

Sara Magrin
Office: 113 1879 Hall
Office hours: M 10:30-12:30 and by appointment
smagrin@princeton.edu

**PHI 515/CLA 550 Special Topics in the History of Philosophy
Plotinus' Psychology
Fall 2018, 201 Marx, W 4:30-7:20**

Course description

Plotinus' fourth *Ennead* consists almost entirely of a three part treatise *On Difficulties about the Soul*. There are many reasons for inquiring about the soul, Plotinus says right at the beginning of this treatise, and one of them is that we should obey the Delphic command and know ourselves. Not long before Plotinus, Alexander of Aphrodisias had introduced his treatise *On the Soul* in a similar way. We ought to know ourselves, Alexander said, but to know ourselves is to know that in virtue of which we are ourselves, and this is the soul; thus, he concluded, we ought to know our soul. Plotinus and Alexander reached very different conclusions about the nature and the capacities of our soul, but both of them examined it in order to gain a better understanding of who we are and of what we ought to do with our lives. In this seminar we will read the first two parts of Plotinus' treatise *On Difficulties about the Soul*, namely *Ennead* 4.3 and *Ennead* 4.4, followed by one of his latest treatises, *Ennead* 1.1: *What is the Living Being, and what is the Human Being?* In *Enn.* 1.1 Plotinus explains why, in his view, a human being is something more than the subject of pleasure, pain, emotions, and perceptions. He suggests that a human being is more than this because it is not merely a living being, but is what rules over a living being by engaging in thought. At first sight this view might seem all too familiar. Plotinus, you might think, simply distinguishes our rational capacities from our non-rational ones and invites us to think of ourselves as rational beings just as Aristotle did before him. But is this really Plotinus' view? It is with this question in mind that we will approach *Enn.* 4.3 and *Enn.* 4.4. By reading these two treatises we will discover how Plotinus interprets Plato's account of the soul and its parts, and to what extent his views on memory, representation, desire, perception, and, in general, the rational/non-rational divide differ from those of Aristotle.

Primary readings

We will use Armstrong's translation of the *Enneads* for the Loeb Classical Library. The Loeb Plotinus is in seven volumes, but for the purposes of this seminar you will need to purchase only the following two volumes (they can be easily found online):

A. H. Armstrong (trans. and ed.), *Plotinus, Ennead I*, Harvard University Press (Loeb Classical Library) 1966

A. H. Armstrong (trans. and ed.), *Plotinus, Ennead IV*, Harvard University Press (Loeb Classical Library) 1984

Recommended readings

It will be useful to have the following books at hand (I can make copies):

J. Barnes (ed.), *Complete Works of Aristotle*, Princeton University Press 1984, 2 Vols.

J. M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (eds.), *Plato, Complete Works*, Hackett 1997

A. A. Long and D. Sedley (trans. and eds.), *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press 1987

Assessment

The final grade will be mostly based on your final paper (20-30 pages), which should examine a topic related to the material discussed in class. However, participation in class discussion will count towards your final grade. To facilitate discussion, a couple of volunteers per week (starting from week 2) will prepare a handout (max. 2 pages) for the readings. All background readings are required; they are labeled “background” to signal that we will examine them only to the extent to which they might contribute to our understanding of the primary readings. “Relevant texts” are texts you might want to read for your final paper; I might occasionally assign some of them.

Tentative schedule

Week 1: Introduction. The living being, the human being, and the soul

- *Enn.* 1.1.1-2; *Enn.* 4.3.1
- Background: Aristotle, *De anima*, 1.4, 408a 30-b 32; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 8.3

Week 2: The soul

- *Enn.* 4.3.9-12; 18-19
- Background: Plato, *Timaeus*, 27b-41b; 41b-44c (relevant texts: *Enn.* 4.1; *Enn.* 4.8; *Enn.* 4.9)

