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A Neglected Stoic Argument for Human Responsibility

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On two separate occasions Origen attempted to defend the proposition that human beings are personally responsible for their actions. In his comprehensive exposition of Christian theology, *On Principles*, written about A.D. 220–25, he devoted an entire chapter to the subject of free will, in the first half of which he attempted to demonstrate on philosophical grounds that human beings are responsible for their behavior and that it is within their power (τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν) to do right and avoid sin, as God in his justice demands (*De Princ*. 3. 1. 1–5 = *SVF* 2. 988).[1] A decade or so later in his treatise *On Prayer* Origen again defended human responsibility, this time in order to show that God does not foreordain everything that happens, thereby rendering prayer useless, but rather that human beings remain in control of and responsible for their own decisions and actions (*De Orat*. 6. 1–2 = *SVF* 2. 989).[2]

Origen's two arguments have long been regarded as influenced by the Stoic literature in defense of moral responsibility, an issue that was being hotly debated in the philosophical schools in the second and third centuries A.D.[3] The first of these texts especially has been pressed into service for

[1] The text of *On Principles* has been edited by Koetschau (1913) and reedited by Görgemanns and Karpp (1976). Page and line numbers in my citations are those of Koetschau, which may also be found in the edition of Görgemanns and Karpp. On the date, see Butterworth vi-viii and Trigg 87.

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[2] The text of *On Prayer* is edited by Koetschau (1899). Page and line numbers in my citations are those of Koetschau. On the date, see Jay 72, and Trigg 156.

[3] Von Arnim includes them in *SVF* 2. 988, 989 (all references to *SVF* are to fragment numbers, with page and line numbers added in square brackets when needed); and they have been used for the reconstruction of Stoic doctrine (see below, note 4). A Stoic influence on Origen's conception of human responsibility is also acknowledged in varying degrees by Koch 280–91; Pohlenz I 426; Jackson, esp. 19–21; and Trigg 116–17; as well as by the authorities cited in note 4. The Stoic influence on Origen, in general, is surveyed by Pohlenz I 423–28, II 203–07; and recent bibliography is cited by Inwood 281 n. 186. For

the illumination that it sheds on the Stoic theory of action, as well as on the Stoic defense of human responsibility in a world governed by fate.[4] Origen's second attempt to defend responsibility, however, has received relatively little attention, either as an argument for the efficacy of prayer or as a reflection of the controversy in secular philosophy.[5] It is cited mainly to fill in a few details that are absent from the discussion of *On Principles*.[6] Yet even a superficial reading shows that though it begins in exactly the same way as the argument in *On Principles*, it soon turns in a noticeably different direction and eventually ranges over a series of points that are entirely absent from the account of *On Principles*. The difference between the two accounts raises the question why Origen did not simply repeat the argument he had used in *On Principles*. He cannot have forgotten what he had written earlier; the close resemblance of the first ten lines demonstrates that he was fully aware of the way he had presented the argument in *On Principles*. The version in *On Prayer*, then, must have been a deliberate revision. As such, it constitutes a distinct contribution to the discussion of the issue and needs to be analyzed and evaluated in its own right.

One can best grasp the unique approach of Origen's argument in *On Prayer* by comparing it to his earlier version in *On Principles*. There Origen had attempted to show how rational human beings differ from other things that move by locating them in a comprehensive division of everything that moves:

> Of things that move some have the cause of their motion in themselves; others are moved only from outside. So the things that are carried, like wood, stones, and every material held together only by its physical state (ἕξις), are moved only from outside. . . Plants and animals, on the other hand, and basically everything that is held together by nature (φύσις) or soul (ψυχή), have the cause of moving in themselves. . . And of those that have the cause of moving within themselves, some, they claim, move out of themselves (ἐξ ἑαυτῶν)

Origen's relation to the Greek philosophical tradition as a whole, see the pioneering work of Koch and, for a few examples of the recent tendency to emphasize Origen's Christian transformation of Greek philosophy, see Balas, Dillon, and Kannengiesser.

[4] E.g., by Gould 22; Stough 206, 220–21; Inwood 21–26, 78–82; and Long and Sedley I 313.

[5] One of the most comprehensive treatments is by Gesell 156–60, who surveys the argument and suggests a Neo-Platonic source, with only a brief allusion to the Neo-Platonic triad of Being, Life, and Thought as a parallel for the three kinds of self-motion. Typical of the treatment of the passage is Trigg 159–60 (cf. 116–17), who considers the argument in *On Prayer* similar to that of *On Principles*, basically a Middle Platonic approach. See also below, note 6.

[6] Most frequently cited is Origen's claim in *On Prayer* that the characteristic activities of plants, animals, and human beings (viz. growth, impulse, and reasoning) are named motion "out of themselves" (ἐξ ἑαυτῶν), "from themselves" (ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν), and "through themselves" (δι' ἑαυτῶν) respectively; cf., e.g., Stough 221 and n. 34; Inwood 22–24. On the terminology see below, notes 8 and 10.

and others from themselves (ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν)—out of themselves the
things without soul (ἄψυχα) [viz. plants] and from themselves the
ensouled things (ἔμψυχα), for the ensouled things move when an
impression (φαντασία) calls forth an impulse (ὁρμή)... The
rational animal, however, in addition to the impression-producing
nature also possesses reason (λόγος), which judges the impressions,
rejecting some and acepting others, in order that the living thing
(ζῷον) may be led in accord with them [viz. the approved
impressions]. (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 3–97. 11] = *SVF* 2. 988 [287.
33–88. 10])

After this Origen goes on in some detail regarding the acceptance or
rejection of impressions and finally concludes that it is precisely by virtue
of this function that rational animals may be said to be responsible for their
actions (esp. *De Princ.* 3. 1. 3 [198. 5–11] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 17–22]).[7]

The argument in *On Prayer* begins with exactly the same division:

Of things that move some have their mover outside, such as inanimate
things held together by physical disposition (ἕξις) alone. (*De Orat.* 6.
1 [311. 16–17] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 37–38])

But instead of continuing the division of *things that move* in the manner of
On Principles, Origen immediately begins to shift to a different point of
view, namely, an enumeration of the different *kinds of motion* that
characterize the various categories of things that move. His point of view is
signaled from the beginning by the particles μὲν ... δὲ ... δὲ; and the
shift from a division of *things that move* to an enumeration of *kinds of
motion* is further facilitated by the use of the ordinal numerals "second" and
"third" in his presentation of the subsequent items. The result is that while
the account begins with a division and a discussion of the first category of
things that move (viz. things moved from outside [τὰ μέν τινα τὸ κινοῦν
ἔχει ἔξωθεν]), this discussion is presented as if it were a discussion of the
first member of a tripartite series, and the division is never mentioned again.

