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*Studies dedicated to Rüdiger Arnzen on His Sixtieth Birthday*

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Editor in Chief: Cristina D'Ancona ([cristina.dancona@unipi.it](mailto:cristina.dancona@unipi.it))

Mailing address: Dipartimento di Civiltà e Forme del Sapere, via Pasquale Paoli 15, 56126 Pisa, Italia.

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### *Cover*

Mašhad, Kitābhāna-i Āsitān-i Quds-i Raḡawī 300, f. 1v  
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, *grec* 1853, f. 186v

A. Marmodoro – S. Cartwright (eds.), *A History of Mind and Body in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 2018, xi-428 pp.

Recent literature on interactions between late antique pagan philosophy and early Christian thought abounds,<sup>1</sup> and scholarly attention has been paid to the pre-modern history of the relationship between soul and body in recent times.<sup>2</sup> Against this background, the volume edited by A. Marmodoro and S. Cartwright fills a gap as it combines the two issues, by investigating “how a number of representative pagan and Christian thinkers of late antiquity addressed the question. (...) What is the human soul made of? How far do our bodies define us, and what does this say about our relationship to the physical universe on the one hand, and human history on the other? How are consciousness and self-awareness possible, and what is it in us that is self-aware? What does all of this imply for how we should structure our physical and mental activities? What happens at the moment of death? Throughout late antiquity, pagan and early Christian thinkers grappled creatively with mind-body issues, asking a diverse range of questions and giving answers often of striking originality and abiding significance. Philosophical and anthropological reflections about the nature of the body, soul and mind prompted and interacted with ethical and epistemological questions” (“Introduction”, p. 1).

The volume is subdivided into two main parts, devoted respectively to “Mind and Body in Late Antique Pagan Philosophy” and to “Mind and Body in Early Christian Thought”. Chapter 1 by E. Watts, “The Late Ancient Philosophical Scene” (pp. 12-29) counts as an introduction to both, as Watts sets himself the task to consider “the physical settings in which pagan and Christian intellectual centres operated, the social environments that developed within them, and the legal structures that governed philosophical teaching” (pp. 11-12). Following a survey of the dynamics that created the institutions of learning in major cities of the Graeco-Roman world which are

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<sup>1</sup> One may gain an understanding of how complex the relationship is between the theology of the philosophers and Christian thought in the Imperial age and in late Antiquity from volume 5/1 of the *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*: Ch. Riedweg – Ch. Horn – D. Wyrwa (eds.), *Philosophie der Kaiserzeit und der Spätantike*, Schwabe, Basel 2018 (Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie begründet von Friedrich Ueberweg, völlig neu bearbeitete Ausgabe hrsg. von H. Holzhey, 5/1-3). The question of what is known as ‘pagan monotheism’ has also been debated, first by P. Athanassiadi – M. Frede (eds.), *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity*, Oxford U.P., Oxford 1999, and then in two volumes edited by S. Mitchell and P. van Nuffeln: *One God. Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 2010; *Monotheism between Pagans and Christians in Late Antiquity*, Peeters, Leuven 2010 (Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion, 12). Recent publications which shed light on the various aspects of this cross-pollination include R. Hirsch-Luipold – H. Görgemanns – M. von Albrecht unter Mitarbeit von T. Thum (eds.), *Religiöse Philosophie und Philosophische Religion der frühen Kaiserzeit: literaturgeschichtliche Perspektiven*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2009 (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, 51); Ch. Riedweg – R. Fuchsli – C. Semenzato – Ch. Horn – D. Wyrwa (eds.), *Philosophia in der Konkurrenz von Schulen, Wissenschaften und Religionen. Zur Pluralisierung des Philosophiebegriffs in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*. Akten der 17. Tagungs der Karl und Gertrud Abel-Stiftung vom 16.-17. Oktober 2014 in Zürich, De Gruyter, Boston – Berlin 2017 (Philosophie der Antike, 34); M. Zambon, *‘Nessun dio è mai sceso quaggiù’. La polemica anticristiana dei filosofi antichi*, Carocci, Roma 2019 (Frecce, 277); F. Celia, *Preaching the Gospel to the Hellenes. The Life and Works of Gregory the Wonderworker*, Peeters, Leuven 2019 (Late Antique History and Religion, 20).

<sup>2</sup> M. Elkaisy-Friemuth – J.M. Dillon (eds.), *The Afterlife of the Platonic Soul. Reflections of Platonic Psychology in the Monotheistic Religions*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2009 (Ancient Mediterranean and Medieval Texts and Contexts, 9); J.E. Sisko (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind in Antiquity. The History of Mind*, Volume 1, Routledge, London – New York 2019.

feliculously labeled “centralized proto-universities”, Watts narrows his focus down to the scholarly life at Alexandria. The *Sitz im Leben* of the late antique philosophers outlined in the first part of the chapter<sup>3</sup> is made even more vibrant when Watts comments on the recent discovery of “a large complex of auditoria” in this city.<sup>4</sup> “In recent decades, scholars have become much more comfortable recognizing that late antique philosophy touched a far wider group of people that we once thought. Philosophers were Christian and pagan, men and women, teachers and students, and geniuses and dilettantes. (...) Philosophers needed to earn a living, find a space in which to meet, attend to the social and professional demands of their disciples, help regulate their home cities and manage their households. They seldom had much time for uninterrupted philosophical contemplation” (p. 27). This holds true, says Watts, both for pagan and Christian thinkers.

The opening chapter by Ch. Shields, “Theories of Mind in the Hellenistic Period” (pp. 33-51) introduces the first part of the volume devoted to pagan philosophy. Apparently, “for the philosophers of this period interest in the soul and its faculties is somehow merely incidental, as subordinated to other, more consequential ethical matters” (p. 33). Shields challenges this view: “Nothing – he says – could be further from the truth regarding theories of mind during the Hellenistic period” (p. 34). In-depth analysis of cognition is a characteristic first and foremost of the Stoics, whose doctrine of mental representation involves an enquiry of the interactions between mind and body. Shields aptly reminds us that “the Stoics were from the outset thoroughgoing materialists. More precisely, core to their conception of soul was that it, like all other bodies, existed in three dimensions and could causally interact with all other bodies” (p. 35), and that for them soul is “an especially fine sort of stuff, pneuma, which is variously characterized as hot air or breath, and regularly treated as a pervasive element, interpenetrating inanimate no less than animate beings. (...) In virtue of its being suitably configured pneuma, then, the soul is capable of perception, intellection, emotion and the initiation of action” (p. 36). This leads them to adopt “a faculty-based conception of the soul, with the soul-stuff, pneuma, extending to the various bodily organs, eventuating in the individual sensory modalities” (p. 37), and to imagine “a central clearing house, in charge of selective attention, focus, and sensory integration” (*ibid.*) – the ἡγεμονικόν. Following his survey of the basic doctrine Shields moves on to discuss its refinements, represented by Chrysippus’ doctrine of mental appearance (φαντασία). The “sceptical detractors” of Stoicism pointed to the impossibility of determining which mental appearances actually correspond to the state of affairs in the world, and which ones do not. The subsequent discussion of Epicurean epistemology, with its typical tenet that all perceptions are true, involves similar questions about

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<sup>3</sup> Watts’ passage is worth quoting in full: “Philosophers who taught publicly faced professional pressures amidst a changing educational landscape that often compelled them to offer courses in other fields. Those who taught privately could focus on teaching philosophy, but they were also aware of the unfortunate power of private donors whose generosity insulated their schools from the vagaries of student demand. Thinkers who worked under the patronage of wealthy supporters were even more exposed” (p. 18).

<sup>4</sup> “The flourishing of rhetoric, as well as philosophical and medical studies in Alexandria of the 5<sup>th</sup> through the 7<sup>th</sup> century is well evidenced foremost in abundant historical sources. It has recently received unexpected archaeological confirmation. The discovery of a large complex of auditoria on the Kom el-dikka site, in the very centre of the ancient town, calls for a new look at the functioning of educational institutions in Alexandria and perhaps in the entire Late Antique world as well”, writes G. Majcherek, “The Auditoria on Kom el-Dikka: A Glimpse of Late Antique Education in Alexandria”, *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth International Congress of Papyrology*, Ann Arbor 2007, American Studies in Papyrology, Ann Arbor 2010, pp. 471-84, here p. 471.

correspondence between perception and its objects. This is a very interesting paper, and its main point is well argued, namely that “In their different ways, the philosophers of the Hellenistic period developed and deployed highly distinctive theses in philosophy of mind, regarding perception, mental representation, intentionality, moral psychology, and the emotions” (p. 50). Of course, there is room for gentle disagreement when Shields claims that “the Stoics developed a remarkably subtle and resilient conception of mental representation, one which, if not in all ways problem-free, was a great advance in its time, and, indeed, proved markedly superior to theories developed by philosophers writing after the Stoics who failed to come to grips with their technical subtlety” (pp. 43-44). Indeed, Plotinus proves to be an acute critic of Stoic emergentism<sup>5</sup> as well as of the theory of sense-perceived evidence as the criterion of truth,<sup>6</sup> but adequate discussion of these two topics exceeds the limits of a review. I will limit myself to observing that Plotinus redirects against both positions – emergentism and ἐνάργεια – objections which come from the sceptical camp, rethinking these objections in Platonic vein.<sup>7</sup> His abiding interest in epistemological questions makes him a good candidate for an ideal debate that one may wish to imagine between Hellenistic and Platonic-based cognitive theories.

This section is followed by series of introductions to the leading figures which unfortunately does not include a chapter on Alexander of Aphrodisias.

In his chapter “Numenius” (pp. 52-66), M. Edwards outlines the views held by a philosopher whose works are attested only in doxographies: “for the knowledge of his thought we are wholly reliant on his ancient readers, each of whom appears to have encountered a different man. (...) What we can say with confidence is that Numenius was regarded by some Christians as a proficient champion of the immortality of the soul against the Stoics; Platonists, on the other hand, remembered him as the author of a dangerous theory that humans possess two souls, together with a cosmogony which ascribes not only the origin of the world but the confinement of the soul to a tragic bifurcation in the transcendent realm” (p. 52). Among the Christian testimonies, that of Nemesius of Emesa is of special interest. In his *De Natura hominis*, written towards the end of the fourth century, Nemesius presents a summary “which avowedly conflates his [i.e. Numenius’] teaching with that of Ammonius, the teacher of Plotinus” (p. 54). We are told that both for Ammonius and Numenius soul is necessarily incorporeal, a conclusion drawn from four anti-Stoic arguments which are at times judged inconclusive by Edwards and which should be compared, in my opinion, with Plotinus’ own anti-Stoic arguments in IV 7[2]. Once again, adequate discussion of the topic would go beyond the limits of a review, although such a comparison might lend support to the view that Nemesius’ summary was guided by Plotinus, either directly or indirectly.<sup>8</sup> If so, this might contribute to singling out Numenius’ distinctive ideas. In any case, the points gathered in the four arguments of Nemesius’ list do not seem to be an original creation of Numenius, and this not only because Nemesius credits both Ammonius

<sup>5</sup> IV 7[2], 2.1-83.25.

