

08740

ELENCHOS

Rivista di studi sul pensiero antico

fondata da

GABRIELE GIANNANTONI



BIBLIOPOLIS

«Elenchos». Rivista di studi sul pensiero antico
fondata da Gabriele Giannantoni
a cura dell'Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee
del C.N.R.

«Elenchos» è disponibile on-line presso il sito Internet:
<http://digital.casalini.it>

DIRETTORE:

Anna Maria Ioppolo

COMITATO DIRETTIVO:

Enrico Berti, Aldo Brancacci, Riccardo Chiaradonna, Fernanda Decleva Caizzi, Anna
Maria Ioppolo, Marwan Rashed, David N. Sedley

RESPONSABILE DI REDAZIONE:

Maria Cristina Dalfino

COMITATO DI REDAZIONE:

Michele Alessandrelli, Aurora Corti, Diana Quarantotto, Francesco Verde

EDITING:

Maria Cristina Dalfino

I contributi vanno indirizzati ad Anna Maria Ioppolo: ioppolo@uniroma1.it
La Direzione di «Elenchos» ha sede presso l'Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo
e Storia delle Idee. Villa Mirafiori, via C. Fea 2, 00161 Roma.
<http://www.iliesi.cnr.it>
elenchos@rmcisadu.let.uniroma1.it
c.dalfino@iliesi.cnr.it

La Rivista è indicizzata in ERIH (European References Index for Humanities) e in
SciVerse Scopus.

Periodici e pubblicazioni vanno indirizzati alla Direzione di «Elenchos».

Gli Autori sono pregati di attenersi alle Norme redazionali stampate alla fine del fascicolo.

L'amministrazione di «Elenchos» ha sede presso la casa editrice «Bibliopolis, edizioni
di filosofia e scienze di Francesco del Franco», 80122 Napoli, via Arancio Ruiz 83.

www.bibliopolis.it
info@bibliopolis.it

«Elenchos» ha periodicità semestrale.

Abbonamenti: per l'Italia: € 26,00 (print + on-line € 35,00)
per l'estero: € 30,00 (print + on-line € 40,00)

Un fascicolo: per l'Italia: € 15,00
per l'estero: € 18,00

I versamenti vanno effettuati sul c.c.p. n. 74019035 intestato a: «BIBLIOPOLIS di
Francesco del Franco», Napoli, via Arancio Ruiz 83.

Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Napoli n. 5805/80

Direttore responsabile: Anna Maria Ioppolo

SOMMARIO

STUDI E SAGGI

MATYÁŠ HAVRDA: Categories in <i>Stromata</i> VIII	p.	197
FILIP KARFÍK: Le temps et l'âme chez Plotin. À propos des <i>Ennéades</i> VI 5 [23] 11; IV 4 [28] 15-16; III 7 [45] 11	»	227
JAN OPSOMER: Self-motion according to Iamblichus	»	259
MARWAN RASHED: Nouveau fragment arabe du <i>De aeternitate mundi contra Aristotelem</i> de Jean Philopon	»	291

DISCUSSIONI, NOTE E RASSEGNE

DENIS O'BRIEN: Empedocles' "Mountain Path" (fr. 24)	»	301
FRANCESCA PENTASSUGLIO: Duplice Afrodite, duplice Eros: un caso di intertestualità nei <i>Simposi</i> socratici	»	335

RECENSIONI BIBLIOGRAFICHE

S. Mouraviev, <i>Heraclitea IV.A. Refectio: Liber ut a nobis Restitutus</i> (G. Calenda)	»	357
Ch.H. Kahn, <i>Essays on Being</i> (N. Galgano)	»	362
M.J. Lutz, <i>Divine Law and Political Philosophy in Plato's 'Laws'</i> (D. De Brasi)	»	370
D. Sedley (ed.), <i>The Philosophy of Antiochus</i> (W. Görler)	»	376
E. Kechagia, <i>Plutarch 'Against Colotes'. A Lesson in History of Philosophy</i> (M. Bonazzi)	»	383
F. Frazier-D.F. Leão (eds.), <i>Tychè et Pronoia. La marche du monde selon Plutarque</i> (F. Ferrari)	»	388

M. van Ackeren, <i>Die Philosophie Marc Aurels</i> (F. Alesse)	p.	391
C. Maggi, <i>Sinfonia matematica. Aporie e soluzioni in Platone, Aristotele, Plotino, Giamblico</i> (S. Slaveva-Griffin)	»	396
CRITERI REDAZIONALI DELLA RIVISTA	»	407

JAN OPSOMER

SELF-MOTION ACCORDING TO IAMBlichUS

Abstract

Iamblichus' theory of self-motion has to be pieced together from various texts and passing remarks. Ever since Aristotle's critique, Plato's concept of the self-motive soul was felt to be problematic. Taking his lead from Plotinus, Iamblichus counters Aristotle's criticism by claiming that true self-motion transcends the opposition between activity and passivity. He moreover argues that it does not involve motion that is spatially extended. Hence it is non-physical. Primary self-motion is the reversion of the soul to itself, by which the soul constitutes itself, i.e. imparts life to itself. This motion is located at the level of essence or substance. The bestowal of life upon the body derives from this fundamental motion. As a result, animals are derivatively self-motive. Secondary self-motions are acts of thought in the broad sense. Contrary to the unmoved motion of intellect, the self-motion of the soul is not beyond time. This somehow fits Iamblichus' theory of the "changing self". Iamblichus anticipates much of the later Platonic accounts of self-motion.

Keywords

Self-motion, soul, Aristotle's criticism of Plato, *Laws*, *Phaedrus*

Iamblichus¹ occupies a peculiar position in the history of Platonism. While Plotinus is traditionally seen as the founder of Neoplatonism, Iamblichus can be considered its second founder, or as K. Praechter put it, as the Chrysippus of the school². Many of the views we find in later authors appear to be anticipated by Iamblichus. Yet unfortunately, the works that would have been the most interesting from that point of view have not come down to us and are known only because later authors use them and occasionally refer to them. Scholars have tried to rehabilitate Iamblichus as a systematic and rigorous thinker, rescuing him from his reputation as an eccentric religious muddle-head³. In order to accomplish this, they have looked mostly at the

¹ I use the following abbreviations for Iamblichus' works: *DA* = *De anima*; *DCMS* = *De communi mathematica scientia*; *Myst.* = *De mysteriis*. The referencing system for *Myst.* combines Ficino's book and chapter numbers with Parthey's page numbers and the line numbers as printed in the standard edition (É. DES PLACES, *Jamblique. Les mystères d'Égypte* ("Collection des Universités de France"), Paris 1966). For translations from this work I use E.C. CLARKE-J.M. DILLON-J.P. HERSHBELL, *Iamblichus. De mysteriis* ("Writings from the Greco-Roman World", IV), Atlanta 2003. *DA* is quoted according to the edition J.F. FINAMORE-J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichus. De anima*, Text, translation, and commentary ("Philosophia antiqua", CXII), Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, p. 81; for the *Letters* I use D.P. TAORMINA-R.M. PICCIONE, *Giamblico. I frammenti dalle Epistole*, Introduzione, testo e commento ("Elenchos", LVI), Napoli 2010 and the translation J.M. DILLON-W. POLLEICHTNER, *Iamblichus of Chalcis. The Letters* ("Writings from the Greco-Roman World"), Atlanta 2009; for the fragments from the commentaries on Plato I use J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis dialogos commentariorum fragmenta* ("Platonic Texts and Translations", I), Revised second edition, Wiltshire 2009 (Leiden 1973), and for those on Aristotle B. DALSGAARD LARSEN, *Jamblique de Chalcis. Exégète et philosophe*, Appendice: *Testimonia et fragmenta exegetica*, recueillis par B. D.L., Aarhus 1972. All references to Stobaeus follow the Wachsmuth-Hense edition. I wish to thank Jonathan Sholl for linguistic improvements and Riccardo Chiaradonna for his precious remarks.

² K. PRAECHTER, *Richtungen und Schulen im Neuplatonismus*, in *Genethliakon für C. Robert*, Berlin 1910, pp. 105-56: 143; see also A.C. LLOYD, *The Later Neoplatonists*, in A.H. ARMSTRONG (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge 1970, pp. 272-330: 273.

³ Cfr. S.E. GERSH, *Κίνησις ἀκίνητος. A Study of Spiritual Motion in the Philosophy of Proclus* ("Philosophia antiqua", xxvi), Leiden 1973, p. 119; C. D'ANCONA, *À propos du 'De anima' de Jamblique*, «Revue des sciences philosophiques et

testimonies about, and fragments from, his more technical works, where his tremendous importance for the further development of the school is apparent. I shall here examine his views on a technical issue that was firmly rooted in the Platonic tradition and was of primary importance for later Platonists such as Hermias, Proclus, and Simplicius: the concept of self-motion. Self-motion occupies a specific position in the hierarchy of movers and moved, yet is a concept wrought with problems. Unfortunately, Iamblichus' views on this issue are not very well-documented, yet the scanty information we have confirm his pivotal role also with respect to this issue.

