

subject which may be said to characterize the whole of the intelligible when the differences within it are not being stressed, and the inability of the discursive level to produce such self-knowledge.

We may look at some doubtful passages in I.1 in a similar way. Here Plotinus says that *nous* is common to all because it is indivisible, but that each of us has it as his own: ὅτι ἔχει καὶ ἕκαστος αὐτὸν ὅλον ἐν ψυχῇ τῇ πρώτῃ (I.1.8.3-6). Ψυχῇ τῇ πρώτῃ could mean the hypostasis, and here we may compare the phrase τῇ μὲν πρώτῃ τῇ μετὰ νοῦν in the next treatise (I.7 [54]. 2.6-7), or it could mean the top part of each individual soul: the latter seems less likely, but if it were what Plotinus means then the individual soul would in fact reach up into the hypostasis *Nous*. That is also suggested by I.1.9.13-15. The difficulty of interpreting these two treatises in this respect is crystallized in the last sentence of I.1, μέρος γὰρ καὶ οὗτοι (νοῦς) ἡμῶν καὶ πρὸς τοῦτον ἔνιμεν. Professor Theiler thinks that Plotinus is merely exaggerating in calling *nous* a part of us. One could object that if any part of *Nous*, or the intelligible, is in us, then so is the whole, but in so far as Plotinus is discussing what belongs to the individual and what does not he should be more precise. If Theiler is right then the intention of the closing remark would not be inconsistent with what seems to be the meaning of the passage in chapter 8.

On balance then it seems that these two treatises regard our *nous* as being in Soul, but the balance does not tilt very far. It may be that Plotinus' statements are so irritatingly ambiguous just because he was not here particularly interested in making the distinctions we are trying to find. Just as in the passages in V.3 he finds the conditions for self-knowledge in direct intuition and wishes merely to distinguish the kind of thought where they exist from that where they do not, so in I.1 he is basically concerned to define the ζῆλον, and so to distinguish what is and what is not part of the sensible man. Any distinctions within the intelligible are less important. But I think that these passages require a more detailed treatment than they can be given here and am prepared to find that my present view of them is inadequate. It is a question that I hope we might discuss. For the moment let it be said that in these discussions of the individual soul we seem to find that Plotinus will be less careful of differences within the intelligible than he would be if he were concerned primarily with these. And so the situation is very similar to that which we found when looking at *Nous* and soul *qua* hypostases. But while this way of looking at some of the problems may be helpful, we should not assume that it will solve them all (58).

(57) *ad loc.* THEILER compares V.3.3.24 ff.

(58) I should like to thank Professor ARMSTRONG for reading and criticizing a draft of this paper.

SOUL, WORLD-SOUL AND INDIVIDUAL SOUL IN PLOTINUS

RÉSUMÉ

Plotin affirme que toutes les âmes ne sont qu'une âme ; cette âme unique inclut l'âme du monde et les âmes individuelles. Pourtant toutes les âmes peuvent se comporter de manière différente, en particulier l'âme du monde. Cette situation engendre des incohérences. Le présent exposé est destiné à définir ce que sont exactement ces incohérences, ainsi que leur origine et leur étendue.

Plotin parle peu de la nature des différentes âmes. Au premier abord, on ne voit pas clairement s'il y a deux ou trois sortes d'âmes ; mais on peut finalement constater qu'il y a chez Plotin trois sortes d'âme et que l'âme du monde est différente de l'Âme-hypostase. Les âmes individuelles sont en théorie égales, par leur statut, à l'âme du monde. Plotin ne donne pas d'explication satisfaisante des différences qui existent entre les âmes individuelles ou entre celles-ci et l'âme du monde. Quand il examine les activités des différentes âmes, leur égalité disparaît. Ces différences paraissent résulter du corps. C'est encore une nouvelle incohérence, puisque les différences entre les corps sont produites en premier lieu par l'âme. De la même manière, le corps semble contrôler l'étendue de l'âme et il ne devrait pas en être ainsi. La supériorité de l'âme du monde sur les âmes individuelles provient du fait qu'elle possède un corps supérieur : de même les caractéristiques des âmes individuelles résultent de différences de corps et de milieu environnant, donc aussi des passions, auxquelles l'âme du monde n'est pas sujette. Le modèle qui régit les relations entre les âmes est le suivant : elles sont unies au sommet, divergent au plan de la raison et de la sensation et, curieusement, se réunissent au point le plus bas.

