General Introduction to the Translations

THE EDITION

This volume presents a new annotated translation of the *Enneads* of Plotinus (204/5-270 cE). We include as well the *Life of Plotinus* written by Porphyry of Tyre (223/4-c.305 cE), who was also the first editor of the *Enneads*. Most of what we know about the life of Plotinus and the circumstances surrounding the composition of his treatises comes from Porphyry's biography and so there is no need to repeat the details here. We follow Porphyry's idiosyncratic arrangement of these treatises, an arrangement which does not correspond to the chronological order of their composition, as Porphyry himself tells us. A table comparing Porphyry's ordering with the chronological ordering follows this introduction.

THE TRANSLATION

Ι.

This translation into English of the *Enneads* of Plotinus is a 'successor' to two great monuments to scholarship, the translations by Stephen MacKenna (1917–1930) and A. H. Armstrong (1966–1988).¹ It is not a replacement for those works, which can still be consulted with considerable profit. In the case of MacKenna, he was impeded by the absence of a critical edition of the Greek text. That did not appear until the publication of the *editio maior* of the *Enneads*, *Plotini Opera* by Paul Henry and Hans-Rudolph Schwyzer (1951–1973). In the case of Armstrong, the first three volumes of his seven-volume work (*Enneads* 1–3) appeared prior to the publication of the *editio minor* of the *Enneads* by Henry and Schwyzer (1964–1982) containing several hundred corrections to the text of *Enneads* 1–5 in the first two

¹ A number of excellent complete translations in European languages now exist. Special mention should be made of the Spanish translation of Igal (1982–1985), the French translation edited by Brisson and Pradeau (2002–2010), the German translation of Harder, continued by Beutler and Theiler (1956–1971), the Italian translation by Faggin (1992), and the modern Greek translation by Kalligas (1994–), with *Ennead* 6 yet to appear.

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volumes. Although textual problems hampered MacKenna much more than they did Armstrong, neither work has been rendered obsolete by the results of the critical work of Henry and Schwyzer, which, incidentally, continues to be advanced by a number of other scholars up to the present, for example, the late Jésus Igal and Paul Kalligas.

The rationale for the present translation is twofold. First, there was the desire to produce a translation that would take account not only of the textual work that has been done since Armstrong, but also of the enormous proliferation of scholarship on Plotinus generally, many facets of which have had an inevitably anonymous influence on the present work. Second, it was thought beneficial to provide a translation in one volume to facilitate the study of Plotinus, something which necessarily requires the comparison of many disparate texts. There are very few of the so-called treatises in the Enneads that exhaust Plotinus' treatment of a particular question or topic. Consequently, one usually has to read several passages in different treatises together in order to get a more or less clear picture of Plotinus' position. It is hoped that with one volume, and numerous cross-references, this will at least be made easier to do for the reader. In this regard, the English glossary of key terms, containing many references, should also provide assistance.

The default text used in this translation is that of the *editio minor* of Henry and Schwyzer, conventionally designated as HS^{2} .² Unless otherwise noted, this is the text that the authors of this work have translated. We note all deviations from that text in the notes, citing, for example, the reading of HS^4 over that of HS^2 . In a separate table, we list all the changes to the text we have followed, although space precludes a discussion of the reasons for the changes. Those who can benefit from the side-by-side Greek text of Armstrong's Loeb edition, can do the same with the *editio minor* (*OCT*) and our translation.

The work of translating the *Enneads* (along with Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*, here included) has been an intensely collaborative effort. Although the work of translating individual *Enneads* was originally apportioned out to the individual members of the 'team', each draft was read and critically discussed with at least two other members. The final product is genuinely collaborative, with the inevitable proviso that

² The *editio maior* is usually labelled HS¹; the *editio minor* HS²; *addenda* to HS¹ labelled HS³; textual *addenda* to HS² labelled HS⁴ and the article by H.-R. Schwyzer, 'Corrigienda ad Plotini textum', *Museum Helveticum* 44, 1 (1987), 191–210, is labelled HS⁵. Even though Henry's name does not appear on the article (he died in 1984), he no doubt participated in the work that led up to this article and by common agreement he is listed as one of the authors.