This procedure creates a tactical problem for Origen in his presentation
of the rest of the series. The original division separated off things moved
from outside, but it left things that move from within as an undifferentiated
generic category, including both plants and animals. Origen's next move
ought to have been to subdivide this generic category in preparation for an
enumeration of its members and their motions. In his eagerness, however,
to shift over to an enumeration of motions he overlooks this task and
instead says:

The second class (δεύτερα δὲ) of things that move, in addition to
these [externally moved objects], are the things that move by the
agency of their internal nature or soul (ὑπὸ τῆς ἐνυπαρχούσης
φύσεως ἢ ψυχῆς κινούμενα), which are also said to move "out of

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[7] For full discussion of this text and its relation to Stoicism see Inwood 21–26, 78–81.

them(selves)" (ἐξ αὐτῶν) by those who are more scrupulous in terminology (παρὰ τοῖς κυριώτερον χρωμένοις τοῖς ὀνόμασι). (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 1–3] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 1–3])[8]

Here he denotes the second class of things that move by the still undivided generic category ("things that move by *either* their internal nature *or* their [internal] soul"), to which he then adds a relative clause identifying their motion as "motion out of them(selves) (ἐξ αὐτῶν)"—the motion that is characteristic of things that move specifically by nature and not by soul.[9] In this way he combines the enumeration of the second member of the series of things that move (although imprecisely described) with an identification of its specific motion.

Finally, having given the proper technical name for the characteristic motion of the second class, he ceases to enumerate the classes and concentrates entirely on the motions themselves:

Third (τρίτη δέ) is the motion in animals which is named "the motion from it(self)" (ἡ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κίνησις); and I believe (οἶμαι) that the motion of rational beings is [called] "motion through them(selves)" (δι' αὐτῶν). (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 3–5] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 3–6])

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[8] I have retained the non-reflexive forms as found in the only extant MS of *On Prayer*, even though the texts of *On Principles* and of Simplicius *In Cat.* (= *SVF* 2. 499) use the reflexive pronouns. The apparent inconsistency has tempted editors to emend the text of *On Prayer* in some or all of the four instances of prepositional phrases. Koetschau eventually decided to emend all four to bring them into line with the text of *On Principles* (cf. Koetschau [1926] 27 n. 1). Such emendation is unnecessary and produces a grammatically inferior text in three of the four instances. In Simplicius and *On Principles* the prepositional phrase modifies the verb and refers back to the subject of the sentence (viz. the things that move). In *On Prayer*, however, in all but one case the prepositional phrase qualifies a noun (κίνησις) and the pronoun refers back to a genitive modifier; hence it cannot be reflexive. In only one instance, where Origen is attempting to combine the second class of things that move with the name of their motion, does the pronoun refer back to the subject of the clause and the sentence, and hence only this one phrase might be expected to contain a reflexive pronoun. Yet even here, if Origen had in mind a list of motions in which the pronouns were non-reflexive (in keeping with standard grammatical practice), he might have retained the non-reflexive form of his source despite a rephrasing that called for a reflexive pronoun. One small additional point in favor of retaining the non-reflexive forms of the manuscript is the fact that when Origen did use the reflexive form in *On Principles* (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 11–97. 1] = *SVF* 2. 988 [287. 41–88. 2]), he used the uncontracted form ἑαυτῶν, removing all ambiguity even in early, unaccented uncial manuscripts. The fact that he uses the short form (αὐτοῦ, αὐτῶν) in a discussion of the very same subject in *On Prayer* may indicate that Origen did not intend the term to be construed as a reflexive. It should be noted, moreover, that regardless of the form used in the Greek text, which is determined by the exigencies of Greek grammar, the reference of the pronoun is the same and the meaning is unaffected. Furthermore, in English the reflexive is more indicative of the required meaning than the non-reflexive, even for the nominal form, "motion out of itself."

[9] Contrast the clarity with which he distinguishes the second and third categories and their motions in *On Principles* 3. 1. 2 (196. 11–97. 1) = *SVF* 2. 988 (287. 41–88. 1).

Thus in three steps Origen shifts completely from a division of *things that move* to an enumeration of *the motions with which they move*.

This procedure is surprising and suggests that Origen did not create this argument from whole cloth, but constructed it by conflating two distinct arguments. One of these, like the argument in *On Principles*, required a classification of things that move on the basis of the source of their motion, i.e., whether their motion originates from outside (as in inanimate things), or from within (specifically from nature in plants, from soul in animals, and from reason in human beings). The other account required a catalog or enumeration of the kinds of motion that characterize the various classes of things that move and designated at least the motions that arise from within by different prepositions with a (reflexive) pronoun, i.e., ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ, or δι' ἑαυτοῦ.[10] To meet these two requirements he grafted the list of motions onto the initial division of things that move. The result was a composite theoretical basis for his argument—a division of things that move into things moved from outside and things that move from within, but with the added stipulation that things that move from within may possess as many as three different types of motion: (1) motion *out of* themselves (presumably found in all living plants and animals), (2) motion *from* themselves (animal motion), and (3) motion *through* themselves (rational motion).

To confirm the hypothesis that Origen's argument is really a combination of two separate arguments, we must examine how the argument actually proceeds:

> If we remove from the living creature (ζῷον) motion from it(self) (ἀπ' αὐτοῦ), it can no longer be considered a living creature, but will be either like a plant moving only by nature or like a stone carried (φέρεται) by someone from outside. If it [the animal] is aware of its own motion (παρακολουθῇ τῇ ἰδίᾳ κινήσει), since it is to this that we have given the name "moving through it(self)" (δι' αὐτοῦ), this [animal] will of necessity be rational. Those people, therefore, who wish nothing to be subject to us (ἐφ' ἡμῖν) will necessarily arrive at a most absurd conclusion: first, that we are not animals, and second, that we are not rational, but we might [rather] say that what we believe we [ourselves] are doing we [really] do, as it were, by the agency of an external mover (οἷον ὑπὸ ἔξωθεν κινοῦντος), in no way ourselves doing the moving (αὐτοὶ οὐδαμῶς κινούμενοι). (*De Orat.* 6. 1–2 [312. 5–14] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 6–13])[11]

[10] For the sake of clarity and consistency I shall use the reflexive form for both the English phrase and the corresponding Greek phrase, regardless whether the reference is to the text of *On Principles*, which used the reflexive form, or to *On Prayer*, which probably used the non-reflexive form (see above, note 8).

[11] Unfortunately, all editions and translations begin a new paragraph in the middle at *De Orat.* 6. 2 (312. 11) = *SVF* 2. 989 (289. 10). This breaks up the argument, which runs

Though Origen's logic may not be immediately clear, it is obvious that he is attempting to prove that determinism leads to not one, but two absurd consequences: (1) we human beings are not living creatures (ζῷα) and (2) we human beings are not rational creatures (λογικά). Working backward from this double conclusion, we see that it is preceded by two conditional sentences. These may now be recognized as supplying the two required major premises for the pair of conclusions, the first stipulating the conditions that constitute denial of our status as animals, the second stipulating the conditions for regarding an animal as rational. Origen's argument thus takes the shape of two parallel syllogisms. In the one, he argues that determinists by claiming that all our actions are done by the agency of an external mover satisfy the condition of the first premise and hence implicitly deny that we are living creatures. In the other, he argues that determinists by this very same claim deny the condition that constitutes rationality as specified in the second premise and therefore also deny that we are rational creatures.

