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Body and Soul in the Philosophy of Plotinus.

The question to be discussed is a straightforward one: how did Plotinus conceive of the relation existing between the human soul and the human body? We cannot pretend that this problem had been of any vital interest to his master Plato. In fact, in many of the Platonic Dialogues, the Phaedo in particular, the association of soul with body seems to be regarded as morally regrettable rather than scientifically interesting. Admittedly, in those Dialogues in which the problem of Motion begins to assume importance, perhaps something approaching a "scientific" interest in the subject begins to emerge. In the Phaedrus, for instance, the soul is considered as the source of all bodily movement and change; and in the Timaeus Plato even gives his attention to the different bodily organs in which, he suggests, the different aspects of the soul are to be located. But on the whole, like Socrates in the Phaedo (96b), Plato does not give the impression of being vitally concerned about such questions as "whether we think with the blood, or whether it is the brain that is the seat of sensation", and therefore to some extent, merits the censure of Aristotle (De An.I.1. 407b13) for failing, like most other thinkers, to consider the essential connection existing between the body and the soul.

The situation is quite different in the case of Plotinus. Although he professes to be a follower of Plato, he is much more profoundly influenced in this instance by Aristotle. He must undoubtedly have been familiar with the De Anima either at first hand, or else through the Commentaries of Alexander of Aphrodisias which were read in his school. Hence his more "scientific" approach to the question of the interrelation of soul and body. Of course, the Platonic undertone of suspicion and hostility toward the body is still very much in evidence at times, but strictly speaking, the extreme dualism of a Dialogue like the Phaedo is inconsistent with the whole tenor of Plotinus' system. In his view, both body and soul are alike descended from the primal Absolute or One; both represent different stages in the evolution of plurality from unity. Soul is an earlier stage, body, a later; and though soul does not require body in order to exist, nevertheless, without body, soul could never come forth from the Intelligible World to display its powers in the visible universe. Thus, because body is, in a sense, necessary to soul, because figuratively speaking, it is the only "place" appropriate for the soul's occupation (Enn.IV.3.9), it is impossible to view the relation between soul and body as one of hostility and opposition. For to some extent, body and soul imply each other. Certainly, on the cosmic level, they never exist apart from one another. For though we may speak of the "ensoulment" (empsuchōsis) of the cosmos, because the cosmos is, in fact, eternal and uncreated, there never was a time when its soul and its body were dissociated. (IV.3.9.) In the case of the human soul and body, however, matters are rather different, since it is evident that the two were separate before birth and will be parted again by death. The union between individual human souls and bodies is therefore a temporary one. When the human soul "descends" into the outer world, it finds a body awaiting its occupation, a "residence" prepared for it by the World Soul (IV.3.6). The soul does not, however, enter in its entirety into its prearranged dwelling, for souls, according to Plotinus, are "amphibious" (amphibioi, IV.8.4.). In their lower phase only are they in contact with the body; in their higher aspect, they live a purely intellectual life divorced from the body altogether. This distinction between the lower and the higher aspects of the soul is based by Plotinus upon a text from the Timaeus (34c-35a) where Plato says: "Out of the essence that is

indivisible and always identical with itself, and the essence that is divisible in bodies, the Demiurge, by mixing them, produced a third kind of being." Now whatever Plato meant by this, and whatever modern commentators may make of it, for Plotinus it meant simply that the "third kind of being", the soul, had affinities both with the Ideal World and with the Sensible. (IV.1.1; 2.1.) Because it partook of both orders, it could be described as both divisible and indivisible (ameriston kai meriston), indivisible in its intellectual aspect, as having no direct contact with the body, divisible, in so far as its non-intellectual functions, sensation, growth and the like, involve it in the life of the bodily organism (IV.3.19). Or in mythical language, the lower phase of the soul, which can be regarded as an image of the higher, is comparable to the Shade of the hero Heracles which lingers in the Underworld while the real Heracles enjoys the company of the gods in Heaven. (I.1.12.)

