

Plotinus, *Enneads* IV.3, Problems concerning the soul, pt. 1 – chapter 2, ll. 1-44  
Ancient Greek & Roman Philosophy Workshop  
16 October 2013 (Minutes)  
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1. It was proposed that τῷ ... ἐφάπτεσθαι in l. 2 is explanatory, in which case P. is inferring from the concession that our souls are in contact with the same objects that his opponents must accept that our souls are of the same form. An alternative was suggested, taking τὸ ... διδόντες in the next clause to represent what P. is drawing out of his opponents' position, with the opponents explicitly making the same-in-form claim, as P. seemed to claim above in l. 22.

2. We found the grammar of ll. 3-5 somewhat opaque, where P. suggests an alternative course for his opponents that would be better (δικαιότερον). Our conclusion was that ἐκάστην is the subject, τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ μίαν is the predicate, and πᾶσαν is a sort of appositive with adverbial force ('as a whole'), giving a jingly sort of effect at the expense of the syntax. Gerson hesitantly translates δικαιότερον as 'consistent' and we determined to flag this sentence in our discussion with him (see following art.).

3. We spent the bulk of the session on the next extremely difficult sentence, ll. 5-8, and its explanation in ll. 8-10.<sup>1</sup> P. is drawing out a consequence of his opponents going down the road of making soul one, but is the consequence meant to be unacceptable to them and thus constitute a reductio, or simply an attempt to draw out the truth? We eventually inclined to the latter view. The text can be taken as evidence that P. distinguished amongst souls, the world-soul, and the hypostasis Soul, which is external to both. We remain somewhat puzzled as to how these consequences follow from soul being one, but we agreed that this is somehow meant to rule out souls being both the same in form and parts.

4. The rest of the chapter is given over to examining various senses of parthood (ll. 10-29) and then showing that soul fits none of these senses (ll. 29 ff.). The trickiest bit is the argument about milk and whiteness (ll. 16-19), which seeks to show the parts of homeomers are not distinguished in form. The argument turns on the thought that whiteness cannot distinguish the part *qua* part. I suggested that P. may be appealing to the transitivity of parthood (if X is a part of Y and Y of Z, then X is a part of Z) to show that the whiteness of a portion is not a part at all since it is not a part of the whole.

5. The other senses are more straightforward: numerical parthood is ruled out as violating the unity of soul and continuous parthood (as for shapes) is ruled out as violating sameness-in-form, both in the case of a triangle where sub-triangles differ in orientation (παράλλάσσοντα, 38) and even the line where segments differ at least in magnitude. Finally, magnitude too is ruled out.

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<sup>1</sup> 'By making [soul] one, they make it depend on another, which though no longer of any given thing but itself of neither the world or anything else, yet brings about what is of both the world and any ensouled thing. For it is indeed right that not every soul is of something, since it is substance, but that there is one which is not at all of something, and those that are of something come to be at some time *per accidens*.'