

# PLOTINUS

## ENNEAD II

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY  
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## II. 1. ON HEAVEN (ON THE UNIVERSE)

### *Introductory Note*

THIS treatise is No. 40 in Porphyry's chronological order. Its purpose is to defend the doctrine, vigorously maintained by all pagan Neoplatonists, of the incorruptibility of the heavens and the heavenly bodies, the unchangingness and everlastingness of everything in the regions above the moon. This was one of the main points of disagreement between Christians and pagans in late antiquity. But, though Plotinus seems to have the Christian doctrine of the end of the world in mind at the end of ch. 4, his arguments in this treatise are mainly directed against Stoics and Stoicising Platonists who interpreted Plato's *Timaeus* to fit in with their own doctrines that the universe as a whole, including the heavenly regions, was subject to change in a regular, never-ending cycle, and that there was a real community of substance and interaction between the regions below and the regions above the moon. Plotinus is concerned to refute these errors without falling into the opposite, Aristotelian, heresy that the heavens are made of the "quintessence" or fifth element, and not, as Platonists held, of fire.

### *Synopsis*

What is the reason why the visible heaven is everlasting in all its parts as well as the whole? The will of God and the fact that there is nothing outside it are not sufficient explanations (ch. 1). Plato's view that all bodies are in a state of flux, and our rejection of Aristotle's "fifth element" make the explanation more difficult, but none the

## ON HEAVEN (ON THE UNIVERSE)

less, if we consider what the heavenly fire in its own proper region is like and how perfectly adapted it is to the control of the universal soul which contains it, we shall find in the action of universal soul (which it is quite unreasonable to suppose will ever bring the universe to an end) sufficient reason to be assured that the heaven is everlasting (ch. 2-4). It is everlasting in all its parts as well as the whole because it is made and ruled by a better soul than that which makes our bodies and other earthly things, as well as out of better material (ch. 5). The heavenly bodies do not contain any admixture of the elements of the sublunary world, and this is the true teaching of Plato if we interpret the *Timaeus* rightly. They need no nourishment, and are not nourished by exhalations from below; the elements of the lower world in no way affect the regions above the moon (chs. 6-8).

## II. 1. (40) ΠΕΡΙ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΥ

1. Τὸν κόσμον αἰεὶ λέγοντες καὶ πρόσθεν εἶναι καὶ  
 ἔσσεσθαι σῶμα ἔχοντα εἰ μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν βούλησιν τοῦ  
 θεοῦ ἀνάγοιμεν τὴν αἰτίαν, πρῶτον μὲν ἀληθὲς μὲν  
 ἂν ἴσως λέγοιμεν, σαφήνειαν δὲ οὐδεμίαν ἂν  
 5 παρεχοίμεθα. Ἐπειτα τῶν στοιχείων ἢ μεταβολὴ  
 καὶ τῶν ζώων τῶν περὶ γῆν ἢ φθορὰ τὸ εἶδος  
 σώζουσα μήποτε οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἀξιώσει  
 γίνεσθαι ὡς τῆς βουλήσεως τοῦτο δυναμένης αἰεὶ  
 ὑπεκφεύγοντος καὶ ῥέοντος τοῦ σώματος ἐπιτιθέναι  
 τὸ εἶδος τὸ αὐτὸ ἄλλοτε ἄλλω, ὡς μὴ σώζεσθαι τὸ  
 10 ἐν ἀριθμῷ εἰς τὸ αἰεὶ, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐν τῷ εἶδει· ἐπεὶ  
 διὰ τί τὰ μὲν οὕτω κατὰ τὸ εἶδος μόνον τὸ αἰεὶ  
 ἔξει, τὰ δ' ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ οὐρανὸς κατὰ τὸ  
 τόδε ἔξει τὸ αἰεὶ; Εἰ δὲ τῷ πάντα συνειληφέναι  
 καὶ μὴ εἶναι εἰς ὃ τὴν μεταβολὴν ποιήσεται μηδὲ  
 τὸ ἔξωθεν ἂν προσπρῶτον φθεῖραι δύνασθαι τοῦτι  
 15 δώσομεν τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς οὐ φθορᾶς, τῷ μὲν ὄλω  
 καὶ παντὶ δώσομεν ἐκ τοῦ λόγου τὸ μὴ ἂν φθαρῆναι,  
 ὃ δὲ ἥλιος ἡμῖν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀστρῶν ἢ οὐσία τῷ

<sup>1</sup> This is a reference to Plato, *Timaeus* 41B4 (the address of the Demiurge to the gods whom he has made, of whom

## II. 1. ON HEAVEN [ON THE UNIVERSE]

1. When we say that the universe has always existed before and will always exist, although it has a body, if we refer the cause of its everlasting existence to the will of God<sup>1</sup>, then, first of all, we may quite likely be speaking the truth, but we are not giving any sort of a clear explanation. Next, the preservation of the form in the changing of the elements and the passing away of the living beings on earth may perhaps make us think that the same happens with the All, that God's will is able as the body continually fleets and flows to impose the same form now on one thing and now on another, so that it is not the single individual thing which lasts for ever but the unity of form; for why should the things of earth have only an everlasting duration of form, while the things in heaven and the heaven itself have an everlasting duration of particular individuals? But if we say that the cause why the heaven does not pass away is that it contains everything and there is nothing it can change into or anything outside which could fall upon it and destroy it, then by this argument we shall grant indestructibility to the Whole and the All, but since our sun and the substance of the other stars

the "visible gods," the heavenly bodies, are the most important group).

μέρη καὶ μὴ ὅλον ἕκαστον εἶναι καὶ πᾶν, οὐχ ἔξει  
 τὴν πίστιν παρὰ τοῦ λόγου, ὅτι εἰς ἅπαντα μένει  
 20 τὸν χρόνον, τὸ δὲ κατ' εἶδος τὴν μονὴν αὐτοῖς  
 εἶναι, ὡσπερ καὶ πυρὶ καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις μόνον ἂν  
 δόξειε παρεῖναι καὶ αὐτῷ δὲ παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ.  
 Οὐδὲν γὰρ κωλύει ὑπ' ἄλλου ἔξωθεν μὴ φθειρόμε-  
 νον, ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, τῶν μερῶν ἄλληλα φθειρόντων,  
 τὴν φθορὰν αἰεὶ ἔχοντα, τῷ εἶδει μόνον μένειν, καὶ  
 25 ρεούσης αἰεὶ τῆς φύσεως τοῦ ὑποκειμένου, τὸ εἶδος  
 ἄλλου διδόντος, γίνεσθαι τὸ αὐτὸ ἐπὶ τοῦ παντός  
 ζώου, ὅπερ καὶ ἐπὶ ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἵππου καὶ τῶν  
 ἄλλων· αἰεὶ γὰρ ἀνθρώπος καὶ ἵππος, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁ  
 αὐτός. Οὐ τοίνυν ἔσται τὸ μὲν μένον αὐτοῦ αἰεὶ,  
 ὡσπερ ὁ οὐρανός, τὰ δὲ περὶ γῆν φθειρόμενα, ἀλλ'  
 30 ὁμοίως ἅπαντα, τὴν διαφορὰν ἔχοντα μόνον τῷ  
 χρόνῳ· ἔστω γὰρ πολυχρονιώτερον τὰ ἐν οὐρανῷ.  
 Εἰ μὲν οὖν οὕτω συγχωρησόμεθα τὸ αἰεὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ  
 παντός καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μερῶν εἶναι, ἤττον ἂν τὸ  
 ἄπορον τῇ δόξῃ προσείη· μᾶλλον δὲ παντάπασιν  
 35 τοῦ θεοῦ ἰκανὸν εἶναι δεκνύοιτο κἂν οὕτω καὶ  
 τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον συνέχειν τὸ πᾶν. Εἰ δὲ καὶ τὸ  
 τόδε τι αὐτοῦ ὀποσονοῦν λέγομεν ἔχειν τὸ αἰεὶ, ἢ  
 τε βούλησις δεκτέα εἰ ἰκανὴ ποιεῖν τοῦτο, τό τε  
 ἄπορον μένει διὰ τί τὰ μὲν οὕτω, τὰ δὲ οὐχ οὕτως,  
 ἀλλὰ τῷ εἶδει μόνον, τά τε μέρη τὰ ἐν οὐρανῷ πῶς  
 40 καὶ αὐτά· ἐπειδὴ οὕτω καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ πάντα εἶναι.

2. Εἰ οὖν ταύτην παραδεχόμεθα τὴν δόξαν καὶ  
 φαμεν τὸν μὲν οὐρανὸν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ κατὰ

are parts, and not each of them a whole and all, the  
 argument will give no assurance that they will last  
 for ever; they will have only permanence of form,  
 and the same will apply to fire and such-like things,  
 and even to the whole universe itself. For there is  
 nothing to prevent it, even if it is not being destroyed  
 by something from outside, from having its own con-  
 tinual destruction as its parts destroy each other, and  
 so being permanent only in form; as its substratum  
 is in continual flux and its form comes from elsewhere  
 it will be in the same state as every living thing, man  
 and horse and the rest; man and horse always exist,  
 but not the same man and horse. So there will not  
 be one permanent part of the universe, like the  
 heaven, while the things on earth pass away, but all  
 will be alike, differing only in the time they last; for  
 we can grant that the things in heaven last longer.  
 If then we admit that both the whole and the parts  
 are permanent in this way, our doctrine will be less  
 difficult: or rather we shall have got completely out  
 of our difficulty, if it can be shown that the will of  
 God is adequate to hold the All together in this way  
 and manner. But if we say that any individual con-  
 stituent of the All, whatever its size, is permanent, we  
 must show that the divine will is adequate to make it  
 so; and the difficulty remains why some things are  
 permanent in this way and others are not, but have  
 only permanence of form, and also why the parts in  
 heaven are permanent as well as the whole; since  
 on the supposition that they are it would seem that all  
 the parts of the universe were permanent.

2. If, then, we accept this view and maintain that  
 the heaven and everything in it last for ever as

τὸ τόδε ἔχειν τὸ αἰεὶ, τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ τῆ τῆς σελήνης  
σφαίρα τὸ κατ' εἶδος, δεικτέον πῶς σῶμα ἔχων  
5 ἔξει τὸ τόδε ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κυρίως, ὡς τὸ καθ'  
ἕκαστον καὶ τὸ ὡσαύτως, τῆς φύσεως τοῦ σώματος  
ρεούσης αἰεὶ. Τοῦτο γὰρ δοκεῖ τοῖς τε ἄλλοις τοῖς  
περὶ φύσεως εἰρηκόσι καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ Πλάτῳ οὐ  
μόνον περὶ τῶν ἄλλων σωμάτων, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ  
τῶν οὐρανίων αὐτῶν. Πῶς γὰρ ἂν, φησι, σώματα  
10 ἔχοντα καὶ ὀρώμενα τὸ ἀπαλλάκτως ἔξει  
καὶ τὸ ὡσαύτως; Συγχωρῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τούτων  
δηλονότι τῷ Ἡρακλείτῳ, ὃς ἔφη αἰεὶ καὶ τὸν  
ἥλιον γίνεσθαι. Ἀριστοτέλει μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἂν  
πρᾶγμα εἴη, εἴ τις αὐτοῦ τὰς ὑποθέσεις τοῦ  
πέμπτου παραδέξατο σώματος. Τοῖς δὲ μὴ τοῦτο  
15 τιθεμένοις, τοῦ σώματος δὲ ἐκ τούτων ὄντος τοῦ  
οὐρανοῦ, ἐξ ὧν περ καὶ τὰ τῆδε ζῶα, πῶς τὸ τόδε  
ἂν ἔχοι; Ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον πῶς ἥλιος καὶ τὰ ἄλλα  
τὰ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ μόρια ὄντα; Συγκεκριμένου δὲ  
παντὸς ζώου ἐκ ψυχῆς καὶ τῆς σώματος φύσεως  
ἀνάγκη τὸν οὐρανόν, εἴπερ αἰεὶ κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἔσται,  
20 ἢ δι' ἀμφω ἔσεσθαι, ἢ διὰ θάτερον τῶν ἐνότων,  
οἷον ψυχὴν ἢ σῶμα. Ὁ μὲν δὲ τῷ σώματι διδοὺς  
τὸ ἀφθαρτον οὐδὲν ἂν εἰς τοῦτο τῆς ψυχῆς δέοιτο,

<sup>1</sup> *Republic* VII. 530B2-3 (slightly adapted). Plato is here arguing that the true, philosophical astronomer should not seriously study the motions of the visible heavenly bodies, which, being material, are imperfect and changeable, but devote his attention to the laws of motion perceived by the intellect alone.

individuals, but the things below the sphere of the moon are only everlasting in form, we must show how heaven, which has a body, can have proper individual identity, in the sense that each particular detail remains unchanged, when the nature of body is in continual flux. This is the view held by Plato himself, as well as by all other natural philosophers, not only about other bodies but about the heavenly bodies themselves. For "how," he says, "when they have bodies and are visible can they be unchangeable and always the same?"<sup>1</sup>—agreeing, obviously, in this, too, with Heraclitus, who said that the sun kept on coming into being.<sup>2</sup> There would be no difficulty for Aristotle, if one accepted his assumption of the fifth body.<sup>3</sup> But for those who do not postulate this fifth element but hold that the body of the heaven is composed of the same elements of which the living creatures down here are made, the question does arise how there can be individual identity. And still more, how can the sun and the other things in heaven be individually everlasting when they are parts? Now every living thing is composed of soul and the nature of body; so it follows necessarily that the heaven, if it exists for ever as one and the same individual, must owe its immortality either to both of its component parts or to one or other of them, i.e. soul or body. Anyone, then, who attributes indestructibility to the body will have no need of the soul for this purpose, except that it will always have

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Diels-Kranz, B6 (quoted by Aristotle, *Meteorologica* B. 2. 355a13-15, from where Plotinus probably takes it).

<sup>3</sup> For Aristotle's conception of the "fifth body," cp. *De Caelo* A. 3. 270b1 ff.

ἢ τοῦ ὁμοῦ ἀεὶ εἶναι πρὸς ζῶον σύστασιν· τῷ δὲ  
τὸ σῶμα παρ' αὐτοῦ φθαρτὸν εἶναι λέγοντι καὶ τῇ  
ψυχῇ διδόντι τὴν αἰτίαν πειρατέον καὶ τὴν τοῦ  
25 σώματος ἕξιν μὴδ' αὐτὴν ἐναντιουμένην τῇ  
συστάσει καὶ τῇ διαμονῇ δεικνύναι, ὅτι μὴδὲν  
ἀσύμφωνον ἐν τοῖς συνεστηκόσιν ἐστὶ κατὰ φύσιν,  
ἀλλὰ πρόσφορον καὶ τὴν ὕλην πρὸς τὸ βούλημα  
τοῦ ἀποτελέσαντος<sup>1</sup> ὑπάρχειν προσήκει.

3. Πῶς οὖν ἡ ὕλη καὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ παντός  
συνεργῶν ἂν εἴη πρὸς τὴν τοῦ κόσμου ἀθανασίαν  
ἀεὶ ῥέον; Ἡ ὅτι, φαίμεν ἂν, <ῥεὶ ἐν αὐτῷ> ῥεῖ  
γὰρ οὐκ ἕξω. Εἰ οὖν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ οὐκ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ,  
5 μένον τὸ αὐτὸ οὔτ' ἂν αὔξειτο οὔτε φθίνοι· οὐ  
τοῖνον οὐδὲ γηράσκει. Ὅραν δὲ δεῖ καὶ γῆν  
μένουσαν ἀεὶ ἐν σχήματι τῷ αὐτῷ ἐξ ἀδίου καὶ  
ἄγκω, καὶ ἀήρ οὐ μήποτε ἐπιλείπει οὐδὲ ἡ ὕδατος  
φύσις· καὶ τοῖνον ὅσον μεταβάλλει αὐτῶν οὐκ  
ἠλλοίωσε τὴν τοῦ ὅλου ζῶον φύσιν. Καὶ γὰρ  
10 ἡμῖν ἀεὶ μεταβαλλόντων μορίων καὶ εἰς τὸ ἕξω  
ἀπιόντων μένει ἕκαστος εἰς πολὺ· ᾧ δὲ ἕξω  
μὴδὲν, οὐκ ἀσύμφωνος ἂν τούτων ἡ σώματος  
φύσις πρὸς ψυχὴν πρὸς τὸ τὸ αὐτὸ εἶναι ζῶον καὶ  
ἀεὶ μένον. Πῦρ δὲ ὀξὺ μὲν καὶ ταχὺ τῷ μὴ ὄδε  
μένειν, ὡσπερ καὶ γῆ τῷ μὴ ἄνω γενόμενον δὲ  
15 ἐκεῖ, οὐ στήναι δεῖ, οὔτοι δεῖν νομίζειν οὕτως  
ἔχειν ἐν τῷ οἰκείῳ ἰδρυμένον, ὡς μὴ καὶ αὐτὸ  
ὡσπερ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα στάσιν ἐπ' ἄμφω ζητεῖν.  
Ἄνωτέρω μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν φέροιτο· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔτι  
κάτω δ' οὐ πέφυκε. Λείπεται δὲ αὐτῷ εὐαγῶγῳ

<sup>1</sup> ἀποτελέσαντος H-S<sup>2</sup>, ἀποτελέματος codd.

to be with the body to make up the living creature. But anyone who says that the body is in itself destructible and makes the soul the cause of immortality will have to try and show that the character of body is not essentially opposed to permanent association with soul, that there is no natural discord between the components, but that even the matter of body must be favourably disposed to assist the purpose of the accomplishing power.

3. How, then, can the matter and body of the All, when it is always in a state of flux, co-operate towards the immortality of the universe? It is, we should say, because it flows in itself; it does not flow out. If, then, it flows *in* itself and not away from itself, it remains the same and does not increase or decrease; so it does not grow old either. One must observe that the earth, too, remains always from eternity in the same shape and bulk and the air never fails, nor does the nature of water; and all that changes of them does not alter the nature of the total living thing. With us too, though parts of us change and go away outside us, each individual lasts a long time; and when something has no outside, the nature of body is not so discordant with the soul as to prevent it being one and the same everlasting living thing. Fire is keen and swift by not staying here below (just as earth will not stay above); when it comes there where it has to stop one must not think of it as being so firmly established in its own place that it does not, like the other elements, seek a position for itself in both directions. Now it cannot go any higher, for there is nothing beyond; and it is not its nature to go down. It remains for it to be tractable

τε εἶναι καὶ κατὰ φυσικὴν ὀλκὴν ἐλκομένῳ ὑπὸ  
 20 ψυχῆς πρὸς τὸ ζῆν εὖ μάλα ἐν καλῷ τόπῳ  
 κινεῖσθαι ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ. Καὶ γάρ, εἴ τῳ φόβος μὴ  
 πέση, θαρρεῖν δεῖ· φθάνει γὰρ ἢ τῆς ψυχῆς  
 περιαγωγή πᾶσαι νεύουσιν, ὡς κρατοῦσαν ἀνέχου.  
 Εἰ δὲ μὴδὲ ῥοπήν πρὸς τὸ κάτω ἔχει παρ' αὐτοῦ,  
 οὐκ ἀντιτεῖνον μένει. Τὰ μὲν οὖν ἡμέτερα μέρη  
 25 ἐν μορφῇ γενόμενα οὐ στέγοντα αὐτῶν τὴν  
 σύστασιν ἀπαιτεῖ ἀπ' ἄλλων μόρια, ἵνα μένοι· εἰ  
 δ' ἐκείθεν μὴ ἀπορρέοι, οὐδὲν δεῖ τρέφεσθαι. Εἰ  
 δὲ ἀπορρέοι ἀπουβεννύμενον ἐκείθεν, πῦρ δεῖ  
 ἕτερον ἐξάπτεσθαι καί, εἰ ἄλλου τινὸς ἔχοι καὶ  
 ἐκείθεν ἀπορρέοι, δεῖ καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἄλλου.  
 30 Ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μένοι ἂν τὸ πᾶν ζῶον τὸ αὐτό,  
 εἰ καὶ οὕτως.

4. Ἄλλ' αὐτό γε ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ, οὐχ ὡς πρὸς τὸ  
 ζητούμενον, σκεπτέον εἴτε τι ἀπορρεῖ ἐκείθεν,  
 ὥστε δεῖσθαι κάκεῖνα τῆς λεγομένης οὐ κυρίως  
 τροφῆς, ἢ ἅπαξ τὰ ἐκεῖ ταχθέντα κατὰ φύσιν  
 μένοντα οὐδεμίαν πάσχει ἀπορροήν· καὶ πότερον  
 5 πῦρ μόνον ἢ πλεόν τὸ πῦρ καὶ ἔστι τοῖς ἄλλοις  
 αἰωρεῖσθαι καὶ μετεωρίζεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ κρατοῦντος.  
 Εἰ γάρ τις προσθείη καὶ τὴν κυριωτάτην αἰτίαν,  
 τὴν ψυχὴν, μετὰ τῶν οὕτω σωμάτων καθαρῶν  
 καὶ πάντως ἀμεινόνων—ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις  
 10 ζῶοις ἐν τοῖς κυρίοις αὐτῶν τὰ ἀμεινῶ ἐκλέγεται

and, drawn by soul to an excellent life in a way  
 according with its nature, to move in soul in a noble  
 place. If anyone is afraid it will fall, he should feel  
 reassured; the soul's guidance on its circular path  
 anticipates any tendency to decline, mastering it and  
 holding it up: and if fire has no spontaneous in-  
 clination downward, it stays in place without re-  
 sistance. Our own members, which come to be in a  
 definite shape, cannot maintain their own structure  
 and demand portions from other things to make them  
 last: but if there is no loss by flux in heaven there is  
 no need for nourishment. If anything was lost there  
 through fire being extinguished, other fire would  
 have to be kindled; and if it had this other fire from  
 something else and that something else lost it by  
 flux, that again would have to be replaced by other fire.  
 But as a result of this the universal living creature  
 would not remain the same thing, even if it remained  
 the same sort of thing.

4. But we ought to consider this question in itself,  
 and not in relation to our main investigation, whether  
 anything in heaven is lost by flux so that the heavenly  
 bodies do need nutrition (not in the strict and proper  
 sense of the word), or whether the beings there, once  
 established, remain naturally and endure no loss by  
 flux; and also whether there is only fire or whether  
 fire predominates and it is possible for the other  
 elements to be carried up and held on high by the  
 dominant fire. If one takes into account the  
 sovereign cause, the soul, along with bodies of the  
 kind which exist in heaven, pure and altogether better  
 than those of earth (for in other living things, too,  
 nature selects and places in their most important



ἡ φύσις—πάγιον ἂν τὴν δύξαν περὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ  
 τῆς ἀθανασίας λάβου. Ὁρθῶς γὰρ καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης  
 τὴν φλόγα ζέειν τιὰ καὶ πῦρ οἶον διὰ κόρον  
 ὑβρίζον· τὸ δὲ ἐκεῖ ὁμαλὸν καὶ ἡρεμαῖον καὶ τῆ  
 τῶν ἄστρων πρόσφορον φύσει. Τὸ δὲ δὴ μέγιστον,  
 15 τὴν ψυχὴν ἐφέξῃς τοῖς ἀρίστοις κινουμένην δυνάμει  
 θαυμαστῇ κειμένην, πῶς ἐκφείζεται τι αὐτὴν εἰς  
 τὸ μὴ εἶναι τῶν ἅπαξ ἐν αὐτῇ τεθέντων; Μὴ  
 παντὸς δὲ δεσμοῦ οἶσθαι κρείττονα εἶναι ἐκ θεοῦ  
 ὠρμημένην, ἀνθρώπων ἀπείρων ἐστὶν αἰτίας τῆς  
 συνεχούσης τὰ πάντα. Ἄτοπον γὰρ τὴν καὶ  
 20 ὀποσοοῦν χρόνον δυνηθεῖσαν συνέχειν μὴ καὶ αἰ  
 ποιεῖν τοῦτο, ὥσπερ βία τοῦ συνέχειν γεγονότος  
 καὶ τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ἄλλου ἢ τούτου ὄντος, ὃ ἐν τῇ  
 τοῦ παντός ἐστι φύσει καὶ ἐν τοῖς καλῶς τεθείσιν,  
 ἢ ὄντος τινὸς τοῦ βιασομένου καὶ διαλύσοντος τὴν  
 σύστασιν καὶ οἶον βασιλείας τινὸς καὶ ἀρχῆς  
 25 καταλύσοντος τὴν ψυχῆς φύσιν. Τό τε μήποτε  
 ἀρξασθαι—ἄτοπον γὰρ καὶ ἤδη εἴρηται—πίστιν  
 καὶ περὶ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἔχει. Διὰ τί γὰρ ἔσται,  
 ὅτε καὶ οὐκ ἤδη; Οὐ γὰρ ἐκτέτριπται τὰ στοιχεῖα,  
 ὥσπερ ξύλα καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα· μερόντων δ' αἰεὶ καὶ  
 τὸ πᾶν μένει. Καὶ εἰ μεταβάλλει αἰεὶ, τὸ πᾶν  
 30 μένει· μένει γὰρ καὶ ἡ τῆς μεταβολῆς αἰτία. Ἐ  
 δὲ μετάνοια τῆς ψυχῆς ὅτι κενόν ἐστι δέδεικται,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Aristotle, *Meteorologica* A. 3. 340b23 and 4. 341b22.

<sup>2</sup> Plotinus particularly disliked the idea that the divine power which made the universe might change its mind and

parts the bodies of better quality), one will have a solid conviction about the immortality of the heaven. Aristotle, certainly, is right in calling flame a "boiling-over,"<sup>1</sup> fire rioting because it is full fed; but fire in heaven is equable and placid, adapted to the nature of the stars. But the greatest argument of all is: when soul, moved with a marvellous power, is situated next after the best of realities, how can anything which was once set in it escape from it into non-being? Only those who have no understanding of the cause which holds all things together would not think soul, sprung from God, stronger than any bond. For it would be absurd for soul, if it is able to hold the universe together for any length of time, however short, not to do so for ever, as if it held it together by force and the natural state of affairs was other than this existing one which is in the nature of the universe and the noble disposition of things, or as if there was someone who was going to dissolve the universal structure by violence and depose the nature of soul as if from some sort of kingship or magistracy. The fact, too, that it had no beginning—we have already said that that would be absurd—gives us assurance for the future. For why should there come a time when it exists no more? The elements do not wear out like pieces of wood and things of that kind; and if they last the All lasts. And even if they are continually changing, the All lasts; for the cause of change endures. And we have shown that it is empty to suppose that soul might change its mind,<sup>2</sup> for its direction of the

destroy it. He had already attacked it in his treatise *Against the Gnostics* (II. 4).

PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 1.

ὅτι ἄπονος καὶ ἀβλαβῆς ἢ διοίκησις· καὶ εἰ πᾶν οἶόν τε σῶμα ἀπολέσθαι, οὐδὲν ἂν ἀλλοιότερον αὐτῇ γίγνοιτο.

5 Πῶς οὖν τὰ ἐκεῖ μέρη μένει, τὰ δ' ἐνταῦθα στοιχεῖα τε καὶ ζῶα οὐ μένει; "Ἡ, φησὶν ὁ Πλάτων, τὰ μὲν παρὰ θεοῦ γηγένηται, τὰ δ' ἐνταῦθα ζῶα παρὰ τῶν γενομένων παρ' αὐτοῦ θεῶν· γεγόμενα δὲ παρ' ἐκείνου οὐ θεμιτὸν φθεί-  
 10 ρεσθαι. Τοῦτο δὲ ταῦτόν τῳ ἐφεξῆς μὲν τῳ δημιουργῶ εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν οὐρανίαν, καὶ τὰς ἡμετέρας δέ· ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς οὐρανίας ἰνδαλμα αὐτῆς ἰὸν καὶ οἶον ἀπορρέον ἀπὸ τῶν ἄνω τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς ζῶα ποιεῖν. Ψυχῆς οὖν μιμουμένης τοιαύτης τὴν ἐκεῖ, ἀδυνατούσης δὲ τῳ καὶ χείροσι σώμασι χρῆσθαι  
 15 οὐρανὸν εἶπερ ἔδει μένειν, καὶ τὰ μόρια αὐτοῦ, τὰ ἄστρα τὰ ἐν αὐτῳ, ἔδει· ἢ πῶς ἂν ἔμεινε μὴ ὁμοίως καὶ τούτων μερόντων; Τὰ γὰρ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν οὐκέτι οὐρανοῦ μέρη· ἢ οὐ μέχρι σελήνης ὁ οὐρανός. Ἡμεῖς δὲ πλασθέντες ὑπὸ τῆς διδο-  
 20 αὐτοῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατ' ἐκείνην καὶ σύνεσμεν τοῖς σώμασιν· ἢ γὰρ ἄλλη ψυχὴ, καθ' ἣν ἡμεῖς, τοῦ εὔ

ON HEAVEN (ON THE UNIVERSE)

universe is without trouble or harm to it; and even if it were possible for all body to perish, nothing unpleasant would happen to soul.

5. How then do the parts in heaven last, but down here the elements and living things do not last? Because, Plato says, the heavenly things derive their being from God, but the living things down here from the gods derived from him;<sup>1</sup> and it is not lawful for the things which derive their being from him to perish.<sup>2</sup> This amounts to saying that the heavenly soul (and our souls too) comes next in order after the maker of the universe; from the heavenly soul comes out an image of it and so to speak flows down from above and makes the living things on earth. Since, then, this kind of soul tries to imitate the soul up there but is unable to because it is using worse bodies for its making and is working in a worse place, and since the ingredients which it takes for its composition are unwilling to endure, the living things here cannot last for ever and the bodies are not as effectively mastered by soul as if the other (heavenly) soul ruled them directly. But if the heaven must last as a whole, then its parts, the stars in it, must last too; how could it last if they do not last as well? (The things under heaven are no longer part of heaven; if we assumed that they were, then heaven would not stop at the moon.) We, however, are formed by the soul given from the gods in heaven and heaven itself, and this soul governs our association with our bodies. The other soul, by which we are ourselves, is cause of our well-being, not of our

<sup>1</sup> *Timaeus* 69C3-5.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *Timaeus* 41A7-B5.

εἶναι, οὐ τοῦ εἶναι αἰτία. "Ἦδη γοῦν τοῦ σώματος ἔρχεται γενομένου μικρὰ ἐκ λογισμοῦ πρὸς τὸ εἶναι συνεκλαμβανομένη.

6. Ἄλλὰ πότερον πῦρ μόνον καὶ εἰ ἀπορρεῖ ἐκεῖθεν καὶ δέεται τροφῆς νῦν σκεπτέον. Τῷ μὲν οὖν Τιμαίῳ τὸ τοῦ παντὸς σῶμα πεποιηκότι πρῶτον ἐκ γῆς καὶ πυρός, ἵνα ὁρατὸν τε ἢ διὰ τὸ  
5 πῦρ, στερρὸν δὲ διὰ τὴν γῆν, ἀκολουθεῖν ἔδοξε καὶ τὰ ἄστρα ποιεῖν οὐ πᾶν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πλεῖστον πυρός ἔχειν, ἐπειδὴ τὰ ἄστρα τὸ στερεὸν φαίνεται ἔχοντα. Καὶ ἴσως ὀρθῶς ἂν ἔχοι συνεπικρίναντος καὶ Πλάτωνος τῷ εἰκότι τὴν γνώμην ταύτην. Παρὰ μὲν γὰρ τῆς αἰσθήσεως κατὰ τε τὴν ὄψιν κατὰ τε  
10 τὴν τῆς ἀφῆς ἀντίληψιν πυρός ἔχειν τὸ πλεῖστον ἢ τὸ πᾶν φαίνεται, διὰ δὲ τοῦ λόγου ἐπισκοποῦσαν, εἰ τὸ στερεὸν ἄνευ γῆς οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο, καὶ γῆς ἂν ἔχοι. "Υδατος δὲ καὶ ἀέρος τί ἂν δέοιτο; "Ατοπόν τε γὰρ δόξει ὕδατος εἶναι ἐν τοσοῦτῳ πυρί, ὃ τε ἀῆρ εἰ ἐνείη μεταβάλλοι ἂν εἰς πυρός φύσιν.  
15 Ἄλλ' εἰ δύο στερεὰ ἄκρων λόγον ἔχοντα δύο μέσων δεῖται, ἀπορήσειεν ἂν τις, εἰ καὶ ἐν φυσικοῖς οὕτως· ἐπεὶ καὶ γῆν ἂν τις ὕδατι μίξειεν οὐδενὸς δεηθεὶς μέσου. Εἰ δὲ λέγοιμεν· ἐννύπαρχει γὰρ ἤδη ἐν τῇ γῇ καὶ τῷ ὕδατι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, δόξομεν ἴσως τι λέγειν· εἴποι δ' ἂν τις· ἀλλ' οὐ πρὸς τὸ

<sup>1</sup> *Timaeus* 31B4-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus* 40A2-3.

<sup>3</sup> This is, perhaps, a reference to what Plato makes Timaeus

being. It comes when our body is already in existence, making only minor contributions from reasoning to our being.

6. But now we must consider whether the heavenly bodies are made of fire only, and whether anything flows away from them and so they need nourishment. To Timaeus, who formed the body of the All primarily from earth and fire, so that it might be visible by means of the fire and solid by means of the earth,<sup>1</sup> it seemed consistent to make the stars contain, not all fire but mostly fire, since the stars obviously have solidity.<sup>2</sup> And he is probably right, since Plato agrees that this view is probable.<sup>3</sup> From our sense-perception, by sight and the apprehension of contact [with their rays], they seem to contain all fire or mostly fire; but when we consider them rationally, we see that, if there is no solidity without earth, they must contain earth. But what need would they have of water and air? It will seem absurd to suppose that there is any water in so much fire, and if there was any air in it, it would change into the nature of fire. But even if two solids standing in the relationship of extremes need two middle terms,<sup>4</sup> one might find it difficult to suppose that this logical relationship held good for natural bodies; for one can mix earth and water without needing any middle term. But if we say "The other elements are already present in earth and water" there will, perhaps, appear to be some sense in this argument, though one might object "These other elements will not serve to bind

say at 29B3-D3, that his account of the formation of the universe is a probable but not a certain one.

<sup>4</sup> *Timaeus* 32B2-3.

20 συνδῆσαι συνιόντα τὰ δύο. Ἄλλ' ὁμως ἐροῦμεν  
 ἤδη συνδεῖσθαι τῷ ἔχειν ἐκάτερον πάντα. Ἄλλ'  
 ἐπισκεπτέον, εἰ ἄνευ πυρός οὐχ ὄρατον γῆ, καὶ  
 ἄνευ γῆς οὐ στερεὸν πῦρ· εἰ γὰρ τοῦτο, τάχ' ἂν  
 οὐδέν ἔχοι ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν αὐτοῦ οὐσίαν, ἀλλὰ  
 πάντα μὲν μέμικται, λέγεται δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἐπικρατοῦν  
 25 ἕκαστον. Ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ τὴν γῆν ἄνευ ὑγροῦ φασι  
 συστήναι δύνασθαι· κόλλαν γὰρ εἶναι τῇ γῆ τὴν  
 ὕδατος ὑγρότητα. Ἄλλ' εἰ καὶ δώσομεν οὕτως,  
 ἀλλὰ ἕκαστόν γε ἄτοπον λέγοντα εἶναί τι ἐφ'  
 ἑαυτοῦ μὲν μὴ διδόναι σύστασιν αὐτῷ, μετὰ δὲ  
 τῶν ἄλλων ὁμοῦ, οὐδενὸς ἐκάστου ὄντος. Πῶς  
 30 γὰρ ἂν εἴη γῆς φύσις καὶ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι γῆ μηδενὸς  
 ὄντος μορίου γῆς ὃ γῆ ἐστιν, εἰ μὴ καὶ ὕδωρ ἐνείη  
 εἰς κόλλησιν; Τί δ' ἂν κολλήσειε μὴ ὄντος ὅλως  
 μεγέθους, ὃ πρὸς ἄλλο μόνιον συνεχὲς συνάψει;  
 Εἰ γὰρ καὶ ὀτιοῖν μέγεθος γῆς αὐτῆς ἔσται, ἔσται  
 γῆν φύσει καὶ ἄνευ ὕδατος εἶναι· ἢ, εἰ μὴ τοῦτο,  
 35 οὐδὲν ἔσται, ὃ κολλήσεται ὑπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος. Ἄερος  
 δὲ τί ἂν δέοιτο γῆς ὄγκος πρὸς τὸ εἶναι ἔτι ἀέρος  
 μένοντος πρὶν μεταβάλλειν; Περὶ δὲ πυρός εἰς  
 μὲν τὸ γῆ εἶναι οὐκ εἴρηται, εἰς δὲ τὸ ὄρατὴ εἶναι  
 καὶ αὐτῇ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα· εὐλογον μὲν γὰρ συγχωρεῖν  
 παρὰ φωτὸς τὸ ὀρᾶσθαι γίνεσθαι. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ τὸ

<sup>1</sup> This is the doctrine of *Epinomis* 981D-E, where all living beings are composed of all the elements, but in the earthly group (men, animals, plants) the earthly and solid element

the two when they come together." But all the same we shall say [for the sake of argument] that they are joined because each of them contains all things. But we must consider whether it is true that earth is not visible without fire and fire is not solid without earth. If this is so, it looks as if no element would ever have its own essential nature by itself, but all are mixed and take their names from the dominant element in each.<sup>1</sup> They say that earth cannot have concrete existence without moisture; the moisture of water is earth's adhesive. But even if we grant that this is so, it is absurd to say that each element is a separate something and not give it any concrete existence but only an existence along with the others, without anything being separate. How could there be a nature and substantial reality of earth if there is no particle of earth which is earth unless water is present in it to stick it together? What could the water stick if there was no bulk of earth at all which it could join to another contiguous particle? And if there is any bulk of absolute earth at all, then earth can exist by nature without water; and if it is not so, there will be nothing to be stuck together by the water. And how could the mass of earth require air for its existence, air that was still air, before it changed? As for fire, it was not maintained that it was needed for earth to exist, but for it and the other elements to be visible,<sup>2</sup> and it is certainly reasonable to agree that visibility comes from light. For we should not say that darkness is

predominates, in the heavenly group (the heavenly bodies) the element of fire.

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus* 31B5.

40 σκότος ὄρασθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὄραῖσθαι φατέον, ὡσπερ  
τὴν ἀφοσίαν μὴ ἀκούεσθαι. Ἄλλὰ πῦρ γὰρ ἐν  
αὐτῇ οὐκ ἀνάγκη παρῆναι· φῶς γὰρ ἀρκεῖ. Χιῶν  
γούιν καὶ τὰ ψυχρότατα πολλά λαμπρὰ πυρὸς ἄνευ.  
Ἄλλ' ἐνεγένετο, φῆσει τις, καὶ ἔχρωσε πρὶν  
45 ἀπελθεῖν. Καὶ περὶ ὕδατος δὲ ἀπορητέον, εἰ μὴ  
ἔστιν ὕδωρ, εἰ μὴ γῆς λάβοι. Ἄηρ δὲ πῶς ἂν  
λέγοιτο μετέχειν γῆς εὐθρυπτος ὢν; Περὶ δὲ  
πυρὸς, εἰ γῆς δεῖ αὐτῷ τὸ συνεχές παρ' αὐτοῦ οὐκ  
ἔχοντι οὐδὲ τὸ διάστατον τριχῆ. Ἡ δὲ στερεότης  
αὐτῷ, οὐ κατὰ τὴν διάστασιν τὴν τριχῆ, ἀλλὰ  
50 κατὰ τὴν ἀντέρεισιν δηλονότι, διὰ τί οὐκ ἔσται ἢ  
φυσικὸν σῶμα; Σκληρότης δὲ γῆς μόνη. Ἐπεὶ  
καὶ τὸ πυκνὸν τῷ χρυσῷ ὕδατι ὄντι προσγίνεται  
οὐ γῆς προσγενομένης, ἀλλὰ πυκνότητος ἢ πήξεως.  
Καὶ πῦρ δὲ ἐφ' αὐτοῦ διὰ τί ψυχῆς παρουσίας οὐ  
συστήσεται πρὸς τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῆς; Καὶ ζῶα δὲ  
55 πύρινά ἐστι δαιμόνων. Ἄλλὰ κινήσομεν τὸ πᾶν  
ζῶον ἐκ πάντων τὴν σύστασιν ἔχειν. Ἡ τὰ ἐπὶ  
γῆς τις ἐρεῖ, γῆν δὲ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν αἴρειν παρὰ  
φύσιν εἶναι καὶ ἐναντίον τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῆς τεταγμένοις·  
συμπεριάγειν δὲ τὴν ταχίστην φοράν γεγερά σῶματα  
οὐ πιθανὸν εἶναι ἐμπόδιόν τε καὶ πρὸς τὸ φανὸν  
60 καὶ λευκὸν τοῦ ἐκεῖ πυρὸς.

7. Ἴσως οὖν βέλτιον χρὴ ἀκούειν τοῦ Πλάτωνος  
λέγοντος ἐν μὲν τῷ παντὶ κόσμῳ δεῖν εἶναι τὸ  
τοιούτου στερεόν, τὸ ἀντίτυπον ὄν, ἵνα τε ἡ γῆ ἐν  
μέσῳ ἰδρυμένη ἐπιβάθρα καὶ τοῖς ἐπ' αὐτῆς

visible but that it is invisible, just as noiselessness is  
inaudible. But there is no need for fire to be present  
in earth: light is enough. Snow, anyhow, and many  
very cold things are bright without fire—but there  
was fire in them, someone will say, and it coloured  
them before it went away. And there is a difficulty  
about water, too; is it not water unless it contains  
some earth? And how could one say that air has  
earth in it when it is so unstable? As for fire, one  
must ask if it needs earth because it has neither con-  
tinuity nor three-dimensionality of itself. But why  
has it not solidity (in the sense not of three-dimen-  
sionality but of resistance) simply from being a  
natural body? Hardness is the property of earth  
alone. For gold, for example, which is water, ac-  
quires density not by the accession of earth but of  
denseness or coagulation.<sup>1</sup> And why, then, should  
not fire, since soul is present to it, attain existence by  
itself through soul's power? There are, in fact, fiery  
living beings among the spirits. We shall question  
the assumption that every living thing is constituted  
of all the elements. One can agree that this is true  
of the things on earth, but to lift up earth into heaven  
is against nature and opposed to her laws; it is not  
probable that the swiftest of all movements carries  
round earthly bodies; it would impede the brightness  
and clearness of the heavenly fire.

7. So perhaps we should listen more carefully to  
Plato; this is what he says: there must in the univer-  
sal order be a solidity, that is a resistance, of such a  
kind that the earth set in the middle may be a founda-

<sup>1</sup> *Timaeus* 59B1-4.

5 βεβηκόσιν ἐδραία ἦ, τὰ τε ζῶα τὰ ἐπ' αὐτῆς ἐξ  
 ἀνάγκης τὸ τοιοῦτον στερεὸν ἔχει, ἢ δὲ γῆ τὸ μὲν  
 εἶναι συνεχῆς καὶ παρ' αὐτῆς ἔχει, ἐπιλάμπεται δὲ  
 ὑπὸ πυρός· μετέχει δὲ ὕδατος πρὸς τὰ μὴ  
 αὐχμηρὸν—ἔχει δὲ—καὶ μερῶν πρὸς μέρη μὴ  
 κωλύεσθαι συναγωγῆν· ἀέρα δὲ κουφίζει γῆς  
 10 ὄγκους· μεμῆχθαι δὲ τῷ ἄνω πυρὶ οὐκ ἐν τῇ  
 συστάσει τῶν ἀστρῶν τὴν γῆν, ἀλλ' ἐν κόσμῳ  
 γενομένου ἐκάστου καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἀπολαῦσαι τι τῆς  
 γῆς, ὡσπερ καὶ τὴν γῆν τοῦ πυρός καὶ ἕκαστον  
 ἐκάστων, οὐχ ὡς τὸ ἀπολαῦσαι γενέσθαι ἐξ ἀμφοῖν,  
 ἑαυτοῦ τε καὶ οὐ μετέσχειν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν ἐν  
 15 κόσμῳ κοινωνίαν ὃν ὃ ἐστι λαβεῖν οὐκ αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ  
 τι αὐτοῦ, οἷον οὐκ ἀέρα, ἀλλ' ἀέρος τὴν ἀπαλότητα  
 καὶ τὴν γῆν πυρός τὴν λαμπρότητα· τὴν δὲ μίξιν  
 πάντα διδόναι καὶ τὸ συναμψότερον τότε ποιεῖν,  
 οὐ γῆν μόνον καὶ τὴν πυρός φύσιν, τὴν στερεότητα  
 20 ταύτην καὶ τὴν πυκνότητα. Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ καὶ  
 αὐτὸς τούτοις εἰπὼν· φῶς ἀνῆψεν ὁ θεὸς περὶ  
 τὴν δευτέραν ἀπὸ γῆς περιφορὰν, τὸν ἥλιον  
 λέγων, καὶ λαμπρότατον πῦρ λέγει ἄλλαχού  
 τὸν ἥλιον, τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ λευκότερον, ἀπάγων ἡμᾶς  
 τοῦ ἄλλο τι νομίζειν ἢ πυρός εἶναι, πυρός δὲ  
 25 οὐδετέρων τῶν εἰδῶν αὐτοῦ τῶν ἄλλων, ἀλλὰ τὸ  
 φῶς ὃ φησὶν ἕτερον φλογὸς εἶναι, θερμὸν δὲ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Timaeus* 55E1-3 and 59D6. This is not exactly what Plato says but what Plotinus thinks he means. Here, as

tion and firm support for those who stand upon it, and the living beings upon it may necessarily have a solidity of this kind;<sup>1</sup> the earth will possess continuity from itself and will be illuminated by fire; it has a share of water to prevent dryness (as, in fact, it has) and so as not to hinder the cohesion of its particles; and air gives lightness to the bulk of earth; but earth is mingled with the upper fire, not in the constitution of the stars but because, since they are both in the universal order, fire gains something from earth as earth does from fire and each element from each of the others; not in the sense that the element which gains something is composed of both, itself and that of which it has a share; but, through the community of the universe, while remaining itself it takes, not the actual other element but something which belongs to it, not air, for instance, but the yielding softness of air, and earth the brightness of fire: the mixture gives all qualities and consequently produces the compound thing, not supplying earth only and the nature of fire but this solidity and density of earth. Plato himself supports this view when he says "God kindled a light in the second circuit from the earth," meaning the sun;<sup>2</sup> and elsewhere he calls the sun "the brightest,"<sup>3</sup> and also says it is the clearest; so he prevents us from thinking that it is made of anything but fire, but by fire he does not mean either of the other kinds of fire but the

always in his Platonic exegesis, Plotinus shows himself determined to extract some meaning from Plato which will fit in with his own ideas of what is reasonable and true.

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus* 39B4-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Theaetetus* 208D2: *Republic* 616E9.

προσηνῶς μόνον· τοῦτο δὲ τὸ φῶς σῶμα εἶναι,  
 ἀποστίλβειν δὲ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὸ ὁμώνυμον αὐτῷ  
 φῶς, ὃ δὴ φαμεν καὶ ἀσώματον εἶναι· τοῦτο δὲ  
 ἀπ' ἐκείνου τοῦ φωτὸς παρέχεσθαι, ἐκλάμπον ἐξ  
 30 ἐκείνου ὡς περ ἄνθος ἐκείνου καὶ στιλπνότητα, ὃ  
 δὴ καὶ εἶναι τὸ ὄντως λευκὸν σῶμα. Ἡμεῖς δὲ  
 τὸ γεηρὸν πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον λαμβάνοντες, τοῦ  
 Πλάτωνος κατὰ τὴν στερεότητα λαβόντος τὴν γῆν,  
 ἐν τι γοῦν δὴ ὀνομάζομεν ἡμεῖς διαφορὰς γῆς  
 ἐκείνου τιθεμένων. Τοῦ δὲ τοιούτου πυρὸς τοῦ  
 35 φῶς παρέχοντος τὸ καθαρῶτατον ἐν τῷ ἄνω τόπῳ  
 κειμένου καὶ κατὰ φύσιν ἐκεῖ ἰδρυμένου, ταύτην  
 τὴν φλόγα οὐκ ἐπιμίγνυσθαι τοῖς ἐκεῖ ὑποληπτέον,  
 ἀλλὰ φθάνουσαν μέχρι τινὸς ἀποσβέννυσθαι ἐντυχοῦ-  
 σαν πλείονι ἀέρι ἀνελθοῦσάν τε μετὰ γῆς ρίπτεσθαι  
 κάτω οὐ δυναμένην ὑπερβαίνειν πρὸς τὸ ἄνω,  
 40 κάτω δὲ τῆς σελήνης ἴστασθαι, ὥστε καὶ λεπτότε-  
 ρον ποιεῖν τὸν ἐκεῖ ἀέρα καὶ φλόγα, εἰ μὲνοι,  
 μαραινομένην εἰς τὸ πραότερον γίνεσθαι καὶ τὸ  
 λαμπρὸν μὴ ἔχειν ὅσον εἰς τὴν ζέσιν, ἀλλ' ἢ ὅσον  
 παρὰ τοῦ φωτὸς τοῦ ἄνω ἐναυγάζεσθαι· τὸ δὲ  
 φῶς ἐκεῖ, τὸ μὲν ποικιλθὲν ἐν λόγοις, τοῖς ἄστροις,  
 45 ὡς περ ἐν τοῖς μεγέθεσιν, οὕτω καὶ ἐν ταῖς χροαῖς  
 τὴν διαφορὰν ἐργάσασθαι, τὸν δ' ἄλλον οὐρανὸν  
 εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸν τοιούτου φωτὸς, μὴ ὄρασθαι δὲ  
 λεπτότητι τοῦ σώματος καὶ διαφανείᾳ οὐκ ἀν-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Timaeus* 58C5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Light for Plotinus is the incorporeal ἐνέργεια of the

light which he says is other than flame, and only  
 gently warm.<sup>1</sup> This light is a body, but another light  
 shines from it which has the same name, which we  
 teach is incorporeal.<sup>2</sup> This is given from that first  
 light, shining out from it as its flower and splendour;  
 that first light is the truly bright and clear body.  
 We take "earthly" in the lower sense, but Plato  
 understands "earth" in the sense of "solidity";<sup>3</sup>  
 we apply the name "earth" in one and the same  
 sense, but Plato distinguishes different kinds of  
 "earth".<sup>4</sup> Now since fire of this kind, which gives  
 the purest light, rests in the upper region and is  
 established there by nature, we must not suppose that  
 the flame down here mingles with the fires of heaven;  
 it reaches a certain way and then is extinguished  
 when it encounters a greater quantity of air, and as it  
 takes earth with it on its ascent it falls back and is  
 not able to get up to the upper fire but comes to a  
 standstill below the moon, so as to make the air finer  
 there; the flame, if it lasts, fades into softness and has  
 not enough brightness to blaze out but only enough  
 to be illuminated by the upper light; the light in  
 the heavens, being varied in different proportions,  
 brings about the distinction of the stars both in size  
 and colour; the rest of the heaven is also made of  
 light of this kind, but is not seen because of the

luminous body, closely parallel to life, the ἐνέργεια of the  
 soul. Cp. iv. 5. 6-7. I have discussed this doctrine and the  
 important place which it holds in the thought of Plotinus in  
 my *Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in Plotinus*, pp.  
 54-58.

<sup>3</sup> *Timaeus* 31B6.

<sup>4</sup> Plotinus may be thinking of *Timaeus* 60B6, but the pas-  
 sage is really quite irrelevant to his argument here.

τιτύπω, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸν καθαρὸν ἀέρα· πρόσεστι δὲ τούτοις καὶ τὸ πόρρω.

8. Τούτου δὴ μείναντος ἄνω τοῦ τοιούτου φωτὸς ἐν ᾧ τέτακται καθαρῶ ἐν καθαρωτάτῳ, τίς ἂν τρόπος ἀπορροῆς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἂν γένοιτο; Οὐ γὰρ δὴ πρὸς τὸ κάτω πέφυκεν ἀπορρεῖν ἢ τοιαύτη φύσις, οὐδ' αὖ τί ἐστὶν ἐκεῖ τῶν βιαζομένων ὡθειν πρὸς τὸ κάτω. Πᾶν δὲ σῶμα μετὰ ψυχῆς ἄλλο καὶ οὐ ταῦτόν, οἶον μόνον ἦν· τοιοῦτον δὲ τὸ ἐκεῖ, οὐχ οἶον τὸ μόνον. Τό τε γειτονοῦν εἴτε ἀήρ εἴτε πῦρ εἴη, ἀήρ μὲν τί ἂν ποιήσῃ; Πυρὸς δὲ οὐδ' ἂν ἐν ἀρμόσειε πρὸς τὸ ποιῆσαι, οὐδ' ἂν ἐφάψαιτο εἰς τὸ δράσαι· τῇ ῥύμη τε γὰρ παραλλάξειεν ἂν πρὶν παθεῖν ἐκείνο, ἔλαττόν τε τοῦτο ἰσχυρόν τε οὐκ ἴσα τοῖς ἐνθάδε. Εἴτα καὶ τὸ ποιῆσαι θερμηναί ἐστι· δεῖ τε τὸ θερμανθησόμενον μὴ θερμὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ εἶναι. Εἰ δέ τι φθαρήσεται παρὰ πυρός, θερμανθῆναι δεῖ πρότερον αὐτὸ καὶ 15 παρὰ φύσιν αὐτὸ ἐν τῷ θερμαίνεσθαι γίνεσθαι. Οὐδὲν δεῖ τοίνυν ἄλλου σώματος τῷ οὐρανῷ, ἵνα μένη, οὐδ' αὖ, ἵνα κατὰ φύσιν ἢ περιφορᾷ· οὐ γάρ πω δέδεικται οὐδὲ ἐπ' εὐθείας οὔσα ἢ κατὰ φύσιν αὐτῷ φορᾷ· ἢ γὰρ μένειν ἢ περιφέρεσθαι κατὰ φύσιν αὐτοῖς· αἱ δ' ἄλλαι βιασθέντων. Οὐ 20 τοίνυν οὐδὲ τροφῆς δεῖσθαι φατέον τὰ ἐκεῖ, οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τῶν τῆδε περὶ ἐκείνων ὑποφαντέον οὔτε ψυχῆν

fineness and non-reflecting transparency of its body (just like pure air); and besides this it is far away.

8. Now when light of this kind stays on high in the place in which it is set, pure in the purest region, what kind of outflow could there possibly be from it? A nature of this kind is certainly not naturally adapted to flow downwards; and there is nothing of a violent sort up there to push it down. Every body is different when it is combined with soul, and not the same as it is when it is left to itself; and body in the heavens is with soul, and not as it would be by itself. And that which borders on it would be either air or fire, and what could air do? And there is no single kind of fire which would be fitted for acting on the heavenly fire, nor could it make contact to do anything; the heavenly fire would be carried on by its momentum to another place before anything could happen to it; and the fire in the upper air is less in strength, not equal to the fires here on earth. Then, too, it would act by heating; and that which is going to be heated must not be hot of itself. And if anything is going to be destroyed by fire, it must be heated first, and be brought in the heating into an unnatural state. So, then, the heaven needs no other body for it to last or for its revolution to take its natural course; for it has never been demonstrated that its natural movement is in a straight line: it is natural to the heavenly bodies either to stay still or to go round in a circle; other movements belong to beings which are subject to force. We must assert, then, too, that the heavenly beings have no need of nourishment, nor must we base our statements about them on the things here on earth, since they have not the



PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 1.

τὴν αὐτὴν τὴν συνέχουσιν ἔχόντων οὔτε τὸν αὐτὸν  
 τόπον οὔτε αἰτίας οὔσης ἐκεῖ, δι' ἣν τὰ τῆδε  
 τρέφεται συγκρίματα ἀεὶ ῥέοντα, τὴν τε μεταβολὴν  
 τῶν τῆδε σωμάτων ἀφ' αὐτῶν μεταβάλλειν ἄλλης  
 25 ἐπιστατούσης φύσεως αὐτοῖς, ἣ ὑπ' ἀσθενείας οὐκ  
 οἶδε κατέχειν ἐν τῷ εἶναι, μιμνῆται δὲ ἐν τῷ  
 γίνεσθαι ἢ γεννᾶν τὴν πρὸ αὐτῆς φύσιν. Τὸ δὲ μὴ  
 ὡσαύτως πάντι, ὥσπερ τὰ νοητά, εἴρηται.

ON HEAVEN (ON THE UNIVERSE)

same soul holding them together and do not inhabit  
 the same region; and the reason why the compound  
 things on earth are nourished does not apply in heaven;  
 the bodies here are always in a state of flux, and their  
 change is a change away from their true selves, for  
 they are under the direction of another nature, which  
 because of its weakness has no way of keeping them  
 in being, but imitates the nature before it in becoming  
 and generating.—But we have already explained that  
 the heavenly bodies are not in every way unchanging  
 like the beings of the realm of Intellect.

## II. 2. ON THE MOVEMENT OF HEAVEN

### *Introductory Note*

THIS short treatise (No. 14 in Porphyry's chronological order), has an alternative title, *On the Circular Motion*, in the *Life* (ch. 4. 49 and 24. 42), which is used in some modern editions and translations. It is a defence of the Platonic doctrine (the movement of heaven is the bodily expression of the spiritual movement of the soul of the universe) against the Aristotelian conception of movement by an unmoved mover and the materialist explanation given by the Stoics. Heinemann denied the authenticity of the treatise: but its opening words are quoted as being by Plotinus by Proclus, Damascius, Simplicius and Philoponus (references in the Henry-Schwyzler edition and Cilento's commentary): and Heinemann's arguments drawn from the contents of the treatise are adequately refuted by Bréhier in his introduction to it (Vol. II, pp. 17-19).

### *Synopsis*

What makes the heaven move in a circle? Its movement cannot be the result of any local or spatial movement of soul, for soul is not moved spatially. The movement of heaven is only local accidentally; it is a movement of awareness and life, the movement of an ensouled living thing. It cannot be the natural movement of fire; fire, like all other bodies, moves naturally in a straight line; circular motion is the result of providence, the action of universal soul—it is not of course unnatural, for "nature" is just what universal soul ordains. Argument

## ON THE MOVEMENT OF HEAVEN

against the idea of an unmoved mover (ch. 1). Why do we not move in circles? Our souls, our real selves, which are "private wholes," do so move, circling lovingly round God; but our bodies are only parts, and parts whose nature is to move in straight lines (ch. 2). Explanation of *Timaeus* 36E in terms of Plotinus's own psychology (ch. 3).

II. 2. (14) ΠΕΡΙ ΚΙΝΗΣΕΩΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΥ

1. Διὰ τί κύκλῳ κινεῖται; Ὅτι νοῦν μιμεῖται.  
 Καὶ τίνος ἢ κίνησις, ψυχῆς ἢ σώματος; Τί οὖν  
 ὅτι ψυχὴ ἐν αὐτῇ ἐστὶ καὶ πρὸς αὐτήν; Ἡ  
 σπεύδει ἰέναι; ἢ ἔστιν ἐν αὐτῇ οὐ συνεχεῖ οὐσα;  
 5 ἢ φερομένη συμφέρει; Ἄλλ' ἔδει συμφέρουσαν  
 μηκέτι φέρειν, ἀλλ' ἐννοχέειν, τουτέστι στήναι  
 μᾶλλον ποιῆσαι καὶ μὴ αἰεὶ κύκλῳ. Ἡ καὶ αὐτὴ  
 στήσεται ἢ, εἰ κινεῖται, οὔτι γε τοπικῶς. Πῶς  
 οὖν τοπικῶς κινεῖ αὐτὴ ἄλλον τρόπον κινουμένη;  
 Ἡ ἴσως οὐδὲ τοπικὴ ἢ κύκλῳ, ἀλλ' εἰ ἄρα, κατὰ  
 10 συμβεβηκός. Ποία οὖν τις; Εἰς αὐτὴν συναισθη-  
 τικὴ καὶ συννοητικὴ καὶ ζωτικὴ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ ἔξω  
 οὐδ' ἄλλοθι· καὶ τὸ πάντα δεῖν περιλαμβάνειν;  
 τοῦ γὰρ ζώου τὸ κύριον περιληπτικὸν καὶ ποιῶν  
 ἐν. Οὐ περιλήφεται δὲ ζωτικῶς, εἰ μένει, οὐδὲ  
 15 κίνησις. Εἰ οὖν καὶ τοπικὴ, ὡς δυνήσεται κινήσεται

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Timaeus* 34A4. Throughout this chapter Plotinus seems to have in mind Aristotle's criticism of the *Timaeus* in *De Anima* A. 3. 407a6-407b12, and to be answering Aristotle's arguments there.

II. 2. ON THE MOVEMENT OF  
 HEAVEN

1. Why does it move in a circle?<sup>1</sup> Because it imitates intellect. And what does the movement belong to, soul or body? Is it that soul is in the movement and directed towards it? Or [does it move] because soul is eager to go? Or does soul exist in a state of discontinuity? Or is soul carried along itself and carries heaven with it? But if that was so, it would be no longer carrying it round; it would have finished its conveyance; that is, it would rather make it stand still, and not always go round in a circle. Surely soul will stand still, or if it is moved is certainly not moved spatially. How, then, does it move heaven spatially when it is moved in another way itself? Perhaps the circular movement is not spatial, or if it is, only accidentally. What sort of movement, then, is it? A movement of self-concentrated awareness and intellection and of life, and at no point outside or elsewhere. And [what about] the necessity of encompassing everything? It does so in the sense that the dominant part of the living being is that which encompasses it and makes it one. If it stayed still, it would not encompass it in a living way, nor would it, since it has a body, preserve what is within it; for the life of the body is movement. If, then, there is local movement

καὶ οὐχ ὡς ψυχὴ μόνον, ἀλλ' ὡς σῶμα ἔμφυχον καὶ ὡς ζῶον· ὥστε εἶναι μικτὴν ἐκ σωματικῆς καὶ ψυχικῆς, τοῦ μὲν σώματος εὐθὺν φερομένου φύσει, τῆς δὲ ψυχῆς κατεχούσης, ἐκ δ' ἀμφοῖν γενομένου φερομένου τε καὶ μένοντος. Εἰ δὲ σώματος ἢ  
 20 κύκλω λέγοιτο, πῶς παντὸς εὐθυποροῦντος καὶ τοῦ πυρός; Ἡ εὐθυπορεῖ, ἕως ἂν ἤκη εἰς τὸ οὐ τέτακται· ὡς γὰρ ἂν ταχθῆ, οὕτω δοκεῖ καὶ ἐστάναι κατὰ φύσιν καὶ φέρεσθαι εἰς ὃ ἐτάχθη. Διὰ τί οὖν οὐ μένει ἐλθόν; Ἄρα, ὅτι ἡ φύσις τῷ πυρὶ ἐν κινήσει; Εἰ οὖν μὴ κύκλω, σκεδασθήσεται  
 25 ἐπ' εὐθύ· δεῖ ἄρα κύκλω. Ἀλλὰ τοῦτο προνοίας· ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτῷ παρὰ τῆς προνοίας· ὥστε, εἰ ἐκεῖ γένοιτο, κύκλω κινεῖσθαι ἐξ αὐτοῦ. Ἡ ἐφιέμενον τοῦ εὐθέος οὐκ ἔχον οὐκέτι τόπον ὥσπερ περιολισθάνον ἀνακάμπει ἐν οἷς τόποις δύναται· οὐ γὰρ ἔχει τόπον μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ· οὗτος γὰρ ἔσχατος. Θεῖ  
 30 οὖν ἐν ᾧ ἔχει καὶ αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ τόπος, οὐχ ἵνα μένη γεγενημένος, ἀλλ' ἵνα φέροιτο. Καὶ κύκλου δὲ τὸ μὲν κέντρον μένει κατὰ φύσιν, ἢ δὲ ἕξωθεν περιφέρεια εἰ μένοι, κέντρον ἔσται μέγα. Μᾶλλον οὖν ἔσται περὶ τὸ κέντρον καὶ ζῶντι καὶ κατὰ  
 35 φύσιν δὲ ἔχοντι σώματι. Οὕτω γὰρ συννεύσει πρὸς τὸ κέντρον, οὐ τῇ συνιζήσει—ἀπολεῖ γὰρ τὸν κύκλον—ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τοῦτο οὐ δύναται, τῇ περι-

<sup>1</sup> This is Aristotelian doctrine. Cp. *De Caelo* A. 9. 279a17-18.

too, then it will move as it can, and not as soul alone but as an ensouled body and a living thing; so its movement will be a mixture of body-movement and soul-movement; body is naturally transported in a straight line and soul's natural tendency is to contain, and from both of them together there comes to be something which is both carried along and at rest. If circular motion is to be attributed to body, how can it be when all body, including fire, moves in a straight line? It moves in a straight line till it comes to its ordained place; for as it is ordained, so it appears both to rest naturally and to be conveyed to the place where it was ordained to be. Why, then, does it not stay still when it has come to heaven? It is, is it not, because the nature of fire is to be in motion. So if it does not move in a circle, going on in a straight line will dissipate it; so it must move in a circle. But this is the doing of providence; rather, it is something in it which comes from providence, so that if it comes to heaven it moves in a circle of its own accord. It seeks to go on in a straight line, but has no longer any place to go to, so it glides round, we may say, and curves back in the regions where it can; for it has no place beyond itself; this is the last.<sup>1</sup> So it runs in the space it occupies and is its own place; it came to be there not in order to stay still but to move. The centre of a circle naturally stays still, but if the outside circumference stayed still, it would be a big centre. So it can rather be expected, in the case of a living body in its natural state, to go round the centre. In this way, then, it will direct itself towards the centre, not by coinciding with it—that would abolish the circle—but, since it cannot

διηγήσει· οὕτω γὰρ μόνως ἀποπληρώσει τὴν ἔφεσιν.  
 Εἰ ψυχὴ δὲ περιάγοι, οὐ καμῖται· οὐ γὰρ ἔλκει,  
 οὐδὲ παρὰ φύσιν· ἢ γὰρ φύσις τὸ ὑπὸ ψυχῆς τῆς  
 40 πάσης ταχθέν. Ἐπι πανταχοῦ οὔσα ἢ ψυχὴ ὅλη  
 καὶ οὐ διειλημμένη ἢ τοῦ παντός κατὰ μέρος δίδωσι  
 καὶ τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὡς δύναται, πανταχοῦ εἶναι.  
 δύναται δὲ τῷ πάντα μετείναι καὶ ἐπιπορεύεσθαι.  
 Ἔστω μὲν γάρ, εἴ που ἐστῶσα ἦν ἢ ψυχὴ, ἔλθον  
 ἐκεῖ· νῦν δέ, ἐπειδὴ πᾶσά ἐστιν, αὐτῆς πάντη<sup>1</sup>  
 45 ἐφέεται. Τί οὖν; Οὐδέποτε τεύξεται; Ἡ οὕτως  
 αἰεὶ τυγχάνει, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτὴν ἄγουσα  
 αἰεὶ ἐν τῷ αἰεὶ ἄγειν αἰεὶ κινεῖ, καὶ οὐκ ἀλλαχοῦ  
 κινούσα ἀλλὰ πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ, οὐκ ἐπ'  
 εὐθὺ ἀλλὰ κύκλῳ ἄγουσα δίδωσιν αὐτῷ οὐ ἐὰν  
 ἦκη ἐκεῖ ἔχειν αὐτὴν. Εἰ δὲ μένοι, ὡς ἐκεῖ οὔσης  
 50 μόνον, οὐ ἕκαστον μένει, στήσεται. Εἰ οὖν μὴ  
 ἐκεῖ μόνον ὄπου οὖν, πανταχοῦ οἰσθήσεται καὶ οὐκ  
 ἔξω· κύκλῳ ἄρα.

