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# Plotinus and the Artistic Imagination

John Hendrix

In the thought of Plotinus, the imagination is responsible for the apprehension of the activity of Intellect. If creativity in the arts involves an exercise of the imagination, the image-making power that links sense perception to noetic thought and the *nous poietikos*, the poetic or creative intellect, then the arts exercise the apprehension of intellectual activity and unconscious thought. According to John Dillon in “Plotinus and the Transcendental Imagination,”<sup>1</sup> Plotinus’ conception of the imagination led to the formulation of the imagination as a basis of artistic creativity.

In Plotinus, imagination operates on several different levels: it produces images in sense perception, it synthesizes images in dianoetic thought, and it produces images in correspondence with the articulation through logos of noetic thought. In *Enneads* III.6.4,<sup>2</sup> “the mental picture is in the soul, both the first one, which we call opinion,” the intelligible form in *nous hylikos*, “and that which derives from it, which is no longer opinion, but an obscure quasi-opinion and an uncriticised mental picture,” the sensible form in perception, “like the activity inherent in what is called nature in so far as it produces individual things...without a mental image,” unintelligible matter and the particulars thereof prior to the apprehension of it. The spiritual exercises described in *Enneads* V.8.9 or VI.4.7 are types of intellection rooted in the creative use of the imagination. The “shining imagination of a sphere” of the visible universe in the soul can be stripped of its body and mass; the corporeal bulk of a hand can be taken away while its power can remain.

The ascent from the apprehension of physical beauty to the comprehension of the idea of beauty in Plato’s *Symposium* is another example of such a spiritual exercise.<sup>3</sup> As Diotima says, a person, like “someone using a staircase” (*Symposium* 211c),<sup>4</sup> should ascend “from one to two and from two to all beautiful bodies,” then “from beautiful bodies to beautiful practices, and from practices to beautiful forms of learning” and knowledge. The

knowledge of beauty is beauty itself, as knowledge in Intellect is equivalent to its object of knowledge. Beauty in Intellect is “absolute, pure, unmixed,” uncontaminated by imagination, *dianoia* or sense perception. Such apprehension would allow the individual to “give birth not just to images of virtue...but to true virtue” (212a). In the *Enneads*, in such apprehension “the soul by a kind of delight and intense concentration on the vision and by the passion of its gazing generates something from itself which is worthy of itself and of the vision” (*Enneads* III.5.3), with the help of imagination.

In *Enneads* V.8.1, “the arts do not simply imitate what they see, but they run back up to the forming principles from which nature derives...”. The forming principles of nature are the intelligible forms perceived by the imagination, as derived from Intellect. It is impossible to apprehend the forming principles in sense perception or *dianoia*; it is necessary to apprehend the forming principles of noetic thought in Intellect, through the execution of the spiritual or intellectual exercises as described above. Plotinus imagines an art which is a product of noetic thought as made possible by the imagination, in contrast to an art which is a product of sense perception and discursive reason. The forming principles possess true beauty, as described by Diotima, and thus “they make up what is defective in things,” which includes the imagination itself. The “forming principle which is not in matter but in the maker, the first immaterial one” (V.8.2), is the true beauty. The mass is beautiful because it follows the beauty in Intellect, as the light of the sensible form follows the light of the intelligible form. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder: the beauty of the perceived object is a shadow of the beauty in the soul of the individual.

There is thus “in nature a rational forming principle which is the archetype of the beauty in body” (V.8.3), and “the rational principle in soul is more beautiful than that in nature and is also the source of that in nature.” The primary principle of beauty is Intellect, from which all images should be taken, as facilitated by imagination. Forms of art, like the forms of nature, are the product of Intellect. Producing a work of art, in the exercise of the intellect and the imagination, reproduces the formation of forms in nature as they are perceived and understood. The production of a work of art is an intellectual or spiritual exercise of the imagination which allows apprehension of Intellect and *noesis* in *nous poietikos*. A work of art is “in the intelligible world” (V.9.10) if it “starts from the proportions of [individual] living things and goes on from there to consider the proportions of living things in general...” (V.9.11), as in the ascent in the *Symposium*. A work of art cannot be

traced back to the intelligible world if it is merely composed of elements of the sensible world and is modeled on sense perception. The work of art in the intelligible world would be considered *natura naturans*, “nurturing nature,” while a work of art copying the forms of nature would be considered *natura naturata*. A work of art that considers the idea of proportion takes part in the power of the higher world. Architecture, since it makes use of proportions, takes its principles from the intelligible, such as geometry, but cannot be completely in the intelligible since it is engaged in “what is perceived by the senses” in physical and functional requirements.

Beauty is the product of the soul which “when it is purified becomes form and formative power, altogether bodiless and intellectual...” (I.6.6); the beauty which is a product of the purified soul informs the beauty of the sensible world. Intellect is the beauty of soul, defining soul in its reality. The beautiful soul makes bodies beautiful, and every other kind of entity “as far as they are capable of participation.” In *Enneads* I.6.8, another intellectual exercise is proposed, modeled on the *Symposium*. We must not pursue beauty in bodies or bodily splendors; “we must know that they are images, traces, shadows,” the shadows on the wall in the allegory of the Cave, “and hurry away to that which they image,” the forming principles in the intelligible. To cling to the beauty of bodies would be to “sink down into the dark depths where intellect has no delight...”. The soul must thus be trained, as in the *Symposium*, “to look at beautiful ways of life: then at beautiful works” (*Enneads* I.6.9), not works of art but rather works of virtue, although the work of virtue may be in the work of art, “then look at the souls of the people who produce the beautiful works.” Only beauty in soul can perceive beauty in soul, as an intelligible forming principle; thus it is necessary to look inward and treat your soul as a work of art, sculpting it according to the rational forming principles of the intelligible in Intellect, until “the divine glory of virtue shines out on you...”. When this is accomplished, the soul is purified, “not measured by dimensions, or bounded by shape...but everywhere unmeasured...”. The object of vision becomes vision itself, intelligible vision; the object of judgment becomes judgment itself, the archetypal idea in Intellect; the object of the beautiful form is beauty itself.

Apprehension of intelligible beauty in Intellect, and the ascension to Intellect from sense perception and *dianoia*, leads to apprehension of true beauty in the sensible world: “how could there be anyone skilled in geometry and numbers who will not be pleased when he sees right relation, proportion and order with his eyes?” (II.9.16). Perception of the representation of beau-

ty in the sensible world facilitates apprehension of Intellect in imagination, through the *pathos* or disturbance, from which love arises. Sense perception perceives forms in bodies organizing the shapeless matter of which bodies are composed; sense perception, or apperception, then “gathers into one that which appears dispersed and brings it back and takes it in, now without parts, to the soul’s interior” (I.6.3), representing in imagination that which in tune with soul, the forming principle.

