

## 3.5 (50)

### On Love

§3.5.1. On the question of love, whether it is a god or a daemon or an affection of the soul, or whether in one sense it is a god or a daemon, and in another an affection, and what sort of thing each of these is, it is worth investigating the ideas of persons that one encounters as well as the ideas on these questions that have occurred in philosophical discussion, especially the opinions of the divine Plato, who indeed also wrote a good deal about love in different places of his own works. He actually said that it is not only an affection which occurs in souls,<sup>1</sup> but says that it is also a daemon<sup>2</sup> and has discoursed on its origin, how, and from what source it came into being.<sup>3</sup>

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No one is, I suppose, ignorant of the fact that the affection for which we say love is responsible occurs in souls which desire to be closely connected with beauty of some kind and that this desire is found in one form in self-controlled people who have been made to have an affinity with beauty itself, but in another form which seeks to find its consummation in the performance of some base act. Where each takes its rise is a proper topic to pursue here in a philosophical way.

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If one were to posit as its origin the desire for beauty itself which is already present in human souls, their recognition of it, kinship with it, and non-rational grasp of their affinity for it, one would, I think, hit on the truth about its cause. For what is ugly is opposed both to nature and to god. For nature produces by looking towards beauty and it looks towards what is defined, which is 'in the column of the good'.<sup>4</sup> But the indefinite is base and in the other column. Nature comes into being from the intelligible world, from the Good and, clearly, from Beauty. If anyone is in love with and akin to anything, he is drawn also to its images.

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But if anyone does away with this cause, he will be unable to say what manner the affection is and what its causes, even in the case of those who

<sup>1</sup> See Pl., *Phdr.* 252B2, 252C1.      <sup>2</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 202D13.

<sup>3</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203B–C.

<sup>4</sup> See Pythagoras *apud* Ar., *EN* 1.4.1096b6; *Meta.* 1.5.986a22–26.

love in the sexual sense. For these, too, want to 'beget in beauty',<sup>5</sup> since it would be absurd for nature that wants to generate beautiful things to want to beget 'in ugliness'.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, for those moved to generate in this world, it is enough to have what is beautiful in this world, a beauty present in images and bodies, since the archetype which is the cause for them loving even what is in this world is not present to them. And if they come to a recollection of the archetype from the beauty of this world, the latter continues to be admired as an image, but if they do not recollect because of their ignorance of what is happening to them,<sup>7</sup> they imagine that the beauty here is true beauty.<sup>8</sup>

And for those who are self-controlled, the affinity with what is beautiful here is not a moral error whereas a collapse into involvement with sex is a moral error. And the person whose love of beauty is pure, will love beauty alone whether he has recalled the archetype or not, while the man whose love is mixed with another desire, that of 'being immortal as far as is possible for a mortal'<sup>9</sup> seeks what is beautiful in the 'forever'<sup>10</sup> and everlasting, and as he proceeds according to nature, he sows and generates in beauty, the sowing being to perpetuate the species; it is done in beauty because of the kinship of beauty and eternity. For eternity is certainly akin to beauty and the eternal nature<sup>11</sup> is the first to be beautiful and all that proceeds from it is beautiful. And so that kind of love which does not want to generate anything is more self-sufficient in beauty, whereas the kind that desires to produce something beautiful wants to produce it because of a need and is not self-sufficient. And if indeed it should produce this, it thinks it is self-sufficient so long as the production takes place in beauty.

But those who want to generate illicitly and contrary to nature, take their start on the natural course, but as they begin to veer off-course, lie there in collapse as though they had slipped off the proper road, without understanding where love has led them or their desire for generation or the right use of beauty's image or what beauty is in itself.

But, to return to the point, those who love beautiful bodies, but not<sup>12</sup> for sexual reasons, love them because they are beautiful and there are also those who have the love – which is called mixed<sup>13</sup> – for women in order to perpetuate the race, but if it is love for other than women they are making a mistake. The first group are better, but both the first and

<sup>5</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 206C4–5.

<sup>6</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 206C4.

<sup>7</sup> Alternatively: 'ignorance due to their passion'.

