

## SOME NEW PLOTINIAN EMENDATIONS

The article proposes emendations for eight problematic passages in the *Enneads*: II 6,1,7-8; II 9,9,67-68; III 2,17,1; IV 3,4,31-33; IV 6,3,70; IV 8,1,19-20; V 1,8,1-2, and V 3,12,22-25

0. During the last five hundred years the writings of Plotinus have been fortunate enough to receive the attention of scholars of uncommon eminence and acumen: names like Marsilio Ficino, F. Creuzer, A. Kirchhoff, R. Harder, E. R. Dodds, W. Theiler, P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (to mention just some of them) form a «palmarès» very few other post-classical Greek authors would be able to match. Yet, even today, five years after the completion of the *editio minor* by Henry and Schwyzer<sup>1</sup>, and although the entire textual evidence has already been admirably presented in H-S<sub>1</sub>, one can hardly maintain that all of the problems presented by this formidable text are solved. The process of revision, abundant evidence of which may be found in H-S<sub>4</sub>, is likely to go on for some time<sup>2</sup>. Part of the reason for this seems to be the interconnection between the notorious idiosyncrasies of Plotinus' ways of expressing himself, and the difficulty (if not abstruseness) of his thought<sup>3</sup>. Not infrequently the ambiguities of a passage are dissipated only after a more or less thorough understanding of its general context, and an at least approximate apprehension of its gist has been obtained.

<sup>1</sup> Hereafter I shall be using the following abbreviations: for Henry's and Schwyzer's *editio maior* (vols. I-III, Paris and Brussels, 1951-73), H-S<sub>1</sub>; for the *editio minor* (vols. I-III, Oxford, 1964-82), H-S<sub>2</sub>; for the Addenda et Corrigenda contained in H-S<sub>1</sub>, vol. III, pp. 348-407, H-S<sub>3</sub>; for the Addenda et Corrigenda in H-S<sub>2</sub>, vol. III, pp. 304-25, H-S<sub>4</sub>; for the consensus of H-S<sub>1,4</sub>, H-S. One has to keep in mind that vol. III of H-S<sub>1</sub> (and therefore H-S<sub>3</sub>) has antedated vol. II of H-S<sub>2</sub>.

<sup>2</sup> The untimely death of P. Jesús Igal, whose contribution has been of primary importance, can only delay this process.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 8,4-6; 14,1-4 (where I read *καὶ <εἶχε> τὸ συμπαιθείας ἢ παραδόσεως*), and 20,5-7.

One can only expect, therefore, that any new attempt to understand the text will result in a new confrontation with its problems, and, sometimes, in new suggestions for their solution.

It is not then out of insolence that while preparing a Modern Greek translation of the *Enneads* I have, in a few cases, found myself obliged to deviate from the text given by H-S. My decision to do so was always motivated by an effort to derive some sense out of an untangled crux, or to make more comprehensible a statement which remained, at least for me, puzzling.

1. Treatise II 6 begins by positing a question on the relation between *οὐσία* and the five *μέγιστα γένη* introduced by Plato in the *Sophist*: Being (*ὄν*), Motion, Rest, Sameness and Otherness. These latter are then described as elements (*στοιχεῖα*) of *οὐσία*, which therefore acquires the status of a *summum genus*, being a generic term for the contents of the second Plotinian hypostasis, Intellect. Motion is subsequently used as an example in order to clarify this point: Motion's relation to Being is accidental, since they constitute co-ordinate genera; is then Motion co-ordinate with *οὐσία*? The answer is obviously no, but the manuscripts read:

*ἡ καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὰ ἐκεῖ πάντα οὐσία (v.l. οὐσίας).*

(II 6,1, 7-8)

*Αὐτὴ*, as H-S<sub>1</sub> point out, can only refer to Motion, therefore the definite article *ἡ* is blatantly out of place, since with it the answer would affirm exactly what it is supposed to deny; so it is duly deleted by Müller and most subsequent editors, including H-S<sub>2</sub>. But we are left with no adequate explanation of how it got into the text, and with a rather cumbersome repetition of *οὐσία* (which probably led some copyist to write the second time *οὐσίας* instead).

I believe that in this case we have, as so often in Plotinus, to make use of Brinkmann's rule: the first *οὐσία* should be deleted, and the *ἡ* should be transposed before the second *οὐσία*, where it is perfectly appropriate: *τὰ ἐκεῖ πάντα* are not just *οὐσία*, but the whole of *οὐσία*.

