

places in the Church-related institutions which may seem more homelike to some of us. If any Church were to pursue a policy of withdrawal from or opposition to this kind of development this would lead to speedy intellectual and, probably, pastoral disaster.

I am not nearly sure enough of my own position to offer advice to anyone on how to behave in our new environment. But I hope that the way in which I have approached my subject may indicate that I still think it of the first importance to study our traditions in all their breadth and depth and complexity, as long as we do so critically. I would like to say from my own experience that I believe that a whole-hearted acceptance of the deep doubt and fundamental questioning which our inherited philosophic spirit brings with it gives us a chance to become more genuine, to pass from a strained, unnatural, archaizing attitude to at least the beginnings of a real faith.

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FOOTNOTES

1. All European intellectual disciplines can be traced back ultimately to Greece and would hardly have come into existence without the characteristic Greek temper of mind which produced philosophy. Most were, in their early stages, cultivated and developed by Greek philosophers.

2. I am using "Hellenic" not as a pedant's equivalent for "ancient Greek" but in the precise sense in which it was used by the Greek Fathers as meaning "non-Christian Greek," "pagan."

3. On this last, see J. J. O'Meara, "Pagan Attitudes in Christian Love" *Theology*, LXXV (1972), 520-525.

4. See Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), pp. 73-74; R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (London: Duckworth, 1972), pp. 104-105 and 120-122; A. H. Armstrong, "Man in the Cosmos," to appear in *Romanitas et Christianitas*, to be published in honour of Dr. J. H. Waszink in 1973.

XV

ETERNITY, LIFE AND MOVEMENT IN PLOTINUS' ACCOUNTS OF NOÛC

RÉSUMÉ

On a souvent remarqué et souvent discuté le caractère vital et dynamique de la description que Plotin donne de la seconde hypostase. Dans cette perspective, il peut être utile d'examiner en détail les passages dans lesquels Plotin parle de la vie éternelle, selon des aspects variés et de voir s'il parvient à donner de celle-ci une description aussi cohérente qu'il le croit.

1) Discussion des passages dans lesquels l'éternité immobile et immuable de l'Intellect est affirmée fortement (I, 1, 8; I, 3, 4; I, 8, 2; II, 9, 1; V, 1, 11; V, 3, 9; I, 4, 3; III, 2, 4; V, 2, 1) et même étendue à l'Âme (III, 6, 3-4; VI, 4, 5). Signification, en ce contexte, du refus d'accorder la mémoire à l'Intellect et à l'Âme en son état supérieur (IV, 3, 25; IV, 4, 1; IV 4, 7-9; IV, 4, 42) et de la doctrine selon laquelle le bonheur ne s'accroît pas avec le temps (I, 5). Autres passages affirmant une éternité immuable : II, 4, 4-5; III, 2, 1; VI, 4 et 6; V, 8, 6; VI, 3, 27; VI, 7, 38. Refus d'une potentialité dans le monde intelligible : II, 5, 3 et V, 9, 4. Éternité non-durationalnelle de l'Intellect : III, 7, 1-6.

2) Discussion des passages qui traitent de la sortie de l'Intellect hors de l'Un et du retour de l'Intellect à l'Un : III, 8, 8; VI, 9, 5; II, 4, 5; V, 3, 11; V, 4, 2; VI, 7, 16-17. L'Intellect comme puissance actualisée : III, 8, 11. Aspiration de l'Intellect vers l'Un : III, 8, 11; V, 3, 11; V, 6, 5.

3) Discussion des passages qui traitent (ou qui traitent apparemment) du mouvement intérieur à l'Intellect : VI, 2, 21; VI, 6, 9 et 10; V, 8, 3-4; VI, 7, 13.

Conclusion. Il existe un manque de cohérence chez Plotin : Ses descriptions de la vie éternelle ne sont pas toujours compatibles avec sa représentation d'une éternité non-durationalnelle, sur laquelle il insiste aussi fortement. Quelles raisons, personnelles ou traditionnelles, conduisirent Plotin à maintenir aussi fortement cette juxtaposition d'idées ? Le concept d'une éternité non-durationalnelle peut-il être employé utilement dans un contexte philosophique ou théologique ?

