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TRACES OF LONGINUS' LIBRARY IN EUSEBIUS' *PRAEPARATIO EVANGELICA*[1]

When Longinus left Athens to go to Palmyra, at *c.* A.D. 269, he must have been of a fairly advanced age. In Athens he had been, for some time, a venerable figure of great renown and considerable importance, and it seems that he had occupied one of the 'chairs' of philosophical education, which had been established in the year 176 by the emperor Marcus Aurelius in the city.[2] Before that, he had been trained in philosophy by Ammonius Saccas, the mysterious teacher also of Plotinus and of the Platonist Origen, after an early career as an *enfant prodige* travelling sophist.[3] The fact that, as it appears, he never met Plotinus, who had stayed at the school of Ammonius in Alexandria from late in 231 to early 243, suggests that he must have left it prior to Plotinus' arrival, which would place his date of birth in the early years of the third century, if not before.[4]

By that time, his accomplishment as a philosopher and—especially—as a scholar was almost universally acknowledged. His rhetorical treatise,[5] which still survives, shows a writer of great experience and acumen in the analysis of the rhetorical practices of his time, and betrays remarkable awareness of the excesses and the other pitfalls in which his contemporary orators not infrequently found themselves immersed. In his philosophy he adopted a rather conservative way of interpreting the Platonic writings, to the irritation of Plotinus, who immortalized him with the famous tag: φιλόλογος ὁ Λογγῖνος, φιλόσοφος δὲ οὐδαμῶς.[6] Anyway, undoubtedly his main claim to distinction was his fame as 'the greatest critic of his time'.[7]

[1] Henceforth I shall be using the following abbreviations:

H–S^1 = P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer, *Plotini Opera I–III* (Paris and Brussels, 1951–73) (*editio maior*).
H–S^2 = P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer, *Plotini Opera I–III* (Oxford, 1964–82) (*editio minor*).
V.P. = Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, ed. H–S^2.
Enn. = Plotinus, *Enneads*, ed. H–S^2.
P.E. = Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, ed. K. Mras (Berlin, 1982^2).
BP = L. Brisson and M. Patillon, 'Longinus philosophus et philologus I–II', *ANRW* II.36.7 (1994), 5214–99, and II.34.4 (1998), 3023–108.

[2] On the nature of these 'chairs', see J. Glucker, *Antiochus and the Late Academy* (Göttingen, 1978), 146–53, who, however, neglects Porphyry's important testimony *apud P.E.* X.3.1–25 = frs. 408F–410F Smith.

[3] See *V.P.* 20.17–25.

[4] See BP I, 5220. The exact date of Longinus' migration to the east is not known (BP I, 5227–8, suggest the year 267, after the destruction inflicted on Athens by the Heruli), and the *Letter* addressed to Porphyry (and discussed below), written late in 270 or early in 271 (BP I, 5261), provides the only *terminus ante quem*.

[5] Τέχνη ῥητορική, partially preserved, and edited by L. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* I (Leipzig, 1853), 299–320 (= 179–207 Spengel–Hammer). See also BP II, 3044–78.

[6] *V.P.* 14.19–20. See J. Pépin, 'Philólogos/philósophos', in L. Brisson et al. (edd.), *Porphyre, La Vie de Plotin* II (Paris, 1992), 477–501.

[7] See *V.P.* 20.1–3 and cf., e.g., Proclus, *In Tim.* I.14.7 Diehl. Eunapius' evaluation is, almost inevitably, much more colourful: he depicts him as 'a living library and a walking museum (βιβλιοθήκη τις ἦν ἔμψυχος καὶ περιπατοῦν μουσεῖον)', *Vit. Sophist.* IV.1.3, 6.13–15 Giangrande.

At first, after his arrival at Palmyra, his visit proved a major success. Queen Zenobia, who had only recently disposed of her husband Odenathus and was now in full command of the (in both economic and military terms) most vigorous state in the Middle East, received him with great honours and it seems that she soon granted him powers more or less equivalent to those of a vizier. At the beginning of the following year, her troops, under the leadership of her general Zabdas, invaded Egypt and occupied Alexandria, posing an unprecedented challenge to Roman control over the region. After the demise of the emperor Claudius II Gothicus in Sirmium, during the summer, his young successor to the throne, Aurelian, decided that it was time to take action against the threat of Palmyra. The death of the powerful Persian shah Shapur in 271 made things considerably easier for him. In his usual decisive and ruthless manner he embarked, early in 272, on a full-scale offensive across the Syrian desert and, after overcoming all resistance, he besieged Palmyra. The *Historia Augusta* reports how his proposals for a negotiated surrender of the city were high-handedly rejected by the queen,[8] so in a final assault, and perhaps with some help from inside, he sacked the city and brought Zenobia's aspirations for a Graeco-Arabic empire in the Fertile Crescent to an end. The queen herself was arrested and carried off to Rome, in order to adorn Aurelian's triumph, but Longinus had to pay on the spot for his arrogant behaviour. Zosimus gives us a moving report of the last moments of this somewhat incongruously austere intellectual, as he mounted the scaffold to his execution. He appears as another instance—almost the last one[9]—of a Platonic philosopher whose involvement in politics ended up in a most tragic way.

> After he (*sc.* Aurelian) became master of the city (*sc.* Palmyra), he came in command of its riches, of various possessions and offerings. Returning to Emesa, he brought Zenobia and her accomplices to trial. She, while speaking about who was responsible, exonerated herself, by putting to blame many others who, she alleged, had led her astray, being a woman. One of those was Longinus, whose writings are of great value for those engaged in culture. When the emperor was convinced of the crimes of which he was accused, he sentenced him to death. Longinus suffered it with such bravery, that even those distressed by his misfortune were consoled.[10]

I. THE LIBRARY OF LONGINUS

The exact reasons for Longinus' travel to Palmyra are not entirely clear. We are not told whether it was undertaken after a special invitation from the queen, or if the favours bestowed on him were the result of his presence there on his own initiative. He was, of course, a Syrian by birth,[11] and one can understand his interest in the developments taking place near his homeland. Anyway, it must have become

[8] 'Vopiscus', *Divus Aurelianus* XXVI–XXVII. The author proceeds to relate Longinus' execution to the insolent tone of this reply, which—he notes—was falsely attributed by Aurelian to his instigation (ibid. XXX). All this, coming as it does from the *SHA*, should of course be taken as containing more than a pinch of salt.

[9] Professor Dillon has suggested to me that a later instance can perhaps be found in Iamblichus' follower Sopater, who was executed (*c.* 330) by the emperor Constantine, after being slandered by invidious Christian courtiers: see Eunapius, *Vit. Sophist.* VI.2.9–12, 20.11–24 G.; Zosimus, *Hist. Nov.* II.40.3, 113.11–4 Paschoud; and R. J. Penella, *Greek Philosophers and Sophists in the Fourth Century A.D.* (Leeds, 1990), 49–53.

[10] Zosimus, *Hist. Nov.* I.56.2–3, 49.24–50.8 P. = Longinus, fr. 6b BP. For a concise account of the developments in Palmyrene political and cultural history during the period, see H. J. W. Drijvers and M. J. Versteegh, 'Hatra, Palmyra und Edessa. Die Städte der syrisch-mesopotamischen Wüste in politischer, kulturgeschichtlicher und religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung', *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 846–63.