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each member of the team would like to reserve a minority dissenting position on this or that issue. Compromise was the price paid for achieving the desired result of publication. Strenuous efforts were made to attain a uniformity of vocabulary where appropriate, although the authors could only reflect with awe on the *Septuagint* as an unattainable ideal of perfect unanimity that, as legend has it, was attained by the 70 translators of the *Torah* into Greek.

2.

The present work, given its size limitation, could in no sense provide a commentary on the often desperately difficult thought of Plotinus, to say nothing of his inelegant, allusive, and sometimes even apparently ungrammatical Greek. The reader will certainly want to have recourse to what is now an abundance of basic exegetical commentary in many languages. For the English reader, the commentary of Kalligas (*Enneads* 1–3, English translation, 2014; translations of 4–5, and 6 forthcoming) sets a high standard of conciseness, erudition, and philosophical insight. Many individual treatises have by now had the benefit of book-length commentaries.³

In the light of the challenges thrown up for the reader by a translation of the Enneads unadorned with any exegetical commentary, the authors have adopted a number of expedients. First, the notes contain brief explanations for words or passages otherwise quite unintelligible on their own. Second are the above-mentioned cross-references, which allow Plotinus to comment on himself, as it were. Third, is the extensive listing of *fontes* in the notes. These require a bit of explaining. The starting point for these is the appendix to the editio minor of Henry and Schwyzer, which includes hundreds of these. Henry and Schwyzer had no illusion that their table of *fontes* was complete. Inevitably, everyone who works intently on one or another treatise discovers additional 'sources'. We have tried to be capacious in our listing of these sources because there is hardly a sentence of the Enneads that does not reflect Plotinus' immersion in the ancient Greek philosophical tradition, including the ongoing involvement in that by his contemporaries. Often, these fontes provide just by themselves a helpful commentary on what Plotinus is arguing since they enable us to understand exactly what he is arguing against. Nevertheless, the term fontes has a broad meaning, including everything from direct quotations from

³ See Richard Dufour (ed.), *Plotinus: A Bibliography 1950–2000* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002), continued online up to the present at http://rdufour.free.fr/BibPlotin/anglais/ Biblio.html.

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Plato's dialogues, to phrases or even illustrative examples of principles from, say, Aristotle or Alexander of Aphrodisias, to Stoic texts that may well not have been even known to Plotinus but which nevertheless are our best source for an expression of the Stoic doctrine that Plotinus is addressing. Some of the *fontes* provided are, of course, disputable given the parameters for selection. In addition to those taken from the *editio minor*, many are gratefully mined from previous translations and commentaries. In the nature of the case, and given the unavailability to us of scores of texts Plotinus had at his disposal, any *index fontium* is bound to be incomplete. Finally, the cross-references should not be understood by the reader as indicating that the translators always believe that the passages cited express the identical doctrine. Indeed, there are occasions when the passages, at least on the surface, seem to say conflicting things. These references are meant only to assist in the interpretative process.

In the translations themselves, the authors have adopted many orthographic, grammatical, and stylistic devices intended to facilitate comprehension. Paragraphs have been introduced to divide the text into more or less logical units. Lengthy periodic sentences have been shortened for the sake of clarity along with the liberal use of punctuation. When the reference of a pronoun is grammatically and semantically certain, the proper name has been introduced. For example, Plotinus often says 'he says' followed by a direct quotation from a Platonic dialogue. This appears as 'Plato says'. When the reference is not certain but probable, the identification is made in a footnote. Plotinus has a number of grammatical idiosyncracies that indicate that he is introducing a new point or a new argument or making a determinatio after a dialectical discussion. For example, he uses the Greek word ň which is normally translated as 'or' to introduce his answer to a question he himself raises or in reply to an argument of one of his opponents that he has just sketched. A sort of gloss on this feature of the text would be to render it as 'or is it not the case that' But apart from the facts that Plotinus is not expressing a rhetorical question, and that translating one Greek letter with seven words seems a bit much, there is a consistent pattern of use by Plotinus of this word to indicate that what follows is his own position. We render the word 'in fact' and set it off in a new paragraph to make the philosophical elements of the text as clear as possible. There are other terms, including τοίνυν ('so'), οὖν ('then'), γάρ ('for'), that serve a similar demarcational purpose.

