

Sentences Porphyry

Translated by Isaak Samarskyi

SOD PROJECT
<https://sodproject.org>

Sentences Porphyry © 2024 by Porphyry, Isaak Samarskyi
is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

**This work is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International
(CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).**

For more information about the CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
license, please visit:
[https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed
.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en)

For more information about the SOD Project's position
on copyright and NonCommercial licensing, please visit
the "About the Project" section at
<https://sodproject.org>

First edition © 2024

ISBN-13: 978-83-971058-1-2 (ebook EN version)

ISBN-13: 978-83-971058-2-9 (paperback EN version)

SOD PROJECT
<https://sodproject.org>

Preface

Dear reader, you are looking at a unique book – the Sentences of Porphyry, a prominent Neoplatonic philosopher of the third century A.D. This work is a kind of summary, a kind of archive ready to be unpacked, and the quintessence of all Neoplatonic doctrine, set forth in concise and profound statements. Porphyry, as a student and follower of the great Plotinus, managed not only to systematize and organize the philosophy of his teacher, as set forth in his famous Enneads, but also to develop and supplement it with his own original ideas and intuitions. The Sentences are precisely this addition and development of Neoplatonism, which makes this book extremely valuable for anyone interested in ancient philosophy and the spiritual quest of mankind.

In the style of ancient philosophers, his philosophy covers a very wide range of human life and knowledge. However, the main theme of the Sentences remains the consideration of fundamental metaphysical questions about the nature of reality, the soul, the mind, and the One Source of all things. Porfirije seeks to reveal the deep essence of existence, which, in his opinion, is immaterial, incorporeal, eternal, and unchanging. It is this spiritual reality, which is inaccessible to sensory perception, that constitutes the true foundation of the universe. It is worth noting that instead of taking one of the two positions in the dichotomous dispute between materialists and idealists, he proposes to combine them through his teachings and shows how they are actually connected in

their interaction with each other and what their fundamental differences are.

Porphyry pays special attention to the problem of the soul and its relationship to the body and the material world. He sees the soul as an immortal and divine entity, which, however, can be "polluted" and "burdened" through its connection with corporeality and sensual passions. The philosopher sees the path to salvation and liberation of the soul in the gradual separation from all corporeal, material things, in turning to the contemplation of eternal ideas and unity with the divine principle. Following this, he raises the topic of the doctrine of the One as the highest principle of existence, from which all things come. For Porphyry, the One appears as absolutely transcendent, ineffable, and transcending all concepts and definitions. It is the source of all that is plural, but at the same time remains indivisible and unchanging. The comprehension of the One, the return of the soul to it, is the highest goal of human life and philosophical efforts.

Porfirije's reflections on the nature of the mind and intellectual contemplation are interesting. Reason appears here as the highest faculty of the soul, which allows us to comprehend the truly essential, eternal, and unchanging. However, reason is not identical to the One; it is the first manifestation of its creative activity. The mind contains all the ideas-forms of things, acting as an intermediary between the One and the sensory world. The contemplative activity of the mind, intellectual intuition, opens the way to

cognition of the higher reality.

In discussing ethics, the philosopher develops the doctrine of virtue and the stages of moral improvement. He distinguishes between "civic," "purifying," and "contemplative" virtues, showing the gradual ascent of the soul from external virtuous behavior to internal transformation and union with the divine. Porfirije's ethics has a pronounced mystical character, since the highest goal of man is to achieve godhood.

He sees the universe as a living and spiritualized organism permeated by divine forces. The material cosmos is a reflection and embodiment of higher ideal principles. Porfirije developed the doctrine of the sympathy of all parts of the universe, the relationship between the earthly and the heavenly, and the role of stars and constellations in the fate of all things. These ideas had a huge impact on the further development of the ancient and medieval worldview.

It is worth noting that the Sentences is a rather difficult text to understand, especially for an unprepared reader. The author's thought often moves in leaps and bounds, he uses complex metaphors and comparisons, and paradoxical formulations. All of this requires great attention and concentration when reading, and a willingness to make intellectual efforts. However, these efforts are worthwhile, because the Sentences are able to enrich and expand the spiritual world of a person, to make him look at reality in a completely new light.

Despite all the time distance, Porfirije's thoughts remain surprisingly relevant in our time. His criticism of materialism and spirituality, his call for a contemplative way of life, his insightful psychological observations – all of this can resonate with the hearts of modern people who seek to find spiritual guidance in our troubled world.

The English translation of the Sentences you are holding in your hands is probably not the first attempt to translate this work into English, but it still takes it in a completely different direction. The translator has tried to convey the meaning and style of the original as accurately and adequately as possible, to preserve the depth and paradoxical nature of Porfirije's thought. At the same time, efforts were made to make the translation easy to read. We hope that reading Porfirije's Sentences will be a real intellectual and spiritual adventure for you, dear readers, and will help you to take a fresh look at the world and your place in it.

Isaak Samarskyi March 2024

Sentences

1

Every material body is in a spatial dimension with its own place, while none of the non-material beings have such a spatial dimension.

2

Intangible beings are present everywhere, not in the form of disjointed beings, but as a whole, and it is their integrity that allows them to be above any location.

3

Non-material beings, while not occupying a place with material beings in the spatial dimension, are nevertheless present next to them whenever they wish, interacting with the material in the way they are characterized by interaction; and without being physically present, they are still present in interaction.

