17 Action by Being Alone in the *Plotiniana Arabica*

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The question of the origins of the ensemble of works known as the *Plotiniana Arabica* (hereafter: PA) is still a matter of controversy, despite decades of excellent work on the subject. The works known under this title are, of course, paraphrastic translations, containing a large number of interpolations, of extracts from the last three of Plotinus' *Enneads*, but that is where agreement among modern interpreters ceases. In their interpolations, the PA exhibit some notable divergences from the doctrines of Plotinus. Some scholars hold that these divergences are due to the works' editor al-Kindī; others that they are to be attributed to the translator Ibn Nāʿima al-Ḥimṣī. Among the latter, some, like Peter Adamson,[1] insist on the importance of situating the composition of the PA within the context of early ninth-century debates between the Muʿtazilites and their adversaries; others, like Alexander Treiger,[2] feel it is equally important to take into account the background of al-Ḥimṣī, a Syrian Christian likely to have been influenced by Origenistic tendencies. Although the PA were probably not transmitted through a Syriac intermediary, the entire Syriac philosophical tradition,[3] including such leading figures as Sergius of Reshʿaynā,[4] is relevant for an understanding of the background of these works, as is, for that matter, the entire history of the translation movement of Greek and Syriac philosophical works into Arabic in the first two centuries of Islam.[5]

All these factors must be taken into account. However, in my opinion, the Greek Neoplatonist background to the particular constellation of non-Plotinian ideas found in the *Theology of Aristotle* (henceforth: ThA) should not be neglected either. More specifically, I believe, following many earlier scholars,[6] that we should take seriously the title of the ThA itself, which announces that the work is a "Commentary by Porphyry the Syrian." In what follows, I will adduce some considerations in favor of this hypothesis.

The Prologue of the *Theology of Aristotle*

As is well known, the circle of translators around al-Kindī manifested a keen interest in Neoplatonic texts,[7] unlike the slightly later circle of Nestorian translators around Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq (d. 873 CE) and his son

Isḥāq ibn Ḥunain (d. ca. 910 CE), who concentrated on Galen and Aris-
totle. It was Kindī's circle that undertook the translation of excerpts from
Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, leading to the composition of the Arabic
Book of the Pure Good. But what interests us here is the Arabic version of
a series of extracts from Plotinus, entitled *Theology of Aristotle*, which its
prologue describes as follows:

> The first mīmar of the book of the philosopher Aristotle, that is called
> in Greek "Theology." It is the discourse on Divine Sovereignty, com-
> mentary [*tafsīr*] by Porphyry of Tyre, translated into Arabic by ʿAbd
> al-Masīḥ ibn ʿAbd Allah ibn Nāʿima al-Ḥimṣī, corrected for Aḥmad
> ibn al-Muʿtaṣim bi-llah by Abū Yūsuf ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī, may God
> have mercy upon him.[8]

This prologue provides us with several precious pieces of information:
that the translator of the *Theology* was the Syrian Christian ibn Nāʿima
al-Ḥimṣī,[9] that al-Kindī "corrected" or "edited" the work, and that he
did so for Aḥmad ibn al-Muʿtaṣim bi-llah, son of the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim.
This allows us to date the work between 833 and 842 CE. Yet the pro-
logue raises as many questions as it answers. The title of the *Theology of
Aristotle* attributes the work to Aristotle: Was this an innocent mistake or a
deliberate forgery?[10] While the PA consist of paraphrases of extracts from
Plotinus' *Enneads* 4–6, they do not respect the order of Plotinus' text, and
their present structure seems to be chaotic. One of the most influential
suggestions for explaining this state of affairs has it that an original com-
plete Arabic translation of the *Enneads* suffered some material accident
in which the manuscript fell apart and was clumsily put back together,
pretty well any old way, by a subsequent editor;[11] others, with whom I
am inclined to agree, reject this "Big Bang" hypothesis and claim to be
able to discern some order in the PA, although it is hard to perceive at first
glance.[12] Above all, there is the question of authorship. Although the PA
are based on the *Enneads* of Plotinus, they actually consist in some passages
of more or less literal translation of Plotinus embedded within an explan-
atory paraphrase, sometimes including passages of commentary that con-
tain doctrines that are not to be found in Plotinus, while some Plotinian
passages are omitted from the Arabic paraphrase. These differences from
the Greek original—divergence in the order of chapters, the inclusion of
material in the Arabic that is lacking in the Greek, the omission of some
Greek passages from the Arabic, and the addition of commentaries that
sometimes contain views at variance with those contained in the Greek
original—are remarkably similar to those found, for instance, in the Ar-
abic "translation" of Aristotle's *Meteorology* by Yaḥyā (or Yūḥannā) ibn al-
Biṭrīq, a prolific translator active at the Bayt al-Ḥikma and in the circle
of al-Kindī in the first third of the ninth century.[13] After remarking on
these differences from the original Greek text of Aristotle's *Meteorology*,

