

No Tale of Alkinous: Plato and the Afterlife

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To my great-uncle Harilaos Michael (1935-1956)

You gave your life so that I might be free.

None of this would be possible without you.

And

My grandfather Elias Michael (1939-2021)

You always encouraged my love of history.

I'm so sad you never got to see me graduate.

I miss you every day.

Abstract

Death has been called the great leveler, knowing neither race, age, gender, sex, religion, etc. It also knows no time, serving to tie the modern human being to the ancient. Death is an ever present constant, enveloping all human beings, at all periods of time; none can escape. Consequently, human beings have always sought to understand this phenomenon: Why do we die? What is the purpose of death? Does anything happen after? An examination of a society's approach to these questions, reveals a great deal about the basic assumptions, conceptual framework, and values that a society holds. In short, to best formulate why life is worth living, one considers death; in particular what happens after death, if anything.

Plato does not speak for all of Athens, but in an examination of Plato's conception of afterlife, we are offered unique insight into how one individual approached these particular issues. To know best how Plato believed one should live, one should investigate the Platonic afterlife. This thesis examines the Platonic conception of the afterlife; beginning with the definitions of 'life' and 'death.' If Plato believes in an afterlife, and it appears he did, how can the afterlife exist if death is the end of life as we know it? Then, this thesis examines Plato's approach to the judgement of the soul, and the subsequent punishment and reward the soul receives as a result. Finally, this thesis considers Plato's conception of reincarnation; which ties back into the definitions of 'life' and 'death' offered at the beginning.

Ultimately, Plato offers the individual an opportunity to find truth in an ever-changing, more connected, post-truth world (as he sees it). He does this by offering the individual a wager: (i) believe in the afterlife he presents; live the life he suggests, and you will find what you are looking for in life. Or, (ii) do not believe in the afterlife he presents; live a life of injustice, and fail to achieve meaning in one's life.

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Introduction

L.P. Hartley's 1953 novel, *The Go-Between*, opens with the line: 'the past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.'¹ In the specific context of the novel, this refers to the central protagonist discovering that their nostalgia has distorted the truth of their youth. Yet, it has been used in popular culture to stress the differences between the modern, progressive, scientific, and enlightened world, and the primitive, superstitious, and unenlightened past. This is, to some extent, a consequence of the Post-Enlightenment age in which we live, which rewrote the story of humanity from being one of progressive decline from some particular Golden Age, to one of progress from savagery.² Hartley's words, moreover, have been used by older members of society in order to absolve themselves of blame for any racist, sexist, or otherwise bigoted views, they might hold, attributing them to the past society in which they grew up.

Yet, it is by no means necessary that one draw such a conclusion from Hartley's words. Indeed, rather than stressing the difference between the past and the present, one should interpret Hartley's words as a reminder that despite the alleged differences that exists between human beings, certain 'things' remain true of all; regardless of time and space, race, age, religion, gender, etc. One such 'thing' is death; all human beings from the very first to the very last must experience death, without exception. All human societies, therefore, will have contemplated the concept of death, and asked of death a similar set of questions, as they sought to reconcile the realities of everyday experience with the inevitability of death. One might ask, for instance, 'Why does death exist?'; 'Why do people have to die?'; 'Does anything happen after death?'; 'Does death serve a

¹ Hartley (1953, repr. 1971): 7.

² For a pre-Enlightenment conception of humanity as a progressive decline, see for example, *Genesis* 2:15-3:24 and the story of Adam and Eve; Hesiodos' Ages of Humanity, *Erga kai Hemerai*, 106-201; Roman concept of *mos maiorum* e.g. the characterization of Aeneas in Virgil, *Aeneid*, 2.707-729. For a post-enlightenment conception of humanity as a steady progress from savagery, consider the modern concepts of science, capitalism, utilitarianism, communism, etc. in, for example, Popper (1963, repr. 2002), Jacob (1981); Porter (2000); Beales (2005). Though in the case of communism, for instance, it posits a primordial golden age of equality, destroyed by greed and exploitation, and for the reattainment of this lost golden age.

purpose?’ In this way, rather than stress the differences between the past and the present, Hartley’s words remind us that certain questions appear to be universal, in terms of both time and space.

The individuals of the past, in this sense, were no different to us; they were born, they laughed, they cried, they had hopes and dreams, and finally they died. The past is not a foreign place because it was somehow fundamentally different to the present. The people of the past possessed the same basic priorities and concerns as the present, and sought to answer the same essential questions; what makes the past ‘foreign’ is that past individuals operated on a different set of basic assumptions, and within a different conceptual framework. If an individual in the present is unaware of these peculiarities, the past can appear to be impenetrable. An examination, therefore, of past responses to these basic questions of humanity, may reveal something about the society in which these responses were formulated.

Returning to the question of death, this thesis seeks to consider a response to the basic question, ‘What happens after death?’ In this particular case, this thesis will examine the response of a specific individual from the past – Plato. Though an examination of Plato’s response cannot provide a general understanding of his contemporaries’ view of the afterlife, it provides insight into the basic assumptions and conceptual framework operating at this particular moment in time.

Yet, it is incontrovertible that modern responses to this question do not arise in a vacuum; they too evolve out of the basic assumptions and conceptual framework of the time. History, however, is linear, in the sense that the past always precedes the present, and the present the future; thus, the present is an agglomeration of all the past actions and choices of past individuals. In this way, the assumptions and conceptual framework that prevail in the present cannot help but be reliant on past developments – on those things our predecessors chose to advance, and those they chose to reject. In the case of the afterlife, the two most prevalent conceptions in the present belong to the Abrahamic religions, on the one hand, and the physicalist/materialist/atheist position, on the other.

The former argues for the continued existence of the individual in some form, in a place of either reward or punishment; whilst the latter argues for the total cessation of the individual upon death.

Both of these positions respond to the basic assumptions and conceptual framework established by the past, either through affirmation and reconceptualization, or complete rejection. These past assumptions and conceptualizations originate, this thesis argues, in the conception of the afterlife proffered by Plato. It is Plato's understanding of the afterlife that underlies all subsequent responses to the question – 'What happens after death?' – whether that person be Aristoteles or Epikouros; Gregorios Palamas or Maimonides; al-Ghazali or Richard Dawkins. An examination of Plato's conception of the afterlife, therefore, is nothing less than an investigation of the basic assumptions that inform present society's responses to the question – 'What happens after death?'

(A) Developmental vs. Unitarian

This thesis adopts the position that Plato wrote in order to say something.³ To what extent this 'something' remains consistent throughout the dialogues, or undergoes development and change,

³ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 40 argue that 'numerous passages in the *Apology* itself might be taken as evidence that the defence was, at least in some places, not intended to be taken seriously and literally...many scholars disbelieve the whole story.' Brickhouse and Smith's assertion does not necessarily imply that Plato had nothing to say, but rather that certain scholars approach particular passages of the dialogues as being dramatic or literary elaborations that possess no obvious motivation beyond the rhetorical. Cf. Rowe (1986): 173; Beversluis (2000): 12; Brickhouse and Smith (2004):1; see *contra* Rosen (1999): xxxix-xl. Alternatively, some approach the Platonic dialogues as though they are 'negative philosophy,' i.e. they serve to refute the theories of other, without ever asserting anything positive themselves; Plato is understood to be, in some sense, a radical sceptic (cf. McDowell (1973): 116-117; Arieti (1991): 19). This thesis, however, does not endorse the position that Plato was a sceptic, but rather that Plato wrote in order to proffer certain positive ideas; cf. Aristoteles, *Ton Meta ta Physika*, 987a-988b, 990a, 992a, 996a,1001a, 1019a, 1026b, 1028b, 1053b, 1064b, 2070a, 171b-1072a, 1083a-b; Irwin (1992): 77; Kraut (1992): 21, 29-30; Kahn (1996): xiv-xv; Rice (1998): 12; Beversluis (2000): 20; Blondell (2002): 43, 45-46, 94; Watts (2003): 57-78 – Watts refers here to Kierkegaard, but this thesis believes it is applicable to Plato also. Plato invariably criticizes Protagorean relativism (*Kratylos* 385e4ff., 391c2f.; *Theaitetos* 151d-186e), Gorgian nihilism (*Gorgias* 448e-461b, 482c4ff., 486e5ff, 494d1f.; *Menon* 70a5ff., 71b9ff., 73c, 76c4ff., 95b9f., 96d5ff., and Chapter 3.4), and Herakleitian flux (*Kratylos* 401d4f., 411b3ff., 416a10f., 436d7ff., 439d-440e; *Theaitetos* 152d2ff., 156a, 160d5ff., 179c7ff., 181c9ff.); not by simple negation, by proffering a positive thesis in their stead. In answer to Protagoras and Gorgias, Plato asserts that, (i) Knowledge exists; (ii) Knowledge may be known; (iii) Knowledge may be communicated; and (iv) Knowledge may be understood. Responding to Herakleitos (or at least Plato's

constitutes one of the underlying issues surrounding any analysis of the Platonic dialogues. This sentiment embodies the distinction modern scholarship draws between the so-called 'unitarian' approach to Plato, and that of the 'developmental.'⁴ Briefly, the unitarian approach posits that Plato undertook the composition of the dialogues in possession of a relatively dogmatic approach with regards to particular issues. Whilst not completely immune to adaptation, this dogma remains fairly constant and consistent throughout his life. For example, the unitarian approach considers the theory of Forms to be a theory Plato possessed from the composition of the first dialogue to the last. The lack of explicit reference to the Forms in a particular dialogue does not mean Plato did not assume their existence, and so neither should the reader. It may be that the Forms were considered irrelevant to the needs of that particular dialogue; or that Plato intended the reader to infer their existence from the 'breadcrumbs' he provides; even, that he intended to advance the reader towards a fully elaborated theory of Forms, revealing various aspects gradually over time.⁵

Conversely, the developmental approach posits that Plato approached each dialogue as an individual work in its own right, with no necessary relation to any other. As such, Plato does not compose the dialogues with any particular dogma in mind, but rather develops particular approaches to particular issues that may or may not coalesce over time into a coherent thesis.⁶ In contrast to the unitarian

conception of Herakleitos), Knowledge, in this case, is understood to be immortal and changeless; if something remains forever changing, then one can never know that thing, since as soon as one comes to know that thing, it undergoes change, and one's knowledge is nullified.

⁴ Rutherford (1995): 23-25; Dancy (2004): 1; Rowe (2006): 13-24.

⁵ See further, Clegg (1977): 17, 197; Rutherford (1995): 24; and especially Kahn (1996): xiv-xvi, 64, 160-164; and Kahn (2006): 126-127.

⁶ See for example, Clegg (1977): 197; Irwin (1977): 3; Kraut (1992): 6, 9; Rutherford (1995): 24-25; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 3-5; Dancy (2004): 4, 4n.17; and *contra* Kahn (1996): xiv-xvi, who states further that his adoption of a unitarian approach to the Platonic dialogues constitutes a 'dissent from the standard view of Plato as an author who defends fundamentally different philosophies at different stages of this career' (page xiv). Whilst, for Kahn at least, this may constitute the 'standard' or 'traditional' view of Plato in modern scholarship, it is evident that ancient scholarship viewed Plato's philosophy in a mostly unitarian manner – e.g. Aristoteles, *Ton Meta ta Physika*, 987a-988b, 990a, 992a, 996a, 1001a, 1019a, 1026b, 1028b, 1053b, 1064b, 2070a, 171b-1072a, 1083a-b; Diogenes Laertios, 3.34-109. Though [Aristoteles], for example, identifies a 'Socratic' period of Plato's philosophy, in which the ideas he espoused conformed closer to those of the historical Sokrates; cf. for example, *Ethikon Megalon*, 1182a, 1183b, 1187a, 1190b, 1198a, 1200b. Nonetheless, Kahn perhaps exaggerates in claiming that developmentalists posit a fundamentally different Plato in the so-called 'later period' dialogues, e.g. the *Timaios* and the *Nomoi*, than the Plato of the 'early period,' e.g. the *Apologia* and the *Kriton*. Rather, the examples provided above consider the Plato of the later period to be a fully elaborate version of the Plato of the early period; one who has the benefit of time,

approach, the developmental approach possesses an inherent temporal aspect, assuming that Plato's stance towards a particular issue does not begin from a static position, but changes over time, eventually culminating in a relatively changeless stance. However, (a) if Plato does arrive at such a stance, it is unclear at which point in the composition of the dialogues this occurs; and (b) it is not necessary for Plato to adopt an unchanging position on a particular issue.⁷

If Plato does come to adopt a relatively changeless stance on a particular issue, then, in accordance with the concept of development, this is most likely to be present in the so-called 'late period' dialogues. The 'late period' representing, in theory, the maturation of Plato's thought. In such a case, the question arises as to what function the dialogues of the 'early' and 'middle' period serve other than to lay the groundwork for what is to come, and attest to Plato's method. Yet, the fact that the 'early' and 'middle' period dialogues are, arguably, the most well-known and well-studied of the Platonic dialogues suggests that developmentalists do not necessarily consider the 'late' period dialogues to be the apogee of Platonic thought. In which case, one must adopt the position that, ultimately, each dialogue serves only as a potential window into Plato's stance on a particular subject at a specific period in time. Both unitarians and developmentalists agree, however, that (i) a Platonic stance exists; (ii) this stance may be known; and (iii) this stance is communicable; and (iv) this stance may be understood.⁸

This thesis adopts the position that the developmental approach and the unitarian approach are not strict, mutually exclusive binaries, but rather two opposing extremes of a spectrum, with most modern scholarship lying at various points along this spectrum. Consequently, this thesis possesses

experience, and discussion, to provide fully developed versions of earlier tentative theories. This would imply, however, that a 'true' developmentalist would focus on Plato's later dialogues in order to gain an understanding of a fully elaborated, mature Plato; yet, as the examples above demonstrate, this is not the case. For instance, Brickhouse and Smith focus on the dialogues: the *Euthyphron*, *Apologia*, *Kriton*, and the *Phaidon*, whilst Irwin focuses on the early and middle dialogues of Plato; neither concentrating exclusively on the later dialogues.

⁷ Irwin (1992): 78; Rutherford (1995): 24; see *contra* Clegg (1977): 197.

⁸ White (1976): xiii, xvii; Kahn (1996): 391.

elements of both the unitarian and developmental positions.⁹ For example, I approach the dialogues under the impression that Plato held certain principles to be true and stable throughout the composition of the dialogues.¹⁰ These include a belief in (i) the validity and veracity of the philosophical life; (ii) the immortality of the soul; (iii) the existence of knowledge, and the ability to acquire it; and (iv) the perfect nature of the gods/the divine.¹¹ In this way, I utilize elements of the unitarian position. However, I also believe that Plato's justification for these principles develops over time, undergoing contemplation; adaptation; changes in presentation, and revision; thereby incorporating elements of the developmental position also. For instance, concepts such as reincarnation and recollection are not interpreted as existing from the outset, but rather as Platonic attempts to justify the validity of the philosophical life and the immortality of the soul, that develop over time as Plato contemplates these particular issues.¹²

(B) Chronology/Arrangement of the Dialogues

This thesis seeks to examine various aspects of the Platonic conception of the afterlife, and with such a purpose in mind, the following dialogues will receive the most attention:

- (i) *The Apologia*;
- (ii) *The Gorgias*;
- (iii) *The Menon*;
- (iv) *The Phaidon*;

⁹ An approach also suggested by White (1976): xiii, xvii: 'His basic philosophical aims and impulses remained the same throughout his life, though some of his views and approaches changed. As time went on, it appears that this conception became progressively elaborated and refined and in certain respects altered. Still, it would be possible to suppose in certain cases that instead of changing or refining his view, Plato merely revealed them more and more clearly' (page xvii).

¹⁰ White (1976): xiii, xvii; Kahn (1996): xiv-xvi, 64, 160-164; Rice (1998): 12.

¹¹ It would take another thesis to present a comprehensive defence of each of these positions; see further, White (1979): 29; Rowe (1986): 174; Reeve (1989): 69-70; Gerson (1990): *passim*; Irwin (1992): 53; Rice (1998): 88; Bostock (1999): 422-424; Fine (1999d): 32-33; Sayers (1999): 158; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 184.

¹² White (1976): xiii, xvii; cf. Rutherford (1995): 24-25.

(v) The *Politeia*;

(vi) The *Phaidros*; and

(vii) The *Timaios*.¹³

Though these dialogues constitute the majority of the forthcoming discussion, this is not done at the complete expense of other dialogues within the Platonic corpus; and when necessary passages from dialogues outside of this selection will receive discussion. These dialogues have been chosen specifically for their explicit elucidation of various features of the afterlife. In the *Apologia*, Plato concludes his account of Sokrates' defence speech by having Sokrates relate two possible accounts of the afterlife. Eschatological accounts of the afterlife follow in the *Gorgias*, the *Phaidon*, and the *Politeia*. The *Menon* introduces the notion of reincarnation, and the associated theory of recollection; and theses are continued in the *Phaidros* and the *Timaios* (not to mention the *Phaidon* and the *Politeia*).

As noted above (Introduction (A)), the developmental approach possesses an inherent temporal aspect.¹⁴ Given the developmental element of this thesis' approach, chronology cannot be completely ignored. However, a precise chronology with regards to the composition of the dialogues is both convoluted and rather unnecessary for the main purpose of this thesis. Moreover, any attempt to formulate a definitive compositional chronology of the Platonic dialogues would require another thesis worth of argumentation.¹⁶ Yet an awareness of chronology is of use for the

¹³ Bremmer (2002): 90 identifies the Myth of Er in the *Politeia*, in addition to the *Gorgias*, the *Phaidon*, and the *Apologia* as the Platonic material which deals with the afterlife. This thesis includes further the *Menon* and the *Phaidros*, and the *Timaios*, in the belief that the *Menon* is the first dialogue to posit the reincarnation of the soul, and the existence of recollection, whilst both the *Phaidon* and the *Timaios* provides accounts of the first incarnation of the soul, and the system of reincarnation that governs all subsequent (re)incarnations of the soul. In addition, the *Timaios* provides an account of the soul as created by the Demiourgos, and the 'ingredients' from which the soul is composed, which this thesis considers useful for considering the relationship between the soul, and life and death, in Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8.

¹⁴ See further Rutherford (1995): 24; Griswold (2002): 141.

¹⁶ Brandwood (1990: *passim.*; Brandwood (1992): 90-120; Rutherford (1995): 4-7. See further Fine (1999b): 1n.1 for further bibliography on the chronology of the dialogues.

forthcoming discussion; for example, this thesis posits that the *Menon* is the first of the dialogues to introduce both reincarnation and recollection.¹⁷

The omission of these particular concepts from the eschatological account of the *Gorgias* does not necessarily signify their non-existence in the mind of Plato.¹⁸ It may be, for example, that Plato believed reincarnation to be irrelevant to the discussion of the *Gorgias*; or that the presence of reincarnation might weaken or undermine the larger message of the discussion; or even that, given Kallikles' general disdain for Sokrates' eschatological account, the use of reincarnation would exacerbate his derision and indifference.

However, one must not forget that Plato composed the dialogues; and he appears to have composed the dialogues with a great deal of care and attention. Among other things, Plato chose the *dramatis personae* of the dialogue; he chose the characterization of individuals like Kallikles; he decided what to include and what to exclude; and he directed the progression of the argument towards its outcome.¹⁹ If Plato wanted reincarnation to be in the *Gorgias*, it would be in the *Gorgias*. Throughout the *Gorgias*, Plato makes no prior allusion to reincarnation or to recollection; nor does he appear to foreshadow these notions.

Kahn, who adopts a unitarian position, argues that Plato constructs philosophical dilemmas in particular dialogues, serving to prime the reader for his eventual reveal of the solution in a subsequent dialogue; or even, to give the reader the opportunity to infer the 'correct' solution, based upon the extent of their prior reading.²⁰ In the case of the *Gorgias*, however, there appears to be no question or dilemma to which reincarnation appears to be the 'solution.' Moreover, such an analysis retains the requirement of a particular reading order; how can the reader infer the presence of reincarnation, if the reader has not yet read a dialogue in which reincarnation is present? I take

¹⁷ Cf. Irwin (1977): 2-3.

¹⁸ Cf. Rutherford (1995): 24-25.

¹⁹ Kraut (1992): 21, 29-30; Rutherford (1995): 24-25; Beversluis (2000): 12, 20; Blondell (2002): 43, 45-46; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 1.

²⁰ Kahn (1996): xv-xvi, 63.

the *Menon*, therefore, as the introduction of reincarnation and recollection (see further Chapter 3.4), since the *Phaidon* appears to refer back to a previous discussion of reincarnation and recollection, and the *Politeia*, *Phaidros*, and *Timaios*, appear to refer to these notions as both established and veracious.²¹

Despite the influence of chronological progression on this thesis' arrangement of the relevant dialogues, one must remain aware of the possible validity of the unitarian position. The importance of chronology in analysing the Platonic corpus is, to a certain extent, a relatively modern phenomenon. In antiquity, it appears that no scholar seems to have approached the Platonic corpus from a developmental point of view.²² Aristoteles does appear to differentiate between doctrines that belong to Plato, and those that belong to Sokrates; yet, the Platonic corpus is treated as if a unitary whole.²³ This appears to be true of other ancient scholars also, since none of the dialogue arrangements given in Diogenes Laertios take into account chronology, but rather the dialogues appear grouped by theme, or internal connectivity (e.g. the *Sophistes*, the *Politikos*, and the *Parmenides*), or level of complexity.²⁴ One must be cognizant, therefore, of the possibility that Plato intended no particular reading order at all. The case may be that Plato meant for each of the dialogues to be complete, 'stand-alone' works, with subtle internal references to other dialogues providing the possibility of interconnectivity for those who sought further complexity.²⁵

²¹ Cf. Kahn (1996): 47. Despite the *Menon* appearing to provide the first instance of reincarnation and recollection, it is not necessarily the case that a reader arrives at the dialogues cognizant of this fact, and so chooses to read the *Menon* prior to these other dialogues. It is equally as likely that a reader will read the *Phaidon* prior to any of these other dialogues, and assume that reincarnation and recollection are either introduced here, and so infer their existence when reading any subsequent dialogue. Or, given the dramatic setting of the *Phaidon*, it may be that a reader assumes the existence of these notions in all dialogues in which Sokrates is a principal character, since all discussions in which Sokrates participated must, by necessity, come prior to Sokrates' death. Thus it may be that the reader assumes these prior discussions serve to guide one to these fully elaborated versions of reincarnation and recollection espoused by Sokrates prior to his death. Regardless, both options would appear to endorse unitarian approaches to the Platonic dialogues; see further Introduction, section (A).

²² Annas (1999): *passim*.

²³ E.g. Aristoteles, *Ton Meta ta Physika*, 987a-988b, 990a, 992a, 996a, 1001a, 1019a, 1026b, 1028b, 1053b, 1064b, 2070a, 171b-1072a, 1083a-b; *Peri Psykhes*, 404b, 406b-407b; Diogenes Laertios, 3.34-109.

²⁴ Diogenes Laertios, 3.56-62.

²⁵ Cf. White (1979): 2; Kahn (1996): 64; Johansen (2004): 2-3; Freeland (2006): 199-213.

It is likely that different readers came to the dialogues with different preconceptions, analytical tools, and levels of education. Therefore, composing the dialogues in this way would allow the inexperienced reader to draw the basic conclusions Plato wishes to impart, whilst the advanced reader may build upon these conclusions by examining them with reference to other areas of philosophy, thereby demonstrating the interconnectedness of philosophy, and hence the interdependence that exists between philosophy and one's way of life.²⁶

On the other hand, given that ancient scholars approached Plato from a non-linear, asynchronous perspective, it may be that Plato thought it expected of him to compose the dialogues in such a way that, regardless of arrangement, a contemporary could infer the existence of a unitary, Platonic whole.²⁷ It is not the case, even in the present, that each student of Plato begins with the *Apologia* and progresses through the dialogues in rough compositional order to the *Nomoi*. For example, if one read the *Phaidon* prior to the *Menon*, and read of the relationship between reincarnation, recollection, and the Forms, it is difficult for one not to then read the *Menon* and infer its existence there also, even though the *Menon* does not make as explicit a connection as the *Phaidon*, though appearing to predate it in composition. If Plato expected his reader to read chronologically, or according to a particular arrangement, would he not have made said arrangement of the dialogues clearer, or at least more obvious?²⁸

The above sentiments appear to support the postulation of this thesis that the developmental and unitarian positions exist on a spectrum, and are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Consequently, the main dialogues discussed in this thesis are examined according to a relatively chronological sequence, beginning with the *Apologia* and ending with the *Nomoi*.²⁹ However, it is my contention

²⁶ Cf. *Apologia* 38a5-6: ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ. Reeve (1989): 179; Kahn (1996): 338.

²⁷ E.g. *Aristoteles, Ton Meta ta Physika*, 987a-988b, 990a, 992a, 996a, 1001a, 1019a, 1026b, 1028b, 1053b, 1064b, 2070a, 171b-1072a, 1083a-b; *Peri Psykhes*, 404b, 406b-407b; Diogenes Laertios, 3.34-109. Kahn (1996): 47, 338; see further footnote 20 above.

²⁸ May such an arrangement have been known to his students? If so, Aristoteles does not appear to follow any particular arrangement in discussing Plato's philosophy, choosing to discuss dialogues on an *ad hoc* basis (see for instance, note 26 above).

²⁹ Rutherford (1995): 4-7.

that this developmental aspect is of importance mainly in relation to the first three dialogues of this arrangement, i.e. the *Apologia*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Menon*; subsequent to the *Menon* the order one approaches the dialogues is not necessarily of equal importance.³⁰ This belief accords with the notion that the *Gorgias* and the *Menon* form some sort of transitional period, either from ‘early’ to ‘middle’ period, or from Sokratic to Platonic. It is not in the purview of this thesis to provide a sustained examination of this issue; nevertheless, this thesis prefers not to view this subset of the dialogues as transitional in the sense of style or in the sense of moving from a more Sokratic to a more Platonic view.³¹ Rather, I take the approach that this ‘transition’ is one of increasing interconnectedness, as Plato adopts a broader, more comprehensive approach to demonstrate the veracity and validity of the philosophical life, encompassing, in addition to ethics, psychology, epistemology, metaphysics, etc. This allows Plato to show the systematic nature of the philosophical way of life, as a type of ‘gateway’ to a larger interconnected web of knowledge, one with important ramifications for the way one should live. In this way, the transition that encompasses both the *Gorgias* and the *Menon*, functions as the beginning of an attempt to marry philosophy with both the everyday realities of life and the more esoteric, and a way to connect theory with practice; the macro with the micro.³²

Taking into account the above discussion, this thesis has decided to adhere to the following, organization of these particular dialogues:

(i) The *Apologia*;

³⁰ Cf. Dancy (2004): 4, 4n.17.

³¹ Irwin (1977): 7; Fine (1999b): 1n.1; Kraut (1992): 6, 9 proffer a more developmental approach that considers this transition as being one of Sokratic to Platonic; developing to mature Plato. Kahn (1996): 62-63, 67-68, 160-164; Kahn (2006): 119-122, on the other hand, proffers the view that the *Menon*, likewise, serves as a transition in Platonic philosophy. For Kahn, Plato utilizes those dialogues prior to the *Menon* to prime his audience for a fully elaborated, interconnected version of his philosophical thesis; from the *Menon* onwards, he begins to unveil this developed philosophical thesis to his audience. In line with the synthetical approach posited earlier (see further Introduction, section (A)), this thesis endorses a position somewhere between developmental and unitarian. Accordingly, the *Menon* is understood to constitute a transition, as Plato employs an increasingly interconnected and complex approach to the philosophical problems he considers, thereby exceeding the limitations of a Sokratic preoccupation with ethics, and opening up new avenues of inquiry previously inconceivable within a purely ethical, Sokratic framework.

³² *Philebos* 28d-30d; *Politeia* 4.434d1ff. Cf. Kahn (1996): 160-164; Rice (1998): 2.

- (ii) The *Gorgias*;
- (iii) The *Menon*;
- (iv) The *Phaidon*;
- (v) The *Politeia*;
- (vi) The *Phaidros*; and
- (vii) The *Timaios*.³³

There is near unanimous agreement that the *Apologia* constitutes the ‘first’ of the dialogues, with both developmentalists and unitarians placing it at the beginning of their respective arrangements.³⁴

This thesis sees no good reason to doubt the veracity of this reasoning, and so follows the convention of placing the *Apologia* first among its arrangement of the dialogues. Following the *Apologia*, this thesis places the *Gorgias* prior to the *Menon*.³⁵ Subsequent to the *Menon* this thesis argues that, with regards to Plato’s conception of the afterlife, the ordering of the dialogues is not of the utmost importance. Placing the *Phaidros* prior to the *Politeia*, for example, does not significantly alter our understanding of the Platonic afterlife. Nevertheless, I do not adopt a completely arbitrary organization of the dialogues, post-*Menon*, but I opt to adhere to the conventional placement of

³³ Kraut’s arrangement (1992: xii) is the same as that utilized by this thesis: the *Apologia*, the *Gorgias*, the *Menon*, the *Phaidon*, the *Politeia*, the *Phaidros*, and the *Timaios*. Kahn’s arrangement (1996: 47-78), likewise, proffers: the *Apologia*, the *Gorgias*, the *Menon*, the *Phaidon*, the *Politeia*, the *Phaidros*, and the *Timaios*. This arrangement is reaffirmed by Kahn (2002): 94. Finally, the arrangement of the dialogues suggested by Fine (1999b: 1n.1.) proffers also: the *Apologia*, the *Gorgias*, the *Menon*, the *Phaidon*, the *Politeia*, the *Phaidros*, and the *Timaios*.

³⁴ So Reeve (1989): xv; Kraut (1992): xii; Kahn (1996): 47; Fine (1999b): 1n.1; and Kahn (2002): 94 all place the *Apologia* at the start of their arrangements of the dialogues. In antiquity, however, there is some evidence that scholars (cf. Diogenes Laertios 3.56-62) placed the *Alkibiades A* at the start of their arrangement of the dialogues. This was not done in the belief that the *Alkibiades A* predated the *Apologia*, but rather that it formed a good introduction to Platonic philosophy for students, since the majority of ancient scholars followed a mostly unitarian approach to the dialogues. Amongst modern scholars, not only is the *Alkibiades A* never placed at the beginning of the dialogues, but the very authenticity of the *Alkibiades A* is queried. Scholars such as Gaiser (1974): 137 dispute the authenticity of the *Alkibiades A*, in addition to other dialogues such as the *Axiokhos*, and the *Theages*. It is for this reason that this thesis does not include the *Alkibiades A*, not in the belief that scholars have demonstrated beyond reproof that the *Alkibiades A* is spurious, but rather a consideration of the *Alkibiades A* does not make any significant contribution to the argument of this thesis. For example, the relationship it establishes between the soul and the individual (e.g. 130a-131e, 133b-c) is discussed in more detail elsewhere, namely the *Phaidon* 78b-84b (the so-called Affinity Argument).

³⁵ See further Footnote 30.

these dialogues, thereby placing the *Phaidon* prior to the *Politeia*; the *Politeia* prior to the *Phaidros*, and the *Phaidros* prior to the *Timaios*.

It would be an exaggeration to posit there is no unity whatsoever amongst the dialogues. For example, internal dramatic chronology allows for the *Politikos* to be placed after the *Sophistes*; and for the *Kritias* to be placed after the *Timaios*, which in turn is situated after the *Politeia*. In addition to this internal dramatic chronology, all the dialogues inhabit the same shared, internal universe. For example, certain characters appear across various dialogues, e.g. Sokrates, the Xenos, Theaitetos, and Anytos.³⁶ Each character's appearance roughly harmonizing with previous appearances, e.g. in the *Sophistes*, Sokrates appears to refer to his encounter with Parmenides in the *Parmenides*, which for the character of Sokrates occurred long ago in his youth (*Sophistes*, 217c4-7). This demonstrates, further, that the characters of the dialogues are not static, but exist within a living internal universe; for example, in the *Phaidon* (72e3-7), during discussion of the theory of recollection, Kebes mentions that Sokrates has discussed the theory on several previous occasions. From a reader's point of view this may be a reference to the events of the *Menon*; yet, from the perspective of the character of Kebes, he is referring to several meetings, conversations, and discussions that took place in the characters' past, of which the reader is not cognizant, but which inform the present. Finally, all the dialogues that include Sokrates take place, in terms the internal chronology of the dialogues, prior to his final moments in the *Phaidon*.

(C) Use of Myth

³⁶ For example, Sokrates is present in: the *Apologia*, the *Kharmides*, the *Kriton*, the *Euthyphron*, the *Hippias Meizon*, the *Hippias Elasson*, the *Ion*, the *Lakhes*, the *Protagoras*, the *Euthydemos*, the *Gorgias*, the *Lysis*, the *Menexenos*, the *Menon*, the *Kratylos*, the *Phaidon*, the *Symposion*, the *Politeia*, the *Phaidros*, the *Parmenides*, the *Theaitetos*, the *Timaios*, the *Kritias*, the *Sophistes*, the *Politikos*, and the *Philebos*. The Xenos is present in the *Sophistes* and the *Politikos*; Theaitetos appears in the *Theaitetos*, the *Sophistes*, and the *Politikos*; and Anytos appears in the *Apologia* and the *Menon*. See further Nails (2002).

Any discussion regarding the Platonic conception of the afterlife must engage with the issue of myth; this is particularly so given that Plato consistently prefers to present eschatological discourse in the form of myth. Consequently, this thesis must consider Plato's understanding of the nature and function of myth in both society and intellectual discourse. A full exploration of this issue, however, would require a thesis in its own right, thus, for the sake of concision, this section presents only those Platonic approaches to myth considered most pertinent to the discussion of the afterlife.

As mentioned above, Plato chooses to introduce eschatological discourse in the form of myth. Given that this thesis considers the Platonic conception of the afterlife, it is necessary to reject, from the outset, the notion that Plato's myths possess no inherent truth value, and are 'mere fancy,' or 'irrational silliness' that can be easily dismissed.³⁷ This is not a new position, Annas (1982*a*) for example, states that "the myths in Plato's dialogues have been in general neglected by philosophers; when he moves from argument or exposition into the myth form there is a sharp switching-off of philosophical interest. There have been studies of the myths, some of them from a philosophical perspective, but it is broadly true that philosophical analyses of the dialogues have made little or no attempt to relate the content of each myth to the argument of the dialogue in which it occurs.

Whether they feel respect for the myths as attempts to express profound truths beyond reason's grasp, or feel contempt for them as holidays from serious thinking, or (most commonly) feel uncomfortable with them and endorse Crombie's, "To me these myths tremble between the sublime

³⁷ For example, Rowe (1986): 173-4 who claims, in reference to the Chariot Allegory, that 'the general spirit in which the following account is to be taken is not serious.' Arieti (1991):19, 24, 163 argues the dialogues constitute nothing more than 'admissions brochures' urging people to 'come to the Academy' (page 163); see further Rowe (1984): 191, and Scott (1999): 98. See *contra* Rosen (1999): xxxix-xl, xlviii, whose Straussian approach, to some extent, necessitates a rejection of any approach to the Platonic dialogues that views the myths (or any other part) as being 'mere fancy,' and thus worthy of being either disregarded or discounted. See also *Politikos* 277a-c; Nussbaum (1982): 81; Janaway (1995): 166; Bostock (1999): 420; Wright (2000): 20n.26. Cf. Cook (1996): 3, 100 who suggests the application of a more synthetic approach, wherein the myths should not simply be translated into doctrines, but neither should they be divorced from the propositions and questions of a dialogue; the two forming an 'indissoluble connection,' such that the mythic and non-mythic discourse of a dialogue form a symbiotic relationship (page 3).

and the tedious," philosophers have mostly not thought to include the myths as part of "Plato's thought."³⁸

In the *Timaios* (28b3ff., 39d7ff.), Timaios argues that one who produces does so in accordance with some purpose, i.e. nothing is produced without possessing at least that purpose its producer assigned to it at its inception.³⁹ Accordingly, if the dialogues contain mythic discourse within them, then its presence indicates a conscious choice on Plato's half to include such discourse.⁴⁰ This thesis thus adopts the position that Plato utilizes myth in a conscious manner and with some purpose in mind, and so one should not be quick to dismiss the Platonic myths as mere artistic embellishments that serve no particular function.⁴¹

If one accepts that Plato chose to utilize myth for some purpose, one must logically ask, 'what was this purpose?' Unfortunately, one is unable to ask Plato himself what he believed the specific function, or functions, of myth to be within his work. This does not mean, however, that (a) one should dismiss the task as being unproductive; and (b) one cannot provide reasonable theories as to what this function, or functions, might have been.⁴² The following enumeration presents various aspects of myth's function in Plato. This enumeration does not seek to be exhaustive in nature, but presents those aspects of myth that accord with the initial sentiment of this section that the use of myth constitutes a conscious act on Plato's part, and as such serves some function. Moreover, it

³⁸ Annas (1982): 119.