The dynamic, vital quality of the accounts which Plotinus gives of his Second Hypostasis has been generally noted and commented on. Throughout the *Enneads*, in almost all places where he speaks of the Divine Intellect and its world, he insists on its eternity, changelessness, completeness, its unity-in-diversity and total simul-

taneous self-presence and omnipresence. But he also insists on its intense vitality and inner variety: and, several times, he presents it as a life springing from the One and formed, patterned and structured by its return upon the One in contemplation. The possible influences which may have led Plotinus to think in this way have been much discussed. A notable one seems clearly to have been that of Stoic dynamic vitalism: though the Stoicism has been transformed to suit Plotinus' Platonic purposes, made to accord with his in some ways very odd exegesis of *Sophist*, 248 e-249 a and his understanding of the Intelligible Living Creature of the *Timaeus*; and we must not forget, either, the important influence of Aristotle's thought about the life of divine intelligence, which in some ways worked against the influence of Stoicism in the mind of Plotinus.¹ This doctrine of the eternal life of Intellect is well known to have had a considerable influence on later philosophy and theology. In view of its distinctiveness and importance it seems worth while to consider in some detail the passages in which Plotinus speaks of this eternal life in various ways and to try to see if he succeeds, not only in asserting that he is giving, but in actually giving a completely coherent account of it, which successfully shows his noetic world as intensely alive, but without any passage or process which would inevitably imply temporal succession or history. This is of great interest in so far as Plotinus is transposing Stoicism, for this, of course, is a kind of thinking in which a material divine intelligence proceeds in time through the everrecurring stages of its life-cycle. The Stoic deity has a history, though a repetitive one, but Plotinus' divine intelligence ought not to have any history at all.

(I) The first passages which I am going to consider are those in which Plotinus, though generally emphasizing the life of Divine Intelligence, insists on its absolutely changeless character. He presents it as changeless in the sense of having no before and after, no passage or transition from one state to another, no *process* of self-making or self-knowing. These are of course very numerous in the *Enneads* and I can only refer to a selection. As on the points which I shall consider in this communication there does not seem to be evidence for a development in the thought of Plotinus, though there may be variation at different periods, I shall generally give the passages in each group in the *Ennead* order. I, 1 [53] 8, 4-6 clearly states a basic point of doctrine, that Intellect is universally available to us, because eternal and unchanging. There are a number of passages in which the process of discursive reasoning in soul is contrasted with the static intuition of Intellect, e.g. I, 3 [20] 4, 16-19; I, 8 [51] 2, 8 ff.; II, 9 [33] 1, 24-30; V, 1 [10] 11; V, 3 [49] 9, 23-5. In others the contrast is between the two kinds of life, restless and successive contrasted with quiet, unchanging and self-contained, I, 4 [46] 3, 24 ff.; III, 2 [47] 4, 13-16 (with the striking phrase *ὄλον εμπνέουσιν καὶ οὐκ ἀτρεμοῦσαν ζωὴν ἀναπνοὴν τῆς ἡρεμοῦσης οὐσαν*); V, 2 [11] 1, 16-21.

But there are other passages in which the vital importance of the idea of static and unchanging life for Plotinus is illustrated, not by a contrast between Intellect

(1) On the Platonic and Aristotelian background of Plotinus' thought about the life of Divine Intellect, and his transposition of Stoic dynamism and, especially of the idea of *τοιαυτὴ κίνησις*, see P. HADOT, *Être, Vie, Pensée chez Plotin et avant Plotin* in *Entretiens Hardt* V (Vandoeuvres-Genève, 1960), pp. 105-141, an essay which has to a great extent inspired this communication: see also Hadot's discussion of the influence of Stoic thought on Plotinus and post-Plotinian Platonism in *Porphyre et Victorinus* (Paris, 1968) I, pp. 225-234.

