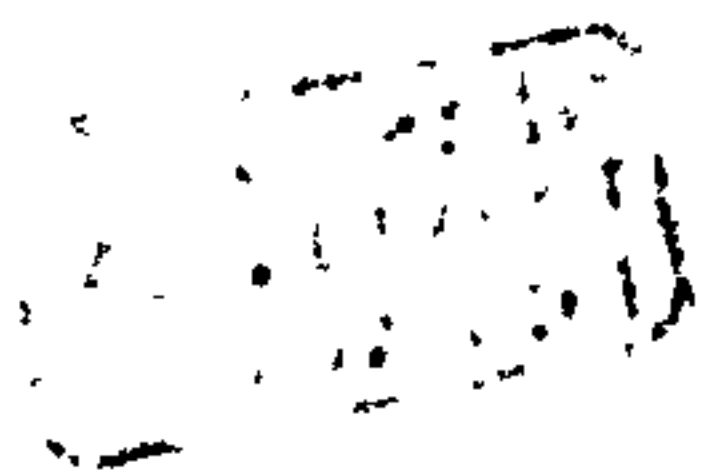


Plato on Soul and Body

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Abstract

This thesis examines the development of Plato's thought on the subject of the soul-body relation. I will not attempt to cover everything that Plato says about the soul - for example I will discuss 'proofs' of immortality only in so far as they have a bearing on the interpretation of soul and body. In this life at least human beings have both a soul and a body; as a result, the soul by necessity interacts with the body. This interaction, though, is not simply an interrelation between two completely different and separate entities; rather the relation between soul and body is far more complicated.

The purpose of the introduction is to present a preliminary view of the soul, in that way we could better understand the background that Plato had to take under consideration. Within the introduction the *Apology* is used so as to show the importance of the idea of the soul in Socratic ethics, and to indicate that the Socratic idea that we should care for the soul rather than the body, becomes crucial within Plato's philosophy. The dialogues that follow, the *Gorgias* and the *Meno*, provide early indications of the complex relation required between soul and body, for Plato's moral, metaphysical and epistemological concerns. Thus, although Plato, in these dialogues, does not give us a clear definition of the soul's nature and its relation to the body, the perplexity and ambiguity concerning the soul's nature leads to the more detailed analysis of it in later dialogues.

The *Phaedo* appears to offer a view of the soul as a simple immaterial entity wholly distinct from the body. Even within this dialogue, though, there are signs that this simple view of the soul is not adequate for Plato's moral and metaphysical concerns, this becomes evident as well in the *Symposium*.

The first dialogue where the notion of the tripartite soul is introduced is the *Republic*. The chapter concerned with the relevant books of the *Republic* - books IV, IX, and X - shows that the tripartite soul is in accord with Plato's moral and metaphysical concerns. The soul is explicitly presented as tripartite and because of this, it requires a close relation to the body. What is not yet achieved, though, in this dialogue is the presentation of the particular relation required between soul and body. Although the tripartite theory implies a close relation between the lower parts of the soul and the body, Plato does nothing to explain exactly how the soul and the body are related. This is the task that the next chapter is set to accomplish. This is done through looking at the *Timaeus*. In the *Timaeus* I look at the detailed construction of the human being. The parts of the soul are located in the body. There is also some account of how bodily events affect the soul, and how the soul affects the body. The language used by Plato shows that soul and body cannot be treated as simply two elements that are accidentally connected. The relation portrayed then between the two is that of mutual dependence.

In the final chapter, thus, I am concerned with the crucial question whether Plato is a dualist or not. To argue that Plato cannot fall under the category of Cartesian dualism, I discuss Descartes and Aristotle's views on the soul-body relation to show their differences. In particular by using Aristotle's view as an intermediate one, and by bringing forward a number of points discussed earlier in the thesis regarding Plato's view, I show that the key notion of Cartesian dualism cannot apply to Plato's theory.

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Introduction

Writing a thesis on Plato's view about the relation of soul and body, one has firstly to examine Plato's view of the soul. Plato, throughout the dialogues, presents us with a number of possible readings regarding the soul's nature, but a more detailed reading of the dialogues can show that there is a development of thought from a simple soul, that is seen as reason, towards a tripartite soul. This change from a simple soul to a tripartite one may be seen as a random one, but I would like to argue that Plato's thought progressed towards the tripartite soul because of his metaphysical and epistemological concerns. Plato's notion of soul moreover, as it progresses, shapes his view of the relation between soul and body. To talk about the soul-body relation, then, requires also to establish the philosophical background in so far as it concerns the various views on the soul, ψυχή. Such a background will show views that directly or indirectly influenced Plato.

One of the essential beliefs of the ancient Greeks regarding the soul, ψυχή, is that ψυχή is what makes something 'living'; the possession or not of soul determines what is animate and what is inanimate. A characteristic example of the notion that soul is the source of life is Thales' philosophy. He held that whatever exhibited some kind of motion must have possessed soul: 'Thales, too, seems from what they relate, to have supposed that the soul was something kinetic, if he said that the [magnesian] stone possesses soul because it moves iron' (Aristotle *de anima* A2, 405a19, K. R. S. 89)¹. But there is much more than this to the notion of ψυχή. Within the philological tradition, the first reference to soul as an aetherial element is that given by Homer. One

¹ All the quotations regarding the Presocratics are taken from G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* Cambridge University Press 1983, unless otherwise stated.

might ask what is the need for presenting Homer's notion of the soul. Well, although Homer does not strictly belong to the philosophical background of Plato, his works were considered as authoritative teachings among the ancient Greeks. Moreover, Plato's insistence on using the Homeric epics to draw examples, and his usual argumentation against the validity of Homer's teachings in relation to moral concerns, indicates that Homer is a valid reference as regards the shaping of people's view of the soul. Homer, then, refers to soul as that which distinguishes the living from the dead. In particular, he treats the soul as a ghost-like shade. In fact, as Gulley puts it, any thought of survival after death was naturally associated with soul, since it was the soul, as the breath of life, which deserted the body at death². A striking feature of the Homeric view of soul is that the souls are dream-like shadows which in order to show any mental capacity, need to drink blood³. A view of this kind implies that the souls, although they are immaterial representations of the people they were before they die, they are not fully conscious after death. As Bernard Williams says, 'psyche stands for Homer as something that is mentioned only when someone is fainting, dying, or dead. When the person is dead, it is pictured as existing in a very flimsy, deprived, and unenviable condition'⁴. His argument goes further; he argues that the fact that the figures encountered in the underworld bear the names of dead people does not show that they are, straightforwardly, those people⁵. This view holds because the soul for Homer cannot be identified with the self. As Adkins puts it, the Homeric man's psyche is not his self, or his personality. This is so, because as Adkins says: 'the psyche is composed of a very tenuous stuff, which resides in the body while the individual is

²Norman Gulley, *The Philosophy of Socrates*, 1968, p. 194.

³The soul as drinking blood is first mentioned by Circe in *Odyssey* 10.536-7 (*Od.* 11.49-50); of greater interest, however, are the references made by Odysseus himself at *Od.* 11.95-6, 152-54.

⁴ Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, University of California Press, 1994, p. 23.

⁵ Williams, p. 175, note 3.

alive, flies away through some orifice at death and goes down to Hades'⁶. A further point for supporting the claim that for Homer the psyche is not the self, is the fact that Homer makes no systematic reference to retribution in after-life. Thus, for Homer the issue of personal survival, in the full sense of the word, does not arise.

Moving, now, to the strictly philosophical background of Plato, a view on the soul's survival after death that influenced Plato immensely is offered by the Pythagoreans. They believed in the soul's personal survival after death, its immortality and transmigration. In detail, the Pythagorean doctrine can be summarised as having two main components; namely the soul's immortality, and the universe's orderly structure. The Pythagorean view of the soul would include the notion that the soul is immortal, reincarnated, and ultimately released into a better existence: 'On the subject of reincarnation Xenophanes bears witness in the elegy which begins: "Now I will turn to another tale and show the way." What he says about Pythagoras runs thus: Once they say that he was passing by when a puppy was whipped, and he took pity and said: "Stop, do not beat it; for it is the soul of a friend that I recognized when I heard it giving tongue." (Xenophanes Fr. 7, K. R. S. 260). As Kirk, Raven and Schofield say, it is very likely that Pythagoras himself expressed the doctrine of reincarnation in terms of ψυχή, soul⁷.

Evidence of that could be found in Pindar's second Olympian ode (56-77):

'Those of the dead that are lawless in mind pay the penalty straightway here - but the sins committed in this realm of Zeus are judged below the earth by one who pronounces sentence with hateful necessity. The good upon whom the sun shines for evermore, for

⁶ A. W. H. Adkins, *From the Many to the One*, London 1970, pp. 14-15.

⁷ See further Kirk, Raven and Schofield, p. 220.

equal nights and equal days, receive a life of lightened toil, not vexing the soil with the strength of their hand, no, not the water of the sea, thanks to the ways of that place; but in the presence of the honoured gods, all who rejoiced in keeping their oaths share a life that knows no tears, while the others endure labour that none can look upon. And those who, while dwelling in either world, have thrice been courageous in keeping their souls pure from all deeds of wrong, they traverse the highway of Zeus to the tower of Kronos, where the ocean-breezes blow around the Island of the Blest...' (Pindar *Olympians* II 56-77, K. R. S. 284).

The implication of such a view is the thought of living beings as composed of bodies and souls, and of the soul as more important than the body. Placing emphasis on the soul's immortality and its transmigration, as Richard D. McKirahan says, implies that our interests extend beyond ourselves and beyond this lifetime⁸. This is further supported by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, who hold that Pythagoras' eschatological theory taught that after death the soul is subject to a divine judgement. According to Pythagoras, punishment follows in the underworld for the wicked, but a better place for the good, who if they remain free from wickedness in the next world and in a further reincarnation in this, may at last reach the isles of the blessed⁹.

The Pythagoreans sought to explain the world on the basic principle that number is of fundamental importance in the world. As Richard D. McKirahan argues, the main philosophical interest of their discussion of the universe is in its account of the origin, in which the KOSMOS resembles number, geometrical figures, and the musical intervals

⁸The influence of the Pythagorean philosophy to Plato's views of the soul's immortality, its transmigration, and the theory of harmony will be pointed out in the discussion of particular dialogues.

⁹See Kirk, Raven and Schofield, p. 238.

by being the product of the imposition of limit on the unlimited¹⁰. These notions are found in Philolaus' theory. He held that: 'Nature in the universe was harmonised from both unlimiteds and limiters - both the universe as a whole and everything in it' (Diogenes Laertius VIII, 85, K. R. S. 424). Philolaus hence combines the idea of unlimiteds and limiters, to that of harmony; 'About nature and harmony this is the position. The being of objects, being eternal, and nature itself admit of divine, not human, knowledge - except that it was not possible for any of the things that exist and are known by us to have come into being, without there existing the being of those things from which the universe was composed, the limiters and the unlimiteds. And since these principles existed being neither alike nor of the same kind, it would have been impossible for them to be ordered into a universe if harmony had not supervened - in whatever manner this came into being...' (Stobaeus *Anth.* I 21, 7d, K. R. S. 429). Thus, a major part in the formation of such a view is played by the notion of harmony; for the Pythagoreans everything in the world is ordered according to numerical relations: 'All the so-called *acusmata* fall into three divisions: some of them signify what a thing is, some of them what is the most such and such, some of them what one must do or not do. Examples of the "what is it?" sort are: What are the isles of the blessed? Sun and moon. What is the oracle at Delphi? The *tetractys*: which is the harmonia in which the sirens sing. Examples of the 'What is the most...?' sort are: What is the most just thing? To sacrifice. What is the wisest? Number; but second the man who assigned names to things. What is the wisest of the things in our power? Medicine. What is the finest? *Harmonia*. What is the most powerful? Knowledge. What is the best? Happiness. What is the truest thing said? That men are wicked'

¹⁰Richard D. McKirahan, Jr., *Philosophy before Socrates*, Hackett Publishing Comp. 1994, p. 115. Moreover, Kirk, Raven and Schofield (p. 324) show that according to Diogenes Laertius (viii, 85) the notion of the unlimiteds (ἐξ ἀπείρων τε) and the limiters (περαιονόντων) is introduced by Philolaus, the Pythagorean philosopher of the fifth century, but the meaning remains oblique.

(Iamblichus *Vita Pythagorae* 82, K. R. S. 277). The Pythagoreans' teaching about harmony and the numerical ratio is recognised by Kirk, Raven and Schofield as deriving from Pythagoras himself¹¹. What should be noted, here, though, is that there is not a clear indication as to what extent, if at all, Pythagoras himself combined these two main doctrines, the soul's immortality, and the universe's orderly structure, into a unified view of world and man. Similarly, E. Zeller when he refers to the Pythagorean theory, talks about: 'order and harmony through which the totality of things is combined into a beautiful whole, a cosmos, and ... is chiefly perceptible to us in harmony of tones, and in the regular motion of the heavenly bodies'¹². That Plato used the idea of the soul's judgement after death, as well as the idea of harmony is apparent throughout his dialogues. He constantly identifies beauty and goodness with harmony and in the *Phaedo* 85e ff. He criticises the idea that the soul is a harmony. The notion that the soul will face judgement after death for its way of life appears in his eschatological myths throughout his works.

An important thinker who not only discusses the soul's nature after death, but also argues for its place within the world, is Heraclitus. Although Heraclitus' thought is known as obscure, his aim is to generate a view of the world of which men are part. He places emphasis on Logos and how men can reach Logos through observation and understanding: 'Of the Logos which is as I describe it men always prove to be uncomprehending, both before they have heard it and when once they have heard it. For although all things happen according to this Logos men are like people of no experience, even when they experience such words and deeds as I explain, when I distinguish each thing according to its constitution and declare how it is; but the rest of

¹¹See Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 233-234.

¹²Edward Zeller, *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy*, London, 1886, p. 51.

men fail to notice what they do after they wake up just as they forget what they do when asleep.' (Sextus adv. math. VII, 132 K. R. S. 194). Logos, though, is treated as an actual component of things and so, co-extensive with the primary cosmic constituent; fire: 'God is day night, winter summer, war peace, satiety hunger [all the opposites, this is the meaning]; he undergoes alterations the way that fire, when mixed with spices, is named according to the scent of each of them' (Hippolytus *Ref.* IX, 10, 8 K. R. S. 204). As Kirk, Raven, and Schofield hold¹³, Heraclitus regards fire as the motive point of the cosmological processes. 'This world-order [the same of all] did none of gods or men make, but it always was and is and shall be: an everliving fire, kindling in measures and going out in measures' (Clement *Strom.* V, 104,I K. R. S 217). His view on cosmology, now, is important because it unites his physical theory of change among the three world masses: water, and earth, with the Logos, which again is the measure and regularity of large-scale cosmological change. 'All things are an equal exchange for fire and fire for all things, as goods are for gold and gold for goods' (Plutarch de E. 8, 388D K. R. S.219)¹⁴. Connecting, then, the large-scale cosmology to the role of man, Heraclitus holds that the soul is composed of fire, of fiery aither. 'For souls it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth; from earth water comes-to-be, and from water, soul' (Clement *Strom.* VI, 17, 2 K. R. S. 229). His treatment of the soul as fire then, as Kirk, Raven and Schofield state, implies that the soul plays a part in the great cycle of natural change. The soul has some kind of physical affinity, and therefore connection, with the cosmic fire¹⁵.

This point leads us to Heraclitus' objective; namely to show that man's life is bound up with his surroundings. Since the soul is a representative portion of the cosmic fire,

¹³For a detailed analysis of Heraclitus' philosophy see Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 181-212.

¹⁴Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 198-200.

¹⁵Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 204-206.

intellect is placed in the soul. Such a notion leads to the discussion of man's soul and its relation to the body. Heraclitus describes the waking and the sleeping states of man: In the waking state men 'become intelligent by drawing in this divine reason [logos] through breathing', and when asleep, men become forgetful because 'the channels of perception are shut, our mind is sundered from its kinship with the surroundings, and breathing is the only point of attachment to be preserved...' (Sextus *adv. math.* VII, 129. K. R. S. 234). Thus, Kirk, Raven, and Schofield argue that Heraclitus treats the intelligent - awake - condition as consequent upon the apprehension of Logos¹⁶. Soul, when man is awake, can reach Logos through perception. The Heraclitean view of death, now, is important because it seems to suggest that certain souls survive death: 'For better deaths gain better portions' (Clement *Strom.* IV, 49,3 K. R. S. 235). The implication then, pointed out by Kirk, Raven and Schofield is that not all souls become water, some leave the body and are reunited with the aitherial fire¹⁷. It should be noted, here, that Heraclitus does not talk of personal survival, but rather of absorption of soul by the cosmic fire. Thus, Heraclitus' theory seems to favour explanations of soul in general and perception and thought in particular, in terms of material phenomena. Such an attempt, although it provided a unified view of the workings of the world, cannot give an account of personal identity. The soul is treated as stuff and therefore is not adequate for outlining the self. Plato's objective like Heraclitus is to show what is the soul's part in the world¹⁸, but the constitution of soul for Plato is neither fire nor Logos. Plato is much more interested in the individual soul and its relation to the body.

¹⁶See further Kirk, Raven, Schofield, pp. 205-6, on the analysis of fragment 234.

¹⁷See Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 207-208.

¹⁸On the soul's relation to the world see the *Timaeus* discussion regarding the connection between World-Soul and human soul.

Another pre-Socratic philosopher, who is concerned with the place of man in the world, is Empedocles. Through his two poems, *On Nature* and *Purifications*, two accounts emerge; a materialistic account and a religious one respectively. In his poem *On Nature*, Empedocles introduces four 'roots of all things'. These are four primary elements - air, fire, water, earth - which form the substances that constitute the world: 'Hear first the four roots of all things: shining Zeus, life-bringing Hera, Aidoneus and Nestis who with her tears waters mortal springs' (Aetius I, 3, 20 K. R. S. 346). The mixture of substances, then, whether they come together or separate is brought about due to Love and Strife. This is a dual process that recurs ceaselessly; '... And these things never cease their continual interchange, now through Love all coming together into one, now again each carried apart by the hatred of Strife. So insofar as they have learned to grow one from many, and again, as the one grows apart grow many, thus far do they come into being and have no stable life; but insofar as they never cease their continual interchange, thus far they exist always changeless in the cycle' (Simplicius *in Phys.* 158, I. K. R. S. 348)¹⁹. The mixing of these elements take the forms of man, animal, plant; 'the various species of animals were distinguished by the quality of the mixture in them' (Aetius V, 19, 5, K. R. S. 375)²⁰. Man, then, is treated by Empedocles as part of this materialistic account of the world's creation. His detailed explanation of perception is indicative. In order to explain perception, he uses the doctrine of pores and effluences. Man perceives when certain effluences, which stream from objects, encounter the fitting pores in the body: 'Empedocles has the same theory about all the senses, maintaining that perception arises when something fits into the passages of any of the senses. This is why one sense cannot judge the objects of another, since the passages of some are too wide, of others too narrow for the object perceived, so that

¹⁹See further Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, pp. 286-288.

²⁰For a detailed analysis of Empedocles' cosmology see Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, pp. 300-305.

some things pass straight through without making contact while others cannot enter at all' (Theophrastus *de sensu* 7, K. R. S. 391)²¹. Such a theory then, as R. J. Hankinson argues, implies firstly that these physiological processes are all there is to perception; no room is left for immaterial souls, and secondly this materialist account of perception leads to a materialist account of cognition in general²². Thus, we see how Empedocles can hold that it is with blood that men think. His materialistic explanation of the world and of man though seems to contradict his religious account of man's destiny, as becomes clear from his poem *Purifications*.

In his poem *Purifications* Empedocles seems to be influenced by mystery religions that argue for incarnation: 'Among beasts they are born as lions with lairs in the hills and beds on the ground, and as laurels among fair-tressed trees' (Aelian *Nat. anim.* XII, 7, K. R. S. 408). Similarly, 'But at the end they come among men on earth as prophets, bards, doctors, and princes, and thence they arise as gods highest in honour, sharing with the other immortals their hearth and their table, without part in human sorrows or weariness' (Clement *Strom.* IV, 150, I and V, 122, 3. K. R. S. 409). It is worth noticing that Empedocles does not refer to souls that incarnate but to daimons. His reference to man as a daimon indicates firstly that man is still part of the world, and secondly, that there is an affinity between gods and men. This is due to the capacity for thought. The main problem here is the inadequacy of explanation of the relation of the daimon to the human body. Plato could have been influenced by Empedocles' view of perception, or

²¹On a detailed analysis of Empedocles' theory of effluences and pores see Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, pp. 309-310. For evidence that Empedocles' theory is physiological see Andre Laks, 'Soul, sensation, and thought', in A. A. Long (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, esp. pp. 250-251, and R. J. Hankinson, 'Greek medical modes of mind', in Stephen Everson (ed.), *Companions to Ancient Thought 2: Psychology*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991, pp. 198-199.

²²Hankinson, p. 199.

by his view that the daimon goes beyond the human form and is still part of the world²³, but he would still have to provide a solution to Empedocles' obscurity that arises concerning the personal identity issue; whether what survives is the same 'I' as the one that lives in the human form.

The fact, then, that there is not an agreed doctrine of the soul to be found before Plato, makes it even more difficult for him to establish what the soul is, and thus explain the soul's relation to the body. However, a point of reference for the development of Plato's thought regarding his moral philosophy, epistemology, psychology and metaphysics, is obviously the teachings of Socrates. Since Socrates left no written work, the sources of our knowledge of his teachings are the writings of Xenophon²⁴ and Plato himself. Although it may seem that Xenophon's picture of the Socratic philosophy is different to that of Plato's, in the essential points they remain consistent²⁵. Socrates' main concern is with the reform of moral life by true knowledge. Based on this conviction, Socrates argues that men should concentrate on the care of their souls. This notion is found both in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*²⁶ and in Plato's *Apology*²⁷ and *Crito*. To care for the soul is important because the soul is treated as what contains reason, the intellect. According to Xenophon, Socrates, while conversing with

²³Empedocles' workings of mixtures in the body could be parallel to the Platonic idea of the workings of the eye in the *Timaeus*, or Empedocles' falling daimon could be seen as similar to the view in the *Timaeus* that soul leaves the stars and enters the human form.

²⁴R. B. Rutherford (*The Art of Plato*, 1995, p.29) argues that Xenophon's *Defence of Socrates* is later than Plato's and does not rest on first hand authorial knowledge. For the relation between Xenophon's works and Plato's see further Rutherford, pp. 47-56.

²⁵Zeller (p. 104) argues that if, with the help of Plato and Aristotle, we penetrate the meaning of the Socratic doctrine we can form from the accounts which Xenophon gives his teaching and method a consistent picture, which answers to the historical position and importance of the philosopher.

²⁶ All the quotations used for Xenophon are from Amy L. Bonnete, *Xenophon Memorabilia*, Cornell University Press, 1994.

²⁷The *Apology* is treated as involving doctrines that are traditionally accepted as Socratic, although presented, enhanced by Plato.

Aristodemus, argues that the universe is the product of divine wisdom. When Aristodemus objects that he does not see the governors of the universe, Socrates replies: 'Nor do you see your own soul, which is in authority over your body; so that, in this way, at least, it is possible for you to say that you do nothing by design but everything by chance' (Xen. *Memorabilia* Book I, chapter 4, section 9). The emphasis then is placed on the existence of intelligence, both in the world and in the human being; intelligence directs the world and the human being.

In Plato's *Apology* Socrates also argues for the care of the soul over that of the body; this is what Socrates holds for himself and at the same time wants to teach to his fellow citizens; this is his mission²⁸. Socrates' primary belief in the importance of leading a good life, of choosing right over wrong. This is stressed by pointing out to the Athenians that although they are eager to possess wealth, fame and honour, they do not care for wisdom, truth, and the best possible state of their souls. In Plato's words: 'are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation and honors as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth, or the best possible state of your soul?' ' χρημάτων μὲν οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ ἐπιμελούμενος ὅπως σοι ἔσται ὡς πλείστα, καὶ δόξης καὶ τιμῆς, φρονήσεως δὲ καὶ ἀληθείας καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ὅπως ὡς βελτίστη ἔσται οὐκ ἐπιμελῆ ἢ οὐδὲ φροντίζεις;' (29e). In order to clarify that caring for the soul is more significant than wealth or anything material, Socrates says that 'wealth does not bring about excellence, but excellence makes wealth and everything else good for men both individually and collectively'. 'Οὐκ ἐκ χρημάτων ἀρετὴ γίγνεται, ἀλλ' ἐξ

²⁸For Socrates' mission as the care of the soul see G. Vlastos, 'The Paradox of Socrates', *The Philosophy of Socrates*, New York, 1971, p. 9. See also, W. K. C. Guthrie, *Socrates*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971, p. 147; P. Duncan, 'Socrates and Plato', *Philosophy* 15, 60 (1940) p. 342; C. D. C. Reeve, *Socrates In the Apology*, Cambridge, 1989, p. x; R. Hackforth, *The Composition of Plato's Apology*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1933, p. 91, and D. Gallop, *Plato Defence of Socrates, Euthyphro, Crito*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1997, p. xviii.

ἀρετῆς χρήματα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἀγαθὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἅπαντα καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ.’

(30b). Hence, the belief held by Socrates that the care of the soul is connected to the notion of acting rightly, is important because it points towards a moral theory which holds that to act rightly is to do the best possible action to keep the soul righteous.

The soul, then, becomes important for its ability to acquire moral excellence. The soul becomes the seat of morality as well as knowledge²⁹. As Vlastos says ‘the soul is improved morally by right action, and intellectually by right thinking’³⁰. The significance of the ‘good, just life’ is also evident in Plato’s *Crito* where Socrates asks: ‘... is life worth living for us with that part of us corrupted that unjust actions harm and just actions benefit?’ (*Crito* 47e). Socrates’ belief on leading the good, just life, no matter the cost, becomes apparent when he claims that: ‘We should not then think so much of what the majority will say about us, but what he will say who understands justice and injustice, the one, that is, and the truth itself. So that, in the first place, you were wrong to believe that we should care for the opinion of the many about what is just, beautiful, good, and their opposites.’ (*Crito* 48a 6-10) Thus, Socrates’ answer to the argument ‘the many are able to put us to death’ (*Crito* 48a 10-11), is that: ‘... the most important thing is not life, but the good life’ (*Crito* 48b 4-5). Thus, although Socrates does not explicitly refer to the soul, it is clear that he does believe that the health of the soul is of supreme importance and that this is harmed by injustice.

The Socratic belief in the value of the good life leads us to his belief regarding the issue of death. Xenophon in his *Defence of Socrates* reports that: ‘it was his [Socrates’] full persuasion, that death was more eligible for him than life at such a season’. This is so,

²⁹According to Burnet (‘The Socratic Doctrine of the Soul’, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 1915-1916, Oxford Univ. Pr., 1916, especially p. 245) Socrates is the first to treat the soul thus.

³⁰Vlastos, 1971, p. 6.

because it is god who thinks this to be the best time for Socrates to die. The claim that the god decides when it is best for Socrates to die illustrates Socrates' religious beliefs. At the same time it may seem to imply that Socrates' faith in god is so great that makes him hold that death is not destruction. Towards the end of the *Apology*, Socrates claims that death is either a dreamless sleep or a change from here to another place (40c-d). At 40c Socrates takes the absence of a divine sign to indicate that death is a good thing³¹. Similarly, at 41c-d he argues that the good man cannot be harmed. The most natural way to take these references is that they imply a life after death in which goodness is somehow to be rewarded. But Socrates does not explicitly commit himself to this. In fact, at 40c he says that death is either nothingness or migration to another place. He even argues that extinction may be a good thing – like a dreamless sleep. Some scholars therefore insist that Socrates is agnostic about life after death, and may even think that he inclines to the extinction view.

On the other hand, the idea that the soul survives death makes it easier to see how Socrates could believe that 'a good man cannot be harmed'³². It is also notable that he describes the life after death at some length, which suggests that he takes it seriously³³. *Crito* 54b-c also assumes that the soul survives death. There is reason therefore to agree with these scholars who think that the general tendency of the *Apology* suggests that the soul probably does survive death³⁴. But this does not help us very much in determining the view of the historical Socrates. The account of life after death could be a Platonic embellishment on Socrates' own position.

³¹ See further Duncan p. 344; Ehnmark, 'Socrates and the Immortality of the Soul', *Eranos* 44 (1946) pp. 117-119.

³² From 41d one could infer that what is implied is the notion of personal survival after death. See further, Ehnmark p. 120.

³³ See further E. de Strycker, *Plato's Apology of Socrates*, Leiden, 1994, p.229.

³⁴ Guthrie, 1971, p. 160.

Socrates' teachings, then, could be summarised as follows: Firstly, Socrates' emphasis on virtue and honour is reported both by Xenophon and Plato: Xenophon in the *Memorabilia* reports: '... he rid many individuals of these things, after making them desire virtue and providing them with hopes that if they attended to themselves they would be gentlemen (noble and good)' (Xen. *Mem.* I, 2, section2). In the *Apology*, Plato argues that Socrates would not consider the dilemma of life or death, but rather consider if one is acting in a right or a wrong manner (*Apology* 28b-c). What such statements imply is a strong moral code, a code, which Socrates believes, everyone should live according to. Socrates holds that determining what is right and what is wrong is the first and foremost crucial point of living one's life. Secondly, Socrates insisted on the care of the soul. According to Xenophon, Socrates 'educated both his soul and his body in a regimen such that one using it would live confidently and securely...' (Xen. *Mem.* iii. 5, 1-4). As mentioned above, in Plato's *Apology* the emphasis remains on the care of the soul over that of the body (29e). This does, of course, imply that the soul can in some way be distinguished from the body even if it cannot survive the death of the body. What should be noted here is that the notion of the care of the soul does not only show the possibility of the improvement of one's soul, but it also implies the possibility of the decline of one's soul. Although Socrates does not mention the soul's decline as a possibility, the fact that he holds that the soul can change, requires him to give an account of the source of such a change, whether that is for the best or for the worst. The implication, thus, that the soul can be affected either positively or negatively reveals traces of a theory concerning the soul-body relation that is yet to be developed by Plato.

The primary aim of this thesis is to show that all the way from the middle period dialogue *Phaedo* to the late dialogue *Timaeus* one can observe both a continuity in Plato's thought on the relation between soul and body, and most importantly, a progress towards a view that pays more focus on the interrelation between the two. This treatment of Plato's dialogues will require an understanding not only of the middle and late period dialogues, but also of the early ones as the basis of Plato's views. In this thesis it will be held that since Plato is the author of the dialogues, the way the dialogues' themes develop is Platonic³⁵. Such a statement is made not so as to disregard Socrates' importance as a philosopher, but rather so as to indicate one line of thought. I will regard the dialogues as being Platonic, and at the same time, Socrates' due will be given by stating that he is not only Plato's teacher, but also, as argued before, the inspiration of Plato's philosophy. Since he wants to stress his interest in Socratic ethics³⁶, Plato uses Socrates as the main character for his dialogues. Plato uses Socratic ethics as the basis for his epistemology as well as for his metaphysics. Plato feels that it is his obligation to bring the Socratic beliefs on morality forward, towards a more elaborate philosophical view.

The need to elaborate on the early dialogues as well as the later ones, originates from the thesis' main objective, namely to show how Plato's theory of soul-body relation develops. The development hypothesis, though, requires a discussion concerning the chronological order of the dialogues. Plato's dialogues are customarily divided into three periods early, middle and late. In this thesis I will present two early dialogues; *Gorgias* and *Meno*, two middle dialogues; *Phaedo* and *Republic*, including a reference

³⁵For an account of the debate between advocates of 'unity' and separatists, see E. N. Tigerstedt, *Interpreting Plato*, Uppsala 1977.

³⁶For the influence of Socratic ethics on the development of Plato's philosophy as a whole, see, for example, de Strycker, p. 12. See further Duncan, p. 346; J. H. Randall, *Plato Dramatist of the Life of Reason*, Columbia Univ. Pr., 1970, p. 97.

to the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, and the late dialogue *Timaeus*. The chronological arrangement of the dialogues, thus, is of concern since it can indicate the degree of development of Plato's thought. The fact that the *Gorgias* and the *Meno* belong to the early Platonic dialogues is widely accepted, similarly the *Symposium* the *Phaedo*, the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus*³⁷ belong to the middle period. Again the *Timaeus* is treated as being one of the late dialogues.

Although this arrangement is widely accepted³⁸, problems arise for the particular relation of dialogues within the same period. For the aim of this thesis the relative chronological arrangement between *Gorgias* and *Meno* as well as *Phaedo* and *Symposium* is in question. Although it is not easy to find any clear grounds for dating the *Meno* and *Gorgias* relative to each other, most scholars hold that the *Gorgias* is earlier than *Meno*³⁹. Since as L. Brandwood argues, little can be said on the sequence of dialogues in the early group, and division into subgroups seems out of the question⁴⁰, the order that is followed in this thesis is adopted purely for expository reasons. The same goes for the middle dialogues⁴¹. Thus, so far as the middle dialogues are

³⁷ Whereas I'm inclined to think that the *Phaedrus* may be later than the *Republic* – the doctrine of division of the soul indicates that it is late within the middle dialogues - their exact chronological order is of no concern. This is so because the *Phaedrus* does not have much that adds on the specific issues that concern this thesis.

³⁸For a good summary on various approaches on the issue of chronology, mainly concerning the middle and the late period dialogues, see Leonard Brandwood, 'Stylometry and Chronology', in R. Kraut (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 90-120. For a detailed argument concerning the chronological order of the early and the middle dialogues see Charles H. Kahn, 'Did Plato write Socratic Dialogues?', in Hugh H. Benson (ed), *Essays on the Philosophy of Socrates*, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 35-51. A chronological table of the dialogues in relation to relevant historical events is provided by Rutherford, pp. 35-36.

³⁹Brandwood (p. 109) refers to Ritter as holding that *Gorgias* is prior to *Meno*, but it is pointed out that this is only a probability. Kahn (1992, p. 36) treats *Meno* as 'a curtain-raiser for the middle dialogues'. In the same article he refers to Guthrie who again presents *Gorgias* as prior to *Meno*, although he hesitates about their relative date. Another scholar who places *Meno* at the end of the early dialogues is Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory; the Early and Middle Dialogues*, Oxford Univ. Press 1977, pp. 291-293.

⁴⁰Brandwood, p. 115.

⁴¹ For the date of the *Symposium* see K. J. Dover, 'The Date of Plato's Symposium', *Phronesis* 10 (1965) pp.2-16. See further H. B. Mattingly *Phronesis* 3 (1958) 31ff; J. S. Morrison, *Classical Quarterly*, n. s. 14 (1964) pp. 45-46.

concerned, I believe that the account of the soul of the *Phaedo* is probably prior to that of the *Republic*. This is consistent with the views of most scholars about the relative dating of these dialogues⁴². Therefore, the analysis of each dialogue will be a self-contained one and at the same time traces of ideas that develop from one dialogue to another will be indicated accordingly.

⁴²See further the list provided by D. W. D. Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, Oxford 1951, p. 2.

Soul and Body in the Gorgias

The next dialogue I shall consider is *Gorgias*¹. My main concern will be to explore its implications for the doctrine of soul and body through its use of the health analogy and its discussion of punishment. Although the health of the body, at a basic level, may seem as implying a mere parallel picture to the condition of the soul, the way that the ways the soul affects the body and the body affects the soul, lead us to think that Plato's view of the soul-body relation goes beyond a mere parallelism. Similarly, Plato's view of punishment as a means to improving the soul implies that the soul is at least indirectly influenced by the condition of the body. These issues will be discussed here so as to show how they develop, in Plato's middle and late dialogues, into a coherent system of body-soul interaction.

Socrates and Polus

Health Analogy

The first passage I shall examine is at 463e ff. where Socrates uses the analogy of the healthy state for both body and soul², in describing his own view about the nature of oratory. Socrates' account of oratory is based on a distinction between spurious and

¹Although the chronology of *Gorgias* in relation to the *Meno* is doubtful, for the purposes of this thesis I shall treat the *Gorgias* before the *Meno*. This is so because the *Gorgias*' theme is mainly moral, while the *Meno* is involved with epistemological notions, and introduces the notion of recollection. On the chronological order between the two dialogues see further E. R. Dodds, *Plato: Gorgias: A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary*, Clarendon Press, 1959, pp. 18-19; W. K. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy IV*, Cambridge, 1975, p. 236; R. W. Sharples, *Plato Meno*, Aris and Phillips, 1985, p. 6.

²Anthony Kenny (*The Anatomy Of The Soul*, Blackwell, 1973, p.1) argues that it was Plato who developed in the *Gorgias* the 'healthy mind' metaphor in unprecedented detail and in the *Republic* crossed the boundary between metaphor and philosophical theory.

genuine arts. The genuine arts aim at the good and use reason, while the spurious aim at gratification and are mere empirical knacks; they can render no rational account of their procedure³. Within each of these categories there are some that apply to the body and some to the soul. The craft concerned with the soul is politics divided into two parts: legislation and justice, and the craft concerned with the body is gymnastics and medicine. Moreover, Plato sees a parallel between the crafts concerned with the soul and those concerned with the body: 'the counterpart of gymnastics is legislation, and the part that corresponds to medicine is justice' (464b-c). Gymnastics, legislation, medicine, and justice are the four crafts, then, which: 'provide care for both body and soul, with a view to what is best' (464b-c), and rest on scientific knowledge of good and evil⁴. On the other hand, the knack or flattery that wears the mask of medicine is pastry baking, while cosmetics is the kind of flattery that corresponds to gymnastics, sophistry is the kind of flattery that corresponds to legislation, and oratory is the kind of flattery that corresponds to justice (465b-c). The conclusive distinction, thus, between an art and a mere knack is that the former aims at the good of its subject, while the latter does not. As E. R. Dodds puts it: 'The four spurious arts are distinguishable in two ways from the genuine - by their aim, which is merely pleasure, and by their empirical character which means that they cannot give any rational account of their procedure' (465a)⁵. This distinguishes them from genuine arts, which, as Henry Teloh suggests, must satisfy the following conditions: An art (1) discerns the nature of its subject, so that (2) it may see the good of its subject, and, then, (3) it seeks the best means to achieve its desired end which is the good of its subject⁶.

³Paul Shorey, *What Plato Said*, University of Chicago Press, 1933, p. 138.

⁴Held by A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and his Work*, London, 1971, p. 111.

⁵Dodds, 1959, on 463e5-466a3.

⁶Henry Teloh, *Socratic Education in Plato's Early Dialogues*, University of Notre Dame Press, 1986, p. 131.

The point of the distinction between gymnastics and medicine, as Allen points out⁷, seems to be that the former maintains bodily health and equilibrium while the latter restores the body to equilibrium. Similarly, legislation seems to maintain equilibrium in the soul while justice restores it. The correspondence between the above pairs points to the idea that soul and body are parallel to one another; namely, both the soul and the body are able to acquire either a healthy or an unhealthy state of being. When the body is in an unhealthy state it is obvious that it needs to be restored through medicine. The fact, though, that the soul - when in a similar state - needs to be restored, is both an innovation of Plato as well as a very crucial point for his theory concerning the body-soul relation. The underlying assumption is that the soul is vulnerable to wickedness and needs to be taken care of; this is the role of justice. Since justice normally involves the infliction of punishment, this must be used as the means to improve the soul.

Another important point about the above division is that Plato a) presents the soul as being the one that governs⁸ the body: 'If the soul didn't govern the body but the body governed itself, and if pastry baking and medicine weren't kept under observation and distinguished by the soul, but the body itself made judgements about them... then the world according to Anaxagoras would prevail.... all things would be mixed together in the same place, and there would be no distinction between matters of medicine and health, and matters of pastry baking' (465c-d). Allen rightly argues that: 'This is an important argument for the Socratic thesis that not only are body and soul distinct, but soul - that is, mind - must govern body even with respect to the excellence proper to the

⁷R. E. Allen, *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 1, Yale University Press, 1984, p. 196

⁸It is not made clear yet, whether Plato believes that the soul should govern the body, or whether it actually does govern it. Perhaps what Plato assumes is that the soul is largely successful in governing the body - otherwise there would be no order - but that it is not wholly successful - that is why there is vice and disease.

body, which is health'⁹. Thus, although the first part of this particular speech of Socrates appears to treat the soul and the body as being parallel to one another, in fact these last lines indicate that the soul-body relation is much more complicated than a simple parallel direction. The fact that Plato takes the soul to govern the body is indicative that he considers that the soul, though different from the body, is capable of affecting it.

It is interesting to mention here that Plato seems to attribute to the body the ability to judge. At the same time, though, he makes it clear that he does not value the body. He says that: 'If the soul didn't govern the body but the body governed itself, and if pastry baking and medicine weren't kept under observation and distinguished by the soul, but the body itself made judgements about them, making its estimates by reference to the gratification it receives, then.... there would be no distinction between matters of medicine and health, and matters of pastry baking' (465c-d). The situation presented is highly hypothetical. Although one cannot say with certainty whether Plato was seriously contemplating the idea of attributing judgements to the body, or whether he was just referring to the body having those desires as part of its nature, it seems that Plato does not seriously attribute to the body the ability to judge. He rather argues that it is the body's nature to be driven by certain desires. The soul is treated as being superior to and as governing the body, partly, because Plato needs a ground to base the importance of the differentiation between a real and an apparent state for anything. If the soul did not govern the body, if one was left to make judgements based only on the body's desires, there would be no way to differentiate the real from the apparent. As in the distinction between real arts and mere knack - real arts can render a rational account while knack cannot - the distinctive point between soul and body is determined by

⁹Allen, p. 197.

knowledge. Since it is driven only by its desires, the body cannot by itself differentiate the real, the good, from the apparent, the pleasurable. It cannot, therefore, render a rational account of anything; it cannot have knowledge.

Thus Plato treats the soul as the ruling element, but he also wants to show that the distraction that any person may face occurs due to the conflict of soul and body within that person¹⁰. The opposition between soul and body, thus, holds because the soul here seems to represent reason, while the body represents the desires. What Plato does not make apparent here is the point that a failure of the soul to govern the body results in vice, which is sickness of the soul, and disease, which is sickness of the body. The soul, then, is chosen to be superior over the body because the soul is the reasonable part in man, the one able to have knowledge. Socrates concludes this passage by saying that: "Oratory is the counterpart in the soul to pastry baking, its counterpart in the body" (465d-e), emphasising once more that oratory is not a real art because it does not involve knowledge.

Punishment

Having shown that the real art for the soul's well being is justice Socrates tries to show the important role of punishment for the soul's improvement. According to Socrates, happiness is determined by education and justice (470e). On the other hand, injustice is connected with misery: 'A man, who acts unjustly, a man who is unjust, is thoroughly miserable, the more so if he doesn't get his due punishment for the wrongdoing he commits, the less so if he pays and receives what is due at the hands of both gods and

¹⁰This notion of a person being confused in the *Timaeus* will be attributed to the soul's embodiment.

men' '... ὁ ἀδικῶν τε καὶ ὁ ἄδικος πάντως μὲν ἄθλιος, ἀθλιώτερος μὲντοι ἔάν μὴ διδῶ δίκην μηδὲ τυγχάνῃ τιμωρίας ἀδικῶν, ἦττον δὲ ἄθλιος ἔάν διδῶ δίκην καὶ τυγχάνῃ δίκης ὑπὸ θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων.' (472e). Socrates holds that: 'Of two miserable people one could not be happier than the other, but the one who avoids getting caught... is the most miserable one' (473d-e).

Even from this early stage, one has the feeling that Socrates' notion of happiness, and consequently his belief on the significance of punishment, is not in accordance to the popular notion of it. The Greek word *eudaimonia* has connotations that the English word *happiness* does not entail; it can be related to words like *blessed*¹¹. Perhaps the main difference in meaning between *eudaimonia* and *happiness* is that shown by Vlastos; namely, *eudaimonia* places emphasis on the attainment of well being, while the English word happiness can also be defined as the state of pleasurable content¹². For Socrates, being happy is not a matter of degree; it is not liable to quantitative measurement, and punishment is treated as the necessary means to improvement, not an end in itself. The implication at this point is that Socrates, unlike those who adopt the hedonistic approach to happiness, associates happiness with self-control. The principle that Socrates seems to hold here is, as Vlastos states¹³, that happiness is desired by all human beings as the ultimate end of all their rational acts. Given such a principle, one has to consider the relation between happiness and the good which, in turn, leads to the relation between happiness and virtue. Happiness and the good are terms used interchangeably¹⁴, while the relation between happiness and virtue seems more

¹¹For the association of the word happiness to words like blessed, see *Phaedrus* 250b-c, and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 1178b 9-10 and 20-3.

¹²Gregory Vlastos, 'Happiness and Virtue in Socrates' Moral Theory', in G. Fine (ed) *Plato 2*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 107.

¹³Vlastos, 1999, p. 108 and n. 14.

¹⁴Vlastos, 1999, p. 109, n. 20; regarding *Gorgias* 494c-495b, p. 128 and n. 82.

complicated. What Socrates makes clear about the relation between happiness and virtue is that one will have happiness if and only if one has virtue¹⁵. This point is further supported by the earlier Socratic comment: ‘... the honourable and the good man and woman is happy the unjust and wicked miserable’ (470e 9-11). The implication, then, is that for Socrates there is a correct standard, when one reaches that standard, one then reaches virtue and thus happiness¹⁶.

In order to stress his point that happiness cannot be achieved without virtue, Socrates moves into a more detailed argument: ‘You and I and everybody else consider doing what is unjust worse than suffering it, and not paying what is due worse than paying it’ (474b). Here Socrates introduces principles governing the comparison between two admirable things, and between two shameful things: ‘Whenever one of two admirable things is more admirable than the other, it is because it surpasses the other in one of these, pleasure or benefit¹⁷, or in both’ and ‘Whenever one of two shameful things is more shameful than the other, it will be so because it surpasses the other either in pain or in badness’ (475a-b). In other words, he establishes specific criteria for what is more admirable and what is more shameful. Socrates tries to determine whether doing what is unjust is more shameful than suffering it: ‘Now if doing what is unjust is in fact more shameful than suffering it, wouldn’t it be so either because it is more painful and surpasses the other in pain, or because it surpasses it in badness, or both?’ (475b), and it is obvious that doing what is unjust is not more painful than suffering it. He concludes

¹⁵Vlastos, 1999, p. 126.

¹⁶The point that happiness is associated with self-control will be discussed towards the end of Socrates’ argument with Polus, at 478d-e, as well as in the discussion between Socrates and Callicles at 491e-492e. The relation between happiness, justice, virtue, and good living will be further explored within Socrates’ discussion with Callicles at 506c-507c.

¹⁷ For various references of what is beneficial within the Platonic dialogues see Vlastos, 1999, p. 134 note 100.

that since doing what is unjust surpasses suffering it in badness, doing what is unjust is worse than suffering it (475c). The argument is structured as follows:

P1 doing what is unjust is more shameful because it either surpasses suffering it in pain or badness.

P2 doing what is unjust is not more painful than suffering injustice.

Conclusion 1: Doing what is unjust is more shameful because it surpasses it in badness.

Conclusion 2: So, because it surpasses it in badness, doing what is unjust would be worse than suffering it.

The usual objection to this argument is that Polus should either have argued that doing injustice is not αἰσχρόν, or else he should have denied that what is αἰσχρόν is bad. He could then have insisted that pain is the only evil and that doing injustice is therefore better for us than suffering it.

