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LENKA KARFÍKOVÁ

Eternity according to Plotinus, Enn. III,7

Plotinus' treatise "On eternity and time" (III,7 [45])[1] was included by Porphyry when classifying the work of his teacher into the third *Ennead* which deals with cosmology.[2] It is rather a late text by Plotinus, according to the chronological order of his treatises (the 45th from 54),[3] and in it we find his mature concept of both Intellect and soul. Similarly to the greater part of Plotinus' work, this treatise intends to interpret Plato's doctrine, in this case his idea of time as the "moving image of eternity" from the *Timaeus* (37d5).[4] A good Platonist, Plotinus assumes that the nature of the image can be investigated better if the nature of the prototype has been inquired into beforehand. Thus, before commencing his inquiries into time (Chapter 7–13), he deals with eternity as its prototype (Chapter 2–6). In both parts of his treatise, Plotinus argues against the doctrines of his predecessors (Chapter 2 concerning eternity, Chapter 7–10 concerning time) to show, in the end (Chapter 11–13), time as the life of the soul, i.e. the successive development of life, which, in eternity, is present at once as the life of the Intellect.[5]

1 *Plotini Opera*, I, ed. HENRY, Paul/SCHWYZER, Hans-Rudolf. Oxford: Clarendon 1991[6], 337–361. See the interpretations by JONAS, Hans: *Plotin über Ewigkeit und Zeit. Interpretation von Enn. III 7*, in: DEMPF, Alois/ARENDT, Hannah/ENGEL-JANOSI, Friedrich (ed.): *Politische Ordnung und menschliche Existenz. Festgabe für E. Voegelin zum 60. Geburtstag*. München: Beck 1962, 295–319; BEIERWALTES, Werner: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit und Zeit. Enneade III,7*, Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann 1981[3]; SMITH, Andrew: *Eternity and Time*, in: GERSON, Lloyd P. (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996, 196–216; STRANGE, Steven K.: *Plotinus on the Nature of Eternity and Time*, in: SCHRENK, Lawrence P. (ed.): *Aristotle in Late Antiquity*. Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press 1994, 22–53.

2 See PORPHYRY: *Vita Plotini*, 24, 73f. (ed. HENRY, Paul/SCHWYZER, Hans-Rudolf: *Plotini Opera*, I. Oxford: Clarendon 1991[6]).

3 See PORPHYRY: *Vita Plotini*, 5, 57f.

4 On this idea in Middle Platonism, see LEISEGANG, Hans: *Die Begriffe der Zeit und Ewigkeit im späterem Platonismus*. Münster: Aschendorff 1913, 6–14; BEUTLER, Rudolf/THEILER, Willy: *Plotins Schriften*. Übersetzt von HARDER, Richard, IV. Hamburg: Meiner 1967, 511f.

5 *Structure of the treatise:*

Chap. 1. Introduction (method)

Chap. 2–6. Eternity:

2. Rejected opinions: (1) Eternity as the intelligible essence itself; (2) Eternity as rest.

3–4. Eternity as the life of the intelligible essence

5–6. Eternity and everlastingness

Chap. 7–13. Time:

7–10. Rejected opinions: (1a) Time as movement in general; (1b) Time as movement of the universe; (2) Time as that which is moved; (3) Time as something belonging

As a whole, the treatise can be understood to be Plotinus' creative interpretation of both Plato's cosmology from the *Timaeus* and Plato's ontology from the *Sophist*, including, at the same time, the Aristotelian idea of divine life as a contemplative self-relation and the refutation of the Aristotelian concept of eternity and time.[6]

1. The method of Plotinus' inquiry (preliminary intuition and the explication of predecessors, prototype-image, catalogues of questions)

As to Plotinus' method,[7] according to his own words he begins with a preliminary intuition that differentiates between eternity (αἰών) and time (χρόνος): while eternity concerns everlasting nature (περὶ τὴν ἀίδιον εἶναι φύσιν), time belongs to becoming and to this universe (περὶ τὸ γινόμενον καὶ τόδε τὸ πᾶν) (1,1-3). This intuition or idea is characterised as spontaneous (αὐτόθεν), instant (ὥσπερ ταῖς τῆς ἐννοίας ἀθροωτέραις ἐπιβολαῖς) and seemingly clear (ἐναργές τι ... πάθος) (1,3-6).[8]

However, if we were to analyse it in detail, we would be confused (ἀποροῦντες). Therefore, we turn to the doctrines of our predecessors to judge which of them are right. In doing so, we can attain our own understanding of the topic (σύνεσις) (1,7-16). Inquiries into the doctrines of our predecessors help us to analyse our preliminary intuition, but at the same time, the predecessors are judged by this very intuition. Combining both these elements is Plotinus' path to understanding.

His second methodological decision is to begin by investigating the prototype, not the image, i.e. eternity, not time. This step implies Plato's idea of time as the image of eternity and also his conviction that moving

to movement: (3a) Extension of movement; (3b) Measurement of movement; (3c) Something that accompanies movement.
11–13. Time as the life of the soul.

6 On this strategy of Plotinus' see Mesch, Walter: *Reflektierte Gegenwart. Eine Studie über Zeit und Ewigkeit bei Platon, Aristoteles, Plotin und Augustinus*. Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann 2003, 228–258.

7 Smith (*Eternity*, 196 f.) distinguishes six elements in Plotinus' method according to our treatise: (1) general notions and presuppositions; (2) our puzzlement as a result of difficultties; (3) what the ancients said; (4) our own interpretation of the ancients; (5) some of these philosophers (in the plural!) hit on the truth; (6) our search for ourselves. Strange (*Plotinus*, 23–31) assumes that here Plotinus uses the Aristotelian "dialectical method" (meaning a critical inquiry into the views of "the many" and of "the wise", i.e. of previous philosophers, on the subject) although he emphasises the doctrines of Plato more than Aristotle does. On the other hand, Jonas (*Plotin*, 296) places greater emphasis on the preliminary assumption of Plotinus' inquiry (namely the difference between time and eternity) which, according to the principles of Plotinus' metaphysics, should be verified by experience.

