

---

# “Everywhere and nowhere”: Porphyry’s *Pathways to the Intelligible* 31

“En todas partes y en ninguna”: Porfirio, *Sentencia* 31

---

JOSÉ MARÍA ZAMORA CALVO

Departamento de Filosofía  
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras  
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid  
28049 Madrid (España)  
jm.zamora@uam.es

**Abstract:** *Sentence* 31 formulates a paradox: the effect stays in its cause, but at the same time it is “everywhere and nowhere” in its effect. We will focus on the analysis of the theory of πανταχοῦ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ, following the Porphyrian reading of the Plotinian argument of the causal priority of the One with regard to the multiple (III, 9 [13] 4, 1-9; VI 4 [22] 3), as applied to God, Intellect and Soul.

**Keywords:** Porphyry, causality, henology, omnipresence.

**Resumen:** La *Sentencia* 31 plantea una paradoja: el efecto permanece en su causa, pero al mismo tiempo la causa está “en todas partes y en ninguna” en su efecto. Nos centraremos en el análisis de la teoría del πανταχοῦ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ, deteniéndonos en la lectura porfiriana del argumento plotiniano de la anterioridad causal del Uno respecto a lo múltiple (III, 9 [13] 4, 1-9; VI 4 [22] 3), aplicado a Dios, al Intelecto y al Alma.

**Palabras clave:** Porfirio, causalidad, henología, omnipresencia.

RECIBIDO: SEPTIEMBRE DE 2011 / ACEPTADO: SEPTIEMBRE DE 2012

*In Memoriam Steven K. Strange*

Porphyry's *Pathways to the Intelligible*, the work which we know under the traditional title of *Sentences*, are a compendium of the doctrine of the *Enneads* of his teacher Plotinus<sup>1</sup>. This enigmatic and still poorly known text by Porphyry bears witness to the renewal of Platonism, established by Plotinus and his Roman school in the third century AD, thus exerting a major influence on the history of Platonic philosophy in late antiquity, particularly in the theoretical foundation of metaphysical systems developed in the schools of Athens and Alexandria<sup>2</sup>.

Within the metaphysical reflections contained in the *aphormai*, we focus on the analysis of the paradox raised in *Sentence 31*: the effect remains in its cause, but at the same time the cause is “everywhere and nowhere” in its effect, looking for its relations with both Plotinus, its inspirer, and Proclus, its follower.

1. THE FIRST ABSOLUTELY SIMPLE PRINCIPLE

Plotinus turns the first three hypotheses of Plato's *Parmenides*, i.e. the three different possible ways of thinking of the One, into three

- 
1. The *Sentences* can be considered as a kind of “handbook” of Plotinus' thought written by his disciple Porphyry, who at some points distances himself from his teacher. On the connections and doctrinal differences, see H. R. SCHWYZER, *Plotinisches und Unplotinisches in den Aphormai des Porphyrios*, in *Plotino e il neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente. Atti del Convegno di Roma promosso dall'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Roma, 5-9 ottobre 1970* (Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Roma, 1974) 221-252. Likewise, C. D'Ancona takes up the thesis of Schwyzer's work, for whom Porphyry's relationship with Plotinus can be explained from a passage of the work the disciple devotes to Plotinus life (*Vita Plotini*, 18, 8-19). Here, Porphyry points out his initial disagreement with his master on the question of the relation between the intelligibles and the Intellect. 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., *Porphyre. Sentences*. With an English translation by J. DILLON (Vrin, Paris, 2005) vol. 1, 145-147. About this point, see the article of J. M. ZAMORA, *Multiplicidad y unidad de la inteligencia en las Sentencias de Porfirio*, “Synthesis” 18 (2011) 45-74.
  2. Porphyry constitutes an essential link in the transition of ancient thought into Late Antiquity and Medieval. On this influence, see G. GIRGENTI, *La metafísica de Porfirio como mediación entre la “benología” platónica y la “ontología” aristotélica base del neoplatonismo cristiano medieval*, “Anuario Filosófico” 33 (2000) 151-162.

hypostases, i.e. three realities structured in a hierarchical order: One, Intellect and Soul. The Alexandrian will integrate the first three hypotheses: “Absolute One”, “One-Multiple” and “One and Multiple” into a dynamic scheme of procession, which will make the three possibilities appear as three realities hierarchically structured in an order which will be not static but dynamic. Therefore, the constitution of things from the One can be understood as a process of “derivation”. Thus, henology<sup>3</sup> and procession are intertwined in Plotinus’ philosophy, so that we can interpret his work by taking this relationship as a point of departure, but one which has its own problems:

“How, then, does it see, and whom, and how in any case did it become an independent entity and has arisen from the One so that it can see at all? The soul now accepts the necessity that these Forms exist, but yearns to know in addition the answer to this question much asked by ancient philosophers too, how from a unity such as we say the One is did anything become an independent entity, whether a multiplicity, a dyad or a number. Why did it not remain on its own, but such a great multiplicity flowed out from it, which is seen in the world and which we claim to refer back to it?”<sup>4</sup>.

- 
3. Beierwaltes, and recently Narbonne, take up again a thesis of the radical heterogeneity of the One with regard to the being from the perspective outlined by Heidegger’s critique of metaphysics. Cfr. W. BEIERWALTES, *Identität und Differenz* (Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M., 1980); and *Image and Counterimage? Reflections on Neoplatonic thought with respect to its place today*, in H. J. BLUMENTHAL & R. A. MARKUS (eds.), *Neoplatonism an Early Christian Thought. Essays in honour of A.H. Armstrong* (Variorum, London, 1981) 236-247; and J.-M. NARBONNE, *Hénologie, ontologie et Ereignis. Plotin-Proclus-Heidegger* (Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 2001). The central aspects of the Plotinian henology are the idea of the transcendence of the absolute One, the perspective of negative theology, and a genuinely philosophical kind of mysticism. Cfr. S. KLIMIS, *L’ambivalence de l’hénologie chez Plotin*, “Diotima” 28 (2000) 43-60; and J. HALFWASSEN, *Henologie bei Platon und Plotin*, “Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch für Antike und Mittelalter” 8 (2003) 21-41.
  4. PLOTINUS, *En. V*, 1 [10] 6, 1-8 (trans. Atkinson see cit. infra, lviii.): “Πῶς οὖν ὁρᾷ καὶ τίνα, καὶ πῶς ὅλως ὑπέστη καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνου γέγονεν, ἵνα καὶ ὁρᾷ; Νῦν μὲν γὰρ τὴν ἀνάγκην τοῦ εἶναι ταῦτα ἡ ψυχὴ ἔχει, ἐπιποθεῖ δὲ τὸ θρυλλούμενον δὴ τοῦτο καὶ παρὰ τοῖς πάλοι σοφοῖς, πῶς ἐξ ἐνός τοιοῦτου ὄντος, οἷον λέγομεν τὸ ἐν εἶναι, ὑπόστασιν ἔσχεν ὁτιοῦν εἶτε πλῆθος εἶτε δυάς εἶτε ἀριθμός, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔμεινεν ἐκείνο ἐφ’ ἑαυτοῦ, τοσοῦτον δὲ πλῆθος ἐξερρή, ὃ ὁρᾷται μὲν ἐν τοῖς οὐσίῳ, ἀνάγειν δὲ