The image formed by imagination based on sense perception is accorded to the image formed in imagination by logos from the forming principle. The architect, for example, can “declare the house beautiful by fitting it to the form of house within him,” the intelligible form of the house based on the geometry, mathematics and proportions of the forming principle in noetic thought. The intellectual exercise is necessary to overcome the hindrance of the body in sense perception of the apprehension of the higher soul: “they should have stripped off this bodily nature in their thought and seen what remained” (II.9.17), which was “an intelligible sphere embracing the form imposed upon the universe,” souls without bodies which organize the intelligible pattern in the sensible world which is equal to the “partlessness of its archetype.” The beauty of the forming principle in soul is the source and archetype of beauty in nature, and is necessarily a higher form of beauty (V.8.3).

Plato defined imagination (*phantasia*) as the ability of mind to make images or likenesses, although images played little role in apprehension. Imagination was much more important for Aristotle, as thinking should be regarded as a “form of perceiving” (*De anima* 427a22).<sup>5</sup> Images are transmitted through sensory perception as phantasms, which are necessary for thought. The ability to understand is connected to the ability to perceive, but perception does not guarantee speculative thinking and judgment, nor perception with imagination. Sensation, imagination, and speculative thinking should be seen as distinct faculties. Imagination is the product of a movement caused by sensation in perception. Light is the most important of the sensations, thus the name for imagination is derived from the name for light (429a5). Thus vision is the most important form of perception. While the perception of sensible objects is necessary for thought, mind cannot be affected by those sensible objects in order to think.

In order to be in control of them, mind must be “uncontaminated” (429a20), as “the intrusion of anything foreign hinders and obstructs it.” Mind must thus control sensory perceptions without letting them disturb it.

Mind can thus not be connected to body, as “soul is the place of forms.” Mind only exists when it is thinking, and when it is possessed of forms. Mind has a passive quality in its potentiality to think, and an active quality in its ability to create, which results from the combination of the possession of the forms and the imagination through perception. Mind “does not think intermittently” (430a23), isolated as it is from the affects of sense perception. Like mind, sense perception only exists when it is acted upon by a sensible object; then “the sensible object makes the sense-faculty actually operative from being only potential...” (431a5).

The soul “never thinks without a mental image” (431a17), but “for the thinking soul images take the place of direct perceptions,” as mind must be separated from body in order to function properly. Perceptions of objects can only help the mind think when the images of the perceptions are disassociated from the objects, when the *eidōs* is disassociated from the *morphe* or *hyle*. Mind can only think sensible objects as images, and it can only think the forms as images, therefore the power of making images, the imagination, is essential for thought from both the sensible and the intelligible. As for Plotinus, imagination mediates between lower and higher soul, bringing them together in thought; without imagination, both lower and higher soul would only be potential, and not creative or productive. Without perception, there could be no imagination: “no one could ever learn or understand anything without the exercise of perception...” (432a8). Even in speculative thinking, which necessitates a separation from sense perception, “we must have some mental picture of which to think...” These mental images resemble perceived objects, but they are “without matter.” Practical mind (discursive reason), as opposed to speculative mind (intellect), like sense perception causes movement and disturbance in soul, and thus causes appetite (*pathos*). Movement and appetite are also always present in imagination, and appetite is always present in movement.

Plotinus follows Aristotle in asserting that it is not sensible objects themselves that are perceived, but rather their images or impressions: “soul’s power of sense-perception need not be perception of sense-objects, but rather it must be receptive of the impressions produced by sensation on the living being; these are already intelligible entities” (*Enneads* I.1.7). Direct, unmediated perception of the sensible world is not possible, because perceived forms result from the combination of the sensible perception or sensible forms, and the conceptual formation of the forms in intellect, or intelligible forms, and in perception the intelligible form must precede the sensible form

in order for there to be a relation between the objects of perception and reason. The perceived form, the external sensation, is thus “the image of this perception of the soul,” which is “a contemplation of forms alone without being affected.” In order for perception of the sensible world to occur, soul must be able to operate without being affected by the sensible world. Soul then has “lordship over the living being”: it controls all human experience, and from its forms come all “reasonings, and opinions and acts of intuitive intelligence...”.

The undescended soul or pure intellect is the highest level of consciousness in mind for Plotinus, according to D. M. Hutchinson in “Apprehension of Thought in *Ennead* 4.3.30,” the “*noetic* self.”<sup>6</sup> The lowest level of consciousness involves an awareness of the body and its sensations in the physical world. The middle level of consciousness is the “*dianoetic* self,” the self identity that is the result of the imagination, which is the only actual source of consciousness or self-consciousness in thought. For Plotinus nature is an “image of intelligence” (*Enneads* IV.4.13) which itself has “no power of imaging” and “no grasp or consciousness of anything.” The imaging faculty is solely in the province of the dianoetic self or the imagination, which “gives to the one who has the image the power to know what he has experienced.” Both the image and the consciousness which reside in the imagination originate from intellect. The soul receives what the intellect possesses, and the reception of the images and the knowledge of the images through time, that is unfolded and divided in a temporal duration, is what creates consciousness. The images from intellect are coupled with the images from the sensible world in the temporal duration, but neither of them on their own are sources of conscious thought. They are brought together as a totality or manifold in soul which is the source of their apprehension (*antilêpsis*) and the soul’s conscious activities. According to Plotinus, “what is grasped by the intellect reaches us when it arrives at perception in its descent, for we do not know everything which happens in any part of the soul before it reaches the whole soul...” (IV.8.8). Thus “every soul has something of what is below, in the direction of the body, and what is above, in the direction of Intellect.”

While the apprehension of the images that come from Intellect, or the linguistic articulation which represents them, is a type of consciousness, the source of the images remains unconscious to apprehension. Consciousness results from the confluence of the sensible form, the intelligible form, and the logos or linguistic articulation, what was translated by A. H. Armstrong as “verbal expression,” though the logos is not articulated verbally. The in-

telligible form is attained by imagination through the mechanisms of desire, as “when the desiring part of the soul is moved, the mental image of its object comes like a perception,” reflected as if in a mirror, as it were, and “announcing and informing us of the experience, and demanding that we should follow along with it and obtain the desired object for it” (*Enneads* IV.4.17), the sensible form. Desire, or *pathos*, is responsible for making the mind subject to the conditions of the sensible world, as explained by Sara Rappe in *Reading Neoplatonism*.<sup>7</sup>

The conditions of the external world, as they affect the mind, erode the autonomy of the higher soul, compromising it as intellect descends into perception. The original condition of mind is a state of *apatheia*, which is intellect unaffected or changed by experience. It is necessary for reason to eliminate the *pathos* caused by a representation from the sensible world, as well as the representation itself, in reason’s ascent to Intellect and its original state of *apatheia*. As the representation is the cause of the *pathos*, the representation must be eliminated from the apprehension of experience. An example would be Plotinus’ exercise in *Enneads* V.8.9, where we are asked to form a mental picture of the visible universe and then subtract the mass, spatial relations and matter, so that the visible universe can be apprehended more clearly. In III.6.5, “the mental image (so to call it) which penetrates it,” the soul, “at the part which is said to be subject to affections,” the lower soul in sense perception (*sunaisthêsis*), “produces the consequent affection, disturbance, and the likeness of the expected evil is coupled with the disturbance...” Matter without form is evil; it has no connection to the good, the source of which is Intellect. As an affection caused by the mental image, “reason thought it right to do away with it altogether and not to allow it to occur in the soul,” so that the soul might remain free from affections. Such purification, of the part of the soul subject to affections, is “the waking up from inappropriate images,” including dream images, which create *pathos* and disturb the soul, and “not inclining much downwards and not having a mental picture of the things below.”