8 Concerning the expressions ἐπιβολή and ἀθρόος, see Guyot, Matthieu: *Traité 45 (III,7). L'etérnité et le temps*, présentation, traduction et notes par Guyot, Matthieu, in: Plotin: *Traités 45–50*, présentés, traduits et annotés par Guyot, Matthieu *et al.* sous la direction de Brisson, Luc et Pradeau, Jean-François. Paris: Flammarion 2009, 13–126, here 69f., note 7.

plurality can only be known thanks to the knowledge of its stable prototype (τοῦ ἑστῶτος). However, this is not the only method Plotinus allows. It is also possible (still according to the Platonic view) to begin with time and, thanks to recollection (κατὰ ἀνάμνησιν), ascend to eternity, to which time is similar (1,16-24). As I understand it, Plotinus' inquiry into eternity and time combines both methods and does not apply only the first one.[9] A temporal being cannot do otherwise than ascend to eternity from time to explain, thanks to eternity, our temporal existence as its image.

According to these methodological rules, in both parts of his treatise (on eternity and on time) Plotinus starts with views to be argued against, in order to come – by analysing Plato's (and also Parmenides' and Aristotle's) doctrines – to his own understanding. Besides these interpretations, we find in his treatise some sets of questions that probably document the "perplexity" or *aporia* mentioned at the beginning of the treatise (1,8). These catalogues of questions (concerning eternity, cf. 3,1-7 and 5,1-12) divide Plotinus' investigation of eternity into two parts, namely Chapters 3-4 and 5-6. Plotinus' interpretation of Plato is present in the whole of his treatise; its densest concentration, however, is to be found in the sixth chapter on eternity, where Plato is also mentioned by name for the first time (6,5).[10]

2. Two rejected opinions (eternity as the intelligible essence and as rest)

Before presenting his position based on Plato, Plotinus argues against two other opinions on eternity, put as counterparts of two concepts of time: first, eternity as the intelligible essence itself (τὴν νοητὴν αὐτὴν οὐσίαν), corresponding to time as the whole of heaven and the world (τὸν σύμπαντα οὐρανὸν καὶ κόσμον) (2,1-3), and second, eternity understood as the rest, as "there", i.e. in the intelligible realm (κατὰ τὴν στάσιν τὴν ἐκεῖ), corresponding to time as motion (κατὰ τὴν κίνησιν) (2,20–21). Both these erroneous concepts of eternity, which could perhaps be deduced from Plato, were quite probably invented by Plotinus himself,[11] according to both con-

9 Riccardo Chiaradonna tries to demonstrate that the second method is not only not used by Plotinus, but is also held to be ontologically mistaken (against Aristotle); cf. Chiaradonna, Riccardo: *Il tempo misura del movimento? Plotino e Aristotele (Enn. III 7 [45])*, in: Bonazzi, Mauro/Trabattoni, Franco (ed.): *Platone e la tradizione platonica. Studi di filosofia antica*. Milano: Cisalpino 2003, 222–250, esp. 222–225.

10 Cf. Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 201.

11 Cf. Beutler/Theiler: *Plotins Schriften*, vol. IV, 511; Strange: *Plotinus*, 34. On the other hand, Beierwaltes (*Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 150) and Smith (*Eternity*, 198f.) emphasise the Platonic basis of both ideas; cf. *Tim.* 37d1-6, 39e1-8, 28a4-b1 and *Soph.* 254d-e.

cepts of time already rejected by Aristotle[12] and argued against by Plotinus later on: first, time as that which is moving (especially the canopy of the heavens), and second, time as motion.

Against the identification of eternity with the intelligible essence, Plotinus argues, quoting from Plato, that "the nature of the prototype is eternal" (ἡ ... τοῦ παραδείγματος φύσις ἐτύγχανεν οὖσα αἰώνιος) (*Tim.* 37d3), i.e. eternity is spoken of (κατηγορῶμεν) with reference to the intelligible world which "abides" (κεῖσθαι) in eternity. Thus, eternity is not identical with the intelligible essence but belongs to it (περὶ ἐκείνην) and is to be found in it (ἐν ἐκείνῃ) or is present in it (παρεῖναι ἐκείνῃ) (2,10-15).

Both the intelligible world and eternity include ideas, but not in the same way: the intelligible world includes them as its parts (ἡ περιοχὴ ὡς μερῶν), whereas eternity includes them together as a whole (ὁμοῦ τὸ ὅλον) (2,17-18). We will see the importance of this "synthetic" nature proper to eternity later on.

As for the second opinion, namely eternity as rest, Plotinus argues against two variants of this idea: first, the identification of eternity with rest in general (ἁπλῶς), and second, the identification with the rest of the intelligible essence (τῇ στάσει τῇ περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν) (2,22-24).

If eternity was rest in general, then neither motion nor rest could be spoken of as eternal. Rest could not be eternal, because it would have to participate in itself, and motion could not be eternal, because it would have to be identified with rest (2,24-27). To be sure, such an identity of motion and rest in general is absurd, but it could perhaps be assumed for the intelligible realm. We will see that Plotinus (unlike Plato) affirms both rest and motion in the intelligible realm. Nevertheless, eternity cannot possibly be identified with rest so as to exclude the other four genera (motion, essence, sameness, and otherness) (2,29-31).

Moreover, the identification of eternity with rest disregards its other essential features: namely, eternity abides not only in rest but also in unity (ἐν ἑνί) (*Tim.* 37d6), i.e. not only does it not change but also it is internally unified. Its unity, however, does not mean continuity in distance, but rather the entire absence of any distance (ἀδιάστατον),[13] distinguishing eternity from time (2,31-35). Besides, the notion of rest does not include the idea of "always" (τὸ ἀεί), which is typical for eternity, which nevertheless (in this case) does not mean continuation in time (τὸ ἐν χρόνῳ) but a kind of "everlastingness" (τὸ ἀίδιον) (2,27-29) which will occupy us

12 Cf. ARISTOTLE: *Phys.* IV,10, 218a33-b1: οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὴν τοῦ ὅλου κίνησιν εἶναί φασιν, οἱ δὲ τὴν σφαῖραν αὐτήν.