It is well known that Plotinus frequently asserts that all souls are one, a unity which includes both the world soul and the soul of each individual. It is equally well-known that all these souls can and do behave in different ways in spite of their fundamental unity. In particular the world-soul is very different in its conduct, if not in its essence, from the souls with which it is supposed to be identical. That these two positions are in fact inconsistent must be evident to all students of Plotinus, even though the point has not received much attention. In a way this is not surprising,

since it soon becomes clear that the problem has no solution. I should like to say at the start that I am not going to produce a solution out of the hat. For whatever reasons Plotinus does not provide us with the necessary material.¹ The purpose of this paper is merely to examine what Plotinus does say, to look more closely at the inconsistencies that there are and to consider their extent. There are certain things I do not intend to do. One is to discuss the philosophical validity of Plotinus' claims about the unity and multiplicity of soul. Another is to handle, except incidentally, the problem of the soul's descent, though this is a problem that cannot really be solved unless one can define the differences between souls.

Most discussions of the relations between different kinds of soul on the one hand, and between different souls of one kind on the other, are concerned with what they do rather than what they are. This in itself is significant, because most of what Plotinus says is relevant only to the first of these questions. Though he devotes a certain amount of space to the proposition that all souls are one, he is more concerned with establishing their similarity than defining their differences. When the differences are important, they are either assumed or attributed to what are perhaps improperly described as extraneous influences. To this point we must return at some length later. At this stage it may be desirable to recall one of Plotinus' discussions of the unity of soul.

The fullest treatments of this question are to be found in IV, 9 and at the start of IV, 3. In IV, 9, which is specifically devoted to our problem, it soon becomes clear that Plotinus is ill at ease, a fact noticed by Harder who said that this treatise has the character of an *apologia*.² It is studded with expressions expecting disbelief.³ The first three chapters urge the view that all souls are one and attempt to dispel two objections, how two individuals can act or perceive differently if their souls are one, and how, if all souls are one, there can be different types of soul. The first is met with the answer that the difference is possible because the two do not share one body or one *συναμρότερον*. Herein lies an inconsistency which we shall have to consider. Plotinus also compares sensations in different individuals to a perception in one part of an individual which is not shared by the other parts. An appeal to this analogy is also used against the second objection.

In the fourth chapter of this treatise Plotinus takes up the question he had earlier reserved, how all the souls are one. He had mentioned two possibilities. The first was that the souls are one because they come from *ἡ τοῦ παντός ψυχή* (ch. 1, 10-11), the second that the *τοῦ παντός ψυχή* as well as the individual souls come from one soul and are therefore one. These alternatives, which Plotinus here leaves open, raise the question whether *ἡ τοῦ παντός ψυχή* is or is not identical with *Ψυχή* the third hypostasis. Does Plotinus distinguish two kinds of soul, the individual soul and the *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* or three, the individual soul, the *ψυχή τοῦ παντός*, and *ψυχή* without qualification? If the answer to this question is two, the individual souls must come from

(1) This was already noticed by ZELLER, *Die Philosophie der Griechen* III.ii³, Leipzig, 1881, p. 542, n. 4.

(2) *Plotinus Schriften*. Übersetzt von R. Harder.² I b, Hamburg, 1956, p. 458f.

(3) e.g. οὐκ ἔτοπον οὐδὲ ἀπογνωστόν, 2,20, μὴ δὲ τις ἀπιστεῖτω, 5,7. Cf. the talk of *παραμυθία* and *πειθῶ* in a similar context at VI, 5, 11, 5-7.

the *ψυχή τοῦ παντός*, which will then be coextensive with the hypostasis. If the answer is three, we shall have to ask how they are related. Is there then a straight line of descent from the hypostasis through the *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* to the individual souls, or are these and the *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* directly descended from the hypostasis?