2. There is a similar case in II 9,9,64 ff., where Plotinus is engaged in his bitter polemic against the Gnostics, addressing them in the second person (*ὕμῶν*, 64). His argument is that if God is to take any

<sup>4</sup> A. Brinkmann, «Ein Schreibgebrauch und seine Bedeutung für die Textkritik», *Rhein. Mus.* 57, 1902, pp. 481-497; cf. H-S<sub>1</sub>, vol. III, p. XV f.

notice of the Gnostics themselves, he must be looking towards the world they are in. He then reverses the argument and presents it in its *modus tollens* form: if God does not look outside, neither does he see the Gnostics.

The way this passage is presented in H-S destroys this robust symmetry and introduces to the argument a rather flimsy ingredient: the conditional in 65-67. Armstrong<sup>5</sup> (and, before him, McKenna) seems to have felt this, but was unwilling to tamper with the punctuation. I think, however, that we must reject the semi-colon after *κάτω* and take the apodosis to start from there. Now this apodosis reads as follows:

... και πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέπων διὰ τί οὐκ ἔξω βλέπει και πρὸς τὸν κόσμον δὲ  
βλέπει ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν;

(II 9,9, 67-68)

The only possible way to make use of the two occurrences of *βλέπει* is the one taken by Igal<sup>6</sup>: «... why doesn't he look outside, but looks towards the world in which they are?» But this is immediately contradicted by the following sentence, in which it is made clear that what is outside is the world. I therefore suggest that the second *βλέπει* must be deleted and the *δὲ* before it should be transposed after *ἔξω*. This would help to emphasize the contrast between the assertion put forward by the Gnostics (*πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέπων*) and P.'s objection to it.

3. At the beginning of III 2,17 we read:

᾿Ων δὴ (sc. ὁ λόγος) τοιοῦτος οἶος και πάντως ποιεῖ, πολὺ μᾶλλον τὰ ποιούμενα ποιήσει ἐναντία, ὅσω και διέστηκε μᾶλλον.

The most accurate translation for the rather inelegant<sup>7</sup> expression *πάντως ποιεῖ* is the one provided by Igal<sup>8</sup> («su modo inexorable de obrar»), and it makes clear that we apparently have here a reference to the necessity of Logos' productive activity. Such, however, can hardly be the case; contrary to what the *δὴ* would seem to imply, there is no mention of any necessity of this kind in what goes before our passage; and if this reading is sustained, no logical connexion between the first

<sup>5</sup> A. H. Armstrong, *Plotinus*, Loeb edition, vol. II, pp. 261 and 263.

<sup>6</sup> J. Igal, *Porfirio, Vida de Plotino. Plotino, Enéadas I-II*, Madrid 1982, p. 515.

<sup>7</sup> Kirchhoff sought remedy for this by changing *ποιεῖ* into *ποιεῖν*.

<sup>8</sup> J. Igal, *Plotino, Enéadas III-IV*, Madrid 1985, p. 76. Professor Schwyzer prefers to understand *πάντως* as meaning «in all ways», «universally», but this, in my view, leaves the preceding *και* unaccounted for.

clause and the rest of the sentence (or any of the following) is available. But if we substitute *οἷα* and *πάντα* for *οἶος* and *πάντως*, the text acquires both smoothness and continuity. For it has been one of the main points of the previous chapter that the Logos is, like its products, full of contarieties and «war» (16, 34-35); in fact contariety constitutes its very essence (50-52).

4. In chapter 4 of the first part of his great essay on soul (IV 3) Plotinus introduces the striking image of the lower part of our souls as grubs (*εὐλαί*, 28) living in the rotten part of a big plant, whose soul is none other than *φύσις*, the lower part of the World-Soul. The higher part of the human soul is then compared to a gardener<sup>9</sup> who

ἐν φροντίδι τῶν ἐν τῷ φυτῷ εὐλῶν γίνοιτο καὶ ταῖς μερίμναις πρὸς τῷ φυτῷ γίνοιτο...