³⁹ Cf. White (1979): 71 and *Politeia* 1.352d-354a.

⁴⁰ Cf. Beversluis (2000): 25-26.

⁴¹ See for example, Annas (1982): 119, who states, with regards to Plato's eschatological myths in the *Gorgias*, the *Phaidon*, and the *Politeia*: "All three myths come at the end of a major dialogue full of controversial claims about the right way to live, and impassioned rejections of conventional beliefs about good and evil, and what is in one's interests. In this context an eschatological myth about the ultimate fate of the good and the bad can hardly fail to be relevant to the dialogue's main moral argument, and may well be revealing about the form of that argument, and any appeal in it to the agent's interests. To treat such a myth as an optional extra for those who like stories is to risk missing something of significance about the form of Plato's arguments, as well as interesting contrasts between dialogues; for differences between two myths may point to differences in what the dialogues are arguing, or may illustrate a major shift of emphasis."

⁴² McPherran (2006): 257.

does not present one aspect as being of more importance than another, but rather each aspect functions in a mutually reinforcing and complementary manner.⁴³

(a) *Myth as the observance of precedent*

A common criticism of Plato's use of myth relates to its supposed incompatibility with the rational method of philosophy.⁴⁴ According to this criticism, myth constitutes an irrational and unscientific form of discourse, and as such, one is not meant to take myth seriously as constituting a legitimate form of logical and/or rational form of argumentation. Whilst this particular convention may be true from a modern, post-Enlightenment, post-scientific revolution perspective, one should not assume this to be the case amongst Plato and his contemporaries. To do so is to fuse anachronistic modes of thinking onto ancient philosophers, and retroactively seek to locate both the modern philosophical and scientific method in the ancient past.⁴⁵

Further, I disagree with Annas who argues that "a philosophical myth *should* (emphasis is Annas') have some rational interpretation." I believe that such an approach towards Plato's myths continues to fall into the trap of finding value in Platonic myth, and myth more generally, only insofar as one can establish its "rationality." The underlying assumption remains: myth is irrational, and myth can only have value if one can salvage some rationality from within. This further emphasises my earlier point, that modern scholars tend to assume that Plato is a philosopher in the modern sense of the

⁴³ Cf. Johansen (2004): 2.

⁴⁴ Annas (1982a): 119 states, for example: "'The philosophical myth mixes genres, and so is disliked by philosophers who want philosophy to be "professional," with its own uniform or distinct medium, preferably as transparent as possible so that philosophical argument cannot be confused with more literary modes of persuading. We can find this attitude in Aristotle, who faults the Phaedo myth by reading it literally and then complaining that its geography and hydraulics are impossible." See also Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez (2012a): 1, who argue against this standard, philosophical presentation of myth, or literature more generally, "as something fundamentally other."

⁴⁵ See further Bett (1999): 426; Rosen (1999): xlii; Sedley (1999): 309-328; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 142, 145-146, 148; McPherran (2006): 244. Cf. Ahbel-Rappe (2006): 434-451; Most (2012): 15.

word, and so one must find the hidden “rationality” Plato *must have* included in his myths, as the “father” of Western philosophy cannot be seen to be “irrational.”⁴⁶

Modern philosophy employs a level of specialization absent from ancient philosophy, such that topics like ethics, logic, ontology, epistemology, and metaphysics are considered distinct areas of philosophy, kept, for the most part, separate. Moreover, areas once considered part of philosophy in antiquity, e.g. psychology, theology, cosmology, astrology, and mathematics, no longer enjoy this designation in modern philosophy. This specialization gives rise to each of these areas developing their own distinct methods and forms of discourse, such that what is appropriate for one is no longer appropriate for the other. For example, one who studies mathematics does not employ the same method as one who studies theology or ethics, and one who studies logic does not employ the same method as one who studies politics or metaphysics.

This, however, is not true of ancient philosophy. Ancient philosophy, though cognizant of the existing distinctions between different areas of philosophy, e.g. mathematics, ethics, politics, psychology, etc., does not conceive of these different areas as being divorced from the greater whole of philosophy.⁴⁷ In this way, though one might choose to focus on a particular subject area, for example ethics, one does not consider ethics in complete isolation from any other subject, there being an implicit understanding that ethics forms a part of a greater whole. For instance, one’s ethics is understood to affect one’s politics, one’s psychology to affect one’s ethics, and so on.

⁴⁶ Annas (1982a): 120. Indeed, during the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment period, Western European empires relegated entire cultures and societies whose collective and personal knowledge lay in oral or mythic form to “irrational” or “primitive,” and thus in need of “enlightenment” from whatever “benevolent” Western European power sought to justify its colonialism. Thus I think it is important to bear in mind when discussing myth, philosophy, “rationality” and “irrationality” that our basic usage and understanding of these terms and concepts ultimately stems from those who preceded us. We should recognize, therefore, that labelling types of discourse “rational” or “irrational” is not entirely unproblematic, and that these terms can be loaded, so we should endeavour to understand the ramifications of such labelling and not do so in a flippant manner.

⁴⁷ For instance, Plato identifies Theodoros as a mathematician (*Politikos* 257a1ff.; *Theaitetos* 143d1ff.), whilst Aristoteles (*Ton Meta ta Physika* 987b) and Xenophon (*Apomnemoneumaton* 1.1.11) identify Sokrates as being more of an ethicist, and yet both are considered equally philosophers. Cf. Clegg (1977): 100-118; White (1979): 2; Morgan (1992): 227; Penner (1992): 137; White (1992): 277-310; Kahn (1996): xv, 317; Fine (1999b): 22; Fine (1999d): 31; Beversluis (2000): 375-376; Johansen (2004): 2-3, 22; Freeland (2006): 199-213; Kahn (2006): 119-122.

Consequently, no specific method or mode of discourse is the reserve of one particular subject area.⁴⁸

From Plato's perspective, this approach to the study of philosophy is both natural and logical, in constituting the sum conceptual and methodological framework developed by his predecessors.

Plato thus inherits from his predecessors the following notions:

- (i) Subject areas such as ethics, epistemology, psychology, etc., function in a manner akin to the jigsaw piece. One may study each piece in isolation, and come to know with certainty the dimensions of the piece, and the proportions of its image. However, in order to understand fully the contents of its image, and thereby the totality of the piece (one might even say the 'true' nature of the piece), it is no longer sufficient to consider the piece in isolation, but one must integrate this piece into the greater whole to which it belongs. Prior to this integration, any account of the piece's function and position, and the contents of its image, is mere supposition.
- (ii) Given the understanding that each subject area forms a piece of a greater whole, then the methods one uses in order to study each individual part constitute legitimate approaches to arriving at an understanding of the whole. In the case of ancient philosophy, Plato conceived of poetics,⁴⁹ rhetoric,⁵⁰ and music as forming legitimate parts of the wider philosophical whole.⁵¹ This is a belief seemingly shared by his successor Aristoteles in his *Rhetorike* and *Peri Poietikes*, in addition to his predecessors, e.g. Xenophanes (DK 21A1), Parmenides (DK 28B1), Philolaos (DK 58B4 and 5), and Empedokles (DK 31A1 and 2). If one considers poetics to be a legitimate 'piece' of the

⁴⁸ E.g. in the *Menon* Sokrates uses mathematics in order to discuss epistemology (81e-86b); ethics and politics are inextricably linked in the *Politeia*; and the cosmology, physics, and biology of the *Timaios* affect Plato's psychology, ethics, politics, and metaphysics (cf. *Philebos* 28d-30d). Cf. Kraut (1992): 7; Rice (1998): 69; Sayers (1999): 123, 127; Freeland (2006): 199-213.

⁴⁹ For instance, the *Ion* is dedicated, for all intents and purposes, to this topic. See also the *Politeia* 2.376e-3.394c, 10.595a-608a.

⁵⁰ See, for instance, the *Gorgias* and the *Phaidros* which purport to discuss rhetoric and oratory in its various guises.

⁵¹ For example, the *Nomoi* 3.700d-701b; *Politeia* 4.424c-d. See further Bourgault (2012): 59-72.

philosophical whole, then the methods one uses in order to examine poetics, as well as the constituents of this 'piece,' become equally legitimate parts of philosophy, and equally legitimate methods for examining philosophy.

In such a system, myth and philosophy will not be understood as being mutually exclusive, but rather myth, functioning as a part of poetics, becomes a legitimate part of philosophy also.

Consequently, a philosopher such as Parmenides, feels comfortable and able to discuss philosophy with reference to its various constituent parts, e.g. epistemology and ontology, whilst utilizing those methods appropriate to these parts, and thus philosophy, e.g. myth. In this way, Plato's use of myth should not be understood as being irrational or inappropriate, but as the continuation of a precedent established by his predecessors.⁵² Plato is by no means obligated to follow this established precedent without question, (and he does not),⁵³ but follow this precedent he does.⁵⁴

(b) Myth ≠ False

In modern, contemporary society there is a common belief that myth is inherently false; that a myth represents a usually fantastical story with little to no basis in fact.⁵⁵ This is an attitude that

⁵² Curiously, Annas (1982a): 120 states "thus the frequent appearance in the myths of reincarnation is explained by Plato's having picked up the idea from some Pythagoreans. Whatever the value of this as a historical explanation - relevant pre-Platonic evidence being hard to come by - it leaves all the important questions still open: for why did Plato choose to pick up this idea from the Pythagoreans?" Yet, Annas never suggests that Plato may be employing mythological precedents established by his predecessors, such as the Pythagoreans or Empedokles (who also possessed a belief in reincarnation). Rather, Annas appears, to me at least, to present Plato as a philosophical innovator who transforms traditional usages of myth and mythological themes, despite recognising the possible impact of prior philosophers on his thought, including prior philosophers who employed so-called "irrational" discourse such as myth, music, or poetry in a philosophical manner. For instance, in arguing that myth does not necessarily mean false, Annas (1982a): 120-121 argues that "*mythos* and cognate words originally mean no more than "speech," and the usage survives in Plato whereby *mythoi* and *logoi* are put together and both are opposed to action." Thus Annas recognizes that Plato might be observing a prior societal precedent in his usage of *mythos* and *logos*, but never seems to extend this precedent to his philosophical predecessors, instead presenting Plato as a "trendsetter" befitting of his status as "father" of Western philosophy. Plato is rightly lauded as a seminal figure in Greek philosophy, but he did not spontaneously appear from the ether, he was a follower of philosophical precedent as much as he was a "trendsetter."

⁵³ For example, e.g. *Ion passim.*; *Nomoi* 2.659c9ff., 4.719a6ff., 7.817a2ff.; *Politeia* 2.376e-3.394c, 10.595a-608a.

⁵⁴ Jackson Knight (1970): 93; Irwin (1992): 73-74; Cook (1996): 3-4, 104-105; Bostock (1999): 411; Rosen (1999): xl, 327; Sayers (1999): 154; Wright (2000): 20n.26; Desjardins (2004): 132; Most (2012): 17-18; Werner (2012): 1-18; Edmonds III (2012): 182-183; Rowe (2012): 193.

⁵⁵ Cf. Woodard (2007): 1-14; Dowden and Livingstone (2011): 3-24.

permeates many modern objections to the myths of Plato, employing the logical fallacy of association to argue that since many myths appear to be demonstrably false, and are presented in a poetic and unscientific manner, so all myth must be false. For such individuals myth is false in both fact and methodology.

Criticism of myth is not confined only to the modern world, but is evident in antiquity also. Indeed, Plato appears to engage in criticism of myth,⁵⁶ as do his rough contemporaries like Herodotos and Thoukydides, as well as predecessors like Xenophanes. Yet, for all of these individuals, myth is not understood to be inherently false.⁵⁷ Rather, these individuals criticize particular details of myths, believing them to be either false or exaggerated. For example, Thoukydides does not reject myth as a method, but rather particular details of myth, arguing that the Greek force at Troia could not possibly have been as large as it is made to be in Homeros. Plato too, in the *Politeia*, does not criticize Homeros and Hesiodos because they chose to present their accounts in mythic form, but because he believes the details they contain to be both fallacious and logically inconsistent.⁵⁸ For instance, Plato objects to Homeros' presentation of the gods as being anything other than good and perfect; this is not a criticism of myth in itself, but of Homeros' conception of the gods.⁵⁹

It is for this reason that I disagree with Annas who claims "the fact that popular stories are mostly trivial does not prevent the philosopher from using or inventing a story which is not."⁶⁰ By "popular stories" I assume Annas is referring to Homeros and other popular, non-philosophical forms of mythology. I believe that Plato's criticism of Homeros and Hesiodos in the *Politeia*, in concert with

⁵⁶ See note 48 for examples where this is the case.

⁵⁷ Morgan (1990): 73; Irwin (1992): 73-74; Janaway (1995): 88, 159n.5; Johansen (2004): 66n.25.

⁵⁸ 1.334b, 2.363a7ff., 2.363b-c, 2.364c-d, 2.376e-3.394c, 3.404b-c, 5.466b-c, 5.468e9f., 8.545d-e, 8.547a, 10.595a-608a, 10.612a-b.

⁵⁹ *Politeia* 1.334b, 2.363b-c, 2.376e-3.394c, 3.404b-c, 8.545d-e, 10.595a-608a, 10.612a-b; Annas (1982): 12-13; Nussbaum (1982): 84; Morgan (1990): 57; Janaway (1995): 159; Rutherford (1995): 127, 229-230; Cook (1996): 101; Vlastos (1999b): 56-77; Desjardins (2004): 131.

⁶⁰ Annas (1982a): 121; see also Most (2012): 13-14, who argues similarly that "For no other Greek thinker attacked the traditional myths as violently as Plato did; and yet no other ancient philosopher has inserted so many striking and unforgettable myths into his own works as he did. How is such an apparent contradiction to be explained?" As in the case of Annas, so in the case of Most, I do not think there is really a contradiction here, since Plato is not attacking traditional myths *per se*, but rather the fallacious content he believes they contain, and the effect that these fallacies may have on the behaviour of the more impressionable parts of society. See too Gonzalez (2012): 259.

his own mythopoeia, demonstrates that Plato viewed these “popular stories” as anything but “trivial.” It is precisely because of the ubiquitous nature of these “popular stories” in Ancient Greek society, as well as their use as authorities or precedent, that these “popular stories” present a clear danger to society, in Plato’s view. For instance, Euthyphron in the *Euthyphron* justifies the entirety of his actions through these “popular stories,” not to mention that Sokrates in the *Apologia* blames some of the prejudice shown towards him on his fallacious (in his view) portrayal in the poetry – the popular story – of Aristophanes (*Apologia*, 19b-d). I proffer, therefore, that for Plato the fallacious content of these “popular stories” are anything but “trivial,” rather they are so important that they literally may mean the difference between life and death.⁶¹

In short, if myth in the modern world is believed to be false in both fact and methodology, Plato appears to suggest that *some* myth is false, and this falsity stems from an incorrect understanding of something’s ‘true’ nature, on the part of the author. There is nothing inherently wrong in using myth to present, for example, one’s understanding of the gods, providing that when one removes the poetic licence of myth, the core of one’s understanding retains its truthfulness.⁶² Indeed, this notion forms the basis of Euhemeros’ later attempt to rehabilitate the truthfulness of myth, by removing all poetic licence, in the belief that this would reveal the underlying truth of the myth.⁶³

⁶¹ This is a debate that continues within society to this day. To some, horror films and video games are just forms of fiction and entertainment; to others they supposedly promote violence in young people. To some, the *Da Vinci Code* is simply a piece of popular fiction; to others it is a text that contains falsities about Jesus Christ, and these people fear that some readers may take these falsities as true. Similarly, to some the film *300* or *Gone with the Wind* are merely pieces of historical fiction meant to be taken as entertainment, and not to be taken seriously. For others, on the other hand, the purported historical nature of the fiction lends greater authority to the historical inaccuracies they possess, thereby leaving their audiences with a false impression of historical reality; a false impression that may have serious consequences, e.g. *Gone with the Wind* may be used to propagate the mostly white-supremacist belief in the so-called “Lost Cause of the Confederacy,” whereas *300* may be used to propagate the similarly false belief in the so-called “Clash of Civilizations” between west and east. In all cases, it is not the medium itself that is being criticised, but the content of said medium; similarly, I think Plato is not criticising the medium of myth *per se*, but rather the content of certain myths, which he believes may have a negative effect on particularly impressionable members of society.

⁶² Rosen (1999): xlviii; Sayers (1999): 42; Johansen (2004): 28-29.

⁶³ Although, of course, Euhemeros (BNJ 63 T1, T4b, T4c, T4e, T4f, T4g, T4i, T6a, F2, F3, F6) operates under the assumption that all myths possess an underlying truth (whether that be, for instance, that Zeus was really an ancient human king, rather than a god; hence his supposed ‘atheism’) that has been distorted by poetic licence; whereas Plato argues that for the majority of myths, even when the poetic licence is removed, they

(c) *Myth and truth value*

As argued above, Plato does not criticize the use of myth as a method of didactic discourse, but rather he criticizes those myths he believes possess demonstrable falsities, even after allowing for poetic licence, e.g. the presentation of the gods as being immoral.⁶⁴ Plato does not criticize these myths because they are myths, but because they are false, i.e. they possess a negative truth value.⁶⁵

A myth may become acceptable if one can ensure that its contents possess a positive truth value.

This thesis thus posits that Plato approaches his myths as though they possess positive truth values.⁶⁶ In other words, Plato responds to his criticism of Homeros', and others', myths by presenting exemplar myths demonstrating that it is possible for a myth to retain elements of poetic licence whilst holding a positive truth value. In this way, there is no justification for future individuals to follow Homeros, Hesiodos, etc., and perpetuate the falsities of their myths.⁶⁷

One may ask, however, what of the Platonic notion of the 'noble lie' ('ἀληθῶς ψεῦδος,' *Politeia* 2.382a4, and 'γενναῖόν τι ἐν ψευδομένους,' *Politeia* 3.414b8-c1)?⁶⁸ In the *Nomoi*, for example, the Athenian explicitly makes a connection between the notion of the 'noble lie' and the myths he uses as preludes to the law.⁶⁹ Can a myth be a 'noble lie' and yet retain its positive truth value?⁷⁰ This thesis posits that it is indeed possible for the two concepts to co-exist in a Platonic myth. Consider, for example, the Myth of Er (*Politeia* 10.614b2-621d2):

- (i) There are facets of the myth that according to Plato possess a positive truth value; they do not say anything necessarily incompatible with a Platonic understanding of what is

still present an incorrect understanding of things. Cf. Irwin (1979): 242; Annas (1982): 23; Rutherford (1995): 34.

⁶⁴ *Euthyphron passim.*; *Politeia* 1.334b, 2.363a7ff., 2.363b-c, 2.364c-d, 2.376e-3.394c, 3.404b-c, 5.466b-c, 5.468e9f., 8.545d-e, 8.547a, 10.595a-608a, 10.612a-b.

⁶⁵ Annas (1982a): 121; Collobert (2012): 87.

⁶⁶ Cf. Jackson Knight (1970): 93; Clegg (1977): 43; Rowe (1984): 84n.20, 192; Morgan (1990): 71; Janaway (1995): 159; Rutherford (1995): 309, 311; Cook (1996): 65, 93; Kahn (1996): 67, 317; Sallis (1996): 80; Rice (1998): 12; Bostock (1999): 411; Fine (1999b): 10; Levin (2001): 163-164; Desjardins (2004): 131; Johansen (2004): 29; McCabe (2006): 45; Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez (2012a): 1-2.

⁶⁷ Cf. Cook (1996): 48; Rice (1998): 21; Sayers (1999): 10; Bobonich (2002): 57-58.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Nomoi* 4.719c-420a, 4.722c-723d, 6.772e, 9.870d-e; *Politeia* 2.382a1ff., 3.389b-c, 3.414b-e.

⁶⁹ E.g. *Nomoi* 4.719c-420a, 4.722c-723d, 6.772e, 9.870d-e. See further Bobonich (1999): 373-403.

⁷⁰ Cf. Sayers (1999): 42.

true. For instance, subsequent to Er's apparent death, his soul separates from his body and travels to Hades. Even if one makes an allowance for possible poetic licence, this episode of the myth presents a dualist understanding of the individual, as constituting the amalgamation of both body and soul. This is a particular sentiment that Plato believes he has shown to be true independent of the myth, and through the use of non-mythic, 'rational' discourse, e.g. in the *Phaidon* (63e8-69e5, 78a10-84b8). Plato's belief in the veracity of this idea is further evidenced by his use of it as a basic underlying assumption throughout the dialogues from the *Apologia* to the *Nomoi*.⁷¹

The above is true of other facets of the Myth of Er also, such as his presentation of the punishment that awaits the unjust soul in Hades, and the categorization of the unjust souls as being either 'curable' or 'incurable.' Again, if one considers these notions without any poetic licence, then these conceptions of punishment accord with their non-mythical presentation and discussion in both prior and subsequent dialogues, e.g. the *Gorgias*, the *Protagoras*, and the *Nomoi*. This is the case, also, for Plato's understanding of the role of the judge.⁷² Even in the concluding myth of the *Gorgias*, for example, in which the gods play a more active role, they accord with a Platonic conception of the divine as being both good and perfect; in possession of 'true' knowledge, and seeking to re-establish an unchanging and eternal order and harmony in the universe (523a1-527e7).⁷³

- (ii) On the other hand, there are aspects of the myth that Plato believes possess a self-evident negative truth value.⁷⁴ For example, the existence of Er is, in theory, a fact that one may deduce to be either true or false through a certain degree of investigation. One may investigate whether there ever was an individual named Er, who was the son of a man named Armenios, who came from Pamphylia (10.614b3-4). One may also

⁷¹ Cf. Chapter 1.5; Rice (1998): 88.

⁷² See further Chapters 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.9.

⁷³ See further Irwin (1979): 242.

⁷⁴ Cf. Desjardins (2004): 131; Johansen (2004): 35, 41.

investigate whether it was possible for there to have been a battle in which this Er was a participant, and ascertain whether this Er died in said battle. These aspects of the myth are all things that an individual may demonstrate, with certainty, to be false or true. This is the case for the individual identities of the judges also. One may investigate, and theoretically determine, whether there ever existed an individual called Minos, one called Aiakos, and one Rhadamanthos.

Moreover, in the eschatological myth of the *Gorgias*, Sokrates presents the gods as engaging in conversation, whereas in the *Timaios*, Timaios argues the gods have no need for external appendages such as ears or mouths (33b1-34a7, 40a2-7, cf. 44d3-6). These are aspects of the myth that one may determine to be false – to possess a negative truth value – and as such are to some extent lies, since theoretically Plato recognizes these may be false. Yet, they attain the label of ‘noble lie’ since, despite their falsity, (a) they do not serve to deceive the reader in a malicious manner by endorsing what is false is to be true, thereby promulgating a harmful ignorance in the soul. For example, believing Er to be a real individual does not affect the soul in any particularly harmful manner. (b) Even if one were to remove these falsities the positive truth value of the remaining myth stands. In the case of Homeros, for example, if one were to remove all of the parts of the *Iliad* related to Plato’s criticisms in the *Politeia*, then there is little to nothing left of the epic.⁷⁵

In the above examples, the status of a particular element’s truth value is known, at least in the first instance, by Plato alone – the composer of the myth.⁷⁶ From the perspective of the reader, the truth value of the myth is indeterminate until such time when the reader comes to a decision. Regardless, for the majority of the myth one may determine whether a particular element is either true or false, at least to one’s own self. However, Plato presents certain components of the eschatological myths

⁷⁵ Cf. Cross and Woosley (1964): 288; Morgan (1990): 74; Rice (1998): 56.

⁷⁶ Cf. White (1979): 263-4; Janaway (1995): 159.

as functioning with indeterminate truth values; the only way in which one may determine their truth value with any certainty being death itself.⁷⁷

These components function with a truth value neither positive nor negative, but which Plato suggests one should approach as though they are true.⁷⁸ On the one hand, one should approach them as true as this determination, according to Plato, fits best with the available evidence, and is the most logically consistent.⁷⁹ For example, in the *Menon*, the *Phaidon*, and the *Politeia* (see further Chapters 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6) Plato asks the reader to accept the existence of reincarnation, in the belief that this is most consistent with the theory of recollection, and the existence of knowledge in the mortal realm.⁸⁰

On the other hand, Plato appears to suggest that one should approach these elements as true in a manner akin to Pascal's Wager.⁸¹ In this case, however, rather than being an argument concerning the existence of god, it is an argument concerning the way of life one should lead (i.e. the Sokratic way of life), that uses the existence of the afterlife as a means to effect said outcome (i.e. the adoption of the Sokratic way of life).⁸² I proffer that using Pascal's Wager in this way serves as a useful hypothesis against which one can test the eschatological myths of Plato, in order to learn

⁷⁷ Morgan (1990): 73; Desjardins (2004): 131.

⁷⁸ White (1979): 52; Cook (1996): 111; Sayers (1999): 161-162; Most (2012): 17-19.

⁷⁹ Dixsaut (2012): 28; who argues, in reference to the *Timaios'* cosmogonical account: "A cosmogonic myth is 'true' because the existence of the world corroborates it; a myth about the origin of death is true because man's mortality proves it; and so forth." Ferrari (2012): 70, referring to the *Gorgias* eschatological myth, "at this point, announcing himself [i.e. Sokrates] convinced of the truth of this narrative that he has heard, Sokrates proceeds to 'draw inferences' from it (524b). These inferences are not conclusions so much as they are statements of what is required by the story if it is to make sense. Death, he reasons, must involve the clean separation of the soul from the body; otherwise, Zeus' judges could not judge without prejudice, as the story requires. Furthermore, if the soul is to be judged naked, it must bear judgeable signs that are independent of the body it once wore. Just as the bodies of the recently deceased retain the marks that they bore or acquired in life, argues Sokrates (notice ara, 524d), so too their souls (524b-d)." See also Ferrari (2012): 71, 79-80, 84-85, and Collobert (2012): 97.

⁸⁰ Sayers (1999): 113.

⁸¹ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, S680; cf. Elster (2003): 63-74; Tarrant (2012): 56-59.

⁸² Cf. Annas (1982a): 122, who states that, in the eschatological myths of Plato, "from the *Gorgias* through the *Phaedo* to the *Republic* we are given different kinds of reason for being virtuous in this life." In other words, Annas suggests Plato's eschatological myths possess a protreptic function, exhorting the individual to be virtuous; and to be virtuous, one must follow the way of life Plato proscribes – the Sokratic way of life. Though Annas makes no reference to Pascal's Wager, I do believe that the Wager serves as a useful analytic tool, that more or less comes to the same conclusion – that Plato's eschatological myths endorse the following of the Sokratic way of life. See also, Annas (1982a): 122-125; Pender (2012): 199.

what it might tell us about the attitude towards death Plato believes we should adopt. Plato's reasoning being thus:

- (i) His conception of the afterlife either is or is not; but one cannot determine with certainty which of the two alternatives is correct.
- (ii) Thus, one is forced into playing a game, in which one must endorse a position before one's death, at which point it is too late.
- (iii) Like Pascal, this wager is not optional – one cannot choose not to participate in the game.⁸³
- (iv) If one wagers upon the immortal, believing that Plato's conception of the afterlife is true, and so lives the Socratic way of life, then one will gain the greatest of rewards. If it is not true, then one has lost relatively little save a small amount of bodily pleasure.⁸⁴
- (v) If, on the other hand, one wagers upon the mortal, believing this conception of the afterlife is false, or refuses to participate in the game, then one will suffer a loss comparatively greater than one who wagers on its truthfulness. If this conception of the afterlife proves to be false, then one neither loses nor gains anything; but if it proves to be true, then one loses everything.
- (vi) Probability, or perhaps logic, thus suggests that one should endorse the existence of this conception of the afterlife.
- (vii) Like Pascal, Plato appears to argue that some will continue to wager against the existence of this afterlife, and these individuals should endeavour to convince themselves that it is worthwhile to wager the contrary.⁸⁵

⁸³ See Gonzalez (2012): 262, in reference to the Myth of Er, "another significant and related feature of the myth is the emphasis on choice: souls are not simply sent into a particular form of embodiment and a particular form of life, but are allowed to choose." I think Gonzalez' argument highlights the point that one cannot choose not to participate in the "game"; the soul cannot escape by deciding not to choose, as the soul must eventually choose its next life, at which point it must participate in the "game" whether it likes to or not. See also, Larivée (2012): 235, "Indeed, Socrates' principal goal in relating the myth of Er is the same as in all of the complex philosophical argumentation deployed up to that point: to demonstrate the choice of a certain *bios* is of crucial importance for the becoming of the soul." Cf. Larivée (2012): 238-240.

⁸⁴ Cf. Rice (1998): 109.

Taken as a whole, I proffer that Plato's eschatological myths essentially function as a sort of "Platonic Wager," which is itself a more systematic and codified version of Sokrates' argument in the *Apologia* concerning the existence of an afterlife (40e4-41c7).⁸⁶ Sokrates' position in the *Apologia* is commonly held to be an agnostic view of the afterlife;⁸⁷ however, if we make use of this Platonic Wager, one may interpret Sokrates as participating in the game like all individuals, and wagering on the existence of an afterlife. Since he adopts the position that the afterlife may exist, he thus lives the way of life most in accordance with this conception of the afterlife – the Sokratic way of life. In this way Sokrates is shown by Plato to lose the least, or at least to believe that he is losing the least, and thereby confirm his own position – that the Sokratic way of life is justifiable and worthy of emulation. One should therefore follow Sokrates, adopt this stance towards the wager, and convince oneself of its veracity, and live the Sokratic way of life;⁸⁸ in this way, one will lose the least and gain the most (see further Chapter 1.5).⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Cf. *Gorgias* 526d-527e; *Menon* 86b-c; *Nomoi* 4.719c-420a, 4.722c-723d, 6.772e, 9.870d-e; *Phaidon* 114c-115a, *Politeia* 10.608b-614b.

⁸⁶ Cf. further *Gorgias* 526d-527e.

⁸⁷ Cf. Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 178.

⁸⁸ Cf. Larivée (2009): 88-89, 91, 96-7, 99, 103; and Larivée (2012): 248-249. Indeed, in general Larivée gets very close on several occasions to arguing for the existence of a wager, though they do not quite adopt Pascal's Wager as a useful analytic tool for tying all of these ideas. For example, "Il s'agit en quelque sorte de faire « comme si » dans l'esprit du « noble risque ». Ainsi, si l'âme transmigre [pg 99] vraiment, tel que le récit d'Er le suggère, nous seront prêts, et s'il n'existe rien de tel, nous aurons au moins vécu de la meilleure façon possible" (page 98). Or again in reference to the Myth of Er and reincarnation, "Que se passe-t-il si l'on accepte de jouer le jeu et de faire comme si notre âme avait vraiment transmigré, comme si nous avions vraiment vécu plusieurs vies dans d'autres corps, un autre sexe peut-être, et d'autres conditions?" (page 99). See also Most (2012): 18 who argues that one of eight common characteristics he identifies with regards to Platonic myth is "(6) Platonic myths often have an explicitly asserted psychagogic effect." This further suggests the existence of some kind of protreptic essence to Plato's eschatological myths; see further Most (2012): 21-23, e.g. "Most likely they [the myths] were intended not only to help to deter people who were making the wrong choice in life, but also to attract people who might yet make the right one" (page 23). See also Tarrant (2012): 56-57 who argues "what seems certain is that 'Socrates' is meant to feel that tales of judgement [in the *Gorgias*] do reflect an actual truth, and that the story he offers at the close of the dialogue (regardless of details) does have some point when taken literally, since the story follows immediately after claiming that the greatest evil is to arrive in Hades with a soul infected by a plurality of crimes (522e3-4). The myth is immediately followed by a declaration of trust (524a8-b1), and a reference to 'these logoi.' 'Socrates' comes to various conclusions about the nature of death and the way we should live as a result of it. to ignore this context is to pretend that Plato can be something other [pg 57] than a Platonist." Collobert (2012): 101-102; "A myth like an eschatological myth is protreptic not only in the sense that it delivers the message that we should philosophize, but also in the sense that it invites and provokes us to philosophize. Socrates shows us the way by providing us with a piece of exegesis at the end of the myth or even during its telling" (page 106). See also Collobert (2012): 107, "A myth like the myth of Er is like an incantation; this is why it could save us. It validates the philosopher's choice and introduces the philosophical life as the most rewarding of any life in a highly vivid way." Destrée

(i) *Myths as supplementary addenda to the textual arguments*

In the *Phaidros*, Sokrates proffers the notion that one must tailor one's argument to appeal to the differing psychic natures of one's audience.⁹⁰ To put it another way, when composing an argument,

(2012): 111: "For the aim of Plato [in composing his myths], as some interpreters have rightly noticed, is also, and maybe primarily, protreptic. This argument Destrée continues on page 112: "being part and parcel of such a protreptic enterprise, I therefore submit, Plato's myths, and also 'images,' are to be conceived not only as intellectual tools in a purely intellectual argumentation, but as emotionally loaded, protreptical ways to motivate his audience, mainly through Glaucon, who is the main interlocutor of Sokrates, to adopt a philosophical life, and also (but both things are the two faces of the same coin) to pursue a morally good life." This, I believe, is consistent with the Platonic Wager I am proposing. See also Edmonds III (2012): 166, who argues in reference to the *Gorgias* eschatological myth: "I argue, to the contrary, that the details of the myth help clarify the ways in which Plato tries to prove that Sokrates' way of life really is better than Callicles', not just 'in the end,' after the afterlife judgement, but right now, at any given moment."

⁸⁹ So Reeve (1989): 70, 181 claims that 'Sokrates is willing, then, to obey [the] divine commands and prohibitions [of his *daimonion*] simply on the basis of the elentially established goodness of the gods' (page 70). In light of the Platonic Wager, one may argue that Sokrates accepts the commands of his *daimonion* because he has wagered on the existence of an afterlife (cf. Sallis (1996): 62-63; Beversluis (2000): 366-367). Therefore, he must convince himself of the veracity of his belief; one way in which he is able to do so is to justify further his belief by recourse to his *daimonion*, apparently treated by Sokrates as though a source of divine revelation (cf. Irwin (1979): 248, 250; Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 216n.7, 237, 241, 253; Asmis (1992): 342; Morgan (1992): 232; Kahn (1996): 97; Weiss (1998): 16-17; Strange (1999): 402; Blondell (2002): 39-40, 86). In this way, Sokrates appeals to both the exoteric and the esoteric, in order to justify his belief in an afterlife, and thus completes his *apologia* of the Socratic way of life (see further Cross and Woosley (1964): 288; Nussbaum (1982): 107; Arieti (1991): 242; Kahn (1996): 116; Weiss (1998): 23; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 210; Kraut (2008): 71). Cf. Pascal's Wager; Pascal, as a Catholic, already believes in the existence of God, and attempts to use the Wager to justify his belief in God to those who do not accept revelation and esoteric sources of knowledge. Likewise, Sokrates already believes in an afterlife (cf. Irwin (1979): 243, 248; Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 238; Rice (1998): 88; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 178, 180-181, 253), but he must convince those who do not accept revelation and the esoteric as justifiable evidence of his belief, thereby precipitating his appeal to logic and probability. Sokrates' belief in revelation and the divine nature of his *daimonion* (*Apologia* 31c8ff., 40a-c, 41d; *Euthydemos* 272e; *Euthyphron* 3b; *Phaidros* 242b; *Politeia* 6.496c; *Theaitetos* 150e-151a; cf. *Symposion* 202d-203a) is further supported by Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 106, 106n.100; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 173-174. Sokrates believes his *daimonion* to be divine, and so, in accordance with the nature of the divine, it is good. If the *daimonion* is good, then it always acts in accordance with the good, and so Sokrates believes his *daimonion* is incapable of evil, e.g. deceiving him. Moreover, if the *daimonion* is divine, then, for Sokrates, it must be in possession of 'true' knowledge. In this case, Sokrates feels confident that the *daimonion* is to be trusted as a divine source of true knowledge, and to act otherwise, would be tantamount to rejecting the omniscience and infallibility of the gods, i.e. it would entail acting in an impious manner (Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 245; Vlastos (1999b): 56-77; see *contra* Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 240-241; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 179. As argued above, the *daimonion* may be acceptable for Sokrates (cf. Weis (1998): 19), but not for everyone, and so he must codify the information he receives from his *daimonion* in a manner more acceptable to a sceptical audience (cf. Weiss (1998): 32; Bobonich (2003): 78). For Sokrates, this means the use of mathematics, probability, and logic, i.e. the use of mathematical proofs, in order to reconceptualise the *daimonion* in manner he believes more acceptable to sceptics, and more resistant to refutation. Indeed, even if one were to reject Sokrates' postulate, reconceptualising the *daimonion* in a mathematical proof, forces an individual to examine the postulate, and devise a reasoned refutation of said postulate, rather than just rejecting it out of hand as esoteric nonsense (cf. Fine (1992): 211; Cook (1996): 66; Rice (1998): 30, 66; Beversluis (2000): 5; Blondell (2002): 21; Dorion (2012): 432.