1. *Self-motion: a problem for Platonists*

In the *Phaedrus* Plato famously describes the soul as moving itself and the source of motion for all other things that exhibit motion (245 c 5-D 7)⁴. And in book ten of the *Laws* the need for a first mover is met by a soul that moves itself and imparts motion to other things (894 B-895 B). Platonists considered the doctrine of the self-moving soul as a key doctrine, but were also aware of Aristotle's criticism of the theory of self-motion. Clearly with the *Phaedrus* in mind, Plotinus declares

théologiques», XC (2006) pp. 617-40: 620; L.I. MARTONE, *La struttura del 'De anima' di Giamblico*, «Studia graeco-arabica», II (2012) pp. 99-128: 99-103; J.-M. NARBONNE-M. ACHARD, *Introduction*, in *Plotin. Œuvres complètes*, Tome 1, vol. I: *Traité 1 (I 6), Sur le beau* ("Collection des Universités de France"), Paris 2012, pp. CLXXVI-CLXXXVI. U. CRISCUOLO, *Problemi della tradizione neoplatonica fra Giamblico e i suoi eredi*, «Rendiconti dell'Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti», n.s. LXVII (1997-1998), pp. 399-436: 405-6 gives a survey of scholarly appreciations of Iamblichus' position in the history of the school.

⁴ Most probably Plato did not use the word αὐτοκίνητον, although it appears as a textual variant for αἰκίνητον at *Phaedr.* 254 c 5 (POxy. VII 1017, from the second or third century). Aristotle uses the term once in his criticism of Plato: *phys.* Θ 5. 258 a 2. From the first century CE onwards αὐτοκίνητον is a standard philosophical term substitutable for the reflexive formula used by Plato. Cfr. F. DECLEVA CAIZZI, *'Αἰκίνητον ο αὐτοκίνητον? (Plat. Phaedr., 245 C)*, «Acme», XXIII (1970) pp. 91-7. Decleva Caizzi also offers a lucid analysis of the argument of *Phaedr.* 245 c (pp. 92-3).

that the soul is the principle of motion, providing motions, and hence life, to other things, while it itself is moved from within itself (ἐξ ἑαυτῆς κινουμένη). Since it receives life from itself (παρ' ἑαυτῆς), it will never lose it and is hence immortal (iv 7 [2] 9, 6-9). At the core of Plotinus' argument is the idea that the soul is essentially life, which means that life is for it not an affection that it, as a substrate, possesses (iv 7 [2] 11, 7-9)⁵. To live is what it is to be a soul, and this *is* its self-motion⁶. Porphyry is probably thinking of this passage when he says that for Plato self-motion (τὸ αὐτοκίνητον) is the rationale (λόγος) and essence (οὐσία: one could also translate "substance" or "being") of the soul (*sent.* 21, p. 13, 10-12),⁷ but there is an even clearer parallel with *leg.* x 895 D 1-896 A 2⁸. Plotinus also ranks knowledge under self-motion (vi 6 [43] 18, 8). In general, later Platonists tend to give a non-physical reading to the motion exhibited by the soul itself. This self-motion is the motion of thinking, in the broad sense (discursive, rational thinking, willing), so that the expression "the self-moved" often simply stands for the rational soul. The emphasis on its being self-moved has a moral and religious significance: insofar as the soul is a self-mover it is not subject to external compulsion, it initiates its thoughts and actions freely and is therefore also morally responsible for them⁹. Originally, however, self-motion is a physical concept and it has always retained a physical role. Platonists, including Iamblichus,

⁵ For the same idea, see PROCL. *el. theol.* 20, p. 22, 10-12 Dodds.

⁶ The equation of self-motion with life rests on a combination of *Phaedr.* 245 C with *Phaed.* 105 D 3-106 E 3. This was explained lucidly by R. CHIARADONNA in a paper *La nature de l'âme et ses vicissitudes. Plotin et le 'Phédon'*, presented in Brussels at the conference "Ancient Readings of Plato's *Phaedo*", 9. Oct. 2012.

⁷ Cfr. C. D'ANCONA, *Les 'Sentences' de Porphyre entre les 'Ennéades' de Plotin et les 'Éléments de théologie' de Proclus*, in L. BRISSON et al. (éds.), *Porphyre. Sentences*, Études d'introduction, texte grec et traduction française, commentaire, avec une traduction anglaise de J. Dillon ("Histoire des doctrines de l'Antiquité classique"), Paris 2005, pp. 139-274: 218.

⁸ *Leg.* x 895 D 1-896 A 2: when considering something, we think of three things: the name, the formula, the essence (ὄνομα, λόγος, οὐσία). To the name "soul" corresponds the formula of the essence «the motion which has the power (δύναμις) to move itself» (896 A 1-2).

⁹ E.g. PROCL. *dub.* 39, 19; OLYMP. *in Alc.* 9, 6-7; 37, 8-10; 41, 5-8.

are committed to the idea that the self-motive soul is the (ultimate) cause of physical motion. This is what interests us here.

That the motion proper to the soul “revolving upon itself” is a motion of thinking or cognition is an idea that could be derived from *Tim.* 37 A 5-C 2. Plutarch of Chaeronea argues that the two main functions of the soul, cognitive and motive, are linked most closely, so that each form of cognition is accomplished through the soul’s motion and all of its motions are directly cognitive. Plutarch clearly sees the motion of the soul as a physical – as opposed to spiritual – motion, a spatial revolution, and that is even true for the motion of intellect insofar as by “intellect” we mean intellect *in* the soul¹⁰ (it may be different for the separate intellect)¹¹. That the motion of the soul extends through space and is the motion of something that is itself spatially extended is strongly suggested by the *Timaeus*¹². Also the *Laws* and the *Phaedrus* appear to be about a physical and spatial self-motion, if only because the motions the soul initiates in others are physical. Nothing in the texts indicates that the motion by which the soul moves itself is in this respect any different. On the contrary, the way the problem is set up suggests that the motion of a self-mover is physical. For if not everything that is moved (κινούμενον) can be moved by something that is in turn moved by another, and the solution for that problem is to find something that is moved by itself, it would be surprising if what it means to be moved would be something completely different in the case of things moved by something external

¹⁰ Cfr. PLUTARCH. *de an. procr.* 1024 C 9-D 4; 1024 E 10-1025 A 1; see also 1014 D 11 (for the irrational soul). And for the two main functions of the soul, mentioned by Plutarch, compare ARISTOT. *de an.* A 2. 403 b 26-27.

¹¹ Cfr. *de an. procr.* 1024 D 1-2. I have argued elsewhere that Plutarch, because he does not have an Aristotelian conception of intellect, does not consider the intellect to be completely unmoved. Its motion could not be spatial, however. Cfr. J. OPSOMER, *The Place of Plutarch in the History of Platonism*, in P. VOLPE CACCIATORE-F. FERRARI (a cura di), *Plutarco e la cultura della sua età*, Atti del X Convegno plutarco, Fisciano-Paestum, 27-29 ottobre 2005 (“Collectanea”, xxv), Napoli 2007, pp. 281-309: 293-4, 297-8.

¹² Cfr. S. BROADIE, *Nature and Divinity in Plato’s ‘Timaeus’*, Cambridge-New York 2012, pp. 179-80.

rather than internally. That is why an interpreter like Plutarch, who stays very close to the text and is not really bothered with Aristotle, assumes that the soul's self-motion is a spatially extended circular motion. By the time of Iamblichus, this has changed. One reason is certainly that Platonists had begun to take Aristotle's criticism of their master very seriously.

Aristotle's criticisms of self-motion are manifold. One of his main worries appears to have been that true self-motion is a motion by which something would move itself in its entirety, in other words: a whole moving the whole. Cases of a whole moving a part or a part moving a whole are not problematic: for in neither case is it strictly speaking true that something moves itself. Aristotle has no qualms about admitting the existence of what we may call "derivative self-movers" – animals are self-movers in this sense. Closer analysis shows, however, that there is an immobile part which moves the rest of the animal¹³. Hence animals are not primary self-movers: there can be no such things. Why, however, does Aristotle think that it is impossible for a Platonic soul as a whole to move itself as a whole? This may very well have to do with the fact that Plato describes the soul as spatially extended. Moreover, as one would expect, Aristotle considers the motion of Plato's self-mover to be physical¹⁴. Aristotle expressly refers to the *Timaeus* and points out that there the soul is said to move the body by being interwoven with it. He takes the description of its division in circles as proof

¹³ Cfr. B. MORISON, *Self-motion in 'Physics' VIII*, in A. LAKS-M. RASHED (éds.), *Aristote et le mouvement des animaux. Dix études sur le 'De motu animalium'*, Villeneuve d'Ascq 2004, pp. 67-79: 71-4.

¹⁴ Cfr. ARISTOT. *de an.* A 2. 403 b 29-31; 404 a 20-25; 404 b 26-30; 3. 405 b 31-406 a 4; 406 a 12-16, and especially 406 a 30-b 1: ἔτι δ' ἐπεὶ φαίνεται κινεῖσα τὸ σῶμα, ταύτας εὐλογον κινεῖν τὰς κινήσεις ἃς καὶ αὐτὴ κινεῖται. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, καὶ ἀντιστρέψασιν εἰπεῖν ἀληθὲς ὅτι ἦν τὸ σῶμα κινεῖται, ταύτην καὶ αὐτὴ. Hence if bodies undergo locomotion, the same must be true for the soul, *per se* and not just *per accidens*. Later Platonist commentators attempted to circumvent this rule. (Pseudo)Simplicius, for instance, who often draws on Iamblichus, argues (*in DA* 36, 11-37, 2) that a self-mover is not necessarily moved by the same passive motion as that caused by it; it suffices that the *active* motion is of the same type as the passive motion caused by it in others, so that nothing prevents the soul to initiate bodily motions by being itself moved "vitally" (36, 30-31).

of its spatial extension, and claims that this is Plato's fundamental error: to conceive of the soul as spatially extended¹⁵.