<sup>8</sup> See Pl., *Rep.* 505D5–9.

<sup>9</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 206E8.

<sup>10</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 206E8.

<sup>11</sup> I.e., Intellect. Cf. 1.6.9.34–42.

<sup>12</sup> Reading καλῶν [καί] <μὴ> διὰ with HS<sup>4</sup> following Ficino's original emendation.

<sup>13</sup> See Pl., *Lg.* 837B4–6. This love is mixed because it can have both sensual and intellectual elements.

the second are self-controlled. But while the latter reverence earthly beauty, too, and find it sufficient, the former reverence beauty in the other realm insofar as they have recalled it and yet do not disdain beauty here, given that it can be a fulfilment of beauty there and its playful expression. These, then, are concerned with beauty without ugliness, but there are those others who fall into ugliness even though it is on account of beauty. For the desire for the Good often involves the fall into evil. These then are what we mean by the affections of the soul.

§3.5.2. But we must especially devote some philosophical reflection to the love which not only the rest of humankind propose as a god, but also the theologians and Plato who calls him ‘Love the son of Aphrodite’<sup>14</sup> and says that his task is to be the ‘guardian of handsome boys’<sup>15</sup> and to move souls towards beauty in the intelligible world or to increase the impulse, already present in us, to that other world.

Moreover, we should also certainly bring into consideration what was said in *Symposium* where Plato says that Love was not born as the son of Aphrodite, but ‘from Poverty and Plenty during the birthday party of Aphrodite’.<sup>16</sup> It looks as if our discourse will require us to say something about Aphrodite, too, as to whether Love was born from her or at the same time as her.<sup>17</sup>

First, then, who is Aphrodite? Next, how was Love born, from her or at the same time as her or could it happen in some way that he was born at the same time from her and at the same time as her? We say that Aphrodite is actually double; the one who is heavenly we say is the daughter of Heaven and the other born of Zeus and Dione, who has to do with marriages in this world as their overseer. The former is ‘motherless’ and transcends marriages because there are no marriages in heaven. The heavenly Aphrodite, who is said to be the child of Kronos, who is Intellect, must be a most divine soul born pure directly from him who is pure and remaining above, since she does not come into this world nor does she want to nor is she able to; it is not in her nature to come down to this world because she is a separate real existent and a Substance and has no share in matter. This is the reason why they say allegorically<sup>18</sup> that she is ‘motherless’. One would certainly be right to call her a god rather than a daemon since she is unmixed and remains pure by herself. For what is born directly from Intellect is also itself pure inasmuch as it is in itself strong due to its proximity to Intellect, and

<sup>14</sup> See Pl., *Phdr.* 242D9.

<sup>15</sup> See Pl., *Phdr.* 265C2–3.

<sup>16</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203C3–5.

<sup>17</sup> The first alternative is that of *Phaedrus*; the second, that of *Symposium*.

<sup>18</sup> The word αἰνιττεσθαι (often rendered ‘to riddle’, ‘to speak enigmatically’) seems to be rendered best in the above manner.

inasmuch as her desire and foundational state are directed towards her producer who is strong enough to maintain her on high. Hence, Soul, which is dependent on Intellect, would be much more likely not to fall away than the sun which is able to maintain the light it sheds around it, light which comes forth but is dependent on it.

Actually, in pursuit of Kronos, then, or, if you prefer, Heaven, the father of Kronos,<sup>19</sup> she turns her activity towards him, establishes an affinity to him, falls in love and brings forth Love. And together with Love she looks towards Kronos. And her activity has fashioned a real existent, that is, a Substance. And both of them look to the intelligible world. And the mother who gave him birth and beautiful Love who has come into being as a real existent that is always ranged towards another beauty, having its existence in this other beauty, in a sort of mid position between the one longing and the one longed for; he is the eye of the one longing and by means of its eye provides the lover with the sight of what is longed for, while Love himself runs ahead and is filled with the vision before providing the lover with the power of seeing through the organ of visual perception. He is ahead, not like a person seeing by fixing his gaze on the object of his longing, but by himself plucking the fruit of the vision of beauty while it runs past him.