Since the second question is merely hypothetical if the answer to the first is two and not three, we must deal with that first. Let us return to IV, 9, 4 where the problem is well illustrated. There Plotinus speaks of one and the same soul being in the many bodies, and before this one that is in the many another that is not, from which derives the one that is in the many: *τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ μίαν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἐν πολλοῖς σώμασι ψυχὴν ὑπάρχειν καὶ πρὸ ταύτης τῆς μιᾶς τῆς ἐν πολλοῖς ἄλλῃν αὐ εἶναι μὴ ἐν πολλοῖς, ἀφ' ἧς ἡ ἐν πολλοῖς μία* (IV, 9, 4, 15-18). This and other similar references to many souls being derived from one (e.g. IV, 8, 3, 11-12; III, 9, 3, 4-5) do not specify what that one is, nor do they make it clear whether the world soul is to be included in the multitude. As it stands our text allows the possibility that the source of the many souls is either the world soul or the hypostasis itself. If the two are identical then, of course there is no problem.

Now a glance at the relevant texts might easily give the impression that the world soul and the hypostasis are in fact the same. This was the view of Zeller, and others have followed him.¹ If they are right, then *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* must refer to both and be that soul from which the other souls come. But there are texts where Plotinus refers to the world soul as the sister of the individual souls (IV, 3, 6, 13; II, 9, 18, 16). These might arouse suspicion, since if the world soul and the hypostasis are identical, we shall be left with a position where the world soul is both parent and sister of the other souls, for in our passage from IV, 9 and its parallels it would have to be their parent. Matters are not helped by the fact that the contexts in which the term *ἡ τοῦ παντός ψυχή*, or its equivalent *ἡ τοῦ ὅλου ψυχή*, are used do not always delimit its reference. But there are some which do. Let us look at a passage where *ἡ τοῦ παντός ψυχή* must refer not to the hypostasis, but to a world soul which has another form of soul above it. In IV, 4, 32, talking about how the components of the world ζῆλον are parts, Plotinus says *ὅσον δὲ καὶ ψυχῆς τοῦ παντός μετέχει, κατὰ τοσοῦτον καὶ ταύτη· καὶ τὰ μὲν μόνῃς ταύτης μετέχοντα κατὰ πᾶν ἐστὶ μέρη, ὅσα δὲ καὶ ἄλλῃς, ταύτη ἔχει τὸ μὴ μέρη πάντη εἶναι* (II, 8-11). Here *ἄλλῃς* must signify a soul other than and higher than that which is described as *ψυχή τοῦ παντός*. This higher soul can only be the hypostasis. The same conclusion may be drawn from a remark early in IV, 3 about the difficulties that occur *εἰ μὴ τις τὸ μὲν ἐν στήθειεν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ μὴ πίπτον εἰς σῶμα, εἴτ' ἐξ ἐκείνου τὰς πάσας, τὴν τε τοῦ ὅλου καὶ τὰς ἄλλας* (IV, 3, 4, 14-16). It is clear from the context that the *ἐν* referred to here is a unity which is soul. This must be the hypostasis, so here too *ἡ τοῦ ὅλου ψυχή* is thought of as being derived from rather than identical with it. Since the point might be made that *ἡ τοῦ ὅλου ψυχή* is not necessarily the same thing as *ἡ τοῦ παντός ψυχή*, it may be as well to state explicitly that the two terms do refer to the same entity. We may safely conclude that we are dealing with three types of soul rather than two, and that it is the world soul that is called *ἡ τοῦ παντός ψυχή*.

(1) *Op. cit.*, p. 538. Cf. most recently J. M. RIST, *Plotinus. The Road to Reality*, Cambridge, 1967, p. 113.