<sup>6</sup> V 5[32], 1.1-32; IV 6[41], 1.28-32; V 3[49], 2.26-3.15.

<sup>7</sup> For an example of how Plotinus combines and rethinks the objections against the Stoic doctrine of sense-perception as a τῶπιος raised by Sextus Empiricus and Plutarch, I take the liberty to refer to my commentary in Plotino, *L’immortalità dell’anima. IV 7[2]. Plotiniana Arabica (pseudo-Teologia di Aristotele, capitoli I, III, IX)*, Pisa U.P., Pisa 2017 (Greco, arabo, latino. Le vie del sapere, 5), pp. 254-7.

<sup>8</sup> H.-R. Schwyzer, *Ammonios Sakkas, der Lehrer Plotins*, West-deutscher Verlag, Opladen 1983 (Vorträge Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Geisteswissenschaften, 260), pp. 45-6, argues that the source of Nemesius’ account is the second *logos* of Porphyry’s (lost) *Symmikta Zetemata*.

and Numenius with them, but also because they are aired in the Middle-Platonic literature on the topic.<sup>9</sup> This was famously one of the pivots of H. Dörrie's thesis of the so-called "Middle-Platonic handbook" – an alleged repository of arguments for the incorporeality and immortality of the soul against Stoic materialism which Dörrie considered to be the source of Plotinus and later Neoplatonic thinkers, including Nemesius.<sup>10</sup> Edwards remarks that several points in Numenius' doctrine of the soul are attested in inconsistent or even contradictory ways by later authors (Iamblichus, Proclus, Calcidius), as is the case with the division of the soul into parts, or the exact nature of its afterlife, or again the interpretation of Xenocrates' definition of soul as a "self-moving number". The discussion of these points and the description of the features that Numenius' ideas about the fall and return of the soul share with the Gnostics' narrative make Edwards' paper very informative and useful.

L.P. Gerson's "Plotinus" (pp. 67-84) is subdivided into five main points: (i) Principles of Psychological Embodiment, (ii) Psychological Functioning, (iii) Cognition, (iv) Soul and Body in Metaphysical Context, and (v) Dependence of Bodies on Souls. Starting from the idea that for Plotinus and other philosophers of the same allegiance Aristotle was a Platonist,<sup>11</sup> Gerson maintains that Plotinus had recourse to Aristotelian terminology to better define his core ideas, first and foremost that of the priority of some degrees of being over others. "For Plotinus, the higher always explains the lower; it is never the other way around. (...) the body of a living thing that is embodied is functionally related to the soul of that bodily composite, something that follows both from the general Platonic metaphysical principles and from the Aristotelian supplement to these, namely, the priority of form to matter or actuality to potency in the discussion of hylomorphic composites. We have the sort of bodies we have because we have the sort of souls we have and not vice versa" (p. 68), a principle that in Gerson's opinion is Aristotelian (p. 83). Plotinus devoted his penultimate treatise I 1[53] to the distinction between our essence and the living being that arises when the soul is interwoven with body, as he says rephrasing Plato's verb *διαπλέκω* (*διαπλακεῖσα*, said in *Tim.* 36 E 2 apropos the cosmic soul and the body of the universe, and by Plotinus, I 1[53], 3.19, apropos our soul). According to Gerson, this distinction corresponds to that between intellect and the Aristotelian entelechy: "Plotinus' strategy here, relying on Aristotle's distinction between soul as the first actuality of body and soul as defined by its highest function, intellect, which is in a way a 'substance' different from that of the ensouled body, is to distinguish soul insofar as it is susceptible to being affected by embodiment from soul insofar as it is not, that is, insofar as it is impassible (*apathēs*)" (p. 72). It bears stressing, however, that Plotinus' "living being" results from rethinking the "composite" (*συναμφότερον*) of the *First Alcibiades* in the light of Alexander of Aphrodisias. As demonstrated by C. Marzolo in his outstanding commentary of I 1[53], Plotinus endorses Alexander's exegesis of the simile of the sailor (*De An.* II 1, 413 a 8-9), whose

<sup>9</sup> According to E.R. Dodds, "Numenius and Ammonius", in *Les sources de Plotin, Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique*, Tome V, Fondation Hardt, Vandœuvres – Genève 1960, pp. 3-32, here p. 25, "The views attributed to 'Ammonius and Numenius' in the second chapter of Nemesius (...) are simply the traditional views common to the two anti-materialist schools, Platonists and Pythagoreans. Ammonius is named as the second founder of Platonism, Numenius as the leading Pythagorean. The opinions quoted are in no way distinctive of either of them, though no doubt both held them".

<sup>10</sup> H. Dörrie, *Porphyrios' Symmikta Zetemata. Ihre Stellung in System und Geschichte des Neuplatonismus nebst einem Kommentar zu den Fragmenten*, C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, München 1959, esp. pp. 224-35; 119-21.

<sup>11</sup> L.P. Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, Cornell U.P., Ithaca – New York 2005.

main point is to rule out the possibility for the soul to be an extrinsic principle which comes into contact with the body as the sailor does with the ship.<sup>12</sup> There are multiple examples of this: Plotinus' understanding of the Aristotelian soul was predictably shaped by Alexander,<sup>13</sup> and his reception of Alexander was all but inadvertent.<sup>14</sup> He was keenly aware of Alexander's assumptions and did not fail to redirect against Alexander the same objections that Alexander directed against the Stoics. He did so in order to force the Peripatetics to concede that if they really wanted to establish the causal priority of soul over body, they needed renounce supervenience. Since in Plotinus' eyes Aristotle's entelechy runs the risk of being precisely a case of supervenience, and he finds arguments in Alexander against emergentism, he willingly takes the opportunity to urge the Peripatetics to be consistent. Put otherwise, if Aristotle and his followers want to establish that soul is the form of the living being, they need want to state its causal priority over body, hence its ontological independence of it. Can they do this? This would be a clear assessment of soul as an οὐσία. The Aristotelians want indeed to have soul as an οὐσία, but they fail to realize that this has bold Platonic implications. In a nutshell, this is Plotinus' reasoning in the section of *On the Immortality of the Soul* devoted to entelechy. In itself and in consideration of the influence on later philosophical thought of his ideas about soul and body, Plotinus' reaction to Aristotle and Alexander deserves careful consideration.

A. Smith, "Porphyry" (pp. 85-96) explores the ideas about soul and body held by a philosopher who, as a result of his education in the Platonic tradition of the Athenian school of Longinus, initially struggled with the new approach of Plotinus. Porphyry's personal approach was one of pronounced opposition of body and soul, corporeal and incorporeal. "Disengagement from the physical world was one of the features which Augustine found most prominent in his reading of Porphyry: 'one must flee from everything corporeal' (*omne corpus fugiendum est*). Whether Porphyry disturbed the subtle balance which Plotinus observed between escape

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<sup>12</sup> Plotino, *Che cos'è l'essere vivente e che cos'è l'uomo? I 1*[53], Introduzione, testo greco, traduzione e commento di C. Marzolo, Pisa U.P., Pisa 2006 (Greco, arabo, latino. Le vie del sapere, 1), pp. 109-11.

<sup>13</sup> This was firmly established in scholarship since the fundamental volume *Les sources de Plotin* (above, n. 8), with the two essays by A.-H. Armstrong, "The Background of the Doctrine That the Intelligibles are not Outside the Intellect", pp. 393-413, and P. Henry, "Une comparaison chez Aristote, Alexandre et Plotin", pp. 427-49.

<sup>14</sup> Lack of space does not allow for the in-depth discussion that this point deserves, but consider for instance Plotinus' IV 7[2], 85.5-9 in comparison with Alexander's *De Anima*, p. 18.17-23 Bruns. Here Alexander levels various objections against the Stoic account of a corporeal soul, criticizing *inter alia* the claim that the parts of a body are necessarily bodies. This claim is definitely false for him: "Form and matter are not parts of the body in this way, but in the way that the bronze and its contours are parts of the statue. Dividing up the statue does not result in them, as it does into a head, trunk, and legs. But the composite is composed from them as parts, even though not in the same way. For the shape of the statue is a part, though not in a way that contributes something to its size – it contributes to its character instead – and not as something that can persist in separation from matter" (trans. V. Caston, *Alexander of Aphrodisias: On the Soul. Part I. Soul as the Form of the Body, Parts of the Soul, Nourishment, and Perception*, Bloomsbury, London – Oxford – New York – New Delhi – Sydney 2012 [Ancient Commentators on Aristotle], p. 45). For Plotinus it is altogether true that the living being is a compound of a bodiless principle and a bodily part. He sides with Alexander in criticizing the Stoic tenet that the parts of a body should be bodies. However, if this is so, the bodiless principle is to be acknowledged as independent of and prior to the bodily part of the compound, otherwise it would necessarily follow the mode of being of the bodily part. Plotinus is in dialogue with Alexander when he writes: "If then it is assimilated to the body by being applied to it, as the form of the statue is to the bronze, then when the body was divided the soul would be separated into parts along with it, and when a part was cut off there would be a bit of soul with the cut-off piece of body" (trans. Armstrong, *Plotinus [...] in Seven Volumes*, Harvard U.P. – Heinemann, Cambridge [MA] – London 1984 [Loeb Classical Library], IV, p. 375).

from the physical and upholding the beauty of the cosmos is difficult to say. But certainly the fragmentary remains of Porphyry's writings suggest a concern with the relationship of body and soul/intellect, an interest demonstrated by his own account of an incident in Plotinus' seminar when Plotinus encouraged his obstinate questioning about the relationship of soul and body, the discussion of which went on for three days" (p. 85). A propensity for ascetism and repeated invitations to disengage the soul from the body are prominent features of both the *Letter to Marcella* and *On Abstinence*. The rationale behind this attitude is a sort of tripartition of our soul that Smith presents as follows: "Porphyry appears to be elaborating a schema in which the individual has three levels of existence: (i) the intellect or real self, which remains unchanged, (ii) *logismos*: the level of discursive reason (elsewhere *dianoia*), (iii) *alogia*: unreason or the irrational soul. The latter two (presumably along with the growth soul) constitute 'soul', the first 'our intellect'. 'We' would appear to be both intellect (the real self) and that which pays attention (the empirical self)" (p. 87). Notwithstanding his repeated plea to flee from body, Porphyry "wished to avoid a dualistic opposition between body and soul" (p. 89). The soul is indeed naturally destined to take care of the body; more importantly, Porphyry is convinced that the soul can be guided towards the intelligible reality even in its embodied state, and that philosophy has this very task. His work *Launching Points towards the Intelligibles* "is intended to lead the soul towards the intelligible world. It may be characterized as marking the route from corporeal to intelligible existence, in both the moral and intellectual progress of the individual as well as in the objective order of metaphysical reality. (...) we are first taught about the nature of the soul's relationship to body, the fact that it is, in its innermost nature, not corrupted by body, that we can and must return to this aspect of our selves which expresses itself at its highest level in our intellect. This return to our real self is a return to Intellect and the power of true Being. The ultimate principle, the One, is clearly mentioned, but plays no major role in the main argument, which is clearly concerned with the ascent of the soul up to the level of Intellect" (pp. 92-93).