2. Τὰ οὖν ἄλλα πῶς; Ἡ οὐκ ὅλον ἕκαστον,  
 μέρος δὲ καὶ κατεχόμενον μερικῶ τόπῳ. Ἐκεῖνο  
 δὲ ὅλον καὶ οἶον τόπος καὶ οὐδὲν κωλύει· αὐτὸ  
 γὰρ τὸ πᾶν. Πῶς οὖν ἄνθρωποι; Ἡ, ὅσον παρὰ

<sup>1</sup> ἐστιν, αὐτῆς πάντη nunc proponunt Henry et Schwyzer:  
 ἐστιν αὐτῆς, παντός codd: H-S: ἐστιν πάντη, παντός Sleeman.

<sup>1</sup> This answers Aristotle, *De Anima* A3.407b2. Cp. *De Caelo* B1. 284a27-35.

<sup>2</sup> I print and translate the reading which Schwyzer now proposes, with Henry's agreement. The MSS πᾶσά ἐστιν

do that, by whirling round it; for in this way alone  
 can it satisfy its impulse. But if soul does carry it  
 round, it will not get tired; for it does not drag it,  
 nor is the movement against nature.<sup>1</sup> "Nature"  
 is just what has been ordained by universal soul.  
 Then again, since the whole soul is everywhere and,  
 being the soul of the All, is not divided part to part,  
 it gives omnipresence to the heaven too, as far as it  
 is capable of it; and it is capable of it by pursuing and  
 reaching all things. If soul stood still anywhere, the  
 heavenly fire would stand when it came to that  
 point; but as it is, since soul is universal,<sup>2</sup> the  
 heavenly fire seeks it in every direction. Will it  
 never, then, attain it? In this way it always attains  
 it; or rather, soul itself, drawing heaven to itself,  
 moves it continually in drawing it continually, not  
 moving it to some other place but towards itself in  
 the same place; it does not draw it on in a straight  
 line but in a circle, and so gives it possession of soul  
 at every stage in its progress. If soul stayed still,  
 being only at that point where each individual thing  
 was at rest, then the heaven would stand still too.  
 If, then, soul is not just there at any particular point,  
 the heaven will move everywhere, and not outside  
 soul; in a circle, therefore.

2. Then what about other things? Each of them  
 is not a whole but a part, and contained in a partial  
 place. But that other [that is heaven] is a whole; it  
 is space, in a way, and there is nothing to hinder it,  
 because it is the All. What about men, then? In

αὐτῆς, παντός, retained in the Oxford text, would give the  
 sense, "soul all belongs to itself," which is a good Plotinian  
 expression but not relevant to the context.

5 τοῦ παντός, μέρος, ὅσον δ' αὐτοί, οἰκεῖον ὄλον.  
 Εἰ οὖν πανταχοῦ οὐδ' ἂν ἦ ἔχει αὐτήν, τί δεῖ  
 περιεῖναι; Ἡ ὅτι μὴ μόνον ἐκεῖ. Εἰ δὲ ἡ δύναμις  
 αὐτῆς περὶ τὸ μέσον, καὶ ταύτη ἂν κύκλω· μέσον  
 δὲ οὐχ ὡσαύτως σώματος καὶ φύσεως ψυχῆς  
 ληπτέον, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ μὲν μέσον, ἀφ' οὗ ἡ ἄλλη,  
 10 τοπικῶς δὲ σώματος. Ἐνάλογον οὖν δεῖ τὸ μέσον·  
 ὡς γὰρ ἐκεῖ, οὕτω καὶ ἐνταῦθα μέσον δεῖ εἶναι, ὃ  
 μόνως ἐστὶ μέσον σώματος καὶ σφαιρικοῦ· ὡς  
 γὰρ ἐκεῖνο περὶ αὐτό, οὕτω καὶ τοῦτο. Εἰ δὲ  
 ψυχῆς ἐστὶ, περιθέουσα τὸν θεὸν ἀμφαγαπάσεται  
 καὶ περὶ αὐτὸν ὡς οἶόν τε αὐτῇ ἔχει· ἐξήρτηται  
 15 γὰρ αὐτοῦ πάντα. Ἐπεὶ οὖν οὐκ ἐστὶ πρὸς αὐτόν,  
 περὶ αὐτόν. Πῶς οὖν οὐ πάσαι οὕτως; Ἡ  
 ἐκάστη ὅπου ἐστὶν οὕτως. Διὰ τί οὖν οὐ καὶ τὰ  
 σώματα ἡμῶν οὕτως; Ὅτι τὸ εὐθύπορον προσήρ-  
 τηται καὶ πρὸς ἄλλα αἰ ὄρμαι καὶ τὸ σφαιροειδὲς  
 ἡμῶν οὐκ εὐτροχόν· γεηρὸν γάρ· ἐκεῖ δὲ συνέπεται  
 20 λεπτόν καὶ εὐκίνητον· διὰ τί γὰρ ἂν καὶ σταίη  
 ἡμῶν κίνησιν τῆς ψυχῆς κινουμένης; Ἴσως  
 δὲ καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν  
 τοῦτο ποιεῖ. Εἰ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς ἐν πάσι, τὴν  
 συνεῖναι βουλομένην ψυχὴν περὶ αὐτὸν δεῖ γίνεσθαι·

<sup>1</sup> "Our spherical part" is the head, which according to the *Timaeus* (44D) is mounted on the body as its vehicle so that it shall not have to roll about.

<sup>2</sup> This is a reference to the description of respiration as a circular process, like a turning wheel, in *Timaeus* 79A5-E9.

so far as he derives from the All, man is a part, in so far as men are themselves, each is a private universe. If, then, heaven, wherever it is, possesses soul everywhere, why does it have to go round? Because it does not possess it only in that particular place. And if the soul's power is movement round its centre, in this way, too, it would make heaven move in a circle: though "centre" is not to be understood in the same way when one is speaking of the nature of soul as it is when one is speaking of a body: with soul the centre is the source from which the other nature derives, with body "centre" has a spatial meaning. So one must use "centre" analogically; there must be a centre for soul as there is for body (though "centre" in the literal sense means the middle point of a body, a spherical one), because just as a body is round its centre, so is soul. If it is the centre of soul that is in question, soul runs round God and embraces him lovingly and keeps round him as far as it can; for all things depend on him: since it cannot go to him, it goes round him. Then why do not all souls do this? Each individual soul does, in its own place. Why, then, do our bodies not go round too? Because there is an additional constituent in them which moves in straight lines, and the impulses of body are directed elsewhere, and our spherical part does not run easily, being earthy.<sup>1</sup> But there the body of heaven follows along with soul, being light and easy to move; why ever should it stop when it goes on moving, whatever its motion? And in us, too, it seems that the breath which is around the soul moves in a circle.<sup>2</sup> If God is in all things, the soul which desires to be with him must

οὐ γάρ πη. Καὶ Πλάτων δὲ τοῖς ἀστροῖς οὐ  
 25 μόνον τὴν μετὰ τοῦ ὄλου σφαιρικὴν κίνησιν, ἀλλὰ  
 καὶ ἐκάστῳ δίδωσι τὴν περὶ τὸ κέντρον αὐτῶν·  
 ἕκαστον γάρ, οὐ ἔστι, περιειληφὸς τὸν θεὸν  
 ἀγάλλεται οὐ λογισμῶ ἀλλὰ φυσικαῖς ἀνάγκαις.

3. Ἔστω δὲ καὶ ὧδε· τῆς ψυχῆς ἢ μὲν τις  
 δύναμις ἢ ἐσχάτη ἀπὸ γῆς ἀρξαμένη καὶ δι' ὄλου  
 διαπλεκείσά ἐστιν, ἢ δὲ αἰσθάνεσθαι πεφυκυῖα  
 καὶ ἢ λόγον δοξατικὸν δεχομένη πρὸς τὸ ἄνω ἐν  
 5 ταῖς σφαίραις ἑαυτὴν ἔχει ἐποχουμένη καὶ τῇ  
 προτέρᾳ καὶ δύναντιν διδοῦσα παρ' αὐτῆς εἰς τὸ  
 ποιεῖν ζωτικωτέραν. Κινεῖται οὖν ὑπ' αὐτῆς  
 κύκλῳ περιεχούσης καὶ ἐφιδρυμένης παντὶ ὅσον  
 αὐτῆς εἰς τὰς σφαίρας ἀνέδραμε. Κύκλῳ οὖν  
 ἐκείνης περιεχούσης συννεύουσα ἐπιστρέφεται πρὸς  
 10 αὐτήν, ἢ δὲ ἐπιστροφή αὐτῆς περιάγει τὸ σῶμα,  
 ἐν ᾧ ἐμπέλεκται. Ἐκάστου γάρ μορίου κἄν  
 ὀπωσοῦν κινήθέντος ἐν σφαίρᾳ, εἰ μόνον<sup>1</sup> κινεῖτο,  
 ἔσεισεν ἐν ᾧ ἔστι καὶ τῇ σφαίρᾳ κίνησις γίνεται.  
 Καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων τῶν ἡμετέρων τῆς  
 ψυχῆς ἄλλως κινουμένης, οἷον ἐν χαραῖς καὶ τῷ  
 15 φανέντι ἀγαθῷ, τοῦ σώματος ἢ κίνησις καὶ τοπικὴ  
 γίνεται. Ἐκεῖ δὲ ἐν ἀγαθῷ γνωμένη ψυχὴ καὶ  
 αἰσθητικωτέρα γενομένη κινεῖται πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν  
 καὶ σεῖει ὡς πέφυκεν ἐκεῖ τοπικῶς τὸ σῶμα. Ἡ  
 τε αἰσθητικὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄνω αὐ καὶ αὐτὴ τὸ ἀγαθὸν

<sup>1</sup> μόνον H-S<sup>2</sup>: μένον codd.

move around him; for he is not in any place. And Plato gives the stars not only their spherical motion with the whole universe but also individual motions, each around its own centre:<sup>1</sup> for each in its place encompasses God and rejoices, not by rational planning but by natural necessity.

3. This, too, is another way of putting it; there is the ultimate power of soul which begins at the earth and is interwoven through the whole universe,<sup>2</sup> and there is the power of soul which is naturally perceptive and receives the opinionative kind of reasoning; this keeps itself above in the heavenly spheres and is in contact with the other from above and gives it power from itself to make it more alive. The lower soul, therefore, is moved by the higher which encompasses it in a circle and bears upon all of it that has risen to the spheres. So the lower soul, as the higher encircles it, inclines and tends towards it, and its tendency carries round the body with which it is interwoven. For if any particular part of a sphere is moved even in the slightest degree, then, if it only is moved, it stirs that in which it is and the sphere is set in motion. In our bodies too, when our soul is moved in a different way from the body—by joy, for instance, and by something which appears good to it—then there is a spatial movement of the body as well. And in heaven, where the soul is in good and more vividly perceptive, it moves to the good and sets its body moving in space in the manner natural to it there. The perceptive power in its turn receives the good from that which

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Timaeus* 40A8-B2.

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus* 36E2.

PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 2.

λαβοῦσα καὶ τὰ αὐτῆς ἠσθεῖσα διώκουσα αὐτὸ ὃν  
20 πανταχοῦ πρὸς τὸ πανταχοῦ συμφέρεται. Ὁ δὲ  
νοῦς οὕτω κινεῖται· ἔστηκε γὰρ καὶ κινεῖται· περὶ  
αὐτὸν γάρ. Οὕτως οὖν καὶ τὸ πᾶν τῷ κύκλῳ  
κινεῖται ἅμα καὶ ἔστηκεν.

ON THE MOVEMENT OF HEAVEN

is above and in delight pursues its own and is  
carried everywhere to the good which is everywhere.  
This is how intellect is moved; it is both at rest and  
in motion; for it moves around Him [the Good]. So,  
then, the universe, too, both moves in its circle and is  
at rest.



### II. 3. ON WHETHER THE STARS ARE CAUSES

#### *Introductory Note*

THIS very late treatise (No. 52 in Porphyry's chronological order) takes up again and develops the objections to the ideas of the astrologers about the stars which Plotinus had already put forward in the early work *On Destiny* (III. 1: No. 3 in the chronological order). Plotinus does not deny that the stars foretell, or even that influences coming from them may make a limited contribution to our fortunes and physical make-up. He finds the astrologers objectionable because: (1) they make stars evil and causes of evil to us; (2) they make them changeable, varying in mood and activity according to their aspect and position, a view which Plotinus shows is unscientific, incompatible with the findings of the astronomers, as well as unorthodox from the point of view of Platonic astral theology; (3) they reduce the universe to a disorderly chaos by making the stars act independently and capriciously, instead of seeing it as a living organic whole in which star-movements and influences as well as everything else form part of the pattern of its rational direction by Universal Soul; (4) they very much exaggerate the degree to which the stars are responsible for our physical constitution and fortunes; star-influences are only one kind of cause among many, and not the most important. Further, Plotinus maintains in this as in other treatises (notably that which he wrote next, I. 1) that our true, higher self transcends the physical universe and is beyond the reach of its necessity.

A curious little problem is presented by the section

### ON WHETHER THE STARS ARE CAUSES

printed in square brackets in ch. 12 (if it really belongs to this treatise it would fit in better where the translation of Ficino and the *editio princeps* of Perna place it, immediately before the last sentence of ch. 5). This seems to be more favourable to the views of the astrologers than the rest of the treatise, and even to be trying to answer the scientific objections brought against them in ch. 5, though it expresses the view of the universe as an organic whole which is found elsewhere in the treatise and is always taken by Plotinus. It looks almost as if it was a fragment of an essay written by a member of the school in defence of astrology, rather like the papers written by Porphyry in defence of the doctrine of Longinus and answered by Amelius which are mentioned in ch. 18 of the *Life*. But, if this were really what it was, it would be very difficult to explain how it got into the text of this treatise—there is no parallel anywhere else in the *Enneads*.

#### *Synopsis*

Detailed refutation of astrological doctrines by scientific and common-sense arguments (chs. 1-6). Explanation of why the stars give signs of things to come from the organic unity of the universe (chs. 7-8). Our higher and lower self (ch. 9). The real nature and limitations of astral influences and the modest part they play in determining our constitution and fortunes (chs. 10-15). How soul directs the All, and reasons for the existence of evils in this world (chs. 16-18).

II. 3. (52) ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΕΙ ΠΟΙΕΙ ΤΑ  
ΑΣΤΡΑ

1. "Οτι ἡ τῶν ἀστρων φορὰ σημαίνει περὶ  
ἕκαστον τὰ ἐσόμενα, ἀλλ' οὐκ αὐτὴ πάντα ποιεῖ,  
ὡς τοῖς πολλοῖς δοξάζεται, εἴρηται μὲν πρότερον  
ἐν ἄλλοις, καὶ πίστευς τινὰς παρείχετο ὁ λόγος,  
5 λεκτέον δὲ καὶ νῦν ἀκριβέστερον διὰ πλειόνων.  
οὐ γὰρ μικρὸν τὸ ἢ ὧδε ἢ ὠδε ἔχειν δοξάζειν.  
Τοὺς δὴ πλανήτας φερούμενους ποιεῖν λέγουσιν οὐ  
μόνον τὰ ἄλλα, πενίας καὶ πλούτους καὶ ὑγείας  
καὶ νόσους, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἰσχρὰ καὶ κάλλη αὐτῶν, καὶ δὴ  
τὸ μέγιστον, καὶ κακίας καὶ ἀρετὰς καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰς  
10 ἀπὸ τούτων πράξεις καθ' ἕκαστα ἐπὶ καιρῶν  
ἐκάστων, ὥσπερ θυμουμένους εἰς ἀνθρώπους, ἐφ'  
οἷς μηδὲν αὐτοὶ οἱ ἀνθρώποι ἀδικοῦσιν οὕτω παρ'  
αὐτῶν κατασκευασμένοι, ὡς ἔχουσι· καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα  
ἀγαθὰ δίδοναι οὐκ ἀγασθέντας τῶν λαμβανόντων,  
ἀλλ' αὐτοὺς ἢ κακουμένους κατὰ τόπους  
15 τῆς φορᾶς ἢ αὐτῶν εὐπαθοῦντας καὶ αὐτῶν ἄλλους αὐτοῦς  
ταῖς διανοίαις γιγνομένους ὅταν τε ἐπὶ κέντρων  
ᾧσι καὶ ἀποκλίνοντας ἄλλους· τὸ δὲ μέγιστον,

<sup>1</sup> III.1. 5. 33 ff.

<sup>2</sup> For a full explanation of the astrological doctrines criticised in these first six chapters see A. Bouché-Leclercq, *L'Astrologie Grecque*: there is an excellent short account

II. 3. ON WHETHER THE STARS  
ARE CAUSES

1. That the course of the stars indicates what is going to happen in particular cases, but does not itself cause everything, as most people think, has been said before elsewhere<sup>1</sup> (and the argument offered some proofs); but now we need a more precise and detailed discussion, for to take one view rather than the other is of no small importance. They say that the planets in their courses do not only cause everything else, poverty and riches, sickness and health, but also ugliness and beauty and, what is most important of all, virtue and vice, and even the actions which result from them in each particular case on each particular occasion; just as if they were angry with men over things in which men have done them no wrong, since it was the planets which made the men what they are; and that they give benefits (so-called), not because they feel kindly towards those who receive them but because they themselves are either pleasantly or unpleasantly affected according to the point they have reached on their course, and again are in a different state of mind when they are at their zeniths and when they are declining;<sup>2</sup> and

of the basic absurdities of this pseudo-science in A. J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* I. ch. V, pp. 89-101.

τοὺς μὲν κακοὺς αὐτῶν λέγοντες, τοὺς δὲ ἀγαθοὺς εἶναι, ὅμως καὶ τοὺς κακοὺς αὐτῶν λεγόμενους ἀγαθὰ δίδοναι, τοὺς δ' ἀγαθοὺς φαύλους γίνεσθαι.  
 20 ἔτι δὲ ἀλλήλους ἰδόντας ποιεῖν ἕτερα, μὴ ἰδόντας δὲ ἄλλα, ὥσπερ οὐχ αὐτῶν ὄντας ἀλλὰ ἰδόντας μὲν ἄλλους, μὴ ἰδόντας δὲ ἑτέρους· καὶ τότε μὲν ἰδόντα ἀγαθὸν εἶναι, εἰ δ' ἄλλον ἴδοι, ἀλλοιοῦσθαι· καὶ ἄλλως μὲν ὄραν, εἰ κατὰ σχῆμα τότε ἢ ἡμῖς, ἄλλως δέ, εἰ κατὰ τόδε· ὁμοῦ τε πάντων τῆν  
 25 κρᾶσιν ἑτέραν γίνεσθαι, ὥσπερ ἐξ ὑγρῶν διαφόρων τὸ κρᾶμα ἕτερον παρὰ τὰ μεμιγμένα. Ταῦτα οὖν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα δοξαζόντων περὶ ἐκάστου λέγειν ἐπισκοπούμενους προσήκει. Ἀρχὴ δ' ἂν εἴη προσήκουσα αὕτη.

2. Πότερμ ἔμφυχα νομιστέον ἢ ἄψυχα ταῦτα τὰ φερόμενα; Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἄψυχα, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ θερμὰ καὶ ψυχρὰ παρεχόμενα, εἰ δὴ καὶ ψυχρὰ ἅττα τῶν ἀστρων φήσομεν, ἀλλ' οὖν ἐν τῇ τῶν σωμάτων  
 5 ἡμῶν φύσει στήσουσι τὴν δόσιν φουρᾶς δηλονότι σωματικῆς εἰς ἡμᾶς γινομένης, ὡς μηδὲ πολλὴν τὴν παραλλαγὴν τῶν σωμάτων γίνεσθαι τῆς τε ἀπορροῆς ἐκάστων τῆς αὐτῆς οὐσης καὶ δὴ ὁμοῦ εἰς ἐν ἐπὶ γῆς μιγνυμένων, ὡς μόνον κατὰ τοὺς τόπους τὰς διαφορὰς γίνεσθαι ἐκ τοῦ ἐγγύθεν καὶ  
 10 πόρρωθεν, πρὸς τὴν διαφορὰν δίδοντος καὶ τοῦ ψυχροῦ ὡσαύτως. Σοφοὺς δὲ καὶ ἀμαθεῖς καὶ γραμματικοὺς ἄλλους, τοὺς δὲ ῥήτορας, τοὺς δὲ

the most important point is, they say that some of the planets are bad and others good, but that the ones which are called bad give good gifts, and the good ones become wicked; and again that when they see each other they cause one kind of thing, when they do not see, another, as if they were not really in control of themselves but varied according to whether they saw or not; and that a planet is good when it sees this particular other planet, but changes if it sees another one; and that it sees differently according to whether its seeing is in this figure or in that; and that the mixture of all the planets together is different again, just as the mixture of distinct liquids is something unlike any of the ingredients. These, and others of the same kind, are their opinions: now we ought to examine and discuss each individual point. This would be a good starting-point.

2. Should we think that these things which go round in their courses have souls or not? If they have no souls, they will have nothing to offer but heat or cold—if we assume that some of the stars are cold; however that may be, they will determine our given destiny only in our bodily nature, since there is a corporeal transference from them to us, and one of such a kind that the alteration it produces in our bodies is not great, since the outflow from each individual star is the same, and they are all mixed together into one on earth, so that the only differences are local differences, according to how near or far we are from the stars and the cold kind of star will give an influence differentiated in the same way. But, then, how will they make some men wise and some foolish, some teachers of letters and others of rhetoric,

κιθαριστὰς καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τέχνας, ἔτι δὲ πλουσίους  
καὶ πένητας, πῶς; Καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, ὅσα μὴ ἐκ  
σωμάτων κράσεως τῆν αἰτίαν ἔχει τοῦ γίνεσθαι;  
15 Οἶον καὶ ἀδελφὸν τσιόνδε καὶ πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν  
γυναϊκά τε καὶ τὸ νῦν εὐτυχεῖν καὶ στρατηγὸν  
καὶ βασιλεῦα γενέσθαι. Εἰ δ' ἔμφυχα ὄντα προαιρέ-  
σει ποιεῖ, τί παρ' ἡμῶν παθόντα κακὰ ἡμᾶς ποιεῖ  
ἐκόντα, καὶ ταῦτα ἐν θείῳ τόπῳ ἰδρυμένα καὶ  
αὐτὰ θεῖα ὄντα; Οὐδὲ γάρ, δι' ἃ ἄνθρωποι  
20 γίνονται κακοί, ταῦτα ἐκείνοις ὑπάρχει, οὐδέ γε  
ὄλως γίνεται ἢ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακὸν αὐτοῖς ἡμῶν ἢ  
εὐπαθούντων ἢ κακὰ πασχόντων.

3. Ἄλλ' οὐχ ἐκόντες ταῦτα, ἀλλ' ἠναγκασμένοι  
τοῖς τόποις καὶ τοῖς σχήμασιν. Ἄλλ' εἰ ἠναγ-  
κασμένοι, τὰ αὐτὰ δῆπουθεν ἐχρήν ἅπαντας ποιεῖν  
ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν τόπων καὶ σχημάτων γινομένους.  
5 Νῦν δὲ τί διάφορον πέπονθεν ὅδε τόδε τὸ τμήμα  
τοῦ τῶν ζωδίων κύκλου παριῶν καὶ αὐτὸς τόδε;  
Οὐ γὰρ δὴ οὐδ' ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ ζωδίῳ γίνεται, ἀλλ'  
ὑπ' αὐτὸ πλείστον ἀπέχων, καὶ καθ' ὅποιον ἂν  
γίγηται κατὰ τὸν οὐρανὸν ὢν. Γελοῖον γὰρ καθ'  
ἑκαστον ὄντις τις παρέρχεται ἄλλον καὶ ἄλλον  
10 γίνεσθαι καὶ δίδόναι ἄλλα καὶ ἄλλα· ἀνατέλλων  
δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ κέντρον γεγονῶς καὶ ἀποκλίνας ἄλλος.  
Οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοτὲ μὲν ἤδεται ἐπὶ τοῦ κέντρον ὢν,  
τοτὲ δὲ λυπεῖται ἀποκλίνας ἢ ἀργὸς γίνεται, οἷδ'

and others lyre-players and practitioners of the  
other arts, or again rich and poor? How will they  
produce the other effects which do not have their  
cause of origin in bodily mixture? For instance,  
how will they give a man a brother or a father, a son  
or a wife of a particular kind, or make him prosper for  
the moment and become a general or a king? But  
if they have souls and act with conscious purpose,  
what have we done to them to make them deliberately  
injure us, these beings which are set in a divine region  
and are divine themselves? They do not have what  
makes men evil, nor does any good or evil to them  
result from our happiness or suffering.

3. But the planets do not do these things willingly,  
but under the compulsion of their positions and  
figures! But if they are under compulsion, they  
ought, surely, all to do the same things when they are  
in the same positions and figures. And really, what  
difference can it make to a particular planet that it  
is passing through, now this and now that section of  
the zodiac? It is not even in the zodiac itself but far  
below it, and at whatever point it is, it is in heaven.  
It is ridiculous for a planet to become different and to  
give different gifts according to the sign it is passing;  
and to be different when it is rising and when it stands  
at the centre and when it is declining. It is certainly  
not pleased when it is at the centre, nor is it distressed  
and enfeebled when it is declining, nor does a planet  
grow angry when it is rising and gentle when it is  
declining—and another of them is even better when  
it is declining. For each particular planet is at the  
centre for some when it is declining in relation to  
others, and when it is declining for one group it is at

αὐ θυμοῦται ἀνατείλας ἄλλος, πραΰνεται δὲ ἀποκλίνας, εἰς δὲ τις αὐτῶν καὶ ἀποκλίνας ἀμείνων.  
 15 Ἔστι γὰρ αἰεὶ ἕκαστος καὶ ἐπίκεντρος ἄλλοις ἀποκλίνας ἄλλοις καὶ ἀποκλίνας ἑτέροις ἐπίκεντρος ἄλλοις· καὶ οὐ δήπου κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον χαίρει τε καὶ λυπεῖται καὶ θυμοῦται καὶ πρᾶός ἐστι. Τὸ δὲ τοὺς μὲν αὐτῶν χαίρειν λέγειν δύνοντας, τοὺς δὲ ἐν ἀνατολαῖς ὄντας, πῶς οὐκ  
 20 ἄλογον; Καὶ γὰρ οὕτω συμβαίνει ἅμα λυπεῖσθαι τε καὶ χαίρειν. Εἶτα διὰ τί ἢ ἐκείνων λύπη ἡμῶς κακώσκει; Ὅλως δὲ οὐδὲ λυπεῖσθαι οὐδ' ἐπὶ καιροῦ χαίρειν αὐτοῖς δοτέον, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τὸ ἴλεων ἔχειν χαίροντας ἐφ' οἷς ἀγαθοῖς ἔχουσι καὶ ἐφ' οἷς ὀρῶσι. Βίος γὰρ ἐκάστω ἐφ' αὐτοῦ, ἐκάστω καὶ  
 25 ἐν τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τὸ εὖ· τὸ δὲ οὐ πρὸς ἡμᾶς. Καὶ μάλιστα τοῖς οὐ κοινωνοῦσιν ἡμῖν ζώοις κατὰ συμβεβηκός, οὐ προηγούμενον· οὐδὲ ὅλως τὸ ἔργον πρὸς ἡμᾶς, εἰ ὥσπερ ὄρνισι κατὰ συμβεβηκός τὸ σημαίνειν.

4. Κακέينو δὲ ἄλογον, τόνδε μὲν τόνδε ὀρῶντα χαίρειν, τόνδε δὲ τόνδε τοῦναντίον· τίς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἔχθρα ἢ περι τίνων; Διὰ τί δὲ τρίγωνος μὲν ὀρῶν ἄλλως, ἐξ ἐναντίας δὲ ἢ τετράγωνος  
 5 ἄλλως; Διὰ τί δὲ ὡδὶ μὲν ἐσχηματισμένος ὀρᾷ, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἐξῆς ζῴδιον ἐγγυτέρω ὦν μᾶλλον οὐχ ὀρᾷ; Ὅλως δὲ τίς καὶ ὁ τρόπος ἔσται τοῦ ποιεῖν ἢ λέγονται ποιεῖν; Πῶς τε χωρὶς ἕκαστος καὶ ἔτι πῶς ὁμοῦ πάντες ἄλλο ἐκ πάντων; Οὐ γὰρ δὴ συνθέμενοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους οὕτω ποιοῦσιν εἰς ἡμᾶς

the centre for another; and it cannot, presumably, be glad and sad and angry and gentle all at the same time. And surely it is quite irrational to say that some planets are glad when they are setting and others when they are rising; this would again have the consequence that they are glad and sad at the same time. And then, why should their grief harm us? But one cannot admit at all that they are glad on one occasion and sad on another. They are always serene and rejoice in the goods they have and in what they see. For each has its own life to itself, and each one's good is in its own act, and has nothing to do with us. The action on us of living beings that have no part with us is always something incidental, not their dominant activity. If, as with birds, their acting as signs is incidental, their work is not directed to us at all.

4. It is irrational, too, to say that one planet is glad when it sees a particular other planet, but another is in the opposite state when it sees another: for what enmity is there between them, and about what? And why should it make a difference whether one planet sees another triangularly or in opposition or quadrilaterally?<sup>1</sup> And why should one see another in one particular figure, but not see it when it is in the next sign of the zodiac, and so nearer? And altogether, how ever do they manage to do what they are supposed to do? How does each act separately, and again how do they all together produce an effect different from all their separate effects? They certainly do not hold meetings and then execute the

<sup>1</sup> On the doctrine of "aspects" see Bouché-Leclercq, p. 165 (summarised in Festugière, p. 100).

10 τὰ δόξαντα ὑφεῖς ἕκαστός τι τῶν ἀφ' αὐτοῦ, οὐδ' αὖ ἄλλος ἐκώλισε τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου δόσιν γενέσθαι βιασάμενος, οὐδ' αὖ ὁ ἕτερος παρεχώρησε τῷ ἑτέρῳ πεισθεὶς αὐτῷ πράττειν. Τὸ δὲ τόνδε μὲν χαίρειν ἐν τοῖς τοῦδε γινόμενον, ἀνάπαλιν δὲ τὸν ἕτερον ἐν τοῖς τοῦ ἑτέρου γινόμενον. πῶς οὐχ ὅμοιον, ὡςπερ ἂν εἴ τις ὑποθέμενος δύο φιλοῦντας ἀλλήλους ἔπειτα λέγοι τὸν μὲν ἕτερον φιλεῖν τὸν ἕτερον, ἀνάπαλιν δὲ θάτερον μισεῖν θάτερον;

5 Ἦ. Λέγοντες δὲ ψυχρὸν τινα αὐτῶν εἶναι, ἔτι πόρρω γινόμενον ἀφ' ἡμῶν μᾶλλον ἡμῖν ἀγασθὸν εἶναι, ἐν τῷ ψυχρῷ τὸ κακὸν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς τιθέμενοι· καίτοι ἔδει ἐν τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις ζωδίοις ἀγαθὸν ἡμῖν εἶναι· καὶ ἐναντίους γινομένους τὸν ψυχρὸν τῷ θερμῷ δεινὸς ἀμφοτέρους γίνεσθαι· καίτοι ἔδει κρᾶσιν εἶναι· καὶ τόνδε μὲν χαίρειν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ καὶ ἀγαθὸν γίνεσθαι θερμαινόμενον, τόνδε δὲ τῇ νυκτὶ χαίρειν πυρώδη ὄντα, ὡςπερ οὐκ ἀεὶ ἡμέρας αὐτοῖς οὔσης, λέγω δὲ φωτὸς, ἢ τοῦ ἑτέρου 10 καταλαμβανομένου ὑπὸ νυκτὸς πολὺ ὑπεράνω τῆς σκιᾶς τῆς γῆς ὄντος. Τὸ δὲ τὴν σελήνην πλησίφωτον μὲν οὔσαν ἀγαθὴν εἶναι τῷδε συνερχομένην, λείπουσαν δὲ κακὴν, ἀνάπαλιν, εἴπερ δυτεύει. Πλήρης γὰρ οὔσα πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐκείνῃ ὑπεράνω ὄντι ἀφώτιστος ἂν εἴη τῷ ἑτέρῳ ἡμισφαιρίῳ, λείπουσα 15 δὲ ἡμῖν ἐκείνῃ πλησίφως· ὥστε τὰ ἐναντία ποιεῖν ἔδει λείπουσαν, ἐκείνον<sup>1</sup> μετὰ φωτὸς ὀρώσαν. Αὐτῇ

<sup>1</sup> ἐκείνον Müller, H-S<sup>2</sup>: ἐκείνῃ codd.

decision of the meeting on us, each surrendering something of his own influence, nor does one hinder by force the giving of another from coming to pass, nor does one yield under persuasion a free field of action to another. And to suppose that one is glad when it is in the region of another, but the other, when it is in the region of the first, feels the reverse, is like saying that two people love each other, and then going on to add that one loves the other but the other hates the first!

5. Then they say that one of the planets is cold, and further, that when it is far away from us it is better for us, assuming that its harmfulness for us consists in its coldness; but it ought, when it is in the opposed signs of the zodiac, to be good for us: and they say that when the cold planet is in opposition to the hot both are dangerous: but there ought to be a blend of temperaments. They allege that one planet delights in the day and becomes good when it is warmed, but another, a fiery one, enjoys the night—as if it was not always day (that is, light) for the planets, and as if the second one was ever overtaken by night, though it is far above the shadow of the earth. And as for their statement that the moon when she is full is good in conjunction with a particular planet, but bad when she is waning, the reverse would be true, if this sort of thing is to be admitted as possible at all. For when she is full in relation to us she would be dark in the other hemisphere to the planet which stands above her, and when she is waning for us she is full for that planet: so she ought to do the opposite when she is waning [for us] since she is looking at that planet with her full light. It will make no difference

μὲν οὖν ὅπως ἐχούσῃ οὐδὲν διαφέρει ἂν τὸ ἥμισυ  
 αἰεὶ φωτιζομένη· τῷ δ' ἴσως διαφέρει ἂν θερμαινο-  
 μένω, ὡς λέγουσιν. Ἀλλὰ θερμαίνονται ἂν, εἰ  
 ἀφώτιστος πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἢ σελήνη εἴη· πρὸς δὲ τὸν  
 20 ἕτερον ἀγαθὴ οὐσα ἐν τῷ ἀφωτίστῳ πλήρης ἐστὶ  
 πρὸς αὐτόν. Ταῦτ' οὖν πῶς οὐ σημεῖα ἐξ ἀναλογίας  
 εἴη ἂν;

6. Ἄρα δὲ τόνδε ἢ Ἀφροδίτην θεμένουσ  
 μοιχείας ποιεῖν, εἰ ὡδὶ εἶεν, ὡσπερ ἐκ τῆς τῶν  
 ἀνθρώπων ἀκολασίας αὐτοὺς ἐμπιπλάντας ὦν πρὸς  
 ἀλλήλους δέονται, πῶς οὐ πολλὴν ἀλογίαν ἔχει;  
 5 Καὶ τὴν μὲν θέαν αὐτοῖς τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους, εἰ  
 ὄντως θεῶντο, ἠδέϊαν εἶναι, πέρασ δὲ αὐτοῖς  
 μηδὲν εἶναι, πῶς ἂν τις παραδέξαιτο; Μυριάδων  
 δὲ ζώων ἀναριθμητῶν γινομένων καὶ οὐσῶν ἐκάστω  
 τελεῖν αἰεὶ τὸ τοι(όν)δε, δόξαν αὐτοῖς διδόναι,  
 πλουτεῖν ποιεῖν, πένητας, ἀκολάστους, καὶ τὰς  
 10 ἐνεργείας ἐκάστων αὐτοὺς τελεῖν, τίς αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ  
 βίος; Ἡ πῶς δυνατόν τοσαῦτα ποιεῖν; Τὸ δὲ  
 ἀναφορὰς ζωδίων ἀναμένειν καὶ τότε τελεῖν, καὶ  
 ὅσαις μοίραις ἀνατέλλει ἕκαστον, ἐνιαυτοὺς εἶναι  
 τοσοῦτους τῆς ἀναφορᾶς, καὶ οἷον ἐπὶ δακτύλων  
 τίθεσθαι, ὅτε ποιήσουσι, μὴ ἐξεῖναι δ' αὐτοῖς πρὸ

<sup>1</sup> At this point the *editio princeps* and Ficino's translation insert the puzzling passage printed in square brackets in ch. 12 (on which see *Introductory Note*) which would certainly be more in place here.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence, which does not seem to belong to the argument here, may possibly have strayed from the beginning of ch. 7.

whatever to the moon herself what phase she is in since half of her is always illuminated; it might, however, on their assumption, make some difference to the planet when it is warmed. But it would be warmed when the moon is dark in relation to us: when it is good in relation to the other planet in the dark phase it is, in relation to it, full.<sup>1</sup> Surely, then, these things are signs from the correspondence of different spheres . . .<sup>2</sup>

6. But it is surely absolute nonsense for the astrologers, having called one planet Ares and another Aphrodite, to say they cause adulteries when they are in a certain relationship, as if they satisfied their desires for each other from men's abandoned wickedness. And how could anyone accept that the sight of each other, in a particular aspect, gives them pleasure, but they have no limit<sup>3</sup>? And what sort of a life is it for the planets if, when innumerable living beings have been born and continue to exist, they are always effecting something for each one of them, giving them reputation, making them rich or poor or wicked, being themselves responsible for bringing the activities of all the separate individuals to completion. How could they do so much? And as for thinking that they wait for the ascendancy of the signs of the zodiac and then act, and that according to the number of degrees it has risen are the number of years of its ascendancy, and that they reckon on their fingers the time when they will act, and may not act before these periods are reached, and altogether to refuse

<sup>3</sup> *πέρας* here seems to make very little sense. L. A. Post suggests *πέρας* in the sexual sense, "intercourse".

15 τούτων τῶν χρόνων, ὅλως δὲ μηδενὶ ἐνὶ τὸ κύριον  
 τῆς διοικήσεως διδόναι, τούτοις δὲ τὰ πάντα  
 διδόναι, ὥσπερ οὐκ ἐπιστατοῦντος ἑνός, ἀφ' οὗ  
 διηρηθῆσθαι τὸ πᾶν, ἐκάστω διδόντος κατὰ φύσιν  
 τὸ αὐτοῦ περαίνειν καὶ ἐνεργεῖν τὰ αὐτοῦ συντεταγ-  
 μένον αὐ μετ' αὐτοῦ, λύντός ἐστι καὶ ἀγνοοῦντος  
 20 κόσμου φύσιν ἀρχὴν ἔχοντος καὶ αἰτίαν πρώτην  
 ἐπὶ πάντα ἰούσαν.

7. Ἄλλ' εἰ σημαίνουσιν οὗτοι τὰ ἐσόμενα, ὥσπερ  
 φαμέν πολλά καὶ ἄλλα σημαντικά εἶναι τῶν  
 ἐσομένων, τί ἂν τὸ ποιοῦν εἴη; Καὶ ἡ τάξις πῶς;  
 Οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐσημαίνετο τεταγμένως μὴ ἐκάστων  
 5 γιγνομένων. Ἐστω τοίνυν ὥσπερ γράμματα ἐν  
 οὐρανῷ γραφόμενα αἰεὶ ἢ γεγραμμένα καὶ κινούμενα,  
 ποιοῦντα μὲν τι ἔργον καὶ ἄλλο· ἐπακολουθεῖται δὲ  
 τῷδε ἢ παρ' αὐτῶν σημασία, ὡς ἀπὸ μιᾶς ἀρχῆς  
 ἐν ἐνὶ ζώῳ παρ' ἄλλου μέρους ἄλλο ἂν τις μάθοι.  
 Καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἦθος ἂν τις γνοίη εἰς ὀφθαλμούς  
 10 τινος ἰδὼν ἢ τι ἄλλο μέρος τοῦ σώματος καὶ  
 κινδύνους καὶ σωτηρίας. Καὶ οὖν μέρη μὲν ἐκεῖνα,  
 μέρη δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς· ἄλλα οὖν ἄλλοις. Μεστὰ δὲ  
 πάντα σημείων καὶ σοφός τις ὁ μαθὼν ἐξ ἄλλου  
 ἄλλο. Πολλὰ δὲ ἤδη ἐν συνηθείᾳ γιγνόμενα  
 γινώσκειται πᾶσι. Τίς οὖν ἢ σύνταξις ἢ μία;  
 15 Οὕτω γὰρ καὶ τὸ κατὰ τοὺς ὄρνεις εὐλογον καὶ τὰ

<sup>1</sup> The thought here is Stoic. Cp., e.g., Seneca, *Naturales Quaestiones* 11. 32.

to grant to any one principle authority over the direc-  
 tion of the universe, but to give everything to the  
 planets, as if there was not one ruler, from whom the  
 universe has separated out, and who gives to each  
 according to its nature to fulfil its own function and  
 do its own work, in union with the ruling principle—  
 this is the opinion of someone who wants to dissolve  
 the unity of the universe and knows nothing about  
 its nature; the universe which has a principle and  
 first cause which reaches to everything.

7. But if these planets give signs of things to come  
 —as we maintain that many other things do—what  
 might the cause be? How does the order work?  
 There would be no signifying if particular things did  
 not happen according to some order. Let us sup-  
 pose that the stars are like characters always being  
 written on the heavens, or written once for all and  
 moving as they perform their task, a different one:  
 and let us assume that their significance results from  
 this, just as because of the one principle in a single  
 living being, by studying one member we can learn  
 something else about a different one. For instance,  
 we can come to conclusions about someone's character,  
 and also about the dangers that beset him and the  
 precautions to be taken, by looking at his eyes or  
 some other part of his body. Yes, they are members  
 and so are we; so we can learn about one from the  
 other. All things are filled full of signs,<sup>1</sup> and it is a  
 wise man who can learn about one thing from another.  
 Yet, all the same, many processes of learning in this  
 way are customary and known to all. Then what is  
 the single-linked order? If there is one, our auguries  
 from birds and other living creatures, by which we



ἄλλα ζῶα, ἀφ' ὧν σημαίνεσθαι ἕκαστα. Συνη-  
 ρτῆσθαι δὴ δεῖ ἀλλήλοις τὰ πάντα—καὶ μὴ μόνον ἐν  
 ἐνὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα—τοῦ εὖ εἰρημένου—σύμπνοια  
 μία, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον καὶ πρότερον ἐν τῷ παντί—  
 καὶ μίαν ἀρχὴν ἐν πολὺ ζῶον ποιῆσαι καὶ ἐκ  
 20 πάντων ἓν, καὶ ὡς ἐνὶ ἑκάστῳ τὰ μέρη ἓν τι ἔργον  
 ἕκαστον εἰληφεν, οὕτω καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ παντί ἕκαστα  
 ἔργα ἕκαστον ἔχειν καὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ταῦτα, ὅσον μὴ  
 μόνον μέρη, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅλα καὶ μείζω. Πρόεισι  
 μὲν δὴ ἕκαστον ἀπὸ μιᾶς τὸ αὐτοῦ πράττον,  
 συμβάλλει δὲ ἄλλο ἄλλω· οὐ γὰρ ἀπήλλακται τοῦ  
 25 ὅλου· καὶ δὴ καὶ ποιεῖ καὶ πάσχει ὑπ' ἄλλων καὶ  
 ἄλλο αὖ προσήλθε καὶ ἐλύπησεν ἢ ἦσε. Πρόεισι  
 δὲ οὐκ εἰκῆ οὐδὲ κατ' ἐπιτυχίαν· καὶ γὰρ ἄλλο τι  
 καὶ ἐκ τούτων καὶ ἐφεξῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἄλλο.

8. Καὶ δὴ καὶ ψυχὴ τὸ αὐτῆς ἔργον ποιεῖν  
 ὠρμημένη—ψυχὴ γὰρ πάντα ποιεῖ ἀρχῆς ἔχουσα  
 λόγον—κἂν εὐθυποροῖ καὶ παράγοιτο αὖ, καὶ  
 ἔπεται τοῖς δρωμένοις ἐν τῷ παντί δίκη, εὔπερ μὴ  
 5 λυθήσεται. Μένει δ' αἰεὶ ὀρθουμένον τοῦ ὅλου  
 τάξει καὶ δυνάμει τοῦ κρατοῦντος· συνεργοῦντα

<sup>1</sup> The *σύμπνοια* of the universe is also Stoic (Posidonius and others), cp. Diogenes Laertius VII. 140.

<sup>2</sup> This Platonic conception (*Timaeus* 30D-31A) developed by the Stoics of the universe as a single living being is of great importance in the thought of Plotinus cp. e.g., IV. 4. 32 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Bouillet is probably right in supposing that Plotinus here had in mind the great passage about Soul, divine and human,

predict particular events, are reasonable. All things must be joined to one another; not only must there be in each individual part what is well called a single united breath of life<sup>1</sup> but before them, and still more, in the All. One principle must make the universe a single complex living creature, one from all;<sup>2</sup> and just as in individual organisms each member undertakes its own particular task, so the members of the All, each individual one of them, have their individual work to do; this applies even more to the All than to particular organisms, in so far as the members of it are not merely members but wholes, and more important than the members of particular things. Each one goes forth from one single principle and does its own work, but they also co-operate one with another; for they are not cut off from the whole. They act on and are affected by others; one comes up to another, bringing it pain or pleasure. Their going out has nothing random or casual about it. Something else proceeds again from these; and something else in succession from that, according to the order of nature.

8. Soul, then, is set upon doing its own work—for soul, since it has the status of a principle, does everything—and it may keep to the straight path<sup>3</sup> and it may also be led astray; and just payment follows upon what is done in the All; otherwise it will be dissolved.<sup>4</sup> But the All remains for ever, since the whole is directed by the ordering and the power of its ruler. And the stars co-operate towards the whole,

in Plato, *Phaedrus* 245C ff.: so εὐθυποροῖ here may be a reminiscence of μετεωροπορεῖ 246C1.

<sup>4</sup> A reminiscence of *Timaeus* 41A8.

δὲ καὶ τὰ ἄστρα ὡς ἂν μόρια οὐ μικρὰ ὄντα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πρὸς τὸ ὅλον ἀριπρεπῆ καὶ πρὸς τὸ σημαίνειν ἐστί. Σημαίνει μὲν οὖν πάντα, ὅσα ἐν αἰσθητῶ, ποιεῖ δὲ ἄλλα, ὅσα φανερώς ποιεῖ.  
 10 Ἡμεῖς δὲ ψυχῆς ἔργα κατὰ φύσιν ποιούμεν, ἕως μὴ ἐσφάλημεν ἐν τῷ πλήθει τοῦ παντός· σφαλέντες δὲ ἔχομεν δίκην καὶ τὸ σφάλμα αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ ἐν χείροιν μοῖρα εἰς ὕστερον. Πλοῦτοι μὲν οὖν καὶ πένια συντυχία τῶν ἕξω· ἀρεταὶ δὲ καὶ κακίαι; Ἄρεταί μὲν διὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖον τῆς ψυχῆς, κακίαι δὲ  
 15 συντυχία ψυχῆς πρὸς τὰ ἕξω. Ἄλλα περὶ μὲν τούτων ἐν ἄλλοις εἴρηται.

9. Νῦν δὲ ἀναμνησθέντες τοῦ ἀτράκτου, ὃν τοῖς μὲν πρόπαλαι αἱ Μοῖραι ἐπικλώθουσι, Πλάτωνι δὲ ὁ ἀτρακτός ἐστι τό τε πλανώμενον καὶ τὸ ἀπλανὲς τῆς περιφορᾶς, καὶ αἱ Μοῖραι δὲ καὶ ἡ  
 5 Ἄνάγκη μήτηρ οὐσα στρέφουσι καὶ ἐν τῇ γενέσει ἐκάστου ἐπικλώθουσι καὶ δι' αὐτῆς εἰσιν εἰς γένεσιν τὰ γεννώμενα. Ἐν τε Τιμαίῳ θεὸς μὲν ὁ ποιήσας τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ψυχῆς δίδωσιν, οἱ δὲ φερόμενοι θεοὶ τὰ δεινὰ καὶ ἀναγκαῖα πάθη, θυμοὺς καὶ ἐπιθυμίας καὶ ἡδονὰς καὶ λύπας αὐτῶν,  
 10 καὶ ψυχῆς ἄλλο εἶδος, ἀφ' οὗ τὰ παθήματα ταυτί. Οὗτοι γὰρ οἱ λόγοι συνδέουσιν ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἄστροις παρ' αὐτῶν ψυχὴν κομιζομένους καὶ ὑποτάττουσι τῇ ἀνάγκῃ ἐνταῦθα ἴοντας· καὶ ἦθη τοῖσιν παρ' αὐτῶν καὶ κατὰ τὰ ἦθη πράξεις καὶ

<sup>1</sup> The reference back is probably to I. 8 (51), cp. ch. 12. 5-7.

since they are no small part of the heaven; this is why they are so bright and well adapted for signs. So they signify everything that happens in the sense-world, but do other things, the things which they are seen to do. We, however, do the works of soul according to nature, as long as we do not fail in the multiplicity of the All; if we fail we have as just penalty both the failure itself and the being in a worse position afterwards. Wealth, then, and poverty are due to chance encounters with things outside. But what about virtues and vices? Virtues are due to the ancient state of our soul, vices to its chance encounter with things outside it. But this has been discussed elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

9. But now we should call to mind the Spindle, which according to the ancients the Fates spin; but for Plato the Spindle is the wandering and the fixed parts of the heavenly circuit,<sup>2</sup> and the Fates and Necessity, who is their mother, turn the spindle and spin a thread at the birth of each one of us, and what is born comes to birth through Necessity. And in the *Timaeus*<sup>3</sup> the God who makes the world gives the "first principle of the soul," but the gods who are borne through the heavens "the terrible and inevitable passions," "angers" and desires and "pleasures and pains," and the "other kind of soul," from which come passions of this kind. These statements bind us to the stars, from which we get our souls, and subject us to necessity when we come down here; from them we get our moral characters, our characteristic actions, and our

<sup>2</sup> *Republic* X. 616C4 ff.

<sup>3</sup> 69C5-D3.

πάθη ἀπὸ ἕξεως παθητικῆς οὐσσης· ὥστε τί λοιπὸν  
 15 ἡμεῖς; Ἡ ὅπερ ἐσμὲν κατ' ἀλήθειαν ἡμεῖς, οἷς  
 καὶ κρατεῖν τῶν παθῶν ἔδωκεν ἡ φύσις. Καὶ γὰρ  
 ὁμως ἐν τούτοις τοῖς κακοῖς διὰ τοῦ σώματος  
 ἀπειλημμένοις ἀδέσποτον ἀρετὴν θεὸς ἔδωκεν.  
 Οὐ γὰρ ἐν ἡσυχῶ οὐσιν ἀρετῆς δεῖ ἡμῖν, ἀλλ' ὅταν  
 κίνδυνος ἐν κακοῖς εἶναι ἀρετῆς οὐ παρούσης.  
 20 Διὸ καὶ φεύγειν ἐντεῦθεν δεῖ καὶ χωρίζειν  
 αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν προσγεγενημένων καὶ μὴ τὸ  
 σύνθετον εἶναι σῶμα ἐψυχωμένον ἐν ᾧ κρατεῖ  
 μᾶλλον ἢ σώματος φύσις ψυχῆς τι ἔχνος λαβοῦσα,  
 ὡς τὴν ζωὴν τὴν κοινὴν μᾶλλον τοῦ σώματος εἶναι.  
 πάντα γὰρ σωματικά, ὅσα ταύτης. Τῆς δὲ ἐτέρας  
 25 τῆς ἕξω ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἄνω φορὰ καὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ  
 θεῖον ὧν οὐδεὶς κρατεῖ, ἀλλ' ἢ προσχρήται, ἢ ἢ  
 ἐκεῖνο καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο ζῆ ἀναχωρήσας· ἢ ἔρημος  
 ταύτης τῆς ψυχῆς γενόμενος ζῆ ἐν εἰμαρμένῃ, καὶ  
 ἐνταῦθα τὰ ἄστρα αὐτῷ οὐ μόνον σημαίνει, ἀλλὰ  
 30 γίνεται αὐτὸς οἷον μέρος καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ συνέπεται,  
 οὐ μέρος. Διττὸς γὰρ ἕκαστος, ὁ μὲν τὸ συναμφό-  
 τερόν τι, ὁ δὲ αὐτός· καὶ πᾶς ὁ κόσμος δὲ ὁ μὲν  
 τὸ ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς τινος δεθείσης σώματι,  
 ὁ δὲ ἢ τοῦ παντὸς ψυχῆ ἢ μὴ ἐν σώματι, ἐλλάμ-  
 πουσα δὲ ἔχνη τῇ ἐν σώματι· καὶ ἥλιος δὴ καὶ  
 35 τᾶλλα διττὰ οὕτω· καὶ τῇ μὲν ἐτέρα ψυχῇ τῇ  
 καθαρᾷ οὐδὲν φαῦλον δίδωσιν, ἃ δὲ γίνεται εἰς τὸ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. I 1. 7. 17 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Republic X. 617E3.

emotions, coming from a disposition which is liable to emotion. So what is left which is "we"? Surely, just that which we really are, we to whom nature gave power to master our passions.<sup>1</sup> Yes, and God gave us too, in the midst of all these evils which we receive through the body, "virtue who is no man's slave."<sup>2</sup> For we do not need virtue when we are in peace but when there is a risk of being in evils if virtue is not there. So we must "fly from here"<sup>3</sup> and "separate"<sup>4</sup> ourselves from what has been added to us, 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. But to the other soul, which is outside the body, belongs the ascent to the higher world, to the fair and divine which no one masters, but either makes use of it that he may be it and live by it, withdrawing himself; or else he is bereft of this higher soul and lives under destiny, and then the stars do not only show him signs but he also becomes himself a part, and follows along with the whole of which he is a part. For every man is double, one of him is the sort of compound being and one of him is himself; and the whole universe is, one part the composite of body and a sort of soul bound to body, and one the soul of the All which is not in body but makes a trace of itself shine on that which is in body. And the sun and the other heavenly bodies are double in this way; they communicate no evil to the other pure soul, but what comes into the All

<sup>3</sup> Plato, *Theaetetus* 176A8 B1.

<sup>4</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 67C6.

πάν παρ' αὐτῶν, καθ' ὃ μέρος εἰσὶ τοῦ παντός  
καὶ σῶμα<sup>1</sup> ἐψυχωμένον, τὸ σῶμα μέρος μέρει  
δίδωσι προαιρέσεως τοῦ ἄστρου καὶ ψυχῆς τῆς  
ὄντως αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἄριστον βλεπούσης. Παρακο-  
40 λουθεῖ δ' αὐτῶ τὰ ἄλλα, μᾶλλον δ' οὐκ αὐτῶ,  
ἀλλὰ τοῖς περὶ αὐτόν, ὅλον ἐκ πυρὸς θερμότητος  
εἰς τὸ ὅλον ἰούσης, καὶ εἴ τι παρὰ ψυχῆς τῆς ἄλλης  
εἰς ψυχὴν ἄλλην συγγενῆ οὔσαν· τὰ δὲ δυσχερῆ  
διὰ τὴν μίξιν. Μειμιγμένη γὰρ οὖν δὴ ἡ τοῦδε  
τοῦ παντός φύσις, καὶ εἴ τις τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν  
45 χωριστὴν αὐτοῦ χωρίσειε, τὸ λοιπὸν οὐ μέγα.  
Θεὸς μὲν οὖν ἐκείνης συναριθμουμένης, τὸ δὲ  
λοιπὸν δαίμων, φησί, μέγας καὶ τὰ πάθη τὰ ἐν  
αὐτῶ δαιμόνια.

10. Εἰ δ' οὕτω, τὰς σημασίας καὶ νῦν δοτέον·  
τὰς δὲ ποιήσεις οὐ πάντως οὐδὲ τοῖς ὅλοις αὐτῶν,  
ἀλλὰ ὅσα τοῦ παντός πάθη, καὶ ὅσον τὸ λοιπὸν  
αὐτῶν. Καὶ ψυχῆ μὲν καὶ πρὶν ἔλθειν εἰς γένεσιν  
5 δοτέον ἤκειν τι φερούση παρ' αὐτῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν  
ἔλθοι εἰς σῶμα μὴ μέγα τι παθητικὸν ἔχουσα.  
Δοτέον δὲ καὶ τύχας εἰσιούση [τὸ κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν  
φορὰν εἰσιέναι]· δοτέον δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν φορὰν  
ποιεῖσθαι συνεργοῦσαν καὶ ἀποπληροῦσαν παρ'  
αὐτῆς, ἃ δεῖ τελεῖν τὸ πᾶν, ἐκάστου τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ  
10 τάξιν μερῶν λαβόντος.

<sup>1</sup> καὶ σῶμα Müller, H-S<sup>2</sup>: σῶμα καὶ codd.

<sup>1</sup> Plato *Timaeus* 47E5.

<sup>2</sup> The distinction of θεός and δαίμων comes from *Symposium* 202D5-E1 (the demonstration that Eros is a daemon, not a

from them, in so far as they are part of the All and ensouled body; their body, which is a part, gives to another part—while the star's intention and the soul which is really itself is looking to the Best. The other effects happen in sequence upon it (or rather not upon it but upon its environment), like heat from a fire spreading through the whole—and perhaps something comes from the star's other soul to another soul which is akin to it. The bad effects are because of the mixture. For the nature of "this All" is "mixed,"<sup>1</sup> and if anyone separates from him the separable soul, what is left is not much. The universe is a god if the separable soul is reckoned as part of it; the rest, Plato says, is a "great daemon"<sup>2</sup> and what happens in it is daemonic.

10. If this is so, we must grant even at this stage of the discussion the power of signifying to the stars, but action not completely nor to their whole natures, but only in so far as affections of the All are concerned and as regards what is left of them [when their separable souls are left out of account]. And we must admit that the soul, even before it enters the realm of becoming, brings something [lower] of itself when it comes: for it would not have come into body unless it had a large part subject to affections. And we must grant, too, that it enters into the domain of chance. And we must grant that the heavenly circuit does act of itself, co-operating and completing by its own power what the All must accomplish; and in its action each individual heavenly body in it has the status of a part.

god), but Plato does not apply it there or anywhere else to the universe.

11. Χρῆ δὲ κακέينو ἐνθυμείσθαι, ὡς τὰ ἀπ' ἐκείνων ἰὸν οἷ τοιοῦτόν εἰσω<sup>1</sup> εἰς τοὺς λαβόντας, οἷον παρ' ἐκείνων ἔρχεται· οἷον εἰ πῦρ, ἀμυδρόν τοῦτο, καὶ εἰ φιλικὴ διάθεσις, ἀσθενὴς γενομένη  
 5 ἐν τῷ λαβόντι οὐ μάλα καλὴν τήν φίλησιν εἰργάσατο, καὶ θυμὸς δὴ οὐκ ἐν μέτρῳ τυχόντος, ὡς ἀνδρείον γενέσθαι, ἢ ἀκροχολίαν ἢ ἀθυμίαν εἰργάσατο, καὶ τὸ τιμῆς ἐν ἔρωτι ὄν καὶ περὶ τὸ καλὸν ἔχον τῶν δοκούντων καλῶν ἔφεσιν εἰργάσατο, καὶ νοῦ ἀπόρροια πανουργίαν· καὶ γὰρ ἡ πανουργία ἐθέλει  
 10 νοῦς εἶναι τυχεῖν οὐ ἐφίεται οὐ δυνάμενος. Γίνεται οὖν κακὰ ἕκαστα τούτων ἐν ἡμῖν ἐκεῖ οὐ τούτων ὄντων· ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ ἐλθόντα, καίτοι οὐκ ἐκεῖνα ὄντα, οὐ μένει οὐδὲ ταῦτα οἷα ἦλθε σώμασι μιγνύμενα καὶ ὕλη καὶ ἀλλήλοις.

12. Καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰ ἰόντα εἰς ἐν συμπίπτει καὶ κομίζεται ἕκαστον τῶν γινομένων τι ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κράματος, ὥστε ὃ ἐστὶ καὶ ποιόν τι γενέσθαι. Οὐ γὰρ τὸν ἵππον ποιεῖ, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἵππῳ τι δίδωσιν·  
 5 ὃ γὰρ ἵππος ἐξ ἵππου καὶ ἐξ ἀνθρώπου ἀνθρώπου· συνεργὸς δὲ ἥλιος τῇ πλάσει· ὃ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ λόγου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου γίνεται. Ἄλλ' ἔβλαψε ποτε ἡ ἀφέλησε τὸ ἔξω· ὁμοίως γὰρ τῷ πατρί, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον πολλακίς, ἔστι δ' ὅτε πρὸς τὸ

<sup>1</sup> εἰσιν Kirchhoff, H-S<sup>2</sup>: ἐστιν codd.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Aristotle, *Physics* B. 2. 194b13. "Man begets man and so does the sun." Cp. *De Gen. et Corr.* B. 10, where it is explained that the movement of the sun in the eclip-

11. We must consider, too, that what comes from the stars will not reach the recipients in the same state in which it left them. If it is fire, for instance, the fire down here is dim [by comparison with that of the stars], and if it is a loving disposition it becomes weak in the recipient and produces a rather unpleasant kind of loving; and manly spirit, when the receiver does not take it in due measure, so as to become brave, produces violent temper or spiritlessness; and that which belongs to honour in love and is concerned with beauty produces desire of what only seems to be beautiful, and the efflux of intellect produces knavery; for knavery wants to be intellect, only it is unable to attain what it aims at. So all these things become evil in us, though they are not so up in heaven; since even the things which have come down, though they are not that which they were in heaven, do not remain what they were when they came since they are mingled with bodies and matter and each other.

12. And, further, the influences which come from the stars combine into one, and each thing that comes into being takes something from the mixture, so that what it already is acquires a certain quality. The star-influences do not make the horse; they give something to the horse. Horse comes from horse and man from man: the sun co-operates in their making;<sup>1</sup> but man comes from the formative principle of man. The outside influence sometimes harms or helps. A man is like his father, but often he turns out better, sometimes worse. But the

tic is the "cause of the rhythm of generation and decay" (Cornford).

PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 3.

χειρον συνέπεσεν. Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐκβιβάζει τοῦ ὑπο-  
 10 κειμένου· ὅτε δὲ καὶ ἡ ὕλη κρατεῖ, οὐχ ἡ φύσις,  
 ὡς μὴ τέλειον γενέσθαι ἠττώμενου τοῦ εἶδους.