13 PLATO (*Tim.* 37c-38b) does not use this expression; however, his description proves that the image, which is time, differs from its prototype by its very extension into days, months and years, in the past and future.

later on. Thus, eternity partakes in rest (μετέχοι ἂν οὖν στάσεως), but it is not rest itself (αὐτοστάσις) (2,35-36).

3. Analytic and synthetic view: eternity as seen by a synthetic view of the intelligible essence

Plotinus' refutation of both erroneous opinions raises his first catalogue of questions to deal with.

According to what (καθ' ὅ), he asks, can we call the intelligible realm "eternal" and "everlasting"? Is "eternity" (αἰών) the same as "everlastingness" (ἀιδιότης), or is everlastingness perhaps the idea of eternity (κατ' αὐτὴν ὁ αἰών) (3,1-3)? Is it one feature (καθ' ἕν τι), although we see it as being composed of many (ἐκ πολλῶν συνηθροισμένην τινὰ νόησιν)? Or is it a nature belonging to intelligible beings (φύσιν εἴτ' ἐπακολουθοῦσαν τοῖς ἐκεῖ), accompanying them (εἴτε συνοῦσαν) or being seen in them (εἴτ' ἐνορωμένην)? Are these beings the one nature which is many and a manifold power (πολλὰ δὲ δυναμένην καὶ πολλὰ οὖσαν)? (3,4-7)

Looking more closely (εἰσαθρήσας) (thus Plotinus), we will see this manifold power to be not only rest, but all the supreme genera as known from Plato's *Sophist*.[14] Whereas Plato seems to reserve rest and motion, as excluding each other, for the realm of becoming, Plotinus interprets the unified plurality of the Intellect as the *essence* (οὐσία), because it is like a substrate of further determinations (οἷον ὑποκείμενον), as *motion* (κίνησις), insofar as it is a life (ζωή), as *rest* (στάσις) being still in the same way (τὸ πάντη ὡσαύτως), *otherness* and *sameness* (θάτερον δὲ καὶ ταὐτόν) insofar as it is a unified plurality (ταῦτα ὁμοῦ ἕν) (3,8-11). Plotinus developed this view of the supreme genera in his treatise "On the kinds of being II" (*Enn.* VI,2 [43] 7-8), which precedes our text closely in chronological order.[15]

Besides analysing thus far the manifold power, we can also have a "synthetic" look at it and see it all at once (συνθεὶς πάλιν αὖ εἰς ἓν ὁμοῦ) as one life (ζωὴν μόνην). Compressing its otherness (ἐν τούτοις τὴν ἑτερότητα συστείλας), we see its incessant and never-changing activity (τῆς ἐνεργείας τὸ ἄπαυστον καὶ τὸ ταὐτὸν καὶ οὐδέποτε ἄλλο), its intellection and life, not going from one thing to another, but always remaining the same, without any extension (9.5). In this "synthetic" view we glimpse eternity (3,11-16).

14 Plato: *Soph.* 254dff.

15 On Plotinus' reinterpretation of Plato's doctrine of the supreme genera from the *Sophist*, see Nebel, Gerhard: *Plotins Kategorien der intelligiblen Welt. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Idee*. Tübingen: Mohr 1929, 34–39 and 49–54; Volkmann-Schluck, Karl-Heinz: *Plotin als Interpret der Ontologie Platos*. Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann 1966³, esp. 108–118; Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 152.

That having been said, eternity does not seem to be contemplated in the analytic view inquiring into the constituent elements of intelligible being, namely essence, motion, rest, sameness and otherness,[16] but in a "synthetic" view thereof. On this path, Plotinus argues in greater depth against both the previously rejected opinions: eternity is not the intelligible essence itself, but only a "synthetic" view thereof. Nor is eternity rest, which has been shown only as one element in the analysis of intelligible being.

But what can the synthetic view on the intelligible essence see, i.e. how does eternity manifest itself? Seeing eternity, according to Plotinus, is seeing a life which "abides in the same" (ζωὴν μένουσαν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ),[17] in which all is always present (ἀεὶ παρὸν τὸ πᾶν ἔχουσαν), which is all at once (ἅμα τὰ πάντα), not one thing and then again another, but a completion without any parts (τέλος ἀμερές), like a point containing all the lines together before they are drawn (3,16-21).[18] This life does not change but is always in the present (ἐν τῷ παρόντι ἀεί). Nothing of it has passed away, nor again is there anything to come (οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ παρῆλθεν οὐδ' αὖ γενήσεται), because it is always what it is (3,21-23). It has not become what it is, nor should it later change into something else, because what it is, it is always. Therefore, we cannot say that it "was" nor "will be" but only "is", always being what it is (3,26-34).

This life, whose description comes close both to the "everlasting essence" in Plato's *Tim.* 37e5-7 and being in the poem by Parmenides,[19] is eternity, according to Plotinus. It is not the intelligible essence itself but its life. It is not a substrate of determinations (τὸ ὑποκείμενον), but it "shines out" from the substrate as its radiance (τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου οἷον ἐκλάμπον) in the sense of an identity which is not to be achieved, but is actually already possessed (3,23-26). (This last feature of eternity is a

[16] In both of these perspectives, SMITH (*Eternity*, 201) recognises both steps of Plato's dialectical method. He also emphasises eternity as *seen* or contemplated in the Intelligible (*ibid.* 201f.).

[17] On the Eleatic expression μένειν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ (abide in the same) and its history, see BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 164–166.

[18] On the metaphor of a point as a condensed implication of lines without any quantification, see BEIRWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 108f.