From this evidence it might be assumed that Plotinus thought of the soul as possessing only two phases, the intellectual, and that whereby we are associated with the body (sunesmen tois sōmati, II.1.5.). In actual fact, he looked upon it as a tripartite entity. There is the purely intellectual soul which is concerned only with the divine and suprasensible world; then there is the specifically human phase, the discursive aspect, which, though not in direct touch with the body, is closely associated with the sensitive faculty operating within the physical organism; and finally, there is the irrational phase corresponding to the "mortal" part of the soul in the *Timaeus* and to the alogos psuchē of Aristotle, and including the faculties of sensation, nutrition, growth and reproduction, all the activities, in fact, which characterise the life of the animal, and in the case of the last three, of plants as well. (see I.1.2; IV.3.18; 23; IV.4.22.) Now it is this third division of the soul with which we are principally concerned, since it is the irrational soul which, according to Plotinus, unites with the body to form the zoon or sunamphoteron, that combination of body and soul which, if we add to it the power of discursive thought, is usually regarded as "the man himself", the essential "human being", though strictly speaking, this title should be reserved, in Plotinus' view, for the highest phase of the soul, the "Ideal Man" or Intellect, which is never associated with the body or any of its activities in any way. (see I.1.10; II.1.5; II.2.9.)

Plotinus was intrigued by the problem of the relation of the lower aspects of the soul to the body. We are told that he once spent three days discussing this very question - pōs hē psuchē sunesti tō sōmati - with his pupil Prophyry. (*Vita Plotini*, 13.) In the middle of the discussion a visitor appeared who, after listening to what was going on, remarked that he would much prefer to hear a general exposition of Plotinus' views on the matter, rather than a series of questions and answers. Whereupon Plotinus replied, in stalwart defense of the Socratic method, "But if Porphyry did not question me, I would have no objections to resolve and nothing to put into my exposition." From what Plotinus eventually wrote on this topic, we can judge fairly accurately what arguments must have been put forward on this occasion and what solutions offered. But before we can even start to consider in detail how Plotinus envisaged the koinōnia of soul and body, we ought first to reflect for a moment upon the causes originally responsible, in Plotinus' opinion, for the initial embodiment of the soul. It is misleading, he insists, to talk of the soul "descending" into the body. For "descent" implies a downward movement in space, which the soul never, in fact, experiences. (VI.4.16.) This must be looked upon simply as a manner of speaking; the entry of soul into body is not a process that can legitimately be described in spatial terms. However, in the spirit of Platonic myth, Plotinus continues to

speak of the soul's "descent" and endeavours to find some good reason to account for its departure from its disembodied state. It is guilty, he suggests, of some "original sin" (hamartia), some error, which consists in a desire to be independent of the Universal Soul (IV.8.4.), a "voluntary inclination" (IV.8.5; V.1.1.) towards the material world, which results as Plato puts it, in the soul's loss of its wings. Or to use a different metaphor, the soul beholds its image in the mirror of matter, becomes enamoured of it and is thus drawn away from its contemplation of higher things. (IV.3.12.) But though the soul's plunge into the material world can be regarded as voluntary, in so far as it is the soul's own act, and "sinful" in so far as it involves separation from the Whole, nevertheless, on a higher level, it is seen to be determined. For it is a universal law, according to Plotinus, that the higher must give itself to the lower, and that soul must impart itself to body in order both to realise its own implicit powers and to contribute to the perfection of the cosmos. This means that the "sin" of the soul in entering the body, proves to be, as it were, the "felix culpa" that is necessary to the divine order of things. The embodiment of the soul is, in fact, no more the result of sin than the casting of a shadow. (I.1.12.)

When we talk of the soul entering the body, we imply that it is the soul that takes the initiative. It is more accurate to say, however, that body approaches soul, as long as we do not take this to suggest a local entry. (VI.4.16.) Indeed, body has what Plotinus calls an "aptitude" for soul. (VI.4.15) This aptitude varies with different types of body; that which is not capable of receiving soul in its totality, shares in it as far as it can. Animals and plants, for instance, have only such phases of soul as their nature permits. But in what sense can anything, animal, vegetable or human, "have" or "receive" soul? What is meant by the participation of body in soul and how are the two related? For though body and soul are both ultimately derived from a single source, they are, nevertheless, completely different in character. Body is composite and therefore liable to dissolution; soul is the animating force that holds together the constituents of the body. Any theory that makes the soul itself a corporeal entity ignores this distinction; and Plotinus takes great pains in this connection, to refute the Stoic view that the soul is a special kind of body (pneuma), in a particular state (pōs echon), and the Epicurean theory that the soul is the product of a concourse of lifeless atoms. (IV.7.) To counter these materialistic doctrines, he draws on various stock philosophical arguments which were current in his day and ultimately traceable to chapters 2 and 5 of the first book of Aristotle's De Anima. We need not linger over these, although they throw some incidental light on our problem, but it would perhaps be advisable to give brief notice to the objections brought by Plotinus first, against the theory set forth in the Phaedo, that the soul is an attunement of the bodily elements, and secondly, to the Aristotelian view that the soul is the entelecheia or "expression" of the body. Both theories are extremely relevant to the question of the connection between body and soul.