We shall have to clarify these arguments further; but first we must observe that Origen's attack on the determinists consists of two parallel arguments based on two parallel premises, and that one of these arguments depends specifically on the distinction between motion caused by an external mover and motion arising from within, whereas the other depends on a particular concept of rational motion that Origen characterizes as "motion through itself." Hence the course of the argument shows the same pattern of conflation as did the exposition of what we may now construe as its theoretical basis, the classification of things that move and their specific motions. We may, therefore, use this pattern to disentangle the two conflated arguments for further detailed analysis:

THEORETICAL BASIS

Division of Things that Move   *Catalog of Self-Motions*

Of things that move some have their mover outside, such as in-animate things held together by physical disposition alone, and also things that are moved by nature and soul at times when they are not being moved as

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to *De Orat.* 6. 2 (312. 18) = *SVF* 2. 989 (288. 17), and has no doubt contributed to its misunderstanding.

Division of Things that Move

Catalog of Self-Motions

such [viz. by nature or soul], but rather in the manner of things held together only by physical disposition. For stones that have been extracted from a mine and wood that has lost its capacity to grow, since these are [now] held together only by physical disposition, have their mover outside. In fact, even the bodies of animals and the foliage of plants when they are transported (μετατιθέμενα) by someone change place (μετατίθεται) not as animals and plants, but in the manner of stones and wood that has lost its capacity to grow. And again, if ever these things move by virtue of the fact that all things disintegrate (ῥευστὰ εἶναι) when they perish, they have the motion that occurs during perishing as an incidental result (παρακολουθητικήν) [viz. of the perishing, and thus as an externally caused motion].

The second

class of things that move, in addition to these [externally moved objects] are the things that move by the agency of their internal nature or soul,

which are also said to move "out of them(selves)" (ἐξ αὐτῶν) by those who are more scrupulous in terminology. Third is the motion in animals, which is named "the motion from it(self)" (ἡ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κίνησις); and I believe that the motion of rational beings is [called] "motion through them (selves)" (δι' αὐτῶν).

ARGUMENTS

Based on *Division of Things that Move*	*Based on* *Catalog of Self-Motions*
If we remove from the living creature motion from itself, it can no longer be considered a living creature, but will be either like a plant moving only by nature or like a stone carried by someone from outside.	
	If it [the animal] is aware of its own motion (παρακολουθῇ τῇ ἰδίᾳ κινήσει), since it is to this that we have given the name "moving through itself," this [animal] will of necessity be rational.

Those people, therefore, who wish nothing to be subject to us (ἐφ' ἡμῖν) will necessarily arrive at a most absurd conclusion:

first, that we are not animals,	
	and second, that we are not rational,

but we might say that what we believe we [ourselves] are doing we [really] do,

as it were, by the agency of an external mover (οἷον ὑπὸ ἔξω-θεν κινοῦντος),	
	in no way ourselves doing the moving (αὐτοὶ οὐδαμῶς κινούμενοι). Especially after examining his own experience let anyone see if he would not be shameless to [still] claim that he himself does not will, he himself does not eat, he himself does not walk, and, moreover, he himself does not assent and accept some beliefs, and he himself does not reject

others as false. (*De Orat.* 6. 1–
2 [311. 16–12. 18] = *SVF* 2.
989 [288. 37–89. 17])

We shall begin by examining the argument in the left-hand column, the argument that we are not living creatures (ζῷα). This argument is based on the premise:

If we remove from the living creature (ζῷον) motion from it(self) (τὴν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κίνησιν), it can no longer be considered a living creature, but will be either like a plant moving only by nature or like a stone carried by someone from outside. (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 5–8] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 5–7])

Origen laid the foundation for this premise in his presentation of the division of things that move at the very beginning. In dividing things into those moved from outside and those moving by nature or soul from within, he made it clear that this division does not entail that things moving from within are *never* moved from outside.[12] Among the things moved from outside he includes things that move by nature and soul (viz. plants and animals) at those times when they are not moving *qua* plants or animals, that is, with the *proper* motion of plants or animals (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [311. 17–24] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 37–44]). Plants, he believes, move as plants when they grow (φύειν, *De Orat.* 6. 1 [311. 19–20, 24–25] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 40–41, 43–44]); animals move as animals when they move by impulse in response to an impression (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 13–97. 1] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 1–2]). However, when a plant dies and loses its ability to grow, as in the case of wood, or when plants or animals are transported by someone or something, they are moved from outside in exactly the same way as inanimate things (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [311. 19–24] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 40–44]). Thus plants and animals are subject to externally caused motion as well as to their own proper internally caused motions.

In the actual statement of the premise Origen goes further and assumes that the various classes of things that move by an internal source also possess varying *numbers* of internally caused motions and that the number of such motions depends on their position in the scale of things that move. What he says is that if we take away (περιέλωμεν) the proper motion of an animal, i.e., motion from itself, it will no longer qualify as an animal, but will "move only by nature like a plant or be carried by someone from outside like a stone" (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 5–8] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 5–7]). This implies that an animal is capable of three kinds of motion, externally

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[12] In *On Principles* he adds the word μόνον to say: "Of things that move some have the cause of their motion in themselves, others are moved *only* from outside" (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 3–4] = *SVF* 2. 988 [287. 33–35]). This makes it clear that the other divisions are moved externally as well as by one or more internal sources of motion.

caused motion and two internally caused kinds of motion, motion by nature, such as characterizes plants, and motion from itself, which is the proper motion of animals; but it is only the motion from itself that defines the animal. If this proper defining motion is removed, the animal may no longer be considered an animal. It will still, however, be left with two kinds of motion, the motion of biological growth that is the proper motion of plants, and, of course, externally caused motion, which may happen to anything at all, whether animate or inanimate. Origen's argument, therefore, entails an analysis of things that move as an ordered series in which each member possesses its own proper motion in addition to all the motions of the prior members of the series.

This conception is built into the very structure of the division, which we may abstract from the full account of it in *On Principles*. There we find the first division defined as follows:
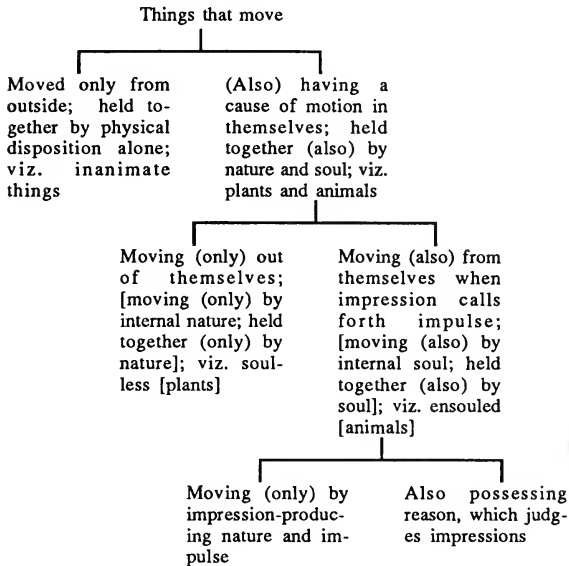
> Of things that move some have the cause of their motion in themselves; others are moved *only* from outside. (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 3–4] = *SVF* 2. 988 [287. 33–35])

This implies that things that have the cause of their motion in themselves are *also* capable of being moved from outside, an implication that Origen actually spelled out in *On Prayer*. Moreover, when Origen comes to the last division, he says:

> The rational animal *in addition to* the impression-producing nature *also* possesses reason. (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 3 [197. 9–10] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 7–9])

He thereby reveals that on his analysis the internal source of motion which characterizes a specific class of things that move occurs in addition to, not in place of, the source that characterized the class from which it is being differentiated. Thus the complete division may be diagrammed as follows:[13]

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[13] I have enclosed "only" and "also" in parentheses where they do not occur in Origen's text, but must be supplied to bring the division into line with the principle of division used for the first and fourth classes. The bracketed descriptions indicate the implied distribution of descriptions that Origen consolidates into a single generic description at the prior level and does not explicitly repeat in the subdivisions of the genus. We might note that this occurs in his attempt to differentiate plants from animals, where he prefers to use the prepositional characterization of the catalog of motions.

