CHAPTER EIGHT
TIME AND CAUSALITY

Categorizing motion

Despite the fact that Origen is mainly interested in rational creatures of the particular spaces rather than the spaces themselves, he does not fail to refer to motion in general. In this section I shall discuss how he considers motion and particularly the *causes* of it.

Treatment of this question is supplied in Greek extracts of *Princ*, as well as in *de Or.* A study of these points shows that the classification of motion is dealt with in quite a systematic way. The points where these analyses appear could in no way be considered as incidental. For it is ‘because the teaching of the Church includes the doctrine of the righteous judgement of God’ that Origen makes the analysis of motion in *Princ*, in the beginning of Book III, Chapter 1, that is, at the outset of his exposition of his doctrine of free will.\(^1\) It should be emphasized that the criterion for the classification of motion is the *cause* of it.\(^2\)

Motion then, on account of the *cause* of it, is classified in the following categories:\(^3\)

1. Motion which is caused from without:\(^4\) this is the motion of inanimate things, like ‘stones and pieces of wood, which are cut out of the quarry or have lost the power of growing’, that is, things which ‘are held together merely by their form’.\(^5\) In the same category are included also those called ‘portable things’\(^6\), in general; that is, not inanimate things as above, but also living

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\(^1\) The title of that chapter is “Free Will”.
\(^2\) This point seems to have eluded J. Oulton and H. Chadwick in their *Alexandrian Christianity*, (On Prayer, Exhortation to Martyrdom, Dialogue with Heraclides), London, 1956; p. 33: an otherwise good translation, of which I partially avail myself at this point.
\(^3\) Cf. *SVF*, II, 161, 25.
\(^4\) *Princ*, III.1.4; *de Or.*, VI, 1.
\(^5\) *de Or.*, VI, 1. *Princ*, III.1.2.
\(^6\) *Princ*, III.1.2; *de Or.*, VI, 1.
things, such as ‘the bodies of living creatures, as well as portable plants’. What is in common in these motions is that all of them have their cause ‘from outside’ (ἐξωθεν)7 them.

2. Motion due to ‘the flux of bodies’ (τὴν ῥύσιν τῶν σωμάτων). It is stated that this motion is not included ‘in the present discussion’, namely in Princ.8 Still there is reference to this in deOr: this motion applies to things which ‘are moved by virtue of the fact that all bodies are in a state of flux as they decay’. Therefore, ‘this motion which they have is inseparably connected with their state of decay.’9

3. Motion in which the cause exists in the moving body. This pertains to those moved ‘either by their own inherent nature or soul’.10 These are things having the cause of motion ‘in themselves’ (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς).11 This kind of motion applies both to inanimate things and living creatures alike. Thus the following sub-categories can be discerned in this case.

a. Motion of ‘metals, and fire and even springs of water’: where it can be said to ‘have the cause of their motion in themselves’ (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς δὲ ἔχειν τὴν αἰτίαν τοῦ κινεῖσθαι).12 Origen states that ‘they have the cause of their motion’ ‘with themselves’ (ἐξ ἑαυτῶν).13

b. Motion of ‘animates’14 or ‘living creatures’,15 which is called motion ‘from within themselves’ (ἀπὸ ἑαυτῶν).16 These ‘living creatures’ move ‘from within themselves when there arises within them an image (φαντασία) which calls forth an impulse’, springing from ‘the imaginative nature setting the impulse in ordered motion’. This is a kind of ‘natural’ motion related to the nature of a certain animal. For instance, ‘in the spider, an image of weaving a web arises and the impulse to weave it follows’; this ‘impulse to weave’ is related to this animal because this is the natural mode of its existence. The same happens

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7 Princ, III.1.2; deOr, V, 5; also, deOr, VI, 1.
8 Princ, III.1.2.
9 deOr, VI, 1.
10 deOr, VI, 1; Princ, III.1.2.
11 Princ, III.1.2.
12 Princ, III.1.2.
13 Cf. L. and S., p. 498. Princ, III.1.2; deOr, VI, 1.
14 Princ, III.1.2.
15 deOr, VI, 1.
16 Princ, III.1.2; deOr, VI, 1.