12, and another in VI.5.8. There are also a number of texts whose interpretation seems to leave sufficient doubt for it to be unsafe to rely on any one of them for a definite answer. But some of these may well go against the view that there are Ideas of individuals.

This last group of texts is late, so that if they are to be taken as precluding the existence of Forms of particulars, any suggestion that the difficulties can be accounted for by a development in Plotinus' views must be discounted. It would be unlikely in any case. But even without this group of texts the distribution of those clear statements which we have mentioned already virtually forbids such an explanation. V.7 is the eighteenth, V.9 the fifth and VI.5 the twenty-third treatise, so that the acceptance of Ideas of individuals (V.7) is inconveniently sandwiched between two denials. It might still just be possible to argue that V.7[18] and VI.5[23] are sufficiently close together for it not to be altogether unreasonable to suggest that at this period Plotinus was still uncertain of his revised answer to the question.<sup>3</sup> But the reappearance of the doctrine in IV.3[27], if it does reappear there, and more particularly its disappearance later, would make such a suggestion, speculative in any case, extremely difficult. It would then be necessary to propose a period of doubt running from V.7 to IV.3, and then a reversion to the original point of view.

This would seem to be carrying speculation too far. We can do no more than examine the evidence at our disposal. But before going on to the texts themselves, it might be helpful to consider what, on general grounds, Plotinus' doctrine might be expected to be. Here there would seem to be good reasons why Ideas of individuals should figure in his system. Some explanation of individuation must be given. Is it form or matter that is the basis of differences between the members of a single species? If, as Aristotle held, it is matter, there is no need to look further. The introduction of formal principles of individual characteristics would clearly be unnecessary. But for Plotinus matter should not be the cause responsible, since it has no powers or attributes in its own

<sup>3</sup> VI.5 is really the continuation of VI.4[22]. The intervening treatises are I.2 and I.3, neither very long, and the mere fragment that is IV.1.

right. It is completely devoid of form:<sup>4</sup> in fact it is mere privation (στέρησις, II.4.14.24). Form is merely reflected on to it from above, and has no effect on the nature of the matter, which retains nothing of what it temporarily receives (cf. III.6.14.24ff.). These features of matter might lead us to think that form should be responsible for all differences, and not merely for specific ones.

In Plato's philosophy, with its greater gulf between the intelligible and sensible worlds, these characteristics of matter, or rather its complete lack of any characterization, should perhaps have led to a belief in Ideas of particulars.<sup>5</sup> At first sight this conclusion suggests itself in Plotinus' case too. But in his system formal principles exist at various stages of diffusion. The One, the cause of all form but itself completely lacking any form, contains all else in potency, in an indistinguishable unity. In *Nous* there is a unity that is at the same time a multiplicity, although there are no real divisions. In Soul the components are more fully separate, though unity is still maintained. This same deployment of an original unity, which has produced *Nous* and Soul, leads finally to the genuine multiplicity of the sensible world. Such progressive explication of higher principles might be thought to make it unnecessary to assume the actual existence of formal principles of particulars at the level of *Nous*. On the other hand it does not follow that anything comes into existence which has not in some way existed already, and, on the principle that all that is here must be in the intelligible world as well – ἐκεῖθεν ἦν σύμπαντα ταῦτα, καὶ καλλιόνως ἐκεῖ (V.8.7.17) – we should expect at least the potential existence of Ideas of individuals at that level.

In fact the explanation that Plotinus usually gives of the multiplicity of existence here is based on the movement towards an ever-increasing diversity which we have outlined. When the contemplation which takes place at various degrees of intensity, proportionate to the levels of being, becomes so weak that the production of natural objects is its only result (cf. III.8.4.28–31), the entities in the intelligible world reflect themselves on to the receptacle below. Many such reflections may arise from a single existent above. Thus the many sensible fires, which may be thought of as reflections (ἐλλάμψεις) of an archetypal fire, have one source which produces them all (cf. VI.5.8). Yet while the

<sup>4</sup> ἄποιος (IV.7.3.8), ἄμορφος (VI.1.27.2), ἀνείδεος (II.5.4.12).

<sup>5</sup> L. Robin, *La théorie platonicienne des idées et des nombres d'après Aristote* (Paris 1908) 589, suggests that Plato might have been on the way to holding that there were such Ideas, but he produces no evidence to show that this was so.

specific forms of things may be due to a multiplication of formative principles (λόγοι), the differences between individuals, other than mere numerical non-identity, can hardly be explained in this way. Such differences would have to be attributed to deficiencies in the imposition of form on matter. It is such deficiencies which Plotinus uses to explain ugliness, and in doing so he allows matter a certain resistance to form (cf. I.8.9.11-14) which its sheer negativity would seem to forbid.<sup>6</sup>

Another general consideration which is relevant to the question under discussion is connected with the position of our intuitive intellect. If this is to be found at the level of *Nous* rather than Soul, the acceptance of Ideas of individuals seems to follow, since all the components of *Nous* are Ideas. But this approach can provide no complete solution either, since Plotinus often leaves unspecified the exact position of that part of the soul which remains in the intelligible. It is however from this angle that Plotinus proceeds to deal with the problem in the only place where an apparently clear affirmation of the existence of Forms of particulars is to be found. To an examination of this and the other relevant texts we must now turn.

Let us first consider the evidence which supports the belief in Ideas of individuals. In V.7, a treatise specifically devoted to this question, it is argued that if each individual can be traced back to the sphere of the intelligible, the principle of his existence must be there too. So if there is always a Socrates, and a soul of Socrates, there will be a Form of Socrates too.<sup>7</sup> One might object, says Plotinus, that if the original Socrates does not always exist as such, but is sometimes reborn as another, for example Pythagoras, there will be no special Form of Socrates in the intelligible world. But he argues that if the soul contains the *logoi* of all the individuals through whom it passes, all those individuals must exist there too.<sup>8</sup> Now each soul does contain the same

<sup>6</sup> Plotinus is not thereby inconsistent; see above ch. 1, 1f. and n. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Cherniss takes this sentence to mean that the "ideas of individuals" (his quotes) Plotinus is proposing are individual souls, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and the Academy I* (Baltimore 1944) 508. Against this view see Rist, *Plotinus*, 86f.

<sup>8</sup> This may not mean that Socrates can become Pythagoras, but only that the presence of all the *logoi* in his soul allows for what is still essentially Socrates to reappear in different forms. If Socrates really "became Pythagoras" there would be difficulties about why Socrates should reproduce the *logoi* of Socrates, Pythagoras, X, Y, Z . . . and not of A, B, C . . . , rather than just being reincarnated as Socrates, S<sup>1</sup>, S<sup>2</sup> . . . There would also seem to be nothing to prevent the simultaneous existence of more than one Socrates. But we must also allow the possibility that Plotinus' aims in this treatise led him to give only a passing glance to the question of reincarnation, and perhaps even that further consider-

number of *logoi* as the cosmos. And as the cosmos contains not only the *logos* of Man, but those of individual living beings, the soul too must contain them. We may interrupt Plotinus' argument to point out that the soul must derive the *logoi* it has from above, and so they must exist somehow in *Nous*. He now goes on to point out that unless the world repeats itself in cycles, the presence of the *logoi* of all individuals in the soul would mean that it contains an infinite number of such *logoi*. If, on the other hand, there is to be a periodic return involving the production of more particulars than the number of entities present in the intelligible pattern, one might object – this is still Plotinus' exposition – that there is no need for periods. Instead one archetypal Man will be sufficient to produce all sensible men, and a finite number of souls could produce an infinite number of men. He meets this objection by saying that one formal principle will not suffice as a model for different beings, or in particular one Man for particular men who differ not by virtue of matter, but by many thousands of formal differences. The creation of different beings must proceed from different *logoi*. One cycle will contain all of these, and the next will reproduce the same set again (V.7.1.1–24). Most of the remainder of the treatise is taken up with the refutation of suggested explanations, based on a theory or theories of generation, which are put forward to account for the differences between individuals without assuming a separate formal principle for each.