Division of Things That Move (On Principles 3. 1. 2–3)

Things that move

Moved only from outside; held together by physical disposition alone; viz. inanimate things	(Also) having a cause of motion in themselves; held together (also) by nature and soul; viz. plants and animals

Moving (only) out of themselves; [moving (only) by internal nature; held together (only) by nature]; viz. soulless [plants]	Moving (also) from themselves when impression calls forth impulse; [moving (also) by internal soul; held together (also) by soul]; viz. ensouled [animals]

Moving (only) by impression-producing nature and impulse	Also possessing reason, which judges impressions

The structure of Origen's division is, in essence, an asymmetrical dichotomy, in which each subdivision *adds* another source of motion and another kind of motion as the defining characteristic of that class, thereby assigning the four classes of things that move to an ordered series, each member of which possesses the motions and sources of motion of all prior members of the series in addition to its own proper motion and source of motion. Specifically, the series consists of four members: (1) inanimate things, (2) plants, (3) animals, and (4) rational creatures. The first member of the series, inanimate things, move only from outside. Plants may also be moved from outside, but their proper motion is one caused by their internal nature and called "motion out of themselves." It is this motion that occurs when they grow and flourish as plants. Animals, too, as the third member of the series, have such motion by nature, enabling them to grow and reproduce in the manner of plants, but their proper motion is the motion from themselves (ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν), which Origen in *On Principles* identifies as the motion that arises when an impression calls forth an impulse (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 13–97. 1] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 1–2]). Animals,

therefore, are susceptible of three kinds of motion: (1) externally caused, passive transportation, (2) biological growth (motion out of themselves), and (3) motion by impulse (motion from themselves). Finally, human beings conform to the same pattern. They possess these three forms of motion, as well as a fourth, their own characteristic motion of reason, which in *On Prayer* Origen calls "motion through themselves" (δι' ἑαυτῶν).

It is this conception that forms the logical basis for Origen's first argument in *On Prayer*. Leaving aside the specific motion of rational creatures, he adopts the conception of an animal as possessing three motions, externally caused transportation, biological growth, and motion by impulse (motion from themselves). If we remove the proper motion of the animal, the motion that defines it *qua* animal, it can no longer be regarded as an animal. This, he asserts, is what the determinists do when they claim that all human actions, even those that we believe we do on our own initiative, are done "as it were, by the agency of something outside." For this argument the motion of reason is not relevant; the determinist claim that all human action is caused by an external mover denies even the animal motion by impulse in response to an impression and so "removes motion from itself." By leaving humans without the defining motion of animals, the determinist position entails the absurd consequence that we human beings are not even animals, much less rational animals.[14]

This analysis shows clearly the conceptual connections of the argument. Formally the argument is made on the basis of the first step in the division, viz. the division into things moved from without and things that move themselves from within. The minor premise (that determinists claim human beings are moved exclusively from outside) requires only the distinction between things moved from within and things moved from without. This distinction is fully developed in the opening lines of the argument. The major premise, however, is formulated to reflect the full range of superimposed motions to which an animal is subject:

> If we remove from the living creature motion from itself, it can no longer be considered a living creature, but will be *either like a plant moving only by nature or like a stone carried by someone from outside.* (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 5–8] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 6–8])

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[14] The justice of Origen's criticism is a question that cannot be discussed here. Origen's critique seems simply to oppose externally caused motion to motion by impulse without taking any account of the possibility that a determinist might incorporate animal motion into his determinist scheme by claiming that not only the impulse-provoking external impression, but also the internal impulse-generating mechanism was in some way affected by external causes. It may be that Origen says οἷον ὑπὸ ἔξωθεν κινοῦντος, "*as it were,* by an external mover," to include under this looser rubric accounts that determine the internal mechanism. If so, he would seem to be claiming that such accounts give a human being less freedom than an animal.

Though these motions are expressed in terms of the prepositional classification of the catalog, the catalog is not the theoretical ground for the conception of a living creature as possessor of the three concomitant motions. For concomitance, though not incompatible with the classification by prepositions, is neither implied by that classification nor stipulated as an additional condition in Origen's exposition. It is, on the other hand, both a necessary, logical consequence of the asymmetrical dichotomy of the division and explicitly mentioned in the full exposition of that division in *On Principles* and again in the part repeated in *On Prayer*. Thus we can safely say that the first argument against determinism is derived conceptually from the division of things that move, such as is found fully expressed in *On Principles*.

Yet at the same time we have to acknowledge that the conclusion of the first argument in *On Prayer* is unequivocally different from that of the argument of *On Principles*. In *On Principles* Origen made no attempt to defend human responsibility on the basis of the internal origin of motion in living creatures (ζῷα), but staked his entire claim of human responsibility on the capacity of the reason (λόγος) to resist the impulses provoked by impressions of the senses (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 3 [197. 1–98. 11] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 2–22]). That argument is now replaced in *On Prayer* with a new argument that even animals, and presumably some of the animal activities of humans, arise from within and so conflict with the determinist claim that all movement without exception is caused from outside.[15] This clears the way for Origen to use the reason of rational creatures as the basis for a second argument that is not based on the division of things that move. Thus we can see that in constructing the composite argument in *On Prayer*, Origen has carefully introduced part, but only part, of the division on which his argument in *On Principles* was based, and then, on the basis of that part and its assumptions about the structured distribution of motions among the components of the universe, he has created a *new* argument, one which will not interfere with the completely different argument with which he intends to conflate it. Let us now turn to that second argument.

The second argument is presented in studied rhetorical antithesis to the first within a conventional literary structure, a ring composition centered around the conclusions:

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[15] This does not mean that Origen is necessarily attributing full responsibility to animals. In *On Principles* he cites spiders and bees as animals who create artistic, geometrically shaped structures without possession of reason (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [197. 2–9] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 2–7]). The impression that calls forth such creations presumably arises from within them and not entirely from some external source. Origen could take these animals as evidence that even irrational animals are not completely dependent on external causes for all their motions. Yet, as he goes on to show in *On Principles*, they are not morally responsible for their actions.