Aristotle's most systematic attack on self-motion is to be found in *Physics* Θ 5. I cannot go into the details of his argument here, but merely point out some important ideas and underlying assumptions. The crucial case of purported self-motion is that of the whole moving the whole (let us call this a "primary self-mover" and animals "derivative self-movers")¹⁶. Primary self-motion is ruled out by Aristotle because it would mean that something would be merely potential in the very same respect in which it is supposed to be actual. To use Aristotle's example: a teacher cannot be learning the very thing he is teaching, for then he would simultaneously have and not have knowledge of the same thing¹⁷. To put it in more general terms, that which is moveable is potentially, not actually in movement, and when it is moving it is in incomplete actualisation. But that which causes the motion must already have in actuality that which it bestows. Hence the mover and the moved cannot be the very same thing. This is why there are no self-movers in the strict sense. In derivative self-movers, the part that does the moving must be different from the moved.¹⁸ Aristotle also brings in the idea, demonstrated in book Z, that the moved must be continuous, i.e. divisible into parts that are at every stage divisible¹⁹. The function of that idea is not immediately clear. S. Menn has argued²⁰ that it is probably residual from an earlier line of argument, directed especially at Plato's idea of an *extended* self-moving soul. It is all the more remarkable that the final sentence of the *Physics* declares the first mover to be indivisible, partless and not extended²¹. Aristotle's first mover is in this respect unlike the moved and hence also unlike Plato's first mover. It is not just that he is unmoved: being

¹⁵ ARISTOT. *de an.* A 3. 406 b 26-407 a 3.

¹⁶ ARISTOT. *phys.* Θ 5. 257 b 25-258 a 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 257 a 12-14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 257 b 6-13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 257 a 33-b 1.

²⁰ In a paper given in Leuven on 4 June 2012, for a workshop on "*Physics* VIII in Antiquity and beyond".

²¹ ARISTOT. *phys.* Θ 10. 267 b 25-26.

partless and indivisible he *could* not be in motion, according to Aristotle's own argumentation²².

Aristotle may have demonstrated that the moved is infinitely divisible, i.e. continuous, but he has done nothing of the kind for the inverse proposition, that the unmoved is not divisible. It could after all be the case that something that is unmoved is nonetheless divisible and even continuous. He arrives at the conclusion that the first mover is indivisible and partless on the basis of a separate argument, based on the infinite power required to instil an unending movement – a power that cannot be housed in a finite body. Proclus will later make a great deal of the contrast in terms of the (in)divisibility of moved and mover: his summary of Aristotle's theory of motion is based on it²³, and in several works he establishes a link between divisibility and passive motion, on the one hand, and indivisibility and motive power, on the other. This fits the general picture of Proclus' metaphysics in which the opposition between indivisibility and divisibility marks the difference between the realities transcending the soul and the material world, respectively, with the soul as an intermediary between them²⁴. This opposition, in part inspired by *Tim.* 35 A 1-4, is also central to Iamblichus' ontology²⁵.

One could argue on Aristotelian lines against the idea of an infinitely divisible self-mover by claiming that each part would have to move another part, which would lead to either an endless regress or

²² Aristotelian souls, which are in a derivative sense unmoved movers, can be moved accidentally (which is generally possible for partless things), but cannot be moved *per se*. The prime unmoved mover, however, cannot even be moved accidentally. Cfr. *ibid.*, 6. 259 b 22-31.

²³ See the final propositions of the two books of Proclus' *Elements of physics*: 1, 31 and 2, 21.

²⁴ Cfr. J. OPSOMER, *The Integration of Aristotelian Physics in a Neoplatonic Context: Proclus on Movers and Divisibility*, in R. CHIARADONNA-F. TRABATTONI (eds.), *Physics and Philosophy of Nature in Greek Neoplatonism*, Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop ("Philosophia antiqua", CXV), Leiden-Boston 2009, pp. 189-229: 203-14.

²⁵ IAMBL. *DCMS* 1, p. 10, 7-24; 3, p. 14, 4-6. Cfr. PH. MERLAN, *From Platonism to Neoplatonism*, Third edition revised, The Hague 1968, p. 13.

circularity, both unacceptable for Aristotle. However, that reasoning is not conclusive, for parts of a continuum have a merely potential existence. It is therefore possible to object that, as far as this argument is concerned, a self-mover that moves itself as a whole could very well be infinitely divisible. Whatever parts into which one divides it, would themselves be self-movers, moving themselves wholes as wholes. There is no need to assume that one could divide such a self-mover into parts so that, for the motion transmitted from one part to the other, one part would be exclusively moving, the other exclusively moved. The challenge is, then, to conceive of a self-mover moving itself in its entirety, such that, in whatever parts one divides it, each part is again a self-mover in the same manner. This is exactly what later Platonists wanted self-motion to be²⁶. Unfortunately, the attempt to conceive of self-movers divisible into parts that are themselves primary self-movers runs into the difficulty that it requires something to be active and passive, or actual and potential, in the same respect. Aristotle's strongest objection to self-motion targets this very idea.

A more radical approach is therefore in order. One solution, adumbrated by Iamblichus, would be to deny that self-motion requires an active and a passive aspect. The solution favoured by Iamblichus' successors in the Platonic tradition consists in claiming that the soul's self-motion is non-physical, i.e. non-spatial. Physically, they claim, the soul is unmoved (at least *per se*; it may be moved *per accidens*, as it is moved along with the body moved by it). The self-motion of the soul is then supposed to consist in its self-thinking, i.e. its reflection toward itself²⁷. I shall argue that this solution was already proposed by Iamblichus. It is this idea that allows him to say that the motion of the soul transcends the division between active and passive motion. In my view

²⁶ HERM. in *Phaedr.* 114, 11-13.

²⁷ This is explained, for Hermias and Proclus, by S. MENN, *Self-motion and Reflection: Hermias and Proclus on the Harmony of Plato and Aristotle on the Soul*, in C. HORN-J. WILBERDING (eds.), *Neoplatonism and the Philosophy of Nature*, Oxford 2012, pp. 44-67: 57-63. See esp. PROCL. *el. theol.* 17; HERM. in *Phaedr.* 104, 19-27. Simplicius is even more explicit: in *phys.* 1248, 21-29.

it would have been even more interesting to pursue the bolder claim that this could also be a model for physical motion²⁸.

2. *Iamblichus on the nature of self-motion*

Iamblichus' ideas about self-motion have to be pieced together from various brief remarks. I shall now subject the most important passages and contexts to closer scrutiny, and then attempt to fit them together.

2.1. '*De mysteriis*' 1, 3-4: *self-motion without activity and passivity*

A passing remark made in *De mysteriis* is the best point to start. Iamblichus²⁹ is arguing that Porphyry fails to understand the nature of the so-called superior kinds (heroes, daemons, and the pure [i.e. super-human] souls)³⁰. In order to interpret the remark about the self-motion of the soul adequately, we should first take a closer look at this larger context. Our grasping of the simplicity of the superior kinds is beyond discursive knowledge. Hence one should strive for a single determinate account of their nature, a "uniform mode of cognition" devoid of indeterminacy, instability, and opposing points of view (1, 3, pp. 8, 14-9, 9). In order to arrive at this form of cognition, which is a kind of direct contact free of the otherness that characterises ordinary knowledge (p. 8, 3-4), we can rely on innate notions (p. 9, 11), but not on conjecture, opinion or syllogistic reasoning. Porphyry's fundamental

²⁸ I plan to argue elsewhere that Proclus wants to claim that self-motion also in some sense manifests itself as physical motion.

²⁹ I accept the authenticity of the work and the identification of its primary addressee and target with Porphyry.

³⁰ The superior kinds are all beings that transcend the soul but are lower than the intellect. Their number can vary. In his *De anima* Iamblichus lists heroes, daemons, angels, and gods (i.e. encosmic gods): cfr. *DA* 40 = *STOB.* 1, 49, 32, p. 455, 3-4; cfr. C. STEEL, *The Changing Self. A Study on the Soul in later Neoplatonism: Iamblichus, Damascius and Priscianus* ("Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België", XL 85), Brussel 1978, p. 27.

mistake is said to consist in thinking that the same mode of cognitions applies to divine and human realities (pp. 9, 12-10, 5). Accordingly, Porphyry's attempt to distinguish the superior kinds from one another by means of genus and differentiae is misguided (1, 3-4, pp. 10, 10-11, 2). One should look at their "properties" (in the etymological sense of *propria*, ἰδιώματα), yet distinguish between what is proper to essence (or "substance": οὐσία), power (δύναμις), and activity (ἐνέργεια). Porphyry only looks for the activities, and at the wrong type of activities at that. For he tries to distinguish these kinds by their active and passive motions (τῶν δραστικῶν ἢ παθητικῶν κινήσεων), failing to see that for these higher beings there is no opposition between activity and passivity and that their activities are free from any relation to an opposite. Hence we should not accept «as being relevant to their case motions which involve an agent and a patient» (1, 4, pp. 11, 9-12, 4). The significance of this passage consists, among other things, in the fact that it shows that the classical triad essence-power-activity (οὐσία-δύναμις-ἐνέργεια) was already known to Iamblichus (the first term could also be rendered as "being" or "substance")³¹.