A much more delicate issue is the use of capitalizations. Conventionally, the three primary hypostases of Plotinus' system are referred to in English as 'One' (or 'Good'), 'Intellect', and 'Soul'. When

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these words are used other than for the three primary hypostases, they appear in lower case. Unfortunately, it is not always clear whether, for example, Plotinus in a given passage is referring to Intellect or to intellect, that is, to an individual intellect. The same problem turns up for Soul or soul. Here, interpretation is inevitable, but we have tended to default to lower case, when the reference is not at least highly probable or when the reference is generic.

In addition, capitalization has been used for the Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus*, given that this principle is invested by Plato and Plotinus with what we might term personal attributes. Plotinus uses the term $\theta\epsilon\delta_S$ rather freely to refer to one or another of the primary hypostases. Although the absolute primacy of the first hypostasis is undisputable, to capitalize 'god' in this case would be misleading if that leads one to suppose that Plotinus is arguing for anything like a form of monotheism. On the other hand, he does sometimes invest the first principle of all with personal attributes in which case personal pronouns are used.

Plotinus' ontological vocabulary cannot be mapped onto ordinary English vocabulary one-to-one. The distinctions between εἶναι, τὸ ὄν, τὰ ὄντα, and οὐσία cannot be straightforwardly rendered into English by different terms that at the same time preserve the etymological connections among these terms. The importance of rendering the Greek in a perspicuous manner is heightened by the fact that Plotinus' metaphysics is hierarchical and the higher, intelligible world is always treated as superior to and explanatory of the lower sensible world. The strategy we have adopted is to capitalize or put in lower case the identical term depending on whether it is used of the intelligible world or sensible world. Thus, οὐσία becomes 'Substance' or 'Substantiality' when referring to the intelligible world and 'substance' or 'substantiality' when referring to the sensible world. The terms τὸ ὄν (τὰ ὄντα) are rendered 'Being' ('Beings') or 'being' ('beings') based on the same principle. An analogous procedure is followed for είναι when used as a noun: 'Existence' or 'existence'; the finite verb, however, is normally 'exist(s)'.

A somewhat delicate translation issue arises for the terms $\tau \alpha \dot{\tau} \dot{\sigma} \nu$ and $\ddot{\sigma} \mu \sigma_{100}$. In most English translations, the former term is rendered 'same' and the latter 'like'. There are several reasons for resisting these translations. First, for Plato and for Plotinus $\tau \alpha \dot{\upsilon} \tau \dot{\sigma} \nu$ is ontologically prior to $\ddot{\sigma} \mu \sigma_{100} \nu$ as is evident from the fact that the former, not the latter, is one of the $\mu \dot{\epsilon} \gamma_{10} \tau \alpha \gamma \dot{\epsilon} \nu \eta$ ('greatest genera'). Stated otherwise, if things are $\ddot{\sigma} \mu \sigma_{100} \nu$ that is because there is something $\tau \alpha \dot{\upsilon} \tau \dot{\sigma} \nu$ prior to it. To render $\tau \alpha \dot{\upsilon} \tau \dot{\sigma} \nu$ as 'same' raises a question for a Platonist that cannot be answered, namely, what explains the fact that two (or more) things are the same? Second, to

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render อันอเอง as 'like' or 'similar' undermines the very foundation of Platonism. This is so because, in English at any rate, to say that one thing is 'like' another or 'similar' to another is, typically, to make a claim that is irreducibly subjective. One may find one thing like or similar to another, whereas someone else does not. These claims are beyond objective adjudication; there is no way to determine who is right. Hence, for the Platonist, claims of likeness or similarity provide no reason for positing Forms. Such claims do not require objective or scientific explanation, whereas the whole point, one might say, of the Platonic project is that there are certain phenomenal facts that can only be explained by a theory of Forms, a theory of separate self-identical entities. Hence, the decision to translate ταὐτόν as 'identical' and ὅμοιον as 'same'. The nouns, όμοιότης and όμοίωμα are, however, rendered 'likeness' which can have the connotation of 'derived sameness' as in 'this work of art was intended as a likeness of that landscape'. In addition, the important term ὑμοίωσις is rendered as 'assimilation' indicative of a process of attempting to achieve a particular sort of sameness with regard to a model or paradigm.