                    Major Premise I
                    Major Premise II
                              Conclusion I
                              Conclusion II
                    Minor Premise I
                    Minor Premise II

Within this structure Origen expresses both arguments in the same
grammatical form. The major premises are introduced in the form of a pair
of conditional sentences (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 5–10] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 5–
9]). Then the conclusion is expressed in the middle of the discussion in a
single sentence with the determinists' consequences in numbered, coordinate
indirect statements: first, that we are not living creatures, and second, that
we are not rational beings (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 11–13] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289.
10–11]). Finally, the minor premises are added in the form of parallel
phrases in an indirect discourse statement of the determinists' allegations:
"moving, as it were, by an external mover, not by ourselves" (*De Orat.* 6. 2
[312. 13–14] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 12–13]). The parallel grammatical forms,
however, embody formally antithetical premises. Whereas the major
premise of the first argument draws a *negative* conclusion ("it is *not* an
animal") from a *denial* of the necessary defining characteristic, the major
premise of the second argument draws a *positive* conclusion ("it is rational")
from the *affirmation* of the defining characteristic of this class. In the minor
premises the determinists are claimed to *affirm* a source of human motion
incompatible with the definition of animals, while simultaneously *denying*
the kind of motion that defines rational beings. Thus Origen claims that the
determinists satisfy the condition of the major premise in the first argument
and so affirm its negative conclusion, whereas they fail to satisfy the
condition of the major premise in the second and so deny its positive
conclusion. In the end the two antithetical syllogisms converge; the
affirmation of the negative conclusion of Major Premise I and the denial of
the positive conclusion of Major Premise II yield the two parallel negative
conclusions: We are not animals and we are not rational. This intricate
antithesis clearly reveals the care with which Origen constructed the
argument, as well as the importance he attached to the conflation of the two
arguments. It also indicates that the remodeling of the argument from *On
Principles* and the addition of the second argument was not a casual
variation, but a deliberate attempt to accentuate it by antithesis and to
produce a climactic focus on its central concept, namely, the rational motion
of human beings.

   Origen's second argument depends on the crucial claim that "being
aware of" or "understanding" (παρακολουθῇ) one's own motion is the
proper motion or defining characteristic of rational human beings.[16] This

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[16] Most modern translators and interpretators, including Gesell 157–60 in his detailed
analysis of the passage, have missed this technical sense of παρακολουθῇ, which was

claim he derives explicitly from the catalog of motions. In his statement of the major premise he justifies the inference from awareness to rationality with the explanation that it was such "awareness" to which he had given the name "moving through oneself" (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 8–10] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 7–9]). He had not, of course, explicitly used the term in his catalog of self-motions; but he is obviously claiming that "awareness" is the particular motion that he had in mind when he said that the motion of rational creatures is called "motion through oneself" (*De Orat.* 6. 1 [312. 5] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 5–6]). Thus he intends us to see "understanding" as the motion that specifically characterizes rational beings and differentiates them from the living things (ζῷα) that move only by impulse "from themselves" (ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν). Origen's argument, then, is that his definition of rationality is grounded in the order of nature and can be used as unimpeachable evidence of rationality.

His next step is to claim that the determinists deny that human beings possess this characteristic. This he does by spelling out the implications of the determinists' claim that he used for his first argument, i.e., that all human action is caused by an external mover, as it were. If one follows the determinists, one ought to say "that everything we *think* we do, we really do, as it were, by an external cause, *we ourselves in no way causing the motion*" (αὐτοὶ οὐδαμῶς κινούμενοι, *De Orat.* 6. 2 [312. 13–14] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 12–13]). The argumentative significance of these last words is clarified and emphasized by the subsequent sentence:

> Let anyone examine his own experience and see if he would not be shameless to continue to claim that *he himself* does not will (μὴ αὐτὸς θέλειν), *he himself* does not eat, *he himself* does not walk, and, moreover, *he himself* does not assent and accept some beliefs, and *he himself* does not reject others as false. (*De Orat.* 6. 2 [312. 14–18] = *SVF* 2. 989 [288. 13–17])[17]

Origen wants his readers to realize that the determinists by their claim that all human actions are externally caused deny that *we ourselves* do any of these things. Origen had just established that the unimpeachable mark of rationality was "being aware of our own motion," which entails being able to distinguish what is our own action from what is imposed on us from without. The determinists, he now claims, effectively deny that we can do that. They say that what we *think* we are doing by ourselves we are doing under compulsion, as if by an outside agent, and that we are, in fact, deceived and unable to recognize our own actions. By this claim they deny παρακολούθησις and hence our rationality.

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current in the second and third centuries A.D., wrongly interpreting the term simply as "follows." This interpretation makes the argument unintelligible. Inwood 22 translates correctly, but does not discuss the argument.

[17] The sentence as a whole is given emphasis by the introductory words: ἄλλως τε καὶ.

Origen's argument is now formally complete. Animals that are aware of their own motions are rational. The determinists refuse to acknowledge this awareness. Therefore, they ask us to believe that we are not rational. But rhetorically Origen still holds his trump card. What the determinists refuse to acknowledge is something that can be verified by intuitive introspection. Anyone can examine his own experience and determine for himself whether his action is freely chosen or not. By conceiving the naturally ordained distinguishing feature of rational humanity as the ability to recognize and reflect on one's own actions Origen gives everyone access to irrefutable evidence of human freedom.[18] This is no doubt why he can call what the determinists ask us to believe "something extremely foolish" (ἠλιθιώτατόν τι, *De Orat.* 6. 2 [312. 11–12] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 10]); anyone can refute it by simple introspection.

This second argument in *On Prayer* is distinctly different from the argument of *On Principles*. Its only explicit point of contact with *On Principles* is the almost parenthetical remark there that the difference between soulless self-movers (plants) and ensouled self-movers (animals) is their kind of motion: The self-motion of plants is "out of themselves" (ἐξ ἑαυτῶν), whereas the self-motion of animals is "from themselves" (ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν, *De Princ.* 3. 1. 2 [196. 11–97. 1] = *SVF* 2. 988 [287. 41–88. 2]). Thus we can hardly see the second argument as an extrapolation of the argument of *On Principles*. We must look elsewhere for its conceptual connections.

Our search quickly takes us back to the Stoa. Simplicius in his commentary on Aristotle's *Categories* tells us that the Stoics differentiated as "different kinds" (διαφορὰς γενῶν) (1) "moving out of oneself" (ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ κινεῖσθαι), (2) "activating motion through oneself" (δι' ἑαυτοῦ ἐνεργεῖν τὴν κίνησιν), and (3) "acting from oneself" (ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ποιεῖν, *SVF* 2. 499). From this account the Stoic origin of the theoretical foundation of Origen's second argument can readily be established.[19]

Moreover, the conception of rational activity on which the entire argument is based, namely, self-understanding (παρακολούθησις), was adopted by the Stoics in the second century A.D. as the essential

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[18] He picks up this point in his next argument, where he claims there are beliefs that one cannot accept regardless of the number of persuasive arguments given in their favor (*De Orat.* 6. 2 [312. 18–20] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 17–18]). If the determinists were right that all human choices are determined by external causes, any belief presented with a plausible argument would win assent. If some person can resist assent to even a single belief, that rejection *eo ipso* constitutes an empirical refutation of the determinist claim. Thus Origen has not only intuition, but objective empirical evidence in his support.