§3.5.3. It is not appropriate to disbelieve that Love is a real existent, that is, a Substance produced from a Substance, less than the producer, but still a Substance. For that higher Soul, too, was a Substance that came to be from the activity and got its life<sup>20</sup> from that which was prior to it, that is, from the Substance that consists of Beings both because it looked towards that which was primary Being and looked at it with great intensity.<sup>21</sup> And this was its first object of sight and it looked at it as to its own good and rejoiced in the sight; and the sight was the sort of thing to ensure that which sees makes its gaze not into an attendant activity but so as to produce, by means of pleasure and reaching out to it and intensity of gaze, something from it that is worthy of it and of the sight. And so from that which is intently active about what is seen and from a kind of out-flowing from the thing seen, the eye was filled, just as physical seeing is found along with the image [of the thing seen], and Love came into being.

<sup>19</sup> On the identity of Kronos with Intellect cf. 5.1.4.8–10. So, his offspring Aphrodite is Soul. Cf. 5.8.13.15–16; 6.9.9.31. But cf. 5.1.7.30–37; 5.8.12.3–13.2 where Zeus, son of Kronos, is identified with Soul.

<sup>20</sup> Restoring the words καὶ ζωῶσα which are bracketed in HS<sup>2</sup>. The life that is Soul is a λόγος of the life of Intellect and the ‘external’ activity of it. Cf. 5.3.5.37–39; 6.7.13.37–42, 49.

<sup>21</sup> The hierarchy is, then, Intellect, Soul, and Love.

He perhaps also acquires his name from this process because he has his real existence from seeing,<sup>22</sup> since the affection of love probably gets its name from him, if indeed it is the case that Substance is prior to non-Substance – yet the actual affection is called ‘loving’ – and if indeed we say ‘love for this person possesses him’,<sup>23</sup> but one would not use the word ‘love’ [as an affection] in an unqualified way. Now the Love of the higher soul would indeed be of the kind described; he would himself see above inasmuch as he is an attendant of the goddess and was born from and along with her and finds satisfaction in contemplating the gods. And since we say that that soul which casts light over heaven in a primary way<sup>24</sup> is separate, we will also make her Love separate, however much we call the soul heavenly. For even if we say the best in us is in us, we nevertheless make it separate, provided it is found only where the pure soul is.

And since there had also to be a soul for the universe, the other Love had to be with this soul from the beginning as its eye, born, too, through desire. And this Aphrodite who belongs to the universe and is not only soul nor simply soul gave birth to the Love who is in this world and who from the start concerned himself with marriages and to the degree to which he is personally linked to the desire for what is above, moves the souls of the young and turns back the soul to which he is attached insofar as it is itself naturally disposed to recall the things above. For every soul desires the Good, both the mixed<sup>25</sup> soul and the soul of the individual, since it follows on from and is derived from the higher soul.

§3.5.4. Does each individual soul then, too, possess a Love<sup>26</sup> like this, a substance, that is, a real existent?

In fact, if it does not, why will universal Soul<sup>27</sup> and the soul of the universe have a Love which has a real existence, but our individual souls and the souls, too, in all other living beings do not?

And is this Love the daemon which they say accompanies each of us, our personal Love? If it is, this would also be the daemon who imbues us with the natural appetites that belong to each soul, as each soul strives to attain what is proportionate to its nature and creates the Love that is proportionate to its worth and its substantiality. We should certainly

<sup>22</sup> Ἐρως (‘love’) derived from ὁρασις (‘seeing’). <sup>23</sup> See Aeschylus, *Suppliants* 521.

<sup>24</sup> Because its light is incorporeal. The higher soul, both for individuals and the cosmos, is the intellectual soul. The lower soul for individuals is that which animates the body and for the cosmos, it is nature.

<sup>25</sup> I.e., mixed with corporeality.

<sup>26</sup> The conjectured personification of love in each individual indicates that a capital ‘L’ should be used.