The first of these theories, according to Plotinus, envisages the soul as comparable to the attunement in the strings of the lyre. When the lyre is strung, a certain condition (pathema) is produced upon the strings, and this is known as an attunement (harmonia); in the same way, our body is formed of different constituents brought together, and the blend produces at once life and soul, which is the condition supervening upon the blend (to epi tē krasei pathēma, IV.7.8.4.) Observing that it has already been demonstrated that this theory is untenable (an obvious allusion to the Phaedo), Plotinus goes on to summarize the chief

objections. These, curiously enough, are not based upon the Phaedo itself, but go back, as Jaeger has pointed out, to Aristotle's Eudemus which now survives only in fragmentary form. Certain arguments in De Anima Book I are also quite clearly utilised for the purpose of refutation. The first point that Plotinus makes is that soul is prior to body, whereas the attunement theory presupposes the prior existence of the lyre. Secondly, the soul rules, guides, and often resists the body; this could not be within the power of a mere attunement dependent upon the constitution of the body; in the third place, the soul is a substance, whereas an attunement is merely a supervening pathema; fourthly, a due blending of bodily elements would produce not soul, but health; fifthly, there would have to be a plurality of souls in each individual, on the attunement theory, since each part of the body, being blended in different proportions, would require a distinct soul; sixthly, before the soul that supervenes upon the body after the manner of an attunement, there would have to be another soul to cause the attunement, just as in the case of a musical instrument, there must be a musician to put the strings in tune; for neither musical instruments nor human bodies are capable of tuning themselves; finally, those who hold the attunement theory derive life and arrangement (taxis) from what is lifeless and unordered; but this is manifestly impossible. Therefore the soul cannot resemble an attunement.

The Aristotelian definition of the soul as the entelecheia of the body is just as rapidly disposed of. (IV.7.8.⁵.) In the first place, Plotinus says, if the soul is related to the body as the shape (morphe) of a statue is related to the bronze, it follows that when the body is divided, the soul, its form, will be divided with it, and that if any fragment of the body is severed from the whole, a portion of the soul will be severed too. In the next place, it is imperative that an entelecheia should be inseparable from that of which it is the fulfilment or expression; but if it is inseparable, the consequence is that the soul will be unable to withdraw from the body in sleep. Therefore sleep will be an impossibility. Again, if the soul is an entelecheia, conflict between reason and bodily desire is completely ruled out, since the whole organism must have one uniform experience and there can be no discord between body and soul. Furthermore, on the entelecheia definition, there can be no pure thought, since thought is an activity which does not involve the body in any way. (And it is precisely for this reason that the Peripatetics have to postulate another soul over and above the entelecheia, to account for the purely intellectual functions.) There are further objections in this vein. The final conclusion reached by Plotinus is that the soul does not depend for its existence upon serving as the "form" or realisation of something else; it is an essence quite separate from any particular body and it exists as soul pure and simple before it becomes the soul of any particular thing.

Plotinus spends a great deal of time in clearing the way for positive treatment of the body-soul problem. In what is perhaps his most important discussion of the topic, (IV.3.20.) his main concern is to emphasise that however body and soul are related, they must not be thought of as spatially connected. Soul is not in body as in a space, for space is that which contains body, whereas soul, not being bodily, cannot be contained. The body is not, in any sense, the vessel (angeion) of the soul. For if it were, and the relation were a spatial one, the body itself would still remain devoid of soul, since container and contained are two entirely separate things. Of course, one might assume that soul transmits something of itself to its container, but this would mean that the body's gain would be the soul's loss. In any case, space, being the container of

body, is not itself corporeal. Thus, body, which is corporeal, could scarcely be the topos of the soul. Besides, if the soul were in the body in a spatial sense, the body would be in contact with the soul only at its surface and not throughout its entire mass; while yet another consequence of assuming a local connection would be that the soul qua "contained" by the body, would be carrying its own space about with it, which would be not only absurd, but actually impossible, according to the Peripatetic definition of space as akinētos. And even if we adopt the Stoic definition of space as the interval (diastēma) separating physical objects, a spatial relation between body and soul is still untenable. For such an interval, Plotinus points out, would have to be a void. Body, however, is not a void; rather, it is in a void. So that even on Stoic premises, soul cannot be in body in a spatial sense.