[19] Cf. PARMENIDES, B, fr. 8. See BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 177f. According to STRANGE (*Plotinus*, 33), Plotinus' description of eternity seems to be rather a commentary on this poem by Parmenides (B 8) than on the *Timaeus* (itself depending on Parmenides). On the other hand, Parmenides' ὁμοῦ πᾶν (fr. 8,5) is being lampooned by Plato (*Phd.* 72c) in his critique on Anaxagoras; cf. MESCH: *Reflektierte Gegenwart*, 250f. As Denis O'Brien shows, Plotinus' notion of eternity as the absence of any duration is not necessarily identical to Parmenides' or Plato's; cf. O'BRIEN, Denis: *Temps et éternité dans la philosophie grecque*, in: TIFFENEAU, Dorian (ed.): *Mythes et représentations du temps*. Paris: Éd. du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 1985, 59–85. Concerning Plato, in the same sense also WHITTAKER, John: *The "Eternity" of the Platonic Forms*, in: IDEM: *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought*. London: Variorum Reprints 1984, N° I.

counterpart to the identity not possessed but longed for by temporal beings, as we will see later on in the treatise.)

However, eternity is not an accident coming from outside to the intelligible essence. It is this essence itself, in the sense that it originates from it and remains with it (ἐκείνη καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνης καὶ σὺν ἐκείνῃ). We can see it (ἐνορᾶται) as something inherent in it. Thus, eternity seems to be a "phenomenal form" (*Escheinungsform*) of the intelligible essence, and as such it is based on this essence. Only in this sense is eternity identical with the intelligible being.[20]

Some determinations of the intelligible essence are, so to speak, only its particular aspects (ὥσπερ ἐν μέρει), while others concern it precisely as a whole (ἐν παντί) insofar as it is not a composition of parts (οὐκ ἐκ τῶν μερῶν ἠθροισμένον), but a real whole that generates its parts (4,8-11). This last difference seems to correspond with the analytic view discerning the aspects or "parts" of the intelligible essence, and the synthetic view contemplating it at once and together as a undivided whole.[21]

Eternity is thus the full and complete essence of being (ἡ τοῦ ὄντος παντελὴς οὐσία καὶ ὅλη), not just one of its aspects but its entire structure or nature (ἡ διάθεσις αὐτοῦ καὶ φύσις),[22] the state in which nothing can be added or taken away. Even the name of eternity (according to a popular etymology known through Aristotle[23]) derives from "being always" (αἰών ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀεὶ ὄντος) (4,37-43).

The first part of Plotinus' inquiry into eternity (Chapter 3–4) is summarised in two short descriptions: (1) eternity is "what was not, nor will be, but only is (ὃ οὖν μήτε ἦν, μήτε ἔσται, ἀλλ' ἔστι μόνον, *Tim.* 37e5-7), having its being as still (ἑστὼς ἔχον τὸ εἶναι) and neither ever having to change nor ever being changed" (μὴ μεταβάλλειν εἰς τὸ ἔσται μηδ' αὖ μεταβεβληκέναι)" (3,34-36); (2) it is "the life belonging to that which exists in being (ἡ περὶ τὸ ὂν ἐν τῷ εἶναι ζωή), all together and fully (ὁμοῦ πᾶσα καὶ πλήρης), completely without extension (ἀδιάστατος πανταχῇ)" (3,36-38). To understand this second description, we must consider that in

[20] Cf. BEIERWALTES: Plotin. *Über Ewigkeit*, 160. It seems to be a misunderstanding, when the later Platonists criticise Plotinus as identifying eternity with intelligible essence (so PROCLUS, *In Tim.* III, 12,9-12; Damascius according to SIMPLICIUS: Phys. 791,32–792,3). See also SMITH: *Eternity*, 198 and note 2.

[21] Further candidates to be seen by the "synthetic", not by the analytic view, i.e. not as parts of the intelligible essence but as its structure, are probably beauty and truth, cf. 4,5-8; see BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 178 (concerning the truth, cf. also 4,11-12; SEE BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 180f.).

[22] Concerning the term διάθεσις, here signifying the ontological structure, cf. BEIERWALTES: *Plotin, Über Ewigkeit*, 189f.

[23] Cf. ARISTOTLE: *De caelo*, I,9, 279a27-28: ... αἰών ἐστιν, ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰεὶ εἶναι τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν εἰληφώς. Unlike Aristotle, Plotinus does not interpret this etymology in the sense of infinite time (cf. BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 190).

the intelligible realm, "life" does not mean duration or continuity in change (as one could assume according to biological life), but the activity of intellection, the divine life as described by Aristotle in Book XII of his *Metaphysics*.[24]

Chapters 3-4 of Plotinus' treatise more or less answer the questions as formulated in his first catalogue of problems at the very beginning of Chapter 3, the exception being the still unclear relationship of eternity and everlastingness, which is left for the second part of the treatise. Eternity has been shown as a structure of the intelligible essence in its entirety (not just one of its parts), its nature or state, which means always being the same and not having to acquire anything not yet possessed or to lose any of its belongings.

4. Eternity and everlastingness

Plotinus opens the next part of his inquiry with a new catalogue of questions presupposing and developing his previous thoughts.

If I turn the intention of my soul to something seen as always remaining the same and completely whole, can I call it "everlasting" (ἀίδιον)? For it is of such a nature that it is found to be without any change whenever it is concentrated upon (εἰ πάλιν προσβάλοις, εὑρεῖν τοιοῦτον) (5,1-7).[25] But what would happen, were I to remain in this contemplation, close to this nature (συνὼν εἴη τῆς φύσεως)? Could I perhaps contemplate it and never grow tired of it (ἀτρύτῳ φύσει)? Or would I run towards eternity (δραμὼν καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς αἰῶνα ἔσται) and never fall away, becoming similar to the eternal (ὅμοιος καὶ αἰώνιος), contemplating eternity and the eternal by the eternal in myself (τῷ ἐν αὐτῷ αἰωνίῳ τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ τὸ αἰώνιον θεώμενος)? (5,7-12)

In this second catalogue of questions Plotinus raises two interdependent problems, namely the relationship between eternity and everlastingness and the nature of the regard turned towards eternity.