Before we go on to deal with our second question, the one about the relations between these three types of soul, it may be worth considering briefly why *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* might be identified with *ψυχή tout court*. In the first place there are passages which suggest that the world soul comes next after *Νοῦς* in the hierarchy of being. Thus we may read *νοῦς δὴ ψυχῆ δίδωσι τῆ τοῦ παντός, ψυχή δὲ παρ' αὐτῆς ἢ μετὰ νοῦν τῆ μετ' αὐτὴν ἐλάμπουσα καὶ τυπούσα* (II, 3, 17, 15-16). Here there is no intermediary between *Νοῦς* and what is called *ψυχή τοῦ παντός*. The same is true of a passage in the following chapter, at II, 3, 18, 9ff. The contexts are similar and provide us with a likely explanation of the apparent inconsistency. In both cases Plotinus is discussing the demiurgic functions of soul and intellect: in chapter 18 *Νοῦς* is actually called *δημιουργός*. Hence what matters is the chain of command between *Νοῦς* and the lower manifestations of Soul which Plotinus elsewhere calls *φύσις*. The world soul, like the soul of the individual, has direct access to *Νοῦς* in certain circumstances, and the translation of what is in *Νοῦς* into the creation of our world is a case where such access is likely to be emphasised. But we should not infer that the access of any entity to higher forms of being means that other forms of being may not exist between. After all the possibility of mystic union for the individual does not imply the abolition of *Νοῦς*. Here is one starting point for the view that *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* and the hypostasis are identical. Another might be found in those passages which show that the world soul is not preoccupied with the world (e.g. IV, 3, 12, 8ff.). One of these does actually treat all soul and the world soul as one: *ἡ μὲν ὅλη καὶ ὅλου ... κοσμεῖ ὑπερέχουσα ἀπόνως* (IV, 8, 8, 13-14).

Plotinus' strict position is that the hypostasis and *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* are not the same. But we should perhaps allow that, while *ψυχή τοῦ παντός* always refers to the world soul, it may not always have the same upper limits. So in the demiurgic passages which we have considered Plotinus could have been thinking of the hypostasis in so far as it is manifested in the world soul. Further there is no need to conclude from the fact that Plotinus does distinguish the hypostasis Soul and world soul that we are to envisage a series of five hypostases, the One, *Νοῦς*, Soul, World Soul, and its lower part which may or may not be called *φύσις*. The point is that, when Plotinus is making the kind of distinctions we have been discussing, he is not abandoning the view that all souls are ultimately one. This totality of soul is referred to by the terms *πᾶσα ψυχή* and *ὅλη ψυχή* (IV, 3, 6, 12 and III, 2, 4, 10-11).

We must now turn to the relation between our three types of soul. The second alternative which Plotinus mentioned in IV, 9, 4, namely that both world soul and the individual souls come from one soul, would give us a triangular relationship with the hypostasis at the apex of the triangle and all other forms of soul distributed along the base. Further evidence for this model may be seen in Plotinus' description of the world soul as *ὁμοειδής* with the individual souls (V, 1, 2, 44; IV, 3, 6, 1). Such a relation is also suggested by those passages which refer to the world soul as the sister of the individual souls. However a closer inspection of these passages shows that the world soul is at least a senior sister. The exact status of the individual souls will emerge more clearly from a consideration of their functions. As far as their nature is concerned Plotinus tells us virtually nothing. Both world soul and the individual souls seem to be such as they because they are either world soul or