(IV 3.4, 31-33)

This passage presents the following difficulties: (a) There appears to be no connexion between the farmer's concern about the grubs, and his care for the plant. (b) The repetition of *γίνοιτο*<sup>10</sup> is definitely awkward, and (c) the dative *ταῖς μερίμναις* seems unwarrantable. W. Helleman-Elgersma's<sup>11</sup> proposal to understand an *ἐν* before *ταῖς μερίμναις* is, I think, made unlikely because of (b) and unacceptable by the presence of *ταῖς*. E. Seidel<sup>12</sup> has tried to remedy the situation by introducing <*ταῖς*> after *μερίμναις* and changing *γίνοιτο* into *κινοῖτο*. I believe, however, that what is needed is once more a Brinkmann-emendation:

[ἐν φροντίδι τῶν ἐν τῷ φυτῷ εὐλῶν γίνοιτο καὶ] ταῖς μερίμναις πρὸς τῷ φυτῷ < ἐν φροντίδι τῶν ἐν τῷ φυτῷ εὐλῶν > γίνοιτο...

The additional *καὶ* could well have been supplied by a puzzled copyist, after the original transposition had taken place.

5. Near the end of IV 6, we find the following phrase:

καὶ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς δὲ ἀμέγεθες [καὶ ὄλωσ] (del. Müller) ψυχὴν μαρτυρεῖ δύναμιν εἶναι.

(IV 6.3, 70-71)

<sup>9</sup> We find a similar comparison in [Ptolemaeus], *Fructus* 8 (p. 39 Boer). Cf. Numenius *apud* Eusebius, *Praep. Euang.* XI 18, 13-14 (= fr. 13 Des Places).

<sup>10</sup> The manuscript readings vary, as usual, in both cases between *γίνοιτο* and *γίνοιτο*.

<sup>11</sup> *Soul-sisters*, Amsterdam 1980, p. 333.

<sup>12</sup> *De usu praepositionum Plotiniano quaestiones*, Neisse 1886, *apud* H-S<sub>1</sub>.

It is strange that, so far, no commentator appears to have been annoyed by the *non sequitur* and the irrelevancy of this remark. The whole chapter (one of the longest in the *Enneads*) deals with the subject of memory, and Plotinus' main concern is (at least from line 5 onwards; cf. ch. 1 *ab init.*) to discard the notion that *μνήμη* consists in impressions deposited in the soul. His thesis is that memory (like perception) is a «power» (*δύναμις*) of the soul, and he produces a series of eight arguments to support it. Then comes our phrase, and the treatise closes with a general reprimand to all the thinkers deceived by analogies with sensible objects while dealing with *τὰ περι ψυχῆν* (i.e. memory, perception, etc.), whether they consider soul as corporeal or as incorporeal.

I believe, and I hope that the outline given above makes it evident, that our phrase cannot be a premise in a new argument (as Blumenthal and Igal<sup>13</sup> apparently think), since nothing of the kind ensues. Furthermore, the description of the soul as *δύναμις* looks inappropriate; it appears nowhere in the *Enneads*<sup>14</sup> and seems to contradict Plotinus' normal view that soul is a substance possessing *δυνάμεις*. I therefore suggest to read *ψυχ<ικ>ήν* and understand *μνήμην* as the subject of *εἶναι*. In this way we obtain one more argument closing the series mentioned before, and we understand better the following *καὶ ὅλως τὰ περι ψυχῆν πάντα* as a generalization on *μνήμη*.

6. One of the few passages in which Plotinus quotes Empedocles is the following:

Ἐμπεδοκλῆς τε εἰπὼν ἀμαρτανούσαις νόμον εἶναι ταῖς ψυχαῖς πεσεῖν  
ἐνταῦθα καὶ αὐτὸς φυγὰς θεόθεν γενόμενος ἤκειν πίσυυρος μαινο-  
μένω νεῖκει...

(IV 8,1, 17-20)

The phrase does not hang together very well, and a close examination will easily inculcate the second infinitive; the presence of *πεσεῖν*<sup>15</sup> should not conceal the fact that *ἤκειν* is not only semantically super-

<sup>13</sup> See H. J. Blumenthal, *Plotinus' Psychology*, The Hague 1971, pp. 82-3 and Igal, *op. cit.*, p. 475.

<sup>14</sup> And very seldom elsewhere; see, however, Alex. Aphrod., *De an.* p. 24,23 Bruns where, as shown by P. L. Donini, «L'anima e gli elementi nel *de anima* di Alessandro di Afrodisia», *Atti della Accademia delle Scienze del Torino* 105, 1970, p. 85 ff., a distinctly peripatetic (and, therefore, unacceptable for Plotinus) conception of soul as first entelechy is implied; also [Plutarch], *Parsne an facultas animi* 5 (VI 3, p. 48 Pohlenz). H. Buchner, *Plotins Möglichkeitslehre*, München 1970, p. 75 f. can be misleading here.