[24] Cf. Aristotle: *Met.* XII,7, 1072b26-27 (quoted below, note 26). The scholarly debates concerning the difficulties connected with the idea of a life without any duration and change are summarised by Strange: *Plotinus*, 38f., notes 45 and 46. Cf. also Armstrong, Arthur H.: *Eternity, Life and Movement in Plotinus' Accounts of Noys*, in: *Le néoplatonisme. Colloques internationaux du C.N.R.S. (Royaumont, 9–13 juin 1969)*. Paris: Éd. du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 1971, 67–74; Sorabji, Richard: *Time, Creation and Continuum Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. London: Duckworth 1983, 114. Concerning the life of the Intellect and the unceasing activity of intellection, see Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 161–164 and 203.

[25] The question is understood in a different way by Guyot (*Traité 45*, 88, note 154), in the sense of whether or not it is sufficient that something has not changed in the past to be "everlasting"? Is it not also necessary to know whether or not it may change in the future?

The notions of "eternal" (αἰώνιον), "always being" (ἀεὶ ὄν) and "everlasting" (ἀίδιον) are used more or less synonymously in Plato's *Timaeus*. Aristotle also characterizes the divine life and, in another context, the heavens, as ἀίδιος and αἰών.[26] Especially the Aristotelian use of these terms can tempt one towards a temporal concept of "everlastingness" and, consequently, also of "eternity". It is highly probable that it is for this reason that Plotinus tries to explain the relationship between both terms,[27] searching for an answer, but not knowing it in advance.

In his first series of questions Plotinus mentioned the possibility of eternity (αἰών) being the same thing as everlastingness (ἀιδιότης), besides another solution in the sense that everlastingness could also be the idea or form of eternity (κατ' αὐτὴν ὁ αἰών) (3,2-3). This second solution was successful in the later history of Platonism; e.g. Proclus distinguished two kinds of everlastingness, one "belonging to eternity" (ἀιδιότης κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα), the other "(belonging to) the entirety of time" (τὸν ὅλον χρόνον).[28] Very similarly, Ficino translated ἀιδιότης as *sempiternitas* in the sense of *idem semper*,[29] and, referring to Proclus, understood it as "a genus signifying duration or life without beginning and end, subsuming two species: first, *aevum* or *aeternitas* (eternity), which is an infinite duration or life as being all things at once; and second, *perpetuitas* or *tempus* itself (time), i.e. an infinite duration proceeding successively in parts".[30] Modern

[26] Cf. PLATO: *Tim.* 27d6; 28a2; 29a2-5; 34a8; 37a1; 37d1-e5; ARISTOTLE: *Met.* 1072b26-30: ἡ γὰρ νοῦ ἐνέργεια ζωή, ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἡ ἐνέργεια·ἐνέργεια δὲ ἡ καθ' αὑτὴν ἐκείνου ζωὴ ἀρίστη καὶ ἀΐδιος. φαμὲν δὴ τὸν θεὸν εἶναι ζῷον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον, ὥστε ζωὴ καὶ αἰὼν συνεχὴς καὶ ἀΐδιος ὑπάρχει τῷ θεῷ·τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ θεός. IDEM: *De coelo*, 283b26-29: Ὅτι μὲν οὖν οὔτε γέγονεν ὁ πᾶς οὐρανὸς οὔτ' ἐνδέχεται φθαρῆναι, [...] ἀλλ' ἔστιν εἷς καὶ ἀΐδιος, ἀρχὴν μὲν καὶ τελευτὴν οὐκ ἔχων τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος, ἔχων δὲ καὶ περιέχων ἐν αὑτῷ τὸν ἄπειρον χρόνον). Concerning the history of the terms ἀιδιότης ("everlastingness", "eternity") and αἰών (originally "life", "vitality", "an individual duration"), cf. FESTUGIÈRE, André-Jean: *Le sens philosophique du mot aiôn. A propos d'Aristote, de caelo I,9*, in: *La parola del passato*, 4, 1949, 172–189; DEGANI, Enzo: *Aiôn da Omero ad Aristotele*. Firenze: L.S. Olschki 1961; BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 145–147.

[27] Cf. BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 146 and 157.

[28] Cf. PROCLUS: *In Tim.*, Diehl I, 278,9f.

[29] MARSILIO FICINO: *In librum de aeternitate et tempore comment.*, in: IDEM: *Opera (omnia)*, vol. II. Basileae: Officina Henricpetrina 1576 (reprint Torino: Bottega d'Erasmo 1983), 1720 [720].

[30] [...] *sempiternitatem simpliciter esse quasi genus aliquod perseverantiam seu vitam significans, pricipio fineque carentem, sub qua duae sunt species, quarum prima est aevum scilicet aeternitas, quae est vita vel perseverantia infinita permanens simul tota; secunda perpetuitas sive ipsum tempus, scilicet perseverantia infinita per partes successione progrediens* (FICINO: *In librum de aeternitate et tempore comment.*, 1721 [721]). A distinction between the terms *aeternus* and *perpetuus* had already been made by Boethius (without, however, *sempiternitas* having been mentioned as the superior genus). He defined *aeternitas* as an "entire together and perfect possession of an endless life" (*interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio*), whereas *perpetuitas* was defined as a temporal duration without beginning or end (cf. BOETHIUS: *Philos. consol.*, Prosa V,6). According to Pierre Courcelle, Boethius adopted the difference between *aeternitas* and *perpetuitas*, corresponding to αἰών

interpreters also consider the possibility of "everlastingness" as the form or idea of "eternity". Some of them reject this solution, arguing for the synonymous meaning of both terms (so R. Beutler – W. Theiler);[31] others allow this interpretation, explaining that Plotinus used the term ἀιδιότης, because the abstract noun αἰωνιότης, derived from the adjective αἰώνιον, does not exist in Greek (so H. Jonas, who translates ἀιδιότης as „Ewig-heit als Form" and αἰών as „Ewigkeit").[32] Most probably (so W. Beierwaltes), "everlastingness" is an "ontologically based way how eternity manifests itself".[33] What does this mean?