Having established this point, Plotinus now tries to explain the presence of the soul in the body in non-spatial terms. He first considers the possibility of an analogy between the soul "in" the body, and a colour or shape "in" a substrate. But this suggestion is immediately rejected on the grounds that colour and shape are accidents of that which exhibits them, whereas the soul is not an accident, but an independent substance. Nor will he admit the possibility that the soul is in the body as a part is contained in the whole; for the soul, he says, is not a part of the body. It would be equally absurd to suggest that the soul is in the body as the whole is "in" its parts. Nor can the soul be related to the body as form to matter (hōs eidos en hulē), for the form immanent in matter is inseparable from and logically posterior to its matter. Besides, the soul, so far from being a form itself, is that which produces form; and even if we fall back upon the suggestion that the soul is a transcendent form and not a form inseparable from its substrate, we are still no nearer solving the problem of how this form is present to the body.

Plotinus proceeds with his discussion of this problem by inquiring why, in spite of these objections, people persist in talking of the soul-body relation as if it were spatial. The reason, he concludes, is that while the body can be seen, the soul is invisible. We observe the behaviour of the body and infer from the fact that it moves and responds to sense-stimuli, that it is animated by a soul. Therefore we say that it "has" a soul and that this soul is located within it. But if in fact, we could see the soul and observe how completely it penetrates the body, we would reverse our opinion and conclude rather, that the body is in the soul. Perhaps a more satisfactory notion of the soul-body connection can be obtained, Plotinus suggests, by regarding the soul as a sort of directing force controlling the body as a pilot controls a ship. (IV.3.21.) But the chief objection to this analogy is that it does not really explain the mode of the soul's presence in the body. All it would suggest is that the soul is potentially separable from the body in the same way that the pilot is separable from the ship; and in the second place, the analogy breaks down because the pilot is not omnipresent in the ship as the soul is omnipresent in the body. It might be more appropriate therefore, to compare the soul not to the pilot, but to the skill of the pilot which operates through the helm of the ship. But the pilot's technē is external to the instrument he employs, whereas, if we are to apply this analogy to the soul, we shall have to regard it as immanent in the helm; and even if we think of the soul as immanent in the body which is its instrument, the mode of its presence still remains unexplained.

In these arguments, Plotinus has placed himself under a heavy debt to the *De Anima* of Aristotle. However, his final answer to the problem in hand is

entirely his own. The true relation between soul and body is analogous, he suggests, (IV.3.22.) to that between light and air. Light is both present and not present to the air (*paron ou parestin*) for although it completely penetrates the air, it is not mixed with it at any point. While the air flows past, the light remains immobile; and when the air passes beyond the illuminated area, it takes no light with it; only when it remains where the light is, does it receive illumination. Now this, Plotinus asserts, is a genuine parallel. The air is in the light and not vice-versa, just as the body is in the soul and not the soul in the body. Thus, in Plotinus' opinion, Plato showed great insight when he declared in the *Timaeus* (34b) that the world soul was not in the body of the cosmos, but rather, the body of the cosmos was in the world soul, and that while part of the soul involves the body, there is another phase of the soul which has no connection with the body at all. We are not justified then, in saying that the soul is in the body. There is no objection, however, to saying that it is "present to" the body, providing it is not suggested that any mixture takes place between them. The soul is no more mixed with the body than light with the air. This analogy can be taken still further. Light, when present to the air is not divided by it; nor is the soul divided by its association with the body. Admittedly, one might describe the soul as divisible in body in so far as it is present "in" every separate part of the body; but because it is present in its totality at every point, because, as Plotinus puts it, (IV.3.8.) "soul is not torn asunder by its simultaneous presence in foot and finger", it can also, quite legitimately, be designated indivisible. Plotinus gives a homely illustration to explain his meaning: a mass of white milk can be divided into several parts; but the whiteness of each of these parts is not a part of the total whiteness. Whiteness, being incorporeal, has neither mass nor quantity, and this means that when it is present, it is present in its entirety in each of the parts of the white mass. The same applies in the case of the soul. The powers of the soul are various and different powers are associated with different organs, but every soul is present entire at every point even if all its powers are not simultaneously in action in any given organ. The soul is, in fact, analogous to a science made up of different *theōremata*, each of which implies the entire *technē*. (see IV.3.2; 3; 23.) If it were not omnipresent and indivisible it would not be a unity. For if, like the body, it could be divided into distinct parts, each part would be cut off from the experiences of its fellows. Thus the organism would never be affected as a whole by anything occurring in one particular part, and the body would not be under the control of a single soul but of a plurality of souls. (IV.2.1.) However, Plotinus adds, it is necessary to grant the soul divisibility in one sense, for if it were altogether perfect and indivisible, nothing would ever be ensouled. Only when body approaches soul, can it participate in life; and such contact with the body inevitably brings an element of apparent multiplicity and divisibility to the soul. (IV.2.2.) However, by means of the Air - Light analogy, Plotinus is able to argue that though the soul is divisible in the sense that it is present "in" every separate part of the body, it is nevertheless omnipresent both in the parts and in the whole, and is therefore indivisible.