⁹⁰ *Phaidros* 246a-254e, 259e7ff., 271a1ff., 273d2ff., 276a-278b; Nussbaum (1982): 79; Rosen (1999): liiii-lvii; Bobonich (2003): 78; cf. Irwin (1977): 71. See also Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez (2012a): 2, who argue: "If a myth is in some cases more persuasive than a reasoned discourse this apparently would not be the case for an

one must take into account the composition of one's audience. In the case of the Platonic dialogues, each individual approaches them in possession of different information, different conceptual and analytic tools, and different preconceptions and assumptions. For example, does Plato assume his audience to know how to read? Does he believe that some of his audience will hear his work orally? Does he expect his audience to be comprised of philosophers and other intellectuals, or a mixture of specialists and non-specialists?

Sokrates' decision to associate with individuals in the *agora* (*Apologia* 17c7-d1); his philosophical discussion with Menon's slave (*Menon* 81e3-86b5); his association with metics (*Politeia* 1.327b2-3); individuals from *poleis* hostile to Athens (e.g. the Thebans Simmias and Kebes, *Phaidon* 59c1-2); women (e.g. Aspasia, *Menexenos* 235e3-9), and his use of humble occupations and everyday objects as examples (e.g. *Sophistes* 226e1-227c9), suggest the potential for a wider audience than just the educated elite.⁹¹ If such is the case, then Plato must utilize all of the tools at his disposal in order to promote the pursuit of the philosophical life, and the veracity of his arguments. This includes the use

audience of philosophers who place more trust in reason than in imagination and who distrust stories of questionable morality. A case in point is precisely the number of scholars who refuse to take into account the myths in Plato's dialogues."

⁹¹ Cf. the Platonic Wager above, which suggests that all individuals participate in the Wager, since all individuals are in possession of a soul, hence their animateness. See also Rice (1998): 2. Larivée (2009): 94 argues, in reference to the choice of lives in the Myth of Er: "Pour l'instant, je désire me concentrer sur le fait que le mythe d'Er cherche à nous imputer la responsabilité de toutes ces conditions de notre vie généralement considérées comme purement contingentes et totalement (ou partiellement) hors de notre portée. Notre sexe, notre origine sociale, le type de corps qui est le nôtre, nos capacités intellectuelles, la richesse ou la pauvreté, tout cela, le mythe nous invite à le considérer comme le résultat d'une décision ayant été nôtre." In some way, therefore, the choice of lives in the Myth of Er serves to remind audience members that one may find themselves in the body of a slave or a woman now, but this may change in the next life. Conversely, one may be in the body of an elite, male now, but this too is subject to change. See further Larivée (2009): 104, and Larivée (2012): 240, 255. See also Most (2012): 21-24, who argues for example: "we might say that exoteric philosophical writings must compete in the literary market-place not only with other philosophical writings for the attention philosophically trained readers, but also with other literary texts of all sorts for the attention of a philosophically untrained public. But the most important kinds of literary works that could be found at the Greek market-place at that time were drama (tragedy and comedy) and epic poetry (above all Homer and Hesiod), both kinds characterized above all by myth and dialogue. If this was so, then a shrewd author who wanted to make sure that his writings would seem interesting and attractive not only to philosophers but also to non-philosophical readers will have ensured that they prominently displayed the same kinds of textual features that the unprofessional readers expected from the books they set out to buy. Esoteric writings, by contrast, possess a high degree of monopoly within a limited discursive space and can restrict themselves to few addressees without having to worry too much about competitors. In short, exoteric writings are directed to a broader and more heterogeneous audience including non-specialist readers, esoteric ones to a smaller and more homogenous audience comprising fewer readers but better trained ones" (page 21).

of modes of discourse, e.g. myth, that possess a reputation of being in some way ‘irrational’ in comparison with the increasing use of prose by contemporary of intellectuals to delineate the ‘rational’ from the ‘irrational.’

As scholars have noted, the philosophical content of the myths tend to supplement the main argument(s) of a particular dialogue, either through restating the same arguments in a different form, or through combining various arguments in order to show how they relate to one another.⁹² For example, the eschatological myth of the *Gorgias* emphasizes the judgement and punishment of the soul in a manner similar to the main body of the dialogue, which presents the same information albeit in a poetical manner.⁹³ Meanwhile, the Myth of Er combines different arguments of the *Politeia* relating to the nature of the soul, knowledge, and the ideal *polis* into one coherent account, demonstrating the interrelated nature of these positions.⁹⁴ The use of myth thus introduces a level of universality to Plato’s arguments, in the sense that unlike his criticism of Protagoras’ impenetrable texts (cf. *Theaitetos* 152c8-10, 170e4-171c7), his texts are available to all alike who seek to learn like Sokrates in the *agora*. Indeed, what use is the possession of ‘true’ knowledge, if one cannot communicate this knowledge to another, and so persuade the reticent to accept the veracity of the Platonic Wager, and live one’s life accordingly? This is of particular importance, given that Sokrates famously fails to justify the Sokratic way of life to his jurors in the *Apologia*, hence his execution.

(ii) Myths as appeals to the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul

Related to the above consideration of the composition of one’s audience, one should also appeal to the different components of the soul itself. This consideration applies to conceptions of the soul that are either tripartite or bipartite; so long as the reasoning part is a separate distinct part, it does not

⁹² Cf. Rowe (1984): 165; Morgan (1990): 57, 150-151; Janaway (1995): 160; Rutherford (1995): 176, 237, 276n.12; Cook (1996): 3, 51, 65, 69, 108; Rice (1998): 88, 117; Rosen (1999): xlviii; Sayers (1999): 42; Strange (1999): 401-406; Beversluis (2000):5; Morgan (2000); Levin (2001): 92, 92n.31.

⁹³ Irwin (1979): 242, 248, 250; see also Saunder (1973): 233.

⁹⁴ Cf. Irwin (1977): 3; Kraut (1984): 218-228; Irwin (1986): 410-414; Reeve (1989): 103n.44; Johansen (2004): 3. See also the *Kriton*, in which the character of Kriton attempts to provide Sokrates with just such an account of the ideal *polis*, by virtue of an account of Atlantis; though Kriton locates this *polis* in the mythical, distant past.

matter whether there is a separate or combined spirited and appetitive part. For Plato, it should be enough for one to grasp the veracity of his arguments using the reasoning part of the soul alone; however, it is not always the case that individuals use only this part to determine an argument's veracity (*Timaios* 42a3-b1, 42e5-44c2, 69a6-92c9). Accordingly, Plato must present his argument further in a manner that appeals to the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul.⁹⁵ In the eschatological myths, for example, Plato utilizes more emotive language, e.g. in the description of the soul returning from Tartaros in the Meadow ('έν τῷ λεμῶνι,' *Politeia* 10.616b2), or the dragging away of the incurable soul. This allows Plato to appeal to the unreasoning parts of the soul, through describing the effects of living an unjust life in terms of the body, presenting an image of great pain and suffering, unable to satisfy one's desire for respite.

An unconvinced soul, for Plato, is one ruled by the spirited and/or appetitive parts, rather than that of reason, and so in convincing these governing parts of the veracity of one's argument, an individual's soul will be directed towards the performance of the 'correct' course of action, i.e. it functions as a form of habituation.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, if such an individual becomes convinced of an argument's truth and acts accordingly, they will have done so through the direction of the unreasoning parts of the soul, i.e. they will be performing the 'correct' actions but not necessarily with a knowledge of 'why' these actions are correct. In the *Politeia*, it is the duty of the ideal *polis* to effect the greatest amount of virtue for the greatest number of individuals in the community, the attainment of this end being guided by the philosopher-king.⁹⁷ The Athenian further reinforces this sentiment with regards to a civic context in the *Nomoi*,⁹⁸ whilst *Timaios* extrapolates this objective to the cosmic level in reference to the Demiourgos' creation of the universe.⁹⁹ Taking into account these particular sentiments, it suggests a utilization of myth as a means of effecting this particular

⁹⁵ See also Nussbaum (1982): 85; Janaway (1995): 160, 168; Rutherford (1995): 175, 178; Strange (1999): 415; Bobonich (2002): 299, 301; Pender (2012): 203.

⁹⁶ Cf. Nussbaum (1982): 79; Kahn (1996): 68; Rice (1998): 29.

⁹⁷ E.g. *Politeia* 4.427e, 4.433a-e, 6.485a-487e, 7.518d-520d; cf. *Politeia* 7. 514a-520a and Bobonich (2003): 78.

⁹⁸ E.g. *Nomoi* 1.630a-d, 1.631b-632d, 2.653a-c, 3.688a-d, 3.693b, 5.730e-731a, 6.770b-771a, 7.807c-d, 8.835b-c, 12.962c-d, 12.965c-e.

⁹⁹ *Timaios* 28b3ff., 39d7ff.

outcome, through a universal appeal to all parts of the soul, rather than a restrictive appeal to the reasoning part alone.¹⁰⁰

(iii) Myths as reflections of the divine, incorporeal realm

A further criticism commonly levelled at Plato's use of myth, is the general criticism of poetry he tends to express throughout the dialogues, but particularly in the *Politeia*.¹⁰¹ One may reduce Plato's criticisms of the composition of poetry to two basic convictions: (1) the poets fail to embody the truth in their poetry, e.g. they portray the gods as being immoral.¹⁰² (2) The product of the poet – the poetry itself – is an imitation of an imitation, representing reflections of the corporeal world, which itself is an imitation of true reality.¹⁰³ The eschatological myths of Plato, on the other hand, embody what he believes to be true (see (c) myth and truth value above). Moreover, though they continue to function as reflections, removed from an initial true reality, they do not present imitations of the corporeal world but of the incorporeal world. In the *Phaidon*, for example (78a10-84b8) incorporeality is a characteristic belonging only to that which is divine, closer to 'truth,' and more 'real' in nature; and as such, it is a characteristic that belongs to the soul.

Plato's eschatological myths involve the presentation of an image of the incorporeal and truer world intrinsic to the divine soul, and as such, Plato suggests they present a truer image of reality than that of the poets.¹⁰⁴ This is not to say that Plato suggests his accounts are definitive, or true beyond

¹⁰⁰ Cf., for example, the preludes to the laws in *Nomoi* 4.719c-420a, 4.722c-723d, 6.772e, 9.870d-e; and the individual who returns to the cave in the *Politeia* 7.514a-520a. White (1979): 52, 265-266; Morgan (1990): 150-151; Kraut (1992): 6; Rutherford (1995): 127; Cook (1996): 12, 104; Rosen (1999): liii-lvii.

¹⁰¹ *Politeia* 2.376e-3.394c, 10.595a-608a.

¹⁰² 1.334b, 2.363a7ff., 2.363b-c, 2.364c-d, 2.376e-3.394c, 3.404b-c, 5.466b-c, 5.468e9f., 8.545d-e, 8.547a, 10.595a-608a, 10.612a-b.

¹⁰³ E.g. *Politeia* 3.392d1ff., 397a1ff., 6.509d-511c, 10.595a1ff.; *Sophistes* 234a-235c, 265a-268d; *Timaios* 29b1ff.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 106n.100; Reeve (1989): 70; Collobert (2012): 100: "myth consists of linking two types of reality: the visible/sensible and the intelligible/invisible. The link amounts to a transfer by which a sketch of the intelligible is transported into the world of experience. The myth allows us to experience in a specific way the intelligible, that is, to have a sensible access to a representation of the truth. Myth operates as a visible and perceptible expression of the intelligible skhema insofar as the Form is visible in its skhema." Trabattoni (2012): 313, in reference to the myth of the charioteer in the *Phaidros*, argues "so, what urges Plato to make use of the myth (the counter-example of the *Republic* shows that Plato could avail himself of dialectics to achieve the same purpose) is not the psychological theory outlined above but the

doubt, since they are images and retain the nature that belongs to the imitative; but rather, they are truer than the accounts of the poets. The accounts of the poets present:

- (i) an image;
- (ii) this image is of the deceptive corporeal world; itself an image of the incorporeal world, and true reality;¹⁰⁵
- (iii) in order to create this image, the poet relies upon the body – particularly the bodily senses;
- (iv) this reliance on the bodily senses ensures the poets embody a false understanding of things in their image.¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, Plato's eschatological accounts present:

- (i) an image;
- (ii) this image, however, is of the incorporeal world. Though the incorporeal world is also an image of true reality, it is truer than that of the corporeal world, being more akin to true reality in nature.
- (iii) In order to create this image, Plato cannot rely on the body or the bodily senses; rather he must rely upon the soul (and possibly the soul's recollections of its initial state of existence).
- (iv) From a Platonic perspective, the reliance on the soul alone to create this image, theoretically ensures the image emanates from the reasoning part of the soul, and as such, embodies a truer understanding of things than that of the poets.¹⁰⁷

transcendence of the object he seeks to talk about, as well as the fundamentally metaphysical nature of the link which necessarily exists between said object and the human soul." See also Trabattoni (2012): 216; and Gonzalez (2012): 276.

¹⁰⁵ Nehamas (1999): 171-191.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Irwin (1979): 243.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Clegg (1977): 114; Nussbaum (1982): 79; Morgan (1990): 74-75; Janaway (1995): 159; Cook (1996): 91-92; Rice (1998): 69, 109; Bobonich (1999): 373-403; Rosen (1999): 1-2, 29; Johansen (2004): 41, 67; Clark (2010): 175.

(iv) Myth and orality

In reference to the possible function of myth in the Platonic dialogues, the final aspect this thesis shall discuss is the relationship between myth and orality. In the *Phaidros*, Plato famously criticizes the practice of communicating one's arguments through writing, although, of course, this did not stop him from doing so. According to Sokrates, writing down one's argument in effect enshrines it in stone, capturing the argument in a static form, at a specific point in time.¹⁰⁸ It, in effect, transforms whatever is written into changeless knowledge, a status Plato reserves for the Forms alone, regardless of whether it deserves this status or not. Consequently, if one who reads this argument disagrees with it, they are afforded the opportunity to refute it without little to no opposition. In other words, in writing down one's arguments the possibility to engage in effective dialectic is disrupted, as the reciprocal aspect of dialectic is removed, and one essentially participates in a form of self-aggrandisement, since one cannot help but always be correct. The written argument is left 'orphaned',¹⁰⁹ losing its adaptability and being forever at the mercy of the reader.¹¹⁰

Myth, at least in the time of Plato, is usually an oral story passed from person to person, speaker to listener.¹¹¹ It possesses, therefore, both an inherent oral and reciprocal aspect. As the speaker of the myth speaks, the hearer hears. A hearer may show their displeasure at the speaker's words through ridicule and mockery, or their assent through applause and praise. The praise positively reinforces

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *Phaidros* 258d, 274b-275b, 276c-d, 277e-278b. One might argue that an author might issue a revised edition of their text once it has been published, but Plato in the *Phaidros* clearly presents a text as being akin to a painting "ζωγραφή" (275d) once it has been published (*Phaidros*, 275d-276a, cf. 276e-277a); there seems to be no conception of a text being revised and reissued. The only way to defend the "painting" or change one's mind is to produce another text; this is the essential function of a palinode for instance. Moreover, even in the contemporary period, revised editions of a text are usually used as a way of making minor orthographic corrections, and discussing new material unavailable at the time of composition, and this usually takes place in a preface or introduction. Revised editions are not generally used to revise whole arguments or defend one's positions, cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, or altered his philosophical positions after compiling the *Tractatus*, but he did not issue a revised edition, he wrote a different text altogether – the *Philosophical Investigations*, since his argument underwent what he felt was a dramatic alteration, such that it was not the same argument anymore.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *Phaidros* 258d, 274b-275b, 276c-d, 277e-278b.

¹¹⁰ See, for instance, *Nomoi* 6.770b-771a, and the modern notion of originalism, for example, which debates whether the US Constitution, in particular, should or should not be interpreted in light of the original intent of the authors (see e.g. Calabresi (2007)). Kraut (1992): 21; Rosen (1999): xliii.

¹¹¹ Cf. Solon's role in the transmission of Atlantis – *Kritias* 108d; *Timaios* 20d7ff.

the speaker's words, increasing the probability the myth will remain fixed in its present structure, and be passed on to others via the assenting audience. Conversely, the ridicule negatively reinforces the speaker's words, increasing the probability the myth will change and adapt, lest the myth be forgotten completely. In this sense, myth is a form of discourse that preserves elements of the notion of dialectic, which likewise possess an inherent oral and reciprocal aspect.¹¹²

Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez (2012a) argue in their Introduction that "reflection on the uses and role of myth in Platonic thought is indeed essential not only for understanding Plato's conception of philosophy and its methods, but also for understanding more broadly the relation between philosophy and literature, given that myth is in the first place a poetic discourse."¹¹³ I agree with them that myth is primarily a poetic discourse during this period, since our earliest, and most famous examples of myth, are preserved in epic poetry, e.g. the *Iliad*, and we can safely assume that this mythic discourse poetry was performed orally, in a poetic form, long before its being written down. However, Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez appear in their assertion to classify poetic discourse as "literature." I understand literature as possessing an inherent written dimension, and thus I cannot agree that myth is "in the first place" a literary discourse. Though in a literary work, such as the *Theogony*, the author

- (a) makes deliberate decisions regarding composition, style, and structure;
- (b) may present unique versions of myths by combining, or omitting, particular mythic elements in order to create a consistent narrative; and
- (c) may create a "standard" presentation and/or understanding of a myth, by virtue of them having been written down, that may supercede competing oral forms of a myth

it remains true, nonetheless, that the "essence" of these literary presentations of myth stem from pre-existing oral versions. In other words, these literary representations of a particular myth could

¹¹² See LSJ s.v. 'διαλέγω.' Cf. Morgan (1990): 170; Kraut (1992): 21-24, 27; Cook (1996): 3, 3n.6, 4-5, 69; Rice (1998): 69.

¹¹³ Collobert, Destrée, and Gonzalez (2012a): 1.

not have existed without the prior existence of their corresponding oral versions; oral versions that reach the author who commits them to writing via oral transmission. This is why, when talking about myth, I believe myth is “in the first place” an oral discourse, rather than a literary one, and that it is this oral aspect to myth that Plato finds appealing, as discussed below.¹¹⁴

Plato, however, wrote down his myths, which would appear to remove these oral aspects of myth. It is possible, of course, that Plato expected his written myths to be read aloud, thereby preserving the oral and aural elements of myth. Regardless, even if these conversational aspects of myth do not become manifest in a literal sense, the authority contemporary society invested in its oral nature remains.¹¹⁵ A contemporary hearer or reader is likely to have assumed a traditional method of transmission for the myths Plato presents in written form. In this case, that the myths Plato presents in written form were ones he once heard from another individual, who in turn heard them from another, and so on up to a theoretical primordial narrator. There is no indication that a contemporary would have approached the myths as being entirely novel inventions of Plato, though he may have been the first to write down a particular arrangement of a myth.¹¹⁶ This preserves the myth’s ability to appeal to both antiquity and authority.¹¹⁷ It sustains an appeal to antiquity since one may assume the myth’s transmission over a long period; and this long-term transmission allows for an appeal to authority through naming an antique figure one believes to be authoritative as sharing in its transmission, e.g. Solon for the myth of Atlantis.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ See also Most (2012): 16-19, who identifies eight characteristics common to Platonic myths. Among these are: “(2) Platonic myths are probably always recounted by an older *speaker* (my emphasis) to younger listeners”; and “(3) Platonic myths go back to older, explicitly indicated or implied, real or fictional *oral* (my emphasis) sources,” suggesting that the oral nature of myth places at least some role in Plato’s decision to utilize the mythic form. See further Tarrant (2012): 51, “the social dynamics of myth, then, are such that one expects to be able to classify tales told by the old to the young as myths. Myths must travel from generation to generation, and require the storytellers should ordinarily be older than their listeners.”

¹¹⁵ Cf. McCabe (2006): 45.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Ploutarkhos, *Solon*, 32.1-2, and Strabon, *Geographika*, 2.6 which intimate that Plato was the first to record the myth of Atlantis.

¹¹⁷ Rice (1998): 56-57.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Rice (1998): 21; Bobonich (2002): 57-58.

It is not always necessary, however, to name a particular individual authority. For example, if one ascribes to a belief in a past Golden Age when human beings were perfect and dwelt closer to the gods, this may be enough to satisfy both an appeal to authority, through locating a myth's origin in the distant past of the Golden Age human.¹¹⁹ This appears to form a part of the Xenos' account of the myth in the *Politikos*.¹²⁰ Here, the Xenos begins with the assumption that there was once a past Golden Age of Kronos. During this Golden Age, human beings were perfect, knowledgeable, and lived close to the gods.¹²¹ The Xenos suggests that contemporary myths form the remnants of accounts of this past produced by individuals who lived through these events, and transmitted these accounts orally through the generations.¹²² However, these accounts, according to the Xenos, became distorted over time so that some events were artificially dislocated, others were forgotten, and still others were transformed into poetical embellishments.¹²³ The Xenos then suggests that an understanding of these distortions enables one to reconstruct the original 'truer' account, thereby precipitating his myth of the Golden Age of Kronos.¹²⁴

Yet, it is not necessary to assume a Platonic belief in a literal Golden Age of Kronos to derive such an understanding of myth. Several aspects of Platonic psychology, metaphysics, and epistemology, allow one to infer the existence of a similar approach. For instance, Plato posits that the soul is divine, and as such it shares in the characteristics that belong to the divine, e.g. incorporeality,¹²⁵ and establishes the 'true' home of the soul as being nearer to that which is like in nature, i.e. the divine. The *Phaidros* and the *Timaios*, in particular, outline an understanding of the initial incarnation of the soul, i.e. how the soul came to be incarnate in body at all (see further Chapters 3.7 and 3.8). Both dialogues agree that, not only is the soul's 'true' home with the divine, but that prior to incarnation each soul did dwell with the divine; the souls of each individual dwelling with the divine,

¹¹⁹ Cf. Rowe (1984): 192; Cook (1996): 6; Blondell (2002): 40-41, 43.

¹²⁰ *Politikos* 268e-274e.

¹²¹ *Politikos* 268e-274e.

¹²² *Politikos* 268e-274e.

¹²³ *Politikos* 268e-274e.

¹²⁴ *Politikos* 268e-274e.

¹²⁵ Cf. *Phaidon* 78a-84b.

and sharing in divine nature. Given the soul's pre-incarnate existence with the divine, and their capacity to manifest the divine properties of which they partake, the addition of the theory of recollection then allows one to infer the possibility of the soul possessing a level of knowledge akin to that of the divine.¹²⁶

In short, one may understand the Xenos' Golden Age of Kronos as being an analogous representation of the above description. The Golden Age reflects the soul's original, pre-incarnate state of existence – with the divine, perfect, and in the possession of knowledge. As the Golden Age passes, humans no longer dwell near the divine, nor do they retain their former perfection or state of knowledge. Similarly, as the soul 'fall's and becomes incarnate in a mortal, corporeal body, so it no longer dwells near the divine, and loses its prior state of knowledge. The Xenos then posits that contemporary myth reflects an understanding of the past that has become distorted and disconnected over time, resulting in their present tendency towards having a negative truth value.

Myth, in this sense, functions as an oral account of past events passed down through the generations. In light of the notion of the soul's initial incarnation, these myths may be understood as possessing the potential to reflect a 'truer' understanding of things, since their initial narrator inhabits a time closer to the soul's initial incarnation, prior to the negative effects of time on the soul's ability to recollect its pre-incarnate knowledge. The old myths the Xenos refers to may have been the 'recollections' of a philosophically-minded individual who, by virtue of their proximity to the soul's initial incarnation, was able to take advantage of this fact, and recollect a truer understanding of things.¹²⁷

Nevertheless, myth's ability to function in a dialectical matter adapting to meet the differing criticisms of different individuals, at different points in time and space, can lead to different versions,

¹²⁶ See further Chapters 3.7, 3.8, and 3.9; *Phaidon* 78a-84b, and *Theaitetos* 176a-b.

¹²⁷ Rosen (1999):1-3; cf. Kahn (1996): 392.

and distortions of the initial truths they once embodied.¹²⁸ From a Platonic perspective, this situation may have arisen as the criticisms that led to the myth changing did not aim at refining its truth, but at making it more aesthetically pleasing. It must also be said that even if the initial narrator of the myth sought to embody a positive truth value within it, this does not mean that what they embodied is true. It may be that the initial narrator possessed an incorrect understanding and so embodied within the myth a negative truth value.¹²⁹ Hence, Sokrates' rejection of several passages of Homeros and Hesiodos in the *Politeia*, the *Euthyphron*, and other dialogues (see further above). In the *Kratylos*, Sokrates appears to conclude that an examination of names may reveal a thing's true nature, if the initial name-giver themselves possessed a true knowledge of that thing's nature, thereby allowing them to embody a correct understanding in their name for that thing. Similarly, concerning myth, its examination may reveal a true account of what it purports to describe, if the initial narrator themselves possessed a true understanding of what they were describing. One, however, is unable to determine this until one has examined the myth and determined whether it possesses a positive or negative truth value.¹³⁰ In the *Politeia*, Sokrates presents several cases in which he determines the truth value of a particular myth to be negative, and so he suggests their rejection.¹³¹

Plato thus composes his eschatological myths in the belief that he is embodying within them a positive truth value. Truth, he posits, exists external to our everyday reality, and as such it cannot be discovered through empirical methods; through the embodiment of the corporeal like the accounts of the poets. In order to present an understanding of what is true, one must present an image of the incorporeal reality that belongs to truth. What is true is immortal and unchanging, so what was true

¹²⁸ A contemporary of Plato, for example, would not be averse to hearing different, sometimes contradictory, versions of particular myths, e.g. the various contradictory myths surrounding Herakles, which [Apollodoros] (*Bibliothēke* 2.61-180) attempts to manipulate into a unitary whole.

¹²⁹ Cf. *Kratylos* 436b-e. See also Sedley (2003): 98.

¹³⁰ Annas (1982): 20.

¹³¹ For instance, *Politeia* 1.334b, 2.363a7ff., 2.363b-c, 2.364c-d, 2.376e-3.394c, 3.404b-c, 5.466b-c, 5.468e9f., 8.545d-e, 8.547a, 10.595a-608a, 10.612a-b.

in the past, is true in the present, and will be true in the future.¹³² This is not the case for the corporeal world, as Herodotos and other historians demonstrate that what was true in the past no longer holds for the present, and so one cannot extrapolate that they will hold in the future. Plato, therefore, looks to understand the true reality of the present through an examination of its past, and looks to myth, understood to be a collection of oral stories passed through the generations originating in a time closer to the soul's initial incarnation, in order to determine what was in the past, what *is* in the present, and so what will be in the future.¹³³

(D) Parameters

Before relating the plan of this thesis, it is useful to relate what this thesis is not:

- (1) This thesis is not an investigation into the relationship between the Platonic afterlife and Presocratic conceptions of the afterlife, e.g. Pythagoreanism or Empedokles. Nevertheless, at certain points of the thesis, particularly Chapter 3 on reincarnation, a consideration of certain Presocratics will be necessary; namely, Protagoras, Gorgias, and Herakleitos.
- (2) This thesis is not an investigation into the relationship between Platonic notions of the afterlife and mystery cult, e.g. the Eleusinian mysteries, the Dionysian mysteries, or so-called 'Orphism.'¹³⁴
- (3) This thesis is not an investigation into the relationship between the Platonic conception of the afterlife and the poets, e.g. Homeros, Pindaros, or Euripides.
- (4) This thesis is not an investigation into the relationship between Platonic notions of the afterlife and medicine/medical literature.

¹³² Cook (1996): 112; cf. Moravcsik (1992): 32-33.

¹³³ Cf. Rutherford (1995): 172; Sallis (1996): 320; Rice (1998): 51; Johansen (2004): 35, 41.

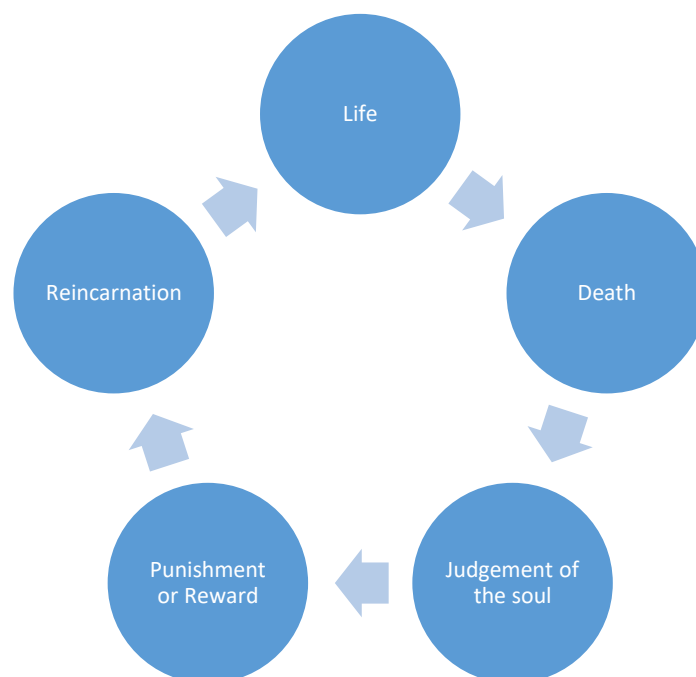
¹³⁴ For such an examination, see for example Bremmer (2002): 90-93; Edmonds III, (2004); and Edmonds III, (2011).

- (5) This thesis does not aim to establish the relationship between Sokratic and Platonic philosophy, or to consider the so-called ‘Sokratic problem.’¹³⁵
- (6) Finally, this thesis is not an examination of the relationship between the Platonic conception of the afterlife and post-Platonic authors, e.g. Aristoteles, the Early Church Fathers, the Neoplatonists, Medieval theologians, or modern philosophers and scientists.

Consequently, this thesis will adhere to the following structure (see each individual chapter for more details on the aims and methods of each respective chapter, as well as the Introduction above):

- (i) Chapter 1: An examination of the Platonic definition of the terms ‘life’ and ‘death.’
- (ii) Chapter 2: An examination of the judgement of the soul, and its subsequent punishment or reward.
- (iii) Chapter 3: An examination of the Platonic conception of reincarnation.
- (iv) Conclusion.

This particular structure was chosen in order to reflect the apparent life-cycle of the individual, as per Plato’s conception of the afterlife (see further the conclusion in Chapter 4):



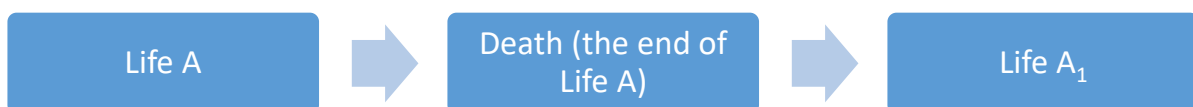
¹³⁵ Cf. Weiss (1998): 3n.1; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 3-4.

Finally, throughout this thesis I have made use of the LOEB English translations, accessed via: cambridge.org. Moreover, I make use of summaries, break-downs, and paraphrases of Plato's arguments, in order to present what I believe Plato's arguments to say, and how I believe he arrived at such arguments. I do not mean for these to be taken as literal translations of Platonic text, but rather as guides to my interpretation of Plato's words.

Chapter 1 – The Definition of “Life” and “Death”

(1.1) Aims

This thesis seeks to consider the notion of ‘the afterlife’ as it pertains to the works of Plato.¹³⁶ When one uses this particular noun – *afterlife* – in modern English, it generally refers to the notion of ‘a life after death’,¹³⁷ of some kind of continued existence associated with the recently deceased entity, whether this be via a heaven and hell or reincarnation. This ‘afterlife,’ however, never denotes the continuation of the same life, in the same manner. Reincarnation, for example, is generally understood to entail the living of another mortal life, distinct from that previous, but still connected to it in some way. Likewise, the concept of heaven and hell consists of a continued existence, though one altogether different to any experienced by a living individual. This continued existence usually represents some notion of ‘true’ existence, and is connected to its prior existence through some metaphysical entity – most commonly the soul. Regardless, such an understanding of the term ‘afterlife’ proffers the following connection between life and death¹³⁸:



The term ‘afterlife’ is a compound noun consisting of the combination of a preposition – ‘after’ – and a noun – ‘life.’ An etymological examination of the term, in itself, reveals a less certain understanding of both ‘life’ and ‘death.’ According to this understanding:

¹³⁶ See the general Introduction for more on the study’s aims, in addition to both Chapters 2.1 and 3.1. For a general and contemporary philosophical study of the afterlife see Paterson (1995).

¹³⁷ Collins English Dictionary (CED) s.v. ‘afterlife.’

¹³⁸ Of course, in the case of reincarnation, the process continues *ad infinitum*, or until one achieves the purported *telos* of that particular system of reincarnation, e.g. Nirvana in the Theravada tradition of Buddhism.

- (a) Death is a finite process that comprises the cessation of life, or at least that which is commonly understood to be life. Life, in this case, must come to an end in order for there to be something after.
- (b) What exists after death, if anything, is uncertain.
- (c) Whatever occurs, this post-death existence cannot be characterized as life, as generally understood.

There is no exact equivalent to the term, ‘afterlife,’ in the Attic Greek of Plato,¹³⁹ but this does not mean that Greek altogether lacks such a term. On the contrary, Ailius Theon, a rhetorician during the 1st century AD, suggests that the orator should be aware of ‘τὰ μετὰ θάνατον’ (*Progymnasmata*, 78.26), i.e. those things that occur after death. Likewise, the fourth century AD church historian, Eusebios, refers in his account on the Theophaneia (*Peri Theophaneias*, 8.55-56) to ‘τῆς μετὰ θάνατον ζωῆς’ – ‘of the life after death.’ This particular phrase – μετὰ θάνατον ζωή – forms the basis of the standard Modern Greek synonym for the English term ‘afterlife.’

Unlike the English term, the Greek embodies a slightly different set of presuppositions regarding the relationship between life and death. Namely, it assumes, from the outset, the certain existence of life after death; whether this constitutes a continuity of one’s previous life through the power of some metaphysical entity (e.g. a soul), or a different mode of life altogether inconceivable to the human being. Although one should note that the English term ‘afterlife’ may also presuppose a ‘life after,’ i.e. a life after that of the present.

Regardless, both terms – ‘afterlife’ and ‘μετὰ θάνατον ζωή’ – rely upon a tacit understanding of the two related terms of ‘life’ and ‘death.’ Whenever an individual utilizes the term ‘afterlife,’ they do so in the knowledge that their understanding of ‘life’ and ‘death’ is understood implicitly by their respondent. This occurs, of course, only if the participants understand the pre-existing ‘rules’ of the

¹³⁹ Perhaps ‘μεταβολή’ (*Apologia*, 40c7), ‘μετοίκησις τῆ ψυχῆ’ (*Apologia*, 40c8), or [in reference to Er’s soul] ‘τὴν ψυχὴν πορεύεσθαι μετὰ πολλῶν, καὶ ἀφικνεῖσθαι σφᾶς εἰς τόπον τινὰ δαιμόνιον,’ (*Politeia*, 614b8-c1) might be the closest approximations of a specific term or phrase corresponding to the modern term ‘afterlife.’

'language game' (Sprachspiele),¹⁴⁰ such that participants are aware of the implicit contextual aspects of a particular terms' usage, e.g. syntax, grammar, idioms, and definitions. For example, two individuals who originate from the same religious context will converse on the afterlife, with an implicit knowledge of the others' basic definition of such terms as 'life' and 'death.' Conversely, were one of these individuals to converse on the afterlife, with an individual originating from an external religious context, it would be necessary for both participants to define their understanding of terms like 'life' and 'death,' since neither individual is aware of the 'rules' of the other's 'language game.'¹⁴¹

This process, however, is not normative, since additional factors, e.g. education, may also affect the extent to which two individuals possess knowledge of the other's 'language game.' For example, an atheist might not possess an implicit knowledge of a Christian's understanding of 'life' and 'death,' but if the atheist and the Christian originate from the same culture, or possess a similar educational background (e.g. one in which religious education and science both form a part of the educational curriculum), then it would be possible for the one to understand the basic tenets of the other's 'language game.' It is possible, therefore, for an individual to acquire knowledge of the 'rules' of this 'language game' through learning.¹⁴²

The above examples demonstrate that one cannot speak of 'the afterlife' without a knowledge of the related notions of 'life' and 'death.' In order to examine the Platonic understanding of the afterlife, one must necessarily possess at least a basic understanding of the way in which Plato utilizes the terms 'life' and 'death.' Plato participated in a 'language game,' whose rules differed from those of our own 'language game,' to varying degrees. Thus, one should not assume the existence of a continuity or similarity between Plato's definition of these terms and contemporary

¹⁴⁰ Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (=Philosophical Investigations), 7, 23-24, 41-42, 44, 49, 55, 57, and 65; *Philosophie der Psychologie – ein Fragment* (=Philosophy of Psychology – a Fragment), 31, and 161.