J.F. Finamore remarks from the outset in his chapter "Iamblichus" (pp. 97-110) that Porphyry's legacy was decisive also in the philosophical tradition of the East. Iamblichus, who established his school in Syria towards the end of the third century, depends upon Porphyry on many counts for his ideas about soul. However, Porphyry's influence on Iamblichus soon evolved into disagreement. "Although Iamblichus studied with Porphyry, the two of them disagreed about the nature of the human soul and the role of religion in its salvation" (p. 97). This approach features prominently in Iamblichus' *De Anima*, a work which is lost but widely attested by Stobaeus.<sup>15</sup> In one of the fragments that has come down to us, Iamblichus "begins by grouping together Platonists (Numenius, Amelius, Plotinus and Porphyry) into one camp and himself into another. These Platonists – each to a different degree, Iamblichus claims – do not properly differentiate soul from Intellect or indeed separate various grades of soul. (...) What concerns Iamblichus is a kind of blurring of the boundaries between higher entities and the human soul. The human soul is different in its essence from these higher sorts of being, and what previous

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<sup>15</sup> In this presentation Finamore relies on his previous work in collaboration with J.M. Dillon: Iamblichus, *De Anima*. Text, Translation, and Commentary by J.M. Finamore – J.M. Dillon, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 2002 (*Philosophia Antiqua*, 92). He does not take into account L.I. Martone, Giamblico, *De Anima. I frammenti, la dottrina*, Pisa U.P., Pisa 2014 (Greco, arabo, latino. *Le vie del sapere. Studi*, 3). Martone's analysis of Iamblichus' stance differs from that of Finamore and Dillon.



Platonists have done (according to Iamblichus) is grant the soul too much authority and power” (pp. 97-8). In Iamblichus’ eyes “The human soul does not have an intellect of its own; it rather has a disposition towards intellectual activity. Thus, the soul is completely divorced from the Intellect except for a certain propensity towards it. (...) What the soul possesses is a capacity to engage at different levels (whether at the level of Intellect or the One), but the soul is not any of the higher entities. (...) The effect is to leave the soul isolated and in need of external aid even to engage in intellection. Earlier Platonists, such as Plotinus, who thought that they could initiate an ascent to the intellect and engage in intelligizing on their own were, Iamblichus believed, sadly mistaken” (p. 99). Intermediate degrees exist between us and the gods: angels, daemons, and heroes, thus “making the soul isolated and at a greater remove from Intellect while providing the means (by gradual stages) to reconnect soul and Intellect” (p. 100). The conviction that these intermediate hierarchies can help the soul to be freed from the material world in which it is trapped paves the way for magic practice as the privileged if not the sole way for salvation: “Theurgy provides the means of ascent, and philosophy provided the metaphysical explanation for its efficacy” (p. 102). Theurgy, Finamore concludes, “bridges the gap, allowing the soul to rise to Intellect and in the case of some souls to the One itself” (p. 110).

The focus of the chapter by F.A.J. de Haas “Themistius” (pp. 111-28) is the paraphrase of Aristotle’s *De Anima* where Themistius “develops a distinctive theory of intellect that shows traces not only of Aristotle but also of Plato’s *Timaeus*, Theophrastus, Boethus, Atticus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Plotinus and Porphyry” (pp. 111-12). Here Themistius unfolds “a comprehensive multi-layered account of intellect. He gives us (1) a single separate divine intellect that somehow informs all human intellects; (2) its products, the productive intellects in each of us; (3) our innate potential intellect, which together with our productive intellect constitutes our composite mind. Finally, he also gives us (4) a lower ‘common’ or passive intellect that is responsible for rational activity immersed in bodily processes like imagination and memory, and the emotions and desires these give rise to” (p. 112). It is De Haas’ conviction that this theory can be accounted for by four principles, all of which are derived “from Aristotle’s *Physics* and *On the soul* that help Themistius forge a relationship between the various levels of intellect in Aristotelian terms” (*ibid.*). These are: (i) the principle that “Every potentiality has to be actualized by something else that has the actuality since no potentiality can actualize itself”; (ii) that “Lower forms may serve as matter for higher forms in which they culminate”; (iii) that “Every actuality of a productive and motive power resides in what is affected”, and finally (iv) “Aristotle’s physics of light and colour” which “supports the hierarchy of intellects” (pp. 116-17). According to De Haas, the adoption of these four points rules out any Neoplatonic interpretation of Themistius’ doctrine of the soul. De Haas is aware that the Themistian hierarchy of forms that “serve as a substrate for higher forms” (p. 119) sounds non-Aristotelian, but thinks that after all this hierarchy can be explained within the Aristotelian tradition: “Perhaps this is a consequence of the expression ‘form of forms’ in the relevant passage of Aristotle’s *On the Soul*. Also, Alexander of Aphrodisias had already described the relationship between these powers of the soul as form or culminations (*teleiōseis*) supervening on suitable substrates” (*ibid.*). In my opinion, Themistius’ items [1] and [2] in the list above, as well as the explanation of their mutual relationship in terms of illumination, are of Neoplatonic lineage in form and content. The source of this doctrine is Plotinus’ account of the separate Intellect as the cause for the fact that our souls are intellectual. In his typical way of smoothing the differences and rephrasing the controversial points that has been highlighted by

E. Coda,<sup>16</sup> Themistius moulds Plotinus' ideas and wording into his account of Aristotle's simile of the light (*De Anima* III 5).

Plotinus, V 3[49], 8.18-49	Themistius, <i>In De An.</i> , p. 103.20-36 Heinze
<p>(...) νοῦς δὲ ὄραξ. ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἡ ὄψις φῶς οὖσα, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐνωθεῖσα φωτὶ, φῶς ὄραξ· χρώματα γὰρ ὄραξ· ἐκεῖ δὲ οὐ δι' ἐτέρου, ἀλλὰ δι' αὐτῆς, ὅτι μηδὲ ἕξω. ἄλλω οὖν φωτὶ ἄλλο φῶς ὄραξ, οὐ δι' ἄλλου. φῶς ἄρα φῶς ἄλλο ὄραξ· αὐτὸ ἄρα αὐτὸ ὄραξ. τὸ δὲ φῶς τοῦτο ἐν ψυχῇ μὲν ἐλλάμπαν ἐφώτισε· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ νοεράν ἐποίησε· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ὁμοίωσεν ἑαυτῷ τῷ ἄνω φωτὶ. οἷον οὖν ἐστὶ τὸ ἴχνος τὸ ἐγγενόμενον τοῦ φωτὸς ἐν ψυχῇ, τοιοῦτον καὶ ἔτι κάλλιον καὶ μεῖζον αὐτὸ νομίζων καὶ ἐναργέστερον ἐγγύς ἂν γένοιτο φύσεως νοῦ καὶ νοητοῦ. καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐπιλαμπέν τοῦτο ζῶν ἔδωκε τῇ ψυχῇ ἐναργεστέραν, ζῶν δὲ οὐ γεννητικὴν· τούναντίον γὰρ ἐπέστρεψε πρὸς ἑαυτὴν τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ σκιδνασθαι οὐκ εἶασεν, ἀλλ' ἀγαπᾶν ἐποίησε τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ ἀγλαίαν· οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ αἰσθητικὴν, αὕτη γὰρ ἕξω βλέπει καὶ οὐ μᾶλλον αἰσθάνεται· ὁ δ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀληθῶν λαβῶν οἷον βλέπει μᾶλλον τὰ ὁρατά, ἀλλὰ τούναντίον. λείπεται τοίνυν ζῶν νοεράν προσειληφέναι, ἴχνος νοῦ ζωῆς· ἐκεῖ γὰρ τὰ ἀληθῆ. <b>ἡ δὲ ἐν τῷ νῷ ζωὴ καὶ ἐνέργεια τὸ πρῶτον φῶς ἑαυτῷ λάμπων πρῶτως καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸ λαμπηδών, λάμπων ὁμοῦ καὶ λαμπόμενον</b>, τὸ ἀληθῶς νοητόν, καὶ νοοῦν καὶ νοούμενον, καὶ ἑαυτῷ ὀρώμενον καὶ οὐ δεόμενον ἄλλου, ἵνα ἴδῃ, αὐτῷ αὐταρκες πρὸς τὸ ἰδεῖν – καὶ γὰρ ὁ ὄραξ αὐτὸ ἐστὶ – γινωσκόμενον καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν αὐτῷ ἐκείνω, ὡς καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν τὴν γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ δι' αὐτοῦ γίνεσθαι· ἢ πόθεν ἂν ἔσχομεν λέγειν περὶ αὐτοῦ; τοιοῦτόν ἐστίν, οἷον σαφέστερον μὲν ἀντιλαμπάνεσθαι αὐτοῦ, ἡμᾶς δὲ δι' αὐτοῦ· διὰ δὲ τῶν τοιούτων λογισμῶν ἀνάγεσθαι καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν εἰς αὐτὸ εἰκόνα θεμένην ἑαυτὴν εἶναι ἐκείνου, ὡς τὴν αὐτῆς ζῶν ἴνδαλμα καὶ ὁμοίωμα εἶναι ἐκείνου, καὶ ὅταν νοῆ, θεοειδῆ καὶ νοοειδῆ γίγνεσθαι.</p>	<p>Ἄλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν οὐχ οὕτω χαλεπὸν ἀπολύσασθαι, ἐκεῖνο δὲ ἄξιον καὶ πάνυ πολλῆς ἐξετάσεως, ἄρα εἰς ὁ ποιητικὸς οὗτος νοῦς ἢ πολλοί; ἐκ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ φωτὸς ὃ παραβέβληται, εἰς ἂν εἴη· ἐν γὰρ που καὶ τὸ φῶς, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὁ τοῦ φωτὸς χορηγός, ὑφ' οὗ πᾶσαι αἱ τῶν ζῶων ὄψεις προάγονται ἐκ δυνάμεως εἰς ἐνέργειαν. ὥσπερ οὖν οὐδὲν πρὸς ἐκάστην τῶν ὄψεων ἢ τοῦ κοινοῦ φωτὸς ἀφθαρσία, οὕτως οὐδὲν πρὸς ἕκαστον ἡμῶν ἢ τοῦ ποιητικοῦ νοῦ ἀιδιότης. εἰ δὲ πολλοὶ καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον τῶν δυνάμει εἰς ποιητικὸς, πόθεν ἀλλήλων διοίσουσιν; ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν αὐτῶν τῷ εἶδει κατὰ τὴν ὕλην ὁ μερισμὸς, ἀνάγκη δὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς εἶναι τῷ εἶδει τοὺς ποιητικούς, εἰ γε ἅπαντες τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχουσιν οὐσίαν τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ πάντες νοοῦσιν. εἰ γὰρ μὴ τὰ αὐτὰ ἄλλ' ἕτερα, τίς ἔσται ἢ ἀποκλήρωσις; πόθεν δὲ καὶ ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς πάντα νοήσει, εἰ μὴ πρῶτος πάντα νοεῖ ὁ προάγων αὐτὸν εἰς ἐνέργειαν; <b>ἡ ὁ μὲν πρῶτως ἐλλάμπων εἰς, οἱ δὲ ἐλλαμπόμενοι καὶ ἐλλάμποντες πλείους ὥσπερ τὸ φῶς</b>. ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἥλιος εἰς, τὸ δὲ φῶς εἴποις ἂν τρόπον τινὰ μερίζεσθαι εἰς τὰς ὄψεις. διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ οὐ τὸν ἥλιον παραβέβληκεν ἀλλὰ τὸ φῶς, Πλάτων δὲ τὸν ἥλιον· τῷ γὰρ ἀγαθῷ ἀνάλογον αὐτὸν ποιεῖ. εἰ δὲ εἰς ἓνα ποιητικὸν νοῦν ἅπαντες ἀναγόμεθα οἱ συγκείμενοι ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ, καὶ ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν τὸ εἶναι παρὰ τοῦ ἐνός ἐκείνου ἐστίν, οὐ χρὴ θαυμάζειν.</p>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. E. Coda, "The Soul as Harmony in Late Antiquity and in the Latin Middle Ages. A Note on Thomas Aquinas as a Reader of Themistius' *In Libros De Anima Paraphrasis*", *Studia graeco-arabica* 7 (2017), pp. 307-30; Ead., "Common Sense in Themistius and its Reception in the pseudo-Philoponus and Avicenna", in D. Bennett (ed.), *Mechanisms of Sense Perception* (Studies in the History of the Philosophy of Mind, forthcoming).