The Air-Light analogy is not, of course, a scientific explanation of the relation existing between the soul and the body, and Plotinus admits himself (IV.3.9.) that he is applying a metaphor from the sense-world to a relation that is non-spatial. Even in his latest study of the soul, the 53rd. Ennead, (I.1.) he is still trying to find a more scientific terminology. His main problem in this treatise is to answer the question: to what extent do the body and the soul share the experiences of sensation, desire, emotion, reflection, and the like?

This question may have been suggested originally by Aristotle's query in De Anima I.1., 403a 3-5, as to whether all the attributes of the soul are common to the living body, or if some are peculiar to the soul. It was a question that had already been discussed in some detail by Plutarch, who had concluded that in the case of the desires and emotions, it was to the compound organism, to soul combined with body, that such experiences should be assigned. This is precisely the position adopted by Plotinus. He insists, of course, that the higher soul, which is independent of the body, is quite unaffected by the experiences of the body-soul complex. But between the lower soul and the body, which together make up the zōon or sunamphoteron, a genuine community of experience exists. The standard Academic definition of Man as "a soul using a body" is therefore, in Plotinus' view, inadequate, since it implies that body and soul are two quite unrelated entities, the one corresponding to the workman's tool, the other, to the workman himself. On this analogy, the soul will certainly have no share in the experiences of the body, for the workman does not actually experience the pathēmata of his tool. And if this objection is countered by the argument that the soul will at least be aware of what is happening in the body, just as the workman knows how his tool is being affected, it is still impossible to see how the body could transmit its experiences to be shared by the soul. However, Plotinus suggests, one might achieve some sort of sympathy between body and soul if one regarded them as if they were mixed together. But the objection here is, that as a result of such a mixture, the original character of both components would inevitably be modified; soul would become something less than soul and body, something more than body; and, of the two, it would be the body, rather than the soul, that would gain the power of sensation and experience the affections arising therefrom. For through admixture with the body, the soul would not acquire power, but lose it. But in any case, Plotinus continues, the metaphor of mixture is probably absurd, since body and soul may be, in fact, absolutely incongruous, so that to talk of them as being mixed together, is as nonsensical as to talk of a line being mixed with whiteness. Perhaps then, as an alternative to the mixture theory, we might adopt the suggestion of Plato in the Timaeus, that the soul is interwoven (diaplakeisa) with the body. But this will not help either if we wish to prove that soul and body share common experiences. For the soul might penetrate right through the body and yet not share its states in just the way that light can permeate air and yet remain unaffected by it.

In attempting to discover some relation that will allow for sympathy between soul and body, Plotinus has so far drawn a blank. His next suggestion is a little more promising. The soul can perhaps be looked upon, he says, as analogous to an immanent form inseparable from its matter, as for instance, the axe-shape in the axe. At first sight this will not serve as a solution either, since it too fails to provide for a community of experience. It is not the axe-shape that performs the function of the axe. Therefore, Plotinus implies, it is not the form that either acts or is acted upon. It is the iron, that is the matter of the axe, on which the axe-shape has been imposed, that actually does the cutting. On this analogy then, it will be the body rather than the soul that is the subject of actions and states. But we should note, it is implied, that in the case of the axe analogy, the effectiveness of the axe as a tool depends upon the fact that the matter of the axe has been modified by the form. Thus when we apply this reasoning to the body-soul relation, we may conclude that it is not the body in isolation that is affected by sensation, desire and the emotions, but rather the living body, body modified as it were, by soul. It is in fact, the zōon or sunamphoteron that is the subject of these experiences. Body by itself is inert, and soul by itself, impassible. But when body and soul combine to

produce some third entity which is capable of sensation and desire, then we can quite legitimately say that soul and body are in sympathy with one another and are sharing common experiences.