There is on a number of occasions some awkwardness arising from this decision. For in English, we naturally say things like 'they followed the same rule that we did' or 'we arrived at the same time' or 'one and the same principle is found both here and there' or 'the same account applies to both' when Plotinus employs the term $\tau \alpha \dot{\upsilon} \tau \dot{\delta} \nu$ in all these cases. The justification for tolerating the awkwardness is, in addition to the above points, that for Plotinus $\tau \alpha \dot{\upsilon} \tau \dot{\delta} \nu$ and $\ddot{\delta} \mu olov$ are quasi-technical terms, meaning that they are occasionally used in a non-technical or colloquial way. But it was thought misleading to revert to the English colloquial translations in the latter cases, a practice that would always leave the reader wondering whether or how Platonic principles would be applicable in the given instance.

Another peculiarity of the present translation is that the term $i \\ k \\ \epsilon \\ \tilde{k}$, which is the ordinary Greek word for 'there' almost always means for Plotinus 'the intelligible (or non-sensible) world', and is so translated. There are a very few places where it does in fact just mean 'there' in contrast to 'here', for example, in a discussion of spatial concepts. And occasionally it refers not to the intelligible world but to the sensible heaven or heavenly things as opposed to terrestrial things, the former including the planets and the heavenly spheres.

The Greek word $\lambda \delta \gamma \circ_{\varsigma}$ has a wide semantic range. Apart from its use for any unit of intelligible discourse, the term also has a specific technical meaning for Plotinus. It refers to the expression or manifestation of a higher principle at a lower level. Thus, for example, each hypostasis is a $\lambda \delta \gamma \circ_{\varsigma}$ of the one above and an enmattered form in the

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sensible world is a $\lambda \dot{0}\gamma_{05}$ of the Form in the soul of the cosmos which is itself a $\lambda \dot{0}\gamma_{05}$ of the Form in Intellect. The term is most frequently translated into English as 'rational principle'. But all principles are rational for Plotinus and this translation does not convey the important feature of the $\lambda \dot{0}\gamma_{05}$ that it is derived from something higher in the hierarchy. In order to convey this essential feature of the technical term, we have translated $\lambda \dot{0}\gamma_{05}$ as 'expressed principle'. For these and many other translation choices, the glossary should be consulted.

Porphyry's Arrangement of the Enneads

Enn.	Chron.	Enn.	Chron.	Enn.	Chron.
1.1	53	2.1	40	3.1	3
1.2	19	2.2	14	3.2	47
1.3	20	2.3	52	3.3	48
1.4	46	2.4	I 2	3.4	15
1.5	36	2.5	25	3.5	50
1.6	Ι	2.6	17	3.6	26
1.7	54	2.7	37	3.7	45
1.8	51	2.8	35	3.8	30
1.9	16	2.9	33	3.9	13
4.1	2 I	5.1	IO	6.1	42
4.2	4	5.2	ΙI	6.2	43
4.3	27	5.3	49	6.3	44
4.4	28	5.4	7	6.4	22
4.5	29	5.5	32	6.5	23
4.6	41	5.6	24	6.6	34
4.7	2	5.7	18	6.7	38
4.8	6	5.8	31	6.8	39
4.9	8	5.9	5	6.9	9

List of *Enneads* as Arranged by Porphyry and the Corresponding Chronological Order