[Τὸ δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς τῆς σελήνης ἀφώτιστόν ἐστι  
 πρὸς τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς, οὐ τὸ ἄνω λυπεῖ. Οὐκ ἐπικου-  
 ρούντος δὲ ἐκείνου τῷ πόρρω χειρον εἶναι δοκεῖ.  
 15 ὅταν δὲ πλήρης ᾖ, ἀρκεῖ τῷ κάτω, κἂν ἐκείνος  
 πόρρωθεν ᾖ. Πρὸς δὲ τὸν πυρώδη ἀφώτιστος  
 οὐσα πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἔδοξεν εἶναι ἀγαθή· ἀνταρκεῖ γὰρ  
 τὸ ἐκείνου πυρωδεστέρου ἢ πρὸς ἐκείνον ὄντος.  
 Τὰ δὲ ἰόντα ἐκείθεν σώματα ἐμφύχων ἄλλα ἄλλων  
 ἐπὶ τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ ἥττον θερμά, ψυχρὸν δὲ οὐδέν.  
 20 μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ὁ τόπος. Δία δὲ ὃν λέγουσιν, εὐκράτος  
 πυρί· καὶ ὁ Ἐφῶς οὕτως.<sup>1</sup> διὸ καὶ σύμφωνοι  
 δοκοῦσιν ὁμοίῳτητι, πρὸς δὲ τὸν Πυρόεντα καλού-  
 μενον τῇ κράσει, πρὸς δὲ Κρόνον ἀλλοτρίως τῷ  
 πόρρω· Ἑρμῆς δ' ἀδιάφορος πρὸς ἅπαντας, ὡς  
 δοκεῖ, ὁμοιούμενος. Πάντες δὲ πρὸς τὸ ὅλον  
 25 σύμφωροι· ὥστε πρὸς ἀλλήλους οὕτως, ὡς τῷ  
 ὅλῳ συμφέρει, ὡς ἐφ' ἐνὸς ζώου ἕκαστα τῶν  
 μερῶν ὁράται. Τούτου γὰρ χάριν μάλιστα, οἶον  
 χολή καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐγγύς· καὶ γὰρ ἔδει  
 καὶ θυμὸν ἐγείρειν καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ πλησίον μὴ

<sup>1</sup> οὕτως Creuzer, H-S: οὗτος codd.

<sup>1</sup> The planets mentioned in this passage are Jupiter, Venus, Mars, Saturn and Mercury.

ON WHETHER THE STARS ARE CAUSES

outside influence does not force anything out of its fundamental nature; sometimes, however, the matter, not the nature, gets the upper hand, so that, as a result of the defeat of the form, the thing does not come to perfection.

[The side of the moon which is towards us is unlighted in relation to the regions of earth, but does no harm to that which is above it. But since that which is above does not help because it is far away, this conjunction is thought to be worse. But when the moon is full, it is sufficient for what is below even if the star above is far away. But when the moon is unlighted on the side towards the fiery star she is thought to be good in relation to us: for the power of that star persists which is fierier than it needs to be for itself [?]. The bodies of living things which come from that upper region differ from each other according to their degrees of heat, but none of them is cold. Their place is evidence of this. The planet that people call Zeus<sup>1</sup> is of fire in a well-balanced mixture; and so is the Morning Star; so these two because of their likeness are considered as "harmonious," but are alien in disposition to the star called Fiery because of its composition and to Cronos because of its distance. Hermes, however, is indifferent and is, it is thought, like all. But all contribute to the whole, and are therefore related to each other in a way that brings advantage to the whole, as we see that all the parts individually are of a living thing. For they are there precisely for the sake of the whole living thing, as, for instance, the gall is to serve the whole and in relation to the part next to it: for it has to stir up the manly spirit and keep the

ἐὰν ὑβρίζειν. Καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐν τῷ παντελεῖ ἔδει  
 30 τινὸς τοιούτου καὶ τινος ἄλλου πρὸς τὸ ἡδὺ  
 ἀνημμένον· τὰ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὺς εἶναι· συμπαθῆ δὲ  
 πάντα τῷ ἀλόγῳ αὐτῶν εἶναι· οὕτω γὰρ ἐν καὶ  
 μία ἁρμονία.]

13. Δεῖ τοίνυν τὸ ἐντεῦθεν, ἐπειδὴ τὰ μὲν καὶ  
 παρὰ τῆς φορᾶς γίνεται, τὰ δὲ οὐ, διαλαβεῖν καὶ  
 διακρίναι καὶ εἰπεῖν, πόθεν ἕκαστα ὕλως. Ἀρχὴ  
 δὲ ἡδε· ψυχῆς δὴ τὸ πᾶν τῷδε διοικούσης κατὰ  
 5 λόγον, οἷα δὴ καὶ ἐφ' ἕκαστου ζώου ἢ ἐν αὐτῷ  
 ἀρχῆ, ἀφ' ἧς ἕκαστα τὰ τοῦ ζώου μέρη καὶ  
 πλάττεται καὶ πρὸς τὸ ὅλον συντέτακται, οὐ μέρη  
 ἐστίν, ἐν μὲν τῷ ὅλῳ ἐστὶ τὰ πάντα, ἐν δὲ τοῖς  
 μέρεσι τοσοῦτον μόνον, ὅσον ἐστὶν ἕκαστον. Τὰ  
 10 δὲ ἔξωθεν προσιόντα, τὰ μὲν καὶ ἐναντία τῇ  
 βουλήσει τῆς φύσεως, τὰ δὲ καὶ πρόσφορα· τῷ  
 δὲ ὅλῳ πάντα ἅτε μέρη ὄντα αὐτοῦ τὰ πάντα  
 συντέτακται φύσει μὲν λαβόντα ἣν ἔχει καὶ  
 συμπληροῦντα τῇ οἰκείᾳ ὁμῶς ὁρμῇ πρὸς τὸν ὅλον  
 τοῦ παντός βίον. Ἰὰ μὲν οὖν ἄψυχα τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ  
 15 πάντη ὄργανα καὶ οἷον ὠθούμενα ἔξω εἰς τὸ  
 ποιεῖν· τὰ δὲ ἐμψυχα, τὰ μὲν τὸ κωεῖσθαι ἀορίστως  
 ἔχει, ὡς ὑφ' ἄρμασιν ἵπποι πρὶν τὸν ἡνίοχον  
 ἀφορίσαι αὐτοῖς τὸν δρόμον, ἅτε δὴ πληγῇ  
 νεμόμενα· λογικοῦ δὲ ζώου φύσις ἔχει παρ

<sup>1</sup> On this passage see Introductory Note.

<sup>2</sup> Again a reminiscence of the *Phaedrus* (246C2; cp. note on ch. 8).

<sup>3</sup> The phrase is taken from Plato, *Critias* 109C1, where it is used in a context relevant to the argument here. But

whole and the part next to it from excess. So, too, in the complete whole [of the universe] there is need of some organ like the gall and of some other directed to producing sweetness; others are the eyes of the universe; all are united in feeling by their irrational part. So the universe is one and a single melody.]<sup>1</sup>

13. We must, then, in consequence of this discussion (since some things do happen as a result of the movement of the heavens, but others do not) distinguish and discriminate and say from what cause in general each particular happening results. Our starting-point is this: since soul directs this All according to a rational order<sup>2</sup> (as with each individual living thing the principle in it does, from which the formation of the individual parts of the living thing and their ordering to the whole derive), it is altogether present in the whole, but in the parts only proportionately to the being of the individual. The influences which come from outside [to each individual thing] are sometimes opposed to the intention of its nature and sometimes favourable to it. But all are ordered to the whole because they are all parts of it; they received the nature which they have, but all the same they contribute, each by its own individual impulse, to the whole life of the All. The lifeless things in the All are altogether instruments and are, so to speak, pushed from outside to act. As for living things, some have unlimited movement, like horses harnessed to chariots before the driver marks off their course, in that he "controls them with the whip."<sup>3</sup> But the nature of a rational

Plotinus also still has in mind the *Phaedrus* myth, with its image of the charioteer and his horses.

εαυτῆς τὸν ἠνίοχον· καὶ ἐπιστήμονα μὲν ἔχουσα  
 κατ' ἰθὺ φέρεται, μὴ δέ, ὡς ἔτυχε πολλακίς.  
 20 Ἀμφω δὲ εἶσω τοῦ παντός καὶ συντελοῦντα πρὸς  
 τὸ ὅλον· καὶ τὰ μὲν μείζω αὐτῶν καὶ ἐν πλείονι  
 τῇ ἀξία πολλά ποιεῖ καὶ μεγάλα καὶ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ  
 ὅλου ζωὴν συντελεῖ τάξιν ποιητικὴν μᾶλλον ἢ  
 παθητικὴν ἔχοντα, τὰ δὲ πάσχοντα διατελεῖ μικρὰν  
 δύναμιν πρὸς τὸ ποιεῖν ἔχοντα· τὰ δὲ μεταξὺ  
 25 τούτων, πάσχοντα μὲν παρ' ἄλλων, ποιῶντα δὲ  
 πολλά καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς ἀρχὴν παρ' αὐτῶν εἰς  
 πράξεις καὶ ποιήσεις ἔχοντα. Καὶ γίνεται τὸ πᾶν  
 ζωὴ παντελῆς τῶν μὲν ἀρίστων ἐνεργούντων τὰ  
 ἀριστα, καθ' ὅσον τὸ ἀριστον ἐν ἐκάστῳ· ὁ δὲ  
 30 καὶ τῷ ἡγεμονοῦντι συντακτέον, ὥσπερ στρατιώτας  
 στρατηγῷ, οἳ δὴ λέγονται καὶ ἔπεισθαι Διὶ ἐπὶ  
 φύσιν τὴν νοητὴν ἰεμένῳ. Τὰ δὲ ἡττονι τῇ φύσει  
 κεχρημένα δεύτερα τοῦ παντός, οἷα καὶ τὰ ἐν  
 ἡμῶν ψυχῆς δεύτερα· τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἀνάλογον τοῖς ἐν  
 ἡμῶν μέρεσιν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐφ' ἡμῶν πάντα ἴσα.  
 35 Ζῶα μὲν οὖν πάντα κατὰ λόγον τὸν τοῦ παντός  
 ὅλον, τὰ τε ἐν οὐρανῷ πάντα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, ὅσα  
 εἰς τὸ ὅλον μεμέρισται, καὶ οὐδὲν τῶν μερῶν, οὐδ'  
 εἰ μέγα, δύναμιν ἔχει τοῦ ἐξαλλαγῆν ἐργάσασθαι  
 τῶν λόγων οὐδὲ τῶν κατὰ τοὺς λόγους γενομένων·  
 40 ἀλλοίωσιν δὲ ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρα, χείρονός τε καὶ  
 βελτίονος, ἐργάσασθαι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκστήσαί γε τῆς  
 οὐκείας φύσεως δύναται. Χείρον δὲ ἐργάζεται ἢ  
 κατὰ σῶμα ἀσθένειαν διδόν ἢ τῇ ψυχῇ τῇ συμπαθεῖ  
 καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ δοθείσῃ εἰς τὸ κάτω κατὰ συμβε-  
 βηκὸς φαυλότητος αἴτιον γινόμενον ἢ σώματος

creature has its driver of itself; and if it has a skilled  
 one it goes straight, but if not, then often just as it  
 chances. But both are within the All, and contribute  
 to the whole. The greater living things which are  
 higher in rank do much that is important, and con-  
 tribute to the life of the whole in an active rather than  
 a passive capacity; others continue passive, having  
 little power to act; others are between the two, acted  
 upon by others, but doing much and in many things  
 having a principle of doing and making which is their  
 own. And the All becomes a complete life when the  
 best parts do the best, according to the best in each  
 of them: and each has to subordinate its best to the  
 ruling principle, as soldiers to the general; so they  
 are said to "follow Zeus"<sup>1</sup> in his progress towards  
 the nature of Intellect. The things which are equip-  
 ped with a lower nature hold second place in the All,  
 as we, too, have a second part of soul; the rest are  
 like our parts; not everything in us is equal either.  
 So then living things are all conformed to the com-  
 plete pattern of the All, both the ones in heaven and  
 the rest which have been made parts in the whole,  
 and no part, even if it is a great one, has power to  
 bring about a complete change in the patterns or the  
 things which happen according to the patterns.  
 It can bring about a non-essential alteration in either  
 direction, for better or worse, but it cannot make  
 anything abandon its own proper nature. It makes  
 a thing worse either by giving it bodily infirmity, or  
 by becoming responsible for an incidental badness in  
 the soul which is in sympathy with it and was given  
 out by it into the lower region, or, when the body is

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Phaedrus* 246E6.



κακῶς συντεθέντος ἐμπόδιον τὴν εἰς αὐτὸ ἐνέργειαν  
45 δι' αὐτὸ ποιῆσαι· οἷον οὐχ οὕτως ἀρμολογίας  
λύρας, ὡς δέξασθαι τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἀρμονίας εἰς τὸ  
μουσικοῦς ἀποτελεῖν τοὺς φθόγγους.

14. Περὶ δὲ πενίας καὶ πλούτους καὶ δόξας καὶ  
ἀρχῆς πῶς; Ἡ, εἰ μὲν παρὰ πατέρων οἱ πλοῦτοι,  
εὐσημῆσαν τὸν πλούσιον, ὥσπερ καὶ εὐγενῆ τὸν ἐκ  
τοιοῦτων διὰ τὸ γένος τὸ ἐνδοξόν ἔχοντα ἐδήλωσαν  
5 μόνον· εἰ δ' ἐξ ἀνδραγαθίας, εἰ σῶμα συνεργὸν  
γεγένηται, συμβάλλοιτο ἂν οἱ τὴν σιμάματος ἰσχὺν  
ἐργασάμενοι, γονεῖς μὲν πρῶτον, εἶτα, εἴ τι παρὰ<sup>1</sup>  
τῶν τόπων ἔσχε, τὰ οὐράνια καὶ ἡ γῆ· εἰ δὲ ἄνευ  
σώματος ἢ ἀρετῆς, αὐτῇ μόνῃ δεστέον τὸ πλεῖστον  
καί, ὅσα παρὰ τῶν ἀμειψαμένων, συνεβάλλετο.  
10 Οἱ δὲ δόντες εἰ μὲν ἀγαθοί, εἰς ἀρετὴν ἀνακτέον  
καὶ οὕτω τὴν αἰτίαν· εἰ δὲ φαῦλοι, δικαίως δὲ  
δόντες, τῶ ἐν αὐτοῖς βελτίστῳ ἐνεργήσαντι τοῦτο  
γεγονέναι. Εἰ δὲ πονηρὸς ὁ πλουτήσας, τὴν μὲν  
πονηρίαν προηγουμένην καὶ ὄτι<sup>2</sup> τὸ αἴτιον τῆς  
πονηρίας, προσληπτέον δὲ καὶ τοὺς δόντας συναι-  
15 τίους ὡσαύτως γενομένους. Εἰ δ' ἐκ πόνων, οἷον  
ἐκ γεωργίας, ἐπὶ τὸν γεωργόν, συνεργὸν τὸ  
περιέχον γεγενημένον. Εἰ δὲ θησαυρὸν εὖρε,  
συμπεσεῖν τι τῶν ἐκ τοῦ παντός· εἰ δέ, σημαίνεται.

<sup>1</sup> τι παρὰ Bury, H-S: τις ἄρα codd.

<sup>2</sup> ὄτι nunc proponunt Henry et Schwyzer: τι codd.  
τι edd.

<sup>1</sup> For the metaphor of the body as lyre, cp. I4. 16. 23 ff.

badly put together, it may by means of it hinder the activity of the soul which is directed towards it: as when a lyre is not so tuned that it takes the melody accurately so as to make its sounds musical.<sup>1</sup>

14. But how about poverty and wealth and reputations and offices? If people are rich by inheritance from their fathers, the stars announce the rich man, just as they do no more than declare the man of good birth who comes of well-born parents and owes his distinction to his family. But if the wealth comes from manly virtue, then if the body has helped in producing this, those who have produced the body's vigour will have contributed, the parents first, then, if any place contributed anything, the heavenly regions and the earth. But if the virtue arose without the body, then the greatest part must be attributed to virtue alone, and it contributed all that was given by those who rewarded it. If the people who gave the riches were good, in this way, too, the cause must be referred back to virtue; but if they were bad, but were justified in giving the wealth, we must say that this happened by the activity of that which was best in them. But if the man who became rich was wicked his wealth must be attributed to his pre-existent wickedness and whatever was responsible for that wickedness, and we must include also those who gave the wealth, who also share in the responsibility. If a man's riches come from hard work, from farming, for instance, the cause is to be referred to the farmer, with the environment helping. If he found a treasure, we must say that something from the All co-operated; if so, it is indicated [in the heavens]; for

PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 3.

πάντως γὰρ ἀκολουθεῖ ἀλλήλοις πάντα· διὸ καὶ  
 20 πάντως. Εἰ δ' ἀπέβαλέ τις πλοῦτον, εἰ ἀφαιρεθεὶς,  
 ἐπὶ τὸν ἀφελόμενον, κακῆνον ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκείαν  
 ἀρχήν· εἰ δ' ἐν θαλάττῃ, τὰ συμπεσόντα. Τὸ δ'  
 ἔνδοξον ἢ δικαίως ἢ οὐ. Εἰ οὖν δικαίως, τὰ ἔργα  
 καὶ τὸ παρὰ τοῖς δοξάζουσι βέλτιον· εἰ δ' οὐ  
 25 δικαίως, ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν τιμώντων ἀδικίαν. Καὶ  
 ἀρχῆς δὲ πέρι ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος· ἢ γὰρ προσηκόντως  
 ἢ οὐ· καὶ θάτερον μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον τῶν ἐλομένων,  
 ἢ ἐπ' αὐτὸν διαπραξάμενον ἑτέρων συστάσει καὶ  
 ὀπωσοῦν ἄλλως. Περὶ δὲ γάμων ἢ προαίρεσις ἢ  
 συντυχία καὶ σύμπτωσις ἐκ τῶν ὄλων. Παίδων  
 30 δὲ γενέσεις ἀκόλουθοι τούτοις, καὶ ἢ πέπλασται  
 κατὰ λόγον ἐμποδίσαντος οὐδενός, ἢ χεῖρον ἔσχε  
 γενομένου ἔνδοι κωλύματός τινος ἢ παρ' αὐτὴν τὴν  
 κύουσαν ἢ τοῦ περιέχοντος οὕτω διατεθέντος ὡς  
 ἀσυμμέτρως πρὸς τῆνδε τὴν κύησιν ἐσχηκός.

15. Ὁ δὲ Πλάτων πρὸ τῆς περιφορᾶς τοῦ  
 ἀτράκτου δοῦς κλήρους καὶ προαιρέσεις συνεργούς  
 ὑστέρον δίδωσι τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀτράκτῳ, ὡς πάντως  
 τὰ αἰρεθέντα συναποτελοῦντας· ἐπεὶ καὶ ὁ δαίμων  
 5 συνεργός εἰς πλήρωσιν αὐτῶν. Ἄλλ' οἱ κλήροι  
 τίνες; Ἡ <τὸ><sup>1</sup> τοῦ παντὸς ἔχοντος οὕτως, ὡς τότε

<sup>1</sup> <τὸ> Müller, H-S<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Republic X. 617D-E.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 620D-E.

ON WHETHER THE STARS ARE CAUSES

all things without exception are connected with each other; so everything without exception is indicated. If someone loses his wealth, then if it is taken away, the taker is responsible, and his own principle is responsible for him: if it is lost in the sea, the circumstances are responsible. And as for fame, a man is either rightly famous or not. If rightly, then it is his achievements that are responsible and that which is better in those who glorify him; but if not rightly, it is the unrighteousness of those who honour him that is responsible. The same argument applies to office: it is either appropriately conferred or not—in the one case the conferment is to be attributed to that which is better in the selectors; in the other to the man himself who has managed to succeed in getting it by the co-operation of others, or in some kind of other way. About marriages, the causes are free choice, or chance coming together with some incidental influence from the universal order. And births of children follow upon marriages, and the child is either formed according to pattern, when there is no hindrance, or it is in a worse state when some obstacle has occurred within, either due to the mother herself or because the environment is so disposed as to be out of harmony with this particular birth.

15. Plato gives the souls lots and choices before the circling of the Spindle,<sup>1</sup> and afterwards gives them the beings on the Spindle as helpers, to bring to accomplishment in every way what they have chosen: since the guardian spirit also co-operates in the fulfilment of their choices.<sup>2</sup> But what are the lots? Being born when the All was in the state in which it

εἶχεν, ὅτε εἰσῆσαν εἰς τὸ σῶμα, γενέσθαι, καὶ τὸ  
 εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸδε τὸ σῶμα καὶ τῶνδε γονέων καὶ  
 ἐν τοιούτοις τόποις γίνεσθαι καὶ ὅλως, ὡς  
 εἴπομεν, τὰ ἔξω. Πάντα δὲ ὁμοῦ γενόμενα καὶ  
 10 οἶον συγκλωσθέντα διὰ τῆς μᾶς τῶν λεγομένων  
 Μοιρῶν δεδήλωται ἐπὶ τε ἐκάστων ἐπὶ τε τῶν  
 ὅλων· ἢ δὲ Λάχεσις τοὺς κλήρους· καὶ τὰ  
 συμπεσόντα τάδε πάντως ἀναγκάιον τὴν Ἄτροπον  
 ἐπάγειν. Τῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων οἱ μὲν γίνονται τῶν  
 ἐκ τοῦ ὅλου καὶ τῶν ἔξω, ὡσπερ γοητευθέντες, καὶ  
 15 ὀλίγα ἢ οὐδὲν αὐτοί· οἱ δὲ κρατοῦντες τούτων καὶ  
 ὑπεραίροντες οἶον τῇ κεφαλῇ πρὸς τὸ ἄνω καὶ ἐκτὸς  
 ψυχῆς ἀποσώζουσι τὸ ἄριστον καὶ <τὸ><sup>1</sup> ἀρχαῖον  
 τῆς ψυχικῆς οὐσίας. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ νομιστέον τοιοῦτον  
 εἶναι ψυχὴν, οἶον, ὃ τι ἂν ἔξωθεν πάθῃ, ταύτην  
 φύσιν ἴσχειν, μόνην τῶν πάντων οἰκείαν φύσιν  
 20 οὐκ ἔχουσαν· ἀλλὰ χρὴ πολὺ πρότερον αὐτὴν ἢ  
 τὰ ἄλλα, ἅτε ἀρχῆς λόγον ἔχουσαν, πολλὰς οἰκείας  
 δυνάμεις πρὸς ἐνεργείας τὰς κατὰ φύσιν ἔχειν· οὐ  
 γὰρ δὴ οἷόν τε οὐσίαν οὔσαν μὴ μετὰ τοῦ εἶναι  
 καὶ ὀρέξεις καὶ πράξεις καὶ τὸ πρὸς τὸ εὖ κεκτῆσθαι.  
 Τὸ μὲν οὖν συναμφοτέρων ἐκ τοῦ συναμφοτέρου  
 25 τῆς φύσεως καὶ τοιόνδε καὶ ἔργα ἔχει τοιαύδε·

<sup>1</sup> <τὸ> Kirchhoff, H-S<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> For the allegorical interpretation of the names of the Fates, cp. Cornutus *Theologiae Graecae Compendium* ch. 13 (p. 13, Lang). Here, as in Cornutus, they stand for different aspects of the same power of destiny, Clotho (only indirectly

was when they came into the body, and coming into this particular body and being born of these particular parents, and in such and such a place, and in general what we call the external circumstances. That all happenings form a unity and are as it were spun together, in the cases of individuals as well as wholes, is signified by one of the Fates, as they are called. Lachesis signifies the lots. And it is altogether necessary that it should be Atropos who brings in these concurrent circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Of men some are born belonging to the powers that come from the whole and to external circumstances, as if under an enchantment, and are in few things or nothing themselves. Others master these powers and circumstances and rise above them, so to speak, by their heads,<sup>2</sup> towards the upper world and beyond soul, and so preserve the best and ancient part of the soul's substance. For we must not think of the soul as of such a kind that the nature which it has is just whatever affection it receives from outside, and that alone of all things it has no nature of its own; but it, far before anything else, since it has the status of a principle, must have many powers of its own for its natural activities. It is certainly not possible for it, since it is a substance, not to possess along with its being desires and actions and the tendency towards its good. The compound entity results from a composition of its nature and is of this particular [composite] kind and has these particular works. But any

referred to here) for the way things are "spun together," Lachesis for destiny as "lot," Atropos for the way our circumstances are unchangeably determined.

<sup>2</sup> The *Phaedrus* myth again (248A1-3).

ψυχὴ δὲ εἴ τις χωρίζεται, χωριστὰ καὶ ἴδια ἐνεργεῖ  
τὰ τοῦ σώματος πάθη οὐκ αὐτῆς τιθεμένη, ἅτε  
ἤδη ὀρώσα, ὡς τὸ μὲν ἄλλο, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο.

16. Ἀλλὰ τί τὸ μικτὸν καὶ τί τὸ μὴ καὶ τί τὸ  
χωριστὸν καὶ ἀχώριστον, ὅταν ἐν σώματι ᾗ, καὶ  
ὅλως τί τὸ ζῶον ἀρχὴν ἑτέραν ὑστερον λαβοῦσι  
ζητητέον· οὐ γὰρ ἅπαντες τὴν αὐτὴν δόξαν ἔσχον  
5 περὶ τούτου. Νῦν δὲ ἔτι λέγωμεν πῶς τὸ <sup>1</sup> "κατὰ  
λόγον ψυχῆς διοικούσης τὸ πᾶν" εἴπομεν. Πότερα  
γὰρ ἕκαστα οἶον ἐπ' εὐθείας ποιούσα, ἄνθρωπον,  
εἶτα ἵππον καὶ ἄλλο ζῶον καὶ δὴ καὶ θηρία, πῦρ  
δὲ καὶ γῆν πρότερον, εἶτα συμπεσόντα ταῦτα  
10 τὴν συμπλοκὴν τὴν ἐκ τούτων ἰδοῦσα μόνον καὶ  
τὰ ὑστερον συμβαίνοντα αἰεὶ γίνεσθαι, οὐδὲν ἔτι  
συμβαλλομένη πρὸς τὰ ἐφεξῆς, ἀλλ' ἢ μόνον ζῶων  
γενέσεις τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς πάλιν ποιούσα καὶ τοῖς  
πάθεσι τοῖς δι' ἀλλήλων αὐτὰ συγχωροῦσα; "Ἡ  
αἰτίαν λέγοντες καὶ τῶν οὕτω γινομένων, ὅτι παρ'  
15 αὐτῆς γενόμενα τὰ ἐφεξῆς ἐργάζεται; "Ἡ καὶ τὸ  
τόδε τόδε ποιῆσαι ἢ παθεῖν ἔχει ὁ λόγος οὐκ εἰκῆ  
οὐδὲ κατ' ἐπιτυχίαν οὐδὲ <sup>2</sup> τῶνδε γινομένων, ἀλλ'

<sup>1</sup> πῶς τὸ Creuzer, H-S: τὸ πῶς codd.

<sup>2</sup> οὐδὲ Kirshhoff, H-S<sup>2</sup>: οὐδὲν codd.

<sup>1</sup> An announcement of the next treatise (I 1).

<sup>2</sup> Cp. ch. 13. 3-4 and *Phaedrus* 246C1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Harder rejects πῦρ δὲ καὶ γῆν πρότερον, perhaps rightly; it seems oddly inconsequent and inappropriate; but Plotinus

soul which is separating itself has separate activities  
of its own and does not consider the body's affections  
as belonging to itself, because it already sees that  
body is one thing and soul is another

16. But what the mixed is and what the unmixed,  
and what the separated is and what the unseparated,  
when the soul is in the body, and in general what the  
living being is, are questions which we must enquire  
into afterwards, taking a different starting-point;<sup>1</sup>  
for everyone does not hold the same opinion on this  
subject. But now, continuing our present discussion,  
let us state in what sense we speak of "soul directing  
the All according to rational plan."<sup>2</sup> Does soul,  
then, make individual things, so to speak, in a  
straight line one after another, man, then horse and  
some other living being, and wild beasts too, and fire  
and earth first,<sup>3</sup> and then see these coming together  
and destroying or benefiting each other, only seeing  
their interweaving and the continual succession of its  
consequences, making no new contribution to what  
happens after but only again causing the births of  
living creatures from the original ones and giving  
them up to what they experience from their action  
upon each other? Or do we mean that soul is the  
cause of the things which happen in this way, be-  
cause the beings produced by it accomplish what  
happens in consequence of their production? Or  
does the "rational plan" include this particular  
thing's acting or being acted on in this particular  
way, so that not even these particular events happen  
at random or by chance but occur in the way they do

is sometimes inconsequent and it seems safer to keep the  
words in the text.

ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὕτως; Ἄρ' οὖν τῶν λόγων αὐτὰ  
 ποιούντων; Ἡ ὄντων μὲν τῶν λόγων, οὐχ ὡς  
 ποιούντων δέ, ἀλλ' ὡς εἰδόντων, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς  
 20 ψυχῆς τῆς τοὺς λόγους τοὺς γεννητικοὺς ἐχούσης  
 εἰδυίας τὰ ἐκ τῶν ἔργων συμβαίνοντα αὐτῆς ἀπάν-  
 των· τῶν γὰρ αὐτῶν συμπιπτόντων καὶ περιεστη-  
 κότων τὰ αὐτὰ πάντως προσήκει ἀποτελεῖσθαι· ἂ  
 δὴ παραλαβοῦσα ἢ προϊδοῦσα ἢ ψυχὴ ἐπὶ τούτοις  
 25 τὰ ἐφεξῆς περαίνει καὶ συνείρει, προηγούμενα οὖν  
 καὶ ἐπακολουθοῦντα πάντως καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τούτοις  
 τὰ ἐφεξῆς προηγούμενα, ὡς ἐκ τῶν παρόντων·  
 ὅθεν ἴσως αἰεὶ χεῖρω τὰ ἐφεξῆς· οἷον ἄνδρες ἄλλοι  
 πάλαι, νῦν δὲ ἄλλοι, τῷ μεταξὺ καὶ αἰεὶ ἀναγκαίῳ  
 τῶν λόγων εἰκόντων τοῖς τῆς ὕλης παθήμασι.  
 30 Συνορῶσα οὖν αἰεὶ ἄλλα, τὰ δ' ἄλλα, καὶ παρα-  
 κολουθοῦσα τοῖς τῶν αὐτῆς ἔργων παθήμασι τὸν  
 βίον τοιοῦτον ἔχει καὶ οὐκ ἀπήλλακται τῆς ἐπὶ τῷ  
 ἔργῳ φροντίδος τέλος ἐπιβεῖσα τῷ ποιήματι καὶ  
 ὅπως ἔξει καλῶς καὶ εἰς αἰεὶ ἅπαξ μηχανησαμένη,  
 οἷα δὲ τις γεωργὸς σπείρας ἢ καὶ φυτεύσας αἰεὶ  
 35 διορθοῦται, ὅσα χειμῶνες ἐβλαψαν ὑέτιοι ἢ κρυμῶν  
 συνέχεια ἢ ἀνέμων ζάλαι. Ἄλλ' εἰ ταῦτα ἄτοπα,  
 ἐκεῖνο δεῖ λέγειν, ὅτι ἤδη ἐγνωσται ἢ καὶ κέεται  
 ἐν τοῖς λόγοις καὶ ἡ φθορὰ καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ κακίας  
 ἔργα; Ἄλλ' εἰ τοῦτο, καὶ τὰς κακίας τοὺς λόγους

by necessity? Is it, then, the rational forming principles which cause these happenings? The forming principles certainly exist, but not as causing but as knowing—or rather the soul which contains the generative rational principles knows the consequences which come from all its works; when the same things come together, the same circumstances arise, then it is altogether appropriate that the same results should follow. Soul takes over or foresees these antecedent conditions and taking account of them accomplishes what follows and links up the chain of consequences, bringing antecedents and consequents into complete connection, and again linking to the antecedents the causes which precede them in order, as far as it can in the existing circumstances. This is, perhaps, why what comes later in the series is always worse. Men, for instance, were quite different once from what they are now, since by reason of the space between them and their origins and the continual pressure of necessity their forming principles have yielded to the affections of matter. So soul sees the continual succession of different events and, following what happens to its works, has a corresponding kind of life, and is not freed from care for its work when it has set the crown on its achievement and has arranged once for all that it shall be in a good state for ever; but it is like a farmer who, when he has sown or planted, is always putting right what rainstorms or continuous frosts or gales of wind have spoiled. But if this account is absurd, then must we maintain the alternative, that corruption and the works that come from evil are known and already present in the forming principles? But if this is so, then we shall be

ποιεῖν φήσομεν, καίτοι ἐν ταῖς τέχναις καὶ τοῖς  
 40 λόγοις αὐτῶν οὐκ ἔνι ἀμαρτία οὐδὲ παρὰ τὴν  
 τέχνην οὐδ' ἢ φθορὰ τοῦ κατὰ τέχνην. Ἄλλ'  
 ἐνταῦθά τις ἔρει μὴ εἶναι μηδὲν παρὰ<sup>1</sup> φύσιν μηδὲ  
 κακὸν τῷ ὄλῳ· ἀλλ' ὅμως τὸ χεῖρον καὶ τὸ  
 βέλτιον συγχωρήσεται. Τί οὖν, εἰ τῷ ὄλῳ καὶ τὸ  
 χεῖρον συνεργόν, καὶ οὐ δεῖ πάντα καλὰ εἶναι;  
 45 Ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ ἐναντία συντελεῖ καὶ οὐκ ἄνευ τούτων  
 κόσμος· καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα ζώων οὕτω·  
 καὶ τὰ μὲν βελτίω ἀναγκάζει καὶ πλάττει ὁ λόγος,  
 ὅσα δὲ μὴ τοιαῦτα, δυνάμει κείται ἐν τοῖς λόγοις,  
 ἐνεργεία δὲ ἐν τοῖς γινομένοις, οὐδὲν ἔτι δεομένης  
 50 ἐκείνης ποιεῖν οὐδ' ἀνακινεῖν τοὺς λόγους ἤδη τῆς  
 ὕλης τῷ σεισμῷ τῷ ἐκ τῶν προηγουμένων λόγων  
 καὶ τὰ παρ' αὐτῆς ποιούσης τὰ χεῖρω, κρατουμένης  
 δ' αὐτὴν οὐδὲν ἤττον πρὸς τὰ βελτίω· ὥστε ἐν ἐκ  
 πάντων ἄλλως ἐκατέρως γινομένων καὶ ἄλλως αὐτὴν  
 ἐν τοῖς λόγοις.

17. Πότερα δὲ οἱ λόγοι οὗτοι οἱ ἐν ψυχῇ  
 νοήματα; Ἄλλὰ πῶς κατὰ τὰ νοήματα ποιήσει;  
 Ὁ γὰρ λόγος ἐν ὕλῃ ποιεῖ, καὶ τὸ ποιοῦν φυσικῶς  
 οὐ νόησις οὐδὲ ὄρασις, ἀλλὰ δύναμις τρεπτικὴ τῆς  
 5 ὕλης, οὐκ εἰδυῖα ἀλλὰ δρώσα μόνον, οἷον τύπον καὶ  
 σχῆμα ἐν ὕδατι, [ὥσπερ κύκλος], ἄλλου ἐνδόντος

<sup>1</sup> παρὰ Ficinus, H-S: κατὰ codd.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Plato, *Republic* I 342B3.

asserting that the forming principles are the causes  
 of evil, though in the arts and their principles there  
 is no error and nothing contrary to the art or any  
 corruption of the work of art.<sup>1</sup> But here someone will  
 say that there is nothing contrary to nature or evil  
 in the Whole; all the same, he will admit that there  
 is worse and better. Suppose, then, the worse helps  
 towards the completion of the Whole, and every-  
 thing ought not to be good? For the opposites, too,  
 co-operate for the perfection of the universe, and  
 without them there is no universal order; yes, and  
 it is so with particular living beings too. The form-  
 ing principle compels the better things to exist and  
 shapes them; the things which are not so, are present  
 potentially in the principles, but actually in what  
 comes to be; there is no need then any more for soul  
 to make or to stir up the forming principles as matter  
 is already, by the disturbance which comes from the  
 preceding principles, making the things which come  
 from it, the worse ones; though it is none the less  
 overruled towards the production of the better. So  
 there is one universe composed of all the things that  
 have come to be, differently in each of these two ways,  
 and that exist differently again in the forming prin-  
 ciples.

17. Are these forming principles which are in soul  
 thoughts? But, then, how will it make things in  
 accordance with these thoughts? For it is in matter  
 that the forming principle makes things, and that  
 which makes on the level of nature is not thought or  
 vision, but a power which manipulates matter, which  
 does not know but only acts, like an impression or a  
 figure in water; something else, different from what

εἰς τοῦτο τῆς φυτικῆς δυνάμεως καὶ γεννητικῆς  
 λεγομένης τὸ ποιεῖν. Εἰ τοῦτο, ποιήσει τὸ ἡγού-  
 μενον τῆς ψυχῆς τῷ τρέπειν<sup>1</sup> τὴν ἔνυλον καὶ  
 γεννητικὴν ψυχὴν. Τρέφει οὖν λογισαμένη αὐτή;  
 10 Ἄλλ' εἰ λογισαμένη, ἀναφορὰν ἔξει πρότερον εἰς  
 ἄλλο ἢ εἰς τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ. Ἄλλ' εἰς τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ  
 οὐδὲν δεῖ λογισμῶν· οὐ γὰρ οὗτος τρέφει, ἀλλὰ τὸ  
 ἐν αὐτῇ ἔχον τοὺς λόγους· τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ δυνατώτε-  
 ρον καὶ ποιεῖν ἐν ψυχῇ δυνάμενον. Κατ' εἶδη ἄρα  
 15 διδόναι. Νοῦς δὲ ψυχῇ δίδωσι τῇ τοῦ παντός,  
 ψυχῇ δὲ παρ' αὐτῆς ἢ μετὰ νοῦν τῇ μετ' αὐτὴν  
 ἐλάμπουσα καὶ τυποῦσα, ἢ δὲ ὡσπερ εἰ ἐπιταχθεῖσα  
 ἤδη ποιεῖ· ποιεῖ δὲ τὰ μὲν ἀνεμποδίστως, τὰ δὲ  
 ἐμποδισθεῖσα χεῖρω. Ἄτε δὲ δύναμιν εἰς τὸ ποιεῖν  
 20 οὐ μόνον καθ' ἃ ἔλαβε ποιήσει, ἀλλὰ γένοιτο ἂν τι  
 καὶ παρ' αὐτῆς καὶ τοῦτο δηλονότι χεῖρον· καὶ  
 ζῶον μὲν, ζῶον δὲ ἀτελέστερον καὶ δυσχεραῖνον  
 τὴν αὐτοῦ ζωήν, ἄτε χεῖριστον καὶ δύσκολον δὲ  
 καὶ ἄγριον καὶ ἐξ ὕλης χείρονος οἶον ὑποστάθμης  
 25 καὶ ταῦτα παρέξει καὶ αὐτῇ τῷ ὅλῳ.

<sup>1</sup> τρέπειν Ficinus, H-S<sup>2</sup>: τρέφειν codd.

<sup>1</sup> If the text is sound this translation, suggested by Henry-Schwyzler in their critical note, is probably right, but the word-order is extraordinarily unnatural and there is a good deal to

is called the power of growth and generation, gives it what is required for this making.<sup>1</sup> If this is so, the ruling principle of the soul will make by manipulating the generative soul in matter. Will it, then, manipulate it as the result of having reasoned? But if it is after having reasoned, it will first refer to something else, or to what it has in itself. But if it refers to what it has in itself, there is no need of reasoning. For it is not reasoning that manipulates, but the part of the soul which possesses the forming principles: for this is both more powerful, and is able to make in the soul. It makes, then, according to forms: that is, it must give what it receives from Intellect. Intellect gives to the Soul of the All, and Soul (the one which comes next after Intellect) gives from itself to the soul next after it, enlightening it and impressing form on it, and this last soul immediately makes, as if under orders. It makes some things without hindrance, but in others, the worse ones, it meets obstruction. Since its power to make is derived, and it is filled with forming principles which are not the original ones, it will not simply make according to the forms which it has received but there would be a contribution of its own, and this is obviously worse. Its product is a living being, but a very imperfect one, and one which finds its own life disgusting since it is the worst of living things, ill-conditioned and savage, made of inferior matter, a sort of sediment of the prior realities, bitter and embittering. This is the lowest soul's contribution to the Whole.

be said for Kirchlhoff's deletion of τῆς . . . λεγομένης as a gloss, which is accepted by Cilento.

18. Ἄρ' οὖν τὰ κακὰ τὰ ἐν τῷ παντὶ ἀναγκαῖα,  
 ὅτι ἔπεται τοῖς προηγουμένοις; Ἡ ὅτι, καὶ εἰ μὴ  
 ταῦτα ἦν, ἀτελὲς ἂν ἦν τὸ πᾶν. Καὶ γὰρ χρεῖαν  
 τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν ἢ καὶ πάντα παρέχεται τῷ ὅλῳ,  
 5 οἷον τὰ τῶν ἰοβόλων, λαμβάνει δὲ τὰ πλείστα διὰ τί·  
 ἐπεὶ καὶ τὴν κακίαν αὐτὴν ἔχειν πολλὰ χρῆσιμα  
 καὶ πολλῶν πεινητικὴν <εἶναι><sup>1</sup> καλῶν, οἷον κάλλους  
 τεχνητοῦ παντός, καὶ κινεῖν εἰς φρόνησιν μὴ ἐῶσαν  
 ἐπ' ἀδείας εὐδεῖν. Εἰ δὲ ταῦτα ὀρθῶς εἴρηται,  
 δεῖ τὴν τοῦ παντός ψυχὴν θεωρεῖν μὲν τὰ ἄριστα  
 10 αἰεὶ ἰεμένην πρὸς τὴν νοητὴν φύσιν καὶ τὸν θεόν,  
 πληρουμένης δὲ αὐτῆς καὶ πεπληρωμένης οἷον  
 ἀπομειστομένης αὐτῆς τὸ ἐξ αὐτῆς ἕνδαλμα καὶ  
 τὸ ἔσχατον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸ κάτω τὸ ποιοῦν τοῦτο  
 εἶναι. Ποιητὴς οὖν ἔσχατος οὗτος· ἐπὶ δ' αὐτῷ  
 τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ πρῶτως πληρούμενον παρὰ νοῦ· ἐπὶ  
 15 πᾶσι δὲ νοῦς δημιουργός, ὃς καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ τῇ μετ'  
 αὐτὸν δίδωσιν ὧν ἕκνη ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ. Εἰκότως οὖν  
 λέγεται οὗτος ὁ κόσμος εἰκὼν αἰεὶ εἰκονιζόμενος,  
 ἐστηκότων μὲν τοῦ πρώτου καὶ δευτέρου, τοῦ δὲ  
 τρίτου ἐστηκότος μὲν καὶ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ ὕλη  
 20 καὶ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς κινουμένου. Ἔως γὰρ ἂν  
 ἢ νοῦς καὶ ψυχὴ, ρείσσονται οἱ λόγοι εἰς τοῦτο τὸ  
 εἶδος ψυχῆς, ὡσπερ, ἔως ἂν ἢ ἥλιος, πάντα τὰ ἀπ'  
 αὐτοῦ φῶτα.

<sup>1</sup> <εἶναι> Müller, H. S<sup>2</sup>.

18. Then are the evils in the All necessary, be-  
 cause they follow on the prior realities? Rather  
 because if they did not exist the All would be im-  
 perfect. Most of them, even all of them, contribute  
 something useful to the Whole—poisonous snakes do,  
 for instance—though generally the reason why  
 remains obscure. Even moral evil itself has many  
 advantages and is productive of much excellence,  
 for example, all the beauty of art,<sup>1</sup> and rouses us to  
 serious thought about our way of living, not allowing  
 us to slumber complacently. If this is correct, it  
 must be that the Soul of the All contemplates the  
 best, always aspiring to the intelligible nature and to  
 God, and that when it is full, filled right up to the  
 brim, its trace, its last and lowest expression, is this  
 productive principle that we are discussing. This,  
 then, is the ultimate maker; over it is that part of  
 soul which is primarily filled from Intellect: over all  
 is Intellect the Craftsman, who gives to the soul  
 which comes next those gifts whose traces are in the  
 third. This visible universe, then, is properly called  
 an image<sup>2</sup> always in process of being made; its first  
 and second principles are at rest, the third at rest too,  
 but also in motion, incidentally and in matter. As  
 long as Intellect and Soul exist, the forming principles  
 will flow into this lower form of soul, just as, as long  
 as the sun exists, all its rays will shine from it.

<sup>1</sup> Is Plotinus thinking here, perhaps, of tragic poetry? If so, the argument shows a startling reversal of Plato's standpoint. Plato in *Republic* II refused to allow poets to portray moral evil; Plotinus here seems to be justifying the existence of moral evil in the universe because it produces art.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. the end of the *Timaeus* 92C7.



## II. 4. ON MATTER

### *Introductory Note*

THE title of this treatise (No. 12 in Porphyry's chronological order) is given by Porphyry in the *Life* as *περὶ τῶν δύο ἕλων* (On the Two Kinds of Matter); in the MSS of the *Enneads* and the ancient tables of contents (*Pinax, Summarium*) it appears simply as *On Matter*. It is referred to by Plotinus himself in I. 8. 15. 2 . . . *δεικτέον ἀπὸ ἐκ τῶν περὶ ἕλης λόγων* . . . but Harder is surely right in saying that there is no question of a title there—the phrase simply means “from our discussions about matter.” Plotinus in fact, we know (*Life* ch. 4), gave no titles to his treatises: and the title given in the *Life* to this one seems preferable, because it describes the contents better, since the first part of the treatise is devoted to intelligible matter, the second to the matter of the sense-world. The treatise is a good example of Plotinus's method of work at its most professional and technical, a close and critical discussion of the views of the Stoics and of Aristotle. As often, he is particularly concerned to carry through a critical rethinking of Aristotle's doctrine designed to adapt it to Platonism as he understood it. The main points on which he differs from Aristotle in this treatise are: (1) he accepts matter in the intelligible world; the objections to belief in its existence stated in ch. 2. and refuted in the following chapters are in substance Aristotelian; (2) he identifies matter in the sense-world with privation; this is established against Aristotle in chs. 14–end, as is essential if Plotinus is to maintain his doctrine that matter is the principle of evil, the ultimate negativity,

## ON MATTER

which appears clearly at the end of the treatise. On the other hand, Plotinus is maintaining Aristotle's doctrine against the Stoics when he argues that matter is incorporeal and without any sort of dimension (chs. 1, 8–12).

### *Synopsis*

Matter is the substrate and receptacle of forms. Diverse views of its nature; corporeal (Stoics) incorporeal (Platonists and Aristotelians). The Platonist doctrine of intelligible matter (ch. 1). Objections to the existence of intelligible matter (ch. 2). Refutation of the objections and explanation of the true nature and function of intelligible matter (chs. 3–5). Matter in the sense-world, Aristotelian arguments for its existence (ch. 6). Criticism of pre-Socratic conceptions, also from Aristotle (ch. 7). Arguments to show that matter is incorporeal and without size, and that the conception of a sizeless incorporeal matter has a real meaning and philosophical value (chs. 8–12). Neither is matter quality, either positive or negative (ch. 13). As against Aristotle, it is identical with privation, (chs. 14–16), and so is absolute negativity and evil (ch. 16).

#### II. 4. (12) ΠΕΡΙ ΥΛΗΣ

1. Τὴν λεγομένην ὕλην ὑποκείμενον τι καὶ ὑποδοχὴν εἰδῶν λέγοντες εἶναι κοινόν τινα τοῦτον λόγον περὶ αὐτῆς πάντες λέγουσιν, ὅσοι εἰς ἔννοιαν ἦλθον τῆς τοιαύτης φύσεως, καὶ μέχρι τούτου τὴν 5 αὐτὴν φέρονται· τίς δὲ ἐστὶν αὕτη ἢ ὑποκειμένη φύσις καὶ πῶς δεκτικὴ καὶ τίνων, τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη ζητοῦντες διέστησαν. Καὶ οἱ μὲν σώματα μόνον τὰ ὄντα εἶναι θέμενοι καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐν τούτοις μίαν τε τὴν ὕλην λέγουσι καὶ τοῖς στοιχείοις ὑποβεβλήσθαι καὶ αὐτὴν εἶναι τὴν οὐσίαν, τὰ δ' 10 ἄλλα πάντα οἷον πάθη ταύτης καὶ πῶς ἔχουσιν αὐτὴν καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα εἶναι. Καὶ δὴ καὶ τολμῶσι καὶ μέχρι θεῶν αὐτὴν ἄγειν καὶ τέλος δὴ καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτῶν τὸν θεὸν ὕλην ταύτην πῶς ἔχουσιν εἶναι. Διδάσκει δὲ καὶ σῶμα αὐτῆ ἄπειρον αὐτὸ σῶμα λέγοντες καὶ μέγεθος δέ. Οἱ δὲ ἀσώματων

<sup>1</sup> ὑποκείμενον is Aristotle's word (cp., e.g., *Physics* A. 9. 192a33), ὑποδοχὴ Plato's (*Timaeus* 49A6). The two conceptions, of course, differ from each other considerably more than this summary definition would suggest.

#### II. 4. ON MATTER

1. What is called "matter" is said to be some sort of "substrate" and "receptacle" of forms;<sup>1</sup> this account is common to all those who have arrived at a conception of a nature of this kind, and as far as this they all go the same way. But they disagree as soon as they begin to pursue the further investigation into what this underlying nature is and how it is receptive and what of. Those who adopt the position that realities are exclusively bodies and that substance consists in bodies say there is one matter and that it underlies the elements and is itself substance; all other things are, so to speak, affections of matter, and the elements, too, are matter in a certain state. They even dare to take matter as far as the gods, and finally, even [to say] that their God himself is this matter in a certain state.<sup>2</sup> And they give it a body too, for they say that it is a body without quality and a magnitude.<sup>3</sup> But others<sup>4</sup> say that

<sup>2</sup> εἶναι cannot be dependent on τολμῶσι: a verb of saying is required. Henry and Schwyzer tentatively suggest ἀντρέω for αὐτῶν. But this is rather far fetched, and it seems to me possible that this is a piece of careless writing by Plotinus himself.

<sup>3</sup> These are the Stoics: cp. *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* II. 316, 309, 326.

<sup>4</sup> Platonists and Aristotelians.

15 λέγουσι καὶ ταύτην οὐ μίαν τινὰς αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ  
ταύτην μὲν τοῖς σώμασιν ὑποβεβλήσθαι καὶ αὐτοὶ  
περὶ ἧς οἱ πρότεροι λέγουσιν, ἑτέραν μέντοι προτέ-  
ραν ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ὑποβεβλημένην τοῖς ἐκεῖ εἶδει  
καὶ ταῖς ἀσωμάτοις οὐσίαις.

2. Διὸ πρότερον ζητητέον περὶ ταύτης εἰ ἔστι,  
καὶ τίς οὐσα τυγχάνει, καὶ πῶς ἔστιν. Εἰ δὴ  
ἀόριστόν τι καὶ ἄμορφον δεῖ τὸ τῆς ὕλης εἶναι, ἐν  
δὲ τοῖς ἐκεῖ ἀρίστοις οὖσιν οὐδὲν ἀόριστον οὐδὲ  
5 ἄμορφον, οὐδ' ἂν ὕλη ἐκεῖ εἴη· καὶ εἰ ἀπλοῦν  
ἕκαστον, οὐδ' ἂν δέοι ὕλης, ἢ ἐξ αὐτῆς καὶ ἄλλου  
τὸ σύνθετον· καὶ γινομένοις μὲν ὕλης δεῖ καὶ ἐξ  
ἑτέρων ἕτερα ποιουμένοις, ἀφ' ὧν καὶ ἡ τῶν  
αἰσθητῶν ὕλη ἐνοήθη, μὴ γινομένοις δὲ οὐ. Πόθεν  
δὲ ἐλήλυθε καὶ ὑπέστη; Εἰ γὰρ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὑπό  
10 τινος· εἰ δὲ αἰδιος, καὶ ἀρχαὶ πλείους καὶ κατὰ  
συντυχίαν τὰ πρῶτα. Καὶ εἶδος δὲ προσέληθ, τὸ  
σύνθετον ἔσται σῶμα· ὥστε κακεῖ σῶμα.

3. Πρῶτον οὖν λεκτέον ὡς οὐ πανταχοῦ τὸ  
ἀόριστον ἀτιμαστέον, οὐδὲ ὁ ἂν ἄμορφον ἦ τῇ

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that Plotinus is making a distinction between Platonists and Aristotelians here. The only incorporeal beings whose existence was recognised by Aristotle were pure forms (intelligences), not composites of form and matter (cp. *Met. A.* 6. 1071b2). Aristotle speaks of ὕλη νοητή in the *Metaphysics* (*Z.* 10. 1036a9-12, 11. 1037a4-5, *H.* 6. 1045a33-37), and Plotinus may have taken the term from these passages. But the senses in which Aristotle uses it (see

matter is incorporeal, and some of them<sup>1</sup> that this incorporeal matter is not one, but they, too, maintain that the same kind of matter underlies bodies which the people mentioned before speak of, but that there is another, prior, kind in the intelligible world which underlies the forms there and the incorporeal substances.

2. So first we must enquire about this second matter, whether it exists, and what sort of thing it is, and how it exists. If what is of the matter kind must be something undefined and shapeless, and there is nothing undefined or shapeless among the beings there, which are the best, there would not be matter there. And if every intelligible being is simple, there would be no need of matter, so that the composite being might come from it and from something else. And there is need of matter for beings that come into existence and are made into one thing after another—this was what led people to conceive the matter of beings perceived by the senses—but not for beings that do not come into existence. And where did it come from, from where did it get its being? If it came to be, it was by some agency; but if it was eternal, there would be several principles and the primary beings would exist by chance. And if form comes to matter, the composite being will be a body; so that there will be body in the intelligible world too.

3. First, then, we must say that we should not in every case despise the undefined or anything of which

Ross's note on the passages from *Z.* in his edition of the *Metaphysics*, Vol. II, pp. 199-200) are very remote from that in which Plotinus understands it.

5 *ἑαυτοῦ ἐπινοία, εἰ μέλλοι παρέχειν αὐτὸ τοῖς πρὸ  
 αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἀρίστοις· οἷόν τι καὶ ψυχὴ πρὸς  
 νοῦν καὶ λόγον πέφυκε μορφουμένη παρὰ τούτων  
 καὶ εἰς εἶδος βέλτιον ἀγομένη· ἐν τε τοῖς νοητοῖς  
 τὸ σύνθετον ἐτέρως, οὐχ ὡς τὰ σώματα· ἐπεὶ καὶ  
 λόγοι σύνθετοι καὶ ἐνεργεία δὲ σύνθετον ποιούσι  
 τὴν ἐνεργοῦσαν εἰς εἶδος φύσιν. Εἰ δὲ καὶ πρὸς  
 ἄλλο καὶ παρ' ἄλλου, καὶ μᾶλλον. Ἡ δὲ τῶν  
 10 *γγυνομένων ἕλη αἰεὶ ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο εἶδος ἴσχει, τῶν  
 δὲ αἰδιῶν ἢ αὐτῆ ταῦτὸν αἰεὶ. Τάχα δὲ ἀνάπαυιν  
 ἢ ἐνταῦθα. Ἐνταῦθα μὲν γὰρ παρὰ μέρος πάντα  
 καὶ ἐν ἐκάστοτε· διὸ οὐδὲν ἐμμένει ἄλλου ἄλλο  
 ἐξωθοῦντος· διὸ οὐ ταῦτὸν αἰεὶ. Ἐκεῖ δὲ ἅμα  
 πάντα· διὸ οὐκ ἔχει εἰς ὃ μεταβάλλοι, ἤδη γὰρ  
 15 *ἔχει πάντα. Οὐδέποτε ὄν ἄμορφος οὐδε<sup>1</sup> ἐκεῖ ἢ  
 ἐκεῖ, ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἢ ἐνταῦθα, ἀλλ' ἕτερον τρόπον  
 ἐκατέρω. Τὸ δὲ εἴτε αἰδιος, εἴτε γενομένη, ἐπειδὴν  
 ὃ τί ποτ' ἐστὶ λάβωμεν, δῆλον ἔσται.***

4. Ὁ δὴ λόγος ἡμῶν ὑποθεμένοις τὸ νῦν εἶναι τὰ  
 εἶδη—δέδεικται γὰρ ἐν ἄλλοις—προίτω. Εἰ οὖν  
 πολλὰ τὰ εἶδη, κοινὸν μὲν τι ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀνάγκη

<sup>1</sup> οὐδὲ Volkmann, H-S<sup>2</sup>: οὔτε codd.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is probably to the earlier treatise V. 9 (5) 3-4.

the very idea implies shapelessness, if it is going to offer itself to the principles before it and to the best beings. Soul, for instance, is naturally disposed like this to Intellect and Reason; it is shaped by them and brought to a better form. And in the intelligible world the composite being is differently constituted, not like bodies: since forming principles, too, are composite, and by their actuality make composite the nature which is active towards the production of form. But if this nature both works on and derives from something other than itself, it is composite to an even higher degree. The matter, too, of the things that came into being is always receiving different forms, but the matter of eternal things is always the same and always has the same form. With matter here, it is pretty well exactly the other way round; for here it is all things in turn and only one thing at each particular time; so nothing lasts because one thing pushes out another; so it is not the same for ever. But in the intelligible world matter is all things at once; so it has nothing to change into, for it has all things already. Therefore, intelligible matter is certainly not ever shapeless in the intelligible world, since even the matter here is not, but each of them has shape in a different way. The question whether matter is eternal or came into being will be cleared up when we grasp what sort of a thing it is.

4. Let us assume for the present that the Forms exist—for it has been demonstrated elsewhere<sup>1</sup>—and continue our discussion on this assumption. If, then, the Forms are many, there must be something in them common to them all; and also something

εἶναι· καὶ δὴ καὶ ἴδιον, ᾧ διαφέρει ἄλλο ἄλλου.  
 5 Τοῦτο δὴ τὸ ἴδιον καὶ ἡ διαφορὰ ἢ χωρίζουσα ἢ  
 οἰκεία ἐστὶ μορφή. Εἰ δὲ μορφή, ἔστι τὸ μορφούμε-  
 νον, περὶ ὃ ἡ διαφορὰ. "Ἔστιν ἄρα καὶ ὕλη ἢ τὴν  
 μορφήν δεχομένη καὶ αἰεὶ τὸ ὑποκείμενον. "Ἔτι εἰ  
 κόσμος νοητὸς ἔστιν ἐκεῖ, μίμημα δὲ οὗτος ἐκείνου,  
 οὗτος δὲ σύνθετος καὶ ἐξ ὕλης, κακεῖ δεῖ ὕλην  
 10 εἶναι. "Ἡ πῶς προσερεῖς κόσμον μὴ εἰς εἶδος  
 ἰδῶν; Πῶς δὲ εἶδος μὴ ἐφ' ᾧ τὸ εἶδος λαβῶν;  
 Ἄμερές μὲν γὰρ παντελῶς πάντη αὐτό, μεριστόν  
 δὲ ἴπωσοῦν. Καὶ εἰ μὲν διασπασθέντα ἀπ'  
 ἀλλήλων τὰ μέρη, ἢ τομὴ καὶ ἢ διάσπασις ὕλης  
 ἐστὶ πάθος· αὕτη γὰρ ἢ τμηθεῖσα· εἰ δὲ πολλὰ  
 15 ὄν ἀμεριστόν ἐστι, τὰ πολλὰ ἐν ἐνὶ ὄντι ἐν ὕλῃ  
 ἐστὶ τῷ ἐνὶ αὐτὰ μορφαὶ αὐτοῦ ὄντα· τὸ γὰρ ἐν  
 τοῦτο [τὸ ποικίλον] νόησον ποικίλον καὶ πολύμορφον.  
 Οὐκοῦν ἄμορφον αὐτὸ πρὸ τοῦ ποικίλου· εἰ γὰρ  
 τῷ νῶ ἀφέλοις τὴν ποικιλίαν καὶ τὰς μορφὰς καὶ  
 τοὺς λόγους καὶ τὰ νοήματα, τὸ πρὸ τούτων  
 20 ἄμορφον καὶ ἀόριστόν καὶ τούτων οὐδὲν τῶν ἐπ'  
 αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ.

5. Εἰ δ', ὅτι αἰεὶ ἔχει ταῦτα καὶ ὁμοῦ, ἐν ἄμφω  
 καὶ οὐχ ὕλη ἐκείνο, οὐδ' ἐνταῦθα ἔσται τῶν  
 σωματίων ὕλη· οὐδέποτε γὰρ ἄνευ μορφῆς, ἀλλ'  
 αἰεὶ ὄλον σῶμα, σύνθετον μὴν ὅμως. Καὶ νοῦς

individual, by which one differs from another. Now  
 this something individual, this separating difference,  
 is the shape which belongs to each. But if there is  
 shape, there is that which is shaped, about which the  
 difference is predicated. Therefore, there is matter  
 which receives the shape, and is the substrate in  
 every case. Further, if there is an intelligible  
 universal order There, and this universe here is an  
 imitation of it, and this is composite, and composed  
 of matter, then there must be matter There too.  
 Or else how can you call it a universal order except  
 with regard to its form? And how can you have form  
 without something on which the form is imposed?  
 Intelligible reality is certainly altogether absolutely  
 without parts, yet it has parts in a kind of way. If  
 the parts are torn apart from each other, then the  
 cutting and tearing apart is an affection of matter:  
 for it is matter that is cut. But if intelligible reality  
 is at once many and partless, then the many existing  
 in one are in matter which is that one, and they are  
 its shapes: conceive this unity as varied and of many  
 shapes. So, then, it must be shapeless before it is  
 varied; for if you take away in your mind its variety  
 and shapes and forming principles and thoughts, what  
 is prior to these is shapeless and undefined and is none  
 of these things that are on it and in it.

5. But if it is objected that, because intelligible  
 matter always has these forms and has them all  
 together, both are one and that underlying reality  
 is not matter, then the matter of the bodies here will  
 not exist in this world either: for it is never without  
 shape but is always a complete body, but all the same  
 a composite one. Intellect finds out its doubleness,

5 εὐρίσκει τὸ διπτόν· οὗτος γὰρ διαιρεῖ, ἕως εἰς  
 ἀπλοῦν ἤκη μηκέτι αὐτὸ ἀναλύεσθαι δυνάμενον·  
 ἕως δὲ δύναται, χωρεῖ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ βάθος. Τὸ δὲ  
 βάθος ἐκάστου ἢ ὕλη· διὸ καὶ σκοτεινὴ πᾶσα, ὅτι  
 τὸ φῶς ὁ λόγος. Καὶ ὁ νοῦς λόγος· διὸ τὸν ἐφ'  
 ἐκάστου λόγον ὀρών τὸ κάτω ὡς ὑπὸ τὸ φῶς  
 10 σκοτεινὸν ἠγγηται, ὡς περ ὀρθαλμὸς φωτοειδῆς ὦν  
 πρὸς τὸ φῶς βαλὼν καὶ χρέας φῶτα ὄντα τὰ  
 ὑπὸ τὰ χρώματα σκοτεινὰ καὶ ἕλικὰ εἶναι λέγει  
 κεκρυμμένα τοῖς χρώμασι. Διάφορόν γε μὴν τὸ  
 σκοτεινὸν τό τε ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς τό τε ἐν τοῖς  
 αἰσθητοῖς ὑπάρχει διάφορός τε ἢ ὕλη, ὅσω καὶ τὸ  
 15 εἶδος τὸ ἐπικείμενον ἀμφοῖν διάφορον· ἢ μὲν γὰρ  
 θεία λαβοῦσα τὸ ὀρίζον αὐτῆν ζωὴν ὠρισμένην καὶ  
 νοερὰν ἔχει, ἢ δὲ ὠρισμένον μὲν τι γίγνεται, οὐ  
 μὴν ζῶν οὐδὲ νοοῦν, ἀλλὰ νεκρὸν κεκοσμημένον.  
 Καὶ ἡ μορφή δὲ εἶδωλον· ὥστε καὶ τὸ ὑποκείμενον  
 20 εἶδωλον. Ἐκεῖ δὲ ἡ μορφή ἀληθινόν· ὥστε καὶ  
 τὸ ὑποκείμενον. Διὸ καὶ τοὺς λέγοντας οὐσίαν τὴν  
 ὕλην, εἰ περὶ ἐκείνης ἔλεγον, ὀρθῶς ἔδει ὑπολαμβά-  
 νειν λέγειν· τὸ γὰρ ὑποκείμενον ἐκεῖ οὐσία,  
 μᾶλλον δὲ μετὰ τοῦ ἐπ' αὐτῇ νοοιμένη καὶ ὅλη  
 οὐσα πεφωτισμένη οὐσία. Πότερα δὲ αἰδιος ἢ  
 25 νοητὴ ὁμοίως ζητητέον, ὡς ἂν τις καὶ τὰς ιδέας  
 ζητοῖ· γενητὰ μὲν γὰρ τῷ ἀρχὴν ἔχειν, ἀγένητα  
 δέ, ὅτι μὴ χρόνω τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχει, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ παρ'

<sup>1</sup> This is an allusion to Plato's theory of vision. Cp. *Timaeus* 45B.

for it divides till it comes to something simple which cannot itself be resolved into parts; but as long as it can it advances into the depth of body. And the depth of each individual thing is matter: so all matter is dark, because the light [in each thing] is the rational forming principle. Now intellect too is rational principle. So intellect sees the forming principle in each thing and considers that what is under it is dark because it lies below the light; just as the eye, which has the form of light,<sup>1</sup> directs its gaze at the light and at colours (which are lights) and reports that what lies below the colours is dark and material, hidden by the colours. The darkness, however, in intelligible things differs from that in the things of sense, and so does the matter, by just as much as the form superimposed on both is different. The divine matter when it receives that which defines it has a defined and intelligent life, but the matter of this world becomes something defined, but not alive or thinking, a decorated corpse. Shape here is only an image; so that which underlies it is also only an image. But There the shape is true shape, and what underlies it is true too. So those who say that matter is substance must be considered to be speaking correctly if they are speaking of matter in the intelligible world. For that which underlies form There is substance, or rather, considered along with the form imposed upon it, it makes a whole which is illuminated substance. As for the question whether intelligible matter is eternal, one must investigate it in the same way as one investigates the ideas: intelligible realities are originated in so far as they have a beginning, but unoriginated because they

ἄλλου, οὐχ ὡς γινόμενα αἰεί, ὡσπερ ὁ κόσμος, ἀλλὰ  
 ὄντα αἰεί, ὡσπερ ὁ ἐκεῖ κόσμος. Καὶ γὰρ ἡ  
 ἑτερότης ἢ ἐκεῖ αἰεί, ἢ τὴν ὕλην ποιεῖ· ἀρχὴ γὰρ  
 30 ὕλης αὕτη, καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἢ πρώτη· διὸ καὶ αὕτη  
 ἑτερότης ἐλέγετο, ὅτι ὁμοῦ ἐξέφυσαν κίνησις καὶ  
 ἑτερότης· ἀόριστον δὲ καὶ ἡ κίνησις καὶ ἡ ἑτερότης  
 ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου, κακείνου πρὸς τὸ ὀρισθῆναι  
 δεόμενα· ὀρίζεται δέ, ὅταν πρὸς αὐτὸ ἐπιστραφῇ·  
 πρὶν δὲ ἀόριστον καὶ ἡ ὕλη καὶ τὸ ἕτερον καὶ  
 35 οὕτω ἀγαθόν, ἀλλ' ἀφώτιστον ἐκείνου. Εἰ γὰρ  
 παρ' ἐκείνου τὸ φῶς, τὸ δεχόμενον τὸ φῶς, πρὶν  
 δέξασθαι, φῶς οὐκ ἔχει αἰεί, ἀλλὰ ἄλλο ὃν ἔχει,  
 εἴπερ τὸ φῶς παρ' ἄλλου. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῆς ἐν  
 τοῖς νοητοῖς ὕλης πλείω τῶν προσηκόντων παρα-  
 γυμνωθέντα ταύτη.