In our passage, Plotinus affirms that everlastingness (ἀιδιότης) is rather a state, not its substrate, a kind of condition existing from the substrate and in it (ἡ τοιαύτη κατάστασις τοῦ ὑποκειμένου ἐξ αὐτοῦ οὖσα καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ). Eternity, on the other hand, would be this substrate with the corresponding condition appearing in it (αἰὼν δὲ τὸ ὑποκείμενον μετὰ τῆς τοιαύτης καταστάσεως ἐμφαινομένης) (5,15-18).

We will have some trouble harmonising this last affirmation with Plotinus' previously uttered idea of eternity being a structure of or a view of the intelligible essence, not the substrate of this structure, which is this essence itself (3,23-25; 4,42).[34] Both Plotinus' statements seem to be analogous in the sense that eternity relates to the intelligible essence, as everlastingness relates to eternity, namely as a structure or state (διάθεσις or κατάστασις[35]) to its substrate (τὸ ὑποκείμενον).

and ἀιδιότης, from Ammonius' commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* (cf. COURCELLE, Pierre: *Les lettres grecques en Occident. De Macrobe à Cassiodore*. Paris: de Boccard 1943, 295–298). According to BEIERWALTES (*Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 198–200), Boethius' exposition corresponds truly to our treatise by Plotinus, which is to be considered as being its main source.

31 Cf. BEUTLER/THEILER: *Plotins Schriften*, IV, 519.

32 Cf. JONAS: *Plotin*, 297 with note 3, similarly 303 (the impossibility of creating a non-existing noun αἰωνιότης is contested by BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 156f.). MESCH (*Reflektierte Gegenwart*, 243f.) also understands everlastingness as „die Eigenschaft des Zugleich-ganz-und-gegenwärtig-Seins", whereas eternity is understood as the substrate of this character: „Es geht im Zugleich-ganz-gegenwärtig-Sein um den *aiôn*, sofern dieser als *aidiotês* einen *besonderen Wesenszug des zugrundeliegenden Seins der Vernunft* ausmacht", *ibid.* 245). In a similar way, GUYOT (*Traité 45*, 68f., note 2) assumes the adjectives αἰώνιον and ἀίδιον to be synonymous, whereas the noun ἀιδιότης describes eternity as a quality and αἰών eternity as a substance.

33 BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 156.

34 This problem is indicated by BEUTLER/THEILER (*Plotins Schriften*, IV, 521 and 523), but without any proposed solution. SMITH (*Eternity*, 202f.) assumes that Plotinus wants to counterbalance the impression we might have had from the previous chapter that eternity is simply a manifestation. Other interpreters underline that eternity is not a substrate considered separately (as has been excluded previously), but a substrate understood *with a quality*, namely with everlastingness (cf. GUYOT: *Traité 45*, 80, note 91; 89, note 165).

35 On the synonymity of both expressions in the listed passages, cf. BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 189.

Both these ideas can probably be put together in the sense that eternity is a structure or nature of the intelligible essence in its whole, namely in its being all that it is at once without adding or removing anything. Whenever the soul turns to this essence it is found to be the same. Everlastingness seems to be precisely this way in which the eternity of the intelligible essence manifests itself to the (temporal) soul, i.e. as "always" or "everlastingly" whole and the same.[36] Thus, eternity is the structure of the intelligible essence as seen by the "synthetic" view, whereas everlastingness is the nature of eternity insofar as the temporal soul is able to see it.

Plotinus is quick to specify (like Plato in a similar manner[37]) that "always" (τὸ ἀεί) is being said only because of us (ἡμῶν ἕνεκα).[38] This term is also often used in an "improper way" (οὐ κυρίως)[39] to mean "incorruptible" (τοῦ ἀφθάρτου), and it could thus mislead the soul into imagining an extension of something becoming more and never failing (εἰς ἔκτασιν[40] τοῦ πλείονος καὶ ἔτι ὡς μὴ ἐπιλείψοντός ποτε) (6,21-26). In fact, it would be sufficient to say "being" (ὤν) instead of "always being" (ἀεὶ ὤν). But "being" or "essence" (οὐσία) is sometimes also used for "becoming" (γένεσις). Therefore we add "always being", although "being" itself has the same

36 As BEIERWALTES (*Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 190f.) states, by the term "everlastingness" Plotinus does not characterise eternity in its relationship to intelligible essence, but from the point of view of the contemplating soul.

37 Cf. *Tim.* 37e3-7, where Plato shows the inadequacy of temporal statements concerning eternity (ἀεί is not explicitly mentioned). However, Plato's concept of eternity does not necessarily include the absence of duration; see WHITTAKER: *The "Eternity" of the Platonic Forms*.

38 I understand line 6,22 (ἡμῶν ἕνεκα [τῆς σαφηνείας] δεῖ νομίζειν λέγεσθαι), with Dodds and other interpreters, τῆς σαφηνείας (because of the clearness) as being a gloss. As for ἡμῶν ἕνεκα, "regarding our temporality", cf. BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 205f.

39 The interpreters differ as to what the "proper meaning" of ἀεί ("always") should be. Some of them assume that in Plotinus' view, this term is "properly" used when speaking of eternity, not of time (so WEISS, Helene: *An Interpretative Note on a Passage in Plotinus' On Eternity and Time (III.7.6)*, in: Classical Philology, 36 [1941] 230–239, esp. 235–237; more precisely, BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 46, 271 and 206, who specifies that ἀεί has a "properly" temporal meaning, and yet, when applied to eternity, it "properly" signifies non-temporality). Others state that it is a temporal expression, being improperly used for eternity (thus SORABJI: *Time*, 112; STRANGE: *Plotinus*, 40).

40 On line 6,25, I adopt (with other interpreters) the conjecture by BURY, Robert G. (*Notes on Plotinus, Enn. I-III*, in: Classical Quarterly 38 (1944) 42), reading ἔκτασιν (expansion to) instead of ἔκβασιν (going out) as it stands in the manuscripts. This latter reading is defended by WEISS (*An Interpretative Note*, 234f.), but contested by BEIERWALTES (*Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 207). On further discussion, see GUYOT: *Traité 45*, 94, note 211. Editors HENRY/SCHWYZER apply Bury's conjecture; however, in the *corrigenda* to the *editio minor*, they propose as their own conjecture ἔμβασιν (*occupatio*); cf. *Plotini Opera*, vol. III. Oxford: Clarendon 1992[4], 318.

significance.[41] In any case, saying "always being", we describe a power without any extension, which in no way needs anything beyond what it already possesses, because it possesses the whole (6,26-36).