[11] See *Suda*, Φ 735 s.v. Φρόντων = Longinus, fr. 1b BP.

apparent not so long after his arrival that he was going to spend a considerable amount of time at the court of Zenobia. Now, it seems inconceivable that a man of his learning, interests, and cultural background would undertake such a long journey and would stay in a place of relatively meagre literary resources without bringing along a considerable portion of his personal library, which, judging by the vastness of his learning alone, must have been quite large. In his *Letter to Porphyry*, sent from Phoenice (on the way to Palmyra) to Sicily, and preserved in the *V.P.*, he displays a keen interest in books; between the lines, we can actually sense the zeal of a true bibliophile. He expresses fervent concern for the completeness and the quality of the copies in his possession, and he even reports that he diverted his copyist from his 'usual' (public?) duties in order to incorporate into his library the newest edition of works by Plotinus, sent to him by Porphyry.[12] This library would presumably contain works of both philological and philosophical character, reflecting his interest in both these types of literature.

As one might expect, there is no direct evidence about the fate of this library after the death of Longinus. Presumably it was not carried away to Rome, together with the other loot from Palmyra that was to enrich Aurelian's triumph: books were not the kind of thing one might expect to see displayed on such occasions. However, it is reasonable to assume that, since its owner had been a prominent official of the enemy, his possessions would have been confiscated by the occupying forces, and thus come under the control of the Roman state. Since none of our sources seems to have anything more to say on the matter, one might think that the books contained in the library vanished without a trace.

Yet, as is well known, *habent sua fata libelli* . . . In a fascinating article, published in 1981,[13] John Rist suggested, in a cautious and rather tentative manner, that the Plotinian material contained in Eusebius' *P.E.* may derive from copies of the works of Plotinus which Amelius, one of his most prominent pupils, brought with him to Phoenice, obviously on his way to Apamea in Syria, as he was going there in order to establish his own school, after he left Plotinus early in 269.[14] Although Rist proceeds to give some arguments which make him prefer this hypothesis to other explanations that have at times been advanced for the presence of this material in the *P.E.*,[15] he prefers not to pursue his brilliant conjecture in any further detail. Now, I believe that there is considerably more to be said in favour of this hypothesis and, moreover, that a fairly convincing case can be made to the effect that Eusebius, when collecting material for

[12] See *V.P.* 19.15–29.

[13] J. Rist, 'Basil's "Neoplatonism": its background and nature', in P. J. Fedwick (ed.), *Basil of Caesaria: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic* (Toronto, 1981), 137–220. Its somewhat forbidding title and its mostly negative results have, perhaps, contributed to the relative neglect of this important essay. It is now more conveniently accessible in Rist's *Platonism and its Christian Heritage* (London, 1985), no. XII. See also L. Brisson, 'Amélius: sa vie, son oeuvre, sa doctrine, son style', *ANRW* II.36.2 (1987), 809.

[14] See *V.P.* 2.32–3, 19.20–4, 20.6.

[15] The most venerable among them, that of P. Henry (*Recherches sur la Préparation Évangélique d'Eusèbe et l'édition perdue des oeuvres de Plotin publiée par Eustochius* [Paris, 1935], 1–2, 15, and 59–133, deriving from F. Creuzer, *Plotini Opera omnia* [Oxford, 1835], III, 202b) concerning an alleged edition of Plotinus' works by Eustochius, can now be allowed to rest in peace. Most recent authorities have come to realize that the scholion which appears in some of our manuscripts at the end of *Enn.* IV.4, ch. 29 provides us with nothing more than an indication that there had been an Eustochian edition of the long treatise *On Difficulties about the Soul* (*Enn.* IV.3–5). See Rist (n. 13), 141, and L. Brisson, 'Une édition d'Eustochius?', in Brisson et al. (n. 6), 66–9.

his work, had access to what remained of the library which Longinus had with him during his adventurous stay in Palmyra.

II. THE PLOTINIAN EXCERPTS IN THE *P.E.*

Let us start with Plotinus. It is well known that there are three sections in the *P.E.* containing excerpts from Plotinus' works.[16] These are the following:

P.E. XI.17.1–10 = portions from *Enn.* V.1.4.1–8.14 (= A)
P.E. XV.10.1–9 = *Enn.* IV.7.8[5].1–50 (= B)
P.E. XV.22.1–67 = *Enn.* IV.7.1.1–8[4].28 (=C).

Section C, which forms a continuous text in Eusebius, can itself be subdivided into two parts:

C1: 1–49 = *Enn.* 4.7.1.1–8.28
C2: 49–67 = *Enn.* 4.7.8.28–8[4].28.[17]

C1 is transmitted both by Eusebius *and* by our main manuscripts of the *Enneads*, whereas C2 is known to us *mainly* through Eusebius and only through three of our Plotinus manuscripts, where it was apparently incorporated during the Byzantine period through contamination with the text of Eusebius.[18] The title given by most manuscripts of the *P.E.* for the whole of C is as follows:

Πρὸς τοὺς Στωικοὺς ὅτι οὐ δύναται σωματικὴ εἶναι ἡ ψυχή· ἀπὸ τοῦ ᾱ περὶ ψυχῆς Πλωτίνου.[19]

Section B is known to us *only* through Eusebius, where it bears the title:

Πλωτίνου ἐκ τοῦ περὶ ἀθανασίας ψυχῆς δευτέρου πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλην ἐντελέχειαν τὴν ψυχὴν εἶναι φήσαντα.

It is obvious from these titles that the treatise known to us as *Περὶ ἀθανασίας ψυχῆς* (*Enn.* IV.7)[20] came into Eusebius' hands in *two* books, which included important

[16] Some other passages from the *P.E.*, which appear in the *index testium* of H–S[1], III.424, and are listed in P. Henry's *Les États du texte de Plotin* (Paris, 1937), 155–6, are shown, quite convincingly, by Rist (n. 13), 160–1, to contain no reference to Plotinus.

[17] At the risk of causing some confusion here, I am afraid I have to deviate from the practice of Henry (n. 15), 5 (see also H–S[1], II.xviii–xx) who is using a different notation which, however, can be misleading. He calls my Section C1 *pericopa* A, my Section C2 *pericopa* B, my Section B *pericopa* C and another passage, not extant in Eusebius, *pericopa* D. He has no sign for my Section A. I prefer to follow the sequence in which the sections appear in the *P.E.* I also think that it is of some importance to keep in mind that C1 and C2 form *one* excerpt in Eusebius.

[18] See H–S[1], II.xviii with n. 4, and the apparatus of H–S[2] *ad Enn.* IV.7.8.28.

[19] According to H–S's apparatus *ad Enn.* IV.7 *tit.*, codex *T* of the *P.E.* (*Vaticanus Rossianus Gr.* 986) has in its margin *Πλωτίνου περὶ ψυχῆς*. However, a *codex saturus* in the National Library of Athens (cat. no. 3169) which contains, among many other things, the whole of Section C (fol. 58[v]–62[v]), has it under the traditional title: *Πλωτίνου πρὸς τοὺς στωϊκοὺς ὅτι οὐ δύναται σωματικὴ εἶναι ἡ ψυχή*. Although very late (a scribal note by the same hand, on fol. 18[r], indicates that it was transcribed in Galata of Constantinople in 1720), it obviously represents an older tradition very close to *T*, but giving several better readings, especially in C2, mostly closer to *M*.