Week 3: The soul

- *Enn.* 4.3.20-24
- Background: Plato, *Timaeus*, 44c-47e; Plato, *Timaeus*, 69b-72d; T. Tieleman, ‘Plotinus on the Seat of the Soul: Reverberations of Galen and Alexander in “Enn.” IV. 3. [27].23’, *Phronesis* 43 (1998), pp. 306-325

Week 4: Perception and memory

- *Enn.* 4.3.25-29
- Background: Aristotle, *De memoria*, 1; Plato, *Philebus*, 33c-34c

Week 5: Memory and representation

- *Enn.* 4.3.30-4.4.1; *Enn.* 4.4.8
- Aristotle, *De anima*, 3.3, 427b 27-429a 9; Aristotle, *De insomniis* especially 3 (relevant texts: *Enn.* 1.4.10; *Enn.* 5.3.3-4)

Week 6: Nature, pleasure and pain

- *Enn.* 4.4.11-14, 17; *Enn.* 4.4.18-19
- Background: *Enn.* 4.7.6-7 (but focus only on 7); Plato, *Timaeus*, 61c-64b (quick look at 64b-69b)

Week 7: Perception

- *Enn.* 4.4.22 (from line 5)-23; *Enn.* 4.4.24-26
- Background: *Enn.* 4.7.6

Week 8: Desire

- *Enn.* 4.4.20, 21, 22.1-5, 27, 28
- Background: Plato, *Timaeus*, 72d through the end of the dialogue; Plato, *Philebus*, 31c-33c; 34c-36c

Week 9: What we should strive for; back to *Enn.* 1.1

- *Enn.* 4.4.43-45; *Enn.* 1.1

Week 10: *Enn.* 1.1

Week 11: *Enn.* 1.1

Week 12: *Enn.* 1.1

Editions of the Greek text

P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (eds.), *Plotini opera*, Oxford University Press (OCT) 1964-82, 3 Vols. (*editio minor* H-S²; this is the standard edition; remember the *addenda et corrigenda* at the end of vol. 3)

P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (eds.), *Plotini opera*, Museum Lessianum, 1951-1973, 3 Vols. (*editio maior* H-S¹ with English translation of *Plotiniana Arabica* or *The Theology of Aristotle*; richer apparatus)

Some other translations

There is a new English translation of the *Enneads* you might wish to consult (without Greek text):

L. Gerson (ed.), *Plotinus, The Enneads*, Cambridge University Press 2018

R. Beutler, R. Harder and W. Theiler (eds.), *Plotins Schriften*, Hamburg 1956-71, 6 Vols.

M.-N. Bouillet (ed.), *Les Ennéades de Plotin*, Paris 1857-61, 3 Vols.

É. Bréhier (ed.), *Plotin. Ennéades*, Paris 1924-1938, 7 Vols.

L. Brisson and J.-F. Pradeau (eds.), *Plotin. Traités*, Paris, multiple volumes; the treatise are in chronological order.

P. Kalligas (ed.), *Πλωτίνου Ἐννεάδες*. Vivliothêkê A. Manousê. Kentron Ekdoseôs Ergôn Ellênôn Syngrapheôn, Athênai, 5 Vols. (to date). One volume for each *Ennead*, thus *Enneas Protê*, *Enneas Deutera*, *Enneas Tritê*, *Enneas Tetartê*, *Enneas Pemptê* (original Greek Text, modern Greek translation and commentary with synopses; the commentary on the first three *Enneads* is available in English, see secondary literature below).

Some other useful texts

M. Bergeron and R. Dufour (eds.), *Alexandre d'Aphrodise, De l'Âme*, Vrin 2008 (reliable French translation with commentary and facing Greek text)

V. Caston (trans. and ed.), *Alexander of Aphrodisias: On the Soul. Part I: Soul as Form of the Body, Parts of the Soul, Nourishment, and Perception*, Bristol Classical Press 2012

P. De Lacy, *Galen, On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato: Corpus Medicorum Graecorum*, vol. V.4.1.2, pts. 1-3, Berlin Akademie-Verlag 1978-84