To Plotinus, everything comes from only one principle, not from two or more. A multiplicity, a dyad or a number “have existence” (ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν)<sup>5</sup> from the One, i.e. they are constituted from the One<sup>6</sup>. Every compound, everything that is made up of

- 
- αὐτὸ πρὸς ἐκεῖνο ἀξιοῦμεν”. P. HENRY & H.-R. SCHWYZER (eds.) *Plotini Opera*, 3 vols. (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1964-1982). In V, 1 [10] 6 Plotinus continues the discussion of the One begun in the precedent chapter 5. “The problem of the identity of the father of νοῦς (τίς οὖν ὁ τοῦτον γεννήσας 5, 3-4) is followed by discussion of the method of genesis (6, 15-41) which is explained in terms of emanation and reversion, emanation being explained by means of the double-activity theory (6, 30-37); note the similar arrangement in V 4, 1, 23 ff. and V 4, 2, 26 ff. where a question about Intellect (πῶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου; and πῶς μένοντος ἐκείνου γίνεται); leads on to the double-activity theory”: M. ATKINSON, *Plotinus: Ennead VI.1. On the Three Principal Hypostases* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1983) 124.
5. Ὑπόστασις is a term used frequently in the *Enneads*, a common expression in the time of Plotinus. Ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν or τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν appears 18 times in the *Enneads*: III 5, 3, 15; V 1, 6, 4-6; V 3, 16, 36-37; V 5, 1, 14-15; V 5, 4, 23; V 6, 3, 11; V 6, 3, 13-14; V 6, 3, 17; V 9, 5, 46; VI 1, 6, 14-15; VI 1, 7, 23-24; VI 1, 8, 2-3; VI 4, 9, 39; VI 6, 11, 4; VI 6, 11, 11-12; VI 6, 12, 1-2; VI 6, 16, 33; VI 8, 12, 27. See Ch. RUTTEN, *ΥΠΑΡΞΙΣ et ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΙΣ chez Plotin*, in F. ROMANO & D. P. TAORMINA (eds.), *Hyparxis e Hypostasis nel neoplatonismo*. Atti del I Colloquio Internazionale del Centro di Ricerca sul Neoplatonismo (Leo S. Olschki Editore, Firenze, 1994) 25-32.
  6. In the *Enneads* the One is the first and universal principle (*En.* V 4 [7] 1, 34-36; VI 9 [9] 3, 39-40; VI 8 [39] 8, 8-9, 18, 38 -41; V 3 [49] 15, 24-31). In V 2 [11] 1, 1-2 Plotinus formulates this thesis synthetically: “The One is all things and not a single one of them: it is the principle of all things”. Cfr. J.-F. PRADEAU, *L'imitation du principe, Plotin et la participation* (Vrin, Paris, 2003) 59. The claim that the One is “everything” makes a radical interpretation of Plotinus’ monism possible, which would make the One not only the universal principle of all reality, but all reality, although it manifests itself in different degrees. Plotinus establishes an opposition between two equivalent needs: the need for the One as the principle of all things, and the need for an absence of relationship between the One and the things (without this, the first principle would not be completely separate and transcendent). This is what Bréhier calls the *vexata quaestio* of the philosophy of Plotinus: “How then do all things come from the One, which is simple and has in it no diverse variety, or any sort of doubleness?” (*En.* V 2 [11] 1, 3-5). Plotinus corrects the statement “the One is all things” (τὸ ἐν πάντα) with its opposite: “the One is not anything” because it is their principle, which implies separation and transcendence (*En.* III 8 [30] 9, 43 -54; VI 7 [38] 32, 12-14). Cfr. É. BRÉHIER, *La Philosophie de Plotin* (Vrin, Paris, 1961) 39-40. For Kremer, “Plotinus *quaestio vexata* nach dem Warum und Wie der Emanation ist also nicht mit einem ‘Entweder-oder’, sondern mit einem ‘Sowohl-Als-Auch’ zu beantworten: Weil Gott gut war und nicht bedurfte, darum hat er die Welt hervorbringen wollen”. K. KREMER, *Bonum est diffusivum sui. Ein Beitrag zum Verhältnis von Neoplatonismus und Christentum, in Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Teil II: Principat* (W. de Gruyter, Berlin-New York, 1987) vol. 36.2, 131. See also, other article by

parts, depends on and comes from what is not compound, from what is simple. O’Meara calls this idea the “principle of anteriority of the simple”<sup>7</sup> and applies it to the study of the *Enneads*. In Plotinus’ view, the Intellect cannot be absolutely simple, even though it possesses a very high degree of unity (multiple unity), but constitutes a compound<sup>8</sup>. The founder of Neoplatonism applies this “principle of anteriority of the simple” and arrives, above the Intellect, at the first absolutely simple principle, the One, from which everything comes.

Every compound depends on the simple elements that constitute it. A compound exists insofar as its constituents exist and unite to conform it. Therefore, we can say that the compound comes, or has existence, from the simple elements that constitute it. To Plotinus, the division of compounds in its simple constituents ends in only one ultimate constituent, the One. There is, therefore, an absolutely simple and independent principle from which every compound comes, directly or indirectly.

## 2. THE PROCESSION OF ALL THINGS

Gerson suspects that “the attraction of emanationism as an interpretation of Plotinus’ metaphysics derives in part from supposing that this is the best way to explain the derivation of multiplicity from unity or complexity from simplicity”<sup>9</sup>. Plotinus’ One is everywhere and nowhere, it is in everything and in nothing<sup>10</sup>. The One is omni-

---

the same author, *Wie geht das Viele aus dem Einen hervor? Plotins quaestio vexata im Spiegel der Schrift V 3.11 (49)*, in J. REITER et al. (eds.), *Aus reichen Quellen leben. Festschrift für H. Weber* (Paulinus Verlag, Trier, 1995) 251-262.