and Soul, but by raising Soul to the unchanging level, III, 6 [26] 3, 22 ff., cp. 4, 34 ff. (here the object is to exclude anything like physical movement or change from soul or form); VI, 4 [22] 5, 5-8 (cosmic soul does not flow because it has nowhere to flow to—again a sort of physical movement and change is excluded). In general this treatise (VI, 4-5 [22-23]) greatly emphasizes the static, unchanging character of real being. We may note here that in the treatise *On Difficulties about the Soul* (IV, 3-4 [27-8]), not only is the possibility of Intellect's having a real history excluded by denying it memory, IV, 3, 25, 13-17, a clear assertion of its static eternity; but Plotinus excludes memory, and so effective remembered history from souls, not only in the intelligible world (IV, 4, 1) but in their highest, celestial or cosmic embodiment (IV, 4, 7-9). The stars live as in eternity, absorbed in their present contemplation of God so that they need not remember their past contemplation, and unaware of the unremarkable passage of their endless circular journeying, and the World-Soul does not have, and does not need a memory (cp. IV, 4, 42 where the stars need no memory to respond to prayers). In the years when he wrote this group of treatises (*Life*, ch. 5), which includes VI, 4-5 [22-23], III, 6 [26], and IV, 3-4 [27-28] Plotinus seems to have been particularly inclined to minimise the distinction between Intellect and Soul and to present Soul at its highest as purely noetic.¹ It will be useful also to remember here I, 5 [36] with its vigorous argument that well-being does not increase with time but is to be measured rather by eternity (I, 5, 7, 22), that nothing can be added to the perfect moment in which we fully realise our eternal life. Here we have a suggestion of that personal experience of eternity which is perhaps the most important source of the doctrine of Plotinus, and is so impressively described in IV, 7 [2] 10.

Other passages in which the unchanging, durationless character of the eternal life of Intellect is strongly insisted on are II, 4 [12] 4-5, on intelligible matter (though we should note that Plotinus slips unavoidably into time-language at the end of ch. 5, where we meet the doctrine of the generation of Intellect from the One and its return which will be discussed in my next section); III, 2 [47] 1, 26 ff., a striking statement of the strength and unity of the eternal; V, 1 [10] 4 and 6 (in 4 we have the doctrine of eternal life expressed, as it is several times, in terms of the "Platonic Categories"); V, 8 [31] 6, the famous comment on the non-discursiveness of hieroglyphics; VI, 3 [44] 27 with its interesting distinction between *ἡρεμία* here below (the absence or negation of motion) and *στάσις* in the intelligible world which is not a negation of intelligible *κίνησις* but compatible and simultaneous with it; VI, 7 [38] 35, 19-30, where we are told clearly that the apparent temporal succession in an intensely dynamic description of Intellect's knowledge of and mystical union with the One is due to the inevitable inadequacy of the description and that the two states are timeless and simultaneous. Passages which should be specially noted are II, 5 [25] 3 and V, 9 [5] 4 and 6-10, where Intellect is pure *ἐνέργεια*, actualising the potency of soul in V, 9, 4, but itself in no sense *δυνάμει*; there is no Aristotelian potency in the intelligible world. With this we may immediately contrast III, 8 [30] 11, 1-2 where Intellect in its contemplation of the One is described as a potency which has come into actuality: the contrast will be discussed in my next section.

(1) A striking example of this, very relevant here, is IV, 4, 15, with its conclusion that souls are not really in time at all, but share the eternity proper to Intellect.