Here then Plotinus accepts Ideas of individuals. Did he go so far as to accept an infinite number of such Ideas? In the part of his discussion that we have dealt with it seems that the number of such principles is finite, and writers on Plotinus tend to say that this was his doctrine with little sign of hesitation. So Zeller takes the postulation of cycles as a means of avoiding the infinity of the Ideas.<sup>9</sup> Inge writes, "Thus the history of the Universe contains an infinite number of vast but finite schemes, which have, each of them, a beginning, middle and end."<sup>10</sup> Similarly Armstrong says that Plotinus mentions but dismisses the idea of an infinite number of Forms in favour of a finite number reproduced in an infinite succession of world-periods.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand the

ation of the implications of that doctrine contributed to the possible later abandonment of Forms of particulars; cf. however Rist's remarks, "Forms of Individuals in Plotinus", *CQ* n.s. 13 (1963) 228.

<sup>9</sup> *Philosophie der Griechen* III.ii<sup>4</sup>, 582.

<sup>10</sup> *Philosophy of Plotinus*<sup>3</sup> I, 189, cf. also II, 56.

<sup>11</sup> "Plotinus" doctrine of the infinite and its significance for Christian

interpretation of the final sentence of V.7.1 given by Bréhier, Harder and Cilento would support the view that in this treatise Plotinus envisages an infinite number of Forms of individuals.<sup>12</sup> The sentence runs: τὴν δὲ ἐν τῷ νοητῷ ἀπειρίαν οὐ δεῖ δεδιέναι· πᾶσα γὰρ ἐν ἀμερεῖ, καὶ οἷον πρόεισιν, ὅταν ἐνεργῇ (V.7.1.25f.). Bréhier, for example, translates: "Mais il ne faut pas craindre l'infinité que notre thèse introduit dans le monde intelligible; car cette infinité est en un point indivisible, et elle ne fait que procéder, quand elle agit." Are we to assume then, as we must if this interpretation is correct, that Plotinus does in the end decide here that there is nothing wrong with numerical infinity in the Ideal world after all? <sup>13</sup>

Such a view would accentuate the contradiction with the passages denying that Ideas of individuals exist at all. But that in itself is no ground for rejecting the interpretation suggested for the sentence in question. What matters is that this interpretation seems to render quite pointless the previous discussion, where the periodical repetition of the world and its phenomena is introduced to explain how a finite number of Ideal archetypes is sufficient to account for all the particulars that ever appear in this world. And if this is so, what need is there for an *infinite* number of such Ideal principles? One cannot say that the theory of cyclical repetition is discarded or superseded by this final sentence of Plotinus' argument, since it reappears both later in the same treatise and elsewhere (in the later work IV.3-4[27-8], at IV.3.12.8ff. and IV.4.9.6ff.).

But another interpretation of V.7.1.25f. seems to be possible. The first half of the sentence could easily be taken to mean that it can now – after the explanations just given – be seen that the introduction of Ideas of individuals need not involve infinity in the Ideal world, and that we need therefore feel no inhibitions about accepting the hypothesis. The second half would most naturally mean that there is a potential infinity there, but that it is realized only in its manifestations here. This will hardly do, for we should then have an adequate expla-

thought", *Downside Review* 73 (1955) 51, *HLGP* 249; cf. too Carbonara, *Filosofia di Plotino*<sup>2</sup>, 205 and M. de Gandillac, *La Sagesse de Plotin*<sup>2</sup> (Paris 1966) 192.

<sup>12</sup> See also Harder Ib, 555f. In an earlier discussion, *op. cit.* 177, de Gandillac also seems to accept that some sort of quantitative infinity in the intelligible world is involved. Rist's discussion in the article cited in n. 8, 224f., also implies that the number of Forms is infinite, but he now feels that this is wrong.

<sup>13</sup> That he might at least have given serious consideration to this possibility is suggested by the fact that his disciple Amelius accepted it as right, cf. Syrianus, *Comm. in Metaph.* 147.1ff.



nation of all the particulars that come into existence in this world, without recourse to the cyclical theory. The difficulty would be solved if the last five words, *καὶ οἷον πρόβεισιν, ὅταν ἐνεργῇ*, could be taken to refer to the *result* of repetition in successive cycles, and mean that infinity is unfolded as the original pattern (made up of a finite number of Ideas) reappears again and again, producing an ever-increasing number of particulars. The pattern, however, by virtue of its intelligible nature, is whole and undivided, and at the level at which it is still a pattern (*ἐν τῷ νοητῷ*), a complete unity though made up of a plurality of components. The force of *πᾶσα* would then be that all the infinity that there is is contained, as it were, *ἐν τῷ ἀμερεῖ*, in the undivided plurality of intelligible being, whose action produces an infinite number of manifestations. Such a meaning is given to infinity at the end of the treatise, where Plotinus says that the infinity of the contents of *Nous* and Soul consists in their being available all over again (V.7.3.22f.).<sup>14</sup> *Καὶ οἷον πρόβεισιν, ὅταν ἐνεργῇ* would then mean that the infinity might be said to advance every time the pattern acts:<sup>15</sup> with each cycle the total number of particulars in all time tends further towards infinity, or perhaps better, since time has no beginning, the infinite number of all the particulars that have ever existed grows. Though strictly speaking it may be nonsense, one might think of this infinity becoming more

<sup>14</sup> Ἡ καὶ ἐν νῷ, ἥ ἐν ψυχῇ, τὸ ἄπειρον τούτων ἀνάπαλιν τῶν ἐκεῖ προχείρων.

<sup>15</sup> Since first deciding on this interpretation I have found it embodied in a discussion of the passage in question by L. Sweeney, "Infinity in Plotinus", *Gregorianum* 38 (1957) 730. But Sweeney there denies that there is any infinity in Plotinus' immaterial world except of a kind determined by effects – the hypostases are infinite by their power, an infinity of "extrinsic determination" – (and in the case of the One an infinity of "non-entity"), and regards the One and the lower hypostases as parallel in this respect. He fails to take into account other types of infinity which Plotinus was prepared to admit, and so his view cannot be said to be sufficiently firmly based. For a criticism of Sweeney's article (*loc. cit.* 515–35 and 713–32) see W. N. Clarke, "Infinity in Plotinus: a reply", *Gregorianum* 40 (1959) 75–98. But in dealing with *Nous* and Soul Clarke seems to go too far in the other direction, and finds an infinity of being in both, albeit relative to what is below. But the idea of a relative infinity, though it may be implicit in Plotinus' thought, does not appear before Porphyry at the earliest – perhaps in *Sententiae* XXXI – cf. Dodds, *Proclus*, note to prop. 93. Sweeney defends his thesis against Clarke in "Plotinus revisited", in the same vol. of *Gregorianum*, 327–31, but in a later paper he admits that the One is intrinsically infinite, "Another Interpretation of *Enneads* VI.7.32", *Modern Schoolman* 38 (1961) 298ff. The question of the One's infinity should now have been settled by the excellent treatment in Rist's *Plotinus*, ch. 3. For infinity as a divine perfection cf. also R. Mondolfo, *L'infinito nel pensiero dell' antichità classica* (Florence 1956) 527f. A balanced account of Plotinus' doctrine of infinity is given by Armstrong in the article cited in n. 11, 47ff.

infinite by the addition of the particulars produced in each new period.<sup>16</sup>

This interpretation seems to be required by Plotinus' views on infinity. Actual numerical or quantitative infinity in the Ideal world he will not allow. When used of *Nous* the word ἀπειρία, normally but sometimes misleadingly translated "infinity", may refer to the lack of impassable demarcations between its "parts" (cf. VI.4.14.5-8), to its ability to reach everywhere always (VI.5.4.13ff.), or to the fact that nothing exists outside *Nous* so that it could limit it (VI.2.21.9-11).<sup>17</sup> In the treatise *On Numbers* (VI.6[34]) Plotinus points out that infinity and number are incompatible, and asks why we talk about infinite number. Perhaps, he suggests, it is in the same way as that in which we may speak of an infinite line, which we can do only by thinking of one longer than the longest existing one, and not because such a line actually exists. When we come to the intelligible world we may say that there is an infinite line, but it is infinite only in that limit cannot be part of its definition, and not because it cannot be traversed (VI.6.17.1-15). In a similar way intelligible number is in fact limited. While we can think of a number greater than the greatest number here, there it is impossible to add to the number given, because the addition is already there, since all number is. There is no basis for further additions. So number too is infinite in a special way, namely in that it cannot be measured by something external (cf. VI.6.18.1ff.). In fact Plotinus even denies that there is an infinite number of sensible objects, and so that the number applicable to these is infinite (VI.6.2.2f.). Much earlier the fact that it would involve an actual numerical infinite had been used to show that total interpenetration (κρᾶσις δι' ὅλου) is impossible (IV.7[2]. 82.18-21).