7. Cfr. D. O’MEARA, *Plotinus. An Introduction to the Enneads* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992). French translation by A. CALLET-MOLIN, *Plotin. Une introduction aux Ennéades* (Éditions Universitaires Fribourg-Cerf, Fribourg-Paris, 1992) 59-65 & 59-81.
8. On the genesis of the Intellect, “multiple unity”, from the absolutely simple One, see the articles by J. IGAL, *La génesis de la Inteligencia en un pasaje de las Enéadas de Plotino (V 1, 7, 4-35)*, “Emerita” 39 (1971) 129-157; M<sup>a</sup>. I. SANTA CRUZ, *Sobre la generación de la Inteligencia en las Enéadas de Plotino*, “Helmantica” 30 (1979) 287-315.
9. L. P. GERSON, *Plotinus* (Routledge, London, 1994) 27.
10. The One is everywhere and nowhere: “everywhere” (πανταχοῦ), as its causality is universal, and “nowhere” (οὐδαμοῦ), as it is separate and transcendent about everything (*En.* VI 9 [9] 4, 24-28; III 9 [13] 4, 1-9; III 8 [30] 9, 24-29; V [32] 8,

present (πανταχοῦ)<sup>11</sup>, is in all things, because it contains all of them in itself, just as the spring contains all the rivers before they separate<sup>12</sup>; and omniabsent (οὐδαμοῦ)<sup>13</sup>, it is in none, because, in order to be the principle of everything, it is not contained by any, since, in Plotinus' view, the antecedent contains its consequents without being contained by them. These two aspects, omnipresence and omniabsence, correspond to the two moments of procession: the one of deployment or *proodic*, from the One to the multiple, and the one of reversion or *epistrophic*, from what is multiple to the One<sup>14</sup>.

To explain this henological deployment, Plotinus uses the metaphor of the tree, and compares the One to the root which governs according to the *lógos*:

“For it is the root (ρίζα) of a rational principle from itself, and all things come to a spot in it; like the principle and fundament of a mighty tree living according to rational principle (*lógos*) which remains itself by itself but gives to the tree existence (εἶναι) according to the rational principle which it receives”<sup>15</sup>.

---

23-27, 9, 18-26; VI 8 [39] 16, 1-12). See G. GÜRTLER, *Plotinus: transcendence and omnipresence of the One in VI 5 [23]*, in S. STERN-GILLET & K. CORRIGAN (eds.), *Reading ancient texts: Essays in Honour of Denis O'Brien*, vol. 2: Aristotle and Neoplatonism (Brill, Leiden, 2007) 137-152. The being of things is based on their oneness, and everything is as far as it is one. Thus, the one is needed for the ὑπόστασις of each οὐσία. The One is the foundation of all things, because through it all things subsist. Cfr. P. HADOT, *Traité 9, VI, 9* (Cerf, Paris, 1994) 173; and P. A. MEIJER, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI 9). An Analytical Commentary* (Gieben, Amsterdam, 1992) 203-208.

11. On πανταχοῦ, “everywhere”, see J. H. SLEEMAN & G. POLLET, *Lexicon Plotinianum* (Leuven University Press, Leuven, 1980) col. 799-800.
12. Cfr. *En.* III, 8 [30] 10, 7-8; VI, 8 [39] 18, 38-48. On the usage of noun and verb forms of “flow” (πέω) to describe the activity of the One in relation to complex entities, see L. P. GERSON, *op. cit.*, 26.
13. On οὐδαμοῦ, “nowhere, in no case”, see J. H. SLEEMAN & G. POLLET, *op. cit.*, col. 768-769.
14. See G. REALE, *Fundamentos, estructura dinámico-relacional y caracteres esenciales de la metafísica de Plotino*, “Anuario Filosófico” 33 (2000) 174-176 & 176-183.
15. *En.* VI, 8 [39] 15, 33-36 [trans. A. H. ARMSTRONG, *Plotinus, with an English translation*, 7 vols. (Loeb Classical Library, London-Cambridge [MA], 1966-1988)].

Plotinus’ henology constructs itself while criticizing Stoic materialism<sup>16</sup>. Plotinus faces Stoicism in its reduction of being to body, which makes matter, as the substratum of changes in bodies, the true being.

As we have seen, everything is through the One:

“For what could anything be if it was not one? For if things are deprived of the one which is predicated of them they are not those things. For an army does not exist if it is not one, nor a chorus or a flock if they are not one. But neither can a house or a ship exist if they do not have their one, since the house is one and so is the ship, and if they lose it the house is no longer a house nor the ship a ship”<sup>17</sup>.

This statement: “everything is because of the one” has its origin in an interpretation of the last lines in Plato’s *Parmenides*: “If the one is not, nothing is”<sup>18</sup>. Plotinus divides the demonstration

- 
16. On the relationship between Plotinus and the Stoa, see A. GRAESER, *Plotinus and the Stoics. A Preliminary Study* (Brill, Leiden, 1972) 11-67, especially; besides, P. A. MEIJER, *Stoicism in Plotinus’ Enneads VI 9, 1*, “Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica” 59 (1988) 61-76.
17. *En.* VI, 9 [9] 1, 3-8 (trans. Armstrong cit.): “τί γὰρ ἂν καὶ εἶη, εἰ μὴ ἔν εἶη; ἐπιπέτερ ἀφαιρεθέντα τοῦ ἔν ὃ λέγεται οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκεῖνα. οὔτε γὰρ στρατὸς ἔστιν, εἰ μὴ ἔν ἔσται, οὔτε χορὸς οὔτε ἀγέλη μὴ ἔν ὄντα. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ οἰκία ἢ ναὺς τὸ ἔν οὐκ ἔχοντα, ἐπιπέτερ ἡ οἰκία ἔν καὶ ἡ ναὺς, ὃ εἰ ἀποβάλοι, οὔτ’ ἂν ἡ οἰκία ἔτι οἰκία οὔτε ἡ ναὺς”.
18. PLATO, *Parmenides*, 166 c 1: “ἔν εἰ μὴ ἔστιν, οὐδὲν ἔστιν” (Burnet). Cfr. *En.* VI, 6 [34] 13, 50-51: “There is not any being that is not one (οὐδὲν γὰρ ὄν, ὃ μὴ ἔν)”. To Aristotle, “being” (ὄν) and the “one” (ἔν) are identical and correlative, but there is no priority of the “one” over “being”: “If, now, being and unity are the same and are one thing in the sense that they are implied in one another as principle and cause are, not in the sense that they are explained by the same formula (though it makes no difference even if we interpret them similarly — in fact this would strengthen our case); for one man and a man are the same thing and existent man and a man are the same thing, and the doubling of the words in ‘one man’ and ‘one existent man’ does not give any new meaning (it is clear that they are not separated either in coming to be or in ceasing to be); and similarly with ‘one’, so that it is obvious that the addition in these cases means the same thing, and unity is nothing apart from being”. (ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysica*, Γ 2, 1003b23-31 [trans. W. D. ROSS, *Aristotle’s Metaphysics* (1953), in J. BARNES (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (Princeton University Press, Princeton [NJ], 1984), vol. II, 1553]). On this passage of *Metaphysics*, see the commentary of W. D. ROSS, *Aristotle’s Metaphysics*, vol. I (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1924) 257-258. See the comment about