Particular attention is given by Plotinus to the various ways in which the body and the soul can co-operate and interact within the living organism. He lays special emphasis upon the mechanism of sense-perception which he regards as the connecting link between the body and the discursive reason. The power of sensation has been granted to the soul, he says, because of its association (koinōnia) with the body. (IV.4.24.) It is the koinon ergon of body and soul. That phase of the soul which transcends the body is quite incapable of perceiving anything in the sense world by direct means, because it lacks the necessary bodily organs of sight or hearing, and because its attention is focussed exclusively upon the intellectual sphere. The discursive phase of the soul, however, is made aware of events in the physical world through association with the sensitive faculty which transmits to it the data on which it works. In the Timaeus Plato had actually assigned to this discursive phase a definite physical location within the head. But Plotinus parts company with Plato over this point, since he does not regard the reasoning faculty as actually resident in the body. However, he continues to attach peculiar importance to the head, since he believes that the brain is the central organ of certain psychic functions with which the discursive soul is intimately connected. It is from the brain, in his view, that the nerves take their origin, (IV.3.23.) and it is to the brain that the nerve endings (which occur all over the surface of the body), transmit what we should call tactual sensations and motor impulses. The more specialized sensations like sight or hearing do not seem however to be associated by Plotinus with the brain. He seems to think of the eyes and the ears as independent organs of perception. But this does not mean that the different seats of sensation are left uncoordinated. Plotinus never tires of insisting upon the omnipresence of the soul in the body and its essential unity. Though different powers operate at different points, the soul, though apparently scattered, is one. Thus, all its functions must be inseparably connected, whatever their instruments may be and wherever situated. Like Aristotle, Plotinus believes that there is a central sense to which the different sensations transmit their reports. The various sense organs cannot all admit the same impressions, he says, but all perceptions terminate in one centre like lines converging from the circumference of a circle; and it is here that the data provided by sensation are sifted by the discursive reason.

As for the desires experienced by the body-soul compound, these, according to Plotinus, should be associated with the lowest phase of the soul, the vegetative element or phutikon. (IV.3.24.) This is present in all living things from plants to human beings, is responsible for their growth, nutrition and propagation, and is a reflection in the individual organism of the cosmic power which Plotinus calls Phusis, in other words, the World Soul. Now though Plotinus has borrowed the term phutikon from Aristotle, it is from Plato that he has taken the idea of an association of the desires with this particular phase of the soul. In the Timaeus (70e and 77a,b.) when discussing vegetable life, Plato assigns to plants the third form of soul, that which has to do with sensation, pleasant or painful, and with the appetites. Plotinus is ready to accept this connection on the grounds that the vegetative principle which "brings to birth and nourishes and gives growth, must have the desire of these things". (IV.3.23.) He also agrees with Plato in making the liver the special organ of desire, since it is in the liver that the veins and the blood which are vehicles of the phutikon, have their point of origin. Plotinus' account of the way in which desires are experienced is

somewhat complicated. Neither body alone, nor soul alone can be the subject of desire. (Plotinus is speaking of course, only of the so-called bodily desires.) Body by itself cannot give rise to appetite; soul by itself is not interested in the desirable object. Desire for such objects must clearly belong to something that is bodily, but chooses to be more than mere body, that is, to a living organism, a body animated by a soul. Plotinus distinguishes three stages in the process of desire within this living entity. First there is a vague, unconscious need felt in the body; this Plotinus calls the prothumia. Then this need is transferred to the phutikon. There it becomes a fully conscious desire, an epithumia, of which an image is conveyed by sensation to the reasoning phase of the soul. This alone has power to satisfy or resist the desire. That desires originate in the living body and not in the soul in isolation, is proved, Plotinus argues, by the fact that bodily desires differ according to the condition of the body in respect of age or health. Furthermore, there are some unconscious desires, some prothumiai, which never become conscious simply because the nature of the organism does not consent to them. But when the needs of the body are conformable to Nature, that is, to the vegetative principle, it, like a human mother, tries to satisfy the needs of the bodily organism and to relieve its pain by identifying itself as far as possible, as Plotinus puts it, with the sufferings of its offspring.

Closely bound up with the desires, are pleasure and pain, also affections of the compound organism. Body by itself could experience neither, since it is lifeless; while soul, we are told, "wears" the body and its pleasures and pains like a garment, that is as mere appendages which are no part of its essential nature. Pleasure and pain are the direct result of the union between body and soul. Because this union is in a sense an artificial one, pain is likely to occur. For the two members of the compound are different and unequal, and the result is that the organism is pulled in two different directions. When it is drawn towards the body it suffers pain; when directed towards the soul, with which it desires closer contact, it feels pleasure. Pain is thus defined as our perception of the body deprived of the soul's image; pleasure, as the realisation that the image of the soul has been restored, in other words, that body and soul are again in harmonious relation to one another. When pain occurs, the pathos is felt directly by the body and perceived by the sensitive soul, which then makes it known to the central sense on which the sensations converge. It is of course, the body that suffers the actual pain. The soul, though aware of the pain does not feel it in the same immediate way. And this is proved, Plotinus says, by the fact that if the soul actually suffered the pain, being omnipresent in the body, it would not be able to localise the pain in one particular area but would feel it at every point in the body. A distinction must be made, in fact, between the actual pain and the perception of that pain, which is what the soul experiences. This perception of pain is a kind of knowledge (gnōsis), and if it is to report its findings correctly, that phase of the soul which acquires it, must itself be apathēs. A messenger who is himself overwhelmed by emotion, either fails to communicate his news at all or else transmits it inaccurately. (IV.4.19.)