Another problem that Socrates seems to face here is that he is not strictly entitled to claim that doing injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice, as he does at 475b. It has been agreed that if A is more shameful than B that must be because A surpasses B in badness or in pain. But, even if doing injustice surpasses suffering it in badness, it is clear that suffering injustice surpasses doing injustice in pain. So, based on one criterion, suffering injustice turns out to be more shameful while, based on the other criterion, doing injustice turns out to be more shameful. This discrepancy could be solved by assuming that Socrates presupposes here that the evils of the soul count more than the evils of the body. My argument here then is that the above idea implies the superiority of the soul's virtue over that of the body. In other words, between the two evils, pain and badness, the former is of less importance for it is bodily, while the latter is of greater value since it is of the soul.

Within the framework of this idea that the soul has greater worth than the body, Plato, thus, argues for the value of punishment. The question Socrates raises is ‘Whether a wrongdoer’s paying what is due is the worst thing there is, or whether his not paying it is even worse’ (476a). It is important to note that Socrates makes Polus accept that paying what is due and being justly disciplined for wrongdoing are the same thing. This point is essential for it connects with Plato’s above belief that punishment is treated as the necessary means to improvement¹⁸. Furthermore, in order to explain this view of punishment, Plato introduces what looks like a simple logical point: ‘If somebody acts upon something, there also has to be something that has something done to it by the one acting upon it?’ ‘ἄρα εἴ τις τι ποιῆι, ἀνάγκη τι εἶναι καὶ πάσχον ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ποιούντος;’ (476b), then, ‘is paying what is due a case of being acted upon or of acting upon something?’ ‘τὸ δίκην δίδοναι πότερον πάσχειν τὶ ἐστὶν ἢ ποιεῖν;’ (476d), Polus answer then is that ‘It must be a case of being acted upon... by the one administering discipline’ ‘Ἀνάγκη πάσχειν... ὑπὸ γε τοῦ κολάζοντος’ (Gorgias 476d). The conclusion then is that since one who disciplines correctly disciplines justly (476e), ‘... the one being disciplined is acted upon justly when he pays what is due’, ‘... ὁ κολαζόμενος δίκην δίδους δίκαια πάσχει’ (476e). Plato here assimilates paying what is due, with being disciplined. This makes it much more plausible to suppose that punishment is good for those on whom it is imposed. Although Plato does not, in this passage, provide us with a reason why being disciplined is good for us, he makes it clear at 505b9 that discipline restrains our desires and thus brings about order within us.

¹⁸According to Mary Margaret Mackenzie (*Plato On Punishment*, University of California Press, London, 1981, p. 179), Plato proposes that punishment is the means by which we may acquire the good fortune of a virtuous disposition.

Socrates concludes his discussion of this view of punishment by saying that: 'one of these men does admirable things, and the other, the one being disciplined, has admirable things done to him, and if they are admirable they are good. For they are either pleasant or beneficial' (476e-477a). Since punishment is evidently not pleasant, this statement apparently shows that punishment is something beneficial for the one who is being disciplined. Clearly this argument is fallacious since even if one concedes that acting justly is beneficial, there is still a question about who receives the benefit. One could argue that it is the person who imposes the punishment and society at large that benefits. Socrates ignores this point and states that: 'the soul is improved if it is justly disciplined. Hence, one who pays what is due gets rid of something bad in his soul' (477a). Therefore, punishment is the means to improvement, to the ultimate result of happiness¹⁹. To show that punishment benefits the soul, Plato returns to the body-soul analogy discussed in 464a-465d. Plato here compares the badness of body to the badness of soul; concerning a person's physical condition, what is bad consists of 'weakness, disease, ugliness, and the like' (477b), and the corrupt condition of the soul has to do with "injustice, ignorance, cowardice and the like" (477b). The most shameful state of wickedness, now, among poverty, disease, and injustice, is injustice since 'It's the source either of the greatest pain, or of harm, or of both' (477c). Socrates here concludes that: 'The reason that corruption of one's soul is the most shameful of them all is that it surpasses the others by some monstrously great harm and astounding badness, since it doesn't surpass them in pain' (477d-e).

It is important to note here that Socrates seems to take the wickedness of the soul to be worse than anything else because of the soul's superiority over anything else. Then as Mackenzie puts it: 'The worst evil that a man can suffer is neither material nor physical

¹⁹This will be analysed towards the end of the discussion between Socrates and Polus.

misfortune, but psychological disorder, which is corrected by the art of justice... According to the body-soul analogy, punishment is the medicine of wickedness - painful, but useful to effect a cure; when it succeeds, it makes us more temperate and just, therefore we should seek punishment just as we consult a doctor'²⁰. Although there is a strong analogy here between the role of medicine and that of punishment, to argue that: 'We should seek punishment just as we consult a doctor', produces a kind of circularity since it requires some degree of justice already existing in us. Someone who is able to recognise that he has done wrong and so is motivated to seek punishment would not have an unjust soul. He would not, therefore, need punishment as a cure of injustice. Plato implicitly recognises this point by assimilating punishment and self-discipline; someone who is basically just might undertake self-discipline to improve his character or to avoid becoming corrupted.

The Treatment against Wickedness

The argument, now, becomes twofold; Socrates proceeds to show how a treatment against wickedness can be either imposed by the judges, or by the person himself. The parallel between body and soul still holds. Getting medical treatment is beneficial because those who receive it 'are getting rid of something very bad, so that it is worth their while to endure the pain and so get well' (478c). In other words, the pain caused by the doctors is not the end result, it is the means to something far more important, the health of the person. Here Socrates reintroduces happiness, *eudaimonia*. He argues that although it is important for one to get rid of something bad either in his body or in his soul, the happiest man, concerning his body, is he who does not need to be treated since he is not sick. The claim made is the following: 'Happiness evidently is not a

²⁰Mackenzie p. 183.

matter of getting rid of something bad; it is a matter of not even contracting it to begin with' (478c). He applies this idea to those that are not treated. He applies the idea that the most miserable one is he who is not treated to the soul as well as to the body: 'Of two people, each of whom has something bad in either body or soul, the most miserable is the one that is not treated and does not get rid of the bad thing' (478d).

Socrates, then, shows how punishment is directly related with the issue of happiness: 'The happiest man is the one who does not have any badness in his soul... and second, I suppose, is the man who gets rid of it' (478d-e). Referring, then, to the second, Socrates says: 'this is the man who gets lectured and lashed, the one who pays what is due' (478e). These points indicate that the soul is improved through both education and corporal discipline. The notion of the soul's improvement through education and punishment is further developed in the *Republic*. In books II and III Plato describes an education, which will bring the souls of the guardians to order. Then, in book IV he claims that 'it is more profitable to act justly, live in a fine way, and be just' (445a) rather than 'to act unjustly and be unjust, provided that one doesn't pay the penalty and become better as a result of punishment' (445a). Plato, once more, is trying to establish that both education and punishment are beneficial for the soul. Returning to the *Gorgias* text, Plato treats punishment as one way that an unjust man can be improved. This is significant for this thesis, since it indicates that the soul is capable of being improved by action on the body. If, as seems likely, Plato is here thinking of corporal punishment, this indicates that the soul is affected due to bodily changes; the body is punished so that the soul is benefited. It is implied, then, that the relation between the soul and the body is not merely parallel, but rather an interdependent one.

Hence, man, by facing punishment, is paying what is due, and as a result he gets rid of wickedness²¹. Trying to avoid punishment or physical treatment, is a result of ignorance: 'they focus on its painfulness, but are blind to its benefit and are ignorant of how much more miserable it is to live with an unhealthy soul than with an unhealthy body, a soul that is rotten with injustice and impiety' (479b-c). Once again it becomes apparent that the greater value of the soul as compared with the body is considered self-evident.

The discussion between Socrates and Polus concludes with a summary of the main points of the argument: A) '... what a man should guard himself against most of all is doing what is unjust, knowing that he will have trouble enough if he does' (480a), in other words a man should always be just. B) 'And If he or anyone else he cares about acts unjustly, he should voluntarily go to the place where he will pay his due as soon as possible; he should go to the judge as though he were going to a doctor, anxious that the disease of injustice should not be protracted and cause his soul to fester incurably' (480b), the health analogy then still holds. C) '... So that he may pay his due and get well; and compel himself and the others not to play the coward, but to grit his teeth and present himself with grace and courage as to a doctor for cauterisation and surgery, pursuing what is good and admirable without taking any account of the pain' (480c), one should prefer, therefore, the improvement of the soul over the bodily pain. D) 'He should be his own chief accuser, and the accuser of other members of his family, and use his oratory for the purpose of getting rid of the worst thing there is, injustice, as the unjust acts are being exposed' (480d). Along with punishment, one should use oratory as an educational tool towards the main goal, the improvement of one's soul. Socrates' reference to oratory here seems to be a paradox since his earlier claim that rhetoric is

²¹A point similar to that is made in *Laws* book XI, 934b.

part of flattery (462e). This might suggest that he could not mean the passage seriously. But an alternative view is possible. The passage may be seen as looking forward to 503a ff. where Socrates begins to talk about the genuine orator who seeks the good of the people. Similarly, in this passage, he may, as Rutherford puts it, be trying to redefine rhetoric so that it resembles dialectic. In an ideal world, the philosophic orator would ensure the proper workings of justice and made certain that he and all he cared for received the treatment they needed even if it must be painful and unpleasant²². Such an analysis of the way Plato uses the paradox could be further supported by the cave image in the *Republic*. In particular, when Plato refers to man's descent from the sun to the cave, he argues that this is done so that he can 'spread happiness throughout the city by bringing the citizens into harmony with each other *through persuasion* [my italics]' (519e). Here Plato talks about the philosopher's difficult task of persuading everyone to study the good. Thus, for Plato the true orator uses his power of persuasion to lead men to the good and so to happiness. This seems to be effective, though, only in an ideal city.

There are, then, a number of points in the discussion between Socrates and Polus that imply interrelation between soul and body. The discussion indicates that the good of the soul is more valuable than that of the body. Emphasis is also placed on the notion that the soul should govern the body. Moreover, Plato's parallel between justice for the soul and health for the body suggests that one could refer to both as being 'healthy' or 'unhealthy'. In making these points Plato not only shows a parallelism between soul and body, but also indicates that there is an essential interaction between the two. This becomes apparent if one brought forward the following points: firstly, Plato argues that if the soul failed to properly govern the body, the body will become diseased.

²²Rutherford, p. 156.

Secondly, he holds that indulgence of the body may lead to disease in the soul. In other words, both body and soul will be damaged if the body becomes dominant. Thirdly, he introduces the notion that punishment - imposed either by oneself or by an outside authority - may restore the soul to health; a punishment which in the first instance affects the body, may improve the soul²³.

Through the health analogy, then, Plato shows that since the soul could be in an unhealthy state, there must be ways to restore it. One effective way to bring health back to soul is punishment, either corporal or by imposing penalties. The healthy state of soul, then, is achieved by bringing order back to the soul. In other words, the argument for the role of punishment seems to be as follows:

P1 The healthy state of the soul is justice.

P2 Justice is a kind of order; if someone is just and virtuous, there is an order in him, he is happy.

P3 The unhealthy state of soul is injustice.

P4 If someone is unjust, the order within him is disrupted.

P5 Education and punishment's role is to restore order in the soul.

//C Therefore, the soul's return to its healthy state is achievable through education and punishment.

²³A detailed analysis of how soul and body interact will be developed in the *Timaeus*. What is of importance here is that the *Gorgias* can be portrayed as the first dialogue that such issues pointing toward an interrelation become apparent.

Socrates and Calicles

Harmony/Order within Oneself

When Calicles questions whether Socrates is serious in the claims he is making, Socrates begins his reply by comparing his own love for Alcibiades and philosophy with Calicles' love for the people (demos) and Demos the son of Pyrilampes (481d). This dichotomy of love does not create problems for Socrates because his love for philosophy is above all. It does, though, create difficulties for Calicles because he does not stay firm in his beliefs but changes his views according to what the objects of his love want to hear (481d-e). Socrates concludes his point by saying that: '... it is better to have my lyre or a chorus that I might lead out of tune and dissonant, and have the vast majority of men disagree with me and contradict me, than to be out of harmony with myself, to contradict myself, though I'm only one person' (482b-c). This shows that Socrates values philosophy because only through philosophy does he achieve harmony within himself²⁴. Here Socrates lays the traces for a theory that will be developed by Plato²⁵.

Calicles, however, presents quite a different ideal, that of the strong man whom he eventually describes as follows: 'by the ones that are the superior I do not mean cobblers or cooks, but those who are intelligent about the affairs of the city... And not only intelligent, but also brave, competent to accomplish whatever they have in mind,

²⁴The idea of harmony as order within oneself obviously alludes to the Pythagoreans, and is further developed in the *Gorgias* 507e-508a. The relation of excellence, happiness and the love of philosophy are also discussed in the *Symposium*.

²⁵The development of Plato's notion of happiness becomes apparent in the *Symposium* as well as in the *Republic*, and it will be analysed accordingly. For the points that *Gorgias* lacks see further Charles Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, esp. pp. 144-145, including n. 24.

without slackening off because of softness of spirit' (491b). Callicles claims that these 'should be the ones who rule their cities, and what is just, is that they, as the rulers, should have greater share than the others, the ruled' (491c-d). Socrates changes the direction of the conversation by asking whether the strong persons admired by Callicles will exercise self-control or not. By self-control Socrates refers to 'Being self-controlled and master oneself, ruling the pleasures and appetites within oneself' (491d-e). Although Plato does not yet provide us with a clear explanation of which part of man these pleasures refer to, there is a definite suggestion that he has in mind relations of conflict and control between soul and body. This is so because the pleasures and appetites must surely be closely related to the body.

Callicles' objection is that a man could not prove to be happy if he is enslaved to anyone, and the man who lives correctly is the one that allows his own appetites to grow and not be restrained (491e-492a). What Socrates cleverly adds to Callicles' view is that such a way of living is considered by Callicles to be 'excellence' or 'virtue' (492e). Socrates wants to distinguish between what Callicles would accept as excellence, and his own conception of moral excellence.

Socrates, then, refers to the religious idea that life is death and to the myth of the jars. In Plato's own words, there is a view that: 'we are now dead and our bodies are our tombs, the part of our souls in which our appetites reside is actually the sort of thing to be open to persuasion and to shift back and forth', 'ἤδη γάρ του ἔγωγε καὶ ἤκουσα τῶν σοφῶν ὡς νῦν ἡμεῖς τέθαμεν· καὶ τὸ μὲν σῶμά ἐστιν ἡμῖν σῆμα, τῆς δέ ψυχῆς τοῦτο ἐν ᾧ αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι εἰσὶ τυγχάνει ὄν οἶον ἀναπείθεσθαι καὶ μεταπίπτειν ἄνω κάτω' (493a). The imagery of the body as a tomb seems to imply that it acts as a restraining power on the soul. The same picture seems to be drawn in the *Cratylus* and the *Phaedo*. In

Cratylus 400c Socrates attributes to some people the idea of the body being the tomb of the soul, or as a sign because the soul signifies whatever it wants by means of the body. But he then seems to prefer another explanation of the naming of the body. According to the Orphic tradition, the body is treated as the prison of the soul since it is being punished for something. In the *Phaedo* Plato presents us with an image of the body as the prison of the soul; the soul is being 'imprisoned in and clinging to the body... forced to examine other things through it as though a cage and not by itself' (82e), but the purpose of this quotation is to show that the soul is tied up with the body and that at most it examines things outside itself; it is involved with desires²⁶. Another reference to the idea that while we are in the human form our souls are dead is attributed by Sextus Empiricus to Heraclitus²⁷. Within the *Gorgias* context, though, no further discussion is made concerning the body as tomb of the soul image. Since it is mentioned only briefly in the *Gorgias*, it may be no more than a metaphor. But if it were taken seriously, it would suggest a distinctive view of soul and body. The body as a tomb image would suggest that embodiment is not essential to the soul; it does not affect its functioning and does not change its nature. Neither is it essential to the body that it is animated. We have thus a view of the soul and body as separate in that neither is really essential to the other. We shall find other passages in Plato which on the surface at best appear to support this extreme dualism²⁸, though, there are of course many passages which suggest different views. Thus, we are left to consider whether Plato arrived at a consistent view on these points.

The idea, now, that the soul contains an element that is like a jar and is open to persuasion, is one passage that suggests a quite different view to the extreme dualistic

²⁶ A detailed analysis of this image is made in the *Phaedo* chapter.

²⁷ See further Dodds, 1959, on 492e10-11 and 493a 2-3.

²⁸ For instance the affinity argument in the *Phaedo*.

position implied by the body as the tomb image. Within the image of the jars, the important contrast is between a better and a worse element within the soul. It thus hints at the Platonic parts of the soul developed as a theory later on in the *Republic*. This image is introduced in order to persuade us to choose the orderly life over the disorderly one; Socrates wants to persuade Callicles to ‘...concede that the orderly life is better than the undisciplined one’ (494a). According to the myth, the part where the appetites reside is presented as a jar [pithos], on account of its being persuadable (493a). Similarly, the fools, the uninitiated²⁹, are like people whose jars are leaking (493b) and the most miserable ones are those that are trying to carry water into the leaking jar using another leaky thing, a sieve that symbolises the disordered soul. This image is also difficult to interpret. At a superficial level it may seem clear enough. Those who lack self-control are constantly trying to satisfy their desires. But this attempt is doomed to frustration because the desires, like leaking jars that can never be filled, can never be satisfied. But the detail of this image poses more problems. The sieve, with which the most deprived characters try to fill their jars, is said to represent the soul. The point of the comparison with the sieve is that the souls of these people are unable to hold anything because of their unbelief and forgetfulness: ‘δι’ ἀπιστίαν τε καὶ λήθην’ (493c). So, these people’s misery seems to stem not only from their unsatisfied desires, but also from their lack of knowledge. In 493b the desires that are represented as jars are said to be part of the soul, but almost immediately the sieve is identified with the soul. As Ivan M. Linforth argues, Plato here likens the sieve to the whole soul, but if he were following the fully developed doctrine of the parts of the soul as it appears in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*, he would have likened the sieve to the rational part of the

²⁹The reference to the uninitiated again shows Plato’s knowledge and influence by Orphic and Pythagorean doctrines.

soul³⁰. In that manner, a leaky sieve would be the rational part of a disorderly soul. If, then, the rational part is not in its proper state itself, is not guided by one goal - that of moral excellence and happiness - its relation to the appetitive part would be affected - it would be easily persuaded by the appetites; it would 'shift back and forth'. As a result, the soul as a whole would be disorderly. Such an argument, though, in order to be complete, requires a detailed analysis of the soul's nature, which is to be provided only later in the *Republic*. Hence, within the image of the jars and the sieve, Plato seems as if he is trying to distinguish between two views. According to the first, the appetites are part of the soul, while there is a separate part that is the location of knowledge and belief. According to the second view, the appetites are distinct from the soul, presumably because they belong to the body. Thus, it is not yet clear whether the appetites are seen as part of the soul or as external to it. However we take the image, though, it clearly represents a quite different way of thinking about the nature of the soul to that implied by the tomb image. The desires, presumably, come at least in part from the body. So the jars image suggests a complex interaction between soul and body, one which affects the nature of both.

Plato uses the above image in a further attempt to persuade Callicles to choose the orderly life, 'the life that is adequate to and satisfied with its circumstances at any given time instead of the insatiable, undisciplined life' (493c-d). For this purpose Plato uses another example that involves the jars imagery, that of two men, each of who has many jars. The first man is satisfied when his jars are full, while the other one needs to keep on filling his jars continuously because they are leaky and rotten, and thus he suffers extreme pain (493d-494a). The point is that happiness comes through self-control

³⁰Ivan M. Linforth, 'Soul and Sieve In Plato's *Gorgias*', *University of California Publications In Classical Philology* 12 (1944) p. 302.

rather than through being undisciplined. Still, even after Socrates' second example, Callicles is not persuaded that the orderly life is better than the undisciplined one.

According to Callicles living pleasantly consists of 'having as much as possible flow in' (494b). An important distinction for Socrates is that between what is pleasant and what is good: 'The good is not just unrestricted enjoyment' (495b)³¹. In order to make this distinction valid, Socrates claims that good and evil are opposites. We cannot therefore have both at the same time (495e). So, he claims that: 'If we find things that a man both gets rid of and keeps at the same time, it's clear that these things wouldn't be what's good and what's bad' (496c). By using the instances of hunger and thirst, then, Socrates makes Callicles admit that: 'every deficiency and appetite is painful' (496d). But by arguing that drinking and eating are pleasant if one has the relevant appetite (496d-e), Socrates concludes that: '... it turns out that good things are not the same as painful ones, and bad things are not the same as painful ones. For pleasant and painful things come to stop simultaneously, whereas good things and bad ones do not, because they are in fact different things. How then could pleasant things be the same as good ones and painful things the same as bad ones?' (497d). Thus, good things and pleasant things are not the same.

Socrates' ultimate point is for Callicles to agree that all things are done for the sake of what is good (499e)³². The requirement that Plato introduces is that not everyone can find out which of the pleasures are good and which are bad. This is the task of a craftsman. By going back to the distinction between arts and knacks, showing the practice of the good and the practice of the pleasant respectively, Socrates stresses once

³¹Plato's insistence on choosing what is good instead of what is pleasant was pointed out earlier in relation to the issue of happiness. See the analysis of 470e-473e and 475a-c.

³²From this point onwards Callicles is no longer an effective contributor to the dialogue.

more the significance of giving an account instead of acting irrationally. Socrates, asks Callicles whether: ‘... it is for every man to pick out which kinds of pleasures are good ones and which are bad ones, or does this require a craftsman in each case’ (500a). By summarising the main points of the argument, which concern the differences between arts and knack, Socrates shows Callicles that, considering the soul, the gratification of pleasures is ‘a kind of flattery... in which a person may wait upon a pleasure without any consideration of what is better or worse’ (501c).

The argument then continues with Socrates clarifying his point by arguing that: ‘a man should satisfy those of his appetites that, when they are filled up, make him better, and not those that make him worse, and that this is a matter of craft...’ (503c-d)³³. The important addition to this is that: ‘The man who speaks with regard to what’s best says whatever he says not randomly but with a view to something’ (503 d-e). This ‘something’ is nothing else but order and organisation. Having shown that being orderly is actually good for objects as well as for bodies, Socrates asks Callicles: ‘What about the soul? Will it be a good one if it gets to be disorganised, or if it gets to have certain organisation and order?’ (504b). The name that is given to what comes into being in the body as a result of organisation and order is ‘lawful’ and ‘law’. Thus Plato returns to the crucial issue of justice and self-control within the soul. We should notice here that Plato’s treatment of the soul, as having the capacity to be orderly or not, implies that the soul itself is complex. If we are to talk about something being disorganised or on the other hand, self-controlled, there must be at least two elements within it so as to cause these dynamics. According to the *Republic IV* 443c-e and *LX*

³³The idea that man should satisfy those appetites that make him better is developed in the *Republic LX* 571b, and it will be discussed accordingly.

586d-e, self-control, is shown when the lower elements of the soul follow reason; such an arrangement within the soul is seen as orderly and therefore as good.

In the *Gorgias*, now, Socrates states that: 'as long as it's [the soul] corrupt, in that is foolish, undisciplined, unjust, and impious, it should be kept away from its appetites and not be permitted to do anything other than what it will make it better' (505b). Socrates here seems to assume that when someone is wicked, he is so in all respects. We should note here the suggestion that in order for the soul to be disciplined, its appetites should be restrained: 'Now isn't keeping it away from what it has an appetite for, disciplining it?' (505b9). This indicates that either the appetites are restrained from within the person himself, by the reasonable part of the soul, or by the 'craftsman' who is able to distinguish what is good from what is bad. If one accepts that Plato has in mind the first alternative, then one should once more accept the existence of a double complexity within the soul³⁴, a complexity that will give prevalence of the reasonable element over the appetitive element. If however the second alternative applies, the connection between an undisciplined person and the 'craftsman', the expert is stressed. The suggestion then is that only those who are brought up under the guidance and governance of the wise can hope to be virtuous. An issue worth mentioning is that Plato seems not to have clarified whether a) each and every person is competent to direct himself, b) this is always the task of an expert, or c) whether virtue comes about through the co-operation of the individual and the expert.

Socrates' argument with Callicles somehow restates and reinforces most of the points made in the argument with Polus, but it also suggests some important new themes. The

³⁴Even if there are only appetites within the soul, the soul has a certain complexity. By supposing that, in addition, a source of order is needed within the soul, an extra layer of complexity is added.

main idea presented in Socrates' argument with Callicles is that the good of the soul consists of virtue, an element that must be sharply distinguished from pleasure. Pleasures are presented as bodily repletions with no real value because bodily desires cannot ever be satisfied. What is crucial, though, is that in developing these ideas, Socrates also seems to attribute the desires to a part of the soul. This implies that the soul is complex, but it also raises questions about how these desires relate to the body. To make matters more complicated, Socrates introduces the idea of the body as a tomb for the soul, an idea that seems to imply that soul and body are totally separate entities that are accidentally coexistent. At the same time though, Socrates refers to the myth of jars, which explicitly points toward the idea that the soul is complex and that since the desires are partly bodily, soul and body interact.

Continuing, Socrates presents the argument as a whole: a) He distinguishes the pleasant from the good once again: 'Is the pleasant the same as the good? - It isn't as Callicles and I have agreed' (506c). b) He stresses the necessity for order: 'But the best way in which the excellence of each thing comes to be present in it... is due to whatever organisation, correctness, and craftsmanship is bestowed on each of them' (506d-e). c) Finally he shows that a self-controlled soul is orderly and therefore good: '... an orderly soul is a self-controlled one? ... So a self-controlled soul is a good one' (507a).

Socrates thus states, once more, that: 'if the self-controlled soul is a good one, then a soul that is been affected the opposite way of the self-controlled one is a bad one. And this ... is the foolish and undisciplined one' (507a). In what follows, Socrates lists the things that one would necessarily possess if one is self-controlled: one would be just, pious, brave, and completely good, blessed, and happy (507b-c). From the above it is

easy for Socrates to conclude that: 'A person who wants to be happy, must evidently pursue and practice self-control' (507c).

In order to strengthen his argument, Socrates brings about the authority of 'wise men' who claim that there is an overall world-order: '... wise men claim that partnership and friendship, orderliness, self-control, and justice hold together heaven and earth, and gods and men, and that is why they call this universe a world order ... and not a world-disorder' (507e-508a). Although little is made of this point in the context, it seems to be the first passage that mentions an idea that will become crucial in Plato's later works; that is the idea that the order of the just soul reflects the order of the universe at large³⁵. Evidently, Plato's idea that there is an order common to, shared by the universe and the soul seems to derive from earlier cosmologies. The Pythagoreans talked about the existence of harmony in the world and in the human soul, Heraclitus talked about order that comes from opposites, and Empedocles talked about the bonds of the world due to love. What is important about Plato's theory is that he parallels the order of the universe to that of the complex soul. He thus emphasises that there should be order in the soul like that existing in the world. In order for the soul to be orderly, as he has already stated, the soul should be self-controlled. The self-controlled soul is good (506e-507a), and if one is self-controlled, he will be happy (507c).

From 508b until 513d Socrates repeats both that one should be just if he is to be 'an orator in the right way' (508c), as well as his previous argument that doing injustice is worse than suffering it. He concludes his point on politics by arguing that the older politicians were no better than the new ones, and that what they did was that: 'they

³⁵The notion of world order and its relation to order displayed within the human beings will be further discussed in the *Timaeus* chapter.

proved to be better servants than the men of today, and more capable than they of satisfying the city's appetites' (517b).

Socrates, then, continues by repeating the 'twofold activity related to both body and soul'³⁶: '... and that one of these is menial and by it can be provided food, if our bodies are hungry; drink, if our bodies are thirsty; and if they are cold, clothing, bedding, shoes, or anything else that our bodies come to desire' (517d). What Socrates stresses, here, is the superiority of gymnastics and medicine over other arts, because: '...of its knowledge of what food or drink is good or bad for bodily excellence, a knowledge which all the others lack' (517e). Applying the same concept now to the soul, Socrates searches for 'justice and self-control' (519a).

Socrates then returns to the issue of justice and in particular to the question why it pays to be just. At 522e he states, as in the *Apology*, that: 'for no one who isn't totally bereft of reason and courage, is afraid to die; doing what's unjust is what he's afraid of. For to arrive to Hades with one's soul stuffed full of unjust actions is the ultimate of all bad things'. He thus introduces the myth of judgement after death as a paradigm for this notion.

The *Gorgias* is the first dialogue that ends with an eschatological myth of judgement; two more dialogues conclude in the same manner; the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*³⁷. The main framework is the judgement of souls after death. Although it is very difficult to decide how much of the myth Plato wants his readers to take literally, it seems safe to

³⁶For 517d I am using the W. D. Woodhead's translation of *Gorgias* in E. Hamilton (ed), *The Collected Dialogues Of Plato*, 1996.

³⁷It should be noted that the myth in the *Phaedrus* is often treated as offering a fourth eschatological myth. It is not discussed here, though, because it is not a myth of judgement and it is not placed at the end of the dialogue.

argue that the myth is drawing an ideal picture of reward or payment and retribution according to the way one lived one's life. Since Plato wants to show how men should live their lives, by choosing the just, orderly life instead of the unjust one, he takes the myth as being literally true and presents it as further evidence to his argument. The obvious objection that one could raise at this point is that to treat the myth, as being literally true, is only one of the interpretations possible for the myth. Two more interpretations would be to treat the myth as a tool of persuasion, or to consider it as an analogy.

According to the literal truth view, Plato believes the main features of the mythical story; namely, that our souls are judged and punished after death. The myth thus provides an additional reason for following the life of virtue. The obvious objection to that is that Plato actually provides no reason for believing the myth; it cannot provide any rational support for Plato's moral and metaphysical views. Of course if Plato's audience already believed in such a myth, referring to it would give them a reason for following the life of virtue. But, it is clear that belief in a life after death in which the wicked are punished and the good rewarded was far from universal in Plato's day. Those who did not hold such a belief would not be impressed by Plato's myth, while those who did believe it would need little reminding of it. A possible response to this is that there are rational grounds for believing in rewards and punishments after death although he does not make these grounds very clear in the *Gorgias*. In *Laws X* 887-907, for instance, he argues that the order of the universe shows that it is under the control of a divine mind which does care about human affairs. We may therefore be sure that ultimately the good will prosper and the bad will suffer. In the *Gorgias* 507e-508a Socrates links his moral beliefs to the claim that the universe is an orderly whole

under the direction of divine wisdom. He might well take that to imply that there must be rewards and punishment after death.

The second interpretation to consider is that the myth is a device designed to win over people to the life of virtue, rather than to imply literal truth. It would thus be a device used by the genuine orator, who seeks the good of his subjects, even though it might even be false in a literal sense. Rutherford seems to adopt this view. He argues that 'here we see, perhaps, a kind of pure rhetoric, a persuasive use of myth in the service of philosophy, but it is neither conclusive nor argumentative'³⁸.

The third interpretation of the myth, is that of taking it as a different way to philosophical argument of conveying the same truth. For instance, according to Penelope Murray 'dialectic and myth can be viewed as different modes of explanation for Plato, without the one being superior to the other, and neither mode being self-sufficient'³⁹. Christopher Rowe, now, takes the above point further. He argues that to the extent that Plato envisages the use of mythoi as an alternative to rational argument, in order to inculcate beliefs and attitudes in the non-philosophical, there is also a clear sense in which the contrast between mythical and non-mythical corresponds to that between rational and irrational. His point, thus, is not that the mythical is simply defined by irrationality, but rather that: 'story-telling, by virtue of the simplicity and directness of its appeal, may be used as a means of control in the context of people for whom other means are inappropriate by virtue of their own inadequate degree of rationality'⁴⁰. But it is difficult to see what this claim of two ways of conveying the

³⁸Rutherford, p. 175.

³⁹Penelope Murray, 'What is a Mythos for Plato?', in Richard Buxton (ed), *From Myth to Reason?* Oxford Univ. Press, 1999, p. 261.

⁴⁰Christopher Rowe, 'Myth, History, and Dialectic in Plato's Republic and Timaeus-Critias', in Buxton, 1999, p. 278.

truth really amounts to. It is not obvious how two accounts whose literal meaning seems to be different convey the same truth. Of course, one could use an analogy or a metaphor to illustrate a point, as Plato often does⁴¹, but the myth of the *Gorgias* does not seem to be a mere analogy or metaphor. Both the philosophical account and the myth imply that it is in our interest to be just, but if the myth is merely a way of emphasising this point, it is really just a rhetorical device.

The way in which we interpret the myth has a bearing on our interpretation of the soul-body relation. If the literal meaning is true, the soul is a separate entity, capable of independent existence, although it does seem to be affected by its involvement with the body. If, on the other hand, the myth is simply a rhetorical device, or if it is a means of conveying the same truths that are conveyed in the philosophical arguments, then it can add nothing to the account of soul and body contained in the dialogue. The soul is important but that does not necessarily imply that it is capable of independent existence. I would like to argue though that the fact that the *Gorgias* myth is not the only reference to life after death and to the souls being rewarded or being punished, seems to imply that it contains some literal truth.

The *Gorgias*' myth then, bears some common elements to the myths of the *Phaedo* and of the *Republic*⁴², but it also has characteristic differences. The similarities among the three myths can be identified as being the following: a) all three myths are placed at the end of the dialogues. b) All three myths refer to the souls' survival after death. c) All three emphasise that souls are influenced during their embodied lives, and thus that it is important to live a just life rather than an unjust one, and d) all three treat the souls as

⁴¹ For example see the complex beat image in *Republic IX*.

⁴² Both the *Phaedo*'s and the *Republic*'s myths will be discussed in detail in the respective chapters of this thesis.

being liable to judgement, including the idea of being rewarded or punished. On the other hand, there are a number of differences that are indicative for each dialogue. For example, the *Gorgias* makes no reference to the issue of reincarnation, which is essential for both the *Phaedo* and for the *Republic*. Another point of contrast between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* is that within the elaborate description of the *Republic's* myth, the issue of personal choice is developed; an issue not mentioned in the *Gorgias*. Hence, it seems to me, that Plato's insistence on the soul's survival as a moral agent, which implies the possibility of the soul's change, is not a point that he accidentally repeats, but is a point that bears significant implications for his theory. Thus I would have to disagree with Fritz Graf's view that in Plato's four eschatological myths it is impossible to discern a set of shared features, or that these myths cannot be combined to produce a larger picture⁴³. Graf accepts that these myths exhibit thematic affinities, but argues that each of them stands alone: myth cannot capture the truth, only hover about it⁴⁴. Taking into account their similarities I would like to argue that the three myths could be combined to form a larger picture, if not every detail is taken into account. Like his philosophical arguments, Plato's myths develop so as to give to his audience and to us readers a complete view of Plato's belief in life after death.

Returning to the *Gorgias's* myth, then, Socrates describes two different places for those who die. Those who lived a just and pious life go to the Isle of the Blessed, while those who lived in an unjust and godless way go to the prison of payment and retribution; Tartarus. During Cronus' and Zeus' time men faced living judges while they were still alive, but their cases were badly decided because they were judged when fully clothed. Thus, Zeus decided that everyone must be judged when they are stripped naked of all

⁴³ Fritz Graf, *Greek Mythology*, John Hopkins University Press, 1993, p. 188.

⁴⁴ Graf, p. 188.

these things for they should be judged when they are dead. The judge should also be naked and dead. So that, only with his soul he should study the soul of each person immediately upon his death, when he is isolated from all his kinsmen and has left behind on earth all that adornment, so that the judgement may truly be a just one. If we compare this myth with the view of afterlife presented in the *Apology*, the one thing that strikes as obvious is that in the *Apology* Socrates did not want to confine himself in any particular view concerning the souls' survival after death. In the *Gorgias*, on the other hand, it seems that only a view of afterlife that directly results from the embodied life is at issue. The souls' condition after death depends on the moral aspects of one's life during embodiment. This is the view that Plato wants to stress when he refers to death.

Death

Having introduced the myth and presented it as true, Socrates summarises what death⁴⁵ is: 'Death ... is nothing but the separation of two things from each other, the soul and the body. So, after they're separated, each of them stays in a condition not much worse than the one they were in when the person was alive. The body retains its nature and the care it had received as well as the things that have happened to it, are all evident. ... All that's in the soul is evident after it has been stripped naked of the body, both things that are natural to it and things that happened to it, things that the person came to have in his soul as a result of his pursuit of each objective' (524b-d). Plato's treatment of death, here, as the separation of two things, is important since it implies that within the

⁴⁵It should be emphasised here that this is a very specific definition of death that does not include the vagueness of the *Apology's* attempt to define death. In the *Apology*, since Plato shows what Socrates must have thought, Plato does not want to be specific about what death is. Here, on the other hand, since he wants to place emphasis on the moral, good, happy life, his remarks are rather conclusive.

human frame two things are involved; for the soul to survive death, it ought to be ontologically separate from the body. At the same time, though, the soul is treated as the bearer of one's moral character. This in turn implies that the soul's relation to the body cannot be that of an accidental coexistence; in order to be influenced by the body, the embodied soul must be linked to the body. What I would like to stress here is that Plato's reference to the survival of the soul after death is the first instance of several ones to follow in his dialogues. This raises the same kind of issue that we saw when comparing the image of the tomb and of the jars. The fact that Plato indicates not only that the soul is something separate from the body, but also that it needs to be in an interrelation to it, requires an effort to show that these two Platonic points do not necessarily negate one another. I will later argue that the tension can be solved, if one keeps in mind the tripartite notion of the soul particularly as it is developed in the *Timaeus*.

The point that the soul is the bearer of one's character is implicit in Plato's account of punishment after death. Socrates brings back the issue of punishment with a very important addition, the distinction between the curable and the incurable. He points out that 'those who are benefited, who are made to pay their due by gods and men, are the ones whose errors are curable; even so their benefit comes to them, both here and in Hades, by way of pain and suffering, for there is no other possible way to get rid of injustice' (525b). Plato seems to treat the issue of punishment as the means for one's correction either in this life or after death. This is important for one's understanding of what Plato thinks a person consists of. The fact that punishment can benefit the soul both in life and after death shows that Plato treats the soul as the essence of 'personality'.

The dialogue concludes with Socrates' statement that: 'I think about how I'll reveal to the judge a soul that's as healthy as it can be ... by practising truth, I really try ... to be and to live as a good man, and when I die, to die like that' (526d-e). Thus, Socrates stresses which way of living is best: ' ... to practice justice and the rest of excellence both in life and in death' (527e).

Thus, although the *Gorgias* could be seen as not bringing forward a specific view of soul-body relation, my attempt was to show that three main issues indicate and require a particular interrelation between soul and body, namely a) Plato presents punishment as beneficial for men. He holds that through punishment of the body, the soul benefits. Like the idea that soul should govern the body (465c-d), such a notion cannot stand without the notion that soul and body are not simply in parallel states but affect each other. Ultimately, soul and body are not accidentally coexisting; the order, the health of the one affects the order, the health of the other. b) His use of the image of the leaking jars, now, is so ambiguous that does not allow us to talk about a complete division of the soul's elements and the bodily elements. Plato explicitly refers to appetites as being located to the part of the soul characterised as undisciplined, which indicates that there should be at least another part that will not be characterised as undisciplined, and again it seems obvious that the appetites reside in the body. The only possible interpretation of this passage could be that it indicates a kind of interaction between the complex soul and the body. c) Finally, when Plato refers to the soul's surviving death and having a particular character that is partly innate and partly due to the previous embodiment, the obvious inference would have to be that soul and body, while in the human form, do interact. This is further stressed if one bore in mind that Plato describes the punishment of the soul after death in physical terms.

Meno

The *Meno* is often considered as one of the later dialogues of Plato's early period. For example, W. K. C. Guthrie says that the *Meno* serves to introduce Plato's own thought, and even identifies the point where we can see the transition [from Socrates to Plato] taking place [in 81a]¹. Vlastos sees the mathematical interests apparent in the *Meno* as demonstrating that here 'we see Plato well started on the course that will take him to the other extreme from the convictions he had shared with Socrates in the elenchus dialogues'². Similarly, R. W. Sharples' view is that *Meno* marks a transitional stage between the early dialogues and the middle ones, and it can, therefore, provide an insight into some of Plato's thoughts that led to the views of the middle period³. In particular, the knowledge-as-recollection theory, which plays an important part in the dialogues of Plato's middle period, is carefully explained and demonstrated as if Plato were introducing his readers to it for the first time⁴.

I want to follow these authors and suggest that the appearance of the recollection argument - with the implied theory of Forms - as well as the belief vs. knowledge issue are the two points that indicate a shift from the exposition and elaboration of the Socratic ethical beliefs to Plato's metaphysics and epistemology⁵.

However, my interest in this dialogue is based not so much on the epistemological points, but rather on the effect that the issue of true belief vs. knowledge has on Plato's

¹W. K. C. Guthrie, *Plato: Protagoras and Meno*, Middlesex, 1986, p. 24.

²Gregory Vlastos, 'Elenchus and Mathematics', in H. Benson (ed), *Essays On The Philosophy Of Socrates*, New York, Oxford University Press 1992, pp. 146-7.

³Sharples, p. 1

⁴See further Guthrie, 1986, pp. 17-18

⁵P. Woodruff writes that in the *Meno* the theory of learning as recollection, and the distinction between knowledge and true belief, are new; see 'Plato's Early Theory of Knowledge', in Benson, p. 102.

concept of the person. The second point of interest is the role of sense-experience in the recollection process. These two notions will indicate further problems in specifying the precise relationship between soul and body. The *Meno's* account, which implies firstly that the soul has existed prior to its present embodiment and secondly that knowledge is not acquired through the senses but is recollected, may seem to imply that there is a minimal interconnection between the soul and the body. The soul seems not to depend on the body for its existence, and its central activity does not seem to require a body. What I would like to argue, though, is that, although on a superficial reading soul and body can be seen as completely separate entities, such a reading would be misleading. If we examine the text closely, we will see that the *Meno's* account of knowledge gives a central role to the senses.

Virtue

The first question asked in the *Meno* is: 'Can virtue be taught?' (70a). Socrates answers that he is 'so far from knowing whether virtue can be taught or not that I do not even have any knowledge of what virtue itself is' (71a). The issue that arises from Socrates' answer is crucial for Plato's philosophy. Socrates claims that he has no knowledge about what virtue is. What he does not explicitly state though, is that he does have beliefs about virtue. Although Socrates claims not to know anything about virtue, he implicitly shows himself to have beliefs about it. The elenchus relies on such beliefs and on the assumption that they must contain some truth, which can be brought out by questioning.

Socrates asks Meno to tell him what is virtue. He says: 'But Meno, by the gods, what do you yourself say that virtue is...so that I may have spoken a most unfortunate untruth

when I said that I had never met anyone who knew, if you and Gorgias are shown to know' (71d). Thus, although Socrates indeed disclaims knowledge, at the same time, he does not deny that Meno may be able to tell him what he thinks virtue is. In other words, Socrates says that one cannot know anything about virtue if one does not know what it is, but evidently he has some beliefs about virtue. In the course of the elenchus, it emerges for example that Socrates and Meno share the belief that, men, women and children can all be virtuous (72e-73a), and that the virtuous are temperate and just (73b). Thus, Socrates must hold that beliefs about virtue are enough to enable one to speak about it.

If both Socrates and Meno have beliefs about virtue we would expect at least some of those beliefs to be true. Moreover, a set of beliefs that was largely false would not help in talking about virtue or anything else. Socrates evidently assumes most of one's beliefs about virtue to be true. So, although Socrates claims that there cannot be knowledge without a definition, this does not contradict the assumption that some beliefs may be reliable. Rather, one needs this assumption in order to be involved in the elenchus.

Socrates hopes to move from beliefs about instances of virtue to a definition of virtue. This can be seen a little later where Socrates asks Meno to give him, not instances of virtue, but that form which makes all cases of virtues what they are (72c). What Socrates wants to distinguish here is the difference between instances of virtue and that common factor that makes all the particulars what they are; he is looking for 'one

description to fit them all' (73d)⁶. The important point, then, about the early pages of the *Meno* is that although Socrates does not claim to have knowledge, he has beliefs. This is Plato's answer to the paradox, which Meno introduces at 80e, that we either have knowledge of something or we can not say anything about it: 'a man cannot search either for what he knows or for what he does not know? He cannot search for what he knows - since he knows it, there is no need to search - nor for what he does not know, for he does not know what to look for'. The recollection argument that follows, then, acts as an example in determining the nature of Plato's view of the knowledge – belief relation. Moreover, I shall argue that the fact that Plato sees the relation of knowledge and belief in this way has an important bearing on the relation between soul and body.

The recollection argument

Socrates disagrees with Meno in that he believes that he can look for something if he does not know what it is. Plato supports this view by introducing two main ideas: the immortality of the soul, and the notion of recollection; his account of the soul and his epistemology are thus interconnected. Socrates could have answered Meno by saying that, although he does not know what he is looking for, he has beliefs about it. But as it stands such a claim would not be adequate because not all beliefs are related to knowledge, they do not all lead to knowledge. What Plato seems to hold, though, is that some beliefs are related to knowledge by the fact that both these beliefs and knowledge derive from the soul. In order to make such a claim; he needs to introduce the idea of the soul's immortality and the recollection theory. He introduces the former

⁶As Kahn says (1992, p. 42), Plato uses here phrases like "the same of all cases"- which hint at the theory of Forms - but he does not clarify the ontological status of these forms. As we will see later on, Plato's commitment to the theory of Forms occurs in the *Phaedo*.

by referring to the sayings of priests and priestesses. He claims: 'The soul is immortal, has been born often and has seen all things here and in the underworld, there is nothing which it has not learned, so it is in no way surprising that it can recollect the things it knew before, both about virtue and other things' (81c-d). Plato obviously influenced by previous theories - probably Pythagorean - of soul's transmigration and reincarnation, presents a picture according to which the soul not only survives death, but also carries with it knowledge acquired before. If such a picture is correct, the suggestion is that when man forms a true belief about something, he is in fact recollecting it. The validity, therefore, of a belief is based on whether it is recollected or not; and this is tested through further questioning. Thus, Plato introduces the slave-boy example to show Meno how the boy does not learn but recollects (81e). Another important point is that Plato's account of knowledge through recollection implies a process with several stages between sheer ignorance and knowledge⁷. It thus contrasts with the underlying assumption of Meno's dilemma that complete knowledge and complete ignorance are the only alternatives.

To explain his view of recollection Socrates asks a slave-boy how to construct a square with double the area of a square with its sides being two feet long and an area of four square feet. It is notable here that recollection is seen as a process; Plato recognises stages within the recollection: The first stage is the slave-boy's wrong conviction that the double square will have a double side: 'Obviously Socrates it will be twice the length' (82e). The second stage is reached when the slave-boy is shown that his answer was wrong, and he is reduced to ignorance: 'by Zeus, Socrates, I do not know' (84a). The third stage of the recollection is where the slave-boy, by responding to Socrates'

⁷Guthrie, 1986, p. 112

questions, reaches the true belief that: 'the double figure would be that based on the diagonal' (85b).

Thus, Socrates proves to Meno that although the slave-boy did not know the correct answer, he managed to reach the correct opinion without being told the answer by Socrates or anyone else: 'so these opinions were in him' (85c). But, there is still another stage if the slave-boy is to reach knowledge; as Socrates says: 'If he [the slave] were repeatedly asked these same questions...in the end his knowledge about these things would be as accurate as anyone's' (85d). In other words, it seems that repeated questioning is both necessary and sufficient to move one from belief to Knowledge. These are then the different stages of recollection that enable Plato to deny Meno's paradox.

The recollection theory in *Meno* is presented to provide an answer to the question how does one know about something. Socrates' discussion with the slave-boy provides an example of how one can reach knowledge. For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to consider the question whether sense perception should be considered a necessary condition for recollection or not. Although this may seem a purely epistemological point, for my purposes, its importance lies in the implications it has for the body-soul relation.

