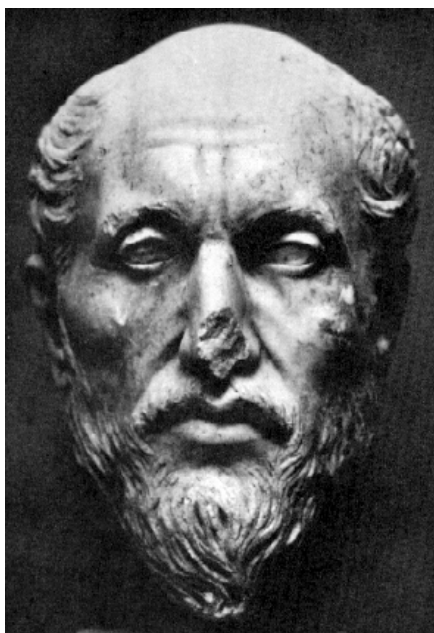


The presence of Plotinus: The self, contemplation, and spiritual exercise in the *Enneads*



Poznań, Poland, 9th-10th June 2020

An international conference organized by
the Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences
and
the Department of Classical Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Invited speakers:

Sara Ahbel-Rappe (University of Michigan)

John Bussanich (University of New Mexico)

Martin Laird (Villanova University)

Christian Tornau (Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg)

The subject

In the center of “The School of Athens”, the famous fresco by Raphael, we can see Plato and Aristotle, the two philosophers who may indeed have been the greatest thinkers of antiquity. However, the scholarly endeavor of the last century has demonstrated with increasing consistency that Plotinus – although his name and legacy are not so popular – could well stand next to them, especially so because he attempted to synthesize the views of those great masters of the past. His presence in Western philosophy was, perhaps a more silent one, but also very influential. Since Late Antiquity, Christian, Jewish and Muslim philosophers were inspired by him as well as Renaissance Platonists and German idealists. In year 2020, 1750 years will have passed by since his solitary death in a Campanian villa or, in his view, since his final ascent from “the divine in us to the divine in the All”. On this occasion, we want to celebrate Plotinus’ presence by organizing an international conference.

One of the topics which has recently attracted a lot of scholarly attention is Plotinus’ view of the self. It seems original, interesting and refreshing in the midst of our “culture of narcissism”, where we tend to be preoccupied more than ever by concepts such as the self, self-realization, identity, and individualism. What we would like to discuss, however, is not only Plotinus’ philosophical view of the self, but the connections between his concept of the self and the practical dimension of his philosophy, famously described by Pierre Hadot as “spiritual exercise” and “the way of life”. The third topic which seems to be worth exploring in that context is contemplation, self-knowledge and the knowledge of the divine, which lies in between the “theoretical” pursuit of the truth and the “practical” search for personal transformation.

We are inviting classicists and philosophers to a conference whose purpose will be to have a dialogue on those three dimensions of Plotinus’ philosophy and how they interact with each other. We hope to receive proposals of original papers, exploring both the more “theoretical” aspects of the thought of Plotinus, concerning his views on the self, the soul, the individual identity, etc., as well as the more “practical” elements that may be described from various angles as religious, spiritual, therapeutic, etc.

Organization

If you wish to present a paper, please, submit a 250-300 word abstract, including the title, to the email address given below. A presentation should last no more than 20 minutes and will be followed by a 10-minute discussion. If your submission is accepted, we will ask you, shortly before the conference, to prepare a two-page summary of your paper, which will be distributed among the participants so that they can prepare for the discussion. We would like the conference

to be thematically focused and oriented towards dialogue, so we will accept ca. 10 papers (apart from four keynote lectures by the invited speakers) and plan no parallel sessions. The language of the conference will be English. We would also like to publish a conference volume based on papers presented.

The registration fee is 150€, which will cover meals and conference materials. A variety of accommodation options will be available to the registered participants.

For registration and inquiries, please email Conference Secretary, Mateusz Stróżyński – monosautos@gmail.com.

Time and place

The conference will take place on 9th – 10th of June 2020. **The deadline for submitting titles and abstracts (250-300 words) is November 30th, 2019.** The conference committee will select ca. 10 papers and the authors will be informed of the results in **February, 2020**. The two-page summaries of the papers will have to reach us by **May 15th, 2020**.

The conference will be held at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. Both the conference site and accommodation will be within walking distance of the historic center of the city, including the Old Market Square with the Renaissance Town Hall. The airport is just 6.5 km/4 miles from the center of Poznań (20 minutes by taxi).

Conference Committee:

General Chair: prof. Krystyna Bartol (Head of the Committee on Ancient Culture; Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Conference Secretary: prof. Mateusz Stróżyński (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Prof. Maria Marcinkowska-Rosół (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Prof. Adam Łukaszewicz (Section of Research and International Relations of the Committee on Ancient Culture; University of Warsaw)