[20] This is an early treatise, coming second in Porphyry's chronological list (*V.P.* 4.24), where its title is given as *Περὶ ψυχῆς ἀθανασίας*.

material not contained in Porphyry's edition of the *Enneads*.[21] Furthermore, it could be referred to not only by the title known to us from the *Enneads*, but also by the alternative *Περὶ ψυχῆς*.[22]

Now, a treatise *On the Soul* in more than one book, as the phrase *τὰ Περὶ ψυχῆς* indicates, is mentioned by Longinus in his *Letter to Porphyry*—referred to earlier and preserved in chapter 19 of the *V.P.*—as one of those brought to him by Amelius in Phoenice (*V.P.* 19.25, 32). It seems quite probable, then, that the work excerpted by Eusebius was none other than the treatise which had come into the possession of Longinus.

A more difficult case is presented by Section A. Eusebius' title in the *P.E.* is *Περὶ τοῦ δευτέρου αἰτίου*, but in introducing it he writes as follows:

ἐπάκουσον οἷά σοι Πλωτῖνος ἐν οἷς περὶ τῶν τριῶν ἀρχικῶν ὑποστάσεων συνέταξε διασαφεῖ γράφων.

Since the title of *Enn.* V.1[23] in Porphyry's edition is unanimously given as *Περὶ τῶν τριῶν ἀρχικῶν ὑποστάσεων*, there can be little doubt that Eusebius reports the heading he found on his exemplar. On the other hand, the second of the treatises mentioned by Longinus in his *Letter* is referred to as *τὰ Περὶ τοῦ ὄντος*. Was it then a different work?

There is no obvious candidate to be found in the *Enneads*. No treatise *On Being* turns up there, and the most likely guess seems to be the one supplied by H–S in their apparatus, namely that it is to be identified with *Enn.* VI.1–3, bearing the title *Περὶ τῶν γενῶν τοῦ ὄντος*.[24] But, apart from the fact that such a characterization of the contents of the particular treatise would be rather misleading,[25] this work is said by Porphyry to be one of the last which his master wrote while he was near him (see *V.P.* 5.51–61). We know that Porphyry left for Sicily in the summer of A.D. 268,[26] so the

[21] At least not in the form in which this edition has reached us. It should be noted, however, that, according to H.-R. Schwyzer, 'Die pseudoaristotelische Theologie und die Plotin-Ausgabe des Porphyrios', *RhM* 90 (1941), 224, the Arabic testimony concerning the text of Plotinus indicates that Porphyry's edition must initially have included Sections B and C2.

[22] There can be little doubt that both of these sections derive from the same work. The continuity of thought between chapters 8^4 and 8^5 makes this obvious (see Henry [n. 15], 127–8, and the apparatus of H–S^1 *ad Enn.* IV.7.8^4.28/8^5.1), whereas it seems perverse to suppose that there were *two* works on the soul, possessed by Eusebius, each comprising two (or more) books, and furthermore that the one known to us as *Περὶ ἀθανασίας ψυχῆς* was known to him as *Περὶ ψυχῆς*, while Eusebius' *Περὶ ἀθανασίας ψυχῆς* was some other, unknown work. What is less certain, of course, is whether there was any other part of the treatise accessible to Eusebius, which has not come down to us.

It is not clear, however, how the discrepancy in the titles given in the *P.E.* may have arisen. Unless there has been some contamination with the manuscript tradition of the *Enneads*, it seems that the only reasonable explanation is that the treatise carried *both* titles, perhaps the one at its *incipit* and the other at its *explicit*. This should not be regarded as being as improbable as it may look at first sight, in view of the fact that, as Porphyry informs us, Plotinus 'gave (to his writings) no titles himself, so each (of his disciples) gave different titles for several treatises', and that the ones Porphyry reports were the ones 'which *finally* prevailed' (*V.P.* 4.17–9).

[23] No. 10 in the chronological list, *V.P.* 4.41. Both *Enn.* IV.7 and V.1 were written before the arrival of Porphyry in Rome. See *V.P.* 4.12–14 and 66–7.

[24] Again, the chronological table in *V.P.* 5.51–5 gives a slight variation: *Περὶ τῶν τοῦ ὄντος γενῶν*. This version would be even more difficult to get condensed into *Περὶ τοῦ ὄντος*, as it would require elision at two points, instead of one.

[25] Since it deals with the theory of the 'categories of being' and not with Being as such.

[26] See *V.P.* 2.31–2, 11.11–19.

likeliest period for the composition of this work is during the first half of this year.[27] Moreover, Porphyry tells us explicitly that Plotinus had assigned him the task of 'the arrangement and editing of his books' (*V.P.* 24.2–3). Presumably, Porphyry carried out this duty especially during the last years of his stay with him at Rome, after he had established himself as one of the foremost disciples in the school,[28] to the dismay, perhaps, of Amelius who was until then in charge of the process of publication (ἔκδοσις) of the master's works.[29] Now, in his *Letter*, Longinus complains about the state of the text of the treatises he had in his hands, and he blames *Amelius* for not taking proper care during the process of their transcription (*V.P.* 19.21–4). Porphyry comments on this remark that it reflects a misunderstanding, on the part of Longinus, of 'Plotinus' usual manner of expressing himself' since these copies, having been prepared and corrected by Amelius (ἐκ τῶν Ἀμελίου), were the best ones available, being 'transcribed from the author's own originals' (*V.P.* 20.6–9). There is no mention of any intervention of Porphyry in the process and, in fact, one has the feeling that the whole incident is intended to form a contrast with Porphyry's own meticulous dispatch of his editorial duties.

It appears, therefore, that the work *On Being* in Longinus' hands was not *Enn.* VI.1–3. It is difficult, however, to find another whose content would suit this title.[30] The best available option seems to me to be the treatise excerpted by Eusebius (*Enn.* V.1), which provides a full and authoritative treatment (the first, chronologically speaking) of Plotinus' metaphysics. Nonetheless, the question remains: what reason would Longinus have had to use the title *On Being* for a work that was already carrying another, more revealing of its content, such as *On the Three Primary Hypostases*?

The answer to this question is perhaps related to the very explicitness of this title. We know that Plotinus' theory of the three hypostases, and especially his doctrine concerning the transcendence of the One with respect to intelligible reality, was viewed with scepticism, if not consternation, by his contemporary fellow-Platonists. Longinus himself explicitly declared his reservations towards some of the main doctrines of his philosophy (*V.P.* 19.36–7), and we know from other sources that he preferred to adhere to a much more conservative, Middle Platonic view about the nature of the First Principle.[31] In fact, his fellow-pupil in the school of Ammonius, the Platonist Origen,

[27] Porphyry indicates that the composition of the treatises was intimately connected with the teaching activities in the school, so doubtlessly the relevant information he provides for the period he was at Rome should be regarded as accurate. Cf. J. Igal, *La cronología de la Vida de Plotino de Porfirio* (Bilbao, 1972), 104.