The proposed interpretation of V.7.1 thus seems to be confirmed. We have then a clear statement that there are Forms of particulars, and we see that the number of these is finite. One reservation, however, should be mentioned. Harder has suggested that this treatise represents a conversation of Plotinus with himself.<sup>18</sup> This is possible, and if Harder is right it could be that Plotinus is simply rehearsing the arguments without actually committing himself to any of the views expressed. But

<sup>16</sup> The number of particulars present in any one period is of course no more infinite than is the number of their ideal intelligible archetypes.

<sup>17</sup> See further Armstrong, *ibid.* 51f.

<sup>18</sup> "ein Selbstgespräch", *Plotins Schriften* Ib, 555.

there seems to be no sufficient evidence for assuming that the conclusion is not Plotinus' own.

One other passage may well support the existence of Forms of particulars. In IV.3.5 we read: "this also applies to the souls which are next in order and attached to each *nous*, being intelligible representations (*logoi*) of the intellects and more fully deployed than they are, having become, one might say, much from little . . . . (lines 8-11).<sup>19</sup> Given these words alone one must allow the possibility that Plotinus has in mind here that each *nous* produces a group of souls, rather than that each *nous* has a single dependent soul which is a deployment of what exists in a more compact form in that *nous*. The rest of the chapter might lead one to think that the second of these interpretations is correct, but does not rule out the first. The question under discussion is whether the soul of Socrates still exists as such when we come to its highest part which is not in the body. Plotinus answers that it does: no things that are (*ὄντα*) can cease to exist, for even the intellects in the intelligible, which form a unity, retain their identity, by otherness. So too, he continues with the words we have quoted, the souls which come next in the order of existence are one and many. Here, and in what follows, the plurality of intellects is used for purposes of comparison, and there is nothing that must mean that there are as many intellects as there are souls. The same may be said of a sentence in the following chapter which tells us that the world soul can look towards the whole of *Nous* whereas the individual souls look rather to their own partial intellects (IV.3.6.15-17).<sup>20</sup> This suggests more strongly than anything in chapter 5 that each soul has a *nous* to which it and no other soul is attached. Such would seem to be the most natural sense of "to their own partial intellects". But once again the possibility that groups of souls are attached to each *nous* cannot be excluded. In that case all human souls would be attached to the *nous* that is the Idea of Man, all horses' souls to the *nous* that is the Idea of Horse, and so on. In favour of the contrary view we might refer back to the remark at the beginning of chapter 5 that none of the things that are perishes (*ἀπολείται οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων*). This is used to support the existence of Socrates' soul apart from its existence in a body, and the words "they do not perish" (*οὐκ ἀπολοῦνται*) are applied to the intellects that retain their identity in

<sup>19</sup> Οὕτω τοίνυν καὶ ψυχαὶ ἐφεξῆς καθ' ἕκαστον νοῦν ἐξηρημέναι, λόγοι νῦν οὔσαι καὶ ἐξειλιγμέναι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐκεῖνοι, οἷον πολὺ ἐξ ὀλίγου γενόμεναι, . . .

<sup>20</sup> Ἔστι δὲ καὶ τὴν μὲν πρὸς τὸν ὅλον νοῦν ἰδεῖν, τὰς δὲ μᾶλλον πρὸς τοὺς αὐτῶν τοὺς ἐν μέρει.

spite of their unity. One could argue that this implies that Socrates' soul should also exist among these intellects in a recognisable form. On the other hand its survival at the level of Soul would suffice to ensure that it did not disappear from the things that are, τὰ ὄντα: the expression is not here used in the technical sense of components of *Nous*. Further the point that nothing passes out of existence refers primarily to the doctrine that unity is not, in the intelligible, incompatible with plurality. To sum up, the balance of probability is perhaps in favour of taking this passage to contain the belief in Forms of individuals, but it cannot be at all certain that it does.<sup>21</sup> The same may be said of some remarks at IV.3.12.1-5 about *nous* staying above when the souls descend.<sup>22</sup> As a result V.7 in the only unambiguous affirmation of the existence of Ideas of particulars.

We must now pass to some texts which deny the existence of Forms of particulars and some which may do so. Two texts are clearly such denials. In V.9.12 Plotinus writes that we must say that there are Ideas of the universal, not of Socrates, but of Man.<sup>23</sup> Going on to ask whether individual characteristics, such as being snub-nosed or hook-nosed, come from the Ideal archetype, he argues that they are included in the Idea of Man as *differentiae*. But that a particular man should have a particular snub-nose is due to matter. Similarly matter and place determine some differences of colour, while others are included in the formal principle.

The second passage, which seems to have escaped notice, is to be

<sup>21</sup> Cilento, "Psyché", *Parola del Passato* 16 (1961) 209, uses it as evidence for the belief in Ideas of individuals, but he considers that our souls are part of *Nous* and not Soul.

<sup>22</sup> Armstrong, *Downside Review* 75 (1957) 132 n. 11, and Bréhier do take νοῦς in line 4 here as referring to individual intelligences. Otherwise Cilento, and possibly Harder.

<sup>23</sup> As it stands the next sentence, ἐπισκεπτόν δὲ περὶ ἀνθρώπου, εἰ καὶ ὁ καθέκαστα (lines 3f.), looks at first sight as if it reopens the question about ideas of individual men. It is so read by Bréhier and Rist, *CQ* n.s. 13 (1963) 224. But it is unlikely that Plotinus would have said we must consider whether there are Ideas of individual men just after he has said there are Ideas of the universal, not of Socrates but of Man. Nor would the announcement of a question about Ideas of individual men fit what comes after, namely a discussion about the status of particular characteristics. This was clearly felt by Harder and Cilento, who translate the sentence as if it referred to particular characteristics and not to particular men (see also Cherniss, *op. cit.* (n. 7) 508). But though this is the sense required, ὁ καθέκαστα will not yield it. The difficulty can be met by supplying an accent and reading the neuter relative οἷ: this would fit with the following τὸ καθέκαστον. Ἐπισκεπτόν δὲ περὶ ἀνθρώπου would then simply introduce the next point after the assertion that there is a Form of ἀνθρωπος.

found in VI.4-5. Discussing how particulars participate in Forms, Plotinus argues that it is by being separate from the matter, and not in it, that the Idea of Fire is able to inform all fiery matter (cf. VI.5.8.15-25). The unity of the Idea makes it possible for it to inform what is not a unity, and it is present as a whole to the matter which it informs. The suggestion that the Form provides different parts of itself to different parts of matter is dismissed, on the grounds that it would be ridiculous to introduce a plurality of Ideas of fire so that each separate fire should be informed by a separate Idea (which is what the division of the original Idea would in fact amount to). This, says Plotinus, will not do, because it would lead to an infinite number of Ideas (cf. VI.5.8.35-42). He also argues that problems about division would arise in the case of a single continuous fire or one whose size had been increased (ib. 42-6).

The first of these passages leaves no room for doubt about Plotinus' intentions, the second but little. While V.9.12 deals expressly with Forms of individual men, VI.5.8 talks about the Idea of Fire. Rist thinks that it is therefore not incompatible with the existence of Ideas of individual *men*.<sup>24</sup> As far as unquestionable demonstration is concerned Rist is right. But it should be noted that fire is originally taken as a specific case of how matter participates in an Idea, which is the subject under discussion in this chapter. The elements are taken as cases for examination, and fire is chosen as their representative (lines 22-5). Further, I can see no reason for thinking that Plotinus admitted Forms of individuals for only some of the things of which he held that there were Ideas.<sup>25</sup> One might refer to Plotinus' argument about difficulties arising from the fact that particular fires can merge or increase and be continuous, and point out that in this respect they differ from men.<sup>26</sup> But Plotinus only mentions continuity as the second of two arguments against the existence of individual Ideas of fire, which have already been rejected on other grounds. Even if it were the only one, Plotinus' methods of refutation<sup>27</sup> suggest that one should not infer that only the attribute of continuity in a number of particulars is a bar to the

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Plotinus* 255, n. 9 to ch. 7. Rist makes the point against the article which forms the substance of this chapter, "Did Plotinus believe in Ideas of Individuals?", *Phronesis* 11 (1966) 61ff., where I probably adduced VI.5.8 as negative evidence too confidently.