Plotinus differentiates the role of memory in intellect from the role of memory in sense perception. In the Divided Line in the *Republic* of Plato, the sensible or visible realm (*to horāton*) consists of the sensible objects and their images. Thinking that is solely connected to the sensible realm can only consist of belief (*pistis*) and illusion (*eikasia*), which form opinion (*doxa*). The intelligible realm (*to noēton*) consists of the forms, which include the *eidōs*, geometry and mathematics, and are detached from the sensible realm.



Thinking in the intelligible realm can be either mathematical or discursive reasoning (*dianoia*, *nous logizomenos*, *logistikon*: to do with reason) or intelligence or dialectical reasoning (*noēsis*), which form knowledge (*epistēmē*). The images in the sensible world begin with shadows and reflections in water. Thinking in intellect based on the forms alone is based on a first principle that requires no assumption. The objects of investigation in the sensible world, which are represented as images in sense perception, are in reality “invisible except to the eye of reason” (*Republic* 510d–511a),<sup>8</sup> that is, intelligible. For Plato, as for Plotinus, perceived forms of sensible objects are not possible except as a consequence of the corresponding intelligible forms which precede them in the process of perception, which is a function of the process of intellection. Dialectic or *noesis*, the intellect of Plotinus, descends from the apprehension of a principle to a conclusion, basing its activity completely on the forms, the archetypal principles, in a procedure which “involves nothing in the sensible world” (511b), is completely detached from sensible reality. *Dianoia* deals with objects in succession and division, while *noesis* involves a simultaneous cognition that is without division of objects or in time.

According to Aristotle in *De memoria*, memory, like thought, requires an image, and while the image, both sensible and intelligible, is not possible without the form received in perception, memory must be a function of perception: “...while memory, even memory of intelligible things, is not without an image, and the image is an attribute of the common receiving power” (450a13),<sup>9</sup> memory as a result would be in the possession of intellect, “but in its own right it belongs to the perceptive potency.” The perceiving power (*hē koinē aesthēsis*) is seen as the power to perceive both sensible and intelligible objects. Because memory belongs to sensible perception, imagination must also belong to sensible perception. Nevertheless, the more disturbance there is in the soul from the sensible world, the less memory is able to function, suggesting that memory must be a function of higher soul or intellect. Memory functions well when intellect is in control of sense perceptions, so that the sense perceptions do not cause disturbances. Intellect is in control of sense perceptions when it is not affected by them, in a state of *apatheia*. Memory is not of sensible objects themselves, of course, but of their images: memory is “an active holding of an image as a likeness of that of which it is an image...” (451a18).

While imagination is seen to belong to sense perception in *De memoria*, in the *De anima* of Aristotle imagination is clearly distinguished from sense

perception. Because imagination involves judgment, “imagination is not sensation” (428a5), and “sensation is always present but imagination is not.” While “imagination seems to be some kind of movement, and not to occur apart from sensation” (428b12), “imagination cannot be either opinion in conjunction with sensation, or opinion based on sensation, or a blend of opinion and sensation” (428a26). Imagination is both connected to sense perception and disconnected from sense perception. The content of imagination, the objects of thought, “—both the so-called abstractions of mathematics and all states and affections of sensible things—reside in the sensible forms” (432a6). This marks a clear distinction between Aristotle and Plato and Plotinus. For Plotinus the imagination is not dependent on sense perception and the objects of thought are not to be found in sensible things. In *Enneads* IV.7.8, “thinking cannot be comprehension through the body, or it will be the same as sense-perception.”

Aristotle makes it clear that imagination is a bodily function. In the *De anima*, “if this too is a kind of imagination, or at least is dependent upon imagination, even this cannot exist apart from the body” (403a8), referring to affections such as desire and sensation. For Plotinus, “it is clear that sense-perception belongs to the soul in the body and working through the body,” but “it belongs to another discussion to determine whether what is to be judged must be immediately linked to the organ...” (*Enneads* IV.4.23). Sense perception and memory must be seen as two distinct entities, and “thinking cannot be comprehension through the body, or it will be the same as sense-perception” (IV.7.8). Thus “this reasoning part of the soul, which needs no bodily instrument for its reasoning...preserves its activity in purity in order that it may be able to engage in pure reasoning...” (V.1.10). It is as in the *Republic* of Plato, “relying on reason without any aid from the senses” (*Republic* 532a) in the exercise of dialectic. As described by Plotinus, “we and what is ours go back to real being and ascend to that and to the first which comes from it, and we think the intelligibles...” (*Enneads* VI.5.7).

According to Plotinus, memory of thoughts occurs when the contents of the thoughts are unfolded or articulated (but not verbally) and are presented to the imagination as images, as if they are reflected in a mirror in the mind’s eye. The medium of the unfolding of the thoughts is the logos. The thoughts as they are prior to being unfolded are properties of Intellect. Consciousness in thought comes about when the logos articulates the thought as an image in imagination. The logos is produced in discursive thinking and the image is produced in imagination in its connection to sense perception, so the embod-

ied soul is instrumental in the perception and apprehension of the forms, the unitary thoughts in Intellect. The *logos* is usually defined as the principle of knowledge, from Heraclitus, or reasoned discourse, from Aristotle. Philo distinguished between *logos prophorikos*, the uttered word or verbal expression, and *logos endiathetos*, the word remaining within. Although Armstrong translated Plotinus' *logos* as *logos prophorikos*, it is clear that Plotinus means the *logos endiathetos*, as pointed out by Hutchinson.