(...) and Intellect is the seer. For here below also sight, since it is light, or rather united with light, sees light: for it sees colours; but in the intelligible world seeing is not through another [medium], but through itself, because it is not [directed] outside. Intellect therefore sees one light with another, not through another. Light then sees another light: it therefore sees itself. And this light shining in the soul illuminates it; that is, it makes it intelligent; that is, it makes it like itself, the light above. For if you consider that it is like the trace of light that comes to be in the soul and still more beautiful and greater and clearer, you will come near to the nature of Intellect and the intelligible. And again, this illumination gives the soul a clearer life, but a life which is not generative; on the contrary it turns the soul back upon itself and does not allow it to disperse, but makes it satisfied with the glory in itself; and it is not a life of sense-perception either; for sense-perception looks outside and perceives the external world; but he who has received that light of the true realities sees, so to speak, the visible things no better, but their opposite. The remaining possibility, then is for the soul to have received an intelligent life, a trace of the life of the Intellect; for the true realities are there. **But the life and activity of Intellect is the first light shining primarily for itself and an outshining upon itself, at once illuminated and illuminating**, the truly intelligible, both thinker and thought, seen by itself and needing no other that it may see, supplying itself with the power of seeing – for it is itself what it sees – known to us by that very power, so that the knowledge if it comes to us through itself; otherwise from where should we have the ability to speak about it? It is such a kind that it apprehends itself more clearly, but we apprehend it by means of it; by reasonings of this kind our soul also is led back up to it, considering itself to be an image of the Intellect, as its life is a reflection and likeness of it, and when it thinks it becomes godlike and intellect-like (trans. Armstrong, IV, pp. 99-101).

It is not difficult to solve these [problems] in this way. What does, however, justify a really extensive examination is whether this productive intellect is one or many. This is because based on the light with which it is compared (430 a 15) it is one. For light too, of course, is one, as even more is the [entity that] supplies the light, [the one] through which all sight among animals is advanced from potentiality to activity. So [on this analogy] the imperishability of the light shared [by everyone with sight] has no more relation to each organ of sight, than does the eternity of the productive intellect to each [one] of us. If, on the other hand, there are many [productive intellects], and for each [individual] potential [intellect], on what basis will they differ from one another? For where [individuals] are the same in kind, division occurs in respect of matter, and so the productive [intellects] must be the same in kind, given that they all have their essence identical with their activity, and all think the same objects. For if they do not think the same, but different objects, what will be the process for apportioning [different intellects to different individuals]? From what source will the potential intellect also come to think all objects, if the intellect that advances it to activity does not think all objects prior to it? Now [the solution is that] the intellect that illuminates (ellampôn) in a primary sense is one, while those that are illuminated (ellampomenoi) and that illuminate (ellampontes) are, just like light, more than one. For while the sun is one, you could speak of light as in a sense divided among the organs of sight. This is why Aristotle introduced as a comparison not the sun but [its derivative] light, whereas Plato [introduced] the sun itself, in that he makes it analogous to the good. There is no need to be puzzled if we who are combined from the potential and the actual [intellects] are referred back to one productive intellect, and that what is to be each of us is derived from that single intellect (trans. R.B. Todd, *Themistius On Aristotle's On the Soul*, Cornell U.P., Ithaca - New York 1996 [Ancient Commentators On Aristotle], pp. 128-9).

J. Opsomer's "Proclus" (pp. 129-50) begins and ends with the interpretations of the "self" mentioned in the *First Alcibiades* that characterize the school of Athens and in particular Proclus, its most prominent philosopher. "At 130 D 4 the author of this work, whom Proclus thinks is Plato, uses the expression 'the self' (*tou autou*) 'the self itself' (*auto to auto*) and 'the particular self

(or ‘each itself, *auto hekaston*). According to a report by Olympiodorus, Proclus’ exegesis explained these different expressions as follows: the ‘self’ stands for our tripartite soul, ‘the self itself’ denotes the rational soul, and ‘the particular itself is the individual (*to atomon*)” (p. 129). For Proclus “the proper self resides in the rational soul and transcends the body and its parts”. Thus his vision is that of “a multi-layered soul” (p. 130). What “appears to be a single, coherent and astonishingly stable doctrine of the soul” (p. 131) embeds some Aristotelian features which require explanation. There is general scholarly consensus that the school of Athens, where Proclus received his philosophical education and which he directed later on, was much less compliant towards Aristotle’s doctrines if compared with the school of Alexandria initiated by Ammonius Hermeiou (who had been Proclus’ condisciple in Athens), even though scholars often part company on the reasons why it was so. Opsomer remarks that this divide is much less pronounced in the case of the doctrine of the soul: Proclus’ exegesis “is to a large extent identical with the one outlined in the introduction of Philoponus’ commentary on Aristotle’s *On the Soul*. This *apo phōnēs* commentary written by Philoponus reflects the teachings of Ammonius, ‘with some critical observations of my own’. While Ammonius’ school is well known for its tendency to harmonize the teachings of Plato and Aristotle, Proclus is held to be much more critical in this respect. It is therefore all the more remarkable that Proclus’ own views on the soul are so heavily indebted to Aristotle. On closer inspection, there is a much greater continuity between Proclus and the commentators on Aristotle than is generally acknowledged” (p. 131). This is an interesting remark. Opsomer thinks that “In general it is impossible to tell how much of his [Proclus’] philosophical views he inherited from his predecessors. It is a plausible hypothesis, though, that the greater part of his views on the soul’s faculties was common among his contemporaries” (*ibid.*). A promising way to narrow the focus consists in my opinion in exploring the doctrine of one of Proclus’ teachers, Plutarch of Athens. Plutarch’s detailed commentary on Aristotle’s *De Anima*, lost but well attested by later authors,<sup>17</sup> might also help to explain the common features of both schools on this issue. A seminal article by H.J. Blumenthal discusses Plutarch’s influence on Proclus’ doctrine of the soul,<sup>18</sup> and in the light of subsequent developments on Iamblichus’ position<sup>19</sup> and on Plutarch’s role in shaping the school of Athens in a Iamblichean vein<sup>20</sup> further research is arguably needed. Opsomer’s informative essay surveys all the distinctive features of Proclus’ soul: its “multi-layered” structure culminates in a “flower” (pp. 134-35); its lowest level is an astral body that steers a middle course between the incorporeal soul and the body made out of flesh and bones.

<sup>17</sup> The fragments are collected by D.P. Taormina, Plutarco di Atene, *L’Uno, l’anima, le Forme. Saggio introduttivo, fonti, traduzione e commento*, Università di Catania – L’Erma di Bretschneider, Catania – Roma 1989 (Symbolon. Studi e testi di filosofia antica e medievale, 8).

<sup>18</sup> H.J. Blumenthal, “Plutarch’s Exposition of the *De Anima* and the Psychology of Proclus”, in *De Jamblique à Proclus. Entretiens sur l’Antiquité Classique*, Tome XXI, Fondation Hardt, Vandœuvres – Genève 1975, pp. 123-47. We are told by Marinus that Proclus took a course on the *De Anima* under Plutarch’s guidance: cf. Marinus, *Proclus, ou sur le bonheur*, Texte établi, traduit et annoté par H.D. Saffrey et A.-Ph. Segonds avec la collaboration de C. Luna, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2001 (CUF), § 12.9-12: “Proclus lut (ἀναγινώσκει) donc avec lui, d’Aristote le *Traité sur l’âme*, et de Platon le *Phédon*. Le grand Plutarque l’engageait même à faire une copie au net des explications (ἀπογράφεσθαι τὰ λεγόμενα)” (pp. 14-15).

<sup>19</sup> A starting point for this enquiry is the detailed analysis provided by Martone, Giamblico, *De Anima. I frammenti, la dottrina* (above, n. 15). Iamblichus sides with Aristotle insofar as the engagement of the soul with the body entailed by the Aristotelian definition of the soul as entelechy goes hand in hand with his own vision of the soul as wholly descended in the world of coming-to-be and passing away. In its turn, this vision results from Iamblichus’ critical stance towards Plotinus’ view that a part of the soul remains constantly present in the intelligible realm.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Taormina, Plutarco di Atene, *L’Uno, l’anima, le Forme* (above, n. 17), pp. 21-26.

The kinds of afterlife of these layers of soul vary: “The self itself encompasses rational conations, and opinative, discursive and intellective reason. “The self is a broader concept that includes in addition the irrational appetites – desire and spirit – and the cognitive functions of perception, imagination and memory. These additional functions of the broader self are all mortal, while only ‘the self itself enjoys true immortality. Its immortality takes the form of never-ending cycles of reincarnations. After each transmigration it gets involved with a new earthly body, and after each full cycle it also grows a new set of irrational capacities, housed in a vehicle of their own” (p. 148).