<sup>25</sup> He seems to have shared with the young Socrates in the *Parmenides*, 130c, the refusal to admit Forms of mud and dirt (cf. V.9.14.6-11), but probably for other reasons: he would have explained the particulars as deficiencies in the imposition of form on matter.

<sup>26</sup> So Rist in an as yet unpublished reply to the article mentioned in n. 24.

<sup>27</sup> See above 12f. and n. 12, and 51ff.

existence of particular Forms. Plotinus is always likely to throw in any argument relevant to the specific case he is discussing. Finally, one might say that Plotinus would be more interested in Forms of individual men than of other things. This would be true, but from it one may only conclude that he would pay more attention to the latter and not that he would accept only these while rejecting the others.

In view of all this, VI.5.8 should be counted with V.9.12. We must next consider a series of texts whose meaning is less clear, or which are, in some cases at least, open to an interpretation other than the obvious one.

In the same treatise VI.4-5 there is an apparent contradiction about our status in the intelligible world which has been noted and discussed by Arnou.<sup>28</sup> Two passages referring to this status would seem at first sight to give different answers to the question whether or not we exist as particulars there. The first (VI.4.14.17ff.) says that before our birth we were other men, and particular ones, pure souls and *nous* in contact with the whole of reality, parts of the intelligible from which we were neither distinct nor isolated. Now another man has been added to the original one, the one that each of us was there, and we are the combination of the two. But now, says Arnou, turning to the second text (VI.5.12.16ff.), from the All ( $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ ) that we were we have become individuals ( $\tau\iota\upsilon\epsilon\varsigma$ ) by virtue of the addition of non-being. The state of being All can be regained by the removal of accretions. The first text, writes Arnou, says that we were individuals in the intelligible world, the second that we were the All.

Before setting out to reconcile the contradiction he sees here, Arnou rightly discounts the possibility of a development, for the two treatises are in fact one. Whatever the exact sense of the first passage, it allows that there was more than one man there. Going on to ask whether this does in fact mean that we were each there individually, Arnou answers that it does, on the grounds that Plotinus believed in Ideas of Individuals.<sup>29</sup>

Yet this belief appears to be rejected in the sixth chapter of VI.5, where the Ideal Man,  $\delta \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma \delta \chi\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha} \tau\eta\nu \iota\delta\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\nu$ , is opposed to the man in matter. The Ideal Man is said to have come to the particular man and becomes a particular man ( $\tau\iota\varsigma \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ ). The man who exists in

<sup>28</sup> *Désir*, 204-8.

<sup>29</sup> For this he refers to V.7: the nature of our discussion does not, of course, allow us to use this as evidence here. Arnou makes no mention of V.9.12.

matter πολλοὺς ἐποίησε τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀνθρώπους. Arnou argues <sup>30</sup> that this does not mean that the Ideal Man has produced a multiplicity of men, but that the individual has unfolded and deployed his model. But then comes an expression which seems to be fatal to his interpretation: "it is one thing stamped, as it were, like a seal on many" (ἐστὶν ἓν τι οἶον ἐνσφραγιζόμενον ἐν πολλοῖς, lines 10f.). Arnou, who has already remarked that Plotinus at the beginning of the passage points out that it is a comparison (οἶον εἰ, line 6), attempts to solve the difficulty about the words quoted by saying that this is just where the comparison breaks down. Plotinus, he says, thinks that it is not exact and indicates this with the words οὐχ οὕτως in line 12.

Having thus, as he thinks, succeeded in showing that we were there as individuals, Arnou reconciles the two original passages, those in VI.4.14 and VI.5.12, by saying that we were there as individuals (τινες), but because we were there without being separate (οὐ διακεκριμένοι), we were there after the manner of the intelligibles, and in this sense All, as parts of the intelligible. But since we were not in the sensible world we were not really a *part*. "Parties du Tout mais restant dans le Tout ne faisant qu'un avec le Tout, nous n'étions pas isolés; encore une fois nous étions *τινες* et nous ne l'étions pas."

Arnou's discussion makes no reference to the passage in VI.5.8, on the Idea of Fire, which we have noted in the previous section. Unless this passage can be explained away, and I do not think it can,<sup>31</sup> we are left with a serious inconsistency between it and the text in VI.5.6, as interpreted by Arnou, as well as with the other two passages which he takes to contain the same doctrine. But let us re-examine his treatment. Even without the evidence from VI.5.8, Arnou's contention that such an apparently plain statement as the one that the Idea of Man is, as it were, stamped on the many individuals, should not be taken too seriously, on the grounds that this is the very point where the comparison breaks down, must excite suspicion. It must not be forgotten that the purpose of the comparison is to throw light on how intelligible being can be everywhere as a whole. Now the argument after the words we are considering runs: "The Man himself and each thing in itself (i.e. each Idea) and the whole totality of being are not in the many in this way, but the many are in it, or rather about it. Whiteness is everywhere in a different way from that in which the soul of each individual is the

<sup>30</sup> Against Bouillet, whom he accuses of neglecting αὐτοὺς, perhaps wrongly as Bouillet in his translation combines this sentence with the next.

<sup>31</sup> But see above 122f.

same in every part of its body: this is how Being is everywhere." (VI.5.6.11-15).<sup>32</sup> It seems clear that the point is that the comparison is inexact in that the seal-impressions involve two things inappropriate to an accurate representation of how intelligible being may be present as a whole at separate points. Firstly, the presence of the archetype in the reproduction, and not *vice-versa*, and secondly, the divided existence – as in the case of colouring on separate surfaces – of what is in fact present in different places without its unity being infringed, just like soul in the different parts of the body. Here, surely, is where the parallel breaks down, and not in the production of many images from one pattern. It is with the relation of parts of Being to the whole that Plotinus is concerned (ib. 1-4).

We have still to explain the τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀνθρώπους of line 9. Arnou takes this as the plural of ὁ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπος, the Idea of Man. This is certainly a possible meaning, but not the only possible one. The words could also mean that the men are the same, and so πολλοὺς ἐποίησε τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀνθρώπους would simply mean that the derivation of sensible man from the Ideal Man had led to the production of a multiplicity of (*qua* men) identical men. This is the interpretation of Harder and Cilento,<sup>33</sup> and our examination of the rest of the argument shows that it is the one that must be accepted. We must conclude that Ideas of individuals have no place in VI.5.6.

But what of the passage in VI.4.14? We may accept Arnou's conclusion that there is no incompatibility between the assertion of individual existence in the intelligible world, and the view that the individual is there equivalent to the whole, which we find in VI.5.12. But if there are no Ideas of individuals, how can the individual exist in the Ideal world? Have we removed the contradiction between VI.5.8 and Arnou's view of VI.5.6 only to be faced with another between both these passages (instead of just VI.5.8) and VI.4.14? This is certainly the case if all three refer to the same level of being. But it is not necessary that they should. Throughout this treatise there are changes of subject. Sometimes Plotinus discusses *Nous*, sometimes Soul, and sometimes both together, the intelligible (τὸ νοητόν) in the more general sense. In particular we may note that the introductory remarks to

<sup>32</sup> Αὐτὸ δὲ ἄνθρωπος καὶ αὐτὸ ἕκαστον καὶ ὅλον τὸ πᾶν οὐχ οὕτως ἐν πολλοῖς, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, μᾶλλον δὲ περὶ αὐτό. "Ἄλλον γὰρ τρόπον τὸ λευκὸν πανταχοῦ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ἑκάστου ἐν παντὶ μέρει τοῦ σώματος ἢ αὐτῇ· οὕτω γὰρ καὶ τὸ ὄν πανταχοῦ.

<sup>33</sup> Bréhier's version is different, but agrees in referring τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀνθρώπους to sensible men.



VI.4.14 show that this chapter is concerned with Soul, as preceding ones have been. Admittedly Soul is said to contain νόες, but since these are parts of the totality of Soul we must assume that they are either νόες in the loose sense of reasons, or human intellects that Plotinus here regards as existing at this level rather than at the higher one of *Nous*. They are, therefore, not Ideas, as is the Man of VI.5.6. Thus the individuality with which Plotinus is here concerned must be that of the individual soul. And to this Arnou's remarks may properly be applied.