Although Plato in the *Meno* is not primarily dealing with the body-soul relation, I shall argue that the role of the senses in the recollection argument has important implications for this issue. When Plato says that through the process of recollection we are all capable of reaching true beliefs, he implies that the process by which we reach true beliefs starts with the senses. This, in turn, implies that the soul is the seat both of

knowledge and of sense perception. One's soul is the element that enables one to form beliefs about concepts - like virtue - or geometrical notions, because it is the soul that 'has seen all things here and in the underworld'. However, Plato seems to argue not only that in this embodied life these beliefs are realised by starting off with the senses, but also that the same beliefs are innate. It is this that gives them the potential to become knowledge. In order to grasp, therefore, Plato's view of the particular relation between soul and body, one must firstly understand his view of knowledge.

The recollection argument involves the following central claims: A) the soul exists prior (and after) the body and thus acquires knowledge. This implies that the soul is something separate from the body, capable of existing in an independent way. B) The soul, while in this embodied state, is able to form beliefs, to recollect what it once knew, the soul is in a way operating along with the body; the body is the recipient of any sensory stimulus which the soul categorises through recollection. C) Thus, the embodied soul is able to turn true beliefs into knowledge 'through further questioning'. If one considers these points carefully, one will come up with a very interesting problem. When Plato refers to the soul as being able to acquire knowledge before birth, he definitely has in mind that this knowledge does not come about by sense-experience. On the other hand, Plato seems to refer to knowledge acquired before embodiment as being recollected in this life by the soul. The soul, though, does not straightforwardly recollect knowledge; rather it first recollects beliefs⁸ that can be turned into knowledge through further questioning. These beliefs, as the recollection example indicated, are formed with the help of the senses, but the Socratic need for definition shows Plato's

⁸ This might seem to suggest that the soul when disembodied is capable of beliefs not knowledge. This is not the case though. In fact, if my reading of the text is correct, Plato's point must be that although the soul when disembodied has knowledge, in this life, due to the embodiment it first reaches beliefs that have been triggered off by the senses.

conviction that the senses cannot be the source of knowledge. The point seems to be that judgements based on sense perception are fragmented; they can tell us about particular instances of virtue but not about virtue as such. These two points might seem contradictory, but the one does not necessarily negate the other. Plato can argue that the senses are not sufficient for reaching true belief, but that in this embodied life they are necessary. Plato's insistence on the fact that beliefs based on the senses are insufficient for knowledge suggests that one should go beyond the senses. That claim, though, does not suggest that one is able to completely dissociate oneself from the senses⁹.

If Socrates held that the senses are both necessary and sufficient for acquiring knowledge, then he would not be able to avoid Meno's paradox. If the senses were both necessary and sufficient for knowledge, then one would either know something or not. But, the recollection argument refutes this. Plato manages to combine the role of the senses with a theory of knowledge, which is not an empirical one. Although one reaches knowledge through recollection, the beliefs that one uses as a basis to start recollecting are realised through the senses. Because one is embodied, one needs to start off one's awareness from this world of sense-experience.

Thus, the distinction between belief and knowledge is not a sharp one, the same person through the same process acquires belief and knowledge but at different stages of it; through the recollection process one first acquires true beliefs and then knowledge. It is crucial, then, that in passing from true beliefs to knowledge, one is not moving to something altogether different, rather one's true beliefs become knowledge through

⁹ Thus, although Plato, as indicated in the *Phaedo*, wishes that men could disregard the senses in order to reach knowledge, this does not mean that he holds that sensual deprivation is achievable in this embodied life.

further questioning. In that manner, Plato combines his epistemology with his metaphysics and his cosmology.

Another question that arises now in *Meno* is what sort of beliefs Plato had in mind as being able to become knowledge through further questioning. It is clear that for his recollection theory Plato needs two kinds of beliefs. As D. Scott says, 'Plato breaks our thoughts into two components; those that derive from perception, and those that derive from the memories of the soul'¹⁰. At the same time one may hold a number of beliefs, based on sense-perception, which are not and will never become knowledge for the reason that they are not innate. Thus, in this life one may have beliefs that are formed purely through sense perception and beliefs that arise from the senses but which are in fact recollected, and which it is possible to turn into knowledge. Therefore, the recollection process shows that although some of one's beliefs, true or false, are gained through the senses, the beliefs that are of any philosophical value for Plato are those that are proven to be true through recollection because through it these beliefs have the possibility to become knowledge. What this implies then is the existence of something that is able to acquire knowledge. If we read this in the light of the later dialogues, we will take it to imply the existence of the Forms and of a soul able to reach to these Forms. Hence, recollection of the Forms can prove something true, while questioning helps one to recollect.

At this point it may be helpful to consider a passage near the end of the dialogue which may seem to suggest that perception alone can be enough for knowledge. At 97a Socrates is facing a difficulty for the idea that virtue is knowledge. Great men seem to

¹⁰Dominic Scott, *Recollection and Experience*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995, p. 17.

have virtue but the fact that they cannot teach it suggests that what they have cannot be knowledge. Socrates meets this point by claiming that if we wanted to go to Larissa true belief would be as good a guide as knowledge. Similarly, great men may owe their success to true belief. If we take this passage seriously, it would imply that there is some knowledge that is based wholly on sense perception and does not require recollection of a previous existence. This does not create difficulties for the main argument of the *Meno*. Socrates could claim to have shown that knowledge of what virtue is and knowledge of mathematical truths could not be derived solely from perception. There are therefore forms of knowledge that require recollection of our previous existence, which in turn implies a distinction between soul and body. This argument would not be undermined by the assumption that there are other forms of knowledge that do not require pre-existence. On the other hand, the road to Larissa example does suggest more general problems for Plato's epistemology. One would be that of distinguishing between knowledge and belief in cases like this. Perception itself cannot provide the sole criterion since someone who made the trip to Larissa a long time ago may be a less reliable guide than someone who has not been there himself, but has carefully questioned other travellers. A more serious problem is that the admission that there is knowledge of particulars, such as the road to Larissa, seems to contradict the *Republic's* claim that knowledge is of the Forms. It looks as though the only way Plato could solve this would be by distinguishing genuine, 'scientific' knowledge from what passes for knowledge in ordinary life. He would have to accept that on talking about someone knowing the road to Larissa, he was using the word in a loose popular sense¹¹.

¹¹ It should be noted here that in the *Republic* Plato takes a stronger view, namely that the only kind of knowledge possible is that of the Forms, especially of the good, and such knowledge is never actually realised in this human life. The significance of it will be examined in the analysis of the *Republic*.

One of the issues that arise from the recollection argument is the question: 'when does recollection occur'. D. Scott argues that: 'if Meno sees the boy recollecting false judgements, Socrates' program is completely ruined. If we can derive from within ourselves false as well as true judgements, we shall need to decide which are which. But how are we to make this decision? Is there to be another process of recollection to help us find out? If so, we have an infinite regress on our hands'¹². One way to overcome this problem is by claiming that if something is not a genuine recollection, it can be proven as false by further questioning. There is, in other words, a kind of coherence in true recollection. It is important, though, that Plato's recollection theory shows that it is the beliefs themselves that turn into knowledge. After the slave-boy example, Socrates argues that: 'the man who does not know has within himself true opinions about the things that he does not know' (85c). Socrates concludes that: 'These opinions have now just been stirred up like a dream, but if he [the slave-boy] were repeatedly asked these same questions in various ways, you know that in the end his knowledge about these things would be as accurate as anyone's' (85c-d). This provides Socrates with an answer to Meno's dilemma: we can search for things we do not know if we have true beliefs about them.

To prove that even indirect reliance on the senses is unnecessary for Plato's argument in the *Meno*, Vlastos has argued against the claim that the knowledge aroused in the slave boy is empirical. This claim is of course different from the one I have made. To say that a form of knowledge is empirical is to say that sense perception is both necessary and sufficient for that form of knowledge. All I have argued is that sense perception plays an essential role in arousing the beliefs that become knowledge. I have not suggested that sense perception is sufficient for knowledge or that it is essential to its

¹²Scott, 1995, pp. 37-38

justification. Vlastos asks us to imagine a situation where the slave-boy is able to add two numbers at a time but can do so only when the numbers are no greater than 10. Socrates asks him to add 13 to 7. By simplifying the number 13 to $10 + 3$ and by adding 3 to 7, instead of asking how much is $13 + 7$ he asks the boy how much is $10 + 10$. Vlastos holds that the boy, then, can give the answer. He argues that his example could actually replace the one provided by Plato without affecting the purpose of Plato's argument¹³.

Vlastos' argument is that the boy would have reached the correct answer through recollection, but without using the senses. Although on Vlastos' example, the answer to the question 'what is $13+7$?' does not directly start off through the senses, on Plato's own example, recollection, as a process, begins with the use of the senses. If Plato had wished to avoid giving the impression that the process of recollection must involve sense perception, he could have used an example of this kind. The fact that he chose not to suggest, at the very least, that he was not worried about giving this impression. Moreover, the fact that the particular arithmetical problem described by Vlastos could be handled without reference to sense perception, does not disprove the claim that sense perception plays an essential role in the recollection of mathematical truths. Plato could have argued that we learn to count by counting perceptible objects. Thus, without perception we could not grasp what the numbers are; we could not recollect the numbers. Once we have recovered knowledge of the numbers, there is no further need for perception.

Vlastos argues that reliance on the evidence of the senses is not a general feature of the 'recollecting' envisaged by Plato but is, at most, a special feature of the example of it he

¹³ G. Vlastos, 'Anamnesis in the *Meno*', *Dialogue* 4 (1965) 145-146.

happened to use in the *Meno*¹⁴. My disagreement with Vlastos' view is based on the examples of recollection that Plato provides us with, both here in the *Meno* and in the recollection argument of the *Phaedo* (74c-75e). There is no doubt that in the *Meno* he used the senses as a preliminary part of the process of recollection. For instance, when Socrates talks about the four-foot square he points to the diagram that he draws and the slave-boy can see (83 c-d). Plato uses phrases like: 'On *this* line we have a square that is four times bigger, do we not?' 'οὐχὶ ἀπὸ μὲν ταύτης τετραπλάσιον;' (83c5), or 'Now this four-foot square is based on this line here, half the length?' 'τετράπου δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμισείας ταυτησὶ τουτί;' (83c6), or 'The line on which the eight-foot square is based must then be longer than this one of two feet, and shorter than that one of four feet? - It must be.' 'Δεῖ ἄρα τὴν τοῦ ὀκτώποδος χωρίου γραμμὴν μείζω μὲν εἶναι τῆσδε τῆς δίποδος, ἐλάττω δὲ τῆς τετράποδος. - Δεῖ.' (83d4-6). This language suggests that he relies on the fact that the boy can see the diagrams. Thus, according to J. Klein the passage under discussion reads as 'the size of this space here [pointing to figure 1] is two feet long. What will be that of the other space which is double?' (82e). Again: 'and if you don't want to count, just show from what line [the double square will result]' (84a)¹⁵. Similarly, Guthrie argues that: 'what shows the slave-boy his errors, and the right answers, is not so much Socrates' questions as the diagrams themselves. When the square on the three-foot side is drawn, he can see at once that it contains nine square feet, not eight'¹⁶. Such a display of language then, explicitly shows that Socrates uses diagrams so as to enable the slave-boy to recollect. Thus, although the senses are not a reliable source for knowledge, the recollection process begins with the use of the senses; the senses are the means to start the process of recollection.

¹⁴Vlastos, 1965, pp. 148-149.

¹⁵J. Klein, *A Commentary On Plato's Meno*, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1965, p. 101.

¹⁶Guthrie, 1986, p. 109.

Vlastos' second example is what he refers to as a 'familiar conundrum' by which a man replies when asked what is his relation to the subject of a portrait. The answer provided is 'Brothers and sisters have I none; but this man's father is my father's son. Vlastos argues then that: 'Had Plato used an example of this sort, in the *Meno*, no one would have even dreamed of saying that the recollecting process gets results by relying on the evidence of the senses'¹⁷. I would like to raise two objections to this point. Firstly it should be noted that Plato did use the senses as part of his argument, here again, therefore, it is idle to speculate about the implication of an example he did not use. Secondly, Vlastos does not describe this example in sufficient detail to explain how it might be relevant to the specific problems of the *Meno*. He does not give us an imaginary dialogue between Socrates and the slave boy using this example. Neither does it make it clear quite how the example would relate to the recollection theory. He may be relying on the modern assumption that logical truths can be assimilated to mathematical truths. This would indeed imply that if the slave-boy could be brought to understand logical truths without perception, he could come to acquire knowledge of mathematical truths in the same way. But this line of argument would not be open to Plato because he did not have the concept of a logical truth. A more Platonic way of putting the point might be to suggest that Socrates use the conundrum to remind the slave-boy of the forms 'father', 'son', 'brother' and 'sister'. But Socrates could argue that solving the conundrum requires that one already have recollected these forms and that this recollection required perception. To put it in another way, it is easier to see the conundrum as part of the questioning that turns belief into knowledge rather than as part of the process of recollection.

¹⁷Vlastos, 1965, p. 148.

A further objection to my argument for the senses would be Cornford's view. He quite rightly takes the Forms as Plato's solution to Socrates' attempt to define universal terms; but he says that knowledge of them can not be distilled or extracted from the changing things of sense, but recovered out of a memory always latent in the soul¹⁸. Thus, on Cornford's view, to suppose that sense perception is a necessary condition of knowledge undermines the whole basis of Plato's epistemology. My reply to this is that although knowledge of the Forms is always innate, the element that triggers memory to start recollecting is the senses. Thus, although what the slave-boy recollects is not given by the senses, the senses nevertheless play as essential a part in the process as they would if the knowledge of the Forms was 'extracted' from the senses.

Consequently, although Plato's ultimate goal in the *Meno* is to prove that deductive knowledge is free from dependence on sense-experience,¹⁹ one can see that sense-experience is Plato's starting point.

One has to note here that I do not claim that in this dialogue Plato was interested in describing exactly the role of the senses. But if Plato did not take into account the role of the senses in a more detailed way that is because he did not need to for the purposes of the *Meno*. I do not wish to claim that the senses are essential for the *possession* of knowledge, what I claim is that they play an essential role in the *process* of acquiring knowledge. In this life one would not be able to acquire knowledge at all if one would not take into consideration the role of the senses²⁰. In other words, the senses are treated as means for achieving a further end.

¹⁸F. M. Cornford, 'Anamnesis', in Brown, M. (ed), *Plato's Meno*, New York, 1971, pp. 119-120

¹⁹Vlastos, 1965, p. 161.

²⁰This point will be pursued further in *Phaedo* and in *Timaeus*.

The question that arises now is whether Plato was aware of the importance of sense-experience in the process of recollection. The arguments I have used suggest that J. T. Bedu-Addo is correct when he disputes the view that in the first part of the slave-boy experiment Socrates could have dispensed completely with sensible diagrams. In his own words, Socrates seems to consider that sensible diagrams are an indispensable aid in the boy's recollection of what the enquiry is about, the square itself²¹.

Similarly, he says that, the slave-boy experiment, with its conspicuous use of sensible diagrams, is Plato's way of preparing his readers for what is to come in the *Phaedo*; that sensible particulars are images of Forms, and that we obtain all our conceptions of the Forms from no other source than from sense-experience (*Phaedo* 75a)²². Furthermore Addo argues that what Plato says in the *Phaedo* is that careful questioning indicates that knowledge is innate and can be recollected, but that this is so is shown most clearly when visible aids are introduced to supplement this questioning. Thus, the *Phaedo* indicates that Plato in the *Meno* was conscious of the importance of sense-experience in the process of recollection²³. While we do not need to accept the implication that the *Meno* is designed as a preparation for the *Phaedo*, Bedu-Addo is clearly right to point out that in both dialogues recollection is triggered by sense perception. The resemblance between the two dialogues on this respect can hardly be a pure coincidence.

²¹J. T. Bedu-Addo, 'Sense Experience And Recollection In Plato's *Meno*', *American Journal of Philology* 104 (1983) 238.

²²Bedu-Addo, p. 240.

²³Bedu-Addo p. 243.

Virtue and Knowledge

This interpretation is confirmed by the last part of *Meno* where Socrates discusses again the issue of whether virtue can be taught. Since, he claims, we do not know either what it is or what qualities it possesses, he proposes to investigate whether it is teachable or not by means of a hypothesis. The first question then is: 'Among the things existing in the soul, what sort is virtue, that it should be teachable or not?' (87b-c). He asks in other words, what sort of attribute of the soul virtue must be, if it is to be teachable. In posing this question he makes it clear that being teachable and being recollectable come to the same thing. Meno readily agrees that if virtue is knowledge, it will be teachable, while if it is some other kind of thing it will not be teachable. Socrates claims that all things either benefit or harm us, because of the soul's direction (88 c-d), and that: 'all other human activities depend on the soul, and those of the soul itself depend on wisdom if they are to be good' (88d). Socrates then argues that virtue is a good thing and must therefore be beneficial. So, he concludes that virtue must be wisdom and that it is therefore knowledge.

Socrates' next point, in connection with his and Meno's original hypothesis, is to see whether they would be right to accept this conclusion; that virtue is knowledge (89d). Socrates uses as a necessary condition for virtue to be knowledge, the fact that there should be people who teach it and people who learn it. It should be noted, however, that Socrates' need for such a condition can be resolved by claiming that if by teachable we mean recollectable, then the relation between a teacher and a learner is not necessary. At 84c-d Socrates explicitly denies that he is teaching the slave-boy, so, evidently teaching is not necessary for recollection. Moreover, the fact that there are no

teachers or learners of something does not necessarily imply that the subject cannot be taught - or recollected, it only shows that it is not in fact taught.

Socrates then includes Anytus in the discussion. Anytus holds that: 'Any Athenian gentleman he [Meno] may meet, if he is willing to be persuaded, will make him a better man than the sophists would' (92e). This claim of Anytus is supported by his belief that there are many good men in this city [in Athens]. The crucial distinction made here, is that although Anytus sees the Athenians as 'good men' in general, Socrates specifies it; they seem 'good at public affairs' (93a). What needs to be noticed, here, is the distinction between the general term 'good' - what Plato later will define as the Form of good - and a particular instance of goodness; good at public affairs. This is significant since it enables one to clarify what might seem a contradiction between the conclusion that Socrates reaches at 94e: 'Virtue can certainly not be taught', with his earlier point that: 'If virtue is a kind of knowledge, it is clear that it could be taught' (87c). The fact that there are no teachers of virtue suggests that virtue is distinct from any ordinary τέχνη. But Plato may be determining that there is some other kind of knowledge.

After stating again that virtue cannot be taught (96c), Socrates claims that: 'It is not only under the guidance of knowledge that men succeed in their affairs, and that is perhaps why the knowledge of how good men come to be escapes us' (96e). Then, what Socrates says that is incorrect is his and Meno's agreement that: 'one cannot guide correctly if one does not have knowledge' (97a). What Plato tries to show here is that for everyday, ordinary activity one does not need knowledge to be able to guide correctly. This is proven by his example of the road to Larissa where it is shown that true opinion is in no way a worse guide to correct action than knowledge. Hence, the

only difference between the true opinion and knowledge in practical affairs is that the former is not stable; does not 'remain', while the later does.

The *Meno* concludes with a very important remark. When Socrates says that: 'because it cannot be taught, virtue no longer seems to be knowledge' (99a), he is not interested in virtue as the Form, but in what all men are capable of possessing; instances, true opinions of virtue. This point becomes clearer at the very end of the dialogue: 'Virtue would be neither an inborn quality nor taught, but comes to those who possess it as a gift from the gods which is not accompanied by understanding, unless there is someone among the statesmen who can make another into a statesman. If there were one, he could be said to be among the living as Homer said Tiresias was among the dead, namely, that "he alone retained his wits while the others flitted about like shadows"'²⁴ (99e-100a)²⁵. Plato's argument, then, points to the fact that true virtue is not simply a τέχνη acquired by experience, at the same time though, it is something we reveal in our everyday life as embodied beings. So, virtue requires that we are neither purely souls nor purely matter.

Thus, although the soul-body relation is not discussed at all in the *Meno*, through the recollection argument as well as the belief-knowledge distinction Plato indicates the need for an agent that will be able a) to combine the use of the senses and the actual recollection of something other than what is given through the senses, and b) to be involved in both beliefs formed due to sense-experience, and in knowledge acquired on its own. The soul is thus required if Plato wants to find something able to be in contact with both the Forms and the senses.

²⁴*Odyssey* x 494-95.

²⁵This can be used as a comparison with *Republic* Book VII 514-517, the cave image.

What is in fact happening in the *Meno* is that Meno's attempts to describe virtue in every day terms are proven not to work. So, he prepares the ground for Socrates to move to a different level; that of virtue as an objective value. At the same time, though these two levels cannot be distinct; man needs to be in contact with both. It seems then that we are left perplexed.

Hence, although in this dialogue, Plato does not refer explicitly to the Forms, when Plato refers to the soul's existence before birth, what the soul is in connection with, is something outside sense-experience. At the same time, although the soul exists independently of whether it is embodied or not, when embodied it is in interaction with the body; during this embodied life it is the soul which is capable, by using the senses, to trigger its memory and start recollecting. In other words, it is the soul along with the help of the body that enables one to acquire true beliefs and ultimately knowledge. So, if Plato accepts man to be the intermediate between the world of the Forms and the material world, he needs to attribute to man a soul, a soul able to use sense perception as the first step to reach knowledge²⁶.

²⁶This issue will be explained further on the chapter on *Timaeus*.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter dealt with these two early dialogues of Plato so as to show that they help as a preliminary illustration of Plato's view on the soul-body relation as an interaction. Although neither of the above dialogues explicitly refers to the issue of soul-body interrelation, both dialogues seem to stress the need for a soul that acts as the agent. The soul is the only one able to combine this world with whatever exists after or beyond it.

In particular, in the *Gorgias* a number of passages raise questions about the nature of the soul and its interrelation with the body. Firstly, through the discussion on the roles of gymnastics and law giving for one's life, what is emphasised is the preservation and enhancement of the equilibrium for soul and body. Under this spectrum medicine and judicial justice are discussed; they have to do with restoring equilibrium when it is disturbed. Moreover, through the distinction between real and apparent states of health for both soul and body, Plato not only points towards the existence of a kind of order in general, but also indicates that there is a relation between soul and body; that of the former governing the latter. This notion is further explored under the issue of punishment where it is indicated that the body is punished for the improvement of the soul. Finally, the self-control notion, as is further stressed through the jars image, implies the existence of a soul that is complex; since in order to talk of something as being organised or disorganised, that something must consist of at least two elements. In that way Plato needs the soul to interact with the body, due to appetites, but at the same time introduces the notion of the soul itself being complex, which will lead to his tripartite notion of the soul in the *Republic*.

In the *Meno*, now, Plato's arguments not only suggest the existence of a soul, but also need the soul to be in close contact with the body, on the one hand, and able to acquire knowledge - of the Forms - on the other. In particular, the recollection argument shows that the senses play an essential role in the slave-boy's recall. Although Plato does not yet attribute sense-experience to the soul, it is evident that even if one's beliefs about ethical or mathematical notions are innate, in this life they are not realised until one uses perception. In other words, although Plato states that it is the soul that is in contact with the beliefs when disembodied, he also needs the soul, when embodied, to start from the senses and reach knowledge. Hence, although the soul is something distinct from the body; capable of existing in an independent way, it is still operating along with the body; the body is the recipient of any sensory stimulus, which the soul categorises through recollection. Thus, the importance of the uses of the senses within the recollection argument lies on the fact that the senses show that a particular relation is required between the soul and the body.

If my hypothesis that recollection as a process necessarily starts from a sensory stimulus is correct, then, the gap between the body, through which the senses are realised, and the soul, that recollects, cannot be a wide one. Plato through the recollection argument argues for a soul that is in contact both with this sensory world and with a world before/after death. This is not achievable though if we are talking about a completely immaterial soul that happens to be 'placed' in a body. Plato faced the same difficulty that of relating an immaterial soul to a body in the *Gorgias*, but there the problems that arose were of an ethical nature. The question then of how the soul relates to the body, that is found in both the dialogues discussed as well as in the *Phaedo* dialogue that follows, Plato is set to solve in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*.

Phaedo

Plato's *Phaedo*, since it involves more than one notion of the soul, is one of the most controversial dialogues for the body-soul relation in Plato. As a result, searching for a coherent view about the body-soul relation seems rather unpromising. What I intend to achieve in this chapter is precisely to point out the different notions of the soul and to give a particular interpretation of the soul-body relation as it emerges from the *Phaedo*. The main goal therefore will be to show that the different concepts of soul invoked in *Phaedo* indicate that the relation between soul and body cannot be as simple as one might understand it to be from a first reading of the dialogue. A traditionally dualistic view of the relation between body and soul cannot adequately incorporate Plato's view about body and soul. Thus, the emphasis will be laid on showing that Plato requires a relation that in a sense goes beyond one that treats soul and body as separate substances that happen to be together.

Socrates, in order to answer Cebes and Simmias' point regarding the issue of death, he is set to defend his view that death is the separation of soul and body (64c). He thus states that 'a man who has truly spent his life in philosophy is probably right to be of good cheer in the face of death and to be very hopeful that after death he will attain the greatest blessings yonder' (63e). He, thus, moves to his next point; namely, that the body is a hindrance to the search for knowledge. The body is 'an obstacle when one associates with it in the search of knowledge' (65b). Hence, he argues that: 'the soul reasons best when none of these senses troubles it... but when it is most by itself, taking leave of the body and as far as possible having no contact or association with it in its search for reality' (65c). In other words, Socrates claims that the philosopher should welcome death because he seeks true wisdom, which is knowledge of the Forms (65d-

66a). This, in effect, sets out the view of the soul that Socrates is to defend in much more detail. So far as we are concerned it implies that body and soul are distinct, that they are capable of independent existence, that the soul alone can achieve genuine knowledge, and that the sensations and feelings of the body can be a hindrance to knowledge.

The Cyclical Argument

When Socrates is challenged to defend the claim that the soul exists and possesses intelligence after death (70b), the first argument he offers is the so-called 'cyclical argument'. To show that the souls of men who have died exist in the underworld, he refers to an 'ancient theory': 'souls arrive in the underworld from this life and then again they arrive here from the dead' (70c). The concept of a cycle, from being born to being dead and then reborn, reminds us the Heraclitean idea that there is an absolute continuity of change in everything; 'Upon those that step into the same rivers different and different waters flow... They scatter and ... gather ... come together and flow away... approach and depart' (Arius Didymus ap. Eusebium P. E. xv, 20, K. R. S. 12)¹. Plato could also be influenced by the Pythagorean eschatology according to which the soul is not only subject to death and rebirth, but it is also liable to judgement². This is a repeatedly used idea in Plato's eschatological myths.

Presumably under the influence of the above views, Plato aims to prove the soul's existence both before birth and after death. As Gallop points out, this commits him to

¹For the Heraclitean idea of the necessity of change in order to achieve total balance in the world; see Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 193-195.

²For the Pythagorean view see Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp. 235-238.

the possibility of the soul's separate existence³, or as Socrates puts it: 'if it is true that the living come back from the dead, then surely our souls must exist there, for they could not come back if they did not exist' (70c-d). In order to prove that life comes from death and death from life, Socrates first argues that all things come to be from their opposites. This alludes directly to the Heraclitean doctrine of opposites; fragments like 'the path up and down is one and the same' (Plutarch Cons. ad Apoll. 10, 106e, K. R. S. 200) indicate the connection between opposites that was important for Heraclitus' view of the world⁴. Plato, then, being influenced by the above mentioned view, examines: 'whether those that have an opposite must necessarily come to be from their opposite and from nowhere else' (70e). To illustrate this point, Socrates uses pairs of opposites such as 'the beautiful' and 'the ugly', 'the just' and 'the unjust'. In the same way that what becomes smaller must previously have been larger so the better must come from the worse and the more just from the more unjust⁵. In each case, there are two kinds of change. For example between larger and smaller there is increase and diminution (71b). Socrates develops this point by means of a parallel between 'living' and 'being awake', and 'being dead' and 'sleeping'

(71c). Socrates gives to Cebes one of the above pairs along with the two processes involved, and asks Cebes to provide the other pair and its processes. The opposites are: being dead and being alive, and they come to be from one another; from being alive

³ D. Gallop, *Plato: Phaedo*, Clarendon press, Oxford 1975, p. 104.

⁴ See further Kirk, Raven and Schofield, pp.188-190.

⁵ Although Plato introduces his argument about opposites with the examples of 'the beautiful' and 'the ugly', 'the just' and 'the unjust', he goes on to illustrate it with comparatives. The examples used are the following: A) The smaller comes to be from the larger. B) The weaker comes to be from the stronger. C) The swifter comes to be from the slower. This actually strengthens Plato's argument: 'Socrates could hardly infer from a thing's coming to be weak that it must previously have been strong, for it might have been neither. But he can plausibly argue that if a thing comes to be weaker (than it was before), it must previously have been stronger (than it is now)'. But, as Gallop himself states, no argument relying entirely upon comparatives could support the claim that 'all things come to be in this way, opposites from opposites' (71a), since there are some opposites (odd and even) which have no comparatives.

comes being dead, and from being dead comes being alive (71d). Thus, Socrates concludes firstly that: 'living creatures and things come to be from the dead' (71d), and secondly that: our souls exist in the underworld' (71e). Having argued then for the one of the processes; the process of dying, Socrates provides Cebes with the second one; coming to life again (71e). Since Socrates and Cebes agreed that: 'the living come from the dead in this way no less than the dead come from the living' they think that the above is: '...a sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must be somewhere whence they come back again' (72a). There is a striking parallel here with Heraclitus' fragment 88: 'And the same thing there exists in us living and dead and the waking and sleeping and young and old; for these things having changed round are those, and those having changed round are these' (K. R. Sc. 202).

One difficulty that arises from these examples is how to define the opposites: as contrary or as contradictory objects. Gallop argues that the opposites that Plato uses should be treated as contrary opposites rather than contradictory. In other words, they may not be truthfully asserted of a subject at the same time, but they may both truthfully be denied⁶. This is relevant to the argument about 'living' and 'dead'. Gallop holds that 'living' and 'dead' may both be truthfully denied of a subject. Thus to say that something is not alive does not imply that it is dead. We cannot therefore infer that the living come from the dead. He uses the example of 'married' and 'divorced' as an analogy to living and dead. He argues that just as someone not yet married cannot be divorced, so something not yet living cannot be dead. Thus, although living and dead are in a sense, opposites, it does not follow that the living must come from the dead.

⁶ Gallop, 1975, p. 7.

Although I agree with Gallop that the 'living' and 'dead' opposites should be treated as contrary opposites I think that when Plato talks about the living coming from the dead, he has in mind a picture of afterlife within which the souls are not completely reduced to nothing. But such an explanation of 'living' and 'dead' brings up another problem for Plato, namely that of begging the question. If 'living' and 'dead' are not contradictory opposites, and the not yet living is not dead, Plato's argument is shown to be fallacious because it could be possible for something to be neither living nor dead. So, Plato begs the question to which he is supposed to be giving an answer.

In order to prove that: 'the souls of men who have died exist in the underworld' (70c), Plato makes an important addition. He argues that there should be a process of becoming from each opposite into the other. He says: '...between each of those two pairs of opposites there are two processes: from one to the other and then again from the other to the first; between the larger and the smaller there is increase and decrease...' (71b). The example that Plato uses is a parallel between 'living' and 'being awake', and 'being dead' and 'sleeping' (71c). Socrates gives to Cebes one of the above pairs along with the two processes involved, and asks Cebes to provide the other pair and its processes. The opposites are being dead and being alive, and from being dead comes being alive (71d). Thus, Socrates concludes firstly that: 'living creatures and things come to be from the dead' (71d), and secondly that: 'our souls exist in the underworld' (71e). Having argued then for the one of the processes; the process of dying, Socrates provides Cebes with the second one; coming to life again (71e). Since Socrates and Cebes agreed that: 'the living come from the dead in this way no less than the dead from the living' they think that the above is '... a sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must be somewhere whence they come back again' (72a). It should be pointed out, though, that the process of coming-to-be seems to introduce a

further argument to show that the living are born from the dead⁷. Gallop's objection to Plato is that: 'from a thing's coming to be alive, the proper inference is not that it was previously dead, but that it did not exist previously at all'. He further argues that: 'the sense of 'come to be alive' required for the argument is not that in which a living thing comes into being, but that in which a soul 'becomes incarnate' in a living body. Yet it cannot do this unless it already exists before birth or conception. And whether it does so or not is just what is at issue'⁸. Thus Plato's argument, as was shown before, is fallacious. The point that is of interest for this thesis, however, is not so much whether Plato's argument is fallacious or not, but rather that in fact it implies the inherent Platonic belief that the soul exists before being incarnated. This in turn implies that, whatever the soul is, it is capable of existing in complete independence from any body. Plato, thus, seems to treat the soul's connection to any particular body as a contingent and temporary matter.

Plato then introduces a further point of argument in favour of the circularity of the two processes of becoming: 'If the two processes of becoming did not always balance each other as if they were going round in a circle, but generation proceeded from one point to its opposite in a straight line and it did not turn back again... all things would ultimately have the same form, be affected in the same way, and cease to become' (72b). In particular, Plato wants to argue that if everything that partakes life were to die and remain in that state and not come to life again, everything would ultimately have to be dead and nothing alive (72c-d). If that were the case: 'Even if the living came from another source, and not all that lived died, how could all things avoid being absorbed in death?' (72d). If we assume that there is a finite number of souls - or a finite quantity

⁷ Gallop, 1975, p. 109.

⁸ Gallop, 1975, pp. 109-110.

of material out of which souls are to be made - then Plato would be right. If that were the case, it would follow that either souls pass from one body to another or that there will come a point when there are no more souls waiting to come into life. One could of course argue against Plato's conclusion by saying either that souls do not have to be created out of anything, or by taking a materialistic view; arguing that coming to life and dying are physical processes which simply involve the rearrangement of material elements⁹. But neither position seems to express Plato's view. Although in the *Phaedo* he is not concerned with such implications, in later dialogues he seems aware of them and tries to present a view where the soul could be treated as finite immaterial 'substance'¹⁰.

The upshot of this is that the cyclical argument commits Plato to saying that the soul can exist separately from the body, but, unfortunately, does not provide us with a clear view of what is the nature of the soul that reincarnates. Moreover, he says nothing concerning its embodiment, whether, and how, the soul is supposed to interact with the body. He does not even explain what comprised the personality of each individual, whether the soul is the person or the combination of a particular body to the soul. It is made clear, though, that the soul cannot be identified with any particular body. It mostly seems to suggest a view of 'soul' as a substance of which there is a finite quantity, and is reincarnated. Plato's first argument thus seems to be incomplete. The unanswered questions seem to be picked up in the next argument of the *Phaedo*.

⁹Plato solves the above vagueness in the *Timaeus* where the souls are created by the demiurge but not out of the same matter as the body and the lower parts of soul.

¹⁰Namely, in the *Republic* he holds that the souls are reincarnated, but only the souls of the laymen, not the philosophers'. In the *Timaeus* - where the soul is part of the universe - all souls are made by the demiurge and are as many as the stars.

The Recollection Argument

The main objective of this thesis is to evaluate the relation of body and soul as it stands for Plato. Therefore, the analysis and interpretation of the recollection argument is of major importance because it links the theory of Forms with the notion of the immortality of the soul; it is supposed to show that we existed before birth. What makes this evident, is that there is something which we know and which we could not have learned after birth; namely the Forms. Another important feature of the argument is that it implies the need for a particular relation between the world of the senses and that of the Forms. This in turn has certain implications for the relation between body and soul.

The argument begins with the claim that: 'if it is true that learning is no other than recollection; ... we must at some previous time have learned what we now recollect. This is possible only if our soul existed somewhere before it took on this human shape. So, ... the soul is likely to be something immortal' (72e-73a). The first point of reference to support the above-mentioned claim is the argument that: 'when men are interrogated in the right manner, they always give the right answer... they could not do this if they did not possess the knowledge and the right explanation inside them. Then if one shows them a diagram or something else of that kind, this will show most clearly that such is the case' (73a-b). This argument directly refers back to *Meno* (*Meno* 81e ff.) where the slave-boy is shown to recollect through the use of diagrams. Its significance then has to do with the assumption of acquisition of knowledge before birth, but even more so with the implication of the role of the senses after birth. As was argued in the analysis of the *Meno*, for one to recollect in this life what one once knew, one has to start from the senses. The senses are the necessary means in this life for

recollection. Evidence for this interpretation will be provided by my analysis of the recollection argument as Plato sets it up.

The recollection argument does not only seek to prove the soul's existence before birth, but it also implies a specific definition of knowledge. That is, it makes both a metaphysical and an epistemological point. The fact that within the recollection argument Plato implies a particular definition of knowledge is shown in the following passage. When Plato says: 'a man sees or hears or in some other way perceives one thing and not only knows that thing but also thinks of another thing of which the knowledge is not the same but different, are we not right to say that he recollects the second thing that comes to mind?' (73c-d), he implies that there are two different kinds of knowledge, one coming directly from sense perception, the other emerging through means different to the senses. The following examples illustrate recollection not only from like things but also from unlike, for example: a) the recollection of a man on seeing his lyre, b) the recollection of Cebes on seeing Simmias, c) the recollection of Simmias himself on seeing a picture of Simmias (73d-e). Plato argues that in the case of recollection from like things, one should 'consider whether the similarity to that which one recollects is deficient in any respect or complete' (74a). The argument proceeds with the affirmation that there is such a thing as an absolute equality, the Equal itself. The crucial question then is: 'Whence have we acquired the knowledge of it?' (74b). Therefore, the distinction is made between things that sometimes appear equal and sometimes unequal, and Equality itself: 'Do not equal stones and sticks sometimes, while remaining the same, appear to be equal to one and unequal to another?', 'ἀρ' οὐ λίθοι μὲν ἴσοι καὶ ξύλα ἐνίοτε ταῦτ' ὄντα τῷ μὲν ἴσα φαίνεται, τῷ δ' οὐ;' (74b). The precise meaning of this sentence is unclear. It could read either 'seems equal to one person and not to another', or 'seems equal to one thing but not to

another'¹¹. Since the text itself is ambiguous, either interpretation is possible. I am inclined to hold, though, the second one, because it seems to fit better with what follows. The next question that Socrates asks is whether the equals themselves have ever appeared unequal to Simmias, or Equality to be Inequality (74c). If Plato wanted to argue for the first alternative, that of equal stones and sticks appearing equal to one person and not to another, he would have formed the question that follows in a different way. Namely, if the former question had been a matter of different perspectives, similarly the latter would have been too. Thus, since Socrates does not challenge Simmias' second answer, one can assume that Plato must have had in mind the second reading of the 74b passage¹². The importance of this passage for this thesis, though, lies mainly in the relation that Plato portrays between particular cases of equal sticks and stones and the Form of Equality.

With the use of this example, Plato shows both that equal things and the Equal itself are not the same, and that, at the same time, one has grasped the knowledge of equality from the equal things. He argues: 'But it is definitely from the equal things, though they are different from the Equal, that you have derived and grasped the knowledge of equality' (74c). Thus, not only is one provided with two kinds of knowledge - one concerning the equal things and the other having to do with Equality - but also with the need for a kind of relation between the two. This is implicit in Plato's claim that from the former, one can reach the latter. This need is further emphasised by the realisation

¹¹ There is also a variant reading, which would give the meaning 'seems equal at one time but not at another'. See further R. S. Bluck, 'Plato's Form of Equal', *Phronesis* 4, no. 1 (1959) 5-11. On the general ambiguity concerning 'αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα' see for example David Apolloni, 'Notes and Discussions: A Note on Auta Ta Isa at *Phaedo* 74', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 27 (1989) 127-134; Richard P. Haynes, 'The form of equality, as a set of equals: *Phaedo* 74b-c', *Phronesis* 9 (1964) 17-26; K. W. Mills, 'Plato's *Phaedo*, 74b7-c6', *Phronesis* 2, no.1 (1957) 128-147; Nicholas D. Smith, 'The Various Equals at *Phaedo* 74b-c', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 18 (1980) 1-7.

¹² The second reading, 'seems equal to one thing but not to another', is also supported by evidence found in the *Symposium* and the *Republic*. See further David Bostock, *Plato's Phaedo*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1986, pp. 72-78, and Gallop, 1975, pp. 120-123.

that equal things fall short of Equality: 'Whenever someone, on seeing something, realises that that which he now sees wants to be like some other reality but falls short and cannot be like that other since it is inferior, the one who thinks this must have prior knowledge of that which he says it is like, but deficiently so' (74d-e). It should be noted here that Plato explicitly states that since one's sense perception makes him realise that everything perceived through the senses is striving to reach that which is Equal but falls short of it, the knowledge of the Equal itself must have been possessed before one began to see, hear, or perceive in any way (75b). What Plato indicates then, is that sense perception is not adequate to provide one with knowledge thus one needs something more. This is the path through which Plato reaches the conclusion that: a) firstly one had knowledge of all things to which one can attach the word 'itself' before birth, b) secondly lost it at birth, c) and later through the use of the senses one recovered the knowledge he had before (75d-e). Plato's argument seems to indicate that in order to be able to recollect one must use his senses; recollection would not be possible without the use of the senses. The process he describes is one that makes it 'possible for someone to see or hear or otherwise perceive something, and by this to be put in mind of something else which he had forgotten and which is related to it by similarity or difference' (76a). A point to note here is the ambiguity created from the above phrase. As I read the text it says that the use of the senses starts one recollecting; it does not suggest that anything other than the senses can trigger off recollection. What Plato seems to have in mind here is that through the use of the senses, which is what man always does in this life, there are times that ones starts of the process of recollection; namely, there can be no other way to start recollecting.

The last claim made is that our souls acquire the knowledge of the Forms before birth: 'Then before we began to see or hear or otherwise perceive, we must have possessed

knowledge of the Equal itself if we were about to refer our sense perceptions of equal objects to it, and realised that all of them were eager to be like it, but were inferior.' (75b). The argument continues, 'but we began to see and hear and otherwise perceive right after birth... we must then have acquired the knowledge of the Equal before this' (75b-c). This is how Plato concludes that our souls must have existed before they were in the form of man and they had intelligence: '...our souls also existed apart from the body before they took on human form, and also they had intelligence' (76c). This is then how Plato treats the recollection argument.

In order to interpret the argument analysed above, one has to consider two main points: a) the notions that Plato accepts as already presupposed, and b) the difficulties created by these assumptions. The first point that Plato seems to take for granted is the existence of the Forms. When Socrates asks Simmias: '... the Equal itself. Shall we say that it exists or not?' Simmias' answer is: 'Indeed we shall ... most definitely' '... αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον φεῶμεν τι εἶναι ἢ μηδέν;' 'Φεῶμεν μὲντοι νῆ Δί', ἔφη ὁ Σιμμίας, θαυμαστῶς γε.' (74a-b). Since Plato's concern is to show that the world of the senses is not adequate for knowledge, this is an important prerequisite for his theory. For Plato, then, to start thinking of such a case, he must at least consider the possibility of the existence of something beyond the senses to enable one to attain knowledge. This was already presupposed when he said that: 'For if it is impossible to attain any pure knowledge from the body, then one of two things is true: either we can never attain knowledge or we can do so after death. Then and not before, the soul is by itself apart from the body' (66e-67a).

Plato's claim is quite complicated at this stage and needs special attention; the first implication is that if one does not recognise the Forms, one would not be able to attain

knowledge. If the senses cannot provide one with the certainty required for knowledge, and if there is nothing else to compare the information that one gets from the senses with, then knowledge would not be possible. Therefore the existence of the Forms is necessary for one to have knowledge. But, this presupposition of Plato creates difficulties for the validity of the recollection argument: If the body is the part of man that deals with the senses, and if the information provided by the senses is not adequate for knowledge, then one needs another element; the soul, that will enable him to attain knowledge. It is implied then that the soul exists as something different from the body. At this point, then, I am faced with what is most probably the greatest difficulty in *Phaedo*; Plato is faced with the fallacy of circular argument. In the Recollection argument Plato wants to prove the soul's existence before birth through the help of the Forms, but as was pointed out above one's awareness of the Forms' existence can come only through the soul; to know the Forms one should be able to detach oneself from anything material, and that implies the existence of the soul separate from the body. This is so, because as Plato argued earlier, 66e-67a, either we can never attain knowledge or we can do so after death. Thus, only the soul is able to know the Forms and only after death. The way the Forms are presented by Plato, as being completely distinct from the material world, makes it impossible for one, in this life, to have knowledge¹³. Whether, thus, one is able to know the Forms in this life, is a question that remains unanswered.

The first question that should be examined, then, within the recollection argument is what is the particular relation between sense perception and knowledge. If one takes recollection as a process, the role of the senses within it is crucial¹⁴. The notion of

¹³ As Bostock argues (p. 90), 'it is we who want to know what the Form is, and we who should therefore like the particulars to tell us. But that they can not do, simply because they are not the form'.

¹⁴ A similar point is held in the *Meno*.

recollection, the remembering act, seems to indicate the existence of a different kind of knowledge, it implies a mental activity that is distinct from the acquisition of anything through the senses; the knowledge of the Forms. On the other hand, when Plato refers to seeing a lyre, seeing Simmias, seeing the picture of a horse or seeing the picture of Simmias, he talks about knowledge that comes straight from empirical means; the senses. Hence, there is an important transition made within the recollection process; the senses are necessary as the stimuli to recollect, but they do not provide one with knowledge of the final recollected object. Because recollection involves being reminded of something by perceiving something else, in order to be able to recollect, one needs the senses as a starting point. Hence, the distinction made by Plato between two different kinds of knowledge is important: 'When a man sees or hears or in some other way perceives one thing and not only knows that thing but also thinks of another thing of which the knowledge is not the same but different, are we not right to say that he recollects the second thing that comes to mind?' (73c). Here Plato makes an explicit distinction between the knowledge which one acquires by perceiving something, empirical knowledge, and the knowledge which comes to one's mind by thinking something.

It should be noted here then, that recollection is to be seen as a process, and that the senses are the means that trigger off this process. Therefore, the important point for this thesis is that recollection cannot be achieved without the necessary stimuli provided by the senses. This, though, does not mean that recollection is achieved by the use of the senses alone. Statements like that would not be meaningful for Plato, since his main

concern is to show that there are two kinds of knowledge¹⁵. Following Plato's examples closely, one can see the difficulty that arises in distinguishing two kinds of knowledge. For instance, Gallop argues that in the cases of a) seeing a man's lyre and remembering the man, and b) seeing a picture of Simmias and being reminded of Simmias, the question that arises is whether the thing thought of and the thing perceived are objects of 'another knowledge'. In the case of recognising the lyre, he argues whether 'recognising' consists merely in recognising the instrument as a lyre, or as its owner's lyre. If one recognises the lyre as its owner's lyre, he argues, then one must be already thinking of the boy [the owner] in recognising the lyre as his. The same point is made for the example of Simmias and his picture. In recognising the picture as one of him, it seems that one should necessarily be thinking of Simmias himself. Gallop then raises the question whether the thing thought of and the thing perceived are in this case objects of 'another knowledge'¹⁶, and claims that this bears on the latter suggestion that sensible equals 'remind' us of Equality. His claim then is that the Form and its instances would not then be objects of 'another knowledge' and the conditions for our being reminded of the former by the latter would not be met.