[19] On this text and its relation to Origen see Inwood 23–24 and Long and Sedley II 310. Simplicius' characterization of the three Stoic motions, however, does not agree with what we read in Origen. This has led Inwood, followed by Long and Sedley, to suspect contamination with Peripatetic and Neo-Platonic notions; but it is also possible to explain the discrepancies as due to a misleading and selective abridgement of a longer Stoic exposition. A full analysis of this text, however, is beyond the scope of this study.

characteristic of rational human beings. Both Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius used παρακολούθησις to denote the term for the capacity that differentiates a rational human being from an animal.[20] As such it had a variety of connotations. In Epictetus these included understanding the meaning of words, following the course of an argument, comprehending the divine order that governs the universe and events in it, and, most relevantly, understanding how to use external impressions so as to act morally in harmony with the divine order and not merely to react mechanically as animals do.[21] Thus it included not only evaluation of the impressions that call forth action, but also evaluation of the evaluative process itself and of the resulting actions in terms of their relation to the causal and moral order of the universe. It was this second-order evaluation that constituted awareness and understanding of the grounds of our own actions and that formed the basis for the use of intuitive introspection in philosophical investigation. Epictetus himself applied such introspection to the recognition of one's own moral progress and so used it, for example, of a student of philosophy who, he believed, should have been able to "understand himself," specifically, that in learning philosophy he was rejecting bad opinions and adopting new (scil. and better) ones, and was thereby changing his position from one in which his choices were morally indifferent to one in which he could make correct moral choices (Diss. 3. 5. 4).[22]

But it is not only Epictetus' concept of παρακολούθησις as a mark of rationality that parallels Origen's second argument; the role of intuition entailed by that concept was also explicitly used by Epictetus as the basis for his own proof of free will. Though, in general, Epictetus simply assumed that human beings are capable of freely choosing their pursuits and actions, on several occasions he offered an actual argument (Diss. 1. 17. 21–28; 4. 1. 68–72, 99–100). His argument is strikingly similar to Origen's second argument in both form and content, here quoted from Diss. 1. 17:[23]

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[20] E.g., Epict. Diss. 1. 6. 1–22, esp. 12–15; 1. 28. 19–20; 2. 10. 3 (cf. 2. 14. 14–17); Marc. Ant. 3. 1; 6. 42. Cf. Bonhoeffer 74–76; Long (1971) 189–92; Long (1982) 49–53.

[21] Understanding the meaning of words: Diss. 2. 14. 14–17; 2. 17. 6; following a speech, argument, or demonstration: Diss. 1. 5. 5; 1. 7. 11, 33; 1. 14. 11; 1. 26. 13–14; 1. 29. 26; 2. 24. 13, 19; 3. 23. 26; comprehending the divine order: 1. 9. 4; 2. 10. 3, 4; 2. 16. 33; 4. 7. 7, and specifically the will of nature (βούλημα τῆς φύσεως), 1. 17. 14–15 (cf. 18); 3. 20. 13; comprehending events (γινόμενα): 1. 6. 13; understanding the use of impressions: 1. 6. 13, 17, 18 (cf. 21); 2. 6. 6, 8; 4. 7. 32; understanding the moral implications of actions: 1. 6. 15; 1. 28. 20; 2. 26. 3; 3. 5. 4–5 (cf. 3. 24. 110; 4. 7. 7); recognizing one's actions as constituting resistance to the divine order: 3. 1. 29; 3. 10. 6 (cf. 3. 24. 110).

[22] He also attributed to Socrates the sentiment that just as someone else derives joy from improving his farm or his horse, he himself derives joy from being aware of himself becoming better (παρακολουθῶν ἐμαυτῷ βελτίονι γινομένῳ, 3. 5. 14).

[23] Though the argument in both discourses is logically the same and verbally similar, the context is different. In Diss. 4. 1. 68–75 it occurs in a dialogue on freedom and is

Therefore, I go to this interpreter and diviner (ἐξηγητὴν ... καὶ
θύτην) and say: "Examine the entrails for me and tell me what they
signify (σημαίνεται) for me." He takes them and spreads them out and
then interprets as follows: "Oh, man, you have choice (προαίρεσιν) by
nature without hindrance and constraint. This is what is written here in
the entrails. I will show this to you first in the area of assent. Can
anyone prevent you from approving truth? Indeed, no one can! Can
anyone force you to accept the false? Certainly not! Do you see that in
this area you have the capacity to choose free of hindrance, necessity,
and obstruction? What about the area of desire and impulse? Is that any
different? What can overpower an impulse except another impulse and
what can overpower desire or aversion except another desire or
aversion? Someone might object: 'If someone threatens me with
death, he compels me.' No, not the threat; the fact that it seems better
to you to do that sort of thing rather than to die. So your own belief
(δόγμα) has compelled you. That is, one choice has compelled the
other. For if God had so constituted (κατεσκευάκει) that part which he
took from himself and gave to you in such a way that it could be
hindered or constrained either by himself or by someone else, he would
no longer be God, nor would he be caring for us as he ought. These are
the things I find in the sacrifice," he says. "These signs are given to
you. If you *will* (θέλῃς), you are free. If you *will* (θέλῃς), you will
have no one to blame, no one to accuse. Everything will be in accord
with what is at the same time your will (γνώμην) and also God's."
(*Diss.* 1. 17. 21–28)

This argument was presented by Epictetus in an imaginative
metaphorical setting within a discourse (*Diss.* 1. 17) devoted to the study of
the reason (λόγος). In this discourse Epictetus discussed the mental faculty
that is capable of undertaking such a study, its philosophical value, and
finally its goal or end.[24] At the very end of this discourse he depicts the

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given as proof that his partner in the dialogue has something "on [his] own authority,
which is subject to him alone" (αὐτεξούσιον, ὃ ἐπὶ μόνῳ ἐστί σοι, *Diss.* 4. 1. 68). In
Diss. 1. 17 it stands as the culmination of a discussion about reason (λόγος), which, he
claims, yields the recognition that "you have a choice that is by nature free of hindrance
and constraint" (προαίρεσιν ἔχεις ἀκώλυτον φύσει καὶ ἀνανάγκαστον, *Diss.* 1. 17.
29). Here it is claimed to be the outcome of an investigation of the reason, and is
presented in a striking mataphorical mode that clarifies its epistemological basis. Since
this shorter, but more suggestive, version reveals more clearly its similarity to Origen's
argument, it is this version that I shall quote and examine.

[24] In *Diss.* 1. 17 Epictetus makes the following claims about reason, all in compressed
dialogue form: (1) the reason (λόγος) studies itself (1. 17. 1–3); (2) the study of reason
(λόγος), typically called "logic" (λογικά), is important because reason is the agent of
understanding (ἐπισκεπτικά, δι' οὗ τἆλλα καταμανθάνεται) and the standard of
judging (διακριτικά, τὸ τῶν ἄλλων κριτήριον) everything else (1. 17. 4–12); (3) its
end in general terms is to understand the will or plan of nature (νοῆσαι, παρακολουθεῖν,
or καταμαθεῖν τὸ βούλημα τῆς φύσεως, 1. 17. 13–19); finally (4) the specific result of
this study is the recognition that "You have a choice that is by nature free of hindrance and

concrete result of the study of the reason in the form of an elaborate metaphor, in which the philosopher is portrayed as an interpreter and diviner (ἐξηγητὴν καὶ θύτην), reading or interpreting God's will from the entrails (σπλάγχνα) of a sacrificial victim. The organs used by the diviner metaphorically represent the different psychological functions of the reason that the philosopher *qua* diviner uses as empirical evidence for his conclusions. So the philosopher looks first at the area of assent (ἐπὶ τοῦ συγκαθετικοῦ τόπου) and then at the area of desire and impulse (ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀρεκτικοῦ καὶ ὁρμητικοῦ). From these "organs" of the human mind he "shows" (δείξω) the "prophecy" (μαντείαν): "You have a choice (προαίρεσιν) that is by nature free of hindrance and constraint. . . If you will (θέλῃς), you are free. You will have no one to blame, no one to accuse."