[28] His philological studies in Athens near Longinus would provide another reason for Plotinus' choosing him for the task. See J. Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre le philosophe néoplatonicien* (Ghent, 1913), 30–6. That Porphyry's editorial work had begun while his master was still alive is indicated by the phrasing in *V.P.* 7.49–51. Cf. M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, 'L'arrière-plan scolaire de la *Vie de Plotin*', in L. Brisson et al. (edd.), *Porphyre, La Vie de Plotin* I (Paris, 1982), 295.

[29] See *V.P.* 3.46–7 and 4.9–16, where the pointed asides are no doubt meant for Amelius. It is not unlikely that Amelius' departure from Rome had something to do with his becoming in some way overshadowed by Porphyry.

[30] *Enn.* V.5, *That the Intelligibles are not outside the Intellect*, is known now to be a section of a larger work of anti-Gnostic polemic, apparently partitioned by Porphyry for the purposes of his edition of the *Enneads*. See R. Harder, 'Eine neue Schrift Plotins', *Hermes* 71 (1936), 1–10. Another option might be *Enn.* V.9, *On Intellect, the Forms and Being*, an early treatise whose garbled final chapters could possibly have provoked Longinus' distress. But the approach in it is distinctively epistemological, so it would not be quite appropriate to label it simply *On Being*. Moreover, it is quite possible that it is this work which was referred to by Longinus in his Περὶ τέλους as Περὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν (*V.P.* 20.89).

[31] See below, 594–6. As it is shown there, Longinus was prepared to ascribe real ὑπόστασις

had written a whole treatise against the notion of a 'productive' principle, higher than the intelligible 'King'.[32] It is not surprising, therefore, that Longinus was disinclined to use a title so blatantly at odds with his own convictions, especially since he had not yet had the opportunity to go through the content of the treatise in any detail (*V.P.* 19.24–6). He might even appeal to the fact that, as noted before, these titles did not bear the *imprimatur* of the author.[33]

If, then, the two treatises of Plotinus contained in Longinus' library in Palmyra were identical with those excerpted by Eusebius in his *P.E.*, and, furthermore, since these items were not part of a widespread 'official' edition of the master's works, as that of the *Enneads* was meant to be, but privately circulating copies, the chances are that the exemplars possessed by Eusebius during the compilation of his huge apologetic encyclopedia in Caesarea during the second decade or so of the fourth century were the very same volumes, or at least directly derived from them. But how could they have reached Caesarea?

Rist[34] has suggested that they may have been descendants of the originals which remained in the possession of Amelius and were presumably carried by him to his school in Apamea. The problem with this theory is that it has to postulate that 'the school of Amelius did indeed affect the Christian community at Caesarea, either in the time of Pamphilus or in that of Eusebius himself'. Unfortunately, there is not a shred of evidence that such an interaction actually occurred. And it would be quite astonishing to see the relatively parochial and insecurely new-fangled Christian community there displaying any interest in the *dernier cri* of Neoplatonic fundamentalism, tainted with marked pagan colours, as the school from which figures such as

only to his first principle, i.e. God, considering the other two, i.e. the Model and Matter, as not properly existent entities. As for the soul, Plotinus' third hypostasis, Longinus' use of the famous passage from the pseudo-Platonic *Second Epistle* (312e1–4: see Longinus *apud P.E.* XV.21.1 = fr. 8 BP), suggests that he regarded it too as something deriving from the first (*τῶν πρώτων ἀφορμήν*) and, therefore, as not a true *ὑπόστασις*.

[32] This is the way I understand the title of a work by Origen given by Porphyry in *V.P.* 3.32: *ὅτι μόνος ποιητὴς ὁ βασιλεύς*. This was written 'during the reign of Gallienus', that is, after Plotinus had started to publish his early treatises, one of which is the one under consideration. It is probable that Origen's work was written as an 'official' response, by the senior pupil of Ammonius, against the innovations advocated by Plotinus in this treatise. Notice the latter's embarrassment at the presence of Origen in his lecture room, which led him to discontinue his teaching under a patently diplomatic pretext (*V.P.* 14.20–5); cf. K.-O. Weber, *Origenes der Neuplatoniker* (Munich, 1962), 96–8. On the meaning of the term 'King' in the history of Platonism, see H. Dörrie, 'Der König: ein platonisches Schlüsselwort, von Plotin mit neuem Sinn erfüllt', *RIPh* 24 (1970), 217–35 = *Platonica minora* (Munich, 1976), 390–405. The crucial passage from the pseudo-Platonic *Second Epistle* mentioning the 'King of All' (312e1–4) is prominently quoted in our treatise: V.1.8.1–4. (On the text of this citation see P. Kalligas, 'Some new Plotinian emendations', *Emerita* 56 [1988], 100–1, while Y. Chitchaline, 'A propos du titre du traité de Plotin *Περὶ τῶν τριῶν ἀρχικῶν ὑποστάσεων* (*Enn.* V, 1)', *REG* 105 (1992), 255–9, has stressed the novelty of Plotinus' interpretation.) On the other hand, it is just possible that Longinus' own treatise *Περὶ τέλους*, the Preface of which is incorporated in *V.P.* 20.17–104, was another, presumably milder, attack against Plotinus and Amelius. (In that case, the reference to these two in *V.P.* 20.14–15 should be taken as part of the original title of the book.) The *τέλος* in the title suggests that it addressed the novel views held by these thinkers concerning the nature of the Ultimate Principle.

[33] A further problem is the use of the plural for the title as given by Longinus. It would be rather rash to propose an emendation of the text at this point from *τά* to *τό*. But it is not impossible that this work too was initially separated into two books. Even if shorter than IV.7, it is certainly much more extensive than any of the two 'books' into which that treatise was divided.

[34] Rist (n. 13), 163–4.

Iamblichus emerged must have been.[35] I believe that there is another solution to the mystery, one which involves unexpected and far-reaching consequences. But in order to reach it, we have to go back to Eusebius.

III. A BREACH IN THE PLAN OF THE *P.E.*?

According to our best authorities, the *P.E.* was composed during the decade from 312 to, roughly, 322.[36] The work, although vast in its compass, possesses a relatively clear structure,[37] presented by Eusebius himself in the *Prooemium* of its last book, XV.1.1–11. The first six books contain a refutation of polytheism in both its theological and its cultural aspects, with Books IV–VI engaging in a detailed criticism of pagan oracles and the related doctrine of predestination or *heimarmene*. In Books VII–IX Eusebius turns to the oracles of the Hebrews, as precursors of Christian doctrine. Book X seems like a culmination of the project, treating whatever is valuable in the doctrines of the 'Greeks' (*τὰ σεμνὰ τῶν μαθημάτων*) as being derived from 'barbarian' wisdom or simply 'stolen' from the prophets of the Hebrews. The material used is, rather predictably, mainly of Christian or Hebraic provenance, drawn from sources such as Clement, Philo, Josephus, ps.-Tatian, and Julius Africanus. It ends with a prolonged statement by Eusebius himself to the effect that 'the times when the Greek philosophers were active were more recent than all the history of the Hebrews'.[38] After that, Book XI appears as a new start. It purports to fulfil a 'promise' that Eusebius would show that 'the Greek philosophers, if not in all, at least in some of their doctrines were in accordance with the sayings of the Hebrews' (*P.E.* XI *Prooem.* 3).[39] The main hero in this fantastic project of turning Greek philosophy into an amplification of the Old Testament is, of course, none other than Plato. So the remainder of Book XI, as well as the four that follow it, are filled with quotations from Plato and also—as a special bonus for us moderns, otherwise frustrated by our lack of sources concerning Middle Platonism—from various other authors, largely of Platonic affiliation. The difference between the material used here and that contained in the previous books is immediately clear. The