Plotinus does not then seem to have held that there were Forms of particulars when he wrote VI.4-5. Some texts from later works point in the same direction, but most of them leave some room for doubt. In the third treatise on the categories Plotinus criticizes Aristotle's distinction between primary and secondary substance (VI.3[44].9.19-42). He objects to the idea implied in Aristotle's classification that the particular is in some way prior to, and the cause of, the universal. One of his points is this: "Socrates did not himself bestow on what was not a man the essence of man, but the man on Socrates. For the individual man exists by participation in man." (lines 27-30).<sup>34</sup> The meaning that most readily presents itself is that Socrates exists as a man by participation in the Form of Man. The Platonic term *μετάληψις*, participation, supports this interpretation. But it is possible that Plotinus is merely arguing *ad hominem*, and pointing out that the existence of Socrates is not a prerequisite for the existence of the general class of men: X may be a man even if there is no Socrates, while Socrates' manhood depends on his membership of the species man. A similar line of thought may be all that is behind the previous remarks on the relation of particular manifestations of a science or quality to the universal. Certainly the discussion that follows, about the relation of form to form in matter, and the priority of the former, seems to be couched in Aristotelian terminology and concepts. The only necessarily Platonic or Plotinian idea is that a *logos* in matter is "worse" than one free of it (lines 32-4). And the introduction of this point need not imply that Plotinus is arguing in his own terms all the time. If he were, it might even be possible to find room for the belief in Ideas of individuals. It is not impossible that Plotinus' train of thought could be this: the Idea of Man is prior to the Idea of Socrates, therefore the sensible Socrates is posterior to men in general. It seems quite likely then that Plotinus is here thinking of species-forms only, but not improbable that he is not<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> ὁ Σωκράτης οὐκ αὐτὸς ἔδωκε τῷ μὴ ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ εἶναι ἀνθρώπῳ, ἀλλ' ὁ ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ Σωκράτει· μεταλήψει γὰρ ἀνθρώπου ὁ τις ἀνθρώπος.

talking about Forms at all, and just possible that he might be assuming Forms of particulars after all.<sup>35</sup>

There is also some room for doubt about an earlier passage in VI.1-3 [42-44]. In discussing the structure of *Nous* Plotinus says that one cannot there grasp anything that is numerically single or an individual (*ἄτομον*). Whatever you may lay hold of is an *εἶδος*, since there is no matter there (VI.2.22.11-13). That this is not merely a reference to the lack of frontiers between the parts of *Nous*, so that *εἶδος* could mean "Form" and still refer to the Idea of an individual, is made clear by the sequel, where the word is opposed to *γένος*, class, and must therefore mean species. We are told too that *εἶδη* provide a limit for prior *εἶδη* till the *ἔσχατον εἶδος*, the *infima species* is reached (ib. 15-17). In itself this passage would seem to rule out any belief in Ideas of individuals. The only difficulty is that the statements we have referred to are made in the course of a discussion of various Platonic texts.<sup>36</sup> It is therefore possible to argue that Plotinus' remarks are coloured by the task in hand. Thus Trouillard suggests that in this passage he is making concessions to Plato in avoiding the introduction of Ideas of individuals.<sup>37</sup> But Plotinus is hardly notorious for altering his views to make his exegesis of texts conform to the spirit of his Master's writings! So we should probably be right in taking this passage to mean that Plotinus himself does not here believe in Forms of particulars. And if he did not believe in them here, we have further grounds for not seeing them in VI.3, a part of the same treatise. This does not, however, justify us in maintaining that the passage from VI.3 contains a definite rejection of Ideas of individuals.

One further discussion in the VIth *Ennead* may well preclude Ideas of individuals. This is concerned with the attributes of the Ideal Man. Even in the Ideal world he is not just *nous* but has sensation and everything else that is necessary for life here, so that the Form should be complete, and thus able fully to inform matter (VI.7[38].3.10ff.). These

<sup>35</sup> It may be worth recalling that in VI.3 Plotinus is directly concerned only with the categories of the sensible world.

<sup>36</sup> From *Tim.* 39e in lines 1-3, *Parm.* 144b in lines 14f., *Phil.* 16e in lines 18f.

<sup>37</sup> *Purification* 76f. Trouillard makes his position less unacceptable by pointing out that Plotinus manages to extract from his texts the existence of individuality at the level of Soul, and claiming that this means that individuality is retained in the world of Ideas since it is still present in the intelligible. Trouillard argues in support that Plotinus is not always clear about the boundary between the top of Soul and *Nous*. But while this is true of the individual there seems to be little room for enough doubt about the boundary between the hypostases to permit the acceptance as an Idea of something that exists only in Soul.

statements are justified in the following chapters (4-7), and the whole discussion is given in terms of a singular man. Certainly one's impression on reading it is that Plotinus is concerned only with a species-form. But there seems to be nothing in this section that makes it impossible that he should be dealing with just one of many Ideas of men, as opposed to the sensible counterpart of the same Idea. Later he talks of Ideas being at the lower end of a sort of vertical section through *Nous*, as a way of explaining how a horse, for example, may still be a *nous*. The descent down one such section, which is one *nous*, may finish with a horse or some other animal. Nails, claws, horns or sharp teeth may be added (VI.7.9.20-46). Again we seem to be concerned with species. And if species-forms come at the bottom of *Nous* there is no room for individual Forms which would have to be lower still. But once again it would be possible for an advocate of the belief in Ideas of individuals to show that Plotinus is not necessarily talking about species-forms. He would however have some difficulty with the first lines of chapter 8.<sup>38</sup> He would have even more with some remarks about the Idea of a plant in chapter 11. There Plotinus says that the immanent formal principle which is responsible for a sensible plant's existence is either the First Plant (τὸ πρῶτον φυτόν) or not, in which case the First Plant is above it and causes it. And that is one, whereas plants here are many and necessarily derived from it (lines 10-15).<sup>39</sup>

Finally we may refer to a text from the last group of treatises. In the course of an argument to show that we should not expect this world to display the same standards of beauty and goodness as its Ideal model, Plotinus writes as follows: "for instance, if someone was looking for the most beautiful man that we can perceive by our senses he would not, presumably, expect him to be the same as the man in Intellect, but would be satisfied with what his maker had done if he had so dominated him, even though he was held in flesh and sinews and bones, by the formative principle, that he made these things beautiful, and the formative principle was able to come into flower on the matter." (III.2 [47].7.6-12).<sup>40</sup> Here too the comparison would seem to be of the

<sup>38</sup> His difficulty would be greater if he had to explain the phrase ἔπρος ὅλος in line 1, as he would have to do if the hitherto accepted reading were correct. In fact H-S' collation shows that it appears only in one of the primary MSS which otherwise have ὅλος. "Ὅλος might leave room for individual Ideas of the animals mentioned, but the sentence still suggests species-forms. Theiler retains ὅλος.

<sup>39</sup> Καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνο ἐν, ταῦτα δὲ πολλὰ καὶ ἀφ' ἑνὸς ἐξ ἀνάγκης.

<sup>40</sup> οἶον, εἴ τις ἐσκόπει τὸν ἀνθρώπου τὸν αἰσθητὸν ὅστις κάλλιστος, οὐκ ἂν δῆπου τῷ ἐν νῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἤξιωσε τὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο ἀποδεχέσθαι τοῦ ποιητοῦ, εἰ ὁμῶς

sensible man with the single Ideal archetype of all men. But again it is open to argue that what the passage means is that even the paragon described falls short of the Ideal principle which is his highest and truest self in *Nous*, and that this principle is peculiar to one man.