In her chapter “Damascius” (pp. 151-70) S. Ahbel-Rappe discusses the Neoplatonic theory that “soul exists prior to its incarnation”, the paradoxical consequences entailed by this theory, and Damascius’ solution to them. The starting point is a passage by Plotinus (the reference to VI.5.1 given in the main text is erroneous, but the footnote gives the right reference to VI 7[38], 1.1-10) where the *Timaeus* is cited in support of the intrinsic necessity of the ‘descent’ of the soul into the body. If this is the case, this means that soul is provided even ‘before’ its incarnation with the capability to operate through bodily organs. This is indeed Plotinus’ opinion, with the caveat that expressions that have to do with space (‘descent’) or time (‘before’) do not sit well with the real nature of the soul. Although these expressions come spontaneously to mind, the soul as a rational structure present in everything that is alive does not have a spatial mode of existence, let alone can it be provided with bodily dimensions. This is Plotinus’ position and at one and the same time also the starting point of Damascius’ puzzles. Ahbel-Rappe writes: “Instead, let us imagine, with Damascius, that the soul is not originally endowed with at least some of its incarnate properties prior to incarnation: in this case, the soul’s nature changes upon embodiment, and does so quite radically. Damascius does think that the soul changes when it is embodied. But how can the soul, the self-moved, be so affected, so profoundly changed, by what is external to it?” (p. 152). Entering “into explicit controversy with his predecessors Plotinus and Proclus”, Damascius “reluctantly speculates that the soul ‘changes essentially’ owing to embodiment, owing, that is, to relationship to the body” (p. 153). Ahbel-Rappe maintains that “Damascius’ work on the soul-body relationship departs from a cosmo-history of embodiment and moves towards an analysis of the constituent features of consciousness in terms of what we might call the thought-moment and what Damascius calls both the instant and the now” (p. 154). This opinion is argued for by means of a discussion of the “change in consciousness” (p. 155) that happens when soul is embodied. It is her conviction that “The adaptation of a dualist position to Aristotle’s hylomorphism is an important component of Neoplatonic psychology, enabling the body to be a hylomorphic compound, whereas the individual soul is completely separate from the body” (p. 157). Against this background – and leaving aside the question whether or not this description sits well with Plotinus’ vision of the soul – it comes as no surprise that Damascius presents embodiment as “the mistaken alignment of the identity of a superior with an inferior” (p. 159). Hence “The soul actually suffers essentially. How can it be that merely sympathizing with the body changes the nature of the soul? In order to understand why Damascius would say something that is metaphysically extremely unappealing, namely that an essence changes, we need to understand the scholastic debate over the soul’s essence in late Neoplatonic circles” (p. 159). Damascius criticizes both the Plotinian doctrine of the undescended soul and Proclus’ attempt to keep the substance of the soul unchanging, whereas its activity is temporal. For Ahbel-Rappe, Damascius’ point is that “Soul’s *ousia* changes in conjunction with its *energeiai*” (p. 164). Elaborating on his exegesis of the ἐξαιφνης of *Parm.* 156 D 3, she comes to the conclusion that “For Damascius, the centre of human consciousness, the activity of the soul, can be understood in one way as a temporally defined moment, what we might call a thought-moment” (p. 168). The attentive faculty that is at

work in these ‘thought-moments’ is “the centre of conscious activity” and can be “the gateway to reversion” towards the intelligible reality (p. 169).

Part II, “Mind and Body in Early Christian Thought”, begins with S. Cartwright’s chapter “Soul and Body in Early Christianity. An Old and New Conundrum” (pp. 173-90). In early Christianity, the Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas about the soul-body relationship were “recast within a fresh and evolving theological mould. Soul-body issues were now also shaped by a commitment to bodily resurrection (as diversely interpreted), the incarnation and the goodness of creation” (pp. 173-4). Cartwright sets herself the task of exploring “the interaction of ideas about cosmology, history and ethics *as features of discussions about body and soul*” (p. 174, author’s emphasis). A survey of the views of Irenaeus of Lyons (pp. 174-9), Origen the Christian (pp. 179-82), Methodius (pp. 182-5), Evagrius Ponticus (pp. 185-88), and a final sketch of Augustine’s views (pp. 189-90) allows the reader to take into account the different answers to the question of the real self and its destiny. “In response to the denigration of the human body, Irenaeus extols its goodness and centrality to human nature (...). Correspondingly, the theme of bodily redemption pervades *Heresies*: Christ took on flesh in the incarnation, and our bodies will be resurrected. (...) Personal identity is located in particular formations of ensouled matter. Unremarkably, Irenaeus does believe that soul and body are made of different stuff and correspond to distinct orders of reality. It is specifically the soul that is the seat of *mens, ratio* and *intentio*. Where he insists that a human being is body, soul and spirit, Irenaeus posits a holistic, rather than monistic, anthropology as an alternative to the Gnostics’ divisive one” (p. 175). The “goodness and intrinsic value of the body implies these of material creation” (p. 178) which is an evident divide with the Gnostics, but also a point that elicits comparison with a very different approach, that of Origen. “Origen apparently represents a very different anthropological tradition from Irenaeus, locating the self outside of history and the earthly body” (p. 179). This does not mean that his doctrine verges on Gnostic dualism, quite the contrary: “Origen’s doctrine of the fall into an earthly body develops Irenaeus’ argument that sin comes from self-determination, rather than from the soul’s inherent evil and he, too, has an anti-Gnostic motivation, casting his theology as a challenge to Marcion, Basilides and Valentinus” (p. 180). Another thinker who “strongly opposes cosmic dualism, and placed the origins of sin in human self-determination” (p. 183) is Methodius of Olympus (d. 311), who “hints at an ultimate end to embodiment, or at least a radical alteration of its terms and nature, so much so that he can write as if our eventual state is not exactly ‘human’. (...) human identity is no longer wedded to specific ensouled matter” (*ibid.*). Also Evagrius Ponticus (d. 399) “stands firmly within an Origenian tradition heavily concerned with metaphysics, but does so in the context of desert monasticism with its particular focus on and distinctive approach towards ethics, prayer and a daily life of intense spiritual warfare” (pp. 185-6). His ideas about the fall of the soul “echoes Irenaeus and Origen in ethics and metaphysics, connecting self-determination with creaturely mutability. (...) Evagrius claims that we will ultimately be ‘liberated’ from our bodies, which is part of the final restoration to God and to unity” (p. 186). This informative survey ends with a sketch of Augustinus’ role in the development of the doctrine of original sin.

V. Limone, “The Christian Conception of Body and Paul’s Use of the Term *Sōma* in I Corinthians” (pp. 191-206) provides an analysis of the Pauline treatment of ‘body’. “Since the middle of the last century scholars have been considering the term *sōma* to denote the relational/communicational property of individuals, in contrast with the nineteenth-century interpretation of it as ‘form’ of the flesh in Aristotelian fashion, or as mind-endowed material substrate” (p. 194). Narrowing the focus on I Cor., “one of the first Christian documents to outline a technical definition of ‘body’, and a favourable vantage point from which to view Paul’s anthropological lexicon” (*ibid.*), Limone argues that ‘individuality’ is the primary meaning of this term for Paul. A key passage in

this letter attests the existence of a debate with some “libertine Christians” (p. 195) who “regard the body as separated from the soul, and thus maintain that all bodily relationships are irrelevant to the question of salvation and urge each other to satisfy their sensual drives, such as hunger (...) and sexual desire” (*ibid.*). Limone records the scholarly opinions on the sources of such views: these libertine Christians might be “influenced by proto-Gnosticism or by Stoicism” (*ibid.*). If an outsider’s remark is permitted, I would like to suggest exploring rather the possibility that the inspiration comes from Imperial Cynicism, now that two outstanding books by M.-O. Goulet-Cazé<sup>21</sup> facilitate this task. Whether or not this is the case, Paul is totally at odds with such a stance. “Whilst for the Corinthians the body is separated from the soul and will not be resurrected by God and, thus, is morally irrelevant, for Paul it means the whole person, that is, the individual with both material and spiritual elements” (p. 196). There are also passages which exhibit a marked overtone on self-discipline and asceticism, but for Paul ‘body’ never means merely ‘matter’. Rather, also in these passages “the body denotes the whole individual” (p. 199). The final part of the essay explores the Pauline account of the resurrected body: “Paul distinguishes the earthly, or psychic, body (*sōma psychikon*), and the spiritual body (*sōma pneumatikon*), and regards the resurrection as the transformation of the former into the latter, arguing that the same body, that is, the same *individual*, persists both before and after the transformation” (p. 205, author’s emphasis).

B.P. Blosser, “The Ensoulment of the Body in Early Christian Thought” (pp. 207-35) examines the various theories advanced in the first four centuries of Christianity to account for the presence of the soul in the body. “Traducianism (that is, the belief that each new soul is the offshoot, *tradux*, of its father’s) and pre-existence (the belief that the soul has a pre-natal existence, usually in heaven) were the more common Christian theories in the first three centuries, but they were crowded out by creationism (the belief that each soul is created immediately by God in the womb) in the fourth century, due both to Origenist dispute and the Neoplatonic leanings of the fourth-century episcopate. Traducianist strains continued to express their influence indirectly, through theories of hereditary sin implicit in baptismal liturgy and catechesis. The synthesis achieved by Augustine – a creationist theory of ensoulment and a traducianist theory of original sin – remains the doctrinal inheritance of the Christian Church” (p. 207). This multifaceted range of opinions has a common background labeled by Bosser as “a dual anthropological stream”: the Jewish and the Hellenistic conceptions of the soul-body relationship. “On the one hand, there was the ‘monistic’ Hebrew anthropology and the larger Jewish meta-mythology of history, in which the individual person was embedded in the larger saga of the human race in its dealings with the Creator. On the other, there was the Hellenistic world of philosophical vocabulary and concepts, including the dualistic and monistic anthropologies and the ‘traducianist’ (Stoic and Aristotelian) and ‘pre-existence’ (Platonic) theories regarding the soul’s origin” (pp. 210-11). Primitive Christianity was of course aware of the philosophical doctrines about soul, as is apparent from the survey on the views of Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus of Rome, Tertullian, and Origen the Christian; however, it is only with the fourth century that the “full synthesis of Neoplatonism and biblical doctrine” took place (p. 214). “The implications of this

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<sup>21</sup> M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, *Cynisme et christianisme dans l’Antiquité*, Vrin, Paris 2014 (Textes et traditions, 26). It is in particular the opening clauses of the passage at stake that are reminiscent of the Cynic stance: “‘I have the right to do anything’, you say, but not everything is beneficial. ‘I have the right to do anything, but I will not be mastered by anything’. You say, ‘Food for the stomach and the stomach for food’”. Both claims are typical Cynic topics. Goulet-Cazé discusses the commonalities and differences of the Cynic movement of the Imperial age and early Christianity and provides a balanced judgment of the so-called ‘Cynic Jesus Thesis’. See also M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, *Le cynisme, une philosophie antique*, Vrin, Paris 2017 (Textes et traditions, 29).