Paul Lettinck concludes that "it was not Aristotle's original text that was rendered into Arabic but a later Hellenistic paraphrase."[14] The Arabic version of the *De anima*, probably also due to ibn al-Biṭrīq, is also more of a Neoplatonic paraphrase than a translation. According to its editor Rüdiger Arnzen, it goes back to a late sixth-century Greek paraphrase based largely on John Philoponus' commentary on the *De anima*.[15]

One may wonder whether the divergences between the PA and the original Greek text of Plotinus do not warrant a similar conclusion: it was not, or not only, the original text of Plotinus that was translated into Arabic, but an intermediary Greek version (except, of course, that, in this case, the text rendered into Arabic will have been not a Hellenistic, but a Neoplatonic paraphrase posterior to Plotinus' death in 270 CE).[16]

In the PA, in any case, these interpretive passages transform Plotinus into a creationist monotheist, much more acceptable to an Islamic audience than the pagan Neoplatonist would have been. Who is responsible for these modifications? To illustrate the complexity of the question, I'd like to compare some Plotinian doctrines with the way the Adaptor interprets them in the PA.

Some Doctrinal Elements of the *Plotiniana Arabica*

Designations of the First Principle

The PA contain several doctrinal elements that are absent from, or at least not as prominent in, the extant Greek works of Plotinus himself. One is the nature of God or the First Principle: he is referred to, among other designations, as *al-anniyya*, *al-huwiyya*, or *al-ann*, terms which are used elsewhere to render the Greek participle *to on* or the infinitive *to einai*, "being."[17] As Richard C. Taylor pointed out in an important article of 1998, this differs from Plotinus, for whom the One or the First Principle is *beyond* being, while being corresponds to the *second* hypostasis of the *Nous*, or intellect.[18] In contrast, Plotinus' student Porphyry speaks, at least in his *Commentary on the Parmenides*, of the First Principle as being (*to einai*). This is one element that suggests a certain similarity between the metaphysics of Porphyry and that of the PA.

Creation by Mere Being

Another point of similarity concerns the mode of activity of this First Principle. In the PA, this Principle produces the world "by mere being" or "by being alone" (Ar.: *bi-anniyati faqaṭ*). According to this doctrine, God, or the First Principle, creates by his or its very being: not by any particular act of will or intention, not, in fact, by doing anything at all, but merely by being what he/it is. Far from choosing between alternatives and then making a choice before creating the world,[19] God already possesses within

himself what he creates. As the *Theology of Aristotle* states, in a passage that is independent from Plotinus:

> It is impossible for us to say that the Creator first reflected over how to originate things and then after that originated them [. . .] he does not need reflection in creating things because he is the things, by virtue of being their cause.[20]

Similarly, a passage from the *Sayings of the Greek Sage* states that:

> The First Agent must be at rest and unmoved, since it is necessary [. . .] that His action be without deliberation, motion and volition inclining towards the effect [*min-ġayri rawiyyati wa-lā ḥaraka wa-lā irāda māʾila ilā-l-mafʿūl*].[21]

This doctrine seems to have been originally designed to avoid a number of conundrums, paradoxes, or objections that had been or might be raised against the doctrine that God created the world at a specific moment in time. Such questions included, but were not limited to:

i   What was God doing before he created? Was he idle? But if his essence is to be good, and being good implies granting being or existence to other things, as Plato taught in the *Timaeus*, then how could God exist without creating? Was he jealous, miserly, impotent, or all three?

ii Why did God create at a specific time, and not earlier or later? Did he change his mind, altering from an eternal state of not willing to create to a sudden state of willing to create?