The *logos endiathetos* is the source of the structure of the sensible world as it is perceived, reproduced in imagination, and organized according to archetypal principles. The *logos* is thus the connector of the hypostases of being, at both the cosmic or world soul level and the level of the individual soul. The *logos endiathetos*, as the unarticulated word, is perhaps Plotinus' "silent rational form" (III.8.6) and the "rational principle" which "must not be outside but must be united with the soul of the learner, until it finds that it is its own." Once the soul has "become akin to and disposed according to the rational principle," the *logos*, it "utters and propounds it," expresses it verbally. It is driven to utter the rational principle from Intellect by its *pathos* and desire, stirred by sense perception and imagination, because soul is incomplete. Soul is missing something: "it is not full, but has something wanting in relation to what comes before it," that is, Intellect. Linguistic expression is a compensation for a lack: "but what it utters, it utters because of its deficiency...".

In the *Theaetetus* of Plato (189c7–190a7), thinking is seen as an internal dialogue in the soul.<sup>10</sup> This is repeated in the *Sophist* (263e) where thought (*dianoia*) and speech (*logos*) are the same except that thought is "the silent, inner dialogue that the soul has with itself..."<sup>11</sup> *Dianoia* is an inner *logos*, *logos endiathetos*. Discursive thought has the same predicative structure as speech, the same propositional logic. The dianoetic is the noetic descended into the material world of speech acts and sense perception, dependent upon the senses and sense objects, able to apprehend discursively in divisions and successions. In order to signify dianoetically it is necessary to "use the forms of letters which follow the order of words and propositions and imitate sounds and the enunciations of philosophical statements..." (*Enneads* V.8.6). *Dianoia* is a "dividing intellect" which places objects of thought in temporal succession; the objects of thought are brought out from undivided Intellect, the intelligible universe, where they are "in repose" (V.9.9), not available to conscious thought. Dianoetic thought has access to the reflections of the intelligibles, as "this world should in its imitation of the eternal

nature resemble as closely as possible the perfect intelligible Living Creature” (*Timaeus* 39e),<sup>12</sup> in the words of Plato. Conscious thought has access to reflections of unconscious thought. While there exists “the rational forming principle of a living creature,” the unconscious intelligible, there also exists “matter which receives the seminal forming principle,” and “the living creature must necessarily come into being...” (*Enneads* V.9.9).

The objects of dianoetic thought and discursive reason are the *logoi*, the product of divided intellect, in the same way that the objects of noetic thought in Intellect are the archetypal forms. “As the spoken word is an imitation of that in the soul, so the word in the soul is an imitation of that in something else...” (I.2.3); the *logos prophorikos* is an imitation of the *logos endiathetos*. The spoken word, then, “is broken up into parts as compared with that in the soul, so is that in the soul as compared with that before it, which it interprets,” which is Intellect. In *Enneads* V.5.1, the objects of sense perception should not be taken in their self-evidence; their existence depends on the way the sense faculties are affected, and on the judgments made about them by discursive reason. The underlying realities of that which is grasped by sense perception are not accessible to sense perception; the underlying realities are only known by Intellect. The *logoi* are the products of the “rational formative principle” (III.2.2) flowing from Intellect. When the rational principles are diffused and spread out, they occupy the soul (III.5.9). The rational principles occupy soul as foreign bodies; they are not intrinsically part of soul as they are of Intellect, therefore they cannot be possessed by soul, or one with soul, as they are with Intellect. The rational principles *are* Intellect, while they are mere adornments in soul.

In *Enneads* V.1.3, “just as a thought in its utterance is an image of the thought in soul,” the *logos prophorikos* and the *logos endiathetos*, “so soul itself is the expressed thought of Intellect, and its whole activity, and the life which it sends out to establish another reality...”. But the activity which flows from Intellect into soul is something distinct from the activity of Intellect itself. Soul depends on Intellect but does not have access to its internal activity, only the manifestations of it. The *logos endiathetos* cannot be a copy of the unrevealed, enfolded and unitary Forms or rational principles in Intellect in the same way that the *logos prophorikos* is a copy of the *logos endiathetos*.

The *logos* represents a thought and unfolds it and makes it visible to imagination, accompanied by an image. The apprehension of the thought by the imagination is responsible for conscious thought, connected with the con-

consciousness of sense perception, although that consciousness is deceptive, as sense perception is made possible by the underlying realities or intelligibles that form the sensible world. Conscious thoughts, “by means of sense-perception—which is a kind of intermediary when dealing with sensible things—do appear to work on the level of sense and think about sense objects” (I.4.10). Conscious thought in discursive reason depends on representations of thought in Intellect rather than the copies of the logos in the verbal expression; the relation is less direct, but also less deceptive.

Awareness “exists and is produced when intellectual activity is reflexive and when that in the life of the soul which is active in thinking is in a way projected back,” as a representation formed by logos, “as happens with a mirror-reflection when there is a smooth, bright, untroubled surface,” though the content of Intellect is not present in front of a mirror in lower soul to be directly reflected. Perhaps the logos is the mirror reflection of the intellectual act. If the logos forms the reflection, the reflection must occur at an angle, with the content that is reflected not visible to the reflection. The reflection is achieved when the disturbances of the physical world are overcome and *apathēia* is achieved, through the *solertia* or will of the subject to access the realm of the unconscious.

According to Plato in *Timaeus* 70–71, the digestive functions of the body are purposely located at a distance from the soul (in the head) so that they would cause the least disturbance to the deliberations of the soul. Knowing that the appetites of the body, the functions of the body and sense perception governed by *pathos*, “would not understand reason or be capable of paying attention to rational argument even if it became aware of it,” and “would easily fall under the spell of images and phantoms,” it was necessary to create the liver, far away from the head. Having a surface smooth in texture and thus reflective like a mirror, the liver could receive thoughts from the mind and reflect them “in the form of visible images, like a mirror.” As in Plotinus, the mirror is a function of the body and *nous hylikos*, receiving representations from Intellect as provided by the logos. In *Republic* 510a, the images in the visible realm of the divided line are described as “shadows, then reflections in water and other close-grained, polished surfaces,” as in a liver or a mirror, thus Plato likens the images of sense perception to the images of imagination.

In the same way that the *logos prophorikos* is a copy of the *logos endiathetos*, expressed speech in the sensible world is a copy of dianoetic thought, which is a representation of noetic thought, so the perceived image

in the sensible world as given by sense perception is a copy of the image of dianoetic thought formed in the imagination, the representation created by logos which is as it were reflected in a mirror. In *Enneads* IV.3.31, “the images will always be double,” the intelligible image of the higher soul and the perceptible image of the lower soul. The image appears as if it is a singular image because “that of the better soul is dominant,” and “the image becomes one, as if a shadow followed the other and as if a little light slipped in under the greater one...”. It is only possible to apprehend the presence of the more dominant intelligible form when the two parts of the soul are in harmony, body and mind; when disturbances of the body distract from the harmony of mind, the sensible image can only be apprehended on its own. But the sensible image has no possible existence independent of the intelligible image. In I.4.10, when the “mirror” which represents the content of Intellect in dianoetic thought is “broken” because of physical disturbances, then “thought and intellect operate without an image, and then intellectual activity takes place without a mind-picture.” This leads to the conclusion that “intellectual activity is [normally] accompanied by a mind-picture but is not a mind-picture.”