Thus several of the texts we have just examined seem to allow of differing interpretations. But none of them clearly affirms a belief in the existence of Forms of particulars. It can be claimed that they do not rule out such a belief. Yet in each case the interpretation which either does not require it or does not permit it seems more likely. In one case, the passage from VI.7, we see that Plotinus is definitely thinking of species-forms and is probably doing so in a way which excludes Forms of Individuals. And that from VI.2 may well do so too. All these texts come from late treatises. VI.7[38] is the earliest of the group. If Plotinus did reject Forms of particulars there and accept them elsewhere in his late writings, we should have to assume more fluctuations in his attitude to this question. His answer would then be "no" in V.9[5], "yes" in V.7[18], "no" in VI.4-5[22-3], perhaps "yes" in IV.3[27], "no" in VI.7[38] and probably VI.2[43], and "yes" again thereafter. Such a development is difficult to accept, but since Plotinus apparently changed his mind twice, in V.7 and VI.4-5, it cannot be claimed that he could not have done so again. One can only say that it is perhaps less likely that he did than that he did not. But in view of the balance of probabilities as far as the interpretation of individual texts is concerned, it is probably safe to say that Plotinus in his last period said nothing about Forms of individuals and may well have dropped his belief in them. Even if none of these texts actually preclude Forms of individuals, it seems strange that he said nothing for so long about what would to him have been an important doctrine. While his silence does not constitute proof, it is not entirely insignificant.

Is there any hope of reconciling his divergent positions? Scholars who have dealt with this problem and tried to do so have tended to treat it as a question of reconciling V.9 and V.7. By doing so they naturally make their task far easier than it is: the evidence from the latest treatises must cast doubt on, and may invalidate, any conclusion which states that Plotinus was always prepared to accept Forms of particulars, or that he worked towards such an acceptance in V.7. Even if the conclusions of our previous paragraph are not accepted, the

ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ νεύροις καὶ ὁστέοις ὄντα κατέλαβε τῷ λόγῳ, ὥστε καὶ ταῦτα καλλῶναι καὶ τὸν λόγον δυνηθῆναι ἐπανθεῖν τῇ ὕλῃ.

evidence from VI.4-5 is enough to show that he rejected the belief on a later occasion.

With these reservations let us look at the solutions proposed. F. Heinemann tried to cut the Gordian knot and simply denied the authenticity of V.7,<sup>41</sup> but naturally enough he has found no support for his view. Bréhier tries to narrow the difference by maintaining that V.9.12 admits intelligible origins for the different races of men, and that hook-nosedness and snub-nosedness are characteristics of such formal principles.<sup>42</sup> But the Greek seems to mean that they are things contained in the Idea of Man. In a note *ad. loc.* he says that a comparison of this passage with V.7 suggests that the differences as far as those between races are due to "préformation", while any further differentiation is accidental.<sup>43</sup> Apart from the objection to his view of V.9.12 we have just mentioned, this suggestion hardly fits with the doctrine of V.7. It could only be supported by giving much more weight than is due to the various ideas canvassed in the second and third chapters of this treatise and paying insufficient attention to the first. Trouillard at least pays attention to passages from other treatises, though we have suggested that his remarks on VI.2.22 are at least questionable.<sup>44</sup> He notes that V.9.12 admits differences arising from matter, and says that this position is approximately the same as that in V.7.3 which allows differences between individuals to arise from defects of form.<sup>45</sup> He concludes that the remark at the beginning of V.9.12, that there is no Idea of Socrates, but only of Man, is just a question or an objection inserted in the exposition.<sup>46</sup> This is hardly suggested by the run of the argument. Another difficulty in Trouillard's suggestion is that according to V.9.12 differences between all individuals are due to matter,

<sup>41</sup> Plotin. *Forschungen über die plotinische Frage, Plotins Entwicklung und sein System* (Leipzig 1921) 63-73. Heinemann's views on questions of authenticity and development are criticized by Bréhier in his Notices and notes, *passim*, and Harder, *Gnomon* 4 (1928) 647-52. See too above ch. 1, 4 and n. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Notice to V.9, vol. V, 159.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* 171 n. 1.

<sup>44</sup> See 127 above and n. 37. Other passages which he discusses (*Purification* 76ff.) in the furtherance of his view that *Nous* contains individuals are concerned with individuality at the level of Soul. On this see n. 37. It is interesting to note that he takes IV.3.5 as referring only to the soul of Socrates.

<sup>45</sup> *Purification* 76.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* Some such idea is presumably what enabled O. Hamelin, *La théorie de l'intellect d'après Aristote et ses commentateurs*. Publié par E. Barbotin (Paris 1953) 45 and n. 99, to quote this chapter and V.9.10 as evidence that Plotinus held that there are Forms of particulars. Hamelin also gives VI.7.14 as evidence for this doctrine: this seems quite unjustified.

while the remark he mentions in V.7.3, at line 6, is concerned only with differences between the offspring of the same parents. Moreover Plotinus seems to deny in the sequel that even such differences are not due to formal principles. It does seem then that we must reject the view that V.9 and V.7 embody the same doctrine.<sup>47</sup>

More attractive is a suggestion made by Himmerich, that the question is left open in V.9 and given a positive answer in V.7.<sup>48</sup> But he appears to base his view on the acceptance of Bréhier's remarks about "préformation",<sup>49</sup> and seems to think that Bréhier's version, which he misquotes, justifies these.<sup>50</sup> A solution somewhat similar to Himmerich's is proposed by Rist in an article on this subject, in which he confines himself to V.7 and V.9.<sup>51</sup> Starting from the questionable assumption that in V.9.12 Plotinus is out to make a case for Forms of individuals, at least of individual men,<sup>52</sup> he suggests that in V.9 he is still rather hesitant about how far individuality is due to form, and that his views develop to the acceptance of Ideas of individuals which appears later in V.7.<sup>53</sup> But the fact remains that in V.7 we find Ideas of particular men while such Ideas are rejected in V.9.

It does seem then that we are faced with a genuine inconsistency between V.9 and V.7.<sup>54</sup> In fact, if we discount the somewhat indecisive evidence from IV.3, this inconsistency may well be one between V.7 and the rest of Plotinus' work, for we have seen that there is evidence that he rejected Forms of particulars afterwards. If Harder were right about V.7, and if we could infer that Plotinus was not there committing himself to Forms of individuals,<sup>55</sup> there would be no serious problem. We could simply say that Plotinus rejected Forms of individuals in an early treatise and on one or more occasions thereafter considered the

<sup>47</sup> Carbonara, *Filosofia di Plotino* 191 n. 34 reports some other explanations of the two passages in question and adds one of his own, but these either fail to attach sufficient importance to V.7 or do not explain why there should be two different statements of an assumed single view.

<sup>48</sup> *Eudaimonia* 88.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* 86.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 186, n. 4 to ch. 7. Bréhier translates: "Il faut dire qu'il y a des idées des universaux, non pas de Socrate, mais de l'homme." Himmerich omits "des idées": a standard scribal error on which the note depends. On Bréhier's explanation of these texts see above.

<sup>51</sup> *CQ* n.s. 13 (1963) 223-231.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* 224.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* 227.

<sup>54</sup> This conclusion is not new. It was reached by Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen* III.ii.4, 581f. Zeller admits that his attempt at conciliation is unsuccessful.

<sup>55</sup> See 119f. above.

question again without coming to any positive conclusion, and sometimes reaching a negative one. But on the premise that V.7 does affirm that Forms of individuals exist our inconsistency remains. If it is to be removed, it can probably only be done by showing that V.7 is no more than an *ad hominem* argument against the theory, or theories, of generation there discussed. But I see no way of doing this. The suggestion is only a guess. It would receive some support if it could be shown that Plotinus did not really believe in the theory of cyclical return. One would have to show convincingly that in other passages where this theory is mentioned (IV.3.12 and IV.4.9) it is not to be taken seriously. The fact that both refer to Zeus might tempt one to see an indication of this, but while Zeus does not always refer to the same hypostasis (cf. IV.4.10), the use of his name does not seem to justify the assumption that such passages are somehow mythical. The appearance of Zeus is not incompatible with the exposition of serious doctrine, and Plotinus expounds no strange or unusual views in the rest of the two passages in question. And if this doctrine of periodic return could be shown to be un-Plotinian, we should also have to show that there is no connection between it and the doctrine of reincarnation.<sup>56</sup> Only if these obstacles could be overcome could we perhaps go on to argue that the cyclical theory does not belong to Plotinus' own system, but is introduced in V.7 to refute on his own terms a Stoic, or Stoicizing, opponent for whom the doctrine of periodic return would be a cardinal principle.