The doctrine of creation by being alone (*bi-anniyati faqaṭ*) fulfills several functions. It obviates the need for reflection,[22] will,[23] and choice on the Creator's part, with the resulting damage to the thesis of his divine simplicity and immutability.[24] Indeed, reflection, will, and choice can be considered as intervening between God and his creation, interrupting the immediacy of his relation to them. More importantly, it seems to me, they all imply change and motion in God.

The Doctrine of Instantaneous Creation

In the PA, God or the First Principle creates all things instantaneously, by his mere being:[25]

> every science and every wisdom and every thing [. . .] were all originated at once [*dafʿatan wāḥidatan*], without reflection or thought [*lā bi-rawiyyati wa-lā fikrin*], because their originator was one and simple, originating the simple things all at once [*dafʿatan wāḥidatan*], by his being alone [*bi-annihi faqaṭ*].[26]

This text introduces a link between several doctrines: creation by being alone, creation without reflection or thought, and the doctrine of instantaneous creation. This doctrine holds that God creates all things all at once (Ar.: *dafʿatan wāḥidatan* = Gk.: *athroōs*) or instantaneously. As we read in another fragment of the *Sayings of the Greek Sage*:

> We say that the First Being performs all his action all at once [*al-anniyya al-ūlā faʿalat fiʿlahā kullahu dafʿatan wāḥidatan*].[27]

According to the *Theology of Aristotle*, this instantaneous mode of action of the First Being contrasts with the way Intellect, the second hypostasis, creates:

> The intellect [. . .] is the maker of things, but it makes them one after another in succession and order. As for the First Agent, he makes all the things he makes without an intermediary [*bi-ghayri tawassuṭin*], simultaneously [*maʿān*], and all at once [*fī dafʿati wāḥidatin*].[28]

The connection between these doctrines is further explained by another text from the *Sayings of the Greek Sage*.[29] For creation to take place, we read here, the First Agent must transmit the intelligible forms to the intellect, so that the latter can, with the help of soul, insert the forms into matter, thereby bestowing form, shape, life, and perpetuity upon the universe. But this process must happen all at once or instantaneously (*dafʿatan wāḥidatan*). Otherwise, if we assume that the Intellect receives the forms from the First Agent one by one (*wāḥidatan baʿda wāḥidata*), this would mean that the First Agent would perform only a partial, fragmentary act (*fiʿlan muta-jazziʾan*).[30] If the First Agent carried out his acts one by one, unmanifested acts would still remain within him. But if this were so, he would not make things by being alone (*lam tafʿal al-ashyāʾa bi-annihā faqaṭ*) but by some kind of deliberation and motion (*bi-rawiyyati wa-ḥarakati mā*), which is absurd and repugnant.[31] Indeed, the Greek Sage—who is probably Plotinus—has previously emphasized that the First Cause "is at rest and unmoved by any kind of motion";[32] he "has no motion, since he is prior to thinking and prior to knowledge."[33]

We see here a cluster of several interconnected ideas in the PA: instantaneous creation, creation by being alone, creation without motion, and creation without reflection. Creation must be instantaneous. If it were not, God's action would be piecemeal, and there would always be some parts of it that remains unrealized within him. This, however, would lead to the unpalatable conclusion that God does not create by being alone, which, in turn, would lead us to infer that God creates by reflection or deliberation. Yet if he does create by reflection or deliberation, this would imply motion in him, which is to say, change. But to suppose that God moves or changes is absurd, hence, he does not reflect or deliberate but creates

by his being alone. Hence, he creates everything all at once. We see, then, that the prime motivation behind the doctrine of creation by being alone seems to have been the desire to avoid motion or change on the part of the creative First Principle.