Finally we should consider the emotions experienced by the living compound. Only the emotion of anger receives any detailed treatment in the Enneads. (IV.4.28.) Following Plato, Plotinus makes anger the concern of the thumoeides. This, like the desiring faculty of the soul, is closely associated with the phutikon, the principle of physiological life. But since anger always implies some subject capable of sensation and judgment, this connection might not at

first sight, appear obvious. The Stoics who say that anger arises from a judgment that some injury has been incurred, might well seem to be right. However, Plotinus argues, anger usually has a physical, rather than a mental origin, since a predisposition to anger is a consequence of the organisation of the body. People in whom the blood and the bile are particularly active, are especially prone to anger, while those who are not of a bilious temperament (acholoi) are less irascible. Animals get angry, not because they judge that they are being injured, but simply because of their bodily temperament (krasis); sick people are more prone to anger than those with healthy bodies; the hungry more irritable than the well fed; which all goes to suggest (against the Stoic view) that the starting point of anger is not perception of an injury, but rather, a predisposition of the body. Anger actually arises, Plotinus says, in the blood around the heart which, being swift and subtle, is a suitable vehicle for passion. The blood and the bile becoming active, ("boiling" or "seething" is the actual word Plotinus uses, following Aristotle, De Anima I.1. 403a) impel the body to go through the motions of anger. Perception then follows, an impression (phantasia) is transmitted to the reasoning faculty and the source of the suffering is then attacked. Thus a mere disturbance in the body is transformed through the agency of soul into an impulse (hormē) to action. That anger, like desire is connected with the vegetative phase of the soul and is of like nature (homocousion) is shown, Plotinus says, by the fact that people who are less inclined toward bodily pleasures are also less prone to anger. The apatheia that they display is not due to the exercise of reason, but is simply a matter of physical temperament. It might be argued of course, that anger cannot be associated specifically with the physiological principle, the phutikon, because plants, in which only this form of soul is present, are not subject to anger. But this point does not deter Plotinus. Plants do not feel anger, he explains, simply because there is no blood or bile in their constitution. They therefore lack the essential pre-conditions, the vehicles through which the irascible phase of the soul can operate. Of course, Plotinus is prepared to admit that there can be cases in which anger does arise as the Stoics say, as the result of a mental judgment, and where the physical reaction follows and does not precede. But the vital point is that a feeling of anger can never be confined to the soul by itself. The body is always involved at some stage and its krasis will always determine the intensity of the irascibility in each individual case.

Besides owing much to Aristotle, Plotinus' account of sensation, pleasure and pain and the emotions in general clearly shows the influence of the medical theories of Galen. This is particularly evident in his emphasis on the bodily krasis in his discussion of anger, and also in his observations concerning the brain and the nerves in the section where he deals with sensation. There are, of course, some psychic processes which he reserves for the soul alone. These would be the province either of the discursive reason or of pure Nous. Among the processes which do not involve the body is Memory. (IV.3.26.) Memory might appear, however, to be, like Sensation, a koinon ergon of the compound organism, since it could be argued that it is our bodily constitution that determines whether our memories are good or bad. To this Plotinus replies, that the body may certainly impede the exercise of memory, but whether it does so or not, the act of memory none the less, belongs only to the soul. We learn by an intellectual process and we retain what we learn by means of memory. This would surely suggest that memory itself is an intellectual operation. It might be argued, however, that it does not arise in the soul itself, but results from a sort of blend of soul and body in which some third entity is produced identical with neither. But even if such a blend were possible, Plotinus observes, there is

still no argument for placing the source of memory anywhere but in the soul. In a blend of wine and honey, any sweetness in the mixture would be due to the presence of the honey. In the same way, in the case of the body-soul "mixture", the power of memory within the organism would result not from the mere mixture but from the essential attribute of one of its ingredients, the soul. Nor can it be argued that the body is the cause or means whereby the soul acquires the faculty of memory. For the impressions (*tupoi*) conveyed to the soul by means of bodily sensation are purely mental, even though based on sense-experience. Thus it is difficult to see what possible assistance it could give as a means of retaining them in the memory. In fact, so far from being a source of memory, the body tends, because of its shifting and changing character, to be rather a cause of forgetfulness, a veritable "River of Lethe". Thus we may quite safely conclude that it is not in any way involved in the process of remembering. This is a purely mental function and the exclusive province of the soul.