of the fact that beings only are as long as they are one into two phases:

a) Bodies only exist as long as they are one<sup>19</sup>. We find here a clear reference to the division that Stoics make between different kinds of bodies<sup>20</sup>: 1) Bodies which show external unity: those simply juxtaposed (the army, the choir, the herd); and those composed by elements which are united among them (the house and the ship). 2) Bodies which show internal unity: continuous bodies, which only have in them a cohesive force (stones); and those which possess internal movement, such as plants (whose φύσις is its force of movement), and animals (whose force of representation is the ψυχή).

b) Bodily and soul qualities exist because of the one. There is health and beauty in bodies, and virtue in the soul only if unity predominates over multiplicity and if there is internal harmony.

“And there is health (ὕγεια) when the body is brought together into one order, and beauty (κάλλος) when the nature of the one holds the parts together; and the soul has virtue (ἀρετὴ δὲ ψυχῆς) when it is unified into one thing and one agreement”<sup>21</sup>.

Plotinus uses the Aristotelian example of the army in motion to explain that the One is a principle of order and coordination. This is how Aristotle expresses it: “(...) as in a battle when a rout occurs, if one man makes a stand another does and the another, until a po-

---

this in P. HADOT, *op. cit.*, 69-71, and 122-123. Plotinus takes from Stoicism and middle Platonism the notions that will help him to defend his theory of the priority of the one over the being. Hadot points out that, from the beginning of *Ennead* VI, the one of beings appears as a predicate of beings, which, if interpreted from the Platonic point of view, can only be something “received and derived”. Thus, the term one (ἓν) refers both to the unity which is inherent to each being, and to the One, the first principle, first hypostasis. This is why translators write it in italics or between inverted commas.

19. Cfr. *En.* VI 9 [9] 1, 4-14.

20. Cfr. P. HADOT, *op. cit.*, 123.

21. *En.* VI 9 [9] 1, 14-17 (trans. Armstrong *cit.*).

sition of strength is reached”<sup>22</sup>. The One, as a principle of order, is the factor because of which everything is coordinated; and when this principle of order is absent, things disappear. Therefore, the One constitutes the principle that coordinates the soldiers that make up an army, the singers in a choir, the sheep in a herd, the bricks in a house. This is why Plotinus states that all beings are what they are because of the One.

The One-Good, which is beyond being and thinking, is the first ungenerated principle. Everything else comes into being by means of arrest (στάσις) and conversion (ἐπιστροφή) towards the One-Good. The first conversion of the first arrest is the Intellect, which is a trace (ἵχνος) of the One-Good. The second conversion of the second arrest is the Soul, which is *lógos* and activity of the Intellect. This mechanism stops in the sensible world, because matter can neither convert to its parent nor, therefore, “proceed forward”.

In the descending series each level is a “symbol” of the previous one. Here the word “symbol” recovers its original force: when several people who were united by a certain social bond separated, they “jointly threw” (συμβάλλειν) a stone, and each one took a fragment as a token and, when they reunited, they put the fragments together, fitting them in order to recognize the original union by means of its reconstruction.

The One-Good, which is beyond the duality implied by thought, is absolutely simple. The process of descending dialectics breaks this primitive unity into fragments, and each fragment in turn into more fragments, and so forth until we arrive at matter, evil and privation, dispersion and multiplicity. We can say that in this descending process each level is a “symbol” of the previous one.

Plotinus thinks he has found “in us” and “in the nature of things” a hierarchically structured order<sup>23</sup>. The limits of this hierar-

22. ARISTOTLE, *Analytica Posteriora*, B 19, 100a11-13 [trans. J. BARNES, *Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975) 80]. On military metaphors in Plotinus, see L. JERPHAGNON, *Doux Plotin? Essai sur les métaphores militaires dans les Ennéades*, “Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger” 107 (1982) 397-404.

23. Cfr. *En. V*, 1 [10] 10, 1-6. On this issue one may consult D. O'MEARA, *Structures hiérarchiques dans la pensée de Plotin. Étude historique et interprétative* (Brill, Leiden, 1975). See also the commentary of M. ATKINSON, *op. cit.*, 212.

chical order are the One-Good and matter, the first and last link, the supra-being and the infra-being. Between both of them the different levels or degrees of being can be found: the Intellect, the Soul and the sensible world, the latter being structured, in turn, hierarchically (the stars, man, animals, plants, inanimate matter). A certain level of life (ζωή), of intellection (νόησις) and of contemplation (θεωρία) corresponds to each level of being. Thus, a higher level of life corresponds to a higher level of intellection and contemplation, and a lower level of life corresponds to a lower level of intellection and contemplation<sup>24</sup>.

However, this is not a static but a dynamic hierarchical order. The different levels or degrees are only different moments of an incessant movement. The One is the beginning and the end of this incessant movement, but it has to do with a non-chronological but henological beginning and end. The movement that comes from the One and returns to it is not successive but simultaneous<sup>25</sup>. It does not have a beginning or an end in time, but takes place at the same time in an eternal now: like a solar center from which all beams of light irradiate and in which they converge<sup>26</sup>.