particular individual souls. If we ask why one part of Soul should be world soul rather than the others, the answer would appear to be simply that the one part is world soul whereas the others are individual souls. It is probably because there is no precise definition of the difference between various souls on the same level and because the differences are left to emerge from their activities that the world soul does appear to be higher than its theoretical peers. The same is true of the differences between various individual souls. Usually their individuality does not seem to be part of their definition. When it is, it arises from their dependence on an Idea of the individual (cf. V, 7, 1), and Plotinus does not normally take such Ideas into account. He was by no means certain that they existed.¹ Otherwise Plotinus does not seem to have had any satisfactory explanation of how souls are both a unity and a number of discrete individuals. When he is talking about the souls in the intelligible, he will accept that they differ by otherness (*ἑτερότης*, VI, 4 [22] 4, 24-6), but when later he is concerned with souls in the world, he will reject the idea as being appropriate only to *Νοῦς* (IV, 3 [27] 4, 9-14). One cannot help feeling that his efforts to provide an explanation are in the end unsuccessful because there was none with which he himself could be satisfied.² The position is reminiscent of Plato's reluctance to describe the Form of the Good, at least in the dialogues.³ What Plotinus gives us is an analogy between the souls and the different powers of one individual soul (IV, 9, 2), and the oft repeated statement that soul is indivisibly divided (cf. esp. IV, 1 and IV, 2 *passim*). The second requires further explanation. The first is inadequate. While it may explain why you and I do not have the same affections and perceptions, it can hardly, as Plotinus intends it to, explain why you are good while I am bad (IV, 9 [8] 2, 21-4). The single souls may be the basis of different physical functions in the several parts of one organism, but these various parts do not have contradictory moral qualities. When Plotinus returns to this question of good and evil later, the answer that emerges is that the difference depends on the extent of one's association with the body (VI, 4 [22] 15, 17 ff.).

This kind of answer is typical of what happens when Plotinus discusses differences between souls or proceeds on the assumption that they exist. In theory, as we have just seen, the world soul is on a level with the individual souls with which it is identical. As soon as Plotinus begins to talk about what the souls do, their equality begins to disappear. Interestingly the pattern is not, as one might expect, one of divergence from the top. The souls do in a sense reunite when they reach their lower limits. But before examining this pattern let us look at the differences that result from the different tasks assigned to world soul and the individual souls.

In the first place the world soul is in control of what Plotinus regards as a stable and worthy body, the *κόσμος* (IV, 8, 2, 6 ff.). In this respect the star souls are to be

(1) On this question see H. J. BLUMENTHAL, 'Did Plotinus believe in Ideas of Individuals?', *Phronesis*, t. 11, 1966, p. 61-80. For another view see RIST, 'Forms of Individuals in Plotinus', *Classical Quarterly* n.s. t. 13, 1963, p. 223-31 and *op. cit.* (p. 57, n. 1) p. 111 and 255, n. 9.

(2) That Plotinus was well aware of the difficulty is indicated by his appeal to divine aid, *θεῶν συλλήπτωρα ... παρακαλέσαντες*, at IV, 9, 4, 6-7. We may compare his reference to the Muses when confronted with another daunting problem, the origin of time (III, 7, 11, 6-11).

(3) E.g. *Rep.*, 506 d-e.

grouped with the world soul rather than the other individual souls (cf. II, 1, 5, 8 ff.). They share the world soul's immunity from disturbance (II, 9, 18, 30-2). Here we come to one of the major inconsistencies in Plotinus' treatment of soul. For him bodies are not mere matter, but matter informed by soul (IV, 7, 1, 8-10). The soul that is responsible for this information is the world soul. It marks out the ground for the individual souls (VI, 7, 7, 8 ff.) and prepares bodies to be their homes: εὐδὴ ἤδη ἔντος (sc. σώματος) οἷον ἀδελφῆς ψυχῆς ἀρχούσης μοίρας διέλαχον, οἷον προπαρασκευασάσης ταύτης αὐταῖς οἰκήσεις (IV, 3, 6, 13-15; cf. II, 9, 8, 15-16). From this we would expect all bodies at least within a species to be similar at this stage. Such differences as there are should only reflect the contents of Νοῦς. And yet we are often told that it is the body or the συναμότερον, the compound of body and the lower level of soul, that determines the nature of the individual. And not only bodies but the environment that has been produced by irradiations (ἐλλάμψεις) from the very same world soul that has produced the bodies (cf. III, 1, 5, 11 ff., IV, 3, 7, 22-5). Moreover soul does not always enforce its authority even on matter (II, 3, 12, 9-11). The same sort of difficulty is involved in the idea that souls differ in proportion to body's capacity to receive them. While all soul is present everywhere, each thing that receives it can receive only a certain amount: ὁ λαβῶν τοσοῦτον ἐδυνήθη λαβεῖν, παντὸς παρόντος (VI, 4, 3, 10-11, cf. *ib.* 15, 3-6). Thus the way in which a body is besouled depends on differences in the bodies although they have originally been preformed by illumination from the same source. What all this means is that by not being able to explain the differences between souls intrinsically, Plotinus has allowed himself to arrive at a position that is doubly inconsistent. Doubly because in the first place he admits that body determines the type of soul a living being is to receive and secondly because he has made the differences in body arise from a combination of undifferentiated matter and at best partly differentiated irradiations from soul. Further as we have seen, it is the world soul, which is basically the same as the individual souls, that has prepared the ground for the differences.