Some Greek Sources of These Concepts

All these notions are, I would argue, ultimately of Greek origin; more specifically, they derive from representatives of Greek Neoplatonic thought of Late Antiquity. The link between motionlessness of the cause and action by being alone was already a prominent feature in Greek philosophy, especially among such later Neoplatonists as Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius.

In the fourth argument of his treatise *On the Eternity of the World*,[34] extant only in the fragments preserved by John Philoponus, Proclus argues that God cannot change. If he did, since change is motion, and motion, according to Aristotle's definition,[35] is an incomplete actuality, then God would change from an imperfect to a perfect state, but such a suggestion is impious. In addition, all change takes place in time, but God is the creator of time. Therefore, no change can take place in God prior to his creation of time.

The doctrine of creation by being alone (Gk.: *autōi tōi einai*) was important in such later Neoplatonists as Hierocles and Proclus.[36] Yet it was first formulated, as far as I know, by Plotinus' student Porphyry of Tyre (ca. 234–ca. 310 CE).[37] According to Proclus, Porphyry wrote:

> Fourth and next is the section of [Porphyry's] arguments in which he shows that the divine Intellect practices a mode of creation [*dēmiourgia*] by mere being [*autōi tōi einai*], and he establishes [this] by a number of arguments. Even artisans, he says, need tools for their activity because they do not have mastery over all their material [*hulē*]. They show this themselves by using these tools to get their material ready for use [*euergos*] by drilling, planing, or turning it, all of which operations do not add form, but merely eliminate the unreadiness of what is to receive the form. The actual rational formula [*logos*], on the other hand, supervenes upon [*paraginesthai*] the substrate timelessly [*akhronōs*] from the art, once all obstacles have been removed. And if there were no obstacle in the case of [artisans] either, they would add the form to the matter instantaneously [*athroōs*] and have absolutely no need of tools.[38]

In Porphyry's argument, we can see the link between creation by being alone and instantaneous creation already established, although in this case it is the Intellect, not the One, that acts in this manner. Proclus, who transmits this fragment, reports Porphyry's rationale for introducing the doctrine of creation by being alone. Craftspeople, such as carpenters or sculptors, need tools because they lack complete mastery over their

material: If they had such mastery, they would need no tools and would insert the form they have in their mind directly into the wood or stone they are working on. This would happen instantaneously, since, as things are now in the real world, the form in the artisan's mind—his notion of the chair he wants to create, for instance—also supervenes instantaneously on matter as soon as all obstacles have been removed. But the divine Intellect has complete mastery over matter, hence, this Intellect creates, that is, it inserts forms within matter, instantaneously.

We find an interesting parallel to this notion in the *Theology of Aristotle*:

> when craftsmen wish to fashion a thing [. . .] when they work they work with their hands and other instruments, whereas when the Creator wishes to make something [. . .] he does not need any instrument in the origination of things [*fī ibdāʿ-l-ashyāʾ*] because he is the cause of instruments, it being he that originated them.[39]

Augustine on Creation in Time

Let us return to the main questions raised by objectors against the idea of creation in time: What was God doing before he created, and why did he create at a specific time, not earlier or later?

Writing in the first quarter of the fifth century CE, hence about fifteen years before Proclus wrote his *Commentary on the Timaeus*, St. Augustine knows of people—probably the Platonists around Porphyry—who raised precisely these questions and came up with the solution of eternal creation:

> But why did the eternal God decide to make heaven and earth at that particular time and not before? [. . .] There are some who admit that the world is created by God, but refuse to allow it a beginning in time, only allowing it a beginning in the sense of its being created [*non tamen eum temporis volunt habere, sed suae creationis initium*], so that creation becomes an eternal process [*semper sit factus*]. There is force in that contention, in that such people conceive themselves to be defending God against the notion of a kind of random, fortuitous act [*velut a fortuita temeritate defendere*]; to prevent the supposition that the idea of creating the world suddenly came into his mind, as an idea which had never before occurred to him, that a new act of will happened to him [*et accidisse illi voluntatem novam*], whereas in fact he is utterly insusceptible of change [*cum in nullo sit omnino mutabilis*].[40]