Conscious thought is given by the formation of the image in dianoetic thought through the logos by the imagination. The content and activities of Intellect are always present, but it is necessary for them to be unfolded by logos and reflected by imagination in order for them to come into consciousness. It is conceivable that dianoetic thoughts can occur independently of images,<sup>13</sup> but no consciousness of them would be possible, as no consciousness of objects in themselves (*principia essendi*, noumena) in sense perception is possible. Equally, no consciousness is possible of the “activity prior to awareness” in Intellect, prior to the activity of the intelligible imagination, discursive reason, and sense perception. Sense perception is always only a derivative of imagination and intelligible thinking, *nous poiētikos*. Only the function of imagination, the power to form images, which is irrational and defective, provides conscious thought with a glimpse of the presence and activities of noetic thought.

As long as there is harmony between the intelligible and sensible souls, the duality of images in perception and imagination, illuminated by both the intelligible and sensible, will go unnoticed, will remain inaccessible to conscious thought. While such unawareness might be considered a virtue,<sup>14</sup> as it is conditioned by rational soul, the harmony also prevents intellect from knowing itself. Intellectual development requires access to Intellect beyond

imagination. While imagination is responsible for the consciousness of reason, as connected to sense perception, the operations of Intellect are independent of the images of *phantasia* and are thus not accessible to conscious thought, but their presence can be known through traces in discursive reason and imagination. Imagination, occupying the gap between intelligible and sensible thought, belongs to neither but adapts to both.

Imagination can perhaps be seen as a form of *nous pathetikos*, connected to *pathos*, affections and emotions, as movement and appetite are present in imagination, and appetite is present in movement. In *Enneads* III.6.5, the mental image which penetrates the soul produces affections and disturbances. *Nous pathetikos* is a perishable, passive intellect (Aristotle, *De anima* 430a: *ho de pathêtikos nous phthartos*), subject to disintegration in time, which may be nevertheless more advanced than *dianoia*, a term first used by Alexander of Aphrodisias, a writer known to Plotinus.<sup>15</sup> *Nous pathetikos* implies the impassioned and irrational, in contrast to *nous poietikos*, the active and creative intellect associated with the noetic. *Nous pathetikos* is also seen in contrast to *apatheia*, the original condition of mind unaffected by the sensible world, the body and the objects of sense perception. Imagination is *pathetikos* in that it has the ability to assimilate to its objects, whether they are sensible or intelligible, between discursive reason and Intellect. *Pathê*, affections and emotions, do not occur in the soul itself, or in sense perception. In *Enneads* III.6.1, “sense-perceptions are not affections but activities and judgements concerned with affections...”. While the judgment belongs to the soul, affections “belong to something else,” which must be the imagination, which is not a function of intelligible soul or sensible soul.

In *Enneads* I.8.15, “Imagination is a stroke from something irrational from outside; and the soul is accessible to the stroke because of that in it which is not undivided.” Imagination, because it is connected to the sensible forms of perception, is susceptible to the multiplicity and contradictions of matter outside the intelligible conception of it and what is perceived, outside of archetypal reason originating in Intellect. We are distracted by sense perception, and the irrationality of imagination, but the activities of logos in the reflection of the content of Intellect create awareness, or conscious thought through the images accompanying the noetic activity. Ascent from sense perception to Intellect is a process of purification involving the imagination. As “not everything which is in the soul is immediately perceptible, but it reaches us when it enters into perception” (V.1.12), perception involves both sensible perception and the perception of images by imagination. Awareness

of the activity of Intellect begins with sensible perception and develops when we “turn our power of apprehension inwards, and make it attend to what is there,” as if attempting to hear a distant voice over other distracting sounds. Access to unconscious thought requires that the individual “keep the soul’s power of apprehension pure and ready to hear the voices from on high.”

In Plotinus the mental images are the affections which cause disturbances in the soul. A purification of the soul would involve a scenario where “if someone who wanted to take away the mental pictures seen in dreams were to bring the soul which was picturing them to wakefulness” (*Enneads* III.6.5), disconnecting it from physical sensations, the mechanisms of imagination in particular.<sup>16</sup> Intelligible reality must be free from the affections that manifest it in the sensible world. It must be “eternal and always the same, and unreceptive of anything, and nothing must come into it...” (III.6.6). It is possible to apprehend intelligible reality without having an irrational or mystical experience, experiencing a reality beyond comprehension. For example, Plotinus says “Often I have woken up out of the body to my self and have entered into myself, going out from all other things...setting myself above all else in the realm of Intellect” (IV.8.1). This is the product of an intellectual exercise, not a mystical experience. The image of Intellect in soul preserves “something of its light” (V.3.9), by which the soul “and any other soul of the same kind can see it by itself,” that is, Intellect. Seeing in the intelligible world is not through an external medium of light, because Intellect is light itself, that which illuminates the realities of the sensible world.

The light in the soul, a trace of the light above, is united with the light of Intellect and allows soul to see Intellect within itself. Again, the illumination of the soul is the product of an intellectual exercise, and the *solertia*, the will of the individual. Soul (discursive reason) is led to Intellect and seeks “a trace of the life of Intellect” (V.3.8), because soul sees itself as an image of Intellect, but Intellect itself is “the first light shining primarily for itself and an outshining upon itself, at once illuminating and illuminated,” not particularly concerned with the soul or the sensible world below.

In *Enneads* V.3.3, impressions are received by discursive reason from sense perception, but discursive reason can only respond to them with the help of memory. With the help of memory, discursive reason then performs analytical operations on the impressions from sense perception, “taking to pieces what the image-making power gave it...”. Any judgments that discursive reason makes about what it receives from sense perception can only be the result of what is already in discursive reason. In order for discursive rea-



son to make any particular judgment about something perceived, discursive reason has to contain the quality that it judges. The only way that discursive reason can contain a quality is if it is illuminated by Intellect, as the sun would illuminate an object in vision. Discursive reason is not aware of the illumination of Intellect, of the reception of the reflection of Intellect, as in a mirror, because again it is too engaged in perceiving and judging external objects. Only Intellect is capable of observing and knowing itself, which is a kind of reason inaccessible to discursive reason. Discursive reason makes use of Intellect, unknowingly, in perception and logical thought, when discursive reason is in accord with Intellect, and can be affected by it. Discursive reason is only in accord with Intellect to the extent that discursive reason has knowledge of such accord.