This is clearly an argument for human freedom and responsibility, but it is an argument that uses a metaphorical mode of presentation to lay its theoretical foundation. Epictetus' metaphorical description of the process by which the philosopher infers human freedom is that of a diviner reading God's plan from the sacred offerings (ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς), i.e., from the natural condition of the human intellect.[25] By this he makes it clear that he regards the argument as drawing its conclusions directly from the divinely ordained structure of the universe in accord with which human beings are endowed with the unique capacity to choose their beliefs, desires, and impulses.[26] Even though this metaphorical proof of freedom makes no reference to these psychic "motions" as members of a comprehensive, naturally ordered set of self-motions, as Origen did in his argument, it appeals through its imagery of divination to a divinely ordained, intellectually comprehensible natural structure as the basis for its validity.

But the similiarity to Origen's argument is found not only in its theoretical basis. What is equally significant is the close similarity of its logical structure and content. Epictetus looks for evidence of freedom first in assent (ἐπὶ τοῦ συγκαθετικοῦ τόπου) and in approving (ἐπινεῦσαι) the true, while not accepting (παραδέξασθαι) the false. Then he looks for evidence of freedom in desire and impulse (ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀρεκτικοῦ καὶ ὁρμητικοῦ). Finally, he describes both areas generically as "willing" (θέλῃς). Origen looks in precisely the same areas, but surveyed in reverse

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constraint" (προαίρεσιν ἔχεις ἀκώλυτον φύσει καὶ ἀνανάγκαστον, 1. 17. 20–29). Cf. also 1. 1. 4 for another statement of the conception of reason studying itself.

[25] Epictetus calls the empirical evidence for the inference "holy things" (ἱεροῖς, 1. 17. 28), a significantly ambiguous term. On the metaphorical level it denotes the parts of the sacrificial victim, which by virtue of their dedication to God have become sacred. On the philosophical level, it refers to the psychological functions of assent, desire, and impulse, which in human beings become sacred by virtue of their service to the divine part of man, the reason.

[26] For Epictetus' conception of human reason as diviner, reading the signs in nature, see *Diss.* 2. 7.

order. He begins with the generic activity of willing (θέλειν), then enumerates two examples of action resulting from impulse, *scil.* eating and walking, and finally looks for evidence of freedom in assenting to (συγκατατίθεσθαι) and acccepting (παραδέχεσθαι) some doctrines, while disapproving (ἀνανεύειν) others as false (*De Orat.* 6. 2 [312. 15–18] = *SVF* 2. 989 [289. 14–17]). Significantly, even Origen's vocabulary echoes the argument of Epictetus.

Finally, Epictetus finds the conclusive evidence for freedom of choice in the presumably self-evident observation or intuition that there is no one who can prevent a person from assenting to the truth or who can force him to accept the false. He makes this point dramatically through the use of rhetorical questions and emphatic answers. It also underlies his reply to the objector who claims that a threat of death is an example of external compulsion to perform some undesirable act. Epictetus' "diviner" rebuts this objection, not by discursive argument, but by asking his opponent simply to reflect: What can overcome a desire or aversion except another desire or aversion? A threat of death is merely an occasion in which one is confronted with two aversions: an aversion to dying and an aversion to performing an undesirable act. As in any freely chosen act, action in these circumstances arises from a decision or belief (δόγμα). From this intuitive reflection on the process of assenting to beliefs and choosing actions, Epictetus concludes that human choice is completely free and not even God himself, who constituted human beings the way they are, can hinder or compel human action. The similarities between Epictetus' argument and Origen's are so strong as to leave little doubt that Origen derived the essential features of his second argument from the same sources as those from which Epictetus derived his own philosophy. Combined with the testimony of Simplicius regarding the Stoic origin of the three prepositional classifications of self-motion, these similiarities force us to conclude that Origen's entire argument emanates from a Stoic source.

These parallels with Stoic doctrine bring into even sharper focus the essential difference between Origen's two arguments and suggest a plausible reason why Origen modified his lengthy and elaborate argument of *On Principles* for his subsequent treatise *On Prayer*. Though in both works Origen relies primarily on the rational capacity of human beings to justify his claims of human freedom and responsibility, his conception of the rational capacity differs significantly.[27] In *On Principles* the function of the reason (λόγος) is to evaluate impressions (φαντασίαι) and to decide whether to assent to an impression or not. An assent results in an impulse

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[27] I say he relies *primarily* on the rational capacity because *On Prayer* also contains an argument (which I have discussed above as the first argument) that does not make use of the rational capacity, but links responsibility to the animal soul. In the overall strategy of the argument, however, it plays a relatively minor role and could not, in itself, have been the basis for Origen's revision.

to action. The essential difference between an animal and a human being is the fact that animals respond automatically and invariably to whatever impression arises in accord with their particular nature. A human being, however, does not respond automatically, but may choose to reject an impression and so refrain from acting. It is in this capacity to resist an impression that a person's moral responsibility lies. In *On Prayer*, in contrast, the function of the reason (here called "awareness" or "understanding" [παρακολουθῇ]) is to reflect on one's action; and it is this ability to reflect on one's actions that enables a person to examine his decisions and to recognize his independence and freedom from compulsion.

This difference in conception was, no doubt, a decisive factor in Origen's choice of arguments for each context. When Origen defended free will in *On Principles*, he did so for the express purpose of justifying God's judgment of sinners. He could not do this without defending a sinner's moral responsibility for his actions (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 1 [195. 4–96. 2], not in *SVF*). The argument he brings in *On Principles* was admirably suited to that purpose. There the defining characteristic of a human being was the reason whose function is to evaluate every impression and to decide whether to approve or reject it. This approval or rejection determines whether a person will act upon an impression or not. The foundation of moral responsibility in an ability to resist the lure of an impression made an ideal basis for justifying God's judgment of sinners, because it could be applied directly to the avoidance of sin. In fact, one of the illustrations that Origen used was that of a Christian monk confronted with an attractive woman (*De Princ.* 3. 1. 4 [199. 1–11] = *SVF* 2. 988 [288. 26–35]). The impression of the woman calls him to sinful action but, as a rational being, he is capable of resisting this temptation and hence he is responsible for the consequences of whatever decision he makes.

In *On Prayer* Origen was faced with a different challenge. He had to defend the value of prayer against the charge that prayer is useless on the grounds that all things happen by God's will and nothing that God determines can be changed (*De Orat.* 5. 3–6).[28] It was against this claim of comprehensive divine predestination that Origen directed his anti-determinist argument. In a defense of the value of prayer for affecting the course of events the argument used in *On Principles* would have been of less value. The ability to resist an impulse to inappropriate or immoral action may have been sufficient to justify moral responsibility for actions, but it possessed less efficacy for justifying a person's ability to determine his own

[28] Origen also had to defend against the charge that God's foreknowledge makes prayer unnecessary (6. 3–5). Against this charge he argues that God does indeed foreknow the actions people will undertake by their free will, including their prayers; but he arranges the consequences to correspond to their freely chosen actions, so that prayers are, in fact, answered. The argument for free will thus serves as a foundation for his defense against this charge as well.

destiny through prayer. For that Origen needed to establish not merely moral responsibility, but causal responsibility as well, and, what is more, a causal responsibility that is not only reactive (able to block immoral influences), but capable of initiating independent action as well.