for Christian anthropology were predictable. The sharp dualism of Neoplatonism had no room for the quasi-materialism latent in traducianism. The divine realm was associated with the spiritual, the intelligible and the immaterial, and the rational soul should not but be akin to it. To imagine that the rational soul was derived from the process of biological procreation was to reduce man to the level of a brute animal" (*ibid.*). Examples of this are Athanasius of Alexandria (d. 373), Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394), and a later tradition that spans from Nemesius of Emesa (end of the century) to John Damascene (d. 749). "No prominent Christian thinker of the fourth century explicitly endorses traducianism. On the contrary, those who show a familiarity with it tend to treat it with scorn" (p. 215). On the other hand, "the major alternative to traducianism, pre-existence, was quickly becoming doctrinally suspect (...). In this way, Christian anthropology arrived at strange crossroads. A strong Neoplatonic conviction of the immateriality of the soul had ruled out traducianism; an eagerness to exorcise any lingering remnants of Gnostic dualism had ruled out pre-existence. The immaterial soul could have no material origin; neither could it pre-exist its insertion into the body. Thus was born, out of intellectual desperation, as it were, the new theory of creationism" (p. 216). The clash between this theory, "imagining the immortal, immaterial soul to be utterly distinct from the body," and the "deep current of tradition (...) which imagined the soul to be much more intimately bound up with the body" (p. 219), a vision implicit in the practice of infant baptism, was inevitable. Against this background, Blosser examines the Pelagian controversy and Augustine's dual solution. On the one hand, "Augustine's metaphysical understanding of the soul as an 'immaterial, immortal, rational and dynamic entity' was not derived from Scripture, but from Neoplatonic philosophy, which he takes for granted in his discussions", says Blosser (p. 221) endorsing Gerard O'Daly's claim.<sup>22</sup> On the other, Augustine was "equally repelled by Pelagius' denial of inherited sin" (p. 222); he "ended his life still undecided on the question of the soul's origin" (p. 223).

The paper by K. Corrigan, "Christian Asceticism. Mind, Soul and Body" (pp. 224-44) aims at countering the common belief that denial of real life is intrinsic to Christianity: "Christian asceticism is frequently associated with the urge to escape from body or bodily attachments, especially sexuality, or with the reduction of body to a corpse-like or dead existence, or again with the extirpation of passion (...). But this is, of course, not the case – or, more precisely, it is only one rather lop-sided and definitely misleading aspect of a diverse set of practices, beliefs and (sometimes) very different world-views that were, in general, much more inclusive of mind, heart, soul and body, and that recognized the need to develop a discipline of the natural ordering of our being" (p. 224). Corrigan argues his point first by calling attention to the continuities and discontinuities between ancient philosophical asceticism and the Christian one. "'Christian' asceticism, while part of the world in which it was born, has a motive force that is somehow unique and shocking, and that even in antiquity puzzled outsiders" (p. 226). This world-view "becomes modulated in new ways of configuring mind/soul/body in the thought of Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria and, above all, Origen of Alexandria. (...) it is formulated anew in the Latin world, especially with Augustine" (p. 227). Corrigan's main point is "first, that Christian asceticism makes possible an altogether new view of flesh/body/mind organization; second, that while separation from body, renunciation of passion and withdrawal from the world are crucial features of ascetic practice, Christianity developed a new way of thinking about

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<sup>22</sup> Blosser cites with approval from G.J.P. O'Daly, "Augustine on the Origins of Souls", in H.-D. Blume – F. Mann, *Platonismus und Christentum. Festschrift für Heinrich Dörrie*, Aschendorff, Münster 1983 (Ergänzungsband Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum 10), pp. 184-91. By the same scholar see also *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*, Univ. of California Press, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1987, esp. pp. 15-20.



body, soul/mind that sees them more as a single continuum than discrete entities or things” (*ibid.*). Corrigan elaborates more on this “continuum” in terms of “the trajectory of body into mind and spirit or, conversely, of mind into soul and body. Clement and Origen (...) map out the progressive or ascending ascetic development of the human being through soul, mind or heart into God. Clemens charts the need for Gnostic life of impassibility, for love and divinization ‘by mystic stages’, and has been criticized for introducing Platonic and Stoic intellectualism into Christian ascetic thought. (...) But it is Origen, above all (...) who forged the architecture of a new Christian cosmos linking speculative classical thought and scripture as the guide to truth” (pp. 233-4). In early Christian thought increasing attention is paid to “body structure, body-soul-mind organization, experience, and their significance and pathologies. This starts, as Hadot<sup>23</sup> has observed, in a shared focus across traditions, pagan and Christian, upon continual vigilance, focused concentration upon the present, and expansion of the self so as to embrace a larger divine world. Athanasius’ unlettered Antony in the *Life of Antony* is a model of attention (‘live daily dying, paying attention to themselves’) and of *askēsis*: ‘each monk, wishing to give attention to his life, practices askēsis’. Such attention, linked to the examination of conscience, goes back in the Christian tradition at least to Origen’s *Commentary on the Song of Songs* and is shared by much in the Graeco-Roman philosophical tradition” (p. 238).

According to I. Ramelli, “Origen” (pp. 245-66), the ideas about the soul-body relationship held by Origen are “often misrepresented in scholarship – ultimately as a result of the misconstructions of Origen’s doctrines during the Origenistic controversy” (p. 245). The paper therefore aims to demonstrate that “it is probably incorrect, or at least grossly imprecise, to ascribe to Origen the doctrine of the pre-existence of disembodied souls” (*ibid.*), a misrepresentation which, in Ramelli’s opinion, is attested from the late third century onwards and is continued in contemporary scholarship (pp. 246-8). To redress the false opinions about Origen’s soul, she claims first that this doctrine is ascribed to Origen by “unreliable and hostile sources” (p. 248). Contrary to these reports, Origen “thought that rational creatures had a body from their creation, and repeatedly rejected metempsychosis as incompatible with the biblical doctrine of the end of the world. Indeed, to metempsychosis Origen opposed his own theory: ensomatosis, entailing that a soul does not change bodies, but always keeps one body, which changes according to its merits, changing for instance from spiritual to mortal” (p. 249). This is the soul’s “vehicle” (ὄχημα) typical of the Platonic tradition. Origen’s subtle and luminous prelapsarian body “parallels the risen body, after the deposition of the ‘skin-tunic’ added

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<sup>23</sup> Corrigan refers to the ground-breaking *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, Études Augustiniennes, Paris 1981, 1993. “Attention” is the pivot of the philosophical exercises. As Hadot has it, “la *prosoché*, l’attention à soi-même, la vigilance de chaque instant” allow the philosopher to be a man who “est sans cesse parfaitement conscient non seulement de ce qu’il fait, mais de ce qu’il est, c’est-à-dire de sa place dans le cosmos et de son rapport à Dieu. Cette conscience de soi est tout d’abord une conscience morale, elle cherche à réaliser à chaque instant une purification et une rectification de l’intention: elle veille à chaque instant à n’admettre aucun autre motif d’action que la volonté de faire le bien. Mais cette conscience de soi n’est pas seulement une conscience morale, est aussi une conscience cosmique: l’homme ‘attentif vit sans cesse en présence de Dieu dans le ‘souvenir de Dieu’, consentant joyeusement à la volonté de la Raison universelle et voyant toutes choses avec le regard même de Dieu. Telle est l’attitude philosophique par excellence. Telle est aussi l’attitude du philosophe chrétien. Elle apparaît déjà chez Clément d’Alexandrie (...). Cette *prosoché*, cette attention à soi-même, attitude fondamentale du philosophe, va devenir l’attitude fondamentale du moine. C’est ainsi que lorsqu’Athanasie, dans sa *Vie d’Antoine*, écrite en 357, nous raconte la conversion du saint à la vie monastique, il se contente de dire qu’il se mit à ‘faire attention à lui-même’. Et Antoine, mourant, dira à ses disciples: ‘Vivez comme si vous deviez mourir chaque jour, en faisant attention à vous-mêmes et en vous souvenant de mes exhortations’ (...) Cette attention, cette vigilance (...) supposent une continuelle concentration sur le moment présent, qui doit être vécu comme s’il était à la fois le premier et le dernier” (pp. 81-4 of the reprint, Albin Michel, Paris 2002).

to the first, immortal body-vehicle” (p. 254). Ramelli compares the account of the ὄχημα of the soul in Proclus’ commentary on the *Timaeus* with Origen’s: “Proclus identified two vehicles: a ‘first body’ without temporal origin, called *augoeides ochēma*, as in Origen, and the lower soul’s pneumatic vehicle, composed of ‘tunics’ added later. The former is ‘perpetually and congenitally attached to the soul that uses it’ and ‘immutable in its essence’, a perpetual (*aidion*) body that ‘each soul’ possesses and that ‘participates in that soul primarily, from its first essence’. This is the same position as Origen’s and a rejection of Plotinus’ doctrine of disembodied souls’ pre-existence” (pp. 254-5). The affinity between Proclus’ and Origen’s positions is rephrased later in the paper in terms of filiation.<sup>24</sup> “Origen’s line, that the luminous, light body always accompanies soul, was rather continued with Neoplatonism by Iamblichus, Hierocles, and especially Proclus” (pp. 262-3). This claim seems to suggest that post-Plotinian Neoplatonists took inspiration from Origen in their accounts of the ὄχημα. However, we owe to M. Baltes a detailed analysis of the sources of the most representative passages attesting this doctrine in the Platonic tradition of the Imperial age and late Antiquity,<sup>25</sup> and I am more inclined to side with him and with M. Zambon<sup>26</sup> in locating the rise of this topic within the mainstream of pagan Neoplatonism with its idiosyncratic interpretation of *Tim.* 44 E 2 aired in the *Chaldaean Oracles* and in the *Corpus Hermeticum*.

C. Moreschini, “Basil of Caesarea” (pp. 268-82) outlines first Basil’s intellectual and spiritual move from Greek *paideia* acquired in Constantinople and Athens to the ascetic life, out of “rejection of pagan culture” (p. 268) which is described by Basil in a letter to Eusthatus of Sebaste. The asceticism of the monastic lifestyle was his own choice. Moreschini agrees with the idea that “some of the principles of Basil’s monasticism are similar to certain institutions of the pagan life of the time. The philosophers-ascetics of India, the famous Gymnosophists, led a communal life, as we read in certain fictional texts, and so did the Pythagorean community of whom Iamblichus’ *Life of Pythagoras* spoke” (p. 269). The monastic life at first is labelled “philosophical” by Basil, a term which is abandoned later on (p. 270 with n. 14). Asceticism entails a struggle against passions in order to be in control of one’s body. “Nonetheless, in the ascetical writings Basil asserts that

<sup>24</sup> Ramelli acknowledges that Porphyry was acquainted with Origen’s works: he “knew Origen’s *De Principiis* and probably his *Commentary on John*” (p. 261; at p. 265 we are told that Porphyry met Origen, but no evidence is given for either claim). Be that as it may, Porphyry’s acquaintance with Origen should not be extended to Iamblichus or Proclus, whose sources for their vision of the ὄχημα come entirely from the camp of pagan Platonism (see below, n. 25 and 26).

