



**Vendredi 21 octobre 2022, 16h-18h15**

Chair: Dylan Burns (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

• **ZLATKO PLESE (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) :**

*The "Archaeology" of Gnosis: On the Inner Life of the Gnostic First Principle*

My talk examines various Gnostic responses to one of the central issues of metaphysical monism: the emergence of reality from a self-contained unitary first principle. In addition to the imagery of plenitude, overflow, and self-extension, Gnostic traditions consistently deploy the analogy with human cognitive processes to account for the passage from initial unity to plurality: they describe the unfathomable first principle as a self-searching absolute which, in the process of its gradual self-actualization, experiences the same series of changing dispositions and affections as the mind of the developing human. Contrary to Plotinus' assertion that "when speaking of the One, we actually speak of our own experiences" (*Enn.* VI.9 [9] 49-54), Gnostic traditions propose exactly the opposite: when speaking of ourselves and our dispositions and experiences, we actually speak of the One.

• **TUOMAS RASIMUS (University of Helsinki) :**

*First Principles on Classic Gnostic Texts and Plotinus*

My paper discusses the ways key classic gnostic texts (*Eugnostos*, the source behind Irenaeus' *AH* 1.30, *Apocryphon of John*, *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes*) explain the generation of first principles. I argue that these texts make use of established Neopythagorean solutions of monistic derivation (by self-duplication, self-division, or exteriorization) but combine them with biblical speculations about the image and likeness of God. In doing so, the gnostic authors came up with creative solutions and set vocabulary that foreshadowed Plotinus' procession-and-return scheme, including the famous being-life-mind triad (as well as its variant, the existence-life-blessedness triad). We know from Porphyry's biography that Plotinus had gnostic friends and that Greek versions of *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes* circulated in Plotinus' seminars. I aim to show that Plotinus was influenced by his gnostic friends but modified their solutions to be compatible with Plato (*Sophist* 248e in particular). The influence was probably mutual and would explain the full-blown Neoplatonism of *Zostrianos* and *Allogenes*.

Projet pluriannuel de recherches dirigé par Luciana Gabriela Soares Santoprete, Anna Van den Kerchove, George Karamanolis, Éric Crégheur et Dylan Burns

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