6. Περὶ δὲ τῆς τῶν σωμάτων ὑποδοχῆς ὡδε  
 λεγέσθω. Ὅτι μὲν οὖν δεῖ τι τοῖς σώμασι  
 ὑποκείμενον εἶναι ἄλλο ὃν παρ' αὐτά, ἢ τε εἰς  
 ἄλληλα μεταβολὴ τῶν στοιχείων δηλοῖ. Οὐ γὰρ

<sup>1</sup> Here we encounter Plotinus's interpretation of the μέγιστα γένη of Plato, *Sophist* 254D ff. (Being, Motion, Rest, Sameness and Otherness) as "categories of the intelligible world," for which, cp. V. 1. 4 and the full exposition in VI. 2. 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> The doctrine briefly stated here is of cardinal importance in the thought of Plotinus; it is that two moments are to be distinguished in the timeless generation of Intellect from the One; the first, in which it proceeds as an unformed potentiality; the second, in which it returns upon the One in contemplation

have not a beginning in time; they always proceed from something else, not as always coming into being, like the universe, but as always existing, like the universe There. For Otherness There<sup>1</sup> exists always, which produces intelligible matter; for this is the principle of matter, this and the primary Movement. For this reason Movement, too, was called Otherness, because Movement and Otherness sprang forth together. The Movement and Otherness which came from the First are undefined, and need the First to define them; and they are defined when they turn to it.<sup>2</sup> But before the turning, matter, too, was undefined and the Other and not yet good, but unilluminated from the First. For if light comes from the First, then that which receives the light, before it receives it has everlastingly no light; but it has light as other than itself, since the light comes to it from something else. And now we have discussed about the intelligible matter more than the occasion demanded.

6. About the receptacle of bodies, let this be our account.<sup>3</sup> That there must be something underlying bodies, which is different from the bodies themselves, is made clear by the changing of the elements into each other. For the destruction of that which

and is informed and actualised by him. For the basic doctrine, cp. V. 4. 2; for Plotinus's explanation of why the multiplicity of Forms results from Intellect's contemplation of the One, cp. V. 3. 11, V. 1. 7.

<sup>3</sup> What follows is an accurate exposition of Aristotle's doctrine of matter, in Aristotelian language: it reads like a Peripatetic commentary on *Met.* A 1-2. 1069b. The criticism of Pre-Socratic views in the following chapter is also entirely based on Aristotle; see the first note to ch. 7.

5 παντελής τοῦ μεταβάλλοντος ἢ φθορά· ἢ ἔσται τις οὐσία εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν ἀπολομένη· οὐδ' αὖ τὸ γενόμενον ἐκ τοῦ παντελῶς μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ ὄν ἐλήλυθεν, ἀλλ' ἔστω εἶδους μεταβολή ἐξ εἶδους ἑτέρου. Μένει δὲ τὸ δεξάμενον τὸ εἶδος τοῦ γενομένου καὶ ἀποβαλὸν θάτερον. Τοῦτό τε οὖν δηλοῖ καὶ ὅλως  
10 ἢ φθορά· συνδέτου γάρ· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, ἐξ ὕλης καὶ εἶδους ἕκαστον. "Ἢ τε ἐπαγωγή μαρτυρεῖ τὸ φθειρόμενον σύνδετον δεικνύσα· καὶ ἡ ἀνάλυσις δέ· ὅσον εἰ ἢ φιάλη εἰς τὸν χρυσόν, ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς εἰς ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ δὲ φθειρόμενον τὸ ἀνάλογον ἀπαιτεῖ. Ἀνάγκη δὲ τὰ στοιχεῖα ἢ εἶδος εἶναι ἢ  
15 ὕλην πρώτην ἢ ἐξ ὕλης καὶ εἶδους. Ἄλλ' εἶδος μὲν οὐχ οἶόν τε· πῶς γάρ ἄνευ ὕλης ἐν ὄγκῳ καὶ μεγέθει; Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ ὕλη ἢ πρώτη φθείρεται γάρ. Ἐξ ὕλης ἄρα καὶ εἶδους. Καὶ τὸ μὲν εἶδος κατὰ τὸ ποιὸν καὶ τὴν μορφήν, ἢ δὲ κατὰ τὸ ὑποκείμενον ἀόριστον, ὅτι μὴ εἶδος.

7. Ἐμπεδοκλῆς δὲ τὰ στοιχεῖα ἐν ὕλῃ θέμενος ἀντιμαρτυροῦσαν ἔχει τὴν φθορὰν αὐτῶν. Ἀναξαγόρας δὲ τὸ μίγμα ὕλην<sup>1</sup> ποιῶν, οὐκ ἐπιτηδειώτητα πρὸς πάντα, ἀλλὰ πάντα ἐνεργεία ἔχειν λέγων ὄν  
5 εἰσάγει νοῦν ἀναιρεῖ οὐκ αὐτὸν τὴν μορφήν καὶ τὸ

<sup>1</sup> ὕλην Steinhart, H-S: ὕδωρ codd.

<sup>1</sup> The criticism of the Pre-Socratics in this chapter does not indicate any independent study of them by Plotinus; it is based on Aristotle (cp. *Physics* A. 4. 137a12 ff.; *Met.* A. 7.

changes is not complete; otherwise, there will be a being which has totally perished into non-being; nor has the engendered thing come to being from absolute non-being, but there is a change from one form into another. But if this is so there remains that which has received the form of the engendered thing and lost the other one. And then destruction also makes this completely clear; for it is destruction of a composite; but if each individual thing is a composite, it is composed of matter and form. Induction demonstrates this by showing that what is being destroyed is a composite; and the process of reduction to a thing's elements shows it too; if, for example, the cup is reduced to its gold and the gold to water, the water in process of dissolution requires something analogous to be reduced to. And the elements must be either form or first matter or composed of matter and form. But it is not possible for them to be form; for without matter how could they be in a state of having bulk and dimension? But they are not first matter either; for they are destroyed; so they must be composed of matter and form: form is in relation to their quality and shape, and matter to their substrate, which is undefined because it is not form.

7. Empedocles, who classes the elements as matter, has their destruction as evidence against him.<sup>1</sup> Anaxagoras, when he makes his mixture matter, and says that it is not a capacity for everything but contains everything in actuality, does away with the mind which he introduces by not making it the giver

988a27 ff.; A 2. 1069b20-23], and is entirely Peripatetic in spirit.



PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 4.

εἶδος διδόντα ποιῶν οὐδὲ πρότερον τῆς ὕλης ἀλλ' ἄμα. Ἀδύνατον δὲ τὸ ἄμα. Εἰ γὰρ μετέχει τὸ μίγμα τοῦ εἶναι, πρότερον τὸ ὄν· εἰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ὄν τὸ μίγμα κάκεινο, ἄλλον ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δεήσει τρίτου. Εἰ οὖν πρότερον ἀνάγκη τὸν δημιουργὸν εἶναι, τί ἔδει τὰ εἶδη κατὰ σμικρὰ ἐν τῇ ὕλει εἶναι, 10 εἶτα τὸν νοῦν διὰ πραγμάτων ἀνηνύτων διακρίνειν ἐξὸν ἀποίω οὕση τὴν ποιότητα καὶ τὴν μορφήν ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἐκτείναι; Τό τε πᾶν ἐν παντὶ εἶναι πῶς οὐκ ἀδύνατον; Ὅ δὲ τὸ ἄπειρον ὑποθεῖς τί ποτε 15 τοῦτο λεγέτω. Καὶ εἰ οὕτως ἄπειρον, ὡς ἀδιεξίτητον, ὡς οὐκ ἔστι τοιοῦτόν τι ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν οὔτε αὐτοἰάπειρον οὔτε ἐπ' ἄλλη φύσει ὡς συμβεβηκὸς σώματι τινι, τὸ μὲν αὐτοἰάπειρον, ὅτι καὶ τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἄπειρον, τὸ δὲ ὡς συμβεβηκός, ὅτι τὸ εἰ συμβέβηκεν ἐκείνο οὐκ ἂν καθ' ἑαυτὸ 20 ἄπειρον εἴη οὐδὲ ἀπλοῦν οὐδὲ ὕλη ἔτι, δῆλον. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ αἱ ἄτομοι τάξιν ὕλης ἔξουσιν αἱ τὸ παράπαν οὐκ οὔσαι· τμητὸν γὰρ πᾶν σῶμα κατὰ πᾶν καὶ τὸ συνεχές δὲ τῶν σωματίων καὶ τὸ ὑγρὸν καὶ τὸ μὴ οἰόν τε ἄνευ νοῦ ἕκαστα καὶ ψυχῆς, ἣν ἀδύνατον ἐξ ἀτόμων εἶναι—ἄλλην τε 25 φύσιν παρὰ τὰς ἀτόμους εἰς τῶν ἀτόμων δημιουργεῖν

<sup>1</sup> This obscure criticism is less Peripatetic than the rest of the chapter, as it seems to imply Plotinus's own equation of Intellect and being.

<sup>2</sup> Anaximander. Plotinus's criticism shows how closely

ON MATTER

of shape and form, and not prior to matter but simultaneous with it. But this simultaneity is impossible. For if the mixture participates in being the existent is prior; and if both this mixture and that other [i.e. being] are existent, there will be need of a third over them, different from them.<sup>1</sup> If, then, it is necessary for the maker to be prior, why did the forms have to be in small pieces in the matter, and why did mind have to separate them out with endless trouble, when it could, as matter is without quality, extend quality and shape over the whole of it? And how is it not impossible that everything should be in everything? And as for the man who posits the unbounded [as matter],<sup>2</sup> let him explain what it is. And if he means that it is unbounded in the sense that one cannot get to the end of it, it is clear that there is no such thing in existence, neither an unbounded-in-itself, nor an unbounded in another nature, as an accident of some body; there is no unbounded-in-itself, because its part, too, would be necessarily unbounded, and no accidental unbounded, because that of which it was an accident would not be unbounded in itself and would not be simple and not be matter any longer. Nor will the atoms hold the position of matter—they do not exist at all; for every body is altogether divisible: and the continuity and flexibility of bodies, and the inability of individual things to exist without mind and soul, which cannot be made of atoms (and it is impossible to make out of the atoms another kind of thing besides the atoms,

he is following Peripatetic tradition here; for he himself regards matter as ἄπειρον (below ch. 15), though in a very different sense from Anaximander.

οὐχ οἶόν τε, ἐπεὶ καὶ οὐδεὶς δημιουργὸς ποιήσει τι ἐξ οὐχ ὕλης συνεχοῦς—καὶ μυρία ἂν λέγοιτο πρὸς ταύτην τὴν ὑπόθεσιν καὶ εἴρηται· διὸ ἐνδιατρίβειν περιττὸν ἐν τούτοις.

8. Τίς οὖν ἡ μία αὕτη καὶ συνεχῆς καὶ ἄποιος λεγομένη; Καὶ ὅτι μὲν μὴ σῶμα, εἴπερ ἄποιος, δῆλον· ἢ ποιότητα ἔξει. Λέγοντες δὲ πάντων αὐτὴν εἶναι τῶν αἰσθητῶν καὶ οὐ τινῶν μὲν ὕλην, 5 πρὸς ἄλλα δὲ εἶδος οὖσαν οἶον τὸν πηλὸν ὕλην τῷ κεραμεύοντι, ἀπλῶς δὲ οὐχ ὕλην—οὐ δὴ οὕτως, ἀλλὰ πρὸς πάντα λέγοντες, οὐδὲν ἂν αὐτῇ προσάπτουμεν τῇ αὐτῆς φύσει, ὅσα ἐπὶ τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς ὀραῖται. Εἰ δὴ τοῦτο, πρὸς ταῖς ἄλλαις ποιότησιν, οἶον χρώμασι καὶ θερμότησι καὶ ψυχρότησιν, οὐδὲ 10 τὸ κοῦφον οὐδὲ τὸ βᾶρος, οὐ πυκνόν, οὐχ ἄραιόν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ σχῆμα. Οὐ τοίνυν οὐδὲ μέγεθος· ἄλλο γὰρ τὸ μεγέθει, ἄλλο τὸ μεμεγεθυμένῳ εἶναι, ἄλλο τὸ σχήματι, ἄλλο τὸ ἐσχηματισμένῳ. Δεῖ δὲ αὐτὴν μὴ σύνθετον εἶναι, ἀλλ' ἀπλοῦν καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῆς φύσει· οὕτω γὰρ πάντων ἔρημος. Καὶ 15 ὁ μορφὴν διδοὺς δώσει καὶ μορφὴν ἄλλην οὖσαν παρ' αὐτὴν καὶ μέγεθος καὶ πάντα ἐκ τῶν ὄντων οἶον προσφέρων· ἢ δουλεύσει τῷ μεγέθει αὐτῆς καὶ ποιήσει οὐχ ἡλίκον θέλει, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἡ ὕλη βούλεται· τὸ δὲ συντροχάζειν τὴν βούλησιν τῷ μεγέθει αὐτῆς πλασματώδης. Εἰ δὲ καὶ πρότερον τῆς ὕλης τὸ

since no maker will make anything out of discontinuous material), and innumerable other objections could be, and have been, alleged against this hypothesis; so there is no need to spend more time on this question.

8. What, then, is this one matter which is also continuous and without quality? It is clear that, if in fact it is without quality, it is not a body—if it was, it would have quality. But, since we say that it is the matter of all sense-objects and not the matter of some, but form in relation to others—as clay is matter to the potter, but not matter absolutely—since we do not mean that it is matter in this sense, but matter in relation to everything, we should not attribute to its nature any of the properties which are observed in sense-objects. Now if this is so, then besides the other qualities, colours and degrees of heat and cold, we must not attribute to it lightness or heaviness, density or rarity, and indeed not even shape: and so not size either. For it is one thing to be size and another to be given a size, one thing to be shape, another to be given a shape. And matter must not be composite, but simple and one thing in its own nature; for so it will be destitute of all qualities. And the giver of its shape will give it a shape which is different from matter itself, and a size, and everything, bringing them to matter, so to speak, from its store of realities. Otherwise, it will be enslaved to the size of matter and will make something, not as large as it wills, but of the size that matter wants: the idea that the will of the maker keeps in step with the size is a fiction. But if, too, the making principle is prior to the matter, matter will

20 ποιούν, ταύτη ἔσται ἡ ὕλη, ἣ πάντη τὸ ποιούν  
 θέλει, καὶ εὐάγωγος εἰς ἅπαντα· καὶ εἰς μέγεθος  
 τοῦνυ. Μέγεθός τε εἰ ἔχει, ἀνάγκη καὶ σχῆμα  
 ἔχειν· ὥστε ἔτι μᾶλλον δύσεργος ἔσται. Ἐπεισι  
 τοῦνυ τὸ εἶδος αὐτῆ πάντα ἐπ' αὐτὴν φέρον· τὸ  
 25 δὲ εἶδος πᾶν καὶ μέγεθος ἔχει καὶ ὅποσον ἂν ἣ  
 μετὰ τοῦ λόγου καὶ ὑπὸ τούτου. Διὸ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν  
 γενῶν ἐκάστων μετὰ τοῦ εἶδους καὶ τὸ ποσὸν  
 ὄρισται· ἄλλο γὰρ ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἄλλο ὄρνιθος  
 καὶ ὄρνιθος τοιουτουί. Θαυμαστότερον τὸ ποσὸν  
 τῆ ὕλη ἄλλο ἐπάγειν τοῦ ποιόν αὐτῆ προστιθέναι;  
 30 οὐδὲ τὸ μὲν ποιὸν λόγος, τὸ δὲ ποσὸν οὐκ, εἶδος  
 καὶ μέτρον καὶ ἀριθμὸς ὄν.

9. Πῶς οὖν τις λήψεται τι τῶν ὄντων, ὃ μὴ  
 μέγεθος ἔχει; Ἡ πᾶν ὅπερ μὴ ταῦτόν τῷ ποσῷ·  
 οὐ γὰρ δὴ τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ ποσὸν ταυτόν. Πολλὰ δὲ  
 καὶ ἄλλα ἕτερα τοῦ ποσοῦ. Ὅλως δὲ πᾶσαν  
 5 ἀσώματον φύσιν ἀποσον θετέον· ἀσώματος δὲ καὶ  
 ἡ ὕλη. Ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ ποσότης αὐτῆ οὐ ποσόν, ἀλλὰ  
 τὸ μετασχόν αὐτῆς· ὥστε καὶ ἐκ τούτου δηλον,  
 ὅτι εἶδος ἢ ποσότης. Ὡς οὖν ἐγένετό τι λευκὸν  
 παρουσία λευκότητος, τὸ δὲ πεποιηκὸς τὸ λευκὸν  
 χρώμα ἐν ζῳῷ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα δὲ χρώματα ποικίλα  
 10 οὐκ ἦν ποικίλον χρώμα, ἀλλὰ ποικίλος, εἰ βούλει,

be exactly as the making principle wills it to be in every way, tractable to everything, and so to size too. And if it had size it would necessarily have shape as well; so that it would be still harder to work. So when the form comes to the matter it brings everything with it; the form has everything, the size and all that goes with and is caused by the formative principle. Therefore, in every natural kind the dimensions are determined along with the form; the dimensions of a man are different from those of a bird, and those of different kinds of birds from one another. Is there anything more surprising in the bringing of quantity to matter as something different from itself than in the addition to it of quality? It is not the case that quality is a rational formative principle and quantity is not, since quantity is form and measure and number.

9. How, then, is one to conceive an existing thing which has not size? Everything is without size which is not identical with that which has quantity; for, certainly, that which exists is not identical with that which has quantity: and there are many other things which are different from that which has quantity. One must regard all bodiless nature as altogether without quantity; but matter is also bodiless. For quantity itself, too, is not a thing which has quantity; that which has quantity is that which participates in quantity; so it is clear from this, too, that quantity is a form. As, then, something becomes white by the presence of whiteness, but that which makes the white colour in a living thing, and the other varied colours too, is not varied colour itself but a various, if you like to put it that

λόγος, οὕτω καὶ τὸ ποιῶν τὸ τηλικόνδε οὐ  
τηλικόνδε, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ "τὶ τηλικόν" ἢ τηλικότης ἢ  
ὁ λόγος τὸ ποιῶν. Προσελθοῦσα οὖν ἡ τηλικότης  
ἐξελίττει εἰς μέγεθος τὴν ὕλην; Οὐδαμῶς· οὐδὲ  
γὰρ ἐν ὀλίγῳ συνεσπείρατο· ἀλλ' ἔδωκε μέγεθος  
15 τὸ οὐ πρότερον ὄν, ὥσπερ καὶ ποιότητα τὴν οὐ  
πρότερον ὄσαν.

10. Τί οὖν νοήσω ἀμέγεθες ἐν ὕλῃ; Τί δὲ  
νοήσεις ἄποιον ὀπωσοῦν; Καὶ τίς ἡ νόησις καὶ  
τῆς διανοίας ἢ ἐπιβολῆς; "Ἡ ἀοριστία· εἰ γὰρ τῷ  
ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον, καὶ τῷ ἀορίστῳ τὸ ἀόριστον.  
5 Λόγος μὲν οὖν γένοιτο ἂν περὶ τοῦ ἀορίστου  
ὠρισμένος, ἢ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ ἐπιβολῆ ἀόριστος. Εἰ  
δ' ἕκαστον λόγῳ καὶ νοήσει γινώσκεται, ἐνταῦθα  
δὲ ὁ μὲν λόγος λέγει, ἃ δὲ λέγει περὶ αὐτῆς, ἢ δὲ  
βουλομένη εἶναι νόησις οὐ νόησις, ἀλλ' οἷον ἄνοια,  
μᾶλλον νόθον ἂν εἴη τὸ φάντασμα αὐτῆς καὶ οὐ  
10 γνήσιον, ἐκ θατέρου οὐκ ἀληθοῦς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ  
ἐτέρου λόγου συγκείμενον. Καὶ τάχα εἰς τοῦτο  
βλέπων ὁ Πλάτων νόθῳ λογισμῷ εἶπε ληπτὴν  
εἶναι. Τίς οὖν ἡ ἀοριστία τῆς ψυχῆς; Ἄρα  
παντελῆς ἀγνοία ὡς ἀφασία;<sup>1</sup> Ἡ ἐν καταφάσει  
τινὶ τὸ ἀόριστον, καὶ οἷον ὀρθαλμῷ τὸ σκότος ὕλη

<sup>1</sup> ἀφασία Heintz: ἀπουσία codd. H-S.

<sup>1</sup> *Timaeus* 52E2.

<sup>2</sup> ἐν καταφάσει in the next sentence strongly suggests that Heintz's ἀφασία is the right reading here, and I translate it. But the MSS ἀπουσία is not quite impossible; Dr. Schwyzler suggests that the antithesis to ἐν καταφάσει is to be found in

way, formative principle; so that which makes a thing a certain size is not a thing of certain size itself, but the specific magnitude, or magnitude itself, or the formative principle which makes magnitude. Does magnitude, then, come to matter and unfold it into size? By no means; for matter was not shrunk together in a small space; but the formative principle gave a size which was not there before, just as it gave a quality which was not there before.

10. "What, then, shall I conceive this sizelessness in matter to be?" What will you conceive anything whatever without quality to be? What is the act of thought, and how do you apply your mind to it? By indefiniteness; for if like is known by like, the indefinite is known by the indefinite. The concept, then, of the indefinite may be defined, but the application of the mind to it is indefinite. If, then, each thing is known by concept and thought, but in this case the concept states about matter what it does in fact state, that which wants to be a thought about it will not be a thought but a sort of thoughtlessness; or rather the mental representation of it will be spurious and not genuine, compounded of an unreal part and with the diverse kind of reasoning. And it was perhaps because he observed this that Plato said that matter was apprehended by a "spurious reasoning."<sup>1</sup> What, then is the indefiniteness of the soul? Is it complete ignorance amounting to inability to say anything?<sup>2</sup> Rather, the indefiniteness is contained in a positive statement, and, as with the eye we see

παντελῆς ἀγνοία and that ὡς introduces a comparison, "Is it complete ignorance, like an absence? Rather, the indefiniteness is contained in a positive statement . . .".

15 ὃν παντὸς ἀοράτου χρώματος, οὕτως οὖν καὶ  
 ψυχὴ ἀφελούσα ὅσα ἐπὶ τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς οἷον φῶς  
 τὸ λοιπὸν οὐκέτι ἔχουσα ὀρίσαι ὁμοιοῦται τῇ ἄμει  
 τῇ ἐν σκότῳ ταυτόν πως γνωμένη τότε τῷ ὁ οἷον  
 ὄρα. Ἄρ' οὖν ὄρα; Ἡ οὕτως ὡς ἀσχημοσύνην  
 καὶ ὡς ἄχρουν καὶ ὡς ἀλαμπές καὶ προσέτι δέ  
 20 ὡς οὐκ ἔχον μέγεθος· εἰ δὲ μή, εἰδοποιήσει ἤδη.  
 Ὅταν οὖν μηδὲν νοῆι, οὐ ταυτὸ τοῦτο περὶ ψυχὴν  
 πάθος; Ἡ οὐ, ἀλλ' ὅταν μὲν μηδὲν, λέγει μηδὲν,  
 μᾶλλον δὲ πάσχει οὐδέν· ὅταν δὲ τὴν ὕλην, οὕτω  
 πάσχει πάθος οἷον τύπον τοῦ ἀμόρφου· ἐπεὶ καὶ  
 ὅταν τὰ μεμορφωμένα καὶ τὰ μεμεγεθυσμένα νοῆι,  
 25 ὡς σύνθετα νοεῖ· ὡς γὰρ κεχρωσμένα καὶ ὅλως  
 πεποιημένα. Τὸ ὅλον οὖν νοεῖ καὶ τὸ συνάμφω·  
 καὶ ἐναργῆς μὲν ἢ νόησις ἢ ἢ αἴσθησις τῶν  
 ἐπόντων, ἀμυδρὰ δὲ ἢ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου, τοῦ  
 ἀμόρφου· οὐ γὰρ εἶδος. Ὁ οὖν ἐν τῷ ὅλῳ καὶ  
 συνθέτῳ λαμβάνει μετὰ τῶν ἐπόντων ἀναλύσασα  
 30 ἐκεῖνα καὶ χωρίσασα, ὃ καταλείπει ὁ λόγος, τοῦτο  
 νοεῖ ἀμυδρῶς ἀμυδρὸν καὶ σκοτεινῶς σκοτεινὸν καὶ  
 νοεῖ οὐ νοοῦσα. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἔμεινεν οὐδ' αὐτῇ  
 ἢ ὕλη ἀμορφος, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἔστι  
 μεμορφωμένη, καὶ ἢ ψυχὴ εὐθέως ἐπέβαλε τὸ  
 εἶδος τῶν πραγμάτων αὐτῇ ἀλγοῦσα τῷ ἀορίστῳ,  
 35 οἷον φόβῳ τοῦ ἔξω τῶν ὄντων εἶναι καὶ οὐκ  
 ἀνεχομένη ἐν τῷ μὴ ὄντι ἐπιπολὺ ἐστάναι.

darkness which is matter of every unseen colour, so, too, the soul, when it has taken away everything which corresponds to light in the objects of sense, being no longer able to define what is left, is made like sight in darkness, having become then somehow the same as what it, so to speak, sees. But does it really see? Only as if it was seeing absence of shape and absence of colour, and something lightless, and without size as well. If it does not see in this way, it will already be giving matter a form. Is not the soul, then, affected in this very same way when it thinks nothing? No, but when it thinks nothing, it says nothing, or rather is not affected at all; but when it thinks matter, it is affected in a way as if it received an impression of the shapeless; since, also when it thinks things that have received shape and size, it thinks them as composites; for it thinks them as things which have been given colour and, in general, quality. So it thinks the whole and the compound of both elements [matter and form]; and the thought or perception of the overlying elements is clear, but that of the substrate, the shapeless, is dim; for it is not form. That, then, which it apprehends in the composite whole along with the overlying elements, when it has analysed these out and separated them, that which reason leaves over, this is what it thinks, a dim thing dimly and a dark thing darkly, and it thinks it without thinking. And since matter itself does not remain shapeless, but is shaped in things, the soul, too, immediately imposes the form of the things on it because matter's indefiniteness distresses it, as if it were in fear of being outside the realm of being and could not endure to stay for long in non-being.

11. Καὶ τί δεῖ τινος ἄλλου πρὸς σύστασιν σωμά-  
των μετὰ μέγεθος καὶ ποιότητος ἀπάσας; Ἡ τοῦ  
ὑποδεχομένου πάντα. Οὐκοῦν ὁ ὄγκος· εἰ δὲ ὁ  
ὄγκος, μέγεθος δὴπυ. Εἰ δὲ ἀμέγεθες, οὐδ' ὅπου  
5 δέξεται ἔχει. Ἀμέγεθες δὲ ὄν τί ἂν συμβάλλοιτο,  
εἰ μήτε εἰς εἶδος καὶ τὸ ποιὸν μήτε εἰς τὴν  
διάστασιν καὶ τὸ μέγεθος, ὃ δὴ παρὰ τῆς ὕλης  
δοκεῖ, ὅπου ἂν ᾗ, ἔρχεσθαι εἰς τὰ σώματα; Ὅλως  
δὲ ὥσπερ πράξεις καὶ ποιήσεις καὶ χρόνοι καὶ  
κινήσεις ὑποβολὴν ὕλης ἐν αὐτοῖς οὐκ ἔχοντα ἔστιν  
10 ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν, οὕτως οὐδὲ τὰ σώματα τὰ πρῶτα  
ἀνάγκη ὕλην ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ ὅλα ἕκαστα εἶναι ἃ ἔστι  
ποικιλώτερα ὄντα μίξει τῇ ἐκ πλειόνων εἰδῶν τὴν  
σύστασιν ἔχοντα· ὥστε τοῦτο τὸ ἀμέγεθες ὕλης  
ὄνομα κενὸν εἶναι. Πρῶτον μὲν ὄν οὐκ ἀνάγκη  
15 τὸ ὑποδεχόμενον ὅτιον ὄγκον εἶναι, εἰ μὴ  
μέγεθος ἤδη αὐτῷ παρῆ· ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ πάντα  
δεχομένη ὁμοῦ ἔχει πάντα· εἰ δὲ μέγεθος αὐτῇ  
συμβεβηκὸς ᾗν, ἔσχεν ἂν ἕκαστα ἐν μεγέθει. Ἡ  
δὲ ὕλη διὰ τοῦτο ἐν διαστήματι ἃ δέχεται λαμβάνει,  
ὅτι διαστήματός ἐστι δεκτικὴ· ὥσπερ καὶ τὰ ζῷα  
20 καὶ τὰ φυτὰ μετὰ τοῦ μεγεθύνεσθαι καὶ τὸ ποιὸν  
ἀντιπαραγόμενον ἴσχει τῷ ποσῷ καὶ συστελλομένου

<sup>1</sup> The objector whose point of view is put here is presumably the same as the "person who says that matter does not exist" mentioned at the beginning of I. 8. 15 (where there is a reference back to this passage). The objection was probably one that Plotinus had really encountered, made by Platonists who interpreted *Timaeus* 52A8 ff. (probably correctly) as meaning that Plato identified the "receptacle" with space, and who therefore rejected the Aristotelian conception of a

11. "And why is there any need of anything else for the composition of bodies besides size and all qualities? There is need of something to receive them all. This is, then, the mass. But if mass, then, presumably, size. But if it has no size, it will have nowhere to receive anything. If it is without size, what would it contribute, if it contributes neither to form and quality nor to extension and size, which appears, wherever it occurs, to come to bodies from their matter? But in general, just as actions and productions and times and movements exist in reality without having a foundation of matter in them, so there is no need for the primary bodies to have matter; they can each of them be what they are as wholes, with a more varied richness of content when they have their structure produced by the mixture of a greater number of forms: so that this sizelessness of matter is an empty name."<sup>1</sup> First of all, then, it is not necessary that what receives anything should be a mass, if size is not already present to it: since the soul which receives everything, contains everything together; but if size were one of its incidental attributes it would contain all individual things in their sizes. But matter does accept in extension what it receives, for this reason, that it is itself receptive of extension; just as animals and plants along with their growth in size have development of quality corresponding to their increase in quantity, and if the quantity decreased the quality

dimensionless ἄλη (cp. Bréhier's introduction to this treatise). The contention that there is no such thing as Aristotelian matter reappears in S. Basil *In Hexaem.* I. 21A-B(8E-9A); cp. S. Gregory of Nyssa *De Hom. Op.* 213C.

συσταλείη ἄν. Εἰ δ' ὅτι προϋπάρχει τι μέγεθος  
 ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ὑποκείμενον τῷ μορφοῦντι, κακέι  
 ἀπαιτεῖ, οὐκ ὀρθῶς· ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ἡ ὕλη οὐχ ἡ  
 ἀπλῶς, ἀλλ' ἡ τούτου· τὴν δ' ἀπλῶς δεῖ καὶ τοῦτο  
 25 παρ' ἄλλου ἔχειν. Οὐ τοίνυν ὄγκον δεῖ εἶναι τὸν  
 δεξόμενον τὸ εἶδος, ἀλλ' ὁμοῦ τῷ γενέσθαι ὄγκον  
 καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ποιότητα δέχεσθαι. Καὶ φάντασμα  
 μὲν ἔχειν ὄγκου ὡς ἐπιτηδειότητα τούτου ὡσπερ  
 πρώτην, κενὸν δὲ ὄγκον. "Ὅθεν τινὲς ταῦτόν τῷ  
 30 κενῷ τὴν ὕλην εἰρήκασι. Φάντασμα δὲ ὄγκου  
 λέγω, ὅτι καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ οὐδὲν ἔχουσα ὀρίσασι, ὅταν  
 τῇ ὕλη προσομιλῇ, εἰς ἀοριστίαν χεῖ ἑαυτὴν οὔτε  
 περιγράφουσα οὔτε εἰς σημεῖον ἵεναι δυναμένη·  
 ἤδη γὰρ ὀρίζεται. Διὸ οὔτε μέγα λεκτέον χωρὶς οὔτε  
 35 ὄγκος καὶ ἀμέγεθες οὔτως, ὅτι ὕλη ὄγκου καὶ  
 συστελλόμενον ἐκ τοῦ μεγάλου ἐπὶ τὸ μικρὸν καὶ  
 ἐκ τοῦ μικροῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μέγα οἶον ὄγκον διατρέχει·  
 καὶ ἡ ἀοριστία αὐτῆς ὁ τοιοῦτος ὄγκος, ὑποδοχὴ  
 μεγέθους ἐν αὐτῇ· ἐν δὲ φαντασίᾳ ἐκείνως. Καὶ  
 γὰρ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων ἀμεγέθων ὅσα εἶδη ὄρισται

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Aristotle *Physics* Δ. 214a13. Aristotle is here referring to Plato; cp. 209b11.

<sup>2</sup> Plato's term, as reported by Aristotle (*Physics* A4. 187a17, Γ4. 203a16; *Metaphysics* A7. 988a26).

would decrease too. But if, because in things like  
 these a certain size is present beforehand underlying  
 the shaping principle, [our opponent] demands it  
 there too [in the case of prime matter], the demand  
 is incorrect; for in the case of plants and animals the  
 matter is not simply matter, but the matter of this  
 particular thing; matter which is simply matter must  
 receive size too from something else. So, then,  
 that which is going to receive the form must not be a  
 mass, but it must receive the rest of its qualities as  
 well at the same time as it becomes a mass. And it  
 does, indeed, have an imaginary appearance of mass  
 because the first, so to speak, of its capacities is a  
 capacity for mass, but the mass is void. For this  
 reason some people have said that matter is identical  
 with the void.<sup>1</sup> I say "an imaginary appearance of  
 mass" because the soul, too, when it is keeping com-  
 pany with matter, having nothing to delimit, spills  
 itself into indefiniteness, neither drawing a line  
 round it nor able to arrive at a point; for if it did it  
 would already be delimiting it. For this reason  
 matter should not be called "great" separately or  
 again "small" separately, but "great-and-small."<sup>2</sup>  
 It is "mass" in this sense and "without size" in  
 this sense, that it is the matter of mass, and when  
 mass is contracted from the great to the small and  
 expands from the small to the great, matter, so to  
 speak, runs through the whole range of mass: and  
 its indefiniteness is mass in this sense, that it has the  
 capacity of receiving size in itself; but in imaginary  
 representation it is mass in the sense we have des-  
 cribed. For in the case of the other things without  
 size, those of them that are forms are each of them

40 ἕκαστον ὥστε οὐδαμῆ ἔννοια ὄγκου· ἡ δὲ ἀόριστος οὐσα καὶ μήπω σταῖσα παρ' αὐτῆς ἐπὶ πᾶν εἶδος φερομένη δεῦρο κἀκεῖνε καὶ πάντη εὐάγωγος οὐσα πολλή τε γίνεται τῇ ἐπὶ πάντα ἀγωγῇ καὶ γενέσει καὶ ἔσχε τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον φύσιν ὄγκου.

12. Συμβάλλεται οὖν τὰ μέγιστα τοῖς σώμασι· τὰ τε γὰρ εἶδη τῶν σωμάτων ἐν μεγέθεσι. Περὶ δὲ μέγεθος οὐκ ἂν ἐγένετο ταῦτα, ἀλλ' ἡ περὶ τὸ μεμεγεθυσμένον· εἰ γὰρ περὶ μέγεθος, οὐ περὶ 5 ὕλην, ὁμοίως ἂν ἀμεγέθη καὶ ἀνυπόστατα ἦν ἡ λόγοι μόνου ἂν ἦσαν—οὗτοι δὲ περὶ ψυχῆν—καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἦν σώματα. Δεῖ οὖν ἐνταῦθα περὶ ἓν τι τὰ πλάττει· τοῦτο δὲ μεμεγεθυσμένον· τοῦτο δὲ ἕτερον τοῦ μεγέθους. Ἐπεὶ καὶ νῦν ὅσα μίγνυται τῷ ὕλην ἔχειν εἰς ταῦτόν ἔρχεται καὶ οὐ δεῖται ἄλλου 10 του περὶ ὃ, ὅτι ἕκαστον τῶν μνησμένων ἡκεῖ φέρον τὴν αὐτοῦ ὕλην. Δεῖται δὲ [ὁμῶς] καὶ ὡς ἐνός τινος τοῦ δεξομένου ἢ ἀγγείου ἢ τόπου· ὁ δὲ τόπος ὑστερος τῆς ὕλης καὶ τῶν σωμάτων, ὥστε πρότερον ἂν δέοιτο τὰ σώματα ὕλης. Οὐδέ, ὅτι αἱ ποιήσεις καὶ αἱ πράξεις ἄνθρωποι, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὰ σώματα· σύνθετα γὰρ τὰ σώματα, αἱ δὲ πράξεις 15 οὐ. Καὶ τοῖς πράττουσιν ἡ ὕλη ὅταν πράττωσι τὸ ὑποκείμενον δίδωσι μένουσα ἐν αὐτοῖς, εἰς τὸ πράττειν οὐχ αὐτὴν δίδωσιν· οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ πράτ-

clearly defined, so that there is no room anywhere in their case for a conception of mass. But matter is indefinite and not yet stable by itself, and is carried about here and there into every form, and since it is altogether adaptable becomes many by being brought into everything and becoming everything, and in this way acquires the nature of mass.

12. Matter, then, makes the greatest contribution to the formation of bodies; for the forms of bodies are in sizes. But these corporeal forms could not come into being in size but only in that which has been given size; for if in size, they would not come into being in matter and would be the same as before, without size and without underlying material substantiality, or they would only be rational principles—but these are in soul—and would not be bodies. So here in the material world the many forms must be in something which is one; and this is what has been given size; but this is different from size. We can see that this is so because in our present experience things that are mixed together come to identity by having matter, and there is no need for any other medium, because each constituent of the mixture comes bringing its own matter. All the same, there is need of some one kind of vessel or place to receive bodies; but place is posterior to matter and bodies, so that bodies would need matter before they need place. Nor, because actions and productions are without matter, are bodies without matter too: for bodies are composite, but actions are not. And matter does provide the substrate for those who act, whenever they act, by its continuing presence in themselves, but does not give itself to the action; nor



τοντες τούτο ζητούσι. Καὶ οὐ μεταβάλλει ἄλλη  
 πράξις εἰς ἄλλην, ἵνα ἂν ἦν καὶ αὐταῖς ὕλη, ἀλλ' ὁ  
 20 πρᾶττων ἐπ' ἄλλην μεταβάλλει πρᾶξιν ἐξ ἄλλης·  
 ὥστε ὕλην αὐτὸν εἶναι ταῖς πράξεσιν. Ἔστι  
 τοίνυν ἀναγκαῖον ἢ ὕλη καὶ τῇ ποιότητι καὶ τῷ  
 μεγέθει· ὥστε καὶ τοῖς σώμασι· καὶ οὐ κενὸν  
 ὄνομα, ἀλλ' ἔστι τι ὑποκείμενον κἂν ἀόρατον κἂν  
 ἀμέγεθες ὑπάρχει. Ἡ οὕτως οὐδὲ τὰς ποιότητας  
 25 φήσομεν οὐδὲ τὸ μέγεθος τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ· ἕκαστον  
 γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων λέγοιτο ἂν οὐδὲν εἶναι ἐφ'  
 ἑαυτοῦ μόνον λαμβανόμενον. Εἰ δὲ ταῦτα ἔστι  
 καίπερ ἀμυδρῶς ὃν ἕκαστον, πολὺ μᾶλλον ἂν εἴη  
 ὕλη, κἂν μὴ ἐναργῆς ὑπάρχει αἰρετῇ οὕσα οὐ ταῖς  
 αἰσθήσεσιν· οὔτε γὰρ ὄμμασιν, ἄχρους γὰρ· οὔτε  
 30 ἀκοῆ, οὐ γὰρ ψόφος· οὐδὲ χυμοί, διὸ οὐδὲ ῥίνες  
 οὐδὲ γλῶσσα. Ἄρ' οὖν ἀφή; Ἡ οὐ, ὅτι μὴδὲ  
 σῶμα· σώματος γὰρ ἢ ἀφή, ὅτι ἢ πυκνοῦ ἢ  
 ἀραιοῦ, μαλακοῦ σκληροῦ, ὑγροῦ ξηροῦ· τούτων  
 δὲ οὐδὲν περὶ τὴν ὕλην· ἀλλὰ λογισμῶ οὐκ ἐκ νοῦ,  
 ἀλλὰ κενῶς· διὸ καὶ νόθος, ὡς εἴρηται. Ἄλλ'  
 35 οὐδὲ σωματότης περὶ αὐτήν· εἰ μὲν λόγος ἢ  
 σωματότης, ἕτερος αὐτῆς· αὕτη οὖν ἄλλο· εἰ δ'  
 ἤδη ποιήσασα καὶ οἶον κραθεῖσα, σῶμα φανερώς  
 ἂν εἴη καὶ οὐχ ὕλη μόνον.

13. Εἰ δὲ ποιότης τις τὸ ὑποκείμενον κοινὴ τις  
 οὕσα ἐν ἐκάστῳ τῶν στοιχείων, πρῶτον μὲν τίς

<sup>1</sup> In ch. 10 (the reference to the *Timaeus*).

do those who are acting even want it to. And one  
 action does not change into another—if it did  
 then actions, too, would have matter—but the person  
 acting changes from one action to another, so that he  
 himself is matter to his actions. So, then, matter is  
 necessary both to quality and to size, and therefore  
 to bodies; and it is not an empty name but it is  
 something underlying, even if it is invisible and size-  
 less. If we do deny the existence of matter we shall  
 by the same argument be prevented from asserting  
 the existence of qualities and size; for everything of  
 this kind could be said to be nothing taken alone by  
 itself. But if these have an existence, though in  
 each case an obscure one, still more would matter  
 exist, though it is not obvious since it is not by the  
 senses that it is apprehended: not by the eyes, for  
 it is without colour; not by the hearing, since it  
 makes no noise; nor has it taste or smell, so it is not  
 nostrils or tongue that perceive it. Is it touch, then?  
 No, because it is not a body, for touch apprehends  
 body, because it apprehends density and rarity,  
 hardness and softness, wetness and dryness; and none  
 of these apply to matter. It is apprehended by a  
 process of reasoning, which does not come from mind  
 but works emptily; so it is spurious reasoning, as has  
 been said.<sup>1</sup> But even corporeality does not belong  
 to it; for if corporeality is a rational formative prin-  
 ciple it is different from matter, and so matter is  
 something else; but if corporeality has already come  
 into action and is so to speak mixed, it would clearly  
 be body and not matter alone.

13. If the substrate is to be some quality, a com-  
 mon one which exists in each and every one of the

αὕτη λεκτέον. Ἐπειτα πῶς ποιότης ὑποκείμενον  
 ἔσται; Πῶς δὲ ἐν ἀμεγέθει ποιὸν θεωρηθήσεται  
 5 μὴ ἔχον ὕλην μηδὲ μέγεθος; Ἐπειτα εἰ μὲν  
 ὠρισμένη ἢ ποιότης, πῶς ὕλη; Εἰ δ' ἀόριστόν τι,  
 οὐ ποιότης, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὑποκείμενον καὶ ἢ ζητουμένη  
 ὕλη. Τί οὖν κωλύει ἄποιον μὲν εἶναι τῷ τῶν  
 ἄλλων μηδεμιᾶς τῇ αὐτῆς φύσει μετέχειν, αὐτῷ  
 δὲ τούτῳ τῷ μηδεμιᾶς μετέχειν ποιῶν εἶναι ἰδιότητα  
 10 πάντως τινα ἔχουσαν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων διαφέρουσαν,  
 οἷον στέρησιν τινα ἐκείνων; Καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἐστερημένος  
 ποιός· οἷον ὁ τυφλός. Εἰ οὖν στέρησις τούτων  
 περὶ αὐτήν, πῶς οὐ ποιὰ; Εἰ δὲ καὶ ὅλως στέρησις  
 περὶ αὐτήν, ἔτι μᾶλλον, εἴ γε δὴ καὶ στέρησις  
 ποιὸν τι. Ὅ δὴ ταῦτα λέγων τί ἄλλο ἢ ποιὰ καὶ  
 15 ποιότητος πάντα ποιεῖ; Ὡστε καὶ ἢ ποσότης  
 ποιότης ἂν εἴη καὶ ἢ οὐσία δέ. Εἰ δὲ ποιόν,  
 πρόσεστι ποιότης. Γελοῖον δὲ τὸ ἕτερον τοῦ  
 ποιοῦ καὶ μὴ ποιὸν ποιὸν ποιεῖν. Εἰ δ', ὅτι ἕτερον,  
 ποιόν, εἰ μὲν ἀντιστερότης, οὐδ' ὡς ποιόν· ἐπεὶ  
 οὐδ' ἢ ποιότης ποιὰ· εἰ δ' ἕτερον μόνον, οὐχ  
 20 ἑαυτῇ, ἀλλ' ἐτερότητι ἕτερον καὶ ταυτότητι ταυτόν.  
 Οὐδὲ δὴ ἢ στέρησις ποιότης οὐδὲ ποιόν, ἀλλ'  
 ἐρημία ποιότητος ἢ ἄλλου, ὡς ἢ ἀψοφία οὐ ψόφου  
 ἢ ὀπουοῦν ἄλλου· ἄρσις γὰρ ἢ στέρησις, τὸ δὲ

<sup>1</sup> I.e. you cannot classify soundlessness as a special sort of sound or any other sort of positive quality; a quality is always something positive, a privation, never.

elements, first of all it must be stated what this quality is. Next, how can a quality be a substrate? How is a quality in something without size to be conceived, when it does not have matter or size? Then, if the quality is defined, how is it matter? But if it is something indefinite, it is not a quality but the substrate and the matter we were looking for. "What, then, prevents it from being something qualified by participating, by its own nature, in none of the other qualities, but by this very fact of participating in none of them being qualified, since it has a thoroughly distinctive characteristic, different from the others, a sort of privation of those other qualities? For anyone who is deprived has a quality—a blind man, for instance. If then privation of the qualities belongs to it, how is it not qualified? But if complete privation belongs to it, it is qualified still more, if privation, too, is really something qualified." But what else is the person who says this doing than making everything qualified and qualities? So that even quantity would be a quality, and substance too. But if something is qualified, quality is present to it. But it is absurd to make qualified what is other than the qualified and so not qualified. But if it is qualified because it is other, if it is absolute otherness, it is not so as being qualified, since quality [the form] is not qualified; but if it is simply other, it is not so by itself, but other by otherness and the same by sameness. And privation is certainly not quality or qualified, but lack of quality or of something else, as soundlessness does not belong to sound or anything else [positive];<sup>1</sup> for privation is a taking away, but qualification is a matter of positive assertion. The

ποιὸν ἐν καταφάσει. Ἡ τε ἰδιότης τῆς ὕλης οὐ  
μορφή· τῷ γὰρ μὴ ποιὰ εἶναι μὴδ' εἶδος τι ἔχειν·  
25 ἄτοπον δὴ, ὅτι μὴ ποιὰ, ποιὰν λέγειν καὶ ὅμοιον  
τῷ, ὅτι ἀμέγεθες, αὐτῷ τούτῳ μέγεθος ἔχειν.  
Ἔστιν οὖν ἡ ἰδιότης αὐτῆς οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ ὕπερ  
ἔστι, καὶ οὐ πρόσκειται ἡ ἰδιότης, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐν  
σχέσει τῇ πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα, ὅτι ἄλλο αὐτῶν. Καὶ τὰ  
μὲν ἄλλα οὐ μόνον ἄλλα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τι ἕκαστον ὡς  
30 εἶδος, αὕτη δὲ πρεπόντως ἂν λέγοιτο μόνον ἄλλο·  
τάχα δὲ ἄλλα, ἵνα μὴ τῷ "ἄλλο" ἐνικῶς ὀρίσης,  
ἀλλὰ τῷ "ἄλλα" τὸ ἀόριστον ἐνδείξῃ.

14. Ἄλλ' ἐκείνο ζητητέον. πότερα στέρησις, ἢ  
περὶ αὐτῆς ἡ στέρησις. Ὁ τοίνυν λέγων λόγος  
ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐν ἄμφω, λόγῳ δὲ δύο, δίκαιος ἦν  
διδάσκειν καὶ τὸν λόγον ἐκατέρου ὄντινα δεῖ  
5 ἀποδιδόναι, τῆς μὲν ὕλης ὅς ὀριεῖται αὐτὴν οὐδὲν  
προσαπτόμενος τῆς στέρησεως, τῆς τε αὐτῆς στέρησε-  
ως ὡσυνήτως. Ἡ γὰρ οὐδέτερον ἐν οὐδετέρῳ τῷ  
λόγῳ ἢ ἐκάτερον ἐν ἐκατέρῳ ἢ θάτερον ἐν θατέρῳ  
μόνον ὀποτρυνούν. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐκάτερον χωρὶς  
καὶ οὐκ ἐπιζητεῖ οὐδέτερον, δύο ἔσται ἄμφω καὶ  
10 ἡ ὕλη ἕτερον στέρησεως, κἂν συμβεβήκη αὐτῇ ἢ  
στέρησις. Δεῖ δ' ἐν τῷ λόγῳ μὴδὲ δυνάμει  
ἐνοραῖσθαι θάτερον. Εἰ δὲ ὡς ἡ ρῖς ἢ σιμὴ καὶ τὸ

<sup>1</sup> To say that something is "other" than something else is a way of helping to define it, to show it as a distinctive unity; this remarkable plural is an attempt to exclude all definition, to speak of matter as absolutely indefinite and incoherent with no sort of distinctive unity.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. for Aristotle's view here criticised *Physics* A9. 192a2 ff.

distinctive characteristic, too, of matter is not shape: for it consists in not being qualified and not having any form; it is surely fantastic to call it qualified because it has no quality; it is like saying that because it is sizeless, by this very fact it has a size. So, then, its distinctive characteristic is not something else other than what it is; it is not an addition to it but rather consists in its relationship to other things, its being other than they. Other things are not only other but each of them is something as form, but this would appropriately be called nothing but other; or perhaps others, so as not to define it as a unity by the term "other" but to show its indefiniteness by calling it "others."<sup>1</sup>

14. But we must investigate this further point, whether it is privation or the subject of privation. Now the argument which says that in the substrate both are one, but that in rational definition they are two,<sup>2</sup> is under an obligation to instruct us what rational definition of each of these two things one must give, one of matter which will define it without applying to it any term belonging to privation, and an exactly similar one of privation. For there are three possibilities; neither of them is contained in the definition of the other, or both are in each other's definitions, or one only is in the definition of the other, whichever one it is. If, then, each of the two things is separate and neither of them requires the other, the pair of them will be two distinct things and matter will be other than privation, even if privation is incidentally predicated of it. But, then, the other must not appear even potentially in the definition of one of them. But if they are related as the snub

σιμόν, καὶ οὕτω διπλοῦν ἑκάτερον καὶ δύο. Εἰ δὲ  
 ὡς τὸ πῦρ καὶ ἡ θερμότης, ἐν μὲν τῷ πυρὶ τῆς  
 θερμότητος οὐσίας, ἐν δὲ τῇ θερμότητι οὐ λαμ-  
 15 βανομένου τοῦ πυρός, καὶ ἡ ὕλη οὕτω στέρησις,  
 ὡς τὸ πῦρ θερμόν, οἷον εἶδος αὐτῆς ἔσται ἡ  
 στέρησις, τὸ δ' ὑποκείμενον ἄλλο, ὃ δεῖ τὴν ὕλην  
 εἶναι. Καὶ οὐδ' οὕτως ἔν. Ἐρα οὖν οὕτως ἐν  
 τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ, δύο δὲ τῷ λόγῳ, τῆς στερήσεως  
 οὐ σημαίνουσης τι παρεῖναι, ἀλλὰ μὴ παρεῖναι,  
 20 καὶ οἷον ἀπόφασις ἢ στέρησις τῶν ὄντων; ὥσπερ  
 ἂν εἴ τις λέγει οὐκ ὄν, οὐ γὰρ προστίθῃσιν ἡ  
 ἀπόφασις, ἀλλὰ φησιν οὐκ εἶναι· καὶ οὕτω  
 στέρησις ὡς οὐκ ὄν. Εἰ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ὄν, ὅτι μὴ  
 τὸ ὄν, ἀλλ' ἄλλο ὄν τί ἐστι, δύο οἱ λόγοι, ὃ μὲν τοῦ  
 ὑποκειμένου ἀπτόμενος, ὃ δὲ τῆς στερήσεως τὴν  
 25 πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα σχέσιν δηλῶν. Ἡ ὃ μὲν τῆς ὕλης  
 πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα καὶ ὃ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου δὲ πρὸς τὰ  
 ἄλλα, ὃ δὲ τῆς στερήσεως εἰ τὸ ἀόριστον αὐτῆς  
 δηλοῖ, τάχα ἂν αὐτὸς αὐτῆς ἐφάπτοιτο· πλὴν ἐν  
 γε ἑκατέρῳ τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ, λόγῳ δὲ δύο. Εἰ  
 μέντοι τῷ ἀορίστῳ εἶναι καὶ ἀπείρῳ εἶναι καὶ  
 30 ἀποίῳ εἶναι τῇ ὕλῃ ταυτόν, πῶς ἔτι δύο οἱ λόγοι;  
 15. Πάλιν οὖν ζητητέον, εἰ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς τὸ  
 ἄπειρον καὶ τὸ ἀόριστον ἐπ' ἄλλῃ φύσει καὶ πῶς

<sup>1</sup> A stock Aristotelian example, cp., e.g., *Metaphysics* Z5. 1030b30-31. Was this philosophical snub nose originally Socrates's?

nose is to snubness,<sup>1</sup> in this way also they are each of them double and each two things. But if they are related as fire and heat, where heat is in fire but fire is not included in the definition of heat, and matter is privation in the way in which fire is hot, privation will be a sort of form of matter, and the substrate will be something else, which must be the matter. And they will not be one thing in this way either. Is, then, this unity in substrate and duality in definition to be understood in this way, that privation does not indicate that anything is there but that it is not there; privation being a kind of denial of realities? It would be just as if someone said "not being," for his denial does not make any addition but asserts that something does not exist; and it would be privation in this way, as not existing. If then it is non-existent because it is not being, but some other existing thing different from being, the definitions are two, one comprising the substrate, and that of privation making clear its relationship to the other existing things. Or perhaps the definition of matter shows its relationship to other things and that of the substrate also shows its relationship to other things, but that of privation, if it makes clear the indefiniteness of matter, might actually grasp it in itself [and not only its relationship to other things]; but in this case they are both one in substratum, but two in rational definition. But if privation, by being indefinite and unlimited and without qualities, is the same thing as matter, how do the definitions still remain two?

15. We must enquire, therefore, again whether the unlimited and indefinite are incidentally predicated

συμβεβηκός καὶ εἰ στέρησις συμβέβηκεν. Εἰ δὴ  
 ὅσα μὲν ἀριθμοὶ καὶ λόγοι ἀπειρίας ἔξω—ὄροι γὰρ  
 5 καὶ τάξεις καὶ τὸ τεταγμένον καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις παρὰ  
 τούτων, τάττει δὲ ταῦτα οὐ τὸ τεταγμένον οὐδὲ  
 τάξις, ἀλλὰ ἄλλο τὸ ταττόμενον παρὰ τὸ τάττον,  
 τάττει δὲ τὸ πέρασ καὶ ὄρος καὶ λόγος—ἀνάγκη τὸ  
 ταττόμενον καὶ ὀριζόμενον τὸ ἄπειρον εἶναι. Τάτ-  
 10 τεται δὲ ἡ ὕλη καὶ ὅσα δὲ μὴ ὕλη τῷ μετέχειν ἢ  
 ὕλης λόγον ἔχων· ἀνάγκη τοῖνυν τὴν ὕλην τὸ  
 ἄπειρον εἶναι, οὐχ οὕτω δὲ ἄπειρον, ὡς κατὰ  
 συμβεβηκός καὶ τῷ συμβεβηκέναι τὸ ἄπειρον  
 αὐτῇ. Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ τὸ συμβαῖνόν τῷ δεῖ  
 λόγον εἶναι· τὸ δὲ ἄπειρον οὐ λόγος· ἔπειτα τίνοι  
 ὄντι τὸ ἄπειρον συμβήσεται; Πέρατι καὶ πεπε-  
 15 ρασμένῳ. Ἄλλ' οὐ πεπερασμένον οὐδὲ πέρασ ἢ  
 ὕλη. Καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον δὲ προσελθὸν τῷ πεπερασ-  
 μένῳ ἀπολεῖ αὐτοῦ τὴν φύσιν· οὐ τοῖνυν συμβε-  
 βηκός τῇ ὕλη τὸ ἄπειρον· αὐτῇ τοῖνυν τὸ ἄπειρον.  
 Ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ἡ ὕλη τὸ ἄπειρον καὶ  
 εἴη ἂν γεννηθὲν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀπειρίας ἢ  
 20 δυνάμεως ἢ τοῦ ἀεί, οὐκ οὕσης ἐν ἐκείνῳ ἀπειρίας  
 ἀλλὰ ποιούντος. Πῶς οὖν ἐκεῖ καὶ ἐνταῦθα; Ἡ  
 διττὸν καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον. Καὶ τί διαφέρει; Ὡς  
 ἀρχέτυπον καὶ εἶδωλον. Ἐλαττόνως οὖν ἄπειρον

of another nature, and how they are incidental at-  
 tributes, and if privation is an incidental attribute.  
 Now if all things that are number and proportion are  
 outside limitlessness—for they are bounds and orders,  
 and other things derive their being set in order from  
 them, but it is not being ordered or order that orders  
 them, but that which is set in order is different from  
 that which orders it, and that which orders is limit  
 and bound and proportion—that which is set in order  
 and bounded must be the unlimited. But matter is  
 set in order, as are all things which are not matter in  
 so far as they participate in it or are reckoned as  
 matter; so matter must be the unlimited, but not  
 unlimited in the sense that it is so incidentally and  
 that the unlimited is an incidental attribute of it.  
 For, first, the incidental attribute of anything must be  
 a rational concept; but the unlimited is not a con-  
 cept. Then what will the subject be of which the  
 unlimited is incidentally predicated? Limit and  
 something limited. But matter is not something  
 limited, nor is it limit. And the unlimited when it  
 comes to that which is limited will destroy its nature.  
 So the unlimited is not an incidental attribute of  
 matter; matter itself, then is the unlimited. For in  
 the intelligible world, too, matter is the unlimited,  
 and it would be produced from the unlimitedness or  
 the power or the everlastingness of the One; un-  
 limitedness is not in the One, but the One produces  
 it. How, then, is matter both there and here? The  
 unlimited is double, too. And what is the dif-  
 ference between the two unlimiteds? They differ  
 as the archetype differs from the image. Is the un-  
 limited here, then, less unlimited? More, rather;

τούτο; Ἡ μάλλον· ὅσω γὰρ εἶδωλον πεφευγὸς τὸ  
 εἶναι <καὶ><sup>1</sup> τὸ ἀληθές, μάλλον ἄπειρον. Ἡ γὰρ  
 25 ἄπειρία ἐν τῷ ἤττον ὀρισθέντι μάλλον· τὸ γὰρ  
 ἤττον ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ μάλλον ἐν τῷ κακῷ. Τὸ ἐκεῖ  
 οὖν μάλλον ὄν εἶδωλον ὡς ἄπειρον, τὸ δ' ἐνταῦθα  
 ἤττον, ὅσω πέφευγε τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἀληθές, εἰς δὲ  
 εἰδῶλου κατερρῦη φύσιν, ἀληθεστέρως ἄπειρον.  
 Τὸ αὐτὸ οὖν τὸ ἄπειρον καὶ τὸ ἀπείρω εἶναι; Ἡ  
 30 ὅπου λόγος καὶ ὕλη ἄλλο ἐκάτερον, ὅπου δὲ ὕλη  
 μόνον ἢ ταῦτὸν λεκτέον ἢ ὅλως, ὃ καὶ βέλτιον,  
 οὐκ εἶναι ἐνθάδε τὸ ἀπείρω εἶναι· λόγος γὰρ  
 εὔται, ὅς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ ἀπείρω, ἢ ἢ ἄπειρον.  
 Ἄπειρον μὲν δὴ παρ' αὐτῆς τὴν ὕλην λεκτέον  
 ἀντιτάξει τῇ πρὸς τὸν λόγον. Καὶ γάρ, ὥσπερ ὃ  
 35 λόγος οὐκ ἄλλο τι ὢν ἔστι λόγος, οὕτω καὶ τὴν  
 ὕλην ἀντιτεταγμένην τῷ λόγῳ κατὰ τὴν ἀπειρίαν  
 οὐκ ἄλλο τι οὔσαν λεκτέον ἄπειρον.

16. Ἄρ' οὖν καὶ ἑτερότητι ταυτόν; Ἡ οὐ,  
 ἀλλὰ μορίῳ ἑτερότητος ἀντιταπτομένῳ πρὸς τὰ  
 ὄντα κυρίως, ἃ δὴ λόγοι. Διὸ καὶ μὴ ὄν οὕτω τι  
 ὄν καὶ στερῆσει ταυτόν, εἰ ἢ στερῆσις ἀντίθεσις  
 5 πρὸς τὰ ἐν λόγῳ ὄντα. Οὐκοῦν φθαρήσεται ἢ  
 στερῆσις προσελθόντος τοῦ οὐ στερῆσις; Οὐδαμῶς·

<sup>1</sup> <καὶ> Harder, H-S<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Aristotle, *Physics* Γ5. 204a23 ff.

for in so far as it is an image which has escaped from being and truth, it is more unlimited. For unlimitedness is present in a higher degree in that which is less defined; and less in the good is more in the bad. That which is there, which has a greater degree of existence, is unlimited [only] as an image, that which is here has a less degree of existence, and in proportion as it has escaped from being and truth, and sunk down into the nature of an image, it is more truly unlimited. Are, then, the unlimited and essential unlimitedness the same?<sup>1</sup> Where there is a formative principle and matter the two are different, but where there is only matter they must be said to be the same, or, which is better, that there is no essential unlimitedness here; for it will be a rational formative principle, the absence of which from the unlimited is the condition of its being unlimited. So matter must be called unlimited of itself, by opposition to the forming principle; and just as the forming principle is forming principle without being anything else, so the matter which is set over against the forming principle by reason of its unlimitedness must be called unlimited without being anything else.