<sup>27</sup> I.e., the hypostasis Soul, here distinguished from the soul of the cosmos or universe. Elsewhere, the distinction is not so clear.

grant that the universal Soul has a universal love and that individual souls each have their own Love. And to the extent that each soul relates to the universal Soul by not being cut off, but embraced by it, so that all souls are one, so, too, each Love will relate to the universal Love. Furthermore, the individual Love shares its being with the individual soul, that great Love with the universal Soul and the Love in the universe with the universe everywhere in it. And this one Love becomes and is multiple, appearing everywhere in the universe where it wants, taking on shapes in its parts and making appearances at will.<sup>28</sup>

And we must think that there are many Aphrodites, too, in the universe, becoming daemons in it along with Love, all flowing from a universal Aphrodite, many partial Aphrodites depending on the universal Aphrodite along with their individual Loves, if indeed soul is the mother of Love, and that Aphrodite is soul and Love the activity of soul which strives for the Good. So, this individual Love leads each soul to the nature of the Good; the Love of the higher soul would be a god who always binds the soul to the Good, while that of the mixed soul would be a daemon.

§3.5.5. But what is the nature of this daemon and of daemons in general, a subject also dealt with by Plato in *Symposium*, both of other daemons and that of Love himself, when he recounts how he was born from Poverty and Plenty, son of Cunning, at the birthday celebrations of Aphrodite?<sup>29</sup> To suppose that Love is meant by Plato to indicate this [sensible] cosmos,<sup>30</sup> rather than that the Love that grows up in the universe is just a part of it, presents many contradictions of interpretation, since the world is said by him to be a ‘happy god’ and ‘self-sufficient’<sup>31</sup> whereas the Love of which we are speaking is agreed by him to be neither a god nor self-sufficient, but for ever wanting.<sup>32</sup>

Next, if indeed the cosmos consists of soul and body and for Plato, and Aphrodite is the soul of the cosmos, Aphrodite must be the most important part of Love, or, if Love’s soul is the cosmos, just as a human being’s soul is a human being,<sup>33</sup> Love will be identical with Aphrodite.

Next, why will this Love, which is a daemon, be the universe, whereas the other daemons – for it is clear that they are from the identical Substance – will not themselves be the cosmos, too? And the cosmos will be simply a combination of daemons. But how could Love, who is described as being the ‘guardian of handsome boys’,<sup>34</sup> be the cosmos?

<sup>28</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 186B1–2. <sup>29</sup> Cf. 3.6.14.5–18. See Pl., *Symp.* 203B–C.

<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris* 374c–e. <sup>31</sup> See Pl., *Tim.* 34B8; 33D2.

<sup>32</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 202D. <sup>33</sup> Cf. 4.7.2. See Pl. [?], *Alc.* I 130C3; *Lg.* 959A7.

<sup>34</sup> See Pl., *Phdr.* 265C2–3.

And how would Plato's description of him as 'bedless', 'unshod', and 'homeless'<sup>35</sup> fit except in a slipshod and discordant way?

§3.5.6. What indeed must we say about Love and his fabled birth? It is certainly clear that we must grasp who Poverty is and who is Plenty, and how these parents fit in with him. It is also clear that we must fit these in with the other daemons, too, if indeed daemons share a single nature or substantiality as daemons, unless they are going to possess just a common name. So, we must grasp how we manage to distinguish gods from daemons. Even if we also often call daemons gods, on those occasions, at any rate, when we do speak of them as being of different kinds, we actually speak and think of the race of gods as incapable of being affected, while we assign affections to daemons,<sup>36</sup> adding that they are eternal, next in order after the gods but already inclining towards us, between gods and our race.

Moreover, how did these daemons not remain incapable of being affected, and how did they descend in their nature towards what is inferior? Indeed, we must also enquire whether there is not even a single daemon in the intelligible world and there are daemons only in the sensible world and god is limited to the intelligible world or 'there are gods in the sensible world, too'<sup>37</sup> and the universe is a 'third god'<sup>38</sup> as the saying goes and beings as far down as the moon are each of them a god. But it is better to call nothing in the intelligible world a daemon; rather, if there is there a daemon in itself,<sup>39</sup> this, too, is a god. And equally in the sensible world, the visible gods down to the moon are secondary, after and related to those higher intelligible gods, dependent on them like the ray of light around each star.