[35] T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1981), 81ff., provides a valuable account of the early history of the Christian community in Caesarea. At 183 he notes that Eusebius appears unaware of the most recent developments in Neoplatonic doctrine and that 'the conceptual universe of Eusebius is not that of contemporary pagan philosophy, but still that of the Middle Platonists of the Second and early Third centuries'. Concerning the broader intellectual background of the philosophical school in Apamea, see now P. Athanassiadi, 'The *Chaldean Oracles*: theology and theurgy', in *eadem* and M. Frede (edd.), *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1999), 155–6.

[36] K. Mras, in the 'Einleitung' of his edition, pp. LIV–LV, suggests that Book I was written in 312, Book IV around 314, Book XIII at the beginning of 320, and Book XV approximately a couple of years later. J. Sirinelli, in the Preface of the '*Sources chrétiennes*' edition, vol. 206 (Paris, 1974), 13, relying on the same evidence as Mras, is just a little more cautious: 'c'est entre la fin des persécutions et la guerre finale contre Licinius qu'Eusèbe a redigé la *P.E.*. Aucune autre approximation ne permet de serrer de plus près le problème.'

[37] I am relying here on the sound analysis of Sirinelli (n. 36), 40–1. Cf. Barnes (n. 35), 179–82.

[38] *Ὡς ἁπάσης τῆς παρ' Ἑβραίοις ἱστορίας νεώτεροι τυγχάνουσι τῶν παρ' Ἕλλησι φιλοσόφων οἱ χρόνοι*: *P.E.* X *Synopsis* (I.555.20–1 Mras), reprinted as heading of Section X.14.

[39] This does not sound very convincing. The passages adduced by G. Favrelle, *Eusèbe de Césarée P.E. livre XI* (*Sources chrétiennes* 292) (Paris, 1982), 17–18, as possible indications of commitment to such a promise, namely, *P.E.* VII.1.3, IX.1.1 and X.1.1, just do not deliver the goods, being hopelessly vague statements of Eusebius' general strategy in Books VIIff. The 'promise' looks to me rather as an attempt, on his part, to cover up the gap separating Books XIff. from those preceding them.

presence of Plato is paramount: it completely outweighs that of all the other authors put together.[40] Moreover, most of the other writers included are of philosophical extraction, including some of the most prominent figures of the second and the third centuries, such as Atticus, Aristocles of Messene,[41] Numenius,[42] Plotinus, Amelius, Porphyry,[43] Severus, and, last but not least, Longinus. One might think that such a shift in the interests of Eusebius is just what should be expected in view of his explicit statement in the *Prooemium* of Book XI that he will now turn to an examination of Greek *philosophical* doctrines. But was this part of his original plan?

It seems not. As Favrelle notes in her very learned Introduction to Book XI:[44]

> Ce livre inaugure en effet une partie très importante de l'ouvrage: la comparaison entre la philosophie grecque et la doctrine de Moïse. . . . Or l'intégration de ce morceau dans le plan général de la *P.E.* semble s'être faite un peu par la force des choses, plutôt que selon les intentions primitives d'Eusèbe.

Eusebius' strategy appears to have shifted considerably after he had finished Book X. Instead of attacking the Greeks as plain impostors and plagiarists, slavishly reproducing 'barbaric' wisdom under the guise of philosophy or myth, he is now treating them as serious thinkers with important insights into the nature of things and even into theological matters such as, for example, negative theology, and his attitude has changed from vehement polemic to conciliatory negotiation.[45] Plato, in particular, emerges as a paradigm of philosophical perceptiveness and although, of course, his doctrines are still presented as mere elaborations and reformulations of those of his oriental predecessors, he is actually envisaged as worthy of admiration.[46] The question now arises: what might have caused this change in the attitude of Eusebius?

[40] It is noteworthy that substantial excerpts from Plato appear, before Book XI, only in *P.E.* II.7, which includes segments from the *Timaeus* (40d–41a) and the *Republic* (377e–378d), also present in *P.E.* XIII.1.1–2 and 3.3–6, the latter in a much fuller form. It seems most likely that the excerpts in Book II are the product of a later insertion, during the final editing of the text of *P.E.*

[41] Aristocles has been claimed by P. Moraux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen* II (Berlin and New York, 1984), 89, as having been active during the first century A.D. Be that as it may, it is clear that the reason he appears in the *P.E.* is that he had obviously been one of the targets of Atticus' attack against Aristotelianism, during the second century: see J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (London, 1977), 250.

[42] Numenius has also appeared briefly before, in Book IX.7–8, in connection with an issue related to the history of religion. But Numenius was an author well known for his interest in religious matters, and that is the reason he was studied even by the Christian Origen. See Porphyry *apud* Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* VI.19.8.

[43] Porphyry had been quite prominent in Books I–X of the *P.E.*, but again mainly for his works related to the history of religion, such as the *De philosophia ex oraculis haurienda*, the *De abstinentia*, the *Epistle to Anebo* (which, rather interestingly, is also used in *P.E.* XIV.10.1–2 under the rubric ἀπὸ τῆς πρὸς Νεκτανεβὼ ἐπιστολῆς: see 257.18 Mras), the *De cultu simulacrorum* and, of course, the *Contra Christianos* (the excerpt from his Φιλόλογος ἀκρόασις is discussed below, p. 593). From Book XI onwards, the citations are mainly from his *Epistle against Boethos on the Soul.*

[44] Favrelle (n. 39), 10.

[45] Note also the discrepancies between the 'programme' announced in *P.E.* I.6.5–7 and the actual procedure followed after Book X, as indicated by Favrelle (n. 39), 10–12. M. Frede, 'Eusebius' apologetic writings', in M. Edwards et al. (edd.), *Apologetics in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1999), 242–7, has recently advocated a more unitary view concerning the overall structure of the *P.E.* and the *Demonstratio Evangelica*; however, even he acknowledges that there is a significant turn at least in the tactics employed by Eusebius after Book X of the *P.E.*

[46] See É. des Places, 'La tradition patristique de Platon', *REG* 80 (1967), 392–3. Cf. Favrelle (n. 39), 247: 'on ne voit pas, d'ailleurs, ce qui justifierait l'admiration d'Eusèbe pour Platon, si ce dernier n'était qu'un faussaire'.