<sup>25</sup> H. Dörrie † - M. Baltes, *Die philosophische Lehre des Platonismus. Von der Seele als der Ursache aller sinnvollen Abläufe*. Band 6.1: *Bausteine* 151-168; Band 6.2: *Bausteine* 169-181. *Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart – Bad Cannstatt 2002, Bst. 165, pp. 122-9 and 388-401 (Commentary), here p. 389: “Im Mittelplatonismus war die Lehre vom einheitlichen ‘glanzartigen’ oder ‘pneumatischen Gefährt’ (ἀύροειδὲς/πνευματικὸν ὄχημα) vorherrschend, selbst da, wo man andere Ausdrücke verwandte. Die Lehre von den Schichten oder Kleidungsstücken, die sich beim Abstieg durch die Himmelsphären um die Seele legen und die zusammen den Seelenwagen bilden, scheint aus den *Chaldäischen Orakeln* (Mitte/Ende 2. Jh. N. Chr.) zu stammen”. On Origen’s reception of this theory see p. 401 with n. 189.

<sup>26</sup> M. Zambon, “Il significato filosofico della dottrina dell’ὄχημα dell’anima”, in R. Chiaradonna (ed.), *Studi sull’anima in Plotino*, Bibliopolis, Napoli 2005 (Elenchos. Collana di testi e studi sul pensiero antico, 42), pp. 305-35: “A partire dal II secolo d.C., in seno alla tradizione platonica o in opere ad essa comunque legate (alcune correnti gnostiche, *Oracoli caldaici*, *Corpus Hermeticum*) si trovano testimonianze di una dottrina che attribuisce all’anima nel cosmo un corpo astrale – fatto di etere o di altri elementi più sottili e leggeri di quelli che compongono il corpo terrestre – grazie ai quali l’anima si muove, come su di un veicolo, nel suo moto di discesa verso il mondo sublunare e nella successiva risalita (...). Non è forse un caso che, malgrado questa dottrina sia attestata almeno dal II secolo d.C., essa si sia diffusa soprattutto nel neoplatonismo post-plotiniano, quando il pensiero di Platone venne reinterpretato alla luce delle dottrine religiose degli *Oracoli caldaici* e della filosofia aristotelica” (pp. 307-8).

the body is transitory, rather than evil – and this is said precisely in opposition to a cruder form of *anachōresis*” (p. 274). Hence the “Christian and philosophical care of the body” (p. 275) come together, at least to some extent. “In accordance with a philosophical and Christian interpretation of the body, some aspects of monastic life are understood in the style of philosophical ‘tranquillity’. (...) It is necessary to live apart, but not to live alone (...) here we very much perceive opposition to forms of asceticism prominent in the desert” (*ibid.*). Some topics of the philosophical tradition, especially of Stoic inspiration, resonate in Basil’s writings, as is the case with “the widespread theme of the *molestiae nuptiarum* in the Stoic-Cynic diatribe. Other philosophical elements are collected in the Basilian rules. They are doctrines, ideas and concepts that do not derive from any particular philosophy, though conceptions dating back to Stoicism predominate. They derive from a crude Stoicism, that was the object of study in the schools of rhetoric, and not in the philosophical schools” (p. 276). Moreschini’s conclusion is that Basil’s “classical education led him towards a different form of monasticism, in which the teaching of the Gospel is surely pre-eminent (...) but the *philanthrōpia* of philosophical ascendance leaves its marks” (p. 282).

In her second paper for this volume, “Gregory of Nyssa” (pp. 283-305) I. Ramelli presents another “reassessment”, like in the previous paper on Origen. Gregory’s “ideas on the mind-body relation and his indebtedness to Origen here need a reassessment that takes into account the reassessment of Origen’s thought on this score”. It consists in correcting “a widespread assumption concerning Gregory’s alleged criticism of Origen’s supposed doctrine of the pre-existence of souls. In fact, Gregory’s attack was not targeting Origen. Gregory is depicted as the advocate of simultaneous creation of soul and mortal body; however, just as Origen never supported the pre-existence of disembodied souls, it is far from certain that Gregory maintained that each intellectual soul comes into being at the same time as its *mortal* body” (p. 283, author’s emphasis). Here too “The misrepresentation of Origen’s anthropology has been facilitated by the the Origenistic controversy and the misattribution of later Origenistic theories to Origen, and by the habit of interpreting Gregory’s and Maximus’ criticism of the pre-existence of disembodied souls as directed to Origen. But Gregory’s criticism had other targets. Gregory knew that Origen never supported the pre-existence of disembodied souls. In the passages from Gregory’s *On the Soul* and *On the Making*, usually taken to be criticisms of Origen, Gregory attacks metempsychosis and the pre-existence of disembodied souls – not Origen’s doctrine” (p. 285). Ramelli argues her point by claiming that the passage of Gregory’s *On the Making* where the pre-existence of the souls is criticized does not refer to Origen’s *De Principiis*. “Gregory’s reference to those who have discussed the *archai* (*Making* 28) is usually mistaken for an allusion to Origen: ‘Some of those who came before us (*tois tōn pro hemōn*) who have dealt with the issue of the *archai* (*ho peri tōn archōn epragmateuthē logos*) thought that souls pre-exist as a population in a state of their own’. But this is a generic designation for protology/metaphysics; for instance, the discussion ‘concerning the principles’ (*peri archōn*) in Justin, referring to the Stoics and Thales, has nothing to do with Origen, who lived long afterwards. In Clement, the treatment refers to Greek philosophy in general, their theories ‘on metaphysics and theology’. That *peri tōn archōn* in Gregory’s sentence is a title is improbable, but even in that case Gregory could well refer to many other works *Peri archōn* besides Origen’s, such as those by Porphyry or Longinus” (p. 286). This argument does not sound convincing to me. Gregory says:

τάχα γὰρ οὐκ ἔξω τῆς προκειμένης ἡμῖν πραγματείας ἐστὶ τὸ διεξετάσαι τὸ ἀμφιβαλλόμενον ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις περὶ ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος. Τοῖς μὲν γὰρ τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν δοκεῖ, οἷς ὁ περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν ἐπραγματεύθη λόγος, καθάπερ τινὰ δῆμον ἐν ἰδιαιζούσῃ πολιτείᾳ τὰς ψυχὰς προὔφεσταναι λέγειν (*De Hominis opificio*, PG 44, chapter 28, col. 229).

For it is perhaps not beyond our present subject to discuss the question which has been raised in the churches touching soul and body. Some of those before our time who have dealt with the question of 'principles' think it right to say that souls have a previous existences as people in a society of their own (trans. Moore -Wilson).<sup>27</sup>

That ὁ περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν (...) λόγος points to a title does not strike me as improbable, but the outsider that I am willingly acknowledges that Moore and Wilson too understand this phrasing as referred to a doctrinal field rather than to a title. However, even in this case two points militate against Ramelli's interpretation. The first is the mention of a heated debate in the churches, that sits quite oddly with a generic reference to ideas about principles like Justin's allusion to the Stoics and Thales, or to Porphyry's or Longinus' metaphysical assumptions in their respective *On Principles*. The second is that none of these authors or schools held the doctrine of the pre-existence of the souls καθάπερ τινὰ δῆμον ἐν ἰδιαζούσῃ πολιτείᾳ, with the sole exception of Porphyry, who postulates the pre-existence of the souls to their embodiment. His Περὶ ἀρχῶν is lost,<sup>28</sup> thus we cannot check and see; however, had Gregory's allusion been to Porphyry, it would nevertheless be difficult to explain why his ideas were the subject of debates ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις.

In his paper "Gregory of Nazianzus" (pp. 306-20) B. Matz examines first the terminology in Gregory for 'body' and 'mind' against the backdrop of the Apollinarian controversy. For Apollinaris of Laodicea (d. 382) Jesus did not possess a human mind as distinct from the divine Logos. Since for Gregory this amounts to "a truncated version of the Logos" (p. 310), he insists that "Jesus took on the complete human person, which includes three things: a soul, mind and body. Yet, rather than being afraid to admit that Jesus had a human *nous*, Gregory suggests the Apollinarians should have been more concerned about acknowledging Jesus possessed a *sarx*, inextricably linked as it is to *sōma*, because of the association of *sarx* with sin" (*ibid.*). In turn, of all the terms for 'mind' that occur in Gregory's writings *nous* is "that part of ourselves capable of contact with God" (*ibid.*). It can be led astray (p. 311), but it is at one and the same time also capable of purification. "In sum, humans are composed of a mind (*nous*, *hēgemonikon* and *eikōn theou*), a *psuchē* and a body, *sōma*, *sarx* and *demās*). The intellective function of *nous* reveals its singular role in a contemplation of God. Consequently, the presence of *nous* reveals the human person to be an *eikōn theou*. Imaging God requires ongoing purification, and this is a project for both the mind and flesh (*noun kai sarka*). Reform of the sinful propensities of *sarx*, which brings about the purification of the *sōma*, is a project of *nous* via the intermediate functions of *psuchē*. For this reason, both *nous* and *psuchē* are rightly described as *hēgemonikon*. In the final analysis, there is no dualistic thinking in Gregory" (p. 315). Mind and body are integrated and Gregory endorses the view of man as a microcosm typical of the Platonic school. "Thus, the mind and body are inseparable, their conjunction is a mystery and the manner in which their operations impact one another is similarly inscrutable" (p. 316). Once again the Apollinarian controversy can be seen to resonate in Gregory's solution. Jesus could not reasonably lack a human mind, lest one is ready to assume that he was not "the saviour of every part of ourselves" (p. 318); but if so, our mind is the ruler of both soul and body, as it was the case with Jesus. "The human mind is a 'shared wall' (*mesotoichon*) between God and ourselves" (pp. 318-9).

<sup>27</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*, Trans., Prolegomena, Notes, and indices W. Moore – H.A Wilson, Parker & C., New York 1893, vol. 5.

<sup>28</sup> Only one fragment (232 F Smith) has come down to us.