16. Is matter, then, the same thing as otherness? No, rather it is the same thing as the part of otherness which is opposed to the things which in the full and proper sense exist, that is to say rational formative principles. Therefore, though it is non-existent, it has a certain sort of existence in this way, and is the same thing as privation, if privation is opposition to the things that exist in rational form. Will privation, then, be destroyed by the accession of that of which

ὑποδοχή γὰρ ἕξεως οὐχ ἕξις, ἀλλὰ στέρησις, καὶ  
 πέρατος οὐ τὸ πεπερασμένον οὐδὲ τὸ πέρασ, ἀλλὰ  
 τὸ ἄπειρον καὶ καθ' ὅσον ἄπειρον. Πῶς οὖν [οὐκ]  
 ἀπολεί αὐτοῦ τὴν φύσιν τοῦ ἀπείρου προσελθὼν τὸ  
 10 πέρασ καὶ ταῦτα οὐ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ὄντος  
 ἀπείρου; Ἡ εἰ μὲν κατὰ τὸ ποσὸν ἄπειρον,  
 ἀνήρει· νῦν δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, ἀλλὰ τοῖναντίον σφίξει  
 αὐτὸ ἐν τῷ εἶναι· ὁ γὰρ πέφυκεν, εἰς ἐνέργειαν καὶ  
 τελειώσιν ἄγει, ὥσπερ τὸ ἄσπαρτον, ὅταν σπείρη-  
 ται· καὶ ὅταν τὸ θῆλυ τοῦ ἄρρενος † καὶ οὐκ  
 15 ἀπόλλυται τὸ θῆλυ, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον θηλύνεται· τοῦτο  
 δὲ ἐστίν· ὁ ἐστὶ μᾶλλον γίννεται. Ἄρ' οὖν καὶ  
 κακὸν ἢ ὕλη μεταλαμβάνουσα ἀγαθοῦ; Ἢ διὰ  
 τοῦτο, ὅτι ἐδεήθη· οὐ γὰρ εἶχε. Καὶ γὰρ ὁ μὲν  
 ἂν δέηται τινος, τὸ δ' ἔχη, μέσον ἂν ἴσως γίγνεται  
 ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ, εἰ ἰσάζοι πως ἐπ' ἄμφω· ὁ δ'  
 20 ἂν μηδὲν ἔχη ἄτε ἐν πενίᾳ ὄν, μᾶλλον δὲ πενία ὄν,  
 ἀνάγκη κακὸν εἶναι. Οὐ γὰρ πλοῦτου πενία τοῦτο  
 [οὐδὲ ἰσχύος], ἀλλὰ πενία μὲν φρονήσεως, πενία δὲ  
 ἀρετῆς, κάλλους, ἰσχύος, μορφῆς, εἴδους, ποιού.  
 Πῶς οὖν οὐ δυσείδες; Πῶς δὲ οὐ πάντῃ αἰσχρόν;  
 25 Πῶς δὲ οὐ πάντῃ κακόν; Ἐκείνη δὲ ἢ ὕλη ἢ ἐκεῖ  
 ὄν· τὸ γὰρ πρὸ αὐτῆς ἐπέκεινα ὄντος. Ἐνταῦθα  
 δὲ τὸ πρὸ αὐτῆς ὄν. Οὐκ ὄν ἄρα αὐτῆ, ἕτερον ὄν,  
 πρὸς τῷ καλῷ τοῦ ὄντος.

<sup>1</sup> L. A. Post suggests that the MSS text can be accepted here if we understand <σπέριμι σπείρηται>: this is not per-  
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it is privation? Not at all; for that which receives a state is not a state but a privation, and the recipient of limit is not what is limited or limit, but the unlimited and that in so far as it is unlimited. How, then, can limit, when it has come to it, possibly destroy the nature of the absolutely unlimited, especially when it is not only incidentally unlimited? If it was quantitatively unlimited, limit would do away with it; but as it is, it does not do so; on the other hand, it keeps it in being; for it brings what it naturally is to actuality and perfection, like the unsown field when it is sown, and as when the female conceives by the male,<sup>1</sup> and does not lose its femaleness but becomes still more female: and that is, becomes more what it is. Is matter, then, also evil because it participates in good? Rather, because it lacks it; for this means that it does not have it. Anything which lacks something, but has something else, might perhaps hold a middle position between good and evil, if its lack and its having more or less balance; but that which has nothing because it is in want, or rather is want, must necessarily be evil. For this thing is not want of wealth but want of thought, want of virtue, of beauty, strength, shape, form, quality. Must it not then be ugly? Must it not be utterly vile, utterly evil? But the matter There is something real, for that which is before it is beyond being. Here, however, that which is before matter is real, and so matter itself is not real; it is something other, over and above the excellence of real being.

haps too much of an ellipsis for Plotinus, and is certainly the best suggestion so far.

## II. 5. ON WHAT EXISTS POTENTIALLY AND WHAT ACTUALLY

### *Introductory Note*

THIS treatise (No. 25 in Porphyry's chronological order) is, like most of II. 4, concerned with the close discussion of technical Aristotelian concepts: it is less explicitly critical of Aristotle than the preceding treatise, but the conception of matter which it presents is Plotinus's own and not that of Aristotle. The main purpose of the treatise is in fact to show clearly what Plotinus means by matter in the intelligible world, and how he conceives of matter in the sense-world as potentiality which never can be actualised, essential negation, "that which is really unreal"; this paradoxical conception is stated more clearly, perhaps, in the last chapter of this treatise than anywhere else in the *Enneads*.

### *Synopsis*

What is meant by potential and actual existence, and by potentiality and actuality; a discussion designed to bring out clearly the meaning of these Aristotelian concepts (ch. 1-2). How these concepts are to be applied to the intelligible world; there is no matter there in the sense of a principle of change, but the something like matter which our analysis detects is form, one aspect of the unchanging actuality (ch. 3). How they apply to the matter of the sense-world; it is a potentiality which never becomes or can become anything actual (chs. 4-5).



II. 5. (25) ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΙ ΚΑΙ  
ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΙ

1. Λέγεται τὸ μὲν δυνάμει, τὸ δὲ ἐνεργείᾳ εἶναι.  
λέγεται δὲ τι καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ ἐν τοῖς οὐσι. Σκεπτέον  
οὖν τί τὸ δυνάμει καὶ τί τὸ ἐνεργείᾳ. ἼΑρα τὸ  
αὐτὸ τῷ ἐνεργείᾳ εἶναι ἢ ἐνεργείᾳ, καὶ εἴ τί ἐστιν  
5 ἐνεργείᾳ, τοῦτο καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ, ἢ ἕτερον ἐκότερον  
καὶ τὸ ἐνεργείᾳ ὄν οὐκ ἀνάγκη καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ εἶναι;  
"Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς τὸ δυνάμει, δηλοῦ-  
εἶ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς, σκεπτέον. Ἡ ἐκεί τὸ  
ἐνεργείᾳ μόνον· καὶ εἴ ἐστι τὸ δυνάμει, τὸ δυνάμει  
μόνον αἰεὶ, κὰν αἰεὶ ἦ, οὐδέποτε ἂν ἔλθοι εἰς  
10 ἐνεργείᾳ <τῷ> οὐ τῷ χρόνῳ<sup>1</sup> ἐξείργεσθαι. Ἄλλὰ  
τί ἐστι τὸ δυνάμει πρῶτον λεκτέον, εἰ δὴ τὸ δυνάμει  
δεῖ μὴ ἀπλῶς λέγεσθαι· οὐ γὰρ ἐστι τὸ δυνάμει  
μηδενὸς εἶναι. Οἷον δυνάμει ἀνδριάς ὁ χαλ-  
κός· εἰ γὰρ μηδὲν ἐξ αὐτοῦ μηδ' ἐπ' αὐτῷ μηδ'  
ἔμελλε μηθὲν εἶσεσθαι μεθ' ὃ ἦν μηδ' ἐνεδέχετο

<sup>1</sup> <τῷ> οὐ τῷ χρόνῳ Theiler: οὐ τῷ χρόνῳ codd: τῷ οὐ χρόνῳ  
H-S<sup>1</sup>: † οὐ τῷ χρόνῳ H-S<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> I accept Theiler's emendation and interpretation here:  
see his note *ad loc.* (Plotinus Schriften II. 6. p. 431).

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Physics* Γ. 1. 201a30.

II. 5. ON WHAT EXISTS  
POTENTIALLY AND WHAT  
ACTUALLY

1. One speaks of potential and actual existence;  
and one speaks of actuality as something in the class  
of existing things. We must consider therefore  
what potential and what actual existence is. Is  
actuality the same as actual existence, and if any-  
thing is actuality is it also actually existent, or are the  
two different, and is it not necessary for that which  
is actually existing to be actuality? Further, it is  
clear that there is potential existence in the world of  
things perceived by the senses; but we must con-  
sider whether it is also in the intelligible world.  
Now, in that world there is only actual existence;  
even if there is potential existence, it is always only  
potential, and even if it always exists, it would never  
come to actuality because it is excluded from it by  
the fact that it is not in time.<sup>1</sup> But first we must  
say what potential existence is, if, as is indeed the  
case, we must not speak of potential existence simply;  
for it is not possible to exist potentially without being  
potentially anything. For instance, "the bronze is  
potentially statue";<sup>2</sup> for if nothing was going to  
come out of a thing or come upon it, and it was  
not going to be anything subsequent to what it was  
and there was no possibility of its becoming anything,

15 γενέσθαι, ἦν ἂν ὁ ἦν μόνον. "Ὁ δὲ ἦν, ἤδη παρῆν  
καὶ οὐκ ἔμελλε· τί οὖν ἐδύνατο ἄλλο μετὰ τὸ  
παρὸν αὐτό; Οὐ τοῖνυν ἦν ἂν δυνάμει. Δεῖ  
τοῖνυν τὸ δυνάμει τι ὄν ἄλλο ἤδη τῷ τι καὶ ἄλλο  
μετ' αὐτὸ δύνασθαι, ἥτοι μένον μετὰ τοῦ ἐκκῆνο  
ποιεῖν ἢ παρέχον αὐτὸ ἐκείνῳ ὃ δύναται φθαρὲν  
20 αὐτό, δυνάμει λέγεσθαι· ἄλλως γὰρ τὸ "δυνάμει  
ἀνδριάς ὁ χαλκός," ἄλλως τὸ ὕδωρ δυνάμει  
χαλκός καὶ ὁ ἀήρ πῦρ. Τοιοῦτον δὴ ὄν τὸ  
δυνάμει ἄρα καὶ δύναμις λέγοιτο ἂν πρὸς τὸ  
ἐσόμενον, οἷον ὁ χαλκός δύναμις τοῦ ἀνδριάντος;  
"Ἡ, εἰ μὲν ἢ δύναμις κατὰ τὸ ποιεῖν λαμβάνοιτο,  
25 οὐδαμῶς· οὐ γὰρ ἢ δύναμις ἢ κατὰ τὸ ποιεῖν  
λαμβανομένη λέγοιτο ἂν δυνάμει. Εἰ δὲ τὸ  
δυνάμει μὴ μόνον πρὸς τὸ ἐνεργεῖα λέγεται, ἀλλὰ  
καὶ πρὸς ἐνέργειαν, εἴη ἂν καὶ δύναμις δυνάμει.  
Βέλτιον δὲ καὶ σαφέστερον τὸ μὲν δυνάμει πρὸς  
τὸ ἐνεργεῖα, τὴν δὲ δύναμιν πρὸς ἐνέργειαν λέγειν.  
30 Τὸ μὲν δὴ δυνάμει τοιοῦτον ὡσπερ ὑποκείμενόν τι  
πάθει καὶ μορφαῖς καὶ εἶδεσιν, ἃ μέλλει δέχσθαι  
καὶ πέφυκεν· ἢ καὶ σπεύδει ἐλθεῖν, καὶ τὰ μὲν ὡς  
πρὸς τὸ βέλτιστον, τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὰ χείρω καὶ  
λυμαντικά αὐτῶν, ὧν ἕκαστον καὶ ἐνεργεῖα ἐστὶν  
ἄλλο.

it would be what it was alone. But what it was, was there already, and was not going to be. What other potentiality, then, would it have after what was already there? It would not be potential at all. So one must speak of anything which is potential as already potentially something else by being able to become something after what it already is, either remaining along with its production of that other thing, or giving itself up to that which it is able to become and being destroyed itself; for "the bronze is potentially statue" in one sense, the water is potentially bronze and the air, fire, in another. Well, then, if this is the sort of thing which potential existence is, can it be called potentiality in regard to that which it is going to be? For instance, is the bronze the potentiality of the statue? If potentiality is taken in the sense of being able to make, certainly not; for potentiality understood in the sense of being able to make would not be described as existing potentially. But if the term "potential existence" is used not only in relation to actual existence but also in relation to actuality, then potentiality, too, would exist potentially. But it is better and clearer to use "potential existence" in relation to "actual existence," and "potentiality" in relation to "actuality." Potential existence in this sense is like something which underlies affections and shapes and forms, which it is going to receive and naturally disposed to receive: indeed, it even strives to come to them, and attains some of them with the best results, others with worse results, spoiling the individual things, of which each is actually something other [than what it is potentially].

2. Περὶ δὲ τῆς ὕλης σκεπτέον, εἰ ἕτερόν τι οὐσα  
 ἐνεργεία δυνάμει ἐστὶ πρὸς ἃ μορφοῦνται, ἢ οὐδὲν  
 ἐνεργεία, καὶ ὅλως καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἃ λέγομεν δυνάμει  
 λαβόντα τὸ εἶδος καὶ μένοντα αὐτὰ ἐνεργεία  
 5 γίνεται, ἢ τὸ ἐνεργεία κατὰ τοῦ ἀνδριάντος  
 λεχθήσεται ἀντιτιθεμένου μόνον τοῦ ἐνεργεία  
 ἀνδριάντος πρὸς τὸν δυνάμει ἀνδριάντα, ἀλλ' οὐ  
 τοῦ ἐνεργεία κατηγορουμένου κατ' ἐκείνου, καὶ  
 οὐ τὸ δυνάμει ἀνδριάντος ἐλέγετο. Εἰ δὲ οὕτως, οὐ  
 τὸ δυνάμει γίνεται ἐνεργεία, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει  
 10 ὄντος πρότερον ἐγένετο τὸ ἐνεργεία ὕστερον. Καὶ  
 γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ δ ἐνεργεία ὄν τὸ συναμφότερον, οὐχ ἢ  
 ὕλη, τὸ δὲ εἶδος τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῇ. Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν, εἰ  
 ἑτέρα γίνονται οὐσία, οἷον ἐκ χαλκοῦ ἀνδριάντος  
 ἄλλη γὰρ οὐσία ὡς τὸ συναμφότερον ὁ ἀνδριάντος.  
 Ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ὅλως οὐ μενόντων φανερόν, ὡς τὸ  
 15 δυνάμει παντάπασιν ἕτερον ἦν. Ἄλλ' ὅταν ὁ  
 δυνάμει γραμματικὸς ἐνεργεία γένηται, ἐνταῦθα  
 τὸ δυνάμει πῶς οὐ καὶ ἐνεργεία τὸ αὐτό; Ὁ γὰρ  
 δυνάμει Σωκράτης ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ ἐνεργεία σοφός.  
 Ἄρ' οὐκ καὶ ὁ ἀνεπιστήμων ἐπιστήμων; Δυνάμει  
 γὰρ ἦν ἐπιστήμων. Ἡ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ὁ ἀμαθὴς  
 20 ἐπιστήμων. Οὐ γὰρ ἦ ἀμαθὴς δυνάμει ἐπιστήμων,

2. We must also consider the question of matter, whether it exists potentially in relation to the things which are given shape and is something else actually, or whether it is nothing actually; and in general, whether the other things which we say exist potentially come to exist actually when they receive the form while remaining themselves, or whether actual existence will be predicated of the statue, and the actual statue only opposed to the potential statue, but the predicate "actual" will not be applied to that of which the term "potential statue" was used. If this is so, it is not that which exists potentially which comes to exist actually, but the subsequent actually existing thing comes into being out of the prior potentially existing thing. Again, the actually existing thing is the compound of matter and form, not the matter on the one side, and on the other, the form imposed upon it. This is so when a different substance comes into existence, for instance, a statue from bronze; for the statue, as being the compound of matter and form is a different substance. And in the case of things of which no trace remains, it is obvious that what existed potentially was altogether different [from the actuality]. But when the man who is potentially educated becomes actually educated, surely in this case what existed potentially is the same as what exists actually. For it is the same Socrates who is potentially and actually wise. Then, is this true when the man without knowledge becomes a man of knowledge? For he was a man of knowledge potentially. It is only incidentally that the unlearned man becomes a man of knowledge. For it was not in so far as he was unlearned that he

ἀλλὰ συμβεβήκει αὐτῷ ἀμαθεῖ εἶναι, ἢ δὲ ψυχὴ  
 καθ' αὐτὴν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχουσα τὸ δυνάμει ἦν  
 ἤπερ καὶ ἐπιστήμων. "Ἐτι οὖν σφίξει τὸ δυνάμει,  
 καὶ δυνάμει γραμματικὸς ἤδη γραμματικὸς ὢν;  
 25 Ἡ οὐδὲν κωλύει καὶ ἄλλον τρόπον· ἐκεῖ μὲν  
 δυνάμει μόνον, ἐνταῦθα δὲ τῆς δυνάμεως ἐχούσης  
 τὸ εἶδος. Εἰ οὖν ἐστὶ τὸ μὲν δυνάμει τὸ ὑποκείμε-  
 νον, τὸ δ' ἐνεργεία τὸ συναμφοτέρων, ὁ ἀνδρίας,  
 τὸ εἶδος τὸ ἐπὶ τοῦ χαλκοῦ τί ἂν λέγοιτο; Ἡ οὐκ  
 ἄτοπον τὴν ἐνεργείαν, καθ' ἣν ἐνεργεία ἐστὶ καὶ  
 30 οὐ μόνον δυνάμει, τὴν μορφήν καὶ τὸ εἶδος λέγειν,  
 οὐχ ἀπλῶς ἐνεργείαν, ἀλλὰ τοῦδε ἐνεργείαν· ἐπεὶ  
 καὶ ἄλλην ἐνεργείαν τάχα κυριώτερον ἂν λέγοιμεν,  
 τὴν ἀντίθετον τῇ δυνάμει τῇ ἐπαγούσῃ ἐνεργείαν.  
 Τὸ μὲν γὰρ δυνάμει τὸ ἐνεργεία ἔχων παρ' ἄλλου,  
 τῇ δὲ δυνάμει ὁ δύναται παρ' αὐτῆς ἢ ἐνεργεία·  
 35 οἷον ἔξις καὶ ἢ κατ' αὐτὴν λεγομένη ἐνεργεία,  
 ἀνδρία καὶ τὸ ἀνδρίζεσθαι. Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν οὕτως.  
 3. Οὐδ' ἔνεκα ταῦτα προείρηται, νῦν λεκτέον,  
 ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς πῶς ποτε τὸ ἐνεργεία λέγεται καὶ  
 εἰ ἐνεργεία μόνον ἢ καὶ ἐνεργεία ἕκαστον καὶ εἰ  
 ἐνεργεία πάντα καὶ εἰ τὸ δυνάμει κάκεῖ. Εἰ δὲ  
 5 μήτε ὕλη ἐκεῖ ἐν ἣ τὸ δυνάμει, μήτε τι μέλλει τῶν

was potentially a man of knowledge, but it was inci-  
 dental to him that he was unlearned, and his soul  
 being appropriately disposed was the potential exist-  
 ence, and by it he became a man of knowledge. So,  
 then, does he still keep the potential existence, and is  
 he potentially educated when he is already educated?  
 There is no obstacle to this, and we can put it in a  
 different way: before he is educated he is only  
 potentially educated, when he is educated the poten-  
 tiality has its form. If, then, the potential existence  
 is the substratum, and the actual existence the com-  
 pound, the statue, what should the form imposed  
 on the bronze be called? It is not unreasonable to  
 call the shape and form, by which the statue exists  
 actually and not only potentially, the actuality, that  
 is, not simply actuality but the actuality of this  
 particular thing: since we might also apply the term  
 "actuality" more properly to something else, the  
 actuality contrasted with the potentiality that brings  
 it to the thing. For the potential existence has its  
 actual existence from something else, but for the  
 potentiality what it is capable of by itself is its  
 actuality; for instance, a moral disposition and the  
 activity called after it, courage and courageous  
 behaviour. So much, then, for this.

3. Now we must speak about the question to which  
 this preliminary discussion was directed, what is  
 really meant by actual existence in the intelligible  
 world, and whether each individual intelligible reality  
 is only actually existent or whether it is also actuality,  
 and if they are all together actuality, and if there is  
 potential existence there too. If, of course, there  
 is no matter there in which potential existence could

ἐκεῖ, ὃ μὴ ἤδη ἐστί, μηδ' ἔτι μεταβάλλον εἰς ἄλλο  
 ἢ μένον ἕτερόν τι γεννᾷ ἢ ἐξιστάμενον ἑαυτοῦ  
 ἔδωκεν ἄλλω ἀντ' αὐτοῦ εἶναι, οὐκ ἂν εἶη ἐκεῖ τὸ  
 δυνάμει ἐν ᾧ ἐστί, τῶν ὄντων καὶ αἰῶνα, οὐ  
 χρόνον ἐχόντων. Εἴ τις οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν νοητῶν  
 10 τοὺς τιθεμένους κάκεῖ ὕλην ἔροιτο, εἰ μὴ κάκεῖ τὸ  
 δυνάμει κατὰ τὴν ὕλην τὴν ἐκεῖ—καὶ γὰρ εἰ ἄλλον  
 τρόπον ἢ ὕλην, ἀλλ' ἔσται ἐφ' ἐκάστου τὸ μὲν ὡς  
 ὕλην, τὸ δὲ ὡς εἶδος, τὸ δὲ συναμφότερον—τί  
 ἐροῦσιν; "Ἡ καὶ τὸ ὡς ὕλην ἐκεῖ εἶδος ἐστί, ἐπεὶ  
 καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ εἶδος ὄν πρὸς ἕτερον ἂν εἶη ὕλην.  
 15 Οὐκοῦν πρὸς ἐκείνο καὶ δυνάμει; "Ἡ οὐ· εἶδος  
 γὰρ ἦν αὐτῆς καὶ οὐκ εἰς ὕστερον δὲ τὸ εἶδος καὶ  
 οὐ χωρίζεται δὲ ἀλλ' ἢ λόγῳ, καὶ οὕτως ὕλην  
 ἔχον, ὡς διπλοῦν νοούμενον, ἀμφω δὲ μία φύσις·  
 οἶον καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης φησὶ τὸ πέμπτον σῶμα  
 αὐλον εἶναι. Περὶ δὲ ψυχῆς πῶς ἐροῦμεν;  
 20 Δυνάμει γὰρ ζῶον, ὅταν μήπω, μέλλῃ δέ, καὶ  
 μουσικῇ δυνάμει καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα γίνεται οὐκ ἀεὶ  
 οὕσα· ὥστε καὶ ἐν νοητοῖς τὸ δυνάμει. "Ἡ οὐ

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle never actually says this: it may perhaps be taken as implicit in *De Caelo* A. 3. 270a-b, where he argues that the celestial substance "the body that moves in a circle" must be ageless, impassible, without any sort of quantitative or qualitative change. Possibly Plotinus depends here on some Peripatetic commentator on this passage, who drew the conclusion that Aristotle thought that the quintessence

be, and nothing there is going to be that which it is not already, and nothing, either in the process of changing into another thing, or remaining what it is, produces anything else, or, going out of itself, gives another thing existence in its place: then there will be nothing there in which potential existence can be, among things which really exist and possess eternity, not time. If, then, anyone were to ask those who posit matter there, too, in the intelligible world, if there is not potential existence There, too, in respect of the matter There—for even if matter exists There in a different way, there will be in each thing something like matter, something like form, and the compound of the two—what will they say? The answer is that the something like matter There is form, since the soul too, which is form, can be matter to something else. Then does it exist potentially in relation to that something else? No; for then the something else would be its form, and the form does not come to it afterwards and is not separated except by rational abstraction: it has matter in the sense that it is thought of as double, but both form and matter are one nature; just as Aristotle, too, says that his quintessence is without matter.<sup>1</sup> But how are we to speak about the soul? For it is potentially a living being, when it is not one yet but is going to be, and is potentially musical, and so with everything else that it becomes and is not always; so that there is potential existence also in the intelligible world. No, the soul is not these things potentially,

was without matter because he states so clearly that it is absolutely unchanging, and there is therefore no need to postulate any matter in it to be the substrate of change.

δυνάμει ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ δύναμις ἢ ψυχὴ τούτων. Τὸ δὲ ἐνεργεία πῶς ἐκεῖ; Ἄρα ὡς ὁ ἀνδριάς τὸ συναμφοτέρον ἐνεργεία, ὅτι τὸ εἶδος ἕκαστον  
 25 ἀπέληφεν; Ἡ ὅτι εἶδος ἕκαστον καὶ τέλειον ὁ ἔστι. Νοῦς γὰρ οὐκ ἐκ δυνάμεως τῆς κατὰ τὸ οἶόν τε νοεῖν εἰς ἐνεργείαν τοῦ νοεῖν—ἄλλου γὰρ ἂν προτέρου τοῦ οὐκ ἐκ δυνάμεως δέοιτο—ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ πᾶν. Τὸ γὰρ δυνάμει βούλεται ἐτέρου ἐπελθόντος εἰς ἐνεργείαν ἄγεσθαι, ἵνα ἐνεργεία  
 30 γίνηται τι, ὃ δ' αὐτὸ παρ' αὐτοῦ τὸ αἰεὶ οὕτως ἔχει, τοῦτο ἐνεργεία ἂν εἴη. Πάντα οὖν τὰ πρῶτα ἐνεργεία· ἔχει γὰρ ὃ δεῖ ἔχειν καὶ παρ' αὐτῶν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ ψυχὴ δὴ οὕτως ἢ μὴ ἐν ὕλη, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ νοητῷ. Καὶ ἢ ἐν ὕλη δὲ ἄλλη ἐνεργεία· οἶον ἢ φυτική· ἐνεργεία γὰρ καὶ αὕτη ὅ ἐστιν. Ἄλλ'  
 35 ἐνεργεία μὲν πάντα καὶ οὕτως, ἐνεργεία δὲ πάντα; Ἡ πῶς; Εἰ δὴ καλῶς εἴρηται ἐκείνη ἢ φύσις ἀγρυπνος εἶναι καὶ ζωὴ καὶ ζωὴ ἀρίστη, αἱ κάλλιστα ἂν εἴεν ἐκεῖ ἐνεργείαι. Καὶ ἐνεργεία ἄρα καὶ ἐνεργεία τὰ πάντα καὶ ζῶαι τὰ πάντα καὶ  
 40 ὁ τόπος ὁ ἐκεῖ τόπος ἐστὶ ζωῆς καὶ ἀρχῆ καὶ πηγῆ ἀληθοῦς ψυχῆς τε καὶ νοῦ.

4. Τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα πάντα, ὅσα δυνάμει τί ἐστίν, ἔχει καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεία εἶναι ἄλλο τι, ὃ ἤδη ὄν πρὸς ἄλλο δυνάμει εἶναι λέγεται· περὶ δὲ τῆς

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Timaeus* 52B7. Plotinus speaks of the "sleepless light" in Intellect in his fine description of its changeless, eternal life and thought in VI. 2. 8. 7.

it is the potentiality of these things. But how are we to understand actual existence there? Is it like the way in which the statue, the compound of matter and form, exists actually, because each intelligible thing has already received its form? Rather because each of them is form and is perfectly what it is. For intellect does not move from a potentiality consisting in being able to think to an actuality of thinking—otherwise it would need another prior principle which does not move from potentiality to actuality—but the whole is in it. For potential existence wants to be brought to actuality by the coming to it of something else, so that it may become something actually, but that which has itself from itself unchanging identity, this will be actuality. So all the primary beings are actuality; for they have what they need to have from themselves and for ever: and soul is in this state too, the soul which is not in matter but in the intelligible. But the soul in matter, too, is another actuality—the growth-soul for instance; for this, too, is an actuality, what it is. But, granted that everything there exists actually in this way, is everything there actuality? Why not? Certainly, if it is well said that that nature there is sleepless,<sup>1</sup> and life, and the best life, the noblest actualities would be there. All things there, then, both exist actually and are actualities, and all are lives, and the region there is a region of life and the origin and spring of true soul and intellect.

4. Everything else, then, which is potentially something, has actual existence as something else; and this something else which already exists is said to exist potentially in relation to another thing.

λεγομένης εἶναι ὕλης, ἣν πάντα δυνάμει λέγομεν  
 5 τὰ ὄντα, πῶς ἔστω εἰπεῖν ἐνεργεία τι τῶν ὄντων  
 εἶναι; Ἡδὴ γὰρ οὐ πάντα τὰ ὄντα δυνάμει ἂν  
 εἶη. Εἰ οὖν μηδὲν τῶν ὄντων, ἀνάγκη μηδ' ὄν  
 αὐτὴν εἶναι. Πῶς οὖν ἂν ἐνεργεία τι εἶη μηδὲν  
 τῶν ὄντων οὐσα; Ἄλλ' οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων ἂν εἶη  
 τούτων, ἃ γίνεται ἐπ' αὐτῆς, ἄλλο δέ τι οὐδὲν  
 10 κωλύει εἶναι, εἴπερ μηδὲ πάντα τὰ ὄντα ἐπὶ τῇ  
 ὕλῃ. Ἡ μὲν δὴ οὐδὲν ἐστι τούτων τῶν ἐπ' αὐτῇ,  
 ταῦτα δὲ ὄντα, μὴ ὄν ἂν εἶη. Οὐ μὲν δὴ ἀνείδεόν  
 τι φανταζομένη εἶδος ἂν εἶη· οὐ τοίνυν οὐδ' ἐν  
 ἐκείνοις ἂν<sup>1</sup> ἀριθμηθεῖη. Μὴ ὄν ἄρα καὶ ταύτη  
 ἔσται. Ἐπ' ἄμφω ἄρα μὴ ὄν οὐσα πλειόνως μὴ  
 15 ὄν ἔσται. Εἰ δὴ πέφευγε μὲν τὴν τῶν ὡς ἀληθῶς  
 ὄντων φύσιν, οὐ δύναται δὲ ἐφικέσθαι οὐδὲ τῶν  
 ψευδῶς λεγομένων εἶναι, ὅτι μηδὲ ἵνδαλμα λόγου  
 ἐστὶν ὡς ταῦτα, ἐν τίνι τῷ εἶναι ἂν ἀλοίη; Εἰ δὲ  
 ἐν μηδενὶ τῷ εἶναι, τί ἂν ἐνεργεία εἶη;

5. Πῶς οὖν λέγομεν περὶ αὐτῆς; Πῶς δὲ τῶν  
 ὄντων ὕλη; Ἡ ὅτι δυνάμει. Οὐκοῦν, ὅτι ἤδη  
 δυνάμει, ἤδη οὖν ἔστι καθὸ μέλλει; Ἄλλὰ τὸ  
 εἶναι αὐτῇ μόνον τὸ μέλλον ἐπαγγελλόμενον· οἷον  
 5 τὸ εἶναι αὐτῇ εἰς ἐκεῖνο ἀναβάλλεται, ὃ ἔσται.  
 Τὸ τοίνυν δυνάμει οὐ τι, ἀλλὰ δυνάμει πάντα

<sup>1</sup> ἂν Kirchhoff; H-S<sup>2</sup>: ὄν codd.

But as for matter, which is said to exist and which we  
 say is all realities potentially, how is it possible to  
 say that it is actually something real? For if it was,  
 it would already have ceased to be potentially all  
 realities. If, then, it is nothing real, it necessarily  
 cannot be existent either. How could it, then, be  
 actually something when it is nothing real? But,  
 even if it is not any of the realities which come into  
 being upon it, there is no obstacle to its being some-  
 thing else, since it is not all realities which have a  
 material foundation. In so far, then, as it is none of  
 these things which are founded upon it, and these are  
 realities, it is non-existent. But certainly it could  
 not be a form, since it is imagined as something  
 formless; so it could not be numbered among those  
 form realities of the intelligible world. So it will be  
 non-existent in this way too. If, then, it is non-  
 existent in both these ways, it will be still more non-  
 existent. If, then, it has made good its escape from  
 the nature of the true realities, and cannot attain  
 even to those which are falsely said to exist, because  
 it is not even a phantasm of rational form as these  
 are, in what sort of existence can it be grasped?  
 And if in no sort of existence, how can it exist  
 actually?

5. How, then, do we speak of it? How is it the  
 matter of real things. Because it is they potentially.  
 Then, because it is they already potentially, is it  
 therefore just as it is going to be? But its being is no  
 more than an announcement of what it is going to  
 be: it is as if being for it was adjourned to that  
 which it will be. So its potential existence is not  
 being something, but being potentially everything;

μηδέν δὲ ὄν καθ' αὐτὸ, ἀλλ' ὃ ἔστιν ὕλη ὄν, οὐδ' ἐνεργεία ἔστιν. Εἰ γὰρ ἔσται τι ἐνεργεία, ἐκεῖνο ὃ ἔσται ἐνεργεία, οὐχ ἡ ὕλη ἔσται· οὐ πάντη οὖν ὕλη, ἀλλὰ οἷον ὁ χαλκός. Εἴη ἂν οὖν τοῦτο μὴ ὄν, 10 οὐχ ὡς ἕτερον τοῦ ὄντος, οἷον κίνησις· αὕτη γὰρ καὶ ἐποχεῖται τῷ ὄντι οἷον ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ οὔσα, ἡ δὲ ἔστιν οἷον ἐκριφείσα καὶ πάντη χωρισθεῖσα καὶ μεταβάλλειν ἑαυτὴν οὐ δυναμένη, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἦν—μὴ ὄν δὲ ἦν—οὕτως αἰεὶ ἔχουσα. Οὔτε δὲ ἦν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐνεργεία τι ἀποσταῖσα πάντων 15 τῶν ὄντων οὔτε ἐγένετο· ἃ γὰρ ὑποδύναται ἠθέλησεν, οὐδὲ χρωσθῆναι ἀπ' αὐτῶν δεδύνηται, ἀλλὰ μένουσα πρὸς ἄλλο δυνάμει οὔσα πρὸς τὰ ἐφεξῆς, τῶν δ' ὄντων ἤδη παυσασμένων ἐκείνων φανείσα ὑπὸ τε τῶν μετ' αὐτὴν γενομένων καταληφθεῖσα ἔσχατον καὶ τούτων κατέστη. Ὑπ' ἀμφοτέρων 20 οὖν καταληφθεῖσα ἐνεργεία μὲν οὐδετέρων ἂν εἴη, δυνάμει δὲ μόνον ἐγκαταλείπεται εἶναι ἄσθενές τι καὶ ἀμυδρὸν εἶδωλον μορφοῦσθαι μὴ δυνάμενον. Οὐκοῦν ἐνεργεία εἶδωλον· οὐκοῦν ἐνεργεία ψεῦδος. Τοῦτο δὲ ταῦτόν τῷ ἀληθινῶς ψεῦδος· τοῦτο 25 δὲ ὄντως μὴ ὄν. Εἰ οὖν ἐνεργεία μὴ ὄν, μᾶλλον μὴ ὄν, καὶ ὄντως ἄρα μὴ ὄν. Πολλοῦ ἄρα δεῖ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. ch. 1. The bronze is already actually bronze, a formed, actually existing thing; but it is potentially the statue which can be made out of it, and so the matter of the statue.

and since it is nothing in itself—except what it is, matter—it does not exist actually at all. For, if it is to be anything actually, it will be what it is actually and not matter: so it will not be altogether matter, but only matter in the way that the bronze is.<sup>1</sup> So then it must be non-existent not in the sense of being different from existence, like motion:<sup>2</sup> for this rides on existence, as if coming from it and being in it, but matter is as if cast out and utterly separated, and unable to change itself, but always in the state it was from the beginning—and it was non-existent. It was not anything actually from the beginning, since it stood apart from all realities, and it did not become anything; it has not been able to take even a touch of colour from the things that wanted to plunge into it, but remaining directed to something else it exists potentially to what comes next; when the realities of the intelligible world had already come to an end it appeared and was caught by the things that came into being after it and took its place as the last after these too. So, being caught by both, it could belong actually to neither class of realities; it is only left for it to be potentially a sort of weak and dim phantasm unable to receive a shape. So it is actually a phantasm: so it is actually a falsity: this is the same as “that which is truly a falsity”; this is “what is really unreal.”<sup>3</sup> That, then, which has

<sup>2</sup> Motion is one of the “categories of the intelligible world,” cp. ch. 5 of the preceding treatise, and the note there.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase τὸ ὡς ἀληθῶς ψεῦδος comes from Plato, *Republic* II. 382A4, but occurs there in a quite different context (the “lie in the soul”): ὄντως μὴ ὄν comes from *Sophist* 254D1, and again certainly does not refer to ὕλη.



αὐτῷ ἐνεργείᾳ τι τῶν ὄντων εἶναι τὸ ἀληθές ἔχοντι  
 ἐν τῷ μὴ ὄντι. Ἐἴπερ ἄρα δεῖ αὐτὸ εἶναι, δεῖ  
 αὐτὸ ἐνεργείᾳ μὴ εἶναι, ἵνα ἐκβεβηκὸς τοῦ ἀληθῶς  
 εἶναι ἐν τῷ μὴ εἶναι ἔχη τὸ εἶναι, ἐπεὶπερ τοῖς  
 30 ψευδῶς οὖσιν, εἰάν ἀφέλης τὸ ψεῦδος αὐτῶν,  
 ἀφείλες αὐτῶν ἦντινα εἶχον οὐσίαν, καὶ τοῖς  
 δυνάμει τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ἔχουσιν εἰσαγαγῶν  
 τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἀπολώλεκας αὐτῶν τῆς ὑποστάσεως  
 τὴν αἰτίαν, ὅτι τὸ εἶναι αὐτοῖς ἐν δυνάμει ἦν.  
 Ἐἴπερ ἄρα δεῖ ἀνώλεθρον τὴν ὕλην τηρεῖν, ὕλην  
 35 αὐτὴν δεῖ τηρεῖν· δεῖ ἄρα δυνάμει, ὡς ἔοικεν,  
 εἶναι λέγειν μόνον, ἵνα ἢ ὁ ἔστω, ἢ τούτους τοὺς  
 λόγους ἐξελεγκτέον.

its truth in non-existence is very far from being  
 actually any reality. If, then, it must exist, it must  
 actually not exist, so that, having gone out of true  
 being, it may have its being in non-being; for when  
 you are dealing with things which exist falsely, if  
 you take away their falsity, you have taken away what  
 substance they have, and if you bring in actuality to  
 things which have their being and substance in  
 potentiality you have destroyed the ground of their  
 existence, since their being was in their potentiality.  
 If, then, we must keep matter as indestructible, we  
 must keep it as matter. One must say, then, it  
 would seem, only that it exists potentially, in order  
 that it may be what it is, or else one must refute  
 these arguments.

## II. 6. ON SUBSTANCE, OR ON QUALITY

### *Introductory Note*

THIS treatise (No. 17 in Porphyry's chronological order) is a highly technical, and at times extremely obscure, criticism of Aristotle's doctrine of quality: it puts forward a view which is in all essentials the same as that which Plotinus much later expounds in his great treatise *On the Categories* (VI. 1-3. 42-44 in the chronological order). This is that the category of quality cannot be used in speaking of the intelligible world, where everything is substance; and even in the sense world its use is severely restricted; the essential quality or *differentia* is not really a quality at all but an activity of the formative principle, and even accidental qualities, though they may still be called qualities, are traces or shadows of the activities of substances in the intelligible world.

### *Synopsis*

In the intelligible world everything is substance. What place, then, can be found there for quality? The Aristotelian distinction between essential differentiations and accidental qualities does not work: the same quality appears in one thing as a *differentia*, in another as an accident, white, for instance, in "white lead" and "white man." We must say, rather, that what is quality here is substance in the intelligible world (ch. 1). Further critical examination of the Aristotelian doctrine of quality as applied to things in the sense-world, with the conclusion that the notion of *differentia* is unsatisfactory here too,

## ON SUBSTANCE, OR ON QUALITY

and that essential differentiations should be regarded, not as qualities, but as activities of substance and formative principle; only non-essential, accidental qualities are to be called qualities (ch. 2). In the intelligible world the origins and archetypes of even these non-essential qualities are substantial activities, of which quality here is a trace or shadow (ch. 3).

II. 6. (17) ΠΕΡΙ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ Η ΠΕΡΙ  
ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΟΣ

1. ἼΑρα τὸ ὄν καὶ ἡ οὐσία ἕτερον, καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄν  
ἀπηρημαωμένον τῶν ἄλλων, ἡ δὲ οὐσία τὸ ὄν μετὰ  
τῶν ἄλλων, κινήσεως, στάσεως, ταύτου, ἑτέρου,  
καὶ στοιχεῖα ταῦτα ἐκείνης; Τὸ ὄν ὅλον οὐσία,  
5 ἕκαστον δὲ ἐκείνων τὸ μὲν ὄν, τὸ δὲ κίνησις, τὸ  
δὲ ἄλλο τι. Κίνησις μὲν ὄν κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ὄν·  
οὐσία δὲ ἄρα κατὰ συμβεβηκός, ἢ συμπληρωτικὸν  
οὐσίας; Ἡ καὶ αὐτὴ [ἡ] οὐσία καὶ τὰ ἐκεῖ πάντα  
οὐσία. Πῶς ὄν οὐ καὶ ἐνταῦθα; Ἡ ἐκεῖ, ὅτι ἐν  
πάντα, ἐνθάδε δὲ διαληφθέντων τῶν εἰδώλων τὸ  
10 μὲν ἄλλο, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο· ὡς περ ἐν μὲν τῷ σπέρματι  
ὁμοῦ πάντα καὶ ἕκαστον πάντα καὶ οὐ χεῖρ χωρὶς  
καὶ χωρὶς κεφαλὴ, ἐνθα δὲ χωρίζεται ἀλλήλων·  
εἶδωλα γὰρ καὶ οὐκ ἀληθῆ. Τὰς ὄν ποιότητας  
ἐκεῖ φήσομεν οὐσίας διαφορὰς περὶ οὐσίαν οὐσίας  
15 ἢ περὶ ὄν, διαφορὰς δὲ ποιούσας ἑτέρας οὐσίας

<sup>1</sup> The "categories of the intelligible world": ep. II. 4. 5  
and II. 5. 5.

II. 6. ON SUBSTANCE, OR ON  
QUALITY

1. Are being and substance different, and is being  
stripped of everything else, while substance is being  
along with everything else, with motion, rest, same-  
ness, otherness,<sup>1</sup> and are these elements of substance?  
The whole, then, is substance, and each of those  
others is, one of them being, another motion, and  
another something else. So, then, motion is in-  
cidentally being: is it, then, incidentally substance,  
or a constituent element essential to the completion  
of substance? Motion is certainly itself substance,  
and everything in the intelligible world is substance.  
Why, then, is everything not substance here below  
too? There, in the intelligible world, everything is  
substance because all are one; here below the  
images are separated, and one is one thing, one an-  
other: just as in the seed all things are together and  
each is all, and there is not a hand separately and a  
head separately, but here and now they are separated  
from each other; for they are images and not true  
realities.

Shall we, then, say that the qualities in the in-  
telligible world are differentiations of substance  
applying to substance or to being, but differentia-  
tions in that they make substances distinct from each  
other and so are entirely responsible for making

πρὸς ἀλλήλας καὶ ὅλως οὐσίας; "Ἡ οὐκ ἄτοπον, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν τῆδε ποιότητων, ὧν αἱ μὲν διαφοραὶ οὐσιῶν, ὡς τὸ δίπονον καὶ τὸ τετράπονον, αἱ δὲ οὐ διαφοραὶ οἶσαι αὐτὸ τοῦτο μόνον ποιότητες λέγονται. Καίτοι τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ διαφορὰ γίνεται  
 20 συμπληροῦσα καὶ οὐ διαφορὰ ἐν ἄλλῳ οὐ συμπληροῦσα τὴν οὐσίαν, συμβεβηκὸς δέ· οἶον τὸ λευκὸν ἐν μὲν κύκνῳ ἢ ψιμυθίῳ συμπληροῦν, ἐν δὲ σοὶ συμβεβηκός. "Ἡ τὸ λευκὸν τὸ μὲν ἐν τῇ λόγῳ συμπληροῦν καὶ οὐ ποιότης, τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ ποῖόν. "Ἡ διαιρετέον τὸ ποῖόν, ὡς τὸ μὲν  
 25 οὐσιῶδες ἰδιότης τις οὐσα τῆς οὐσίας, τὸ δὲ μόνον ποῖόν, καθ' ὃ ποιά οὐσία, τοῦ ποιοῦ οὐ διαλλαγὴν εἰς τὴν οὐσίαν ποιοῦντος οὐδ' ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας, ἀλλ' οὔσης ἤδη καὶ πεπληρωμένης διάθεσιν τινὰ ἕξωθεν ποιοῦντος καὶ μετὰ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ πράγματος προσθήκην, εἴτε περὶ ψυχὴν εἴτε περὶ σῶμα  
 30 γίνονται. "Ἄλλ' εἰ καὶ τὸ δρώμενον λευκὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ ψιμυθίου συμπληρωτικὸν εἶη αὐτοῦ;—ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ κύκνου οὐ συμπληρωτικόν· γένοιτο γὰρ ἂν καὶ οὐ λευκός—ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τοῦ ψιμυθίου· καὶ τοῦ πυρός δὲ ἢ θερμότης. "Ἄλλ' εἴ τις λέγοι τὴν πυρότητα τὴν οὐσίαν εἶναι καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ψιμυθίου

<sup>1</sup> White lead appears as a stock example of whiteness already in Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* A.4. 1096b23, where it is coupled with snow. As for the swan, Plotinus's self-correction below (l. 31-32) seems to confirm the correctness of the MSS reading: cp. also Simplicius, *In Phys.* I. 3, p. 119, 15.

them substances? Now this view is not unreasonable in itself, but it is unreasonable when it is applied to the qualities here, of which some are differentiations of substance, for instance, "two-footed" and "four-footed," and some, which are not differentiations of substance are called just qualities, and nothing but qualities. And, in fact, the same thing becomes a differentiation essential to the completion of a substance, and in something else is not a differentiation and does not contribute to the completion of the substance, but is an incidental attribute: as for instance "white" is an essential completion in a swan or white lead,<sup>1</sup> but in you it is an incidental attribute. The white which enters into the definition is an essential completing element and not a quality, that which appears on the surface is qualitative. Perhaps we should make a distinction between two kinds of quality, the substantial kind being a distinctive particularity of substance, and the other qualitative and nothing else, that by which a substance is of a certain quality when the quality does not change the thing either into or out of its substance, but only puts it into a certain state from outside when it exists already in fullness of substantial being, and produces an addition posterior to the substance, whether this happens in the case of body or of soul. But what if the visible white in white lead was an essential completion of it?—in the swan white is not an essential completion, for there could be a swan which was not white; but our question was about white lead: and the same might be true of the heat of fire. But suppose one said that "fireness" is the substance of fire, and what corresponds to it the

35 τὸ ἀνάλογον; Ἄλλ' ὅμως τοῦ ὁρωμένου πυρὸς  
 [πυρότης] ἢ θερμότης συμπληροῦσα καὶ ἡ λευκότης  
 ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου. Λί αὐταὶ τοίνυν συμπληρώσουσι  
 καὶ οὐ ποιότητες, καὶ οὐ συμπληρώσουσι καὶ [οὐ]  
 ποιότητες. Καὶ ἄτοπον ἐν μὲν οἷς συμπληροῦσι  
 40 λέγειν ἄλλο εἶναι, ἐν δὲ οἷς μὴ ἄλλο, τῆς αὐτῆς  
 φύσεως οὐσης. Ἄλλ' ἄρα τοὺς μὲν λόγους τοὺς  
 ποιήσαντας αὐτὰ οὐσιώδεις ὄλους, τὰ δὲ ἀποτελέ-  
 σματα ἔχειν ἤδη τὰ ἐκεῖ τι ἐνταῦθα ποιὰ, οὐ τί.  
 Ὅθεν καὶ ἀμαρτάνειν ἡμᾶς αἰεὶ περὶ τὸ τι ἀπολισθά-  
 νοντας ἐν ταῖς ζητήσεσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς τὸ ποιὸν  
 45 καταφερομένους. Οὐ γὰρ εἶναι τὸ πῦρ ὃ λέγομεν  
 εἰς τὸ ποιὸν ἀφορῶντες, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν εἶναι οὐσίαν,  
 ἃ δὲ νῦν βλέπομεν, εἰς ἃ καὶ ἀφορῶντες λέγομεν,  
 ἀπάγειν ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ τι καὶ ὀρίζεσθαι τὸ ποιόν.  
 Καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν εὐλόγως· οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν  
 οὐσίαν εἶναι, ἀλλ' αὐτῆς πάθη. Ὅθεν κάκεῖνο,  
 50 πῶς οὐκ ἐξ οὐσιῶν οὐσία. Ἐλέγετο μὲν οὖν, ὅτι  
 οὐ δεῖ τὸ αὐτὸ τὸ γινόμενον εἶναι τοῖς ἐξ ὧν· νῦν  
 δὲ λέγειν δεῖ ὅτι οὐδὲ τὸ γενόμενον οὐσία. Ἄλλὰ  
 πῶς ἐκεῖ ἦν ἐλέγομεν οὐσίαν οὐκ ἐξ οὐσίας

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Plato, *Seventh Letter* 343C1-6.

substance of white lead? Even so, the heat is an essential completion of the visible fire, and the whiteness in white lead. So, then, the same distinctive features will be essential completions and not qualities, and qualities and not essential completions. And it is unreasonable to say that they are one thing in what they complete and another in what they do not, when their nature is the same. But, then, one must say rather that the rational formative principles which made them are altogether substantial, but that the things produced by them have here and now what in the intelligible world is a "something" but here below qualitative and not a "something." This is the reason why we are always making mistakes in our investigations about the "something," and slipping off it and being carried away to the qualitative.<sup>1</sup> For fire is not what we say it is when we concentrate our gaze on the qualitative, but its being is substance, and what we see now, that which we concentrate our gaze on when we speak of it, leads us away from the "something" and we define only the qualitative. This is reasonable procedure when we are dealing with objects of sense; for there is nothing of them which is substance, but only affections of substance. This raises that other problem, how substance can come not from substances [but from something which is not substance]. Now it has already been said that what comes into being cannot be the same as that from which it comes; we must add at this stage that what has come into being is not substance. But how, then, does there come to be in the intelligible world what we said was substance, when we said it did not come from substance?

λέγοντες; Τὴν γὰρ οὐσίαν φήσομεν ἐκεῖ κυριώτε-  
 55 ρον καὶ ἀμιγέστερον ἔχουσαν τὸ ὄν εἶναι οὐσίαν—  
 ὡς ἐν διαφοραῖς—ὄντως, μᾶλλον δὲ μετὰ προσθή-  
 κης ἐνεργειῶν λεγομένην οὐσίαν, τελείωσιν μὲν  
 δοκοῦσαν εἶναι ἐκείνου, τάχα δ' ἐνδεεστέραν τῇ  
 προσθήκῃ καὶ τῷ οὐκ ἀπλῶ, ἀλλ' ἤδη ἀφισταμένην  
 τούτου.

2. Ἀλλὰ περὶ τῆς ποιότητος σκεπτέον τί ὅλως·  
 τάχα γὰρ γνωσθὲν ὅ τι ἐστὶ μᾶλλον παύσει τὰς  
 ἀπορίας. Πρῶτον οὖν ἐκεῖνο ζητητέον, εἰ τὸ αὐτὸ  
 θετέον ὅτε μὲν ποιὸν μόνον, ὅτε δὲ συμπληροῦν  
 5 οὐσίαν, οὐ δυσχεράναντας ποιὸν συμπληρωτικὸν  
 οὐσίας εἶναι, ἀλλὰ ποιῶς μᾶλλον οὐσίας. Δεῖ  
 τοίνυν ἐπὶ τῆς ποιῶς οὐσίας τὴν οὐσίαν πρὸ τοῦ  
 ποιῶν εἶναι καὶ τὸ τί ἐστὶ. Τί οὖν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρὸς  
 πρὸ τῆς ποιῶς οὐσίας ἢ οὐσία; Ἄρα τὸ σῶμα;  
 Τὸ γένος τοίνυν οὐσία ἔσται, τὸ σῶμα, τὸ δὲ πῦρ  
 10 σῶμα θερμὸν καὶ οὐκ οὐσία τὸ ὅλον, ἀλλ' οὕτω τὸ  
 θερμὸν ἐν αὐτῷ, ὡς καὶ ἐν σοὶ τὸ σιμόν. Ἀφαιρε-  
 θείσης τοίνυν θερμότητος καὶ τοῦ λαμπροῦ καὶ  
 κούφου, ἃ δὴ δοκεῖ ποιῶ εἶναι, καὶ ἀντιτυπίας τὸ  
 τριχῆ διαστατὸν καταλείπεται καὶ ἡ ὕλη οὐσία.  
 Ἄλλ' οὐ δοκεῖ τὸ γὰρ εἶδος μᾶλλον οὐσία.  
 15 Ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος ποιότητος. Ἡ οὐ ποιότητος, ἀλλὰ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Z3, 1029a16-19; Sextus  
 Empiricus, *Pyrrh. hyp.* III. 39.

We shall assert that the substance There, because  
 it has a more authentic and purer being, is really  
 substance, as far as is possible in differentiations of  
 being, or rather that when we speak of substance  
 There we speak of it with the addition of its activities;  
 it seems to be a perfection of That [which is its  
 source], but is perhaps deficient in comparison with  
 it by this addition, and by not being simple but al-  
 ready moving away from this original simplicity.

2. But we must enquire what in itself quality is:  
 for perhaps the knowledge of what it is will more  
 effectively put an end to our difficulties. First of  
 all, then, we must enquire into the question already  
 raised, whether we are to assume that the same thing  
 is at one time only qualitative, and at another  
 essentially completing substance (we must not be  
 uneasy about what is qualitative being an essential  
 completing element of substance, but regard it  
 rather as a completing element of a substance of a  
 certain quality). Now in the substance of a certain  
 quality the substance, the specific essence, must be  
 there before it is qualified. What then, in the case of  
 fire, is the substance which is there before the  
 qualified substance. Is it the body? Then the  
 genus "body" will be the substance, and fire will  
 be a hot body, and the whole of it will not be sub-  
 stance but the hot will be in it in the same way as  
 the quality of snubnosedness is in you. So if the  
 heat and the brightness and the lightness—these  
 appear to be qualitative—are taken away, the three-  
 dimensionality is left and the matter is the substance.<sup>1</sup>  
 But we do not think it is: the form, rather, is sub-  
 stance. But the form is quality. No, the form is not

λόγος τὸ εἶδος. Τὰ οὖν ἐκ τοῦ λόγου καὶ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου τί ἐστῶ; Οὐ γὰρ τὸ ὀρώμενον καὶ τὸ καλὸν τοῦτο δὲ ποιόν. Εἰ μὴ τις λέγοι τὸ καίειν ἐνέργειαν ἐκ τοῦ λόγου· καὶ τὸ θερμαίνειν καὶ τὸ λευκαίνειν τοῦν καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ποιήσεις· ὥστε τὴν ποιότητα οὐχ ἔξομεν ὅπου καταλείψομεν. Ἡ ταύτας μὲν οὐ λεκτέον ποιότητας, ὅσαι λέγονται συμπληροῦν οὐσίας, εἴπερ ἐνέργειαι αἱ αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων καὶ τῶν δυνάμεων τῶν οὐσιωδῶν ἰοῦσαι, ἃ δ' ἐστὶν ἔξωθεν πάσης οὐσίας οὐ πῆ μὲν ποιότητες, ἄλλοις δὲ οὐ ποιότητες φανταζόμεναι, τὸ δὲ περιττὸν μετὰ τὴν οὐσίαν ἔχουσαι, οἷον καὶ ἀρεταὶ καὶ κακίαι καὶ αἰσχρὰ καὶ κάλλη καὶ ὑγίαι καὶ οὕτως ἐυχηματίζομαι. Καὶ τρίγωνον μὲν καὶ τετράγωνον καθ' αὐτὸ οὐ ποιόν, τὸ δὲ τετριγωνίσθαι ἢ μεμόρφωται ποιὸν λεκτέον, καὶ οὐ τὴν τριγωνότητα, ἀλλὰ τὴν μόρφωσιν· καὶ τὰς τέχνας δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιτηδειότητας· ὥστε εἶναι τὴν ποιότητα διάθεσιν τινα ἐπὶ ταῖς οὐσίαις ἤδη οὔσαις εἴτ' ἐπακτὴν εἴτ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς συνοῦσαι, ἢ εἰ μὴ συνῆν, οὐδὲν ἔλαττον εἶχεν ἢ οὐσία. Ταύτην δὲ καὶ εὐκίνητον καὶ δυσκίνητον εἶναι· ὡς διττὸν εἶναι εἶδος, τὸ μὲν εὐκίνητον, τὸ δὲ ἔμμονον αὐτῆς.

3. Τὸ οὖν λευκὸν τὸ ἐπὶ σοὶ θετέον οὐ ποιότητα, ἀλλ' ἐνέργειαν δηλονότι ἐκ δυνάμεως τῆς τοῦ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Aristotle, *Categories* 8, 10a14-16.

quality but rational formative principle. What, then, is the result of the combination of the formative principle and the underlying matter? Not what is seen and burns: for this is qualitative. Unless, perhaps, someone were to say that the burning is an activity which comes from the formative principle; then the heating, too, and the brightening and the rest would be activities of making; so we shall have no place to put quality. We ought not to call what are said to be essential completions of substance qualities, seeing that those of them which come from the formative principles and substantive powers are activities; we should call qualities only what are outside all substance and do not appear in one place as qualities but in other things as not qualities; they contain that which is extra and comes after substance, for instance, virtues and vices, and uglinesses and beauties, and states of health, and being of this and that shape. Triangularity and quadrangularity in themselves are not qualitative, but being made triangular in so far as it is being given shape must be called qualitative, not the triangularity, that is, but the shaping.<sup>1</sup> Arts and aptitudes should also be called qualities. So quality, we say, is a condition of substances which already exist, either brought about from outside or accompanying them from the beginning: [even in this latter case], if it was not there the substance would have nothing less. This quality can be sometimes easy to remove, sometimes hard; so that there are two kinds of it, the easily removable and the persistent.

3. The whiteness, therefore, in you must be assumed not to be a quality but an activity, obviously

λευκαίνειν, κακεῖ πάσας τὰς λεγομένας ποιότητας ἐνεργείας τὸ ποιὸν λαβούσας παρὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας  
 5 δόξης τῷ ιδιότητι εἶναι ἐκάστην οἶον διορίζουσας τὰς οὐσίας πρὸς ἀλλήλας καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὰς ἴδιον χαρακτήρα ἐχούσας. Τί οὖν διοίσει ποιότης ἢ ἐκεῖ; Ἐνεργεῖαι γὰρ καὶ αὐταί. Ἡ ὅτι μὴ οἶον τί ἐστι δηλοῦσιν οὐδὲ ἐναλλαγὴν τῶν ὑποκειμένων οὐδὲ χαρακτήρα, ἀλλ' ὅσον μόνον τὴν λεγομένην  
 10 ποιότητα ἐκεῖ ἐνεργεῖαν οὖσαν ὥστε τὸ μὲν, ὅταν ιδιότητα οὐσίας ἔχη, δηλον αὐτόθεν ὡς οὐ ποιόν, ὅταν δὲ χωρίσῃ ὁ λόγος τὸ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἴδιον οὐκ ἐκεῖθεν ἀφελών, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον λαβὼν καὶ γεννήσας ἄλλο, ἐγέννησε ποιὸν οἶον μέρος οὐσίας λαβὼν τὸ ἐπιπολῆς φανέν αὐτῷ. Εἰ δὲ τοῦτο,  
 15 οὐδὲν κωλύει καὶ τὴν θερμότητα τῷ σύμφυτον εἶναι τῷ πυρὶ εἰδός τι εἶναι τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ ἐνεργεῖαν καὶ οὐ ποιότητα αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐ ἄλλως ποιότητα, μόνην δὲ ἐν ἄλλῳ ληφθεῖσαν οὐκέτι μορφὴν οὐσίας οὖσαν, ἀλλὰ ἔχνος μόνον καὶ σκιὰν καὶ εἰκόνα ἀπολιποῦσαν αὐτῆς τὴν οὐσίαν, ἧς ἢ ἐνεργεῖα,  
 20 ποιότητα εἶναι. Ὅσα οὖν συμβέβηκε καὶ μὴ ἐνεργεῖαι καὶ εἶδη οὐσιῶν μορφάς τινας παρεχόμενα, ποιά ταῦτα· οἶον καὶ αἰ ἕξεις καὶ διαθέσεις ἄλλαι

proceeding from the power of whitening; and in the intelligible world all qualities, as we call them, must be assumed to be activities, taking their qualitative-ness from the way we think about them, because each and every one of them is an individual characteristic, that is, they mark off the substances in relation to each other and have their own individual character in relation to themselves. In what way, then, will quality in the intelligible world differ from qualities here? The qualities here are activities too. The qualities in the intelligible world do not indicate what sort of things their underlying realities are, or their alterations or their distinctive characters, but only just what we call quality, which is activity there: so that it is immediately clear that the reality there, when it possesses an individual characteristic of substance, is not qualitative, but when the process of rational thinking separates the distinctive individuality in these realities, not taking it away from the intelligible world but rather grasping it and producing something else, it produces the qualitative as a kind of part of substance, grasping what appears on the surface of the reality. If this is so, there is nothing to prevent heat, by the fact that it is inherent in fire, from being a form and activity of fire and not its quality, and again being a quality in a different way, when it is taken alone in something else and is no longer a shape of substance but only a trace, a shadow, an image, abandoning its substance, of which it was an activity, to be a quality. All, then, which is incidental and not activities and forms of substance, giving definite shapes, is qualitative. So, for instance, states and other dispositions of the



τῶν ὑποκειμένων λεκτέαι ποιότητες, τὰ δὲ ἀρχέ-  
 τυπα αὐτῶν, ἐν οἷς πρώτως ἐστίν, ἐνεργείας  
 ἐκείνων. Καὶ οὐ γίνεται ταυτὸ ποιότης καὶ οὐ  
 25 ποιότης, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀπηρημωμένον οὐσίας ποιόν, τὸ  
 δὲ σὺν ταύτῃ οὐσίαν ἢ εἶδος ἢ ἐνέργειαν· οὐδὲν  
 γὰρ ἐστι ταυτὸν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ μόνον  
 ἐκπεσόν τοῦ εἶδος καὶ ἐνέργεια εἶναι. Ὁ μὲντοι  
 μηδέποτε εἶδος ἄλλον, ἀλλὰ συμβεβηκὸς αἰεί,  
 καθαρῶς ποιότης καὶ μόνον τοῦτο.

underlying realities are to be called qualities, but  
 their archetypal models, in which they exist primarily,  
 are the activities of those intelligible realities. And  
 in this way one and the same thing does not come to  
 be quality and not quality, but that which is isolated  
 from substance is qualitative, and that which is with  
 substance is substance or form or activity; for noth-  
 ing is the same in itself and when it is alone in some-  
 thing else and has fallen away from being form and  
 activity. That, then, which is never a form of some-  
 thing else but always an incidental attribute, this and  
 only this is pure quality.

## II. 7. ON COMPLETE TRANSFUSION

### *Introductory Note*

THIS little treatise (No. 37 in Porphyry's chronological order) is devoted to the discussion of the curious Stoic doctrine that two material substances when they are mixed can totally interpenetrate one another. This doctrine aroused a good deal of opposition, especially from the Peripatetics, and Plotinus begins his discussion by stating the Peripatetic objections to it. Here he closely follows the exposition given by Alexander of Aphrodisias in his *De Mixtione and Quaestiones et Solutiones* II. 12 (ed. Bruns, p. 57). He often seems to have found that the critical reading of the great Aristotelian expositor and commentator stimulated his own thought. Next he gives the Stoic reply to the Peripatetic arguments, and finally, in ch. 2, his own reflections on the question, which lead him to a criticism of the Peripatetic view that it is the impenetrability of matter which prevents the total interpenetration of bodies. Following up a passing admission of Alexander (cp. Bréhier's excellent introduction to this treatise) he shows that the impenetrability of a body must be due to its qualities, not to any inherent property of the matter.

Ch. 3 is an appendix or footnote on "corporeity," which Plotinus maintains against Alexander of Aphrodisias to be not just an abstract general definition but the formative principle which makes bodies corporeal—a good illustration of the difference between the Platonic and the Aristotelian way of thinking about universals.

## ON COMPLETE TRANSFUSION

### *Synopsis*

Summary of the discussion of the question by previous philosophers. The Peripatetic objections to complete transfusion and Stoic answers to them (ch. 1). Plotinus's own discussion, leading to the conclusion that the impenetrability of a body is due to its qualities, not to the matter (ch. 2). Note on the meaning of corporeity (ch. 3).

II. 7. (37) ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΔΙ' ΟΛΩΝ  
ΚΡΑΣΕΩΣ

1. Περὶ τῆς δι' ὄλων λεγομένης τῶν σωμάτων  
κράσεως ἐπισκεπτέον. Ἐὰρ ἐνδέχεται ὄλον δι'  
ὄλου ὑγρὸν ὑγρῷ συμμιχθὲν ἑκάτερον δι' ἑκατέρου  
ἢ θάτερον διὰ θατέρου χωρεῖν; Διαφέρει γὰρ  
5 οὐδὲν ὁποτέρωσόν, εἰ γίννιτο. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ τῇ  
παραθέσει διδόντες ὡς μινύντες μᾶλλον ἢ κινάντες  
ἐατέοι, εἴπερ δεῖ τὴν κράσιν ὁμοιομερῆς τὸ πᾶν  
ποιεῖν, καὶ ἕκαστον μέρος τὸ σμικρότατον ἐκ τῶν  
κεκράσθαι λεγομένων εἶναι. Οἱ μὲν οὖν τὰς  
ποιότητας μόνας κινάντες, τὴν δὲ ὕλην παρατιθέν-  
10 τες ἑκατέρου τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῶν ἐπάγοντες  
τὰς παρ' ἑκατέρου<sup>1</sup> ποιότητας, πιθανοὶ ἂν εἶεν τῷ  
διαβάλλειν τὴν δι' ὄλων κράσιν τῷ τε εἰς τομὰς τὰ  
μεγέθη συμβαίνειν τῶν ὄγκων ἵεναί, εἰ μὴδὲν  
διάλειμμα μὴδετέρῳ τῶν σωμάτων γίννιτο, εἰ  
15 συνεχὴς ἔσται ἢ διαίρεσις τῷ κατὰ πᾶν τὴν  
διάδυσιν γίνεσθαι θατέρῳ εἰς θάτερον, καὶ δὴ,

<sup>1</sup> ἑκατέρου Kirchhoff, H-S: ἑκατέρας codd.

