

Plotinus, *Enneads* IV.3, Problems concerning the soul, pt. 1 – chapter 2, l. 44 – 3, end
Ancient Greek & Roman Philosophy Workshop
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1. The first sentence, φαίνεται ... τοῦ ὅλου (ll. 44-49), follows on the previous argument against the acceptability of a quantitative division of the whole of soul. At first glance, it seems that the wine image is meant to drive home the point – that must be the force of ἀναλώσουσι τὴν ὅλην, but the clause that begins εἰ μὴ put us in some doubt. We decided, however, that the image illustrates the problem and that the proviso is meant to explain that we may sometimes *speak* as if the whole remained (λέγοι, 49) when in fact that is no longer true (note the (probable) past tense ἦν). Leon rightly noted that the image is a Stoic one and is used in their theory of mixtures (on this, see *SVF* II, 471).

2. P. turns next (ll. 50-59) to the last option canvassed earlier in the chapter – that each soul is a part of the whole of soul in the way that a theorem is part of a science. This is evidently his own favored analysis, since the whole will be undiminished on division, but it creates trouble for his opponents (cf. the similar move earlier in 2, 3-10). The problematic consequence, again, is that the whole will be apart and not a soul of anything; it cannot therefore be identified with the world-soul, which then turns out to be a partial soul, too.

3. We noted the curious term προφορά, translated by Gerson with the seemingly technical term ‘projection’. The core semantic meaning is ‘pronunciation’ or ‘utterance’ in the sense of something quite literally put forth, which fits the context, since each theorem is a specification of the body of science behind it.

4. Chapter 3 is devoted to another sense of parthood and adds another image: that of the soul in the finger being a part of the whole body’s soul. A consequence is adduced in the form of a dilemma – that soul would either be necessarily all embodied or not at all (ll. 3-5). We wondered whether discussion of the dilemma was being postponed by τοῦτο δὲ σκεπτόν in favor of putting the image (or is it a model?) to argumentative work or whether it was somehow being carried out thereby. At any rate P. argues in ll. 7-10 that (1) the whole cannot provide itself *in toto* to the parts and (2) it cannot be present everywhere as a whole. Perhaps this is meant to recapitulate the dilemma initially raised.

5. P. eventually (ll. 10-31) brings in the notions of function and capacity to dispose of the proposal (we puzzled over the syntax of τὸ αὐτὸ δυνάμεως at 12, though the sense is clear enough). Even where the functions of parts differ, one and the same thing may be exercising different capacities. The model is the familiar Aristotelian inner sense with all the sensory modalities converging (εἰς ἓν ... πάντα ἰέναι, 20-21).

6. The textually corrupt lines 18-20 posed some difficulty. If we read δυνάμενον, the point seems to be about the sense-objects being such as to be sensed; if we emend to δυναμένης, then it is instead about the soul shaping what it takes in, which as Gabriel noted sounds a little like Kantian givenness.