4

Non-material beings are not present and do not mix with material bodies because of their essence, but because of a certain force arising from their interaction, and through this force they can influence the material.

After all, the interaction itself creates a secondary force that can act on material bodies and is closer to them.

5

The soul lies somewhere in between the wholeness and divisibility of the material world and is a kind of mediator, while the mind is completely whole and the body

is completely divisible, and the qualities and embodied forms surrounding the bodies are divisible.

6

Not every active being that influences another by approaching or touching the object of influence does so through direct touch and interaction, and some beings that interact in this way use approaching only as a side element of their activity.

7

The soul is attached to the body through giving in to the passions that arise from it, and is freed from it through the renunciation of these passions.

8

What nature has bound, nature dissolves, and what the soul has bound, it can dissolve; thus, nature has bound the body to the soul, and the soul has bound itself to the body.

Thus, nature separates the body from the soul, and the soul separates from the body.

9

There are two kinds of death: one known as the separation of body from soul, and the other, the philosophical one, which is the separation of soul from body; and not always one is a consequence of the other.

10

Everything exists in everything, but in a way that corresponds to the nature of each entity: in the mind – noetically, in the soul – rationally, in plants – through

seeds, in bodies – in the form of images, and in the transcendent – unknown and beyond being.

11

When immaterial beings descend, they divide into parts and branch out, multiplying in their individual manifestations of power, but when they ascend, they unite and return to simultaneous existence in unity through increased power.

12

Not only does homogeneity exist in physical bodies, but life has many forms: different life in plants, different life in animals, different life in intelligent beings, different life in nature, different life in the soul, different life in the mind, different life in the transcendent; for there is life there, too, although none of the other things that exist nearby has life like this.

13

Everything that generates gives rise to beings inferior to itself, and everything created by nature seeks to return to its source; of those who generate, some do not go back to their creations at all and do not become the beings they generate, some both return and do not return, and some only return to creations that are not capable of returning to them.

14

Every creation has a cause for its emergence from something else, for nothing comes into being without a cause.

But among the created things, those that have existence through compounding can be separated and are

therefore transitory; those that are simple and uncomplex, and have existence in the simplicity of their existence, are insoluble and pure, but are called created not because they are complex, but because they come from a cause.

Bodies, therefore, are created in a twofold way, both as originating from a cause and as complex; the soul and mind are created as originating from a cause, but not as complex; bodies, therefore, are created and transitory, and the non-incarnate are non-incarnate, as simple and therefore insoluble and pure, but created as originating from a cause.

15

Memory is not the preservation of ideas, but the emergence of reflections, thoughts, and what was learned from the very beginning.

16

The soul possesses the causes of everything and acts in accordance with them, either by remaining caused by external causes to act or by bringing itself back to them within itself; by remaining caused by the external, it gives sensation to the external, so to speak, and by coming into itself it becomes understanding within the mind. And just as in animals sensation is inseparable from the physical organs, so understanding is inseparable from the image; so that, as the imprint is concomitant with the sensory animal, so the image follows the rational soul of the animal.

17

The soul is a dimensionless, immaterial, pure, and indestructible being that has life from itself and possesses being.

18

The suffering of the body and the suffering of the soul are different from each other, since the suffering of the body arises from change, while the feelings and emotions of the soul are forms of its activity that are not similar to the heating or cooling of bodies.

Therefore, if the pain of the body is always associated with change, then all disembodied beings should be considered impervious to pain, because actions that are separated from matter and bodies are the same as those that are close to matter and bodies, but they are not themselves impervious, but they are affected through the objects they are directed at.

When a living being feels something, the soul resembles an independent harmony that sets in motion the strings tuned to inseparable harmony. The cause of movement, the spiritualized living being, is likened to a musician because of its harmony, and the affected bodies, because of their sensual passion, are likened to the tuned strings.

In this case, too, sensation, and therefore suffering, occurs through the string (body), not through a separate harmony (soul).

The musician moves in his harmony, but the string cannot move musically on its own unless the harmony requires it.

19

The name incorporeal is not given because of a commonality of the same kind, as in the case of bodies,

but is determined by a simple absence in relation to bodies.

Hence some of them are existing and some are not existing. And some exist before bodies and some after bodies; and some are separate from bodies and some are inseparably connected with them; and some are self-existent and some need another for their existence; and some are active and living entities in themselves and some remain alive through certain actions.

For they are not named for the absence of something, but for the representation of what they have.

20

According to antiquity, the features of matter are as follows: it is incorporeal, because it is different from bodies; soulless, because it has neither mind nor soul and is not alive in itself; formless, mindless, infinite, powerless.

Therefore, it is not being, but nothingness; and it is not that it is not movement or static, but true nothingness, the delusion and ghost of volume, because it is the primary thing that mass contains and this powerlessness; it is the absence of any essence, it stands but not at rest, and always reveals opposites, small and large, less and more, insufficient and superior, always becoming and not staying, and cannot escape, it is the absence of everything that exists.

Therefore, everything that it promises (the way it manifests/appears) is a lie, and although it may seem great, it is small; because it is like a toy running away to nothingness; because escape is not in space, but in the abandonment of being; hence the images in it are the worst images, as in a mirror, what exists somewhere else is imagined somewhere else; and is filled as it seems, and has nothing, and seems to be everything.

21

Pain is present to everything that is subject to destruction, since the acceptance of pain is the path to destruction, and it is what is destroyed that suffers; but nothing incorporeal is destroyed, some of it either exists or does not exist, so it does not suffer at all; for the suffering one must not be unchanging, but changeable and destructive because of the quality of what causes pain; for for the existing one, change is spontaneous.