While impressions are received through sense perception, “it is not we ourselves who are the perceivers...,” because the mechanisms that allow perception to take place, from Intellect, are not accessible by conscious thought. We can define ourselves and have self-identity only in our discursive reason, not in the mechanisms behind perception, and not in the mechanisms of Intellect. Thus “we are this, the principal part of soul, in the middle between two powers...,” neither of which is accessible to our knowledge or awareness. Thus our self-knowledge and identity can be described as being caught between two mirrors; we can perceive the reflections of sense perception and Intellect, but we cannot see beyond the source of the reflections.

We do not notice the activity of Intellect because “it is not concerned with any object of sense,” as Plotinus says in *Enneads* I.4.10. We are generally only aware of our mind’s activity when it is connected to sense perception and thinking about the objects of sense, the *nous hylikos*. If Intellect, and soul, are understood to come before sense perception and discursive reason, as necessary ground for those activities, then it must be considered that the activities of Intellect and soul are continually active, in making sense perception and discursive reason possible, although we do not have immediate awareness of or access to those activities. “There must be an activity prior to awareness,” says Plotinus, if ‘thinking and being are the same’,” that is, if being is given by thought. When awareness of the activity of Intellect exists, or is produced, intellectual activity is reflected back to conscious thought as in a mirror reflection. Or the activity of Intellect is reflected back to dianoetic thought as logos, since the lower soul can only perceive it as such. In order for that to happen, the surface of the mirror has to be clear, or, in other words, the power of soul has to be clear of disturbances or distract-

tions from sense perceptions. It is necessary for the individual to not be distracted by or focused on the objects of sense perception, in order to disconnect the mind's activities from them, and concentrated on the premises for the possibilities of those sense perceptions.

What is reflected as a mirror image, which is a function of the image-making power or imagination (*phantasia*) in soul, is the activity of Intellect, which must always be there, whether the mirror reflects it or not. The reflective power of the mirror needs to be turned on, through the will of thinking, and the mirror needs to function correctly. It is not possible to have direct access to the activities of Intellect, but only to their reflections in soul. Memory serves the image-making power to preserve images and translate them into words, so that the images which are the product of sense perception can play a role as the vocabulary elements of thinking activity in discursive reason. When the mirror imaging power of imagination is functioning correctly, the activity and images of Intellect, what is prior to sense perception, can be perceived by soul in the same way that objects of sense perception are perceived by sight, although the light by which they are illuminated is not the light of the sun, but rather an inner light, the light of Intellect itself. In order for the activities and images of Intellect to be perceived in the same way as sense objects, they have to mimic or take the form of sense objects and activities.

The operation of the mirror of self-reflection, or self-consciousness of intellectual activity, depends on the smooth functioning, harmony and balance of the body in relation to the sensible world. The mirror is a property of *nous hylikos*, the physical functioning of mind in relation to body. If the body does not function properly, the self-reflexive powers of mind cannot function properly. If the mirror is broken because the body is not functioning properly, there is no image for thought and intellect to operate with; the image-making power or imagination is also a property of *nous hylikos* and bodily function in the sensible, although it is also a property of Intellect, and in fact is seen by Plotinus as occupying the midpoint between Intellect and sense perception. But for these purposes, the mirror in the mind, as a property of the body, is necessary for the mind to perceive the activities of Intellect in connection with images, the images reflected in the well-functioning mirror of the soul. The activity of Intellect itself does not necessarily involve a connection with images, but its connection with images is necessary in order to be perceived.

Plotinus also calls the reflections of the images of Intellect "imprints" or

“impressions,” so they are seen as the *eidōs* or form which is not connected to a material form or *morphe*, in the same way that the images of sense perception themselves are the *eidōs* and not the *morphe*, imprints or impressions of forms that are received in connection to the material objects, as if there are two lights, or a double light, shining on the material object: the light of the intelligible which illuminates the *eidōs*, and the light of the sensible (the sun) which illuminates matter. Judgment in discursive reason is based on the perception of the *eidōs* of the sensible object, as it is subjected to the mechanisms of combination and division in apperception. The judgment in discursive reason is also based on the perception of the image connected to thoughts from Intellect, as the objects of sense perception are processed through the mechanisms of imagination and memory which make the sense perception possible in the first place, then translate the objects of sense perception into a totality, even through the combinations and divisions, which makes being possible, and which makes thinking equivalent to being.

Thinking is a dialectical process which is facilitated by imagination, which is suspended between Intellect, the source of thinking, and sense perception, the object of thinking. The dialectical process involves the imprint of the sense object or sensible form in perception, the imprint of the idea of the object or intelligible form in the imagination or image-making power, the memory or recollection of past thoughts and perceptions in relation to the present thought, the “recollections” of the soul, the transformation of the image, both sensible and intelligible, into the word in language, both the spoken word and the word prior to speech in Intellect, and the fitting together of sensible image, intelligible image, recollected sensible image, recollected intelligible image, sensible word, and intelligible word, in a process which requires the anticipation of the perception of the image or word in relation to the recollection of the intelligible image or word in Intellect, as it is perceived as a reflection or imprint in mind. When the soul is “in the intelligible world it has itself too the characteristic of unchangeability” (IV.4.2), but “if it comes out of the intelligible world, and cannot endure unity, but embraces its own individuality and wants to be different” (IV.4.3) it then acquires memory, in discursive reason and temporal succession. Memory helps keep the soul partly in the intelligible world, the rational soul, but it also brings soul down to the sensible world, the irrational soul.<sup>17</sup>

As the perception of a sensible object entails both the *eidōs* of the object and the *eidōs* of the intelligible idea of the object, “actual seeing is double” (*Enneads* V.5.7). The eye “has one object of sight which is the form of the

object perceived by the sense, and one which is the medium through which the form of its object is perceived...". The medium, the intelligible idea of the object which comes from Intellect and is connected to the imprint that is reflected in the mirror of the mind's eye, precedes the perception of the sensible form, and is the cause of the perception of the sensible form. In normal conscious thought and perception, the form and the medium cannot be separated, and the form of the sensible object is unknowingly perceived as a sensible object, without its sensible or intelligible form. While vision in sense perception is distracted in the act of perception of an object, it is not capable of self-reflection in its outer act.

Mind must be made aware of the medium without the object in order to understand how the object is perceived. Plotinus gives as an example the light of the sun, which is perceived without the body of the sun which is the source of its light. The light of the sun, although only the light is perceived, is not possible without the mass of the body which lies beneath it. Saying that the sun is all light is the equivalent of saying that sensible objects are only the forms that they are perceived as. The seeing of the Intellect sees objects by another light than the light which illuminates the perceptible form; the seeing of the intellect can detach itself from the illuminated perceptible form and see the source of the light as well as the light itself. In that way mind can perceive the source of its perception or thought, and not just the object perceived or the act of perception.