At this point, Iamblichus refers to the self-motion of the souls: not even in the case of the (human) soul is one allowed to make a distinction between active and passive motion:

«For not even in the case of the soul do we admit that self-motion, which arises from a moving and a moved [aspect] (τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ κινουντος καὶ κινουμένου [...] αὐτοκινήσιαν), but rather we take it be a simple and essential motion proper to itself alone (ἁπλῆν δέ τινα κίνησιν οὐσιώδη αὐτὴν ἑαυτῆς οὔσαν), and not bearing any relation to anything else (καὶ οὐ πρὸς ἕτερον ἔχουσιν σχέσιν), transcending the opposition between acting upon itself and being acted upon by

³¹ See also *Myst.* 1, 4, p. 11, 9-11; 1, 5, p. 19, 5 *et passim*; *DA* 20 = *STOB.* 1, 49, 37, p. 373, 10-11. Steel argues that Iamblichus uses the triad in order to organise the doxographical section of his treatise on the soul: *DA* 1-9 (οὐσία of soul); 10-13 (δυνάμεις of soul); 14-24 (ἐνέργειαι of soul) = *STOB.* 1, 362, 24-367, 9; 367, 10-370, 13; 370, 14-375, 28. Cfr. C. STEEL, *The Changing Self*, cit., p. 60 note 31. According to the excellent analysis of *DA* in I.L. MARTONE, *La struttura del 'De anima' di Giamblico*, cit., this is not the main structuring principle.

itself (ἐξηρημένην τοῦ ποιεῖν εἰς ἑαυτὴν καὶ πάσχειν ὑφ' ἑαυτῆς). Is it likely, then, that in the case of the classes superior to the soul, one would put up with distinguishing their properties according to active or passive motions?» (*Myst.* 1, 4, p. 12, 6-14).

At what level of the aforementioned triad should we situate self-motion? One could think that Iamblichus is thinking of motion as an *activity*. For indeed, is this not what a motion is supposed to be? Iamblichus' remark seems to be intended to illustrate the idea that there are activities that transcend the opposition between activity and passivity. Yet the presence of the term "essential" (οὐσιώδης) points in another direction. Indeed, as we shall see below, Iamblichus intends self-motion as belonging to the very essence of the soul. This does not mean, however, that it would not be an activity. What is more, the soul is even essentially activity; it is the activity of life. The confusion is dispelled if we understand that this type of activity is different from that denoted by the third term of the triad essence-power-activity. There "activity" refers to changes brought about by the soul (i.e. external activity) that do not invariably flow from its essence. The intermittent nature of that kind of activity is therefore characteristic of them. It is here distinguished from the essential self-motion of the soul. Let us call it "secondary self-motion" (not to be confused with the *derivative* self-motion which is that of animals). Porphyry makes the mistake, so Iamblichus claims, of assuming that the (secondary) activities determine essential differences between different types of soul. In reality it is the other way around: essence determines, i.e. produces, activity³².

The most striking claim made by the passage at hand is that self-motion of the human soul should not be thought of as involving an active and a passive aspect. In view of *Phaedr.* 245 c 5-9, this is an astonishing remark, given Plato's argument which is *based* on the distinction between active and passive motion: that which moves something else and is moved by another (τὸ δ' ἄλλο κινεῖν καὶ ὑπ' ἄλλου κινούμενον) sees its motion coming to an end. Only that which moves

³² *Myst.* 1, 4, pp. 13, 9-14, 3. See also *DA* 18-19 = *Stob.* 1, 49, 37, pp. 372, 15-373, 8.

itself (μόνον δὴ τὸ αὐτὸ κινεῖν), because it does not abandon itself – implied is: because it does not stop to exercise active motion, i.e. to cause motion – never stops being moved (κινούμενον). In addition, this self-motion is the source of motion – i.e. an active mover – for non-self-movers that exhibit passive motion (κινεῖται). The upshot of the expression “that which moves itself” – and of the entire passage – seems to be that self-motion involves an active-causal, and a passive-caused aspect. Yet this twofold aspect is exactly what Aristotle found to be problematic about the concept of self-motion.

The active voice of the transitive verb “to move” (κινέω) standardly expresses the efficient causation of motion, with the grammatical subject as efficient cause. The grammatical subject of the verb in the passive voice (or the object of the verb in the active voice) is that which undergoes efficient causation³³. On Aristotle’s analysis of motion, the cause should be in actuality that which it causes in the patient. The patient, in turn, cannot already be in actuality, but only potentially, what it will be caused to be. If, however, that which moves (“the mover”) is identical with that which is moved, this thing that is mover and moved with respect to a numerically identical motion should have in actuality the same property that it has merely potentially. Aristotle’s solution is to get rid of (primary) self-movers and substitute unmoved movers for them. An “unmoved mover”, as the expression itself reveals, has only active, and no passive motion. It causes motion without being in motion. Iamblichus opts for a different solution: to retain self-motion, but to conceptualise it as corresponding to the middle voice of the verb, as it were. If that entails the complete loss of any active causal sense, the risk of introducing an uncaused motion becomes very real³⁴. The only hope to avoid this, so it seems,

³³ For this connection between grammatical and logical categories, see ARISTOT. *cat.* 2 a 3-4.

³⁴ Analogously, I would argue that the concept of the self-caused is deeply misguided: something that is caused by itself, in fact simply exists, without being caused at all. Hence what the expression usually (but misleadingly) denotes is the absence of external causation. For something to be a cause of itself, it would have to be (ontologically) prior to itself. Plotinus was well aware of the fact that the One does not really produce itself: cfr. VI 8 [39] 20, 1-17. In fact, ancient Platonists were

would be to deny that this kind of motion involves the actualisation of a potentiality.

Iamblichus may have taken this idea from Plotinus, who in his aporetic critique of Aristotle's categories suggests – even if his final take on the issue is not so clear – that motion, in particular self-motion, needs not necessarily involve a combination of activity and passivity³⁵. Even if one grants the distinction between activity and passivity as being essential to motion, so Plotinus argues, it is hard to see what the passive would be in the case of motions “from oneself, but not extending to other things”, such as reasoning or getting angry, on the basis of an internal cause, i.e. an opinion – what we would call a self-motion, that is³⁶. Plotinus also suggests that activity and passivity may be relative notions: the same motion may be regarded as action in one being, and as passion in another³⁷. Such considerations may have given Iamblichus the idea that in the case of self-motion this distinction becomes invalid. Although Iamblichus' dependence on Plotinus' critique of Aristotle's categorial analysis merits a separate and more extensive treatment, at least it has become clear that Iamblichus' own

not committed to the absurd thesis that an essence can produce its own existence, entertained in later times. For the problem of the self-causative nature of the One in Plotinus, see W. BEIERWALTES, *Causa sui. Plotins Begriff des Einen als Ursprung des Gedankens der Selbstursächlichkeit*, in J.J. CLEARY (ed.), *Traditions of Platonism. Essays in Honour of John Dillon*, Aldershot 1999, pp. 191-226: 194-6, discussing the paradoxical nature of the concept, and also Plotinus' reasons for using it (pp. 196-215). His analysis in my view only shows that Plotinus does indeed *not* accept self-causation of the One.

³⁵ PLOT. VI 1 [42] 19, 23-26; 33-35. It can safely be assumed that Iamblichus was aware of this text. When he discusses Plotinus' view on the relation between the soul and the body from the perspective of motion, he uses the term “detached” (ἀπόλυτος), which is probably due to Plotinus' use of the same term in VI 1 [42] 18, 5-8; 22, 3; 22, 21. See IAMBL. DA 32 = STOB. 1, 49, 41, p. 382, 11-16. Moreover, from the fragments of the commentary on the *Categories*, preserved by Simplicius, it is clear that Iamblichus knew Plotinus' critique of Aristotle in *enn.* VI 1-3 quite well. I thank Riccardo Chiaradonna for drawing my attention to these connections.

³⁶ PLOT. VI 1 [42] 21, 9-11. It should be noted that, in VI 1 [42] 16, Plotinus has argued against the Aristotelian distinction between motion (κίνησις) and activity (ἐνέργεια).

³⁷ PLOT. VI 1 [42] 22, 10-19.

criticism of Aristotle may very well have been inspired by these arguments devised by Plotinus.