Therefore, neither matter suffers, for it is inactive in itself, nor the forms that enter and exit it, but pain is felt by matter and form together, and existence is in this union; for this is seen in the opposite forces and qualities of what causes pain.

Therefore, those who have life outside and not of themselves can suffer life and non-life; those who have existence in life, who are invulnerable, should remain in life as well as in non-life without suffering as much as possible, for insensibility does not feel how much it is insensibility.

As change and pain are in the complex of matter and form that make up the body-although this was not inherent in matter itself-so life and death and pain are in the complex of soul and body; though this also does not occur with the soul, since it was not composed of non-life and life, but only of life; and this was for Plato the essence and rational principle of the soul-self-motion.

22

The existing intellectual essence is homogeneous in the same way that things exist in a partial mind as in a complete mind, but in a complete mind, both homogeneous and partial things exist homogeneously, while in a

partial mind, both homogeneous and partial things exist partially.

23

For an entity that has existence in life, and whose suffering is alive, then death is in some sense an aspect of life, and not a complete liberation from life, since even suffering was not a path to complete lifelessness for it.

24

In the world of disembodied beings, their development takes place on the basis of previous stable and unchanging states that do not destroy anything in their essence; thus, the existence of these beings is not subject to destruction or change, since this does not occur at all due to the fact that processes of a destructive nature do not take place; therefore, they are unaltered and indestructible, existing in this state from the beginning.

25

As for that which is beyond the mind, much is said in terms of understanding, but it is considered unknowable and beyond the mind, although it is better studied by stopping thinking, just as much is said about a sleeper because of the vigilance of those who are awake while he is in this state, but knowledge and awareness of what is happening to him can only be gained through sleep; for like is like, since all knowledge is like the known.

26

The nothingness we imagine departs from being, keeping us from considering that which exceeds being; if

we were to separate from being, we would not think of that which is above existence, which does not exist, but we would imagine a false nothingness, which does not exist, occurring in that which has departed from itself. And everyone is the cause of that which is real and through which the self was destined to rise to that which is above existence, above that which does not exist, and this causes that which exists to fall into that which does not exist.

27

The existence of the body does not prevent the asomatic from existing where it wants and how it wants.

Because for the body, the inaccessible is immaterial and does not exist for it, and for the incorporeal, the voluminous exists as imperceptible.

The incorporeal does not pass through space to wherever it wants to go, because space is formed by the material, and the incorporeal is not limited by the volume of bodies.

For something that is limited in some way by volume could suffer in volume and locally move, but the absolutely volumeless and dimensionless is uncontrolled by the material and thus devoid of such movement.

Therefore, it is located where it is installed, being everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

Therefore, it is located by disposition above the heavens or in some part of the world; when it lingers in some part of the world, it is not seen by the eyes, but its presence is made known through action.

28

If the incorporeal is contained in the body, it need not fear that it will be confined like a beast in a cage; for nothing can hold it and encompass the body any more

than a bag can hold liquid or air, but it must support the forces that tend from unity with it to the outside, by which it descends and intertwines with the body; therefore, the connection with the body passes through the ineffable extensibility of its essence.

Therefore, it does not need anything other than itself to hold it and therefore does not dissolve when the body becomes broken and collapses, but returns to itself.

29

Just as the soul's being on the earth is a property of the soul – but it does not mean walking on the earth like a body, but being in front of a body walking on the earth – so too is the soul's being in Hades a property of the soul when it stands before an image that, although it has the nature of being in a place, has its existence in darkness.

Thus, if Hades is an underground place in darkness, the soul, not being separated from being, but having emerged from the solid body, is attracted in Hades by the image that accompanies it and that it has adopted from the spheres.

Through her interaction with the body during her life, she forms an imaginary image that radiates, according to which she had a relationship to the body of the creator in life, and from this passion the imprint of the imagination is separated into a spirit and thus the image is attracted; in Hades, this spirit is said to have the nature of darkness and inhospitality.

As a heavy and damp spirit reaches underground places, so too is the soul said to pass underground, not because its essence moves through places and exists in places, but because it accepts the ability to pass through places and the material bodies that naturally

reside there, and accepts the nature of these places, accepting them according to the suitability of such bodies to transmit their properties in accordance with its own nature.

In accordance with its state, the soul finds a body that corresponds to its inherent order and place.

A soul with a purer state has a body close to the immaterial, which is etheric, and one that has moved from the rational to the imaginative has the nature of a solar body; if it has a feminine or passive state, it receives the nature of a lunar body, but when it falls into a physical body composed of moist vapors due to its state, it becomes completely unaware of existence, darkens and falls into childhood.

Even when leaving the body, the soul still holds the disordered damp spirit and it attracts the shadow and becomes burdened falling lower and lower into the earth, because such a damp spirit tends to the depths of the earth by nature unless it is attracted by another cause.

Just as a shell full of earthly substances feels heavy on the ground, so does a moist spirit that attracts an image need to be framed.

A moist spirit attracts an image when the soul is constantly accustomed to communicating with nature, whose work is in moisture and more in the underworld.

But when the soul gets used to moving away from nature, it becomes light and dry, clean and cloudless, because a cloud forms in moist air, and dry light arises from steam.