This nature can also be described as "the infinite" (τὸ ἄπειρον), not in the sense of quantification (as time) or indetermination (as the One), but rather because of an "infinite power" (διὰ δύναμιν ἄπειρον) constituting plurality.[42] Therefore, eternity can also be defined as an "infinite life" (ζωὴν ἄπειρον), which possesses the whole and never expends anything of itself (ἀναλίσκει) (5,22-28).[43]

This life is an activity which remains within itself, is directed to the One and abides in the One (ἐνέργεια ζωῆς μενούσης παρ' αὐτῆς πρὸς ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῳ), as stated by Plato: eternity "abides in one" (μένοντος αἰῶνος ἐν ἑνί) (*Tim.* 37d6). Therefore, eternity is not only unified with itself (αὐτὸς αὑτὸν εἰς ἓν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἄγων), but it is a "life of being around the One" (περὶ τὸ ἓν τοῦ ὄντος ζωή) (6,1-11). According to Plotinus, eternity thus seems to derive its unity from the One which unifies the intelligible essence.[44] If the "synthetic" view can contemplate eternity as the intelligible essence in its nature of the whole being together at once, then this possibility seems to be based in the One itself, which in this way is present in us.

5. Eternity and time

In his treatment of eternity Plotinus compares eternity and time in a very interesting line. The crucial point seems to be the relationship to the future as constitutive for time, whereas it (the future) would be destructive for eternity.

The complete whole which is the intelligible essence not only contains all, but also does not lack anything.[45] Therefore, nothing is future to it that is actually lacking at present – otherwise, it would not be a complete whole. What could be added to it against its nature, when it cannot even be affected in any way (πάσχει γὰρ οὐδέν[46])? Thus, when nothing can

[41] Cf. *Tim.* 27d6-7: τί τὸ ὂν ἀεί, γένεσιν δὲ οὐκ ἔχον, καὶ τί τὸ γιγνόμενον μὲν ἀεί, ὂν δὲ οὐδέποτε;

[42] On infinity, see Jonas: *Plotin*, 303f.; Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 47, 197f., 271f.

[43] Therefore, eternity can also be identified with God as manifesting Himself (ὁ αἰὼν θεὸς ἐμφαίνων καὶ προφαίνων ἑαυτὸν οἷός ἐστι), namely as an unceasable life (cf. 5,18-22). See Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 194–196.

[44] Cf. Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 48f.

[45] Cf. *Tim.* 33c6-7, d2-3 (on the sensible world as a whole, which has no need of external nutrition, but is completely self-sufficient).

[46] Cf. *Phd.* 78c4; see Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 183f.

happen to it, there is neither anything future for it, nor has it antecedently become what it is (4,12-19).

Giving a future to things which did not come to be, we would let them fall from the "seat of being" (ἐκ τῆς τοῦ εἶναι ἕδρας), because in this case, being would not be something natural (σύμφυτον) for them, but something acquired or to be acquired. On the other hand, by removing the future from things which did come to be, we would cause them to perish, because they always are what they become (ἅτε ἐπικτωμένοις ἀεί) (4,19-24). For these things, to be (ἡ οὐσία, τὸ ἔστιν, τὸ εἶναι) signifies that they exist from the very moment they came into being till the last one when they perish (μέχριπερ ἂν εἰς ἔσχατον ἥκῃ τοῦ χρόνου, ἐν ᾧ μηκέτ' ἐστί). Removing their future from them, we would shorten their life (ὁ βίος) and so also their being (4,24-28). According to Plotinus, the whole of the world has this kind of future as well, which it is hurrying to (σπεύδει πρὸς τὸ μέλλον εἶναι), because of which it will not stay but will always acquire its being, doing one thing after another (ἕλκον τὸ εἶναι αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ τι ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο ποιεῖν). Longing for being (ἐφέσει τινὶ οὐσίας), it moves by a circular movement (*Tim.* 38a7-8) caused exactly by this hurrying to the always-future (4,28-33).[47]

On the other hand, the first, blessed[48] beings do not long for any future, already being whole and having all their life. They do not strive for anything, including the future, and nor does "that in which the future is" (ἐκεῖνο, ἐν ᾧ τὸ μέλλον) have any weight for them (4,33-37).

In this exposition of Plotinus', we find a very important aspect of time, namely the focus on the future as something valuable for temporal beings. Time even seems to be constituted by the importance the future has for those beings, which are always hurrying to something they do not yet have. Without this hurrying to or longing for (and thus without a being which is not everything it would like to be), there would be no time.

For Plotinus, temporal being (τὸ ἐν χρόνῳ) is always deficient in its wholeness (ἀτελές). Even as the body is made complete by the soul, this being always needs a future (δεόμενον καὶ τοῦ ἔπειτα); it lacks time, which it is in need of (ἐλλεῖπον τῷ χρόνῳ, οὗ δεῖται). And even if time is given to it, this being remains incomplete; only by a homonymy (ὁμωνύμως) can it be called complete (τέλειον) (6,38-42).

Intelligible being in its eternity has no need of any future (μηδὲ τοῦ ἔπειτα δεῖσθαι), neither for a limited time (εἰς χρόνον ἄλλον μεμετρημένον), nor for an infinite one which would come endlessly (τὸν ἄπειρον καὶ

47 Plotinus offers a more detailed exposition on the circular movement of the universe in *Enn.* II,2 (14).

48 Concerning blessedness as ontological self-sufficiency, see BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 186–188.

ἀπείρως ἐσόμενον). It has everything it needs. This being precedes any limited extent (οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ τοσοῦδε) and as such is unlimited and indivisible (ἀμερές) (6,43-50). It neither ceases nor changes, and is therefore "true". It does not contain one thing and then another. It has neither extension nor development; there is neither "before" nor "after" about it but only "is", which is its essence and life (ὡς οὐσίᾳ ἢ τῷ ζῆν). This is eternity (6,12-21).