The people Augustine is referring to are almost certainly, I think, the followers of Porphyry. As in the texts we have studied previously, the doctrine of eternal creation is here introduced in order to avoid the unseemly suggestion that God changes.[41]

To say that the world did not have a beginning of its time, but did have a beginning of its creation is, I think, the same as what Augustine earlier attributes to the *Platonici*:

> However, Plato [*Timaeus* 28b7ff.; 41b2] openly says both of the world and of what he writes as the gods in the world made by God, that they began to exist and have a beginning [*habere initium*], but by the most powerful will of the creator he testifies they will remain for eternity [41b2]. Yet they [i.e., the *Platonici*] found a way to understand this, i.e., that this is not a beginning of time, but of subsistence [*non esse hoc videlicet temporis, sed substitutionis initium*]. "Just as," they say, "if a foot was in dust from eternity, a footprint would always be under it, yet no one would doubt that the footprint was made by someone treading, so," they say, "both the world and the gods created within it always existed, since He who made them always exists, and yet they were made."[42]

In this text, the Latin term *substitutio* takes the place of *creatio* in the previous passage; the term is likely to be a literal translation of the Greek *hypostasis*, "existence" or "subsistence." In both passages, what the *Platonici* mean is that, despite the surface meaning of the text of Plato's *Timaeus*, the world did *not* have a temporal beginning (Gk.: *arkhē khronikē*), but merely a beginning or principle *of its existence* (*arkhē hupostaseōs*). This, in turn, means that the world is created causally (Gk.: *kat'aitian*), not in time. This is precisely the doctrine we find attributed to Porphyry in a fragment of his *Commentary on the Timaeus*:

> And Porphyry, having stated that it is primarily insofar as it is compound that the world is said to be generated [*genēton*], nevertheless, a bit further on, says that [Plato says] that it is generated causally [*kat'aitian*].[43]

The same Porphyrian doctrine features in a quotation preserved only in Arabic:

> And he [Porphyry] claimed that the statement attributed to Plato concerning the world's coming into being is not correct. He said in his letter to Anebo: what separates Plato from you, viz. that *he gives the world a temporal beginning*, is a mendacious assertion. This is because *Plato did not think that the world has a temporal origination*, *but an origination with regard to a cause* [*anna Aflāṭūn laysa (yarā) anna li-l-ʿālam ibtidāʾ zamāniyyan lakinna ibtidāʾ ʿalā jihati al-ʿilla*]; and he claimed that the cause of its existence is its origination. He [Porphyry] was of the opinion that whoever had the illusion that he [Plato] believed that the world was created and that it had come into being *ex nihilo*, and that

it had emerged from disorder into order—such a person has erred and been deluded. That is because it is not always true that all non-existence precedes existence in that which has the cause of its existence in something else; nor is all lack of order prior to order. But *by saying that the creator revealed the world from non-existence into existence, Plato merely meant that it does not exist by itself, but the cause of its existence is from the creator.*[44]

In turn, the doctrine of this text corresponds closely to what we find in a passage from the *Theology of Aristotle*, at the end of a lengthy excursus that does not correspond to anything in Plotinus:

> How well and how appropriately does this philosopher [sc. Plato] describe the Creator when he says: "He created mind, soul, nature, and all things else," but *whoever hears the philosopher's words must not pay attention to the letter of his words and imagine that he said that the Creator created the creation in time.* If anyone imagines that from his mode of expression, he merely expressed the will to follow the custom of the ancients. The ancients were compelled to mention time in connection with the beginning of creation [*fī badʾi al-ḫalq*] because they wanted to describe the generation of things, and they were compelled to introduce time into their description of becoming and into their description of the creation—*which was not in time at all*—in order to distinguish between the exalted first causes and the lower secondary causes [. . .]. But this is not so: not every agent performs his action in time, nor is every cause prior to its effect in time.[45]

The similarities between these texts from Porphyry and from the *Theology of Aristotle* seem to me to be quite striking. In all three cases, it is argued that Plato's description of the creation of the world by the Demiurge in the *Timaeus* is to be understood not as a temporal act, but as a causal dependency (Ar.: *ibtidāʾ ʿalā jihati al-ʿilla* = Gk.: *kat'aitian*).