In this incessant and simultaneous movement from the one to the multiple we can distinguish two moments:

- a) Moment of deployment or *proodic*: centrifugal movement that “proceeds”. The noun πρόοδος<sup>27</sup> and the verbs in the same

24. Cfr. *En.* III 8 [30] 8.

25. Against the Gnostics, Plotinus criticizes the idea of a production of derivatives that involves any type of change in the first principle (*En.* II 9 [33] 8, 1-5). Chiaradonna notes that Plotinus reacts against the gnostic idea of a principle that is mixed with the events of the sensible world, which would entail changes in its “will” or its “decisions”. Cfr. R. CHIARADONNA, *Hylémorphisme et causalité des intelligibles: Plotin et Alexandre d’Aphrodise*, “Les études philosophiques” 86 (2008) 379-397.

26. Cfr. *En.* I 7 [54] 1, 21-24. On the image of the center that “generates” the circle, see IV 4 [28] 16, 23-31, VI 8 [39] 18, 7-26; I 7 [54] 1, 23-28). Cfr. J. BOULAD AYOUD, *L’image du centre et la notion de l’Un dans les Ennéades*, “Philosophiques” 11 (1984) 41-70.

27. Although the term πρόοδος is more representative of post-Plotinian metaphysics, especially Proclus’, Plotinus uses the word, both the noun and the verb προΐέναι, in support of the two pillars of the doctrine of “procession”: the ontological disparity between the principle and its offspring and the immutability of the

semantic field, προῖέναι and προβαίνειν indicate, precisely, “advance” or “procession”, “to advance” and “to proceed”. At this first moment, the activity which has been generated is still indeterminate and shapeless, because it lacks content. We can compare this first moment to the movement of diastole.

b) Moment of reversion or *epistrophic*: centripetal movement, of concentration or return. The noun ἐπιστροφή and the verb ἐπιστρέφειν mean, precisely, “return” or “conversion”, “to return” or “turn oneself back”. At this second moment, the generated term converts to its parent, and thus determines and perfects itself.

This second moment can be compared to the movement of systole.

These two moments of procession are not successive but simultaneous; so much so that the moment of deployment or *proodic* cannot take place if the moment of reversion or *epistrophic* does not take place at the same time. But how does Plotinus solve this paradox?

By means of the axiom of procession we know that “all things when they come to perfection produce”<sup>28</sup>. Each level of being achieves its own perfection when it turns towards its parent, and it

---

principle. See J. TROUILLARD, *La procession plotinienne* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1955); W. BEIERWALTES, *Die Metaphysik des Lichtes in der Philosophie Plotins*, “Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung” 15 (1961) 334-362; D. J. O’MEARA, *The hierarchical ordering of reality in Plotinus*, in L. P. GERSON (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996) 66-81; and J.-F. PRADEAU, *op. cit.*, 58-65. Contra J. H. RANDALL [*The Intelligible Universe of Plotinus*, “Journal of the History of Ideas” 30 (1969) 3-16], for whom the emanation theory is a theory of intelligibility, not a theory of physical action, a process of physical creation of existence, for J. BUSSANICH [*Plotinus Metaphysics of the One*, in L. P. GERSON (ed.), *op. cit.*, 38-65], the One is an efficient cause, since it is cause of what comes into existence as of its being maintained in existence by the continued participation in the One. On some characteristics that distinguish the philosophy of “emanation” of Plotinus from a creationist theory, see J. P. B. LUPI & S. GOLLNICK, *A teoria emanacionista de Plotino*, “Scintilla: Revista de filosofia e mística medieval” 5 (2008) 13-30. The eternal relation between the One and the multiple is intrinsic to emanation and necessary to it, although this does not mean an *ananke* for the One; the One and the relations of reality to it surpass our intellectual capacity, and we need to go beyond our reason to accept it, in a state of mind similar to prayer.

28. *En.* V 1 [10] 6, 37-38: καὶ πάντα δὲ ὅσα ἤδη τέλεια γεννᾶ.

is then that it becomes productive. Thus, for each being to acquire its own shape, its own perfection, it is not enough for it to have been originated by the immediately previous being, but it has to necessarily turn to its parent and resemble it by means of contemplation. Therefore, they are two simultaneous, not successive, moments<sup>29</sup>.

When a being has returned to its parent by means of contemplation, it has converted, and in this way it has reached its own perfection, it is this very perfection that makes it produce, in turn, another being, different and inferior to itself<sup>30</sup>. Igal calls this double movement “principle of two-phase genesis”<sup>31</sup>. The moment of withdrawal, conversion of the generated term to its parent, ends in its own perfection (τελείωσις), which makes it generate another being.

Therefore, action (πράξις) is only an effect of contemplation (θεωρία)<sup>32</sup>, the moment of deployment or *proodic* is only an effect of the moment of reversion or epistrophic. For Plotinus, contemplation is, above all, the corollary of his theory of procession, because, thanks to it, the return to the One<sup>33</sup>, and, from it, the production of an inferior level in the scale of procession, take place.

Both moments of procession can only be applied, strictly speaking, to the procession of the Intellect and the Soul. It does not hold for the One-Good, because it is not originated, therefore does not need to convert to its parent. Neither does it hold for matter, because, as the latter is “absolute indetermination”, it cannot convert to its parent, or produce anything after itself. Matter, the last

---

29. Cfr. *En.* V 1 [10] 6, 50-53.

30. See D. P. HUNDT, *Contemplation and Hypostatic Procession in Plotinus*, “Apeiron” 15 (1981) 71-79.

31. Cfr. J. IGAL, *Porfirio. Vida de Plotino. Plotino. Enéadas I-II* (Gredos, Madrid, 1982) 21-32.

32. Cfr. R. ARNOU, ΠΡΑΞΙΣ et ΘΕΩΡΙΑ. *Étude de détail sur le vocabulaire et la pensée des Ennéades de Plotin* (Presses de l'Université Grégorienne, Roma, 1972<sup>2</sup>) 50-64. On the ethical level, the Neoplatonic hierarchy is based on the reduction of Stoic ethical virtues to a first or second degree of virtues (cfr. PLOTINUS, *En.* I 2 [19] and V 9, 1 [5]), and PORPHYRY, *Sent.* 32), which must be completed with essentially contemplative virtues. See Th. BÉNATOUIL, *Theôria et vie contemplative du stoïcisme au platonisme: Chrysippe, Panétius, Antiochus, Alcinoos*, in M. BONAZZI & J. OPSOMER (eds.), *The Origins of the Platonic System. Platonisms of the Early Empire and their Philosophical Contexts* (Peeters, Leuven, 2009) 23.