IV. THE MEDIATION OF LONGINUS

I think that the content itself of Books XI–XV of the *P.E.* provides us with substantial clues for answering the above question. The quality and the variety of the material incorporated there indicates that, without doubt, Eusebius had come to know an important selection of the works of the most prominent Platonists of the two centuries before he was writing. Some of the items in this list must have been quite rare even at his time: the philosophical writings of Amelius, Severus, and Longinus do not seem to have had a very prominent place on the shelves of either bookstores or libraries at the beginning of the fourth century—especially in a place like Caesarea. Moreover, the direct knowledge of Plato's works appears to have been minimal, even on the part of Eusebius when he was writing the first books of the *P.E.*. There could be no serious philological treatment of the Platonic text in an area with no tradition in endeavours of this kind, whereas in the later books of the *P.E.* we find serious and obviously learned efforts towards establishing a text quite at variance with the one preserved by our manuscripts.[47] It is inconceivable that Eusebius was himself responsible for this kind of work. His agenda must have been quite full during this period since, apart from his massive literary output, he was also considerably involved in both political and ecclesiastical intrigues.[48] And it is doubtful if he possessed the qualifications and the resources necessary for philological work of such scope and quality as we find in the *P.E.*

My hypothesis, therefore—as I have already stated—is that the library left at Palmyra after the death of Longinus must have in some way come into the hands of Eusebius, as he was ready to put the final touches to the manuscript of the *P.E.* His interest in it might have been aroused by the fact that he knew something about the preoccupation of Longinus and his entourage with the issue of plagiarism, a theme of great importance for Eusebius' project, as originally planned,[49] but also one hotly discussed—for completely different reasons, of course—in the schools of Athens during the time of Longinus' presence there. In fact, in Book X of the *P.E.* we find a long extract from Porphyry's *Φιλόλογος ἀκρόασις* that relates a discussion, held at the house of Longinus in Athens, on the occasion of celebrating Plato's birthday (*τὰ Πλατώνεια ἑστιῶν*), where the main subject is precisely the question of plagiarism and to what extent authors such as Plato rely on, or 'steal from', the works of their predecessors.[50] Porphyry's interest seems to have been of a purely literary character;

[47] Several such instances are discussed by Favrelle (n. 39), *passim*. Among the most remarkable are the ones in *P.E.* XI.29.4 (*Tim.* 28c3–4), XI.32.2 (*Tim.* 32b8–c4), XI.32.4 (*Tim.* 41a7–8), XI.27.5 (*Alc.* 133c1–17), XI.38.6 (*Phd.* 114c2–4). There is a noticeable correspondence between the variant reading of *Tim.* 37e3–4 in *P.E.* XI.9.7 and Longinus, *Ars Rhet.* 300.1–3 Spengel. The importance of Eusebius' testimony for establishing the text of Plato's *Laws* has been discussed by É. des Places, 'Les *Lois* de Platon et la *Préparation Évangelique* d'Eusèbe de Césarée', *Aegyptus* 32 (1952), 223–31, and 'Deux temoins du texte des *Lois* de Platon', *WS* 70 (1957), 254–6.

[48] See E. Schwartz, 'Eusebios (24) von Caesaria', *RE* VI (1907), 1410–11, and Barnes (n. 35), 205–6. Eusebius became bishop of Caesarea in 313.

[49] Cf. *supra*, p. 591. Eusebius, of course, was already familiar with Longinus' chronological studies, which he had used while compiling his own *Chronicle*: see *Chron.* 125.14–15 Karst. Apparently, there were even some works of Longinus in Origen's library: see Porphyry *apud* Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* VI.19.8.

[50] The topic was a commonplace in learned discussions during the period. We find, for example, Diogenes Laertius, who was probably working in the same environment, distinctly preoccupied with questions of this sort. See D.L. 3.9–18.

Eusebius, however, takes the debate very seriously and provides it with a heading to the effect 'That the Greeks were thieves.'[51] It was this kind of grist that Eusebius was seeking for his apologetic mill.

Besides, it is quite possible that more than this was involved. Several years ago, Philip Merlan drew attention to a testimony of Photius concerning Longinus which, at first sight, looks totally astounding. While discussing the character of the *prooemium* of Demosthenes' speech *Against Leptines*, Photius notes:

> ... τὸ προοίμιον Λογγῖνος μὲν ὁ κριτικὸς ἀγωνιστικὸν νομίζει· ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου δὲ οὗτος ἤκμαζε, καὶ τὰ πολλὰ συνηγωνίζετο Ζηνοβίᾳ τῇ τῶν Ὀσροηνῶν βασιλίδι, τὴν ἀρχὴν κατεχούσῃ Ὀδενάθου τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς τετελευτηκότος, ἣν καὶ μεταβαλεῖν εἰς τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἤθη ἀπὸ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς δεισιδαιμονίας παλαιὸς ἀναγράφει λόγος· ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν Λογγῖνος τοιαύτην περὶ τοῦ προειρημένου ψῆφον ἐξάγει.[52]

Henry translates the sentence beginning with ἣν as coming after a semi-colon: 'une vielle tradition rapporte qu'elle (*sc.* Zenobia) aurait adopté les coutumes juives et abandonné la superstition païenne'. That Zenobia had been a convert to Judaism, although contestable, is at least attested also in some other sources.[53] But, as Merlan has pointed out, the normal reading of the passage would make Longinus responsible for her conversion.[54] Such an understanding of the text seems so implausible that most interpreters, including, as we saw, Henry, prefer to treat μεταβαλεῖν as intransitive and disregard καί altogether. However, this is by no means the most obvious rendering of the text as it stands. It would therefore be sounder procedure if we tried first to envisage the possibility that Longinus might have developed the inclination to accommodate at least some Jewish elements into his philosophical teaching.

The political advantages of such a move should have been, as Merlan has noticed, quite obvious. The Jewish community within Palmyra was an important political factor, whose estrangement from Roman authority would be a crucial element to be taken into account while pursuing an increasingly anti-Roman policy. But, perhaps, there were also theoretical reasons for such a *rapprochement* between Platonism and Judaism. Philo of Alexandria had already shown that an interpretation of the Old Testament along Middle Platonic lines was at least possible. In a well-known phrase, Numenius had characterized Plato as an 'atticizing Moses' (fr. 8.13 des Places). And in the *P.E.* itself we find several attempts to see things in such a light which, although not unprecedented in the Judaeo-Christian exegetical tradition,[55] display fresh insights into some basic doctrines of Middle Platonism and, furthermore, are fully compatible with what else we know about Longinus' philosophical tenets.

Although our evidence concerning Longinus' metaphysical theory is very scanty, some of its main guidelines seem relatively clear. He had written a work *On the First Principles* which had been tersely disapproved of by Plotinus, presumably because of

[51] Πορφυρίου περὶ τοῦ κλέπτας εἶναι τοὺς Ἕλληνας· ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου τῆς Φιλολόγου ἀκροάσεως: *P.E.* X.3.1–25.

[52] Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 265, 492a29–37 Henry = Longinus, fr. 6c BP. See Ph. Merlan, 'Plotinus and the Jews', *JHPh* 2 (1964), 15–21.

[53] See the discussion in Merlan (n. 52), 17–18 and Brisson's note ad loc. See further the critical assessment of the evidence by F. Millar, 'Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: the Church, local culture and political allegiance in third-century Syria', *JRS* 61 (1971), 13.

[54] Merlan (n. 52), 19, n. 21.