Enneads in Chronological Order and the Corresponding Order of Porphyry

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Chron.	Enn.	Chron.	Enn.	Chron.	Enn.
I	1.6	19	I.2	37	2.7
2	4.7	20	1.3	38	6.7
3	3.1	2 I	4.1	39	2.1
4	4.2	22	6.4	40	2.1
5	5.9	23	6.5	41	4.6
6	4.8	24	5.6	42	6.1
7	5.4	25	2.5	43	6.2
8	4.9	26	3.6	44	6.3

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Chron.	Enn.	Chron.	Enn.	Chron.	Enn.
9	6.9	27	4.3	45	3.7
IO	5.1	28	4.4	46	1.4
II	5.2	29	4.5	47	3.2
I 2	2.4	30	3.8	48	3.3
13	3.9	31	5.8	49	5.3
14	2.2	32	5.5	50	3.5
15	3.4	33	2.9	51	1.8
16	1.9	34	6.6	52	2.3
17	2.6	35	2.8	53	I.I
18	5.7	36	1.5	54	1.7

Porphyry's Arrangement of the Enneads

List of Textual Changes to Henry-Schwyzer Editio Minor

- 1.4.2.35 Reading proslambárete with Armstrong.
- 1.4.4.24 Reading $\varepsilon \tilde{\upsilon}$ with HS⁴.
- 1.4.6.13 Correcting the auth of HS^2 to auth.
- 1.4.8.5 Reading ἔσται <καὶ> ἐν τῷ ἀλγεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτοῦ [καὶ ἐν τῷ]
 ἔνδον γέγγος οἴον with HS⁴.
- 1.5.2.7 Eliminating the quotation marks in HS^2 .
- 1.5.7.25 Restoring tỹ ai
ãva from HS1.
- 1.6.3.27 Reading ὅλον with Kalligas.
- 1.6.7.14 Reading $\delta v < o \dot{v} k > \dot{\epsilon} k \pi \lambda \alpha \gamma \epsilon i \eta$ with HS^4 .
- 1.8.5.14 Following the punctuation of HS $^{\rm I}$ with a full stop before $\tau\tilde{\omega}.$
- 1.8.7.7 Reading ἐк θεοῦ τοῦ with Creuzer.
- 1.8.9.21 Reading тои́тои with Dodds.
- 1.8.10.15 Reading $\tilde{\eta}$ instead of $\tilde{\eta}\nu.$
- 2.1.1.15 Reading μηδέ τι with HS4.
- 2.1.1.32 Reading ката̀ with Igal and HS $^5.$
- 2.1.4.14 Reading ἀρίστοις κειμένην δυνάμει θαυμαστῆ κινουμένην with HS⁴.
- 2.1.5.12 $\,$ Correcting the typographical error $\sigma\epsilon$ in HS 2 to $\tau\epsilon.$
- 2.1.5.23 Reading συλλαμβανομένη with HS⁴.
- 2.1.7.7 Reading μετέχειν δὲ ὕδατος πρός τὸ <τὸ> μὴ αὐχμηρόν ἔχειν τε καὶ.
- 2.1.7.19 Reading πυρότητα with HS3.
- 2.1.7.24 Reading oùdetépov with HS3.
- 2.2.1.6 Reading $\tilde{\mathfrak{h}}$ with Harder.
- 2.2.1.11 Reading אאסט געדא with HS⁴. Also, following HS⁴ in changing the question mark after $\pi\epsilon\rho$ ואסעאלע to a raised dot.
- 2.2.1.44 Reading המסל
 לסדוע, מט
ל המעדה המידה שלו
נדמו with $HS^4.$
- 2.2.2.19 Reading λεπτόν <öν> καὶ with HS⁵.
- 2.2.3.11 Retaining the
 נו שניסע או
עסוודס of the mss.
- 2.3.5.17 Reading $\tau\tilde{\omega}$ with Beutler-Theiler.
- 2.3.6.5 Reading $\pi \acute{e} \rho \alpha$ with Igal and HS4.
- 2.3.6.13 Reading avamon for avapopas with $HS^4.$
- 2.3.7.16 Following the punctuation of HS^4 .
- 2.3.12.31 Reading τῷ ἀναλόγ
φ of $HS^4.$