<sup>1</sup> This is a reference to Anaxagoras (cp. Diels 59A54) and Democritus (referred to by Alexander in the passage on which

II. 7. ON COMPLETE TRANSFUSION

1. We must consider the question of what is called the complete transfusion of bodies. Is it possible that when one fluid body is mixed with another both penetrate each other whole through whole, or that one of them penetrates the other totally? For it makes no difference which way it happens, if it happens at all. We can leave out of account those who allow that it happens by simple juxtaposition of particles<sup>1</sup> because they make a mechanical mixture rather than a coalescence, if we grant that a coalescence must make the total a whole of like parts, and each smallest part must be composed of the things which are said to have coalesced. Those, then, who make the qualities only coalesce,<sup>2</sup> juxtaposing the matter of each body and imposing upon these matters the qualities of each, would seem to deserve belief because they disprove complete transfusion by the fact that the magnitudes of the masses will be completely cut away, if there is no interval between the divisions in either of the bodies—on the assumption that the division will be continuous because each of the bodies penetrates the other completely; and

this account is based, *De Mixtionē* 2 (II. 214, 18 Bruns-Diels 68A64).

<sup>2</sup> The Peripatetics. Cp. Galen's account of the Peripatetic and Stoic positions, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* II. 463.

ὅταν τὰ κραθέντα μείζω τόπον κατέχη ἢ θάτερον  
καὶ τοσοῦτον, ὅσον συνελθόντα τὸν ἑκατέρου  
τόπον. Καίτοι, εἰ δι' ὅλου ὅλον ἦν διεληλυθός,  
τὸν τοῦ ἑτέρου ἔδει, φασί, μένειν τὸν αὐτόν, εἰς ὃ  
θάτερον ἐνβλήθη. Οὐ δὲ μὴ μείζων ὁ τόπος  
20 γίνεται, ἀέρος τινὰς ἐξόδους αἰτιῶνται, ἀνθ' ὧν  
εἰσέδου θάτερον. Καὶ τὸ μικρόν δὲ ἐν τῷ μείζονι  
πῶς ἂν ἐκταθὲν δι' ὅλου χωρήσειε; Καὶ πολλὰ  
ἄλλα λέγουσιν. Οἱ δ' αὖ—οἱ τὴν δι' ὅλων κρᾶσιν  
εἰσάγοντες—τέμνεσθαι μὲν καὶ μὴ εἰς τομάς  
ἀναλίσκεσθαι λέγειν ἂν δύναιτο καὶ δι' ὅλων τῆς  
25 κρᾶσεως γιγνομένης, ἐπεὶ καὶ τοὺς ἰδρώτας οὐ τοῦ  
σώματος τομάς ποιεῖν οὐδ' αὖ κατατετρηῆσθαι  
φήσουσι. Καὶ γὰρ εἴ τις λέγοι μηδὲν κωλύειν τὴν  
φύσιν οὕτω πεποιηκέναι τοῦ διέναι τοὺς ἰδρώτας  
χάριν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῶν τεχνητῶν, ὅταν λεπτά ἦ καὶ  
συνεχῆ, ὀραῖσθαι τὸ ὑγρὸν δι' ὅλου δεῦον<sup>1</sup> αὐτὰ  
30 καὶ διαρρεῖν ἐπὶ θάτερα τὸ ὑγρὸν. Ἄλλὰ σωμάτων  
ὄντων πῶς οἷόν τε τοῦτο γίνεσθαι; Ὡς διέναι  
μὴ τέμνοντα ἐπινοῆσαι οὐ ῥάδιον· τέμνοντα δὲ  
κατὰ πᾶν ἀναιρήσει ἄλληλα δηλονότι. Τὰς δὲ  
αὔξας ὅταν λέγωσι μὴ γίνεσθαι πολλαχού, διδάσκει

<sup>1</sup> δεῦον Creuzer: δεοντα codd.

then, too, there is the case when the bodies which  
have coalesced occupy a larger space than either of  
them, as much, in fact, as the spaces occupied by each  
of them put together. And yet, they say, if one had  
completely penetrated the other, the space of the  
one would have had to remain the same and the  
other would have been put into it. But in the case  
where the space occupied by the mixture does not  
become greater, they allege as the cause some sort  
of exit of air, whose place within the one body is  
taken by the other. And then, when a small body  
is mixed with a larger one, how could it be extended  
so as to penetrate the whole? And they have many  
other arguments. But then, on the other side, those  
who introduce the idea of complete transfusion could  
say that it was possible for a body to be divided with-  
out being completely used up in the cutting, even  
when complete transfusion occurs, since they will  
assert that drops of sweat do not make cuts in the  
body or even fill it full of holes. For even if someone  
were to argue that there was no objection to nature  
having arranged it that way so as to enable the drops  
of sweat to get through, yet, they could reply, in the  
case of artificial products, when they are of fine  
continuous texture, moisture is observed wetting  
them right through, and it flows through to the  
other side. But, if they are bodies, how can this  
happen? So it is not easy to conceive how there can  
be interpenetration without division; but if the  
bodies divide each other at every point they will  
obviously destroy each other. And when they say  
that in many cases there are no increases in size  
[when there is coalescence], they give the other party

τοῖς ἑτέροις ἀέρων ἐξόδους αἰτιᾶσθαι. Πρὸς τε  
 35 τὴν τῶν τόπων αὔξην χαλεπῶς μὲν, ὅμως δὲ τί  
 κωλύει λέγειν συνεισφερομένου ἑκατέρου σώματος  
 καὶ τὸ μέγεθος μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ποιότητων ἐξ  
 ἀνάγκης τὴν αὔξην γίνεσθαι; Μὴ γὰρ μηδὲ τοῦτο  
 ἀπόλλυσθαι, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὰς ἄλλας ποιότητας, καὶ  
 40 ὥσπερ ἐκεῖ ποιότητος ἄλλο εἶδος μικτὸν ἐξ ἀμφοῦν,  
 οὕτω καὶ μέγεθος ἄλλο, οὐ δὴ τὸ μίγμα ποιεῖ τὸ  
 ἐξ ἀμφοῦν μέγεθος. Ἄλλ' εἰ ἐνταῦθ' ἂν πρὸς  
 αὐτοὺς οἱ ἕτεροι λέγοιεν, ὡς, εἰ μὲν ἡ ὕλη τῆ ὕλη  
 παράκειται, καὶ ὁ ὄγκος τῷ ὄγκῳ, ὧ σύνεστι τὸ  
 μέγεθος, τὸ ἡμέτερον ἂν λέγοιτε· εἰ δὲ δι' ὅλου  
 45 καὶ ἡ ὕλη μετὰ τοῦ ἐπ' αὐτῇ πρώτως μεγέθους,  
 οὕτως ἂν γένοιτο οὐχ ὡς γραμμὴ γραμμῆ ἐφεξῆς ἂν  
 κέοιτο <τῷ><sup>1</sup> κατὰ τὰ πέρατα τοῖς σημείοις ἑαυτῶν  
 συνάψαι, οὐ δὴ αὔξη ἂν γένοιτο, ἀλλ' ἐκείνως ὡς  
 ἂν γραμμὴ γραμμῆ ἐφαρμοσθεῖη, ὥστε αὔξην μὴ  
 γίνεσθαι. Τὸ δ' ἔλαττον διὰ παιτὸς τοῦ μείζονος  
 50 καὶ μεγίστου τὸ μικρότατον καὶ ἐφ' ὧν φανερόν  
 ὅτι κίρναται. Ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀδήλων ἕξεστι λέγειν  
 μὴ εἰς πᾶν φθάνειν, ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὧν γε φανερῶς  
 συμβαίνει, λέγοιτο ἂν. Καὶ λέγοιεν ἐκτάσεις τῶν  
 ὄγκων, οὐ σφόδρα πιθανὰ λέγοντες εἰς τοσοῦτον  
 τὸν ἀμικρότατον ὄγκον ἐκτείνοντες· οὐδὲ γὰρ μετα-

<sup>1</sup> <τῷ> Theiler et. nunc Henry et. Schwyzler.

the opportunity of alleging exits of air as the cause. And, though it is difficult to refute the argument from the increase of the spaces occupied, yet, all the same, what is the objection to saying that, as each of the two bodies brings its size along with it as well as all the other qualities, an increase must necessarily occur? For certainly size is not destroyed in the coalescence any more than the rest of the qualities, and just as in the case of the others there is another quality compounded of both, so there is another size, where the compounding [of the two sizes] produces the size which results from both. But suppose that at this point the other party replied to them, "If the matter of one body lies alongside the matter of the other, and the mass alongside the mass, with which the size goes, then you would be saying what we say; but if there is complete transfusion of the matter with the size which is primarily imposed upon it, it would come about not as when a line lies end to end with another line in that their terminal points coincide, where there certainly would be increase, but as in that arrangement where one line is made to coincide with another line, so that there is no increase in length." But as for a smaller body penetrating the whole of a larger one, and even the very smallest the very largest, this occurs in things which have manifestly coalesced. In the cases where it is not obvious it is possible to say that the smaller body does not reach every part of the larger one but in the cases where it manifestly occurs it ought to be admitted. They might allege extensions of the masses, but this is not a very plausible explanation when they extend the smallest mass so enormously; for they do not

55 βάλλοντες τὸ σῶμα μέγεθος αὐτῷ πλέον διδόασιν,  
ὡσπερ εἰ ἐξ ὕδατος ἀήρ γίγνεται.

2. Τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ ζητητέον, τί συμβαίνει, ὅταν ὡσπερ ἦν ὄγκος ὕδατος ἀήρ γίγνηται, πῶς τὸ μείζον ἐν τῷ γενομένῳ· νῦν δὲ τὰ μὲν εἰρήσθω πολλῶν καὶ ἄλλων παρ' ἑκατέρων  
5 λεγομένων. Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν σκοπῶμεν τί χρὴ λέγειν περὶ τούτου, τίς δόξα σύμφωνος τοῖς λεγομένοις ἢ καὶ τίς ἄλλη παρὰ τὰς νῦν λεγομένας φανέται. Ὅταν τοῦντιν διὰ τοῦ ἐρίου ῥέῃ τὸ ὕδωρ ἢ βίβλος ἐκστάξῃ τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ ὕδωρ, πῶς οὐ τὸ πᾶν ὑδάτινον σῶμα δίδεισι δι' αὐτῆς; Ἡ καὶ  
10 ὅταν μὴ ῥέῃ, πῶς συνάψομεν τὴν ὕλην τῇ ὕλῃ καὶ τὸν ὄγκον τῷ ὄγκῳ, τὰς δὲ ποιότητας μόνας ἐν συγκράσει ποιησόμεθα; Οὐ γὰρ δι' ἐξω τῆς βίβλου ἢ τοῦ ὕδατος ὕλη παρακείσεται οὐδ' αὖ ἐν τισὶ διαστήμασιν αὐτῆς· πᾶσα γὰρ ὑγρά ἐστι καὶ οὐδαμῶς ὕλη κενὴ ποιότητος. Εἰ δὲ πανταχοῦ ἢ  
15 ὕλη μετὰ τῆς ποιότητος, πανταχοῦ τῆς βίβλου τὸ ὕδωρ. Ἡ οὐ τὸ ὕδωρ, ἀλλ' ἢ τοῦ ὕδατος ποιότητος. Ἄλλὰ ποῦ ὄντος<sup>1</sup> τοῦ ὕδατος; Πῶς οὖν οὐχ ὁ αὐτὸς ὄγκος; Ἡ ἐξέτεινε τὴν βίβλον τὸ προστεθέν· ἔλαβε γὰρ μέγεθος παρὰ τοῦ εἰσελθόντος. Ἄλλ' εἰ ἔλαβε, προστεθῆ τις ὄγκος· εἰ δὲ προστεθῆ,  
20 οὐ κατεπόθη ἐν τῷ ἐτέρῳ, δεῖ οὖν ἐν ἄλλῳ καὶ

<sup>1</sup> ὄντος F<sup>3ms</sup> (Ficino:) ὄντα codd: † ὄντα H-S.

<sup>1</sup> I print and translate ὄντος (Ficino's suggestion in the margin of F). The corruption may have arisen through an abbreviation of ὄντος (Warmington's suggestion).

even allow a larger size to a body when it changes, as, for instance, if air comes into being out of water.

2. But this is a subject which requires separate investigation, what happens when what was a mass of water becomes air, and how the increase of volume in the air which has come into being is to be explained. Now, however, let us content ourselves with what has been said, although there is a great deal else which is said on both sides. But let us consider independently what we ought to say about this problem, what view will be in accordance with the arguments stated, or what new one will appear going beyond the present arguments. Well, then, when water runs through a fleece, or papyrus exudes the water which is in it, how can we deny that the whole body of the water goes right through the papyrus? Or even when it does not run through, how can we put matter in contact with matter and mass with mass and make the qualities alone coalesce? For surely the matter of the water will not lie outside the papyrus, nor, again, in any interstices of it; for the whole papyrus is wet and its matter is nowhere destitute of the quality [of wetness]. But if the matter is everywhere accompanied by the quality of wetness, the water is everywhere in the papyrus. But perhaps it is not the water but the quality of the water. But where is the water? <sup>1</sup> Why, then, does the mass not remain the same? What was added to the papyrus has extended it: for it took size from the water which entered into it. But if it took size, a mass was added to it; but if it was added, it was not absorbed in the other, and so the matter of the water and the matter of the papyrus must be in two

ἄλλω τὴν ὕλην εἶναι. "Ἡ τί κωλύει, ὡσπερ δίδωσι  
 τῆς ποιότητος καὶ λαμβάνει σῶμα θάτερον παρὰ  
 θατέρου, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μεγέθους; Ποιότης  
 μὲν γὰρ ποιότητι συνελθοῦσα οὐκ ἐκείνη οὔσα,  
 ἀλλὰ μετ' ἄλλης, ἐν τῷ μετ' ἄλλης εἶναι οὐ καθαρὰ  
 25 οὔσα οὐκ ἔστι παντελῶς ἐκείνη, ἀλλὰ ἡμαύρωται·  
 μέγεθος δὲ συνελθὼν ἄλλω μεγέθει οὐκ ἀφανίζεται.  
 Τὸ δὲ σῶμα χωροῦν διὰ σώματος πάντως τομὰς  
 ποιεῖν πῶς λέγεται, ἐπιστήσειεν ἂν τις· ἐπεὶ καὶ  
 αὐτοὶ τὰς ποιότητας [τὰς] διὰ τῶν σωμάτων χωρεῖν  
 λέγομεν καὶ οὐ τομὰς ποιεῖν. "Ἡ ὅτι ἀσώματος.  
 30 Ἄλλ' εἰ ἡ ὕλη καὶ αὐτὴ ἀσώματος, διὰ τί τῆς ὕλης  
 ἀσωμάτου οὔσης καὶ τῶν ποιότητων, εἰ τοιαῦται  
 εἶεν ὡς ὀλίγα εἶναι, οὐ μετὰ τῆς ὕλης τὸν αὐτὸν  
 τρόπον διάσσει; Μὴ διεῖναι δὲ τὰ στερεά, ὅτι  
 τοιαύτας ἔχει τὰς ποιότητας ὡς κωλυθῆναι διεῖναι.  
 35 "Ἡ πολλὰς ὁμοῦ ἀδυνατεῖν μετὰ τῆς ὕλης ποιεῖν  
 τοῦτο; Εἰ μὲν οὖν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ποιότητων τὸ  
 πυκνὸν λεγόμενον σῶμα ποιεῖ, τὸ πλῆθος ἂν εἴη  
 αἴτιον· εἰ δὲ πυκνότης ἰδία ποιότης ἐστίν, ὡσπερ  
 καὶ ἦν λέγουσι σωματότητα, ἰδία ποιότης· ὥστε  
 οὐχ ἡ ποιότητες τὴν μίξιν ποιήσονται, ἀλλ' ἡ  
 40 τοιαῖδε, οὐδ' αὖ ἡ ὕλη ἡ ὕλη οὐ μίχθήσεται, ἀλλ'  
 ἡ μετὰ τοιαῖδε ποιότητος, καὶ μάλιστα, εἰ μέγεθος

different places. But what is the objection, just as one body gives and takes a share of quality from the other, to the same thing happening with the size? The objection is that when quality comes together with quality it is not that quality which it was before, but is associated with another, and, because in that association it is not pure, it is no longer perfectly what it was, but is dimmed: but when size comes together with another size it does not disappear. But one should consider carefully the sense of the assertion that when a body passes through a body it cuts it up completely: since we ourselves say that the qualities go through bodies without cutting them. The reason is that they are incorporeal. But if matter itself is incorporeal too, why then, since matter and its qualities are incorporeal, should not the qualities, if they are of such a kind that there are few of them, penetrate with the matter in the same way? We should say that they do not penetrate solid bodies because these have qualities of such a kind as to prevent their penetration. Or perhaps we might say that many qualities all together cannot penetrate with the matter? If, then, the multiplicity of qualities makes what is called a dense body, the multiplicity would be the cause of its impenetrability; but if density is a distinct quality, as is the quality they call corporeity, then this distinct quality is the cause: so that it is not in so far as they are qualities that they will blend but in so far as they are qualities of a certain kind, and it is not matter as matter that will not blend but matter in so far as it is associated with a certain quality: and particularly, if it has no size

οἰκείον οὐκ ἔχει, ἀλλ' ἡ<sup>1</sup> μὴ ἀποβαλοῦσα τὸ μέγεθος. Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἔστω καὶ οὕτω διηπορημένα.

3. Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐμνήσθημεν σωματότητας, ἐπισκεπτέου πότερα ἢ σωματότης ἐστὶ τὸ ἐκ πάντων συγκείμενον ἢ εἶδος τι ἢ σωματότης καὶ λόγος τις, ὡς ἐγγενόμενος τῇ ὕλη σώμα ποιεῖ. Εἰ μὲν οὖν  
5 τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σώμα τὸ ἐκ πασῶν τῶν ποιότητων σὺν ὕλη, τοῦτο ἂν εἴη ἢ σωματότης. Καὶ εἰ λόγος δὲ εἴη ὡς προσελθὼν ποιεῖ τὸ σώμα, δηλονότι ὁ λόγος ἐμπεριλαβὼν ἔχει τὰς ποιότητας ἀπάσας. Δεῖ δὲ τὸν λόγον τοῦτον, εἰ μὴ ἐστὶν ἄλλως ὥσπερ ὀρισμὸς δηλωτικὸς τοῦ τί ἐστὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλὰ  
10 λόγος ποιῶν πρᾶγμα, μὴ τὴν ὕλην συμπεριειληφέναι, ἀλλὰ περὶ ὕλην λόγον εἶναι καὶ ἐγγενόμενον ἀποτελεῖν τὸ σώμα, καὶ εἶναι μὲν τὸ σώμα ὕλην καὶ λόγον ἐνόντα, αὐτὸν δὲ εἶδος ὄντα ἄνευ ὕλης ψιλὸν θεωρεῖσθαι, κἂν ὅτι μάλιστα ἀχώριστος αὐτὸς ἦ. Ὁ γὰρ χωριστὸς ἄλλος, ὁ ἐν νῶ· ἐν νῶ  
15 δέ, ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς νοῦς. Ἄλλὰ ταῦτα ἄλλοθι.

<sup>1</sup> ἢ Kirchhoff, H-S<sup>2</sup>: εἰ codd.

of its own, except in so far as it has not rejected size. So much, then for the discussion of these difficult questions.

3. But since we have mentioned corporeity, we should enquire whether corporeity is that which is composed of all a body's constituents, or whether corporeity is a form and rational formative principle which enters matter and makes it body. If, then, this is what body is, that which is composed of all the qualities with matter, this is what corporeity would be. And if corporeity was a formative principle which by its coming to matter makes body, obviously the formative principle includes and contains all the qualities. But this rational principle, on the assumption that it is not a sort of definition which declares the nature of the thing but a rational principle which makes a thing, cannot include the matter but must be a principle in relation with matter which enters matter and brings the body to perfection, and the body must be matter and a rational principle present in it, but the rational principle itself, since it is a form, must be contemplated bare, without matter, even if it is itself as inseparable as it can be from matter. For the separated form is a different one, that which is in intellect: and it is in intellect because it is intellect itself. But this we discuss elsewhere.



## II. 8. ON SIGHT, OR HOW DISTANT OBJECTS APPEAR SMALL

### *Introductory Note*

THIS very short treatise (No. 35 in Porphyry's chronological order) is the only surviving evidence of Plotinus's study of optics, mentioned by Porphyry in ch. 14 of the *Life*. It is a school discussion, based probably on the reading of Peripatetic *προβλήματα* (on this, and for evidence of the origin of the views put forward, see Bréhier's introduction). The question why distant objects appear smaller than they are was much discussed in the philosophical schools, and Plotinus puts forward five different views. The first is Stoic (the light is contracted in proportion to the size of the eye); the second, apparently, bad Aristotelian (we perceive the form without the matter, and so without the size—but, as Plotinus remarks in passing, size is a form); the third (necessity of seeing each part to perceive the size) is Epicurean; the fourth is Aristotelian (we perceive colour primarily, and size only incidentally). This is the solution which Plotinus prefers; he develops it at some length, with an excursus on sounds. The fifth is the mathematical explanation by the lesser angle of vision, which Plotinus seems to find more interesting than any of the first three, but which he none the less rejects.

### *Synopsis*

Why do distant objects appear small? Four different explanations, the first three stated shortly, the fourth developed at length, with some remarks on sound (ch. 1). Rejection of a fifth explanation, from the lesser angle of vision (ch. 2).

II. 8. (35) ΠΕΡΙ ΟΡΑΣΕΩΣ Η ΠΩΣ ΤΑ  
ΠΟΡΡΩ ΜΙΚΡΑ ΦΑΙΝΕΤΑΙ

1. Ἄρα τὰ πόρρω φαίνεται ἐλάττω καὶ τὰ πολὺ ἀφεστηκότα ὀλίγον δοκεῖ ἔχειν τὸ μεταξύ, τὰ δ' ἐγγύθεν ἤλικα ἐστὶ φαίνεται, καὶ ὅσην ἔχει τὴν ἀπόστασιν; Ἐλάττω μὲν δοκεῖ τοῖς ὄρωσι τὰ πόρρω, ὅτι συναιρεῖσθαι πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν ἐθέλει καὶ πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος τῆς κόρης τὸ φῶς· καὶ ὅσῳ ἂν πόρρω ἢ ὕλη ἢ τοῦ ὀρωμένου, τόσῳ τὸ εἶδος οἶον μεμονωμένον ἀφικνεῖται γινομένου καὶ τοῦ πηλίκου εἶδους καὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ποιοῦ, ὡς τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἀφικνεῖσθαι μόνον. Ἡ καί, ὅτι τὸ μὲν μέγεθος ἐν  
10 διεξόδῳ καὶ ἐπελεύσει καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος ὅσον ἐστὶν αἰσθάνεσθαι· παρῆναι οὖν δεῖ αὐτὸ καὶ πλησίον εἶναι, ἵνα γνωσθῇ ὅσον. Ἡ καί, ὅτι κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ὄραται τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ χρώματος πρῶτως θεωρουμένου· πλησίον μὲν οὖν ὅσον κέχρωσται γινώσκεται, πόρρω δὲ ὅτι κέχρωσται, τὰ δὲ μέρη  
15 κατὰ ποσὸν συναιρούμενα<sup>1</sup> οὐκ ἀκριβῆ δίδωσι τὴν τοῦ ποσοῦ διάγνωσιν· ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ χρώματα αὐτὰ ἀμυδρὰ προσέρχεται. Τί οὖν θαυμαστόν, εἰ καὶ τὰ μεγέθη, ὡσπερ καὶ αἱ φωναὶ ἐλάττους, ὅσῳ ἂν τὸ εἶδος αὐτῶν ἀμυδρὸν ἦ; Εἶδος γὰρ

<sup>1</sup> συναιρούμενα Harder: συνδιαρούμενα cold.

II. 8. ON SIGHT, OR HOW DISTANT  
OBJECTS APPEAR SMALL

1. Do distant objects appear smaller, and things far apart seem to have only a small space between them, but objects which are near appear the size they are and the distance apart which they are? Distant objects seem smaller to those who look at them because the light tends to be contracted in proportion to the sight and the size of the pupil: and the farther the material of the seen object is away, the more the form comes, so to speak, bare of its matter (though size, too, itself, as well as quality, is a form), so that its rational formative principle comes alone. Or another explanation is that we perceive the size in the process of going over and surveying the thing part by part, each in its actual extent; so it must be on the spot and near at hand in order that its extent may be known. Or another explanation is that the size is seen incidentally, the primary object of contemplation being the colour: so when it is near we know how large a space is coloured, but when it is far off we know that it is coloured, but the parts being quantitatively contracted do not give an accurate determination of the extent: then, too, the colours themselves come to us blurred. Then why is it remarkable if magnitudes too, as well as sounds, are smaller in proportion as their form comes to us

κακεὶ ἢ ἀκοῇ ζητεῖ, τὸ δὲ μέγεθος κατὰ συμβε-  
 20 βηκὸς αἰσθάνεται. Ἄλλὰ περὶ τῆς ἀκοῆς, εἰ τὸ  
 μέγεθος κατὰ συμβεβηκός· τίνοι γὰρ πρῶτως τὸ  
 ἐν τῇ φωνῇ μέγεθος, ὡσπερ δοκεῖ τῇ ἀφῆ τὸ  
 ὀρώμενον; Ἡ τὸ δοκοῦν μέγεθος ἢ ἀκοῇ οὐ κατὰ  
 τὸ ποσόν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μάλλον καὶ ἥττον, οὐ  
 κατὰ συμβεβηκός, οἷον τὸ σφόδρα, ὡς καὶ ἡ  
 25 γεῦσις τὸ σφόδρα τοῦ γλυκέος οὐ κατὰ συμβεβηκός·  
 τὸ δὲ κυρίως μέγεθος φωνῆς τὸ ἐφ' ὅσον· τοῦτο δὲ  
 κατὰ συμβεβηκός ἐκ τοῦ σφόδρα σημήνειεν ἄν,  
 οὐκ ἀκριβῶς δέ. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ σφόδρα ἐκάστω τὸ  
 αὐτό, τὸ δὲ εἰς πλῆθος εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν τόπον, ὃν  
 ἐπέσχευ. Ἄλλ' οὐ σμικρὰ τὰ χρώματα, ἀλλ'  
 30 ἀμυδρά, τὰ δὲ μεγέθη σμικρά. Ἡ ἐν ἀμφοτέροις  
 κοινὸν τὸ ἥττον ὃ ἐστι· χρῶμα μὲν οὖν τὸ ἥττον  
 ἀμυδρόν, μέγεθος δὲ τὸ ἥττον σμικρόν, καὶ  
 ἐπόμενον τῷ χρώματι τὸ μέγεθος ἀνάλογον  
 ἡλάττωται. Σαφέστερον δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ποικίλων  
 γίνεται τὸ πάθος, οἷον ὀρών ἐχόντων πολλὰς  
 35 οἰκήσεις καὶ δένδρων πλῆθος καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ, ὧν  
 ἕκαστον, εἰ μὲν ὀρώτω, δίδωσι ἐκ τῶν ὀρωμένων  
 ἐκάστων μετρεῖν τὸ ὅλον· τοῦ δὲ εἶδους καθ'  
 ἕκαστον οὐκ ἰόντος ἀπεστέρηται τοῦ καθ' ἕκαστον  
 εἶδος μετροῦσα τὸ ὑποκείμενον μέγεθος τὸ πᾶν  
 ὅσον ἐστὶ γνώσκει. Ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ πλησίον, ὅταν

blurred? For in the case of sounds, too, it is form  
 that the hearing seeks, and the size is incidentally  
 perceived. (But as regards hearing, it is question-  
 able whether size is perceived incidentally; for to  
 what sense does the size in sound appear as its pri-  
 mary object, as visible size appears as the primary  
 object to touch? The hearing perceives what seems  
 to it the size of the sound not according to an actual  
 quantity but according to a scale of more and less,  
 like intensity, and not incidentally, just as taste  
 perceives the intensity of sweetness not incidentally;  
 but the proper size of sound is the size of the area  
 over which it can be heard; and this would be in-  
 cidentally perceptible from the intensity, but not  
 accurately. For, on the one hand, each sound has  
 its own intensity which remains the same, on the  
 other, it multiplies itself by extending to the whole  
 space which the sound occupies.) But colours are  
 not small but blurred; it is sizes which are small.  
 Both have in common the "less than they are":  
 as regards colour the "less" is blurredness, as re-  
 gards size the "less" is smallness, and, following the  
 colour, the size is lessened proportionately. What  
 happens to them becomes clearer in things of many  
 and varied parts, for instance, hills with many houses  
 on them and a quantity of trees and a great many  
 other things, of which each individual one, if it is  
 seen, enables us to measure the whole from the in-  
 dividual parts which we observe. But if the form  
 does not reach us in individual detail, the possibility  
 of knowing the dimensions of the whole by measuring  
 its basic size according to the forms of individual  
 parts is taken away. For this applies to things near

40 ποικίλα ἢ, ἀθρόως δὲ γίνηται ἢ ἐπιβολὴ πρὸς αὐτὰ  
καὶ μὴ πάντα τὰ εἶδη ὁρῶτο, ἐλάττω ἂν φανείη  
κατὰ λόγον, ὅσον ἂν ἕκαστον κλαπῆ ἐν τῇ θέα·  
ὅταν δὲ πάντα ὀφθῆ, ἀκριβῶς μετρηθέντα ὅσα  
ἐστὶ γινώσκεται. Ὅσα δὲ τῶν μεγεθῶν ὁμοειδῆ  
ὁμοιόχροα ὄντα, ψεύδεται καὶ ταῦτα τὸ ποσὸν  
45 αὐτῆς οὐ κατὰ μέρος πάνυ τι μετρεῖν δυναμένης  
τῆς ὄψεως, ὅτι ἀπολισθάνει κατὰ μέρος μετροῦσα,  
ὅτι μὴ ἔχει ἴστασθαι καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος τῆ  
διαφορᾶ. Ἐγγύθεν δὲ τὸ πόρρω, ὅτι <τό><sup>1</sup>  
μεταξὺ συναιρεῖται ὅσον ἐστὶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν  
αἰτίαν. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ πλησίον αὐτοῦ, ὅσον οὐ  
50 λανθάνει, διὰ τὰ αὐτά· οὐ διεξοδεύουσα δὲ τὸ  
πόρρω τοῦ διαστήματος, εἶδόν ἐστι κατ' εἶδος,  
οὐκ ἂν δύναίτο οὐδ' ὅσον ἐστὶ κατὰ μέγεθος  
εἰπεῖν.

2. Τὸ δὲ κατὰ τὰς τῆς ὄψεως γωνίας ἐλάττους  
εἶρηται μὲν καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ὡς οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ νῦν δὲ  
ἐκεῖνο λεκτέον, ὡς ὁ λέγων ἕλαττον φαίνεσθαι  
ἐλάττονι γωνίᾳ καταλείπει τὴν λοιπὴν ἔξωθεν τῆ  
5 ὁρῶσαν ἢ ἄλλο τι ἢ ὄν τι ἔξωθεν ὅλως, οἷον ἀέρα.  
Ὅταν οὖν μηδὲν καταλείπη τῷ πολὺ εἶναι τὸ ὄρος,  
ἀλλ' ἢ ἰσάζῃ καὶ μηκέτι ἄλλο οἶόν τε ἢ αὐτῇ ὁρᾶν,  
ἅτε τοῦ διαστήματος αὐτῆς συναρμόσματος τῷ  
ὁρωμένῳ, ἢ καὶ ὑπερτείνῃ τὸ ὁρώμενον ἐφ'  
ἐκάτερα τὴν τῆς ὄψεως προσβολήν, τί ἂν τις  
10 ἐνταῦθα λέγοι ἐλάττονος μὲν ἢ ἔστι πολλῶ

<sup>1</sup> <τό> Kirchoff, H.S<sup>2</sup>.

at hand too; when they have many parts, but we only take a quick glance at them as a whole and do not observe all the forms of the parts, they seem smaller in proportion as the individual details evade our observation; but when all the details are seen, we measure the objects accurately and know how large they are. And those magnitudes that are of one form and like colour throughout cheat our sight, too, because it is not very well able to measure them part by part, since it slips off them as it measures by parts because it has no firm resting-place given it in each individual part by its distinction from others. And things far off appear near because the real extent of the distance between is contracted for the same reason. The near part of the distance appears in its true extent, from the same causes; but the sight cannot go through the far part of the distance and see its forms as they really are, and so it is not able to say how great in magnitude it really is.

2. It has been said elsewhere that the explanation by lesser angle of vision does not apply; but we should now add this, that the man who says that something appears smaller because of the lesser angle of vision leaves the rest of the sight seeing something outside, either another object or something that is completely out of the angle of vision, air for instance. When, therefore, he leaves nothing outside the angle of vision because the mountain [for instance] is large, but either the eye's range is equal to the object and can see nothing beyond it, in that the dimensions of the field of vision correspond with those of the seen object, or the seen object even extends beyond the field of vision on both sides,

φαινομένου τοῦ ὑποκειμένου, πάση δὲ τῇ ὄψει  
 ὄρωμένου; Εἰ δὲ δὴ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ θεωροί,  
 ἀναμφισβητήτως μάθοι ἂν τις. Πᾶν μὲν γὰρ τὸ  
 ἡμισφαίριον οὐκ ἂν τις ὄρᾶν μὲ προσβολῇ δύναιτο,  
 οὐδ' ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον χυθῆναι ἢ ὄψις μέχρῃς αὐτοῦ  
 15 ἐκτενομένη. Ἄλλ' εἴ τις βούλεται, δεδόσθω.  
 Εἰ οὖν πᾶσα μὲν περιέλαβε πᾶν, πολλαπλάσιον δὲ  
 τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ φαινομένου ὑπάρχει ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ  
 τοῦ ἔλαττον πολλῶ ἢ ἐστι φαίνεσθαι, πῶς ἂν  
 ἐλάττωσιν γωνίας τοῦ ἐλάττω φαίνεσθαι τὰ πόρρω  
 αἰτιῶτο;

what will anyone say then, when the object appears  
 far smaller than it is but is seen with the whole sight?  
 But certainly, if one looked at the sky one could dis-  
 cover the truth of this without any possibility of  
 doubt. One could not, of course, see the whole  
 hemisphere with one look, nor could the sight be  
 spread out so widely, extending over the whole of it.  
 But if anyone likes, let it be granted that this is  
 possible. If, then, the whole sight includes the  
 whole hemisphere, and the size of what is seen is in  
 the actual sky many times greater than the ap-  
 pearance, far less than it really is, how could one  
 make the lessening of the angle of vision responsible  
 for distant objects appearing small?

## II. 9. AGAINST THE GNOSTICS

### *Introductory Note*

THIS treatise (No. 33 in Porphyry's chronological order) is in fact the concluding section of a single long treatise which Porphyry, in order to carry out his design of grouping his master's works, more or less according to subject, into six sets of nine treatises, hacked roughly into four parts which he put into different Enneads, the other three being III. 8 (30) V. 8 (31) and V. 5 (32). Porphyry says (*Life* ch. 16. 11) that he gave the treatise the title *Against the Gnostics* (he is presumably also responsible for the titles of the other sections of the cut-up treatise). There is an alternative title in *Life*, ch. 24. 56-57 which runs *Against those who say that the maker of the universe is evil and the universe is evil*.

The treatise as it stands in the Enneads is a most powerful protest on behalf of Hellenic philosophy against the un-Hellenic heresy (as it was from the Platonist as well as the orthodox Christian point of view) of Gnosticism. There were Gnostics among Plotinus's own friends, whom he had not succeeded in converting (ch. 10 of this treatise) and he and his pupils devoted considerable time and energy to anti-Gnostic controversy (*Life* ch. 16). He obviously considered Gnosticism an extremely dangerous influence, likely to pervert the minds even of members of his own circle. It is impossible to attempt to give an account of Gnosticism here. By far the best discussion of what the particular group of Gnostics Plotinus knew believed is M. Puech's admirable contribution to *Entretiens Hardt V*

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(*Les Sources de Plotin*)<sup>1</sup>. But it is important for the understanding of this treatise to be clear about the reasons why Plotinus disliked them so intensely and thought their influence so harmful. The teaching of the Gnostics seems to him untraditional, irrational and immoral. They despise and revile the ancient Platonic teaching and claim to have a new and superior wisdom of their own: but in fact anything that is true in their teaching comes from Plato, and all they have done themselves is to add senseless complications and pervert the true traditional doctrine into a melodramatic, superstitious fantasy designed to feed their own delusions of grandeur. They reject the only true way of salvation through wisdom and virtue, the slow patient study of truth and pursuit of perfection by men who respect the wisdom of the ancients and know their place in the universe. They claim to be a privileged caste of beings, in whom alone God is interested, and who are saved not by their own efforts but by some dramatic and arbitrary divine proceeding; and this, Plotinus says, leads to immorality. Worst of all, they despise and hate the material universe and deny its goodness and the goodness of its maker. This for a Platonist is utter blasphemy, and all the worse because it obviously derives to some extent from the sharply other-worldly side of Plato's own teaching (e.g. in the *Phaedo*). At this point in his attack Plotinus comes very close in some ways to the orthodox Christian opponents of Gnosticism, who also insist that this world is the good work of God in his goodness. But, here as on the question of salvation, the doctrine which Plotinus is defending is as sharply opposed in other ways to orthodox Christianity as to Gnosticism: for he maintains not only the goodness of the material universe but also its eternity and its divinity. The idea that the universe could have a beginning and end is inseparably connected in his mind with the idea that the divine action

<sup>1</sup> Vandoeuvres 1960, pp. 161-190.

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in making it is arbitrary and irrational. And to deny the divinity (though a subordinate and dependent divinity) of the World-Soul, and of those noblest of embodied living beings the heavenly bodies, seems to him both blasphemous and unreasonable.

### *Synopsis*

Short statement of the doctrine of the three hypostases, the One, Intellect and Soul; there cannot be more or fewer than these three. Criticism of attempts to multiply the hypostases, and especially of the idea of two intellects, one which thinks and the other which thinks that it thinks. (ch. 1). The true doctrine of Soul (ch. 2). The law of necessary procession and the eternity of the universe (ch. 3). Attack on the Gnostic doctrine of the making of the universe by a fallen soul, and on their despising of the universe and the heavenly bodies (chs. 4-5). The senseless jargon of the Gnostics, their plagiarism from and perversion of Plato, and their insolent arrogance (ch. 6). The true doctrine about Universal Soul and the goodness of the universe which it forms and rules (chs. 7-8). Refutation of objections from the inequalities and injustices of human life (ch. 9). Ridiculous arrogance of the Gnostics who refuse to acknowledge the hierarchy of created gods and spirits and say that they alone are sons of God and superior to the heavens (ch. 9). The absurdities of the Gnostic doctrine of the fall of "Wisdom" (Sophia) and of the generation and activities of the Demiurge, maker of the visible universe (chs. 10-12). False and melodramatic Gnostic teaching about the cosmic spheres and their influence (ch. 13). The blasphemous falsity of the Gnostic claim to control the higher powers by magic and the absurdity of their claim to cure diseases by casting out demons (ch. 14). The false other-worldliness of the Gnostics leads to immorality (ch. 15). The true Platonic other-worldliness, which loves and venerates the material

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universe in all its goodness and beauty as the most perfect possible image of the intelligible, contrasted at length with the false, Gnostic, other-worldliness which hates and despises the material universe and its beauties (chs. 16-18).

## II. 9. (33) ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΓΝΩΣΤΙΚΟΥΣ

1. Ἐπειδὴ τοῖνυν ἐφάνη ἡμῖν ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἀπλή φύσις καὶ πρώτη—πᾶν γὰρ τὸ οὐ πρῶτον οὐχ ἀπλοῦν—καὶ οὐδὲν ἔχον ἐν ἑαυτῷ, ἀλλὰ ἓν τι, καὶ τοῦ ἐνὸς λεγομένου ἡ φύσις ἡ αὐτή—καὶ γὰρ  
 5 αὕτη οὐκ ἄλλο, εἴτα ἓν, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἄλλο, εἴτα ἀγαθόν ὅταν λέγωμεν τὸ ἓν, καὶ ὅταν λέγωμεν τὰγαθόν, τὴν αὐτήν<sup>1</sup> δεῖ νομίζειν τὴν φύσιν καὶ μίαν λέγειν οὐ κατηγοροῦντας ἐκείνης οὐδέν, δηλοῦντας δὲ ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ὡς οἶόν τε. Καὶ τὸ πρῶτον δὲ οὕτως, ὅτι ἀπλοῦστατον, καὶ τὸ αὐταρκές, ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ πλειόνων· οὕτω γὰρ ἀναρτηθήσεται  
 10 εἰς τὰ ἐξ ὧν· καὶ οὐκ ἐν ἄλλῳ, ὅτι πᾶν τὸ ἐν ἄλλῳ καὶ παρ' ἄλλου. Εἰ οὖν μηδὲ παρ' ἄλλου μηδὲ ἐν ἄλλῳ μηδὲ σύνθεσις μηδεμία, ἀνάγκη μηδὲν ὑπὲρ αὐτὸ εἶναι. Οὐ τοῖνυν δεῖ ἐφ' ἐτέρας ἀρχὰς ἵεναι, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο προσησαμένους, εἴτα  
 15 νοῦν μετ' αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ νοοῦν πρῶτως, εἴτα ψυχὴν μετὰ νοῦν—αὕτη γὰρ τάξις κατὰ φύσιν—μήτε πλείω τούτων τίθεσθαι ἐν τῷ νοητῷ μήτε ἐλάττω.

<sup>1</sup> τὴν αὐτήν Heigl, H-S<sup>2</sup>: ταύτην codd.

<sup>1</sup> This is a reference back to the conclusion of what, as Plotinus wrote it, was the preceding section of the same treatise, which appears in the *Enneads* as V. 5; cp. V. 5. 13. 33-36.

## II. 9. AGAINST THE GNOSTICS

1. Since, then, the simple nature of the Good appeared to us as also primal (for all that is not primal is not simple), and as something which has nothing in itself, but is some one thing;<sup>1</sup> and since the nature of what is called the One is the same (for this is not some other thing first and then one, nor is the Good something else first, and then good), whenever we say "the One" and whenever we say "the Good," we must think that the nature we are speaking of is the same nature, and call it "one" not as predicating anything of it but as making it clear to ourselves as far as we can. And we call it the First in the sense that it is simplest, and the Self-Sufficient, because it is not composed of a number of parts; for if it were, it would be dependent upon the things of which it was composed; and we say that it is not in something else, because everything which is in something else also comes from something else. If, then, it is not from something else or in something else or any kind of compound, it is necessary that there should be nothing above it. So we must not go after other first principles but put this first, and then after it Intellect, that which primally thinks, and then Soul after Intellect (for this is the order which corresponds to the nature of things): and we must not posit more principles than these in the intelligible world, or



Εἴτε γὰρ ἐλάττω, ἢ ψυχὴν καὶ νοῦν ταῦτόν φήσουσιν, ἢ νοῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον· ἀλλ' ὅτι ἕτερα ἀλλήλων, ἐδείχθη πολλαχῆ. Λοιπὸν δὲ ἐπισκέ-  
 20 ψασθαι ἐν τῷ παρόντι, εἰ πλείω τῶν τριῶν τούτων, τίνες ἂν οὖν εἶεν φύσεις παρ' αὐτάς. Τῆς τε γὰρ λεχθείσης οὕτως ἔχειν ἀρχῆς τῆς πάντων οὐδεὶς ἂν εὔροι ἀπλουστέραν οὐδ' ἐπαναβεβηκυῖαν ἡντι-  
 νοῦν. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ τὴν μὲν δυνάμει, τὴν δὲ ἐνεργείᾳ φήσουσι· γελοῖον γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἐνεργείᾳ οὔσι καὶ  
 25 ἀύλοις τὸ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ διαιρουμένους φύσεις ποιείσθαι πλείους. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα· οὐδ' ἐπωοεῖν τὸν μὲν τινα νοῦν ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ τινί, τὸν δὲ οἶον κινούμενον. Τίς γὰρ ἂν

<sup>1</sup> Here, and in what follows in the rest of the chapter, Plotinus is probably not only, or even primarily, concerned with explicitly Gnostic doctrines. He is attacking views which were held in the Platonic school and to which he had himself at one time been prepared to make some concessions. The idea that there were two or more Intellects seems to have arisen in the course of discussions about the meaning of Plato, *Timaeus* 39E, and the relationship of the intellect of the Demiurge to the intelligible model of the universe, which had long been discussed in the Platonic school (as it still is by modern scholars). Amelius, according to Proclus, (*In Timaeum* III. 268A, p. 103. 18 ff., Diehl), came to the conclusion that there were three Intellects, the "existing," the "possessing" and the "seeing," a view which had a considerable influence on the later developments of Neoplatonic doctrine (cp. Dodds's commentary on Proclus, *Elements of Theology* prop. 167). And in the first of the early notes collected by Porphyry in III. 9, Plotinus puts forward a distinction between an Intellect "in repose," and another which is an "activity proceeding from it" and "sees" it, very similar to the

fewer. For if people posit fewer, they will either assert that Soul and Intellect are the same, or Intellect and the First; but it has been shown in many places that they are different from each other. It remains to investigate in our present discussion, if we are to posit more than these three, whatever other natures there could be beside them. No one could find any principle simpler than the principle of all things which we have said to be as above described, or transcending it. For they will not assert that there is one principle which exists potentially and another which exists actually; for it would be ridiculous to distinguish things existing actually and potentially, and so multiply natures, in things which exist actually and are without matter. It is not even possible to do this in the things which come after these. One cannot conceive one intellect of some sort in a sort of repose and another in a kind of way in motion.<sup>1</sup> What would the repose of Intellect be,

distinction criticised here. This distinction seems to go back to Numenius, whose thought had affinities with Gnosticism (cp. Dodds on Proclus *El. Th.* prop. 168). Dodds also thinks that Numenius may be the author of the other distinction criticised here between the Intellect that thinks and the other which thinks that it thinks. But the passage describing Numenius's doctrine about the thinking of his three Intellects (Proclus *In Tim.* III. 268A-B, p. 103, 28 ff.; Diehl = Numenius test. 25 Leemans Fr. 22 Desplaces) is too obscure for any certainty. Similar ideas were, of course current among the Gnostics, but it is important to remember that they were seriously put forward in Plotinus's own circle, by others than professed Gnostics. The Gnostics themselves, especially Valentinus, derived some of their ideas from Platonism and Neopythagoreanism, which makes it easier to understand the reciprocal influence they exercised on some Platonists and Neopythagoreans.

ἡσυχία νοῦ καὶ τίς κίνησις καὶ προφορὰ ἂν εἴη ἢ  
 τίς ἀργία καὶ τοῦ ἐτέρου τί ἔργον; "Ἔστι γὰρ ὡς  
 30 ἔστι νοῦς ἀεὶ ὠσαύτως ἐνεργεῖα κείμενος ἐστῶση·  
 κίνησις δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ περὶ αὐτὸν ψυχῆς ἤδη  
 ἔργον καὶ λόγος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ εἰς ψυχὴν ψυχὴν  
 νοερὰν ποιῶν, οὐκ ἄλλην τινὰ μεταξὺ νοῦ καὶ  
 ψυχῆς φύσιν. Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ διὰ τοῦτο πλείους  
 νοῦς ποιεῖν, εἰ ὁ μὲν νοεῖ, ὁ δὲ νοεῖ ὅτι νοεῖ. Καὶ  
 35 γὰρ εἰ ἄλλο τὸ ἐν τούτοις νοεῖν, ἄλλο δὲ τὸ νοεῖν  
 ὅτι νοεῖ, ἀλλ' οὖν μία προσβολὴ οὐκ ἀναίσθητος  
 τῶν ἐνεργημάτων ἑαυτῆς· γελοῖον δὲ<sup>1</sup> ἐπὶ τοῦ  
 ἀληθινοῦ νοῦ τοῦτο ὑπολαμβάνειν, ἀλλὰ πάντως γε  
 ὁ αὐτὸς ἔσται ὅσπερ ἐνόει ὁ νοῶν ὅτι νοεῖ. Εἰ δὲ  
 μὴ, ὁ μὲν ἔσται νοῶν μόνον, ὁ δὲ ὅτι νοεῖ νοῶν  
 40 ἄλλου ὄντος, ἀλλ' οὐκ αὐτοῦ τοῦ νενοηκότος.  
 Ἄλλ' εἰ ἐπινοία φήσουσι, πρῶτον μὲν τῶν πλειόνων  
 ὑποστάσεων ἀποστήσονται· ἔπειτα δεῖ σκοπεῖν, εἰ  
 καὶ αἰ ἐπίνοιαὶ χώραν ἔχουσι λαβεῖν νοῦν νοοῦντα  
 μόνον, μὴ παρακολουθοῦντα δὲ ἑαυτῶ ὅτι νοεῖ· ὁ  
 καὶ ἐφ' ἡμῶν αὐτῶν εἰ γίγνοιτο τῶν ἀεὶ ἐπιστα-  
 45 τούντων ταῖς ὀρμαῖς καὶ ταῖς διανοήσεσιν, εἰ καὶ  
 μετρίως σπουδαῖοι εἶεν, αἰτίαν ἂν ἀφροσύνης  
 ἔχοιεν. "Ὅταν δὲ δὴ ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἀληθινὸς ἐν ταῖς  
 νοήσεσιν αὐτὸν νοῆ καὶ μὴ ἔξωθεν ἢ τὸ νοητὸν

<sup>1</sup> δὲ Harder: γὰρ codd. H-S.

and what its motion and "going forth," or what would be its inactivity, and what the work of the other intellect? Intellect is as it is, always the same, resting in a static activity. Movement towards it and around it is already the work of Soul, and a rational principle proceeding from Intellect to Soul and making Soul intellectual, not making another nature between Intellect and Soul. Again, the supposition that one intellect thinks and the other thinks that it thinks, is certainly not a reason for making several intellects. For even if on our level it is one thing for an intellect to think and another for it to think that it thinks, yet all the same its thinking is a single application of the mind not unaware of its own activities; but it would be absurd to suppose this duality to exist in the case of the true Intellect, but the intellect which thinks that it thinks will be altogether the same as the intellect which did the thinking. Otherwise one intellect will be only thinking, and the other will be thinking that it thinks, but the thinking subject will be another, and not itself. But if they are going to assert that the distinction is only in our thought, first of all they will be abandoning the idea of a plurality of hypostases. Then we must consider if we can make distinctions in thought which leave room for the assumption of an intellect which only thinks, but is not conscious of its thinking. If this happened to ourselves, who always watch over our impulses and thought processes, if we are even moderately serious people, we should be blamed for witlessness. But certainly when the true Intellect thinks itself in its thoughts and its object of thought is not outside but it is itself also its

αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἦ καὶ τὸ νοητόν, ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἐν  
 τῷ νοεῖν ἔχει ἑαυτὸν καὶ ὄρᾳ ἑαυτόν· ὄρων δ'  
 50 ἑαυτὸν οὐκ ἀνοηταίνοντα, ἀλλὰ νοοῦντα ὄρᾳ.  
 Ὡστε ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ νοεῖν ἔχει ἂν καὶ τὸ νοεῖν  
 ὅτι νοεῖ ὡς ἐν ὄν· καὶ οὐδὲ τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ ἐκεῖ διπλοῦν.  
 Εἰ δὲ καὶ αἰεὶ νοῶν εἴη, ὅπερ ἔστι, τίς χώρα τῇ  
 ἐπινοίᾳ τῇ χωριζούσῃ τὸ νοεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ νοεῖν ὅτι  
 νοεῖ; Εἰ δὲ δὴ καὶ ἑτέραν ἐπινοίαν τις τρίτην  
 55 ἐπεισάγοι τὴν ἐπὶ τῇ δευτέρᾳ τῇ λεγούσῃ νοεῖν  
 ὅτι νοεῖ, τὴν λέγουσαν ὅτι νοεῖ ὅτι νοεῖ ὅτι νοεῖ,  
 ἔτι μᾶλλον καταφανὲς τὸ ἄτοπον. Καὶ διὰ τί οὐκ  
 εἰς ἄπειρον οὕτω; Τὸν δὲ λόγον ὅταν τις ἀπὸ τοῦ  
 νοῦ ποιῇ, εἶτα ἀπὸ τούτου γίνεσθαι ἐν ψυχῇ ἄλλον  
 60 ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ λόγου, ἵνα μεταξὺ ψυχῆς καὶ νοῦ ἢ  
 οὗτος, ἀποστερήσει τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ νοεῖν, εἰ μὴ  
 παρὰ τοῦ νοῦ κοιμῆται, ἀλλὰ παρὰ ἄλλου τοῦ  
 μεταξὺ, τὸν λόγον· καὶ εἰδῶλον λόγου, ἀλλ' οὐ  
 λόγον ἔξει, καὶ ὅλως οὐκ εἰδήσει νοῦν οὐδὲ ὅλως  
 νοήσει.

2. Οὐ τοίνυν οὔτε πλείω τούτων οὔτε ἐπινοίας  
 περιττὰς ἐν ἐκείνοις, ἃς οὐ δέχονται, θετέον, ἀλλ'  
 ἓνα νοῦν τὸν αὐτὸν ὡσαύτως ἔχοντα, ἀκλινηῖ  
 πανταχῇ, μιμούμενον τὸν πατέρα καθ' ὅσον οἶόν  
 5 τε αὐτῷ. Ψυχῆς δὲ ἡμῶν τὸ μὲν αἰεὶ πρὸς

object of thought, it necessarily in its thinking pos-  
 sesses itself and sees itself: and when it sees itself  
 it does so not as without intelligence but as thinking.  
 So that in its primary thinking it would have also  
 the thinking that it thinks, as an existent unity;  
 and it is not double, even in thought, there in the  
 intelligible world. And further, if it is always  
 thinking what it is, what room is there for the  
 distinction in thought which separates thinking from  
 thinking that it thinks? But if one even introduced  
 another, third, distinction in addition to the second  
 one which said that it thinks that it thinks, one  
 which says that it thinks that it thinks that it thinks,  
 the absurdity would become even clearer. And why  
 should one not go on introducing distinctions in this  
 way to infinity? But when someone makes the  
 rational principle proceed from Intellect, and then  
 makes another principle come to be in the soul from  
 the first rational principle itself, in order to make this  
 first principle an intermediary between soul and  
 Intellect, he will deprive soul of thinking, if it does  
 not get its principle of thinking from Intellect but  
 from another principle, the intermediary: and it  
 will have an image of a rational principle, but not a  
 principle, and it will not know Intellect at all or  
 think at all.

2. One must not, then, posit more beings than  
 these, nor make superfluous distinctions in the  
 realities of the intelligible world which the nature of  
 these realities does not admit: we must lay down that  
 there is one intellect, unchangeably the same, with-  
 out any sort of decline, imitating the Father as far  
 as is possible to it: and that one part of our soul is

ἐκείνοις, τὸ δὲ πρὸς ταῦτα ἔχειν, τὸ δ' ἐν μέσῳ  
 τούτων· φύσεως γὰρ οὔσης μιᾶς ἐν δυνάμεσι  
 πλείοσιν ὅτε μὲν τὴν πᾶσαν συμφέρεσθαι τῷ  
 ἀρίστῳ αὐτῆς καὶ τοῦ ὄντος, ὅτε δὲ τὸ χεῖρον  
 αὐτῆς καθελκυσθὲν συνεφελκύσασθαι τὸ μέσον·  
 10 τὸ γὰρ πᾶν αὐτῆς οὐκ ἦν θέμις καθελκύσαι. Καὶ  
 τοῦτο συμβαίνει αὐτῇ τὸ πάθος, ὅτι μὴ ἔμεινεν  
 ἐν τῷ καλλίστῳ, ὅπου ψυχὴ μείνασα ἢ μὴ μέρος,  
 μηδὲ ἥς ἡμεῖς ἔτι μέρος, ἔδωκε τῷ παντὶ σώματι  
 αὐτῷ τε ἔχειν ὅσον δύναται παρ' αὐτῆς ἔχειν,  
 μένει τε ἀπραγμόνως αὐτῇ οὐκ ἐκ διανοίας  
 15 διοικοῦσα οὐδέ τι διορθουμένη, ἀλλὰ τῇ εἰς τὸ  
 πρὸ αὐτῆς θεῶν κατακοσμοῦσα δυνάμει θαυμαστῇ.  
 Ὅσον γὰρ πρὸς αὐτῇ ἔστι, τόσῳ καλλίων καὶ  
 δυνατωτέρα· κακείθεν ἔχουσα δίδωσι τῷ μετ'  
 αὐτὴν καὶ ὡσπερ ἐλλάμπουσα αἰεὶ ἐλλάμπεται.

3. Ἀεὶ οὖν ἐλλαμπομένη καὶ διηλεκτὴς ἔχουσα  
 τὸ φῶς δίδωσιν εἰς τὰ ἐφεξῆς, τὰ δ' αἰεὶ συνέχεται  
 καὶ ἄρδεται τούτῳ τῷ φωτὶ καὶ ἀπολαύει τοῦ  
 ζῆν καθ' ὅσον δύναται· ὡσπερ εἰ πυρὸς ἐν μέσῳ  
 5 πῶν κεκμένου ἀλεαίνονται οἱς οἶόν τε. Καίτοι τὸ  
 πῦρ ἔστιν ἐν μέτρῳ· ἔταν δὲ δυνάμεις μὴ μετρηθεῖ-  
 σαι μὴ ἐκ τῶν ὄντων ὡσιν ἀηρημένοι, πῶς οἶόν  
 τε εἶναι μὲν, μηδὲν δὲ αὐτῶν μεταλαμβάνειν;  
 Ἄλλ' ἀνάγκη ἕκαστον τὸ αὐτοῦ δίδόναι καὶ ἄλλῳ,  
 ἢ τὸ ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἀγαθὸν ἔσται, ἢ ὁ νοῦς οὐ νοῦς,  
 10 ἢ ψυχὴ μὴ τοῦτο, εἰ μὴ τι μετὰ τοῦ πρώτως ζῆν

always directed to the intelligible realities, one to  
 the things of this world, and one is in the middle  
 between these; for since the soul is one nature in  
 many powers, sometimes the whole of it is carried  
 along with the best of itself and of real being, some-  
 times the worse part is dragged down and drags the  
 middle with it; for it is not lawful for it to drag down  
 the whole. This misfortune befalls it because it  
 does not remain in the noblest, where the soul  
 remains which is not a part—and at that stage we,  
 too, are not a part of it—and grants to the whole of  
 body to hold whatever it can hold from it, but re-  
 mains itself untroubled, not managing body as a  
 result of discursive thinking, nor setting anything  
 right, but ordering it with a wonderful power by its  
 contemplation of that which is before it. The more it  
 is directed to that contemplation, the fairer and more  
 powerful it is. It receives from there and gives to  
 what comes after it, and is always illuminated as it  
 illuminates.

3. Since, therefore, it is always illuminated and  
 continually holds the light, it gives it to what comes  
 next after it, and this is held together and fertilised  
 by this light and enjoys its share of life as far as it  
 can; as if there was a fire placed somewhere in the  
 middle and those who were capable of it were warmed.  
 Yet fire has its limited dimensions; but when powers  
 which are not limited to precise dimensions are not  
 separated from real being, how can they exist with-  
 out anything participating in them? But each of  
 necessity must give of its own to something else as  
 well, or the Good will not be the Good, or Intellect  
 Intellect, or the soul this that it is, unless with the

ζώη<sup>1</sup> καὶ δευτέρως ἕως ἔσται τὸ πρῶτως. Ἄνάγκη  
 τοίνυν ἐφεξῆς εἶναι πάντα ἀλλήλοις καὶ αἰεί,  
 γενητὰ δὲ τὰ ἕτερα τῶ παρ' ἄλλων εἶναι. Οὐ  
 τοίνυν ἐγένετο, ἀλλ' ἐγένετο καὶ γενήσεται, ὅσα  
 15 γενητὰ λέγεται: οὐδὲ φθαρήσεται, ἀλλ' ἢ ὅσα  
 ἔχει εἰς ἄ· ὁ δὲ μὴ ἔχει εἰς ὅ, οὐδὲ φθαρήσεται.  
 Εἰ δέ τις εἰς ὕλην λέγοι, διὰ τί οὐ καὶ τὴν ὕλην;  
 Εἰ δὲ καὶ τὴν ὕλην φήσῃ, τίς ἦν ἀνάγκη, φήσομεν,  
 γενέσθαι; Εἰ δὲ ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι φήσουσι παρα-  
 κολουθεῖν, καὶ νῦν ἀνάγκη. Εἰ δὲ μόνη καταλει-  
 φθήσεται, οὐ πανταχοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐν τινι τόπῳ  
 20 ἀφωρισμένῳ τὰ θεῖα ἔσται καὶ οἶον ἀποτετειχισ-  
 μένα: εἰ δὲ οὐχ οἶόν τε, ἐλλαμφήσεται.

4. Εἰ δὲ οἶον πτερορρυήσασαν τὴν ψυχὴν  
 φήσουσι πεποιηκέναι, οὐχ ἢ τοῦ παντὸς τοῦτο  
 πάσχει· εἰ δὲ σφαλείσαν αὐτοὶ φήσουσι, τοῦ  
 σφάλματος λεγέτωσαν τὴν αἰτίαν. Πότε δὲ  
 5 ἐσφάλη; Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐξ αἰδίου, μένει κατὰ τὸν  
 αἰτῶν λόγον ἐσφαλμένη· εἰ δὲ ἤρξατο, διὰ τί οὐ  
 πρὸ τοῦ; Ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ νεῦσιν φαμεν τὴν ποιούσαν,

<sup>1</sup> ζώη Perna et nunc Henry et Schwyzer: ζωή wxy, H-S:  
 ζωή Q.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase is taken from Plato, *Phaedrus* 246C. It is  
 clear from what follows in Plato that the reference is only to  
 the fall of *human* souls. But a reading of the passage will  
 show how the Gnostics might have misinterpreted it to fit in  
 with their own doctrines.

primal living some secondary life lives as long as the  
 primal exists. Of necessity, then, all things must  
 exist for ever in ordered dependence upon each other:  
 those other than the First have come into being in  
 the sense that they are derived from other, higher,  
 principles. Things that are said to have come into  
 being did not just come into being [at a particular  
 moment] but always were and always will be in  
 process of becoming: nor will anything be dissolved  
 except those things which have something to be  
 dissolved into; that which has nothing into which it  
 can be dissolved will not perish. If anyone says  
 that it will be dissolved into matter, why should he  
 not also say that matter will be dissolved? But if  
 he is going to say that, what necessity was there, we  
 shall reply, for it to come into being? But if they  
 are going to assert that it was necessary for it to  
 come into being as a consequence of the existence of  
 higher principles, the necessity is there *now* as well.  
 But if matter is going to remain alone, the divine  
 principles will not be everywhere but in a particular  
 limited place; they will be, so to speak, walled off  
 from matter; but if this is impossible, matter will be  
 illuminated by them.