Iamblichus holds on to the concept of self-movers and integrates them, like his successors also do, into a hierarchy of movers, including unmoved movers and moved movers³⁸. I have assumed that the concept of self-motion to which Iamblichus refers in *Myst.* 1, 4 addresses Aristotle's criticism (the understanding of which is possibly mediated by Plotinus). It is certainly a promising line of argument to take against Aristotle, for if self-motion were to be a simple concept not involving an active and a passive aspect, Aristotle's criticism loses its sting. Moreover, it is not in itself an absurd idea, as the Newtonian account of motion shows. Unfortunately, the comparison with classical physics also points to a problem for any ancient Platonist: by accepting a simple self-motion of this kind one runs the risk of accepting an uncaused motion (Newton only needs causes for changes of motion, not for motion itself). This also becomes clear when one looks at it in the following way: a motion that is supposedly simple in this sense does not involve two aspects. Since "being in motion" was held to be identical with passive motion, there is no room left for active, causative motion. Iamblichus' remark also raises a problem for the translation of the adjective αὐτοκίνητος in other texts: in general it would already be more correct to render it as "self-moved" rather than the more usual "self-moving" (though for Aristotle that would not make a

³⁸ As D.P. TAORMINA-R.M. PICCIONE, *Giamblico. I frammenti dalle Epistole*, cit., p. 368 note 86, explains, Iamblichus postulates higher forms of motion for the intelligible and for the intellect. The intelligible is called ἀεικίνητος: this motion is circular, continuous and without beginning nor end (*in cat.* test. 33, 9 = SIMPL. *in cat.* 116, 33; *in cat.* test. 36, 15 = SIMPL. *in cat.* 128, 31). The intellect and intellectual life possess a motion that is carried around uniformly in the same place (κίνησις κατὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἐν ταύτῳ περιεγόμενη: said to be proper to the "intellect and intellectual life": *in Tim.* fr. 55, 4-7, see below, 2.5). Paradoxically, the motion of the intellect is motionless (*in Tim.* fr. 55, 11-12). As a matter of fact, the entire realm above the soul is motionless. This is also true for the very first god (*Myst.* 8, 2, p. 261, 11), for the gods, their order and activity (*Myst.* 1, 5, p. 18, 9; 2, 4 p. 74, 13; 6, 6, p. 247, 13), and for mathematical (see below, 2.3). In the case of the first god it is probably not allowed to speak of a motionless motion, as in the case of the intellect. The very first has nothing to do with motion at all.

difference: a self-moved is also a self-mover³⁹), but in the light of Iamblichus' account it would be better still to get rid of the active/passive distinction altogether – hence the advantage of “self-motive”, the translation proposed by J. Finamore and J. Dillon. Yet it is not clear whether it is allowed to transpose the present analysis to the other texts in which Iamblichus uses the term, and for some arguments it may even be misleading to avoid the idea of passive motion.

2.2. *Self-motion, life, and immortality*

Commenting on *Phaed.* 78 B, Olympiodorus⁴⁰ reports that according to Iamblichus the famous Argument from Similarity demonstrates the immortality of the soul, this because the soul is non-composite and not in a subject. Composition (C) and being in a subject (iS) are the two conditions for destructibility according to Plotinus⁴¹. This would mean that each of these two conditions is sufficient, and moreover that the fact that at least one of the two obtains ($C \vee iS$) constitutes a necessary condition. In fact the disjunction is exclusive, as the first member (C) applies to bodies alone and the second (iS) exclusively to incorporeals⁴². More important for the argument, however, is that if a thing fulfils neither condition, it is not destructible (Proclus disagrees⁴³). Iamblichus proves that according to Plato the soul is not in a subject, because Plato says that it rules (δεσπόζειν) over the body, and elucidates this by saying that it imparts life to it (ζωοποιῶσα αὐτό) and that it is self-moved (αὐτοκίνητος οὔσα). The last remark is indeed meant to explain *what* the rule of the souls consist in, not to show *that* Plato thinks the soul rules the body. The rule of the soul is indeed explicitly stated in the course of Plato's argument⁴⁴, whereas he does not mention either self-motion or the production of life. The

³⁹ τὸ αὐτοκίνητον is often used as an equivalent for τὸ ἑαυτὸ κινεῖν, “that which moves itself”.

⁴⁰ OLYMP. in *Phaed.* 13, 4, 6-18 = IAMBL. in *Phaed.* fr. 4.

⁴¹ See PLOT. IV 7 [2] 11-12.

⁴² IAMBL. in *Phaed.* fr. 4, 10-13.

⁴³ Cfr. DAMASC. in *Phaed.* II 29, 7-11.

⁴⁴ PLAT. *Phaed.* 80 A 2.

context does not permit us to extract much information about Iamblichus' concept of self-motion, except for the fact that the soul has it, that it plays a role in its rule over the body, and that it is intimately linked to life⁴⁵. Iamblichus here focuses on the idea that self-motion imparts motion to the body, and hence rules it, and maybe also on the idea that self-motion excludes being extrinsically moved, *c.q.* by the body. If the soul rules the body, it does not have its existence in a subject, and is separable from the body; hence it can escape the destruction affecting the body. The bestowal of life upon the body seems to be treated as equivalent to the activity of self-motion. In this passage, then, self-motion is not so much taken as referring to the motion exhibited by the soul, but rather to the idea of its being the source of motion for other things. From the outset both ideas were intimately linked (cfr. *Phaedr.* 245 c 9). As the next passage shows, Iamblichus probably drew a fine distinction between the vital self-motion of the soul and the bestowal of life upon the body.

A testimony from Hermias' commentary on the *Phaedrus* does not add much to the picture, at least not at first sight. Again the question is about immortality, more particularly whether "individual nature" (ἡ μερική φύσις) is immortal for being self-moved. The reason given for the immortality assumption is comparable to the argument of the previous text, yet in the present passage mortality is denied, the reason being that it is not the particular *nature* (the so-called irrational soul) that is self-moved, but rather the soul. Iamblichus and Porphyry are said to agree on this view: "particular nature" is merely an instrument of the soul, is moved by it, and moves bodies (in other words: it is a moved mover)⁴⁶. Note that it does not follow that the irrational soul is perishable: it could be imperishable without having self-motion, as J. Dillon points out⁴⁷. Nor is there a conflict with the previous text: in

⁴⁵ Cfr. also *Myst.* 1, 5, pp. 18, 19-19, 1.

⁴⁶ IAMB. in *Phaedr.* fr. 2 = HERM. in *Phaedr.* 113, 23-27. If one includes the next line of the text (113, 28) with the fragment, we get the additional information that the individual nature has self-motion by way of an image (τὸ αὐτοκίνητον εἰδολικῶς) and instrumentally.

⁴⁷ J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis dialogos*, cit., p. 250.

the case of an incorporeal entity, destructibility does not follow from the lack of self-motion, but from being in a subject. Being in a subject is there declared to be incompatible with ruling the body, whereas self-motion is taken to be either a sign or a sufficient condition of the latter. But even if self-motion is a necessary condition for the rule over the body – which cannot be conclusively derived from our text, yet is quite plausible – there is not a problem, given that the rule over the body can hardly be a necessary condition for not being in a subject. This interpretation allows us to avoid a conflict with doxographical information according to which Iamblichus was committed to the immortality of the irrational soul⁴⁸.

The testimony from Hermias may, however, provide one further clue: the motion with which the irrational soul is moved by the rational and which it imparts to bodies is called the ninth by Porphyry and Iamblichus (*in Phaedr.* 113, 27). This refers back to an earlier passage from Hermias' commentary (107, 6-26) where the commentator lists eight plus one motions of the soul. It is therefore likely that this passage, too, draws on Porphyry and Iamblichus⁴⁹. If it is Iamblichean, the passage contains precious information about what kind of motions Iamblichus attributes to the soul. The motions of the soul, it says, are paradigms of the eight bodily motions: (1) generation and (2) corruption; (3) growth and (4) diminution; (5) association and (6) separation; (7) (rectilinear) translation and (8) revolution. Their psychic counterparts are: (1) the soul's ascent away from the realities down here and (2) its falling away from the intelligible; (3) its multiplication of intellections by devoting itself to higher things; (4) the diminution of these same intellections; (5) its simultaneous contemplation of the Forms and (6) its grasping of a single form; (7) its rectilinear motion into the realm of becoming and (8) the going around and unfolding of the Forms and its return to the same position. Hermias adds the remark that it is more appropriate to assume the seventh motion for

⁴⁸ PROCL. *in Tim.* v 3, 234, 32-235, 4 = IAMBL. *in Tim.* fr. 81; DAMASC. *in Phaed.* I 177.

⁴⁹ Cfr. J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis dialogos*, cit., p. 250: «I will leave this formal annexation to some bolder spirit».

human souls and the eighth for divine souls. The ninth motion, finally, is that of incorporeals in the realm of bodies, for instance in the processes of heating, cooling and ensouling. These are, in good Platonic fashion, immaterial powers active in the bodily realm. To these too corresponds a psychic motion, namely the motion by which the soul imparts life to bodies. Of this ninth motion Iamblichus and Porphyry are reported to claim that it actually belongs to the irrational soul, not to the self-moved soul itself⁵⁰. In his final observations on this theory (114, 13-27), Hermias asks what then the proper motion of the soul is: none of the eight bodily motions, and not even the ninth, as these motions are not self-moved. In the *Laws*, self-motion is the tenth and crowning motion⁵¹. One might be forgiven for thinking that this motion is primarily manifested in the motions of thinking, willing, opining, which are typical of the soul. Yet Hermias denies that this is what is in the truest sense the proper motion of the soul. For these motions are intermittent, whereas what we are looking for is an unceasing motion. The motion most proper of the soul is therefore its connatural vivifying motion that it gives to itself and according to which it is moved⁵². This is the true self-motion of the soul, by which it reverts upon itself and perfects itself. Note that this is different from the vivifying motion directed to the body, which Iamblichus and Porphyry consider to belong to irrational nature. Acts of thinking, willing, and the like, Hermias adds, are “lives and motions” stemming from that most proper motion of the soul.

It may seem temerarious to suppose that this remark, too, derives from Iamblichus, yet if one already attributes the account of the nine motions to him, this would be the crowning piece of the theory. Now, according to this account, psychic motions differ from physical motions, the latter being their images. Psychic motions are thinking activities in the broad sense, and thus non-spatial. They are self-motions

⁵⁰ This is probably also the motion mentioned at *leg.* x 894 b 8-9. Cfr. H. BERNARD, *Hermeias von Alexandrien. Kommentar zu Platons 'Phaidros'*, Tübingen 1997, p. 218 note 97.