¹⁴¹ Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (=Philosophical Investigations), 7, 23-24, 41-42, 44, 49, 55, 57, and 65; *Philosophie der Psychologie – ein Fragment* (=Philosophy of Psychology – a Fragment), 31, and 161.

¹⁴² Indeed, this appears to conform to Plato's portrayal of Sokrates in the dialogues – as investigating the 'rules' of the language game in order to derive some essence from them (cf. Wittgenstein who argues there is no essence, *Philosophical Investigations*, 65-66).

definitions of these two terms. Consequently, this chapter concerns itself with two main questions:

(1) 'What is life?' and (2) 'What is death?'

Prior to an examination of the Platonic definition of particular terms, it is useful to consider what

Plato understands the task of the definition to constitute, i.e. what is the purpose of a definition?

(1.2). A consideration of this question serves to establish the conceptual framework underpinning

Plato's definitions of 'life' and 'death.' It seems improbable for an individual to obtain a secure

Platonic definition of 'life' and 'death' without some prior knowledge of what a Platonic definition is,

and what it aims to achieve. This short examination of the Platonic definition, will focus mainly on

the understanding of the correctness of names proffered in the *Kratylos* (1.2.1).¹⁴³ The subject of

definition is not confined to the *Kratylos* alone, for instance the Xenos introduces the notion of

diairesis in the *Sophistes*, but it is the *Kratylos* that acquired the subordinate title of 'On Names' in

antiquity (Diogenes Laertios, 3.58); a reputation that continues to dominate modern scholarship on

the *Kratylos*. For this reason, in addition to that of word constraint, this thesis has chosen to focus on

the *Kratylos* alone.

Subsequent to the above discussion regarding the Platonic definition (1.2), the chapter proceeds to

discuss the questions: 'What is life?' (1.3), and 'What is death?' (1.4). Prior to discussion of these

questions it is important to note the existence of the following suppositions, which Plato appears to

take for granted:

- (i) Plato's definitions of 'life' and 'death' assume the existence of a soul-body dichotomy (roughly equivalent to the modern notion of mind-body dualism). This dichotomy posits that the living being possesses two basic constituents – body and soul. Each of these constituents is an independent entity in its own right, possessing their own unique

¹⁴³ Moreover, since the main subject of this thesis is the Platonic conception of the afterlife, though a discussion of various Platonic methods of definition possesses utility, its relevance is tangential to the main concern of this thesis – to investigate what the afterlife is, rather than Plato's underlying conception of the interrogative, "What?" or "Τί;".

natures and sets of properties, which, when combined, create the amalgam known as the living being.¹⁴⁴

- (ii) This chapter, likewise, assumes a Platonic belief in the existence of the soul, a metaphysical (or otherwise) entity of which no ancient philosopher denied the existence.¹⁴⁵
- (iii) Given the existence of the present thesis, this chapter assumes that Plato posits a positive afterlife – positive in the sense that there is something after ‘death,’ rather than nothing – requiring the continued existence of some aspect of the individual, an aspect understood to lie within the soul.¹⁴⁶

(1.1.2) *A Brief Note on Method*

The above suppositions serve to outline for the reader the parameters governing discussion in this chapter, and in the thesis more generally. These suppositions, however, form only a part of the overarching framework. In order that a reader might possess a complete understanding of these parameters, with regards to the present discussion on life, death, and the soul, it is necessary to provide a brief excursus on method, prior to any discussion, in the hope that this will both ease the reading of the author’s argument, and facilitate exchange between reader and author, on equal terms.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ See Chapter 1.3.1-1.3.11.

¹⁴⁵ See Appendix 1, and Aristoteles, *Peri Psykhes*, *passim* (esp. his doxographical survey of Presocratic views on the soul, 403b20-405b30, and that of Plato’s, 406b26-407b13). Although an individual philosopher may have denied whether the soul is indeed a metaphysical entity, as opposed to a physical entity, none appears to have denied the existence of an entity called ‘a soul,’ that in some way represents the essence of the individual being.

¹⁴⁶ Rice (1998): 88.

¹⁴⁷ For further discussion on the parameters of the thesis as a whole, please see the general introduction, section (D), on the parameters of the present thesis.

Accordingly, this chapter does not seek to provide an in-depth, comprehensive account of Platonic psychology in the manner of Robinson,¹⁴⁸ nor does it seek to enumerate the various properties and faculties of the soul, or demonstrate the myriad usages of the term ‘ψυχή’ (usually translated into English as ‘soul’) by Plato in relation to his contemporaries.¹⁴⁹ Such an undertaking, although useful and worthwhile, does not lie within the purview of this study.¹⁵⁰

Supposition (iii) above (1.1), assumes the existence of a positive afterlife, in which some aspect of the individual, believed to lie within the soul, survives ‘death.’ Such an argument inevitably invites a review of the well-worn issue of psychic immortality – whether the soul is understood to be immortal or not.¹⁵¹ In order to avoid an unnecessary rehashing of old arguments (as old as Aristoteles),¹⁵² the issue of psychic immortality will be dealt with on an ad hoc, case-by-case basis, and only insofar as it pertains to the stated purpose of arriving at Platonic definitions of ‘life’ and ‘death.’¹⁵³ Both questions, moreover, proceed according to the arrangement order outlined in the Introduction, section (B), regarding the Chronology/Arrangement of the Dialogues; and the position established in the Introduction, section (A), regarding this thesis’ position on the debate between developmentalism and unitarianism.

(1.2) Plato and Definition

(1.2.1) The *Kratylos* on Names

¹⁴⁸ T.M. Robinson (1995, 2nd edition), *Plato’s Psychology*. Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press.

¹⁴⁹ See Claus (1981): *passim*.

¹⁵⁰ Although an expanded version of this study would seek to establish the faculties of the soul, and consider in more depth the arguments for psychic immortality.

¹⁵¹ See Robinson (1995).

¹⁵² Aristoteles, *Peri Psykhes*, *passim*., but especially 406b26-407b13.

¹⁵³ Again, an expanded version of this study would seek to consider the issue of psychic immortality in and of itself, as a faculty of the soul.

The *Kratylos* undertakes a discussion of names (ὀνόματος, 383a4-5), with particular emphasis on the issue of ‘the correctness of names’ (ὀρθότητα, 383a4-5).¹⁵⁴ On the one hand, Hermogenes proposes to Sokrates that there is no such thing as the correctness of names, and names are given by convention, i.e. they are relative to the culture that produces them.¹⁵⁵ Kratylos, on the other hand, vehemently protests Hermogenes’ theory, and argues for the existence of a correctness to names, whereby names embody the true nature, or essence, of whatever is being named.¹⁵⁶ In this way, the *Kratylos* serves as a microcosm of a larger debate between the positions of relativism,¹⁵⁷ as expressed by Hermogenes, and a type of Kratylean idealism.

Regarding the issue of the correctness of names, Sokrates refutes both Hermogenes and Kratylos, suggesting a synthesis of the two approaches provides a more accurate understanding of the nature of names, at least as they pertain to the mortal world.¹⁵⁸ Names, it seems, do possess some kind of natural correctness, but the *nomothetai* – the primordial name givers¹⁵⁹ – were not philosophers, and possessed an incomplete understanding of the true nature of reality (i.e. they were ignorant of the Forms). Rather, the names given by the *nomothetai* reflect an understanding of a particular entity’s true nature, which may or may not accord with its ‘actual’ true nature, as determined by the Forms. Nevertheless, although names give the appearance of being arbitrarily determined; the original *nomothetai* always sought to embody the true nature of a particular thing in its name, even if they were not consistently successful in this respect.

In order to resolve the dispute between Hermogenes and Kratylos, Sokrates considers the following hypothesis: ‘what is the purpose of a name?’ (387e1-388a9). The name, according to this hypothesis,

¹⁵⁴ Diogenes Laertios, 3.58.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (=Philosophical Investigations), 7, 23-24, 41-42, 44, 49, 55, 57, and 65; *Philosophie der Psychologie – ein Fragment* (=Philosophy of Psychology – a Fragment), 31, and 161.

¹⁵⁶ For further on the interplay between names and essences in Plato’s *Kratylos*, see Ackrill (1999): 125-142.

¹⁵⁷ Plato, *Kratylos*, 385e4-386d2. Here, Sokrates specifically relates Hermogenes understanding of names to Protagorean relativism; Hermogenes apparently being unaware of this connection.

¹⁵⁸ Baxter (1992): 99. See further 1.3.11 and 1.4.9, wherein Plato appears to draw a distinction between the ‘real’ definitions of the terms ‘life’ and ‘death’ that belong to the immortal and the divine – read soul – and the ‘less real’ definitions of these terms that belong to the mortal being.

¹⁵⁹ Plato, *Kratylos*, 388d12-389a9, 389d4-390a8, 390d4-390e4.

is a created entity, manufactured in order to serve a particular function. Sokrates, in other words, assumes that the name possesses an extrinsic *telos* – the name was created in order to serve a particular function for the human being, and cannot exist independently of the human being. Understanding the function of a name – ‘what is it for’ and what does it do’ – forms one approach of responding to a larger fundamental question, ‘what is a name?’ through relating a lexical definition in which the name is related to a particular working description.¹⁶⁰

What is a name? (387e1-388a9)

Σωκράτης: Καὶ ὃ ἔδει δὴ ὀνομάζειν, ἔδει τῷ ὀνομάζειν;

Ἐρμογένης: Ἔστι ταῦτα.

Σωκράτης: Τί δὲ ἦν ἐκεῖνο ᾧ ἔδει τρυπᾶν;

Ἐρμογένης: Τρύπανον.

Σωκράτης: Τί δὲ ᾧ κερκίζειν;

Ἐρμογένης: Κερκίς.

Σωκράτης: Τί δὲ ᾧ ὀνομάζειν;

Ἐρμογένης: Ὄνομα.

Σωκράτης: Εὖ λέγεις. ὄργανον ἄρα τί ἐστι καὶ τὸ ὄνομα.

Ἐρμογένης: Πάνυ γε.’

(i) A name ‘is’ (387e1-2; cf. 388a8): a name is an entity that exists. If a name did not exist then to speak of such would be meaningless, and any investigation would entail an investigation into nothing.¹⁶¹ Though a name may constitute an entity that exists, this does not necessarily mean that

¹⁶⁰ See Robinson (1950) for a modern philosophical investigation on the issue of definition.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Parmenides’ advice in the *Sophistes*, 237a7-8, 258d1-2 (=Parmenides, fr. 7, ll.1-2): ‘οὐ γὰρ μήποτε τοῦτο δαμῆ, φησὶν, εἶναι μὴ ἔοντα· ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆσδ’ ἀφ’ ὁδοῦ διζήμενος εἶργε νόημα.’ See further Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 50. Although Sokrates and Wittgenstein possess somewhat different

this name corresponds to something that 'is.' For example, in Aristophanes' *Ornithai*, Aristophanes uses the term 'Cloud-cuckoo-land' ('Νεφελοκοκκυγίαν.' Aristophanes, *Ornithes*, 819) to describe the place where the birds live; yet, this does not mean that 'Cloud-cuckoo-land' exists in everyday reality.

(ii) A name is used for the purpose of naming (388a6-8): despite the rather circular reasoning, a name is that which one has need of in order to engage in the act of naming.

(iii) A name is a tool (388a8): as one uses a drill (τρύπανον, 388a3) to drill (τρυπᾶν, 388a2), a weaver's shuttle (κερκίς, 388a5) to weave (κερκίζειν, 388a4), so a name (ὄνομα, 388a7) is used to name (ὀνομάζειν, 388a6). Sokrates appears to suggest that the drill and the weaver's shuttle are both entities with extrinsic final causes; such that the drill is a tool created for the purpose of drilling, and a weaver's shuttle for the purpose of weaving; each serving no other purpose in and of themselves. Since Sokrates understands the name as possessing (a) an extrinsic final cause, and (b) a relationship with its associated expertise analogous to that of the drill and the weaver's shuttle, so it must share in the nature of these objects, and be a tool ('ὄργανον,' 388a8).¹⁶²

interpretations of language, a name, for both, retains its status as an instrument. For further bibliography on Wittgenstein and his approach to names see further W. Child (2011), *Wittgenstein*, Routledge: London and New York.

¹⁶² Sedley (2003): 4. Indeed, among modern discussions concerning the philosophy of language, Hermogenes' suggestion that names are basically decided by convention has proven to be long-standing, outlasting Kratylos' notion of a natural correctness to names. Intrinsic to modern versions of Hermogenes' theory, is the notion that a name, (or language more generally), is a tool like any other developed for the benefit of human beings, and as such it changes and adapts to the differing needs of the individual at specific moments in time. Wagner (2011): 86, discusses the work of German philosopher Rudolf Carnap, arguing that for Carnap 'language is a tool, not a natural phenomenon that one should merely study, or a sacred entity that one should leave untouched,' before quoting Carnap's own words in saying that language 'is an instrument that may be replaced or modified according to our needs, like any other instrument.' Furthermore, Longworth (2011): 106, whilst analyzing the main arguments of British philosopher J.L. Austin, quotes Austin as stating that 'words are our tools' before attesting to the adaptability of language stating that 'our common stock of words embodies all the distinctions men have found worth drawing, and the connexions they have found worth making, in the lifetimes of many generations: these surely are likely to be more sound, since they have stood up to the long test of the survival of the fittest.' The description of language as a tool, continues in one of the twentieth century's most influential philosophers – Ludwig Wittgenstein. In the *Philosophical Investigations* (*Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 2009 4th ed.), 11, Wittgenstein argues that one should 'Denk an die Werkzeuge in einem Werkzeugkasten: es ist da ein Hammer, eine Zange, eine Säge, ein Schraubenzieher, ein Maßstab, ein Leimtopf, Leim, Nägel und Schrauben. – So verschieden die Funktionen dieser Gegenstände, so verschieden sind die Funktionen der Wörter. (Und es gibt Ähnlichkeiten hier und dort).' In this example, Wittgenstein uses the word-tool analogy in order to emphasize the diverse function of different words, but

What is the purpose of a name? (388b1-388c2)

Σωκράτης: Κερκίζοντες δὲ τί δρῶμεν; οὐ τὴν κρόκην καὶ τοὺς στήμονας
συγκεχυμένους διακρίνομεν;

Ἐρμογένης: Ναί.

Σωκράτης: Οὐκοῦν καὶ περὶ τρυπάνου ἕξεις οὕτως εἰπεῖν καὶ περὶ τῶν
ἄλλων;

Ἐρμογένης: Πάνυ γε.

Σωκράτης: Ἔχεις δὴ καὶ περὶ ὀνόματος οὕτως εἰπεῖν; ὀργάνῳ ὄντι τῷ
ὀνόματι ὀνομάζοντες τί ποιοῦμεν;

Ἐρμογένης: Οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.

Σωκράτης: Ἄρ' οὐ διδάσκομέν τι ἀλλήλους καὶ τὰ πράγματα διακρίνομεν ἢ
ἔχει;

Ἐρμογένης Πάνυ γε.

Σωκράτης: Ὅνομα ἄρα διδασκαλικόν τί ἐστὶν ὄργανον καὶ διακριτικόν τῆς
οὐσίας ὥσπερ κερκὶς ὑφάσματος.

Ἐρμογένης: Ναί.

Thus far, Sokrates has established that a name: (i) is something; (ii) is used for the purpose of naming; and (iii) is a tool. Furthermore, the relationship between a name and the process of naming

despite this diversity they share similarities, in this case, the over-arching classification of words as the tools of language. A hammer, pliers, a screwdriver, etc, all belong to the class of 'tools,' and are used by individuals in order to improve the daily circumstances of their lives (e.g. through the construction of houses), thus enabling an individual to develop larger, more complex structures, e.g. a city. Likewise, different words all belong to the same over-arching classification – 'tools of language' – that serve as the tools by which the individual constructs the simplicities of everyday communication, thus enabling the individual to develop, eventually, larger more complex, linguistic structures, e.g. ideas and concepts. See also, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 14, 16, 17, 23, 304, 569, and 570; indeed Wittgenstein concludes in 569 that 'die Sprache ist ein Instrument. Ihre Begriffe sind Instrumente,' and that 'begriffe leiten uns zu Untersuchungen. Sind der Ausdruck unseres Interesses, und lenken unser Interesse' (570). The purpose of these modern philosophical examples, is not to suggest that Plato thought of language in the same way, but rather the notion of names, language, or words serving as tools or instruments for the human being, is a concept Plato introduced in the *Kratylos* that continues to contribute to current philosophical debates regarding the definition and purpose of 'language' (albeit in a form by no means Platonic). Nevertheless, Rijlaarsdam (1978: 85): argues that Plato, and the above philosophers, are not necessarily describing the use of a word in ordinary usage, but rather that word's use in philosophy.

is taken, by Sokrates, to be equivalent to that of the drill and drilling, and the weaver's shuttle and weaving. Henceforth, Sokrates is able to refer to 'the drill' and 'the weaver's shuttle' as analogues of the 'name,' serving to normalize his conception of the name through their utilization as comparative examples, grounding the abstract notion of the name in the larger class of physical objects ('tools' ὄργανα, 388a8) to which the name is assigned.¹⁶³

Here (388b1-c2), Sokrates resumes his discussion with Hermogenes seeking to define further the function of the tool within its respective expertise. First, Sokrates utilizes the example of the weaver's shuttle, identified as being for the purpose of weaving. This expertise – weaving – is subsequently defined further as the division of woof and warp. If,

- (a) The weaver's shuttle is for weaving.
- (b) Weaving is the division of woof and warp.
- (c) Then, the weaver's shuttle is used in order to divide the woof from the warp.

Sokrates presents the weaver's shuttle and weaving, and the drill and drilling as analogous examples of the same phenomenon. This allows the above conclusion to be translated into a normative statement applicable to all tools (388b13-388c1), such that the purpose of all tools, according to Sokrates, is division; in particular, the division of two or more things into their respective natures. As both Sokrates and Hermogenes have come to the agreement that a name is a tool, and all tools are used to divide something from something else, then a name must also serve the same function with regards to naming (388b13-388c1).¹⁶⁴

What is it that a name divides? (388b13-388c2)

¹⁶³ Cf. Baxter (1992): 40-41, 46. Here, Baxter argues that a name is a tool that human beings use in order to help them understand reality, and as such, the names must correspond to reality, and not vice versa. Thus, Sokrates here betrays his conclusion that the names we use do not correctly correspond to reality, since the original name-givers possessed an incorrect understanding of reality.

¹⁶⁴ Baxter (1992): 41.

The main use of the name, according to Sokrates, is as a tool of instruction ('ὄνομα ἄρα διδασκαλικόν τί ἐστὶν ὄργανον,' 388b13). Instruction (διδασκαλικόν, 388b13), in this case, is defined further as the division of being ('διακριτικὸν τῆς οὐσίας' 388c1). So,

- (a) A name is a tool used for naming.
- (b) Naming is the expertise of giving instruction.
- (c) Instruction is the division of being.
- (d) Therefore, a name is a tool used for the division of being.

The name is a tool by which an individual is able to divide things according to their natures, allowing for the individuation of particular entities, and the subsequent separation and categorization of different things into classes and kinds. This comes to form the basis of the method of *diairesis*, outlined in the *Sophistes* (218b5-221c4); whereby the division of entities into their separate natures, constitutes the basis of definition.¹⁶⁵

In the *Kratylos*, 435d4-436e5, Sokrates relates to Kratylos that although a name is a tool of instruction, and is used for the purpose of dividing being, the above theory makes one important assumption: that the *nomothetes* (the name-giver) knew the true nature of things he was naming. If, however, the *nomothetes* possessed an inaccurate understanding of the nature of these things, he will manifest these inaccuracies in the names he gives (436c7-436d4). According to Sokrates, any natural correctness of names becomes distorted as it is filtered through the *nomothetes'* understanding of the true nature of a particular entity. Regardless of whether one believes that names do possess an inherent correctness, one should not assume that all individuals embody the same conception of a particular thing, when using a given name. Consequently, the remainder of the

¹⁶⁵ See further [Plato] *Oroi*, which provides Platonist definitions utilizing the method of diairesis; in addition to the various definitions of the sophist and the statesman proffered by the Xenos in the *Sophistes* and the *Politikos* respectively.

chapter seeks to examine the two terms, 'life' and 'death,' in order to understand how the specific usage of these terms reflects Plato's conception of these two states of existence.¹⁶⁶

(1.3) The Definition of 'Life'

(1.3.1) The *Apologia*

The *Apologia* consists of a stylized defence speech (the eponymous *apologia*), in which Sokrates responds to the accusations made against him by Meletos, Anytos and Lykon.¹⁶⁷ Sokrates is adjudged guilty and is sentenced to death,¹⁶⁸ after he fails to persuade the jury that the 'punishment' he truly deserves is to be fed in the Prytaneion, as would befit an Olympic victor (*Apologia*, 36d1-37a1).¹⁶⁹ He

¹⁶⁶ Baxter (1992): 84); Sedley (2003): 4, 9, 60-61. One must be cautious that one does not assume that what the human being calls 'life' and 'death' corresponds to reality, i.e. to the 'true' understanding of 'life' and 'death' that belongs to the immortal soul.

¹⁶⁷ Meletos: *Euthyphron* 2b9-10, 2d12-3a2, 5a4-9, 5c6, 12e2; *Apologia*, 19a8-c8, 23e3-24a1, 24b6-27b5, 27e3-28b2, 30c8-d1, 31d2, 34a8-b5, 36a7, 37b5-6; Anytos: 23e3-24a1, 25b6, 28a6, 29c1-d1, 30b8-c9, 31a5, 34a8-b1, 36a9-b2, *Menon*, 89e9-95a8; Lykon: 23e3-24a1, 36a9-b2.

¹⁶⁸ *Apologia*, 38c1-39b8.

¹⁶⁹ 'Εἰ οὖν δεῖ με κατὰ τὸ δίκαιον τῆς ἀξίας τιμᾶσθαι, τοῦτου τιμῶμαι, ἐν πρυτανείῳ σιτήσεως,' *Apologia*, 36e1-37a1. Although, it is possible that Sokrates never meant for this particular assessment of a punishment to be taken seriously, but rather to function as "Socratic irony"; juxtaposing the way in which the *polis* treats an Olympic victory – a champion of the body – with the way in which the *polis* treats a champion of the soul – in this case, Sokrates. For example, Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 40, argue that "numerous passages in the *Apology* itself might be taken as evidence that the defence was, at least in some places, not intended to be taken seriously and literally"; this may be one of those places. Rosen (1999): 21, on the other hand posits that Socratic irony may function as a means for Sokrates to protect against a potential charge of *hubris*; though not *hubris* in a legal sense of the term, but in a religious one. Here, *hubris* constitutes a transgression punishable by the gods as a form of impiety, since to be hubristic implies that one – a mortal – believes that they are somehow greater than, or equal to, a god, whether this be in knowledge, strength, chastity, or *aulos*-playing; see for example, Euripides, *Bellerophontes*, and *Hippolytos*; Homer, *Odyssey*, 11.593-600 on Sisyphos; or [Apollodorus], *Bibliothēke*, 1.24 on Apollo and Marsyas. In this way, therefore, Sokrates 'protects' against *hubris* by claiming to possess no secure knowledge, nor even that he is wise. Whilst Rosen's argument possesses merit, and may apply to other passages of the dialogues, it is unlikely to underlie any Socratic irony employed in this particular context. Here, Sokrates claims directly that he should be honoured by the *polis*, and is the equal of any Olympic victor, which would appear to undermine any attempt to guard against claims of *hubris*. It seems, therefore, that the former interpretation is more likely to be the case, since it appears that Sokrates juxtaposes the *polis*' willingness to praise and honour champions of the body, but condemn champions of the soul – i.e. him – to death, as evidence that the people of Athens do not possess any 'true' knowledge; for if they did they would honour the soul above the body, and not the contrary.

then proceeds to reassure his companions, and justify his invitation of death, by explaining how death, contrary to popular opinion, is nothing to fear, and those who believe death is an evil (κακὸν, 40c1) are surely mistaken.¹⁷⁰

Although Sokrates refers to earlier proofs, for example that of his *daimonion*¹⁷¹ or the oracle at Delphi,¹⁷² this section will focus on the latter part of the *Apologia*, wherein Sokrates proffers the existence of two alternative possibilities with regards to the afterlife.¹⁷³ According to Sokrates, either (a) the dead are nothing, and possess no perception of anything whatsoever,¹⁷⁴ or (b) in accordance with that which is said, it [i.e. death] happens to be a transition and migration for the soul, from this place to another.¹⁷⁵

In other words, either death consists of the continuation of the soul, in which case the general conception of life is lacking in some respect, as it fails to take into account the soul's continued existence, subsequent to the cessation of what is generally termed 'life.' Or, death constitutes a terminal end, in which all life ceases to exist, in accordance with the common definition of 'life.'¹⁷⁶

For Sokrates, these two alternatives, alone, can conceivably be thought to exist; as positive proof of which Sokrates turns, once more, to his *daimonion*.

¹⁷⁰ Ἐγὼ ὑμῖν ἐρῶ· κινδυνεύει γάρ μοι τὸ συμβεβηκὸς τοῦτο ἀγαθὸν γεγονέναι, καὶ οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως ἡμεῖς ὀρθῶς ὑπολαμβάνομεν, ὅσοι οἰόμεθα κακὸν εἶναι τὸ τεθνάναι,' *Apologia*, 40b6-c1. See further Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 242 on the use of Sokrates' 'great proof' (*Apologia* 40c1) as a conciliatory measure, intended to both reassure and calm his companions. Although I agree that Sokrates' 'great proof' does possess a conciliatory aspect, this does not necessarily mean that this proof is 'false,' or constructed specifically to serve this purpose. On the contrary, Sokrates' 'great proof' serves foremost to justify the Socratic way of life as befits an *apologia* (defence speech), and the conciliatory nature of Sokrates' 'great proof' results as a secondary by-product of this justification.

¹⁷¹ For example, *Apologia* 31c7-32a3.

¹⁷² For example, *Apologia* 22e6-23c1.

¹⁷³ For a detailed commentary on these passages see further Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 174-181.

¹⁷⁴ Ἡ γὰρ οἷον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν τεθνεῶτα,' *Apologia* 40c5-7.

¹⁷⁵ Ἡ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει οὔσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῇ ψυχῇ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον,' *Apologia* 40c7-9.

¹⁷⁶ In this case, the common definition of an animate being corresponds to the amalgam that results from the combination of body and soul (see further 1.5, and Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 263-264). Consequently, when the body dies the animate being ceases to be, since at least one of its constituent parts ceases to be.

(40b8) καὶ οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως ἡμεῖς ὀρθῶς ὑπολαμβάνομεν,
 (c) ὅσοι οἰόμεθα κακὸν εἶναι τὸ τεθνάναι. μέγα μοι τεκμήριον
 τούτου γέγονεν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐκ ἤναντιώθη ἂν μοι τὸ
 εἰωθὸς σημεῖον, εἰ μὴ τι ἔμελλον ἐγὼ ἀγαθὸν πράξειν.
 Ἐννοήσωμεν δὲ καὶ τῆδε ὡς πολλὴ ἐλπίς ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν
 αὐτὸ εἶναι.

[LOEB translation]: "...and those of us who think that death is a bad thing cannot be making a right assumption. I've had significant proof of this, for there's no way my usual sign would not have opposed me, unless I was about to do something good. And let's look at it this way too: that there is much hope that it is a good thing."

His *daimonion*, which acts as a sign from god (τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον, 40b1 cf. 40c3), has consistently failed to oppose him throughout his trial (οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐκ ἤναντιώθη ἂν μοι, 40c2). This Sokrates' interprets as a 'great proof' (μέγα... τεκμήριον, 40c1) that his actions thus far have been in accordance with the good, and most importantly, of benefit to him (εἰ μὴ τι ἔμελλον ἐγὼ ἀγαθὸν πράξειν, 40c3). His *daimonion* being understood as possessing a divine origin, and as such, it is wholly knowledgeable and perfect as are the gods. Indeed, Sokrates appears to reason thus with regards to his *daimonion*:

- (i) Sokrates has a *daimonion*.
- (ii) This *daimonion* he interprets as constituting a personal communication with the divine (31c-d).¹⁷⁷
- (iii) The divine is perfect, and always acts in accordance with the good (*Symposion* 202a-d).¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ "ὅτι μοι θεῖόν τι καὶ δαιμόνιον γίγνεται" ([LOEB translation: "that something god-inspired and spirit-like comes to me"). Sokrates refers to his *daimonion* as being both (a) divinely sourced, and (b) something that "comes to me," i.e. it is a personal sign that comes to Sokrates.

¹⁷⁸ In this particular passage, Sokrates is relating to his interlocutors a "true" account of Eros. In order to do this, he recounts to them a prior discussion he had with Diotima. Here, Diotima's and Sokrates' discussion runs as follows: "[Diotima:] Καὶ ἦ, Ῥαδίως, ἔφη. λέγε γάρ μοι, οὐ πάντας θεοὺς φῆς εὐδαίμονας εἶναι καὶ καλοὺς; ἢ τολμήσαις ἂν τινα μὴ φάναι καλὸν τε καὶ εὐδαίμονα θεῶν εἶναι; [Sokrates:] Μὰ Δί' οὐκ ἔγωγ', ἔφη. [Diotima:] Εὐδαίμονας δὲ δὴ λέγεις οὐ τοὺς τάγαθὰ καὶ τὰ καλὰ κεκτημένους; [Sokrates:] Πάνυ γε. [Diotima:] Ἀλλὰ μὴν Ἐρωτὰ γε ὠμολόγηκας δι' ἔνδειαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ καλῶν ἐπιθυμεῖν αὐτῶν τούτων ὧν ἐνδεής ἐστιν. [Sokrates:] Ὁμολόγηκα γάρ. [Diotima:] Πῶς ἂν οὖν θεὸς εἴη ὃ γε τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἄμοιρος; [Sokrates:] Οὐδαμῶς, ὡς γ' ἔοικεν." [LOEB Translation:] "[Diotima:] 'Easily,' said she; 'tell me, do you not say that all gods are happy and beautiful? Or will you dare to deny that any god is beautiful and happy?' [Sokrates:] "'Bless me!' I exclaimed, 'not I.' [Diotima:] "'And do you not call those happy who possess good and beautiful things?'"

- (iv) Therefore, the *daimonion*, as a representative of the divine, likewise acts, invariably, in accordance with the good.
- (v) The *daimonion* always intervenes in order to deter Sokrates from his intended course of action.¹⁷⁹
- (vi) Consequently, the *daimonion*'s non-interference with regards to his present trial, suggests to Sokrates his actions must be in accordance with the good.¹⁸⁰

The dead are nothing, and possess no perception of anything whatsoever (40c5-7, 40c9-e4)

(c) δυοῖν γὰρ θάτερόν ἐστιν τὸ τεθνάναι· ἢ γὰρ
οἷον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν
τεθνεῶτα
...
καὶ εἴτε δὴ μηδεμία αἴσθησις ἐστὶν ἀλλ’
(d) οἷον ὕπνος ἐπειδάν τις καθεύδων μηδ’ ὄναρ μηδὲν ὄρα, θαυ-
μάσιον κέρδος ἂν εἴη ὁ θάνατος—ἐγὼ γὰρ ἂν οἶμαι, εἴ τινα
ἐκλεξάμενον δέοι ταύτην τὴν νύκτα ἐν ἧ οὔτω κατέδαρθεν
ὥστε μηδὲ ὄναρ ἰδεῖν, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας
τὰς τοῦ βίου τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ ἀντιπαραθέντα ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ δέοι
σκεψάμενον εἰπεῖν πόσας ἄμεινον καὶ ἥδιον ἡμέρας καὶ

[Sokrates:] “Certainly I do.” [Diotima:] “But you have admitted that Love, from lack of good and beautiful things, desires these very things that he lacks.” [Sokrates:] “Yes, I have.” [Diotima:] “How then can he be a god, if he is devoid of things beautiful and good?” [Sokrates:] “By no means, it appears.” From this passage I believe one can conclude that the divine is conceived of as being perfect, since to be divine *qua* divine, the divine can lack for nothing. I concede that this particular understanding of the divine comes from the *Symposium* and so one could argue that it might not apply to the *Apologia*, however, I believe one can assume the same understanding of the divine in the *Apologia* based on the following (40c): “οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ’ ὅπως οὐκ ἦναντιώθη ἂν μοι τὸ εἰωθὸς σημεῖον, εἰ μὴ τι ἐμελλον ἐγὼ ἀγαθὸν πράξειν” ([LOEB translation:] “for there’s no way my usual sign would not have opposed me, unless I was about to do something good.” In this passage, I believe Sokrates presents his *daimonion* as possesses a knowledge of what-is-good and what-is-bad; what-is-just and what-is-unjust. Thus, I believe it appropriate to conclude that the divine are being described as no-lacking in knowledge, in goodness, and in justness; hence, my assumption that the understanding of the divine as perfect, and always acting in concert with “the good” is applicable to the *Apologia* also.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. *Phaidros* 242b9; and *Symposium* 198a3-199b5, in which Sokrates is spurred to perform palinodes (in the sense of a recantation) in order to atone for the ignorance shown by both himself and his interlocutors.

¹⁸⁰ *Apologia* 31c8ff., 40a-c, 41d; *Euthydemos* 272e; *Euthyphron* 3b; *Phaidros* 242b; *Politeia* 6.496c; *Theaitetos* 150e-151a; cf. *Symposium* 202d-203a.

σκεψάμενον εἰπεῖν πόσας ἄμεινον καὶ ἥδιον ἡμέρας καὶ
νύκτας ταύτης τῆς νυκτὸς βεβίωκεν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ βίῳ, οἶμαι
ἂν μὴ ὅτι ἰδιώτην τινά, ἀλλὰ τὸν μέγαν βασιλέα εὐαριθμή-
(e) τους ἂν εὐρεῖν αὐτὸν ταύτας πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας ἡμέρας καὶ
νύκτας—εἰ οὖν τοιοῦτον ὁ θάνατός ἐστιν, κέρδος ἔγωγε
λέγω· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλείων ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται οὕτω
δὴ εἶναι ἢ μία νύξ.

[LOEB translation]: “You see death is one of two things, for either it’s as if the dead person has no existence, and has no perception of anything

...

And if there’s no sensation, but as in sleep, when someone while sleeping sees nothing, not even in a dream, then death would be a wonderful benefit. For I would think, if someone had to choose that night during which he slept so deeply as not even to dream, and compare all the rest of the days and nights of his life with this night and then after consideration say how many days and nights he had spent during his lifetime better and more pleasantly than this night, I think that not just a private citizen, but the Great King of Persia himself would find these easy to count up when set against the rest of his days and nights. If then this is what death is like, I say it is a benefit, for in that case the whole of time seems to be nothing more than a single night.”

According to this possibility, death consists of a complete lack of perception (μηδεμία αἴσθησις, 40c9), and is like that kind of sleep, when someone sleeping sees nothing, not even a dream (ἀλλ’ οἶον ὕπνος ἐπειδάν τις καθεύδων μηδ’ ὄναρ μηδὲν ὄρα, 40c9-40d1). Death, therefore, would be an advantage (κέρδος, 40e2), as all of time appears (ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται, 40e3) to be no more than a single night (οὐδὲν πλείων... ἢ μία νύξ, 40e3-4). Such a conception of the afterlife relies on the following understanding:

- (i) When life is present, so is the capacity for perception (by “capacity for perception” I mean “the potential for perception”).¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ One can make the valid argument that Sokrates’ description of a dreamless sleep is an example of life without perception, as during a dreamless sleep one does not seem to possess any perception or awareness, and it is obvious that one who has a dreamless sleep is not dead. It is for this reason, I argue that it is the capacity for perception that is necessary for the presence of life. Whilst it is may be that an individual who experiences a dreamless sleep does not necessarily perceive (though thanks to modern science we know this is not true), this individual still possesses the capacity for perception. At any point in the future they may activate their capacity for perception, which usually occurs immediately once they wake-up from the

(ii) When life is absent, so is the capacity for perception.

(iii) Death consists of the absence of the capacity for perception, and thus the absence of life.