4. But if they are going to assert that the soul  
 made the world when it had, so to speak, "shed its  
 wings,"<sup>1</sup> this does not happen to the Soul of the All;  
 but if they are going to say that it made the world as  
 the result of a moral failure, let them tell us the cause  
 of the failure. But when did it fail? If it was from  
 eternity, it abides in a state of failure according to  
 their own account. If it began to fail, why did it not  
 begin before? But we say that the making act of the

ἀλλὰ μάλλον μὴ νεῦσιν. Εἰ δὲ ἔνευσε, τῷ  
 ἐπιλελησθαι δηλονότι τῶν ἐκεῖ· εἰ δὲ ἐπελάθετο,  
 πῶς δημιουργεῖ; Πόθεν γὰρ ποιεῖ ἢ ἐξ ὧν εἶδεν  
 10 ἐκεῖ; Εἰ δὲ ἐκείνων μεμνημένη ποιεῖ, οὐδὲ ὅλως  
 ἔνευσεν, οὐδὲ γὰρ εἰ ἀμυδρῶς ἔχει. Οὐ μάλλον  
 νεύει ἐκεῖ, ἵνα μὴ ἀμυδρῶς ἴδῃ; Διὰ τί γὰρ ἂν  
 οὐκ ἠθέλησεν ἔχουσα ἡντινοῦν μνήμην ἐπανελθεῖν;  
 Τί γὰρ ἂν ἑαυτῇ καὶ ἐλογίζετο γενέσθαι ἐκ τοῦ  
 κοσμοποιήσαι; Γελοῖον γὰρ τὸ ἵνα τιμῶτο, καὶ  
 μεταφερόντων ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγαματοποιῶν τῶν  
 15 ἐνταῦθα. Ἐπεὶ καὶ εἰ διανοία ἐποίει καὶ μὴ ἐν τῇ  
 φύσει ἦν τὸ ποιεῖν καὶ ἡ δύναμις ἡ ποιούσα ἦν,  
 πῶς ἂν κόσμον τόνδε ἐποίησε; Πότε δὲ καὶ  
 φθереῖ αὐτόν; εἰ γὰρ μετέγνω, τί ἀναμένει; Εἰ  
 δὲ οὐπω, οὐδ' ἂν μεταγνοίῃ ἔτι ἤδη εἰθισμένη καὶ  
 τῷ χρόνῳ προσφιλεστέρα γενομένη. Εἰ δὲ τὰς  
 20 καθ' ἕκαστον ψυχὰς ἀναμένει, ἤδη ἔδει μηκέτι  
 ἐλθεῖν εἰς γένεσιν πάλιν πειραθείσας ἐν τῇ προτέρα  
 γενέσει τῶν τῆδε κακῶν· ὥστε ἤδη ἂν ἐπέλιπον  
 ἰοῦσαι. Οὐδὲ τὸ κακῶς γεγονέναι τόνδε τὸν  
 κόσμον δοτέον τῷ πολλὰ εἶναι ἐν αὐτῷ δυσχερῆ·  
 τοῦτο γὰρ ἀξίωμα μεῖζόν ἐστι περιτιθέντων αὐτῷ,  
 25 εἰ ἀξιούσι τὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι τῷ νοητῷ, ἀλλὰ μὴ

soul is not a declination but rather a non-declination.  
 But if it declined, it was obviously because it had  
 forgotten the intelligible realities; but if it forgot  
 them, how is it the craftsman of the world? For  
 what is the source of its making, if not what it saw in  
 the intelligible world? But if it makes in re-  
 membrance of those intelligible realities, it has not  
 declined at all, not even if it only has them dimly  
 present in it. Does it not rather incline to the  
 intelligible world, in order not to see dimly? For  
 why, if it had any memory at all, did it not want to  
 ascend there? For whatever advantage did it think  
 was going to result for it from making the universe?  
 It is ridiculous to suppose that it did so in order to be  
 honoured; the people who suppose so are transferring  
 to it what is true of the sculptors here below. Then  
 again, if it made the world by discursive reasoning  
 and its making was not in its nature, and its power  
 was not a productive power, how could it have made  
 this particular universe? And when, too, is it going  
 to destroy it? For if it was sorry it had made it,  
 what is it waiting for? But if it is not sorry yet, it is  
 not likely to be, since it has got used to the universe  
 by now and grown more kindly disposed to it with  
 the passage of time. But if it is waiting for the  
 individual souls, they ought by now to have stopped  
 coming again to birth, since they have made trial  
 in their former birth of the evils in this world; so  
 that they would have left off coming here by now.  
 We cannot grant, either, that this universe had an  
 evil origin because there are many unpleasant things  
 in it: this is a judgement of people who rate it too  
 highly, if they claim that it ought to be the same as

εἰκόνα ἐκείνου. "Ἡ τίς ἂν ἐγένετο ἄλλη καλλίων εἰκὼν ἐκείνου; Τί γὰρ ἄλλο πῦρ βελτίων<sup>1</sup> τοῦ ἐκεῖ πυρός παρὰ τὸ ἐνταῦθα πῦρ; "Ἡ τίς γῆ ἄλλη παρὰ ταύτην μετὰ τὴν ἐκεῖ γῆν; Τίς δὲ σφαῖρα ἀκριβεστέρα καὶ σεμνοτέρα ἢ εὐτακτοτέρα τῇ 30 φορᾷ μετὰ τὴν ἐκεῖ τοῦ κόσμου τοῦ νοητοῦ περιοχὴν ἐν αὐτῷ; "Ἄλλος δὲ ἥλιος μετ' ἐκείνου πρὸ τούτου τοῦ ὀρωμένου τίς;

5. 'Ἄλλ' αὐτοὺς μὲν σῶμα ἔχοντας, ὅσον ἔχουσι ἀνθρώποι, καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ λύπας καὶ ὀργὰς τὴν παρ' αὐτοῖς δύναμιν μὴ ἀτιμάζειν, ἀλλ' ἐφάπτεσθαι τοῦ νοητοῦ λέγειν ἐξεῦναι, μὴ εἶναι δὲ ἐν ἡλίῳ 5 ταύτης ἀπαθεστέραν ἐν τάξει μᾶλλον καὶ οὐκ ἐν ἀλλοιώσει μᾶλλον οὔσαν, οὐδὲ φρόνησιν ἔχειν ἀμείονα ἡμῶν τῶν ἄρτι γενομένων καὶ διὰ τοσοῦτων κωλυομένων τῶν ἀπατώντων ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐλθεῖν· οὐδὲ τὴν μὲν αὐτῶν ψυχὴν ἀθάνατον καὶ θεῖαν λέγειν καὶ τὴν τῶν φαυλοτάτων 10 ἀνθρώπων, τὸν δὲ οὐρανὸν πάντα καὶ τὰ ἐκεῖ ἄστρα μὴ τῆς ἀθανάτου κεκονωνηκέναι ἐκ πολλῶν καλλιόνων καὶ καθαρωτέρων ὄντα, ὄρωντας ἐκεῖ μὲν τὸ τεταγμένον καὶ εὐσχημον καὶ εὐτακτον καὶ μάλιστα τὴν ἐνταῦθα περὶ γῆν ἀταξίαν αὐτοὺς αἰτιωμένους· ὥσπερ τῆς ἀθανάτου ψυχῆς τὸν 15 χεῖρω τόπον ἐπίτηδες ἐλομένης, παραχωρήσει δὲ τοῦ βελτίονος τῇ θνητῇ ψυχῇ ἐλομένης. "Ἄλογος δὲ καὶ ἡ παρεισαγωγὴ αὐτοῖς τῆς ἐτέρας ψυχῆς

<sup>1</sup> βελτίων Heigl, H-S<sup>2</sup>: βέλτιον codd.

the intelligible world and not only an image of it. Surely, what other fairer image of the intelligible world could there be? For what other fire could be a better image of the intelligible fire than the fire here? Or what other earth could be better than this, after the intelligible earth? And what sphere could be more exact or more dignified or better ordered in its circuit [than the sphere of this universe] after the self-enclosed circle there of the intelligible universe? And what other sun could there be which ranked after the intelligible sun and before this visible sun here?

5. But really! For these people who have a body like men have, and desire and griefs and passions, by no means to despise their own power but to say that *they* can grasp the intelligible, but that there is no power in the sun which is freer than this power of ours from affections and more ordered and more unchangeable, and that the sun has not a better understanding than we have, who have only just come to birth and are hindered by so many things that cheat us from coming to the truth! And to say that *their* soul, and the soul of the meanest of men, is immortal and divine, but that the whole heaven and the stars there have no share given them in the immortal soul, though they are made of much fairer and purer material, though these people see the order there and the excellence of form and arrangement, and are particularly addicted to complaining about the disorder here around the earth! As if the immortal soul had taken care to choose the worse place, and chosen to retire from the better in favour of the mortal soul! Unreasonable, too, is their slipping in of this

ταύτης, ἣν ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων συνιστάσι· πῶς γὰρ  
 ἂν ζῶν ἤντων ἔχοι ἢ ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων σύστασις;  
 20 Ἡ γὰρ τούτων κρῆσις ἢ θερμὸν ἢ ψυχρὸν ἢ  
 μικτὸν ποιεῖ, ἢ ξηρὸν ἢ ὑγρὸν ἢ μίγμα ἐκ τούτων.  
 Πῶς δὲ συνοχὴ τῶν τεσσάρων ὑστέρα γενομένη ἐξ  
 αὐτῶν; Ὅταν δὲ προστιθῶσι καὶ ἀντίληψιν αὐτῇ  
 καὶ βούλευσιν καὶ ἄλλα μυρία, τί ἂν τις εἴποι;  
 Ἄλλὰ οὐ τιμῶντες ταύτην τὴν δημιουργίαν οὐδὲ  
 25 τῆνδε τὴν γῆν καινὴν αὐτοῖς γῆν φασι γεγονέναι,  
 εἰς ἣν δὴ ἐντέθην ἀπελεύσονται· τοῦτο δὲ λόγον  
 εἶναι κόσμου. Καίτοι τί δεῖ αὐτοῖς ἐκεῖ γενέσθαι  
 ἐν παραδείγματι κόσμου, ὃν μισοῦσι; Πόθεν δὲ  
 τὸ παράδειγμα τοῦτο; Τοῦτο γὰρ κατ' αὐτοῦς  
 νενευκότος ἤδη πρὸς τὰ τῆδε τοῦ τοῦ παραδείγμα  
 30 πεποιηκότος. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ ποιήσαντι  
 πολλὴ φροντίς τοῦ κόσμου<sup>1</sup> μετὰ τὸν κόσμον τὸν  
 νοητὸν ὃν ἔχει ἄλλον ποιῆσαι—καὶ τί ἔδει;—καὶ  
 εἰ μὲν πρὸ τοῦ κόσμου, ἵνα τί; Ἴνα φυλάξωται αἱ  
 ψυχαί. Πῶς οὖν; οὐκ ἐφυλάξαντο, ὥστε μάτην  
 ἐγένετο. Εἰ δὲ μετὰ τὸν κόσμον ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου  
 35 λαβῶν ἀποσυλήσας τῆς ὕλης τὸ εἶδος, ἦρκει ἢ

<sup>1</sup> κόσμον Kirchhoff, H-S: κόσμου codd.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the Coptic Gnostic work edited by C. Schmidt (in *Koptisch-Gnostische Schriften I*, Leipzig, 1905; ed. altera ed. W. Till, Berlin 1954) and by C. A. Baynes (*A Coptic Gnostic Treatise contained in the Codex Brucianus*, Cambridge, 1933).

other soul of theirs, which they compose of the elements. For how could the composition of the elements have any sort of life? For the mixture of the elements makes hot or cold or a mixture of the two, or dry or wet or a mixture of these. And how can the soul be the principle which holds the four elements together when it has come into being out of them afterwards? But what can one say when they attribute to the soul compounded of the elements perception and deliberation and innumerable other things as well? But they do not honour this creation or this earth, but say that a new earth<sup>1</sup> has come into existence for them, to which, say they, they will go away from this one: and that this is the rational form of the universe. And yet why do they feel the need to be there in the archetype of the universe which they hate? And where did this archetype come from? It came into existence according to them, when its maker had already inclined towards this world. Well, then, if there was in the maker himself a great concern to make a universe after the intelligible universe which he possesses—and what need was there to do so?—and if it existed before our universe, what did he make it for? To put the souls on their guard. How could that be? They were not on their guard, so there was no point in its existence. But if he made it after this universe, taking the form out of the universe and stripping it off the matter, then their testing in this world would

The new earth is spoken of at p. 352, 6–12 Schmidt, p. 136 Baynes: Nicotheos, one of the alleged authors of spurious Gnostic revelations mentioned by Porphyry in the *Life* (ch. 16) appears in this Coptic Treatise.



πεῖρα ταῖς πειραθείσαις ψυχαῖς πρὸς τὸ φυλάσθαι.  
 Εἰ δ' ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς λαβεῖν ἀξιοῦσι τοῦ κόσμου  
 τὸ εἶδος, τί τὸ καινὸν τοῦ λόγου;

6. Τὰς δὲ ἄλλας ὑποστάσεις τί χρὴ λέγειν ἅς  
 εἰσάγουσι, παροικήσεις καὶ ἀντιτύπους καὶ μετα-  
 νοίας; Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ψυχῆς ταῦτα λέγουσι πάθη,  
 ὅταν ἐν μετανοίᾳ ᾗ, καὶ ἀντιτύπους, ὅταν οἶον  
 5 εἰκόνας τῶν ὄντων, ἀλλὰ μὴ αὐτὰ πῶς τὰ ὄντα  
 θεωρῆ, καινολογούντων ἐστὶν εἰς σύστασιν τῆς  
 ἰδίας αἰρέσεως· ὡς γὰρ τῆς ἀρχαίας Ἑλληνικῆς  
 οὐχ ἀπτόμενοι ταῦτα σκευωροῦνται εἰδότην καὶ  
 σαφῶς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀτύφως λεγόντων ἀναβάσεις  
 ἐκ τοῦ σπηλαίου καὶ κατὰ βραχὺ εἰς θεῶν ἀληθεσ-  
 10 τέραν μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον προειούσας. "Ὅλως γὰρ  
 τὰ μὲν αὐτοῖς παρὰ τοῦ Πλάτωνος εἴληπται, τὰ  
 δέ, ὅσα καινοτομοῦσιν, ἴνα ἰδίαν φιλοσοφίαν  
 θῶνται, ταῦτα ἕξω τῆς ἀληθείας εὔρηται. Ἐπεὶ  
 καὶ αἱ δίκαι καὶ οἱ ποταμοὶ οἱ ἐν Ἅιδου καὶ αἱ  
 μετενσωματώσεις ἐκείθεν. Καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν νοητῶν  
 15 δὲ πλῆθος ποιῆσαι, τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸν νοῦν καὶ τὸν  
 δημιουργὸν ἄλλον καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν, ἐκ τῶν ἐν τῷ  
 Τιμαίῳ λεχθέντων εἴληπται· εἰπόντος γὰρ αὐτοῦ  
 "ἦ περ οὖν νοῦς ἐνούσας ἰδέας ἐν τῷ ὄντι ἐστὶ

<sup>1</sup> παροικήσεις, μετάνοια, and ἀντίτυποι appear in the Coptic Gnostic treatise referred to in the note on ch. 5. p. 361, 35–p. 362, 3 Schmidt: p. 180 Baynes: on the extremely vague and fluctuating Gnostic meaning of these terms see the discussion in Entretiens Hardt V p. 181–2 (ἀντίτυποι) and p. 189–90 (μετάνοια and παροικήσεις).

suffice to put on their guard the souls which had been tested in it. But if they claim to have received the form of the universe in their souls, what does this new way of speaking mean?

6. And what ought one to say of the other beings they introduce, their "Exiles" and "Impressions" and "Repentings"?<sup>1</sup> For if they say that these are affections of the soul, when it has changed its purpose, and "Impressions" when it is contemplating, in a way, images of realities and not the realities themselves, then these are the terms of people inventing a new jargon to recommend their own school: they contrive this meretricious language as if they had no connection with the ancient Hellenic school, though the Hellenes knew all this and knew it clearly, and spoke without delusive pomposity of ascents from the cave and advancing gradually closer and closer to a truer vision.<sup>2</sup> Generally speaking, some of these peoples' doctrines have been taken from Plato, but others, all the new ideas they have brought in to establish a philosophy of their own, are things they have found outside the truth. For the judgements too, and the rivers in Hades and the reincarnations come from Plato.<sup>3</sup> And the making a plurality in the intelligible world, Being, and Intellect, and the Maker different from Intellect, and Soul, is taken from the words in the *Timaeus*: for Plato says, "The maker of this universe thought that it should

<sup>2</sup> This, of course, refers to the simile of the Cave in Plato *Republic* VII. 514A ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. *Phaedo* 111D ff.; the mention of the "rivers in Hades" suggests that this is the one of Plato's myths of the after-life which Plotinus had particularly in mind here.

ζῶον καθορᾶ, τοσαύτας καὶ ὁ τότε ποιῶν τὸ  
 πᾶν διανοήθη σχεῖν." Οἱ δὲ οὐ συνέντες τὸν  
 20 μὲν ἔλαβον ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ ἔχοντα ἐν αὐτῷ πάντα τὰ  
 ὄντα, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἕτερον παρ' αὐτὸν θεωροῦντα,  
 τὸν δὲ διανοοῦμενον—πολλάκις δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀντὶ τοῦ  
 διανοοῦμένου ψυχῆ ἐστὶν ἡ δημιουργοῦσα—καὶ κατὰ  
 Πλάτωνα τοῦτον οἴονται εἶναι τὸν δημιουργὸν  
 ἀφεστηκότες τοῦ εἰδέναι τίς ὁ δημιουργός. Καὶ  
 25 ὕλως τὸν τρόπον τῆς δημιουργίας καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ  
 καταψεύδονται αὐτοῦ καὶ πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον ἔλκουσι  
 τὰς δόξας τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὡς αὐτοὶ μὲν τὴν νοητὴν  
 φύσιν κατανενοηκότες, ἐκείνου δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων  
 τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν μή. Καὶ πλῆθος νοητῶν  
 30 ἀντῷ τῷ πλίθει τὴν νοητὴν φύσιν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ  
 καὶ ἐλάττωι εἰς ὁμοιότητα ἄγοντες, δεόν ἐκεῖ τὸ  
 ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα ὀλίγον εἰς ἀριθμὸν διώκειν καὶ  
 τῷ μετὰ τὸ πρῶτον τὰ πάντα ἀποδιδόντας ἀπλη-  
 λάχθαι, ἐκείνου τῶν πάντων ὄντος καὶ νοῦ τοῦ  
 πρώτου καὶ οὐσίας καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα κατὰ τὴν  
 35 πρώτην φύσιν. Ψυχῆς δὲ εἶδος τρίτον· διαφορὰς  
 δὲ ψυχῶν ἐν πάθειν ἢ ἐν φύσει ἰχνεύειν μηδὲν  
 τοὺς θεοὺς ἀνδρας διασύροντας, ἀλλ' εὐμενῶς  
 δεχομένους τὰ ἐκκίνων ὡς παλαιότερων καὶ ἄ  
 καλῶς λέγουσι παρ' ἐκείνων λαβόντας, ψυχῆς

<sup>1</sup> *Timaeus* 39E 7-9.

<sup>2</sup> Again, it looks as if Plotinus was thinking of "Gnosticising" Platonists, who derived their ideas to some extent from Numenius, at least as much as of Gnostics properly so called: cp. the second note on ch. 1.

contain all the forms that intelligence discerns contained in the Living Being that truly is."<sup>1</sup> But they did not understand, and took it to mean that there is one mind which contains in it in repose all realities, and another mind different from it which contemplates them, and another which plans—but often they have soul as the maker instead of the planning mind—and they think that this is the maker according to Plato, being a long way from knowing who the maker is.<sup>2</sup> And in general they falsify Plato's account of the manner of the making, and a great deal else, and degrade the great man's teachings as if they had understood the intelligible nature, but he and the other blessed philosophers had not.<sup>3</sup> And by giving names to a multitude of intelligible realities they think they will appear to have discovered the exact truth, though by this very multiplicity they bring the intelligible nature into the likeness of the sense-world, the inferior world, when one ought there in the intelligible to aim at the smallest possible number, and attribute everything to the reality which comes after the First and so be quit of multiplicity, since it is all things and the first intellect and substance and all the other excellences that come after the first nature. The form of soul should come third; and they should trace the differences of souls in affections or in nature, without in any way disparaging those godlike men, but receiving their teaching with a good grace since it is the teaching of more ancient authorities and they themselves have received what is good in what they

<sup>3</sup> Cp. what Porphyry says about the Gnostics in *Life* ch. 16, 8-9.

ἀθανασίαν, νοητὸν κόσμον, θεὸν τὸν πρῶτον, τὸ  
 40 τὴν ψυχὴν δεῖν φεύγειν τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ὁμιλίαν,  
 τὸν χωρισμὸν τὸν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, τὸ ἐκ γενέσεως  
 φεύγειν εἰς οὐσίαν· ταῦτα γὰρ κείμενα παρὰ τῷ  
 Πλάτῳ σαφῶς οὕτως λέγοντες καλῶς ποιούσιν.  
 Οἷς θέλουσι διαφωνεῖν φθόνος οὐδεὶς λεγόντων  
 οὐδ' ἐν τῷ τοῦς Ἑλληνας διασύρειν καὶ ὑβρίζειν  
 45 τὰ αὐτῶν ἐν συστάσει παρὰ τοῖς ἀκούουσι ποιεῖν,  
 ἀλλ' αὐτὰ παρ' αὐτῶν δεικνύειν ὀρθῶς ἔχοντα,  
 ὅσα ἴδια αὐτοῖς ἔδοξε παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνων δόξαν  
 λέγειν, εὐμενῶς καὶ φιλοσύφως αὐτὰς τὰς δόξας  
 τιθέντας αὐτῶν καὶ οἷς ἐναντιοῦνται δικαίως, πρὸς  
 50 τὸ ἀληθὲς βλέποντας, οὐ τὴν εὐδοκίμησιν θηρωμέ-  
 νους ἐκ τοῦ [πρὸς] ἄνδρας κεκριμένους ἐκ παλαιῶ  
 οὐ παρὰ φαύλων ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθοὺς εἶναι ψέγειν,  
 λέγοντας ἑαυτοὺς ἐκείνων ἀμείνους εἶναι. Ἐπεὶ  
 τὰ γε εἰρημένα τοῖς παλαιοῖς περὶ τῶν νοητῶν  
 πολλῶ ἀμείνω καὶ πεπαιδευμένως εἴρηται καὶ  
 55 τοῖς μὴ ἐξαπατωμένοις τὴν ἐπιθέουσιν εἰς ἀνθρώ-  
 πους ἀπάτην ῥαδίως γνωσθήσεται τὰδ' <sup>1</sup> ὕστερον  
 τούτοις παρ' ἐκείνων ληφθέντα, προσθήκας δέ  
 τινὰς οὐδὲν προσηκούσας εἰληφότα, ἐν γε <sup>2</sup> οἷς  
 ἐναντιοῦσθαι θέλουσι γενέσεις καὶ φθορὰς εἰσάγον-  
 τες παντελεῖς καὶ μεμφόμενοι τῷδε τῷ παντὶ καὶ  
 60 τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα κοινωνίαν τῆ ψυχῆ αἰτιώμενοι  
 καὶ τὸν διοικοῦντα τόδε τὸ πᾶν ψέγοντες καὶ εἰς

<sup>1</sup> γνωσθήσεται τὰδ' nunc Henry et Schwyzer: γνωσθήσεται τὰ  
 δ' H-S.

<sup>2</sup> ἐν γε Müller et nunc Henry et Schwyzer: ἐν τε WΣQ:  
 ὥστε y.

say from them, the immortality of the soul, the in-  
 telligible universe, the first god, the necessity for the  
 soul to shun fellowship with the body, the separation  
 from the body, the escape from becoming to being.  
 For these doctrines are there in Plato, and when  
 they state them clearly in this way they do well.  
 If they wish to disagree on these points, there is no  
 unfair hostility in saying to them that they should  
 not recommend their own opinions to their audience  
 by ridiculing and insulting the Greeks but that they  
 should show the correctness on their own merits of  
 all the points of doctrine which are peculiar to them  
 and differ from the views of the Greeks, stating their  
 real opinions courteously, as befits philosophers, and  
 fairly on the points where they are opposed, looking  
 to the truth and not hunting fame by censuring men  
 who have been judged good from ancient times by  
 men of worth and saying that they themselves are  
 better than the Greeks. For what was said by the  
 ancients about the intelligible world is far better,  
 and is put in a way appropriate to educated men,  
 and it will be easily recognised by those who are not  
 utterly deceived by the delusion that is rushing  
 upon men that these teachings have been taken by  
 the Gnostics later from the ancients, but have  
 acquired some in no way appropriate additions; on  
 the points, at any rate, on which they wish to oppose  
 the ancient teachings they introduce all sorts of  
 comings into being and passings away, and dis-  
 approve of this universe, and blame the soul for its  
 association with the body, and censure the director  
 of this universe, and identify its maker with the  
 soul, and attribute to this universal soul the same

ταῦτὸν ἄγοντες τὸν δημιουργὸν τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ πάθη διδόντες, ἅπερ καὶ τοῖς ἐν μέρει.

7. Ὅτι μὲν οὖν οὔτε ἤρξατο οὔτε παύσεται, ἀλλ' ἔστιν αἰεὶ καὶ ὅδε ὁ κόσμος, ἕως ἂν ἐκεῖνα ἦ, εἴρηται. Τὴν δὲ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα τῇ ψυχῇ κοινωνίαν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ πρὸ αὐτῶν εἴρηται ὡς οὐκ ἄμεινον τῇ  
5 ψυχῇ· τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας καὶ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς λαμβάνειν ὅμοιον, ὡς εἴ τις τὸ τῶν χυτρίων ἢ χαλκῶν λαβὼν γένος ἐν πόλει εὖ οἰκουμένη τὴν ἅπασαν ψέγοι. Δεῖ δὲ τὰς διαφορὰς λαμβάνειν τὰς τῆς ὅλης ὅπως διοικεῖ, ὅτι μὴ ὁ αὐτὸς τρόπος μὴδ' ἐνδεδεμένη. Πρὸς γὰρ αὐταῖς ἄλλαις  
10 διαφοραῖς, αἱ μυρίαί εἴρηται ἐν ἄλλοις, κακῆν ἐνθυμείσθαι ἔδει ὅτι ἡμεῖς μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ σώματος δεδέμεθα ἤδη δεσμοῦ γεγενημένου. Ἐν γὰρ τῇ πάσῃ ψυχῇ ἢ τοῦ σώματος φύσιν δεδεμένη ἤδη συνδεῖ ὁ ἂν περιλάβῃ· αὐτὴ δὲ ἢ τοῦ παντὸς ψυχῇ οὐκ ἂν δέοιτο ὑπὸ τῶν ὑπ' αὐτῆς δεδεμένων·  
15 ἄρχει γὰρ ἐκείνη. Διὸ καὶ ἀπαθῆς πρὸς αὐτῶν, ἡμεῖς δὲ τούτων οὐ κύριοι· τὸ δ' ὅσον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον τὸ ὑπεράνω ἀκέραιον μένει καὶ οὐκ ἐμποδίζεται, ὅσον δὲ αὐτῆς δίδωσι τῷ σώματι ζωὴν οὐδὲν παρ' αὐτοῦ προσλαμβάνει. Ὅλως γὰρ τὸ μὲν ἄλλου πάθημα τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ ἐξ ἀνάγκης  
20 δέχεται, ὁ δ' αὐτὸ ἐκείνῳ οὐκίτι τὸ αὐτοῦ δίδωσιν οἰκίαν ζωὴν ἔχοντι· οἷον εἰ ἐγκεντρισθὲν τι εἴη ἐν ἄλλῳ, παθόντος μὲν τοῦ ἐν ᾧ συμπέποιθεν, αὐτὸ δὲ ξηρανθὲν εἴασεν ἐκεῖνο τὴν αὐτοῦ ζωὴν

affections as those which the souls in parts of the universe have.

7. It has been said already that this universe did not begin and will not come to an end but exists always as long as the intelligible realities exist. And it has been said before the Gnostics that the association of our soul with body is not to the advantage of the soul. But to apply conclusions drawn from our soul to the Soul of the All is as if somebody were to take the tribe of potters or smiths in a well-ordered city and make them a reason for blaming the whole. But one must take into account the differences between the universal soul and ours, in its management of body; it does not direct it in the same way, and is not bound to it. For, as well as all the other differences (of which we have mentioned a vast number elsewhere) this ought to have been taken into consideration, that we are bound by a body which has already become a bond. For the nature of body is already bound in the universal soul and binds whatever it grasps; but the Soul of the All could not be bound by the things it binds itself: for it is the ruler. Therefore it is unaffected by them, but we are not their masters; but that part of the universal which is directed to the divine above it remains pure, and is not hindered, but that part which gives life to the body takes no addition from it. For in general anything which is in something else is affected by what happens to it, but it does not itself give of its own to that other which has its own life. For instance, if a shoot of one tree is grafted on another, when anything happens to the stock the shoot is affected with it, but if the shoot is withered

ἔχειν. Ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἀποσβεννυμένου τοῦ ἐν σοὶ  
 πυρὸς τὸ ὅλον πῦρ ἀπέσβη· ἐπεὶ οὐδ' εἰ τὸ πᾶν  
 25 πῦρ ἀπόλοιτο, πάθοι ἂν τι ἢ ψυχὴ ἢ ἐκεῖ, ἀλλ' ἢ τοῦ  
 σώματος σύστασις, καὶ εἰ οἷόν τε εἶη διὰ τῶν  
 λοιπῶν κόσμον τινὰ εἶναι, οὐδὲν ἂν μέλοι τῇ  
 ψυχῇ τῇ ἐκεῖ. Ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἡ σύστασις ὁμοίως τῷ  
 παντὶ καὶ ζώῳ ἐκάστω· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ οἶον ἐπιθεῖ  
 κελεύσατα μένειν, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ὡς ὑπεκφεύγοντα  
 30 εἰς τὴν τάξιν τὴν ἑαυτῶν δέδεται δεσμῷ δευτέρῳ·  
 ἐκεῖ δὲ οὐκ ἔχει ὅπου φύγη. Οὔτε οὖν ἐντὸς δεῖ  
 κατέχειν οὔτε ἔξωθεν πιέζουσιν εἰς τὸ εἶσω ὠθεῖν,  
 ἀλλ' ὅπου ἠθέλησεν ἐξ ἀρχῆς αὐτῆς ἢ φύσις μένει.  
 Ἐὰν δέ ποῦ τι αὐτῶν κατὰ φύσιν κινήθῃ, οἷς οὐκ  
 ἔστι κατὰ φύσιν, ταῦτα πάσχει, αὐτὰ δὲ καλῶς  
 35 φέρεται ὡς τοῦ ὅλου· τὰ δὲ φθείρεται οὐ δυνάμενα  
 τὴν τοῦ ὅλου τάξιν φέρειν, οἷον εἰ χοροῦ μεγάλου  
 ἐν τάξει φερομένου ἐν μέσῃ τῇ πορείᾳ αὐτοῦ  
 χελώνη ληφθεῖσα πατοῖτο οὐ δυνηθεῖσα φυγεῖν τὴν  
 τάξιν τοῦ χοροῦ· εἰ μέντοι μετ' ἐκείνης τάξειεν  
 ἑαυτήν, οὐδὲν ἂν ὑπὸ τούτων οὐδ' αὐτὴ πάθοι.

8. Τὸ δὲ διὰ τί ἐποίησε κόσμον ταῦτόν τῳ διὰ  
 τί ἔστι ψυχὴ καὶ διὰ τί ὁ δημιουργὸς ἐποίησεν.  
 Ὁ πρῶτον μὲν ἀρχὴν λαμβανόντων ἐστὶ τοῦ ἀεί-

up it leaves the stock to live its own life. So also, if the fire in you is quenched, the universal fire is not quenched as well: since even if the universal fire were destroyed, the soul there in the universe would not be in any way affected, but only the structure of its body, and, provided that the other elements made it possible for some sort of universe to exist, it would not in any way concern the soul there. For the structure is not the same in the All and in each living creature; but in the All soul, so to speak, runs over the surface ordering things to stay in their places, but in the individual the parts, as if they were trying to escape, are bound into their proper places by a second bond; but in the universe there is nowhere for them to escape to. Therefore soul does not have to hold them together within, or press upon them from outside and push them inwards, but its nature remains where it wished to be from the beginning. But if any of the parts of the universe is moved according to its nature, the parts with whose nature the movement is not in accord suffer, but those which are moved go on well, as parts of the whole; but the others are destroyed because they are not able to endure the order of the whole; as if when a great company of dancers was moving in order a tortoise was caught in the middle of its advance and trampled because it was not able to get out of the way of the ordered movement of the dancers: yet if it had ranged itself with that movement, even it would have taken no harm from them.

8. To ask why Soul made the universe is like asking why there is a soul and why the Maker makes. First, it is the question of people who assume a

ἔπειτα οἴονται τραπέντα ἕκ τινος εἰς τι καὶ  
 5 μεταβάλλοντα αἴτιον τῆς δημιουργίας γεγονέναι.  
 Διδακτέον οὖν αὐτούς, εἰ εὐγνωμόνως ἀνέχονται,  
 τίς ἡ φύσις τούτων, ὡς αὐτοὺς παύσασθαι τῆς εἰς  
 τὰ τίμια λοιδωρίας ἢν εὐχερῶς ποιοῦνται ἀντὶ  
 πολλῆς προσηκόντως ἂν γενομένης εὐλαβείας.  
 Ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ τοῦ παντός τὴν διοίκησιν ὀρθῶς ἂν  
 10 τις μέμψαιτο πρῶτον μὲν ἐνδεικνυμένην τῆς νοιότης  
 φύσεως τὸ μέγεθος. Εἰ γὰρ οὕτως εἰς τὸ ζῆν  
 παρελήλυθεν, ὡς μὴ ζωὴν ἀδιάρθρωτον ἔχειν—  
 ὁποῖα τὰ μικρότερα τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἃ τῇ πολλῇ  
 ζωῇ τῇ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀεὶ νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν  
 γενιᾶται—ἀλλ' ἔστι συνεχῆς καὶ ἐναργῆς καὶ  
 15 πολλῇ καὶ πανταχοῦ ζωῇ σοφίαν ἀμήχανον  
 ἐνδεικνυμένη, πῶς οὐκ ἂν τις ἄγαλμα ἐναργές  
 καὶ καλὸν τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν εἴποι; Εἰ δὲ  
 μιμούμενον μὴ ἔστιν ἐκεῖνο, αὐτὸ τοῦτο κατὰ  
 φύσιν ἔχει· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἔτι μιμούμενον. Τὸ δὲ  
 ἀνομοίως μεμιμησθαι ψεῦδος· οὐδὲν γὰρ παραλέ-  
 20 λειπται ὡν οἶόν τε ἦν καλὴν εἰκόνα φυσικὴν ἔχειν.  
 Ἀναγκαῖον μὲν γὰρ ἦν εἶναι οὐκ ἕκ διανοίας καὶ  
 ἐπιτεχνήσεως τὸ μίμημα· οὐ γὰρ οἶόν τε ἦν  
 ἔσχατον τὸ νοητὸν εἶναι. Εἶναι γὰρ αὐτοῦ  
 ἐνέργειαν ἔδει διττήν, τὴν μὲν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, τὴν δὲ εἰς  
 ἄλλο. Ἐδει οὖν εἶναι τι μετ' αὐτό· ἐκεῖνου γὰρ  
 25 μόνου οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἔτι πρὸς τὸ κάτω, ὃ τῶν πάντων  
 ἀδυνατώτατόν ἐστι. Δύναμις δὲ θαυμαστὴ ἐκεῖ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Plato *Timaeus* 37C6-7.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. ch. 3 for this law of necessary procession. Plotinus

beginning of that which always is: then they think  
 that the cause of the making was a being who turned  
 from one thing to another and changed. So they  
 must be taught, if only they would endure the  
 teaching with a good will, what is the nature of these  
 beings, so as to stop them from abusing what are  
 worthy of all honour, which they frivolously do in-  
 stead of showing the reverent care which would be  
 becoming. For it is not right to disapprove of the  
 management of the All, first of all because it manifests  
 the greatness of the intelligible nature. For if it  
 has come into life in such a way that its life is not a  
 disjointed one—like the smaller things in it which in  
 its fullness of life it produces continually night and  
 day—but coherent and clear and great and every-  
 where life, manifesting infinite wisdom, how should  
 one not call it a clear and noble image of the intel-  
 ligible gods? <sup>1</sup> If, being an image, it is not that  
 intelligible world, this is precisely what is natural to  
 it; if it was the intelligible world, it would not be an  
 image of it. But it is false to say that the image is  
 unlike the original; for nothing has been left out  
 which it was possible for a fine natural image to  
 have. The image has to exist, necessarily, not as  
 the result of thought and contrivance; <sup>2</sup> the intel-  
 ligible could not be the last, for it had to have a  
 double activity, one in itself and one directed to  
 something else. There had, then, to be something  
 after it, for only that which is the most powerless  
 of all things has nothing below it. But There a

always insists that the eternal production of the universe  
 is a unitary spontaneous act without any previous planning:  
 cp. V. 8. 7.

θεῖ· ὡστε καὶ εἰργάσατο. Εἰ μὲν δὴ ἄλλος  
κόσμος ἔστι τούτου ἀμείνων, τίς οὗτος; Εἰ δὲ  
ἀνάγκη εἶναι, ἄλλος δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ  
τὸ μίμημα ἀποσφύζων ἐκείνου. Γῆ μὲν δὴ πᾶσα  
30 ζώων ποικίλων πλήρης καὶ ἀθανάτων καὶ μέχρις  
οὐρανοῦ μεστὰ πάντα· ἄστρα δὲ τὰ τε ἐν ταῖς  
ὑποκάτω σφαίραις τὰ τε ἐν τῷ ἀνωτάτῳ διὰ τί  
οὐ θεοὶ ἐν τάξει φερόμενα καὶ κόσμῳ περιμόντα;  
Διὰ τί γὰρ οὐκ ἀρετὴν ἐξουσιον ἢ τί κώλυμα πρὸς  
κτῆσιν ἀρετῆς αὐτοῖς; Οὐ γὰρ δὴ ταῦτά ἐστιν  
35 ἐκεί, ἅπερ τοὺς ἐνταῦθα ποιεῖ κακοὺς, οὐδ' ἢ τοῦ  
σώματος κακία ἐνοχλουμένη καὶ ἐνοχλοῦσα. Διὰ  
τί δὲ οὐ συνίᾳσιν ἐπὶ σχολῆς ἀεὶ καὶ ἐν νῶ λαμβά-  
νουσι τὸν θεὸν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς νοητοὺς θεοὺς,  
ἀλλ' ἡμῖν σοφία βελτίων ἔσται τῶν ἐκεῖ; Ταῦτα  
τίς ἂν μὴ ἐκφρων γεγενημένος ἀνάσχοιτο; Ἐπεὶ  
40 καὶ αἱ ψυχαὶ εἰ μὲν βιασθεῖσαι ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς  
ψυχῆς ἦλθον, πῶς βελτίους αἱ βιασθεῖσαι; Ἐν  
γὰρ ψυχαῖς τὸ κρατήσαν κρεῖττον. Εἰ δ' ἐκούσαι,  
τί μέμφεσθε εἰς ὃν ἐκόντες ἦλθετε διδόντος καὶ  
ἀπαλλάττεσθαι, εἴ τις μὴ ἀρέσκουτο; Εἰ δὲ δὴ  
45 καὶ τοιοῦτόν ἐστι τόδε τὸ πᾶν, ὡς ἐξεῖναι ἐν αὐτῷ  
ἐκεῖνα, πῶς οὐ μαρτυρεῖ ἐξηρηθῆσθαι τῶν ἐκεῖ;

<sup>1</sup> Plotinus maintains that the celestial bodies of the astral gods (the visible heavenly bodies), though material, are altogether superior to our earthly bodies, being everlasting,

wonderful power runs, and so besides its inward activity it produces. If there is another universe better than this one, then what is this one? But if there must be a universe which preserves the image of the intelligible world, and there is no other, then this is that universe. Now certainly the whole earth is full of living creatures and immortal beings, and everything up to the sky is full of them: why, then are not the stars, both those in the lower spheres and those in the highest, gods moving in order, circling in well-arranged beauty? Why should they not possess virtue? What hindrance prevents them from acquiring it? The causes are not present there which make people bad here below, and there is no badness of body, disturbed and disturbing.<sup>1</sup> And why should they not have understanding, in their everlasting peace, and grasp in their intellect God and the intelligible gods? Shall our wisdom be greater than that of the gods there in the sky? Who, if he has not gone out of his mind, could tolerate the idea? Since, again, if the souls here came under compulsion by the Soul of the All, how are the souls under compulsion better? For among souls the dominant is the better. But if the souls came willingly, why do you blame the universe into which you came of your own free will, when it gives you leave, too, to get out of it, if any of you dislike it? But if this All is of such a kind that it is possible to have wisdom in it and to live according to that higher world when we are here, how does it not bear witness that it depends on the realities There?

impassible and no obstacles to the activity of soul: cp. II. 1 and IV. 4. 42. 24-30.

9. Πλούτους δὲ καὶ πενίας εἴ τις μέμφοιτο καὶ  
 τὸ οὐκ ἴσον ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἅπασιν, πρῶτον μὲν  
 ἀγνοεῖ, ὡς ὁ σπουδαῖος ἐν τούτοις τὸ ἴσον οὐ  
 ζητεῖ, οὐδέ τι νομίζει τοὺς πολλὰ κεκτημένους  
 5 πλέον ἔχειν, οὐδὲ τοὺς δυναστεύοντας τῶν ἰδιωτῶν,  
 ἀλλὰ τὴν τοιαύτην σπουδὴν ἄλλους ἐὰ ἔχειν, καὶ  
 καταμεμάθηκεν ὡς διττὸς ὁ ἐνθάδε βίος, ὁ μὲν  
 τοῖς σπουδαίοις, ὁ δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων,  
 τοῖς μὲν σπουδαίοις πρὸς τὸ ἀκρῦτατον καὶ τὸ  
 ἄνω, τοῖς δὲ ἀνθρωπικωτέροις διττὸς αὖ ὢν ὁ μὲν  
 10 μεμνημένος ἀρετῆς μετίσχει ἀγαθοῦ τινος, ὁ δὲ  
 φαῦλος ὄχλος οἷον χειροτέχνης τῶν πρὸς ἀνάγκην  
 τοῖς ἐπιεικεστέροις. Εἰ δὲ φονεύει τις ἢ ἡττᾶται  
 τῶν ἡδονῶν ὑπὸ ἀδυναμίας, τί θαυμαστὸν καὶ  
 ἀμαρτίας εἶναι οὐ νῶ, ἀλλὰ ψυχῆς ὥσπερ παισὶν  
 ἀνήβοις; Εἰ δὲ γυμνάσιον εἴη νικῶντων καὶ  
 15 ἡττωμένων, πῶς οὐ καὶ ταύτῃ καλῶς ἔχει; Εἰ  
 δ' ἀδικεῖ, τί δεινὸν τῷ ἀθανάτῳ; Καὶ εἰ φονεύει,  
 ἔχεις ὁ θέλεις. Εἰ δὲ ἤδη μέμφῃ, πολιτεύσθαι  
 ἀνάγκην οὐκ ἔχεις. Ὁμολογεῖται δὲ καὶ δίκας  
 εἶναι ἐνθάδε καὶ κολάσεις. Πῶς οὖν ὀρθῶς ἔχει  
 μέμφεσθαι πάλαι διδούσῃ ἐκάστῳ τὴν ἀξίαν; Οὐ  
 20 καὶ ἀρετὴ τετίμηται, καὶ κακία τὴν προσήκουσαν  
 ἀτιμίαν ἔχει, καὶ θεῶν οὐ μόνον ἀγάλματα, ἀλλὰ

<sup>1</sup> Cp. III. 2, [47] 8 and 15.

9. But if anyone objects to wealth and poverty and the fact that all have not an equal share in things of this kind, first, he is ignorant that the good and wise man does not look for equality in these things, and does not think that people who have acquired a great deal of them have any kind of advantage, or that those who hold power have the advantage over private persons; he leaves concern of this kind to others. He has learnt that there are two kinds of life here below, one for the good and wise and one for the mass of men, that for the good and wise being directed to the highest point and the upper region, and that for the more human sort being of two kinds again; one is mindful of virtue and has a share in some sort of good, but the common crowd is there, so to speak, to do manual work to provide for the necessities of the better sort. But if anyone commits murder, or is worsted by his passions because of his incapacity, why is it surprising that there should be sins, not in intellect but in souls that are like children which have not grown up? And if the world is like a sports-ground, where some win and others lose, what is there wrong with that? <sup>1</sup> If you are wronged, what is there dreadful in that to an immortal? And even if you are murdered, you have what you want. But if you have come by now to dislike the world, you are not compelled to remain a citizen of it. It is agreed that there are judgements and punishments here. How, then, is it possible rightly to disapprove of a city which gives each man his deserts? In this city [of the world] virtue is honoured and vice has its appropriate dishonour, and not merely the images of gods but gods



καὶ αὐτοὶ ἄνωθεν ἐφορῶντες, οἱ ῥηιδίως αἰτίας,  
 φησὶν, ἀποφεύξονται πρὸς ἀνθρώπων, πάντα  
 ἄγοντες τάξει ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἰς τέλος μοῖραν ἐκάστω  
 τὴν προσήκουσαν διδόντες κατὰ ἀμοιβὰς βίων τοῖς  
 25 προῦπηργμένοις ἀκόλουθον· ἦν ὁ ἀγνοῶν προπετέ-  
 στερος ἀνθρώπων περὶ πραγμάτων θεῶν ἀγροικι-  
 ζόμενος. Ἄλλὰ χρὴ ὡς ἄριστον μὲν αὐτὸν  
 πειρᾶσθαι γίνεσθαι, μὴ μόνον δὲ αὐτὸν νομίζειν  
 ἄριστον δύνασθαι γενέσθαι—οὕτω γὰρ οὕτω ἄριστος  
 30 —ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνθρώπους ἄλλους ἀρίστους, ἔτι καὶ  
 δαίμονας ἀγαθοὺς εἶναι, πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον θεοὺς  
 τοὺς τε ἐν τῷδε ὄντας κακεῖ βλέποντας, πάντων  
 δὲ μάλιστα τὸν ἡγεμόνα τοῦδε τοῦ παντός, ψυχὴν  
 μακαριωτάτην· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ ἤδη καὶ τοὺς νοητοὺς  
 ὑμνεῖν θεοὺς, ἐφ' ἅπασιν δὲ ἤδη τὸν μέγαν τὸν  
 35 ἐκεῖ βασιλέα καὶ ἐν τῷ πλήθει μάλιστα τῶν θεῶν  
 τὸ μέγα αὐτοῦ ἐνδεικνυμένους· οὐ γὰρ τὸ συστεῖλαι  
 εἰς ἓν, ἀλλὰ τὸ δεῖξαι πολὺ τὸ θεῖον, ὅσον ἔδειξεν  
 αὐτός, τοῦτό ἐστι δύναμιν θεοῦ εἰδότην, ὅταν  
 μένων ὅς ἐστι πολλοὺς ποιῆ πάντας εἰς αὐτὸν  
 ἀνηρημένους καὶ δι' ἐκεῖνον καὶ παρ' ἐκεῖνον  
 40 ὄντας. Καὶ ὁ κόσμος δὲ ὅδε δι' ἐκεῖνόν ἐστι  
 κακεῖ βλέπει, καὶ πᾶς καὶ θεῶν ἕκαστος καὶ τὰ  
 ἐκείνου προφητεύει ἀνθρώποις καὶ χρώσιν ἃ  
 ἐκείνους φίλα. Εἰ δὲ μὴ τοῦτό εἴσω, ὃ ἐκείνός  
 ἔστιν, αὐτὸ τοῦτο κατὰ φύσιν ἔχει. Εἰ δ' ὑπερορᾶν

<sup>1</sup> Plotinus may be thinking here of *Epinomis* 983E6-984A2, where the heavenly bodies are said to be either gods themselves or images made by the gods themselves.

themselves look down upon us from above,<sup>1</sup> who, as the saying goes, will easily acquit themselves of men's blame, leading all things in order from beginning to end, giving to each his fitting portion in changes of lives as a consequence of the deeds he did in previous existences; he who ignores this is one of the rasher sort of humans who deals boorishly with divine things.

But one ought to try to become as good as possible oneself, but not to think that only oneself can become perfectly good—for if one thinks this one is not yet perfectly good. One must rather think that there are other perfectly good men, and good spirits as well, and, still more, the gods who are in this world and look to the other, and, most of all, the ruler of this universe, the most blessed Soul. Then at this point one should go on to praise the intelligible gods, and then, above all, the great king of that other world, most especially by displaying his greatness in the multitude of the gods. It is not contracting the divine into one but showing it in that multiplicity in which God himself has shown it, which is proper to those who know the power of God, inasmuch as, abiding who he is, he makes many gods, all depending upon himself and existing through him and from him. And this universe exists through him and looks to him, the whole of it and each and every one of the gods in it, and it reveals what is his to men, and it and the gods in it declare in their oracles what is pleasing to the intelligible gods. But if they are not what that supreme God is, this in itself is according to the nature of things. But if you want to despise them,

θέλεις καὶ σεμνύνεις σαυτὸν ὡς οὐ χείρων, πρῶτον  
 45 μὲν, ὅσῳ τις ἄριστος, πρὸς πάντας εὐμενῶς ἔχει  
 καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους· ἔπειτα σεμνὸν δεῖ εἰς μέτρον  
 μετὰ οὐκ ἀγροικίας, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἴοντα ἐφ' ὅσον  
 ἢ φύσις δύναται ἡμῶν, ἀνιέναι, τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις  
 νομίζειν εἶναι χάραν παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ μὴ αὐτὸν  
 μόνον μετ' ἐκείνον τάξαντα ὡσπερ ὀνείρασι  
 50 πέτεσθαι ἀποστεροῦντα ἑαυτὸν καὶ ὅσον ἐστὶ  
 δυνατὸν ψυχῇ ἀνθρώπου θεῷ γενέσθαι· δύναται  
 δὲ εἰς ὅσον νοῦς ἄγει· τὸ δ' ὑπὲρ νοῦν ἤδη ἐστὶν  
 ἔξω νοῦ πεσεῖν. Πείθονται δὲ ἄνθρωποι ἀνόητοι  
 τοῖς τοιούτοις τῶν λόγων ἐξαίφνης ἀκούοντες ὡς  
 σὺ ἔση βελτίων ἀπάντων οὐ μόνον ἀνθρώπων,  
 55 ἀλλὰ καὶ θεῶν—πολλὴ γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἢ  
 αὐθάδεια—καὶ ὁ πρότερον ταπεινὸς καὶ μέτριος  
 καὶ ιδιώτης ἀνὴρ, εἰ ἀκούσει· σὺ εἰ θεοῦ παῖς,  
 οἱ δ' ἄλλοι, οὓς ἐθαύμαζες, οὐ παῖδες οὐδ' ἄ  
 τιμῶσιν ἐκ πατέρων λαβόντες, σὺ δὲ κρείττων καὶ  
 τοῦ οὐρανοῦ οὐδὲν πονήσας—εἶτα καὶ συνεπηχῶσιν  
 60 ἄλλοι; Οἷον εἰ ἐν πλείστοις ἀριθμεῖν οὐκ εἰδόντων  
 ἀριθμεῖν οὐκ εἰδὼς πήχεων χιλίων εἶναι ἀκούει,  
 τί ἂν, εἰ χιλιόπηχυς εἶναι νομίζοι, τοὺς ἄλλους  
 πενταπήχεις εἶναι ἀκούει; μόνον δὲ φαντάζοιτο  
 ὡς τὰ χίλια ἀριθμὸς μέγας. Εἴτ' ἐπὶ τούτοις  
 65 ὑμῶν προνοεῖ ὁ θεός, τοῦ δὲ κόσμου παντός ἐν ᾧ  
 καὶ αὐτοὶ διὰ τί ἀμελεῖ; Εἰ μὲν γάρ, ὅτι οὐ σχολή

<sup>1</sup> Cp. St. Irenaeus's equally indignant protest against the claim of the Gnostics to be superior to the Creator and his creation in *Adversus Haereses* II. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Plato, *Republic* IV, 426D8-E1.

and exalt yourself, alleging that you are no worse than they are, then, first of all, in proportion to a man's excellence he is graciously disposed to all, to men too. Then the man of real dignity must ascend in due measure, with an absence of boorish arrogance, going only so far as our nature is able to go, and consider that there is room for the others at God's side, and not set himself alone next after God; this is like flying in our dreams and will deprive him of becoming a god, even as far as the human soul can. It can as far as intellect leads it; but to set oneself above intellect is immediately to fall outside it. But stupid men believe this sort of talk as soon as they hear "you shall be better than all, not only men, but gods"—for there is a great deal of arrogance among men—and the man who was once meek and modest, an ordinary private person, if he hears "you are the son of God, and the others whom you used to admire are not, nor the beings they venerate according to the tradition received from their fathers; but you are better than the heaven without having taken any trouble to become so"—then are other people really going to join in the chorus?<sup>1</sup> It is just as if, in a great crowd of people who did not know how to count, someone who did not know how to count heard that he was a thousand cubits tall; what would happen if he thought he was a thousand cubits, and heard that the others were five cubits? He would only imagine that the "thousand" was a big number.<sup>2</sup> Then besides this, God in his providence cares for you; why does he neglect the whole universe in which you yourselves are? For if it is because he has no time to look at it, and it is not

αὐτῷ πρὸς αὐτὸν βλέπειν, οὐδὲ θέμις αὐτῷ πρὸς  
τὰ κάτω· καὶ πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέπειν διὰ τί οὐκ  
ἔξω βλέπει καὶ πρὸς τὸν κόσμον δὲ βλέπει ἐν ᾧ  
εἶσιν; Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἔξω, ἵνα μὴ τὸν κόσμον ἐφορᾷ,  
70 οὐδὲ αὐτοὺς βλέπει. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲν δέονται αὐτοῦ·  
ἀλλ' ὁ κόσμος δέεται καὶ οἶδε τὴν τάξιν αὐτοῦ καὶ  
οἱ ἐν αὐτῷ ὅπως ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ὅπως ἐκεῖ, καὶ  
ἀνδρῶν οἱ ἂν θεῶ ὡσι φίλοι, πράως μὲν τὰ παρὰ  
τοῦ κόσμου φέροντες, εἴ τι ἐκ τῆς τῶν πάντων  
φορᾶς ἀναγκαῖον αὐτοῖς συμβαίνει· οὐ γὰρ πρὸς  
75 τὸ ἐκάστω καταθύμιον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ πᾶν δεῖ  
βλέπειν· τιμῶν δὲ ἐκάστους κατ' ἀξίαν, σπεύδων δ'  
αἰεὶ οὐ πάντα σπεύδει τὰ δυνάμενα—πολλὰ δὲ εἶναι  
τὰ σπεύδοντα ἐκεῖ [πάντα],<sup>1</sup> καὶ τὰ μὲν τυγχάνοντα  
μακάρια, τὰ δὲ ὡς δυνατὸν ἔχει τὴν προσήκουσαν  
αὐτοῖς μοῖραν—οὐχ αὐτῷ μόνῳ διδοὺς τὸ δύνασθαι·  
80 οὐ γάρ, ἢ ἐπαγγέλλει, τὸ ἔχειν, ὃ λέγει τις ἔχειν,  
ἀλλὰ πολλὰ καὶ εἰδότες ὅτι μὴ ἔχουσι, λέγουσιν  
ἔχειν καὶ οἶονται ἔχειν οὐκ ἔχοντες καὶ μόνοι ἔχειν,  
ὃ αὐτοὶ μόνοι οὐκ ἔχουσι.

10. Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα, μᾶλλον δὲ πάντα  
ἂν τις ἐξετάζων ἀφθονίαν ἔχει ἂν καθ' ἕκαστον  
λόγον δεικνὺς ὡς ἔχει. Αἰδῶς γάρ τις ἡμῶς ἔχει  
πρὸς τινὰς τῶν φίλων, οἱ τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ ἐντυχόν-

<sup>1</sup> [πάντα] Kirchhoff et nunc Henry et Schwyzer: πάντα codd.  
H.S.

lawful for him to regard what is below him: why, when he looks at the Gnostics, does he not look outside himself and at the universe in which they are? But if he does not look outside, in order that he may not supervise the universe, he does not look at them either. But they have no need of him. But the universe does need him, and knows its station, and the beings in it know how they are in it and how they are there in that higher world, and those of men who are dear to God know this, and take kindly what comes to them from the universe, if any unavoidable necessity befalls them from the movement of all things. For one must not look at what is agreeable to the individual but at the All. A man who does this values individuals according to their worth, but presses on always to that goal to which all press on that can—he knows that there are many that press on to the higher world, and those that attain are blessed, others, according to what is possible for them, have the destiny which fits them—and he does not attribute the ability to himself alone. For if someone says he has something, having does not come by claiming it; but the Gnostics say that they have many things, even though they know they have not got them, and think they have them when they have not, and that they alone have what they alone have not.

10. There are many other points, or rather all the points of their doctrine, which if one investigated, one would have ample opportunity of showing the real state of the case in regard to each argument. [But we shall not continue this detailed refutation] for we feel a certain regard for some of our friends

5 *τες πρότερον ἢ ἡμῖν φίλοι γενέσθαι οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως  
ἐπ' αὐτοῦ μένουσι. Καίτοι αὐτοὶ οὐκ ὀκνοῦσι—τὰ  
αὐτῶν ἐθέλοντες δοκεῖν εἶναι ἀληθῆ ἀξιοπίστως ἢ  
καὶ οἰόμενοι τὰ αὐτῶν οὕτως ἔχειν—λέγειν ἃ δὴ  
λέγουσιν· ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς πρὸς τοὺς γνωρίμους, οὐ  
πρὸς αὐτοὺς λέγοντες—πλέον γὰρ οὐδὲν ἂν γίγνοιτο  
10 πρὸς τὸ πείθειν αὐτοὺς—ἴνα μὴ πρὸς αὐτῶν  
ἐνοχλοῦντο οὐκ ἀποδείξεις κομιζόντων—πῶς γάρ;—  
ἀλλὰ ἀπαυθαδιζομένων, ταῦτα εἰρήκαμεν, ἄλλου  
ὄντος τρόπου, καθ' ὃν ἂν τις γράφων ἡμῖνατο τοὺς  
διασύρειν τὰ τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ θείων ἀνδρῶν καλῶς  
καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐχομένως εἰρημένα τολμῶντας.  
15 Ἐκείνως μὲν οὖν ἑατέον ἐξετάζειν· καὶ γὰρ τοῖς  
ταῦτα ἀκριβῶς λαβοῦσι τὰ νῦν εἰρημένα ἔσται καὶ  
περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων ὅπως ἔχει εἰδέναί·  
ἐκεῖνο<sup>1</sup> δὲ εἰπόντα ἑατέον τὸν λόγον, ὃ δὴ καὶ  
πάντα ὑπερβέβληκεν ἀτοπία, εἰ δεῖ ἀτοπίαν τοῦτο  
λέγειν. Ψυχὴν γὰρ εἰπόντες νεῦσαι κάτω καὶ  
20 σοφίαν τινά, εἴτε τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρξάσης, εἴτε τῆς*

<sup>1</sup> ἐκεῖνο Kircherhoff, H-S: ἐκεῖνα codd.

<sup>1</sup> From this point to the end of ch. 12 Plotinus is attacking a Gnostic myth known to us best at present in the form it took in the system of Valentinus. The Mother, Sophia-Achamoth, produced as a result of the complicated sequence of events which followed the fall of the higher Sophia, and her offspring the Demiurge, the inferior and ignorant maker of the material universe, are Valentinian figures; cp. Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* I.4 and 5. Valentinus had been in Rome, and there is nothing improbable in the presence of Valentinians there in the time of Plotinus. But the evidence in the *Life* ch. 16 suggests that the Gnostics in Plotinus's circle belonged

who happened upon this way of thinking before they became our friends, and, though I do not know how they manage it, continue in it. Yet they themselves do not shrink from saying what they say—either because they wish their opinions to have a plausible appearance of truth or because they think that they really are true. But we have addressed what we have said so far to our own intimate pupils, not to the Gnostics (for we could make no further progress towards convincing them), so that they may not be troubled by these latter, who do not bring forward proofs—how could they?—but make arbitrary, arrogant assertions. Another style of writing would be appropriate to repel those who have the insolence to pull to pieces what godlike men of antiquity have said nobly and in accordance with the truth. So let us leave that detailed examination; for those who have grasped precisely what we have been saying up till now will be able to know what the real state of the case is as regards all their other doctrines. But, before we leave the argument, that one point must be mentioned which surpasses all the rest of their doctrine in absurdity—if absurdity is what one ought to call it.<sup>1</sup> For they say that Soul declined to what was below it, and with it some sort of “Wisdom,” whether

rather to the older group called Sethians or Archontics, related to the Ophites or Barbelognostics: they probably called themselves simply “Gnostics.” Gnostic sects borrowed freely from each other, and it is likely that Valentinus took some of his ideas about Sophia from older Gnostic sources, and that his ideas in turn influenced other Gnostics. The probably Sethian Gnostic library discovered at Nag Hammadi includes Valentinian treatises: cp. Puech, *l.c.* pp. 162–163 and 179–180.

τοιαύτης αἰτίας γενομένης σοφίας, εἴτε ἄμφω ταυτὸν θέλουσιν εἶναι, τὰς μὲν ἄλλας ψυχὰς συγκατεληλυθέναι λέγοντες καὶ μέλη τῆς σοφίας ταύτας μὲν ἐνδύναμι λέγουσι σώματα, οἷον τὰ ἀνθρώπων· ἧς δὲ χάριν καὶ αὐταὶ κατήλθον, 25 ἐκείνην λέγουσι πάλιν αὐτὴ μὴ κατελθεῖν, οἷον μὴ νεῦσαι, ἀλλ' ἐλλάμψαι μόνον τῷ σκότῳ, εἴτ' ἐκείθεν εἰδῶλον ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ γεγονέναι. Εἴτα τοῦ εἰδῶλου εἰδῶλον πλάσαντες ἐνταῦθά που δι' ὕλης ἢ ὑλότητος ἢ ὅ τι ὀνομάζειν θέλουσι, τὸ μὲν ἄλλο, τὸ δ' ἄλλο λέγοντες, καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλα ὀνόματα 30 εἰπόντες οὐ λέγουσιν εἰς ἐπισκότησιν, τὸν λεγόμενον παρ' αὐτοῖς δημιουργὸν γεννῶσι καὶ ἀποστάντα τῆς μητρὸς ποιήσαντες τὸν κόσμον παρ' αὐτοῦ ἔλκουσιν<sup>1</sup> ἐπ' ἔσχατα εἰδῶλων, ἵνα σφόδρα λοιδορήσῃται ὁ τοῦτο γράψας.

11. Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν, εἰ μὴ κατήλθεν, ἀλλ' ἐνέλαμψε τὸ σκότος, πῶς ἂν ὀρθῶς λέγοιτο νενευκέναι; Οὐ γάρ, εἴ τι παρ' αὐτῆς ἔρρευσε οἷον φῶς, ἤδη νενευκέναι αὐτὴν λέγειν προσήκει· 5 εἰ μὴ που τὸ μὲν ἔκειτό που ἐν τῷ κάτω, ἢ δὲ ἦλθε τυπικῶς πρὸς αὐτὸ καὶ ἐγγὺς γενομένη ἐνέλαμψε. Εἰ δ' ἐφ' αὐτῆς μένουσα ἐνέλαμψε μηδὲν εἰς τοῦτο ἐργασαμένη, διὰ τί μόνη αὐτὴ ἐνέλαμψε, ἀλλ' οὐ τὰ δυνατώτερα αὐτῆς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς; Εἰ δὲ τῷ λογισμῷ λαβεῖν αὐτῇ κόσμου 10 ἠδυνήθη ἐλλάμψαι ἐκ τοῦ λογισμοῦ, διὰ τί οὐχ ἅμα ἐλλάμψασα καὶ κόσμον ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἔμεινε

<sup>1</sup> ἔλκουσιν Theiler et nuno Henry et Schwyzor: λέγουσιν codd. H-S.

Soul started it or whether Wisdom was a cause of Soul being like this, or whether they mean both to be the same thing, and then they tell us that the other souls came down too, and as members of Wisdom put on bodies, human bodies for instance. But again they say that very being for the sake of which these souls came down did not come down itself, did not decline, so to put it, but only illumined the darkness, and so an image from it came into existence in matter. Then they form an image of the image somewhere here below, through matter or materiality or whatever they like to call it—they use now one name and now another, and say many other names just to make their meaning obscure—and produce what they call the Maker, and make him revolt from his mother and drag the universe which proceeds from him down to the ultimate limit of images. The man who wrote this just meant to be blasphemous!