These difficulties may also be observed when Plotinus discusses the descent of the soul, or at least the depth of that descent. Here again it is, in the last resort, the nature of the body concerned that is the controlling variable. For it is the body as much as any inherent differences in the souls that initially determines how far they will go: κάτεισι δὲ εἰς ἔτοιμον ἐκάστη καθ' ὁμοίωσιν τῆς διαθέσεως· ἐκεῖ γάρ, εἴ ἂν ὁμοιωθεῖσα ἦ, φέρεται, ἢ μὲν εἰς ἄνθρωπον, ἢ δὲ εἰς ζῶον ἕλλη ἄλλο (IV, 3, 12, 37-9). As the immediately preceding words show this also holds within the same natural kinds. And each soul will mould itself to fit its recipient (VI, 7, 7, 13-15). Another factor contributing to the position may have been that, if Plotinus had put all the differences in soul, he would have had to say that some souls were essentially evil. There is an exception to the general rule that body plays a large part in determining what happens to the soul. It is the idea that the nature of a soul depends on its former lives in general (III, 4, 2, 11 ff.; IV, 3, 8, 5-9) and its memories in particular (IV, 4, 3, 3-6). Plotinus believed in reincarnation no less than did Plato.¹ It followed that former lives could influence the soul. But at a theoretical first incarnation this last influence

(1) Cf. A. N. M. Rich, 'Reincarnation in Plotinus', *Mnemosyne*, ser. 4, 10, 1957, p. 232-8.

would not be applicable. Nor does it apply to the world soul because its duties are always the same and may be seen as an ever-present unity (IV, 4, 9 ff.). The same is true of the star souls, which here again are to be classed with world soul even though they are in fact individual souls (cf. IV, 4, 6 ff.).

In any case the differences which result from memory are or may be the result of factors external to the soul. Once again we have no intrinsic difference. Only the world soul is, more or less by definition, exempt from outside influence. Some explanation may be found in the suggestion that it is free of all those passions whose opposites are the virtues because there is nothing outside it which could be a threat or an attraction (I, 2, 1, 10-13, cf. II, 9, 18, 24-7). Unlike the individual souls it does not descend, that is associate closely with body (cf. e.g. III, 4, 4, 4-7) although like them it has a series of reflections extending downwards as far as soul can go. Plotinus will usually say that it governs the world from above with no difficulty: ὑπερέχουσα ἀπόνως (IV, 8, 8, 14). In such contexts the world soul is not in body. There is one passage where it is, namely II, 9, 18, 20 ff., where the individual souls are said to have the ability to live in their bodies in a way closely resembling that in which the world soul lives in its. It may be that we can attribute this statement to over-enthusiasm on Plotinus' part in the peculiar context. He is after all in this treatise concerned to stress the value of the physical world against the Gnostics and may in the chapter in question be allowing himself to be carried away by rhetoric. But the point seems to be simply that the best souls are virtually not in their bodies at all, so that to adduce the world soul's presence "in" its body as an ideal involves only a slight inaccuracy. The remark need not be inconsistent with Plotinus' usual position. Being outside body absolves the world soul from any alteration through association with body, but also means that it cannot acquire individual characteristics from those additions or accretions — προσθήκαι — which become attached to other souls on their descent (VI, 4, 6, 4-5).