Gallop's objection can be met, though, if one brings in mind Plato's examples: '...whenever they see a lyre ... that their beloved is accustomed to use, they know the lyre, and the image of the boy to whom it belongs come into their mind' (73d). Likewise, Plato argues that by 'seeing a picture of Simmias, recollect Simmias himself' (73e). Therefore, Gallop seems to disregard Plato's emphasis on the role of the senses. Plato is not distinguishing between recognising the lyre and thinking of its owner, nor

¹⁵Scott (1995, p. 62, and notes 9&10) argues that although perception is necessary condition for thinking of the Form, we need not - and should not - take this as saying that perception instils knowledge of the Form, merely that use of the senses is a necessary condition for gaining knowledge, i.e. that to start the process off, we must have our memories jogged by sensible stimuli.

¹⁶Gallop, 1975, p. 116, note on 73c4-d11.

does he distinguish between recognising Simmias' picture as his and recollecting Simmias. What he is distinguishing between, is seeing the lyre and the picture, which is knowledge acquired from perceiving the empirical data, and being reminded of the lyre's owner and of Simmias himself; the acquisition of a particular reasoning that goes beyond sense-perception.

The recognition of the lyre, as the owner's lyre, as well as the recognition of Simmias' picture as his, can be taken as belonging a step further from the sense perception within the recollection process. The sense-stimuli provide one with one kind of knowledge while the recognition along with the recollection provides one with another. If I were to analyse Plato's examples, two points would be of importance. Firstly, by looking at the example of being reminded of Simmias by his lyre, there seem to be three stages; a) pure sense perception, I see something, b) conceptualisation - that is a lyre, and c) recollection - that is Simmias' lyre. The same stages apply to the example of seeing Cebes and being reminded of Simmias. Presumably, though, Plato really thinks that the conceptualisation involves recollection of the Form. Bostock, in an attempt to explain the workings of the recollection argument, brings forth a distinction between description and evaluation so as to argue that, terms such as 'good' or 'just' or 'beautiful' cannot be terms whose meaning is given directly by paradigm examples. He thus, states that, to this extent, it seems to him that Plato was entirely right¹⁷. Bostock, though, does not commit himself in accepting that we must have born with an understanding of the relevant concepts¹⁸. In other words, he does not want to commit himself on whether Plato was right to claim that in this world our sole source of knowledge is perception. I would like to argue though, that Bostock here pays no

¹⁷ Bostock, p. 109.

¹⁸ Bostock, p.109.

attention to the fact that what Plato seems to be thinking as a solution, is the introduction of the Forms. Thus, although Plato does not himself provide us with a process that involves the three stages, sense perception, conceptualisation and recollection, he seems to have something like it in mind. The introduction of the Forms, thus, is Plato's solution to making the transition, from the one stage to the next, possible. Unfortunately, though, the recollection argument does not by itself explain the relation between the knowledge gained through the senses and that obtained through reasoning. What it states is that from the senses one can reach the object of reasoning. But even this statement is quite vague, since the only thing that one knows is that the senses act as the stimuli for recollection. What one needs therefore, is a common element, something that would make it possible to combine sense perception and reasoning.

This need for a combination between sense perception and reasoning is further emphasised by Plato's claim that knowledge of the Forms in this life is derived and grasped from particulars. He argues that: 'it is definitely from the equal things, though they are different from that Equal, that you have derived and grasped the knowledge of equality' (74c). Similarly: 'Then surely we also agree that this conception of ours [the Equal] derives from seeing or touching or some other sense-perception, and cannot come into our mind in any other way, for all these senses... are the same' (75a). Plato firstly takes as given the existence of the Form of Equality: '... we say that there is something that is the Equal itself' (74a), and argues that: 'From seeing sticks or stones or some other things that are equal, we come to think of that other [Equality] which is different from them' (74b), and insists that one grasps knowledge of the Forms from particulars. When he asks: 'When have we acquired the knowledge of it?' (74b), one must keep in mind both Plato's concern with the way in which one gets knowledge of

the Forms in this life, as well as with the significance of the role of the senses to the acquisition of knowledge of the Forms. Socrates says that we acquire knowledge of the Forms through the senses, and Gallop suggests two interpretations. The first is that we acquired the concept of Equality from sensible equals. But he objects that this would be a jejune answer to a complex empirical question; 'Much more would need to be said about how we learned to compare and measure sensible things in order to judge them equal'¹⁹. The second interpretation is that Socrates is talking about the philosophical clarification of concepts. To this Gallop objects that his insistence that we could acquire knowledge of the Form 'Equal' only from sensing particular equals must seem surprising 'in view of his continual disparagement of the senses'²⁰. He appears to see the senses as 'nothing but a hindrance in the quest for Forms'²¹. The solution that I intend to propose in this thesis could be seen as a way to escape the above two difficulties. By sensing the particulars one can indeed acquire knowledge of the Forms, but in an indirect way. The recollection argument provides one with the opportunity not to disparage the senses and at the same time not to accept them as both the necessary and sufficient means to knowledge of the Forms. The sensing of the particulars enables one to start the process of recollection; they do not immediately provide one with knowledge of the Forms. Thus, by seeing equal sticks or stones, one can recollect the Form of Equality. It should be pointed out, though, that since one needs sense perception to gain knowledge of the Forms, Plato's theory needs an element able to make the transition from sensing particulars to knowing the Forms. If then, as it was indicated, it is the soul that has knowledge, then it is the soul that must have sense perception, which will enable it to recollect the Forms.

¹⁹ Gallop, 1975, p. 121.

²⁰ Gallop, *ibid.*

²¹ Gallop, *ibid.*

Taking the soul as the common element, though, would require a particular notion of the soul: one needs to accept that the soul is the only medium for one to attain knowledge; it is necessary for the soul to be in direct relation with the Forms. This is so because the Forms are for Plato the existences that are unchangeable, whereas everything in this world is changeable. This is also the reason why for Plato the soul should be immortal: 'we must then have acquired the knowledge of the Equal before this... It seems then that we must have possessed it before birth' (75c). At the same time, the soul is that which during this life recollects: 'It was seen to be possible for someone to see or hear or perceive something, and by this to be put in mind of something else which he had forgotten and which is related to it by similarity or difference. One of two things follow, ...either we were born with the knowledge of it, and all of us know it throughout life, or those who later ...are learning, are only recollecting, and learning would be recollection' (76a). The recollection process, then, indicates the direct relation between the soul and the Forms as well as the relation needed between the soul and the senses, which by extension requires a specific relation of interdependence between the soul and the body.

The Affinity Argument

The affinity argument is introduced by Plato to answer Cebes' fear that even if the soul exists before we are born, it might still be destroyed when we die. As Socrates puts it, he fears that: 'The wind would really dissolve and scatter the soul as it leaves the body' (77d-e). This is the third argument of Plato in favour of the immortality of the soul. To begin with, Socrates distinguishes that which is composite and therefore liable to be split up, from that which is non-composite and not likely to be split up (78c). The second point made, is to recognise that: 'The things that always remain the same are

most likely not to be composite, whereas those that vary from one time to another and are never the same, are composite' (78c). He thus moves to the Forms and argues that the equal itself, the beautiful itself, each thing in itself, the real, cannot be affected by change (78d). On the other hand, the beautiful particulars do not ever remain the same as themselves or in relation to each other (78e).

The second difference introduced, then, between Forms and particulars is that the particulars could be touched, seen, perceived by the senses, but the Forms can only be grasped by the reasoning power of the mind, they cannot be seen; are invisible (79a). So, Plato assumes two kinds of existence: the visible and the invisible. The invisible always remains the same, whereas the visible changes (79a).

Plato's argument, then, to separate the Forms from the particulars is based on three characteristics for each: the Forms are unchangeable, non-composite, and invisible, while the particulars are liable to change, composite, and visible. The difference between Forms and particulars, based on the above attributes, is essential for the distinction between body and soul. Plato needs the Forms as existences separate from anything visible so as to argue in favour of the soul's being indestructible. He believes that man is both body and soul: 'One [part] of ourselves is body another [part] is soul' 'ἄλλο τι ἡμῶν αὐτῶν τὸ μὲν σῶμά ἐστι, τὸ δὲ ψυχὴ;' (79b). This presupposition, then, that one part of man is body and the other soul, although taken for granted, can be explained. Gallop says that: 'The assumption that we are part body and part soul... is simply posited and accepted without demur'²². In order to show that the soul is indestructible, he has to show that there is something beyond the physical, material, and

²²Gallop, 1975, p. 140.

therefore visible world. By this argument Plato does not only recognise two parts in humans, but he also claims that they belong to different existences; the body is visible and therefore it belongs to the visible class of existence, while the soul is invisible and therefore more like the invisible realm, that of the Forms (79b-c). It, thus, plays an essential role in establishing Plato's view of soul and body. Although the phrasing: 'more like the invisible' is quite vague²³, Plato's interest is to distinguish effectively the soul from the body, and as a result prove its immortality. Plato implies then that if the only kind of destruction is being broken up, and the soul by being akin to the Forms is not composite, the soul is indestructible and therefore immortal.

Emphasis then is placed on the soul itself. In particular, Plato distinguishes between the soul being by itself, and the soul being embodied: '...when the soul makes use of the body to investigate something, be it through hearing or seeing or some other sense... it is dragged by the body to the things that are never the same, and the soul itself strays and is confused and dizzy, as if it were drunk...' '... ὅτι ἡ ψυχὴ, ὅταν μὲν τῷ σώματι προσχρῆται εἰς τὸ σκοπεῖν τι ἢ διὰ τοῦ ὄραν ἢ διὰ τοῦ ἀκούειν ἢ δι' ἄλλης τινὸς αἰσθήσεως – τότε μὲν ἔλκεται ὑπὸ τοῦ σώματος εἰς τὰ οὐδέποτε κατὰ ταῦτ' ἔχοντα, καὶ αὐτὴ πλανᾶται καὶ ταραττεται καὶ εἰλιγγιᾶ ὥσπερ μεθύουσα, ...' (79c). On the contrary, 'when the soul investigates by itself, it passes into the realm of what is pure, ever existing, immortal and unchanging, and being akin to this, it always stays with it whenever it is by itself.... its experience then is what is called wisdom' (79d). In that way Plato concludes that: 'The soul resembles the divine and the body resembles the mortal' (80a). By distinguishing, however, between the soul being by itself and the soul being embodied, Plato needs to provide one with a specific relation between body and soul. In other words, for the soul to be affected by the body one needs the soul and

²³Gallop, *ibid.*

the body to be distinct, but, more importantly, one needs to establish an interrelation between the two. As presented by Plato, the soul cannot just happen to be embodied; such an embodiment cannot be seen as just an imprisonment. When embodied, the soul is affected by the body and that cannot be achieved unless it is in a close relation to the body. Plato argues that the embodied soul uses the senses and that results in its being distracted. Such a point, though, raises the question of how the soul can be unchanging. He parallels this state of the soul with the state of drunkenness, and such a metaphor implies that the body's influence on the soul is a negative one. What should be noticed, though, is firstly that Plato does not tell one explicitly what is that makes the soul distracted by the body, and secondly how is the soul able to use the senses, if the senses are bodily, and the soul is not. He does not explain in other words, the specific relation between body and soul. Since soul is said to be distracted by the body - due to the use of the senses - the soul needs to be in close relation to the body.

What is discussed next is the soul when it is by itself. In that state the soul is in contact with a different realm; that of the Forms, which results in its being wise. Indeed, part of Plato's argument may be that in order to know the Forms our souls must belong in the same 'realm'²⁴. Our souls cannot therefore be capable of distraction. The statement that the soul is wise when in association with the Forms suggests that Plato must have believed that the senses are a hindrance for the soul to acquire wisdom²⁵. It seems to stress the point that no one is wise while embodied, which is to say while using the senses (66a and 79c). Such a claim could be supported if one bring forward the

²⁴What seems to be implied here is the notion of 'like knows like'. Taking that for granted, if the Forms belong in a different order of being, then what knows them must at least have access to this order.

²⁵ Bostock (p. 98) makes a similar point; he argues that the role of the Form is to be a clear and unambiguous example of X, an example that is not also an example of non-X. He thus argues that Plato supposes that if all ordinary sensible examples are thus ambiguous, then an unambiguous example would have to be non-sensible.

example of the Line used in the Republic. In this example, Plato divides between two kinds of things; namely, the visible and the intelligible (509d). But, such an inference seems to contradict what is said in the recollection argument, where the senses are not a hindrance but a means to knowledge. Perhaps this discrepancy could be resolved if one takes wisdom to mean ultimate knowledge. On the other hand, knowledge through recollection would be knowledge gained in this life, and somewhat inferior. This is so because in this life the soul, when recollecting, uses the particulars as stepping stones to the Forms but is not in direct contact to the Forms.

A further argument used by Plato to hold that the soul is more like the divine, is that of the soul being the ruler of the body 'when the soul and the body are together, nature orders the one to be subject and to be ruled, and the other to rule and be master. Then, again, which do you think is like the divine and which like the mortal?' (80a). The reply then is that: "Obviously, Socrates, the soul resembles the divine, and the body resembles the mortal" (80a8-9). Having established then that: "The soul is most like the divine, deathless, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, always the same as itself, whereas the body is most like that which is human, mortal, multiform, unintelligible, soluble, and never consistently the same' (80a-b), Plato asks if the soul, being of this kind, will be scattered and destroyed on leaving the body (80d). What should be noted here is the implication that the soul ruling the body has for the relation of the two. If the soul rules the body, they must obviously be connected. The significance for this thesis, then, lies on the particular way that soul and body are connected. If, on the one hand, one takes the language of ruling literally, it implies that the body understands and obeys the commands of the soul. This would imply that the body is not unthinking matter but shares an understanding with the soul. On the other hand, the case could be that the soul is not so much the source from which the principles that govern the body arise, but

it is those principles. What I would like to argue, though, is that Plato's idea is that soul and body are actively involved. Although such a notion is problematic, it enables one to see how Plato moves from it to a more elaborate notion of interaction between the parts of the soul and the body, without having to hold that body is anything more than matter²⁶.

Plato, then, divides souls into those that are pure and those that are impure after death. If the soul is pure and drags nothing bodily with it, it can be happy, and truly spend the rest of time with the gods (81a). On the other hand, if the soul is impure, having always been associated with the body, it becomes heavy and is dragged back to the visible region (81a-c). Plato seems to introduce here a distinction between souls that are mainly, if not utterly, involved in reasoning, in knowing the Forms, and in souls that are so much influenced by the bodily needs that do not aspire to the Forms. So far, Plato talked about a soul being deathless, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, always the same as itself (80a8-9), but the distinction between pure and impure souls suggests otherwise. In order to be able to distinguish between pure and impure souls, Plato at least seems to commit himself to a view of the soul according to which the soul is not indissoluble and not always the same to itself. It seems that here Plato is constructing a view of the soul similar to the one presented in later dialogues where the soul is presented as being composite. The composite soul can partially answer the question 'what does Plato mean by pure/ impure soul. The composite embodied soul could be seen as impure because, being associated with the body, it is involved in activities other than reasoning. But for a soul that is simple, there are no criteria offered for distinguishing between pure and impure souls. Even if we accept that Plato could define a pure soul as a soul that concentrates on the pursue of knowledge, and an impure one as a soul that is

²⁶This idea will be explored in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*.

satisfied with the experiences gained through the senses, the question that remains unanswered is whether it is possible to talk of a pure soul in this human life. The evidence provided in the Recollection argument would seem to suggest that there could never be a pure soul within this realm.

Plato argues further that the pure soul moves to a different realm; that of the gods, while the impure soul, due to its association with the body, is 'imprisoned' again in a body (81c). He therefore distinguishes between the souls of the philosophers - who have as little contact with the body as possible - and the souls of ordinary men - who according to Plato are bewitched by the bodily, desires and pleasures. Moreover, the souls of 'inferior' men are reincarnated according to their character: '... they are then ... bound to such characters as they have practised in their life' (81e).

The distinction between the soul's purity and impurity after death is another important point for the relation between body and soul. Plato argues that the soul is impure because of its association with the body. What is not explained, though, is how the soul can be affected by the body. Although Plato's talk is metaphorical and it is difficult to see its literal meaning, Plato is facing the need to establish a close relation between soul and body, and this is essential for this thesis. This need will lead to the notion of interrelation of soul and body in the *Timaeus* where he not only refers to the soul being impure, but also shows exactly how the soul can be affected by its embodiment.

The distinction, now, between the philosopher and ordinary men is based upon how close an association there is between the soul and the body. Plato goes on in showing the role that philosophy plays for men. After having distinguished between 'lovers of learning' and ordinary men, Plato says that philosophy enables the soul to understand

that the soul is tied up to the body: 'The lovers of learning know that when philosophy gets hold of their soul, it is imprisoned in and clinging to the body, and that it is forced to examine other things through it as through a cage and not by itself, and that it wallows in every kind of ignorance' *‘γινώσκουσι γάρ, ἢ δ’ ὅς, οἱ φιλομαθεῖς ὅτι παραλαβοῦσα αὐτῶν τὴν ψυχὴν ἢ φιλοσοφία ἀτεχνῶς διαδεδεμένην ἐν τῷ σώματι καὶ προσκεκολλημένην, ἀναγκαζομένην δὲ ὥσπερ διὰ εἴργμου διὰ τούτου σκοπεῖσθαι τὰ ὄντα ἄλλα μὴ αὐτὴν δι’ αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἀμαθίᾳ κυλινδουμένην’* [my italics] (82e). But, according to Plato, the worst thing about this restraint is that the soul examines things outside itself; it is involved with desires: 'Philosophy sees that the worst feature of this imprisonment is that it is due to desires, so that the prisoner himself is contributing to his own incarceration most of all' *‘καὶ τοῦ εἴργμου τὴν δεινότητα κατιδοῦσα ὅτι δι’ ἐπιθυμίας ἐστίν, ὡς ἂν μάλιστα αὐτὸς ὁ δεδεμένος συλλήπτωρ εἴη τοῦ δεδέσθαι’* (82e). Although the language in 82e is complex, Plato seems to argue that the soul is tied up - *diadedeme/nhn* - and glued or fastened - *προσκεκολλημένην* - to the body. It seems, then, as if the soul sees reality as though through bars of a cage - *διὰ εἴργμου* - knowing that it is the cause of its own binding. Such imagery, thus, implies that the soul is not merely imprisoned to the body like a prisoner in a cell, but rather that the body distorts the soul's judgement; it is the desires that 'bind' or 'imprison' the soul.

Therefore, the role of philosophy is to: 'persuade the soul to withdraw from the senses, in so far as it is not compelled to use them, and bids the soul to gather itself together by itself, to trust only itself and whatever reality existing by itself, the soul by itself understands, and not consider as true whatever it examines by other means, for this is different in different circumstances and is sensible and visible, whereas what the soul itself sees is intelligible and invisible' (83b). In other words, philosophy persuades the

soul to 'gather itself by itself' otherwise it - by experiencing pleasure or pain - is welded to the body (83d). This seems to imply that if Plato held soul and body to be distinct, then he wouldn't need to argue in favour of philosophy. On the contrary Plato says that the soul, when not concentrating on philosophy, is made corporeal (83d). Since 'it [the soul] is always full of body when it departs, so that it soon falls back to a body and grows with it....' (83d-e), the soul seems unable to reach a pure state. It should also be mentioned here that Plato could not treat the soul as something completely non-physical, because if he did he wouldn't be able to hold that the souls of ordinary men are 'full of body'. The Affinity argument finishes with Plato's claim that: 'The soul of the philosopher achieves a calm from such emotions [pleasures and pains]; it follows reason and ever stays with it contemplating the true, the divine which is not the object of opinion' (84a). What such a quotation indicates, then, is not that soul and body are completely separate from each other, but rather that the soul is able to concentrate on itself. This is how Plato says that one 'should live ... and after death, arrive at what is akin and of the same kind' (84b). Plato concludes that: '...after such nurture there is no danger that one should fear that, on parting from the body, the soul would be scattered and dissipated by the winds and no longer be anything anywhere' (84b).

Simmias' and Cebes' Objections

Following the Affinity argument, are Simmias' and Cebes' objections. Simmias discusses the soul as being parallel to the attunement of a lyre (85e ff.), and Cebes compares it with the weaver of a series of cloaks (87a-88b). Both objections have to do with the fact that the soul although it was shown to exist prior to death, can perish at

death²⁷.

To show the inadequacy of Socrates' argument he argues that: '... a harmony is something invisible, without body, beautiful and divine in the attuned lyre, whereas the lyre itself and its strings are physical, bodily, composite, earthly and akin to what is mortal' (85e-86a). Simmias, then, uses the characteristics attributed to the soul in the affinity argument to draw a parallel between the soul and harmony or attunement. He further argues that someone who accepts the affinity argument, would also be obliged to hold that; if the lyre is destroyed, 'the harmony must still exist ... because it would be impossible for the lyre and the strings, which are mortal, still to exist when the strings are broken, and for the harmony, which is akin and of the same nature as the divine and immortal, to be destroyed before that which is mortal...' (86a-b). The argument, thus, is that the properties ascribed earlier to the soul -unseen, incorporeal, and divine - belong also to the attunement. But just as an attunement does not outlast lyre and strings, so the soul's possession of these properties need not entail that it outlasts the body.

Simmias goes on to claim that: '...as the body is stretched and held together by the hot and the cold, the dry and the moist, and other such things, and our soul is a mixture and harmony of those things when they are mixed with each other in due measure' (86b-c). Simmias here implies that the soul is the balance needed among the physical elements of the body. In that way, he presents the parallel between soul and harmony as a direct one. The soul is a 'mixture' of the basic, physical elements, and harmony is a mixture of notes. He thus claims that: 'if then the soul is a kind of harmony, when our body is relaxed or stretched without due measure by diseases and other evils, the soul must immediately be destroyed...' (86c). There are two main points that should be raised

²⁷ Gallop, 1975, p. 146.

here; firstly, although it is tempting to suppose that Simmias brings forth a Pythagorean view, as Bostock rightly points out²⁸, this can be challenged if one bears in mind that the Pythagoreans also believed in the immortality of the soul. It should be noted then that although the Pythagoreans may have combined the notion of harmony to the reincarnation of the soul, there is no evidence that in fact they treated the soul as harmony or as harmonious²⁹. At best, one can argue that taken Pythagoras' view of the world as exhibiting order, harmonia, and his belief that the soul is part of the world, one could hold that the two views can be combined, as F. M. Cornford argues, the same order that is found on a large scale in the universe could be found on a small scale in individuals³⁰. Therefore, as Bostock quite rightly argues, it would be more plausible to draw a parallel between a man's health and attunement, rather than between the soul and attunement³¹.

The second point is that for a parallel between soul and attunement to work, the soul will have to consist in a balance or harmony among the elements of something. Plato nowhere in the dialogue suggests such a view. On the contrary, according to the Affinity argument, in order for the soul to be immortal, Plato needs the soul to be simple, non-composite, and distinct from the body. Having said that, though, one cannot but ask how Plato's argument would hold against the attunement parallel if the soul were composite³². A possible answer to such a question would have to be that the soul although composite involves more than a mixture of bodily elements. The fact that

²⁸ Bostock (123) does not want to commit himself in such a view, because, as he says, maybe such a belief was held by some Pythagoreans. The same point is held by Gallop, 1975, p. 148.

²⁹ There is reasonable ground to claim that Simmias' view actually goes beyond the Pythagorean view of harmony. See further F. M. Cornford, 'Mysticism and Science in the Pythagorean Tradition', *Classical Quarterly* 16 (1922) 145-148; H. B. Gottschalk, 'Soul as Harmonia', *Phronesis* 16, pp 192-193.

³⁰ Cornford, 1922, pp 142-143.

³¹ Bostock, p. 124

³² The composite soul is discussed in later Platonic dialogues; the dialogues that I will examine, which involve such a view, are the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus*.

Plato does not see the soul as depending on the combination of material elements is made evident by the view of soul as it is presented in the recollection argument and is also held in the *Republic* and *Timaeus*. Plato presents the soul, or part of it, as something that has the ability to know the Forms. To know the Forms requires the soul to be something other than the body. The theory of Forms requires the soul to be in contact with this physical world, and therefore with the body, but at the same time it requires that the soul has the ability to know the Forms; a kind of knowledge that cannot come from this world. Although such a view creates various problems for Plato, the point that cannot be refuted is that if one combines the recollection argument with the affinity argument, the attunement parallel is weakened.

Another objection to Simmias' point is that harmony is explicitly dependent on the lyre, whereas the soul, in Plato's view, is not dependent on the body; rather, the body in order to be alive depends on the soul. Thus, even if the soul is not separate from the body, Plato nowhere holds that it is a result of the body³³. So, although the soul's possession of the previously mentioned properties need not entail that soul outlasts body, at the same time, the possession cannot by itself indicate that the soul will be lost after the body's destruction, just like harmony will be lost after the destruction of the lyre.

The dialogue continues with the presentation of Cebes' objection. Cebes holds that although the argument sufficiently proved the soul's existence before its being embodied, it did not prove its existing somewhere after our death (87a). To explain this point, Cebes uses the example of the old weaver: '...as if one said at the death of an old

³³I.e. Plato rejects any view of the soul as supervenient on the body.

weaver that the man had not perished but was safe and sound somewhere, and offered as proof the fact that the cloak the old man had woven himself and was wearing was still sound and had not perished... But... That does not mean that a man is inferior and weaker than a cloak. The image, then, is that the weaver wears out many cloaks. But the fact that one cloak still exists when he dies, does not prove that he still exists. Similarly, even if the soul outlasts any particular body, that does not prove that it is immortal' (87b-d). Cebes thus concludes: "we cannot trust this argument and be confident that our soul continues to exist somewhere after our death" (87e-88a). Cebes therefore needs a further premise in order to be able to hold that the soul survives bodily death. '...But if having granted all this, one does not further agree that the soul is not damaged by its many births and is not, in the end altogether destroyed in one of those deaths, he might say that no one knows which death and dissolution of the body brings about the destruction of the soul, since not one of us can be aware of this' (88a-b). Socrates' task, then, would be to prove that the soul is altogether immortal (88b).

Socrates' Reply to Simmias

Socrates' first point against Simmias' harmony argument is to ask both Simmias and Cebes whether they accept the recollection theory. Both Simmias and Cebes reaffirm that they accept that 'learning is recollection' and that 'our soul must of necessity exist elsewhere before us, before it was imprisoned in the body' (91e-92a). What is worth noticing, at this point, is the emphasis that Plato places on the acceptance of the recollection argument. This emphasis is significant since it implies the deep belief of Plato on the notion that souls exist independently of the body.

Hence, since Simmias accepts the above, Socrates is able to bring forward the first

counterexample against the harmony argument. If Simmias holds that: 'a harmony is a composite thing and that the soul is a kind of harmony of the elements of the body' he cannot maintain that: 'a composite harmony existed before those elements from which it had to be composed' (92b). Socrates, in other words, argues that Simmias' claim is that:

P1 A harmony is a composite thing.

P2 The soul is a kind of harmony of the elements of the body.

P3 A composite harmony cannot exist before the elements that it is composed of.

This would imply the conclusion:

//C Soul cannot exist before body.

But, as Simmias has already agreed, according to the recollection argument the soul exists before the body.

In that way, Plato shows that the harmony theory is in conflict with the recollection theory. Socrates shows that soul cannot be harmony, since harmony cannot exist prior to its instruments, whereas soul can exist prior to body. In Socrates' own words: 'A harmony is not like that to which you compare it, ... the harmony is composed last of all, and is first to be destroyed' (92b-c). Simmias, then, abandons the harmony theory because it is inconsistent with the recollection theory.

The next difference between harmony³⁴ and soul, as Socrates clearly shows to Simmias, is that harmony is directed by the elements it is composed of (93a). Socrates shows such a point by arguing that 'Do you think it is natural for a harmony, or any other composite to be in different state from that of the elements of which it is composed?' (92e-93a). He, thus, forces Simmias to admit that harmony and the elements it is

³⁴The Greek word translated as either harmony or attunement is ἁρμονία.

composed of have to be in the same state. Such a point will become clear later at 94b.

The next argument of Plato against the harmony theory is considered to be complicated and not easy to be analysed³⁵. Socrates asks: 'Does not the nature of each harmony depend on the way it has been harmonised?' (93a). Since Simmias says that he does not understand Socrates' question, Socrates asks: 'Will it not, if it is more and more fully harmonised, be more and more fully a harmony, and if it is less and less harmonised, it will be less and less fully a harmony' (93a-b). And this is another difference between harmony and soul, since the above does not apply to soul. One cannot say that: '...one soul is more and more fully a soul than another, or is less and less fully a soul, even to the smallest extent' (93b). The problem with the above distinction is that one cannot say explicitly what it is meant by a harmony if it is more or less harmonised, being more or less a harmony³⁶. The importance, though, for this thesis is that the souls do not admit of degrees. Souls can be distinguished into those that have intelligence and virtue and are good, and those that have folly and wickedness and are bad (93c). Socrates states that the good souls are harmonious while the bad ones are inharmonious. Those who claim, then, that soul is harmony must say either that there can be a harmony of a harmony, or that being a soul is a matter of degrees - that one can be more or less of a soul. But, since neither of these suggestions is acceptable, the soul as harmony theory has to be rejected. Plato's statement that good souls contain attunement, and bad souls contain nonattunement (93c3-8) would be incompatible with Simmias' attunement theory, but also with Plato's suggestion that soul is non-composite³⁷. Gallop further claims: 'if attunement or non-attunement can be obtained only by that which is

³⁵According to Gallop (1975, p.157), the section that follows, namely, 93a11-94b3 is extremely difficult, and its analysis remains highly problematic.

³⁶Gallop, 1975, pp. 159-160.

³⁷Gallop, 1975, p. 161.

composite, they would require a different account of the soul from that which the *Phaedo* suggests³⁸.

What should be taken under consideration, next, is that Plato elsewhere in the *Phaedo* treats the soul as being incomposite. For example, in the recollection theory and in the affinity argument. The harmony argument, on the other hand, shows that Plato could not speak of the soul as being harmonious unless it was composite. But could Plato hold that the soul is composite without abandoning his idea that the soul is distinct from the body? A solution to such a problem would be viable if Plato held two different views on what is composite. Thus, the soul could be composite without being the mixture of hot, cold, dry or moist as Simmias holds. The soul is composite at both the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*. Gallop says that Plato recognises and tries to resolve the conflict between the doctrine of a composite soul and that of immortality at *Republic* 611a10-612a7³⁹. What I would like to add to it is that the way Plato treats the soul in the *Timaeus* - as being composite and being able to achieve harmony - indicate further that he did not disregard the harmony theory altogether.

Socrates' last point against harmony (94b-95a) is related to the point made earlier - that harmony is directed by its elements (93a). Here again Plato argues that the soul rules man and that it opposes the affections of the body (94c). Plato, here, attributes to the body qualities like thirst and hunger. What this concept implies is that the soul is considered as only the reasoning element. Thus, as Gallop states, the harmony differs from the soul in that 'a lyre's attunement depends wholly upon the state and relationship of its material components, whereas they in no way depend upon it. The

³⁸Gallop, *ibid.*

³⁹Gallop, *ibid.*

causal relation is in one direction only. By contrast, the soul is not only acted upon by the bodily elements, but acts upon them. This is the point at which the attunement theory breaks down.⁴⁰ What should be stressed once more, though, is that, what would follow from Plato's argument is that the soul is not an attunement of bodily feeling, not that it is not an attunement at all⁴¹.

Socrates' Reply to Cebes

Socrates summarises Cebes' objection. He says that Cebes thinks: '... the soul must be proven to be immortal and indestructible... to prove that the soul is strong, that it is divine... all this... does not show the soul to be immortal but only long-lasting' (95c). Socrates then treats Cebes' objection as requiring an 'investigation of the cause of generation and destruction' (96a). Socrates thus refers to 'natural science' which enables one to find the 'causes of everything' (96a). The important question raised here is whether people think with their blood or air or fire or none of these and whether the brain provides people with their senses (96b), and whether: '... the brain provide our senses of hearing and sight and smell, from which come memory and opinion, and from memory and opinion which has become stable, comes knowledge?' 'ὁ δὲ ἐγκέφαλος ἐστὶν ὁ τὰς αἰσθήσεις παρέχων τοῦ ἀκούειν καὶ ὄραν καὶ ὀσφραίνεσθαι, ἐκ τούτων δὲ γίγνοιτο μνήμη καὶ δόξα, ἐκ δὲ μνήμης καὶ δόξης λαβούσης τὸ ἡμερεῖν, κατὰ ταῦτα γίγνεσθαι ἐπιστήμην;' (96b). These questions are important for this thesis since Socrates is clearly raising the possibility of a materialistic account of the human mind.

Realising that he did not know the cause of things, Socrates moves into providing one

⁴⁰Gallop, 1975, p. 167.

⁴¹Gallop, *ibid.* For an analysis of soul as harmonious see further the *Timaeus* image of soul's circles.

with another method: 'I do not any longer persuade myself that I know why a unit or anything else comes to be, or perishes, or exists by the old method of investigation, and I do not accept it but I have a confused method of my own' (97c). Plato in that way introduces a teleological explanation; namely, the idea of everything being done for the good. Socrates says according to Anaxagoras' doctrine: 'it is Mind that directs and is the cause of everything', '... νοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ διακοσμῶν τε καὶ πάντων αἴτιος' (97c). What Socrates is looking for in Anaxagoras' saying is to see how anything that comes to be or perishes does so for the best (97d). Socrates' objection to Anaxagoras is that although he uses 'Mind' as directing everything, he brings in other 'causes than that it was best for them to be as they are' (98b). Anaxagoras, according to Socrates, 'made no use of Mind, nor gave it any responsibility for management of things, but mentioned as causes air and ether and water and many other strange things' (98b-c). Socrates, hence, cannot accept this doctrine, because he finds it inconsistent. Socrates believes that once Anaxagoras 'had given the best for each as the cause for each and the general cause of all' (98b), he should have gone on 'to explain the common good for all'. Thus, Socrates is looking for something that would enable him to explain everything according to what is best for them. It is crucial then to notice that Socrates here seems to almost equate the claim that the universe is directed by νοῦς to the claim that everything is directed to the best. This, in turn, points toward a notion that the fact that we have mind implies that our actions must be explained by reference to what we think as good. There is then a parallel between human action and the universe. The human mind is seen as either having something analogous to the divine νοῦς, or as participating in the divine νοῦς that governs the universe. Such a view is important since it seems to raise questions about the relation of the human soul and this νοῦς. It looks as though the soul is identified with that element of νοῦς that is in humans.

Furthermore, although there is no implication that mind must be separate from body, Socrates argues strongly that, bodily explanations are inadequate. To explain this point, Socrates uses the example of himself sitting in prison; Socrates' argument is that the reason he is in prison is not because of his body; due to the way it consists of bones and sinews (98c-d). Socrates says that: 'these sinews and bones could long ago have been in Megara or among the Boetians, taken there by "my" belief as to the best course, if I had not thought it more right and honourable to endure whatever penalty the city ordered rather than escape and run away' (99a). Thus, Socrates' concern is about the 'true cause'. It is important to note, here, that due to the ambiguity of the text, there are two ways to read the above quotation. Firstly, following the above translation of Grube, the distinction between a physical cause and a teleological explanation seems to be quite straightforward. Secondly, if one looks at the Gallop's translation – 'these sinews and bones would long since have been off in Megara or Boetia, impelled by *their* [my italics] judgement of what was best...' - the text is taken as literally implying that the body can have beliefs⁴². Thus, the ambiguity is apparent. I would like to hold that although the text is not taken literally, it does suggest that what we would think best can be determined by whether we are dominated by the body or not. Socrates' main purpose is to explain things in terms of the best. Hence, he provides one with the distinction between a physical efficient cause, and a teleological explanation that derives from something different; namely thinking. In turn, such a distinction implies the recognition of both a soul and a body within men. This is also shown later on the dialogue where Plato does not disregard the role of the bones and the sinews altogether; he truly recognises that they are necessary, but he places emphasis to the point that they cannot act as the cause of Socrates' actions: 'If someone said that without bones and sinews and all such things, I should not be able to do what I decided, he would be right,

⁴²Gallop, 1975, p. 51.

but surely to say that they are the cause of what I do, and not that I have chosen the best course, even though I act with my mind, is to speak very lazily and carelessly' (99a). Socrates would not be able to act out his decision without his body - for example, if his body had a severe handicap. But, what is of importance, as it was pointed out earlier, is that the decision is not made by the body. The key distinction then is between a cause and that without which it could not be a cause. Thus, Plato's *voûs* is distinct from the body due to its teleological function.

Thus, having established that his interest lies in finding 'the real cause' (99b), Socrates claims that he: 'must take refuge in discussions and investigate the truth of things by means of words' (99e). When Socrates talks about 'the real cause', it seems that he wants to explain things in non-physical terms; but, in order to do so, he needs to incorporate in his doctrine an entity which will be able to see what is the best. One could argue that Socrates' insistence on the 'real cause', on finding what is the best; what is the ultimate good for everything individually and collectively, implies that he wants to explain everything in terms of intentionality. He wants to separate reason explanations from causal explanations. The former is based on the soul's beliefs, intentions, while the latter is based on bodily elements. Although, then, an intentional explanation may not be incompatible with physicalism, Plato's view implies a separate status for the reasoning element of the soul. An intentional explanation is part of a wider pattern of a teleological explanation for the universe as a whole. Such an explanation is bound up with the Forms and in particular the Form of the good. As Plato has already argued, one's knowledge of the Forms presupposes that there is

something in one that belongs to the realms of the Forms⁴³. Plato, then, recognises that he starts with the hypothesis about the existence of the Forms: ‘... assume the existence of a Beautiful, itself by itself, of a Good and a Great and all the rest’ (100b). Having got Cebes’ agreement on the above hypothesis, Socrates states that the cause that something is, for example, beautiful is because it shares in beauty: ‘... if there is anything beautiful besides the Beautiful itself, it is beautiful for no other reason than that it shares in that Beautiful and I say so with everything’ (100c). So, for Plato the ‘cause’ of something being beautiful is that it shares in that Beautiful. Cebes then agrees with Socrates that: ‘... it is through beauty that all beautiful things are made beautiful...’ (100e), and such a relation between the Form of something and particular things applies also to big things, small things, and the like.

The Final Argument

Plato in the final argument, now, shows a difference between the Forms and particulars: ‘... not only Tallness itself is never willing to be tall and short at the same time, but also that the tallness in us will never admit the short, or be overcome, but one of two things happens: either it flees and retreats whenever its opposite, the short, approaches, or it is destroyed by its approach’ (102e). Although such a statement seems to contradict the previous claim that opposites come to be from opposites, Plato clarifies it by distinguishing between things with opposite qualities and the opposite itself. In Plato’s words: ‘we were talking of things that have opposite qualities and naming these after

⁴³The relation between the soul and the Forms is another indication that the soul should be a separate entity. In order for one to know the Forms, one needs something beyond the bodily, and this is the soul. In other words, the soul functions as the element that bridges the gap between the physical world and the Forms. It should be stressed here that the existence of the Forms is of necessity taken for granted.

them, but now we say that these opposites themselves, from the presence of which in them the things got their name, never can tolerate the coming to be from one another' (103b-c).

Having established that 'an opposite will never be opposite to itself' (103c), Plato uses two examples to clarify his point: The first deals with the opposites of hot and cold and fire and snow. Hot is something other than fire and cold is something other than snow, but fire will never admit cold, nor will snow admit hot. The second example is that of Odd and number three and Even and number two. Plato says that: 'that is the nature of three and of five, and of half of all the numbers; each of them is odd, but it is not the Odd. Then again, two and four and the whole other column of numbers; each of them, while not being the same as the Even, is always even' (104a-b). Plato by showing that three could never admit of the Even (104e) generalises and claims that: 'Not only does the opposite not admit its opposite, but that which brings along some opposite into that which it occupies, that which brings this along will not admit the opposite to that which it brings along' (105a). Such a statement is then crucial for Plato's analysis of the soul that follows. Socrates asks: '... what is it that, present in a body, makes it living?' (105c). The answer that he gets is 'a soul' (105c). According, then, to the example of three and Odd, Socrates investigates the nature of the soul:

P1 Whatever the soul occupies, it brings life to it (105d).

P2 The soul will never admit the opposite of that which it brings along [i.e. life] (105d).

//C Therefore, the soul does not admit death (105e).

Thus, Plato proves that 'the soul is deathless' (105e). Plato, now, shifts the argument in showing the soul to be indestructible. Socrates argues that: 'if the uneven were of necessity indestructible, surely three would be indestructible' (105e-106a). The same claim is made for the non-hot, and the non-cold (106a). Plato then asks: 'must then the

same not be said of the deathless? If the deathless is also indestructible, it is impossible for the soul to be destroyed when death comes upon it' (106b).

The argument seems to be as follows:

P1 The presence of soul makes a body alive (105c).

P2 So, whenever a soul enters a body, it is accompanied by life.

P3 The soul cannot admit the opposite of what accompanies it.

P4 The opposite of life is death (105d).

//C I So, the soul cannot admit death (105e).

//C II So, the soul is deathless.

//C III So, the soul is immortal.

There are two objections that can be raised here. Firstly, the first two premises show that soul brings life to the body. A body that has soul cannot, therefore, be dead. But it does not follow that soul must itself be alive. One could argue that souls could neither be alive nor be dead. One could also object to the passage from deathless to immortal. Saying that the soul cannot admit death means only that so long as the soul exists, it cannot be dead, but that does not imply that a soul cannot cease to exist.

Such a claim, therefore, is essential for trying to understand what notion of the soul Plato is taking under consideration. Firstly, Plato seems to have in mind that soul is analogous to 'the largeness that is in us'. But, such a view is very confusing. On the one hand, it could suggest that the soul is a property-instance. This would imply that to have a soul is simply to possess a property. But, such a view could not hold that the soul is a separate entity from the body, or that it is able to survive death, two notions

that are of importance for Plato⁴⁴. Thus, the status of property-instances within Plato's theory of Forms is very obscure. Some of the phrasing might suggest that 'the largeness that is in one is a 'portion' of the Form of largeness⁴⁵. If one was to think towards that direction, two points are insinuated: A) Each soul is a portion of Soul. In that way soul is treated as a kind of 'stuff' that each possesses a portion of. B) Soul is a Form or like a Form. But these ideas do not seem to connect very well. Although Plato sometimes seems to think of soul as 'stuff', he is more inclined to think of human souls as containing a particle of divine reason. But, that would imply that neither soul nor reason could be a Form. They have to be what knows the Forms.

Secondly, the final argument seems also to show traces of the notion that soul is analogous to heat. Among Plato's predecessors there was a widespread idea that the hot, the cold, the dry and the moist were power-stuffs. The fire is by itself hot and makes other things feel hot, in much the same way that water is both moist itself and makes other things moist. It would not be unnatural then to think of soul in that way, but that view would be very difficult to reconcile with other Platonic ideas, particularly the view that soul belongs to the realm of the Forms which is distinct from the physical realm. Overall, the final argument does not seem to suggest a single coherent view of the soul, but rather, as has been shown, suggests a number of different and probably incompatible views.

Plato's Myth

Plato finishes his argument with a myth that includes the two key ideas throughout

⁴⁴ A property instance cannot exist without that of which it is a property. For example my smallness cannot exist when I cease to exist any more than it can when I have grown tall.

⁴⁵ *Parmenides* 131a-e seems designed to refute this view of Forms and particulars.

Plato's dialogues; namely, the notion that soul is immortal, and the notion that the soul is the bearer of moral characteristics. The myth reads: 'now that the soul appears to be immortal, there is no escape from evil or salvation for it except by becoming as good and wise as possible, soul goes to the underworld possessing nothing but its education and upbringing, which are said to bring the greatest benefit or harm to the dead right at the beginning of the journey yonder (107d). What is of interest, at this point, is that again Plato puts forward a notion of the soul that implies it is influenced by the embodied life. Moreover, Plato distinguishes between the well-ordered souls and those souls that are attached to the body and therefore face difficulties in leaving the bodily form (108a-b). In particular, he describes in detail the 'fate' of the souls in the underworld. Firstly, the dead are judged according to their penalties in their embodied lives. The souls are separated into those committing incurable and those committing curable crimes (113e), which determine the punishment that will be imposed upon them. On the other hand, those who 'have lived an extremely pious life are freed and released from the regions of the earth as from prison; they make their way up to a pure dwelling place' (114c). This category incorporates the philosophers. Such a point is made clear when Plato says that: 'those who have purified themselves sufficiently in philosophy live in the future altogether without a body' (114c) implying, in other words, the distinction between souls reincarnated and the philosophers' souls.

After clarifying that the above described situation may not be exact, Plato claims: 'that is the reason why a man should be of good cheer about his own soul, if during life he has ignored the pleasures of the body and its ornamentation as of no concern to him... but has seriously concerned himself with the pleasures of learning, and adorned his soul not with alien but with its own ornaments, namely, moderation, righteousness, courage, freedom and truth, and in that state awaits his journey to the underworld' (114e-115a).

Finally, the dialogue concludes with Socrates advising his interlocutors to take good care of themselves (115d), and he makes the important remark about him leaving this world: ‘... after I have drunk the poison I shall no longer be with you but will leave you to go and enjoy some good fortunes of the blessed’ (115b). So, Socrates says to Crito that: ‘You must be of good cheer and say you are burying my body, and bury it in any way you like and think most customary’ (115d-116a). After the above instructions Socrates drinks the poison. His death follows.

Conclusion

Trying to establish what is the particular notion of the soul, and consequently the relation between soul and body, with which Plato is concerned in the *Phaedo*, proves to be a very challenging task. The *Phaedo*, as one of the main dialogues of Plato dealing with the soul, involves a lot of arguments that are not always valid, coherent, or easy to explain. It is generally treated as the dialogue with the most clearly dualistic orientation. Due to Plato’s insistence on proving the soul’s immortality, the dialogue is thought to emphasise the separation of the soul from the body. In this chapter, though, an attempt was made to show that the separation between soul and body couldn’t be a sharp one because of the relation between the senses and knowledge. Although Plato does not present one with a specific view of the soul, throughout his arguments he implies that: a) a soul is required to be separate from the body, in order to be able to know the Forms, and b) at the same time, the soul is interdependent with the body when in the form of man.

The central doctrine of the *Phaedo* can be traced mainly in the recollection and the affinity arguments. Both arguments imply that the soul belongs in the world of the Forms. This would suggest a view of the body as the soul's prison from which it must escape. So, the message of the *Phaedo* may seem to be very dualistic: Soul and body are utterly distinct and belong to different realms. The salvation of the soul lies in disregarding the body. But, even within the recollection and affinity arguments, there are elements that indicate that this view is not entirely accurate: A) Firstly, recollection comes about through the senses. This implies that the senses play an important role in the salvation of the soul. But the senses involve the body. So it seems that body and soul cannot be utterly separate, and that soul needs the body in working out its own salvation. B) Secondly, moral evil comes from the body. The bad person is the one whose soul is too closely attached to the body and which allows its opinions to be shaped by the body. But the soul is also the bearer of moral responsibility and must suffer punishment for the misdeeds committed while it was in the body. So, again the extreme dualistic body-as-prison view seems misleading. C) Thirdly, the discussion of Anaxagoras' view suggests a view of soul as divine $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$. This may be associated with the recollection and the affinity arguments, but leaves unsolved problems about soul and body. Socrates draws a parallel between a) the relationship of Mind to the world in Anaxagoras and b) the relation of himself to the body. This might seem to suggest that Socrates identifies himself with his soul and regards that as $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$.

Additionally there are elements in the *Phaedo* that do not fit at all with the recollection and the affinity arguments. The cyclical argument seems to reflect a view of the soul as something that has to be constantly recycled, that notion seems to imply that the soul's embodiment is an accidental event. It could also be seen as holding that the soul is

really the person, the self, as it stands though, the cyclical argument is incomplete. The final argument, now, seems to reflect several different views of the soul: as a property-instance, seen as something that brings life to the body, and as a Form or like a Form due to the soul's contact with the Form of life (105c). Soul as stuff or as power does not make much sense of personal immortality. If the soul is like a portion of a Form, one faces the same difficulty along with problems concerning the dividing up of a Form. Both views seem inconsistent with the central views of the soul being influenced by the body, or of the soul as a bearer of moral responsibility. Hence, the *Phaedo* demonstrates the difficulty of finding an acceptable account of soul and body rather than providing one with a solution. What does seem to become apparent, though, in the *Phaedo* is that Plato treats perception as a kind of 'ladder', as the necessary means to acquiring Knowledge.