30

None of the complete and perfect entities return to the one who gave rise to them, but they all aspire to that which gave them rise, up to the cosmic body itself; for being perfect, it is raised to the rational soul, and

therefore moves through it in a circle, and its soul to the mind, and the mind to the First Cause.

Therefore, it stretches from the end to the beginning, from the latter to the former, according to the extent that each one is able; approaching the First Cause is attentive, but from a distance.

Therefore, these entities not only strive for G-d, but also enjoy Him to the extent that they can.

And in divisible entities, which can be inclined toward many things, there is also the possibility of returning to their descendants; therefore, they also have sin, and infidelity is despised.

Therefore, the evil of matter is that it can return to itself, and it actualizes this possibility over and over again, while it could return to the divine.

Thus, perfection supports the secondary by keeping it facing the primary, and the imperfect returns the primary to the later and makes us love it by turning away from the previous.

31

G-d is everywhere, for there is nothing anywhere, and the mind is everywhere, for there is nothing anywhere, and the soul is everywhere, for there is nothing anywhere.

But G-d is everywhere and nowhere among all that is after Him - He exists only as He exists and wills - and the mind exists in G-d, everywhere and nowhere among all that is after it; and the soul is in the mind and in G-d, everywhere and nowhere in the body.

And the body is in the soul, and in the mind, and in G-d, since everything that exists and does not exist comes from G-d and in Him, and He is neither existing nor non-existing in them.

For as all things and non-existent things are from G-d and in G-d, and He is neither existing nor non-existent in them, so the mind is everywhere and nowhere, the cause of souls and of what is behind them, and the mind itself is not a soul, nor is it what is behind the soul, nor is it in this, since it was not only everywhere among what is behind it, but also nowhere.

And the soul is not the body, nor in the body, but the cause of the body, since being everywhere except the body, it is nowhere. And thus the progress of everything comes from something that cannot be everywhere and nowhere at the same time, but participates in both parts in turn.

32

The virtues of a political leader are different, different for someone who seeks to immerse himself in theoretical knowledge, hence such a person is called a theorist, different for someone who has already achieved the status of a highly educated theorist and observer, and unique to the mind, in terms of its purity from the soul.

The virtue of a political leader is manifested in restraint, following rational conclusions, and devotion to duty in action; hence, in creating a safe coexistence with neighbors through communication and public relations, they are identified with the political sphere.

Wisdom refers to the rational element, courage to the angry element, temperance to the reconciliation of desires with prudence, and justice to the proper use and control of these qualities by each individual.

The virtues of the one who turns to the theory are based on detachment from worldly affairs; they are also called purification rituals because they involve renunciation of bodily actions and feelings.

They focus the soul on the truly existing, in contrast to political charities that only adorn mortal man, and are the precursors to purificatory actions; for one must first develop oneself according to their principles before giving up bodily activity – thus, in purificatory processes, unnecessary cooperation with the body is rejected, but the isolated work of the mind supports wisdom, which is perfected through pure reasoning; the lack of feeling of suffering leads to moderation, and the lack of fear of separation from the body to emptiness or nothingness, and justice grows out of the control of the mind and reasoning without any resistance.

Thus, the state of mind that corresponds to the political virtues is evaluated through restraint, with the ultimate goal of living in harmony with human nature, while the state of mind that is directed toward the theoretical virtues is characterized by dispassion with the ultimate goal of being like the Divine.

Since one purification is only a process of purification and the other is a result, the purifying virtues are seen as both purifying the soul and as the result of purification – for the ultimate goal of purification is to achieve the purified state.

However, since purification and the purified state involve the elimination of all extraneous things, the goodness must be other than the purification process; if what is to be purified is good, then the purification itself would be sufficient.

But although purification is the beginning, true goodness remains after it, and is not the process of purification itself.

The soul is not inherently good, but it has the ability to participate in the good and become like a model of good; it could not have come into being in evil.

Thus, goodness for the soul consists in coexistence with its Creator, and evil is related to what came later.

Evil has a twofold dimension: in coexistence with earthly things and in excessive passions.

Thus, political virtues that liberate from the first kind of evil are considered valuable and respected, and purifying virtues that liberate from the second are considered even more honorable and liberating from the evil of the soul.

Therefore, when the soul is purified, it must be in union with its Creator; and therefore its virtue upon return consists in cognition and realization of the truly existing, not because it is deprived of this, but because without prior preparation it cannot attain contemplation of its essence.

Thus, a third kind of virtue emerges, which follows the purifying and political ones, when the soul acts according to the logic of reason; wisdom and prudence are manifested in the theoretical realm to which reason aspires, justice in appropriate actions guided by reason, temperance in the inner inclination to reason, and courage in the inability to feel pain, due to the resemblance to the object of contemplation, which is passionless.

And these virtues are interrelated, just like the others.

The fourth type of virtue is that which exists in the mind as standards, which are higher than the mental virtues and serve as models for them; the mind is the place where standards are concentrated, knowledge is awareness, wisdom is knowledge that possesses the mind, temperance refers to it, actual action is concrete deeds, and courage is integrity and the ability to remain pure through the superiority of inner strength.

Thus, there are four types of virtues: some belong to the realm of the mind, are characteristic of it and are

closely related to it, some belong to the soul, which already perceives and is saturated with reason, some belong to the animal soul, which is purified and separated from bodily and irrational desires, and some belong to the human soul, which adorns the personality by setting boundaries between rashness and reasonable restraint.