The eye then, through the knowledge of Intellect, is able to perceive not just the external light which illumines the form of the sensible object, but an internal light as well, which illuminates the intelligible idea of the form as an intelligible light, or a priori intuitive light. Evidence of the internal light can be seen when the eyelids are closed, or in the dark, when light appears in the eyes. Plotinus is following Plato in suggesting that vision itself depends on the external light entering the eye (intromission) as well as internal light from the eye illumination the object (extramission). If the eye abandons the external light and external form, it can concentrate on the internal light and internal form, just like mind can concentrate on the intelligible idea, and "then in not seeing it sees, and sees then most of all...".

The external world of sense objects is necessary to be renounced in order to understand its existence in relation to the perception of it, in the equivalence of thinking and being, and conscious thought and perception have to be renounced in order to understand their existence in relation to human thought and identity, which can be found suspended somewhere between Intellect

and sense perception. The renunciation of conscious thought is necessary in order to access unconscious thought, the prior ground of all thought and perception. In not seeing, the eye “sees light; but the other things which it saw had the form of light but were not the light,” not the original light. The intelligible light which Intellect sees when “veiling itself from other things and drawing itself inward,” is a light “alone by itself in independent purity,” its source inaccessible and unknown even to Intellect, being that of the One, which is not being or thought.

In V.3.8, Plotinus explains that intelligibles exist prior to bodies, and cannot be thought of in terms of color or form (until they are connected to such in imagination). Intelligibles themselves are “naturally invisible,” invisible even to the soul which possesses them. In the physical world, something is seen when it is illuminated by enough light. In the intelligible world, something can only be seen by itself, because seeing is only through itself, and not through a medium. Seeing something through itself in the intelligible is like light seeing itself, seeing itself as the source of itself, which is inaccessible even to Intellect. Once the intelligible light is seen, sensible light in perception is no longer necessary for understanding. Soul is an image, a reflection or likeness of Intellect. The illumination of a sensible object by light is a reflection or likeness of the illumination of Intellect by intelligible light. Knowledge of Intellect depends on the separation of the soul from the body.

In the *Phaedo* of Plato, the philosopher “separates the soul from communion with the body” (64e3–10).<sup>18</sup> Mind thinks best when it is untroubled by sense perceptions and affections, and “avoiding, so far as it can, all association or contact with the body, reaches out toward the reality” (65c3–8), the archetypal reality or intelligible reality of Intellect for Aristotle and Plotinus. Mind is only deceived when it “tries to consider anything in company with the body” (65b9–12), in relation to sense perception and imagination. According to Aristotle in the *De anima*, it is necessary that mind, “since it thinks all things, should be uncontaminated,” (429a10–30) because “the intrusion of anything foreign hinders and obstructs it.” Mind cannot be seen to be mixed with body, because then it would be qualitative; mind can only be receptive—it can have “no actual existence until it thinks.”

In *Enneads* V.8.9, Plotinus asks us to apprehend in our thought, or form a mental picture, of the visible universe, with all of its parts, including the sun, heavenly bodies, earth and its creatures, organized in a sphere. In the soul then is a “shining imagination of a sphere” informed by an image connected to the intelligible understanding of the universe as reflected as if in a

mirror into the image-making power. Then Plotinus asks us to subtract the mass, spatial relations and matter, and apprehend the universe without the “petty power of body.” In that way the universe can be apprehended more clearly, in its conceptual organization not dependent upon its physical appearance to the senses. The same exercise might be applied to the apprehension of a house, for example. If one forms a mental picture of the house in the imagination, derived from the picture of the house as given by perception, and then subtracted the physical properties of the house, then one would have a true understanding of the house, as an entity given in the beginning by the intelligible idea, or concept, of “house,” prior to the sensible perception of the house. The house would be understood as a set of spatial relationships and preconceptions about form and function.

In VI.4.7, Plotinus asks us to perform the same exercise with a hand holding a piece of wood. Imagine the “corporeal bulk of the hand to be taken away,” so that only the power or *virtus* to hold the wood would remain, in the same way that light, or the power of light, would remain if the bulk of a material body were removed, for example the bulk of a body at the center of a sphere and illuminating the sphere from the inside. Physical light itself, is illuminated by intelligible light, which is a reflection of the originary inaccessible source of light itself. Intellect is “that which is actually and always intellect” (V.9.5); it “thinks from itself and derives the content of its thought from itself, it is itself what it thinks.” This defines its actuality, as opposed to its potentiality. In the *De anima* of Aristotle, mind is “separable, impassive and unmixed” (430a10–25), an originating cause, identical to its object of knowledge. In isolation, mind, or Intellect, “is its true self and nothing more, and this alone is immortal and everlasting...and without this nothing thinks.” For Plotinus, Intellect both thinks the “real beings,” intelligible forms, and is the real beings. It is necessary that “primary reality is not what is perceived by the senses” (*Enneads* V.9.5), as in the Allegory of the Cave in the *Republic* of Plato, because “the form on the matter in the things of sense is an image of the real form,” the archetypal or intelligible form known to conscious reason as a reflection, and a likeness of the intelligible form with which it is connected. Intellect is composed of “rational forming principles” which precede not only visible forms but also the mechanisms of soul, which can only be potential, as in the *De anima* of Aristotle, two distinct elements must be present in soul, like everything in nature.

There is, on the one hand, “something which is their matter, i.e., which is potentially all the individuals,” and on the other hand “something else which

is their cause or agent in that it makes them all...". For Aristotle, it is the sensible object which "makes the sense faculty actually operative from being only potential..." (*De anima* 431a1–10). But it is not the object itself that actualizes the sense faculty, but rather the *eidos* or form of the object, pre-given in intellection, as "sense is that which is receptive of the form of sensible objects without the matter..." (424a17–26). Imagination is a "movement produced by sensation actively operating" (429a1–7), but it is not produced by sense objects themselves, or anything in matter.

Imagination facilitates the translation of sensible objects in perception to intellection. Following Aristotle, the intellectual act is not possible without an accompanying mental image, according to Plotinus. The power (*virtus*) to form the image in the mind's eye is conversely always accompanied by the "verbal expression" (IV.3.30), or more accurately, the *logos endiathetos*, the word in thought, as Plotinus intends it. The intelligible image, and thus the sensible image, is not possible without the linguistic expression of it, and linguistic expression is not possible without the intelligible image. Perception of sensible objects is only possible after the idea of the sensible object is articulated in language in intellection. The imaginative faculty is a unitary activity which unites the sensible in perception and the intelligible in intellection, but it seems to be fragmented because of the lack of conscious apprehension of all of its activities.<sup>19</sup>