The clearest statement of the eternity of Intellect and the sharpest contrast between its timeless unity and the divided time-life of Soul is of course in the treatise *On Time and Eternity*, III, 7 [45]. The first six chapters of this treatise are the finest presentation in ancient, perhaps in any, philosophical literature of eternal life in its wholeness and simultaneity, excluding any incompleteness, change, variation or passage. There are very clear statements in ch. 3, 36-8 γίνεται τόνον ἢ περὶ τὸ ὄν ἐν τῷ εἶναι ζωῆ ὁμοῦ πᾶσα καὶ πλήρης ἀδιάστατος πανταγῆ τοῦτο, ὁ δὲ ζητοῦμεν αἰών and ch. 5, 25-28. In ch. 4, 19 ff. and 6, 38 ff. the things which have come to be, the things in time, which need to have a history to have a full existence, which need a future to complete their being and are diminished if it is taken away, are contrasted with the beings of eternity, which need no future and could only be diminished or destroyed by temporality. In ch. 11, 22-23, it is said significantly of the "restless power" of soul which originates time τὸ μὲν ἀθρόον αὐτῆ πᾶν παρεῖναι οὐκ ἤθελεν; time only comes into existence because soul does not want everything to be present to it all at once, but prefers to have one thing after another. Plotinus makes it abundantly clear in this treatise that his eternity is a *nunc stans*, a changeless now, a present without past or future. We should notice that it is by no means certain that this is the doctrine of Plato, or Aristotle. When Plato contrasts eternity and time in *Timaeus*, 37 d he may well be contrasting the endless duration of the unchanging with the duration of the changeable measured by the movements of the heavenly bodies: he seems to be able to separate duration and time in his thinking.¹ And divine life for Aristotle is endless duration rather than an eternal present.

(II) We must now turn to consider a group of passages in which Intellect is represented as having a kind of history in relationship to the One, as having passed through a process (of course asserted to be timeless) of outgoing from and return to its origin. We should remember here that, as Dr. Blumenthal has pointed out to me, Plotinus is thinking about Intellect in a different context. In the passages which we have just been considering, he is concerned with its relationship to what lies below it, to Soul and the material universe; in those which we are going to consider, he is concerned with its relationship to its transcendent origin. This would certainly account for a considerable difference of emphasis. But I am inclined to think, as

(1) The view here stated is that of F. M. CORNFORD: see *Plato's Cosmology*, p. 98, n. 1 and p. 102. For the opposite view, that Plato's αἰών is the durationless eternity of the Neoplatonists, see PROCLUS, *In Tim.*, 73 c-d (I, p. 239, 2-6, Diehl), and H. CHERNISS, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and the Academy* (Reprinted New York, 1962), pp. 211ff and *The Riddle of the Early Academy* (Reprinted New York, 1962), pp. 5f. John WHITTAKER in his article *The 'Eternity' of the Platonic Forms*, *Phronesis*, I, XIII, 1968, 2, pp. 131-44 has produced strong reasons for accepting Cornford's view. He also has some enlightening remarks on Aristotle's statements about divine life in *De Caelo*, A, 9, 279 a, 11-28 and *Met.*, A 1072 b-1073 d (pp. 141-2) and on the way in which Plato and Aristotle may have contributed to the development of the concept of non-durational eternity (p. 143). In another article, *Ammonius on the Delphic E* (*Classical Quarterly*, N.S., XIX, 1, May 1969, pp. 185-192) Whittaker discusses a passage of Plutarch in which the non-durational eternity of God who is Being and the One is sharply contrasted with the temporal mutability of man (*De E Apud Delphos*, 393 a-393 c). He shows that the main content of this discourse of Ammonius (391 c-394 c) is of Neopythagorean inspiration, and tentatively suggests a more specific source for the passage considered in the commentary of Eudorus of Alexandria on the *Timaeus*. His discussion makes it appear very likely that the concept of non-durational eternity was current among Neopythagoreans in the 1st century B.C., and at least possible that Eudorus interpreted the αἰών of *Timaeus*, 37 d as a *nunc stans*.

we shall see, that the contrast between the two sets of descriptions is not just one of difference of emphasis. We must also always remember that the passages to be considered which seem to attribute process, change and history to Intellect often form parts of extended discussions, in which elsewhere the static eternity of Intellect is strongly affirmed. I do not at all wish to ignore Plotinus' characteristic style of philosophising, with its continual variation of the point of view, its ceaseless retouches and modifications of an account always admitted to be inadequate, its admission of unresolved tensions and perhaps an element of deliberate paradox. But I do not think that the recognition of this makes it desirable simply to stop asking questions about the consistency and coherence of his various accounts of the life of Intellect, though I am sure that he himself saw no inconsistency or incoherence in them.