⁵¹ *Leg.* x 894 c 3-8.

⁵² Compare PHILOP. *de intel.* 45, 50-52.

in a secondary sense, since they are spontaneously generated by the soul and stem from the true self-motion that has even less in common with physical motion. This true self-motion is the one by which the soul continuously reverts upon itself, thus constituting and perfecting itself. This account agrees with Plato's description of self-motion as the only perpetual motion (reading τὸ αἰκίνητον in *Phaedr.* 245 c 5).

A fragment taken from Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus* agrees with the information provided by Hermias⁵³. The world-soul is called self-moving in its life-giving capacity, which takes the form (σχῆμα) of the two circles of the soul, the image of which is the spherical form of the world. Analogously, human souls are imitated by our spherically revolving soul vehicles, while the intellection of the soul (a self-motion, although this is not said explicitly) imitates the activity of the intellect. Analogously, the ascents and descents of the souls are imitated by the rectilinear motions of bodies, which are indeed motions of bodies that are not in their natural place. This passage thus lends some support to the attribution of the nine-fold classification of psychic and corporeal motions to Iamblichus, for there too the descent into becoming (but not ascent) was likened to the rectilinear corporeal motions.

Further information is provided by an excerpt from a letter *To Macedonius, on Fate*⁵⁴: the essence (οὐσία) of the soul is said to be «immaterial, incorporeal, completely exempt from generation and corruption, possessing of itself existence and life, entirely self-moved and first principle of nature and of motions in general»⁵⁵. The fact that self-motion is said to belong to the essence of the soul constitutes further evidence for the view that self-motion is not just a matter of

⁵³ IAMBL. in *Tim.* fr. 49, 9-18 = PROCL. in *Tim.* III 2, 72, 8-19.

⁵⁴ *Ep. ad Mac. de fat.* fr. 2, apud STOB. II 8, 43, p. 173, 3-17.

⁵⁵ Apud STOB. II 8, 43, p. 173, 5-8 = D.P. TAORMINA, *Le δυνάμεις dell'anima. Psicologia ed etica in Giamblico*, in H.J. BLUMENTHAL-E.G. CLARK (eds.), *The Divine Iamblichus. Philosopher and Man of Gods*, London 1993, pp. 30-47: 37: Οὐσία ἐστὶν αἴθερος ἢ τῆς ψυχῆς καθ' ἑαυτήν, ἀσώματος, ἀγέννητος πάντα καὶ ἀνώλεθρος, παρ' ἑαυτῆς ἔχουσα τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ζῆν, αὐτοκίνητος παντελῶς καὶ ἀρχὴ τῆς φύσεως καὶ τῶν ὅλων κινήσεων. Trans. J.M. DILLON-W. POLLEICHTNER, *Iamblichus of Chalcis*, cit., pp. 21-3.

the intermittent activities of the soul, but is found at the highest level of the triad essence-power-activities. As in other texts, self-motion is connected with the bestowal of life and motion upon other things⁵⁶. In the same excerpt from the letter Iamblichus writes that, in virtue of its inner, intellectual life, the soul is free. One may infer that the essential self-motion of the soul is its contemplation of intellect. Later in the letter (fragment 4) the reason principle (λόγος) possessed by the soul is also called self-motive, as well as self-subsisting (αὐθυπόστατον)⁵⁷ and active out of itself (ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐνεργοῦντα). The motion of *logos* is what I have called secondary self-motion.

2.3. *Self-motion and mathematics*

Since the mathematical occupies a similar intermediary position as the soul, the question naturally suggests itself as to whether, like the soul, mathematical entities are self-motive. Ph. Merlan has shown convincingly⁵⁸ that the treatment of this issue in *De communis mathematica scientia* suffers from the fact that Iamblichus has compiled material from different sources, without integrating them completely. That is why his account in chapters 3-4 differs crucially from that in chapters 9-10. I do not think that the two accounts are irreconcilable. However, Iamblichus gives no indication as to how such a harmonisation would have to be accomplished. I here merely summarise and comment on Merlan's conclusions. In chapters 3-4, Iamblichus rejects the identification of the realm of mathematics with that of the soul, because, contrary to the soul, mathematical objects are not self-motive. The result is a quadripartite ontological

⁵⁶ See also PLOT. v 1 [10] 2, 1-9: the passage emphasises the bestowal of life, and contains a reference to Plato's account of self-motion in *Phaedr.* 245 c.

⁵⁷ Cfr. J. WHITTAKER, *The Historical Background of Proclus' Doctrine of the αὐθυπόστατα*, in H. DÖRRIE (éd.), *De Jamblique à Proclus*, Vandœuvres-Genève 1974, pp. 193-237; J.M. DILLON-W. POLLEICHTNER, *Iamblichus of Chalcis*, cit., p. 77.

⁵⁸ P. MERLAN, *From Platonism to Neoplatonism*, cit., pp. 11-33. For the intermediate status of mathematics, see also the detailed comparison of Iamblichus with Syrianus and Proclus in G. BECHTLE, *Iamblichus. Aspekte seiner Philosophie und Wissenschaftskonzeption*, Sankt Augustin 2006, esp. pp. 34-40.

structure, with mathematics *and* the soul as two separate intermediary realms between the intellectual and the corporeal⁵⁹. In the later chapters Iamblichus takes a different perspective. The question now is with which branch of mathematics the soul is to be identified. From the outset, Iamblichus here opts for a tripartite structure⁶⁰. His answer to the question will be that the soul is not to be identified with any single branch of mathematics, but with all of them together. The soul comprises arithmetic, geometry, and harmonics. In the course of his argument Iamblichus discusses Xenocrates' and Speusippus' famous definitions of the soul as a self-moving number and as the form of the extended, respectively (the third aspect is that of the soul as the harmony of reason-principles)⁶¹. It is interesting that Iamblichus here plays down the idea of motion⁶², and focuses instead on the function of *number* in Xenocrates' definition, probably in order not to make the contrast with the earlier chapters too stark. Implicitly, the self-motive character of soul is confirmed, which is what interests us here. Iamblichus' partial adoption of Speusippus' definition – it is correct insofar it identifies a fundamental aspect of the soul, but incorrect insofar it situates the soul with respect to only one branch of mathematics – is attractive as well. For it enables an interpretation of Plato's account that avoids making the soul itself extended. As the *form* of extension, it is merely the paradigmatic-productive principle of extension. This is also what is suggested by A.J. Festugière⁶³. The idea that the soul is not extended in substance is indeed adopted by Iamblichus (and later

⁵⁹ IAMBL. *DCMS* 3, p. 13, 9-15; 13, 25; 4, p. 18, 16-18. See also 15, p. 50, 18-19.

⁶⁰ This is confirmed especially by *DCMS* 10, pp. 42, 23-43, 3, a passage that ranks mathematics on a par with the soul.

⁶¹ *DCMS* 9, pp. 40, 7-41, 3. Compare IAMBL. *DA* 4 = STOB. 1, 49, 32, pp. 363, 26-364, 20. See also the notes in A.J. FESTUGIÈRE, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, III: Les doctrines de l'âme*, suivi de *Jamblique. Traité de l'âme*, Traduction et commentaire, Porphyre. *De l'animation de l'embryon* ("Études bibliques"), Paris 1953, pp. 177-83.

⁶² He even omits "self-moved" when quoting the Xenocratic definition of soul at *DCMS* 9, p. 40, 16-17.

⁶³ A.J. FESTUGIÈRE, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, cit., p. 181 note 1,

by Proclus), and helps to counter Aristotle's criticism of self-motion. The motive character of the soul is mentioned in these chapters, too: it is associated with the vital power of the soul, whereas the orderly character of the motions stems from the mathematical aspects of the soul, in the three manifestations of mathematics⁶⁴.

Elsewhere in the text Iamblichus makes a passing reference to "self-moving substance". The expression unmistakably denotes the soul, which is called to mind again by means of a reference to its Xenocratean definition as a self-moved number⁶⁵. Iamblichus' account of mathematics and the soul may be fruitfully compared to Proclus', who calls the mathematical relations in the soul self-motive, but makes clear that «this motion, being mathematical, is neither spatial motion nor change»⁶⁶.

2.4. *A report by Michael Psellus*

Michael Psellus attributes to Iamblichus, but also to Plato and Aristotle, the view that the self-motive aspect of soul is "reason" (λόγος): this is not the cause of soul, but soul is the cause of the self-moved. This cause moreover coexists with its product and is not separate from it⁶⁷. The fact that Psellus ascribes this view to these three philosophers could be an indication that he found it in Iambli-

referring to IAMBL. *apud* SIMPL. *in cat.* 135, 8-27 (= fr. 37 L.). See also J.F. FINAMORE-J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichus. De anima*, cit., p. 81.

⁶⁴ IAMBL. *DCMS* 9, p. 41, 9-15; 10, p. 43, 9. Cfr. J.F. FINAMORE-J.M. DILLON, *ibid.* (arguing against L. Tarán): «Certainly, for Speusippus, the soul appears at a lower level than numbers and geometrical magnitudes, but that does not mean to say that it is not in some sense a mathematical or geometrical entity. What it adds, no doubt, is motion, or motivity – very like Xenocrates's conception of soul as a 'self-moving number'».