33. Cfr. W. EBOROWICZ, *La contemplation selon Plotin*, “Giornale di Metafisica” 12 (1957) 472.

link in the chain of procession, is absolutely sterile. This scheme of procession partially breaks in the generation of the sensible world, because it is not engendered matter that turns itself back to contemplate the Soul, but the lower level of the Soul turns back to matter to project, as if in a mirror, its *lógoi*<sup>34</sup>. The generation of the sensible World goes from what subsists in itself (the three main hypostases: One, Intellect and Soul) to what subsists in another, as an image of the noetic World<sup>35</sup>.

### 3. THE “PRESENCE” OF THE EFFECT IN THE CAUSE

Procession implies that there is always a “presence” of the effect in the cause, as the effect needs a cause<sup>36</sup>.

“But God is everywhere and nowhere in respect of all things that come after him –it is his characteristic to be only as he is and as he wills; while Intellect [5] is in God, on the one hand, but is everywhere and nowhere in respect of what comes after it; and Soul is in Intellect and God, on the one hand, but everywhere and nowhere in respect of body; and as for body, it is both in Soul and in Intellect and in God”<sup>37</sup>.

The effect depends on the cause. There is no physical description in *Sentence* 31. In the processional scheme, Porphyry states that there is a necessary presence which is neither local nor temporal. Thus,

34. Cfr. *En.* IV 3 [27] 11, 6-12. The Soul, amphibious between both worlds, projects into matter the *lógoi* that make the generation of the sensible world possible. Cfr. M<sup>a</sup>. I. SANTA CRUZ, *La genèse du monde sensible dans la philosophie de Plotin* (P.U.F., Paris, 1979) 129-132, and *Aspectos de la crítica de Plotino a las Categorías de Aristóteles*, “Elenchos” 15 (1994) 39-40.

35. Cfr. *En.* III 2 [47] 4, 13-16.

36. Cfr. *En.* V 5 [32] 9, 1-9.

37. PORPHYRY, *Sententia* 31, li. 2-8 (trans. Dillon): “Ἄλλ’ ὁ θεὸς μὲν πανταχοῦ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ τῶν μετ’ αὐτὸν πάντων – αὐτοῦ δὲ ἐστὶ μόνον ὡς ἔστι τε καὶ ἐθέλει – , νοῦς [5] δὲ ἐν μὲν θεῷ, πανταχοῦ δὲ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ τῶν μετ’ αὐτόν· καὶ ψυχὴ ἐν νῷ τε καὶ θεῷ, πανταχοῦ <δὲ> καὶ οὐδαμοῦ ἐν σώματι· σῶμα δὲ καὶ ἐν ψυχῇ καὶ ἐν νῷ καὶ ἐν θεῷ”. L. BRISSON et alii, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, 795-835.

bodies are present in the Soul, the Soul is present in the Intellect, and the Intellect is present in the One.

The producer has an influence over the product, but is not in it. On the contrary, the product is in the producer, since the product has need of the producer. Only the first principle is not in something else, since “it is his characteristic to be only as he is and as he will<sup>38</sup>”.

The effect remains in its cause, but at the same time the cause is “everywhere and nowhere” in its effect. Porphyry contrasts these two contradictory formulas to refine the notions of corporality, and to have access to the One-Good transcending oppositions. In order to do so, in Sentence 31 he quotes a passage from treatise III 9 [13] 4, 1-9, where Plotinus wonders how multiplicity could possibly come from the One.

“How then does multiplicity come from one? Because it is everywhere, for there is nowhere where it is not. Therefore it fills all things; so it is many, or rather it is already all. Now if it itself were only everywhere, it would itself be all things; but since it is also nowhere, all things come into being through him, because he is everywhere, but are other than him, because he is nowhere. Why, then, is he not only everywhere, and is also, besides being everywhere, nowhere? Because there must be one before all things. Therefore he must fill all things and make all things, not be all the things he makes<sup>39</sup>”.

The hypothetical One of Plato’s *Parmenides* (138a2-b6) is nowhere, neither in itself nor in another. Instead, Plotinus’ first principle is everywhere and nowhere, it is in everything and in nothing.

---

38. *Sent.* 31, li. 4.

39. *En.* III 9 [13] 4, 1-9 (trans. Armstrong cit.): “Πῶς οὖν ἐξ ἐνὸς πληθος; Ὅτι πανταχοῦ· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅπου οὐ. Πάντα οὖν πληροῖ πολλά οὖν, μάλλον δὲ πάντα ἤδη. Αὐτὸ μὲν γὰρ εἰ μόνον πανταχοῦ, αὐτὸ ἂν ἦν τὰ πάντα· ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ, τὰ πάντα γίνεται μὲν δι’[5] αὐτόν, ὅτι πανταχοῦ ἐκεῖνος, ἕτερα δὲ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι αὐτὸς οὐδαμοῦ. Διὰ τί οὖν οὐκ αὐτὸς μόνον πανταχοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς πρὸς τούτῳ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ; Ὅτι δεῖ πρὸ πάντων ἔν εἶναι. Πληροῦν οὖν δεῖ αὐτόν καὶ ποιεῖν πάντα, οὐκ εἶναι τὰ πάντα, ἃ ποιεῖ”.

a) Omnipresence: The One is everywhere. There is no place where it is not present. Therefore, it fills everything. However, if the One limited itself to being everywhere, it would be everything that it produces. In other words, by adding everything that exists we would obtain the One. The explanation of the procession of what is multiple from omnipresence is insufficient, since the cause must be differentiated from its product and vice versa, because otherwise there would not be a cause and its product at the same time, but only one reality. It is necessary to differentiate the principle from what participates in it. Hence the need to add a second explanation which will account for this alterity.

b) Omniabsence: The One is nowhere. All things originate through it, because it is everywhere, but they are different from it, because it is nowhere.

To Plotinus, antecedents contain their consequences without being contained by them. Thus, the first principle is everywhere, because it contains them all, but it is in none, because it is not contained by any<sup>40</sup>. The first principle is present in everything, but without mixing with any<sup>41</sup>.

In *Sentence* 31 Porphyry reintroduces Plotinus’ antinomy of the complementary character of omnipresence and omniabsence, but he reinforces the character of logical need. How can Plotinian formula in III 9 [13] 4: πανταχοῦ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ come from Porphyry’s *Sentence* 31, thus highlighting causal relationship as πανταχοῦ ὅτι οὐδαμοῦ: “God is everywhere because he is nowhere, <and Intellect is everywhere because it is nowhere>, and Soul is everywhere because it is nowhere”<sup>42</sup>.

