L.'s unexpected solution for one of the vexed problems of Plotinian studies, the existence of ideas of individuals (Chapter 6), may serve as an example of L.'s practice of *noûs* at work. The issue has provoked a lot of discussion, since he seems to hold different views on the matter at different times. L. rejects the two most obvious solutions, that either Plotinus changed his mind over time or that the inconsistency is only seemingly. He argues instead that Plotinus explicitly wanted to be inconsistent in order to make us discover something about ourselves. Plotinus may show himself to be well aware of the limitations of logical thought, yet the idea that he is sowing hidden contradictions throughout the *Enneads* on purpose I find highly unlikely.

In conclusion, this book is an interesting, yet failed, experiment in reading Plotinus.

*Leiden University* R. M. VAN DEN BERG
doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni055

## THE WISE MAN IN PLOTINUS

A. Schniewind: *L'Éthique du Sage chez Plotin. Le paradigme du* spoudaios. (Histoire des Doctrines de l' Antiquité Classique 31.) Pp. 238. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2003. Paper, €32. ISBN: 2-7116-1616-9.

The focus of this monograph is, as its title suggests, the ethical stance of the *spoudaios* in Plotinus' *Enneads*. Schniewind provides in her introduction an accurate summary of the work of previous writers on Plotinus' ethical theory. This summary demonstrates that there is some disagreement as to whether or not Plotinus provides an ethic that is applicable to the ordinary man, as opposed to the *spoudaios*. A number of writers, this reviewer included, have found it difficult to see what practical ethical guidance is available to the ordinary man in the egoistic behaviour of the Plotinian *spoudaios*. Yet Porphyry's *Life* presents Plotinus, whom one must assume was a *spoudaios*, as a figure deeply involved with the life of the community and not the austere figure that the *Enneads* seem to conjure up. S. claims that this dichotomy can be resolved upon examination of the figure of the *spoudaios*, and in the seven chapters that make up this monograph, she argues her case in a thorough and scholarly manner.

Chapter 1 examines the historical context for the term *spoudaios*, examining its development prior to its use by Plotinus. S. notes the importance of Aristotle in imbuing the term with moral connotations. The Stoics used the term interchangeably with *sophos*, and Plotinus, borrowing from both, employs the term to describe a man who has reduced the aspects of his corporeal self to a minimum, and become self-conscious at the level of his higher soul in the timelessness of Intellect. Like the Stoic *sophos*, the Plotinian *spoudaios* displays little emotion concerning the events of the sense world, which is a mere reflection of true life in Intellect. Since wise, good, fulfilled, etc. simply do not do justice to what Plotinus means by the *spoudaios*, S. sensibly transliterates throughout.

In essence, Chapters 2–6 examine *Ennead* 1.4 [46], 'On Well-Being' (*Peri Eudaimonias*), since it contains the most sustained analysis of the *spoudaios* to be

The Classical Review vol. 55 no. 1 © The Classical Association 2005; all rights reserved

https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni056 Published online by Cambridge University Press

found in Plotinus. S. considers its ethical content in terms of its chronological position within the *Enneads* as a whole, and its position within the first *Ennead*. She discusses the probable make-up of the audience that attended Plotinus' school and speculates on the recipients of the written work. I have some reservations when she suggests that 1.4 was intended for three different groups: Chapters 1–4 for basic listeners, 5–11 for disciples (more advanced), and 12–16 for assistants (most advanced). Although S. does admit that this division is somewhat artificial, she continues to use these groupings throughout her analysis of 1.4. Chapter 3 looks at the definition of *eudaimonia* as presented in this treatise and explores the first four parts of the treatise in the style of a commentary. S. shows good understanding in her appraisal of the structure of Plotinus' argument here. Chapter 4 examines the ontological difference between the ordinary man and the *spoudaios*, captured well in French by 'l'autre homme' and 'l'homme autre'. S. identifies three types of men, the *spoudaios*, who obviously has no need of ethical guidance; the middle-man who is capable of being guided; and the wretch who is incapable of being guided. These varieties of men provide for a complicated ethic. Chapter 5 argues that the *spoudaios*, existing on a higher ontological level, sees things differently from the ordinary man. Essentially his ethical guidance consists in the example he sets to others, displaying the correct unemotional attitude to body, demonstrating the upward path to self-consciousness. But what sort of man does this make the *spoudaios*? S. herself accepts that Plotinus' notion of concern for himself and others is quite complex. Chapter 7 looks at other treatises in the *Enneads* where she claims the *spoudaios* endorses an educational rôle towards other men. There is good analysis of the higher and lower soul—the higher soul must encourage the lower one to imitate it; this is presented as a parallel of what the ordinary man must do in relation to the *spoudaios*. Of course, it is only the middle-man who is capable of such imitation, whereas the wretch is beyond the pale. S. concludes that the *Enneads* presents a constructive dualism between the higher and lower man, and not a division which leads to an uncaring *spoudaios*. She claims that there is indeed an ethic for the ordinary man (or rather the middle-man), which she finds essentially in the model of the *spoudaios*. The book closes with an excellent bibliography and indices of the *Enneads* referred to, ancient authors cited, and chief topics discussed.

This is a well-written book. S.'s scholarly exactitude is impressive. She has worked through *Ennead* 1.4, in particular, in a thoughtful and sympathetic way. She gives the reader much to think about in terms of the structure of this and other treatises, and although I am not convinced entirely that 1.4 was written with three different types of reader in mind, I was made to think a great deal about nature of Plotinus' argument here. Ultimately, however, she does not convince me completely that in the figure of the *spoudaios* there really is a practical ethic for the ordinary man in the *Enneads*. The *spoudaios* found in the *Enneads* would still seem to me to be an uncaring one, in the normal sense of that word, quite unlike the figure that Porphyry describes in the *Life of Plotinus*. While this book will not be the last word on this topic, I found it interesting and thought provoking, and it will provide a stimulus for those interested in Plotinus' ethical theory.

*National University of Ireland, Maynooth* KIERAN McGROARTY
doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni056

https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni056 Published online by Cambridge University Press