[55] With regard to Philo's attempt to integrate Platonic and Mosaic cosmology, see the cautious evaluation by D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the* Timaeus *of Plato* (Leiden, 1986), 406–10.

its uninspired traditionalism.[56] This has been taken to reflect his adherence to the Middle Platonic doctrine of three ἀρχαί, namely, God, Model (παράδειγμα: a collective term commonly used in order to designate the entire world of Platonic Ideas), and Matter.[57] It seems reasonable to assume that the first of these principles was identified by Longinus, as it had been by Atticus,[58] with both the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* and the Idea of Good of the *Republic*. As for the second principle, we have Syrianus' testimony,[59] according to which

> Longinus had chosen to believe that the Ideas co-subsist (παρυφίστανται) with the Intellect in a way analogous to the fanciful "sayables" (τοῖς λεκτοῖς τοῖς πολυθρυλήτοις) (*sc.* of the Stoics). For, if what is co-subsistent is devoid of substance (ἀνούσιον), nothing will co-subsist with Intellect; and how can the same thing be both intelligible and co-subsistent?

This is further corroborated by Proclus' statement[60] that, 'as Longinus said, the Model (came) after him (*sc.* God)'. Such descriptions seem to indicate that the only true and primary existent in Longinus' ontology had been God whom, thus, it would be appropriate to call ὄν, or ὁ ὤν. Now, it is exactly such a formulation of Plato's doctrine which enables Eusebius to relate it with Moses' characterization of God as ὁ ὤν.[61] What is more, Eusebius describes the intelligible realm as νοητόν, ἀσώματον καὶ λογικὸν τὴν φύσιν, which appears to relate it to some process of λογισμός. Whereas God is ἀγέννητον and κυρίως καὶ ἀληθῶς ὄν, he calls the intelligible nature merely ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀθάνατον, thus implying its derivative status.[62] This seems to accord perfectly well with the derivative nature of the Ideas in Longinus' ontological system.[63] Furthermore, Eusebius is all too eager to opt for the literal interpretation of the cosmogonical myth in the *Timaeus*, according to which it refers to a creation of the world in time.[64] This interpretation has always been considered as a landmark of the school of Atticus,[65] and it seems reasonable to assume that Longinus' view would be in accordance with it. A problem might arise, in the eyes of Eusebius, with respect to the material principle of the *Timaeus*, which Atticus obviously regarded as uncreated and pre-existent,[66] a doctrine clearly unacceptable for any Christian. There are some indications, however, that Longinus' position on the issue was somewhat

[56] See *V.P.* 14.18–20. This is, I believe, how we should understand Plotinus' statement, quoted above in p. 584.

[57] See, e.g., BP I, 5254–5, and cf. Atticus, fr. 26 des Places.

[58] See fr. 12 des Places and M. Baltes, 'Zur Philosophie des Platonikers Attikos', *Platonismus und Christentum: Festschrift für H. Dörrie, JbAC* Erg.-Bd. 10 (Münster, 1983), 40.

[59] *In Metaph.* M4, 1078b12, 105.25–30 Kroll = Longinus, fr. 7b BP.

[60] *In Tim.* I, 322.22–4 Diehl = Longinus, fr. 7c BP.

[61] *Exodus* 3.14. See *P.E.* XI.9.1–5, while, in *P.E.* XI 11.1–15, Eusebius seeks to derive confirmation from Plutarch's interpretation of the Delphic *EI* (= *De E apud Delph.* 391f–393b); see also Favrelle (n. 39), 303–14, who notes that, although Eusebius evokes also the authority of Numenius in this context, he diverges considerably from him in his understanding of the constitution of the intelligible world. J. Whittaker, 'Moses Atticizing', *Phoenix* 21 (1967), 196–201, has reviewed several other attempts to relate the passage from the Septuagint with Middle Platonic doctrine.

[62] *P.E.* XI.9.3. Cf. e.g. Philo, *De opif. m.* 20, 'Alcinoos', *Didask.* 9, 163.14–24 and 27, 180.27–8 Whittaker, Apuleius, *De Plat.* 6, 194, Atticus, fr. 9.35–43 des Places.

[63] See M. Frede, 'La teoría de las ideas de Longino', *Méthexis* 3 (1990), 87–9 and 96.

[64] See *P.E.* 11.29.1–30.2.

[65] See fr. 23 des Places = Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 381.26–382.12 Diehl, with Baltes (n. 58), 44–7, and *Die Weltentstehung des platonischen Timaios nach den antiken Interpreten* I (Leiden, 1976), 51–63.

[66] See frs. 19–24 des Places and G. Pasquali, 'Doxographica aus Basiliusscholien', *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philol.-hist. Klasse* (1910), 196.11–13.

different from that of his predecessor. According to Damascius,[67] he identified τὰ ἄλλα mentioned in Plato's *Parmenides*, 146b1 ff., as the particular sensible things, being 'some kind of substance . . . not proper substance', 'not strict existence . . . but a mode of existence'. The parallel with a passage from Plotinus' treatise *On Matter* (*Enn.* II.4.13.29–32) might suggest that Longinus was not far from a monistic standpoint, similar to that of Plotinus, altogether denying to matter any kind of independent existence, but viewing it as being in some way derivative or depending upon higher reality. Such a view might easily account for Eusebius' neglect of any reference to the problem of the origin of matter in Books XIff.[68]

In general, Longinus' independent attitude towards Plato, whose formulations he was quite prepared to abandon or even to castigate, whenever they did not conform to his own insight or taste,[69] was perfectly suited to be adopted by Eusebius for his own purposes, since it allowed him a considerable area for expressing his reservations or his disagreement while, at the same time, retaining his admiring stance.

Finally, we may note that the material of philosophical import that we find in Books XI–XV of the *P.E.* corresponds almost exactly to what we might expect to find in a library such as Longinus': large amounts of Middle Platonic stuff, deriving mainly from authors who must have been particularly important for him, such as, for example, Atticus, who was probably his predecessor in the Platonic chair of Athens and with whose philosophy his own views had very obvious affinities,[70] and also Numenius, whom we know he had studied quite well, for all his misgivings about his style.[71] Plotinus, Amelius, and Porphyry were his direct or indirect acquaintances and he had actually written books about their philosophical theories.[72] Severus had been a target of some of his criticisms.[73] And Longinus' own works would, of course, also have had a place in the collection. But most prominent of all must have been the works of Plato, which Longinus purported to study fervently, employing both his exegetical skills and his philological acumen. So it is not at all surprising to find such massive use of the Platonic corpus in the compilation of the later books of the *P.E.*, embellished with substantial editorial elaborations. In fact, the works which have been most generously excerpted are exactly those which we should expect to find in the baggage of a Platonic philosopher embarking on a political adventure such as the one in Palmyra, namely the *Laws* and the *Republic*.[74]

[67] *In Parm.* 306, II.173.6–11 and 452, II.316.6–10 Ruelle = Longinus, frs. 12a and 12b BP.

[68] Cf. Favrelle (n. 39), 319–29. Eusebius seems content with the treatment of the issue in *P.E.* VII.19–22, along monistic lines.