Porphyry reintroduces Plotinus’ argument of causal anteriority of the One-Good with respect to what is multiple, but he adapts it to God, the Intellect and the Soul. There is argumentative parallel-

40. Cfr. *En.* V 5 [32] 9, 1-26.

41. Cfr. *En.* V 4 [7] 1, 6-8.

42. *Sent.* 31, li. 1-2 (trans. Dillon cit.): “Ὁ θεὸς πανταχοῦ ὅτι οὐδαμοῦ, <καὶ ὁ νοῦς πανταχοῦ ὅτι οὐδαμοῦ> καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ πανταχοῦ ὅτι οὐδαμοῦ”.

ism between Plotinus, treatise III 9 [13] 4, 1-9, and Porphyry, *Sent.* 31: if the cause was only everywhere, it would be everything; yet, as it is also nowhere, all things originate through it, but are different from it.

The organization of Porphyry's argument lays stress on the risk that the cause would limit itself to being everywhere, since this would imply not only that the cause would be identical to all its effects, but also that it would be present in all its effects, from which it would follow that the One would be dependent on its effects. Instead, everything originates through the One and is in it, as everything depends on it.

With these two clarifications, Porphyry consolidates the transcendence of the One: on the one hand, he avoids the dependence of the cause with respect to its effect, and on the other, he reaffirms the dependence of the effect on its cause.

With the introduction of ὅτι: πανταχοῦ ὅτι οὐδαμοῦ, which is not found in Plotinus, Porphyry makes omnipresence come from omniabsence. Thus, in his argumentation, Porphyry grants preeminence to omniabsence: if the One was not "nowhere", i.e. without the anteriority and alterity of the cause, there could not be an effect, i.e. things would not originate through it. Thus, he gives priority to the anteriority and alterity of the cause as the foundation of procession, and shows that the same principles apply to all of the causality chain, from God to the Soul.

By means of the omniabsence of the cause he reaffirms the separateness of the cause, its alterity, which allows for the procession of everything and the participation<sup>43</sup> of all these things in their cause.

Proclus does not reintroduce Porphyry's inference in the *Elements of Theology*<sup>44</sup>, section 98. His argumentation analyses both

---

43. An analysis of the question about aspects, means and precedents of participation in connection with Plotinian procession doctrine, can be read in J.-F. PRADEAU, *op. cit.*, 44-45 & 89-96.

44. Unlike the *Sentences*, a work in which Porphyry sets out the main themes of the *Enneads* in a scholastic mode, reinterpreting them without any claim to being systematic, in the *Elements of Theology* Proclus develops a more geometric deduction, which nevertheless contains some of the terminology coined in the Porphyrian work. Proclus just spends the first part of the *Elements of Theology* on the topic of deduction of the multiplicity of the One, which in Porphyry appears virtually

hypotheses, to conclude that: “Every cause which is separate from its effects exists at once everywhere and nowhere”<sup>45</sup>.

If the cause was only “everywhere”, it could not be previous; if the cause was only “nowhere”, it would not be present in everything. Therefore, the cause must be present everywhere and at the same time nowhere.

#### 4. THE LAST LINK IN THE PROCESSIONAL CHAIN

“And the procession of the All comes, perforce, to a halt at that which is unable to be at once either everywhere or nowhere, [20] but partakes successively of either state”<sup>46</sup>.

We will base this interpretation on Proclus’ *Elements of Theology*, 98, as proposed by Goulet-Cazé<sup>47</sup>, who reconstructs Plotinus’ formula: “πανταχοῦ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ” to say “πανταχοῦ ἅμα καὶ οὐδαμοῦ”<sup>48</sup>. Proclus’ exegesis considers, as we have seen, both possibilities: if the cause was only everywhere, then if the cause was only nowhere, and he concludes that the cause can only be everywhere at the same time as nowhere. Thus, the adverb ἅμα, “at the same time”, intensifies the conjunction καὶ: “everywhere and nowhere at the same time”.

In line with this, at the end of *Sentence* 31 ἅμα intensifies the second μήτε: “that which is unable to be at once either everywhere

---

condensed in the *Sentence* 31, whose analysis concerns us. Cfr. S. BRETON, *Le théorème de l'un dans les Éléments de Théologie de Proclus*, “Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques” 58 (1974) 561-583; and M. SCHMITZ, *Zur Logik der henologischen Metaphysik. Zu Proklos, Elem. Theol. I*, in M. BARBANTI, G. R. GIARDINA & P. MANGANARO (eds.), “Ἐνωσις καὶ φιλία. *Unione e amicizia. Omaggio a Francesco Romano* (CUECM, Catania, 2002) 455-467.

45. PROCLUS, *Elementatio Theologica*, 98, lin. 1 (trans. Dodds): “Πᾶν αἴτιον χωριστὸν πανταχοῦ ἐστὶν ἅμα καὶ οὐδαμοῦ”. E. R. DOODS, *Proclus. The Elements of Theology*. A revised text with translation, introduction, and commentary (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1963<sup>2</sup>) 86-87.
46. *Sent.* 31, li. 18-21 (trans. Dillon cit., modified): “Καὶ ἔστι γέ ἡ πρόοδος τοῦ παντὸς εἰς τὸ μήτε πανταχοῦ ἅμα μήτε [20] μηδαμοῦ εἶναι δυνάμενον, ἀλλ’ ἀνά μέρος ἐκατέρων μετέχον”.
47. Cfr. M.-O. GOULET-CAZÉ & L. BRISSON, *Le système philosophique de Porphyre dans les Sentences*, in L. BRISSON et al., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 43-44.
48. Cfr. PROCLUS, *Elem. Theol.* 8, li. 1: “πανταχοῦ ἐστὶν ἅμα καὶ οὐδαμοῦ”; and *Elem. Theol.* 98, li. 16-17: “πανταχοῦ ἐστὶν ἅμα καὶ [17] οὐδαμοῦ”.

or nowhere”<sup>49</sup>. In this sense, ἅμα, “at the same time” is opposed to ἀνὰ μέρος, “successively”, “in turns”.

Hence, the simultaneity “everywhere and nowhere” that characterizes incorporeal beings cannot be applied to that in which procession stops, which cannot be a cause for other beings, i.e. which cannot generate other beings.