This notion of perception being the stepping-stone to knowledge, this gradual progress from the bodily to the spiritual, is a common theme in Plato's dialogue. It is implied in the *Symposium*, and it is made explicit in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*. It is interesting, thus, to compare the account of the soul in the *Phaedo* with the account implicit in the *Symposium*⁴⁶, where different aspects of love are treated as the necessary means to reaching love of Beauty and the Good. Love of Beauty and the Good is treated as equivalent to knowledge of Beauty and the Good.

Although philosophical commentary on this dialogue tends to concentrate on Socrates' speech, it is important to see it in the context of the dialogue as a whole. As I. Sykoutris holds, Socrates' narration is not the last step to a series of speeches towards

⁴⁶The *Symposium* seems to belong chronologically to the middle dialogues.

truth, but rather a reconstruction in which the previous speeches are used only as the basic material⁴⁷. Phaedrus, who speaks first, emphasises the notion of living well. He holds that love provides the guidance needed if we are to live well (178c-d). Thus, although when Phaedrus talks about love he has in mind sexual attraction, he indicates that love is a tool that can help men 'gain virtue and blessedness whether alive or dead' (180b). Interpreting this notion one can see that love, which could be characterised as a strong desire, helps us acquire knowledge of the Form of Beauty and the Good, a claim made later by Diotima in 206a. Next, Pausanias' speech stresses the fact that heavenly love is not simply a bodily attraction, but is expressed as an attachment and a partnership for life (183e-184a). This idea, too, will be further explored in Diotima's speech through the notion of 'being pregnant' in soul (209a). Giving birth to ideas is a step closer to actually attaining knowledge of Beauty and the Good. Eryximachus, now, although he treats love as that which holds the basic elements of the body together⁴⁸, argues that love is something more than the physical attraction of two human beings. He argues that love should be treated as a universal phenomenon (186b). This idea, then, of broadening the notion of love will be used by Diotima so as to indicate that the true purpose of love is to attain absolute beauty. The issue that Aristophanes underlines, is the issue of 'becoming whole'. He argues that love, which is the desire to become whole, leads humans to happiness (193d). This is another point that will be chosen by Diotima to elaborate on. She argues that: 'a lover does not seek the half or the whole, unless, it turns out to be good as well' (205e). In other words, Plato points out that humans do not look for what belongs to them in general, but they look for the good (205e-206a). The final speaker before Socrates is Agathon. Agathon's speech

⁴⁷I. Sykoutris, Πλάτωνος Συμπόσιον, Athens 1949, pp. 78-79 [my translation].

⁴⁸This idea alludes to the Presocratics. The notion of a principle of all things was a common one; for Thales this principle is water, for Anaximander is apeiron, for Heraclitus is fire and for Empedocles there are four elements within a cycle of change characterised by love and strife. See further Kirk, Raven and Schofield.

does not provide material that will be used by Diotima, but it does provide us with the grounds for contrast the commonly praised characteristics of a man within the Athenian society, and Socrates' notion of what is beautiful and good. The contrast becomes obvious later in Alcibiades' praise to Socrates (212e ff.), where Plato once more praises the beauty of soul over that of the body – through the image of Silenus (215a-b), through direct reference to Socrates' behaviour (216e); through his words and deeds (218e-219a). Alcibiades, thus, emphasises the importance of love as presented by Diotima, as Sykoutris argues, the speech of Alcibiades does not therefore depart from the theme of the dialogue, but it is the natural and completely necessary continuation to the subject. It is the climax of the Symposium were the revelations of Diotima become alive in Alcibiades' memories, the words become deeds, love, thus, becomes the human soul's major drama⁴⁹.

Going back, though, to the ascent to reaching knowledge of Beauty, one sees that this ascent is important because it indicates a gradual progress from something bodily to something spiritual. In particular, it indicates that in order for one to reach knowledge of Beauty, one has to start from observing beautiful things, realising that there must be something beyond them, and thus reach Beauty. Thus, as A. W. Price says: 'it is the physical beauty of the loved one, which is the starting point of the ascent (210a), that first reminds the lover of Beauty itself, which is the apex of the ascent' (210e-211e)⁵⁰. It should be noted here, then, that when Plato talks about the first stages of the above-mentioned ascent, he talks about humans as placing emphasis in different aspects of their characters. The body, therefore, is not treated as something disconnected from the character. This becomes obvious if we look at the dialogue itself: The ascent starts

⁴⁹ See Sykoutris, pp. 145-146.

⁵⁰ A. W. Price, 'Loving Persons Platonically', *Phronesis* 26 (1981) 28.

according to Diotima by coming closer to ‘καλὰ σώματα’ (210a), the word ‘καλὰ’ means both beautiful and good, with all the connotations that refer to someone’s character rather than simply to his body. Thus, from the first level of the ascent the emphasis is placed on the person as a whole, body and soul⁵¹. In fact the two, soul and body, seem to be inseparable⁵². We thus move through the different levels to the Beauty and the Good itself (211c).

This ascent, then, is parallel to the approach of acquiring knowledge in the recollection argument in the *Phaedo*. In the recollection argument one is reminded of a Form by looking at particular instances of that Form: “But it is definitely from the equal things though they are different from the Equal, that you have derived and grasped the knowledge of equality” (74c). Thus, again by seeing an instance of something one is able to think of the Form. In the recollection argument, Plato shows that in this life to reach knowledge, one has to start from the instances provided by the senses. In a similar manner, in the *Symposium*, in order to reach the ‘mystery of love’, in order to reach the Beauty and the Good, one starts from loving another human being, first due to physical attraction and then due to attraction to his soul. Plato, in other words, recognises stages in achieving the ultimate beauty and good. The same idea, though, that of recognising that in order to achieve happiness one has to pass a number of stages, is further explored in later dialogues. This, as we shall see, becomes apparent in the *Republic*, in the example of the ascent from the cave to the sun, and in the *Timaeus* in the example of the function and purpose of eyesight⁵³.

⁵¹Sykoutris (p. 174, n. 2) notes that the word ‘σώματα’ is used by the ancient Greeks to refer to persons or individuals.

⁵²The differentiation between soul and body will follow in a higher level of the ascent.

⁵³ See further the relevant passages in the chapters where the *Republic* and the *Timaeus* are discussed.

The Tripartite Notion of the Soul in the *Republic*

The *Republic* can be read with the emphasis being placed on its political ideas, on epistemology, or - as in this thesis - on the doctrine of the soul. As it is understood, such a diversity of issues may raise conflicting views. The focus, though, for this thesis is the developments that the *Republic* offers in relation to *Phaedo* concerning the soul-body relation. In particular, through the tripartite notion of the soul, Plato shows that the relation between the tripartite soul and the body has to be that of mutual interaction and interdependence. The tripartite soul enables Plato to escape the problems that the simple soul of the *Phaedo* faces. Hence, what will become manifest, as early as from book IV, is that Plato has already in mind the notion that the soul is complex and at the same time one. This point, in turn is important because of the bearing it has on the soul-body relation.

Republic IV

In book IV of the *Republic* Plato uses the analogy between city and soul to search for justice. Commentators, who have discussed the analogy, have concentrated largely on the issue of justice. In particular, it has been argued by some that Plato's doctrine of the tripartite soul was designed primarily to show that the same account of justice could be found in the soul as in the state. What this chapter proposes to do, though, is to show that by introducing the three parts of the city, Plato provides one with a kind of model for the soul. As the city is presented as a unity, being one in its complexity, the soul can be seen as both one and tripartite.

Plato in determining the structure of a just city wants to establish a criterion for the just soul. From the beginning of book IV of the *Republic*, the emphasis is placed on the city

as a whole; Plato wants not to 'make any one group outstandingly happy but to make the whole city so, as far as possible' (420b). Such a notion - quite apart from the political significance that it bears - is of importance for the analogy to the soul. The soul will also be treated in a holistic way; the interest is on the whole soul, not on individual parts i.e., the well being of the soul does not consist in each part doing well in isolation. The same notion is explored in Plato's example of a statue in order to show how the guardians should be treated: 'You mustn't expect us to paint the eyes so beautifully that they no longer appear to be eyes at all, and the same with the other parts. Rather you must look to see whether by dealing with each part appropriately, we are making the whole statue beautiful. Similarly, you mustn't force us to give our guardians the kind of happiness that would make them something other than guardians' (420c-d). What the analogy with the statue suggests, is that the city is treated as a unity also. Plato seems to imply here that by taking care of the city as a whole, by establishing a just city its individuals will be happy to a certain degree determined by nature. Therefore, each part finds its own welfare in fulfilling its role as part of a large whole. Taking such a notion into the account of the soul, Plato will not simply be concerned to show that the soul has parts, but he will also be concerned to show that it is a unity that has to be achieved; it is not something given to the soul.

Hence, concerning the city, Plato emphasises on the role of education and upbringing. He says: '... each of the other citizens is to be directed to what he is naturally suited for, so that, doing the one work that is his own, he will become not many but one, and the whole city will itself be naturally one not many' (423d). Plato here seems to have in mind a different sense of oneness from that in the *Phaedo* where the soul is by definition simple. His view seems to be that the soul is complex but if it becomes a

unity, the whole city will benefit. Thus, at 425c he talks of the 'single newly finished person' as the outcome of education.

Plato continues by claiming that the city he described is wise because '... it has good judgement' (428b). By arguing, now, that good judgement is a kind of knowledge (428b), Plato defines guardianship as some knowledge that judges about the whole city: '... some knowledge possessed by some of the citizens in the city we just founded that doesn't judge about any particular matter but about the city as a whole and the maintenance of good relations, both internally and with other cities' (428c-d). As will be shown later on, this is an essential point for one's understanding of the analogy between city and soul. The guardians judge what is best for the city internally and externally; similarly, the reasoning part of the soul is the one that judges what is best for itself and for the other two parts.

Plato, now, tries to find in the city wisdom, courage, moderation and justice. In particular, he refers to moderation as a kind of order: 'Moderation is surely a kind of order, the mastery of certain kinds of pleasures and desires. People indicate as much when they use the phrase self-control and other similar phrases...' 'Κόσμος πού τις, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ἡ σωφροσύνη ἐστὶν καὶ ἡδονῶν τινῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐγκράτεια, ὡς φασι κρείττω δὴ αὐτοῦ ἀποφαίνοντες οὐκ οἶδ' ὄντινα τρόπον, καὶ ἄλλα ἄττα τοιαῦτα ὥσπερ ἵχνη αὐτῆς λέγεται' (430e). Plato raises here though a very interesting point; he says: 'yet isn't the expression self-control ridiculous? The stronger self that does the controlling is the same as the weaker self that gets controlled, so that only one person is referred to in all such expressions' (430e-431a). This point indicates a particular view about the personal identity issue. Plato's notion is that there is only one person that does the controlling and is controlled. What should be emphasised then is that Plato

does not treat the lower parts of the soul as alien to the true self. His position here is thus different from that in the *Phaedo* where the desires are attributed to the body in which the soul - the true self - is imprisoned. Plato's conception, of recognising only one person that does the controlling and is controlled, further indicates that there is a natural hierarchy among the parts of the soul. This is expressed as follows: '... in the soul of that very person, there is a better part and a worse one and that, whenever the naturally better part is in control of the worse, this is expressed by saying that the person is self-controlled or master of himself' (431a)¹.

Next, Plato distinguishes between desires that are diverse, and those that are 'simple, measured, and directed by calculation in accordance with understanding and correct belief' (431b-c)². Hence, Plato argues that '...the desires of the inferior many are controlled by the wisdom and desires of the superior few' (431c-d), and such a city is '... in control of itself and of its pleasures and desires ... and, therefore, also moderate' (431d-e). The emphasis then is placed on moderation being spread throughout the whole city and, likewise, throughout the whole soul. Such a state is achieved through unanimity or agreement among the parts - of the soul or of the city - as to which should rule.

Plato, then, applies the talk about the city to the soul: 'So, let's apply what has come to light in the city to an individual, and if it is accepted there, all will be well' (434d). He continues: 'then a just man won't differ at all from a just city in respect to the form of justice; rather, he'll be like the city' (435a-b), and 'a city was thought to be just when

¹The issue of hierarchy among the soul's parts will be discussed later in relation to 441e and it is also seen in book IX of the *Republic*.

²A similar distinction is made at the beginning of book IX, 571a-b.

each of the three natural classes within it did its own work³, and it was thought to be moderate, courageous, and wise because of certain other conditions and states of theirs' (435b). Thus, the argument continues by asking about the parts of the soul with which we learn, get angry, and desire the pleasures (436a). Plato's concern here is to determine '... whether these parts are the same or different' (436b). In order to do so, he introduces an axiom: 'It is obvious that the same thing will not be willing to do or undergo opposites in the same part of itself, in relation to the same thing, at the same time' (436b). For example, it is impossible for 'the same thing to stand still and move at the same time in the same part of itself' (436c). If someone stands still while moving his head and arms, one ought to say not that he is both moving and standing still but that 'one part of the person is standing still and another part is moving' (436c).

This principle is then applied to the appetites: 'Then won't we say that there is a class of things called appetites and that the clearest examples are hunger and thirst?' (437d). Plato here points out that: '... thirst itself will never be for anything other than what it is in its nature to be for, namely, drink itself, and hunger for food' (437e). Plato clarifies these points about thirst and hunger by comparing knowledge itself with a particular kind of knowledge, knowledge of something. The text reads: 'Knowledge itself is knowledge of what can be learned itself (or whatever it is that knowledge is of), while a particular sort of knowledge is of a particular sort of thing' (438c). Plato, thus, returns to the example of thirst: 'hence the soul of a thirsty person, insofar as he's thirsty, doesn't wish anything else but to drink...' (439a-b) and '...if something draws it back when it is thirsting, wouldn't that be something different in it from whatever thirsts and drives it like a beast to drink?' (439b). In that way Plato separates between rational calculation - being unwilling to drink - and feelings -being thirsty. As Stalley points

³Doing one's own, which is the best, is a notion explored also in book IX, 585d-e.

out, Plato does not say explicitly that being unwilling to drink is equivalent to not being thirsty nor does he say anything that implies this. What he does say is that being unwilling to drink is the opposite or contrary, 'ἐνάντιον' of being thirsty⁴, in other words, there is a positive desire not to drink. By implication, Plato distinguishes between the desire for a drink and the desire for a good drink. The first could be characterised as an impulse, while the second is a reasonable judgement. In that way Plato does not hold the idea that 'all desires are for the good', which, in turn, requires more than one part in us; a part that involves the impulse of drink and another one for making a judgement whether a drink is for the good. Subsequently, Plato talks as though there are different parts within the soul: 'Isn't it that there is something in their soul, bidding them to drink, and something different, forbidding them to do so, that overrules the thing that bids?' (439c). Following Stalley's argument, Plato's language here suggests very strongly that he sees this as a case in which there are two distinct entities, not as one in which something is affected in two different respects⁵. Thus, Plato concludes: 'We'll call the part of the soul with which it calculates the rational part and the part with which it lusts, hungers, thirsts, and gets excited by other appetites the irrational appetitive part, companion of certain indulgences and pleasures' 'τὸ μὲν ὡς λογίζεται λογιστικὸν προσαγορεύοντες τῆς ψυχῆς, τὸ δὲ ὡς ἐρᾷ τε καὶ πεινῆ καὶ διψῆ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἐπιθυμίας ἐπτόηται ἀλόγιστόν τε καὶ ἐπιθυμητικόν, πληρώσεών τινων καὶ ἡδονῶν ἐταῖρον' (439d). Hence, Plato makes it clear that although there are different elements involved in mental conflict, they are nevertheless parts of a single thing; namely, the soul. Although the argument for the soul's division looks plausible, it is difficult to make sense of something non-physical having parts. A further difficulty is that it depends on physical analogies. Some scholars have thought that Plato really

⁴ R. F. Stalley, 'Plato's Argument for the Division of the Reasoning and Appetitive Elements within the Soul', *Phronesis* 20 (1975) 120.

⁵ Stalley, 1975, p. 116.

wants to make a distinction between motivations, but 436a and the language used in the argument rules this out. So, one is left with the puzzle of how something non-physical can have parts. What is more, one of the parts - the appetitive - is described in terms that link it closely to the body. These difficulties could be solved if the parts of the soul had physical locations. Unfortunately, such a solution is not provided in the *Republic*. A question that could be raised then is whether we can infer that Plato was thinking of the soul's parts as being spatially located or not. Although there are no direct references where the soul's parts are located in particular parts of the body, the fact that Plato does not deny such a possibility may be seen as indicating that he have not worked out the details for such an argument. This is clearly argued at length in the *Timaeus*⁶.

Then, Plato introduces the third part of the soul; the spirited part, by which 'we get angry' (439e). Although Plato does not analyse at any length the role of the spirited part, it is implied that without it Plato would not be able to argue for a unified, harmonious soul. The appetites are described as being opposite to reason, and reason does not have any emotional force over the desires. Thus, in a case of two conflicting points, the spirit functions as the part that is able to help reason overcome desires. Plato, thus, has proven that there are in the soul three different parts just as there are in the city: 'We are pretty much agreed that the same number and the same kinds of classes as are in the city are also in the soul of each individual' (441c). The spirit, thus, unlike some scholars who hold that spirit was introduced purely to prove an analogy between city and soul, is treated as essential for Plato's moral psychology⁷. What should be noted, though, is that the presence of the spirited part creates a further complexity

⁶The soul's parts are spatially located within the bodily frame in the *Timaeus*.

⁷Another point supporting the view that the role of the spirit goes beyond the political analogy is that it is referred to in the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus* where no political issues are discussed.

regarding the nature of a soul, since it is far from clear how it fits into the soul-body dichotomy. It is unclear because although the desires could be treated as bodily, and reason as immaterial, the spirited part can be seen as belonging to neither or both.

What remains, now, to be discovered is what makes a soul just: 'And we surely haven't forgotten that the city was just because each of the three classes in it was doing its own work' (441d), and 'Then we must also remember that each one of us in whom each part is doing its own work will himself be just and do his own' (441d-e). In like manner, Plato argues that: 'isn't it appropriate for the rational part to rule, since it is really wise and exercises foresight on behalf of the whole soul, and for the spirited part to obey and be its ally?' (441e). What one should note at this point, is that Plato not only talks about the different parts of the soul, but most importantly presupposes a hierarchy within the soul. The reasoning part is rightfully ruling the other parts since it is the only one that can 'exercise foresight' for the whole soul. In other words, reason knows what is best not only for itself, it is best for the soul as a whole, and therefore for the other two parts each in its own way⁸. As Peters puts it, according to Plato, reason must grasp the good of the soul, understood both collectively and distributively, in order to govern well⁹. In a similar manner, Stocks maintains that in the perfect life there is still triplicity of function though there is unity of direction or motive. Thus the three forms are no longer alternatives: '... they are all present together, united for the first time after a fashion which is described by the metaphor of ruler and subject'¹⁰. Plato's view is, thus, that the soul is a natural unity in the sense that it becomes a unity when each of its parts functions correctly. But this unity is not automatic. If the parts do not function correctly, then the soul is 'pulled apart', and we have three competing elements rather

⁸The issue of 'hierarchy' within the soul is seen throughout the *Republic*.

⁹James Robert Peters, 'Reason and Passion in Plato's *Republic*', *Ancient Philosophy* 9 (1990) p. 175.

¹⁰J. L. Stocks, 'Plato and the Tripartite Soul', *Mind* 24 (1915) 215.

than a single unified personality. This indicates that if this order is maintained the soul is just. If I may compare, now, the above passage with 425c, here also Plato seems to imply that only the just soul is truly one.

Plato, though, faces here a major problem for the whole of the Republic regarding the soul-body relation; he does not distinguish clearly the relation between the three parts of the soul and the body. In other words, he does not clarify in what way and how far the parts of the soul are affected by the body. He does argue that the rational and the spirited part - when properly nurtured - will govern the appetitive part. But at the same time he says that: 'they'll watch over it to see that it isn't *filled* [my italics] with the so-called pleasures of the body and that it doesn't become so big and strong that it no longer does its own work but attempts to enslave and rule over the classes it isn't fitted to rule, thereby overturning everyone's whole life', 'ὁ τηρήσεται μὴ τῷ πίμπλασθαι τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα καλουμένων ἡδονῶν πολὺ καὶ ἰσχυρὸν γενόμενον οὐκ αὐτὰ αὐτοῦ πράττει, ἀλλὰ καταδουλώσασθαι καὶ ἄρχειν ἐπιχειρήσει ὧν οὐ προσήκον αὐτῷ γένει, καὶ σύμπαντα τὸν βίον πάντων ἀνατρέψει' (442a-b). Such a quotation suggests that although the appetites are part of the soul, there is a special relation between them and the body, which can affect the other parts of the soul. Plato's phrasing of 'filling up' the appetitive part with the pleasures of the body suggests that the appetitive part of the soul cannot be separated completely from the body. A difficulty that is raised here is that Plato does not have a clear view regarding the variety of desires that are included under the appetitive part. The problem is evident from the fact that Plato treats the desire for drink and the desire for money, in a very general way, under the same part. While the desire for drink is clearly bodily, the desire for money is not.

Plato concludes his discussion of justice by stating what the just man does; a) he is concerned with what is truly himself and his own (443d), b) he puts himself in order; he harmonises the three parts of himself (443d), and c) he brings together those parts; he becomes entirely one, moderate and harmonious. Although the 443d passage can not be taken literally since it seems to confuse the self with his reasoning part and at the same time to consider the self as something altogether different to its parts, if one looks at the city a helpful parallel can be drawn. One might talk of the city pursuing, or failing to pursue, the right values, setting itself in order or uniting itself. The point would not be that particular parts did these things, nor that each part separately did the same thing. Rather, when the city acts as a whole, each part plays its appropriate role. Similarly, the talk of the soul putting itself in order is not equivalent to saying that reason brings the other elements to order. Each part plays a role in the reorganisation of the soul. Thus, although it seems that Plato identifies the reasoning part with the true self, in fact his emphasis is placed on the unity achieved due to reason being in control over the other two parts. He has already claimed that reason is the one that rules naturally, so by claiming now that the just man brings the parts of the soul together, he underlines the importance of the self being a unity. Because the soul of the just man is properly ordered, the man as a whole is truly one and harmonious.

After having argued for the just city and the just man, Plato moves to the discussion of injustice. He argues: 'Surely, it must be some kind of civil war between the three parts, a meddling and doing of another's work, a rebellion by some part against the whole soul in order to rule it inappropriately' (444b). The above quotation indicates that since injustice is a matter of inappropriate ruling, then justice is appropriate ruling. The point that should not be overlooked is that Plato's talk about a 'rebellion' is metaphorical. A literal rebellion implies that the rebels have a reasoning capacity, which by definition

the two lower parts of the soul are lacking. One could hold here, then, that Plato's emphasis is placed on one part doing the work of another, which would disturb the presupposed hierarchy. Hence, the notion of rebellion is a rather misleading one. In truth, what Plato has in mind is not that the appetites literally 'take control' on ruling the soul, but rather that the appetites are allowed to distort reason's judgements. But what exactly does Plato have in mind with this notion of distorting reason's judgement, and what does it entail? Perhaps it would be helpful to remember Plato's example of thirst. Thirst is obviously an appetite, and as such it is 'a companion to indulgences and pleasures' (439d). Usually, then, it is reason that determines whether one should fulfil that appetite. There are cases though where the appetite is so strong, or the reason is so weak, that the person does not employ reason but follows the appetites. In that sense, the presupposed correct hierarchy is lost.

Plato, then, introduces an analogy between the effect of healthy and unhealthy things on the body and that of just and unjust actions on the soul: 'Because just and unjust actions are no different for the soul than healthy and unhealthy things are for the body' (444c). The analogy is stated as follows: 'To produce health is to establish the components of the body in a natural relation of control and being controlled, one by another, while to produce disease is to establish a relation of ruling and being ruled contrary to nature' (444d). 'Then, isn't to produce justice to establish the parts of the soul in a natural relation of control, one by another, while to produce injustice is to establish a relation of ruling and being ruled contrary to nature?' (444d). What is emphasised, then, is that for both health and justice there is a *natural* relation among the parts involved, while disease and injustice is a disturbance of that relation. The idea of the natural order within the soul is here taken for granted. This notion is further explored through the notion that each one should do what is the natural work for him. As Stalley argues,

justice in the state is finally discovered to be a matter of each man doing his own thing... So an important part of Plato's defence of justice is the claim that it is the natural state both in cities and in individuals¹¹. Therefore, Stalley concludes that in Plato's view justice and health are genuinely alike in that they both exemplify the fundamental natural order of the universe¹². Two points need to be stressed here. Firstly, the analogy between the body's health or its disease and the soul's justice or injustice alone does not indicate a connection between mental and physical health. An important distinction on the way mental health differs from physical health is that the establishment of the body's parts in a relation of control is not done by any of those parts, but from something else; the person. On the other hand, the establishment of the parts of the soul in a relation of control is done by the soul as a whole. The *Republic* itself, then, does not provide one with the necessary argument in holding that the relation between them [mental and physical health] is closer than a mere analogy.

Book IV concludes with the question whether it is more profitable to act justly, or to act unjustly (444e-445a). Plato states: 'So even if someone can do whatever he wishes, except what will free him from vice and injustice and make him acquire justice and virtue, how can it be worth living when his soul - the very thing by which he lives - is ruined and turmoil?' (445b). The problem that should be raised here is that of a different notion of the soul than the one presented earlier in the book. In particular, Plato refers here to the soul as the life principle. What he confuses then, is the soul as a moral agent - doing what is best, what is directed by reason - with the soul as the element that brings life to whatever it occupies. The worthy life is different from life, a notion that although Plato seems to recognise, he often merges. In other words, he

¹¹See Stalley, 1975, p. 112.

¹²Stalley, 1975, p. 113.

moves from the notion of a worthy life to the notion of life without paying much attention to the moral and metaphysical consequences of that assimilation.

Republic IX

In book IX of the *Republic* Plato refers to the tyrannical man - both in his private and his public life - and compares him with the other types of men. Although such a discussion might seem not to have any bearing on this thesis, I want to argue that the discussion in this book has important implications for Plato's view of the soul and its relation to the body. In particular, the issues that arise are the following: a) the question of whether man is in control over the three parts of the soul as something external, or the three parts of the soul are aspects of the man. In other words, how is one to interpret Plato's metaphorical talk about what constitutes a person. b) How far the parallelism between city and person influences Plato's ethical view about the soul's hierarchy. c) What kind of view of the soul arises from Plato's discussion about the pleasures corresponding to the three parts of the soul, along with his talk of pleasure and pain. Finally, d) how is the issue of injustice, and the imagery of the beast, the lion, and the human to relate to the soul-body question.

Plato's account of the tyrannical man is based on the distinction - already mentioned in 554a and 559d - between two types of desires the necessary and the unnecessary. At 571b Plato further distinguishes the unnecessary desires into those that are lawless and those that are lawful: 'some of our unnecessary pleasures and desires seem to me to be lawless. They are probably present in everyone, but they are held in check by the laws and by the better desires in alliance with reason' (571b). What such a distinction indicates is that for Plato there is a standard, by which desires are to be judged, he considers the desires of which reason approves best and the ones that are contrary to reason, worse. He claims that the worse desires are those that awake in sleep, when the rest of the soul rests: 'Then the beastly and savage part, full of food and drink, casts off

sleep and seeks to find a way to gratify itself. You know that there is nothing it won't dare to do at such a time, free of all control by shame or reason' (571c). This passage raises important questions since Plato apparently refers to dreams and implies that there are unconscious desires, but it is not clear how he could account for the unconscious¹³. Since, within Plato's theory, reason cannot be identified with consciousness¹⁴ the conscious/unconscious distinction cannot fit his tripartite notion of the soul. Plato's primary concern is to distinguish appetites from reason as well as from the body; appetites are not directly linked to the body, and at the same time they are something other than reason. In that way, Plato is able to describe the healthy and moderate man as placing emphasis on the elevation of reason. Before going to sleep: '... he rouses his rational part and feasts it on fine arguments and speculations; second, he neither starves nor feasts his appetites, so that they will slumber and not disturb his best part... third, he soothes his spirited part in the same way' (571d-572a). Plato, here, not only recognises three parts in the soul that have to be interrelated, but also argues that the appetites and the spirited parts can disturb the rational part of man from getting on 'with its investigations' (572a). Moreover, the claim that the reasoning part needs to be left alone, pure and by itself (572a), implies both that it has the potential to do so, and that it is, in practice, disturbed by the other two parts.

In Plato's view, the tyrannical man is one whose reason is disturbed by the other parts; he is full of intense desires, shameless and without moderation: 'then this leader of the soul adopts madness as its bodyguard and becomes frenzied. If it finds any beliefs or desires in the man that are thought to be good or that still have some shame, it destroys

¹³It should be noticed that the emphasis will not be placed on whether Plato had any notion of the unconscious mind.

¹⁴The desires of appetite and spirit generally appear conscious and there is no suggestion that those who are dominated by their lower elements lapse into the unconscious.

them and throws them out, until it's purged him of moderation and filled him with imported madness' (573a-b). The implication is again that 'originally' a person is good and moderate. But, although man is naturally good and moderate, and therefore governed by reason, the desires are able to influence him in such a degree so that he is destroyed, he becomes corrupt. It should be stated here that Plato must have had in mind that something better could not develop out of something worse; thus he talks about 'decline' of the natural goodness and moderation of man due to desires. Hence, the effect of desires on the person is partially held responsible for the person's development. What one should notice here is Plato's distinction between bad habits acquired from outside, and those emerging from within, those that are shaped by the environment, and those that are so due to nature. But such a distinction, indicates that the person is affected both from external and inner influences; the desires, that are distinct from reason and the body but at the same time connected with both, are liable for the whole person's condition. Such a point reveals that the person cannot be identified with the reasoning part of the soul, but must be something more composite¹⁵.

Plato's account of the tyrannical man, therefore, is important because it indicates a presupposed idea about the definition of the 'healthy' man; there should be a certain hierarchy within the soul; reason has to be in control, while the appetitive and the spirited parts can achieve only partial satisfaction. The emphasis, then, lies on moderation. Plato, as regards desires, is not thinking of maximising uncontrolled

¹⁵This point will be discussed in more detail in relation to the image of the beast the lion and the human in 588c-d.

satisfaction, but rather satisfaction of the desires that are good¹⁶. Such a point, again, implies a need for a hierarchy within the soul.

The above issue of hierarchy is further examined through the city-person analogy: 'And won't the relations between the cities with respect to virtue and happiness be the same as those between the men?' (576c). Thus, Plato says about the tyrannical man: 'if man and city are alike, mustn't the same structure be in him too? And mustn't his soul be full of slavery and unfreedom, with the most decent parts enslaved and with a small part, the maddest and most vicious, as their master?' (577d). And he concludes: 'Then a tyrannical soul - I'm talking about the whole soul - will also be least likely to do what it wants and forcibly driven by the strings of a dronish gadfly, will be full of disorder and regret' (577d-e). An issue that arises here is that of what exactly Plato had in mind when he claimed that the tyrannical man is not doing what he wants. For Plato, what anyone really wants has to be what is good for him. Based on that, he then argues that the tyrannical man is not doing what *he* as a whole person wants, but what the distorted self makes him believe that he wants. This point can be seen also in *Gorgias*; Socrates denies that orators and tyrants 'do what they want' (467b), they simply do what seems fit. Plato's argument could be read in the following way:

P.1 If someone does A for the sake of B, it is not A which he really wants but B.

P.2 People do things that are not good themselves for the sake of the good.

//C 1 So, if someone does something that is not good itself, what he really wants is the good.

//C 2 So, if someone does something thinking it good, when it is in fact bad, he is not doing what he really wants.

¹⁶This will be also seen in relation to Plato's argument for the most just and happy man in 580b-c. The notion that complete satisfaction of desires is not good is further explored in *Philebus* where it is argued that goodness comes with limit, *Philebus* 24e-29c.

The *Gorgias* example although complicated, points out that for Plato what one wants is something different from what seems fit for him to do. In other words, both in the *Gorgias*' text and here Plato takes for granted that what one wants is what is good. It is implied, thus, not only that the tyrant lacks the soul's natural order, but also that the tyrant's soul, because does not do what is really good, only what seems good, does not do what it really wants. Plato presupposes here that the true soul is the soul that is ruled by reason, where the other parts achieve partial satisfaction. For Plato, the lower parts of the soul are seeking what is good for them, but they can only achieve that when they are under the direction of reason¹⁷. Similarly, Schiller argues: 'The soul of the *Republic* is not pictured as an entity imprisoned in the body, but rather as the seat of all the activities of the body'¹⁸.

On the other hand, the tyrannical soul, and the tyrant as a person - since he does not function correctly - is less truly a man than the one who does¹⁹. The tyrant, like the city, must always be poor and unsatisfiable, full of fear and find more wailing, groaning, lamenting and grieving than in any other soul and city (578a). The discussion about the tyrant concludes with a very important passage: 'The most just, and the most happy is the most kingly, who rules like a king over himself, and that the worst the most unjust and the most wretched is the most tyrannical, who tyrannises himself and the city he rules' (580b-c). This shows Plato's argument to be that the reason should act as the king of the soul. The emphasis is again placed on the hierarchical order of the soul.

¹⁷This notion is discussed further in relation to 586d-e.

¹⁸J. Schiller, 'Just Men and Just Acts in Plato's Republic', *Journal of The History of Philosophy* 6 (1968) p. 5.

¹⁹Such a view though faces the paradox of claiming that the tyrannical man is not a true man, which most of all creates a serious personal identity issue for Plato. It is as if he implies a particular definition of man in which the tyrant cannot fit into.

This point is also used by Schiller. He argues that: 'It is absurd to ask why a just soul is more worthwhile than an unjust one because, by definition, a just soul is one in which the rational element is in control over the other elements, and thus, is able to fulfil all its functions adequately'²⁰. Hence, the emphasis is placed on the presupposed notion of how a man should be in order to be considered just. In other words, the soul's natural hierarchy is essential not only for saying what constitutes a just man, but for what constitutes a man²¹. The tyrannical man, then, is treated as someone who lacks a unified personality. Thus, Plato's argument seems to be that the true self is not the reason. Rather, we acquire a single identity when our whole nature is organised under the control of reason.

From this point, 580d, until 588b Plato is concerned with the pleasures corresponding to the three parts of the soul: 'it seems to me that there are three pleasures corresponding to the three parts of the soul, one peculiar to each part, and similarly with desires and kinds of rule' (580d). He distinguishes three parts of the soul: the money-loving part²², the honour-loving part, and the learning-loving and philosophical (581a-b). Each part, now, rules some people's souls (581b-c). Thus, the person is characterised according to which part of his soul rules the whole soul. Such a notion again indicates that each individual part of the soul is capable of affecting the soul as a whole, which in turn requires a certain interrelation between each of the soul's parts and the whole soul. Plato's argument continues; there are: 'also three forms of pleasure one assigned to each of them [three types of people]' (581c). Moreover 'since there is a

²⁰Schiller, p. 11.

²¹A similar point, regarding the analogy between a just city and a just man is made in *Republic IV* 443e-444a.

²²Plato's talk of the money-loving part, is confusing since Plato attributes more to the appetites than what we get from the body. A possible explanation of what Plato means is not that we have an appetite for money, but that appetites motivate the man to pursue money.

dispute between the different forms of pleasure and between the lives themselves, not about which way of living is finer or more shameful better or worse, but about which is more pleasant and less painful, how are we to know which of them is speaking most truly?' (581e). What Plato wants to achieve here is to establish criteria for judging something to be more truly pleasant than something else is. In Plato's own words: 'how are we to judge things if we want to judge them well? Isn't it by experience, reason, and argument?' 'τίνι χρῆ κρίνεσθαι τὰ μέλλοντα καλῶς κριθήσεσθαι; ἄρ' οὐκ ἐμπειρία τε καὶ φρονήσῃ καὶ λόγῳ;' (582a).

The argument continues: 'A philosopher has of *necessity* [my italics] tasted the other pleasures since childhood, but it isn't necessary for a profit-lover to taste or experience the pleasure of learning the nature of the things that are and how sweet it is' (582b). And Plato concludes: 'Then a philosopher is far superior to a profit-lover in *his experience of both their pleasures* [my italics]', 'Πολὺ ἄρα διαφέρει τοῦ γε φιλοκερδοῦς ὁ φιλόσοφος ἐμπειρία ἀμφοτέρων τῶν ἡδονῶν' (582b). A difference between the *Phaedo* and the *Republic* seems to be raised here. In the *Phaedo* the philosopher is represented as needing to be disassociated from the body, from anything physical: 'Philosophy then persuades the soul to withdraw from the senses in so far as it is not compelled to use them and bids the soul to gather itself together by itself, to trust only itself and whatever reality, existing by itself, the soul by itself understands, and not to consider as true whatever it examines by other means, for this is different in different circumstances... whereas what the soul itself sees is intelligible and invisible' (*Phaedo* 83b). This need for the soul to be essentially disembodied is somehow unavoidable in *Phaedo* since Plato presents a simple soul being placed in a body. What should be noticed, though, is that Plato in the *Phaedo* seems to suggest that ideally we would turn our backs completely on bodily desires. The *Republic*, on the other hand, seems to

suggest that the just man will enjoy these in so far as they are compatible with the rule of reason.

Another striking point is that the philosopher has necessarily learned through experience. As it is said in 582a, experience is necessary to decide between lives. There is, in other words, a process, through experience, that the philosopher followed, in order to achieve his present state - that of superiority - due to the use of 'learning the nature of the things that are'. This is further developed in the *Republic* with the notion of the tripartite soul. This is seen when Plato says: 'Then, as far as experience goes, he [the philosopher] is the finest judge of the three' (582d), and is further supported by the next sentence: 'And he alone has gained experience in the company of reason' (582d). Plato's emphasis, thus, is placed in the rule of reason, but having passed through experience. The implication then is that both reason and experience are necessary for one to reach truth. Moreover, the philosopher's experience is best exactly because of the search for truth. As J. L. Stocks says, in the *Republic* an attempt is made to show that in knowledge there is both honour and profit, so that in a sense exclusive attention to one of these three sides of our nature results in the satisfaction of all three, while exclusive attention to any other brings misery and disaster²³. And he continues: 'knowledge does bring with it true pleasure and true honour: for the whole soul is content and at peace when knowledge is attained'²⁴.

From 583b onwards, Plato presents one with what he calls the 'third proof', concerning the just person's superiority over the unjust one. Plato holds that 'apart from those of a knowledgeable person, the other pleasures are neither entirely true nor pure but are like

²³Stocks, p. 211.

²⁴Stocks, *ibid.*

a shadow-painting' (583c). Thus, he starts by separating pleasure, pain, and the intermediate feeling, that of calm of the soul (583c). Although it seems that such a state can be, under certain conditions, both pleasant and painful, in truth it only appears to be so. The examples used by Plato are the following: sick people say that: 'nothing gives more pleasure than being healthy, but that they hadn't realised that it was most pleasant until they fell ill' (583d). On the other hand, 'And haven't you also heard those who are in great pain say that nothing is more pleasant than the cessation of their suffering?' (583d). Plato continues: 'Then the calm we described as being intermediate between pleasure and pain will sometimes be both' (583e). He, then, asks: 'Then how can it be right to think that the absence of pain is pleasure or that the absence of pleasure is pain?' (584a). Plato wants to show, here, that being in the intermediate state; feeling neither pain nor pleasure is different from the true and pure pleasure of someone being knowledgeable. Then, Plato refers to the pleasures that are not preceded by pain so as to show that pure pleasure is not relief from pain and that pure pain is not absence of pleasure (584b-c). Plato, in order to support further his argument, claims that: 'Is it any surprise, then, if those who are inexperienced in the truth have unsound opinions about lots of other things as well, or that they are so disposed to pleasure, pain and the intermediate state that, when they descend to the painful, they believe truly and are really in pain, but that, when they ascend from the painful to the intermediate state, they firmly believe that they have reached fulfilment and pleasure?' (584e-585a). Therefore, the emphasis is placed again on the 'inexperienced' having 'beliefs' which are not true.

The argument that follows, 585b-e, seems odd because it interrupts the main line of argument and seems to involve a different view of the soul and its pleasures: 'And aren't hunger, or thirst, and the like some sort of empty states of the body?' (585b), and 'Aren't ignorance and lack of sense empty states of the soul?' (585b). The argument

continues, 'And wouldn't someone who partakes of nourishment or strengthens his understanding be filled?' (585b). The crucial question, then, asked by Plato regards 'which kinds [of filling up] partake more of pure being' (585b). Plato claims that: 'That which is related to what is always the same is far more [true]' (585c). Similarly, he asks: 'And isn't it generally true that the kinds of filling up that are concerned with the care of the body share less in truth and being than those concerned with the care of the soul?' (585c-d). The argument, then implies that the soul has an ontological priority over the body because it is in contact with the Forms. It is, thus, close to the *Phaedo* doctrine. But this notion does not fit at all well with the tripartite doctrine assumed in the rest of book IX. Although it wants to stress the soul's superiority over the body, in fact it is only able to stress the reason's superiority over the other parts of the soul and the body. Although throughout the *Republic* Plato emphasises the importance of the hierarchy among the three parts for the person's benefit in fact here he places emphasis to the reasoning part having priority over anything else. In a sense, Plato moves from his claim of hierarchy among the soul's elements to the metaphysical point of reason being superior due to being able to know the Forms.

Plato concludes to the above: 'Therefore, those who have no experience of reason or virtue, but are always occupied with feasts and the like, are brought down and then back up to the middle, as it seems, and wander in this way throughout their lives never reaching beyond this to what is truly higher up, never looking up at it or being brought up to it, and so they aren't filled with that which really is and never taste any stable or pure pleasure' (585e-586a).

Despite the discrepancies in the argument, it is clear that: a) firstly, Plato associates reason and virtue with truth, and b) secondly, he takes the existence of objective truth

for granted, he talks about the 'stable and pure pleasure', the existence of something that really is. Moreover, this objective truth can be reached only through reason, and only then one is able to 'taste any stable or pure pleasure' (586a). The argument implied then is:

P1 There is something that really is, the objective truth.

P2 This objective truth is reached only by reason.

P3 Objective truth, when reached, gives one stable or pure pleasure.

//C Reason is a source of pure and stable pleasure.

Thus, Plato offers an image of the way men who are driven by their appetites act: 'For the part that they're trying to fill is like a vessel full of holes, and neither it nor the things they are trying to fill it with are among the things that are' (586b). In this respect, there is a contrast with the *Gorgias*. It resembles the *Gorgias* in using the leaky jars idea, but it also introduces the idea of true pleasures. In *Gorgias* the relevant passage reads: '... part of the souls of fools where their appetites are located is their undisciplined part, one not tightly closed, a leaking jar, as it were' (*Gorgias* 493b), and '... the uninitiated ones would be the most miserable. They would carry water into the leaking jar using another leaking thing, a sieve' (*Gorgias* 493b). As in *Gorgias*, Plato's emphasis here is placed on the role of the appetites. In particular, the appetites are presented as being unlimited and dissociated from reason. Moreover, both in the *Gorgias* 493b and in the *Republic* 586b the language of 'filling' and 'emptying' implies that Plato treats the appetites in a rather physicalistic way, due to their close relation to the body.

What is striking, though, about the above argument is that of the reference to the 'things that are' (586b). It implies that Plato has in mind a model, a particular idea of

permanency. In other words, Plato has in mind the Forms. The existence of the Forms, being presupposed, is necessary for Plato to hold that there is an objective truth.

Plato continues his argument: 'Then can't we confidently assert that those desires of even the money-loving and honour-loving parts that follow knowledge and argument and pursue with their help those pleasures that reason approves will attain the truest pleasures possible for them, because they follow truth, and the ones that are most on their own, if indeed what is best for each things is most its own?' (586d-e). Thus, the distinction between the desires that follow reason, and those that are on their own, becomes more evident.

A problem to notice here is what Plato means with the sentence 'if indeed what is best for each thing is most its own' (586e). Does Plato argue here that what is best for the appetites is most their own or does 'own' means what is most appropriate to them? It seems as if there is a discrepancy here between the appetites' own - their own fulfilment - and what is best for them. Such an inconsistency could be overcome if one assume that for Plato there is no possibility for the lower parts of the soul to exist independently. Although the appetites, and the spirit, could theoretically achieve complete satisfaction, that would ultimately lead to the soul's destruction, due to the whole soul becoming disorderly.

Thus, Plato says: 'when the entire soul follows the philosophic part, and there is no civil war in it each part of it does its own work exclusively and is just, and in particular it enjoys its own pleasures, the best and truest pleasures possible for it' (586e-587a). What is again underlined here is the relation of each part of the soul to the philosophic part and therefore to the truth. The best pleasures for each part have to be related to

knowledge, the philosophic part and therefore to truth. As regards the above quotation, R. W. Hall writes: the proper functioning of the three parts of the soul which results in each part attaining its proper virtue as well as the whole soul's gaining justice implies that the individual knows how each part should function in relation to itself and to the other parts. Through 'knowledge how', the rational element 'τὸ λογιστικόν' guides the proper functioning of the lower elements so that each part fulfils its function, gains its appropriate pleasure, and contributes to the well being of the whole²⁵. Also concerning the point of the soul achieving its best through hierarchy; with the philosophic part being 'in control', J. R. Peters claims; Plato asserts unequivocally that the philosopher will in fact aim at the harmony and fulfilment of the entire soul²⁶. He further supports his point by saying that, even though their [the lower elements'] pleasures are inferior to reason's own, for its part, reason accepts the limitations of being connected to temporally bound desires and seeks to transform the entire system of psychic impulses into a unified organism. As part of this system, reason pursues the complete unity of the whole personality²⁷. Peters' analysis helps one to see more clearly that Plato's talk of unity also gives rise to a particular notion of personal identity. In detail, reason's pursuing what is best for the whole, suggests that the person cannot be something distinct from the unity of the soul's parts.

Plato continues by comparing the life of a tyrant to that of a king (587b-e), and concludes that: 'Then if a good and just person's life is that much more pleasant than the life of a bad and unjust person, won't its grace, fineness, and virtue be incalculably greater?' (588a). In that way, Plato returns to the original discussion about injustice; 'Since we've reached this point in the argument, let's return to the first things we said

²⁵R. W. Hall, 'Justice and the Individual in the *Republic*', *Phronesis* 6, no. 1 (1959) p. 154.

²⁶Peters, p. 181.

²⁷Peters, *ibid.*

... injustice profits a completely unjust person who is believed to be just' (588b). Thus, Plato wants to fashion '... an image of the soul in words' (588b). This image follows: '... fashion a single kind of multicoloured beast with a ring of many heads that it can grow and change at will - some from gentle, some from savage animals' (588c), then, '... fashion one other kind, that of a lion, and another of a human being. But make the first much the largest and the other second to it in size' (588d). The argument continues: 'Now join the three of them into one, so that they somehow grow together naturally' (588d), and finally, 'Then fashion around them the image of one of them, that of a human being so that anyone who sees only the outer covering and not what's inside will think it is a single creature, a human being' (588d-e).

