



Soul in Aesara of Lucania (4th or 3rd century BC)

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According to Aesara of Lucania the human soul is a divinely created, tripartite unity of associated parts, consisting of the mind, spiritedness and desire (Waithe, 21). "Mind" is the analytical center and power of the human soul. It is in the mind where the powers of thinking ("thoughtfulness") and judging reside and where those activities occur. Spiritedness is the part of the soul in which the power of strength and what Aesara calls "ability" reside. Through its activities physical actions occur. Desire is that part of the soul through which the moral emotions of love and kindness are felt and expressed (Waithe, 20). (In the small surviving fragment from Aesara (Stobeaus, 1.49.27] she does not mention the corresponding negative moral emotions (hatred and heartlessness) as occurring in and being expressed through the part of the soul called "desire," but we may infer that to be the case.)

The parts of the soul are naturally "...disposed relative to one another [such that] the best part [mind] is in command, the most inferior [desire] is governed, and the one in between [spiritedness] holds a middle place; it both governs and is governed" (Waithe, 20). All human activities require all three parts of the soul to work together harmoniously, in "suitable proportion" (Waithe, 21). Different parts of the soul may motivate any given action, depending upon that which is to be done. But in a well-ordered soul, it is always mind that prevails because mind provides the orderliness and harmonious relationship amongst the parts. In so doing, Aesara says, the soul becomes "lovely through systematic education and virtue" (Waithe, 21). The well-ordered soul, having the characteristics of orderliness and lawfulness provides humans with an organizational and normative model of harmonious justice in the home and in the state (Waithe, 22-23).

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