11. First of all then, if it did not come down, but illumined the darkness, how can it rightly be said to have declined? For if something like light streamed from it, it is not proper to say that it declined when that happened; unless the darkness lay somewhere below it and it moved spatially towards it and illumined it when it came close to it. But if Soul remained in itself and illumined matter without taking any action to this end, why did only it illumine matter, and not the powers greater than it in the realm of existence? But if it was by forming a rational conception of the universe that it was able to illumine as a result of its rational conception, why did it not make the universe at the same time as it

τὴν τῶν εἰδώλων γένεσιν; Ἐπειτα καὶ ὁ λογισμὸς  
 ὁ τοῦ κόσμου, ἢ γῆ αὐτοῖς ἢ ξένη λεγομένη  
 γενομένη ὑπὸ τῶν μιζόνων, ὡς λέγουσιν αὐτοί, οὐ  
 κατήγαγεν εἰς νεῦσιν τοὺς ποιήσαντας. Ἐπειτα  
 15 πῶς ἢ ὕλη φωτισθεῖσα εἶδωλα ψυχικὰ ποιεῖ, ἀλλ'  
 οὐ σωματίων φύσιν; Ψυχῆς δὲ εἶδωλον οὐδὲν ἂν  
 δέοιτο σκοτόους ἢ ὕλης, ἀλλὰ γενόμενον, εἰ γίνεται,  
 παρακολουθοῖ ἂν τῷ ποιήσαντι καὶ συνηρημένον  
 ἔσται. Ἐπειτα πότερον οὐσία τούτο ἢ, ὡς φασιν,  
 ἐνόημα; Εἰ μὲν γὰρ οὐσία, τίς ἢ διαφορὰ πρὸς  
 20 τὸ ἀφ' οὗ; Εἰ δ' ἄλλο εἶδος ψυχῆς, εἰ ἐκείνῃ  
 λογικῆ, τάχ' ἂν φυτικῆ καὶ γεννητικῆ αὕτη· εἰ  
 δὲ τοῦτο, πῶς ἂν ἔτι, ἵνα τιμῶτο, καὶ πῶς δι'  
 ἀλαζονείαν καὶ τόλμαν ποιεῖ; Καὶ ὅλως τὸ διὰ  
 φαντασίας καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον τοῦ λογίζεσθαι ἀνήρηται.  
 Τί δ' ἔτι ἔδει ἐμποιεῖν ἐξ ὕλης καὶ εἰδώλου τὸν  
 25 ποιήσαντα; Εἰ δ' ἐνόημα, πρῶτον τὸ ὄνομα  
 ἐπισημαντέον ὅθεν· ἔπειτα πῶς ἔστιν, εἰ μὴ τῷ  
 ἐνοήματι δώσει τὸ ποιεῖν; Ἀλλὰ πρὸς τῷ  
 πλάσματι πῶς ἢ ποιήσῃς; Τουτὶ μὲν πρῶτον,  
 ἄλλο δὲ μετ' ἐκείνο, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπ' ἐξουσίας λέγοντες.  
 Διὰ τί δὲ πρῶτον πῦρ;

<sup>1</sup> This and similar ideas are common to most kinds of Gnosticism: cp. Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* I. 29 (a non-Valentinian system) and Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* IV ch. 13, 89 (Valentinus).

illuminated, instead of waiting for the production of the images? Then, too, the rational conception of the universe, "the strange land," as they call it, which was brought into being by higher powers, as they say themselves, would not have brought its makers down to declination. Then how did matter when it was illuminated make images of the soul kind, instead of bodily nature? An image of soul would have no sort of use for darkness or matter, but when it had come into being, if it did come into being, would correspond to its maker and remain in close connection with it. Then is this image a substance or, as they say, a "thought"? If it is a substance, what is the difference between it and its origin? But if it is another kind of soul, then if that higher soul is the rational soul, presumably this latter is the growth soul which is the principle of generation. But if this is what it is, how will their statements still apply that it created for the sake of being honoured, and how does it create out of arrogance and rash self-assertion?<sup>1</sup> In fact, all possibility of a soul of this kind creating through imagination and, still more, through rational activity, is taken away. And why was there still any need to introduce into their system the maker of the universe derived from matter and image? But if the image is a thought, first of all they must explain whence they derive this name for it; and then how it exists, unless Soul is going to give the thought power to make. But, over and above the fact that this is pure fiction, how does the making work? They say this comes first, and another after that, but they speak quite arbitrarily. And why does fire come first?

12. Καὶ ἄρτι γενόμενον πῶς ἐπιχειρεῖ; Μνήμη  
 ὧν εἶδεν. Ἄλλ' ὅλως οὐκ ἦν, ἵνα ἂν καὶ εἶδεν,  
 οὔτε αὐτὸς οὔτε ἡ μήτηρ, ἣν διδάσασιν αὐτῶ.  
 Εἶτα πῶς οὐ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοὺς μὲν οὐκ εἶδωλα  
 5 ψυχῶν ἐνθάδε ἐλλόντας εἰς τὸν κόσμον τόνδε, ἀλλὰ  
 ἀληθινὰς ψυχάς, μέλις καὶ ἀγαπητῶς ἕνα ἢ δύο  
 αὐτῶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου κινήθηναι, <καὶ><sup>1</sup> ἐλλόντας  
 εἰς ἀνάμνησιν μόλις ἀναπόλησιν λαβεῖν ὧν ποτε  
 εἶδον, τὸ δὲ εἶδωλον τοῦτο, εἰ καὶ ἀμυδρῶς, ὡς  
 λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' οὖν ἄρτι γενόμενον ἐνθυμηθῆναι  
 10 ἐκεῖνα ἢ καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ, εἶδωλον ὑλικόν,  
 καὶ μὴ μόνον ἐνθυμηθῆναι ἐκεῖνα καὶ κόσμου  
 λαβεῖν ἔννοιαν καὶ κόσμου ἐκείνου, ἀλλὰ καὶ  
 μαθεῖν ἐξ ὧν ἂν γένοιτο; Πόθεν δὴ καὶ πρῶτον  
 πῦρ ποιῆσαι; Οἰηθέντα δεῖν τοῦτο πρῶτον; Διὰ  
 τί γὰρ οὐκ ἄλλο; Ἄλλ' εἰ ἐδύνατο ποιεῖν ἐνθυμη-  
 15 θεῖς πῦρ, διὰ τί ἐνθυμηθεῖς κόσμον—πρῶτον μὲν  
 γὰρ ἔδει ἐνθυμηθῆναι τὸ ὅλον—οὐ κόσμον ἀθρόως  
 ἐποίησι; Ἐμπεριείχετο γὰρ κακείνα ἐν τῇ ἐνθυμή-  
 σει. Φυσικώτερον γὰρ πάντως, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς αἱ  
 τέχναι ἐποίησι. Ὑστεραι γὰρ τῆς φύσεως καὶ τοῦ  
 κόσμου αἱ τέχναι. Ἐπεὶ καὶ νῦν καὶ τὰ κατὰ  
 20 μέρος γινόμενα ὑπὸ τῶν φύσεων οὐ πρῶτον πῦρ,  
 εἶθ' ἕκαστον, εἶτα φύρασις τούτων, ἀλλὰ περιβολὴ  
 καὶ περιγραφὴ τυπούσα ἐπὶ τοῖς καταμιγνύουσιν  
 παντὸς τοῦ ζώου. Διὰ τί οὖν οὐ κακεὶ ἡ ὕλη

<sup>1</sup> <καὶ> Heigl, et nunc Henry et Schwyzer.

12. And how does this thought set to its task of making when it has just come into being? By memory of what it saw. But it did not exist at all so as even to see, neither it nor the mother whom they give it. Then is it not surprising that they themselves come here into this world not as images of souls but as real souls, but only one or two of them with difficulty just manage to get out of the world and, when they attain to recollection, with difficulty recapitulate what they once saw; but this image, even if dimly, as they say, yet does manage to form a conception of the intelligible realities when it has just come into being, itself or even its mother, an image in matter, and not only to conceive them and form an idea of a world, and of that world, but to learn the elements from which it could come into being? What could have been the reason why it made fire first? Because it thought that fire must come first? Why not something else? But if it was able to make fire when it conceived it, why when it conceived the world—for it must have conceived the whole first—did it not make the world straight away? For the elements, too, were included in its conception. For it made the world in every way after the manner of nature rather than as the arts make; for the arts are later than nature and the world. Even now the things which are parts of the world when they are brought into being by natural principles do not come into existence like this, first fire, then each individual constituent, and then a mixture of them, but there is an outline and sketch plan of the whole living thing impressing the form on the menstrual fluid. Why then, in the making

περιεγράφετο τύπῳ κόσμου, ἐν ᾧ τύπῳ καὶ γῆ  
καὶ πῦρ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα; Ἄλλ' ἴσως αὐτοὶ οὕτω  
25 κόσμον ἐποίησαν ὡς ἂν ἀληθεστέρα ψυχῇ χρώμενοι,  
ἐκεῖνος δὲ οὕτως ἡγνῶει ποιῆσαι. Καίτοι προιδεῖν  
καὶ μέγεθος οὐρανοῦ, μᾶλλον δὲ τοσοῦτον εἶναι,  
καὶ τὴν λόξωσιν τῶν ζωδίων καὶ τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὸν  
τὴν φορὰν καὶ τὴν γῆν οὕτως, ὡς ἔχων εἰπεῖν  
αἰτίας δι' ἃς οὕτως, οὐκ εἰδῶλου ἦν, ἀλλὰ πάντως  
30 ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρίστων τῆς δυνάμεως ἐλθούσης· ὁ καὶ  
αὐτοὶ ἄκουτες ὁμολογοῦσιν. Ἡ γὰρ ἑλλαμψις ἢ  
εἰς τὸ σκότος ἐξετασθεῖσα ποιήσει ὁμολογεῖν τὰς  
ἀληθεῖς τοῦ κόσμου αἰτίας. Τί γὰρ ἐλλάμπει  
ἔδει, εἰ μὴ πάντως ἔδει; Ἡ γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν ἢ  
παρὰ φύσιν ἀνάγκη. Ἄλλ' εἰ μὲν κατὰ φύσιν, ἀεὶ  
35 οὕτως· εἰ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐκεῖ  
ἔσται τὸ παρὰ φύσιν, καὶ τὰ κακὰ πρὸ τοῦ  
κόσμου τοῦδε, καὶ οὐχ ὁ κόσμος αἴτιος τῶν κακῶν,  
ἀλλὰ τὰ κεῖ τούτω, καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν, ἀλλὰ  
παρ' αὐτῆς ἐνταῦθα· καὶ ἤξει ὁ λόγος ἀναφέρων  
τὸν κόσμον ἐπὶ τὰ πρῶτα. Εἰ δὲ δῆ, καὶ ἡ ὕλη,  
40 ὅθεν φανείη. Ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ ἢ νεύσασα ἤδη ὄν τὸ  
σκότος, φασίν, εἶδε καὶ κατέλαμψε. Πόθεν οὖν

of the world, too, was not matter marked in outline with the form of the universe, in which form earth and fire and the rest were contained? But perhaps they would have made the world like this, since they possess a more genuine soul, but that creator of theirs did not know how to. Yet to see, before it existed, the greatness of the heaven—or rather to see its exact size—and the inclination of the zodiac and the circuit of the stars below it, and the earth, in such a way that it is possible to give reasons why all these things are so—this does not belong to an image, but altogether to a power which comes from the best principles. And this even they themselves unwillingly admit. For their "illumination of the darkness," if it is investigated, will make them admit the true causes of the universe. For why was it necessary for the soul to illuminate, unless the necessity was universal? It was either according to soul's nature or against it. But if it was according to its nature, it must always be so. If, on the other hand, it was against its nature, then there will be a place for what is against nature in the higher world, and evil will exist before this universe, and the universe will not be responsible for evil, but the higher world will be the cause of evil for this world, and evil will not come from the world here to the soul, but from the soul to the world here; and the course of the argument will lead to the attribution of responsibility for the universe to the first principles: and if the universe, then also the matter, from which the universe on this hypothesis would have emerged. For the soul which declined saw, they say, and illuminated the darkness already in existence.



τοῦτο; Εἰ δ' αὐτὴν φήσουσι ποιῆσαι νεύσασαν, οὐκ ἦν δηλονότι ὅπου ἂν ἔνευσεν, οὐδ' αὐτὸ τὸ σκότος αἴτιον τῆς νεύσεως, ἀλλ' αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχῆς φύσις. Τοῦτο δὲ ταῦτόν ταῖς προηγησαμέναις ἀνάγκαις· ὥστε ἐπὶ τὰ πρῶτα ἡ αἰτία.

13. Ὁ ἄρα μεμφόμενος τῇ τοῦ κόσμου φύσει οὐκ οἶδεν ὅ τι ποιεῖ, οὐδ' ὅπου τὸ θράσος αὐτοῦ τοῦτο χωρεῖ. Τοῦτο δέ, ὅτι οὐκ ἴσασι τάξιν τῶν ἐφεξῆς πρώτων καὶ δευτέρων καὶ τρίτων καὶ αἰεὶ 5 μέχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων, καὶ ὡς οὐ λοιδορητέον τοῖς χεῖροσι τῶν πρώτων, ἀλλὰ πράως συγχωρητέον τῇ πάντων φύσει αὐτὸν θέοντα πρὸς τὰ πρῶτα παυσάμενον τῆς τραγωδίας τῶν φοβερῶν, ὡς οἴονται, ἐν ταῖς τοῦ κόσμου σφαίραις, αἱ δὴ πάντα μείλιχα τεύχουσιν αὐτοῖς· τί γὰρ φοβερὸν ἔχουσιν αὐταί, ὡς φοβοῦσι τοὺς ἀπείρους 10 λόγων καὶ πεπαιδευμένης ἀνηκόους καὶ ἐμμελοῦς γνώσεως; Οὐ γάρ, εἰ πύρινα τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν, φοβεῖσθαι δεῖ συμμέτρως πρὸς τὸ πᾶν καὶ πρὸς τὴν γῆν ἔχοντα, εἰς δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν βλέπειν, αἷς καὶ αὐτοὶ δῆπουθεν ἀξιούσι τίμοι εἶναι. 15 Καίτοι καὶ τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν μεγέθει καὶ κάλλει

<sup>1</sup> The cosmic spheres and the Archons who ruled them were for the Gnostics formidable barriers which the soul had to pass on its journey upwards to its true home. To do so it was necessary to know the correct formula with which to address

Where, then, did the darkness come from? If they are going to say that the soul made it when it declined, there was obviously nowhere for it to decline to, and the darkness itself was not responsible for the decline, but the soul's own nature. But this is the same as attributing the responsibility to pre-existing necessities; so the responsibility goes back to the first principles.

13. The man who censures the nature of the universe does not know what he is doing, and how far this rash criticism of his goes. This is so because the Gnostics do not know that there is an order of firsts, seconds and thirds in regular succession, and so on to the last, and that the things that are worse than the first should not be reviled; one should rather calmly and gently accept the nature of all things, and hurry on oneself to the first, ceasing to concern oneself with the melodrama of the terrors, as they think, in the cosmic spheres,<sup>1</sup> which in reality "make all things sweet and lovely"<sup>2</sup> for them. For what is there terrible about the spheres, which makes them terrify people who are unpractised in reasoning and have never heard anything of a cultured and harmonious "gnosis." For even if their bodies are fiery, there is no need to fear them, since they are duly proportioned to the All and the earth; but one should look at their souls—it is on their souls that the Gnostics themselves, of course, base their claim to honour. Yet their bodies, too, are outstanding in size and beauty and are partners and co-operators in

each Archon: cp. the Ophite spells in Origen *Against Celsus* VI. 31, with H. Chadwick's commentary.

<sup>2</sup> A reminiscence of Pindar *Olympians* I. 48.

διαφέροντα συμπράττοντα καὶ συνεργούντα τοῖς  
κατὰ φύσιν γιγνομένοις, ἃ οὐκ ἂν οὐ γένοιτό ποτε  
ἔστ' ἂν ἢ τὰ πρῶτα, συμπληροῦντα δὲ τὸ πᾶν καὶ  
μεγάλα μέρη ὄντα τοῦ παντός. Εἰ δ' ἄνθρωποι  
τίμιόν τι παρ' ἄλλα ζῶα, πολλῶ μᾶλλον ταῦτα οὐ  
20 τυραννίδος ἕνεκα ἐν τῷ παντὶ ὄντα, ἀλλὰ κόσμον  
καὶ τάξιν παρέχοντα. Ἄ δὲ λέγεται γίνεσθαι παρ'  
αὐτῶν, σημεῖα νομίζω τῶν ἐσομένων εἶναι,  
γίνεσθαι δὲ τὰ γινόμενα διάφορα καὶ τύχαις—οὐ  
γὰρ οἷόν τε ἦν ταῦτα περὶ ἐκάστους συμβαίνειν—  
καὶ καιροῖς γενέσεων καὶ τόποις πλείστον ἀφειστη-  
25 κόσι καὶ διαθέσει ψυχῶν. Καὶ οὐκ ἀπαιτητέον  
πάλιν ἀγαθοὺς πάντας, οὐδ' ὅτι μὴ τοῦτο δυνατὸν,  
μέμφεσθαι προχείρως πάλιν ἀξιούσι μηδὲν διαφέ-  
ρειν ταῦτα ἐκείνων, τό τε κακὸν μὴ νομίζω ἄλλο  
τι ἢ τὸ ἐνδεέστερον εἰς φρόνησιν καὶ ἔλαττον  
30 ἀγαθὸν καὶ αἰεὶ πρὸς τὸ μικρότερον· οἷον εἴ τις  
τὴν φύσιν κακὸν λέγοι, ὅτι μὴ αἰσθησίς ἐστι, καὶ  
τὸ αἰσθητικόν, ὅτι μὴ λόγος. Εἰ δὲ μὴ, κἀκεῖ τὰ  
κακὰ ἀναγκασθῆσονται λέγειν εἶναι· καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ  
ψυχὴ χειρὸν νοῦ καὶ οὗτος ἄλλου ἔλαττον.

14. Μάλιστα δὲ αὐτοὶ καὶ ἄλλως ποιῶσιν οὐκ  
ἀκήρατα τὰ ἐκεῖ. Ὅταν γὰρ ἐπωιδᾶς γράφωσιν

<sup>1</sup> For a full exposition of Plotinus's thought about astral signs and astral influences see II. 3, especially chs. 7-8 and 10-15.

<sup>2</sup> Plotinus himself does sometimes come very near to saying that all procession, with its necessary falling below the highest, is an evil: cp. III. 8. 8. 35-6 (of the procession of Intellect

all that happens according to nature, and cannot ever not happen as long as the first principles exist; they are essential to the completeness of the All and are important parts of the All. And if men have a degree of honour in comparison with other living things, these are much more honourable, as they are not in the All to exercise tyrannical rule but as the givers of beauty and order. As for what is said to happen as a result of their influence, one should consider that they give signs of things to come, but that the variety of things that happen is due to chance—it was not possible that the fortune of each individual should be the same—and to reasons of birth, and places far different from each other, and the dispositions of souls.<sup>1</sup> And again, one should not demand that everybody should be good nor, because this is not possible, should they be ready with censure, demanding that this world should differ in no way from that higher one; nor is it right not to consider evil as anything else than a falling short in wisdom, and a lesser good, continually diminishing; as if one were to say that the growth-principle was evil because it is not perception, and the principle of perception, because it is not reason. Otherwise, they will be compelled to say that there are evils in the higher world too: for there soul is worse than intellect and intellect than Something Else.<sup>2</sup>

14. But they themselves most of all impair the inviolate purity of the higher powers in another way too. For when they write magic chants, intending to

from the One) and III. 7. 11. 15 ff. (of the procession of Soul from Intellect). But this cosmic pessimism is not his normal thought.

ὡς πρὸς ἐκεῖνα λέγοντες, οὐ μόνον πρὸς ψυχὴν,  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐπάνω, τί ποιούσιν ἢ γοητείας καὶ  
 5 θέλξεις καὶ πείσεις λέγουσι καὶ λόγῳ ὑπακούειν  
 καὶ ἄγεσθαι, εἴ τις ἡμῶν τεχνικώτερος εἰπεῖν ταδὶ  
 καὶ οὕτως μέλη καὶ ἤχους καὶ προσπνεύσεις καὶ  
 σιγμοὺς τῆς φωνῆς καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, ὅσα ἐκεῖ μαγεύειν  
 γέγραπται. Εἰ δὲ μὴ βούλονται τοῦτο λέγειν, ἀλλὰ  
 πῶς φωναῖς τὰ ἀσώματα; Ὡστε οἷσι<sup>1</sup> σεμνοτέ-  
 10 ρους αὐτῶν τοὺς λόγους ποιούσι φαίνεσθαι, τούτοις  
 λελήθασιν αὐτοὺς τὸ σεμνὸν ἐκείνων ἀφαιρούμενοι.  
 Καθαίρεσθαι δὲ νόσων λέγοντες αὐτοῖς, λέγοντες  
 μὲν ἂν σωφροσύνη καὶ κοσμίᾳ διαίτῃ, ἔλεγον ἂν  
 ὀρθῶς, καθάπερ οἱ φιλόσοφοι λέγουσι· νῦν δὲ  
 ὑποστησάμενοι τὰς νόσους δαιμόνια εἶναι καὶ  
 15 ταῦτα ἐξαιρεῖν λόγῳ φάσκοντες δύνασθαι καὶ  
 ἐπαγγελλόμενοι σεμνότεροι μὲν ἂν εἶναι δόξαιεν  
 παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς, οἱ τὰς παρὰ τοῖς μάγοις  
 δυνάμεις θαυμάζουσι, τοὺς μέντοι εὖ φρονούντας  
 οὐκ ἂν πείθοιεν, ὡς οὐχ αἱ νόσοι τὰς αἰτίας ἔχουσιν  
 ἢ καμάτοις ἢ πλησμοναῖς ἢ ἐνδείαις ἢ σήψεσι καὶ  
 20 ὅλως μεταβολαῖς ἢ ἔξωθεν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἢ ἐνδοθεν  
 λαβοῖσαι. Δηλοῦσι δὲ καὶ αἱ θεραπείαι αὐτῶν.  
 Γαστρὸς γὰρ ρυείσης ἢ φαρμάκου δοθέντος  
 διεχώρησε κάτω εἰς τὸ ἔξω τὸ νόσημα καὶ αἵματος  
 ἀφηρημένου, καὶ ἐνδεια δὲ ἰάσατο. Ἡ πεινήσαντος  
 τοῦ δαιμονίου καὶ τοῦ φαρμάκου ποιήσαντος

<sup>1</sup> οἷσι Heigl: οἱ A<sup>12</sup>ExUC H-S: οἷς A (in ras.) Q: εἰ S.

address them to those powers, not only to the soul  
 but to those above it as well, what are they doing  
 except making the powers obey the word and follow  
 the lead of people who say spells and charms and  
 conjurations, any one of us who is well skilled in the  
 art of saying precisely the right things in the right  
 way, songs and cries and aspirated and hissing sounds  
 and everything else which their writings say has  
 magic power in the higher world? But even if they  
 do not want to say this, how are the incorporeal  
 beings affected by sounds? So by the sort of state-  
 ments<sup>1</sup> with which they give an appearance of  
 majesty to their own words, they, without realising  
 it, take away the majesty of the higher powers.  
 But when they say they free themselves from diseases,  
 if they meant that they did so by temperance and  
 orderly living, they would speak well, just as the philo-  
 sophers do; but in fact they assume that the diseases  
 are evil spirits, and claim to be able to drive them  
 out by their word; by this claim they might make  
 themselves more impressive in the eyes of the masses,  
 who wonder at the powers of magicians, but would  
 not persuade sensible people that diseases do not  
 have their origin in strain or excess or deficiency or  
 decay, and in general in changes which have their  
 origin outside or inside. The cures of diseases make  
 this clear too. With a vigorous motion of the bowels  
 or the giving of a drug the illness goes through the  
 downward passage and out, and it goes out too with  
 blood-letting; and fasting also heals. Does the evil  
 spirit starve, and does the drug make it waste away,

<sup>1</sup> I read here οἷσι (Heigl), not οἱ (Henry-Schwyzler with most MSS).

25 *τήκεσθαι, ποτὲ δὲ ἀθρώως ἐξελλθόντος, ἢ μένοντος ἔνδον; Ἄλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐπι μένοντος, πῶς ἔνδον ὄντος οὐ νοσεῖ ἔτι; Εἰ δὲ ἐξελήλυθε, διὰ τί; Τί γὰρ αὐτὸ πέπονθεν; Ἡ ὅτι ἐτρέφετο ὑπὸ τῆς νόσου. Ἦν ἄρα ἡ νόσος ἑτέρα οὔσα τοῦ δαίμονος. Ἐπειτα, εἰ οὐδενὸς ὄντος αἰτίου εἴσεισι, διὰ τί*  
 30 *οὐκ αἰὲ νοσεῖ; Εἰ δὲ γενομένου αἰτίου, τί δεῖ τοῦ δαίμονος πρὸς τὸ νοσεῖν; Τὸ γὰρ αἴτιον τὸν πυρετὸν αὐταρκές ἐστιν ἐργάσασθαι. Γελῶιον δὲ τὸ ἅμα τὸ αἴτιον γενέσθαι καὶ εὐθέως ὡσπερ παρυποστήναι τῷ αἰτίῳ τὸ δαίμονιον ἔτοιμον ὄν. Ἄλλὰ γάρ,*  
 35 *ὅπως καὶ ταῦτα εἴρηται αὐτοῖς καὶ ἔτου χάριν, δῆλον· τούτου γὰρ ἕνεκα οὐχ ἦγον καὶ τούτων τῶν δαίμονίων ἐμνήσθημεν. Τὰ δ' ἄλλα ὑμῖν καταλείπω ἀναγινώσκουσιν ἐπισκοπεῖσθαι καὶ θεωρεῖν ἐκεῖνο πανταχοῦ, ὡς τὸ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν εἶδος φιλοσοφίας μεταδιωκόμενον πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις*  
 40 *ἅπασιν ἀγαθοῖς καὶ τὴν ἀπλότητα τοῦ ἠθους μετὰ τοῦ φρονεῖν καθαρῶς ἐνδείκνυται, τὸ σεμνόν, οὐ τὸ αὐθαδὲς μεταδιώκουσα, τὸ θαρραλέον μετὰ λόγου καὶ μετ' ἀσφαλείας πολλῆς καὶ εὐλαβείας καὶ πλείστης περιωπῆς ἔχουσα· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα τῷ τοιούτῳ παραβάλλειν. Τὸ δὲ παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἐναντιώτατα κατεσκεύασται διὰ πάντων· οὐδὲν*  
 45 *γὰρ ἂν πλέον· οὕτω γὰρ περὶ αὐτῶν λέγειν ἡμῖν ἂν πρέποι.*

15. Ἐκεῖνο δὲ μάλιστα δεῖ μὴ λανθάνειν ἡμᾶς, τί ποτε ποιούσιν οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι εἰς τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν

and does it sometimes come out all at once, or stay inside? But if it continues to stay, how does the patient not continue to be ill while it is still inside him? But if it went out, why did it go? What happened to it? Presumably because it was fed by the disease. So then the disease was different from the spirit. Then, if it came into the man without any cause of disease, why is he not always ill? But if there was a cause, what need is there of the spirit to produce the illness? For the cause is sufficient by itself to produce the fever. It is ridiculous to suppose that as soon as the cause occurs the evil spirit, all ready and waiting, immediately takes up its position in support of it. But it is clear how they say this and also why they say it; it was for this reason, too, that we mentioned these evil spirits. The rest of their teachings I leave to you to investigate by reading their books, and to observe throughout that the kind of philosophy which we pursue, besides all its other excellences, displays simplicity and straightforwardness of character along with clear thinking, and aims at dignity, not rash arrogance, and combines its confident boldness with reason and much safeguarding and caution and a great deal of circumspection: you are to use philosophy of this kind as a standard of comparison for the rest. But the system of the others [the Gnostics] is in every part constructed on entirely opposed principles—for I would not like to say more; this is the way in which it would be suitable for us to speak about them.

15. But there is one point which we must be particularly careful not to let escape us, and that is what these arguments do to the souls of those who

ἀκουόντων καὶ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ  
καταφρονεῖν πεισθέντων. Δυοῖν γὰρ οὐσῶν αἰρέ-  
5 σεων τοῦ τυχεῖν τοῦ τέλους, μᾶς μὲν τῆς ἡδονῆν  
τῆν τοῦ σώματος τέλος τιθεμένης, ἑτέρας δὲ τῆς τὸ  
καλὸν καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν αἰρουμένης, οἷς καὶ ἐκ θεοῦ  
καὶ εἰς θεὸν ἀνήρηται ἢ ὄρεξις, ὡς δὲ ἐν ἄλλοις<sup>1</sup>  
θεωρητέον, ὃ μὲν Ἐπίκουρος τὴν πρόνοιαν ἀνελῶν  
τὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ τὸ ἡδεσθαι, ὅπερ ἦν λοιπόν, τοῦτο  
10 διώκειν παρακελεύεται· ὃ δὲ λόγος οὗτος ἐπι  
νεανικώτερον τὸν τῆς προνοίας κύριον καὶ αὐτὴν  
τὴν πρόνοιαν μεμφόμενος καὶ πάντας νόμους τοῦς  
ἐνταῦθα ἀτιμάσας καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν τὴν ἐκ παντός  
τοῦ χρόνου ἀνηρημένην τό τε σωφρονεῖν τοῦτο  
ἐν γέλωτι θέμενος, ἵνα μηδὲν καλὸν ἐνταῦθα δὴ  
15 ἀφθείη ὑπάρχον, ἀνεῖλε τὸ σωφρονεῖν<sup>2</sup> καὶ τὴν  
ἐν τοῖς ἡβῆσι σύμφυτον δικαιοσύνην τὴν τελειου-  
μένην ἐκ λόγου καὶ ἀσκήσεως καὶ ὄλων καθ' ἃ  
σπουδαῖος ἄνθρωπος ἂν γένοιτο. Ὡστε αὐτοῖς  
καταλείπεσθαι τὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ τὸ περὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ  
20 τὸ οὐ κοινὸν πρὸς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους καὶ τὸ τῆς  
χρείας μόνον, εἰ μὴ τις τῇ φύσει τῇ αὐτοῦ κρείττων  
εἴη τῶν λόγων τούτων· τούτων γὰρ οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς  
καλόν, ἀλλὰ ἄλλο τι, ὃ ποτε μεταδιώξουσι.  
Καίτοι ἐχρῆν τοῖς ἡδὴ ἐγνωκότας ἐντεῦθεν διώκειν,

<sup>1</sup> ὡς δὲ ἐν ἄλλοις nunc Henry et Schwyzer: ὡς δέ, ἐν ἄλλοις H-S.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ σωφρονεῖν A et nunc Henry et Schwyzer: τε τὸ σωφρονεῖν Exy: τότε σωφρονεῖν Q.

hear them and are persuaded by them to despise the universe and the beings in it. For there are two schools of thought about attaining the end, one which puts forward the pleasure of the body as the end, and another which chooses nobility and virtue, for whose members desire depends on God and leads back to God (as must be studied elsewhere): Epicurus, who abolishes providence, exhorts to pursue pleasure and its enjoyment, which is what is left; but this doctrine censures the lord of providence and providence itself still more crudely, and despises all the laws of this world and the virtue whose winning extends back through all time, and makes self-control here something to laugh at, that nothing noble may be seen existing here below, and abolishes self-control and the righteousness which comes to birth with men's characters and is perfected by reason and training, and altogether everything by which a man could become nobly good.<sup>1</sup> So pleasure is left for them, and what concerns themselves alone, and what other men have no share in, and what is nothing but a matter of their needs—unless one of them is by nature better than these teachings of theirs: for nothing here is of value for them, but something else is, which they will go after one day. Yet those who already have the *gnosis*<sup>2</sup> should start

<sup>1</sup> On the question of how far the charges of immorality brought against the Gnostics by their opponents were justified, see the discussion in *Entretiens Hardt V*, pp. 186–189.

<sup>2</sup> I have translated *ἐγνωκότας* in this way, following Harder and Cilento, as it seems clear that Plotinus is referring to the distinctive Gnostic claim to possess a *gnosis*, not, that is, just ordinary knowledge but a special secret knowledge which had power to save.

διώκοντας δὲ πρῶτα κατορθοῦν ταῦτα εἰς θείας  
 25 φύσεως ἤκουτας· ἐκείνης γὰρ τῆς φύσεως καλοῦ  
 ἐπαίειν, τὴν ἡδονὴν τοῦ σώματος ἀτιμαζούσης.  
 Οἷς δὲ ἀρετῆς μὴ μέτεστιν, οὐκ ἂν εἶεν τὸ παράπαν  
 κινηθέντες πρὸς ἐκεῖνα. Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ  
 τόδε τὸ μηδένα λόγον περὶ ἀρετῆς πεποιῆσθαι,  
 ἐκλειοιπέναι δὲ παντάπασιν τὸν περὶ τούτων λόγον,  
 30 καὶ μήτε τί ἐστιν εἰπεῖν μήτε πόσα μήτε ὅσα  
 τεθεώρηται πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ τοῖς τῶν παλαιῶν  
 λόγοις, μήτε ἐξ ὧν περιέσται καὶ κτήσεται, μήτε  
 ὡς θεραπεύεται ψυχὴ μήτε ὡς καθαίρεται. Οὐ  
 γὰρ δὴ τὸ εἰπεῖν “βλέπε πρὸς θεόν” προὔργου τι  
 ἐργάζεται, ἔαν μὴ πῶς καὶ βλέψη διδάξῃ. Τί γὰρ  
 35 κωλύει, εἴπαι τις ἂν, βλέπειν καὶ μηδεμιᾶς  
 ἀπέχεσθαι ἡδονῆς, ἢ ἀκρατῆ θυμοῦ εἶναι μεμνημέ-  
 νον μὲν ὀνόματος τοῦ “θεός,” συνεχόμενον δὲ  
 ἅπασιν πάθεσι, μηδὲν δὲ αὐτῶν πειρώμενον ἐξαι-  
 ρεῖν; Ἀρετὴ μὲν οὖν εἰς τέλος προιοῦσα καὶ ἐν  
 ψυχῇ ἐγγενομένη μετὰ φρονήσεως θεὸν δείκνυσιν.  
 40 ἄνευ δὲ ἀρετῆς ἀληθινῆς θεὸς λεγόμενος ὄνομά ἐστιν.

16. Οὐδ’ αὖ τὸ καταφρονῆσαι κόσμον καὶ θεῶν  
 τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων καλῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐστι  
 γενέσθαι. Καὶ γὰρ πᾶς κακὸς καὶ πρὸ τοῦ  
 καταφρονήσειεν ἂν θεῶν, καὶ μὴ πρότερον πάγ-  
 κακος<sup>1</sup> καταφρονήσας, καὶ εἰ τὰ ἄλλα μὴ πάντα  
 5 κακὸς εἶη, αὐτῷ τούτῳ ἂν γεγονῶς εἶη. Καὶ γὰρ

<sup>1</sup> πάγκακος Heigl. H-S<sup>2</sup> (sed nunc protulerint Henry et Schwyzer [πᾶς κακός] Kirchhoff): πᾶς κακός codd.

going after it here and now, and in their pursuit should  
 first of all set right their conduct here below, as they  
 come from a divine nature; for that nature is aware  
 of nobility and despises the pleasure of the body. X  
 But those who have no share of virtue would not be  
 moved at all towards that higher world. This, too,  
 is evidence of their indifference to virtue, that they  
 have never made any treatise about virtue, but have  
 altogether left out the treatment of these subjects;  
 they do not tell us what kind of thing virtue is, nor  
 how many parts it has, nor about all the many noble  
 studies of the subject to be found in the treatises of  
 the ancients, nor from what virtue results and how it  
 is to be attained, nor how the soul is tended, nor  
 how it is purified. For it does no good at all to say  
 “Look to God,” unless one also teaches how one is to  
 look. For someone could say, “What prevents me  
 from looking and refraining from no pleasure, or from  
 having no control over my emotions and from re-  
 membering the name ‘God’ and at the same time  
 being in the grip of all the passions and making no  
 attempt to get rid of any of them.” In reality it is  
 virtue which goes before us to the goal and, when it  
 comes to exist in the soul along with wisdom, shows  
 God; but God, if you talk about him without true  
 virtue, is only a name. XXX

16. Again, despising the universe and the gods in  
 it and the other noble things is certainly not becoming  
 good. Every wicked man, in former times too, was  
 capable of despising the gods, and even if he was not  
 altogether wicked before, when he despised them he  
 became so by this very fact, even if he was not wicked  
 in everything else. Then again the honour which  
 XXX

ἂν καὶ ἡ πρὸς τοὺς νοητοὺς θεοὺς λεγομένη αὐτοῖς  
 τιμὴ ἀσυμπαθῆς ἂν γένοιτο· ὁ γὰρ τὸ φιλεῖν πρὸς  
 ὀτιοῦν ἔχων καὶ τὸ συγγενὲς πᾶν οὐ φιλεῖ ἀσπάζε-  
 ται καὶ τοὺς παῖδας ὧν τὸν πατέρα ἀγαπᾷ· ψυχὴ  
 10 δὲ πᾶσα πατρὸς ἐκείνου. Ψυχὰὶ δὲ καὶ ἐν τούτοις  
 καὶ νοεραὶ καὶ ἀγαθαὶ καὶ συναφεῖς τοῖς ἐκεῖ πολὺ  
 μᾶλλον ἢ αἱ ἡμῶν. Πῶς γὰρ ἂν ἀποτμηθεῖς ὁδε  
 ὁ κόσμος ἐκείνου ἦν; πῶς δὲ οἱ ἐν αὐτῷ θεοί;  
 Ἄλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν καὶ πρότερον· νῦν δέ, ὅτι καὶ  
 τῶν συγγενῶν ἐκείνοις καταφρονοῦντες, [ὅτι]<sup>1</sup> μηδὲ  
 15 ἐκείνα ἴσασιν, ἀλλ' ἢ λόγῳ. Ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ πρόνοιαν  
 μὴ δικνεῖσθαι εἰς τὰ τῆδε ἢ εἰς ὀτιοῦν, πῶς  
 εὐσεβές; Πῶς δὲ σύμφωνον ἑαυτοῖς; Λέγουσι  
 γὰρ αὐτῶν προνοεῖν αὐτῶν μόνων. Πότερα δὲ ἐκεῖ  
 γενομένων ἢ καὶ ἐνθάδε ὄντων; Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκεῖ,  
 πῶς ἦλθον; Εἰ δὲ ἐνθάδε, πῶς ἔτι εἰσὶν ἐνθάδε;  
 20 Πῶς δὲ οὐ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστὶν ἐνθάδε; Πότεν γὰρ  
 γινώσκται, ὅτι εἰσὶν ἐνθάδε; Πῶς δέ, ὅτι ἐνθάδε  
 ὄντες οὐκ ἐπελάθοντο αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐγένοντο κακοί;  
 Εἰ δὲ γινώσκει τοὺς μὴ γενομένους κακοὺς, καὶ  
 τοὺς γενομένους γινώσκει, ἵνα διακρίνη ἀπ'  
 ἐκείνων αὐτούς. Πᾶσιν οὖν παρέσται καὶ ἔσται  
 25 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τῷδε, ὅστις ὁ τρόπος· ὥστε καὶ

<sup>1</sup> [ὅτι] Kirchhoff et nunc Henry et Schwyzer: ὅτι codd. H-S.

these people say they give to the intelligible gods  
 would be of a very unfeeling sort. For anyone who  
 feels affection for anything at all shows kindness to  
 all that is akin to the object of his affection, and to the  
 children of the father he loves. But every soul is a  
 child of That Father. And there are souls in these  
 [the heavenly bodies] too, and intelligent and good  
 ones, much more closely in touch with the beings of  
 the higher world than our souls are. How could this  
 universe exist if it was cut off from that other world?  
 How could the gods in it? But we spoke of this before,  
 too: our point now is that because they despise the  
 kindred of those higher realities, also, they do not  
 know the higher beings either but only talk as if they  
 did. Then, another point, what piety is there in deny-  
 ing that providence extends to this world and to any-  
 thing and everything? And how are they consistent  
 with themselves in this denial? For they say that  
 God does care providentially for them, and them  
 alone. Did he care for them only when they were in  
 the higher world, or does he care for them when they  
 are here, too? If he cared for them when they were  
 there, how did they come here? But if he cares for  
 them here, why are they here still? And how is it  
 possible that God is not here, too? For from what  
 source does he know that they are here? And how  
 does he know that while they have been here they have  
 not forgotten him and become wicked? But if he  
 knows those who have not become wicked, he knows  
 those who have become wicked too, in order to be  
 able to separate the good from them. So he will be  
 present to all and will be in this universe, whatever  
 the manner of his presence; so that the universe

μεθέξει αὐτοῦ ὁ κόσμος. Εἰ δ' ἄπεισι τοῦ κόσμου,  
καὶ ὑμῶν ἀπέσται, καὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἔχοιτέ τι λέγειν  
περὶ αὐτοῦ οὐδὲ τῶν μετ' αὐτόν. Ἄλλ' εἴτε ὑμῖν  
πρόνοια τις ἔρχεται ἐκεῖθεν, εἴτε ὅ τι βούλεσθε,  
ἀλλ' ὅ γε κόσμος ἐκεῖθεν ἔχει καὶ οὐκ ἀπολέλειπται  
30 οὐδ' ἀπολειφθήσεται. Πολὺ γὰρ μᾶλλον τῶν  
ὄλων ἢ τῶν μερῶν ἢ πρόνοια καὶ ἡ μέθεξις  
κάκεινης τῆς ψυχῆς πολὺ μᾶλλον· δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ  
τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἐμφρόνως εἶναι. Τίς γὰρ οὕτω  
τεταγμένος ἢ ἐμφρων τῶν ὑπερφρονούντων ἀφρό-  
νως, ὡς τὸ πᾶν; Ἡ παραβάλλειν καὶ γελοῖον  
35 καὶ πολλὴν τὴν ἀτοπίαν ἔχει, καὶ ὅ γε μὴ τοῦ  
λόγου ἕνεκα παραβάλλων οὐκ ἔξω ἂν τοῦ ἀσεβεῖν  
γένοιτο· οὐδὲ τὸ ζητεῖν περὶ τούτων ἐμφρονος,  
ἀλλὰ τυφλοῦ τινος καὶ παντάπασιν οὔτε αἰσθησιν  
οὔτε νοῦν ἔχοντος καὶ πόρρω τοῦ νοητὸν κόσμον  
ιδεῖν ὄντος, ὃς τοῦτον οὐ βλέπει. Τίς γὰρ ἂν  
40 μουσικὸς ἀνὴρ εἴη, ὃς τὴν ἐν νοητῷ ἀρμονίαν ἰδὼν  
οὐ κινήσεται τῆς ἐν φθόγγοις αἰσθητοῖς ἀκούων;  
Ἡ τίς γεωμετρίας καὶ ἀριθμῶν ἐμπειρος, ὃς τὸ  
σύμμετρον καὶ ἀνάλογον καὶ τεταγμένον ἰδὼν δι'  
ὀμμάτων οὐχ ἡσθήσεται; Εἴπερ οὐχ ὁμοίως τὰ  
45 αὐτὰ βλέπουσιν οὐδ' ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς οἱ δι' ὀμμάτων  
τὰ<sup>1</sup> τῆς τέχνης βλέποντες, ἀλλ' ἐπιγινώσκοντες  
μίμημα ἐν τῷ αἰσθητῷ τοῦ ἐν νοήσει κειμένου  
οἶον θορυβοῦνται καὶ εἰς ἀνάμνησιν ἔρχονται τοῦ

<sup>1</sup> τὰ Kirchhoff H-S: τῶν codd.

will participate in him. But if he is absent from the universe, he will be absent from you, and then you would have nothing to say about him or the beings which come after him. But whether a providence comes to you from the higher world or—whatever you like, the universe anyhow has providential care from that world; it has not been abandoned and it will not be abandoned. For providential care is much more of wholes than of parts, and the participation in God of that universal soul, too, is much greater. Its existence, and its intelligent existence, make this clear. For who of those who are so mindlessly high-minded in looking down on it is as well ordered or has as intelligent a mind as the All? The comparison is ridiculous and very much out of place; anyone who made it except for the sake of argument would not be able to avoid impiety. It is not the part of an intelligent man even to enquire about this but of someone who is blind, utterly without perception or intelligence, and far from seeing the intelligible universe, since he does not even see this one here. For how could there be a musician who sees the melody in the intelligible world and will not be stirred when he hears the melody in sensible sounds? Or how could there be anyone skilled in geometry and numbers who will not be pleased when he sees right relation, proportion and order with his eyes? For, indeed, even in pictures those who look at the works of art with their eyes do not see the same things in the same way, but when they recognise an imitation on the level of sense of someone who has a place in their thought they feel a kind of disturbance and come to a recollection of the truth; this is the



ἀληθοῦς· ἐξ οὗ δὴ πάθους καὶ κινεῖνται οἱ ἔρωτες.  
 Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν ἰδὼν κάλλος ἐν προσώπῳ εἰ μεμιμημέ-  
 50 νον<sup>1</sup> φέρεται ἐκεῖ, ἀργὸς δὲ τίς οὕτως ἔσται τὴν  
 γνώμην καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν ἄλλο κινήσεται, ὥστε ὁρῶν  
 σύμπαντα μὲν τὰ ἐν αἰσθητῷ κάλλη, σύμπασαν δὲ  
 συμμετρίαν καὶ τὴν μεγάλην εὐταξίαν ταύτην καὶ  
 τὸ ἐμφαινόμενον ἐν τοῖς ἄστροις εἶδος καὶ πόρρωθεν  
 οἶσιν οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν ἐνθυμεῖται, καὶ σέβας αὐτὸν  
 55 λαμβάνει, οἷα ἀφ' οἶων; Οὐκ ἄρα οὔτε ταῦτα  
 κατενόησεν, οὔτε ἐκεῖνα εἶδεν.

17. Καίτοι, εἰ καὶ μισεῖν αὐτοῖς ἐπήγει τὴν τοῦ  
 σώματος φύσιν, διότι ἀκηκόασι Πλάτωνος πολλὰ  
 μεμιημένου τῷ σώματι οἷα ἐμπόδια παρέχει τῇ  
 ψυχῇ καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν σωματικὴν φύσιν εἶπε  
 5 χείρονα ἐχρῆν ταύτην περιελόντας τῇ διανοίᾳ  
 ἰδεῖν τὸ λοιπὸν, σφαῖραν νοητὴν τὸ ἐπὶ τῷ κόσμῳ  
 εἶδος ἐμπεριέχουσαν, ψυχὰς ἐν τάξει, ἄνευ τῶν  
 σωμάτων μέγεθος δούσας κατὰ τὸ νοητὸν εἰς  
 διάστασιν προαγαγούσας, ὡς τῷ μεγέθει τὸ  
 γενόμενον τῷ ἀμερεῖ τῷ<sup>2</sup> τοῦ παραδείγματος εἰς  
 10 δύναμιν ἐξισωθῆναι· τὸ γὰρ ἐκεῖ μέγα ἐν δυνάμει  
 ἐνταῦθα ἐν ὄγκῳ. Καὶ εἴτε κινουμένην ταύτην

<sup>1</sup> μεμιμημένον Cruszer, H-S: μεμιημένον codd.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ γενόμενον τῷ ἀμερεῖ τῷ Kirchhoff: τοῦ γενομένου τῷ ἀμερεῖ τὸ (τῷ A) codd: † τοῦ γενομένου τῷ ἀμερεῖ τὸ † H S<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Plato *Phaedrus* 251A2-3.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *Phaedo* 66B.

experience from which passionate loves arise. But if someone who sees beauty excellently represented in a face is carried to that higher world,<sup>1</sup> will anyone be so sluggish in mind and so immovable that, when he sees all the beauties in the world of sense, all its good proportion and the mighty excellence of its order, and the splendour of form which is manifested in the stars, for all their remoteness, he will not thereupon think, seized with reverence, "What wonders, and from what a source?" If he did not, he would neither have understood this world here nor seen that higher world.

17. And yet, even if it occurred to them to hate the nature of body because they have heard Plato often reproaching the body for the kind of hindrances it puts in the way of the soul<sup>2</sup>—and he said that all bodily nature was inferior—they should have stripped off this bodily nature in their thought and seen what remained, an intelligible sphere embracing the form imposed upon the universe, souls in their order which without bodies give magnitude and advance to dimension according to the intelligible pattern, so that what has come into being may become equal, to the extent of its power, by its magnitude to the partlessness of its archetype:<sup>3</sup> for greatness in the intelligible world is in power, here below in bulk. And, whether they wish to think of this sphere as moved,

<sup>3</sup> It seems impossible (as Herry and Schwyzer now agree) to extract any tolerable sense from the MSS readings here. I read τὸ γενόμενον (Kirchhoff) for τοῦ γενομένου and τῷ τοῦ παραδείγματος for τὸ τοῦ παραδείγματος (this τῷ has no real MS authority, the τῷ of A being a manifest error, but is required by the sense).

τὴν σφαῖραν ἐβούλοντο νοεῖν περιαγομένην ὑπὸ  
 θεοῦ δυνάμεως ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλος τῆς  
 πάσης ἔχοντος, εἴτε ἐστῶσαν ὡς οὔπω καὶ ἄλλο τι  
 διοικούσης, καλῶς ἂν εἶχεν εἰς ἔννοιαν τῆς τότε  
 15 τὸ πᾶν ψυχῆς διοικούσης. Ἐνθέντας δὲ ἤδη καὶ  
 τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆ, ὡς οὐδὲν ἂν παθούσης, δούσης δὲ  
 ἐτέρῳ, ὅτι μὴ θέμις φθόνον ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς εἶναι,  
 ἔχειν, εἴ τι δύναται λαμβάνειν ἕκαστα, οὕτως  
 αὐτοὺς διανοεῖσθαι κατὰ κόσμον, τοσοῦτω δίδοντας  
 τῆ τοῦ κόσμου ψυχῆ δυνάμεως, ὅσῳ τὴν σώματος  
 20 φύσιν οὐ καλὴν οὔσαν ἐποίησεν, ὅσον ἦν αὐτῆ  
 καλλύνεσθαι, μετέχειν κάλλους· ὁ καὶ αὐτὸ τὰς  
 ψυχὰς θείας οὔσας κινεῖ. Εἰ μὴ ἄρα αὐτοὶ φαῖεν  
 μὴ κινεῖσθαι, μὴδὲ διαφόρως αἰσχροῦ καὶ καλὰ  
 ὄραν σώματα· ἀλλ' οὕτως οὐδὲ διαφόρως αἰσχροῦ  
 καὶ καλὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα οὐδὲ καλὰ μαθήματα,  
 25 οὐδὲ θεωρίας τοίνυν· οὐδὲ θεῶν τοίνυν. Καὶ γὰρ  
 διὰ τὰ πρῶτα ταῦτα. Εἰ οὖν μὴ ταῦτα, οὐδὲ  
 ἐκεῖνα· μετ' ἐκεῖνα τοίνυν ταῦτα καλὰ. Ἄλλ'  
 ὅταν λέγωσι καταφρονεῖν τοῦ τῆδε κάλλους,  
 καλῶς ἂν ποιοῖεν τοῦ ἐν παισὶ καὶ γυναιξὶ κατα-  
 φρονούντες, ὡς μὴ εἰς ἀκολασίαν ἤττάσθαι. Ἄλλ'  
 30 εἰδέναι δεῖ, ὅτι οὐκ ἂν σεμνύνοιτο, εἰ αἰσχροῦ  
 καταφρονοῖεν, ἀλλ' ὅτι καταφρονοῦσι πρότερον  
 εἰπόντες καλόν· καὶ πῶς διαπιθέντες; Ἐπειτα,  
 ὅτι οὐ τὰντὸν κάλλος ἐπὶ μέρει καὶ ὅλῳ καὶ πᾶσι

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Plato, *Phaedrus* 247A7, and *Timaeus* 29E1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Plato, *Symposium* 211C4-8.

carried round by the power of God who holds the  
 beginning and the middle and the end of the whole  
 of its power, or standing still because it is not yet also  
 directing something else, it would be well adapted  
 to give an idea of the soul which directs this universe.  
 And if they already put a body into it, they should  
 think about the universe in this way, that soul would  
 not be affected by body but would give to something  
 else (since it is not lawful for there to be envy among  
 the gods)<sup>1</sup> to possess whatever each and every thing  
 can take; they should grant to the soul of the uni-  
 verse that amount of power with which it made the  
 nature of body, not beautiful in itself, to share in  
 beauty as far as it was possible for it to be beautified:  
 it is this very beauty which moves souls, which are  
 godlike. But perhaps they may say that they are  
 not moved, and do not look any differently at ugly  
 or beautiful bodies; but if this is so, they do not look  
 any differently at ugly or beautiful ways of life, or  
 beautiful subjects of study;<sup>2</sup> they have no contem-  
 plation, then, and hence no God. For the beauties  
 here exist because of the first beauties. If, then,  
 these here do not exist, neither do those; so these are  
 beautiful in their order after those. But when they  
 say they despise the beauty here, they would do well  
 if they despised the beauty in boys and women, to  
 avoid being overcome by it to the point of abandoned  
 wickedness. But one should notice that they would  
 not give themselves airs if they despised something  
 ugly; they do so because they despise something  
 which they begin by calling beautiful: and what sort  
 of a way of managing is that? Then one should be  
 aware that there is not the same beauty in part and

καὶ παντί· εἶθ' ὅτι ἐστὶ τοιαῦτα κάλλη καὶ ἐν  
 αἰσθητοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἐν μέρει, οἷα δαιμόνων, ὡς  
 35 θανμάσαι τὸν πεποιηκότα καὶ πιστεῦσαι, ὡς  
 ἐκείθεν, καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἀμήχανον τὸ ἐκεῖ κάλλος  
 εἰπεῖν, οὐκ ἐχόμενον τούτων, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τούτων ἐπ'  
 ἐκεῖνα ἰόντα, μὴ λοιδορούμενον δὲ τούτοις· καὶ εἰ  
 μὲν καὶ τὰ ἔνδον καλὰ, σύμφωνα ἀλλήλοις εἶναι  
 λέγειν· εἰ δὲ τᾶνδον φαῦλα, τοῖς βελτίοσιν ἡλατ-  
 40 τῶσθαι. Μήποτε δὲ οὐδὲ ἔστιν ὄντως τι καλὸν  
 ὄν τὰ ἔξω αἰσχροὺς εἶναι τᾶνδον· οὐ γὰρ τὸ ἔξω  
 πᾶν καλόν, κρατήσαντός ἐστι τοῦ ἔνδον. Οἱ δὲ  
 λεγόμενοι καλοὶ τᾶνδον αἰσχροὶ ψεῦδος καὶ τὸ ἔξω  
 κάλλος ἔχουσιν. Εἰ δέ τις φήσει ἐωρακέναι  
 καλοὺς ὄντως ὄντας, αἰσχροὺς δὲ τᾶνδον, οἴμαι  
 45 μὲν αὐτὸν μὴ ἐωρακέναι, ἀλλ' ἄλλους εἶναι νομίζειν  
 τοὺς καλοὺς· εἰ δ' ἄρα, τὸ αἰσχροὺς αὐτοῖς ἐπίκτη-  
 τον εἶναι καλοῖς τὴν φύσιν οὐσι· πολλὰ γὰρ ἐνθάδε  
 τὰ κωλύματα εἶναι ἐλθεῖν εἰς τέλος. Τῷ δὲ παντί  
 καλῷ ὄντι τί ἐμπόδιον ἦν εἶναι καλῷ καὶ τᾶνδον;  
 50 Καὶ μὴν οἷς μὴ τὸ τέλειον ἀπέδωκεν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἢ  
 φύσις, τούτοις τάχ' ἂν οὐκ ἐλθεῖν εἰς τέλος γένοιτο,  
 ὥστε καὶ φαύλοις ἐνδέχασθαι γενέσθαι, τῷ δὲ  
 παντί οὐκ ἦν ποτε παιδί ὡς ἀτελεῖ εἶναι οὐδὲ

<sup>1</sup> Plotinus is probably thinking of Plato, *Republic* VI. 509A6, where the word is used, though half-jokingly, of τὸ ἀγαθόν, rather than of *Symposium* 218E2, where it is used in a much less serious context of the beauty Alcibiades sees in Socrates.

whole and in all individual things and the All: and then that there are such beauties in things perceived by the senses and in partial things (the beauties of spirits, for instance) that one admires their maker, and believes that they come from the higher world, and, judging from them, says that the beauty there is overwhelming;<sup>1</sup> one does not cling to them, but goes on from them to the beauties of the higher world, but without insulting these beauties here; and if their inward parts are beautiful, one acknowledges the harmony of inward and outward; but if their inward parts are bad, they are deficient in the better part. But perhaps it is not really possible for anything to be beautiful outwardly but ugly inwardly; for if the outside of anything is wholly beautiful, it is so by the domination of what is within. Those who are called beautiful and are ugly within have an outward beauty, too, which is not genuine. But if anyone is going to say that he has seen people who are really beautiful but are ugly within, I think that he has not really seen them, but thinks that beautiful people are other than who they are. But if he has really seen them, then their ugliness was something superadded, not really belonging to people who were beautiful by nature: for there are many hindrances here below to arriving at perfection. But what was there to hinder the All, which is beautiful, from being also beautiful within? It might, perhaps, happen to beings to whom nature has not given perfection from the beginning not to arrive at their completion, so that it is possible for them even to become bad; but it never happened to the All to be incomplete like a child, nor does any

προσεγίνετο αὐτῷ προσίόν<sup>1</sup> τι καὶ προσετίθετο εἰς σῶμα. Πόθεν γάρ; Πάντα γὰρ εἶχεν. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ εἰς ψυχὴν πλάσειεν ἂν τις. Εἰ δ' ἄρα τοῦτό τις αὐτοῖς χαρίσαιτο, ἀλλ' οὐ κακόν τι.

18. Ἄλλ' ἴσως φήσουσιν ἐκείνους μὲν τοὺς λόγους φεύγειν τὸ σῶμα ποιεῖν πόρρωθεν μισοῦντας, τοὺς δὲ ἡμετέρους κατέχειν τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸς αὐτῷ. Τοῦτο δὲ ὅμοιον ἂν εἴη, ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ δύο οἶκον 5 καλὸν τὸν αὐτὸν οἰκοῦντων, τοῦ μὲν ψέγοντος τὴν κατασκευὴν καὶ τὸν ποιήσαντα καὶ μένοντος οὐχ ἤττον ἐν αὐτῷ, τοῦ δὲ μὴ ψέγοντος, ἀλλὰ τὸν ποιήσαντα τεχνικώτατα πεποιηκέναι λέγοντος, τὸν δὲ χρόνον ἀναμένοντος ἕως ἂν ἴκη, ἐν ᾧ ἀπαλλάξεται, οὐ μῆκετι οἶκον δεήσουτο, ὁ δὲ 10 σοφώτερος οἷοιτο εἶναι καὶ ἐτοιμότερος ἐξελθεῖν, ἔτι οἶδε λέγειν ἐκ λίθων ἀψύχων τοὺς τοίχους καὶ ξύλων συνεστάναι καὶ πολλοῦ δεῖν τῆς ἀληθινῆς οἰκῆσεως, ἀγνοῶν ὅτι τῷ μὴ φέρειν τὰ ἀναγκαῖα διαφέρει, εἴπερ καὶ μὴ ποιεῖται δυσχεραίνειν ἀγαπῶν ἡσυχῇ τὸ κάλλος τῶν λίθων. Δεῖ δὲ 15 μένειν μὲν ἐν οἴκοις σῶμα ἔχοντας κατασκευασθεῖσιν ὑπὸ ψυχῆς ἀδελφῆς ἀγαθῆς πολλὴν δύναμιν εἰς τὸ δημιουργεῖν ἀπόνως ἐχούσης. Ἡ ἀδελφοὺς μὲν καὶ τοὺς φαυλοτάτους ἀξιοῦσι προσενέπειν,

<sup>1</sup> προσίόν nunc Henry et Schwyzer: προίόν codd. H-S.

<sup>1</sup> Theiler defends the MSS text (marked as corrupt, μὴ † ποιεῖται in H-S<sup>1</sup> and <sup>2</sup>) and cites passages (Synesius,

kind of addition come to it and add anything to its body. For where could it come from? The universe includes everything. Nor could one imagine any addition to its soul. But even if one granted to them that there could be an addition, it would not be anything bad.

18. But perhaps they will assert that those arguments of theirs make men fly from the body since they hate it from a distance, but ours hold the soul down to it. This would be like two people living in the same fine house, one of whom reviles the structure and the builder, but stays there none the less, while the other does not revile, but says the builder has built it with the utmost skill, and waits for the time to come in which he will go away, when he will not need a house any longer: the first might think he was wiser and readier to depart because he knows how to say that the walls are built of soulless stones and timber and are far inferior to the true dwelling-place, not knowing that he is only distinguished by not bearing what he must—unless he affirms that he is discontented while having a secret affection for the beauty of the stones.<sup>1</sup> While we have bodies we must stay in our houses, which have been built for us by a good sister soul which has great power to work without any toil or trouble. Or do the Gnostics think it right to call the lowest of men brothers,

Dion. 248. 2 and 270. 6 Terzaghi and [Plato] *Theages* 128B5) to show that ποιεῖσθαι can have the same meaning as προσποιεῖσθαι, "pretend." Henry and Schwyzer now agree that the text is sound, but point out that in the passages cited by Theiler ποιεῖσθαι means "affirm" rather than "pretend."

ἥλιον δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἀπαξιοῦσιν  
 20 ἀδελφοὺς λέγειν οὐδὲ τὴν κόσμου ψυχὴν στόματι  
 μαινομένῳ; Φαύλους μὲν οὖν ὄντας οὐ θεμιτὸν  
 εἰς συγγένειαν συνάπτειν, ἀγαθοὺς δὲ γενομένους  
 καὶ μὴ σώματα ὄντας, ἀλλὰ ψυχὰς ἐν σώμασι καὶ  
 οὕτως οἰκεῖν δυναμένους ἐν αὐτοῖς, ὡς ἐγγυτάτω  
 εἶναι οἰκίσεως ψυχῆς τοῦ παντός ἐν σώματι τῷ  
 25 ὄλῳ. "Ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ μὴ κρούειν, μηδὲ ὑπακ-  
 οῦειν τοῖς ἔξωθεν προσπίπτουσιν ἠδέσιν ἢ ὀρωμέ-  
 νοις, μηδ' εἴ τι σκληρόν, ταραττεσθαι. Ἐκείνη  
 μὲν οὖν οὐ πλήττεται· οὐ γὰρ ἔχει ὑπὸ τοῦ· ἡμῖς  
 δὲ ἐνθάδε ὄντες ἀρετῇ τὰς πληγὰς ἀπωθοίμεθ' ἂν  
 ἤδη ὑπὸ μεγέθους γνώμης τὰς μὲν ἐλάττους, τὰς  
 30 δὲ οὐδὲ πληττούσας ὑπὸ ἰσχύος γενομένας.  
 Ἐγγύς δὲ γενομένοι τοῦ ἀπλήκτου μιμοίμεθ' ἂν  
 τὴν τοῦ σύμπαντος ψυχὴν καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀστρων,  
 εἰς ἐγγύτητα δὲ ὁμοιότητος ἐλθόντες σπεύδομεν  
 ἂν πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ ἢν θεῶν καὶ ἡμῶν εἶη  
 ἅτε καλῶς καὶ αὐτοῖς παρεσκευασμένοις φύσει  
 35 καὶ ἐπιμελείαις· τοῖς δὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπάρχει. Οὐ  
 δὴ, εἰ μόνον λέγοιεν θεωρεῖν δύνασθαι, πλέον ἂν  
 θεωρεῖν αὐτοῖς γίνοιτο, οὐδ' ὅτι αὐτοῖς φασιν  
 εἶναι ἐξελεῖν ἀποθανοῦσι, τοῖς δὲ μή, αἰεὶ τὸν  
 οὐρανὸν κοσμοῦσιν· ἀπειρία γὰρ ἂν τοῦ ἔξω ὅ τι  
 ποτέ ἐστι τοῦτο ἂν λέγοιεν καὶ τοῦ ὄν τρόπου

<sup>1</sup> The phrase is taken from Heraclitus's description of the Sibyl's prophesying (Diels, 22B92), which seems to have

but refuse, in their "raving talk,"<sup>1</sup> to call the sun and the gods in the sky brothers and the soul of the universe sister? It is not lawful to include the bad in the bonds of kinship but only those who have become good and are not bodies but souls in bodies, and able to live in them in such a way that they are very close to the dwelling of the soul of the All in the universal body. This means no clashing with, nor yielding to the pleasures or sights which hurl themselves upon us from outside,<sup>2</sup> and not being disturbed by any hardship. The soul of the universe is not troubled; it has nothing that it can be troubled by. We, while we are here, can already repel the strokes of fortune by virtue, and make some of them become less by greatness of mind and others not even troubles because of our strength. As we draw near to the completely untroubled state we can imitate the soul of the universe and of the stars, and, coming to a closeness of resemblance to them hasten on to the same goal and have the same objects of contemplation, being ourselves, too, well prepared for them by nature and training (but they have their contemplation from the beginning). Even if the Gnostics say that they alone can contemplate, that does not make them any more contemplative, nor are they so because they claim to be able to go out of the universe when they die while the stars are not, since they adorn the sky for ever. They would say this through complete lack of understanding of what "being outside" really means,

been intended to be complimentary. Plotinus, as often, cares nothing for the context of the phrase he quotes—if, indeed, he knew it.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Plato, *Timaeus* 43B7-C1.

PLOTINUS: ENNEAD II. 9.

40 ψυχὴ παντὸς ἐπιμελεῖται ἢ ὅλη τοῦ ἀψύχου.  
"Ἐξεστὶν οὖν καὶ μὴ φιλοσωματεῖν καὶ καθαρῶς  
γίνεσθαι καὶ τοῦ θανάτου καταφρονεῖν καὶ τὰ  
ἀμείνω εἰδέναι κακείνα διώκειν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις  
τοῖς δυναμένοις διώκειν καὶ διώκουσιν αἰεὶ μὴ  
φθονεῖν ὡς οὐ διώκουσι, μηδὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πάσχειν  
45 τοῖς οἰομένοις τὰ ἄστρα μὴ θεῖν, ὅτι αὐτοῖς ἢ  
αἰσθησις ἐστάναι αὐτὰ λέγει. Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ  
αὐτοὶ οὐκ οἴονται τὰ ἔξω βλέπειν τὴν τῶν ἄστρον  
φύσιν, ὅτι οὐχ ὁρῶσι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτῶν ἔξωθεν  
οὔσαν.

AGAINST THE GNOSTICS

and of how "universal soul cares for all that is soulless."<sup>1</sup> So we can be without affection for the body and pure, and despise death, and know what is better and pursue it, and not show ill-feeling against others who can and do always pursue it, as if they did not: and not suffer from the same illusion as those who think the stars do not move because their senses tell them they stand still. In the same way the Gnostics, too, do not think that the nature of the stars sees what is outside the material universe, because they do not see that their souls come from outside.

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus* 246B6.