And whoever possesses the greater virtues certainly possesses the lesser ones, but not always vice versa. However, the possessor of the greater virtues is not always guided by the lesser ones, but only when they are needed.

After all, the goals differ, as already mentioned, and they differ in their types.

The goal of the political virtues is to regulate the passions within the framework of natural action; the cathartic virtues are the complete abandonment of passions that previously had their measure; the virtues that are related to reason are acting directly from reason without being subject to passions; and as for those that are not related to reason, the activity is one with the essence of reason.

Therefore, one who acts in accordance with the practical virtues would be an excellent man, one who acts in accordance with the purifying virtues would be a divine person or even a high deity, one who acts exclusively in accordance with the rational virtues would be a god, and one who acts in accordance with the applied virtues would be the father of gods.

Thus, one should pay the most attention to the purifying virtues, based on the fact that it is through them that ascension to higher values is possible in this life.

One should carefully consider to what extent and how far the purification, which consists in separation from bodily and irrational feelings of pain, can be carried out.

How this is possible and where exactly this boundary lies needs to be considered.

Firstly, the realization of oneself as a soul in an alien body and connected to another nature is the basis and foundation for purification.

Secondly, this leads to the desire to assemble oneself separately from the body and from the places in which the body has been, is, and will be, but to do so with dispassion under any circumstances.

When one is constantly in a state of dependence on his sensory impressions, even if it is not related to passion or pleasure, but his consciousness is dispersed through the bodily, he becomes like the body for this very reason, sympathizing with the joys and pains experienced by the body.

He should especially purify himself from this state.

This is possible if even the necessary physical pleasures and sensations are accepted only for the sake of healing or pain relief, so that they do not interfere with the purification.

Pain should also be avoided; if avoidance is not possible, then minor pain should be tolerated without compassion for it.

Anger should be extinguished as far as possible, or better yet, completely; if this is not possible, then at least it should not be allowed to influence the expression of will, but should be left unintentional, weak, and insignificant; fear should be eradicated completely, for there is nothing to fear—and nothing should be done intentionally. Thus, anger and fear should be used as tools in learning.

Desire for all kinds of lower pleasures should be eradicated. Food and drink should not be taken for granted, and natural sexual instincts should not be manifested even unconsciously; if they do arise, they

should be only on the level of imagination, and then only in the excesses of dreams.

In general, the soul should be completely free from everything that has been purified, and the moving part of the soul, which is inclined to the irrational through bodily passions, should act without compassion and without participation, in such a way that its impulses are easily dispelled by rational reasoning.

In this way, there will be no conflict with the purification process, but in the end, only the word will suffice, which causes more shame, so that even the worst behavior will be difficult to detect, if at all, because it leads to rest in the presence of the master and self-condemnation for its weakness.

And all this is only a stage in the attainment of dispassion; when the sympathetic part of the soul is completely purified, then the state of dispassion will come, since passion was a movement that arose from the reasoning that allowed it to arise.

33

Every thing exists according to its inherent nature, if it exists at all, somewhere, but not beyond that nature.

Thus, a physical body, which has materiality and volume, is somewhere in physical space; therefore, a cosmic body, which also has materiality and volume, must exist in dimensions and space in order to be everywhere.

However, for the mental world and in general for everything that is immaterial and has no body, volume, or dimensions, the concept of existence in space does not apply, so omnipresence for the incorporeal is not spatial.

Thus, a part of it is not here or there—for it cannot occupy space or have dimensions—but it exists wholly

wherever it is; and not here, but not elsewhere either, for then it would be limited to a place here but absent there—not far from something, but not close, as defined for distances that are close or far from objects in space.

Thus, the world is close to the mental world in terms of dimensions, and the incorporeal is next to the world without parts and dimensions.

And without division, the partial becomes whole in the measurable, being the same and unified in each of its parts.

Even if the measurable has an infinite number of parts, the integral dimensionless is present without division, without increasing, but integrally in every part of the volumetric, in every element of a number and in the whole volume and number without division, without increasing and as one in the number.

And its partial and divided use is manifested in things divided into parts, which often lack the nature of what they reproduce, or they are not even able to represent the essence, passing from their inherent nature to the essence of another.

Thus, for what is naturally voluminous and extended, indivisible and non-expansive, becomes seemingly divided and extended, and so it is perceived, according to its nature, not according to its essence; for what is naturally undivided and non-expansive, divided and extended, appears as undivided and non-expansive, and so it exists for it, viz: the undivided and non-expansive exists without a physical place for that which is divided and expanded, which is in space having its place, and the divided and expanded in space exists for the other without a physical place, as divided and expanded.

Thus, in our reflections, we should give preference to the properties of each separately, not mix entities, and not imagine or think of the immaterial as material; for

it is impossible to attribute attributes that belong exclusively to the immaterial to material objects.

Many people are accustomed to the material, but only a few are able to comprehend immaterial entities, let alone project images onto them, as long as they are held in the imagination.

Thus, it can be stated: if one exists in space and outside of its limits, since it exceeds the volume, then the other, the mental, does not exist in space and is within itself, since it does not go beyond the volume; if one is a reproduction, the other is a model, one exists thanks to the mental, and the other is self-sufficient; for every reproduction is a reflection of thought.

And as I have already said, we should not be surprised by changes in coexistence, if this concept is applicable at all; for we are not discussing the coexistence of material bodies, but the coexistence of objects that are completely different in their essential nature.

Commonality appears to those who observe homogeneity.