The Stoic conception of παρακολούθησις did just that. For Epictetus, it served, like the reason in Origen's *On Principles*, to evaluate individual impressions that call forth action, but it also included the additional function of understanding the process as a whole, as well as the entire working out of divine providence in the universe (*Diss.* 1. 6. 12–22). Moreover, it included reasoning out the implications of the divine order and bringing one's own life into harmony with it (*Diss.* 1. 6. 12–22; 2. 8. 1–8; 2. 10. 1–6). This ability not only differentiated humans from animals, but also set them over the irrational animals as leaders (προηγούμενα) or masters.[29] With their understanding of the divine order and with their position as masters of all the lower orders of nature, rational human beings are in a position, not merely to comply with the order of nature, but even to take positive action to promote it (cf., e.g., *Diss.* 2. 10. 5–6). It is not hard to imagine why such a conception of the human mind would have seemed to offer a better basis for the kind of autonomy that Origen needed to oppose rigid divine predestination and to justify the efficacy of prayer.

If, however, this broad conception of mind made a better basis for justifying the efficacy of prayer than did the narrower conception of it as a mechanism of accepting or rejecting impressions, we are still left with the question why in *On Prayer* Origen did not completely ignore the argument that he had used in *On Principles*. Why did he jeopardize the unity and clarity of his presentation by conflating an argument based on the broad conception of mind as awarenenss or understanding with the first phase of the division that served to ground his argument in *On Principles*? Once again the Stoic conception as exemplified in Epictetus suggests an explanation. The conception of mind as παρακολούθησις, which raises human beings above animals and the rest of the component parts of the universe and gives them an element of control over their destiny in the universe, puts human beings on the same level as God. In fact, in the Stoic view human beings carry a "fragment of God" (ἀπόσπασμα θεοῦ) around within themselves in the guise of their minds.[30] This, as we have seen, was Epictetus' primary basis for claiming that human choice is totally free and unhindered (*Diss.* 1. 17. 27; cf. 1. 1. 10–12). If God had not constituted human beings with total freedom from manipulation by himself or anyone else, he would not be God or he would not be caring for us as he ought. In

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[29] The role as master is brought out in Epictetus' characterization of animals as servants (ὑπηρετικά, *Diss.* 2. 8. 6; 2. 10. 3). He also uses the verb ὑπετέτακτο of animals to denote the correlate of προηγούμενα (*Diss.* 2. 8. 8).

[30] E.g., *Diss.* 1. 1. 10–12; 1. 14. 1–10; 1. 17. 27; 2. 8. 1–14; cf. 1. 9. 1–6. On this Stoic doctrine see Bonhoeffer 76–80 and Rist 262–68.

reality, Epictetus claimed, whatever human beings choose by will, will actually occur in accord with a will that is their own and God's will at the same time (*Diss.* 1. 17. 27–28). Human beings, in effect, participate with God in the governance of the universe.

Such a close connection between human beings and God could not have been unwelcome to Origen when he was attempting to justify the possibility and importance of human communication with God through prayer, but it did suggest at least one unacceptable consequence. If whatever human beings will is actually in accord with God's will, then God is also in some sense responsible for sin and wrongdoing in human beings. Origen could not allow God to participate in human decisions to sin.[31] One way to ensure this was to eliminate the Stoic conception of the human reason as a "fragment of God" within. This Origen could do only at the risk of leaving his argument bereft of its strongest basis for claiming human autonomy. To compensate for this loss Origen built his second argument on the ontological foundation of the first—the natural order of the universe. This he could construe as the product of God's creative activity, thereby grounding the existence and autonomy of the human mind, without making God personally responsible for human action, specifically, human failures and sins.

An analysis of Origen's arguments for free will shows that Origen was familiar with a variety of Stoic arguments in support of human responsibility.[32] It also shows that he did not simply take over Stoic arguments indiscriminately, but was sensitive to the philosophical nuances of the arguments and selected from among them such as could support his

[31] In *On Prayer* Origen deals with this problem in connection with the petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation" (*De Orat.* 19. 11). He resolves it by appealing to free will (*De Orat.* 19. 13). For an account of Origen's own conception of the mind and its relation to God, its creator, see Crouzel 36–50, esp. 47, and O'Laughlin. Cf. Butterworth xxxiii and Jay 66–67.

[32] Whether he knew them directly from Stoic sources or received them through Middle or Neo-Platonic sources is difficult to ascertain. Origen certainly had read Chrysippus (e.g., *C. Cels.* 1. 64, 2. 12, 4. 48, 4. 63, 5. 57, 8. 51) and other early Stoics and knew of and admired Epictetus (e.g., *C. Cels.* 3. 54, 6. 2, 7. 53); see also Chadwick; Jackson 20; and Inwood 281 n. 186. The division of things that move, however, is attested only in Origen's proof in *On Principles* and in a differently structured version in Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 2. 20 = *SVF* 2. 714). Another related division, but of things that are, rather than of things that move, is found in Philo of Alexandria (*Quis rer. div. her.* 137–39) and in Seneca (*Ep.* 58. 14). The preponderance of references to the division in Alexandrian Jewish and Christian writers could suggest transmission via Alexandrian Platonism. Similarly the fact that the prepositional classification of self-motions is otherwise attested only in the Neo-Platonist Simplicius, and that in the context of a discussion of Neo-Platonic conceptions of motion, points in the same direction; but we must also consider that neither Origen's division nor his catalog is parallelled exactly by any other text. At the very least, we have to assume a fluid tradition in which these conceptions were transmitted; and the possibility of direct influence of Stoic texts at different stages must be kept open.

own theological objectives most effectively without importing any conceptions incompatible with his theological presuppositions. In the case of *On Prayer* this meant adapting and combining elements from two different arguments to create a rhetorically effective double argument in support of human autonomy and freedom. Origen thereby proved himself to have been a philosophically astute, creative adapter of Stoic philosophy to Christian theology.

At the same time an analysis of his adaptation of Stoic arguments discloses at least one argument, based on a prepositional classification of motions and a self-reflective conception of mind, that is distinctly different from the Stoic arguments for human responsibility attested by Cicero, Aulus Gellius, and Alexander of Aphrodisias.[33] This argument sheds new light on the Stoic treatment of the issue of human responsibility. Its appearance in the repertory of Stoic arguments suggests that the Stoics did not limit themselves to the approach established by Chrysippus, but went beyond him to explore new ways of attacking the problem. If that is the case, the history of the Stoic treatment of this important philosophical topic and the role of the Stoa in the larger history of the subject may have to be reexamined.

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[33] These are conveniently collected in *SVF* 2. 974–1007 and in Long and Sedley I 386–91; II 382–88. For a discussion of Chrysippus' defense of human responsibility and the general Stoic treatment of the subject see Long (1971), van Straaten, Long and Sedley I 333–55, 386–94, with further bibliography at II 505.

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