The difficulties seem too great, and therefore we must accept that Plotinus did not hold consistent views on the existence of Ideas of individuals.<sup>57</sup> At most he sometimes believed in them. And so we must conclude that we are unable to give a definite answer to the problem we set out to solve. The permanent basis of the individual's existence may be, but is not always, a Form in the realm of *Nous*. Such Forms were certainly not a particularly important part of Plotinus' philosophy. And so there are scarcely adequate grounds for the view that his acceptance of them shows that Plotinus placed a higher value on the individual personality than did Plato<sup>58</sup> – though it may be true that he

<sup>56</sup> Plotinus certainly believed in reincarnation, see n. 22 to ch. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Armstrong remarks, in a context which does not admit detailed discussion, that Plotinus sometimes admitted the existence of Ideas of individuals, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy* 26, n. 1. In his *Architecture*, 79f., he took this as Plotinus' normal view, as also in *Downside Review* 66 (1948) 416. So too *HLGP* 249, though he notes the inconsistency, *ibid.* n. 1.

<sup>58</sup> For an unqualified statement of this view see Rist, *Eros and Psyche* 109; cf. also Ferwerda, *Signification* 83 and Armstrong *HLGP* 249. Nor should one

did. Could Plotinus' hesitation perhaps be due to a reluctance to depart from Plato's doctrine on a question so central in the Master's teaching?

unreservedly include Forms of individuals in a list of Plotinus' additions to Plato, as does Rist, *Plotinus* 183, or even take them as evidence of his originality: so Krämer, *Ursprung der Geistmetaphysik* 434 n. 209. They were in any case accepted by some earlier Platonists, cf. Albinus, *Did.* IX = 163.22ff. Hermann.



## CONCLUSION

"His writings contain an admixture of Stoic and Peripatetic doctrines which escape notice".<sup>1</sup> Porphyry's well-known remark is as appropriate to Plotinus' psychology as to other parts of his philosophy. But the Stoic contribution to his doctrines of the soul is a small one. Among the Platonists of the period preceding Plotinus' own, there were varying attitudes to Aristotle. Some, like Albinus, incorporated important points of Aristotelian doctrine in their thought, while others, like Atticus, rejected what they regarded as the pernicious errors of the Peripatetics and were more inclined to mix Stoicism with their Platonism.<sup>2</sup> Plotinus followed the former of these two factions. The most important Aristotelian element in his system is of course the doctrine that an actively thinking mind is identical with its objects, a doctrine which is the basis of Plotinus' second hypostasis<sup>3</sup> and of his view on higher cognition.

In the field of lower psychology Aristotle's influence is of a different kind, a kind which Porphyry's statement perhaps fits better. Not that anyone familiar with Aristotle's psychology could fail to detect the resemblances. Yet it is probably true to say that there is no specific piece of Aristotelian doctrine that has shaped Plotinus' lower psychology in the way that Aristotle's views on the intellect and the intellection of the unmoved mover shaped Plotinus' conception of *Nous*. Rather Plotinus has used Aristotle's work, and sometimes his methods, to help him to construct a psychology which is not really Aristotelian at all,

<sup>1</sup> 'Εμμέμικται δ' ἐν τοῖς συγγράμμασι καὶ τὰ Στωικὰ λανθάνοντα δόγματα καὶ τὰ Περιπατητικὰ. Porphyry *Vita Plot.* 14.4f.

<sup>2</sup> Albinus' *Didaskalikos* is full of Aristotelian notions. For Atticus' attitude to Aristotle cf. Eusebius *P.E.* XV.4.1 and chapters 4, 6, 9, 12 and 15 *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. esp. Armstrong, "The Background of the Doctrine 'That the Intelligibles are not Outside the Intellect'", *Entretiens* V, 393-413; also Merlan, *Monopsychism* 8ff.

and though the outlines of his doctrines are not unlike Aristotle's, there are many points at which they differ. The most fundamental difference is that Plotinus entirely rejected Aristotle's view of the relation between body and soul. For him the doctrine that the soul is the entelechy of the body was little better than the blatant materialism of the Stoa. We have examined the arguments which he brings against both.<sup>4</sup> Here, as at all crucial points of his system, Plotinus followed in the direction of Plato. The soul was a separate substance, and, at least in intention, independent of the body with which it was merely associated.

On this basis Plotinus constructed his psychology. One may even go further and say that much of Plotinus' discussion of questions about the soul was aimed at preserving its autonomy. We have seen how this aim influenced his views on memory, and even more his consideration of the emotions. In the latter case he reveals his motives by pointing out that to involve the soul in physical changes would infringe its immortality. But to say that such were, at least in part, the reasons which prompted Plotinus to study carefully the problems arising from the soul's presence in the body is not to suggest either that his view on these problems were in some way disingenuous, or that he had little interest in the problems for their own sake. That his views on the nature and destiny of man should influence his approach is only natural.

The approach, then, was Platonic. But the framework into which Plotinus fitted his doctrines, as well as some of these doctrines themselves, was Aristotelian. For Plotinus rejected Plato's tripartition, and saw the soul's activities as the functions of a series of faculties which were basically those of Aristotle. But we must remember that Plotinus may not have settled on a definite scheme of faculties, and so the parallel between his scheme and Aristotle's is not always equally close. Thus Plotinus did not always group together all the activities involved in Aristotle's appetitive faculty. When he did, he seems to have included in the group the power of initiating movement, which Aristotle sometimes kept distinct.<sup>5</sup> Plotinus also differed from Aristotle in duplicating the faculty of imagination.<sup>6</sup> And even apart from this

<sup>4</sup> See above *gff.*

<sup>5</sup> So in *de An.* II, 414a 31f. In Bk. III, 432b 3ff., ὁρεξίς is found to be the cause of motion.

<sup>6</sup> But his starting point could have been Aristotle's references to two kinds of φαντάσια, cf. *de An.* 433b 29 and 434a 5-7, though here, as at *de Motu Animalium* 702a 19, Aristotle is probably thinking only of the two sources of images, thought

duplication there was here a difference in emphasis. For Aristotle in the *de Memoria* describes memory, which he shows to depend on imagination, as a function of the primary sensitive faculty (πρῶτον αἰσθητικόν),<sup>7</sup> while Plotinus seems to be more concerned with the factors which differentiate memory from sense-perception, and so make it less dependent on the body. In the *de Anima*, however, where Aristotle is trying to determine how the soul is to be split up into faculties, he too dwells on the factors which distinguish imagination from sensation.<sup>8</sup>

Plotinus' criticism of Aristotle's views on memory, to which he is none the less indebted, demonstrates how careful he was in the use of others' ideas. Any suggestion that the soul was somehow material, or no more than a function of the body, was subjected to searching criticism. The victims were more often the Stoics. They provided a system based on assumptions which Plotinus could not accept. But the very fact that such a system existed, and required refutation, seems to have helped Plotinus to form his own views. His constant attacks on Stoic materialism may well have made him more attentive to the risks of admitting materialistic elements into his own thought.

We have mentioned that the positive contribution of Stoicism to Plotinus' psychology was not very great. Pohlenz has suggested that the Stoic emphasis on freedom from affections (ἀπάθεια) influenced Plotinus' views on the impassibility of the soul, and implies that it also contributed to his stress on the need to preserve the soul from the body's affections.<sup>9</sup> But surely the Platonic tradition provides sufficient stimulus. Anyone who had read the *Phaedo* with the enthusiasm with which we can imagine that Plotinus did, would hardly need to turn to Stoicism for inspiration. The idea that the constituents of the body may affect a man's susceptibility to the emotions may, but need not, come from Posidonian Stoicism. The *Timaeus* too could easily provide the source.<sup>10</sup> More important was Posidonius' concept of universal sympathy.<sup>11</sup> Though the main influence of this notion is to be seen in other

and sensation. And did Aristotle's treatment of *nous* perhaps suggest the idea of duplicating a faculty?

<sup>7</sup> *de Mem.* 451a 14-17.

<sup>8</sup> *de An.* 427b 27ff.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Die Stoa* I<sup>2</sup> (Göttingen 1959) 395f.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Tim.* 86b ff. For the idea in the Stoicism of Posidonius cf. Galen *de plac. Hipp. et Plat.* 442 Müller.