So there is no mixing, merging, community, or neighborhood, but there is another way of seeing that is different from any ordinary community of others with other homogeneous ones, and completely different from the things that come under the senses.

So, there is no mixing, merging, community, or neighborhood, but there is another way of representation that is different from any ordinary forms of community of similar entities, and completely different from things that are experienced through the senses.

34

Real existence is not limited by size, whether vast or small, for the concepts of great and small belong to the realm of volume, but that which exists transcends

both greatness and insignificance, is influenced by the highest and lowest, is identical in number, and exists simultaneously under the influence of all that is highest and all that is lowest; do not perceive it as the highest – for then you will be confused as to how it can be the highest and at the same time exist in the smallest spaces without division, reduction, or contraction – and not as the lowest – for then you will be confused as to how it can be the smallest and at the same time exist in the largest spaces without growth, spreading or stretching – but imagine it as something that encompasses the highest limits from the highest and the lowest limits to the lowest at the same time, as something that is simultaneously comprehended in each and every one of them and in the whole and in infinite numbers and volumes, while remaining unbroken in itself; it exists in the space of the universe by its uniqueness without separation and without limitation of size and exceeds the space of the universe and envelops every part of the universe with its indivisibility, as the universe by its multiplicity exists in it comprehensively and to the extent that it is possible, and cannot encompass it completely or with all its power, but meets it in everything as infinite and impenetrable in all aspects and to the extent that it is freed from all the limitations of space.

35

What is larger in size is smaller in power not in comparison with things of similar nature, but with things that are different in kind due to a difference in essence.

The expansion of volume, as an example, is an expression of a departure from one's own essence and a split in power.

Consequently, that which is superior in strength to any size is alien; for a force that is self-sufficient, concentrated in itself, has power over itself.

Thus, a body that has expanded to a certain size is weaker in its power than an immense body that is truly existent in power, since true existence does not exhaust itself in expanding to a certain volume, retaining the power of its power due to the absence of limitations.

Just as true existence has no size and no limitations in comparison to size, so the material is weak and feeble in comparison to true existence; for what is powerful in force is foreign to what is large in size, and what is large in size is weak in comparison to the magnitude of the force.

Thus, the universe, which exists everywhere, encounters the truly existing, which is said to be omnipresent, but cannot embrace its power, because it encounters it not as partially existing, but as unlimited and without size.

Thus, presence is not limited to location, but rather to likeness, to the extent that it is possible, the material becomes like the incorporeal and the incorporeal manifests itself in the material, approaching its properties.

The immense cannot be fully present, because the material cannot fully resemble the purely incorporeal, but it is present to the extent that the material can reflect the incorporeal.

However, this does not lead to a merger through acceptance; for if it did, each side would be destroyed: the material, accepting the incorporeal, would change into it, and the other, the incorporeal, would become material.

Thus, similarity and participation pass from one to the other between things that differ in nature.

Thus, in the universe of true existence, there is a surprising lack of power, and in the truly existing, there is no weakness of the material; and that which in the middle makes the extremes similar and unites the extremes, has caused delusion about the extremes separately through likeness, by joining one to the other.

36

That which truly exists is called numerous not because of the diversity of places or volumes, not because of accumulation or because of separate descriptions and divisions into parts, but because of differences that are immaterial, immeasurable, and non-growing, divided only numerically.

Thus, it is also one; not as a single thing, not as a single place, not as a single volume, but as a single entity that is also multiple, because according to its unity it is also different. And the difference of this is both distinct and unified; its difference is not external or additive; neither can it be shared with another, but is rich in itself.

It acts in different ways while remaining what it is because it retains all of its inner content through unchanging, not in the difference of one to another, as is the case with physical realities.

In these, similarity exists within diversity, as if diversity were primary and similarity superimposed from without; but in true being, similarity is primary and diversity is because similarity has been active.

Therefore, the one essence is expanded in its partlessness, and this unity is numerous in its dimensions and volumes; and the former is self-sufficient, being one in itself, and does not leave itself, while the latter never exists independently, as if it has its existence in ecstasy.

Thus, a single entity is omnipotent, and its multiplicity is one. Thus, it is worthwhile to consider carefully how this one and the other are, and how this multiplicity and unity are, and not to project the characteristics of one onto the other.

37

We should not assume that because of the diversity of bodies there is a diversity of souls, for souls exist before bodies, both numerous and single, without preventing one and the same being from being diverse in itself, nor from allowing many to divide the one among themselves.

They are separated without being completely separated or divided into parts, and they exist together without creating a mixture or accumulation out of the whole; for they are not separated by boundaries, nor are they mixed with each other, just as different knowledge is not mixed in one soul, nor are they contained as bodies in a soul of a different nature, but as manifestations of the activity of the soul.

The nature of the soul is infinite in its power, and each individual soul is a soul, and all together form one, but each is different from all the others.

Just as bodies, infinitely divided, do not become disembodied because of the difference in the volume of the parts, so the soul, which is the source of life, infinitely variable in its forms, brings about a change of forms, and it is all at once with them and outside of them; for the diversity in it is only an extension that preserves unity.

Just as in bodies, where diversity surpasses unity, no incorporeal entry disrupts the integrity, but everything remains united by nature, divided only by qualities and other forms, so what can be said of that

special incorporeal being where unity reigns over diversity and where nothing else is subject to form—that unity which ensures unity even in bodies—and no body destroys this unity, although it affects a variety of functions?