Thus, perception (or the capacity for perception) and life are intimately related – life is necessary in order for perception to exist, and the existence of perception is symptomatic of life. For instance, in the second conception of the afterlife proffered by Sokrates (discussed below), the soul (τῆ ψυχῆ, 40c8) retains its ability to perceive upon arrival in Hades (41b5-7). Here, Sokrates appears to present the soul as still being alive in the afterlife: “καὶ ἤδη τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἀθάνατοὶ εἰσιν” – [LOEB translation:] “not to mention that from then on they’re [i.e. the souls of the dead] immortal for the rest of time”).¹⁸² Sokrates’ use of “immortal” to describe the souls in Hades, suggests they do not *die* but *live* for ever. In such a case, life and perception would appear to be intrinsic faculties of the soul (41c).¹⁸³ Only when the soul is present in the individual, is the individual considered alive and capable of perception. When the soul subsequently departs the individual, so does their ability to perceive, and hence live.

Sokrates prefaces the two alternative conceptions of the afterlife with the clause: ‘δυσὸν γὰρ θάτερόν ἐστιν τὸ τεθάναι’ (40c5). The use of ‘θάτερόν’ serves to juxtapose the two possibilities, suggesting they form two binary views of death.¹⁸⁴ Death as an endless, perceptionless sleep is, in

dreamless sleep. This capacity for perception remains up to the point at which that individual dies. At the point of death, the individual loses the capacity for perception, since at no point in the future will perception ever belong to them again; this is why I argue that the capacity for perception is necessary for life, rather than perception *per se*. This receives further support from Sokrates’ second conception of the afterlife, in which he seems to present that the soul as still possessing life, and one of the signs of this life is the capacity for perception, since the soul is described as conversing with other souls in the afterlife (see further below).

¹⁸² Indeed, if the soul retains its ability to perceive in the afterlife, thereby allowing Sokrates to continue to examine the souls of the dead, so the gods, the judges, and other divine entities must retain their ability to perceive in order to examine the soul and possess knowledge.

¹⁸³ *Timaios* 69a6-92c9; see also Robinson (1995).

¹⁸⁴ Brickhouse and Smith (1989: 257) argue that Sokrates does not ‘say that the two alternatives he imagines are the only possible ones...and nothing he says should encourage us to assume that the two alternatives he outlines exhaust, in his view, all the possibilities’ i.e. Sokrates does not establish an either/or dichotomy in the presentation of his two alternate conceptions of the afterlife. However, in prefacing his speech with ‘κινδυνεύει’ (40b7), suggestive of probability (LSJ s.v. ‘κινδυνεύω’) and using the term ‘δυσὸν’ (40c5), Sokrates appears to be establishing an either/or dichotomy between the continued existence of the soul, or its total destruction upon death. It is the creation of this dichotomy that allows the Platonic Wager (see Introduction (C) and Conclusion) to exist; and in such a case, Sokrates, as Brickhouse and Smith argue, is not necessarily saying that these are the only two possibilities concerning the afterlife, but rather we should believe that this

some sense, meant to represent the contrary of an understanding of death whereby the soul continues to exist. The idea of these two conceptions of death being contraries, serves to provide, roughly, both prevalent views concerning death in contemporary society.¹⁸⁵ On the one hand, the idea of death as a perceptionless sleep, conforms to a materialist approach to the soul, whereby the soul is a created entity, subject to death and dissolution in the same way as the body.¹⁸⁶ The idea of death as a transferral from one place to another, on the other hand, presupposes the immateriality of the soul, or at least that the soul possesses particular properties which allow it to survive the death of the body. As a result, the two conceptions of the afterlife Sokrates proffers represent the two most prevalent, and alternative, approaches to the soul: one in which the soul is mortal, and one in which the soul is immortal.

One might argue that the first description of death offers nothing to suggest the existence of a soul at all. Indeed, the application of the principle of Ockham's Razor, would suggest it is unnecessary, in such a situation, to posit the existence of a separate, superfluous entity – the soul – in order to account for the presence of life and perception. Yet such an argument would fail to take into account both the context, and conceptual framework, of these arguments. Today, the notion of the non-existence of the soul is not an unusual one, as advancement in scientific inquiry has led to the proliferation of physicalist theories of mind, in which consciousness arises from purely biological factors, rendering the existence of a soul superfluous.¹⁸⁷ However, at that time, the existence of the soul was a basic underlying assumption, at least in philosophy; and no individual ever argued for the

is the case. In order to secure this belief, the initial either/or dichotomy Sokrates utilizes is not 'either death is like a dreamless sleep, or it is a relocation to another place,' but rather 'either the soul continues to exist after death, or it does not.' Sokrates may not be exhausting every possible afterlife, but he simplifies these alternatives into two categories – those that assume the soul continues to exist, and those that do not; reminiscent of the method of *diagnosis* employed by the Xenos in the *Sophistes* and the *Politikos*. Indeed, Brickhouse and Smith (1989: 258-259) later contradict their prior statement by stating that 'it is typical for Sokrates to view opposites as exhausting the possible outcomes in a given issue.' This contradiction they continue later in Brickhouse and Smith (2004: 178), wherein they argue that 'Sokrates sees no reason to consider any conception of the afterlife other than one that is like an endless sleep, or one in which the souls of good men like Sokrates are given proper rewards for having lives as they should.' As mentioned previously, I believe the reason for this decision on Sokrates' part, is the construction of the Platonic Wager.

¹⁸⁵ See note 165 above.

¹⁸⁶ This is a common juxtaposition utilized by Plato, see for example the Xenos in the *Sophistes* 245e6-248a3.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. J. Bremmer (1983). *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul*: 3.

strict non-existence of the soul. Even the so-called atheists, physicists, and natural scientists did not challenge the belief that the soul exists.¹⁸⁸ What served to differentiate them was their belief that the soul ceased to exist upon the death of the individual.¹⁸⁹ The notion that the soul does not exist is one an ancient philosopher would have considered absurd.¹⁹⁰ Hence, it is likely that the two accounts represent the opposite binary: mortal and immortal; whereby one account posits the death of the soul, and the other the immortality of the soul, rather than the binary: soul *is* and soul *is-not*.¹⁹¹

Death consists of a transition and migration for the soul, from this place to another (40c7-9, 40e4-41c7)

ἢ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει
οὔσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῆ ψυχῆ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς
ἄλλον τόπον.

...

εἰ δ' αὖ οἷον ἀποδημησαί ἐστιν ὁ
θάνατος ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ἐστιν τὰ
λεγόμενα, ὡς ἄρα ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεῶτες, τί μεῖζον
ἀγαθὸν τούτου εἶη ἄν, ὃ ἄνδρες δικασταί; εἰ γάρ τις
41.

(α) ἀφικόμενος εἰς Ἄιδου, ἀπαλλαγείς τουτωνὶ τῶν φασκόντων
δικαστῶν εἶναι, εὐρήσει τοὺς ὡς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, οὔτερ
καὶ λέγονται ἐκεῖ δικάζειν, Μίνως τε καὶ Ῥαδάμανθους καὶ

¹⁸⁸ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 64-65. For example, in Aristophanes' *Nephelai* 245-428, the character of Sokrates does not argue that entities such as the soul or the gods do not exist, but rather that they were (a) knowable entities, and (b) subject to the laws of nature, thereby removing their immortality for instance.

¹⁸⁹ See Appendix 2 – Presocratic views on the soul.

¹⁹⁰ Aristoteles, *Peri Psykhes*, 402a6-7 – the soul is, in a sense the principle of animal life ('ἔστι γὰρ οἷον ἀρχὴ τῶν ζώων').

¹⁹¹ Kahn (1996: 89), for example, argues that the *Apologia* is the dialogue most able to proffer an insight into the philosophy of Sokrates. Given that Sokrates is presented by Plato as being pious: he takes Khairēphon's visit to the Delphic oracle seriously, and visits several craftsmen in order to obey said oracle (*Apologia* 20e6ff.), and possesses a *daimonion* – a personal link to the divine; it is unlikely that he would seriously believe in the non-existence of a divine entity such as the soul. Whether this truly represents the philosophy of Sokrates or not is not the issue; Plato, at least, presents Sokrates as possessing these beliefs, and as such he utilizes the character of Sokrates to direct us towards opting for the continued existence of the soul in the Platonic Wager.

Αἰακὸς καὶ Τριπτόλεμος καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσοι τῶν ἡμιθέων δίκαιοι
ἐγένοντο ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν βίῳ, ἄρα φαύλη ἂν εἴη ἡ ἀποδημία;
ἢ αὖ Ὀρφεῖ συγγενέσθαι καὶ Μουσαίῳ καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ
Ὀμήρῳ ἐπὶ πόσῳ ἂν τις δέξαιτ' ἂν ὑμῶν; ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ
πολλάκις ἐθέλω τεθνάναι εἰ ταῦτ' ἔστιν ἀληθῆ. ἐπεὶ
(b) ἔμοιγε καὶ αὐτῷ θαυμαστὴ ἂν εἴη ἡ διατριβὴ αὐτόθι, ὁπότε
ἐντύχομι Παλαμήδει καὶ Αἴαντι τῷ Τελαμώνος καὶ εἴ τις
ἄλλος τῶν παλαιῶν διὰ κρίσιν ἄδικον τέθνηκεν, ἀντιπαρ-
βάλλοντι τὰ ἑμαυτοῦ πάθη πρὸς τὰ ἐκείνων—ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι,
οὐκ ἂν ἀηδὲς εἴη—καὶ δὴ τὸ μέγιστον, τοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐξετάζοντα
καὶ ἐρευνῶντα ὥσπερ τοὺς ἐνταῦθα διάγειν, τίς αὐτῶν σοφός
ἐστὶν καὶ τίς οἴεται μὲν, ἔστιν δ' οὐ. ἐπὶ πόσῳ δ' ἂν τις,
ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί, δέξαιτο ἐξετάσαι τὸν ἐπὶ Τροίαν ἀγαγόντα
(c) τὴν πολλὴν στρατιάν ἢ Ὀδυσσέα ἢ Σίσυφον ἢ ἄλλους
μυρίους ἂν τις εἴποι καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας, οἷς ἐκεῖ
διαλέγεσθαι καὶ συνεῖναι καὶ ἐξετάζειν ἀμήχανον ἂν εἴη
εὐδαιμονίας; πάντως οὐ δήπου τούτου γε ἔνεκα οἱ ἐκεῖ
ἀποκτείνουσι· τὰ τε γὰρ ἄλλα εὐδαιμονέστεροί εἰσιν οἱ ἐκεῖ
τῶν ἐνθάδε, καὶ ἤδη τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἀθάνατοί εἰσιν, εἴπερ
γε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀληθῆ.

[LOEB translation:] "...or according to what we're told, it's actually a change and removal of the soul from its place here to another place

...

But if death is a kind of migration from here to another place, and what they say is true, that indeed all the dead are there, what greater good could there be than this, members of the jury? For if someone, after getting to Hades, having rid himself of these self-proclaimed jurors, will find real jurors, who also are said to judge cases there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus and others of the demigods who were just in their lives, would this be a bad transfer? Or again, to meet up with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer, what price would any of you pay for that? You see I'm willing to die many times over if this is the truth, since for myself spending time there would be wonderful, when I could meet Palamedes and Aias, Telemon's son, and any others of olden times who died as a result of an unjust judgment, and compare my experiences with theirs—in my view it would not be unpleasant—and what's more, the most important thing, I could go round, examine and inquire, just as I did here, who is wise and who thinks he is, but isn't. What price, members of the jury, would one pay to examine the leader of the great army against Troy, or Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or the countless others one could

mention, men and women, to converse with whom there, and meet and examine them would be utmost happiness? At any rate, I don't suppose they put people to death there for doing this: in fact there are other reasons why they are more blessed there than those down here, not to mention that from then on they're immortal for the rest of time, if, that is, what is said is true."

This account differs from the previous, in several significant respects:

- (i) A transition occurs and the soul (τῆ ψυχῆ) migrates from here to another place (40c8).¹⁹²
- (ii) Some kind of judgement occurs (40e7-41a5), based on some notion of 'true' justice (τοὺς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, 41a2).
- (iii) The soul meets (συγγενέσθαι, 41a5) other souls there in Hades (εἰς Ἅιδου, 41a1).
- (iv) These souls retain both their former renown and memory, i.e. their conception of self (40e7-41c7).¹⁹³
- (v) The soul retains its ability to perceive (40e7-41c7).
- (vi) The souls in Hades are immortal (ἀθάνατοί εἰσιν, 41c6).

This particular conception of the afterlife is discussed further in Chapters 2 and 3. Suffice it for now, these differences serve to enumerate various attributes and faculties Sokrates assigns to the soul – life, memory, motion, and perception.¹⁹⁴ As these attributes appear psychically intrinsic, then regardless of time and space, the soul will always be in possession of these attributes, and the ability to manifest them in some form. Hence, if a living being possesses the ability to perceive, to remember, or to live, it does so by way of their possession of soul. As a result, just as the living being possesses a dual aspect, virtue of its existence as an amalgam of body and soul, so these attributes

¹⁹² 'Μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει οὐσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῆ ψυχῆ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον,' (*Apologia*, 40c7-9).

¹⁹³ In particular, Sokrates distinguishes: Minos (Μίνως, 41a3), Rhadamanthus (Ραδάμανθους, 41a3), Aiakos (Αἰακός, 41a4), Triptolemos (Τριπτόλεμος, 41a4), Orpheus (Ὀρφεΐ, 41a6), Mousaios (Μουσαίω, 41a6), Hesiodos (Ἡσιόδω, 41a6), Homeros (Ὅμηρῳ, 41a7), Palamedes (Παλαμήδει, 41b2), Aias (Αἴας, 41b2), Agamemnon (τὸν ἐπὶ Τροίαν ἀγαγόντα, 41b8), Odysseus (Ὀδυσσεά, 41c1), Sisyphos (Σίσυφον, 41c1). Given the lack of accurate images of these individuals, the large gulf in time between them and Sokrates, and their legendary status, it is likely that in order to recognize such individuals, one requires sense perception (especially sight, hearing, and speech) in order to learn who these individuals are, and the continued possession of memory in order to associate the identified soul with their image, and form a new, more complete discernment of their identity.

¹⁹⁴ See also Robinson (1995).

must be understood in light of this dual aspect. Thus, what the individual considers 'life' is, in actuality, the manifestation of a psychic attribute by way of the mortal body.¹⁹⁵

From the *Apologia*, the following conclusions can be drawn, which serve to ground all subsequent discussion regarding the definition of 'life,' but also that of 'death':

- (a) Sokrates' accounts of the afterlife, demonstrate a dualist understanding of the individual, whereby the individual is an amalgam of two distinct entities – body and soul – each of which possess their own independent natures, and attributes.
- (b) One should, therefore, analyse properties such as 'life,' 'death,' 'memory,' 'perception,' etc., in light of this duality.
- (c) Taking this duality into account, 'life,' according to Sokrates, is an intrinsic faculty of the soul. Soul cannot exist apart from life, and life apart from soul; hence, its apparent immortality.¹⁹⁶ This creates a disconnect between the definition of 'life' as it pertains to everyday, mortal experience, and 'life' as it pertains to a divine, immortal entity. Yet, given the soul's affinity to the divine and the immaterial, this psychic understanding of death should relate most to that understanding of life and death that pertains to true reality.
- (d) On the other hand, what the individual calls 'life,' is analogous to an understanding of life as it pertains to the mortal body. This form of 'life' is made possible only through the presence of soul in the body, which then bestows the 'appearance' of life (or a particular form of life) upon the body, and by extension, the individual.
- (e) As 'life' is not an intrinsic property of the body, it is subject to death. When death occurs, the soul departs from the body, resulting in the appearance of death, since the soul is no longer present to manifest life. This precipitates the body's reversion to its natural state of existence – its 'true' reality – as an inanimate entity.

¹⁹⁵ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 263-264.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. *Phaidon* 70c4-72e1.

(f) Consequently, the two alternative forms of the afterlife presented here in the *Apologia* do not have to be mutually exclusive, if read as referring to the dual aspect of the individual. In this way, the first idea of the afterlife – the perceptionless sleep – represents the afterlife of the body upon the soul’s departure. Here, the body has lost those attributes it once possessed virtue of the soul’s presence, e.g. life and perception, and reassumes its natural state of existence – that of inanimate entity. The soul, on the other hand, continues to possess those attributes intrinsic to it, e.g. ‘life’ and experiences an altogether different afterlife. Just as the body reassumes its natural state of existence, so does the soul, such that ‘death’ from the soul’s perspective involves the resumption and remanifestation of that form of ‘life’ most natural to it.¹⁹⁷

(1.3.2) The *Gorgias*

The *Gorgias*, according to Diogenes Laertios, 3.59-60, deliberates the value of rhetoric, and rhetoric’s relationship with the notion of justice.¹⁹⁸ During the discussion, Sokrates proffers the argument that it is better for one to suffer injustice, than for one to be unjust.¹⁹⁹ As a final

¹⁹⁷ Johansen (2004: 19), and Fine (1999d): 33.

¹⁹⁸ Diogenes Laertios, 3.59-60, records the dialogue as ‘Γοργίας ἢ περὶ ῥητορικῆς, ἀνατρεπτικός,’ or rather this is the double-title given to the dialogue by Thrasyllus (3.56-58), who ‘διπλαῖς τε χρῆται ταῖς ἐπιγραφαῖς καθ’ ἑκάστου τῶν βιβλίων, τῇ μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀνόματος, τῇ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ πράγματος, 3.57-58). This suggests that by the time Thrasyllus came to edit the dialogues, it was commonplace among the scholars of Alexandria to refer to this particular dialogue with the title ‘*Gorgias*,’ after Gorgias; but also ‘*On Rhetoric*,’ after the accepted subject of the dialogue – rhetoric. This dialogue, moreover, was held to be refutative, i.e. rather than being a manual of rhetoric, it was a refutation of rhetoric’s supposed worth. This double-title, and Thrasyllus’ arrangement of the dialogues, is accepted by Diogenes as being definitive, since the only other arrangement of the dialogues he mentions is that of Aristophanes the grammarian, whom he criticizes for ‘εἰς τριλογίας ἔλκουσι τοὺς διαλόγους’ (3.61-62) – for dragging the dialogues into trilogies. Diogenes appears to suggest that Aristophanes unnaturally forced the dialogues into trilogies, thereby affirming his preference for Thrasyllus.

¹⁹⁹ *Gorgias*, 469b-469c: Σωκράτης: Οὕτως, ὡς μέγιστον τῶν κακῶν τυγχάνει ὄν τὸ ἀδικεῖν.

Πῶλος: Ἦ γὰρ τοῦτο μέγιστον; οὐ τὸ ἀδικεῖσθαι μείζον;

Σωκράτης: Ἦκιστά γε.

Πῶλος: Σὺ ἄρα βούλοιο ἂν ἀδικεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ ἀδικεῖν;

Σωκράτης: Βουλοίμην μὲν ἂν ἔγωγε οὐδέτερα· εἰ δ’ ἀναγκαῖον εἴη ἀδικεῖν ἢ ἀδικεῖσθαι, ἐλοίμην ἂν μᾶλλον ἀδικεῖσθαι ἢ ἀδικεῖν. (cf. 479c, 511b-511c, 522c-522e, 527b-527c, 527e).

demonstration of the veracity of this position, Sokrates embarks on an eschatological excursus (*Gorgias*, 522c4-e6).²⁰⁰ This excursus includes a description of what Sokrates believes happens to the soul upon its separation from the body,²⁰¹ with a particular focus on the soul's judgement and its subsequent consequences. For the purposes of this chapter, the account may be divided into three stages:

(1) The first stage (523a1-524a7)

The first stage relates the origins of the contemporary process of psychic judgement, and the consequences of said judgement (in this case, to be sent either to the Isles of the Blessed or Tartaros).²⁰² Sokrates locates these origins in the distant past, more specifically to a law issued during the time of Kronos (“ἦν οὖν νόμος ὁδε περὶ ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ Κρόνου,” 523a5-6). This law is subsequently revised by Zeus (“εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ζεὺς· “Ἄλλ’ ἐγώ,” ἔφη, “παύσω τοῦτο γιγνόμενον. νῦν μὲν γὰρ κακῶς αἱ δίκαι δικάζονται,” i.e. “Then Zeus spoke thus: “But I,” he said, “will put a stop to these proceedings. For now the cases are being judged badly,”” 523c1-3), who rectifies the issues that come to exist in the law, after complaints from Plouton and ‘οἱ ἐπιμεληταὶ οἱ ἐκ μακάρων νήσων’ (“the overseers from the Isles of the Blest,” 523b7-8) of flawed judgements apportioning the wrong destination to the wrong souls (“κακῶς οὖν αἱ δίκαι ἐκρίνοντο,” i.e. “and thus the cases were being judged badly,” 523b6-7). These events are assigned to the distant past, a time closer to the point of creation, but after the age of Kronos (‘καὶ ἔτι νεωστὶ τοῦ Διὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν,’ i.e. “and when Zeus had newly begun his rule,” 523b4-5), wherein the human being has become more

²⁰⁰ ‘Πολλῶν γὰρ ἀδικημάτων γέμοντα τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς Ἄιδου ἀφικέσθαι πάντων ἔσχατον κακῶν ἐστίν. Εἰ δὲ βούλει, σοὶ ἐγώ, ὡς τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχει, ἐθέλω λόγον λέξαι’ (*Gorgias*, 522e).

²⁰¹ Sokrates’ description of the afterlife here presupposes the idea that the individual is a composite being, consisting of the union between one entity – the soul – and another entity – the body. Death, according to this supposition, occurs when these two entities separate from one another, so that they exist, once more, apart from each other, thereby necessitating the termination of the composite entity – the individual. This supposition is one that governs all of the dialogues – the idea that the individual is something other than a composite of body and soul being inconceivable. Indeed, referring to an animate being by the term ‘ἔμψυχος,’ and the inanimate being by ‘ἄψυχος,’ further supports this claim, since ‘ἔμψυχος’ *qua* ‘ἔμψυχος’ indicates an ensouled body, whereas ‘ἄψυχος’ *qua* ‘ἄψυχος’ suggests a body lacking in soul – hence its inanimateness.

²⁰² The terms Sokrates uses being ‘Τάρταρος’ and ‘μακάρων νήσους’: *Gorgias*, 523b-523c, 524a, 526b-526c.

corrupt in nature (as per the Hesiodos, *Erga kai Hemerai*, 106-201). Sokrates' names several of the traditional gods (e.g. “ὁ Ζεὺς καὶ ὁ Ποσειδῶν καὶ ὁ Πλούτων,” i.e. “Zeus, Poseidon, and Plouton,” 523a4), and utilizes them, in particular Kronos and Zeus, as direct causation for the contemporary state of affairs (523c1-2: “εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ζεὺς· “Ἄλλ’ ἐγώ,” ἔφη, “παύσω τοῦτο γιγνόμενον,” i.e. “But I,” he said, “will put a stop to these proceedings”).²⁰³

(2) The second stage (524a8-526d1)

The second stage relates briefly an outline of the afterlife, in light of Zeus' revisions to the 'law of Kronos' elucidated in the previous stage. Here, Sokrates outlines how the judgement of the soul actually occurs, in addition to the divergent fortunes that await the just and unjust soul.²⁰⁴ For instance, Sokrates concludes this part with the following summation:

(526b4) ὅπερ οὖν ἔλεγον, ἐπειδὴν ὁ Ῥαδάμανθους ἐκεῖνος τοιοῦτόν τινα λάβῃ, ἄλλο μὲν περὶ αὐτοῦ οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδέν, οὔθ' ὅστις οὔθ' ὧντινων, ὅτι δὲ πονηρός τις· καὶ τοῦτο κατιδὼν ἀπέπεμψεν εἰς Τάρταρον, ἐπισημνόμενος, ἔάντε ἰάσιμος ἔάντε ἀνίατος δοκῆ εἶναι· ὁ δὲ ἐκεῖσε ἀφικόμενος (c) τὰ προσήκοντα πάσχει. ἐνίστε δ' ἄλλην εἰσιδὼν ὁσίως βεβιωκυῖαν καὶ μετ' ἀληθείας, ἀνδρὸς ἰδιώτου ἢ ἄλλου τινός, μάλιστα μὲν, ἔγωγέ φημι, ὧν Καλλίκλεις, φιλοσόφου τὰ αὐτοῦ πράξαντος καὶ οὐ πολυπραγμονήσαντος ἐν τῷ βίῳ, ἠγάσθη τε καὶ ἐς μακάρων νήσους ἀπέπεμψε. ταῦτα δὲ ταῦτα καὶ ὁ Αἰακός—ἐκάτερος τούτων ῥάβδον ἔχων δικάζει—ὁ δὲ Μίνως ἐπισκοπῶν κάθηται, μόνος ἔχων χρυσοῦν (d) σκῆπτρον.

[LOEB translation:] “So, as I was saying, whenever the judge Rhadamanthus has to deal with such an one, he knows nothing else of him at all, neither who he is nor of what descent, but only that he is a wicked person; and on perceiving this he sends him away to Tartarus, first setting a mark on him to show whether he deems it a curable or an incurable case; and when the man arrives there he suffers what is fitting. Sometimes, when he discerns another soul that has lived a holy life in company with truth, a private man's or any other's—especially, as I claim, Callicles, a philosopher's who has minded his own business and not

²⁰³ In utilizing these gods as the direct causation for contemporary events, Sokrates points to their institution by a divine authority, both good and knowledgeable in nature. Consequently, Sokrates may present the afterlife – which is immaterial, incorporeal, and immortal like the gods – as being part of a perfect and divine cosmic order. Given that the afterlife shares in the immortal and incorporeal nature of the gods, Sokrates may now suggest to his interlocutors that what was true in the past, will be true in the present, and must continue to be true in the future. Were this not the case, then one would be adopting the position that the gods instituted an imperfect and unjust system of disorder and disharmony – a position Sokrates considers to be both impious and incompatible with the nature of the gods (For example, e.g. *Ion passim.*; *Nomoi* 2.659c9ff., 4.719a6ff., 7.817a2ff.; *Politeia* 2.376e-3.394c, 10.595a-608a).

²⁰⁴ For further discussion see Chapter 2.2.

been a busybody in his lifetime—he is struck with admiration and sends it off to the Isles of the Blest. And exactly the same is the procedure of Aeacus: each of these two holds a rod in his hand as he gives judgement; but Minos sits as supervisor, distinguished by the golden sceptre that he holds.”

(3) The final stage (526d2-527e7)

Whereas the first stage dealt with events in the past, and the second stage dealt mostly with events in the future; the final stage (526d2-527e7) deals exclusively with the present. In particular, Sokrates applies the conclusions from the previous two stages in order to exhort one to live a just life, so as to avoid the terrible fate of the unjust soul in Tartaros.²⁰⁵

(527c5) ἐμοὶ οὖν
πειθόμενος ἀκολούθησον ἐνταῦθα, οἷ ἀφικόμενος εὐδαιμονήσεις καὶ ζῶν καὶ τελευτήσας, ὡς ὁ λόγος σημαίνει. καὶ ἕασόν τινά σου καταφρονῆσαι ὡς ἀνοήτου καὶ προπηλακίσει, ἐὰν βούληται, καὶ ναὶ μὰ Δία σύ γε θαρρῶν πατάξει τὴν (d) ἄτιμον ταύτην πληγὴν· οὐδὲν γὰρ δεινὸν πείσει, ἐὰν τῷ ὄντι ᾗς καλὸς κάγαθός, ἀσκῶν ἀρετὴν.

...
(e1) ὡσπερ
οὖν ἡγεμόνι τῷ λόγῳ χρῆσώμεθα τῷ νῦν παραφανέντι, ὃς ἡμῖν σημαίνει ὅτι οὗτος ὁ τρόπος ἄριστος τοῦ βίου, καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν ἀσκοῦντας καὶ ζῆν καὶ τεθνάναι. τούτῳ οὖν ἐπώμεθα, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους παρακαλῶμεν, μὴ ἐκείνω, ᾧ σύ πιστεύων ἐμὲ παρακαλεῖς· ἔστι γὰρ οὐδενὸς ἄξιος ᾧ Καλλίκλεις.

[LOEB translation:] “Take my advice, therefore, and follow me where, if you once arrive, you will be happy both in life and after life’s end, as this account declares. And allow anyone to condemn you as a fool and foully maltreat you if he chooses; yes, by Heaven, and suffer undaunted the shock of that ignominious cuff; for you will come to no harm if you be really a good and upright man, practising virtue.

...
Let us therefore take as our guide the doctrine now disclosed, which indicates to us that this way of life is best—to live and die in the practice alike of justice and of all other virtue. This then let us follow, and to this invite every one else; not that to which you trust yourself and invite me, for it is nothing worth, Kallikles.”

²⁰⁵ This allows Sokrates to conclude that ‘έν τοσούτοις λόγοις τῶν ἄλλων ἐλεγχομένων μόνος οὗτος ἡρεμεῖ ὁ λόγος, ὡς εὐλαβητέον ἐστὶν τὸ ἀδικεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ἀδικεῖσθαι’ (527b), thereby demonstrating the veracity of his prefatory hypothesis that ‘πολλῶν γὰρ ἀδικημάτων γέμοντα τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς Ἄιδου ἀφικέσθαι πάντων ἔσχατον κακῶν ἐστὶν’ (522e).

In stage one, Sokrates identifies the dispensing of false judgements as the cause of the failure of Kronos' law, and the catalyst for Zeus' institution of a new law intended to govern the judgement of the soul henceforth (523c1-d5).²⁰⁶ Sokrates' identifies two underlying causes of these false judgements:

- (i) those being judged possess prior knowledge of the date of their death, and by extension, their judgement, allowing them to prepare (523d5-e1); and
- (ii) both the judges and the individuals remain in possession of their bodies when judgement takes place (523c1-d5, 523e1-2).

In order to prevent human foresight of death – which allows the individual to present false witnesses to their justness (523c1-523d) – Prometheus is sent to remove this knowledge from humankind (523d5-e1).²⁰⁷ The solution Zeus devises for the second cause adds the stipulation that the individual (as well as the judge) must both be dead when judgement takes place. Death strips the soul of the body, which fools the judges by equating the health and beauty of the body with that of the soul (523c1-d5, 523e2-6). Moreover, it strips the soul of association to mortal conventions, such as family, fame, or honour. In so doing, the soul loses the ability to influence the judge through the

²⁰⁶ This raises the question of whether the laws of Kronos failed because the god was deficient, which seems unlikely given Plato's conception of the gods, or because these laws were made specifically to govern the more perfect human beings of the Kronian Age. This, of course, assumes that Hesiod's Ages of Man are, to some extent, accurate in describing the present age as comprising of lesser human beings, thereby necessitating the institution of different laws reflective of the more corrupt, and less perfect nature of the contemporary human being. Indeed, in the later *Nomoi* the Athenian argues that it is not necessary for the just individual to have laws, since the just individual will act consistently in accordance with justice regardless (9.853a1ff, 9.880d-e). If one assumes the humans of the Golden Age are just, then it may be that there were no laws, as such, in the Kronian Age, since they would be superfluous if all the human beings acted in a just manner regardless. This may be why it is necessary for Zeus to institute laws, since human beings are no longer just, and therefore, one cannot assume the contemporary human being will consistently act in accordance with justice, in the absence of laws.

²⁰⁷ Cf. *Politikos*, 268e-274e in which the Xenos argues that the human beings of the Kronian Age possessed knowledge of the date of their death, as time, in this period, ran in reverse to the contemporary age. Consequently, these human beings were 'earth-born,' being born old from the corpses of the dead, and dying young, giving these human beings a rough estimate of the date of their apparent death. Just as Zeus in the *Gorgias* removes from human beings foreknowledge of their death, so the Xenos describes how foreknowledge of one's death disappeared once time came to flow in its present direction. Nonetheless, all human beings continue to possess some foresight of the death, since all know that death must come at some time, though the exact moment of death remains unknown. See also [Aiskhylos], *Prometheus Desmotes*, 247-250, 622-628, 698-699 (cf. *Politikos*, 274c-d).

exercise of fallacious argument; in particular, through the exercise of rhetoric, and rhetorical devices. All that remains for the soul, are those attributes inherent to its nature, which it previously manifested in the individual, upon its coming into union with the body. Given that Sokrates describes the soul as continuing to exist following 'death' (i.e. the dissolution of the individual), so the soul must retain its ability to live. From the perspective of the soul, the consistent presence of life establishes it as an intrinsic psychic attribute, thereby ensuring its immortality.

The individual, on the other hand, possesses a different kind of life; one that is transient. Death for the individual consists of 'οὐδέν ἄλλο ἢ δυοῖν πραγμάτων διάλυσιν, τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ σώματος, ἀπ' ἀλλήλων' (524b2-4). This dissolution (διάλυσιν, 524b3) results in these two constituent parts resuming their original natures – the soul its divine immortality and the body its inanimateness.²⁰⁸ In this strict sense, the individual ceases to be upon death; life for the individual consisting of the soul's ability to manifest its inherent attributes through the body, thus, the absence of soul from body equates to the absence of life for the individual. In this way, life does not strictly 'belong' to the individual, but acts as a time sensitive 'loan' from the soul; one which the soul may 'retract' at any point.

(1.3.3) The *Menon*

If life is an intrinsic property of the soul, and the soul is immortal, then the soul should be capable of inducing life in all bodies, for all time. So, when soul A inhabits body A, this results in the creation of living being A. Given that life is inherent to the soul, and the soul is immortal, i.e. life cannot exist apart from soul, then were soul A to inhabit body B, this too should result in the creation of a living

²⁰⁸ This establishes a divergence between the common understanding of life, which considers death from the perspective of the mortal – whether the individual or the body; and the 'true' understanding of life that relates to the immortal, incorporeal, and immaterial, i.e. to the gods and the soul.

being. The process whereby the soul induces life in a body, subsequent to its separation from another, is more commonly referred to as 'reincarnation,' or 'metempsychosis'.²⁰⁹

Reincarnation is first introduced in the *Menon*, a dialogue in which Sokrates and Menon discuss whether virtue is something that is taught, results from practice, is allocated by nature at birth, or arises in some other way. During their discussion, Sokrates raises the so-called Menon's Paradox, which he appears to respond to with the exposition of the theory of recollection, before attempting to prove the validity of this theory through practical application on a slave of Menon's.²¹⁰ In order to offer the theory of recollection as a viable response to Menon's paradox, it is necessary for Sokrates to establish that souls exist prior to embodiment. This does not necessarily require the existence of reincarnation, since Sokrates need only establish the pre-existence of the soul, but he introduces the notion of reincarnation nonetheless (81a5-81e2).²¹¹

For Sokrates, the veracity of the notion of reincarnation appears never to be in doubt – 'ἀληθῆ, ἔμοιγε δοκεῖν, καὶ καλόν,' 81a8.²¹² Nevertheless, he challenges Menon 'ἀλλὰ σκόπει εἴ σοι δοκοῦσιν ἀληθῆ λέγειν' (81b2-3).²¹³ The inclusion of this challenge serves a twofold purpose: firstly, within the narrative of the dialogue it allows Sokrates to engage in a reasoned discussion with Menon, in order to demonstrate to him the validity, or the logical consistency, of his claim. Secondly, on an extrinsic level, Sokrates and Menon act as surrogates for the author and audience, respectively, thus

²⁰⁹ See further Chapter 3.

²¹⁰ See further Chapter 3.3.

²¹¹ The issue of the soul's pre-existence was acknowledged by the earlier theory of reincarnation as suggested by the Pythagoreans (KRS 260, 261, 262 (=DK36B2; 15), 263 (=DK 14, 1), 281 (=DK 58C2), 282 (=DK 58C2), 283 (=DK 58C1), 284) and Empedokles (KRS 399, 400 (=DK 1B18), 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410). Plato's introduction of his own understanding of reincarnation suggests his rejection of these earlier elucidations of reincarnation.

²¹² Indeed, the Platonic Wager necessitates that one must believe this formulation of the afterlife to be true; even if one has doubts, one must convince oneself of its veracity. Cf. *Menon* 86b6-c2 wherein Sokrates tells Menon that one must believe this (i.e. recollection and reincarnation) is so, in order that one should not cease to search for the truth.

