

# CONTENTS

Note on Publications .....	IX
Acknowledgments .....	XI
 Introduction .....	 1
 Study One. The Controversy over the Generation of Matter in Plotinus: The Riddle Resolved? .....	 11
Part I. Plotinus and the Gnostics on the Generation of Matter (33 [II 9], 12 and 51 [I 8], 14) .....	 11
Part II. The Generation of Matter in Plotinus' System .....	29
1. Sources .....	29
2. The Exegetic Context .....	38
2.1. The Historical Dimension .....	38
2.2. The Doctrinal Dimension .....	42
3. The Double Originality of Plotinus .....	47
 Study Two. The Riddle of the Partly Undescendend Soul in Plotinus: The Gnostic/Hermetic Path of the ὁμοούσιος .....	 55
I. The Term ὁμοούσιος .....	56
II. "And, if one ought to dare to express one's own view more clearly, contradicting the opinion of others" .....	 64
III. The Unification with the Divine: The Gnostic Variant and Its Plotinian Counterpart .....	 69
IV. Treatise 6 (IV 8): Plotinus' First Anti-Gnostic Manifesto? ....	75
 Study Three. A Doctrinal Evolution in Plotinus? The Weakness of the Soul in Its Relation to Evil .....	 79
Sensible Matter, By-product of the Emanative Process .....	88
The Proper Goal of Treatise 51 .....	92

Study Four. A New Sign of the Impact of the Quarrel against the Gnostics on Plotinus' Thought: Two Modes of Reascent in 9 (VI 9) and 37 (VI 8).....	97
I. Μόνου πρὸς μόνον, or the Solitary Ascent of the Soul in 9 (VI 9) .....	97
II. The Accompanied Ascent of the Soul in 38 (VI 7), 36.....	100
III. The Plotinian Critique of the Soul's Ascent According to the Gnostics .....	103
III.1. The Gnostic's Privileged Status in the Face of Other Men.....	105
III.2. The Gnostic's Privileged Status in the Face of Other Divine Beings .....	108
III.3. The Privileged Status of the Gnostic with Regard to the Intellect.....	111
IV. The Ascent of the Soul in Association with the Intellect in 38 (VI 7), 36: A Radical or a Relative Novelty?.....	113
 Study Five. A New Type of Causality: Plotinian Contemplative Demiurgy .....	117
An Invention of Contemplation? .....	122
 Study Six. New Reflections on God as CAUSA SUI in Plotinus and Its Possible Gnostic Sources .....	129
 Works Consulted .....	143
Index Nominum .....	151