Unity itself, by its very nature, accomplishes everything and reaches infinity in its activity, each part of which has the potential of all that is possible, and just as a seed contains the potential of the whole plant when it is purified of the material, so does a part of a seed contain the potential of the whole seed.

Just as a seed preserved in matter manifests its potential in every aspect of which it is capable while preserved partially in matter, and when brought together as a seed, it has the power of the whole in each of its parts, so the disembodied soul, seen as a part of the whole soul, has all of its power.

And that which is connected with the material, although governed as a form that interacts with matter, has the power of the whole soul and meets it when it is removed from the material and elevated in itself.

Since the soul, which is turned to matter, has encountered difficulties and has lost some of its own power, when it rises to the level of the mind, it finds its fullness in the fact that it possesses the power of the whole.

Therefore, those who first recognized this dual nature of the soul called it, respectively, Poverty and Wealth¹.

38

In an effort to express in language, as far as possible, the peculiarities of a being without a body, the ancient sages, when they refer to it as one, immediately include in this concept everything that

¹ Plotinus. *Enneads*, III. 5. 7–9.

corresponds to the unity of those objects known through the senses; When they imagine this unity as something else, without realizing the fullness of this unity in all that is perceptible, they connect the one with the one in order to express the indivisible that pervades everything in true existence and avoid any association with the multitude.

When they say that it exists everywhere, they emphasize that it does not actually have a place anywhere; and when they say that it is present in everything and in every part that can properly receive it, they indicate that it is integral as a whole. And in general, the ancients presented it through the most opposite concepts, using them simultaneously to make us reject the ideas about it formed on the basis of physical bodies, which obscure the cognitive features of the true essence.

39

What is said about the tangible and material is indeed the following: ubiquitous existence, changeability, existence in diversity, complexity, independent dismemberment, spatial location, volume, and similar things.

But the existence of the truly existing and self-sufficiently immaterial is that it is constantly within itself, remains constant in its properties, exists in unanimity, is unchanging in its essence, is uncomplicated, not dismemberable, not spatial or volumetric, never created or vanishes, and other such things.

Holding on to these concepts, we should not deviate from understanding their diverse nature, expressing them ourselves and listening to others express them.

You will not reach the top by accomplishing this, and you will not stop, you will not step aside, you will not limit yourself to the small, as if this small does not have the ability to give more, because it has already exhausted its resources.

For the ever-flowing mind is greater than any spring that carries its waters forever and ever.

Therefore, if you succeed in creating a unity that is like everything that exists, then you will not strive to find anything, or if you strive, you will turn aside and get lost, not seeing how you are reflected in the other.

But if you do not seek to find anything, standing on your own and in your own being, you will become like everything and will not stop at anything that is separated from wholeness; you will not even be able to say that you are limited to this, and by giving up this limitation you will become everything; and although you were once everything, by adding something else to this everything you have become less, because this additional was not of what exists; you cannot add anything to it.

So, when one rises from nothingness, one is not all, one lives in lack and needs everything; but when one rejects nothingness, one becomes all, becoming saturated with oneself; thus, one realizes oneself by giving up that which weakens you and makes you less – and especially when this less is considered by its nature to be you and not who you really are; For you have distanced yourself from yourself by turning your back on existence – and when one stands in this existence, present where one is present, then one is present in existence itself everywhere; but when, in rejecting yourself, you have distanced yourself from yourself, you have distanced yourself from existence.

41

The existence of something that is defined through its presence in another and cannot consider itself separate from that other becomes impossible when it tries to perceive itself in isolation from its carrier, feeling itself separated, and in such a self-reference it annihilates its essence.

The ability to self-knowledge without taking into account its environment, feeling isolated and capable of such action without its own destruction, is unattainable for something that seeks self-knowledge without causing its own decline.

Thus, if sight and other sensory faculties do not possess self-awareness and do not maintain their autonomy outside the bodily framework, and if the mind, when separated from the body, most effectively reason by referring to itself and does not dissolve, it becomes clear that the senses function through the body, while the mind exists outside the body and has the ability to act and exist independently.

42

The things of disembodied entities, which are called disembodied because of their lack of materiality and are imagined as such, include, for example, matter as conceived by ancient philosophers and form existing in matter; when form is separated in consciousness from matter, nature and properties are also separated.

In addition, space, time, and boundaries are considered to be disembodied due to the lack of physical form.

There are also other entities that are defined as non-incarnate not because they lack physical form, but because they are fundamentally unable to create a material body.

Thus, the first category refers to physical bodies, while the second refers to separate entities that are completely disembodied and distinct from bodies and other disembodied things.

Bodies exist in space, and boundaries exist in bodies, but the mind and mental activity are not in space, are not attached to physical forms, are not adjacent to bodies, nor to disembodied entities that are so called because they are not physical.

Even if we imagine a vacuum as disembodied, the mind cannot exist in a vacuum.

A vacuum can accommodate a physical body, but it cannot contain or provide space for the activity of the mind. In the face of this dual nature of things, the Zenoists reject one category completely, and refute the other, having accepted it, without recognizing its true essence and doubting that it is another kind of existence, rather than denying its existence altogether or recognizing it as nothingness.

43

The mind cannot be the beginning of everything, because it is full of diversity, and before a plurality there must be unity.

Its versatility is undeniable, because it constantly operates with many concepts, not limiting itself to one, but including many, and only those.

Therefore, if it is united with these concepts, and they are plural, then the mind is also plural.