²¹³ This accords with the Platonic Wager that compels each individual to participate, and convince themselves of the veracity of life after death. In this scenario Menon's debater's argument acts as an attempt to evade playing the game, but Sokrates' challenge forces Menon to participate and convince himself of its truthfulness; cf. *Apologia* 38a5-6 – the unexamined life is not worth living.

affording Plato the same opportunity for explanation and examination with regards to his audience.²¹⁴

For the purposes of this chapter, this examination of reincarnation can be divided into three parts, of which the first part is considered below: (1) the first part (81a10-b7) consists of a synthesis of what Sokrates has heard from the priests, priestesses, Pindaros, and ἄλλοι πολλοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ὅσοι θεῖοι εἰσιν’ (“and many another poets of heavenly gifts,” 81b1-2). (2) The second part (81b7-c3) utilizes a Pindaric fragment in order to supplement the interpretation given in the first part, in particular the addition of a moral element to reincarnation. (3) The final part (81c4-d2) applies the conclusions drawn above in order to show the role reincarnation plays within the context of recollection, before demonstrating recollection on Menon’s slave (82a5-86b5).²¹⁵

The First Part (81a10-b7)

(81a10) ΣΩ. Οἱ μὲν λέγοντές εἰσι τῶν ἱερέων τε καὶ τῶν ἱερειῶν ὅσοις μεμέληκε περὶ ὧν μεταχειρίζονται λόγον οἷοις τ’ εἶναι (b) διδόναι· λέγει δὲ καὶ Πίνδαρος καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ὅσοι θεῖοι εἰσιν. ἃ δὲ λέγουσιν, ταυτί ἐστιν· ἀλλὰ σκόπει εἴ σοι δοκοῦσιν ἀληθῆ λέγειν. (1) φασὶ γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι ἀθάνατον, (2) καὶ τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν—ὃ δὲ ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι— (3) τοτὲ δὲ πάλιν γίνεσθαι, (4) ἀπόλλυσθαι δ’ οὐδέποτε· (5) δεῖν δὲ διὰ ταῦτα ὡς ὀσιώτατα διαβιῶναι τὸν βίον·

[LOEB translation:] “Soc.: They were certain priests and priestesses who have studied so as to be able to give a reasoned account of their ministry; and Pindar also and many another poet of heavenly gifts. As to their words, they are these: mark now, if you judge them to be true. They say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time comes to an end, which is called dying, and at another is born again, but never perishes. Consequently one ought to live all one’s life in the utmost holiness.”

I believe the first part, which is of interest for this chapter, may be organised thus:

- (1) The human soul is immortal (τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι ἀθάνατον, 81b3-4).

²¹⁴ Sharples (1985): 144.

²¹⁵ See further Chapter 3.3.

- (2) At times it comes to an end, which they call dying (καὶ τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν—ὃ δὴ ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι, 81b4-5).²¹⁶
- (3) At other times it is reborn – or born again (τοτὲ δὲ πάλιν γίνεσθαι, 81b5).
- (4) But it is never destroyed (ἀπόλλυσθαι δ’ οὐδέποτε, 81b5-6).
- (5) Therefore, one must live one’s life as piously as possible (δεῖν δὴ διὰ ταῦτα ὡς ὀσιώτατα διαβιῶναι τὸν βίον, 81b6-7).

From this account of reincarnation, it is possible to conclude that the human being participates in ‘life’ through the presence of the soul alone, since Sokrates states that “at times it comes to an end, which they call dying (καὶ τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν—ὃ δὴ ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι, 81b4-5.” What can “it” be other than the human being, since Sokrates has just said that the soul of the human being is immortal (81b3-4), and so cannot die; whereas we know, from human experience, that the human being most certainly does. Thus, only through the presence of soul in the body can a human being participate in ‘life.’ Prior to the soul’s presence in the body, the body is capable of exhibiting only that nature inherent to it, i.e. inanimateness. Life, on the other hand, cannot be separated from the soul, thereby bestowing immortality upon this entity. The soul, in this way, is freed of the finiteness of death, such that wherever the soul may be so there will be life; thus, when the soul enters any inanimate body, the ‘life’ that is inherent to the soul, manifests itself in the body also, and creates a living being. What a human being understands ‘life’ to be is that of mortal life, i.e. that life exhibited by soul’s presence in a formerly inanimate body.

‘True’ life, it seems, belongs to the soul alone, such that the death of the individual does not constitute the end of its life, but rather the cessation of one particular form of existence (that of mortal, corporeal existence), and the resumption of that kind of life inherent to the soul (i.e. that of the immortal and incorporeal).²¹⁸ This establishes the soul as being the ‘source’ of life within the corporeal and physical universe, such that all entities considered to be alive, whether human,

²¹⁶ Cf. *Phaidros* 246a: ‘ἔξ ἀνάγκης ἀγένητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ψυχὴ ἂν εἴη.’

²¹⁸ Miller Jr (2006): 280-286.

animal, or plant, must possess soul.²¹⁹ The further possibility arises that the kind of life experienced by the mortal being is not ‘true’ life but merely the semblance of life (a reflection of the ‘true’ life that belongs to the soul), since the soul continues to experience life apart from the body and the individual, but neither the individual nor the body, is capable of experiencing life apart from the soul.²²⁰

(1.3.4) The *Euthydemos*

(302a) Κάγω (ἤδη γὰρ ὅτι ἐξ αὐτῶν καλόν τι ἀνακύψοιτο τῶν ἐρωτημάτων, καὶ ἅμα βουλόμενος ὅτι τάχιστ’ ἀκοῦσαι)
 Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφην, οὕτως ἔχει· τὰ τοιαῦτά ἐστιν μόνα ἐμά. — Τί δέ; ζῶα, ἔφη, οὐ ταῦτα καλεῖς ἃ ἂν ψυχὴν ἔχη;
 (b) — Ναί, ἔφην. — Ὅμολογεῖς οὖν τῶν ζώων ταῦτα μόνα εἶναι σά, περὶ ἃ ἂν σοι ἐξουσία ἦ πάντα ταῦτα ποιεῖν ἃ νυνδὴ ἐγὼ ἔλεγον; — Ὅμολογῶ.

[LOEB translation:] “Hereupon, since I knew that some brilliant result was sure to bob up from the mere turn of the questions, and as I also wanted to hear it as quickly as possible, I said: It is precisely as you say; only such things as mine. Well now, he went on; you call those things animals which have life? Yes, I said. And you admit that only those animals are yours which you are at liberty to deal with in those various ways that I mentioned just now? I admit that.”

The *Euthydemos* presents an understanding of ‘life’ from the point of view of the mortal, animate being, effectively equating life with the soul, such that ‘life equates to the soul.’²²¹ This conclusion appears predicated on the observation that all living beings, everything that is animate (ἔμψυχον),

²¹⁹ E.g. Aristoteles, *Peri Psykhes*, 412a-413a.

²²⁰ If one looks forward to the conception of true reality as being the Forms (e.g. *Phaidon* 78a-84b), i.e. the immaterial, incorporeal, and changeless, then the kind of life that belongs to the soul is more akin to this true reality, than that life that belongs to the human being. Irwin (1979): 244.

²²¹ It is not entirely clear at this point whether the soul exactly equals life, such that the soul *is* Life, as maybe the later *Phaidon* suggests (cf. 70c4-72e1), or whether life and the soul are two separate entities, but two separate entities that may appear only in conjunction with one another (cf. Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8). In this case, wherever there is soul there is life, and wherever there is life there is soul; though they may be separate entities, they act, for all intents and purposes, as though they are the same. A helpful comparison may be the common conception of the relationship between water and life, which posits that wherever there is water there is life, and wherever there is life there is water, though the two are separate entities.

possess soul, whereas all that is contrary (i.e. inanimate, ἄψυχον) differs in one respect alone – the absence of soul; life being inseparable from soul.²²² Accordingly, Euthydemus suggests a definition of the living being predicated on the presence of soul: ‘ζῶα οὐ ταῦτα καλεῖς ἃ ἂν ψυχὴν ἔχῃ;’ (“you call those things animals which have life?” Indeed, the LOEB translator appears to equate soul, ψυχὴν, with life, using the two interchangeably) to which Sokrates responds in the affirmative, ‘ναί’ (“yes,” 302a8-b1). This establishes a firm distinction between those entities that do not possess soul – the inanimate, ἄψυχον – and those that do possess soul – the animate, ἔμψυχον.²²³

Nonetheless, although an entity that does not possess a soul, e.g. a rock, is considered inanimate, or not-alive, it still participates in being in some way, since it evidently exists – the rock may not be alive, but it exists. Thus, although the presence of soul appears to be the source of life in mortal beings, the presence of soul does not determine whether a particular entity participates in existence – in being. Returning to the example of the human being, although the body ceases to be animate upon death, it still participates in being, as it continues to exist:

- (a) A body *per se* is inanimate;
- (b) A soul is animate.
- (c) When soul inhabits body; body becomes animate.
- (d) This animate body is known as a living being.
- (e) Since living beings exist, then so soul and body exists.

²²² This of course may be a supposition arrived at through an etymological examination of the terms ‘ἔμψυχον’ and ‘ἄψυχον’ in themselves. Yet, as Sokrates argues in the *Kratylos* (see Chapter 1.2) an etymological examination of these terms can only tell us what the original namegiver had in mind when giving these particular names, namely that all bodies with soul are animate (alive and capable of self-motion), and all bodies without soul are inanimate (dead and incapable of self-motion).

²²³ The definition of the animate mortal being as being that body which possesses soul is reinforced further in 302e, wherein Euthydemus and Sokrates reiterate the definition of a living being as something that possesses soul (ὡμολόγηκας γὰρ ὅσα ψυχὴν ἔχει ζῶα εἶναι). In this particular case, Euthydemus attempts to use this definition in order to trick Sokrates into admitting the impious notion that one has the right to treat the gods as one would any other living creature, as they too must possess soul if they are to be considered alive, thus enumerating them amongst the same class of ‘living beings’ as animals and slaves (302e-303a). Although Sokrates does not succumb to Euthydemus’ eristic, he nevertheless admits that the gods do number amongst living beings, i.e. ζῶα (302e), as they do indeed possess soul. Even the gods, therefore, are alive virtue of their possession of soul. Cf. *Phaidros* 246b-246e people think a soul must possess a body to be considered alive; hence the belief that the gods must possess a body.

- (f) When soul departs body; body becomes inanimate.
- (g) The departure of the soul from an animate body is known as death.
- (h) Since both entities existed prior to this union, and continue to exist subsequent to this union, existence (or being) is a property of both body and soul.²²⁴
- (i) Animation, on the other hand, belonged only to the soul prior to this union, and so, according to Sokrates, only the soul will continue to possess this property subsequent to this union.

(1.3.5) The *Phaidon*

In the *Phaidon*, Sokrates returns to a consideration of 'life' from the perspective of the soul, re-employing the notion of reincarnation from the *Menon* (1.3.3), but also introducing a new argument – the Cyclical Argument – as a further proof of both reincarnation and psychic immortality. This reaffirms the triangular relationship, established in the *Menon*,²²⁵ between psychic immortality, recollection, and reincarnation; each component functioning both to substantiate and advocate for the existence of the other.²²⁶

²²⁴ Indeed, even when the body has decomposed back into its constituent elements, it is not entirely clear whether Plato conceives of these elements as decomposing further, *ad infinitum*, until they too cease to exist. For instance, the atomists (and later the Epikoureans), would argue that the body decomposes up to that point in which it reaches some component that can no longer be dissolved (in this specific case, the 'atom'). Cf. Leukippos: KRS 555 (=DK 67A6), 557 (=DK 67A14), 558 (=DK 67A13), 584 (=DK 67A14); Demokritos: KRS 556 (=DK 68A37), 561 (=DK 68A43), 583 (=DK 68A37); Epikoureanism: IG I-2.40-41, I-3.116, I-14.18, I-15.18, 22-25, 46-48, I-17.69, I-28, I-29, I-31, I-77, I-84, I-85, I-86.

²²⁵ See further, Chapters 3.4 and 3.5.

²²⁶ Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 253-254. Kahn (1996): 314. Kahn, however, argues that recollection is used in order to demonstrate the existence of the Forms. This, however, only establishes the existence of some transcendental knowledge separate from the mortal realm (cf. *Parmenides* 133a-134e). In order for this knowledge to become known to the soul it must, according to Plato, come to learn of the Forms separate from its existence in the mortal realm, i.e. it must come to learn of the Forms in its disembodied state; a state that is immortal, incorporeal, and immaterial like the Forms themselves. The soul then experiences embodiment, and which point it must rely upon recollection to communicate knowledge of the Forms to others. In this way, Plato preserves the belief that (a) knowledge exists; (b) this knowledge may be known; and (c) this knowledge may be communicated to others.

The Cyclical Argument (70c4-72e2)

Throughout, it is important to note that the basic premise of the argument is that an opposite comes to be from its opposite. For instance, what is small comes to be because of what is large, as in order to say that Human A is 'small,' one must necessarily make reference to the large, such that Human A can only be thought of as 'small' in relation to Human B, who is 'larger.' Yet, although Human A may be 'small' in comparison with Human B, Human A may be 'large' in relation to Human C. Therefore, Human A partakes of both 'small' and its opposite, 'large.' Similarly, an individual is considered 'dead' only in relation to other individuals who are 'alive.' Hence, for example, 70d6-71b11:

(70d6) Μὴ τοίνυν κατ' ἀνθρώπων, ἧ δ' ὅς, σκόπει μόνον τοῦτο, εἰ βούλει ῥᾶον μαθεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ ζώων πάντων καὶ φυτῶν, καὶ συλλήβδην ὅσαπερ ἔχει γένεσιν περὶ πάντων (e) ἴδωμεν ἄρ' οὕτωςί γίνεταί πάντα, οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἢ ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίων τὰ ἐναντία, ὅσοις τυγχάνει ὄν τοιοῦτόν τι, οἷον τὸ καλὸν τῷ αἰσχυρῷ ἐναντίον που καὶ δίκαιον ἀδίκῳ, καὶ ἄλλα δὴ μυρία οὕτως ἔχει. τοῦτο οὖν σκεψώμεθα, ἄρα ἀναγκαῖον ὅσοις ἔστι τι ἐναντίον, μηδαμόθεν ἄλλοθεν αὐτὸ γίνεσθαι ἢ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτῷ ἐναντίου. οἷον ὅταν μεῖζόν τι γίνηται, ἀνάγκη που ἐξ ἐλάττονος ὄντος πρότερον ἔπειτα μεῖζον γίνεσθαι;

Ναί.

Οὐκοῦν κἂν ἔλαττον γίνηται, ἐκ μεῖζονος ὄντος πρότερον 71.

(a) ὕστερον ἔλαττον γενήσεται;

Ἔστιν οὕτω, ἔφη.

Καὶ μὴν ἐξ ἰσχυροτέρου γε τὸ ἀσθενέστερον καὶ ἐκ βραδυτέρου τὸ θᾶπτον;

Πάνυ γε.

Τί δέ; ἂν τι χειρὸν γίνηται, οὐκ ἐξ ἀμείνονος, καὶ ἂν δικαιότερον, ἐξ ἀδικωτέρου;

Πῶς γὰρ οὐ;

Ἰκανῶς οὖν, ἔφη, ἔχομεν τοῦτο, ὅτι πάντα οὕτω γίνονται,
ἐξ ἐναντίων τὰ ἐναντία πράγματα;

Πάνυ γε.

Τί δ' αὖ; ἔστι τι καὶ τοιόνδε ἐν αὐτοῖς, οἷον μεταξὺ
ἀμφοτέρων πάντων τῶν ἐναντίων δυοῖν ὄντων δύο γενέσεις,
(b) ἀπὸ μὲν τοῦ ἐτέρου ἐπὶ τὸ ἕτερον, ἀπὸ δ' αὖ τοῦ ἐτέρου
πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἕτερον· μείζονος μὲν πράγματος καὶ ἐλάττονος
μεταξὺ αὐξήσις καὶ φθίσις, καὶ καλοῦμεν οὕτω τὸ μὲν αὐξά-
νεσθαι, τὸ δὲ φθίνειν;

Ναί, ἔφη.

Οὐκοῦν καὶ διακρίνεσθαι καὶ συγκρίνεσθαι, καὶ ψύχεσθαι
καὶ θερμαίνεσθαι, καὶ πάντα οὕτω, κἂν εἰ μὴ χρώμεθα τοῖς
ὀνόμασιν ἐνιαχοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔργῳ γοῦν πανταχοῦ οὕτως ἔχειν
ἀναγκαῖον, γίνεσθαι τε αὐτὰ ἐξ ἀλλήλων γένεσιν τε εἶναι
ἐκατέρου εἰς ἄλληλα;

Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἦ δ' ὅς.

[LOEB translation:] ““Well then, don’t look at this,” he said, “only from the human angle, if you want to understand it more easily, but from that of all animals and plants, and by looking collectively at all things that come into being let’s see whether everything comes into being in this way, from nowhere but opposites from their opposite, where they happen to have this kind of characteristic, for example: the beautiful is opposite to the ugly, I suppose, the just to the unjust; and indeed there are countless others like this. So let’s consider whether for those things that have an opposite, it must follow that a particular thing comes into being from nowhere else but what is opposite to it. For example, when something larger comes into being it must, I suppose, be from something that was previously smaller and that then became larger, mustn’t it?”

“Yes.”

“Likewise, if something comes to be smaller, will it then come to be smaller from something that was previously larger?”

“That’s right,” he said.

“And furthermore, the weaker from the stronger and the quicker from the slower.”

“Yes indeed.”

“And what about if something worse comes into being, isn’t it from something better, and the more just from the more unjust?”

“Of course.”

“Then we’re satisfied on this point then,” he said, “that all things come into being in this way: opposite things from their opposites?”

“Very much so.”

“But what about this? Is there also something like this in them: two kinds of generation between all the pairs of opposites, as they occur in pairs, from one to the other and conversely from the second to the first? You see, between a larger object and a smaller one isn’t there a process of growing and diminishing, and so we refer to the one as increasing and the other as decreasing?”

“Yes,” he said.

“And so too, we have separation and combination, cooling and warming and everything like this; even if sometimes we don’t use these terms, in actual fact it must apply in all instances that their coming into existence from each other is the process of coming-to-be into each other?”

“Very much so,” he agreed.”

Despite an opposite appearing to come from its opposite, it cannot, in itself, admit of its opposite. For instance, although Human A partakes of both ‘large’ and ‘small,’ large, in itself, cannot admit of the small, otherwise, there can be no such thing as ‘large.’ If ‘large’ admitted of the small, then this would mean it is ‘smaller’ than something else, and lead to an infinite regress. Thus, Sokrates posits that there is something as ‘the large’ (the Form of Large), an abstract universal that particulars partake of in order to manifest that particular property, i.e. to be large, but Large itself is unchanging and constant. Large must be unchanging, if one understands Large in this case to be a so-called Platonic Form, otherwise nothing can ever be said to be ‘large’; and it must be constant, in order that particulars can partake of the Large, as long as the corporeal universe exists.

Similarly, Sokrates posits the existence of a Form of Life, which particulars may partake of, in addition to Death;²²⁷ but Life itself cannot participate in Death, as it is constant and unchanging. In order for Sokrates to prove the immortality of the soul, he appears to equate the ‘Form of Life’ to

²²⁷ Though in practicality, the only entity that may participate in Life is the soul, and it is through the presence of soul that other entities may participate in Life. In this way, only the soul participates directly in Life, whereas other living beings participate in a type of life mediated by the presence of soul. This may be why ‘true’ life belongs only to the soul, whereas the human being, for example, participates only in a reflection of this ‘true’ life; cf. *Phaidros* 246b-e.

the soul; hence it should be incapable of admitting death, and is immortal.²²⁸ The above is a summation of the following, 71c1-72e1:

71 (c) Τί οὔν; ἔφη, τῷ ζῆν ἐστί τι ἐναντίον, ὡσπερ τῷ ἐγρηγορέναι τὸ καθεύδειν;
Πάνυ μὲν οὔν, ἔφη.
Τί;
Τὸ τεθνάναι, ἔφη.
Οὐκοῦν ἐξ ἀλλήλων τε γίνεταί ταῦτα, εἴπερ ἐναντία ἐστίν, καὶ αἱ γενέσεις εἰσὶν αὐτοῖν μεταξύ δύο δυοῖν ὄντων;
Πῶς γὰρ οὔ;
Τὴν μὲν τοίνυν ἐτέραν συζυγίαν ὧν νυνδὴ ἔλεγον ἐγώ σοι, ἔφη, ἐρῶ, ὁ Σωκράτης, καὶ αὐτὴν καὶ τὰς γενέσεις· σὺ δέ μοι τὴν ἐτέραν. λέγω δὲ τὸ μὲν καθεύδειν, τὸ δὲ ἐγρηγορέναι, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ καθεύδειν τὸ ἐγρηγορέναι γίνεσθαι καὶ
(d) ἐκ τοῦ ἐγρηγορέναι τὸ καθεύδειν, καὶ τὰς γενέσεις αὐτοῖν τὴν μὲν καταδαρθάνειν εἶναι, τὴν δ' ἀνεγείρεσθαι. ἰκανῶς σοι, ἔφη, ἢ οὔ;
Πάνυ μὲν οὔν.
Λέγε δὴ μοι καὶ σὺ, ἔφη, οὕτω περὶ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου.
οὐκ ἐναντίον μὲν φῆς τῷ ζῆν τὸ τεθνάναι εἶναι;
Ἔγωγε.
Γίνεσθαι δὲ ἐξ ἀλλήλων;
Ναί.
Ἐξ οὔν τοῦ ζῶντος τί τὸ γιγνόμενον;
Τὸ τεθνηκός, ἔφη.
Τί δέ, ἢ δ' ὅς, ἐκ τοῦ τεθνεώτος;
Ἀναγκαῖον, ἔφη, ὁμολογεῖν ὅτι τὸ ζῶν.
Ἐκ τῶν τεθνεώτων ἄρα, ὧ Κέβης, τὰ ζῶντά τε καὶ οἱ ζῶντες γίνονται;
(e) Φαίνεται, ἔφη.

²²⁸ Cf. *Kratylos*, 396a-b, 339d-400b, 403c, which suggest life is bestowed upon the individual by a divine, immortal entity; and Aristoteles, *Peri Psykhes* 412a-413a.

Εἰσὶν ἄρα, ἔφη, αἱ ψυχαὶ ἡμῶν ἐν Ἄιδου.

Ἔοικεν.

Οὐκοῦν καὶ τοῖν γενεσέοιν τοῖν περὶ ταῦτα ἢ γ' ἑτέρα
σαφῆς οὔσα τυγχάνει; τὸ γὰρ ἀποθνήσκειν σαφές δήπου,
ἢ οὐ;

Πάνυ μὲν οὔν, ἔφη.

Πῶς οὔν, ἢ δ' ὅς, ποιήσομεν; οὐκ ἀνταποδώσομεν τὴν
ἐναντίαν γένεσιν, ἀλλὰ ταύτη χωλὴ ἔσται ἢ φύσις; ἢ ἀνάγκη
ἀποδοῦναι τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν ἐναντίαν τινὰ γένεσιν;

Πάντως που, ἔφη.

Τίνα ταύτην;

Τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι.

Οὐκοῦν, ἢ δ' ὅς, εἴπερ ἔστι τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι, ἐκ τῶν

72.

(a) τεθνεώτων ἂν εἴη γένεσις εἰς τοὺς ζῶντας αὕτη, τὸ ἀνα-
βιώσκεσθαι;

Πάνυ γε.

Ὅμολογεῖται ἄρα ἡμῖν καὶ ταύτη τοὺς ζῶντας ἐκ τῶν
τεθνεώτων γεγονέναι οὐδὲν ἦττον ἢ τοὺς τεθνεώτας ἐκ τῶν
ζῶντων, τούτου δὲ ὄντος ἰκανόν που ἐδόκει τεκμήριον εἶναι
ὅτι ἀναγκαῖον τὰς τῶν τεθνεώτων ψυχὰς εἶναι που, ὅθεν δὴ
πάλιν γίνεσθαι.

Δοκεῖ μοι, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐκ τῶν ὁμολογημένων
ἀναγκαῖον οὕτως ἔχειν.

Ἴδὲ τοίνυν οὕτως, ἔφη, ὦ Κέβης, ὅτι οὐδ' ἀδίκως ὁμο-
λογήκαμεν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ. εἰ γὰρ μὴ αἰεὶ ἀνταποδοίη τὰ
(b) ἕτερα τοῖς ἑτέροις γιγνόμενα, ὡσπερὶ κύκλω περιόντα, ἀλλ'
εὐθεῖά τις εἴη ἢ γένεσις ἐκ τοῦ ἑτέρου μόνον εἰς τὸ καταν-
τικρὺ καὶ μὴ ἀνακάμπτει πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἕτερον μηδὲ καμπὴν
ποιοῖτο, οἷσθ' ὅτι πάντα τελευτῶντα τὸ αὐτὸ σχῆμα ἂν σχοίη
καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πάθος ἂν πάθοι καὶ παύσαιτο γιγνόμενα;

Πῶς λέγεις; ἔφη.

Οὐδὲν χαλεπὸν, ἦ δ' ὅς, ἐννοῆσαι ὃ λέγω· ἀλλ' οἷον εἰ
τὸ καταδαρθάνειν μὲν εἶη, τὸ δ' ἀνεγείρεσθαι μὴ ἀνταποδιδοίη
γινόμενον ἐκ τοῦ καθεύδοντος, οἷσθ' ὅτι τελευτῶντα πάντ'
(c) <ἄν> λήρον τὸν Ἐνδυμίωνα ἀποδείξειεν καὶ οὐδαμοῦ ἄν
φαίνοιτο διὰ τὸ καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα ταύτων ἐκείνῳ πεπονθέναι,
καθεύδειν. κἂν εἰ συγκρίνοιτο μὲν πάντα, διακρίνοιτο δὲ
μή, ταχὺ ἂν τὸ τοῦ Ἀναξαγόρου γερονὸς εἶη, “Ὅμοῦ πάντα
χρήματα.” ὡσαύτως δέ, ὧ φίλε Κέβης, καὶ εἰ ἀποθνήσκοι
μὲν πάντα ὅσα τοῦ ζῆν μεταλάβοι, ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀποθάνοι,
μένοι ἐν τούτῳ τῷ σχήματι τὰ τεθνεῶτα καὶ μὴ πάλιν
ἀναβιώσκοιτο, ἄρ' οὐ πολλὴ ἀνάγκη τελευτῶντα πάντα
(d) τεθνάναι καὶ μηδὲν ζῆν; εἰ γὰρ ἐκ μὲν τῶν ἄλλων τὰ
ζῶντα γίνονται, τὰ δὲ ζῶντα θνήσκοι, τίς μηχανὴ μὴ οὐχὶ
πάντα καταναλωθῆναι εἰς τὸ τεθνάναι;
Οὐδὲ μία μοι δοκεῖ, ἔφη ὁ Κέβης, ὧ Σώκρατες, ἀλλὰ μοι
δοκεῖς παντάπασιν ἀληθῆ λέγειν.

Ἔστιν γάρ, ἔφη, ὧ Κέβης, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, παντὸς μᾶλλον
οὔτῳ, καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἐξαπατῶμενοι ὁμολογοῦμεν,
ἀλλ' ἔστι τῷ ὄντι καὶ τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι καὶ ἐκ τῶν τεθνεώ-
των τοὺς ζῶντας γίνεσθαι καὶ τὰς τῶν τεθνεώτων ψυχὰς
(e) εἶναι.

[LOEB translation:] ““And what does that imply?” he [Socrates] asked. “That there’s an opposite to living, just being awake is to sleeping?”

“Indeed there is.”

“What?”

“Being dead,” he [Kebes] said.

“So do these things come into being from each other, if indeed they are opposites and are the processes of their coming into being two, as they are in pairs?”

“Of course.”

“Right then, I’ll give you the first pair that I was telling you about just now,” said Socrates, “both itself and its processes, and you give the other one. I mean sleeping and being awake, and that being awake comes about from sleeping and sleeping from being awake and their processes are first going to sleep and second waking up. Is that enough for you,” he asked, “or not?”

“Perfectly.” “Good. Now you tell me in this way,” he said, “about life and death. Aren’t you saying that being dead is the opposite of being alive?”

“I am.”

“And they come about from each other.”

“Yes.”

“So what is it that comes about from that which is living?”

“That which is dead,” he said.

“And what is that comes from that which is dead?”

“It must be agreed,” he said, “that it’s the living.”

“Then living things and beings must come into existence from the dead, Cebes?”

“It looks like it.”

“So then our souls exist in Hades” he said.

“It seems so.”

“Then is the one of the two processes regarding these things actually obvious? Dying is quite obvious presumably, or isn’t it?”

“Very much so,” he said.

“How shall we deal with this then?” he asked. “Shall we not put forward the opposite process as a counterbalance, otherwise the nature of things will be lopsided in this respect? Or should we set some opposite process against dying?”

“Yes I suppose we should,” he said.

“What will this be?”

“Coming back to life.”

“Therefore,” he said, “if there is a return to life, then this process of coming back to life would be from the dead to the living.”

“Indeed.”

“In that way too we’re agreed then that the living have come into being from the dead no less than the dead have from the living, and this being the case I presume that it seemed sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must exist somewhere from where indeed they come back into being.”

“It seems to me, Socrates,” he said, “from what we’ve agreed this must be how it is.”

“Then consider it in this way, Cebes,” he said, “and you will see, I think, that we’re not wrong to have made this agreement. For if things did not always balance out with their opposites when they come into being, going round in a circle as it were, but if coming into being were only in a straight line from the opposite to the opposite and did not bend back to the other side and make the turn, do you realize that all dying things would have the same pattern and would undergo the same process and coming into being would cease.”

“How do you mean?” he said.

“It’s not at all difficult to understand what I’m saying,” he said; “after all, for example, if there was a going to sleep, but waking didn’t balance it up by coming into being out of sleeping, do you realize that in dying everything would show that Endymion is insignificant and would nowhere to be seen on account of everything else being in the same state as he, namely being asleep? And if everything were combined together and not separated out, then Anaxagoras’ maxim would soon come true: ‘All things together.’ Likewise also, my dear Cebes, if everything that partakes of life were to die, and when it died the dead were to remain in this form and not come back to life again, isn’t it absolutely inevitable that all things that are dying would be dead and nothing would be alive? For if the living came from things other than the dead and the living died, what means are there to prevent everything being consumed in death?”

“None whatsoever, it seems to me, Socrates,” said Cebes, “and I think what you’re saying is true in every respect.”

“Yes this is most certainly the case, Cebes, as I see it, and we’re not being misled in agreeing just these things: there really is coming back to life and the living come into being from the dead, and the souls of the dead do exist.””

The soul, it would seem, is capable of possessing particular faculties, e.g. intellect, perception, memory, as these do not represent the contrary form of Death. These faculties do not represent the Form of these particular things, and so they are subject to change. The kind of life that belongs to the soul, on the other hand, does appear to represent the Form of Life, thereby being incapable of change, and admitting its contrary – Death. This argument appears to proceed, in my opinion, according to the following reasoning:

- (i) Sokrates appears to begin with the premise that all living things are alive virtue of the presence of soul.
- (ii) The soul, therefore, appears to be the universal of life, since it is through participation in the soul, that all things come to live.
- (iii) Yet, all living beings also appear to possess memory and intellect.
- (iv) Why is the soul, then, the Form of Life, but not of Memory and Intellect too?
- (v) All living beings appear to participate in the same type of life, such that the life of which a dog partakes is the same as that of a human or an oak tree.

- (vi) However, it is evident that all living beings do not partake of the same intellect or memory, such that both of these properties differ from living being to living being, never being exactly the same.
- (vii) Therefore, Sokrates concludes that the soul is not the Form of Intellect or Memory.

It is unclear, however, whether the term 'soul' is therefore used to refer both to the Form of Life, and to the composite entity within which it dwells, such that it refers to both a part of a whole, and the whole itself.²²⁹ Nevertheless, since life cannot exist apart from soul; life is, for all intents and purposes, equal to soul. This endorses the notion that soul is the only entity that participates in Life itself; the body participating in a mediated form of life, by virtue of the presence of soul.²³⁰ Since, the body participates in life through the presence of a separate entity, the type of life it possesses is neither constant nor unchanging, permitting the admittance of death at some particular point in the future. Yet, it is the period of time in which the body partakes of this mediated form of life that is equivalent to that which human beings understand as 'life.'²³¹

The Theory of Recollection (72e3-78a9; see further Chapter 3)

In the immediate context of the passage, Sokrates seeks to respond to Kebes' objections that some people find it difficult to believe that the soul continues to exist after death; despite both Kebes and Simmias being Pythagoreans, and thus aware of the existence of reincarnation as a theory.²³² Thus, just as Sokrates utilized reincarnation in the Menon (1.3.3) in order to assert the existence of recollection, so in the *Phaidon*, he employs reincarnation in order to demonstrate further the existence of psychic immortality.²³³ The use of reincarnation in this way creates a triangular relationship between the three notions: (i) recollection; (ii) reincarnation; and (iii) psychic immortality. According to this relationship, the existence of the one necessitates the existence of the

²²⁹ Cf. Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8.

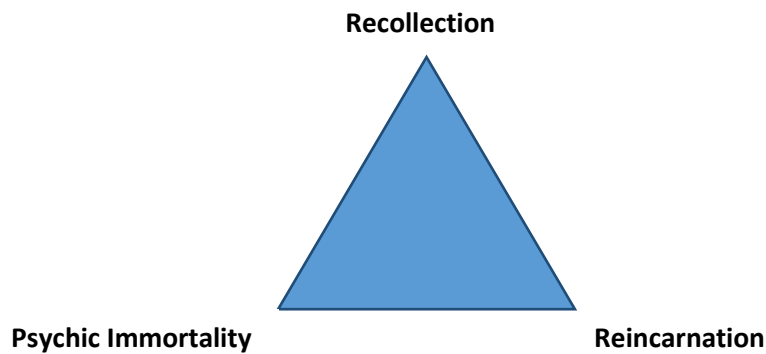
²³⁰ Irwin (1979): 244.

²³¹ See further Bostock (1999): 422-424.

²³² *Phaidon* 61d-e: 'Φιλολάω συγγεγονότες' (61d7).

²³³ Cf. *Politeia* 10.614b-621d.

others, such that Sokrates cannot conceive of recollection, for example, existing apart from reincarnation or psychic immortality, and vice versa:



(1.3.6) The *Politeia*

The *Politeia* opens with a discussion between Sokrates, Kephalos (the orator Lysias' father) and Polemarkhos (Kephalos' son) regarding the topic of justice; in particular, they attempt to arrive at a suitable definition of the term.²³⁴ The conviviality of their discussion, however, is shattered by the sophist – Thrasymakhos. Thrasymakhos takes issue with the convivial nature of the discussion, criticizing Polemarkhos for allowing Sokrates to refute him so easily, and condemning Sokrates for persistently refuting other people's understanding of justice, whilst never contributing positively to the discussion, i.e. never proffering his own conception of justice (1.337a3-338b4). The discussion then proceeds in a more hostile manner, Thrasymakhos adopting an eristic manner of discourse – a characteristic Plato commonly assigns to sophists.²³⁵

²³⁴ This may be an example of dramatic irony, depending on the extent to which the reader possessed knowledge of Polemarkhos' fate (cf. Lysias 12, *Kata Eratosthenous*, *passim*.), who is murdered by the Thirty Tyrants, and has his wealth and property confiscated.

²³⁵ See for example, *Euthydemos*, *passim* but esp. 272a-b; *Phaidon*, 101e; *Philebos*, 16e-17a; *Politeia*, 5.454a, 6.498d-499a, 7.539a-b; *Sophistes*, 216b, 225d-e; *Theaitetos*, 167e.

Thrasymakhos begins with the positive assertion that justice is equivalent to the advantage of the stronger (1.338c2-339b8). As part of his refutation of this definition of justice, Sokrates considers briefly the relationship between life and the soul (1.353d3-10), proceeding in the following manner:

Σωκράτης: ἴθι δὴ, μετὰ ταῦτα τόδε σκέψαι. ψυχῆς ἔστιν τι ἔργον ὃ ἄλλω τῶν ὄντων οὐδ' ἂν ἐνὶ πράξαις; οἷον τὸ τοιόνδε· τὸ ἐπιμελεῖσθαι καὶ ἄρχειν καὶ βουλευέσθαι καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα πάντα, ἔσθ' ὅτῳ ἄλλω ἢ ψυχῇ δικαίως ἂν αὐτὰ ἀποδοῖμεν καὶ φαῖμεν ἴδια ἐκείνης εἶναι;

Θρασύμαχος: Οὐδενὶ ἄλλω.

Σωκράτης: Τί δ' αὖ τὸ ζῆν; οὐ ψυχῆς φήσομεν ἔργον εἶναι;

Θρασύμαχος: Μάλιστα γ[ε].

[LOEB translation:] “All right then, next consider this: take the soul: does it have a function which you could perform with nothing else in the world, as for example: caring, ruling, deliberating and all things like that: is there anything else other than the soul to which we could rightly entrust these, and say that they were its particular province?”