A. P. Fotinis, *The "De Anima" of Alexander of Aphrodisias*, University Press of America 1979 (Not very well reviewed, but the only English translation of the whole treatise)

Some secondary literature

Barney, R., Brennan, T., and Brittain, C. (eds.), *Plato and the Divided Self*, Cambridge University Press 2012

Blumenthal, H. J., *Plotinus' Psychology: His Doctrines of the Embodied Soul*, Martinus Nijhoff 1971

Boys-Stones, G. (ed.), *Platonist Philosophy 80 BC to AD 250: An Introduction and Collection of Sources in Translation*, Cambridge University Press 2018

Brittain, C., "Attention Deficit in Plotinus and Augustine: Psychological Problems in Christian and Platonist Theories of the Grades of Virtue", *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 18 (2003), pp. 223-263

Caluori, D., *Plotinus on the Soul*, Cambridge University Press 2015

Chiaradonna, R., "Plotinus on Memory, recollection and Discursive Thought", in L. Castagnoli, and P. Ceccarelli (eds.), *Greek Memories: Theories and Practices*, Cambridge University Press 2015

Emilsson, E. K., *Plotinus on Sense-Perception: A Philosophical Study*, Cambridge University Press 1988

—'Plotinus on Soul-Body Dualism', in S. Everson (ed.), *Psychology: Companions to Ancient Thought II*, Cambridge University Press 1991, pp. 148-165

—*Plotinus on Intellect*, Oxford University Press 2007

—*Plotinus*, Routledge 2017

Henry, P., "Une comparaison chez Aristote, Alexandre et Plotin", in *Les Sources de Plotin*, Entretiens de la Fondation Hardt, 1960, pp. 429-444

Kalligas, P., "Logos and the Sensible Object in Plotinus", *Ancient Philosophy*, 17 (1997), pp. 397-410

—"Plotinus against the Corporealists on the Soul. A Commentary on *Enn.* IV 7 [2], 8. 1-23", in R. Chiaradonna (ed.), *Studi sull' Anima in Plotino*, Bibliopolis 2005, pp. 95-112

—*The Enneads of Plotinus: A Commentary. Volume 1* (translated by E. K. Fowden and N. Pilavachi), Princeton University Press 2014

King, R., *Aristotle and Plotinus on Memory*, De Gruyter 2009

Lloyd, A. C., "Nosce Teipsum and Conscientia", *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 46 (1964), pp. 188-200

Lorenz, H., *The Brute Within: Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle*, Oxford University Press 2006

Noble, C. I., "How Plotinus' Soul Animates its Body: The Argument for the Soul-Trace at *Ennead* 4.4.18.1-19", *Phronesis* 58 (2013), pp. 249-279.

O'Meara, D. J., "Plotinus on How Soul Acts on Body", in Id. (ed.), *Platonic Investigations*, Catholic University of America Press 1985, pp. 247-262

Filip, K., "Parts of the Soul in Plotinus", in K. Corcilius, and D. Perler (eds.), *Partitioning the Soul. Debates from Plato to Leibniz*, De Gruyter 2014, pp. 107-148

Remes, P., *Plotinus on Self: The Philosophy of the 'We'*, Cambridge University Press 2007

Smith, A., "Unconsciousness and Quasiconsciousness in Plotinus", *Phronesis* 23 (1978), pp. 292-301

Sorabji, R. (ed.), *The Philosophy of the Commentators 200-600 AD: A Sourcebook*. Volume 1: Psychology (with Ethics and Religion), Cornell University Press 2005.

Tieleman, T., "Plotinus on the Seat of the Soul: Reverberations of Galen and Alexander in Enn. IV. 3. [27].23", *Phronesis* 43 (1998), pp. 306-325

Warren, E. W., "Consciousness in Plotinus", *Phronesis* 9 (1964), pp. 83-97

—"Memory in Plotinus", *The Classical Quarterly* 15 (1965), pp. 252-260

Wolfson, H. A., "The Internal Senses in Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew Philosophic Texts", *The Harvard Theological Review* 28 (1935), pp. 69-133