For Porphyry, if God creates by his very being, none of the thorny questions we have mentioned above arise. This is, I believe, the same view we have seen in the PA: for the First Principle, creation is coextensive with its existence, and there never was a moment when he or it did not create. Contrary to what one might assume from a superficial reading of Plato's *Timaeus*, God's creative act did not take place in time.[46] Nor did God first reflect, calculate, and weigh alternatives before creating. Instead, his creation flows from him like heat from fire or light from the sun,[47] or even as a solid object casts its shadow.[48]

These doctrinal parallels, among many others that I cannot go into here,[49] have led me to take seriously the statement of the Prologue to the *Theology of Aristotle*, which, as we saw, describes the work as a "commentary" (Ar.: *tafsīr*) by Porphyry.

To make a long story short, I think what may have happened was the following. We know from Porphyry's own testimony that he wrote a commentary or series of commentaries (Gk.: *hupomnēmata*) on the *Enneads* of Plotinus.[50] These commentaries are likely to have taken the form of glosses in the margin of a manuscript surrounding the text of Plotinus, as was frequent in Late Antiquity.[51] The translator Ibn Nāʾima al–Ḥimṣī then translated into Arabic both the text of Plotinus and the commentaries of Porphyry—he may not always have been able to distinguish between what belonged to Plotinus and what was due to Porphyry. But the resulting text of the PA is no word-for-word translation of Porphyry's commentaries. The translator may have skipped passages he did not understand or simply did not find interesting, for whatever reason. An editor, probably al-Kindī, later went over the translation, introducing transitional phrases and modifying some doctrinal elements to accentuate the creationist and monotheistic aspects of the text, so that it would be easier to reconcile with Islam.[52]

So, there you have it. A text written in Greek by Plotinus, an Egyptian-born philosopher of the late third century, and commented upon by his student Porphyry came to be partially translated into Arabic half a millennium later, where it played a fundamental role in shaping several different trends in Islamic philosophical and theological thought. It has been argued that Porphyry also played an important role in transmitting the thought of Plotinus in the West: when Latin authors of the fifth century cite Plotinus, they may actually owe their knowledge not to a direct reading of Plotinus, who seems never to have been translated into Latin, but to the commentaries of Porphyry, some of whose works were indeed translated by Marius Victorinus, the teacher of Augustine. Thus, through its possible role in the elaboration of the PA, what we might call the "underground Porphyry" may have had an importance in the Islamic East comparable to his considerable influence on the Latin-speaking West.

Notes

1 Adamson, *Arabic Plotinus.*
2 Treiger, "Palestinian Origenism."
3 See Hugonnard-Roche, *La logique d'Aristote*, and Watt, "The Syriac Aristotelian Tradition," with references to previous publications.
4 See, in addition to the works cited in the previous note, Fiori, "Un intellectual alexandrin."
5 The literature on this subject is too vast to be listed here. Fundamental studies are Gutas, *Greek Thought*; Endress, *Proclus Arabus*; Endress, "Die wissenschaftliche Literatur"; Endress, "Circle of al-Kindī." For a useful survey, see D'Ancona, "Greek into Arabic."
6 See Thillet, "Indices porphyriens"; Pinès, "Les textes arabes."
7 Endress, "Circle of al-Kindī."

8 Plotinus, *Aflūṭīn ʿinda al-ʿArab*, ed. Badawī (hereafter "ThA"), 1.6–9. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from the Greek, Latin, and Arabic are my own.

9 Who may have been a Melkite, trained in Palestine, or a Maronite, trained in Syria. See Treiger, "Palestinian Origenism." At any rate, he was well versed in philosophy and fluent in Greek, Arabic, and perhaps Syriac.

10 Zimmermann, "Origins," and Adamson, *Arabic Plotinus*, think the misattribution was the result of an honest mistake; like D'Ancona (see Plotinus, *La dicesa*, ed. D'Ancona, 85–87), I am pretty sure we have to do with a deliberate forgery, committed by either Ḥimṣī, Kindī, or both, deliberately structured and rephrased this collection of paraphrastic translations from Plotinus in order to give it the appearance of a work by Aristotle.