“No, no other.”

“But what about living, then? Shall we not say that it is a function of the soul?”

“Very definitely,” he replied.”

Sokrates makes it clear that life is, indeed, to be understood as an inherent function of the soul (ἔργον, 1.353d3), along with other things, such as the ability to take care of things, to rule, to deliberate, and everything else of comparable nature. These functions, according to Sokrates, are most appropriately assigned to the soul alone of all the things that are (ἄλλω τῶν ὄντων, 1.353d4).²³⁶ Accordingly, no other entity that exists in the present universe is capable of possessing these functions, including life; and indeed, even Thrasymakhos concurs (1.353d10). If life is a function that belongs to the soul alone, then it confirms the thesis (see 1.3.1-1.3.5) that all living beings are alive, virtue of the presence of soul; life being inseparable from soul.²³⁷

Life, therefore, is dependent on the location of the soul, such that if the soul finds itself in a corporeal body, this body exhibits the life that is intrinsic to the soul, since it is superior to the body in nature. Once the soul leaves the body, on the other hand, the body ceases to live, whereas the

²³⁶ See further Chapter 1.3.5.

²³⁷ Cf. Sophistes, 245e-249d.

soul continues to exhibit life, but that form of life appropriate to its nature. There are two forms of life, according to such an understanding: one which belongs to the body, and is akin to it in nature, being transient; and another which belongs to the soul, and corresponds to the immortal nature of the soul, such that this life is both constant and unchanging ('true' life).²³⁸

The above conclusion regarding the two kinds of life – one belonging to the body, and one to the soul (that of the soul being 'true' life) – serves as the underlying assumption of the Myth of Er (10.614a5-621d2). In the Myth of Er one finds not just an account of the afterlife, but, as far as Sokrates is concerned, a justification for why an individual must live in accordance with justice, in order that they might achieve the greatest of rewards (10.614a5-8).²³⁹ The afterlife is incorporeal, immaterial, immortal, and relatively devoid of change; this makes the afterlife akin, in nature, to the Forms – the true nature of reality. Thus, the rewards of the afterlife correspond most closely to the Forms, thereby elevating them above the ephemeral rewards of the mortal world.

Sokrates begins his account of Er's journey to Hades and back again, with a short introduction in which he presents the circumstances under which Er 'dies' and comes back to life (614b1-7):

(b) Λέγοις ἄν, ἔφη, ὡς οὐ πολλὰ ἄλλ' ἥδιον ἀκούοντι.
Ἄλλ' οὐ μέντοι σοι, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, Ἀλκίνου γε ἀπόλογον ἐρῶ,
ἀλλ' ἀλκίμου μὲν ἀνδρός, Ἡρὸς τοῦ Ἄρμενίου, τὸ γένος
Παμφύλου· ὃς ποτε ἐν πολέμῳ τελευτήσας, ἀναιρεθέντων
δεκαταίων τῶν νεκρῶν ἤδη διεφθαρμένων, ὑγιῆς μὲν ἀνη-
ρέθη, κομισθεὶς δ' οἴκαδε μέλλων θάπτεσθαι δωδεκαταῖος ἐπὶ
τῆ πυρᾶ κείμενος ἀνεβίω, ἀναβιοῦς δ' ἔλεγεν ἃ ἐκεῖ ἴδοι.

[LOEB translation:] ““Please tell us,” he said, “as there are not many other things I would more gladly hear.”

²³⁸ Cf. *Politeia* 10.617d-618a.

²³⁹ Ἐὰ ταῦτα τοίνυν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ [i.e. Sokrates], οὐδέν ἐστι πλήθει οὐδὲ μεγέθει πρὸς ἐκεῖνα ἃ τελευτήσαντα ἐκάτερον περιμένει· χρὴ δ' αὐτὰ ἀκοῦσαι, ἵνα τελέως ἐκάτερος αὐτῶν ἀπειλήφῃ τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου ὀφειλόμενα ἀκοῦσαι, 10.614a5-8.

“Mind you, I’m not going to give you an Alcinous’ tale,” I said, “but the story of a brave man, Armenius’ son Er, by race from Pamphylia. Once upon a time he was killed in battle, and when the bodies of those who had already decayed were collected up ten days later, his was found to be sound, and when he’d been taken home for burial, on the twelfth day, as he lay on the pyre, he came to. Having done so, he described what he had seen on the other side.”

This introduction, or prologue, can be deconstructed thus:

- (1) Er once died in battle (‘ποτε ἐν πολέμῳ τελευτήσας,’ 614b4).
- (2) The dead were taken up for burial after ten days, and already they were decomposing (‘ἀναίρεθέντων δεκαταίων τῶν νεκρῶν ἤδη διεφθαρμένων,’ 614b4-5).
- (3) Yet, Er’s body was taken up in good condition (‘ὕγιής μὲν ἀνηρέθη,’ 614b 5-6).
- (4) Nonetheless, Er was taken home to be buried (‘κομισθεὶς δ’ οἴκαδε μέλλων θάπτεσθαι,’ 614b6).
- (5) On the twelfth day, lying dead upon the funeral pyre, Er came to life again (‘δωδεκαταῖος ἐπὶ τῇ πυρᾷ κείμενος ἀνεβίω,’ 614b6-7).
- (6) Having come back to life, Er recounted what he had observed in that place [i.e. in Hades] (‘ἀναβιοῦς δ’ ἔλεγεν ἃ ἐκεῖ ἴδοι,’ 614b7).

Although this introduction is short, one may draw the following conclusions regarding the definition of life:

- (a) Death is defined as the separation of the soul from the body, i.e. the dissolution of the union that initially resulted in the creation of the individual. In this particular case, Sokrates clearly states that Er died, as his soul left his body (“Ἐφη [i.e. Er] δέ, ἐπειδὴ οὐ ἔκβῆναι, τὴν ψυχὴν πορεύεσθαι μετὰ πολλῶν,’ 614b8-c1). Accordingly, Er comes back to life only when his soul departs from Hades and reunites with his temporarily uninhabited body.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Cf. 10.614d1-2: the need for Er to be an emissary to human beings – he must, like the prisoner who returns to the cave (7.514a-520a) communicate the knowledge he has learnt of Hades, in order to convince others of the veracity of the Platonic Wager (see also *Nomoi* 5.730e-1a).

- (b) Once the soul no longer inhabits the body, all natural biological functions, such as breathing, cease, and the body begins to revert to its natural state of inanimate existence. Although the body comes to live through the presence of soul, it is not through the presence of soul alone. The soul applies the initial 'spark of life,' inciting in the body the beginning of certain natural bodily functions, e.g. breathing, which serve to preserve the body's living status, up until that time when the soul departs. Consider, for example, an individual with a serious illness, who requires the use of a life support machine. The life support machine, in this context, acts as a 'source' of life for that individual, allowing for the natural bodily processes, e.g. breathing, to continue to function, thereby preserving the life of that individual. Yet, were the life support machine to be removed, then these natural bodily processes would cease to function, and the individual would experience death.
- (c) Er's body, however, remains in a good condition, suggesting the continuation of those natural bodily processes, which are meant to keep the individual alive when soul is present (foretelling the soul's return). This is in contrast to the bodies of Er's comrades which had already begun to decompose. For these bodies, all the natural process meant to sustain the life of the individual whilst soul is present have ceased to function. Thus, they begin to reacquire their natural state of inanimation, wherein these processes are inapplicable.

(1.3.7) The *Phaidros*

The Allegory of the Chariot (246a3-255a1)

In the *Phaidros*, Plato continues the identification of two different forms of life: one that belongs to the soul, and might be considered 'true' life; and one that belongs to the body, being a reflected image of this 'true' life.²⁴¹ This dichotomy exists, necessarily, and must be taken into account when considering the nature of 'life.' Accordingly, Sokrates proffers the following argument serving to demonstrate the illusory nature of the 'life' that belongs to the human being, in contrast to the 'real' life that belongs to the soul (246b5-d2):

(246b) (1) πῆ δὴ οὖν θνητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ζῶον ἐκλήθη πειρατέον εἰπεῖν. (2) ψυχὴ πᾶσα παντός ἐπιμελεῖται τοῦ ἀψύχου, πάντα δὲ οὐρανὸν περιπολεῖ, ἄλλοτ' ἐν ἄλλοις εἶδεσι γιγνομένη. (3) τελέα (c) μὲν οὖν οὔσα καὶ ἐπτερωμένη μετεωροπορεῖ τε καὶ πάντα τὸν κόσμον διοικεῖ, (4) ἡ δὲ πτερορρηήσασα φέρεται ἕως ἂν στερεοῦ τινοσ ἀντιλάβηται, οὗ κατοικισθεῖσα, σῶμα γήϊνον λαβοῦσα, αὐτὸ αὐτὸ δοκοῦν κινεῖν διὰ τὴν ἐκείνης δύναμιν, (5) ζῶον τὸ σύμπαν ἐκλήθη, ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα παγέν, θνητόν τ' ἔσχεν ἐπωνυμίαν· (6) ἀθάνατον δὲ οὐδ' ἐξ ἐνὸς λόγου λελογισμένου, (7) ἀλλὰ πλάττομεν οὔτε ἰδόντες οὔτε ἰκανῶς νοήσαντες (d) θεόν, ἀθάνατόν τι ζῶον, ἔχον μὲν ψυχὴν, ἔχον δὲ σῶμα, τὸν ἀεὶ δὲ χρόνον ταῦτα συμπεφυκότα. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ, ὄπη τῷ θεῷ φίλον, ταύτη ἐχέτω τε καὶ λεγέσθω·

[LOEB translation:] "Now we must try to tell why a living being is called mortal or immortal. Soul, considered collectively, has the care of all that which is soulless, and it traverses the whole heaven, appearing sometimes in one form and sometimes in another; now when it is perfect and fully winged, it mounts upward and governs the whole world; but the soul which has lost its wings is borne along until it gets hold of something solid, when it settles down, taking upon itself an earthly body, which seems to be self-moving, because of the power of the soul within it; and the whole, compounded of soul and body, is called a living being, and is further designated as mortal. It is not immortal by any reasonable supposition, but we, though we have never seen or rightly conceived a god, imagine an immortal being which has both a soul and a body which are united for all time. Let that, however, and our words concerning it, be as is pleasing to God."

²⁴¹ Irwin (1979): 244.

This, I believe may be presented in the following manner:

- (1) 'Πῆ δὴ οὖν θνητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ζῶον ἐκλήθη πειρατέον εἰπεῖν' ('Now, then, one must attempt to recount in what way a living being is called both mortal and immortal,' 246b5-6).
- (2) 'Ψυχὴ πᾶσα παντὸς ἐπιμελεῖται τοῦ ἀψύχου' ('All soul takes care of all of inanimate being,' 246b6), 'πάντα δὲ οὐρανὸν περιπολεῖ, ἄλλοτ' ἐν ἄλλοις εἶδεσι γιγνομένη' ('and it traverses all heaven becoming different forms at one time and then another,' 246b6-7).
- (3) 'Τελέα μὲν οὖν οὔσα καὶ ἐπτερωμένη μετεωροπορεῖ τε καὶ πάντα τὸν κόσμον διοικεῖ' ('So, when it is perfect and fully-winged, it both travels high and governs the whole universe,' 246b7-c2).
- (4) 'Ἡ δὲ πτερορρησασα φέρεται ἕως ἂν στερεοῦ τινος ἀντιλάβηται' ('But the soul that sheds its wings is borne along until it lays hold of something solid,' 246c2-3), 'οὗ κατοικισθεῖσα, σῶμα γήϊνον λαβοῦσα' ('wherein it settles, occupying an earthly body,' 246c3-4), 'αὐτὸ αὐτὸ δοκοῦν κινεῖν διὰ τὴν ἐκείνης δύναμιν' ('it seeming to move of its own accord because of her [i.e. the soul's] power,' 246c4).
- (5) 'Ζῶον τὸ σύμπαν ἐκλήθη' ('As a whole, it is called a living being,' 246c5), 'ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα παγέν' ('fastening together soul and body,' 246c5), 'θνητόν τ' ἔσχεν ἐπωνυμίαν' ('and it possesses the designation mortal,' 246c5-6).
- (6) 'Ἀθάνατον δὲ οὐδ' ἐξ ἐνὸς λόγου λελογισμένου' ('But on no account can it be considered immortal,' 246c6-7).
- (7) 'Ἀλλὰ πλάττομεν οὔτε ἰδόντες οὔτε ἰκανῶς νοήσαντες θεόν, ἀθάνατόν τι ζῶον, ἔχον μὲν ψυχὴν, ἔχον δὲ σῶμα, τὸν αἰὶ δὲ χρόνον ταῦτα συμπεφυκότα' ('Yet, having neither seen nor sufficiently considered god, we form an image of an immortal living being, possessing soul and possessing body, these being united for eternity,' 246c7-d2).

Sokrates' account reaffirms the definition of the living being as the union of body and soul (cf.

Chapter 1.3.4 on the *Euthydemos*), in addition to the dichotomy that exists between that life that

belongs to the soul, and that life that belongs to the individual. In the case of the latter, this is done with the presentation of an account of incarnation (cf. 1.3.9 for another account of the soul's incarnation), i.e. how the soul comes to be embodied, using as its starting point the Chariot Allegory.²⁴² According to this allegory, meant to relate the structure of the soul, the soul is akin to a winged chariot, consisting of two horses and a charioteer. One of the horses embodies all that is 'good,' whereas the other embodies all that is contrary. Their charioteer, meanwhile, represents intelligence, who attempts to keep control of the horses, allowing the good horse to lead, so that the soul always travels upwards. However, if intelligence is unable to keep control of the horses, and lets the bad horse lead, the soul metaphorically 'sheds its wings' and descends from its home in heaven to the corporeal world (246c2-6).

Once the soul can no longer support itself and begins to 'fall,' it does so until it comes across something solid, i.e. corporeal body (246c). Thereupon the soul inhabits the body, retaining only those properties inherent to it, e.g. life and motion. Nevertheless, the soul possesses the capacity to manifest these intrinsic properties, through the body it inhabits, such that they exhibit themselves in the corporeal world. Sokrates, in this context, provides the example of motion, arguing that upon the soul's embodiment, the body it inhabits appears to move as though of its own accord. Self-motion, however, is an intrinsic property of the soul alone, and so the body possesses only the appearance of self-motion, as it moves courtesy of the soul and not under its own volition. Likewise, the body appears to possess life, but this is an intrinsic faculty of the soul, and so it is only through the soul's presence the body seems to possess the capacity to live.²⁴³

Consider the example of the car; when an individual witnesses a car drive past, the senses perceive the car to be moving. The car, however, does not possess the capacity for self-motion; it is only through the agency of the driver that the car is able to move. The driver must decide to turn the ignition, to press the accelerator, and to steer the car. The car, therefore, possesses only the

²⁴² For further on the Chariot Allegory being used to consider issues of (re)incarnation see Chapter 3.7.

²⁴³ See further Chapter 1.3.5 on the *Phaidon*. Irwin (1979): 244.

appearance of self-motion; but of the two entities, it is only the driver that is capable of self-motion, in reality. So, the soul is like the driver; when it inhabits the body, the body lives and moves itself, but this is only the appearance of self-motion and life. Out of the two entities, it is the soul that possesses agency, 'turning the ignition' of the individual in order to manifest the appearance of life, and 'pressing the accelerator' and 'steering' the body in order to create the impression of self-motion. Just as the individual cannot drive the car *ad infinitum*, so the soul cannot remain in union with the body for all time; but there must be a point at which this union is dissolved (246c6-7). In the case of the car, there will come a point at which the petrol will run out, the tyres will require replacement, the chassis will rust, and the engine will break down; thus dissolving, permanently, the union between that particular car and the driver. Likewise, with regards to the individual, there will come a point in which the body 'breaks down' and ceases to function, thereby dissolving the union between that body and soul, permanently, which is called 'death.'²⁴⁴

(1.3.8) The *Timaios*

In the *Timaios*, the character of Timaios relates to Sokrates (and the other interlocutors) a cosmogony, cosmology, and anthropology,²⁴⁵ as a gift of friendship in return for Sokrates' account of the ideal *polis* in the *Politeia* (17a1-20d6, esp. 20c1: 'νῦν ἀνταποδώσειν μοι τὰ τῶν λόγων ξένια'). Timaios introduces the notion of the Demiourgos, a cosmic 'craftsman' who appears to exist outside of our universe. The Demiourgos, according to Timaios, created the universe through his own agency; the Demiourgos thereby acting as direct causation for the existence of the universe. If, as Timaios argues (29d7-30c1):

²⁴⁴ Just as the driver can buy a new car, and create a new union; so the soul can inhabit a new body, and create a new union, i.e. reincarnation – see further Chapter 3.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Diogenes Laertios 3.52, wherein Sokrates, the Xenos, Timaios, and the Athenian were considered (at least by Diogenes) to be the spokespeople of Plato's views.

(29d7) Τι. Λέγωμεν δὴ δι' ἦντινα αἰτίαν γένεσιν καὶ τὸ πᾶν
(e) τόδε ὁ συνιστὰς συνέστησεν. ἀγαθὸς ἦν, ἀγαθῷ δὲ οὐδεὶς
περὶ οὐδενὸς οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγνεται φθόνος· τούτου δ' ἐκτὸς
ὧν πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα ἐβουλήθη γενέσθαι παραπλήσια ἑαυτῷ.
ταύτην δὴ γενέσεως καὶ κόσμου μάλιστ' ἂν τις ἀρχὴν κυριω-
30.

(a) τάτην παρ' ἀνδρῶν φρονίμων ἀποδεχόμενος ὀρθότατα ἀπο-
δέχοιτ' ἂν. βουλευθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον
δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν, οὕτω δὴ πᾶν ὅσον ἦν ὄρατὸν
παραλαβὼν οὐχ ἡσυχίαν ἄγον ἀλλὰ κινούμενον πλημμελῶς
καὶ ἀτάκτως, εἰς τάξιν αὐτὸ ἤγαγεν ἐκ τῆς ἀταξίας, ἡγη-
σάμενος ἐκεῖνο τούτου πάντως ἄμεινον. θέμις δ' οὐτ' ἦν
οὕτ' ἔστιν τῷ ἀρίστῳ δρᾶν ἄλλο πλὴν τὸ κάλλιστον·

(b) λογισάμενος οὖν ἠϋρίσκειν ἐκ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ὀρατῶν οὐδὲν
ἀνόητον τοῦ νοῦν ἔχοντος ὅλον ὅλου κάλλιον ἔσεσθαι ποτε
ἔργον, νοῦν δ' αὖ χωρὶς ψυχῆς ἀδύνατον παραγενέσθαι τῷ.
διὰ δὴ τὸν λογισμὸν τόνδε νοῦν μὲν ἐν ψυχῇ, ψυχὴν δ' ἐν
σώματι συνιστὰς τὸ πᾶν συνετεκταίνετο, ὅπως ὅτι κάλλιστον
εἶη κατὰ φύσιν ἄριστόν τε ἔργον ἀπειργασμένος. οὕτως
οὖν δὴ κατὰ λόγον τὸν εἰκότα δεῖ λέγειν τόνδε τὸν κόσμον
ζῶον ἔμψυχον ἔννοον τε τῇ ἀληθείᾳ διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ
(c) γενέσθαι πρόνοιαν.

[LOEB translation:] “Tim.: Let us now state the Cause wherefore He that constructed it constructed Becoming and the All. He was good, and in him that is good no envy ariseth ever concerning anything; and being devoid of envy He desired that all should be, so far as possible, like unto Himself. This principle, then, we shall be wholly right in accepting from men of wisdom as being above all the supreme originating principle of Becoming and the Cosmos. For God desired that, so far as possible, all things should be good and nothing evil; wherefore, when He took over all that was visible, seeing that it was not in a state of rest but in a state of discordant and disorderly motion, He brought it into order out of disorder, deeming that the former state is in all ways better than the latter. For Him who is most good it neither was nor is permissible to perform any action save what is most fair. As He reflected, therefore, He perceived that of such creatures as are by nature visible, none that is irrational will be fairer, comparing wholes with wholes, than the rational; and further, that reason cannot possibly belong to any apart from Soul. So because of this reflexion He constructed reason within soul and soul within body as

He fashioned the All, that so the work He was executing might be of its nature most fair and most good. Thus, then, in accordance with the likely account, we must declare that this Cosmos has verily come into existence as a Living Creature endowed with soul and reason owing to the providence of God.”

From the above passage, I believe we may draw the following conclusions:

- (1) A craftsman creates something, he does so in order to fulfil a particular purpose.
- (2) No craftsman, therefore, creates something free of extrinsic finality.
- (3) For example, a carpenter creates a chair in order that it may be sat on. Even if the carpenter sells the chair, he does so in the expectation that the purchaser will use it for this purpose. Indeed, even the carpenter who creates the chair under compulsion, e.g. a slave carpenter, does so in the expectation that the one who compels them will use it for the purpose of sitting. It may be that one might use the chair as a stool for standing, a table for eating, or as fuel for a fire. In each case, however, the fact remains that the chair was created, initially, for the purpose of being sat upon; if one chooses not to utilize the chair in this way, they are not fulfilling the chair’s *telos*, i.e. they are using the chair ‘incorrectly.’

Then,

- (a) The Demiourgos, as the ultimate craftsman, created the universe in order to serve a particular function.
- (b) The universe, therefore, and everything therein, possess an extrinsic finality.
- (c) Consequently, the Demiourgos created the soul with a specific *telos* in mind, and so it is possible for the soul to be used ‘incorrectly,’ i.e. in a way contrary to the fulfilment of its intended *telos*.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ See further Chapter 2 and 3 for further discussion of the soul’s apparent *telos*. In terms of the Platonic Wager, the imposition of a *telos* from a divine source, serves to ensure, further, the participation of all individuals, since to ignore the Wager is to ignore the purpose the god established for all human beings. It is easy to dismiss the Wager as an argument of probability, but in tying the Wager to god, a rejection of the Wager amounts to a potential act of impiety, since it involves a rejection of one’s divinely imposed *telos*. In this way all those who consider themselves pious are forced to participate; allowing Plato to suggest that the life most able to effect this divinely imposed *telos*, and return the soul to its natural state of existence, is none other than the philosophical life, i.e. the Sokratic way of life.

The creation of all soul in the universe, as outlined by Timaios, falls into three stages: (1) the World Soul (35a1-37c5); (2) the gods' souls (40a2-b4); and (3) the 'mortal' soul (i.e. the souls of mortal living beings, 41d4-42a3). All three kinds of soul are created by the Demiourgos in the same manner, utilizing the same ingredients, though of increasingly less quality (41d4-7), such that the souls of mortals are of a lesser purity than that of the World Soul. For Timaios, the Demiourgos created the World Soul in the following manner (35a1-b3):

(35a) συνεστήσατο ἐκ τῶνδὲ τε καὶ τοιῶνδε τρόπῳ. (1) τῆς ἀμερίστου καὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταυτὰ ἐχούσης οὐσίας καὶ τῆς αὖ περὶ τὰ σώματα γιγνομένης μεριστῆς τρίτον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ συνεκεράσατο οὐσίας εἶδος, (2) τῆς τε ταύτου φύσεως [αὖ περὶ] καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἑτέρου, (3) καὶ κατὰ ταυτὰ συνέστησεν ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ τε ἀμεροῦς αὐτῶν καὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὰ σώματα μεριστοῦ· (4) καὶ τρία λαβὼν αὐτὰ ὄντα συνεκεράσατο εἰς μίαν πάντα ιδέαν, τὴν θατέρου φύσιν δύσμεικτον οὔσαν εἰς ταύτῳ συναρμόττων βίᾳ.
(b) (5) μειγνύς δὲ μετὰ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ ἐκ τριῶν ποιησάμενος ἕν, (6) πάλιν ὅλον τοῦτο μοίρας ὅσας προσῆκεν διένειμεν, ἐκάστην δὲ ἕκ τε ταύτου καὶ θατέρου καὶ τῆς οὐσίας μεμειγμένην.

[LOEB translation:] "and He made her [i.e. the Soul] of the materials and in the fashion which I shall now describe.

Midway between the Being which is indivisible and remains always the same and the Being which is transient and divisible in bodies, He blended a third form of Being compounded out of the twain, that is to say, out of the Same and the Other; and in like manner He compounded it midway between that one of them which is indivisible and that one which is divisible in bodies. And He took the three of them, and blent them all together into one form, by forcing the Other into union with the Same, in spite of its being naturally difficult to mix. And when with the aid of Being He had mixed them, and had made of them one out of three, straightway He began to distribute the whole thereof into so many portions as was meet; and each portion was a mixture of the Same, of the Other, and of Being.

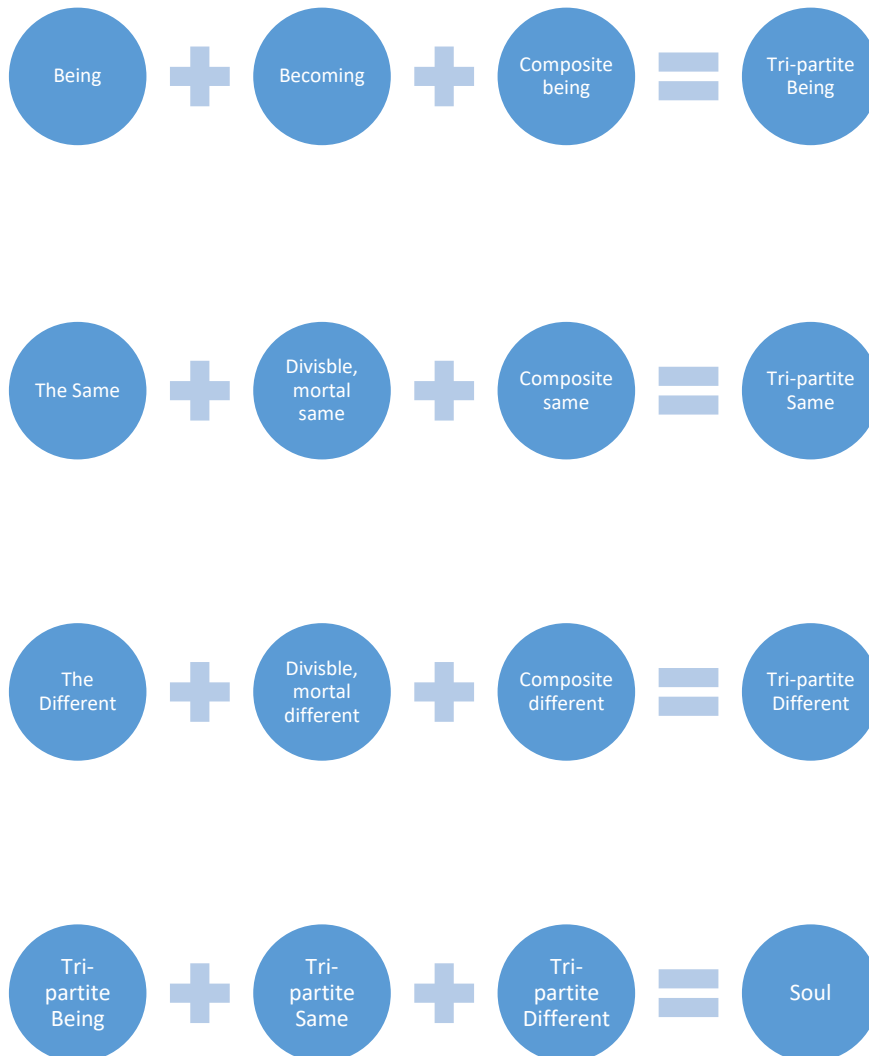
The above passage may be broken down thus:

- (1) The first ingredient the Demiourgos uses to create the World Soul is 'being.' The Demiourgos takes the Being that is indivisible and always like itself (i.e. Being), and that being that is divisible and connected with the bodily (i.e. Becoming). In the middle of these two kinds of

being, he blends a third kind of being consisting of both. (τῆς ἀμερίστου καὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἐχούσης οὐσίας καὶ τῆς αὖ περὶ τὰ σώματα γιγνομένης μεριστῆς τρίτον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ συνεκεράσατο οὐσίας εἶδος, 35a1-4).

- (2) The Demiourgos then adds two further ingredients – that of the Same and that of the Different; the World Soul thus consisting of three ingredients: Being, the Same and the Different (τῆς τε ταύτου φύσεως [αὖ πέρι] καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἑτέρου, 35a4-5).
- (3) As with the first ingredient – Being – so with the Same and the Different. The Demiourgos takes the indivisible part of the Same and the Different, and that of the divisible connected with the bodily. In between these two – the divisible and indivisible forms of the Same and the Different – a third, intermediate kind of Same and Different is added. (καὶ κατὰ ταῦτὰ συνέστησεν ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ τε ἀμεροῦς αὐτῶν καὶ τοῦ κατὰ σώματα μεριστοῦ, 35a5-6).
- (4) The Demiourgos then takes these three substances – the tri-partite Being, Same, and Different – and mixes them all together, creating one whole form, the World Soul. In order to overcome the opposite and repellent natures of the Same and the Different, which inherently prohibit the easy mixture of the two, the Demiourgos utilized such force as was necessary to overcome the two opposing natures. (καὶ τρία λαβὼν αὐτὰ ὄντα συνεκεράσατο εἰς μίαν πάντα ιδέαν, τὴν θατέρου φύσιν δύσμεικτον οὔσαν εἰς ταύτον συναρμόττων βία, 35a6-8).
- (5) The World Soul thus consists of three ‘ingredients’: Being, the Same, and the Different, or rather a tri-partite Being, Same, and Different, mixed together in order to create a new, unified whole. (μειγνύς δὲ μετὰ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ ἐκ τριῶν ποιησάμενος ἓν, 35b1).
- (6) This mixture the Demiourgos then divides into as many portions as befitted it, each portion containing an equal amount of Being, the Same, and Different. (Πάλιν ὅλον τοῦτο μοίρας ὅσας προσῆκεν διένειμεν, ἐκάστην δὲ ἕκ τε ταύτου καὶ θατέρου καὶ τῆς οὐσίας μεμειγμένην, 35b2-3).

For this reason, the World Soul, the souls of the gods, and the souls of mortal living beings conform to the following construction (though the gods' souls are of a lesser purity than the World Soul, and the souls of mortal beings, still more so):



This particular derivation of soul (see diagrams above), imbues all soul with two intrinsic properties – life and intelligence.²⁴⁷ Regarding the souls of mortals, the first ingredient the Demiourgos uses in order to construct the soul is 'Being' ('Οὐσία'). More specifically, the Demiourgos utilizes a tri-partite mixture of being consisting of both Being itself, Becoming, and an intermediate kind of being that is a combination of the former. Thus, at least half of all being that belongs to the soul is that of

²⁴⁷ *Timaios*, 35a-b; See further Chapter 3.8.

the immortal kind, that which belongs to Being itself, ensuring that a part of soul possesses eternal existence. This accords with Timaios' subsequent description of the soul's embodiment (the tripartite soul), in which the soul consists of the reasoning part, the spirited part, and that of the appetitive part. The latter, appetitive part being described as completely mortal in nature; that of the reasoning being completely immortal, and the spirit part lying between the two (69d6-71d4).²⁴⁸

Yet, being – or existence – is not equivalent to life; if existence were equivalent to life this would have the effect of rendering all the things-that-are (τὰ ὄντα) in the universe alive, since they exist. For example, a rock numbers among the things-that-are; but it is clear that a rock is not alive, despite partaking of being. How is it possible to reconcile the existence of the rock, i.e. its participation in being like the soul, with its obvious lack of life? In this case:

- (i) What differentiates the rock from the individual, despite both partaking of being?
- (ii) The individual is considered to be 'ἔμψυχον' (with soul), whilst the rock is 'ἄψυχον' (without soul).
- (iii) The differentiating element being the presence of soul. The individual possesses soul, and experiences life; whereas the rock does not possess soul, and so does not experience life. Indeed, without the presence of soul, the individual is likewise considered an inanimate body.
- (iv) What distinguishes the kind of being that belongs to the soul, from that which belongs to the rock?
- (v) Timaios argues that the soul possesses three kinds of being: Being, Becoming, and an intermediate being that is a mixture of the former; and is, moreover, created by the Demiourgos. The combination of the Demiourgos, and the presence of Being, allows the soul to partake of life.

²⁴⁸ See further Chapter 3.8 and Clegg (1977): 116.

- (vi) The rock, on the other hand, is created by the gods (who are themselves created by the Demiourgos), and consists of only one form of being: Becoming. This must be the case, since Being is immortal, and no part of the rock's existence is immortal; hence it cannot partake even of the intermediate form of being, as this too contains Being.
- (vii) Life, therefore, appears analogous to the presence of both Being and the intermediate form of being, i.e. the presence, in some way, of the true Being that belongs to the Forms.

A potential contradiction arises, however, when one considers the category of living beings called plants. Plants (76e7-77c5) are considered ἔμψυχον, and thus alive, yet possess a completely mortal soul, suggesting they too do not possess either Being or the intermediate being, like the rock. How can the plant be alive but not the rock, when they partake of the same kind of being? The Demiourgos, when creating the universe, did so looking to an eternal model.²⁴⁹ This model possessed four type of living being: (i) the gods; (ii) living beings that dwell in the air; (iii) living beings that dwell in the sea; and (iv) living beings that dwell on land (39e3-41d3). Upon creating the gods, the Demiourgos assigned the gods with creating the bodies of these living beings, as well as all those things that are necessary for their survival (42d2-e4). Although plants may number amongst the living beings that dwell on land and sea, Timaios makes it clear (39e3-41d3, 91d5-92c9) that these categories refer to land and sea animals, respectively. He describes how animal bodies came to be as transformations of the initial body assigned to the soul of mortal beings – that of the human male; and plants do not figure in this description.

Plants, therefore, appear to be additional beings added to the universe by the gods, presumably in order to assist the mortal living beings the Demiourgos sought to include in the universe in order to match his eternal model (77c6-7). Timaios does not give a reason why the gods would require plants to be 'living,' other than through the use of abductive reasoning. In this case, that plants are living

²⁴⁹ Fine (1999d): 33.

beings because their creators (the gods) determined it should be so; and since the gods are perfect beings who always act in accordance with the 'good,' so this decision is good. However, all soul was created by the Demiourgos, using ingredients the gods do not have access to, otherwise they would possess the capability to create themselves, or beings of equal status to themselves; a scenario the Demiourgos specifically prohibits (41a7-d3).

The gods must, therefore, imitate the Demiourgos with the ingredients they do have access to – Becoming. Accordingly, the gods emulate the Demiourgos, creating a soul possessing the spirited, and appetitive parts shared by the rest of soul, but the soul of plants is composed purely of the Becoming form of being.²⁵⁰ Plants, therefore, possess an entity that is composed purely of Becoming, making it completely mortal; but contains those parts shared by the rest of soul – the spirited and appetitive, giving the plant the illusion of life, as this entity ('soul') closely imitates the soul created by the Demiourgos. The rock, on the other hand, consists of the mortal type of being, alone, and possesses no parts in common with any soul; hence the rock exists, but it does not possess life, nor the illusion of life.

Only the soul, therefore, of all the entities that exist within the universe participates in Life. For an entity to partake of 'true' life, it must adhere to the following set of requirements:

- (i) It must be created by the Demiourgos.
- (ii) It must partake of the three forms of being: Being, Becoming, and the intermediate form of being composed of the former.
- (iii) It must possess a tripartite structure consisting of the reasoning, the spirited, and the appetitive, at least in the *Timaios*, since the soul of the tree, for example, possesses no reasoning part and so does not partake of 'true,' immortal life (76e7-77c5). Hence its absence from the cycle of reincarnation (91d5-92c9), and from the Demiourgos' list of beings necessary to complete the universe (39e3-41d3).

²⁵⁰ This must be the case since they were created without the reasoning part of the soul, i.e. intelligence, 76e7-77c5.

As a result of the above requirements, the soul (all types) is the only entity that participates in ‘true’ life, i.e. it is the only entity in the universe one can argue is ‘really’ alive.²⁵¹ Every other entity that appears alive, e.g. plants, animals, and the human being, possess only the appearance of ‘life,’ such that upon the soul’s departure, these entities cease to live, and reassume their original inanimate natures.

(1.3.9) The *Nomoi*

In the *Nomoi*, Kleinias has been appointed the task of founding a new colony by the Kretans. The three principal interlocutors – Megillos, Kleinias, and the Athenian – take advantage of this opportunity, in order to discuss how one might go about instituting a *polis* that ensures the greatest amount of virtue for the greatest number of citizens (see for example 662b1-663e6).