The identity of eternal life and thought in Intellect and the relative perfection of its living contemplation in comparison with that of Soul are clearly asserted in III, 8 [30] 8. But in lines 30-40 of this chapter we have the very curious account of Intellect absent mindedly and besottedly¹ leaving its contemplation of the One as One and unrolling itself into multiplicity, a departure from the highest which Plotinus clearly thinks is in some way culpable (II, 35-6), and which results in the establishment of Intellect as a one-in-many, an all-inclusive whole, below the absolute unity of the first principle. For the idea of a πόλις of Intellect, a self-willed and culpable self-separation from the One compare VI, 9 [9] 5, 29.² For more precise descriptions of how Intellect, having emerged from the One, establishes itself in its own true nature by a kind of checked return in contemplation (falling short of the mystical union which it also eternally possesses, VI, 7 [38] 35, 20 ff.), see II, 4 [12], 5, 31-35 (cp. p. 69); V, 3 [49] 11, 1-12 (the formation by a pluralising vision of the One of the ὄψις οὐπω ἰδοῦσα or ἀτίπωτος ὄψις); V, 4 [7] 2, 4-10 (again the pluralising vision informing and perfecting the ἀόριστος ὄψις or ἀόριστος δῶς) and the full account of the process in VI, 7 [38] 16-17. This doctrine—Aristotelian with a difference—of Intellect as informed by the transcendent object which it cannot in its normal thinking receive in its true nature once it has left it, is constant throughout the *Enneads*. It is summed up in III, 8 [30] 11, 1-2 in the words ἐπεὶ γὰρ ὁ νοῦς ἐστιν ὄψις τις καὶ ὄψις ὁρῶσα, δύναμις ἔσται εἰς ἐνέργειαν ἐλθοῦσα. This seems to me incompatible with the assertion in II, 5 [25] 3 and V, 9 [5] 4 and 6-10 that there is no potency in the intelligible world. A timeless Pure Act cannot surely be also a potency which has been actualized. And I find it (perhaps because I have an obtuse and time-bound mind) impossible to translate this whole doctrine, which is certainly expressed in time-language, into non-durational terms. It seems to imply that Intellect has a history of at least two episodes, and that something happens to it, when it should have no history and nothing should happen to it at all. There should be no possibility in the durationless intelligible world of Plotinus of even a once-for-all 'tonic movement.' Again, I find the recurrent insistence on an ἐρσις of Intellect towards the

(1) βεβαρημένος 1,34 is surely a reminiscence of *Symposium*, 203 b 7—the drunken Poros sleeping it off in the garden: though in III, 5 [50] 9 Poros drops to the level of Soul, in a way characteristic of Plotinus' casual interpretation of myth to suit his purpose of the moment.

(2) On the subject of πόλις in Plotinus and the Gnostics see my contribution to the *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Mediaeval Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1967, reprinted 1969), Part III, ch. 15, pp. 242-5.

One (III, 8, 11, 23; V, 3, 11, 12; V, 6 [24] 5, 9-10) difficult to interpret nondurationally. The fine phrase in III, 8, 11 ἐφιέμενος ἀεὶ καὶ ἀεὶ τυγχάνων is appropriate to everlasting life, to a finite mind endlessly exploring the riches of the infinite with a desire ever stimulated by new revelations of the unbounded good into which it penetrates ever more deeply: but how can it apply to an absolutely timeless perfect intellect? If we take the accounts of the relationship of Intellect to the One to be really saying something about the quest for and attainment of God by our selves as we are aware of them in this world, existing in time and with a history, we may find that they are saying something profound and important. But this is not what Plotinus thinks he is talking about.