⁶⁵ *DCMS* 19, p. 64, 4-6.

⁶⁶ P. MERLAN, *From Platonism to Neoplatonism*, cit., p. 22. Cfr. PROCL. *in Eucl.* 17, 22-24; 18, 22-24.

⁶⁷ *Theologica*, Op. 97, 29-32: αὐτίκα καὶ Πλάτων καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης καὶ ὁ μέγας Ἰάμβλιχος λόγον φασὶν εἶναι τὸ αὐτοκίνητον τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ οὐ δήπου τὸ αὐτοκίνητον ψυχῆς αἴτιον, ἀλλὰ τοῦ αὐτοκινήτου ψυχῆ· αἴτιον δὲ οὐχ ὡς κεχωρισμένον, ἀλλ' ὡς συνυπάρχον.

chus, who declared it to be in agreement with Plato and Aristotle⁶⁸. If this statement is indeed attributable to Iamblichus, one may infer that it was part of Iamblichus' attempt to overcome the difference between Plato and Aristotle with respect to self-motion and to neutralise Aristotle's criticism. The gist of Iamblichus' claim would be that soul, as the cause of the self-motive *logos*, transcends self-motion, without however being separate from it. This probably means that the self-motive *logos* is itself psychic, i.e. internal to the soul, but not situated at the highest level of the soul. This may seem not to agree very well with the evidence discussed above, which suggests that true self-motion is not a mere activity of the soul, but is the constitutive reversion of the soul upon itself. *Logos* is indeed what is *produced* by the soul and can therefore hardly be the constitutive motion of the soul. Psellus' report may lack precision, yet there is no fundamental contradiction. The motion of *logos* may be regarded as "secondary self-motions". These are the self-motions of thought, proper of, and issued by, the soul. This interpretation agrees with the mention of the self-motion of *logos* in the *Letter to Macedonius* (see above, 2.2).

Psellus' doxographic report can be made to fit with the fact that Iamblichus includes into his concept of soul the notion of harmony existing in *logoi*⁶⁹. This would allow Iamblichus to posit a level at which the soul is free of (passive) motion. Accordingly, the partial adoption of Speusippus' definition amounts to the idea that, at its highest level, the soul transcends extension. Iamblichus may have thought that this corresponds to Aristotle's view that every (derivative) self-mover has an unmoved mover internal to it. All of this is speculative, of course. As we will see below, Iamblichus argues that only on a Peripatetic misreading of Aristotle is unmoved motion regarded as fundamentally incompatible with the Platonic theory of motion.

⁶⁸ Which appears to have been a typical move: cfr. *DA* 7 = *STOB.* 1, 49, 32, p. 366, 5-11.

⁶⁹ *IAMBL. DCMS* 9, p. 40, 17 and see above, 2.3.

2.5. *Self-motion compared with intellectual motion*

The reversion of the soul to itself – if this is indeed what Iamblichus considers to be its true self-motion – is an ontologically constitutive motion. It makes the soul into what it is. One might think that this is no motion at all, or at best some paradoxical motionless motion, yet, in a fragment that can be securely attributed to him⁷⁰, Iamblichus carefully distinguishes between the self-moved motion of the soul and, indeed, the unmoved motion (κίνησις ἀκίνητος) of the intellect. The latter is a motion that «exists as a whole all at once and unitarily» (ὅλη γὰρ ἅμα καὶ ἐνιαίως ὑφέστηκεν), that is uniform (μονοειδής), one and indivisible (εἷς καὶ ἀδιαίρετος), whereas psychic self-motion is dyadic (δυοειδής), divides itself up and multiplies itself (ἐαυτὴν διαιροῦσα καὶ πολλαπλασιάζουσα). This bit of speculation is introduced in the context of Iamblichus' remarkable interpretation of *Tim.* 36 c 2-3, where Plato writes that the demiurge "includes" the two circles of the soul «in that motion which is carried around uniformly in the same place». The motion in which they are included is not the motion of soul, but that of «intellect and intellectual life», as Iamblichus interprets the passage. Proclus agrees: if one does not accept this interpretation, Plato would explain nowhere in what manner the soul is joined to the intellect. We can safely ignore this piece of exegetical wizardry, in order to turn to the contrast drawn between psychic and intellectual motion. It is legitimate, I think, to wonder what the differences between the expressions used to qualify each really mean. After all, when compared with the One the intellect can be called dyadic too. And compared with physical motions, the self-motion of the soul is likely to be labelled as indivisible and unchanging – features that here, in the comparison with the intellect, are denied of it. It would therefore seem to be appropriate to regard these descriptive adjectives not as denoting absolute qualities of each type of motion, but rather as allowing us to see that the so-called motion of the intellect merely possesses a greater degree of unity and uniformity than

⁷⁰ IAMB. *in Tim.* fr. 55 = PROCL. *in Tim.* III 2, 250, 22-251, 14 (Dillon puts the end of the fragment already at 251, 11).

that of the soul. But even then the epithets used retain some mysterious quality. S. Gersh has done an excellent job at explaining the “motionless motion” of the intellect⁷¹. The expression does not just refer to the motive power that an unmoved intellect exerts on other things, but also to the inner activity and life of the intellect. These two aspects can already be seen in Aristotle’s unmoved mover: the intellect is a mover of other things and as such unmoved, but it can also be described with respect to its inner activity – self-thinking – which is in a way a kind of non-physical motion (to be associated with the term ἐνέργεια rather than κίνησις)⁷². Hence the expression “motionless motion” cannot simply be reduced to the affirmation of active, causal motion combined with a denial of passive motion.

“Motion” in the intellect amounts to the timeless procession and reversion by which intellective beings are constituted⁷³. In the case of the soul too, Iamblichus appears to think that the most fundamental self-motion of the soul is its procession and reversion by which it gives life to itself and constitutes itself as essentially a principle of life. That is its self-motion, in virtue of which the soul is living, and as a secondary consequence of which it is also life-giving. Contrary to intellective motion, this self-constitutive motion is not timeless. Iamblichus appears to think that this self-motion is not just an activity of the soul, but belongs to the level of power and even substance. This agrees with

⁷¹ S.E. GERSH, *Κίνησις ἀκίνητος*, cit.; ID., *From Iamblichus to Eriugena. An Investigation of the Prehistory and Evolution of the Pseudo-Dionysian Tradition* (“Studien zur Problemgeschichte der antiken und mittelalterlichen Philosophie”, VIII), Leiden 1978, pp. 67-81.

⁷² At *Myst.* 10, 6, p. 292, 10 some sort of self-motion is attributed to the demiurge, i.e. to an intellect. The way that leads to human happiness unites the soul with the demiurge’s self-generating (αὐτογόνῳ), self-moving and intellectual power. Iamblichus possibly means that in virtue of its own self-motive power the soul is united with the demiurge and his activities, which prefigure those of the souls. The passage is nonetheless striking. That the demiurge is considered to be the cause of the self-motion of the soul is borne out by another passage, in which Iamblichus states that the demiurge does not create by means of physical motions, but by his thoughts, using the hypercosmic and encosmic souls as his intermediaries (3, 28, pp. 168, 16-169, 1).

⁷³ Cfr. S.E. GERSH, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, cit., p. 68.

his idiosyncratic doctrine of the soul being affected by change in its entirety (see below, 2.7). This doctrine sets Iamblichus apart from Plotinus, but also from most of his successors, for instance Proclus. But also regarding the demarcation between time and eternity Iamblichus' view appears to differ from Proclus': for Proclus the activities of the soul develop in time, but its essence is not subject to time⁷⁴.

2.6. *Self-motion in the excerpts from 'De anima'*

In his work *On the Soul*, excerpts of which have been preserved by Stobaeus, Iamblichus expressly addresses the Peripatetic doctrine of the soul as an unmoved mover. According to the Peripatetics⁷⁵, the soul is unmoved, yet is the cause of motions. Iamblichus distinguishes between motion (κίνησις) and activity (ἐνέργεια), and construes a dilemma: either "unmoved" also means "without activity" (ἀνενέργητον), in which case something without activity, i.e. the soul, is the originator of activity; or the soul comprehends within itself activity and this activity is the end, the principle of coherence and the unity, and the stable cause, of motions. This is what Aristotle calls the unmoved (or unmoveable) entelechy (ἄκίνητος ἐντελέχεια). If this is what is meant, the accomplishment of individual actions of animals proceeds from the most perfect activity⁷⁶. Although he does not explicitly say so, it is clear that Iamblichus rejects the first horn of the dilemma (because he appears to be committed to the view that whatever generates activity must itself be *some kind of* activity too, in this case a transcendent and internal activity). The upshot of the second horn would be that an unmoved activity is the cause of *all* activities. This unmoved activity can only be that of the intellect, as J. Finamore and J. Dillon argue. The implied criticism is then that Aristotle is

⁷⁴ Cfr. PROCL. *el. theol.* 191. See also PLOT. IV 4 [28] 15, 16-17.

⁷⁵ Cf. J.F. FINAMORE-J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichus. De anima*, cit., p. 119: «Here again the doctrine should be understood not as Aristotle's but as that of later Peripatetics who 'misunderstood' Aristotle's 'true' doctrine, even though Aristotle (*De An* 405b30-b25) does argue against the position that the soul moves itself».

⁷⁶ IAMBL. *DA* 16 = STOB. 1, 49, 36, p. 370, 16-25.

wrong in making the intellect the principle of all, including lowly activities⁷⁷.