The mind's coincidence with concepts is manifested in the following way: if it is aware of something, it either possesses it within itself or discovers it in something else. Its perception is not doubtful, because the existence of the mind is inseparable from thinking, but without the process of thinking, it loses its basis.

Thus, when studying the emotions that arise in the process of cognition, we must pay attention to its observation. We have cognitive tools: sensory perception, imagination, reason.

But everything that is perceived is oriented toward external objects, perceiving them without uniting with the object of perception, but only collecting its imprint through interaction with it.

When the eyes see an object, it is impossible for them to become the same object; they could not see without distance; similarly, touch, if it became identical to the object, would cease to exist.

It follows that both perception and the object of perception are always expanding in external space in order to catch what is perceived. Imagination is also always reaching outward, forming an image through its expansion, whether by creating it on the basis of external influence or by recreating it as if it were external. This is how these elements are perceived, none of which is directed toward itself or encounters a perceived or unknown form.

In the mind, however, perception is different: it turns to itself and introspects itself; for when it refuses to observe its own functions and becomes an observer of its own actions, it cannot perceive anything external.

So, just as there is perception and the object of perception, so there is the mind and its representations.

But sense perception goes outward, finding an object in the material world, while the mind is curled up inside itself; however, it does not go outward, as some believed, separating the mind from the imagination, because in thinking beings the imagination seemed to be thinking.

But if they had to separate the mind from matter and the physical world, where does our mind meet bodies and other realities?

If they exist outside of matter, then they don't exist anywhere, and obviously they are concentrated in the mind and representations, and the mind observes the representations, returning to itself through its capacity for self-observation.

But if the representations are plural – because the mind contemplates many things, not just one – then the mind must also be plural.

But before multiplicity there is always unity, so there must also be unity before the mind.

44

The mind and representation are one thing, and the sensation and the felt are another. The imagination is the companion of the mind, while the felt is the partner of the sensation.

But the sensation itself is not aware of itself, nor is the sensed; for the mind, the imagination is a friend, for the sensation, the sensed.

The mind, however, is imagined for the mind itself.

If the Mind is imagined for itself, then it is self-imagined.

In this case, if the mind is imagined and not sensed, it remains imagined; if it is imagined for the mind and not for sensation, it is pure thinking.

Thus, the mind is both the thinker and the object of thought; it is a whole in itself, not like the one who rubs and the one who rubs.

So, the mind does not think using one part of it and not the other; it is partless and is a single whole representation, a single whole mind, without losing the thought of incomprehension.

Therefore, it does not think about something in itself and does not think about something else; for in not thinking, it would be reckless.

Thus, the mind does not move from one thing to another; for if it refused to understand one thing, it would be reckless with regard to it.

If it does not move between objects, it realizes everything at once; because it realizes everything at once, not starting with one and then moving on to another, it always realizes everything at once.

Thus, when it is not attached to the past and does not anticipate the future, it settles in the fixed and eternal now, holding everything together, both in terms of volume and time; thus, everything becomes one in this fixed and eternal now.

If this is true, then there is neither a starting point nor a direction of movement in the mind, only an action that unites in itself, free from expansion, transformation, and all transitions.

If the plural is a unity that is both action and timeless, then one must recognize the existence of an entity that is always one; this is eternity; thus, eternity is for the mind.

Therefore, the one who does not perceive it as unity in the one, but moves, retreating from the one and turning to something else, dividing and breaking through, for him time becomes reality; such movement creates the future and the past.

The soul, in turn, moves between the one and the other, replacing perceptions, neither abandoning the previous ones nor accepting new ones from the outside, but holding one as if it were the past, although it remains within, and the other as if it were reaching it from the outside, but in fact it is not from the outside, but moving within itself and controlling its view of what it already has in its parts; it is like a spring that

does not run dry but instead draws back to itself what it possesses.

Thus, time is associated with movement, and eternity is associated with the unbroken movement of the intellect within itself, inseparable from it, just as time is not separated from the soul, for both aspects are integrated there.

The one who is in motion rejects eternity within himself, measuring the endless course of eternity, while the one who remains motionless rejects time within himself, considering it as the present and spreading by the flow of time.

Therefore, some believe that time should be perceived not only in motion but also at rest, and eternity as infinite time, each contributing its own characteristics to the other: the moving always moves away from the stationary, confirming eternity, which reproduces its permanence, and the stationary, while maintaining its identity in action, brings time through its only action.

In the sensory world, then, the disembodied time differs from one entity to another, as the time is different for the sun, different for the moon, different for each star, and different for each individual entity.

Likewise, the year is individual for each of them; and the year that unites them all is a reflection of the movement of the soul; this movement imitates their individual movements but differs from them, and therefore the time arising from this movement is different from their own times.

This time is spatial and associated with movements in space.

Table of contents

Preface.....	5
Sentences.....	9
1.....	10
2.....	10
3.....	10
4.....	10
5.....	10
6.....	11
7.....	11
8.....	11
9.....	11
10.....	11
11.....	12
12.....	12
13.....	12
14.....	12
15.....	13
16.....	13
17.....	14
18.....	14
19.....	15
20.....	15
21.....	16
22.....	16
23.....	17
24.....	17

25.....	17
26.....	18
27.....	18
28.....	19
29.....	19
30.....	21
31.....	21
32.....	22
33.....	27
34.....	30
35.....	30
36.....	32
37.....	33
38.....	34
39.....	35
40.....	36
41.....	37
42.....	37
43.....	38
44.....	40