<sup>15</sup> Which, of course, depends on *νόμον εἶναι*.

fluous (as most translators apparently assume), but also syntactically adrift<sup>16</sup>. If we turn now to the verses of Empedocles<sup>17</sup> as preserved by other authors<sup>18</sup>, we find them in the following form:

... εἶμι, φυγὰς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης,  
 νεῖκει μαινομένω πίσυρος.

The difference in the order of the words suggests that the troublesome ἤκειν is just a false variant of νεῖκει inserted in its place, while the correct reading was displaced after μαινομένω.

7. One of Plotinus' favourite Platonic passages is the extremely obscure one in the (almost certainly spurious) second *Epistle* (312e 1-4) which professes to present «in riddles» the quintessence of Platonic metaphysics. It is quoted twice in the *Enneads* and is once<sup>19</sup> extensively commented upon. In the latest of these occurrences (I 8,2, 28-32) the text provided is fairly faithful to the original<sup>20</sup>, but in V 1,8, 1-4 some perplexing differences appear:

Plato	Plotinus V 1 (H-S)
<p>περὶ τὸν πάντων βασιλέα            πάντ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἐκείνου ἔνεκα            πάντα, καὶ ἐκείνο αἴτιον ἀπάντων            τῶν καλῶν· δευτέρον δὲ            περὶ τὰ δεύτερα, καὶ τρίτον            περὶ τὰ τρίτα.</p>	<p>Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὰ            Πλάτωνος τριττὰ τὰ πάντα            περὶ τὸν πάντων βασιλέα            —φησὶ γὰρ πρῶτα—              καὶ δευτέρον            περὶ τὰ δεύτερα καὶ περὶ            τὰ τρίτα τρίτον.</p>

<sup>16</sup> I cannot accept Prof. Schwyzer's view that ἤκειν is (together with εἶναι) depending on εἰπῶν, since this would require an accusative as its subject (cf. νόμον).

<sup>17</sup> *Καθαρμοί*, fr. 115, vv. 13-14 DK.

<sup>18</sup> In the case of v. 14, all of them later than Plotinus: see Philoponus, *In Phys.*, p. 24,20-21 and *In de An.*, p. 73,32-33, and cf. Asclepius *In Metaph.* p. 197,20-21 (who writes αἰθομένω instead of μαινομένω). It should be noted here that Plotinus' γενόμενος confirms the reading εἶμι in v. 13 (found in Plutarch and the Aristotelian commentators, and adopted by Wilamowitz and G. Zuntz, *Persephone*, Oxford 1971, pp. 198 and 245) against Diels' εἶμι.

<sup>19</sup> VI 7,42 *passim*. For other allusions to it see the «Index Fontium» of H-S, in vol. III, p. 349.

<sup>20</sup> The main deviation from the established Platonic text is the use of *περὶ* instead of Karsten's *πέρι* in *περὶ τὰ δεύτερα* and *περὶ τὰ τρίτα*. H-S are certainly right to adhere here to the manuscript tradition (whatever its worth in matters of accentuation; see also M. Atkinson, *Plotinus V 1*, Oxford 1983, p. 187), but the reading *περὶ* has found some support also in the case of Plato: see R. Hackforth, *The Authorship of the Platonic Epistles*, Manchester 1913, p. 49 and R. S. Bluck, «The Second Platonic Epistle», *Phronesis* 5, 1960, p. 143; hereafter I shall be following this view, just to avoid unnecessary complications.

To take minor issues first, the innocuous variation *καὶ δεύτερον* for *δευτέρων δὲ* is found also in the I 8 passage, and need not concern us any further. The change in the order of the last words blocks the way not only to the reading *πὲρι* mentioned in note 20, but also to the understanding of *δευτέρων* and *τρίτων* as adverbial<sup>21</sup>; this means that for Plotinus the passage contains a reference to a second and to a third *hypostasis*<sup>22</sup>. This is confirmed by III 9,7,3 where the *περὶ τὸ δεύτερον* (that is, the Intelligible World, which is a collective expression for *τὰ ὄντα*) is said to be *νοῦς*. The greatest difficulties lie, however, in the first lines of our passage. H-S have felt the need for some punctuation after *τριτὰ*<sup>23</sup>, but most codices provide it only after *πάντα*, which seems to split the quotation in two. Furthermore, the *πρῶτα* looks extremely awkward without the definite article, and its plural form makes it an unlikely designator for the «king of all»<sup>24</sup>, that is, the One<sup>25</sup>. On the other hand Atkinson's proposal to understand (*τὰ?*) *πρῶτα* as Plotinus' gloss on *τὰ πάντα*<sup>26</sup> is rather confusing, since, as he himself admits a few lines further on, the Intelligible World is next referred to by the expression *τὰ δεύτερα*. The only way out, therefore, appears to be to understand *πρῶτα* adverbially, but this would make its use pointless and imprecise, as far as the context of the *Epistle* is concerned.