The cause is not “everywhere and nowhere at the same time”, or the cause “is not everywhere at the same time as nowhere” (ἅμα, “at the same time”, is opposed to ἀνὰ μέρος, “successively”).

What is, however, the last link in which procession stops that Porphyry mentions? While the Soul and the Intellect are in their cause<sup>50</sup>, but everywhere and nowhere in their effects<sup>51</sup>, the body is only in its cause, hence the body does not produce any effect and is the last link in the processional chain.

God, the Intellect and the Soul are everywhere in a non-local manner<sup>52</sup> and, at the same time, nowhere in the effects that they produce. On the contrary, the body, as it is in a place (see Sent. 1: “All body is in a place, but none of those things in themselves incorporeal, as such, is in a place”<sup>53</sup>), lacks the characteristic of being

49. *Sent.* 31, li. 19-20: “τὸ μήτε πανταχοῦ ἅμα μήτε [20] μηδαμοῦ εἶναι δυνάμενον”.

50. “Such language suggests a causal dependency between entities, and this is how Porphyry interprets it, arguing that the intellect is the cause of souls (αἴτιον ψυχῶν *Sent.* 31, 22.5 Lamberz)”. S. STRANGE, *Porphyry and Plotinus’ metaphysics*, in G. KARAMANOLIS & A. SHEPPARD (eds.), *Studies on Porphyry* (Institute of Classical Studies, University of London, London, 2007) 106.

51. Cfr. *En.* VI 4 [22] 3, 17-19 (trans. Armstrong cit.): “There is nothing, therefore, surprising in its being in all things in this way, because it is also in none of them in such a way as to belong to them. (Θαυμαστόν οὖν οὐδὲν οὕτως ἐν πᾶσιν εἶναι, ὅτι αὐτὸ ἐν οὐδενί ἐστιν αὐτῶν οὕτως ὡς ἐκείνων εἶναι)”.

52. Cfr. *En.* VI 4 [22] 3, 23-29 (trans. Armstrong cit.): “But one should not be surprised if [the true All] itself, which is not in place, is present to everything which is in place (Θαυμάζειν δὲ οὐ δεῖ, εἰ αὐτὸ μὴ ὄν ἐν τόπῳ παντὶ τῷ ἐν τόπῳ ὄντι πάρεστιν); it would on the other hand be surprising, and impossible as well as surprising, if it had itself its own proper place and was present to another thing which was in place, or was present at all, and present in the way in which we say it is. But now the argument says that it is necessary for it, since it has not been allotted a place, to be present as a whole to that to which it is present (ὡς ἀνάγκη αὐτῷ τόπον οὐκ εἰληχότι ὧ πάρεστι τοῦτῳ ὅλον παρεῖναι), and to be present as a whole to an all as well as to each individual (παντὶ δὲ παρὸν ὡς καὶ ἐκάστῳ ὅλον παρεῖναι)”.

53. “Πᾶν μὲν σῶμα ἐν τόπῳ, οὐδὲν δὲ τῶν καθ’ αὐτὰ ἀσωμάτων ἢ τοιοῦτον ἐν τόπῳ”. Cfr. *Sent.* 33, li. 4-6.

everywhere and nowhere at the same time, in the way incorporeal beings are.

For the body that lives in matter and volume, being in a place means: either being everywhere in that specific place, or not being anywhere in that specific place. Thus, “everywhere” and “nowhere” applied to the body must be understood in relation with a specific place, and not in an absolute sense, “but partakes successively of either state”<sup>54</sup>.

Porphyry points out that the reality in which procession stops participates successively in everything and nothing. Here he uses the term “participation”<sup>55</sup>.

Procession stops in what is in a specific place, i.e. in body<sup>56</sup>. What is in one place cannot simultaneously be everywhere and nowhere in the place it occupies, but it can only participate successively everywhere and nowhere.

In *Sentence* 31 Porphyry deals with the generic body (σῶμα), not specifically the body of the world or individual bodies. What is bodily and is somewhere is opposed to what is incorporeal which is in relation with a place, but is nowhere.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

*Sentence* 31 explains that the cause is “everywhere and nowhere” in its effect. What does this paradoxical expression mean? Being present everywhere means, in a global sense, being in every particular place while being divided by them, as happens with the body. Instead, being everywhere, in a unitary sense, denotes ubiquity which does not imply division, as with the principles of the world. Saying that God is nowhere, Porphyry tries to define a state which is different from that of ubiquity in a global sense: if God were just everywhere, he would be identical to all things; but as he is not in any, he is distinguished from them.

---

54. *Sent.* 31, li. 20-21: “ἀλλ’ ἀνά μέρος ἐκατέρων μετέχον”.

55. Cfr. *Sent.* 32.

56. Cfr. *En.* III 4 [15] 1.

After pointing out that the first principle is the origin of all things, Porphyry proposes two denials that allow him to establish the relationship between the origin and everything that comes from it:

- a) By denying that the principle is identified with its effects, Porphyry opposes the Stoics, following as a model a passage from Plotinus' treatise III, 9 [13].
- b) By denying that the principle is in its effects, Porphyry exceeds Plotinus' quoted text.

Thus, *Sentence* 31 explains causality by means of the relationship between ubiquity and not being anywhere. Since the relationship God has with reality is twofold —God is everywhere in it without being in any particular place— divine causality is carried out in two ways: a) dependence of all things on God derives from the universal presence of God; and b) the fact that God is not anywhere in particular shows that is not identical to his effects, which is what happens with the God of the Stoics.

If the three realities —God, Intellect and Soul— are everywhere, because they are nowhere, this is due to the relationship with what comes from them. The terms “everywhere” (πανταχοῦ) and “nowhere” (ουδαμοῦ) refer to two aspects of causal relationships: a) it is said that they are “everywhere” in so far as they produce their effects, and b) “nowhere” in so far as they precede their effects and are different from them. Therefore, for Porphyry, the realities which are the principles are everywhere in their effects, because they are nowhere in them, hence the cause produces its effect because it precedes it. But when it comes to the body, that is, to what is in a particular place, the last link in the processional chain participates successively, not simultaneously, everywhere and nowhere<sup>57</sup>.

---

57. This paper was written within the framework of the research project subsidized by the Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación (Ref. FFI2009-09498). We want to thank L. Brisson (CNRS), M. Chase (CNRS), C. Fernández (UNLP), and C. Vega (UAM & UdeA).