Plotinus asserts that there are two souls, or two parts of soul, that connected to material reality in sense perception and *nous hylikos*, and that of the pure Intellectual, not connected to material reality. The mechanisms of perception, imagination, language and memory are active in both souls, but function differently and distinctly in each one. There are thus "two image-making powers" (IV.3.31), but in life in the sensible world, the two powers are acting in unison, thus images in perception and imagination, as both sensible and intelligible, are double images. Sensible images are not possible without intelligible images, and intelligible images are not possible without sensible images. In IV.3.31 Plotinus asks, "when the souls are separate we can grant that each of them will have an imaging power, but when they are together, in our earthly life, how are there two powers, and in which of them does memory reside?" Clearly the soul has two imaginative faculties, one concerned with the intelligible and the other with the sensible, although the intelligible imaginative faculty does not depend in any way on the sensible imaginative faculty. According to H. J. Blumenthal, Plotinus "wishes to preserve the impassibility of the higher soul, and so tries to detach it as far as

possible from the lower, and thus from a faculty of imagination which is closely connected with the body's needs and activities."<sup>20</sup> The activities and images of imagination in the lower soul are duplications of the activities and images in the higher soul, and contribute nothing to them. The higher imagination is a condition of the functioning of the lower imagination; the lower imagination receives the intelligible image as a shadow or copy, which is subsumed in the light of the higher intelligible image. The only connection between the two faculties is one of dependence.

If we are able to apprehend the intellectual act as a reflection in a clean mirror, if we are pure and healthy of body and mind, then we are able to apprehend that the intelligible image is more powerful and important than the sensible image, because the intelligible image precedes the sensible image, which is dependent upon it. It is as if every image has two lights shining on it, or is illuminated from two different sources, intellection and perception. When we apprehend the intellectual act it is clear to see that the intelligible light is stronger than the sensible light, that the sensible light is just a shadow of the intelligible light, as in the shadows reflected on the wall of the cave in the *Republic* of Plato. If the representation of the Intellectual in imagination is not apprehended clearly, if the body is impure or unhealthy or distracted by sensible objects in perception, then there is disharmony between the two images and only the sensible image can be apprehended. The inferior light of the sensible, which is a shadow of the stronger light which is the intelligible, is apprehended as if alone, and only a shadow of reality can be comprehended, which is that portion of reality limited to sense perception and discursive reason.

Thus, in the soul, "if the part which is in the world of sense perception gets control, or rather if it is itself brought under control, and thrown into confusion, it prevents us from perceiving the things which the upper part of the soul contemplates" (*Enneads* IV.8.8), which are the intelligible forms in Intellect, inaccessible to conscious thought or discursive reason. We can only apprehend Intellect when it is reflected and perceived in imagination, descending into the material world as it were. It is not possible to "know everything which happens in any part of the soul before it reaches the whole soul," as reflection or representation. All elements of Intellect, including desire, are only known in their manifestations in material soul. Desire is not physical or instinctual; it is a sensible manifestation of an intellectual quality, manifested in the combination of idea, perception, language, and memory.

As every soul, according to Plotinus, "has something of what is below, in



the direction of the body, and of what is above, in the direction of Intellect,” the soul which is whole and functioning correctly is the soul which maintains the balance and coexistence of its parts, but this cannot be accomplished by material soul or discursive reason, but only by Intellect. For Plotinus, only Intellect can maintain the “beauty and order of the whole in effortless transcendence...as art does not deliberate,” quoting Aristotle (*Physics* B 199b28–9). Art is seen as a product of Intellect, not discursive reason or sense perception. Art is not empirical; all art is metaphysical, and expression of intelligible form in imagination, an expression of an intellectual idea that can be differentiated from sensible form in intellectual apprehension. Discursive reason and sense perception are considered by Plotinus to be defective on their own, and can be hazardous to the Intellectual. They can introduce impurities and malfunctions, and can prevent the individual from an understanding of reality and human identity, and access to Intellect.

There are many ways in which the tenets of the thought of Plotinus become currents of art and aesthetic theory as it develops. The imitative arts are the *natura naturata* of Spinoza, while the productive arts are the *natura naturans*. The higher imagination is the “productive” imagination of Kant, while the lower imagination is the “reproductive.” The imagination is what connects the intelligible in intellect and the form in sense perception, through the *logos endiathetos*. A work of art is an artifact or object that communicates a metaphysical or intelligible idea, as in the conceptual art of the twentieth century. Architecture is the most problematic of the arts because concerns for practicality and function are contrasted with the realization of intelligible principles, thus form must contradict function.

- <sup>1</sup> John Dillon, "Plotinus and the Transcendental Imagination," in James P. Mackey, ed., *Religious Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986).
- <sup>2</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, trans. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, The Loeb Classical Library, 1966).
- <sup>3</sup> See J. S. Hendrix, "The *Symposium* and the Aesthetics of Plotinus," in *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Spirit: From Plotinus to Schelling and Hegel* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005).
- <sup>4</sup> Plato, *The Symposium*, trans. Christopher Gill (London: Penguin Books, 1999).
- <sup>5</sup> Aristotle, *On the Soul (De anima)*, trans. W. S. Hett (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, The Loeb Classical Library, 1964).
- <sup>6</sup> D. M. Hutchinson, "Apprehension of Thought in *Ennead* 4.3.30," in *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 264.
- <sup>7</sup> Sara Rappe, *Reading Neoplatonism: Non-discursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Proclus, and Damascius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- <sup>8</sup> Plato, *Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee (London: Penguin Books, 1955).
- <sup>9</sup> Aristotle, *On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, trans. Joe Sachs (Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 2001).
- <sup>10</sup> Hutchinson, "Apprehension of Thought in *Ennead* 4.3.30," in *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition*, p. 269.
- <sup>11</sup> Plato, *Sophist*, trans. William S. Cobb (Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1990).
- <sup>12</sup> Plato, *Timaeus*, trans. Desmond Lee (London: Penguin Books, 1965).
- <sup>13</sup> See Mark J. Nyvlt, *Aristotle and Plotinus on the Intellect* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2012), p. 173.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- <sup>15</sup> H. J. Blumenthal, *Aristotle and Neoplatonism in Late Antiquity: Interpretations of the De anima* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 153.
- <sup>16</sup> See J. S. Hendrix, "Plotinian Aesthetics," in *Platonic Architectonics: Platonic Philosophies and the Visual Arts* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004).
- <sup>17</sup> See Mark J. Nyvlt, *Aristotle and Plotinus on the Intellect*, p. 169.
- <sup>18</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, trans. Harold North Fowler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, The Loeb Classical Library, 1982).
- <sup>19</sup> See H. J. Blumenthal, *Plotinus' Psychology: His Doctrines of the Embodied Soul* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 88.
- <sup>20</sup> H. J. Blumenthal, "Neoplatonic Interpretations of Aristotle on 'Phantasia'," in *The Review of Metaphysics* 31 (2) (Washington, DC: Philosophy Education Society, 1977), p. 248. See Nyvlt, *Aristotle and Plotinus on the Intellect*, p. 169.