A Neoplatonist who became a bishop: this is the portrait of J. Bregman's chapter "Synesius of Cyrene" (pp. 321-42). As a bishop, he is included in the Patristic corpus, "but his thought remained that of a Hellenic Neoplatonist. Few, if any Patristic authors who make use of Hellenic philosophy follow his line of thought. His stance is one of maintaining a late Platonic form of Hellenic rationalism, in an age of extreme asceticism and 'irrationalism'. His synthesis is unique; the way in which he approached Platonic philosophy cannot simply be written off as typical of an era in which many could mix Hellenic and Christian imagery, while remaining Christian" (p. 321). Bregman remarks how Synesius was presented since late Antiquity as "an aristocratic Hellene who was converted to Christianity" and is sceptic about the recent attempts at claiming that he was born a Christian instead (*ibid.*). An outline of Synesius' biography that includes the account of his discipleship with Hypatia – "the most significant event of his early life" (p. 322) – paves the way for the discussion of Synesius' modes of combining his philosophical allegiance with Christianity. Bregman compares his stance with that of his contemporary Evagrius Ponticus: while the latter considered monasticism the highest expression of true philosophy, Synesius "*contrasted* philosophy and monasticism" (p. 325, author's emphasis), on the assumption that renouncing classical learning and rhetoric was insane. He parted company also with other versions of the Patristic topos of Christianity as the culminating expression of Greek logos. "Thus, Synesius remains a consistent philosophical Platonist, for whom the primacy of the rational soul cannot be subordinated to any scripture or faith tradition. (...) Those unable to look upon unmediated reality are to be taught a 'fiction', a palatable version of the truth. Only the philosopher understands the truth behind the myth" (p. 329). On the issue of the body-soul relationship, he openly disagrees with the Christian doctrines, in particular with that of resurrection. Bregman discusses Synesius' exchange with Hypatia on this topic and comes to the conclusion that the influence of the theory of the *ὄχημα* of the soul as it features in the *Chaldaean Oracles* prevails over any Christian account of the resurrected body (p. 332). The analysis of Synesius' ideas about Incarnation held in his *Hymns* is conducive to similar conclusions. "Synesius' attempt at a synthesis between Hellenism and Christianity has as its centre of gravity Hellenic Neoplatonism, a world-view he never abandoned. He did not 'baptize Porphyry' as Augustine 'baptized Plotinus', though calling him a 'baptized Porphyry' would perhaps not be far off the mark (...) Synesius never tried to turn Christianity into the 'true philosophy', but rather assessed it by the canon of the latter: Platonism" (p. 340).

G. Catapano, "Augustine" (pp. 343-63) examines "the arguments by which Augustine aims at showing the diversity of nature between mind and body and attempts to prove the soul's incorporeality" (p. 344). These are presented "in the same order in which they appear in the works that Augustine himself lists in his *Reconsiderations*" (*ibid.*), with the caveat (n. 9 of p. 344) that this does not automatically imply any chronological order. Still, some priority in time is firmly established, as is the case with *De Immortalitate animae*, "written in Milan in early 387" (p. 345). Here and in later works, Augustine's arguments are often clearly Neoplatonic in origin and depend chiefly upon Plotinus' IV 7[2] (p. 348). In the dialogue *On the Greatness of the Soul* and in the *Fundamental Letter against the Manichaeans* Augustine makes use of claims similar to those of the *De Immortalitate animae*, while in the *De Trinitate* the arguments already established in earlier works combine with a new approach: "The work of Augustine that contains the longest discussion on the human mind is the fifteen-book treatise *On the Trinity* (*De Trinitate*), begun at the turn of the year 400 and completed between 420 and 427. The main subject of Books IX-XV is the mind as an image of God. In the second half of the work, Augustine highlights similarities, but also differences, between the human mind and the divine Trinity. He describes two chief mental 'trinities'. The first consists of the mind itself, the knowledge that it has of itself, and the love it has of both itself and

its knowledge (*mens, notitia, amor*). The second trinity consists of memory, intelligence and will (*memoria, intelligentia, voluntas*). In analysing the first mental trinity, Augustine dwells at length upon the mind's self-knowledge, which is the central theme of Book X. In this book, he maintains the paradoxical and counterintuitive thesis that mind always has full self-knowledge. As a result, the Delphic precept 'know thyself', in Augustine's opinion, should not be understood as if the mind needed to achieve a self-knowledge that it still does not own, but rather as an exhortation to think properly to itself, as something inferior to God and superior to bodies" (pp. 353-4). Catapano then proceeds to examine two works written around 415, the *Literal Interpretation of Genesis* and the letter to Jerome *On the Origin of the Soul*. "Before expressing his doubts about the origin of souls, in the opening section of the letter Augustine enunciates what he holds more firmly regarding the soul, stating that it is immortal, though not in an absolute sense (because it can 'die' spiritually); that it is not a part of God, because it is not immutable like him; that it is incorporeal; that it has fallen into sin by its own will; that it needs God's grace through Jesus Christ to be saved; that it will receive either punishment or rest after death and will be reunited with its body at the Last Judgment" (p. 361). The Neoplatonic topic of 'omnipresence' resurfaces in *On the Origin of the Soul*. This counts as another proof of the continuity of Augustine's arguments, a point which Catapano recalls in his general conclusion, highlighting "how deep is the debt of Augustine's doctrine of the soul towards Neoplatonism. In the period of about thirty years separating the composition of *On the Immortality of the Soul* from that of *On the Origin of the Soul*, however, Augustine was not content with a single argument to support the thesis of the spirituality of the soul, but he intentionally elaborated many proofs, referring either to the soul in general, or especially to the human soul, and in particular to the mind. While remaining inside a hierarchical vision of reality of Neoplatonic origin, he put into the field philosophical notions derived from different ancient philosophical traditions, adapting them to the aims pursued in his writings from time to time" (p. 363).

W.-M. Stock, "Dionysius the Areopagite" (pp. 364-79) sides with those scholars who credit the pseudo-Areopagite with the double allegiance of genuine Platonism and genuine Christianity. Marsilius Ficinus in the past, and the late lamented Werner Beierwaltes are quoted as representatives of this opinion (p. 364). This study does not discuss the recent scholarship on the place of the pseudo-Areopagite in the sixth-century struggle between Christianity and Neoplatonism.<sup>29</sup> While Stock is clearly aware of Dionysius' debt to the post-Plotinian version of Neoplatonism, the focus of her paper is nevertheless a broad doctrinal comparison that leaves no room for a discussion of the relationship between the mysterious author of the *Corpus* and his coeval Neoplatonism. Typical of the pseudo-Areopagite is the attitude to "combine pagan Neoplatonic ideas on theurgy with Christian beliefs. The ascent of the soul is only possible if the body is included and addressed through ritual as well. In and through the participation in liturgical acts the soul itself is formed and initiated into a higher understanding" (pp. 364-5). In this respect the pseudo-Areopagite parts company with Plotinus and

<sup>29</sup> For chronological reasons Stock was not able to take into account the all-embracing volume by E.S. Mainoldi, *Dietro 'Dionigi l'Areopagita'. La genesi e gli scopi del Corpus Dionysiacum*, Città Nuova, Roma 2018 (Institutiones. Saggi, ricerche e sintesi di pensiero tardo-antico, medievale e umanistico, 6), reviewed in the present issue of *Studia graeco-arabica* by M. Di Branco (see below, pp. 392-5). There are however some earlier studies which advance a new hypothesis about the relationship of the pseudo-Areopagite with Athenian Neoplatonism, upon which one is left wondering what Stock's stance might be. This hypothesis, labelled "crypto-pagan", has been advanced chiefly by A. Mazzucchi, "Damascio, autore del *Corpus Dionysiacum* e il dialogo Περὶ πολιτικῆς ἐπιστήμης", *Aevum. Rassegna di scienze storiche linguistiche e filologiche* 80 (2006), pp. 299-324; cf. also T. Lankila, "The *Corpus Areopagiticum* as a Crypto-Pagan Project", *Journal for Late Antique Religion and Culture* 5 (2011), pp. 14-40.

Porphry, to whom Stocks attributes the vision that body is an obstacle for the ascent of the soul. The reason why body is seen in a more positive way by later Neoplatonists resides for Stock in that these thinkers abandoned Plotinus' theory of the undescended soul. "In later Neoplatonism body and materiality are seen more positively even though the separation from the body is still the highest goal. The new valorization stems from a change in the theory of the soul and of the intelligible universe. The founder of Neoplatonism Plotinus defends the famous thesis of the undescended part of the soul; he thinks that soul does not descend entirely into the material world, and is therefore capable of ascending without external help. Later Neoplatonists disagree. They underscore the transcendence of the One and think that the soul has lost the link to the intelligible completely, and thus needs help for the ascent. Therefore material rites are necessary for most men because few souls are so pure that they can ascend without them. Thus, the appreciation of materiality and the body changes, especially in Iamblichus and Proclus. Man is seen more as compound (*sunamphoteron*) of body and soul, and the body therefore not just as an 'obstacle' but as a potential 'tool' for the soul". Note, however, that the most detailed discussion of the *συναμφότερον*, and one that served as a model for all the subsequent developments in the Neoplatonic camp, is due to Plotinus.<sup>30</sup> It is Stock's conviction that the post-Plotinian vision of the body as necessary in the ascent of the soul was endorsed by the pseudo-Dionysius in his understanding of liturgical rites and figurative language about God.

To conclude, a chapter on Boethius should in my opinion have been included in this volume. Examples of the issues related to the soul-body relationship which have been shaped by Boethius in a new form that was destined to be influential in the long run are the definition of *persona* as *naturae rationalis individua substantia*<sup>31</sup> and the treatment of free will.<sup>32</sup>

A succinct Bibliography (pp. 381-2), the general index, the index of Ancient and Medieval authors, one of Greek, Hebrew and Latin terms, one of modern authors (listing only ten names) complete this rich and interesting volume.

Cristina D'Ancona

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<sup>30</sup> See above, n. 12.

<sup>31</sup> Of the many works which include treatment of the formula of the *Contra Eut.* III 1-6, cf. in part. C.J. De Vogel, "The Concept of Personality in Greek and Christian Thought", in J.K. Ryan (ed.), *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C. 1963, pp. 20-60; C. Micaelli, "Natura e persona nel *Contra Euthychen et Nestorium* di Boezio", in L. Obertello (ed.), *Atti del congresso internazionale di studi boeziani, Pavia 5-8 ottobre 1980*, Harder, Roma 1981, pp. 327-36; M. Lutz-Bachmann, "Natur und Person in den *Opuscula sacra* des A.M.S. Boethius", *Theologie und Philosophie* 58 (1983), pp. 48-70; C. Gill, *The Person and the Human Mind. Issues in Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, Clarendon, Oxford 1990, here pp. 187-207.

<sup>32</sup> N. Kretzmann, "Nos ipsi principia sumus. Boethius and the Basis of Contingency", in T. Rudavsky (ed.), *Divine Omniscience and Omnipotence in Medieval Philosophy: Islamic, Jewish and Christian Perspectives*, Reidel, Dordrecht 1985, pp. 23-50; R.W. Sharples, "Fate, Prescience and Free Will", in J. Marenbon (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Boethius*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 2009, pp. 207-27.