When Plato uses the past tense (speaking about the demiurge and) saying that "he was good" (ἀγαθὸς ἦν, *Tim.* 29e1), according to Plotinus, he is referring to the notion of (the intelligible[49]) world (ἀναφέρει εἰς ἔννοιαν τοῦ παντός). Plotinus' idea seems to be that the transcendent world (with which he identifies the demiurge) has no beginning in time (τῷ ἐπέκεινα παντὶ τὸ μὴ ἀπὸ χρόνου τινός) and therefore, nor does the sensible world as its image have any beginning in time (μηδὲ τὸν κόσμον ἀρχήν τινα χρονικὴν εἰληφέναι). The intelligible world precedes the sensible one as its cause (τῆς αἰτίας τοῦ εἶναι αὐτῷ τὸ πρότερον παρεχούσης), a kind of "ontologically *prius*" (6,50-54).[50] (For Plato, the intelligible archetype is a cause of the sensible world,[51] called its "eternal image".[52] On the other hand, Plato also speaks about a beginning of the sensible world.[53] Plotinus decides this controversial question, discussed since Antiquity, in the sense of the sensible world without any temporal beginning.[54])

Plotinus seems also to assume, besides individual temporal beings which have a beginning and end, the sensible world as a whole and not having such a beginning (and probably not such an end either). Nevertheless, this world also needs the future, not being fully what it is, but always only hurrying towards it. Both these forms of existence are understood as time, because – unlike eternity, being fully what it is – they are characterised by their openness to the future which they do not yet have.

As for the last question of his second catalogue, namely, the issue of the soul's contemplation of eternity, Plotinus does not answer it explicitly. However, having analysed the relations both of eternity and everlastingness and eternity and time, we can probably draw the following conclu-

49 In the sense of the "intelligible world", here (6,51) τοῦ παντός is (rightly) interpreted by JONAS (*Plotin*, 306, note 11) and thereafter by other interpreters (e.g. BALTES, Matthias: *Die Weltentstehung des Platonischen Timaios nach den antiken Interpreten*. I. Leiden: Brill 1976, 133 and note 196; BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 211f.; HENRY/SCHWYZER: *Plotini Opera*, tom. III, 318), who (in the interests of coherency) distinguish between τὸ πᾶν (as the intelligible realm) and ὁ κόσμος (as the universe, which came into being) in this passage.

50 See BEIERWALTES: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 213.

51 *Tim.* 28a4-5: πᾶν δὲ αὖ τὸ γιγνόμενον ὑπ' αἰτίου τινὸς ἐξ ἀνάγκης γίγνεσθαι.

52 *Tim.* 37d7: αἰώνιον εἰκόνα.

53 *Tim.* 28b6-7 on the sensible world: (σκεπτέον) πότερον ἦν ἀεί, γενέσεως ἀρχὴν ἔχων οὐδεμίαν, ἢ γέγονεν, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τινος ἀρξάμενος. γέγονεν.

54 Cf. BALTES: *Die Weltentstehung*, I, 123–136.

sion. Eternity as a structure of intelligible being demonstrates itself to the soul as everlastingness (it *always* is what it is). Whenever the soul turns to it, it is found to be the same and unchanged. Were the soul to endure in this regard (which is probably impossible[55]), it would perhaps be assimilated to eternity, contemplating it by the eternal in the soul. In spite of living in time, the soul preserves something eternal[56], which enables it to have the intuition of eternity mentioned at the beginning of Plotinus' treatise. Thanks to this eternal element, the soul can see not only everlastingness (the enduring identity), but also, in the "synthetic" view, eternity as the nature of a whole, present in the intelligible essence.

6. Conclusion: Time as image of eternity

What does it mean, according to the first six chapters of our treatise, when it is said that time is the image of eternity? The relationship of the image implies both similarity and dissimilarity. For the time being, the similarity is proven in the dependence of both eternity and time on a substrate or subject, whose relationship to being is characterised as eternity or time. This substrate is the intelligible essence for eternity and "something temporal" or the (sensible) world for time. Eternity means having all one's being always together, whereas time signifies never having it whole, but to be always hurrying to and longing for it. Therefore, eternity only "is" (neither "was" nor "will be"), whereas for time, the crucial line is the future to which it hurries. Thus "everlastingness" and "always", said about eternity and time, are also not the same. For time, they signify *in each stage*, whereas for eternity, they mean *whenever eternity is seen by the soul*, i.e. in this latter case, everlastingness is the face of eternity as shown to the temporal soul.

As for eternity, the relationship to being is referred to as "life", namely as the activity of intelligence which, at one glance, sees all that it is. This life is a special form of unifying (the intelligible) plurality, yet not unified only by a relationship to itself, but also to the One in which it "abides". Of this life, the temporal soul is an image, because it also (on another ontological level) unifies plurality, namely "still something else and else again" (ἕτερον εἶθ' ἕτερον, 11,18–19) which, in its in-completeness, it longs for, and thus creates time.

55 Cf. Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 191.

56 On the "eternal in us", see Beierwaltes: *Plotin. Über Ewigkeit*, 192f.

Summary
The study is concerned with Plotinus' conception of eternity (and time) according to Ennead III,7 [45], 1-6. While eternity means having always the whole of one's being, time means not having it wholly at any time, but longing for it incessantly, rushing to it and thus imitating its full possession, which is typical of eternity. For this reason, the proper predication of eternity is only "is" (not "was" or "will be"); as far as time is concerned, the future towards which it rushes is pivotal here. Apart from eternity (aiôn) and time as its image, Plotinus also speaks of "everlastingness" (aidiotês), which is a characteristic of eternity as its nature. "Everlastingness" or "always" predicated of time and eternity are not identical. With respect to time they mean "in every phase"; as for eternity, they render every moment in which it is viewed by the temporal soul. In other words, everlastingness (in our interpretation) is the face of eternity which reveals itself to the soul in its temporal nature.