11 Zimmermann, "Origins."

12 Such as D'Ancona (see Plotinus, *La dicesa*, ed. D'Ancona, 85–87).

13 Other works allegedly translated by Ibn al-Biṭrīq, who was said to have accompanied Salm, head of the *bayt al-ḥikma*, on his expedition to Byzantium in search of Greek manuscripts (Endress, "Die wissenschaftliche Literatur," 3:24), include Plato's *Timaeus*, Aristotle's *De caelo*, *Generation and Parts of Animals*, and *Prior Analytics* (in a translation denounced as unsatisfactory by subsequent Arabic scholars, see Endress, "Die Bagdader Aristoteliker," 293), and perhaps the *Secretum secretorum*; see Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, 191–92; Endress, Review of *The Arabic Version of Aristotle's Meteorology*; Endress, "Building the Library," 345. It is not always easy to distinguish which translations are due to Yaḥyā and which were carried out by his father al-Biṭrīq, who translated the *Tetrabiblos* of Ptolemy and some works on medicine, and died ca. 815; see Endress, "Die wissenschaftliche Literatur," 2:421.

14 Lettinck, "Aristotle's 'Physical' Works," 107.

15 Arnzen, *Aristoteles' De Anima*.

16 Another "translation" exhibiting similar features is the *Book of the Senses and the Sensibles* (*Kitāb al-ḥiss wa-l-maḥsūs*). The *Kitāb* represents an extreme case of adaptation, with only about 30 percent of the work occupied by text corresponding to the Aristotelian original, and the rest representing exegetical developments or interpolations. The text's future editor Rotraud Hansberger believes an initial, rather poor translation of Aristotle's *De sensu* was subsequently adapted and interspersed with Neoplatonic-style interpolations written directly in Arabic; Hansberger, "Arabic Adaption." We will have to wait for Hansberger's upcoming critical edition to be able to evaluate the author's conclusions, and see whether the existence of a late Greek intermediary paraphrase really is so improbable.

17 For *annīya* as equivalent to the Greek *to on*, see, for instance, ThA 8, ed. Badawī, 111.12–17. *Huwīya* sometimes renders the Greek *tautotēs*; cf. ibid., 112.5, 9, 11.

18 Taylor, "Aquinas," 217–39.

19 On Plotinus' rejection of deliberation on the part of the Platonic demiurge, see D'Ancona, "The *Timaeus*' Model."

20 ThA 10. 185–86, ed. Badawī, 162.3–10 (comment on *Enn*. 5. 8. 7).

21 *The Philosophy Reader*, ed. Wakelnig (hereafter "GS"), 31, 94.7–9. In contrast, Intellect, the second principle and first creation of the First, does act by motion (*bi-ḥarakati*, ThA 8, ed. Badawī, 112.7–8), although it is a motion that does not involve change from state to state.

22 ThA 5. 8.11–14, ed. Badawī, 66–67.

23 *Epistle of the Divine Science* 105–9, in ThA, ed. Badawī, 174; English in Plotinus, *Enneades*, trans. Lewis, 321: "We say that between mind and its act there

is volition [. . .] the action of the First Agent is not preceded by volition, because he acts solely by the fact of his being."

24 This aspect is stressed by Adamson, *Arabic Plotinus*, 132, who writes that if God willed, he'd be many. It should be noted, however, that the text does *not* state this in so many words.

25 As D'Ancona, "The *Timaeus*' Model," 220–22, points out.

26 ThA 10. 159–60, ed. Badawī, 160.9–12; trans. Lewis modified.

27 GS 38, 21a, ed. Wakelnig, 98.

28 ThA 8, ed. Badawī, 98.12–13.

29 GS 37, ed. Wakelnig, 98.5–22 = ed. Badawī, 187.4–10.

30 For the terminology, see ThA, ed. Badawī, 38–39.

31 On the fact that the Creator creates without deliberation, see ThA, ed. Badawī, 66.12–13. Similarly, the World Soul governs the universal body without thought or deliberation; ThA, ed. Badawī, 91.7–8.