(III) There are a few very interesting passages in the *Enneads* where the internal κίνησις, which is so often said to be inseparably coupled with στάσις in the passages where the 'Platonic Categories' are applied to Intellect, is described in terms which seem clearly to imply duration and history, to suggest that Intellect has a past and future as well as a present. It is however only fair to Plotinus to preface the discussion of them by citing a passage where he tries very hard to argue that this sort of language, when applied to Intellect, does not really carry any implication of this sort. It occurs in VI, 2 [43] 21. This chapter gives a very dynamic-sounding account of what, if one reads it carelessly, appears to be a process of emergence of quantity and quality, figures and numbers, from the 'Platonic Categories'. But if one reads it carefully, and compares it with ch. 8 of the same treatise, in which we are instructed how to see the 'Platonic Categories' themselves in Intellect, we shall see that the process-language is here didactic and expository: the process does not take place in Intellect, but is to take place in our minds. Quantity and quality 'emerge' only in the sense in which details in a picture emerge when one studies it carefully. But even so, Plotinus fears that his language may have been misleading and corrects himself, as he so often does, by saying (21, 29-32) ἀλλ' ἔστιν εἰς ὅσον λόγος, μέγας, τέλειος, πάντας περιέχων, ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων αὐτοῦ ἐπεξιόν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀεὶ ἐπεξελλόν, ὥστε μηδέποτε τὸ ἐπεξιέναι ἀληθὲς εἶναι. What he is saying here, in a rather paradoxical way, is that what looks to us like the result of a process of reasoning, Intellect's total possession of all the detailed variety of its content, is in fact nothing of the sort. He would no doubt like us to apply the same sort of correction to the other passages which I am going to cite, but I am not sure that it can be done, in some cases at least, without evacuating the passages of a vital part of their content. First I will cite two passages from the treatise *On Numbers*, VI, 6 [34], where the ideal numbers are, so to speak, suspiciously active. In ch. 9, 29-32 we read ἄρ' οὖν τὸ μὲν ὄν ἀριθμὸς ἡνωμένος, τὰ δὲ ὄντα ἐξεληγμένους ἀριθμὸς, νοῦς δὲ ἀριθμὸς ἐν ἑαυτῷ κινούμενος, τὸ δὲ ζῶον ἀριθμὸς περιέχων; and in ch. 10, 1-2 we have ἔστῶς οὖν τὸ ὄν ἐν πλήθει ἀριθμὸς, ὅτε πολὺ μὲν ἡγείρετο, παρασκευὴ δὲ ὅλον ἦν πρὸς τὰ ὄντα καὶ προτύποις... It might just be possible to apply Plotinian correction to these passages, though unrolling oneself, waking up, preparing and performing are processes and operations which it is very difficult to think of in terms of non-process and non-duration without depriving them of all meaning. But the difficulty of taking the next two passages which I shall consider as descriptions of what goes on in timeless eternity (the paradox here is deliberate) goes a good deal deeper. These are the great visionary description