[69] See BP I, 5283 and, e.g., Proclus, *In Tim.* I.63.24–9, 66.14–23, 68.3–14 Diehl (= Longinus, frs. 10f–h BP), Michael Psellus, *Opusc. theol.* 98.30–3 Gautier (= fr. 13 BP).

[70] See P. Kalligas, 'The Ideas as conceptions of the Demiurge: a Middle Platonic interpretation of the *Timaeus*' (in Modern Greek), *Deucalion* 15 (1997), 337–40. Regarding Aristocles, see above, n. 41.

[71] See *V.P.* 20.74–6.

[72] About the first two, see above, n. 32 and *V.P.* 20.97–104, while for Porphyry, see *V.P.* 20.95–6. A curious detail in the way Amelius is introduced in the *P.E.* may be of some significance: he is called 'a prominent young philosopher (τῶν νέων φιλοσόφων διαφανὴς γεγονώς)' (*P.E.* XI.18.26), i.e. by an expression hardly appropriate for somebody who must have been born about a century before Eusebius was actually writing these lines. However, the expression would be distinctly appropriate, if it was coming from the author of Φιλαρχαῖος (*V.P.* 14.19). Note also the extreme traditionalism expressed in *P.E.* XII.4.14.

[73] See Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 204.16–24 (= Longinus, fr. 10n BP). An interpretation of a phrase in the *Timaeus*, 27d6, attributed by Psellus to Longinus (*Opusc. theol.* 56.6–11 Gautier = Longinus, fr. 10o BP), is ascribed by Proclus, *In Tim.* I.227.13–18 Diehl, to Severus.

[74] That is, if he had any illusions about making a philosopher-queen out of the notorious Zenobia. Book XII of the *P.E.*, which is actually a cento of Platonic excerpts, contains more than

Eusebius might have had the opportunity to come to possess these books sometime after the establishment of his famous *scriptorium* in Caesarea.[75] The political circumstances and his increasingly influential political connections may have considerably enhanced his ability to effect their acquisition. The fact that, as was mentioned before, Longinus' library might have come under the control of the state,[76] would only make things easier for someone with such close ties to the state bureaucracy of the time.[77]

V. CONCLUSION

So, the defence rests its case. I am fully aware that my arguments are far from providing a watertight proof of the matter. But how many of the facts that we know from this period of history can be regarded as conclusively proven? On the other hand, I am convinced that the circumstantial evidence available makes the case reasonably solid. And if so, then the import of this theory is clearly momentous.

Firstly, our views concerning the attitude of Eusebius towards Greek philosophy, and especially Plato, need to be modified. His initial hostility against all aspects of Greek culture, abundantly illustrated in the first books of the *P.E.*, changed gradually into an attitude of—perhaps still disguised, but nevertheless genuine—admiration after he encountered the dialogues of the master himself, explained and analysed by some of the best authorities of his time. It is almost impossible to overestimate the impact of this conversion on the development of Christian theology, during the crucial period before the Council of Nicaea in 325. Platonism was, from that time onwards, never to lose its place as one of the cornerstones on which the Christian dogma should be founded. And the reading of Plato's own works, in contrast to the Middle Platonic compendia generally used by previous Church Fathers,[78] became a legitimate, or even a mandatory prerequisite for any serious Christian theologian.

thirty-two passages from the *Laws* and twelve from the *Republic*. The collection includes also portions from the *Statesman* and the *Gorgias*. In the later books Eusebius' preferences become more varied. The *Timaeus* becomes more prominent, but there are also some passages from several other dialogues, including some of the minor ones such as the *Euthyphro*. It appears that the fascination of the compiler acquired more impetus as he proceeded with his study of the texts.

[75] There is a widespread view according to which Eusebius and, before him, Pamphilus had instituted in Caesarea a vast library containing, apart from theological writings, large quantities of philosophical texts. However, Eusebius' testimony, *Hist. Eccl.* VI.32.3, speaks only of 'the works of Origen and other *ecclesiastical* writers', while the main evidence for the existence of a philosophical collection comes from the *P.E.* itself: see e.g. Henry (n. 15), 12. So, unless one wishes to beg the question, this evidence cannot be adduced in order to document the presence of such a collection in Caesarea *before* the composition of *P.E.* XI.

[76] See above, p. 586.

[77] Eusebius had obviously established close relations with his namesake, the bishop of Nicomedia who, after Licinius' edict of tolerance, in 313, acquired a prominent place in his court and associated both with Julius Julianus, praetorian prefect during the period from 315 to 324, and with Licinius' wife, and sister of Constantine, Constantia: see Barnes (n. 35), 70. Such contacts would facilitate Eusebius' access to public documents, such as the archives of the city of Edessa in Syria: see *Hist. Eccl.* I.13.5.

[78] One may contrast here Porphyry's description of Origen's sources, which is very characteristic in this respect: he reports that 'he was conversant with the writings (*συγγράμμασιν*) of Numenius and Cronius, Apollophanes and Longinus and Moderatus, Nicomachus and the distinguished men among the Pythagoreans; and he used also the books (*ταῖς βίβλοις*) of Chaeremon the Stoic and Cornutus', while, on the other hand, regarding Origen's use of Plato, he employs much vaguer terms, i.e. 'he was always consorting with Plato (*συνῆν τε γὰρ ἀεὶ τῷ Πλάτωνι*)', thus suggesting that his acquaintance with the latter was more pervasive, but less immediate. See Porphyry, *Contra Christ.*, fr. 39 Harnack = Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* VI.19.8.

Secondly, the value of the selection of Platonist texts included in the *P.E.* is considerably enhanced. Coming from the library of a person such as Longinus, with his vast scholarship and widespread acquaintances in the intellectual community of this period, they must represent fairly accurately the most important trends of philosophy during the second and the third centuries of our era, and thus provide a stable basis on which we can reconstruct the history of Platonism up to the time of Plotinus.

Thirdly, and this is perhaps the most important result of our enquiry, the readings of the texts of Plato contained in the collection should be treated with the respect they deserve, as the contributions of the greatest critic of late antiquity to the establishment of a reliable Platonic corpus. Longinus' position in Athens would have surely enabled him to consult the best manuscripts available at this time, while his critical skills, combined with his well-known conservatism, would have made him the most appropriate person to embark on this task: and the portions contained in the *P.E.* provide us with a fascinating insight into his workshop.

It appears, therefore, that one of the most important events in the intellectual history of the first centuries of our era, namely the integration of Christian doctrine with Platonism, was, to some important extent, due to an accident. Through one of those unexpected reversals of which human fate is so exasperatingly full, the unlikely, solitary political dream of an ageing Platonic scholar in the remote desert of Syria turned out as one of the most fruitful endeavours towards the development of a religious doctrine he, most probably, hardly ever came to know.[79] And his books, instead of converting Palmyra into a Platonopolis,[80] helped to transform Byzantium into a City of God.[81]

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[79] See, however, Merlan (n. 52), 16. But even if, as seems probable, Longinus was acquainted with Paul of Samosata, it is doubtful that he would regard him as anything more than a—perhaps somewhat eccentric—adherent of Judaism: cf. Millar (n. 53), 12–13.

[80] This was the name intended by Plotinus for the object of his own political daydreaming: see *V.P.* 12.1–9.

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