I think that a more convincing solution can be reached if we take *τὰ πάντα* as a correction on *πρῶτα* inserted in the wrong place<sup>27</sup>. This would leave Plotinus' parenthetical remark to be just *φησὶ γὰρ* and the quotation almost as precise as the one in I 8; finally, the punctuation of the manuscripts would find itself in place.

8. An intricate crux is found in V 3,12, 22-25. The passage was

<sup>21</sup> An option left open by the Platonic text, and in fact taken by Porphyry, *apud* Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Julianum* I, P.G. IX, col. 553. On the other hand, Proclus' paraphrase (*Theol. Plat.* II 8, p. 53 Saffrey-Westerink) seems to imply Karsten's reading.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. H.-R. Schwyzer, art. «Plotinos» in *R.E.* XXI, col. 553 and J.-M. Charrue, *Plotin lecteur de Platon*, Paris 1978, p. 53.

<sup>23</sup> See the apparatus of H-S, *ad loc.*

<sup>24</sup> As H-S wish us to understand it. Prof. Schwyzer informs me now that he no longer insists on this particular point.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. H. Dörrie, «Der König, ein platonisches Schlüsselwort, von Plotin mit neuem Sinn erfüllt», *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 24, 1970, p. 224 (= *Platonica Minora*, pp. 396-7).

<sup>26</sup> Meaning «the constituents of the Intelligible World». See Atkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 186 and cf. his translation («the Primaries») on p. LXII; also Armstrong, *op. cit.*, vol. V, p. 39.

<sup>27</sup> Three codices of Eusebius already have *πάντα* instead of *πρῶτα*, and in all of them *γὰρ* is substituted by *τὰ*.

recognized as being corrupt even by Ficino, and H-S<sub>3,2</sub> obelize it, although several editors have since then tried to put it right. It would be tedious to review all these efforts; I shall therefore present my proposal straightway, mentioning the most important variants in a concise apparatus:

25 *εἰ δ' αὐταὶ εἰσὶν αἱ πρῶται ἐνέργειαι τὸ δεύτερον ποιήσασαι, ποιήσασθαι δεῖ ἐκεῖνο, ὃ πρὸ τούτων τῶν ἐνεργειῶν ὄν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ μένει, τῷ δευτέρῳ τῷ ἐκ τῶν ἐνεργειῶν συστάντι τὰς ἐνεργείας [ἄς] παραχωρήσαν·*

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- 22 *ἐνέργειαι*, interpung. plerique codd., H-S  
 22-23 *ποιήσασθαι δεῖ* conieci: *ποιήσασαι δὲ* codd., H-S<sub>1</sub>; † Ficino, H-S<sub>2</sub>: *εἰάσασαι δὲ* Igal.  
 23 *τούτων τῶν* cod., Kirchhoff, H-S: *τούτων* uel *τοῦ τῶν* uel *τῶν ceteri* codd. // *ἐνεργειῶν, ὄν* interpung. H-S // *μένει* reuisor in marg. cod.: *μένειν* codd., edd.  
 24-25 [ἄς] *παραχωρήσαν* deleuit Ficino, H-S<sub>1</sub>; ἄς † *παραχωρήσαν* H-S<sub>2</sub>: ἂν *παραχωρήσειαν* Igal.

I think that this solution is the one which does least violence to the received text, and provides an excellent sense: the one issues the first *ἐνέργειαι* that constitute the second hypostasis, and is therefore its creator while resting in itself, being prior to these<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> A previous draft of this paper has had the benefit of comment from Professors H.-R. Schwyzer and A. Nehamas, and from Dr. E. N. Roussos. Although none of these scholars is in complete accord with all my suggestions (Prof. Schwyzer has informed me that he is willing to adopt in his text the corrections expounded under §§ 1, 4 and 5), their criticisms helped me to improve or clarify certain points. I therefore wish to express here my gratitude to them. I also thank N. Pilavachi for trying to correct my English.