<sup>11</sup> Since this concept was a marked feature of the doctrines of an important figure, I venture to think of Posidonius as the source. The "vitalistic" view of the world is one of the notions retained by A. D. Nock in a very careful account of what can confidently be stated about him, "Posidonius", *Journal of Roman*

parts of Plotinus' philosophy, it did make possible his theory of sense-perception, which depended on the alleged sympathy between subject and object and dispensed with any physical transmission through a medium.<sup>12</sup>

Plotinus' theory of sense-perception illustrates particularly well how he used elements from various traditions to produce a new and coherent theory. He accepted from Aristotle that sense-perception involved the reception of the forms of sense-objects without their matter. But while Aristotle's account tended to make sense-perception mainly a passive process for the soul,<sup>13</sup> Plotinus insisted on its active role. And he was not satisfied with the Peripatetic account of the function of air and light in vision.<sup>14</sup> Nor could he accept Plato's view that vision depended on the fusion of light from subject and object with the light between, for Plato regarded light as fire, and the theory was too materialistic. For Plotinus of course light was incorporeal.<sup>15</sup> He thus introduced the notion of sympathy to account for the interaction between subject and object which was essential if perception were to take place. That the sympathy in question, in the form in which it was originally conceived, depended on the omnipresence of a material *pneuma* provides but a further example of how Plotinus adapted the ideas with which he worked. Using these materials, and helped both by the discovery of the nerves and by his own careful separation of body and soul, Plotinus evolved his own theory and sharpened the rather unclear distinction which had sometimes been made between sensation and perception. He thus produced a theory which drew on the work of his predecessors, but was a consistent whole which both conformed to the principles of his own system, and marked an advance on what had been achieved before.

The distinction between sensation and perception was not the only result of Plotinus' approach to psychology from a dualistic view of the body-soul relation. We have already mentioned how it contributed to his interest in the affections. We may add that it influenced his solution

*Studies* 49 (1959) 4. But, as Schwyzer points out, *RE* XXI.i, 579, someone else may have derived the idea from certain remarks in the *Timaeus*.

<sup>12</sup> For Plotinus air is not even the medium of vision, except in the sense that it is there between subject and object. Unless he means medium only in this loose sense R. E. Witt, "Plotinus and Posidonius", *CQ* 24 (1930) 205, is wrong in saying that for Plotinus air is the medium, but not the instrument of vision as Stoicism in general said. Witt's references to IV.3.10 and 22 to show that air was important in Plotinus' theory of sunlight are not helpful.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. P. Siwek, *La Psychophysique humaine d'après Aristote* (Paris 1930) 110.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. IV.5.2-4.

<sup>15</sup> On this see Armstrong, *Architecture* 54.

to the difficulties involved in preserving the impassibility of the soul, namely the careful distinction between various levels of soul. These distinctions enabled him to relegate all the effects of activities which he regarded as undesirable to comparatively unimportant areas of the soul, though he had to admit that the higher part of the embodied soul might not be able to escape the consequences of these effects. It is interesting to note that in distinguishing these lowest levels of soul from those above, and these in turn from what lay above them, Plotinus always derives the lower entity from the higher. Here too we may note a difference in approach between Plotinus and Aristotle in a case where both are concerned with similar facts. For while Plotinus regarded his faculties as the product of a process of weakening and diffusion starting from above, Aristotle viewed his as an ascending series in which each component rested on the one below.<sup>16</sup>

Plotinus' use of Aristotle's method of dividing the soul into faculties provided him with a means of preserving the continuity between the lowest and highest levels of soul which Plato's tripartition tended to conceal. Even if Plato did not mean tripartition to be taken literally, it gave the wrong impression. This is even more true of Plato's location of the three parts in the head, chest and abdomen. One cannot help feeling that in allocating these positions to the soul Plato has not yet fully grasped the implications of immaterial existence. When Plotinus talks about the soul as working in certain parts of the body he is far more careful. When he says that the soul functions in a particular organ, he stresses that all he means is that the soul exercises one of its powers in that area.<sup>17</sup>

It is at this point in his system that we may complain that Plotinus owes us an explanation. He tells us that the soul makes contact with the body at some part of the body, or that it receives dematerialized impressions from the body. But he does not tell us just how these things happen. That he is aware of the difficulty of explaining how soul, as he conceived it, is joined to the body emerges in his consideration of how the soul may be said to be in the body at all. That he examined this difficult question at such length as he did suggests again that he was not content with Plato's statements. Plato just said that the soul was in the body, or in specific parts of it, and left it at that. Plotinus worked out a picture of how an immaterial soul could be in a body. Yet he does

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *de An.* II. 2-3 *passim* and III.12.

<sup>17</sup> See above 33, 38, 75.

not really explain how one can act on the other. We have no more than a hint in a remark that the *pneuma* around the soul might account for the difference between our movements and those of the heavens,<sup>18</sup> and some passing references to some sort of pneumatic or other body which the soul takes on before incarnation.<sup>19</sup> Did Plotinus then think of *pneuma* as somehow forming a link between the spiritual and the fully material? <sup>20</sup> Usually he seems to have thought that the powers of spiritual being were sufficient to explain how the soul could control the body and respond to its requirements.

It is precisely the lack of any clear explanation of how body and soul acted on each other that made it easier for Plotinus to adapt elements from Aristotle's psychology to his own dualistic notions. Plotinus' incorporation of Aristotle's system of faculties into his own framework made it possible for him to improve on Plato. At the same time the translation of the system to fit the view of the soul as a separate substance meant that Plotinus was able to avoid the difficulties which faced Aristotle when he considered the relation of *nous* to the rest of the soul. Plotinus' *nous* too was, of course, transcendent, but since the whole soul was separate from the body, this transcendence was rather a matter of degree, while Aristotle's *nous* stood in a totally different relation to the body from the rest of the soul.

In other ways too Plotinus' doctrines of the soul marked an im-

<sup>18</sup> II.2.2.21f.

<sup>19</sup> There is a reference to souls transferring from an airy and fiery body to an earthy one, IV.3.9.5f, and another to souls on their descent assuming an unspecified body, which is contrasted with the earthier bodies for which they are bound, IV.3.15.1-3. But, as Dodds points out, *Proclus* Appendix II, 318, Plotinus does not seem to have attached much importance to this idea; cf. Rich, "Body and Soul in Plotinus", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 1 (1963) 13, and Inge, *Philosophy of Plotinus*<sup>3</sup> I, 220: on the previous page, however, Inge says as if it were Plotinus' normal doctrine that the connection between body and soul is mediated by *pneuma*. The passage at III.6.5 to which Dodds, *loc. cit.*, and others refer may not be to the point, see n. 28 to ch. 5. G. Verbeke, *L'Évolution de la doctrine du pneuma du stoïcisme à S. Augustin* (Paris/Louvain 1945) 360f. also refers to IV.7.14, but this passage could be a reminiscence of Plato, *Rep.* X 611d. On the pre- and post-Plotinian history of the notion of an astral body see the above mentioned Appendix in Dodds, *Proclus* 313-21, and for the Neoplatonists also Verbeke, *op. cit.* ch. 4 *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> This was suggested by Inge, see n. 19. Verbeke also takes it as Plotinus' usual view, but he does point out that the idea is only a first step and not a carefully worked out doctrine. Miss Rich, *loc. cit.* 14, tentatively suggests that Plotinus' *pneuma* was intended to have a similar role in explaining movement and sensation to that of Aristotle's σμψυτον πνεύμα: on the function of this, which is important in all the activities of the sub-rational soul in Aristotle, cf. A. L. Peck's Loeb edition of the *de Generatione Animalium*, Appendix B.

portant advance on those of Plato and Aristotle. Not only did he adapt their ideas, but he added others of his own. This may be seen in his treatment of memory. Based as it was on a critical reappraisal of Aristotle's as far as the mechanics are concerned, Plotinus went beyond Aristotle in his emphasis on the influence that memory may have on the personality. The most striking case is his interest in conscious and unconscious activity, and in particular his concept of the "we" as a mobile centre of consciousness. In general his psychology shows well how he managed to draw on earlier ideas, to reconsider these ideas, and to combine those he found acceptable with ideas of his own to produce an impressive and by no means unoriginal synthesis. And while the view that he was something else still persists in some quarters,<sup>21</sup> we may add that it shows us Plotinus working as a Greek philosopher.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* I (Cambridge 1962) 24.

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