The causes of this descent are a subject on their own, but one point should be mentioned.¹ This is that in so far as the world soul as well as the individual souls are involved in creation and separation from the intelligible world, both are on the same footing. They wish to be their own masters (V, 1, 1, 3-5, III, 7, 11, 15-17).² World soul and the individual souls thus become separate in the same way and at the same point. From here we may look at the pattern of their relation.

At the top all souls are together in the totality of soul, distinct but not separate (VI, 4, 14 *passim*). Separation is a function of body (VI, 4, 8, 12-17). Without it the souls are related in much the same way as the parts of Νοῦς (IV, 3, 5, 15-16; cf. V, 9, 6, 8-9). And in so far as they are turned towards Νοῦς that is just what they are. It is characteristic of world soul to retain this orientation (II, 3, 18, 9-10). With the individual soul, though it does have that higher part always above to which it may turn, the orientation is not permanent. Since world soul is theoretically equivalent to the individual soul and since it extends downwards just as far, it is

(1) For a recent discussion see Rist, *Plotinus. The Road to Reality*, ch. 9.

(2) Rist argues that Plotinus does not mean the same thing in these two texts—the first about individual souls, the second about world soul—because the context is different *ib.* p. 257, n. 3. I cannot follow this argument.

interesting to speculate whether Plotinus made his confessedly bold and idiosyncratic claim that the individual soul has a part which never descends primarily in order to retain the parallelism between the two types of soul. That there were other reasons to commend such a view is not to be denied.¹ The question, to which unfortunately there can be no answer, is merely whether the theoretical equivalence of souls was his starting point. The way in which Plotinus could think of the world as parallel to the individual is well illustrated by a passage where he splits the *κόσμος* as well as the individual into two, a part composed of body and a kind of soul attached to it, and another, the true self in the individual, the disembodied world soul in the *κόσμος* (II, 3, 9, 30-4). The same tendency may explain why we have the curious discussion about the earth having sense perception in IV, 4, 22 ff.

At the level of the embodied soul, that is in the range of faculties from the discursive reason downwards, the souls are considered to be at their most separate and individual. Here the identity of distinct individuals that characterises the intelligible world is gone. Instead we have a multiplicity of formally identical individuals dependent on the appropriate Idea (VI, 5, 6, 7-11)². It is at the level of *αἰσθησις* that Plotinus is most anxious that his doctrine of the soul's unicity should not be incompatible with the separate existence of individuals (cf. IV, 9, 2). Here we are concerned with differences between souls whose multiplicity stands in contrast to the singleness of the world soul. Two other groups of differences, to a large extent related, serve to show the divergence between world soul and the individual souls, namely those caused by body and the environment, which we have already mentioned, and those caused by the affections. In theory, all souls are free from affections (*ἀπαθεῖς*). The world soul remains so. The individual souls do not. Differences in the environment will affect the body and this can, as we have seen, affect the constitution of the individual. Moral behaviour and one's susceptibility to the affections are related to the composition of the body: *καὶ σφοδρότερα δὲ αἰ ἐπιθυμίας κράσει τοιαύδε σωμάτων, ἄλλαι δὲ ἄλλων* (I, 8, 8, 30-1; cf. IV, 4, 31, 39-42). If the soul gives in to its body's constitution, it will be forced to desire or be angry (III, 1, 8, 15-16). In general the soul will be subject to affections if it associates closely with the body (IV, 7, 10, 7-11). In the first instance the informed body (*τοιοῦδε σώμα*) and the compound formed by this and the lower phase of soul called *φύσις* are the subject of the affections, which are transmitted upwards by the sensitive and imaginative faculties (IV, 8, 8, 9-11, IV, 4, 17, 11-14). But it can happen that the whole soul will be affected by excessive attention to the needs of the lower parts (cf. IV, 4, 17, 20 ff.). The upper soul must therefore avoid taking more than the necessary interest in the activities of the lower (I, 2, 5). Thus the individual soul is subject to the circumstances in which it works and liable to deteriorate. So in its case Plotinus cannot maintain in practice the doctrine that the soul is *ἀπαθής*³. With the world soul it is quite otherwise. Its attention is always directed upwards and

(1) It provided an easy explanation of how men could know the Forms and made Plato's doctrine of *anamnesis* unnecessary.