But what are the daemons? Are they just the trace of each soul that comes to be in the cosmos? But why of only the soul in the cosmos? We claimed<sup>40</sup> that it is because the pure soul generates a god and the god belonging to this soul is Love.

First, then, why are not all daemons Loves? Next, how is it that these, too, are not purified of matter?

In fact, those are Loves which are generated from soul which desires the Good and Beauty and the souls in this world all generate this daemon. But these other daemons come also from the soul of the

<sup>35</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203D1–2.

<sup>36</sup> On gods as not susceptible to being affected, cf. 1.2.6.26; 3.6.4.34–35. On daemons as susceptible, cf. 4.4.43.12–16.

<sup>37</sup> See Heraclitus, fr. 22 A 9 DK (= Ar., *PA* 1.5. 645a21).

<sup>38</sup> See Numenius, fr. 21 I (= Proclus, *In Tim.* 1.304.1).

<sup>39</sup> The word is αὐτοδαίμων, that is, a paradigm of the daemonic nature.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. 3.3.5.4.24.

universe, although they are generated by different powers which fulfil and share in administering each thing for the universe in accordance with its needs. For the soul of the universe had to make sufficient provision for it by generating the powers of daemons, powers that are also beneficial to the universe, which belongs to it.

But how and in what kind of matter do they participate? Certainly, not in corporeal matter; otherwise, they will be sensible living beings. For even if they acquired airy or fiery bodies, they would, however, have had at least to be different beforehand in their nature so as to share in body at all. For what is pure does not immediately mingle completely with body. And yet many people think that the substantiality of a daemon as daemon is accompanied by a body of some kind, either airy or fiery.

But why does one kind of being mingle with body, another not, unless there is some cause for its being mingled? What, then, is the cause? One must suppose the existence of intelligible matter in order that what shares in that can come by means of it into the matter which belongs to bodies.

§3.5.7. For this reason, too, Plato says that at the birth of Love ‘Plenty was drunk with nectar as wine did not yet exist’,<sup>41</sup> meaning that Love came into being before the sensible world and Poverty shared in the nature of the intelligible world, not in an image of the intelligible or in a reflection of it, but by being there and mingling with it and giving birth to the real existent which is Love made of form and indefiniteness; this the soul had before it encountered the Good, yet could divine something of it present<sup>42</sup> in the guise of an indefinite and limitless semblance.

And so an expressed principle which came to be in what was not an expressed principle but an undefined desire and a dim reality rendered what came to be neither perfect nor sufficient but defective inasmuch as it came into being from an indefinite desire and a [self-]sufficient<sup>43</sup> expressed principle. And this Love is an expressed principle which is not pure inasmuch as it has in itself a desire that is indefinite, non-rational, and unlimited. For it will not be fulfilled as long as it has within it the nature of indefiniteness. And it depends on soul since it came into being from soul as its principle, a mixture of an expressed principle which did not remain in itself but was mixed with indefiniteness; however, it was not the expressed principle itself that was mixed with indefiniteness but what came forth from it was what was mixed with indefiniteness.

<sup>41</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203B5–6. <sup>42</sup> See Pl., *Rep.* 505D11–E2.

<sup>43</sup> The word is *ἰκανός* (‘sufficient’), here indicating the contrast with that which is indefinite in itself.



And Love is like a ‘sting’<sup>44</sup> resourceless by his very nature. For this reason, even when he attains his goal, he is once more resourceless. He cannot be fulfilled since what is a mixture cannot be fulfilled. For only that can be fulfilled which is fulfilled in its own nature. But what desires because of a deficiency that is inherent, even if for the moment fulfilled does not retain it. So, then, his powerlessness<sup>45</sup> is due to his ‘deficiency’,<sup>46</sup> his resourcefulness to the expressed principle in his nature.