Iamblichus contrasts this with the Platonic position⁷⁸. He wants to argue that not all activities of the animal directly derive from the essence of the soul. There is a «congenital essence and life of the soul» (τῇ συμφύτῳ τῆς ψυχῆς οὐσία καὶ ζωῇ), but this is not what produces all activities of the animal. Most of its activities are related to the compound of soul and body, and are «accompanied by change, division, and spatial and temporal extension» (ἐπεὶ μεταβολὴ καὶ διαίρεσις καὶ παράτασις περὶ τὸ σῶμα καὶ κατὰ χρόνον καὶ τόπον διάστασις ἐπισυμπίπτει). These are not proper to soul itself and do not belong to its “incorporeal life”. The life of the soul is “twofold” and comprises two types of activities (ἐνεργήματα), those of the soul alone and those of the compound. And among the latter he further distinguishes activities initiated by the soul and others that arise from bodily affections. Yet all have the soul as their principal cause. Obviously, then, Iamblichus holds the view that the essential activity of the soul is vital, incorporeal and unextended, and hence non-physical⁷⁹. Iamblichus also tells us what these activities proper to the soul are: «those of divine possession, immaterial intellection and, in a word, those by which we are joined to the gods»⁸⁰. For these activities the soul does not need the body.⁸¹ The soul produces the activities proper to it «out of itself and attaches them to itself» (ἀφ’ αὐτῆς καὶ περὶ αὐτήν)⁸²; these transcend nature and are productive of nature⁸³. These activities are thus described in a vocabulary that is reminiscent of the Platonic doctrine of self-motion. In order to harmonise this text with other texts examined above, we should specify that the activities mentioned here may very well be self-motive, yet are still different from the

⁷⁷ Cf. J.F. FINAMORE-J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichus. De anima*, cit., pp. 119-21.

⁷⁸ IAMBL. *DA* 16 = STOB. 1, 49, 36, pp. 370, 25-371, 22.

⁷⁹ The Platonic tradition is also contrasted with the Stoic, according to which all motions are corporeal: cfr. *DA* 16 = STOB. 1, 49, 36, pp. 371, 22-372, 2.

⁸⁰ *DA* 16 = STOB. 1, 49, 36, p. 371, 20-22.

⁸¹ *DA* 20 = STOB. 1, 49, 37, p. 373, 9-21.

⁸² *DA* 22 = STOB. 1, 49, 37, p. 374, 17.

⁸³ *DA* 22 = STOB. 1, 49, 37, p. 374, 11-20.

primary self-motion of the soul, which is even higher and is its self-constitutive uninterrupted reversion towards itself. Indeed, the activities mentioned in the passage at hand, by which the soul contemplates and intelligises, are intermittent.

2.7. *The changing soul*

The “changing self” is an expression introduced into Iamblichean studies by C. Steel. According to Iamblichus there is no part of the soul that can remain completely unaffected by its descent. With this claim Iamblichus’ rejects a fundamental doctrine of Plotinus⁸⁴. Iamblichus argues that the soul goes forth in its entirety and projects itself outward, but also reverts and reunites itself by a gradual process with its original objects of knowledge, thus reassembling itself into undivided unity⁸⁵. The process of going out and losing itself, however, never reaches the stage where the soul would become divided and changed, for that would mean that it were indistinguishable from the lower realm of becoming. Conversely, it will never be completely undivided⁸⁶. This is why the soul is truly intermediary. It is by being both divided and undivided and by simultaneously progressing and reverting that the soul is constituted ontologically. «It is precisely as identity-in-change that it is ‘the middle between the divisible and the indivisible’»⁸⁷. Its changing nature is therefore what constitutes its invariable essence and self-identity⁸⁸. Change affects not just the activities and powers of the soul, but also its substance. For if we do not

⁸⁴ See *in Tim.* fr. 87, 19-20 = PROCL. *in Tim.* v 3, 334, 26-27; IAMBL. *apud* (PS.)SIMPL. *in de an.* 6, 12-17. Cfr. J.F. FINAMORE-J.M. DILLON, *Iamblichus. De anima*, cit., pp. 253-4.

⁸⁵ C. STEEL, *The Changing Self*, cit., p. 63. IAMBL. *apud* (PS.)SIMPL. *in de an.* 90, 1-25; 219, 36-220, 12; 223, 24-33.

⁸⁶ C. STEEL, *The Changing Self*, cit., p. 64.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52; ID., *L’âme: modèle et image*, in H.J. BLUMENTHAL-E.G. CLARK (eds.), *The Divine Iamblichus*, cit., pp. 14-29: 19-20. See also (PS.)SIMPL. *in de an.* 94, 33-95, 6.

⁸⁸ IAMBL. *apud* (PS.)SIMPL. *in de an.* 220, 12-15, with C. STEEL, *The Changing Self*, cit., p. 39 note 26; *ibid.*, 241, 15-19.

accept substantial change⁸⁹, we cannot explain changes in activities, as activities flow from substance⁹⁰. Change in psychic substance is only attributed to the average human soul in its incarnate state⁹¹. If there is change of substance during its earthly life⁹², however, the descent and ascent themselves (the incarnations and disincarnations) should be changes of substance too.

Pseudo-Simplicius, our main source for Iamblichus' doctrine of the substantial change of the soul (C. Steel identifies him with Priscianus), offers an ontological interpretation of the term αὐτοκίνητον, according to which the concept agrees with the intermediate position of the soul, between the unmoved and undivided (αὐτο-) and the divided, the realm of the moved. The morphological element κίνητον is even said to *signify* the divisible nature (τῆς μεριστῆς ἐστὶ σημαντικόν). The complex term self-motion thus primarily denotes the preservation of identity in motion (*in de an.* 26, 22-31). Steel points out that this understanding of the nature of the soul agrees with Iamblichus, without expressly claiming, however, that this interpretation of the term "self-motion" stems from the latter. He also remarks that this understanding of self-motion is considerably different from «the generally accepted Neoplatonic explanation which presented this term as referring to *self-movement*»⁹³. The Neoplatonic triad remaining-proceeding-reverting, on which pseudo-Simplicius' explanation of the term "self-motion" is based, and its application to the soul are without any doubt Iam-

⁸⁹ Obviously, "substantial change" here denotes a change affecting substance, and is different from "Aristotelian" substantial change (generation and corruption).

⁹⁰ IAMBL. *apud* PRISC. *metaphr.* 32, 13-19; *apud* (PS.-)SIMPL. *in de an.* 240, 33-241, 15; C. STEEL, *The Changing Self*, cit., pp. 52-69.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 61; D.P. TAORMINA, *Le δυνάμεις dell'anima*, cit., p. 37. Some blessed human souls may escape this fate: cfr. C. STEEL, *Il sé che cambia. L'anima nel tardo Neoplatonismo: Giamblico, Damascio e Prisciano*, trans. L.I. Martone, Bari 2006, pp. 267-8, and also G. SHAW, *Theurgy and the Soul. The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus*, Pennsylvania 1995, pp. 53-5.

⁹² According to *Myst.* 2, 4, p. 79, 5-6, souls are changed by many motions.

⁹³ C. STEEL, *The Changing Self*, cit., pp. 67-8.

blichean⁹⁴. The explanation is moreover very much in line with Iamblichus' hermeneutical practice. It is highly likely, therefore, that it indeed stems from Iamblichus.

Even so, that does not mean that Iamblichus did not at the same time understand self-motion in the more usual manner. The other texts that I have discussed indeed confirm this. What, however, are the implications of the famous doctrine of substantial change affecting the substance of soul for Iamblichus' theory of self-motion? This is an intriguing question and we can only speculate about the answer. I address it in the following and final section.

3. *Concluding remarks*

As we have seen, the primary self-motion of the soul is the self-constitutive reversion to itself. The secondary self-motions are those of the thinking activities proper to itself, also described as those of the *logos* produced by the soul (I thus take both expressions as equivalent). By the fact that the soul is self-motive, it moreover produces motions in moved movers. The essential change exhibited by the soul is likely to be a self-motion. Even though Iamblichus stresses the invariability of the soul's essence, he also says that this invariability consists in its changing nature. If this is indeed supposed to take place at the level of essence, the soul's primary and constitutive self-motion exhibits change. This would also imply that the manner of self-reversion changes when the soul descends. We also know that true self-motion by-passes the distinction between activity and passivity. The "changing" of the "self" is thus a change corresponding to the absolute, intransitive usage of the verb. It presumably somehow transcends ordinary motion and even non-physical motion insofar as the latter is still understood as the actualisation of a potentiality. Iamblichus nowhere explains how we should conceive of such a motion.

Although not all details are clear, a fairly consistent picture emerges from the dispersed remarks relative to self-motion. Iambli-

⁹⁴ Cfr. IAMBL. *in Tim.* fr. 53 = PROCL. *in Tim.* III 2, 215, 5-29.

chus' account agrees with Plotinus' idea that self-motion is intimately connected to life, and that this is not an affection for which the soul is a substrate, but rather that which constitutes the soul. It is also undeniable that Iamblichus anticipates much of the later doctrines about self-motion. It is even possible that his doctrine was as elaborate as Proclus' and was even largely identical to his (yet I have pointed out some differences above), but for lack of evidence we cannot state this with certainty.

University of Leuven

jan.opsomer@hiw.kuleuven.be