(2) On the meaning of this passage see *Phronesis*, t. 11, 1966, p. 71-3.

(3) These matters will be discussed more fully in a forthcoming book.

its work does not affect it (cf. IV, 8, 2, 42 ff.). The ideal for the individual soul is to join the world soul in tranquil administration (IV, 3, 12, 8-12).

All this might suggest that the world soul and the individual souls are furthest apart in their lowest reaches, but curiously this is not the case, or at least not always. Sometimes Plotinus will regard the lowest part of the soul, that part assuring life and growth (*τὸ φυτικόν*), as part of a vertical section which is the individual soul. He will tell us that, when the already ensouled entity which is body comes closer to soul it becomes a living body, and the trace of soul which it now receives brings the beginning of the affections (VI, 4, 15, 8-17). The additional soul that body here receives must be the *φυτικόν*: any possibility that it is a higher form of soul is ruled out by the statement that it is only now that the body becomes a *living* body. So this passage would appear to conflict with the view that we receive the lower parts of the soul from the universe, parts to which we oppose another higher kind of soul (IV, 3, 7, 25-8, cf. II, 2, 2, 3-5). This opposition is of course the resistance to the affections that Plotinus so often talks about, and the centre of these affections is that very *φυτικόν* which we receive from the world and thus from its soul (cf. IV, 4, 28 *passim*). The apparent inconsistency may be explained if we do not forget that Plotinus maintains that all souls are one. When in IV, 9, 3, he is discussing how all the various levels of soul which may be distinguished and can exist without each other will unite when separated from body, he remarks *τὸ δὲ θρηπτικόν, εἰ ἐκ τοῦ ὅλου, ἔχει καὶ ἐκείνης*, namely world soul: *τὸ θρηπτικόν* is clearly the same as *τὸ φυτικόν* which he has just listed with the other faculties that reunite. The point seems to be that reunion is not really applicable to this part because it was never really individualised, for he proceeds to pose and answer the question why it does not come from our soul. The answer is that this is «because the object of *τροφή* is a part of the whole, a part that is sentient in a passive way, whereas the sensation that makes distinctions in alliance with reason belongs to the individual: this (the faculty of sensation) the soul does not need to use to form what already has its formation from the whole" (*ib.* 25-8)¹. Here what is allocated to our soul and what is not depends on the view that our bodies as such are parts of the world as a whole, and our individuality only begins above them. At other times, when Plotinus is analysing the functions of an individual (cf. esp. IV, 4, 18 ff. and 28), he will speak of the faculties closely linked with the body as part of the individual, not unreasonably since the body does after all belong to us. He is merely considering the same data from different standpoints.

So the souls that diverged at the top have converged again at the bottom. In a way we have come full circle. We have seen that Plotinus' statements about the unity of souls may at times be unsatisfactory. But when we reach the point where that unity might be most completely lost, we find that it will explain what would otherwise be a serious inconsistency about our lower soul. It is interesting to reflect that many of the problems that do arise might not have arisen, had Plotinus always accepted that the basis of individuation is to be found in Forms. At this point Plotinus may have been a better Platonist than his own best interests required.²

(1) ὅτι τὸ τρεφόμενον μέρος τοῦ ὅλου, ὃ καὶ παθητικῶς αἰσθητικόν, ἢ δὲ αἰσθησις ἢ κρίνουσα μετὰ νοῦ ἐκάστου, ἢ οὐδὲν ἔδει πλάττειν τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ ὅλου τὴν πλάσιν ἔχον.

(2) I should like to thank Professor A. H. Armstrong for reading and commenting on a draft of this paper.