The image could be read as saying that the beast with the many heads is the appetitive part of the soul, and it is many-headed exactly because the appetites are multiform. Another point indicating that the beast is the appetites, is that it is said to 'grow and change at will' which indicates an irregular, disorderly growth similar to the unlimited appetites. The lion, now, has to be the spirited part of the soul since it alludes to power and honour-loving inclinations. The third element, that of the human being, needs to be examined in a more detailed way. In particular, Plato uses the word 'human being', 'ἄνθρωπος' in 588d, 588e, 589a, and in 589b. What such a use could indicate then is that a) Plato falls into a fallacy of including in the hypothesis what he wants to prove. He talks of 'the human being within the human being', 'τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ ἐντὸς ἄνθρωπος' (589a) while he wants to define what man is. If man here means a whole human being, with a three-part soul, Plato would be faced with an infinite regress. B) An alternative could be that Plato has a different view of 'human being' in mind than the one that he stated. The complex creature represents what a human being is in this

life, while one can assume that the 'man' is the most distinctively human element, the one that survives death.

The first alternative seems to be such an obvious problem, that it would be difficult for one to accept that Plato did not notice it. The second alternative, though, unfortunately requires one to assume more than what is actually given in the text. Plato's talk about the 'human being within this human being' (589a) is crucial. Plato argues: 'But, on the other hand, wouldn't someone who maintains that just things are profitable by saying, first, that all our words and deeds should insure that the human being within this human being has the most control; second, that he should take care of the many-headed beast as a farmer does his animals, feeding and domesticating the gentle heads and preventing the savage ones from growing; and third, that he should make the lion's nature his ally, care for the community of all his parts, and bring them up in such a way that they will be friends with each other and with himself?' (589a-b). The emphasis is placed on the 'human being' part to control the 'beast' part and the 'lion' part. Plato's image of the 'human being' taking care of the gentle 'heads' and keeping under control the savage ones reminds one of the passage where Plato describes the healthy and moderate man going to sleep (571d-572b). What is to be assumed here is that Plato when he talks about the 'human being' implies the rational part of man, reason. In turn, such an assumption implies that Plato takes reason to be the true self. At the same time, though, it is indicated that the human being is all three parts; thus the image of the beast. As it was stated above, this claim might seem to contradict the one that reason is the true self, but such a contradiction is avoided if Plato presupposes that the true self is different when in itself and when in this form of life.

In other words, Plato needs to hold that the image of the beast, the lion, and the human being form a human being *in this life*. Such a claim could be supported if one bore in mind Schiller's point about how the picture of the just composite beast refers to man; it has the appearance of a man but in which the growth of *all* elements is fostered. The just man is a man, not a congeries of dissociated desires. As such he realises the advantages of a man, because this is precisely what it means to be just²⁸. At the same time, reason remains the most important part, the part that is able to exist outside this human form. A notion like that implies that the appetites and the spirit are parts of a human being as long as it is embodied, and the true human being is reason but not as disconnected from the lower parts. What should be stressed here, though, is that although the above argument seems plausible, it is inconsistent with what Plato holds elsewhere in the dialogue. In the *Republic*, as in the *Phaedrus*, where the emphasis is placed on Plato's moral psychology, the tripartite soul is not treated as able to be separated.

Plato concludes book IX by summarising what a person should do in order to attain the best nature of his soul: 'Then won't a person of understanding direct all his efforts to attaining that state of his soul? First, he'll value the studies that produce it and despise the others' (591b-c), 'second, he won't entrust the condition and nurture of his body to the irrational pleasure of the beast within or turn his life in that direction, but neither will he make health his aim or assign first place to being strong, healthy, and beautiful, unless he happens to acquire moderation as a result' (591c). Such a person would: '... always cultivate the harmony of his body for the sake of the consonance in his soul' (591c-d).

²⁸Schiller p. 11.

Republic X

In the middle books of the *Republic* Plato makes it clear that the senses are not a source of knowledge. He contrasts the philosopher with the lover of sensory experience, and the intelligible world with the visible world. The objects of sight stand to the Forms as reflections and shadows do to physical objects. At the same time, although Plato talks about the importance of the soul's unity, by describing the soul as having three elements, he gives very little indication of how the senses are related to the soul. Some light is cast on this question, through the discussion of art in the first part of book X. In the first part of that discussion Plato attacks imitative art because it produces only imitations of imitations, and is thus far from the truth. But at 602c the attention shifts to the question 'on which part of the person imitation exercises its power'.

In other words, Plato wants to establish which part of the person is the one affected by painting and poetry. Although Plato does not explain, at the moment, the emphasis is going to be on the different parts of the soul. Plato starts by talking about deceiving appearances that cause confusion in the soul. He says: '... something looks crooked when seen in water and straight when seen out of it, while something else looks both concave and convex because our eyes are deceived by its colours, and every other similar sort of confusion is clearly present in our soul' (602c). One should notice, here, the talk about one being confused by the senses. In particular, the eyes can give false information and so confuse the soul. Plato does not specify though where the source of confusion arises; is it because the eyes themselves just perceive something but the understanding of the truth of that thing depends on something more than mere sight, namely reason? The role of sense perception is also analysed in the *Theaetetus*. There

Plato holds that sense-perception cannot provide one with truth: 'Perception... has no share in the grasping of truth...' (*Theaetetus* 186e).

In the *Republic*, Plato continues by saying that: '... it is because they exploit this weakness in our nature that... painting, conjuring, and other forms of trickery have powers that are 'little short of magical' (602d). The implication here is that the soul is confused when affected by appearances. But, although the soul is influenced by perception, Plato does not yet clarify the required distinction between sensation and judgement. Such a differentiation is important, since it points towards a body-soul relation that can not be sharply dualistic. By referring to *Theaetetus*, again, one could argue that through Plato's treatment of the notion of perception, one's understanding of the body-soul relation becomes clearer. Firstly, Plato argues: '... soul or whatever one ought to call it, which all these converge - something *with* which, *through* those things, if they were instruments, we perceive all that is perceptible' (*Theaetetus* 184d). It is indicated here, then, that one perceives with the soul through the instruments of the body, which in turn shows that the soul is in close relation to the body. A difference, though, that should be of interest is that in the *Republic* the soul is composite while in the *Theaetetus* it is not. This difference is crucial for, although in the *Theaetetus* the relation between soul and body is that of interrelation, in the *Republic*, where the soul is tripartite, the relation between soul and body becomes more complicated. The reasoning of the *Theaetetus* is the following: a) one uses the senses, which are bodily (184e), b) all the senses converge to the soul, and it is implied that c) the soul elaborates them; is the part of man that does the thinking. On the other hand, in the *Republic*, Plato still tries to specify which part of the soul is affected by appearances and which is not. This is why he introduces calculating, measuring, and weighing: 'And don't measuring, counting, and weighing give us most welcome assistance in these cases, so

that we aren't ruled by something's looking bigger, smaller, more numerous, or heavier, but by calculation, measurement or weighing?' (602d).

Thus, Plato infers that: 'and calculating, measuring, and weighing are the work of the rational part of the soul' (602d-e). This notion by itself implies that there should be at least another part of the soul. Then Plato states that, since it is impossible 'for the same thing to believe opposites about the same thing at the same time' (602e), then 'the part of the soul that forms a belief contrary to the measurements couldn't be the same as the part that believes in accord with them' (602e-603a). In the *Theaetetus*, now, Plato differentiates the soul investigating by itself from the soul investigating through the bodily powers: '... while the soul considers some things through the bodily powers, there are others which it considers alone and through itself' (*Theaetetus* 185e). What, then, remains constant to both the *Republic* and the *Theaetetus*, is the permanence of reason. In the *Timaeus*, Plato indicates again that soul and body are in a relation of interdependence by referring to the example of the usefulness of the eyes: '... our sight has indeed proved to be a source of supreme benefit to us, in that none of our present statements about the universe could ever have been made if we had never seen any stars, sun or heaven. As it is, however, our ability to see the periods of day-and-night, of months and of years, of equinoxes and solstices, has led to the invention of number, and has given us the idea of time and opened the path to inquiry into the nature of the universe' (*Timaeus* 47a-b).

In the *Republic* it is inferred not only that there is a need for at least two parts of the soul, but also that: 'the part that puts its trust in measurement and calculation is the best part of the soul' (603a). In other words, it is taken for granted that the rational part of the soul is superior. What I would like to point out, though, is that when Plato talks

about 'the best part' he is making this assumption based on the part's participation in, on contact with the truth. That is why he then claims: 'Therefore, the part that opposes it [measurement] is one of the inferior parts in us' (603a). What should be discussed, then, is the particular view of the soul that is implied from the above. The first point of consideration would have to be the role of perception in the *Republic*. It was already said that in the *Theaetetus* and the *Timaeus* perception is connected with the body²⁹. In the *Republic*, though, Plato does not clarify to which part of the soul perception belongs. Moreover, he seems to talk as though there are just two parts of the soul, the rational and the irrational³⁰. Although Plato implies that perception belongs to the lower part, he does not explain how the soul - as a whole - can be affected by the senses. In other words, if the soul is essentially non-bodily, and the senses are bodily, there can be no other way for the soul to be influenced by the senses, unless it is in a close relation to the body. A similar conclusion came forward in the *Phaedo* discussion, in the analysis of the recollection argument, where it was shown that Plato must have had in mind a kind of process, a step by step explanation of how one reaches to knowledge from perception. Plato distinguished between seeing something - the lyre, which is perceptible - and being reminded of its owner - which is the acquisition of a particular reasoning that goes beyond sense perception. The recognition of the lyre, as the owner's lyre, can be taken to be a step further from sense perception. Thus, for the soul to be influenced by the senses, the soul has to be in close relation to the body.

²⁹The *Theaetetus*' view has to do with an interrelation between a simple soul and the body; while the *Timaeus* recognises three parts in the soul, but they are made along with the body by the lower gods and are located in the body.

³⁰Talking vaguely of the 'irrational' part enables Plato to avoid associating perception specifically with either appetite or spirit. It thereby helps to conceal the fact that perception has no clear place in the tripartite soul as presented in the *Republic*.

The next move of Plato's, is to check whether what he said about imitation applies also to the imitations we hear; namely poetry (603b). The first point to note is that since poetry imitates either pleasure or pain, it is said to be far from truth. The role of poetry then is to encourage the lower parts of the soul by appealing to emotions (603e-608a). So, again we have a distinction between the rational soul and the irrational elements including desire, emotion, and sensation. These are all treated as part of the soul though of course they are all closely connected with the body.

From this point onwards, Plato is concerned to prove that 'Our soul is immortal and never destroyed' (608d). This notion, though, creates various problems for Plato since the notion of being indestructible becomes involved in the question what exactly is a soul. Plato begins with the assumption that: 'the bad is what destroys and corrupts, and the good is what preserves and benefits' (608e). The argument, then, begins with the question whether there is a good and a bad for everything (608e). By clarifying that, Plato asks: 'And when one of these [badness, sickness] attaches itself to something, doesn't it make the thing in question bad, and in the end, doesn't it disintegrate it and destroy it wholly?' (608e), and he adds: 'if they don't destroy it, nothing else will, for the good would never destroy anything, nor would anything neither good nor bad' (609a-b). Plato, then, goes on to say: '... if we discover something that has an evil that makes it bad, but isn't able to disintegrate and destroy it, couldn't we infer that it is naturally incapable of being destroyed?' (609b). Plato here talks about intrinsic evils that they are the only ones able to destroy the thing that possesses them. This implies that external evils are not in a position to destroy anything. And that, in turn, implies that the soul can only be destroyed by its own evils, not by the body's evils. Although the idea that each thing has its own proper evil sounds odd, it would seem plausible to ancient Greeks who noticed that things tend to decay, rot or rust away with no obvious

external cause. Influenced by this way of thinking Plato can hold that things can be destroyed by their intrinsic evils. This view fits also with the *Timaeus*' view³¹ that things left to themselves turn to disorder and chaos.

To prove that the soul's intrinsic evil cannot destroy it, Plato argues: 'What about the soul? Isn't there something that makes it bad? Certainly all the things we were mentioning injustice, licentiousness, cowardice, and lack of learning' (609b-c). He, therefore, asks: 'Does any of these disintegrate and destroy the soul?' (609c), ... 'Do injustice and the other vices that exist in a soul - by their very presence in it and by attaching themselves to it - corrupt it and make it waste away until, having brought it to the point of death, they separate it from the body?' (609d). Plato assumes here that what applies to natural things must also apply to the immaterial soul. He also assumes that the soul's evils are not enough to destroy it. These assumptions are made plausible under certain conditions; it should be taken for granted that, in the case of the soul, the evils that are natural to it are not able to destroy it³². Moreover, one is faced here with a distinction between the 'substance' disintegration of the soul that separates it from the body, and the spiritual disintegration. Plato's claim is that physical things can be destroyed as a result of internal defects. The defects, vices of the soul, on the other hand, are not defects on its structure. The soul by definition is not material; thus, its evils cannot destroy it, and it cannot be pulled apart. The argument that is implied, then, is the following:

P1 If something's intrinsic evil cannot destroy it, nothing can.

P2 The intrinsic evil of the soul is injustice.

P3 Injustice cannot destroy the soul.

³¹See further *Timaeus* 33a.

³²This is so according to 609a.

//C Soul cannot be destroyed by anything.

Thus, Plato restates: ‘... For if the soul’s own evil and badness isn’t enough to destroy it, an evil appointed for the destruction of something else will hardly kill it’ (610e). From the above Plato concludes: ‘Now if the soul isn’t destroyed by a single evil, whether its own or something else’s then clearly it must always be’ (610e-611a). What is now added to this argument is the claim that: ‘... if it is so, then you realise that there would always be the same souls’ (611a). What Plato probably implies here is that there always be the same number of souls, a notion that will appear also in the *Timaeus*³³.

Plato, then, says: ‘It isn’t easy for anything composed of many parts to be immortal if it isn’t put together in the finest way, yet this is how the soul now appeared to us’³⁴, ‘Οὐ ράδιον, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, αἰδίου εἶναι σύνθετόν τε ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ μὴ τῇ καλλίστῃ κεχρημένον συνθέσει, ὡς νῦν ἡμῖν ἐφάνη ἡ ψυχὴ.’ (611b), and ‘Yet our recent argument and others as well compel us to believe that the soul is immortal’ (611b).

There are two possible interpretations of this passage. The first being that the composite soul cannot be immortal, which in turn implies that the true soul must be the reason. J. Adam, for example, argues that according to the theory which is rather suggested (612a) than fully worked out in this chapter, the so called lower ‘parts’ are not of the essence of soul at all, but only incidental to its association with body, and

³³See *Timaeus* 41d-e. The same notion is implied in *Phaedo* 70c-72e.

³⁴Paul Shorey translates this controversial passage, 611b, as: ‘It is not easy, said I, for a thing to be immortal that is composed of many elements not put together in the best way, as now appeared to us to be the case with the soul’.

consequently perishable³⁵. For the alternative view, 611b says that 'it is hard for something composite to be immortal unless it is put together in the best way'. This leaves open the possibility that the composite soul is immortal. Looking at the text for evidence as to what was Plato's notion of the soul's true nature, is not an easy task. This is so, since it contains an implicit contradiction between his belief that a) what is composite cannot be immortal, and his conviction that b) the soul that survives has a moral character and is liable to punishment. This can be true only if the soul after death includes the lower elements. I would be inclined to argue that, at this point, Plato is faced with an inconsistency that is at the heart of his account of the soul. The inconsistency then, is present throughout book X. In particular, the notion that the soul's unity is something that one has to strive for, as well as the idea - within the myth of Er - that after death the soul chooses the type of person or animal that it will become in its next incarnation, indicate that the soul's true nature cannot be a simple one. Moreover, the *Phaedrus* indicates that Plato had in mind a soul that is naturally composite. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato likens the soul to the "natural union of a team of winged horses and their charioteer" (246a). This likeness implies that the soul is naturally tripartite. Furthermore, Plato talks about the 'soul's steersman' (247c-d), this image in turn implies not only that the soul is composite, but also that the reasoning element is responsible for the condition of the soul as a whole³⁶.

³⁵ J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato* 2 Cambridge, 1965, p. 427, n. 12. On the same interpretation see further Francis Macdonald Cornford (*The Republic of Plato*, Oxford University Press, 1945, p. 345): 'We are thinking just now of the soul as composed of a number of parts not put together in the most satisfactory way; and such a composite thing could hardly be everlasting'; see also, Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1981, p. 346; S. Halliwell, *Plato Republic 10*, Aris and Phillips 1988, pp.79 and 164; G. M. Grube, *Plato's Thought*, London, Methuen, 1935, pp. 138-139. B. Jowett and L. Campbell bring forth both views; see B. Jowett, L. Campbell, *Plato's Republic*, Oxford, 1894, p. 463. On the view that the composite soul survives see further T. M. Robinson, 'Soul and Immortality in *Republic X*', *Phronesis* 12 (1967), especially pp. 149-150.

³⁶On the image of the charioteer and his horses see further *Phaedrus* 246a-248e.

The *Timaeus*, now, provides us with a more coherent view regarding the nature of the soul. The reasoning part of the soul, like the World-Soul, is by nature immortal, but at the same time it has to be placed in a body and so acquire two more parts: the appetitive and the spirited. The main addition to the *Republic*, then, is that the lower elements of the soul are linked to the body and therefore mortal (42a-b, 69c-70e). Plato holds, thus, that the reasoning part of the soul is immortal, while the embodied soul contains both immortal and mortal elements: 'weave what is mortal to what is immortal, fashion and beget living things' (41d). Thus, the *Timaeus* favours the view that it is the reason that is immortal. What should be emphasised though is that after the first incarnation the reasoning element is linked to the lower elements and consequently to the body in a way that enables it to be distorted. In other words, the *Timaeus* takes the immortal soul to be the reasoning faculty. Treating the immortal soul as a faculty of reason, enables Plato to hold the idea that reason can be distorted, without being faced with the inconsistency of the *Republic*³⁷.

Returning to 611b, it should be noted that although Plato argues that the soul cannot be destroyed by the body's evils, he mentions nothing about whether the body's evil can in any way affect the soul. This point is essential for one's understanding of the relation between body and soul. It allows the soul to be influenced by either its intrinsic evils or the evils of the body, but, at the same time, it keeps its immortality. This is achieved by taking for granted that the soul cannot be destroyed by its natural evils, and therefore cannot be destroyed by external evils either. And at the same time, by not eliminating the possibility of the soul being affected by either internal or external evils. This point has also an important bearing on Plato's view of the afterlife. As will be discussed

³⁷Plato's notion of the soul in the *Timaeus* will be analysed further in the following chapter. Plato is able to treat the immortal soul as a reasoning faculty because of a) the link between reason and the circular motions, and b) the abandonment of the idea of punishment.

later, on the analysis of the myth of Er, this open possibility, of the soul being influenced, can be used as an explanation of the different characters of the souls after death.

The description of the soul in its purest state, 611b-e, is of interest because it again refers to the soul as being akin to the Forms, and at the same time, it doesn't present the soul as being necessarily simple as is implied in the *Phaedo*³⁸. The soul being presented as composite can be further argued through Plato's phrasing 'its whole being' (611e). To talk about the soul's whole being implies a composite being. He continues by saying that in order to determine the soul's true nature, one would be able to 'determine whether it has many parts or just one and whether or in what manner it is put together. But we've already given a decent account, I think, of what its condition is, and what parts it has when it is immersed in human life' (612a). This last quotation implies further that Plato has in mind a view of the soul independently of the body and another view of the soul while in human form. Although, as was said previously, it is difficult for Plato to be coherent in holding both that the soul is composite and immortal, he seems to argue for both. Plato can argue that the soul, while on its own, is immortal, and while embodied, is composite, but for the argument to be complete, he needs to show how the disembodied soul is different to the embodied one. Such an attempt is made in the myth of Er³⁹.

³⁸*Phaedo* 78c.

³⁹It is also of importance to my analysis of the *Timaeus*.

The Myth of Er

Plato concludes book X of the *Republic* by telling a myth of judgement. These last pages of the *Republic*, although a myth, make some important points about the soul-body relation. In particular, Plato uses the myth so as to show that a) the soul survives death, and b) it is affected by its embodiment, and is therefore different from the soul as pure reason depicted in the earlier dialogues. Such a notion is implied so that it enables Plato to establish the importance of being just; it points towards the importance of moral choice. According to the myth, Er was thought to be dead and so prepared for the funeral, but after twelve days he revived. Thus, he described what he saw in the underworld: 'He said that, after his soul had left him, it travelled together with many others until they came to a marvellous place, where there were two adjacent openings in the earth, and opposite and above them two others in the heavens, and between them judges sat' (614b-c). After the judges' decision, the just souls go upwards, into the heavens (614c), while the unjust travel downward (614c). Er, thus, acts as a messenger: he said that 'the souls were departing after judgement through one of the openings in the heavens and one in the earth, while through the other two souls were arriving' (614d). The souls that came up from earth were covered with dust and dirt, while the souls that came down from the heavens came down pure (614d-e). This account might seem useful for one's understanding of the souls' constitution. It might be taken as implying that the souls when in this state of disembodiment are pure, but the souls that come from the earth, that where recently embodied, are carrying with them the influences of such an embodiment.

The myth continues with the emphasis being placed on the penalties of the unjust: 'For each in turn of the unjust things they have done and for each in turn of the people they

had wronged, they paid the penalty ten times over, once in every century of their journey. Since a century is roughly the length of a human life, ... they paid a tenfold penalty for each injustice' (615a-b). Similarly, Plato talks about the penalties inflicted to tyrants. Although one is not presented with details, the main point seem to be that tyrants are the most unjust, and therefore incapable 'to go up' (615e). The first point that should be noticed here is Plato's argument that the unjust are to be punished. Since Plato is not talking about a physical punishment, one must assume that the soul is punished for its previous embodied life. At the same time it is implied that the soul is in a position to benefit from punishment. The notion of punishment, then, shows that the soul is not pure reason, if it were it wouldn't bear any responsibility for what the person did in his embodied life. In other words, we could argue:

P1 the souls of the unjust are punished in afterlife according to their wrongdoings while embodied.

P2 Pure reason is not affected by embodiment.

//C Therefore, soul is not pure reason.

It is interesting to notice here that the punishments inflicted on the souls depend on the severity of their wrongdoings, and that the tyrants are considered to be the worse sinners and therefore incurable. Such a point might mean that the tyrants' souls while embodied were so corrupt that it is impossible for them now to reform; they are no longer in a position to distinguish right from wrong, and thus they can not easily improve themselves.

The next point of the myth is to unravel the pattern of the souls' journey: 'Each group spent seven days in the meadow, and on the eighth they had to get up and go on a journey. On the fourth day of that journey they came to a place where they could look down from above on a straight column of light that stretched over the whole of heaven

and earth. After another day, they came to the light itself' (616b). In a like manner, Plato presents a picture of a spindle and eight whorls: '... eight whorls altogether lying inside one another, with their rims appearing as circles from above, while from the back they formed one continuous whorl around the spindle...' (616d-e) and 'The spindle itself turned on the lap of necessity... And there were three other beings sitting at equal distances from one another, each on a throne. These were the Fates, the daughters of Necessity: Lachesis, Clotho, and Atropos' (617b-c). These final lines about the Fates are an important addition to the myth because they are going to be in juxtaposition to the individual soul's choice. The Fates are considered the ones to regulate the past, the present, and the future respectively (617c).

The souls' next step, then, is to present themselves to Lachesis who tells them that they are entering 'the new beginning of another cycle, that will end in death (617d). As Annas says, 'what death reveals to Er is that he and everybody else is on a cycle of birth and rebirth; there is no final judgement'⁴⁰. This is an issue that will be discussed in detail concerning Plato's view of the soul of the philosopher. What is of interest here, though, is firstly, as H. S. Thayer says, that 'there is no choice about whether to choose or not; the souls must make a choice'⁴¹, and this is so of necessity, determined by the Fates. Secondly, the souls are to choose their daemon or guardian spirit themselves: 'Your daemon or guardian spirit will not be assigned to you by lot; you will choose him' (617d). Consequently, the main interest here is on the issue of personal choice. The souls are responsible for the choices they make; 'The responsibility lies with the one who makes the choice; the god has none' (617e). As Thayer says, 'in the myth the operation of choice is portrayed as directed to a "life" (bios), a network or pattern of

⁴⁰Julia Annas, 'Plato's Myths of Judgement', *Phronesis* 27 (1982) p. 131.

⁴¹H. S. Thayer, 'The Myth Of Er', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 5 (1988) p. 372.

contained and ensuing actions'⁴². Thayer further claims that it is taken for granted that choice is possible. He, moreover, argues that Plato departs from a tradition in Greek thought - according to which the gods in various ways and degrees cause moral blindness and evil in human conduct - by stating the fact of choice and assigning responsibility to the one who chooses, rather than to divine agencies⁴³. The choice, thus, lies on the soul. The soul is responsible for the life it chooses.

The process followed then is like this: the lots are thrown to everyone to choose, and then the models of lives are presented to the souls (617e-618a). An interesting detail here is that the models of lives are far more than the souls present (618a). This is of importance for it makes the scope of choice wider and therefore, more fair. Another interesting point is that, for the first time, Plato includes in the models those of animals⁴⁴. What should also be noted is Plato's claim that '... the arrangement of the soul was not included in the model because the soul is inevitably altered by the different lives it chooses' (618b). Thayer notes that 'the soul itself, before choosing a life, is unqualified and simply "a pure chooser"'. The choice is *of* a life-pattern: and once the choice is made the choosing soul and the character or quality of the life it selects are fused'⁴⁵.

On the other hand, J. Annas believes that one cannot be held responsible for his life and so either punishment or reward in the afterlife is of no point. Therefore, she argues that: 'However, to the extent that my present life is the product of past lives and their afterlife requitals, it becomes hard for me to think seriously that *I* should be rewarded or

⁴²Thayer, p. 370.

⁴³Thayer, p. 371.

⁴⁴This point is also discussed in the *Timaeus* 42c and 91e.

⁴⁵Thayer, p. 372.

punished. A conviction that the responsibility for my character and actions does not go back to me and then stop, but can be traced in large part to previous lives which I do not remember is bound to undercut the feeling that *I* am responsible for what *I* have done'⁴⁶. Thus, Annas' argument is that one does not have control over what one does.

Annas further argues that 'the free choice of the souls between lives can have significance for me only if there is some way in which the free choice of my life by a soul on the cycle of rebirths implies that *within* my life *I* have freedom to choose and so am truly responsible for what I choose to do. Yet this seems not to be the case'⁴⁷. In other words, Annas argues that the souls do not choose a character, rather they choose a fully worked-out blueprint, so there is nothing that the souls could have done to alter it⁴⁸. It should be noticed here, though, that Plato's major concern is to show why one should choose the just life. The myth enables him to show a further benefit due to such a choice. Even if we assume that what a soul chooses is a fully worked-out life, there is still room for improvement. To choose wisely, for instance, can make an important difference on the life that one is assigned with. Thus, despite the reincarnations, Plato holds that the core of the personality; the reasoning element, remains the same; he implies that the soul is the reason. It seems then that what Plato argues for is that the soul is in a position to make itself better. The soul is affected by the embodiments, but that does not mean that it has no control over them. Plato's claim implies that despite the choice, the embodied life - whatever that may be - is ultimately going to affect the soul's development. But the important point is that there is always the possibility of change no matter how bad or good a choice is. Plato, thus, says to Glaucon that '... each of us must neglect all other subjects and be most concerned to seek out and learn

⁴⁶Annas, 1982, p. 132.

⁴⁷Annas, 1982, p. 133.

⁴⁸Annas, 1982, p. 134.

those that will enable him to distinguish the good life from the bad and always to make the best choice possible in every situation' (618b-c). This advice of Plato's, in a way, verifies the element of personal choice. By making oneself more aware of what is good and what is bad, one will make the best choice.

Hence, Plato continues: 'And from all this he will be able, by considering the nature of the soul, to reason out which life is better and which worse and to choose accordingly, calling a life worse if it leads the soul to become more unjust, better if it leads the soul to become more just, and ignoring everything else' (618d-e). At this point, the emphasis is placed on choosing the just life. What is the crucial addition, though, is to choose the just life through reason, to choose the just life is not a matter of inclination or urge, it is a reasoning process. This does not mean though that reason is pure; the judgement of reason is presumably corrupted by the influences of the lower soul in previous lives. Plato's claim is then that 'we must always know how to choose the mean in such lives and how to avoid either of the extremes, as far as possible, both in this life and in all those beyond it. This is the way that a human being becomes happiest' (619a-b). Thus, the essential point here is not only the personal choice it is the best choice possible. This is accented by the following: 'There is a satisfactory life rather than a bad one available even for the one who comes last, provided that he chooses it rationally and lives it seriously' (619b).

After the example of a soul choosing a tyrannical life, Plato refers specifically to those who pursue philosophy: 'However, if someone pursues philosophy in a sound manner when he comes to live here on earth and if the lottery doesn't make him one of the last to choose, then, given what Er has reported about the next world, it looks as though not only will he be happy here, but his journey from here to there and back again won't be

along the rough underground path, but along the smooth heavenly one' (619d-e). The emphasis is placed again on the use of reason; one who pursues philosophy is in a condition to choose more wisely and therefore better than those who do not pursue it, are. An interesting point raised by Annas, here, is that Plato does not allow to the philosopher to escape reincarnation. As Annas puts it: 'Even if in some unexplained way a good, innocent soul always avoided a bad choice of life, it is still condemned to endless embodiment, and so there is no final judgement and permanent reward. Life and judgement, life and judgement keep on coming endlessly round'⁴⁹. Although such an example could create a difficulty for Plato, it can also be overcome by establishing Plato's goal. Plato's goal - at this case - is not to talk about ultimate judgement and reward, but the circle of the soul in a better way; the soul by following a philosophical way of life is benefited despite the reincarnations. As Annas recognises, 'the myth serves as a symbolic expression of the *Republic's* main moral argument. For the original demand was that justice be shown to benefit the agent both in being the kind of thing it is and for its intrinsic consequences, rewards being left out of the account'⁵⁰.

Book X concludes with Plato arguing that '... if we are persuaded by me, we'll believe that the soul is immortal and able to endure every evil and every good, and we'll always hold to the upward path, practising justice with reason in every way...like victors in the games who go around collecting their prizes - we'll receive our rewards. Hence, both in this life and on the thousand-year journey we've described, we'll do well and be happy' (621c-d). These last words of the *Republic* show that what Plato has in mind is to show that the best life is the just life; that justice is beneficial both for its consequences and for itself.

⁴⁹Annas, 1982, p. 136.

⁵⁰Annas, 1982, p. 137.

Conclusion

To conclude, the emphasis in the chapter based on the *Republic* is placed on the introduction of the notion of the tripartite soul because of the solutions that it provides to *Phaedo's* ethical considerations. In other words, one of Plato's main difficulties in the *Phaedo* is that by presenting a soul as being simple and therefore separate from the body, he is not able to give an adequate ethical theory respecting the soul's improvement. Although the emphasis placed in *Phaedo* proves Plato's seriousness about the soul's immortality, at the same time Plato insists on the notion of the care of the soul which itself proclaims a moral theory that would allow the soul to change; to become either better or worse. That point, in turn needs a soul that will not be completely separate from the body.

Another point in the *Phaedo* is that the soul, being pure reason, tries to reach knowledge without being distracted by the body. The question that arises from such a view is that if the soul has nothing to do with the body, why is the soul affected by it, why does the soul have to struggle to be left pure? It is implied here that the relation between soul and body cannot be that of a sharp dualism. In other words, if the soul is simply reason, *Phaedo* can not give an adequate account of the relation between soul and body regarding its epistemology. This is an issue that Plato seems to realise even within the *Phaedo*; in the recollection argument the role of the senses is important for one to achieve knowledge, but it is not solved.

A further difficulty that Plato faces in the *Phaedo* is that the philosopher is distinguished from the other humans in that he lives a life of practising death. He treats sense-experience as a hindrance to his development, he is not interested in anything

bodily, he rather he strives to achieve immortality. Such a notion contradicts Plato's moral beliefs. Plato, wants to show that one's moral advancement depends on how much the soul is affected by the body, the bodily sense organs provide the first step for one to achieve knowledge, but at the same time, Plato refers to the philosopher as if he can dissociate himself from anything bodily. An apparent contradiction that can be solved if one accepts that the soul-body relation cannot be that of a sharp dualism. These are the problems that the tripartite soul of the *Republic* is set to solve.

Hence, in the *Republic*, Plato introduces the notion of the tripartite soul. The first thing that is achieved by this notion of the soul is that the soul-body relation is no longer sharply dualistic. Even as early as in book IV, through Plato's talk about the education of the guardians, one sees that what Plato aims for is a balance within the soul. Plato, throughout the *Republic*, wants to achieve a kind of unity within the soul's parts as well as between soul and body. The three parts of the soul enable Plato to talk about the soul's improvement or decline. By starting from the assumption that there are different motivations for different things, Plato tries to locate them in different parts of the soul. This move enables him to have conflicting drives in the soul. By dividing the soul in three parts, he is able to locate in the soul various motivations that could not be included under the simple soul of the *Phaedo*⁵¹. So, the tripartite theory of the soul provides the means for an ethical view to be held, and as a result, for a closer relation between soul and body to be achieved. In particular, in order to hold that the body is able to affect the soul, the soul has to be something more than reason. Plato's ethical point in the *Republic*, therefore, is that the soul can be improved or degraded according to the influences that it has from the body. These influences, now, are not straight from

⁵¹This notion arises from Plato's belief that two opposite things cannot be derived from one and the same source at the same time.

the body to reason, rather the lower parts of the soul; appetites and spirit, which are in close connection to the body, are the ones that can alter the soul's character. Through the tripartite soul then, Plato is in a position to hold that a person is not simply reason, something that was implied in the *Phaedo*, but rather that a human being is a unity; consists *necessarily* of the soul as a whole; being tripartite, and the body.

This theory, however, faces a number of problems. One difficulty is that the relation between the lower parts of the soul and the body has to be illustrated in detail⁵². J. Schiller correctly says that the soul of the *Republic* is not pictured as an entity imprisoned in the body, but rather as the seat of all the activities of the body⁵³. The distinction that is proposed here, then, is that between the soul's imprisonment in the body, and the embodiment of the soul. In the first place the soul is seen as something completely different from the body, that was accidentally put in it. On the other hand, the notion of embodiment leaves open the possibility of mutual interdependence especially between the lower parts of the soul and the body. Although the *Republic* does not provide one with the necessary information for such a notion to be accepted in full, the notion of the tripartite soul is an improvement over the *Phaedo*, where the soul was thought to be simple.

An extension to the above problem is that neither in the *Phaedo* nor in the *Republic* does Plato give an adequate account of how reason and perception interact. But, in the *Republic*, the problem is at least taken under consideration. Plato tries to show that man is in a position to synthesise his knowledge of the Forms with the data that he gets from

⁵²This is done in the *Timaeus*, where the lower parts of the soul are spatially located within the body's framework (*Timaeus* 69d-70a).

⁵³Schiller, p. 5.

the senses. Reason and perception are related; and this is so due to the soul's nature. This, I shall show, is indicated by a) Plato's cave image, b) his talk of which part is influenced from imitation in book X, and c) from his notion on punishment in the myth of Er, concerning afterlife.

Firstly, the cave image, along with the significant political connotations, points towards an important epistemological issue; as J. Malcolm says it represents the educational progress of the soul⁵⁴; it shows the necessity of having reason in a close relation to perception. What is of interest, thus, is the ascent from the cave to the sun as well as the descent back to the cave. The ascent shows how one can reach knowledge by passing through the perceptions. On the other hand, the descent is of importance too since it indicates why reason cannot be left by itself; it implies the significance of the notion of the soul as a unity.

In detail, then, the first state in the cave presents one with the image of the prisoners who are tied down and are able to see only the shadows: 'the prisoners would in every way believe that the truth is nothing other than the shadows of those artefacts...' (515c). These are the men that consider appearances to be the truth; they form false beliefs based only on sense-perception, reason has no role to play yet. The image's next stage is that of the gradual adjustment when one looks up towards the light: 'When one of them [the prisoners in the cave] was freed and suddenly compelled to stand up, turn his head, walk, and look up toward the light, he'd be pained, and dazzled and unable to see the things whose shadows he'd seen before' (515c). Plato continues in a like manner: 'And if someone compelled him to look at the light itself, wouldn't his eyes hurt, and

⁵⁴J. Malcolm, 'The Line and the Cave', *Phronesis* 7 (1962) p. 39.

wouldn't he turn around and flee towards the things he is able to see, believing that they're already clearer than the ones he's being shown' (515d-e). What should be noted here is that Plato realises that such a process is not an easy one.

Plato argues, thus, that after different stages in his way upwards towards the sun, one is able to see the things in the world above, and ultimately the sun itself: 'Finally, he'd be able to see the sun, not images of it in water or some alien place, but the sun itself, in its own place, and be able to study it' (516b). This is then the process from the cave upwards to the sun. Trying to apply it to the soul's progress towards knowledge then, one sees that Plato does not give one an absolute jump from perception to knowledge; he assumes that there is a continual progress of how one is to attain knowledge. This point is of essence since it indicates a complex relation between soul and body. Perception is not treated as completely bodily, and therefore having nothing to do with knowledge; rather, one needs perception so as to reach knowledge. Plato in the cave image, hence, claims that for one to reach knowledge, one has to start by the senses. As A. S. Ferguson says, the prisoner who is dragged from his spectacle (the cave) to the sunlight is like a soul that is turned from ἀπαιδευσία to knowledge⁵⁵. Ferguson further argues that ἀπαιδευτοί or ἄφρονες, upon being faced with the problems of mathematics, as Plato conceives it, pass through a stage of ἀπορία and unbelief before they learn to apprehend the Forms⁵⁶. Such a notion is important if one bears in mind that Plato's emphasis is on the progress from sense perception to knowledge. Thus the cave image, like *Meno's* slave example, the recollection argument of the *Phaedo*, and Socrates' speech in the *Symposium*, is Plato's way of showing that to achieve knowledge one has to pass through perception. The same kind of continuity is pointed

⁵⁵A. S. Ferguson, 'Plato's Simile of Light Again', *Classical Quarterly* 28 (1934) p. 202.

⁵⁶Ferguson, p. 204.

out in the example of the divided line (509d ff.). Although the line does not have a progress, it does suggest that there is a kind of continuity among the different sections. This can be supported by the general claim that Plato refers to one line for both the visible and the intelligible. Although he wants to stress the difference between the two main divisions, the visible from the intelligible, he argues that man, at least in principle, is able to move from the one to the other. That there is continuity within the divided line is further indicated through Plato's example of mathematics. Plato argues that when people use 'geometry, calculation, and the like' (510c), 'although they use visible figures and make claims about them, their thought isn't directed to them but to those other things that they are like' (510d). The claim thus is that there cannot be completely distinct stages among the line because even those stages that involve knowledge presuppose perception. Thus, as Plato says: 'This, then, is the kind of thing that, on the one hand I said is intelligible, and, on the other, is such that the soul is forced to use hypotheses in the investigation of it, not travelling up to a first principle... but using as images those very things of which images were made in the section below, and which, by comparison to their images, were thought to be clear and to be valued as such' (511a).

Returning to the cave image then, the descent from the sun back to the cave is significant for it implies that in this embodied life reason cannot exist by itself. In other words, the man has to function as a unity not only for the individual's sake but also for the whole of the state. In particular, Plato says that the one that has seen the sun, has achieved knowledge of the Forms, has to return to the cave to: 'spread happiness throughout the city by bringing the citizens into harmony with each other through persuasion and by making them share with each other the benefits that each class can confer on the community' (519e). If one applied, again, such a talk to the soul, one

could argue that [if one assume that reason is the part of the soul that achieves knowledge of the Forms] Plato's claim is that in this embodied life reason cannot be by itself; it has to work along with the lower parts so as to achieve unity. That Plato has in mind the soul's unity can be further supported by Ferguson's argument. He maintains that the allegory is an experience, 'πάθος' of changing from firelight to full sun and back to firelight, which is applied to illustrate the gulf between παιδεία and ἀπαιδευσία (514a) and to show that the gulf may, with difficulty, be bridged⁵⁷.

Secondly, in book X Plato tries to show that the lower part of the soul is the one confused when affected by appearances. The complication created then is that Plato does not provide one with the particular relation between reason and perception, and he cannot therefore provide one with the specific relation required between the tripartite soul and the body⁵⁸. If perception is bodily, and reason is completely separate from perception, appearances cannot affect reason. But, when Plato talks about the soul, he talks about three parts being interconnected with each other, and the whole being interrelated to the body, in such a way that perception and reason have to be combined.

Finally, in the myth of Er Plato's talk about punishment indicates that there is a close relation between reason and perception. If the soul after death is reason alone, then when Plato talks about the punishment of a wicked soul, he cannot refer to physical punishment, the soul cannot suffer physically. So, what Plato says indicate that reason in a way is influenced by the perceptions the person had while embodied, and that results in the soul being judged accordingly, otherwise, to talk about the soul's rewards or punishment after death would have been meaningless. The myth of Er, then,

⁵⁷ Ferguson, p. 209.

⁵⁸ See further the discussion for book X of the *Republic*.

intended to summarise the message of the *Republic*. It is designed to emphasise the notion of choice, a notion that suggests parallels with previous passages.

Another question that arises is that of how the three parts of the soul are interrelated, and what bearing such a relation has on the soul. In other words the relation among the soul's parts, leaves one perplexed about the soul's true nature and its immortality. Throughout the *Republic* the soul is presented to be tripartite with the reason as the part which ought to be in control. At the same time, though, the reasoning part can be, and sometimes is, influenced by the lower parts. Thus, the soul is presented as being necessarily tripartite: Although it is made clear that the soul, while embodied, cannot be other than tripartite, in the afterlife the soul still remains simple. What is, though, implied by 'simple' here is important for the soul's immortality. As T. M. Robinson argues; 'although J. Adam may be right in arguing that Plato seems to imply that the soul in its true nature is 'monoeides', this is not to say that such a soul is simply the *logistikon*'⁵⁹. The main difference hence between the soul in afterlife in the *Republic* and that in the *Phaedo* is that in the *Republic* what survives is the reasoning part shaped by the influences of the embodiment. In other words, what is immortal is one's character. This point again is not discussed in detail, but it is mentioned in book X, in the myth of Er.

Finally, if one wants to have a clearer understanding of the soul-body relation, as it is presented by Plato, one has to progress; to move from the *Republic* to the *Timaeus*. This is of necessity since as it was shown although the *Republic* is an advancement to the *Phaedo*'s idea of soul-body relation, it is not yet complete as a view. In particular,

⁵⁹T. M. Robinson, 'Soul and Immortality in *Republic X*', *Phronesis* 12 (1967) p. 150.

although the soul is shown to be tripartite, it is not yet explained in what way something immaterial - the soul - can be connected to something material - the body. In like manner, the soul is presented to be composite and at the same time immortal; a notion that as it stands is not accurate; Plato himself does not give us a sufficient answer to the above contradiction. Moreover, Plato presents one with a view of the soul as the bearer of one's moral character, both in this embodied life and after death, which in turn implies that the soul - in whatever state of being - cannot be purely reason. Finally, he presents the philosopher as somehow superior to the rest of human kind, but at the same time cannot release him from the ongoing circle of reincarnations. These are then issues for which the *Timaeus* is set to provide answers.

Timaeus

Introduction

In order to understand Plato's notion of the soul in the *Timaeus*, we need, I believe, to investigate four main issues. These are: a) Plato's teleology as it appears within the creation story, b) The relation of World-Soul to World-Body, and the association between the World-Soul and reason, c) The affinity between the created world and the human being, including that between the World-Soul and the human soul and d) The human soul-body relation.

Doctrine of Creation

To begin with, Plato's teleology becomes apparent in the creation story, which includes the creation of the World-Soul as well as the human soul. The account of the universe's creation is based on the notion that everything created must have a cause¹. In Plato's own words: 'Now everything that comes to be must of necessity come to be by the agency of some cause, for it is impossible for anything to come to be without a cause' (28a). Through his imagery of the demiurge early in the dialogue (30a), Plato attempts to give an account of how the world came to be. Thus, within the creation story, the demiurge creates the universe - which is comprised of the World-Soul and the World-body - by giving order to materials that already exist. The demiurge means to create a universe that would be a good, orderly one. 'The god wanted everything to be good and nothing to be bad as far as that was possible, and so he took over all that was visible - not at rest but in dissonant and disorderly motion - and brought it from a state of disorder to one of order, because he believed that order was in every way better than

¹As G. E. R. Lloyd argues ('Plato As A Natural Scientist', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 88 (1968) pp. 82, 84 and 90), Plato's main motive for doing what we should call cosmology and natural science (physics and biology) is to reveal the operations of reason in the world.

disorder' (30a). Thus, the demiurge is said to take over materials that were already present. As F. M. Cornford puts it: 'Plato's Demiurge like the human craftsman in whose image he is conceived, operates upon materials *which he does not create* [my italics], and whose inherent nature sets a limit to his desire for perfection in his work'². This is also how H. J. Easterling reads the text: 'At the cosmic level the doctrine of the *Timaeus* is that in the act of creation - whether this was an actual event or not - the demiurge took in hand and worked upon a substratum which was not created by him but was already in existence, exhibiting disorderly motion and other properties of its own'³. It is clear, therefore, that the demiurge works on pre-existing materials.

Plato, thus, in order to explain philosophically the workings of the universe presupposes the existence of a cause, and the notion that this cause is an agent that acts for the best. It seems as though Plato presupposes the existence of an intelligent agent so as to put the materials already present in nature in order, and thus provide us with the ordered universe that we have. In other words, Plato's belief in the necessity of the existence of the demiurge, is based on one of his fundamental convictions that both the universe and human action cannot be explained in purely physical terms; they must have a 'telos'.

The notion of 'telos' within Plato's creation talk, thus, is of prime importance for it shows why Plato uses the demiurge as his agent. Still, in talking about Plato's teleology, one firstly has to pay attention to a very important divergence in the meaning applied to the word 'cause'. The modern conception of 'cause', which derives from Newton, assumes that the word 'cause' indicates the relation between two events; one event causes another. Such a relation is generally explained in terms of strict physical

²F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, London 1935, p. 37.

³H. J. Easterling, 'Causation In the *Timaeus* and *Laws X*', *Eranos* 65 (1967) p. 32.

laws. On the other hand, in older views the idea of a 'cause' is less precise. The word *aition* is used in an unrestricted way to include anything that may be cited in explanation of an event or of something's existence. Aristotle argues that the soul is the cause or source of the living body, and explains the different senses of the word cause. The soul for Aristotle is a) the source or origin of movement, b) the end (the telos), and c) the essence of the whole living body⁴. Plato's model, now, in the *Timaeus* is that things come to a state of relative order out of a state of relative disorder so, later in the dialogue, he speaks of two main 'causes' in nature; namely Reason and Necessity. In this early section of the dialogue, the demiurge apparently embodies Reason⁵ and the elements that lack order embody Necessity. It is thus consistent with the passage where Timaeus says: 'For this ordered world is of mixed birth: it is the offspring of a union of Necessity and Intellect. Intellect prevailed over Necessity by persuading it to direct most of the things that come to be toward what is best...' (48a). Although Plato's talk is mythological, it is indicative of what he thought about the workings of nature: The universe is necessarily an ordered one. This is so because the Forms act as a model. In Timaeus' words: 'whenever the craftsman⁶ (*δημιουργός*) looks at what is always changeless and, using a thing of that kind as his model, reproduces its form and character, then, of necessity, all that he so completes is beautiful' (28a-b). In such a manner, Plato not only presupposes the existence of a rational, good demiurge, but he also presupposes the existence of the realm of the Forms, that is treated as a pattern, as a model for the creation of the world. The realm of the Forms is: 'that which is changeless and is grasped by a rational account, that is, by wisdom' (29a). The

⁴ See further Aristotle *De Anima* book II, chapter 2, 415b5-10. It should be pointed out, though, that Aristotle does not recognise a universal, World-Soul like Plato.