of the life of Intellect in V, 8 [31] 3-4 and the still more remarkable, and closely related VI, 7 [38] 13¹. There is nowhere in the *Enneads* where the total simultaneity, the eternal presence of everything to and in everything in the world of Intellect is more strongly insisted on and vividly expressed than in the first of these passages, e.g. 4, 7-8 ὥστε πανταχοῦ πάντα καὶ πᾶν πᾶν καὶ ἕκαστον πᾶν καὶ ἄπειρος ἢ αἴγλη. But there is also nowhere, except VI, 7, 13, where the varied life of Intellect is more dynamically described; and in some places it is described in such terms that it seems impossible to eliminate an awareness of duration from the intellectual experience we are called upon to share without destroying or radically transforming that experience. The gods in the intelligible heaven 'travel' through their country—admittedly ἀναπαυόμενοι (3, 35-6); each intellect There moves in a place which is itself and 'runs along with it' συνθεῖ αὐτῷ (4, 15-18); intellect ὄρων γὰρ μᾶλλον ὄρεζ, καὶ καθορῶν ἕπειρον αὐτὸν καὶ τὰ ὄρώμενα τῇ ἑαυτοῦ συνέπεται φύσει. In VI, 7, 13 the insistence on a kind of movement in Intellect which seems necessarily to involve duration, passage, and change of awareness is even more striking. The chapter insists on the importance of otherness and movement in the life of Intellect with a one-sidedness unusual in Plotinus. Change and otherness are essential to its life εἰ γὰρ μηδεμίαν ἔχει ἐξαλλαγὴν μηδὲ τις ἐξεγείρει αὐτὸ εἰς τὸ ζῆν ἑτερότης, οὐδ' ἂν ἐνέργεια εἶη (II, 11-12). The multiplicity of real beings is due to Intellect 'wandering within itself': οὐκ ἔστιν ἄρα τὰ ὄντα εἶναι μὴ νοῦ ἐνεργήσαντος, ἐνεργήσαντος δὲ ἀεὶ ἄλλο μετ' ἄλλο καὶ ὅσον πλανηθέντος πᾶσαν πλάνην καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πλανηθέντος, οἷα νοῦς ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ ἀληθινὸς πέφυκε πλανᾶσθαι· πέφυκε δ' ἐν οὐσίαις πλανᾶσθαι συνθεουσῶν τῶν οὐσίων² ταῖς αὐτοῦ πλάναις. Πανταχοῦ δ' αὐτὸς ἔστι· μενοῦσαν οὖν ἔχει τὴν πλάνην (II, 28-34).³ Plotinus tries to save himself with these last words, as he did with ἀναπαυόμενοι at the end of V, 8, 3, from an interpretation which he would have found undesirable. But it seems to me that he has in these passages irrevocably introduced into his account of the eternal life of Intellect the idea of intellectual travel and exploration, and so of duration and succession. The inner life of Intellect has a history, the history of a mind endlessly exploring the rich and varied world which is itself, a world of which the content is indeed all continually present to it, ever fresh and new and intimately its own, so that its exploration is an unrewarding joy, never straying into uncongenial territory and leaving no room for boredom (V, 8, 4, 26-31); but a world which is explored successively, part by part, and in which, it would seem, there is always room for further discoveries. I think that there is something more here than Plotinus could account for by saying that he was forced here below to use inappropriate, time-bound language about eternal reality, something that goes deeper than a manner of speaking. These wonderful accounts of eternal life would be so greatly impoverished if one

(1) The great work of which V, 8 is the second part comes shortly before VI, 7 in the chronological order (and is immediately followed by the treatise *On Numbers* (VI, 6) just cited): both passages are clearly inspired by, and contain verbal reminiscences of the *Phaedrus* myth. Both also are parts of developments working up from below to the One, which may be significant (cp. my remarks at the beginning of (II)).

(2) Cp. συνθεῖ αὐτῷ V, 8, 4, 16.

(3) And, shortly afterwards, στάσις is not as usual coupled with κίνησις but flatly denied: εἰ δ' ἔστηκεν, οὐ νοεῖ· ὥστε καὶ, εἰ ἔστη, οὐ νενόηκεν· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, οὐδ' ἔστιν. (II, 39-40).

eliminated from them all suggestion of duration, succession, change without decay, and history, that they would hardly be recognizable as accounts of life at all, and certainly not of the fullest and most perfect life.

CONCLUSION

My conclusion, then, is that the accounts which Plotinus gives of the eternal life of Intellect are not fully consistent or coherent, and in particular that he is not always successful in confining his descriptions of it within the limits imposed by the concept of non-durational eternity, on which he so strongly insists. He is, perhaps we may say, a very Plotinian soul who both wants and does not want to have everything all together at once. In general he tries to pack too much and too varied a content of tradition and experience into his account of his Second Hypostasis for consistency. This may be the reason why none of his successors, pagan or Christian, could take over his doctrine of Intellect simply as they found it. Our survey of the variety of his accounts raises some important questions for discussion: first about the reasons, traditional and personal, which led Plotinus to try to combine the idea of a life which, just because it is life at its most intense, must be presented as moving and changing both in relation to its source and within itself with the concept of non-durational eternity; and then the very much larger question, perhaps too large for appropriate discussion here, whether non-durational eternity is a concept which can be usefully employed in any philosophical or theological context.¹

(1) The discussion of eternity as *Nunc Stans* in the chapter on *Time* in Edwyn Bevan's Gifford lectures *Symbolism and Belief* (first published London, 1938; reprinted in the Fontana Library, London, 1962) is relevant here. Bevan's tentative conclusion (p. 90) is that 'it would seem an inappropriate conception for the eternal life of the blessed and an even less happy symbol for the unimaginable life of God than Royce's idea of a specious present.'