32 GS 30, ed. Wakelnig, 92.15–16. Cf. GS 32, ed. Wakelnig, 94.7: "The First Agent must be at rest and unmoved."

33 GS 36, ed. Wakelnig, 98.11–12.

34 Proclus, *On the Eternity of the World*, quoted by Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi*, ed. Rabe, 55.22. On this argument and its interpretation, see Chase, "Discussions," 61–62.

35 Aristotle, *Phys.* 3. 2, 201b31–32; *De anima* 2. 2, 417a14–17.

36 Hierocles, *On Providence*, Book 2, ap. Photius, *Library*, cod. 251, 436b 30ff. See also, for instance, Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 76.

37 And not by Syrianus, as claimed by D'Ancona, "La notion," n. 49, and "L'influence," 94.

38 Porphyry, *Commentary on the Timaeus*, fr. 51, ed. Sodano, 38.5ff. = Procl., *In Tim.*, ed. Diehl, 1:395.10ff.

39 ThA 10. 190, ed. Badawī, 163.

40 Augustinus, *De civitate dei* 11. 4, ed. Dombart and Kalb, 465.9–10.

41 On the notion of immutability in Augustine, see, for instance, O'Donnell, *Augustine*, 394–95. Yet it seems rash to deny that the concept is Platonic simply because "A. claims stoutly that the doctrine was part of him before he ever read the Platonists."

42 Augustinus, *De civitate dei* 10. 31, ed. Dombart and Kalb, 453.26–27.

43 Porphyry, fr. 172, from Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi* 6. 177, ed. Rabe, 172.4–7 = ed. Scholten, 3:682. For a French translation with commentary, see Rashed, "Nouveaux fragments," 276.

44 Porphyry, fr. 459 Smith, from al-Shahrastānī, *Livre des religions et des sectes*, ed. Jolivet-Monnot, 2:357–58 (my emphasis).

45 ThA, 27.7ff. = ed. D'Ancona, 237; trans. Lewis in Plotinus, *Enneades*, 231 (my emphasis).

46 ThA 1, ed. D'Ancona, 237.14: *al-ḫalīfa, allatī lam takun fī zamānin al-battata.*

47 Cf. Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi* 4, ed. Rabe, 13.12ff., who speaks of those—including Porphyry?—who say that "The sun, [. . .] which is the cause of light, creates the latter by its very being [*autōi tōi einai*], and neither is light prior or posterior to the sun nor the sun to light. The bodies in light, moreover, are the cause of the shadow that is brought about from them and always co-exists with them."

48 Aeneas of Gaza, *Theophrastus*, ed. Colonna, 45.20–22.

49 Pinès, "Les textes arabes," and Thillet, "Indices prophyriens," enumerate these as follows: a preference for describing the derivation of the various levels of the universe in causal terms; the idea that the First Principle produces being, while the second principle produces Form; and the doctrine of learned

ignorance. One could add a predilection for allegorical interpretation and a concern to harmonize Plato and Aristotle. For more details, see Chase, "Porphyry."

50 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, 26.28–37.

51 For evidence, see Chase, "Porphyry," 175.

52 Overt references by Plotinus to polytheism, for instance, are eliminated or explained away. When Plotinus states that his line of investigation will enquire into the memories of Zeus himself (*kai epitolmēsei kai tou Dios autou tas mnēmas polupragmonein*, *Enn.* 4. 4, 6.7–8), the Adaptor writes (ThA 8, ed. Badawī, 104.112–13): "Then we shall proceed to the enquiry into the soul of Jupiter [*al-mushtarī*, i.e., the planet]: does it remember anything?" Some signs of Islamicization, however, will have been introduced by scribes: for instance, the formulas ʿazza wa-jalla ("the mighty and sublime," ThA, 84.18) and ʿazza shaʾnahu ("mighty is his nature," ThA, 105.3), printed in Badawī's edition after the mention of the Creator, are lacking in the best manuscript, Aya Sofia 2457.

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