⁵H.-G. Gadamer (*Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutical Studies on Plato*, trans. by P. Christopher Smith, Yale University Press, 1980, p. 163), thus, rightly states that 'the demiurge in the *Timaeus* symbolises nothing more than the conversion of a condition of disordered movement into a condition of order'.

⁶As far as the creation myth is concerned, the existence of the craftsman is taken for granted.

existence of the raw materials, found in a state of disorder, is also taken for granted. The assumption that the Forms and the 'raw' materials by themselves - without an agent - would never be able to provide one with a universe is implicit in this whole account. The Forms and the raw materials are necessary for the formation of the universe, but they could not bring it into existence without an agent. The act of creation requires an agent that possesses reason, and neither the Forms nor the 'raw' materials are treated as agents that possess reason.

Thus, as far as the creation myth is concerned, the existence of the craftsman is taken for granted. There are, though, a number of questions that arise from such a claim. To what extent are the demiurge and the creation story to be taken as mythological? What are the points within the myth that Plato treats as conveying philosophical truths? Although the existence of the demiurge as the creator and craftsman⁷ of the world cannot be proven, Plato has serious reasons to treat both the demiurge and the creation story as, at least, approximating to truth as much as possible. Firstly, regarding the demiurge, as Giovanni Reale says, 'the Demiurge or supreme intelligence is he who fully actualises the One and Measure at all levels of reality and so is measure in the personal sense. The Good-One is Measure as the supreme model; the Demiurge is Measure as the perfect way to make that model actual'⁸. If my reading of Reale is correct, he seems to argue that the fundamental truth that Plato seems to convey here is that measure is imposed on disorder, on chaos; the universe is structured for the Good, in an orderly way. The question thus is not whether the demiurge exists or not, but

⁷ John Sallis (*Chorology on Beginning in Plato's Timaeus* Indiana University Press, 1999, p. 52) argues that according to Plutarch (Plato Quest. II, 1) Plato's demiurge is both a maker and a father.

⁸ Giovanni Reale, 'Plato's Doctrine of the Origin of the World, With Special Reference to the *Timaeus*', in T. Calvo - L. Brisson (eds), *Interpreting the Timaeus - Critias Proceedings of the IV Symposium Platonicum*, 1997, p. 161.

rather why Plato introduces a demiurge⁹. The answer is provided by the text. For Plato to introduce reason to the world, an agent is required who would act upon mindless matter and bring order to it. Hence, although the demiurge and the creation story as described by Timaeus are parts of a myth, a likely mythos – a point that is admitted by Timaeus before he starts the narrative (29c-d)¹⁰ - Plato treats them as essential elements in the search for truth rather than as alternatives to the truth. In other words, the whole dialogue uses the mythological and the philosophical as tools for an account of the world's creation. Thus, Christopher Gill argues that, 'as regards the genesis (coming to be or becoming) of the universe, we must be content if we can achieve 'likelihood', and so the status of the account is presented as being, at best, a 'likely story' (eikos mythos 29d2)'¹¹. John Sallis follows a similar line of thought. He treats the *Timaeus*' discourse as 'a likely discourse, but only provided one understands *likely* by reference, not to some abstract concept of probability, but to the character of that which the likely discourse is about, its character as a likeness, an image'¹². Having shown, thus, the way the whole dialogue is to be interpreted, there remains to separate the particular parts of the creation story that are obviously mythological, from those that can help as tools in conveying the truth. These will be indicated accordingly as the creation story progresses.

⁹ E. R. Dodds ('Plato and the Irrational', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 65 (1945) p. 23) argues that it is Plato's religious feeling that created the figure of the benevolent and mighty (though not omnipotent) Father-god, father and maker of gods and men and of the world itself.

¹⁰ In 29c-d Timaeus claims that 'if we can come up with accounts no less likely than any, we ought to be content, keeping in mind that both I, the speaker, and you, the judges, are only human. So, we should accept the likely tale on these matters'. He thus indicates that although the account is mythological, they should accept it as a possible one.

¹¹ Christopher Gill, 'Plato on Falsehood – not Fiction', in C. Gill – T. P. Wiseman (eds), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, University of Exeter Press, 1993, pp. 58-59.

¹² See Sallis, p. 55. See also Kathryn A. Morgan, *Myth and Philosophy, from the Presocratics to Plato*, Cambridge University Press 2000, p. 277.

World-Body and World-Soul

The universe, now, is made out of World-Soul and World-Body. Thus, it is a living organism that is always changing. Timaeus claims that since it was impossible for an unintelligent thing to be better than anything that possesses intelligence (30b), and nothing could possess intelligence except soul (30b), the demiurge: 'put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, and so he constructed the universe... as a truly living thing, endowed with soul and intelligence' (30b-c). The original claim of the above quotation is that the universe is intelligent and living exactly because it has soul. It should be noticed, though, that Timaeus talks about a created soul. Such a notion, thus, implies a revision from Plato's earlier theory that held not only that soul is eternal but also that it is outside the world of change¹³. Here, the World-Soul is created by the demiurge precisely because he wants to make a perfect world¹⁴. A perfect world needs to be self-sufficient, and in order to be so, it must contain a rational power that can maintain its order. Furthermore it is also important that the world is 'living'. If the world is to be complete, operating on its own with no external influences, it has to be living. Thus, the world is treated as a living organism and as such it requires soul. Hence, Plato assumes that the universe must be perfect and unique by implying that:

P1 nothing can be intelligent, without having soul.

P2 nothing can be orderly, without having soul.

P3 nothing can be 'living', without having soul¹⁵.

¹³See further *Phaedo* 66e.

¹⁴The point that soul is created but at the same time eternal, will be discussed further later on.

¹⁵The same view is held by Aristotle, the soul's main function is that it brings life to body. In *De Anima*, Aristotle says: 'the soul must be a substance in the sense of the form of a natural body having life potentially within it.' (*DA*. 412a 19-21). He thus claims that 'if, then, we have to give a general formula applicable to all kinds of soul, we must describe it as the first grade of actuality of a natural organised body' (*DA*. 412b 4-7).

P4 The world is intelligent, orderly, and living.

//C The world has a soul.

Here again we might question the necessity of the demiurge. Premises 1-3 could be true independently of whether one accepts the demiurge's existence or not. So one could claim that Plato does not need the demiurge for holding that anything intelligent, orderly, living has to have a soul. He could have arrived at premise 4 on empirical grounds, by observing the pattern in living beings and in the universe. It might therefore be possible to reach the conclusion that there is a World-Soul on purely empirical grounds, but from Plato's point of view it would not be enough merely to say that the order of the universe shows that there is a World-Soul. Plato believes that the world is as it is because that is best. He uses the story of the demiurge to make this point. The universe is not only orderly but can be understood in teleological terms. As it will be shown later in the discussion by the example of eyesight, Plato thought that 'the inquiry into the nature of the universe', namely astronomy, 'has given us philosophy' (47a-b). Thus, we have the ability to observe the workings of Reason and order that take place in the universe, and infer that the World has a World-Soul. Thus, G. R. Carone argues that 'from a metaphysical perspective, and because of its ontological constitution, the World-Soul serves to mediate between the indivisible and the divisible. This World-Soul (or the universe that it animates) is a god; itself has a mathematical structure and rules over the motions of the divine stars and planets, which, from an ethical perspective, human beings are encouraged to learn. This learning of astronomy involves mainly the exercise of intellectual functions and is based on the apprehension of mathematical relationships'¹⁶. Thus one of the World-Soul's

¹⁶ Gabriela Roxana Carone, 'The Ethical Function of Astronomy in Plato's *Timaeus*', in T. Calvo – L. Brisson, p. 342.

main function within the universe is to provide us with a teleological explanation of the workings of the universe.

The World-Soul, then, is placed by the demiurge within and around the World-Body, a placement that implies the completeness of the universe: '... he who formed it [the World-Soul] went on to fashion inside it all that is corporeal, and, joining centre to centre, he fitted the two together. The soul was woven together with the body from the centre on out in every direction to the outermost limit of the universe, and covered it all around on the outside. And revolving within itself, it initiated a divine beginning of unceasing, intelligent life for all time' (36e)¹⁷. Hence, Plato takes for granted that the universe is the union of World-Soul and World-Body, since, in order for the universe to be complete, the demiurge needs to give it a soul. Plato assumes that orderly motion must be the work of reason. He therefore requires the World-Soul to be the seat of reason. He also appears to assume that reason (*nous*) is an activity, which must be achieved by - performed and sustained by - some sort of agent¹⁸. Since there cannot be order without reason, it follows that an ordered universe must possess a rational soul. Plato's argument, thus, could be stated as follows:

P1 The universe is complete.

//C I It cannot therefore be dependent on something outside itself (from 1).

P3 The universe is orderly.

P4 Order is always the product of reason.

¹⁷ The use of language here, that the soul is woven to the body, although obviously mythological, shows Plato's attempt to indicate the interconnection between the World-Soul and the World-Body in order to form the world as a whole.

¹⁸ Edward N. Lee ('Reason and Rotation: Circular Movement as the Model of Mind (*Nous*) in Later Plato', *Facets of Plato's Philosophy* supplementary vol. II 1976, p.89) holds that *nous* must exist ἐν ψυχῇ (30b, 37c, 46d) that is, that *nous* is itself an activity, one which must be achieved by - performed and sustained by - some sort of agency or agent. In other words, Lee argues that one cannot have reason without soul.

//C II The universe must therefore be governed by reason (from 3 and 4).

P5 Reason must always be in a soul.

P6 The World-Body is matter.

//C III The universe therefore must have its own rational soul.

The *Timaeus*, thus, combines two basic ideas concerning the soul which appear within Plato's works; namely, that the soul is necessarily the seat of reason, and the seat of motion¹⁹. This union is achieved through the World-Soul's construction out of the circles of the Same and the Different. In particular, Plato, through the description of the movements of the circles in the World-Soul, indicates that the World-Soul is the cause of orderly movement. The demiurge 'made the movement of the Same revolve toward the right by way of the side, and that of the Different toward the left by way of the diagonal, and he made the revolution of the Same, i.e., the uniform, the dominant one in that he left this one alone undivided, while he divided the inner one six times, to make seven unequal circles' (36c-d). Thus, Hackforth argues that Plato's mixture of Being, Sameness, and Difference described at 35a is clearly to be taken as an analysis of the cosmic soul's faculties of cognition and motion²⁰.

The movements of the Same and the Different are linked with the notion of making judgements, a process that involves reasoning. In *Timaeus*' words: 'Because the soul is a mixture of the Same, the Different, and Being, because it was divided up and bound together in various proportions, and because it circles round upon itself, then, whenever it comes into contact with something whose being is scatterable or else with something

¹⁹The soul being the seat of reason is held in the *Phaedo*, while the soul as the seat of motion is held in the *Phaedrus* and later in the *Laws* X. It should be noted that although both Plato and Aristotle hold that the soul is the seat of motion, Plato treats the soul in as a self-moving mover. On the other hand, Aristotle argues that the soul cannot 'partake in movement' because if it would, it would have to have a place, something that Aristotle denies (*DA*. 406a 20-22). This leads to two quite different views on soul.

²⁰R. Hackforth, 'Plato's Cosmogony (*Timaeus* 27D ff.)', *Classical Quarterly*, n. s. 9 (1959) p.20.

whose being is indivisible, it is stirred throughout its whole self. It then declares what exactly that thing is the same as, or what it is different from, and in what respect and in what manner, as well as when, it turns out that they are the same or different and are characterised as such' (37a-b). Thus, the World-Soul is able to combine opinion with knowledge²¹. In other words, although the objects of opinion are different from the objects of knowledge, it is the World-Soul that can make any judgements about them; 'whenever the account concerns anything that is perceptible, the circle of the Different goes straight and proclaims it throughout its whole soul. This is how firm and true opinions come about. Whenever, on the other hand, the account concerns any object of reasoning, and the circle of the Same runs well and reveals it, the necessary result is understanding and knowledge' (37b-c)²². In that manner, the World-Soul is portrayed not only as the cause of orderly motion, but also as being able to exercise reason. As Timaeus says 'it is impossible for anything to possess intelligence apart from soul' (30b). Similarly, in describing the world's creation, he claims that the world is 'a divine beginning of unceasing, intelligent life for all time' (36e), because it has Soul. Therefore, the fact that the World-Soul is both the seat of reason and the cause of motion shows why soul is the cause of everything within the ordered universe.

Another point of interest concerning the World-Soul is that Plato treats it as both created and eternal. Such a notion is essential because it indicates that since the World-Soul is 'made' and at the same time cannot undergo any change, such as those that matter undergoes, it belongs neither to the realm of the Forms nor to the constructed

²¹ For Aristotle the reasoning part of soul is the one that 'is capable of receiving the form of an object; that is must be potentially identical in character with its object without being the object' (*DA*. 429a15-17).

²² According to Gretchen Reydam-Schils ('Plato's World Soul: Grasping Sensibles Without Sense-Perception', in T. Calvo - L. Brisson, pp. 262-263) the two functions of the World-Soul, knowledge and opinion, are essentially cognitive. The World-Soul can have a true grasp of the sensible realm.

world. As Hackforth argues, Plato conceives this soul as something which comes upon the scene only when the κόσμος comes into being, and only through the action of the demiurge. He then concludes that Soul makes its appearance in the universe, as well as in the creatures with which the universe comes to be populated, including the stars and planets and human kind, as a feature of the διακόσμησις. But not, like the body, as the result of an ordering or re-fashioning of a pre-existent material or substrate²³. Thus, the World-Soul is already thought to be between the two realms.

Being between the two realms, though, does not mean that it is separate from them; rather, the World-Soul combines the two worlds. This is achieved through the manner the Soul is constructed; it is created as a mixture of the two kinds of being, the changing and the unchanging. The Soul consists of an 'intermediate form of being' (35a), also 'the soul came to be as the most excellent of all the things begotten...' (37a), and '... the soul is a mixture of the Same, the Different, and Being' (37b). But how are we to understand this particular way of the World-Soul's creation out of the three above-mentioned elements? This passage is generally characterised as a most difficult one²⁴, and various interpretations have been attempted²⁵, without anyone being free from difficulties. Despite the fact that we cannot have a clear idea of what the Same, the Different and the Being entail, it is interesting to see what we can infer from them. Plato, thus far, has presented us with a picture of the World-Soul as something that is created, eternal, and the cause of motion and reason in the world. But the question that seems to linger in our minds is how can something be both created and eternal. Within the myth, Timaeus argues that the World-Soul and the gods – along with the stars and planets – will never cease to exist because this is the demiurge's will. This is a valid

²³ See Hackforth, 1959, p.20.

²⁴ See A. E. Taylor, *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, Oxford 1928, p. 106.

²⁵ See Sallis, pp. 65-70.

answer within the boundaries of mythology, but what happens when we try to explain it through logical arguments? Plato's answer seems to be that the World-Soul consists of the above-mentioned elements. The emphasis, though, should be placed on the element of Being. Plato treats the intermediate Being as a necessary requirement for the World-Soul, and later on for the human soul, to be both created and eternal. This assumption though, does not actually explain what the World-Soul's nature is; at most it says that it is neither a Form, nor a purely material entity. This view of the World-Soul can be compared with Xenophanes' notion of god. In particular, Xenophanes held that god 'shakes all things by the thought of his mind' (K. R. S. 171, 25). In other words, he argues that thought or intelligence can affect things outside the thinker without the agency of limbs²⁶. Both the World-Soul and Xenophanes' god impose intelligence on the world. Xenophanes' view of god at least shows that Plato is not alone in the search for something to connect the immaterial to the material. As Kirk, Raven, and Schofield argue, 'Xenophanes' god has a body because totally incorporeal existence was inconceivable, but that body apart from its perceptual – intellectual activity, was of secondary importance, and so perhaps was its location'²⁷.

But, although for Xenophanes' theology the case may be that the god's spatial location was of no importance, for Plato's cosmology, the World-Soul's spatial location is essential for explaining its nature, and cannot be so easily dismissed. David Sedley, discussing the revolutions of the World-Soul, argues that 'in themselves the world soul and its revolutions are incorporeal (36a6), but when illumination is added the combined effect is something bodily. The incorporeal thus differs from the corporeal, not by necessarily being altogether non-spatial, but by lacking essential characteristics of body,

²⁶ See Kirk, Raven, and Schofield p. 170.

²⁷ See Kirk, Raven, and Schofield p. 172.

such as visibility and tangibility. There is no reason why an incorporeal should not have a circular motion, even though its invisibility and intangibility make this undetectable to the senses'²⁸. The World-Soul, since is presented by Plato as being both immaterial, and located in space, is faced with a discrepancy that for Aristotle is not solvable. Aristotle denies that soul naturally partakes of movement (DA. 406a21), and claims that 'it is a mistake to say that the soul is a spatial magnitude' (DA. 407a3-4). Thus a characteristic difference is stated between the two philosophers. For Plato the World-Soul is the cause of reason and motion, while itself being self-moving. For Aristotle the soul cannot be spatially located because it not a matter but rather 'a ratio' (414a12).

Next, the World-Body is made by the demiurge to be 'a symphony of proportion' (32c). This is so due to its being created out of the four primary elements: fire, earth, water, and air. 'Hence the god set water and air in between fire and earth, and made them as proportionate to one another as possible, so that what fire is to air, air is to water, water is to earth' (32b). Another interesting point here is that the elements that the demiurge uses for the construction of the World-Body, are used completely: 'Now each one of the four constituents was entirely used up in the process of building the world' (33a), this is so because the demiurge wanted the world to be 'a single whole, composed of all wholes, complete and free of old age and disease' (33a). This is necessary because the universe must be complete and self-sufficient. Similarly, the point that the World-Body is made into a rounded shape, also indicates Plato's need for a complete, self-sufficient universe: 'The appropriate shape for that living thing that is to contain within itself all the living things would be the one which embraces within itself all the shapes there are.

²⁸ See further David Sedley 'Becoming like god in the *Timaeus* and Aristotle', in T. Calvo – L. Brisson, pp.329-330.

Hence he gave it a round shape...' (33b). Thus, because the universe is complete it is discharged from outside influences - unlike the human being.

The Created World and the Human Being

In order for one to understand fully Plato's notion of soul in the *Timaeus*, one has to examine the significance of the resemblance between the created world and the human being. The first, rather general, point that should be examined is Plato's insistence on talking about a created world that is one, unique, and at the same time, a diversity of elements. Treating the world as such both shows Plato's belief about the structure of the world, and more especially allows Plato to use it as an example for explaining the structure of the human being. Plato's intention is to demonstrate that the human being is also created as one and at the same time as having various elements within it²⁹. Another important characteristic of the world, which is essential for the human being as well, is that the world is treated as a living being. The soul is necessary for any living thing, and therefore, as was shown earlier, since the world is a living being, consisting of body and soul, and since body is made out of inert matter, it is the World-Soul that makes the world a living thing. But the World-Soul is the cause of motion as well as of cognition. Thus, the world is not only 'living' but also 'intelligent' due to the existence of the World-Soul. Accepting that there is a parallel in Plato's way of thinking, the claim that soul is the cause of life as well as of motion and reason for the world implies that the human being, which is both soul and body, will have the same properties. The human soul, the reasoning part in particular, will be considered as the cause of motion and cognition, while its body will be the necessary matter.

²⁹This point will be discussed in the passage concerning the human soul-body relation.

Two additional points should be considered here: Firstly, as the world is a unity of world-body and World-Soul, the human being will be a unity of body and soul. Since there is no other way for the world, there will not be another way of having a human being. As J. V. Robinson argues, 'if embodiment is good enough for the World-Soul, which is in every way better than the human soul, then it is good enough for the human soul'³⁰. Secondly, the idea that both the World-Soul and the human soul are the cause of life, motion and reason plays an important role in the structure of both the world and the human being. Since the World-Soul is the source of life, motion and reason, and as a result, there can be no world without a World-Soul, it can be inferred that neither can there be a human without a soul. More importantly, as the World-Soul governs the universe, the human soul governs the body. As J. V. Robinson puts it, 'since the human soul is presented as a lesser version of the World-Soul, and the World-Soul governs a body, one would expect the human soul to also have this responsibility. This expectation is strengthened by the fact that the Demiurge created the World-Soul so that the order of the universe could be maintained'³¹.

In detail, now, a point that is crucial for one's understanding of Plato's notion of the soul concerns the similarities that can be found between the World-Soul and the human soul³². The first common characteristic between the World-Soul and the human one is that they are both made out of the same ingredients. 'He [the demiurge] turned again to the mixing bowl he had used before, the one, in which he had blended and mixed the

³⁰J. V. Robinson, 'The Tripartite Soul in the *Timaeus*', *Phronesis* 35 (1990) p. 106.

³¹J. V. Robinson, p. 106.

³²It should be acknowledged that the similarity is not between the World-Soul and the human soul as a whole. The World-Soul is taken to be both created and eternal. Likewise, the reasoning part of the human soul is taken to be both created, and eternal. Again, the World-Soul as being between the realm of the Forms and the created world, is parallel to the reasoning element of the human soul, which is the only one able to combine the two.

soul of the universe. He began to pour into it what remained of the previous ingredients and to mix them in somewhat the same way, though these were no longer invariably and constantly pure, but of a second and third grade of purity'; 'ἀκηρατα δὲ οὐκέτι κατὰ ταῦτὰ ὡσαύτως, ἀλλὰ δεύτερα καὶ τρίτα' (41d). Thus, in describing the way the demiurge creates the immortal part of the human soul with the same ingredients that he used for the World-Soul, Plato attributes to it the same characteristics as in the World-Soul, that of being created and at the same time being eternal.

This notion indicates that both the World-Soul and the reasoning part of the human soul belong neither to the realm of the Forms, nor to the constructed world, exactly because they are 'made' and at the same time cannot undergo any changes, similar to the one that matter undergoes. Thus, already both the World-Soul and the reasoning part of the human soul are thought to be between the two realms. Being between the two realms, though, does not mean that they are separate from them; rather, they combine the two worlds. What Plato tries to establish here concerning both the World-Soul and the immortal part of the human soul is that although they are an integral part of the world and the human being respectively, they both are not 'immortal', like the Forms. At the same time they are not corporeal, like the World-Body and the human body. This, in turn, shows that Plato's construction of both the world and the human beings does not fall under a mind/body dualism, but rather a dualism of being and becoming with soul somehow bridging the gap. Plato, thus, tries to achieve a theory of oneness.

Another important point that arises from the particular construction of the World-Soul as well as the reasoning part of the human soul³³ is that because they consist of both the

³³ Although Plato refers to the human soul in a general manner, it should be noted that what he has in mind is the reasoning part of the human soul that can be compared to the World-Soul.

intermediate Sameness and the intermediate Difference they are able to combine opinion with knowledge. It is made clear from the text that the World-Soul is involved in both; '... whenever the account concerns anything that is perceptible, the circle of the Different goes straight and proclaims it throughout its whole soul. This is how firm and true opinions come about. Whenever, on the other hand, the account concerns any object of reasoning, and the circle of the Same runs well and reveals it, the necessary result is understanding and knowledge' (37c). Thus, the World-Soul is portrayed not only as the cause of any motion in the physical realm, but also as the only one able to exercise reason. By implication, then, one has to argue that the immortal part of the human soul will be able to exercise reason as well.

Furthermore, the notion that the reasoning part of the human soul is of a lesser degree of purity than the World-Soul: 'of a second and third grade of purity', 'ἀλλὰ δεύτερα καὶ τρίτα' (41d), is rather puzzling. It may indicate that although the same ingredients are used, the human-soul's weaknesses are due to the way the human being is structured³⁴. It is not explained, though, to what extent these weaknesses are due to its nature or to its embodiment. The text seems to suggest that the weakness is determined by its elements. One could argue that the elements' inferiority makes the reasoning part of the human soul less able to control its body, and liable to be influenced by the body. This is so, because the human being, which consists of both the immortal part of the soul as well as of body and the mortal parts of the soul, is an organism that is constantly affected by its environment. Hence, it may seem that the lack of purity comes before the body's creation - and as such cannot result from the structure of the human being. In fact, though, the reasoning part of soul is - in its making - less pure because it is

³⁴ Cornford (1935, on 41d) writes that the human souls are inferior, because they can do wrong of their own wills.

going to be placed in a body, and has to interact with the environment. The case seems to be that the reasoning part of the human soul is less pure than the World-Soul because it will function as part of a complex whole. We are left then perplexed as to the nature of the reasoning part of human soul in particular and its relation to the mortal parts and therefore the body. As the reasoning part is portrayed, although it is immaterial by nature, also by nature it is linked to the mortal parts of the soul and therefore to the body. As Christopher Gill puts it, 'the psyche, while not itself physical, is integrally linked with the body in the universe as a whole and in human beings. It follows from this that the specific character of the body necessarily has an effect on the psyche with which it is linked'³⁵. The question that remains unanswered, though, is how can something immaterial be integrally linked to something material? Trying to answer this I would like to argue that in Plato's mind the distinction between the two is not sharp. Plato does hold that the reasoning part is immortal, and not made out of matter, but at the same time he holds that it cannot exist outside its environment, it has to be spatially located. The problem that arises for us, the modern readers, is that we are influenced by the Cartesian tradition, we equate reason to the Cartesian self. For Plato, though, the reasoning part of the human soul is just that, an essential but not the only part in constituting the human being. At best, the reasoning part is also the part that makes something living.

A further point of interest is that the reasoning parts of human souls are assigned to the same number of stars: '... he [the demiurge] divided the mixture into a number of souls equal to the number of the stars and assigned each soul to a star' (41d-e). The point here seems to be that the reasoning part of human souls, like the World-Soul, is treated

³⁵ Christopher Gill, 'The body's fault? *Timaeus* on psychic illness', in M. R. Wright (ed), *Reason and Necessity*, Duckworth and the Classical Press of Wales 2000, p.64.

as being necessarily spatially located. The claim that the reasoning part of soul should be located somewhere, firstly to the stars and then to the human bodies, indicates that it cannot exist apart from a body. What is indeterminate, though, is the difference between being located to a star and being located to a human body. While in the stars, they neither affect nor are affected by the star; they are in the stars but do not animate it. On the other hand, that the reasoning parts of the human souls are part of the universe is due to them being spatially located in the stars. The reason for Plato's view seems to be that, since the reasoning parts of the souls are everlasting, they must always exist. That implies that when one dies his soul must either immediately move to a new body, or go somewhere else. Plato may have thought that an immediate move to a new body is implausible, so he allocated the souls to the stars.

As stated earlier, the soul's purpose is to animate a body. This holds both for the World-Soul as well as for the immortal part of the human soul. What is of interest is that, by placing emphasis on the soul being 'extended' in space, Plato implies not only that the world-body and the human body require a soul, but also that the World-Soul and the human soul require a body. This, in turn, shows Plato's intention to present a view of the soul that cannot be categorised as a sharp dualism. Plato, thus, would have to argue that the human soul, while forming a human being, is not independent of the human body.

Human soul-body relation

The passage at *Timaeus* 42b ff. is probably Plato's fullest account of the human soul-body relation. Although there are references to the issue from Plato's early dialogues,

his view about how the human soul is related to the human body is nowhere else as definite as it is in the *Timaeus*³⁶. The progress found in the *Timaeus*, by comparison with to the earlier dialogues, consists in the fact that in it, Plato not only presents the soul as having three parts, but also gives a detailed physiological and psychological account of the human being as a whole.

Timaeus describes the way human beings were constructed as follows: He, firstly, refers to the human souls' initial birth, and their reincarnations: 'They would all be assigned one and the same initial birth, so that none would be less well treated by him than any other' (41e). The first form that the demiurge chooses for the souls is that of man. This is done so that everyone would be equal, and so that their reincarnations would depend on the way humans will lead their lives; whether they live good, just lives or unjust ones (42b). In a more general way, Plato links his metaphysics with his moral philosophy. His theory of the soul provides reasons to justify the choice of a good, just life over an unjust one. While in the human form, the human being must live well. 'So, once the souls were of necessity implanted in bodies, and these bodies had things coming to them and leaving them, the first innate capacity they would of necessity come to have would be sense-perception, ... the second would be love, mingled with pleasure and pain. And they would come to have fear and spiritedness as well, ... And if they could master these emotions, their lives would be just, whereas if they were mastered by them, they would be unjust' (42a-b). Thus, in order for the soul to 'return to his dwelling place in his companion star, to live a life of happiness that agreed with his character' (42b), while in the human form, the human being must live well.

³⁶The *Republic* is the first dialogue where Plato introduces the tripartition of the soul, but the relation between soul and body is not clearly described.

Two points are important here; firstly, Plato implies that there is a life after death does not talk simply about the relation of this life to the life after death, but is doing so for every soul *as an individual*. Plato talks not merely of 'soul' as immortal, but of individual souls. Plato's reference to individual souls is further stressed by his claim that everyone has the potential either to move upwards toward his star or to move downwards taking the form of a woman or an animal. He says: 'But if he failed in this [to live a good life], he would be born a second time, now as a woman. And if even then he still could not refrain from wickedness, he would be changed once again, this time into some animal that resembled the wicked character he had acquired' (42b-c)³⁷. This passage, then, implies continuity between human beings and animals.

Secondly, although no specific details are given, the implications about the human soul-body relation are of interest. This passage (42a-c) implies that the human soul, in its embodiment in a human body, is not only the part given to the mortal gods by the demiurge, but by necessity, it acquires additional capacities. Plato recognises that emotions are acquired by the soul only due to its human nature; being in a human body. The human soul, thus, both affects and is affected by its body. One's life is shaped according to one's actions, and one's actions have to do with one's character, which is shaped both by one's given part of the soul, but also from the influences that it receives from the environment. This passage in a way is set to deal with the idea that one's character is partly innate but also partly acquired, which in turn implies that although external factors help to shape one's character, one is responsible for the life one chooses to live.

³⁷The notion of acquired character and reincarnation due to that character, is also seen in the myth of Er in *Republic* book X.

A further point of interest, then, is that both the human body and the lower parts of the soul are made by the mortal gods: The demiurge's last act is that of assigning to mortal gods the task of 'weaving mortal bodies' and whatever else the human souls required: 'After the sowing, he handed over to the young gods the task of weaving mortal bodies. He had them make whatever else remained that the human soul still needed to have, plus whatever goes with those things. He gave them the task of ruling over these mortal living things and of giving them the finest, the best possible guidance they could give, without being responsible for any evils these creatures might bring upon themselves' (42d-e). As Cornford notes, the subordinate divinities must add the body and those mortal parts of the soul which temporary association with the body entails³⁸.

The creation of the mortal body, thus, is a task for the mortal gods. The mortal gods: 'borrowed parts of fire, earth, water and air from the world, intending to pay them back again, and bonded together into a unity the parts they had taken, but not with those indissoluble bonds by which they themselves were held together. Instead, they proceeded to fuse them together with copious rivets so small as to be invisible, thereby making each body a unit made up of all the components' (42e-43a). Again two points are of significance in the above quotation; Firstly, the materials used by the mortal gods are 'borrowed', and they are going to be 'paid back'. This could only imply that the materials that constitute the body, when the human dies, will be returned to nature. Thus, for Plato the human being when alive is both soul and body, but when it dies what is preserved is the soul. What this further implies is that, the lower parts of the

³⁸See Cornford, 1935, p. 146.

soul are not part of the immortal soul³⁹. In that respect, the *Timaeus* differs from the *Phaedrus* and some passages of the *Republic*. Secondly, the body's bonds are not as strong as that of the soul's since there are given by the mortal gods. Thus, although the unity of the soul depends solely on the demiurge, the bonds of the body, and consequently that of the human being, can be destroyed by various influences.

The body, then, is connected with the soul: 'And they went on to invest this body - into and out of which things were to flow - with the orbits of the immortal soul' (43a). The description that follows is that of the soul's confusion when first embodied. The picture here is, as Cornford says, that of the immortal principle of reason being plunged for the first time into the turbulent tide of bodily sensation and nutrition⁴⁰.

Plato here talks about human growth, and how age determines a person's intelligence. When a soul is first put in a body, there is a lot of confusion due to the various sensations: 'The motions produced by all these encounters would then be conducted through the body to the soul, and strike against it' (43c). 'They mutilated and disfigured the circles in every possible way so that the circles barely held together and though they remained in motion, they moved without rhyme or reason, sometimes in the opposite direction, ...' (43e). This passage indicates that the sensations have the power to distort the reasoning part of the soul; the sensations, which are bound up with the body, affect the soul. The same point is also made clear in Plato's talk about the lack of rhyme or reason for the human being due to the lack of unity among the soul's circles; where these are 'mutilated and disfigured' (43e). Thus, it becomes apparent that for Plato the

³⁹Aristotle, although he does not elaborate on the point, seems to hold that mind 'seems to be widely different kind of soul... it alone is capable of existence in isolation from other psychic powers' (*DA*. 413b 25-27).

⁴⁰See Cornford, 1935, p. 147.

reasoning part of the soul is identified with the moving circles of the soul. In turn the notion that the reasoning part of the soul is linked to the soul's circles, implies that whenever these circles are deformed, the reasoning part of the soul is disturbed by the body's sensations. Hence, the mutual dependence between human soul and body is proclaimed.

This interdependence between the human soul and body is further explored a little later in the dialogue. 'As the stream that brings growth and nourishment diminishes and the soul's orbits regain their composure, resume their proper courses and establish themselves more and more with the passage of time, their revolutions are set straight, to conform to the configuration each of the circles takes in its natural course. They then correctly identify what is the same and what is different, and render intelligent the person who possess them' (44b).

Plato's concern at this point is to show how the soul was put in the body. In the construction of the human body, then, Plato places emphasis on the head, because it is going to be the seat of the soul's immortal part⁴¹. Hence, Plato claims that the head is the most divine part of humans and controls the rest of the body: 'the gods bound the two divine orbits into a ball-shaped body, the part that we now call our head. This is the most divine part of us, and master of all our other parts. They then assembled the rest of the body and handed the whole of it to the head, to be in its service' (44d). It should be noted here that the head is of a rounded shape. In that way, it is as self-contained as possible.

⁴¹See further Cornford, 1935, p.150.

At the same time, though, the head exists within the universe and so it has to be in contact with it. As Tracy argues, the human head, unlike the cosmic body, is not unique but exists within the cosmos and must cope with the environment, it needs the help of other organs for local motion, sensation, respiration, nutrition, etc. This determines the structure and functions of the rest of the body⁴². Therefore, the gods have to add to it the rest of the body so as to hold and support the head (44e-45a)⁴³. Consequently, the discussion of the construction of the head is of importance because it shows that the reasoning part of the soul is spatially located within the head, within the human frame. Plato says, then, that the head is ‘... carrying at the top the dwelling place of that most divine, most sacred part of ourselves’ (45a). The way the human body is constructed, hence, is intentional. The particular shape given to the body is thought of as the best one possible to fulfil the soul’s needs. As Tracy says, for Plato the entire body is the physical organ of the rational soul. Its ultimate purpose is to serve as the mortal container and vehicle for the immortal soul, and this τέλος determines its general structure⁴⁴. So, Plato not only introduces a physiological account of the human body but also the ‘cause’ for it having this specific structure.

This combination between physiology and teleology is best displayed in Plato’s account of the eyes. Firstly, Plato describes the ‘sensation of seeing’: He talks about the way the light of the eyes relates to that of the environment: ‘And because this body of fire has become uniform throughout and thus uniformly affected, it transmits the motions of whatever it comes in contact with as well as of whatever comes in contact with it, to and through the whole body until they reach the soul. This brings about the sensation

⁴²Theodore James Tracy, *Physiological Theory and the Doctrine of the Mean in Plato and Aristotle*, The Hague, 1969, p.102; also, on man being influenced from the environment, see Harold W. Miller, ‘Aetiology of disease’, *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 93 (1962) p. 179.

⁴³See further, Cornford, *ibid.*

⁴⁴See Tracy, p. 102.

we call “seeing” (45c-d). It should be noted here that the example of the workings of the eyes pays equal attention to the physiological, mechanistic, and therefore necessary function of the eyes as well as to their intelligent purpose.

Plato, then, refers to the above-mentioned mechanism of the eyes as: ‘... the auxiliary causes that gave our eyes the power which they now possess’ (46e), and moves to discuss: ‘... that supreme beneficial function for which the god gave them [the eyes] to us’ (47a). He, thus, moves from the auxiliary causes to the intelligent one; necessity’s role is a mechanistic one, while intelligence is directed towards the idea of achieving a higher goal⁴⁵. He says: ‘As my account has it, our sight has indeed proved to be a source of supreme benefit to us, in that none of our present statements about the universe could ever have been made if we had never seen any stars, sun or heaven. As it is, however, our ability to see the periods of day-and-night, of months and of years, of equinoxes and solstices, has led to the invention of number, and has given us the idea of time and opened the path to inquiry into the nature of the universe. These pursuits have given us philosophy... the supreme good our eyesight offers us’ (47a-b).

As Steven K. Strange points out, both necessity and intelligence play essential roles here: ‘One must discover the operation of Necessity before grasping the work of Reason.... understanding of the divine causes can only be obtained through grasp of the lower kind... One must study phenomena through their material causes to see how these are ordered, for only then will one be able to see how they are ordered for the best’⁴⁶. The notion that the human being is made with a view to the best shows further that a

⁴⁵See further Tracy, p.103.

⁴⁶Steven K. Strange, ‘The Double Explanation in the *Timaeus*’, *Ancient Philosophy* 5, no. 1, p. 30.

mechanistic explanation of the world cannot be perfect⁴⁷. Thus, for Plato, the eyes are the bodily organs that not only enable one to see, but also provide one with the means to move from seeing to understanding. As Cornford rightly argues: 'the account of eyesight has brought us to the point of contact between the knowing soul and the external world of visible bodies'⁴⁸. In other words, Plato shows that sight as a sense provides the soul with the necessary material source to turn from looking at the stars, to the invention of numbers, and so to a purely intelligent act, that of thinking⁴⁹ (47b). As Cornford says, 'Plato singles out the sense of sight, firstly because it is useful for locomotion, and secondly because sight and hearing are the two senses which above all reveal the harmony of the world'⁵⁰. It is important to note, then, that Plato sees a need for both auxiliary and primary causes. Human action needs to be interpreted in terms of reasoning purposes as well as in physical terms. As Cornford asserts, 'we need to study all physical transactions, but they will not reveal the true reason or explanation (αἰτία) of vision, the purpose it is rationally designed to serve. They tell us "how" we see, but not "why"⁵¹. J. E. Boodin makes the same point, he argues that: 'the naturalistic point of view has a place, though it misses the main point - that of creative intelligence in the universe'⁵². It may be tempting to take Plato to be saying that reason explanations and explanations in terms of physical causes are quite distinct so that one could give a complete physical explanation of someone's act without invoking reason, and a complete reason explanation without invoking physical mechanisms. But this is not Plato's view. The auxiliary causes give one a mechanistic account and at the same time

⁴⁷In a similar way, Glenn R. Morrow ('Necessity and Persuasion in Plato's *Timaeus*', *Philosophical Review* 59 (1950) p. 148) says that the man's soul is lodged in a bodily frame that exposes him to innumerable distractions and passions, yet still provides means to facilitate the victory of intelligence over disorder.

⁴⁸Cornford, 1935, p. 156.

⁴⁹Plato's ultimate purpose is to pursuit philosophy. See especially *Phaedo* 82e, 83b, *Republic* 619d-e, *Timaeus* 47b.

⁵⁰See further Cornford, 1935, pp. 151-152.

⁵¹See Cornford, 1935, p. 157.

⁵²J. E. Boodin, 'Cosmology In Plato's Thought', *Mind* 39 (1930) p. 64.

provide one with the necessary means for reaching the primary function, the rational account. The implication of this seems to be that reason can direct physical movements in one way or another without violating nature.

In this way, Plato points out that the human being, and by implication the world, is governed by two causes necessity and intelligence, with intelligence being the primary one. The fact that both the human being and the world as a whole are treated as combining reason and necessity is essential for this thesis since it points towards the important notion that both the human being and the world are neither Forms nor simply material.

Plato then attempts to re-describe the way the world operates: 'For this ordered world is of mixed birth: it is the offspring of a union of Necessity and Intellect. Intellect prevailed over Necessity by persuading it to direct most of the things that come to be toward what is best...' (48a). Although Plato's talk of Intellect persuading Necessity is mythological, it is indicative of what he thought about the workings of nature. As Morrow states: 'to say that the cosmos comes about by persuasion means that it results from the workings of the powers inherent in the materials of which it consists in, each of them bringing into being the effects natural to itself, and none of them being under any constraint by a power outside nature'⁵³. Thus, although both necessity and intelligence are operating within the human frame and within nature, intelligence is taken to be of more value since it provides the purpose of everything. In regard to the above quotation, Strange claims that although Reason and Necessity are co-ordinate

⁵³See further Morrow, pp. 156-157.

causes in the making of the world, reason is somehow prior or superior to Necessity, ... Necessity counts as a cause in so far as it co-operates with Reason's purposes⁵⁴. Plato, then, introduces along with the forms and matter, the receptacle as an important element for the world's creation: 'that which keeps its own form unchangeable, which has not been brought into being and is not destroyed, which neither receives into itself anything else from anywhere else, nor itself enters into anything else anywhere, is one thing... The second thing is that which shares the other's name and resembles it. This thing can be perceived by the senses, and it has been begotten... And the third type is space, which exists always and cannot be destroyed. It provides a location for all things that come to be' (52a-b). Hence, Plato introduces a third element that stands as the only possible medium to combine reason and necessity. This becomes obvious when Plato likens the receptacle to a mother: 'It is in fact appropriate to compare the receiving thing to a mother, the source to a father, and the nature between them to their offspring' (50d).

The workings of Necessity, in nature, are best seen in Plato's discussion of perception. It is important for this thesis to see how Plato treats perception, since his view provides us with a clear notion of the way perception is linked to the reasoning part of man. This in turn indicates the interdependence between the rational soul and the rest of the human being. Plato talks in the following way about sense-perception; about how men come to characterise something as hot, cold, hard, soft, heavy light, smooth, rough. He says: 'we notice how fire acts on our bodies by dividing and cutting them. We are all well aware that the experience is a sharp one... It is this substance, more than any other, that divides our bodies throughout and cuts them up into small pieces, thereby giving us the property that we now naturally call hot' (61d-62a). In a similar, physiological

⁵⁴Strange, p. 29.

manner the rest of the bodily perceptions are described, for example; *Hard* we call whatever our flesh gives way to; *soft*, whatever gives way to our flesh' (62b). Then, Plato tries to relate the above perceptions to pleasures and pains. He says that one must understand pains as 'an unnatural disturbance that comes upon us with great force and intensity' (63d), while pleasure is the return to the original state: 'leading back to the natural state' (63d).

The point of interest in this analysis of perceptions is its implication for the role of perception in the soul-body relation. In particular, it should be noted that when Plato talks about perception, he does not attribute it to the body. His point is rather that the various senses deliver perceptions to the human being, but it is reason that has to pass judgement on them. In other words, perception provides one with appearances, while reason provides one with judgement. This is made clear from what Plato implies earlier in 42a-b, but also from what he says in 61e. He says: 'ὅτι μὲν γὰρ ὀξύ τι τὸ πάθος, πάντες σχεδὸν αἰσθανόμεθα.'; 'We are all aware that the experience is a sharp one'⁵⁵. This sentence indicates a very interesting distinction between the perception, the experience or pathos of something being sharp and one's awareness of it⁵⁶. Thus, firstly, one cannot have any perception without having a body to experience it through, and secondly, perceptions are not merely bodily, but that they are the means for the human being to reach particular judgements about the world. Michael Frede develops this idea of perceptions not being merely bodily further⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ Cornford (1935, p. 259) translates the passage: "we are all aware that the sensation is a piercing one".

⁵⁶ See further Cornford, 1935, p. 261.

⁵⁷ Michael Frede ('Perception in Plato's Later Dialogues', in G. Fine (ed), *Plato 1*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1999) discusses perception mainly through the *Theaetetus* where the main issue is to find a definition of knowledge.

According to Frede the term 'aisthanesthai' came to have the meaning of sense-perception in Plato⁵⁸. He further argues that 'Plato thinks that our beliefs and our knowledge about the physical world involve a passive affection of the mind, but he also thinks that they go much beyond this passive affection'⁵⁹. This passive affection is perception. The example used by Frede is whether the question whether A is red or not, can be settled by perception. 'We may be passively affected by the colour red, but to form the belief that something is red presupposes and takes a great deal of activity on the part of the mind... Thus, even the simple judgement that something is red... is not given to us by perception, but only by reflection on what we perceive'⁶⁰. Hence, the point of interest both for Frede's purposes and this thesis' is that perception is the passive affection of the soul, which by itself cannot yield knowledge. At the same time though, for the reasoning part to judge something as appearing to be something, perception has to come first. Thus, through the notion of perception, Plato's implicit distinction is not between soul and body, but between reason and the mortal elements of the human being. Perception belongs to the mortal elements but the judgement we make on perceptions belongs to reason.

The notion that perception passes through the body, and comes in contact with the reasoning soul becomes also apparent in 64a where Plato refers to pleasure and pain. 'The most important point that remains concerning the properties that have a common effect upon the body as a whole, pertains to the causes of pleasures and pains in the cases we have described as well as all cases in which sensations are registered throughout the bodily parts, sensations which are also simultaneously accompanied by pains and pleasures in those parts' (64a).

⁵⁸See further Frede, 1999, p. 379.

⁵⁹Frede, *ibid.*

⁶⁰See Frede, 1999, p. 382.

The next point of interest concerning the human soul-body relation is that of the way the body and the lower parts of the soul are constructed. This discussion falls under Plato's discussion of the co-operation of reason to necessity. Plato once again mentions that the mortal body as well as the lower parts of the soul are made by the created gods: 'They imitated him: having taken the immortal origin of the soul, they proceeded next to encase it within a round mortal body [the head], and to give it the entire body as its vehicle. And within the body they built another kind of soul as well, the mortal kind, which contains within it those dreadful but necessary disturbances...' (69c-d).

Within the detailed description of the construction of the body and the lower parts of the soul, the emphasis should be placed on the significance of the localised placement of the lower parts within the body. Plato says that although, of necessity, the immortal soul is related to the body and the mortal soul, there is still a need to spatially separate the divine soul from the rest. Thus '... they provided a home for the mortal soul in another place in the body, away from the other, once they had built an isthmus as boundary between the head and the chest by situating a neck between them to keep them apart.' (69e). Although at the beginning it may seem that this separation between the immortal soul and the rest of the soul along with the body is emphasised merely so as to show that the former is distinct in nature from the latter, in fact Plato's point is to stress the significant teleological priority of the one over the other. The immortal soul is located in the head and is separated from the body, and from the other two parts, since it is the part that exercises reason, while the rest of what comprises a human being is the necessary means. In a sense, the immortal part of the soul is placed in the body but can - at least in principle - exist outside it, while the mortal parts of the soul are

necessarily embodied; they exist only as long as the body exists. Thus, the immortal soul is located in the head so as to minimise contamination from the mortal elements.

Then, the mortal soul is placed in the body: 'Now the part of the mortal soul that exhibits manliness and spirit, the ambitious part, they settled nearer the head, between the midriff and the neck, so that it might listen to reason and together with it restrain by force the part consisting of appetites, should the latter at any time refuse outright to obey the dictates of reason coming down from the citadel' (70a). The second part of the mortal soul now is located as far from the head as possible: 'the part of the soul that has appetites for food and drink and whatever else it feels a need for, given the body's nature, they settled in the area between the midriff and the boundary toward the navel.' (70e).