ELEMENTS IN THE THOUGHT OF PLOTINUS AT VARIANCE WITH CLASSICAL INTELLECTUALISM

PLOTINUS is, up to a point, a classical intellectualist in the manner of Aristotle, and, he would himself have certainly thought, of Plato. He professes, that is, to give an account of everything that is in any degree real in the universe (and even a kind of account of the unreal) which is certainly and unchangingly true and can be demonstrated to be so by rational processes. This account culminates in the description of an eternal realm of intelligible intellect which can be (and indeed really always is) our own, certainly and impermutably possessed. This systematic account of reality, as is well known, breaks down, and we have to break out of it, in a very startling way at the top. Beyond the Platonic-Aristotelian Intellect-Intelligible, the world of real being which is *Noûs* and *νοητά*, lies the One or Good beyond being, which is neither intelligent nor intelligible. When we have completed our understanding of reality, we have to leave it all behind in order to find what turns out to be the only thing we want, the source of all values and the goal of all desire, which alone makes it worth the effort to attain to *Noûs* on the way, as it is the only reason why *Noûs* is there at all. I find the phrase . . . τὸ ἐπέκεινα αὐτοῦ ὄντων χάριν καὶ οἱ πρόσθεν λόγοι which marks the transition from *Noûs* to the One in Chapter 9 of the treatise *On Contemplation* (iii 8[30]) rather significant. Certainly in what the Germans now call the *Grossschrift*¹ and in the closely related treatise written a year or two later, *On How the Multitude of the Forms came into being and On the Good*,² the great elaborate descriptions of the intelligible world seem to be designed to lead us to a point from which the indescribable One can be indicated. Plotinus, however, normally presents the knowledge that the One is there as attainable partly, though not wholly, by an intellectual process; we find, when we think things out to the end, that we must go beyond the duality of thought and object of thought and the plurality of Ideas to the ultimate unity from which the double-sided, structured, finite perfection of the ultimate intelligible proceeds: though it is something else than a mere desire to carry a logical process to its end which drives us on.

I propose here to consider some odd aspects of Plotinus' thought about thinking at all levels which fit badly with the classical intellectualism to which, at all levels below the highest, he consciously aspired, and which reveal in him a temper of mind very different from that of Aristotle, or of the side of Plato in which most philosophers (though not all theologians) have been interested in modern times. I shall make no attempt to link these aspects into a sort of anti-intellectualist system, which would be both absurd and unhistorical, and I shall not conceal the fact that I think that Plotinus would be, probably, very annoyed with me for writing about him like this. He might even have decided, if he had read this paper, that he ought to have done more about revising his writings, and to have removed some passages which I find particularly interesting as liable to misunderstanding and likely to start undesirable trains of thought in the minds of barbarian readers; for I do not want, either, to conceal my opinion that if you lay some emphasis on these odd aspects of Plotinus' thinking you may arrive at an account of what goes on in the human mind (at least in my mind) and of what it may discover in the world a good deal more adequate, and a good deal more adaptable and flexible, than the classical intellectualist systems or the various reductionist, no-nonsense, clear and coherent accounts which have generally superseded them in our own time.

In writing this paper I have realised yet again how much I, like many others, have been helped to understand Plotinus by the all too brief, but always illuminating, remarks which E. R. Dodds has from time to time made upon him. I owe a great deal, in particular, to

¹ iii 8 [30], v 8 [31], v 5 [32], ii 9 [33].

² vi 7 [38].