One should consider the entire genus of daemons to be like this and to come from such parents. For each is resourceful with regard to what he is set over, is desirous of it, and is akin in this way also to Love and is not itself full but desires one of the individual things which he regards as good. Hence, we must suppose, too, that the good persons in the sensible world focus their love on what is unqualifiedly and really good and not on any particular love, but that those who are placed under other daemons are placed under this or that daemon and, letting go as inoperative for them the daemon they naturally had, become active under the guidance of the other daemon which they chose as being consonant with that part of their soul which was active in them. But those who desire evil things have put in chains all the loves in them by the desires that have grown in them just as they have also enchained the right reason which is innate in them by the evil beliefs which have supervened on them.

The loves, then, which are natural and in accordance with nature are fine. And those of a lesser soul are less, proportionate to their worth and power, others are greater, but all possess substantiality. But the loves of those who have fallen into ways contrary to nature are all pathological states<sup>47</sup> and certainly not substances or real existents, as they are no longer something generated from soul but have come into being with the vice of a soul which forthwith produces things that are of the same kind as those in the dispositions and habits in it.

For, in general, true goods are likely to be substances when the soul acts according to nature within the limits of what is defined, but the things that are other than true goods the soul does not seem to produce from itself; rather, they seem to be nothing other than pathological states, just like false thoughts which have no substantiality to support them as really true thoughts do which are eternal and defined and possess thinking, the intelligible, and existence together, not only in what is unqualifiedly Intellect, but also in each individual intellect when

<sup>44</sup> See Pl., *Phdr.* 240D1.

<sup>45</sup> Reading ἀμύχανον with Kirchhoff and HS<sup>4</sup>. <sup>46</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203D3.

<sup>47</sup> The word is πᾶθη having here a clearly pejorative connotation.

it concerns itself with what is really intelligible. This is so, supposing that the individual intellect in each of us is also both intellection and intelligible in a pure state – even if we ourselves are not this either by being one with it or unqualifiedly so. This is also the source of our love for what is simple; for our acts of intellection are from there, too. And if they are of some particular thing, it is accidental, in the same way as if you think of the particular triangle as having angles totalling one hundred and eighty degrees, it is so insofar as it is simply a triangle.<sup>48</sup>

§3.5.8. But who is this Zeus into whose ‘garden’, he says, ‘Plenty entered’<sup>49</sup> and what is this garden? For Aphrodite was Soul for us and Plenty was said to be the expressed principle of all things.<sup>50</sup> But what should we make of these, Zeus and his garden? For we shouldn’t take Zeus as Soul since we have already taken Aphrodite as this. Indeed, in this case, too, we should understand Zeus from Plato, from *Phaedrus*, when he says explicitly that this god is ‘a great leader’<sup>51</sup> but elsewhere he says, I think, that he is ‘third’.<sup>52</sup> But more clearly in *Philebus* when he says that ‘in Zeus there is a royal soul and a royal intellect’.<sup>53</sup>

If, then, Zeus is a great intellect and soul and is ranged among the causes, and we must rank him as more powerful both for other reasons and because he is described as a cause<sup>54</sup> but one that is also ‘royal’ and ‘leading’, he will be at the level of Intellect, while Aphrodite, since she belongs to him, is from him and with him, will be placed at the level of Soul, having acquired the name of Aphrodite because of her beauty, splendour, innocence, and delicacy of soul. For if we rank the male gods at the level of Intellect and say that the female gods are at the level of their souls, since a soul accompanies each intellect, in this way, too, Aphrodite would be the soul of Zeus, an interpretation witnessed by priests and theologians, who identify Hera and Aphrodite and assign the star of Aphrodite in the heavens to Hera.<sup>55</sup>

§3.5.9. Plenty, then, since he is the expressed principle of what is in the intelligible and in Intellect and is more diffused and, in a way, unfolded than they are, could be said to be around Soul and in Soul. For what is in Intellect is contracted and does not take into itself anything from outside, whereas Plenty when drunk had his fulfilment from outside.<sup>56</sup> But what could it be that filled him in the intelligible world with nectar other than an expressed principle as it fell from a higher to a lower principle?

<sup>48</sup> See Ar., *Meta.* 5.30.1025a32. <sup>49</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203B5–6.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *supra* 5.12; 7.9. <sup>51</sup> See Pl., *Phdr.* 246E4. <sup>52</sup> See Pl. [?], 2nd Ep. 312E4.