In conclusion, it would be relevant to touch upon one final theme, the fate of the lower aspects of the soul after bodily death. We would expect that since the soul has a tripartite character during life, death would bring a dissolution of the elements that compose it. Certainly, the soul that is emancipated from all bodily influences, would lay aside those aspects of itself that it had acquired on entering the body. Souls less "pure" might retain them longer. But Plotinus is convinced that not even the lowest phase of the soul can ever perish as long as its source continues to exist. (IV.7.14.) Admittedly, the *phutikon* must leave the body when life is extinct, though it lingers for a brief time after death. But though it loses all connection with the individual in whom it resided, it is not annihilated. It returns to its source in the World Soul and eventually becomes the principle of physiological life in some other organism. In this way Plotinus explains the phenomenon of life arising in the carcase of a dead animal. The soul that animated the animal's body is no longer present, since that particular body is no longer receptive of the life force. But the decayed matter has now become suitable material for some other form of life, and "since soul is nowhere lacking", the carcase is again "ensouled" (IV.3.8.) The other powers of the embodied soul, sensation, desire and feeling, are also discarded on the death of the body, or, to be more precise, they merge into the higher phase of the soul. The discursive faculty merges likewise, for though it has never been in direct contact with the body, nevertheless, it exists in order to pronounce upon the sensations experienced by the living compound. Thus when the compound is dissolved, it has no further justification for its existence. It therefore unites with *Nous* and loses its distinct identity. "When the body is laid aside" Plotinus says, "all powers merge into one soul". (IV.9.3.) This remark only applies, however, to souls that have been completely purified. The soul that fails to divest itself of bodily associations is punished for its attachment by reincarnation. When it can, Plotinus says, the soul stands outside the realm of coming-to-be and abides with the Universal Soul, for the true awakening of the soul is not with the body, but from the body. But before this complete emancipation can be achieved, it must purify itself through a series of reincarnations. Thus some souls only take a temporary bow from the stage of life. Soon they are back again in different roles and different costumes. Others, however, leave the scene never to return. For them death is a complete laying aside of the body; they have made positively their last appearance. (III.2.15.) Or to change the metaphor, death may be either a final awakening from a sleep that will never recur, or simply a temporary awakening which is simply a prelude to falling asleep again, but in a different bed. (III.6.6.)

Plotinus' belief in reincarnation, which he seems to have taken seriously, shows up the more Platonic strain in his approach to the body-soul problem. Here he tends to stress the ill effects the body can have on the soul, and elsewhere, in language reminiscent of the Phaedo, he complains of the way in which the body impedes thought and fills the soul with its follies. Following the Timaeus, he observes the evil consequences for the soul of a defective bodily constitution; and from the Republic he takes the illustration of the sea-god Glaucus who represents the soul weighed down and encrusted with alien matter. Plotinus' attitude to the body is not, however, consistently hostile. Admittedly the story told by his pupil Porphyry (Vita Plotini I.) that Plotinus refused to sit for his portrait because he was ashamed of being in the body, shows him in an ultra-Platonic mood. But one wonders if this was the reason Plotinus actually gave or simply the ascetic pupil's interpretation of his master's motive. What Plotinus actually said, according to Porphyry, was that he did not want to transmit an image of an image to posterity, and perhaps this was intended humourously. At any rate, an attitude of unmitigated hostility to the body is quite out of keeping with the tone of Plotinus' treatise against the Gnostics. (II.9.) Here he vindicates the visible creation as an expression of the powers of the soul and roundly criticises the Gnostic dualism which condemns the bodily and the material and declares the world to be the creation of an evil Demiurge. For in fact, a hostile attitude towards the body is incompatible with Plotinus' philosophy as a whole. Body, no less than soul, is a necessary consequence of that process of evolution whereby the powers of the Absolute Unity are unfolded and manifested in Creation. If body is less perfect than Soul or Mind, this is simply because it is further from its source than they, not because it is inherently evil. Nor has it any real power for evil over the soul since the soul is in its essence, incapable of sin, (anamartētos). Admittedly, by contact with the material world, the soul may acquire the stain of evil if it consents to the desires and demands of the body. But evil belongs only to the compound of body and soul, not to the soul by itself. (I.1.19.) In any case, it is possible, even when in the body, to avoid evil; the mere fact of embodiment is not necessarily a degradation. "We may care for that which is below us without ceasing to abide in the highest and best". (IV.8.2.)

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