Another point that is worth noticing within the discussion of the body's construction is that of the marrow. It is characterised as carrying life's chains: 'For life's chains, as long as the soul remains bound to the body, are bound within the marrow, giving roots for the mortal race' (73b). What is important is that the marrow is to be found both in the head, which contains the immortal part of the soul, and in various other parts of the body; 'Each living thing was at its completion to have a head to function as a container for this marrow. That, however, which was to hold fast the remaining, mortal part of the soul, he divided into shapes that were at once round and elongated, all of which he named "marrow"' (73d). This statement implies that marrow is the component that connects the immortal soul to the mortal soul. The marrow binds together the soul as a whole and consequently the soul to the body. This is made clear from the following: 'And from these as from anchors he put out bonds to secure the whole soul and so he proceeded to construct our bodies all around this marrow...' (73d).

The particular construction of the body - and especially the way the head was covered with 'a sparse layer of bone and not with flesh and sinew' (75c) - explains also the human beings' life span. Humans could have had a longer life span if their heads had been fleshier, but the particular construction of the head, by allowing them to be more responsive to the various sensations, gives them a shorter but superior life. For, as Plato says: '... there is no way that anything whose generation and composition are a consequence of Necessity can accommodate the combination of thick bone and massive flesh with keen and responsive sensation.' (75a-b). But the body, is not just the container of the soul anymore, it plays a crucial role in the formation and life of a human being.

Within the discussion of the construction of the human frame and its significance for one's understanding of the soul-body relation, there is the supplementary issue of death. Throughout his dialogues Plato holds that death is the separation of soul to body⁶¹, but in the *Timaeus*, a detailed rather physiological description is attempted. Plato presents us with a natural process of growth and decay, since the body functions according to the 'interlocking bonds' of life which tie soul and body (81d). Natural death, then, occurs because the bodily bonds are loosened, and therefore the bonds of the soul are loosened too and the soul departs: 'Eventually the interlocking bonds of the triangles around the marrow can no longer hold on, and come apart under stress, and when this happens they let the bonds of the soul go. The soul is then released in a natural way, and finds it pleasant to make its flight.' (81d-e). On the other hand, if the death happens to occur due to a disease or injury it is a painful one. The original point, then, in this dialogue is

⁶¹See further: *Apology* 40c, *Gorgias* 524b, *Phaedo* 67d, and *Republic* 614c.

that Plato does not simply state that death is the separation of soul from body, but he also provides one with an account of how the bonds that connect soul to body break up. At the same time, since death is presented as a process in which both body and soul are involved, the role of the soul is of significance. The fact that Plato distinguishes between a natural, pleasant death and an unnatural, untimely, painful death indicates that the soul - being the one that realises pleasure and pain - is actively involved in the process of death. The account, then, is not that of the soul waiting as if from a distance to be released from the body, like a bird from its cage, but rather that the processes involved in dying also affect the soul. In other words, what happens to the soul during dying is the consequence of what happens to the body, and the human being dies as a result of the soul's release⁶².

The final point of interest within the *Timaeus* is that of the way the diseases of both body and soul are treated, as well as the remedy suggested by Plato. The discussion of the bodily diseases is mainly physiological; it shows how the body can get sick, but what is of interest for this thesis is that Plato treats the diseased marrow as the worst case of bodily disease; he says: 'But the most extreme case of all is when the marrow becomes diseased, either as a result of some deficiency or some excess. This produces the most serious, the most critically fatal diseases, in which all bodily processes are made to flow backwards.' (84c). What should be noted, here, is that Plato considers the situation where the marrow is diseased as the most serious one because the marrow is connected to the whole body. What could be implied also at this point is that since the marrow connects the soul as a whole to the body, its becoming diseased has an effect to

⁶²Similar to Plato's view, is Aristotle's. He holds that death is the release of soul to body, 'the soul holds the body together; at any rate when the soul departs the body disintegrates and decays' (*DA*. 411b5). The emphasis for both Plato and Aristotle is that one dies due to the soul's departure. This follows because both philosophers treat the soul as what brings life to the body.

the human being as a whole; since the marrow is what holds body and soul together, the disease of the marrow is most likely to cause death.

After the diseases of the body, Plato discusses those diseases of the soul that result from a bodily condition. Plato recognises mindlessness - *ἄνοιαν* - as the soul's disease, and divides it into two kinds namely, madness - *μανίαν* - and ignorance - *ἀμαθίαν*: '... mindlessness is the disease of the soul, and of mindlessness there are two kinds. One is madness, and the other ignorance' (86b). What is of interest is that these diseases of the soul are due to the body's condition: '... if the seed of a man's marrow grows to overflowing abundance like a tree that bears an inordinately plentiful quantity of fruit, he is in for a long series of bursts of pain, or of pleasures, in the area of his desires and their fruition' (86c). Moreover, the soul's diseases are related to excessive pleasures or pains, which in turn indicates the interdependence between soul and body.

As it was discussed in the passage of the construction of the body, it is obvious that Plato insists on relating the soul to the body in a way that the condition of the one affects the condition of the other. In particular, cases like madness and ignorance are conditions of the diseased soul, but they refer to *the soul as a whole; the soul that is interconnected to the body*. In other words, Plato does not refer to the reasoning part of the soul being sick by its own and on its own; rather the soul becomes sick because it is embodied. The picture drawn here seems to be that of a kind of circle; badness of the soul leads one to follow the wrong kind of life, this causes disruption of the body, which, in turn, affects the soul. It should be noted, then, that Plato does not claim that all diseases of the soul result exclusively from the sickness of the body, his point is that due to the embodiment both the soul and the body affect each other.

Furthermore, the fact that Plato argues that no one is wilfully evil (86e) shows that the reasoning part of the soul is not evil by itself. In Plato's own words: 'A man becomes evil, rather, as a result of one or another corrupt condition of his body and an uneducated upbringing. No one who incurs these pernicious conditions would will to have them.' (86e). Moreover, Plato argues that there are two causes for one's condition. *These are one's parents and teachers*: '... all of us who are bad come to be that way - the products of two causes both entirely beyond our control. It is the begetters far more than the begotten, and the nurturers far more than the nurtured, that bear the blame for all this' (87b). In that way it can be explained how one came to lead the particular life that he leads; one can explain his particular condition⁶³. What is important, though, for the *Timaeus* is that Plato insists that if one's way of life affects the balance between his soul and body, then he too is responsible for his life: 'Even so, one should make every possible effort to flee from badness, whether with the help of one's upbringing, or to the pursuits or studies one undertakes, and to seize its opposite' (87b). So, from the above quotation, it becomes apparent not only that the body affects the soul, but also that the soul, the reasoning part, is able to affect the body through the proper education. Thus, although ultimately all diseases of the soul come from its embodiment, the soul is still able to affect the body, and so cure itself.

The fact that the soul, too, affects the body, leads then to the discussion of 'how to treat our bodies and states of mind and preserve them whole' (87c). Plato says: 'Hence we must take it that if a living thing is to be in good condition, it will be well-proportioned' (87c). Plato's notion of proportion, then, is important since it stresses the mutual dependence between soul and body; it refers to the human being as a whole. When Plato says 'In determining health and disease or virtue and vice no proportion or lack of

⁶³See further *Republic* 424a-b.

it is more important than that between soul and body' (87d), he makes an important claim for the relation between soul and body. It seems that he does not treat the issue of health as merely physical and the issue of virtue as merely mental, but rather as the one shaping the other⁶⁴. This, in turn, indicates that soul and body are combined. In Plato's own words: '... that combination of soul and body which we call the living thing' (87e).

Thus, one can not talk about the human being without referring to the combination of soul and body. Moreover, it is of significance to note that the above mentioned combination is one that involves due proportion; if one is to be healthy, neither the soul nor the body can be more powerful than one another (87e-88b) can. Plato's suggestion then is not to exercise the one without the other. The text reads: '... there is in fact a way to preserve oneself, that is not to exercise the soul without exercising the body, nor the body without the soul, so that each may be balanced by the other and so be sound.' (88b-c). What is important, thus, from the above is the assumption that Plato's treatment of the human being as being comprised of soul and body, is mostly developed having in mind what is the best for the human being. The notion of proportion between soul and body is not necessary only for the composition of a human being; it is also necessary for the human being to lead a good life; both healthy and virtuous.

Conclusion

As was shown in the *Timaeus* the relation between soul and body is clearly one that does not fit within the traditional mind/body distinction, it rather offers a complex

⁶⁴The analogy between health - virtue and disease - vice is also discussed in the *Republic* IV 444c-e.

account of the relation between soul and body. Although throughout Plato's dialogues the soul-body relation is of major concern, in the *Phaedo* as well as in the *Republic* Plato is puzzled about how exactly soul and body are related. In the *Phaedo* the picture seemed to be that the soul is separate from the body (79b-c), and one should avoid anything bodily and concentrate on the soul by itself (80e). This was shown to be the case because the soul was treated as being simple and therefore akin to the immaterial Forms. Even within such a picture, though, there were indications that Plato's view could not be that of a strong dualism because although soul and body were treated as two separate entities, specific operations of the human being required soul/body interaction. The recollection argument, for instance, implied that any kind of knowledge in this embodied life is 'recollected' through the use of the senses (75e). This in turn implied a kind of interconnection between soul and body that was not yet clarified by Plato's arguments. Thus, one is left perplexed as to what exactly was Plato's view on the relation of soul and body. In the *Republic* Plato's view progressed towards the tripartite notion of the soul; the soul consists of three 'parts', the rational, the appetitive, and the spirited (439e-441a). In that way one is not faced with the difficulty found in the *Phaedo* as to how something completely immaterial, the soul, can relate to something material, the body. The tripartite soul is more easily related to the body, because the lower parts of it are closely related to the body. The problem that remains unsolved, though, is that although the tripartite soul requires a closer relation between it and the body, although it is implied that the tripartite soul is immanent within the body, the particulars of such a relation are hinted at rather than stated. This creates a further discrepancy; the soul is clearly tripartite while in the human form, but its structure prior to and after death is imprecise. This is so due to Plato's conviction that the soul after death retains its moral character, and is punished or rewarded accordingly. Such a conviction cannot stand if one holds that the only part of the human soul that

survives is reason. Reason alone cannot display any character and cannot be affected by being punished or rewarded.

The *Timaeus*, then, by holding that the soul/body relation is a complex one, tries to solve some of the above mentioned difficulties. This is done through the discussion of a number of important issues. The first issue that helps us understand Plato's view on soul/body relation, is the resemblance of the reasoning part of the human soul to the World-Soul. The likeness of the reasoning part of the human soul to the World-Soul is essential since it enables Plato to hold that the reasoning part is created by the demiurge and, therefore, is immortal. The association of the reasoning element of the human soul to the World-Soul further indicates a close relation between the orderly circles of the universe and the reasoning faculty of the human soul. At the same time, this likeness places emphasis on the reasoning part being spatially located. Plato demonstrated that since the rational part of the human soul cannot exist without a body, it has to be united with one – either the stars or a human body. Although, then, the reasoning part of the soul is not physical it is located in time and space and is thus capable of interacting with the physical world. An example of this interaction is seen in Plato's talk about the reincarnation of the souls. He refers to reincarnation as a natural process, not as an upgrading or decline towards something outside this world, as he does in the *Republic*.

The second advancement point to the previous dialogues is that the reasoning part by being spatially located is easier to be linked with the mortal parts of the soul. Although the exact status of the mortal parts of the human soul is unclear, they are clearly closely bound up with the body while also able to affect the reasoning part. Because the reasoning part is affected by the body, it is capable of being disrupted by the body and thus is capable of making false judgements. Thus, the reasoning part of the human soul

cannot be identified with reason as such. The view of the *Timaeus* is better understood if contrasted to those views which see human beings as having within them a small part of incorruptible divine reason, and which explain vice and error by saying that the bodily desires have overcome our true nature. The latter view could be read as being suggested by some passages in the *Republic*.

Plato's main concern in the *Timaeus*, then, is to talk about the human being, not the immortal soul. Thus, the emphasis on our interpretation of the *Timaeus* should be placed on the reasoning part as just that, a part of the human soul. Plato, within the description of the human being, presents the reasoning part as affecting and being affected by the rest of the human being, and ultimately seems to imply that the soul that survives death is the reasoning part as it has been shaped due to embodiment. Thus, although it is only the reasoning part of the human soul that survives, this is shaped by the embodiment in such a degree that it is not the same as the reasoning part that Plato described in the beginning of the creation story. In a sense, Plato, in order to be able to hold both that the reasoning part of the soul is immortal, and that there is a complex relation between the soul as a whole and the body, needs to abandon the idea of the soul as a whole being able to exist independently of the body. For Plato's theory to hold, Plato has to argue that the human soul, qua human, cannot survive the body. The part of the human soul that survives the body cannot characterise any individual's survival. Perhaps Plato was more than aware of such a difficulty and that is the reason why in the *Timaeus* he does not refer to any issue of punishment and retribution as he does in the *Republic* where he refers to personal survival⁶⁵.

⁶⁵ Unfortunately though this is just a speculation. All the information we get from the *Timaeus* is that difficult to interpret, let alone understand, passage in 41d, and the limited passage in 42b-c where he is concerned with reincarnation.

To conclude, although the *Timaeus* tries to combine the two essential ideas of Plato, that of the soul's immortality, with that of the soul acting as a principle of life, order and reason for anything that animates, the important question of what exactly is the soul for Plato remains unanswered. Although Plato came closer to a satisfactory analysis for our modern standards of how the complex human soul relates to the human body, the soul that survives the human body remains still something obscure. The *Timaeus* then faces a number of problems: Firstly, Plato does not explain the notion of spatial location of the soul as a whole and especially of the reasoning part. Because of that, we do not have a worked out view to work with. The notion of spatial location, if it were made into a fully worked out view, would have been a very powerful tool in interpreting Plato as a non-Cartesian dualist. Unfortunately, though, we are left with a notion, which at best is taken on faith. Secondly, he insists that the reasoning part is able to exist independently of the body, and thirdly, he does not distinguish between the reasoning part as first created by the demiurge, before being placed in a body, and the reasoning part that survives the body. The second difficulty is a problem that is shared with Aristotle. For Plato, the insistence on the reasoning part's existence, prior to and after the human existence, is strongly linked with his epistemology. Plato's theory of knowledge requires the existence of an element that is able to go beyond the human existence. Moreover, the fact that he does not explain the difference between the initial creation of the reasoning part, before it is placed in a human body, and the reasoning part that survives death, creates difficulties for his theory. The reasoning part, which is created in order to be assigned to a star, and then to a human being, is treated as being pure reason. On the other hand, the reasoning part that survives bodily death is structured by the embodiment, it 'carries' with it elements that has acquired due to the embodiment. The difference, then, between the two states is that the former has

nothing to do with notions of self, of personality, while the latter does involve such notions. It should be noted though that Plato must have been at least aware of such a discrepancy in his view. This becomes apparent if one bears in mind that in the *Timaeus* Plato insisted on the reasoning part of the human soul being spatially located, if not in a human body, then to a star. Thus, his view on the separate existence of the soul changes somewhat from the earlier dialogues. In the *Phaedo* he insisted on the soul's ability to exist independently of the body. In the *Republic*, although the reasoning element is part of a tripartite soul, is still able to exist outside a body. In the *Timaeus*, though, the reasoning part, being part of the tripartite soul, has to be spatially located. Thus, from the image of a soul that should exist independently of a body, we move into a view that the soul, the reasoning part has to be spatially located. The *Timaeus'* account obviously raises many problems but it is clear that Plato was engaged seriously with the mind/body problem, and he was aware of its complexity.

Is Plato A Dualist ?

Introduction

The main concern of this chapter is to examine whether we should place Plato under the category of dualism¹, whether we are right in treating Plato as a dualist. This question results from the attempt to explain how the soul-body relation developed within Plato's dialogues. As was shown in the previous chapters and especially on the *Timaeus*, for Plato the human being consists of both soul and body. Seeing, then, that the soul's relation to the body is not a simple coexistence, but rather a complex two-way interaction, a mutual interdependence, one is fascinated by the particulars of such a relation, which inevitably leads to the question whether or not Plato could be treated as a dualist of some kind. In order to answer this question in the most adequate way possible, I shall consider four main points: Firstly, I shall discuss Descartes' view as the most familiar form of dualism. Secondly, I shall examine Aristotle's notion of soul, based on the *De Anima*. Thirdly, I shall give an analysis of what Plato says in the *Timaeus* in so far as it bears on the question of dualism. Finally, through the indication of the similarities and differences among the three philosophers, I shall use Aristotle's theory as an intermediate between Plato and Descartes' views. This investigation will help in clarifying Plato's view of the soul-body relationship, and thus enable us to form a clearer idea as to whether Plato should be treated as a dualist or not.

¹ Dualism is defined as follows: Any view that postulates two kinds of thing in some domain is dualistic. The most famous example of contrast is mind-body dualism. The definition is from *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* edited by Simon Blackburn, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Descartes' Dualism

To see whether Plato can be treated as a dualist like Descartes², one has to start with Descartes' theory itself. For the purposes of this thesis two Cartesian texts will be discussed, namely, the *Meditations* and the *Passions of the Soul*. A limited reference will be also made to the 'Letters to Elizabeth'³. The *Meditations* and the *Passions of the Soul* are selected because they provide us with an understanding of Descartes' view of soul-body relation⁴. In the former Descartes seems to adopt a rather simplistic view. Mind and body are separate entities. The self is the mind and the body is the physical mechanism with which it is connected. In the latter, he provides us with a more complex account of interaction between the mind and the body, without deviating, though, from his basic belief that the self is a thinking thing.

Descartes argues in his *Meditations* that his first indisputable belief is that the mind is the real self. Within this general idea, he treats the senses as an unreliable source for knowledge, 'Whatever I have up till now accepted as most true I have acquired either from the senses or through the senses. But from time to time I have found that the senses deceive, and it is prudent never to trust completely those who have deceived us

² Cartesian dualism is defined as the separation of mind and matter into two different but interacting substances. The explanation for such an interaction is assigned to divine dispensation. The definition is taken from the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* ed. by Simon Blackburn, Oxford Univ. Press, 1996.

³Descartes' theory is going to be discussed in a very fragmented way; the interest in this thesis is just to show why Plato' view of soul-body cannot be considered to be the kind of dualism that Descartes' theory belongs to. The translations used for this thesis' purposes are John Cottingham's *Rene Descartes Meditations on First Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, and Stephen Voss' *The Passions of the Soul Rene Descartes*, Hackett Publishing Company, 1989. The 'Letters to Elizabeth' are from *Descartes Philosophical Writings*, translated and edited by Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter Thomas Geach, the Open University, 1970.

⁴It should be noted that Descartes does not distinguish between the soul and the mind; in fact, he uses the two terms interchangeably.

even once' (I, 18). Such a deception according to Descartes is possible if one suppose that there is an evil demon, 'some malicious demon of the utmost power and cunning has employed all his energies in order to deceive me' (I, 20). If there were such a demon, the beliefs he derives from the senses would be false, they cannot therefore be beyond any doubt. Descartes' doubt about the reliability of the senses is methodological. He tries to doubt everything in order to discover what he can know for certain. By casting doubt on the validity of the senses as means of achieving knowledge, Descartes establishes those beliefs that could resist the sceptics. So, as was mentioned above, Descartes held that the belief in one's own individual existence could resist any sceptic's challenge: 'If I convinced myself of something then I certainly existed' (II, 25). Thus, his argument is that the very fact that one can ask whether one exists is conclusive that one does exist, because one has to exist in order to think. In Descartes' words: 'I am, I exist, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind' (II, 25)⁵. Descartes' argument, then, is that mind and body are completely distinct since his mind is essentially a thinking thing while body is essentially extended. For Descartes the 'I am' refers only to a thing that thinks, a thinking thing (II, 27). The body, on the other hand, is 'whatever has a determinable shape and a definable location, and can occupy a space in such a way as to exclude any other body'. The body 'can be received by touch, sight, smell, and can be moved in various ways, not by itself but by whatever else comes into contact with it' (II, 26).

A further reference to the distinction between mind and body, which also shows Descartes' conviction that there is an interrelation between the mind, the self and the body, is found in Descartes' sixth meditation. He shows how the body relates to the

⁵The problem that Descartes' theory faces, then, is that although he is based on the existence of God as a non-deceiver to prove his mind's existence, the idea of God is said to be in his mind. In that way he is faced with a circular argument.

self: 'As for the body which by some special right I called 'mine', my belief that this body, more than any other, belonged to me had some justification. For I could never be separated from it, as I could from other bodies; and I felt all my appetites and emotions in, and on account of, this body; and finally, I was aware of pain and pleasurable ticklings in parts of this body, but not in other bodies external to it' (VI, 76). This notion, though, of Descartes is taken on faith: 'it is true that I have a body that is very closely joined to me. But nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non-extended, thing; and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body, in so far as this is simply an extended, non-thinking thing. And accordingly, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body and can exist without it' (VI, 78). Descartes, hence, on the one hand recognises that by feeling, having sensations he cannot be completely separate from his body, but on the other hand he still holds that the self is something distinct from the body. He argues: 'nature also teaches me, by these sensations of pain, hunger, thirst and so on, that I am not merely present in my body as a sailor is present in a ship, but that I am very closely joined and, as it were, intermingled with it, so that I and the body form a unit' (VI, 81). At the same time, he holds that '...it is certain that I am really distinct from my body and can exist without it' (VI, 78).

Another element in Descartes' thought, which suggests that the mind and the body are only coincidentally related, is his claim that the mind is indivisible while the body is divisible. 'The first observation I make at this point is that there is a great difference between the mind and the body, inasmuch as the body is by its very nature always divisible, while the mind is utterly indivisible. For when I consider the mind, or myself in so far as I am merely a thinking thing, I am unable to distinguish any parts within myself; I understand myself to be something quite single and complete. Although the

whole mind seems to be united to the whole body, I recognise that if a foot or arm or any other part of the body is cut off, nothing has thereby been taken away from the mind' (VI, 85-86). Again, here, Descartes talks about mind versus body. The mind is indivisible, while the body is divisible⁶. Descartes thinks of the self as single and complete, the self cannot be seen as one in plurality. Moreover, he implies that this particular body, although linked to the self, is not a necessary part of it.

In order to fully appreciate and understand Descartes' position on the soul-body relation, though, one has to look into *The Passions of the Soul*, and into his *letters to Elizabeth*. In *The Passions of the Soul* Descartes provides one with a detailed analysis concerning the nature of man. He distinguishes the functions of the soul from those of the body. In a very crude way, this distinction is that the functions that can be equally attributed to inanimate bodies should be attributed to the body alone, while the functions that are incapable of belonging to a body should be attributed to the soul (article 3, 329 5-10). Based on such a distinction, Descartes attributes every kind of movement to the body, and every kind of thought to the soul (article 4, 329 15). Despite the fact that such a distinction may appeal as plausible, Descartes' view faces difficulties in explaining in a satisfactory way the relation of soul to body. The problem that Descartes faces concerns the relations among the brain, the soul, and the animal spirits. In particular, Descartes holds that all bodily movements; movements of the muscles, as well as all the senses depend on nerves. These nerves come from the brain, which contains a very fine air, namely the animal spirits (article 7, 332 25-30). He then distinguishes between movements occurring in the brain that create sensations to the soul, and movements that cause the spirits to cause movement on bodily members (article 13, 338 15-25). At the same time, Descartes claims that the functions

⁶Although Descartes' view here is similar to the view Plato seemed to hold in the *Phaedo* 79a.

of the soul are its thoughts, which he categorises into its actions and its passions (article 17, 342 10-15). What is of importance, though, in Descartes' distinction between the actions of the soul and those of the body, is that the actions of the soul necessarily involve volition, will, while the bodily actions are done automatically, mechanically. A characteristic example of this distinction is Descartes' reference to dreams. He claims that imaginations 'arise because the spirits, agitated in various ways and coming upon traces of various impressions which have preceded them in the brain, haphazardly take their course through certain of its pores rather than others. Such are the illusions of our dreams' (article 21, 344 20- 345). Thus, although the brain process may be the same, what characterises it as an action of the soul or as one of the body is volition. If I have willed for it, is an action of the soul otherwise it is one of the body.

This point in turn points towards Descartes' view that the person, is the conscious self, the part that wills. This view is further supported by Descartes' insistence on the soul's nature as non-extended. He argues that the soul is 'of a nature which has no relation to extension, or to the dimensions, or other properties of the stuff the body is composed of, but only to the whole collection of its organs – as becomes apparent from the fact that one cannot in any way conceive of a half or a third of a soul, or of what extension it occupies...' (article 30, 351 10-20). This leads us perhaps to the most difficult claim of Descartes' regarding the soul-body relation, the soul's relation to the pineal gland. Descartes claims: '... even though the soul is joined to the whole body, there is nevertheless one part in [the body] in which [the soul] exercises its functions in a more particular way than in all the others... a certain extremely small grand' (article 31, 352 1-15). The difficulty that we are faced with, here, in explaining the particulars of Descartes' theory, is that although he wants to distinguish soul from body, he also wants to explain the relation between the two. His solution is that the soul moves the

little gland that causes the movement of the animal spirits that in turn cause a chain of physiologically explained reactions to the body. In Descartes' words: 'the whole action of the soul consists in this: merely by willing something, it makes the little gland to which it is closely joined move in the way required to produce the effect corresponding to this volition' (article 41, 360 1-5).

There is though a question that remains unanswered⁷, how can pure will move the little gland? This question was raised by princess Elizabeth to Descartes: 'how the human soul can determine the movement of the animal spirits in the body so as to perform voluntary acts' (Letter IX A, Princess Elizabeth to Descartes). Descartes' answer seems to be that along with the notion proper of the body, which is extension, and along the notion proper to the soul, which is consciousness, he recognises a notion proper of the soul and body together, the notion of their union. In an attempt to explain the notion of union between soul and body Descartes talks about the qualities or powers that enable the soul to move the body. His example is gravity. He says that 'Now I hold that we misuse this notion by applying it to gravity... but that it has been given to us in order that we may conceive of the way that the soul moves the body' (Letter IX B, Descartes to Princess Elizabeth). The question though remains unanswered. As princess Elizabeth argues, she cannot 'understand the idea by means of which we are to judge of the way that the soul, unextended and immaterial, moves the body, in terms of the idea you used to have about gravity' (Letter X A). Descartes' answer then was that 'matter and extension to the soul is nothing else than to conceive the soul as united to the body' (Letter X B). Unfortunately though, such an answer is not a satisfactory one, because to say the least it begs the question. How is one to explain the notion of the

⁷ Peter Remnant ('Descartes Body and Soul', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 9, 3 (1979) 381-82) holds that although Descartes promises to answer the above question in his *Treatise of Man*, in fact he never does.

soul-body union with the idea that the matter and extension of the soul is its union to the body?

Thus, although Descartes' basic line of reasoning is that of the soul and body being intermingled, he still holds that the self is the soul while the body is something altogether distinct. He strongly argues that the self is the soul, and consequently he cannot provide one with the necessary details for the required interrelation between soul and body, he thus, does not adequately explain how the soul that is not extended is linked to the body.

Aristotle on Soul-Body Relation

We can now turn to Aristotle's theory of soul-body relation. In the *De Anima*, Aristotle attempts to explain scientifically the workings of the human being as an organism in nature. Aristotle like Plato holds that the soul is what animates the body. But for Aristotle, the soul is not a separate entity able to exist on its own; rather, he treats the soul as the 'form' of the body, which is matter: 'soul is an actuality or formulable essence of something that possesses a potentiality of being besouled' (II, 2, 414a26-28). He thus holds that body without a soul is not a human being, and claims that soul cannot exist independently of body. In his own words, 'the body is the subject or matter... hence the soul must be a substance in the sense of the form of a natural body having life potentially within it' (DA II, 1, 412a17-21). Thus, despite the fact that both philosophers treat the soul as that which animates the body, Aristotle's view differs from Plato's in a very significant point, namely, the soul's independent existence. For Plato if the soul is to animate the body, it must exist independently and even be prior in time to the body. On the other hand, Aristotle treats the soul as a kind of essence that

cannot be distinguished from the body that it animates. Thus, as M. Frede argues, when Aristotle introduces the notion of essence, he is not introducing a new entity. Frede argues that: 'when Aristotle is insisting on essences or natures, he is insisting that objects, natural objects, human, beings, are not just configurations of more basic material constituents and hence should not just be conceived in this way'⁸. A point, which marks off Aristotle's view from any modern theory of supervenience is that he treats the soul as the form of the body, and hence as the formal cause of the body. Moreover, he recognises at least one part of soul that is capable of existing independently of body, namely intelligence. Aristotle's view on the active intellect is that it is immortal, an issue that seems to come in opposition to his claim of the soul being the form of the body⁹.

What can we make then of Aristotle's notion of intelligence and consequently of the soul? In the *De Anima* Aristotle explicitly claims that: 'we have no evidence as yet about mind or the power to think; it seems to be a widely different kind of soul' (DA II, 2, 413b24). The thinking part of soul is said to differ from the rest because it is eternal while the rest are perishable, 'it alone is capable of existence in isolation from all other psychic powers' (DA II, 2, 413b26-27). Thus, both Aristotle and Plato hold that there must be something in the human being that is capable of being immortal. For Aristotle, though, the immortality of intelligence does not indicate personal survival, while for Plato, throughout the dialogues, what survives death must contain more than pure reason. In particular, as K. V. Wilkes says, Aristotle's immortal and eternal psychic power 'would be nothing like me that survives bodily death'¹⁰. On the other hand, Plato's view is that although it is the reasoning element that survives death, it is so

⁸ Michael Frede, 'On Aristotle's Conception of the Soul', in M. C. Nussbaum – A. Oksenberg Rorty (eds), *Essays on Aristotle's De Anima*, Clarendon Press Oxford 1992, p.95.

⁹ This is discussed further in the comparison among Plato, Aristotle and Descartes that follows.

¹⁰ See K. V. Wilkes, 'Psuchê versus the Mind', in M. C. Nussbaum – A. Oksenberg Rorty, p. 125.

formed by the embodied state that it 'carries' with it personality traits, in other words, the element of soul that survives death for Plato is not purely intellect¹¹. Thus, as Wilkes argues, Aristotle's idea of immortality is 'more like that of Heraclitus than that of contemporary Christianity, we do not survive as ourselves, but something else does: the Heraclitean fire, or the Aristotelean light of intellect'¹².

Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes

Having thus drawn an outline of the two philosophers' views on the soul-body relation, I will attempt to show the similarities and differences among the views of Plato Aristotle and Descartes, so as to show why Plato's theory of soul-body relation cannot be treated as a Cartesian dualism. Through this process of comparison and contrast, it will be indicated that Aristotle's view in some respects acts as an intermediate position.

The first point that shows a significant difference between Plato and Descartes is that Plato, in the *Timaeus*, holds that the soul is the cause of reason and motion, in other words, the soul is what animates the body and what brings intelligence to it. The notion of the soul being the cause of motion is an essential one for Plato. In the *Laws*, Plato says about the soul: 'it is one of the *first* creations, born long before all physical things, and is the chief cause of all their alterations and transformations' (892a). Moreover, the soul is defined as 'motion capable of moving itself' (*Laws* 896a). In a similar manner, Plato holds in the *Phaedrus* that the soul is self-mover that moves everything else: 'every soul is immortal. That is because whatever is always in motion is immortal, while what moves, and is moved by, something else stops living when it stops moving.

¹¹ This issue is clearly stated in the *Republic X* within the myth of Er 618b, in the *Timaeus* 42b-c, and in 90e-91c.

¹² See further Wilkes, p. 126.

So it is only what moves itself that never desists from motion, since it does not leave off being itself. In fact, this self-mover is also the source and spring of motion in everything else that moves' (*Phaedrus* 245c-d).

For Descartes, though, the soul cannot be seen as something that animates the body, since he insists on the soul being a thinking thing and the body an extended thing. For Descartes the soul happens to be connected to a particular body that is a perfectly functioning mechanism. A clear indication of this is that Descartes denies soul to animals who are clearly self-movers. Descartes' view then of how the soul, the mind, which is a thinking thing can relate to a body, which is an extended thing, is unclear. Although, as was discussed at the relevant section of this chapter, he introduces the idea that the soul affects the pineal gland, and from there all possible movements of the body start, he does not give us the details of this relation. In *The Passions of the Soul* Descartes claims that 'the whole action of the soul consists in this: merely by willing something, it makes the little gland to which it is closely joined move in the way required to produce the effect corresponding to this volition' (article 41, 360 1-5). At best, his view seems to be that the soul in a mysterious way can affect a body, soul is not the source of animal motion but somehow affects it by altering the flow of animal spirits, but there is no particular reason why it affects this particular body. In a sense, Descartes' view of the soul affecting the pineal gland could hold even if the brain were imaged to be separated from the body. There is no obvious reason why my soul should affect the pineal gland in my brain rather than the one in someone else's brain. This Cartesian view, then, could be associated with Dennett's thought experiment¹³ where a brain in a vat is linked to a body, which is situated some way away. My soul could affect the pineal gland in the brain in the vat and that in turn could, in principle, be

¹³Daniel C. Dennett, 'Where am I?', in D. R. Hofstadter – D. C. Dennett (eds), *The Mind's I Fantasies and Reflections on Self and Soul*, 1981, pp. 217-229.

linked to a distinct body. The sense in which this body belongs to my soul is simply that my soul can, directly or indirectly, affect that body and the body in turn, directly or indirectly, affects the soul. No close relation is required.

Another way that the relation between the soul and the pineal gland could be explained is the one proposed by Sara Broadie. She argues that the explanation of the link between mind and body cannot be that the mind wills such a union, for 'without sense experience we could not have an idea, either definite or indefinite, of a particular body'¹⁴. According to her reading then, 'only God; a third being of infinite power, can cause by his will a union between substances of such mutually alien natures as mind and body'¹⁵. Although Broadie's conclusion is a correct one, based on Descartes' ideas, unfortunately it is one that is taken as a matter of faith and not as proven philosophically.

Thus, the first point of difference between Plato and Descartes is that of the soul acting as a life-principle. What remains to be seen is Aristotle's position on this issue. As was mentioned previously, Aristotle like Plato holds that the soul acts as the animating principle of a body. He characterises the soul as the form of the body. But what is exactly Aristotle's view on the issue, and why is his view to be treated as an intermediate of Plato and Descartes' views? Firstly, Aristotle like Plato assigns to the soul the role of the animator. Without the soul the body cannot be characterised as a human body, it is just inert matter, matter without form. On the other hand, unlike Plato, Aristotle holds that the soul is a form, and therefore is not something that comes to be, and it is not divisible. Thus, as Christopher Shields argues, the fact that Aristotle

¹⁴ Sara Broadie, 'Soul and Body in Plato and Descartes', *The Aristotelean Society Proceedings* 101 (2001) p. 301.

¹⁵See further Broadie, *ibid.*

is committed to the immateriality of souls is due to the following arguments: 'a) First, the soul cannot be moved by itself (*DA*, I, 3). Every magnitude can be moved kath' hauto (*de Galeo* 268b15-16). Therefore the soul is not a magnitude. b) Second, the soul, as a form of the body, is not generable (*Metaphysics* VII, 8). This is so since whatever comes to be has form as well as matter, but form is not a compound (*Meta* VII, 8). Therefore, the soul does not have matter. c) Third, the soul is not divisible (*DA* 411b27). But whatever is not divisible is not a magnitude (*Physics* 219a11, 237a11). Therefore the soul is not a magnitude. d) Fourth, the soul is neither one of the elements nor from the elements (*de Generatione et Corruptione* 334a10-11)¹⁶. There is, in other words, a crucial distinction between Plato and Aristotle, namely, that of the soul's separate existence. For Plato the soul's immateriality is a proof to its existence prior to body. For Aristotle on the other hand, the soul's immateriality does not prove its separate existence. As a matter of fact, from most of what Aristotle says in the *De Anima*, the body is so much necessary for a human being as the soul is. As K. V. Wilkes argues not all complex systems can provide the 'matter' (hardware) for a psychê-competence. Form puts constraints on matter and vice versa¹⁷. She thus goes on to claim that the body is a necessary condition for thinking in general and the active intellect in particular¹⁸.

This is, thus, the point according to which we can differentiate Aristotle's position to that of Descartes'. As it was indicated earlier, Descartes holds that the soul is not the cause of the body; the body is a perfect mechanism that operates according to its own rules. The soul, therefore, happens to be related to the body and thus interact with it. For Aristotle, though, the body on its own, is nothing but inert matter. Likewise, the

¹⁶ Christopher Shields, 'Soul and Body in Aristotle', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 6 (1988) p. 114.

¹⁷ See Wilkes, p. 124. That is why Aristotle's view cannot be seen as a kind of functionalism.

¹⁸ See Wilkes, p.126.

soul's existence depends on the body's existence. Thus, as Shields argues, Aristotle cannot be treated as a Cartesian dualist, because he denies that the soul is separate from the body. In Shields' words: 'it is clear that Aristotle is no sort of Cartesian... he regards souls as ontologically dependent on bodies... Aristotle denies Cartesianism but he does not thereby deny dualism'¹⁹.

Another point that indicates that neither Plato nor Aristotle could be treated as Cartesian dualists, is the issue of the soul's spatial location. Plato holds that the soul, whether he refers to the reasoning element, or to the tripartite soul, cannot exist outside space. It has to be spatially located, but that does not mean that it always has to be located in a human body. Plato does not explain the exact relation between the mortal parts of the soul and the body – perhaps because he lacks the means to make the requisite distinction. What could be argued here on Plato's behalf is that he does not think of the mortal parts as ontologically distinct from the body, the mortal parts couldn't exist without the body. Having said that, though, it is not clear what the particular relationship is. It cannot be an identity because of the language used. Plato insists on terminology that indicates that the mortal parts are placed within bodily parts, not that they are tautologous to them: 'they provided a home for the mortal soul in another place in the body' (69e). Further examples of this kind of language are the following: '...they settled nearer the head' (70a) and 'they assigned it its position there...' (70e). Similarly, the relation of the mortal parts to the body cannot be that of supervenience because the mortal parts are created along with the body, they are not the result of the body's constitution. That the soul occupies 'space', then, implies, at least, that for Plato the soul is not a substance totally and completely separate from the body. It rather indicates that by necessity there is no sharp distinction between soul and body, the soul is interconnected to the body for the human being to live. In other words, there

¹⁹ Shields, pp. 131-132.

can be no human being without the existence of both soul and body, the result, the human being, is what determines the relation between the soul and the body. So, for the human being's existence it is irrelevant whether the soul is able to exist independently of the body, because a human being cannot exist without both a soul and a body.

Aristotle, now, holds that the soul's existence depends on the body²⁰. The soul is necessarily located in space; it is embodied. This position of his, though, differentiates him from both Plato and Descartes' views. Aristotle, unlike Descartes, recognises the soul's embodiment to a particular body as the only one possible. In other words, the soul's existence and the body's existence are determined by the human being. Shields treats this claim as pointing towards a view of supervenient dualism. He argues that: 'Aristotle affirms that mental states depend in an intimate way on physiological states'²¹, and thus claims that the best overall consistent interpretation of Aristotle is that he is a supervenient dualist²². It should be noted here that Shields does not treat Aristotle as being a materialist; the interpretation that he proposes is a different kind of dualism to that of Descartes. He claims that 'given his analysis of form and soul Aristotle cannot be regarded as any sort of materialist'²³. Alan Code and Julius Moravcsik also support the view that Aristotle cannot be seen as being a materialist. They argue that 'if materialism is a view according to which principles governing the matter of a natural/physical entity are sufficient for all the behaviour and changes it undergoes qua natural/physical thing, then neither his [Aristotle's] psychology nor his physics is materialist'²⁴. Their argument, thus, is that although Aristotle's

²⁰The intellect though is excluded.

²¹ Shields, pp. 133-134.

²² Shields, p. 134.

²³ Shields, pp. 105-106.

²⁴ Alan Code, Julius Moravcsik, 'Explaining Various Forms of Living' in M. C. Nussbaum – A. Oksenberg Rorty, p. 131.

hylomorphism is committed to the existence of physical/natural structures underlying perception and cognition, it is a mistake to see these structures as arising from the powers of inanimate matter²⁵.

Another point of difference between Plato and Aristotle on the one hand, and Descartes on the other is the way they treat the issue of death. For Plato and Aristotle death is defined as the separation of soul from body. Plato argues in the *Timaeus* that death occurs when the bonds that hold soul and body together are broken, either in a natural or an unnatural way. The actual process is described as follows: 'the interlocking bonds of the triangles around the marrow can no longer hold on, and come apart under stress, and when this happens they let the bonds of the soul go. The soul is then released in a natural way, and finds it pleasant to take its flight' (81d). This is how Plato treats the process of a natural death. An unnatural death, on the other hand, is 'a death that is due to disease or injury' (81e) and is seen as 'painful and forced' (81e). Plato's distinction between natural and unnatural death shows that the former is due to the natural decay of the elements of the body, and therefore the bonds between the soul and the body, while the latter is due to a sudden, unexpected separation of the soul from the body. A point that should be stressed here, then, is that Plato does not hold that it is the structure of the body that enables the soul to inhabit the body. He rather holds that to have a soul is to have a certain something, the animating principle for the body. The soul's structure, though, within the body shows also that it is influenced by the body's condition. This, in turn, indicates that the bonds of soul to body, the relation between the two is such that when in a particular proportion they constitute the human being. When the proportion is loosened or destroyed, then the soul leaves the body, and death occurs. In other words, Plato seems to argue that because the bonds between the soul

²⁵See further Code & Moravcsik, p.133.

and body become inadequate, death comes about. The significance of this description of death is that it does not treat soul and body as two elements that exist side by side, rather the soul can coexist with the body only when the latter is in an appropriate state.

Aristotle, now, although in the *De Anima* does not provide us with a definition of death, holds like Plato that someone dies because the soul is separated from the body. This is so because the soul is the element that animates the body, the soul is what determines whether something is living or not²⁶. On the other hand, Descartes claims that death occurs due to the malfunctioning of the body mechanism. Descartes argues that: 'the soul departs when someone dies only because that heat ceases and the organs used to move the body disintegrate' (De An. Article 6, 33015-20). He thus argues that 'death never occurs through the fault of the soul, but only because one of the principal parts of the body disintegrates' (article 7, 330 23-25). In that way Descartes describes the body as a machine and compares it to automata. One might observe here that the definitions of death provided are not that distinct. Indeed all three philosophers treat death as the separation of soul from body. The main difference, though, between Plato and Aristotle and Descartes is that Plato and Aristotle recognise the soul as the cause of life, and therefore its loss as the cause of death. Descartes on the other hand, thinks that death occurs because the body is not working properly, and this has as a result the soul's release.

The last point of difference among Plato, Aristotle and Descartes is their notion of perception. Perception is a characteristic example of the relation between soul and body. Plato in the *Theaetetus* argues that perception is different from knowledge in that there is no judgement involved in perception. For Plato 'knowledge is to be found not

²⁶ As J. P. Vincenzo states ('Plato and Aristotle on the Soul', *Philosophia* 19-20 (1989-1990) 276), Aristotle conceives of soul as the cause of life within organic natural bodies possessing potential life.

in the experiences but in the process of reasoning about them' (*Theaetetus* 186d). To illustrate the point that 'it is in cases where we both know things and are perceiving them that judgement is erratic' (194b), Plato introduces the wax image. He assumes that the block of wax is in the soul and its function is to take 'impressions of everything we wish to remember among the things we have seen or heard or thought of ourselves' (191d). In that way he can argue that there are cases of false judgements. These are cases where being misled by perception, we, our souls, do not 'bring together the proper stamps and records' (194b) and thus judge falsely.

Aristotle on the other hand, uses the same example, the wax tablet, as a model of perception. Aristotle argues that 'by a sense is meant what has the power of receiving into itself the sensible forms of things without the matter' (*De Anima* II, 12, 424a16). Aristotle claims that like the impressions of a signet of bronze or gold, the sense is affected by what is coloured or flavoured or sounding, but it is indifferent to what in each case the substance is...' (*De Anima* II, 12, 424a24). In that respect, as M. F. Burnyeat says 'It is striking that Aristotle should apply to perception a model which Plato used for judgement in contrast to perception... Plato had contrasted perception with judgement. He had argued that there is no awareness in perception itself, just a causal interaction with sensible qualities in the environment.... Aristotle's applying the wax-block model directly to perception is a way of insisting, against Plato, that perception is awareness, articulate awareness, from the start'²⁷. Thus, in Plato's account, perception is just the physical stimulation; it does not on its own involve judgement, while for Aristotle perception is the awareness.

²⁷See further, M. F. Burnyeat, 'Is Aristotelean Philosophy of Mind Still Credible?' (A Draft), in M. C. Nussbaum – A. Oksenberg Rorty, p. 21.

Descartes, now, distinguishes two causes of perception. Perception can be caused by mental or bodily events, what differentiates the two is volition (*The Passions of the Soul*, article 19, 343 10-25). What should be noted, therefore, is that although both Plato and Aristotle treat perception as the first level of a process that can lead to knowledge, Descartes seems to categorise perception according to the will.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis the emphasis was placed in trying to determine Plato's notion of the soul-body relation. As we have seen, Plato's view changes somewhat from the early dialogues to the late ones. This change, though, it has been argued, was not drastic enough to alter Plato's view on the soul-body relation, rather it helped him modify his theory and present us with a more detailed view. In particular, from the idea of a single soul, Plato moves into the view that the soul is tripartite. This enables him to hold his initial position that the soul is immortal and at the same time to show in a detailed way the soul's relation to the body so as to form a human being. Thus, the soul cannot be treated as something altogether separate from the world and therefore is treated as being part of it.

Thus, although the *Timaeus* solved a lot of the questions that were raised concerning the soul-body relation in the early and middle dialogues, there are other questions that remain unanswered. The one that I attempted to examine was whether Plato could be considered a Cartesian dualist or not. As it was indicated in the previous chapter, and in this one, Plato could not be treated as a Cartesian dualist for a number of points. Namely, A) for Plato the soul along with the body compose a human being. Although the soul is tripartite, one part is immortal and therefore somehow quite distinct from the body and the other two are formed along with the body, the whole soul is treated as a

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unity that is a necessary part of the human being. B) Plato argues that the soul is spatially located, it is a part of the world. In that respect, it differs to Descartes' notion of the fundamental natures of soul and body; the soul for Descartes is an essentially thinking thing, while the body is an essentially extended thing. C) Also, for Plato, the soul is the cause of motion and reason, two notions that cannot fit Descartes' idea of the separate existences, the mind existing independently of the body. Hence, although Plato like Descartes holds that the soul is not identical to the body, for Plato the self, the human being is composed of a soul and a body. On the other hand, Descartes holds that in principle at least the mind the soul is the real self, the body is just an automaton that accidentally happens to be interrelated to a soul. This distinction is more than adequate so as to conclude that Plato should not be treated as a Cartesian dualist.

Finally, even after the changes on his theory of soul and body, as they were presented in the *Timaeus*, Plato does not provide us with a conclusive view of the soul's nature. He cannot be seen as a Cartesian dualist, since without a soul Plato claims the body couldn't function. Plato, thus, emphasises the mutual interdependence between soul and body. The desires for instance that are attributed to the soul, are at the same time treated as partly belonging to the body. Another example of this relation of interdependence is that of love. In the *Symposium*, Plato talks about love as a desire and moves from the love of a beautiful body, the purely physical desire, to the love of the Forms of Beauty and Good. If he held that reason is something completely separate to the bodily desires, he wouldn't be able to talk of a process of advancing from the merely physical to the intellectual. In general terms, if Plato thought that reason is something altogether separate from anything material, then he couldn't avoid being treated as a Cartesian dualist, but throughout his dialogues he tries to emphasise the relation of mutual interdependence between soul and body. Although, then, Plato's

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