<sup>53</sup> See Pl., *Phil.* 30D1–2. <sup>54</sup> See Pl., *Phil.* 30D3.

<sup>55</sup> See Ar. [?], *De mun.* 2.392a28. Thus, Zeus would be the intellect of the soul of the cosmos or simply Intellect. Cf. 5.9.13.15–25.

<sup>56</sup> I.e., Plenty represents discursive intellect outside of which are the intelligibles.

It is in the Soul, then, that this expressed principle takes its place as it comes from Intellect, flowing into his garden at the time when Aphrodite is said to be born.

And every garden is a glorious display and ornamental expression of wealth, but the domains of Zeus are brilliant with reason and his ornaments are the glories that enter into the Soul from Intellect itself. What could the garden of Zeus really be except the glorious images of his person? And what could his glories and adornments be other than the expressed principles which flow from him? The expressed principles taken together are identical with Plenty, his abundance and wealth of beautiful things already revealed.

And this is what is meant by being drunk with nectar. For what is nectar for the gods other than that which the divine secures. And what is beneath Intellect [i.e., Soul] secures reason for itself, but Intellect possesses itself in satiety and is not drunk through its possession, for it does not have anything imported from outside. But an expressed principle, because it is a product of Intellect and a real existent coming after Intellect and no longer belonging to itself,<sup>57</sup> but vested in another, is said to lie in the garden of Zeus and to be lying there at precisely the moment when Aphrodite is described as coming into existence among Beings.

But myths, if indeed they are going to be myths, must separate temporally their narrative and divide from each other many Beings which exist together, but are distinct from each other by rank or powers, in the same way that rational accounts, too, produce generations for the ungenerated, that is, separating out what is together. And when they have instructed as best they can, they allow someone who has understood them at once to put them together again.

The reassembly of our myth is as follows. Soul, which is with Intellect and takes its real existence from Intellect and is then filled with expressed principles and, being already beautiful, is adorned with beautiful things and filled with abundance, so that it is possible to see in it many glorious things and images of all kinds of beautiful things, is in the totality of these aspects to be understood as Aphrodite. And all the expressed principles in Soul are abundance and Plenty, just as the nectar above flows from on high. And the glories in Soul, since they are set in the life [of soul], are said to be the 'garden of Zeus', and Plenty is said to 'fall asleep' there 'weighed down'<sup>58</sup> by the things with which he has been filled. And when life<sup>59</sup> has appeared and is forever among the Beings, the gods are described as 'celebrating a feast',<sup>60</sup> which signifies that they are in a state of great happiness.

<sup>57</sup> Reading αὐτοῦ with HS<sup>4</sup>. <sup>58</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203B5–7.

<sup>59</sup> I.e., Soul/Aphrodite. <sup>60</sup> See Pl., *Symp.* 203B2.

40 And so Love has of necessity always existed as a result of Soul's desire  
to attain what is superior and good, and he was always there ever since  
Soul, too, existed. And he is a mixed thing sharing in deficiency, in that  
he wants to be filled, but not without a share in abundance insofar as he  
45 seeks what is missing from what he has. For that which is completely  
devoid of good would actually never search for the Good.<sup>61</sup>

And this is why he is said to be born from Plenty and Poverty in that  
deficiency and desire and the memory of the expressed principles come  
together and generate in soul the activity directed towards the Good and  
this activity is love. And his mother is Poverty because desire always  
50 belongs to what is in need. And Poverty is matter because matter is in  
need in every respect and the indefinite aspect of the desire for the  
Good – for there is neither form nor expressed principle in that which  
desires this – makes what desires even more akin to matter insofar as it  
desires. And what is turned towards itself<sup>62</sup> is form alone remaining in  
itself. But if it desires to receive as well, it makes what is going to receive  
55 into matter for what comes to it. And so then Love is a material entity  
and he is a daemon born from soul insofar as soul lacks the Good but  
desires it.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. 1.8.4.22.

<sup>62</sup> Reading πρὸς αὐτό.

PLOTINUS

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The Enneads

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