The Law Regarding the Natural Death of an Ordinary Citizen of the Polis (12.958c7-960c1)

(959a1) ... τὰς δὲ προθέσεις πρώτον μὲν μὴ μακρότερον χρόνον ἔνδον γίνεσθαι τοῦ δηλοῦντος τὸν τε ἐκτεθνεῶτα καὶ τὸν ὄντως τεθνηκότα, εἴη δ’ ἂν σχεδόν, ὡς τὰνθρώπινα, μέτρον ἔχουσα τριταία πρὸς τὸ μνήμα ἐκφορά. (i) πείθεσθαι δ’ ἐστὶ τῷ νομοθέτῃ χρεῶν τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ λέγοντι ψυχὴν σώματος εἶναι τὸ πᾶν διαφέρουσιν, (ii) ἐν αὐτῷ τε τῷ βίῳ τὸ παρεχόμενον ἡμῶν ἕκαστον τοῦτ’ εἶναι μηδὲν ἀλλ’ ἢ τὴν ψυχὴν, (b) (iii) τὸ δὲ σῶμα ἰνδαλλόμενον ἡμῶν ἕκαστοις ἔπεσθαι, καὶ τελευτησάντων λέγεσθαι καλῶς εἶδωλα εἶναι τὰ τῶν νεκρῶν σώματα, (iv) τὸν δὲ ὄντα ἡμῶν ἕκαστον ὄντως, ἀθάνατον εἶναι ψυχὴν ἐπονομαζόμενον, παρὰ θεοῦς ἄλλους ἀπιέναι δώσοντα λόγον, καθάπερ ὁ νόμος ὁ πάτριος λέγει—τῷ μὲν γὰρ ἀγαθῷ θαρραλέον, τῷ δὲ κακῷ μάλα φοβερὸν—βοήθειαν τε αὐτῷ

²⁵¹ Irwin (1979): 244.

μήτινα μεγάλην εἶναι τετελευτηκότι· ζῶντι γὰρ ἔδει βοηθεῖν
πάντας τοὺς προσήκοντας, ὅπως ὅτι δικαιοτάτος ὦν καὶ
(c) ὀσιώτατος ἔζη τε ζῶν καὶ τελευτήσας ἀτιμώρητος ἂν κακῶν
ἀμαρτημάτων ἐγίγνετο τὸν μετὰ τὸν ἐνθάδε βίον. ἐκ δὲ
τούτων οὕτως ἐχόντων οὐδέποτε οἰκοφθορεῖν χρή, διαφε-
ρόντως νομίζοντα τὸν αὐτοῦ τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν τῶν σαρκῶν
ἄγκον θαπτόμενον, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν ὑὸν ἢ ἀδελφόν, ἢ ὄντινά
τις μάλισθ' ἠγεῖται ποθῶν θάπτειν, οἴχεσθαι περαίνοντα καὶ
ἐμπιμπλάντα τὴν αὐτοῦ μοῖραν, (v) τὸ δὲ παρὸν δεῖν εὖ ποιεῖν,
(d) τὰ μέτρια ἀναλίσκοντα ὡς εἰς ἄψυχον χθονίων βωμόν· ...

[LOEB translation:] “Ath.: ... And as to the laying-out of the corpse, first, it shall remain in the house only for such a time as is required to prove that the man is not merely in a faint, but really dead; and accordingly, in a normal case, the third will be the proper day for the carrying out to burial. As in other matters it is right to trust the lawgiver, so too we must believe him when he asserts that the soul is wholly superior to the body, and that in actual life what makes each of us to be what he is is nothing else than the soul, while the body is a semblance which attends on each of us, it being well said that the bodily corpses are images of the dead, but that which is the real self of each of us, and which we term the immortal soul, departs to the presence of other gods, there (as the ancestral law declares) to render its account,— a prospect to be faced with courage by the good, but with uttermost dread by the evil. But to him who is dead no great help can be given; it was when he was alive that all his relatives should have helped him, so that when living his life might have been as just and holy as possible, and when dead he might be free during the life which follows this life from the penalty for wickedness and sin. This being so, one ought never to spend extravagantly on the dead, through supposing that the carcase of flesh that is being buried is in the truest sense one’s own relative; but one ought rather to suppose that the real son or brother—or whoever else it may be that a man fancies himself to be mournfully burying—has departed in furtherance and fulfilment of his own destiny, and that it is our duty to make a wise use of what we have and to spend in moderation, as it were on a soulless altar to the gods below ...”

This particular law regards the burial rituals that are to be observed for the average citizen of the polis that has died a natural death, having led a life according to the laws. The Athenian has previously outlined the law and rituals that are to be observed by the polis in relation to (a) those who do not die natural deaths (e.g. those who are slain in battle); (b) those who did not live according to the laws of the polis (for example, those who were executed for a crime, or exiled); and (c) those who occupy prestigious positions in the governing of the polis, i.e. positions which require

one to be of high moral character, and possess a virtuous nature more generally, e.g. the Guardians of the Laws.

The Athenian gives a detailed definition of the citizen to whom this particular law is applicable (12.958c7-d3): a citizen born and brought up in the *polis*, who has reared children of their own; dealt fairly in their transactions; payed the appropriate penalty for any infractions; and died of natural causes. This is then followed by the actual burial rites themselves, in which he provides specifications regarding the size of a citizens' tomb, the appropriate period of mourning, the rites that must be followed, etc. (12.958d3-959a5). Subsequent to this explicatory section of the law, the Athenian provides an exegesis relating why it is that the law must be prescribed in this manner:

- (i) 'The soul possesses absolute superiority over the body' ('ψυχὴν σώματος εἶναι τὸ πᾶν διαφέρουσαν,' 12.959a5-6). This notion forms the underlying assumption of this particular law on burial rites. The soul is always superior to the body, and always possesses primacy over it. Hence, the care one shows to these entities must be proportional to their relative importance. By devoting an inordinate amount of care and attention to an inanimate body, the individual is not showing the appropriate reverence that belongs, by nature, to the soul.
- (ii) 'While I am alive I have nothing to thank for my individuality except my soul' ('ἐν αὐτῷ τε τῷ βίω τὸ παρεχόμενον ἡμῶν ἕκαστον τοῦτ' εἶναι μηδὲν ἀλλ' ἢ τὴν ψυχὴν,' 12.959a6-7). Everything the individual believes is indicative of the self, results from the presence of soul. Life itself is an intrinsic property of the soul, that belongs only temporarily to the human being. Once the soul departs from the body, it takes 'life' (and everything that once constituted the individual, e.g. intellect, memory, and perception) with it, and the body reassumes its natural state of inanimateness. Without the soul, the human body is of equal status to a rock – inanimate, perceptionless, devoid of feeling and intelligence.
- (iii) 'My body is just the likeness of myself that I carry round with me, this means we are quite right when we say a corpse 'looks like' the deceased' ('τὸ δὲ σῶμα ἰνδαλλόμενον ἡμῶν

ἐκάστοις ἔπεσθαι, καὶ τελευτησάντων λέγεσθαι καλῶς εἶδωλα εἶναι τὰ τῶν νεκρῶν σώματα,’ 12.959b1-3). This statement further reinforces the belief that the soul represents the ‘true’ individual, and participates in ‘true’ life.²⁵² Compare, for example, modern particle physics. Here, the human being is composed of a variety of atoms, which in turn are composed of a number of subatomic particles, e.g. quarks. It is the various combinations of these subatomic particles that constitute the ‘real’ human being. Yet, an individual does not perceive another as an amalgam of quarks; the ‘true’ appearance of the individual being imperceptible to the human eye. Instead, the individual perceives a ‘likeness’ representative of the specific combination of quarks that constitute a particular human being. Likewise, the soul represents the ‘true’ reality of the individual, but it is imperceptible to the human eye; consequently, one sees only a reflection of this ‘true’ reality – the human being.

- (iv) ‘Our real self - our immortal soul - departs, as the ancestral law declares, to the gods below to give an account of itself...’ (‘τὸν δὲ ὄντα ἡμῶν ἕκαστον ὄντως, ἀθάνατον εἶναι ψυχὴν ἐπονομαζόμενον, παρὰ θεοῦς ἄλλους ἀπιέναι δώσοντα λόγον...,’ 12.959b3-5 ff.).²⁵³
- (v) ‘It is our duty to make the best of what we have and spend only a moderate sum on the body, which we may now think of as a kind of altar to the gods below, now deserted by its spirit’ (‘τὸ δὲ παρὸν δεῖν εὖ ποιεῖν, τὰ μέτρια ἀναλίσκοντα ὡς εἰς ἄψυχον χθονίων βωμόν,’ 12.959c7-959d1). The Athenian has argued, above, that the human being is a mere ‘likeness’ of the ‘true’ self – the soul. As a result, once the divine and immortal soul has departed the body, the body reverts to being an inanimate entity, and should be treated accordingly.²⁵⁴ Yet, the body should not be disposed of entirely as though it were completely worthless, rather, although it is now inanimate, it once housed a divine entity – the soul – and it

²⁵² Irwin (1979): 244.

²⁵³ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the soul’s judgement and the ramifications therein.

²⁵⁴ Cf. *Phaidon* 115a-116a wherein Kriton asks Sokrates, prior to his execution, how he would like to be buried. Sokrates replies to Kriton with complete indifference, arguing that it is of no concern how his body is buried, since it is not the ‘real’ Sokrates; the ‘real’ Sokrates is that of the soul.

represents the likeness of that divine entity. The Athenian, therefore, suggests that the body should be thought of as akin to an altar to the departed soul.

(1.4) The Definition of 'Death'

(1.4.1) The *Apologia*

The understanding of death Sokrates proffers in the *Apologia* relies upon a twofold manner of argumentation. On the one hand it is an understanding based on inference and analogy. On the other hand, it consists of a delineation of a particular set of attributes believed to be characteristic of the condition of being dead. Both methods for defining death are exemplified in the description Sokrates' gives at the end of the dialogue, in which he relates two alternative possibilities regarding the afterlife (39e5-41c7). This he does, to some degree, in order to console his companions following his death sentence;²⁵⁵ but this serves, moreover, as a response to the common attitude directed toward him during his trial, which argues 'is he [i.e. Sokrates] not ashamed to have followed a way of life that now results in his death?' Death being understood in this sense as an absolute cessation of life, and therefore, 'bad.'

This common attitude embodies, at least for Sokrates, the popular understanding of death, emphasizing three aspects in particular:

- (i) Death is something bad;
- (ii) Death is something to be feared; and

²⁵⁵ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 242.'

(iii) One must do whatever is necessary to retain bodily existence.²⁵⁶

The above popular understanding of death relies, according to Sokrates, upon the underlying assumption that it is possible for one to possess some kind of knowledge regarding what occurs after death. In order to fear death, to label it something 'bad,' and exhort individuals to cherish life above all else, one must necessarily possess some conception of what occurs to the human being after death, and that this conception is 'true.' In terms of the Platonic Wager, such individuals have identified the same two options – either there is an afterlife or there is not – and participated in the game; but they have wagered that, since death is an evil, there can be no afterlife. In order to demonstrate to such individuals that they have made the incorrect wager, Sokrates attempts to refute the underlying assumption influencing their decision – the belief that death is an evil. This he does through an appeal to two of the so-called Sokratic paradoxes: (i) one does not desire evil; and (ii) one does not err willingly; effectively predicating this popular understanding of death on ignorance.²⁵⁷ For Sokrates:

- (a) The prevalent view prevents death as something bad, something to fear, and something to be avoided at all costs.
- (b) Given that one does not desire evil, and those who hold this view see death as an evil, so these individuals believe they are acting correctly in not desiring death.
- (c) These individuals, however, do not possess a complete knowledge of death, but are ignorant of the 'true' nature of death.
- (d) Therefore, it is illogical for these individuals to view death as an evil, and seek to avoid it, since they do not possess knowledge of these things.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Kallikles' sentiment in the *Gorgias* 492e that stones and corpses would be considered the happiest of all, were bodily existence considered to be an evil, and death a benefit.

²⁵⁷ Irwin (1977): 78-86; Irwin (1979): 143-147; and Kahn (1996): 132.

(e) Consequently, they may err in their estimation of death, and through their ignorance, desire what is evil; in this case, bodily existence.²⁵⁸

Although Sokrates directs a charge of ignorance at those who hold to the common understanding of death, he himself believes he does possess some knowledge regarding the ‘true’ nature of death. Namely, that death is the contrary of the popularly-held belief that it is neither an evil or to be feared; and since it is not an evil, one should not be so attached to bodily existence. Or, at the very least, one should not be overly certain of the categorization of death as an evil, as though it were verifiable fact. In order to prove his position, he utilizes both his *daimonion* and two alternate conceptions of the afterlife. This section will focus on the two possible afterlives Sokrates proffers in order to support his conception of death (see further 1.3.1, 2.2.4, and 3.2), which, as introduced in the Introduction section (C), Sokrates utilizes in order to establish the existence of a ‘Platonic Wager’; a wager that all individuals are forced to participate in, and demonstrates that a belief in the existence of an afterlife is statistically more beneficial than a belief in the contrary. Consequently, one must believe in the existence of an afterlife; and by extension, that death cannot be an evil.²⁵⁹

*The Preface (39e5-40c3)*²⁶⁰

(39e5) (1) ὑμῖν

40.

(α) γὰρ ὡς φίλοις οὖσιν ἐπιδειῖξαι ἐθέλω τὸ νυνὶ μοι συμβεβη-
κὸς τί ποτε νοεῖ. ἔμοι γάρ, ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί—ὕμᾱς γὰρ
δικαστὰς καλῶν ὀρθῶς ἂν καλοῖην—θαυμάσιόν τι γέγονεν.
ἢ γὰρ εἰωθυῖά μοι μαντικὴ ἢ τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐν μὲν τῷ
πρόσθεν χρόνῳ παντὶ πάνυ πυκνὴ ἀεὶ ἦν καὶ πάνυ ἐπὶ
σμικροῖς ἐναντιουμένη, εἴ τι μέλλοιμι μὴ ὀρθῶς πράξειν.

(2) νυνὶ δὲ συμβέβηκέ μοι ἅπερ ὀρᾶτε καὶ αὐτοί, (3) ταυτὶ ἄ γε δὴ

²⁵⁸ As Sokrates posits in the Platonic Wager, a belief that death is an evil, leads the individual to wager on the option that might cause the individual to focus on bodily pleasures, and commit acts of injustice detrimental to both themselves and others, since they choose the option with the most to lose, and little to gain.

²⁵⁹ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 237-238.

²⁶⁰ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 237-257.

οἰηθείη ἄν τις καὶ νομίζεται ἔσχατα κακῶν εἶναι· (4) ἐμοὶ δὲ
 (b) οὔτε ἐξιόντι ἔωθεν οἴκοθεν ἠναντιώθη τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον,
 οὔτε ἠνίκα ἀνέβαινον ἐνταυθοῖ ἐπὶ τὸ δικαστήριον, οὔτε ἐν
 τῷ λόγῳ οὐδαμοῦ μέλλοντί τι ἐρεῖν. καίτοι ἐν ἄλλοις λόγοις
 πολλαχοῦ δὴ με ἐπέσχε λέγοντα μεταξύ· (7) νῦν δὲ οὐδαμοῦ
 περὶ ταύτην τὴν πράξιν οὔτ' ἐν ἔργῳ οὐδενὶ οὔτ' ἐν λόγῳ
 ἠναντιώταί μοι. τί οὖν αἴτιον εἶναι ὑπολαμβάνω; (9) ἐγὼ
 ὑμῖν ἐρῶ· κινδυνεύει γάρ μοι τὸ συμβεβηκὸς τοῦτο ἀγαθὸν
 γεγονέναι, καὶ οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως ἡμεῖς ὀρθῶς ὑπολαμβάνομεν,
 (c) ὅσοι οἰόμεθα κακὸν εἶναι τὸ τεθνάναι. μέγα μοι τεκμήριον
 τούτου γέγονεν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐκ ἠναντιώθη ἄν μοι τὸ
 εἰωθὸς σημεῖον, εἰ μὴ τι ἔμελλον ἐγὼ ἀγαθὸν πράξειν.

[LOEB translation:] “You see I want to explain to you as my friends the meaning of what has now happened to me. You see, members of the jury—for in calling you members of the jury I would be giving you your rightful name—something remarkable has happened to me. My usual prophetic voice from my spiritual sign always on every occasion in the past used to come very frequently and opposed me even on quite trivial matters if I was about to do something wrong. But now things have happened to me that you can see for yourselves: things that one would think, and are considered to be the extreme of evil; but the god’s sign didn’t oppose me either when I left home at dawn or when I came here up into to court, or at any point in my speech when I was about to say something. Yet in other discussions in all sorts of places it stopped me in midspeech. But now in these proceedings it hasn’t opposed me anywhere in either word or action. What should I take to be the reason for this? I will tell you. You see there’s a probability that what has happened to me has turned out for the good, and those of us who think that death is a bad thing cannot be making a right assumption. I’ve had significant proof of this, for there’s no way my usual sign would not have opposed me, unless I was about to do something good.”

Socrates makes the statement that, conceivably, there are two alternate conceptions of the afterlife (‘δυσοῖν,’ 40c5). Regardless of which option is true, each of these conceptions demonstrate the veracity of his thesis that death is neither a bad, nor something to fear; and one should not attempt

to cling on to bodily existence at the expense of one's soul. This belief he predicates upon his own personal relationship with the divine, as expressed through his *daimonion*,²⁶¹ such that:

- (1) On all previous occasions, Sokrates' *daimonion* opposed him when he was about to commit a wrong (39e1-40a6).
- (2) Presently, Sokrates' has been found guilty at his trial, and been sentenced to death (40a7).
- (3) Death, according to the prevailing view, is the worst of all evils; an evil soon to be visited upon Sokrates (40a7-8).
- (4) Yet, at no point has Sokrates' *daimonion* opposed him (40a8-40b5).
- (5) The *daimonion* constitutes a personal link between Sokrates and the divine (40a4: for instance, "μοι μαντική ἢ τοῦ δαιμονίου" suggests it is a *daimonion* that belongs to Sokrates – "to me," "μοι").
- (6) Since the divine always act in accordance with the good, so the *daimonion* likewise acts consistently in accordance with what is good.
- (7) The failure of Sokrates' *daimonion* to act and prevent his death sentence, implies that Sokrates' death is consistent with the good (40b4-6).
- (8) Given the divine origin of this information, Sokrates' assigns to it the status of 'true' knowledge regarding the nature of death.²⁶²
- (9) Death, therefore, is neither an evil nor is it to be feared and despised, but it must be in accordance with the good (40b6-40c3).
- (10) Hence, the common desire to avoid death is akin to desiring what is contrary to the good, i.e. what is evil. This leads the individual to err, but to err unwillingly, since their actions arise from a position of ignorance regarding 'the truth.'

²⁶¹ Cf. *Apologia* 31c8-d1, 40a4-6, 40b2, 40c3-4, 41d6; *Euthydemos* 272e4; *Euthyphron* 3b5-7; *Phaidros* 242b8-9; *Politeia* 6.496c4. See further Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 106, 106n.100, 216n.7, 238-241, 243-245, 253; Reeve (1989): 69-70, 181; Irwin (1992): 53; Kahn (1996): 97; Weiss (1998): 16-17, 19; Rosen (1999): 199; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 141-143, 145-146, 174-175, 179.

²⁶² As Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 253 assert with regards to Sokrates' *daimonion*, 'the god does not lie to Socrates.'

If Sokrates believes his *daimonion* truly constitutes a connection with the divine, then his belief that death is not an evil, though reliant on a certain amount of inference, is ultimately presented as a form of revealed truth. One might argue that the two alternative forms of the afterlife Sokrates proffers below serve to provide logical proof of this particular understanding of death; and certainly, this appears to be Sokrates' own view. In other words, in order to justify a belief he already appears to hold, Sokrates establishes the Platonic Wager as though it were proof that death is not an evil, when, in actuality, it is circular in its reasoning. The Platonic Wager justifies the belief that death is not an evil, yet it is the belief that death is not an evil that leads to the establishment of the Wager. Consequently, Sokrates proffers these two alternatives under the initial assumption that death is not an evil.²⁶³

This foundational assumption Sokrates acquires via inference, utilizing his *daimonion's* action, or lack thereof, as confirmation of an initial intuition regarding the nature of death. It is only through the input of a divine source of knowledge that Sokrates feels able to arrive at the normative conclusion that death is not an evil, which then serves as the underlying premise of the two alternate afterlives.²⁶⁴ One may argue that this does not strictly constitute revealed truth, since the *daimonion* does not reveal anything directly, but only through lack of action. This is true enough, yet if the *daimonion* is understood to be a personal agent in itself, or even if it results from the agency of others (in this case, the divine), then its decision not to intervene constitutes a direct choice, either on its own behalf, or that of the divine. Thus, a failure to intervene functions as a direct exertion of the *daimonion's* agency, as it consciously decides not to intervene, which has a direct impact upon Sokrates and his understanding of death. The *daimonion* chooses to allow Sokrates to arrive at this conclusion, which, based upon Sokrates' understanding, indicates that his conclusions are in accordance with the good.

The First Conception of the Afterlife (40c5-40e4)

²⁶³ Rice (1998): 88.

²⁶⁴ Rice (1998): 12.

(40c5) (i) δυοῖν γὰρ θάτερόν ἐστιν τὸ τεθνάναι· ἢ γὰρ οἶον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν τεθνεῶτα, ἢ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολὴ τις τυγχάνει οὔσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῆ ψυχῆ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον. (ii) καὶ εἴτε δὴ μηδεμία αἴσθησις ἐστὶν ἀλλ’ (d) οἶον ὕπνος ἐπειδάν τις καθεύδων μηδ’ ὄναρ μηδὲν ὄρα, θαυμάσιον κέρδος ἂν εἴη ὁ θάνατος—ἐγὼ γὰρ ἂν οἶμαι, εἴ τινα ἐκλεξάμενον δέοι ταύτην τὴν νύκτα ἐν ᾗ οὔτω κατέδαρθεν ὥστε μηδὲ ὄναρ ἰδεῖν, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας τὰς τοῦ βίου τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ ἀντιπαραθέντα ταύτῃ τῆ νυκτὶ δέοι σκεψάμενον εἰπεῖν πόσας ἄμεινον καὶ ἥδιον ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας ταύτης τῆς νυκτὸς βεβίωκεν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ βίῳ, οἶμαι ἂν μὴ ὅτι ἰδιώτην τινά, ἀλλὰ τὸν μέγαν βασιλέα εὐαριθμη- (e) τους ἂν εὐρεῖν αὐτὸν ταύτας πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας— (iii) εἰ οὖν τοιοῦτον ὁ θάνατός ἐστιν, κέρδος ἔγωγος λέγω· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλείων ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται οὔτω δὴ εἶναι ἢ μία νύξ.

[LOEB translation:] “You see death is one of two things, for either it’s as if the dead person has no existence, and has no perception of anything, or according to what we’re told, it’s actually a change and removal of the soul from its place here to another place. And if there’s no sensation, but as in sleep, when someone while sleeping sees nothing, not even in a dream, then death would be a wonderful benefit. For I would think, if someone had to choose that night during which he slept so deeply as not even to dream, and compare all the rest of the days and nights of his life with this night and then after consideration say how many days and nights he had spent during his lifetime better and more pleasantly than this night, I think that not just a private citizen, but the Great King of Persia himself would find these easy to count up when set against the rest of his days and nights. If then this is what death is like, I say it is a benefit, for in that case the whole of time seems to be nothing more than a single night.”

I proffer that this particular conception of the afterlife may be broken down thus:

- (i) The dead are nothing and possess no perception of anything (40c5-7: “ἢ γὰρ οἶον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν τεθνεῶτα”).
- (ii) Death, according to this conception, is akin to a dreamless sleep, completely devoid of perception (40c9-40e2): “καὶ εἴτε δὴ μηδεμία αἴσθησις ἐστὶν ἀλλ’ οἶον

ὑπνος ἐπειδάν τις καθεύδων μηδ' ὄναρ μηδὲν ὄρα, θαυμάσιον κέρδος ἂν εἴη ὁ θάνατος," 40c9-d2.

- (iii) If death is like this, argues Sokrates, then it is a great advantage ("κέρδος," 40e2), since eternity would seem like one night ("καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλείων ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται οὕτω δὴ εἶναι ἢ μία νύξ," 40e3-4).²⁶⁵

At the beginning of this discussion, two motivations were given regarding Sokrates decision to proffer two alternate conceptions of the afterlife. The first was to serve as consolation to his companions, demonstrating how the popular conception of death does not conform to the 'true' nature of death.²⁶⁶ The second was to respond to the common attitude displayed towards him, which asks 'is he [i.e. Sokrates] not ashamed to have followed a way of life that now results in his death?' This particular conception of the afterlife fails to fulfil either purported purpose. If the popular understanding of death holds that death is an evil, and bodily existence should be cherished above all else, then the argument that the dead are nothing, only serves to reinforce this popular belief. This conception of the afterlife confers primacy upon bodily existence, since only in life can one experience anything, whether pleasure, pain, love, sight, thought, etc.

²⁶⁵ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 258-259. Brickhouse and Smith's assertion that 'Socrates does not assert dogmatically that senselessness is pleasant, he says only that it is pleasant by comparison to the experiences typically involved in normal life,' further supports the argument that Sokrates intends to direct the reader towards the acceptance of the second conception of the afterlife. In so doing, Sokrates encourages the reader to opt for the 'correct' choice in the Platonic Wager; the choice that ensures the greatest benefit for the participant – the belief in the Platonic conception of the afterlife, and the pursuit of the Socratic way of life. See also Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 176, and Weiss (1998): 30. Weiss argues that 'death cannot really harm a good man, harm being understood in its technical sense of causing injury or corruption to the soul.' If this is the case, then the dreamless sleep does involve harming the soul, even of the good man. Sokrates argues that the conception of death as a dreamless sleep entails the complete lack of perception, in a motionless body, for eternity. If the soul no longer perceives, it can no longer think; if it can no longer think, it no longer possesses knowledge. Moreover, its existence in a motionless body, suggests the soul loses its capacity to move, a characteristic even Thales supposedly believed to be inherent to soul (KRS 89, 90). If the soul no longer possesses the capacity to think or to move, then it is reasonable to conclude that the soul ceases to exist – i.e. the soul comes to harm. Or, the soul is trapped forever in the corpse, incapable of manifesting its inherent properties – i.e. the soul, once again, comes to harm. Therefore, it is unlikely that Sokrates expects the reader to adopt this conception of the afterlife as the truth, but rather it supports the notion that he directs the individual to the second conception of the afterlife – the one that confers the most benefit on the soul.

²⁶⁶ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 242; Weiss (1998): 30. Although, as argued above in the notion of a Platonic Wager, Weiss' argument that both conceptions of the afterlife ultimately aim only 'to lift the spirits of his unhappy supporters,' is perhaps too sceptical an analysis of Sokrates' aims.

Moreover, it does not provide any evidence for Sokrates' way of life being in any way preferable to any other. If the dead are nothing, and death is akin to an eternal, dreamless, and perceptionless sleep, then it makes no difference whatsoever whether one lives the life of Sokrates, the life of the tyrant, or the life of pleasure, since all will experience the 'great advantage' ('μεῖζον ἀγαθόν,' 40e6-7) of this type of death. Thus, Sokrates cannot accept this conception of the afterlife as a viable option in the wager, as regardless of which option one chooses, everybody 'wins,' and the wager is made null and void.

The Second Conception of the Afterlife (40c7-9, 40e4-41c7)

(40c7) ... (i) ἢ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει οὕσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῆ ψυχῆ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον.

...

(40e4) (ii) εἰ δ' αὖ οἷον ἀποδημησαί ἐστιν ὁ θάνατος ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ἐστιν τὰ λεγόμενα, ὡς ἄρα ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεώτες, τί μεῖζον ἀγαθόν τούτου εἴη ἂν, ὃ ἄνδρες δικασταί; εἰ γάρ τις 41.

(a) ἀφικόμενος εἰς Ἄιδου, ἀπαλλαγείς τουτωνὶ τῶν φασκόντων δικαστῶν εἶναι, εὐρήσει τοὺς ὡς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, οὔπερ καὶ λέγονται ἐκεῖ δικάζειν, Μίνως τε καὶ Ῥαδάμανθους καὶ Αἰακὸς καὶ Τριπτόλεμος καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσοι τῶν ἡμιθέων δίκαιοι ἐγένοντο ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν βίῳ, ἄρα φαύλη ἂν εἴη ἡ ἀποδημία;

(iii) ἢ αὖ Ὅρφεϊ συγγενέσθαι καὶ Μουσαίῳ καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ Ὀμήρῳ ἐπὶ πόσῳ ἂν τις δέξαιτ' ἂν ὑμῶν; ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ πολλάκις ἐθέλω τεθνάναι εἰ ταῦτ' ἐστιν ἀληθῆ. ἐπεὶ

(b) ἔμοιγε καὶ αὐτῷ θαυμαστὴ ἂν εἴη ἡ διατριβὴ αὐτόθι, (iv) ὁπότε ἐντύχοιμι Παλαμήδει καὶ Αἴαντι τῷ Τελαμῶνος καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος τῶν παλαιῶν διὰ κρίσιν ἄδικον τέθνηκεν, ἀντιπαρβάλλοντι τὰ ἑμαυτοῦ πάθη πρὸς τὰ ἐκείνων—ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι, οὐκ ἂν ἀηδὲς εἴη—καὶ δὴ τὸ μέγιστον, τοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐξετάζοντα

καὶ ἐρευνῶντα ὥσπερ τοὺς ἐνταῦθα διάγειν, τίς αὐτῶν σοφός
 ἐστὶν καὶ τίς οἶεται μὲν, ἔστιν δ' οὐ. ἐπὶ πόσῳ δ' ἂν τις,
 ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί, δέξαιτο ἐξετάσαι τὸν ἐπὶ Τροίαν ἀγαγόντα
 (c) τὴν πολλὴν στρατιάν ἢ Ὀδυσσέα ἢ Σίσυφον ἢ ἄλλους
 μυρίους ἂν τις εἴποι καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας, οἷς ἐκεῖ
 διαλέγεσθαι καὶ συνεῖναι καὶ ἐξετάζειν ἀμήχανον ἂν εἴη
 εὐδαιμονίας; (v) πάντως οὐ δήπου τούτου γε ἔνεκα οἱ ἐκεῖ
 ἀποκτείνουσι· τά τε γὰρ ἄλλα εὐδαιμονέστεροί εἰσιν οἱ ἐκεῖ
 τῶν ἐνθάδε, καὶ ἤδη τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἀθάνατοί εἰσιν, εἶπερ
 γε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀληθῆ.

[LOEB translation:] "... or according to what we're told, it's actually a change and removal of the soul from its place here to another place.

...

But if death is a kind of migration from here to another place, and what they say is true, that indeed all the dead are there, what greater good could there be than this, members of the jury? For if someone, after getting to Hades, having rid himself of these self-proclaimed jurors, will find real jurors, who also are said to judge cases there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus and others of the demigods who were just in their lives, would this be a bad transfer? Or again, to meet up with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer, what price would any of you pay for that? You see I'm willing to die many times over if this is the truth, bsince for myself spending time there would be wonderful, when I could meet Palamedes and Aias, Telemon's son, and any others of olden times who died as a result of an unjust judgment, and compare my experiences with theirs—in my view it would not be unpleasant—and what's more, the most important thing, I could go round, examine and inquire, just as I did here, who is wise and who thinks he is, but isn't. What price, members of the jury, would one pay to examine the leader of the great army against Troy, or Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or the countless others one could mention, men and women, to converse with whom there, and meet and examine them would be utmost happiness? At any rate, I don't suppose they put people to death there for doing this: in fact there are other reasons why they are more blessed there than those down here, not to mention that from then on they're immortal for the rest of time, if, that is, what is said is true."

This second account of the afterlife may be broken down thus:

- (i) The soul undergoes a transition and a change of home, from here to somewhere else – in this case, Hades (40c7-9).
- (ii) A judgement of the soul occurs, conducted by a set of 'true' judges, consisting of demigods who lived a life in accordance with justice (40e4-41a5).

- (iii) Here in Hades, one will find all those who have died. For example, Hesiodos and Homeros, Palamedes and Aias, Odysseus and Sisyphos (41a6-c4).
- (iv) The continued existence of the soul in the company of others affords the soul the opportunity to resume particular aspects of life characteristic of this world. For example, Sokrates believes that he will be able to continue to test and examine the people there, determining who among them is wise, and who claims to be wise, but is not (41b1-5; cf. 38a5-6 – ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ).
- (v) The souls remain in Hades for the rest of time, being immortal; and exist henceforth in a state of happiness (41c4-7, 41c9-d2).²⁶⁷

According to this conception, death is merely a transition for the soul – a change from one location to another. Here, the soul remains for eternity, being an immortal entity. Sokrates thus identifies a dual aspect to death: on the one hand, the soul is immortal, and so never experiences death; on the other hand, all living beings do appear to experience a state of existence known as ‘death.’ The form of death that belongs to living beings, according to Sokrates, is nothing more than the separation of the soul from the body, thereby dissolving the union that had existed up to that point and initially constituted the living being. For the soul, death involves both a return to an abode alike in nature to

²⁶⁷ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 259 argues that Sokrates’ second conception of the afterlife does not diverge from traditional stories regarding the afterlife. Yet, if one considers Homeros’ description of Hades in the *Odyssey* 11.51-635 one may see that the two are quite divergent in nature: (i) Sokrates’ judges are more numerous, at least for the present; (ii) Sisyphos in the *Odyssey* is tortured in Tartaros, whereas in Sokrates’ account he is Hades with the other good and just souls; (iii) the souls in the *Odyssey* do not possess self-awareness or intelligence except for Teiresias, whilst for Sokrates souls continue to converse and possess the capacity for intellectual discourse; and (iv) in the *Odyssey* Akhilles famously asserts he would rather be the lowliest slave than lord of the dead, whereas in Sokrates there is no suggestion that Hades is such a miserable place; indeed, this would refute Sokrates’ stated aim – to demonstrate that death is not an evil (at least for a good person). In Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 176-177, they concede that Sokrates’ second conception of the afterlife ‘is not exactly like any of the other afterlife stories that have come down to use from the ancient world.’ See also Weiss (1998): 36-37. However, Weiss (1998): 36n.72, proffers the idea that the ‘*Apologia* contains no hint death is the final release of the soul from the fetters of the body’; despite Sokrates’ clear statement that the second conception of death involves a relocation of the soul to another place apart from the body (40e4-41c7).

itself, but also a resumption of its natural state of existence, allowing it to re-manifest those properties intrinsic to it, e.g. immortality.²⁶⁸

From the point of view of the body, death likewise involves a resumption of its natural state of existence, as it returns to being an inanimate entity once the soul has departed; before eventually decomposing into its constituent elements. Employing a more holistic account of death, taking into account both the perspective of the soul and body, corresponds to both descriptions of the afterlife proffered by Sokrates. The first conception death as a perceptionless sleep describing the experience of death from the point of view of the body; whereas the second conception of death, describes the experience of the soul.

Unlike the previous conception of death, this version of the afterlife does respond to the two motivations that precipitated these two accounts of the afterlife, implying this version. First, Sokrates demonstrates to his companions that the popular conception of death is incorrect, since one arrives at people of like nature with oneself, and possesses the capacity to continue to test and examine the souls there (cf. *Apologia* 38a5-6). Moreover, the soul's immortality ensures that one may experience this kind of existence, in complete happiness for all time. Death, therefore, cannot be an evil, nor is it something to be feared; consequently, it is unnecessary to cherish greatly bodily existence, since the disembodied existence of the soul far surpasses this in nature.

Finally, this version of the afterlife predicates the attainment of future happiness, on the judgement of the soul, suggesting that only those souls that have lived a life in accordance with justice may achieve this form of existence. This future happiness does not apply to all souls, but only those who have lived their life in a particular manner. Sokrates suggests that the life he has led thus far conforms to the manner of life one must live in order to be adjudged worthy by the 'true' judges, and attain this everlasting happiness after death.²⁶⁹ In this way, Sokrates establishes that one should wager the existence of a positive afterlife, necessitating one to live a life in accordance with justice

²⁶⁸ Cf. *Kriton* 43d7-44b4; *Phaidros* 246a-e; Johansen (2004): 19.

²⁶⁹ Reeve (1989): 152, 181.

and the good, i.e. the Sokratic way of life. Accordingly, this provides a final *apologia* for the Sokratic way of life, showing that regardless of whether there is or is not an afterlife, one will derive more benefit from living the Sokratic way of life, than living any other manner of life. Sokrates is, therefore, justified in living the life he has lived, and performing the actions he has performed.

(1.4.2) The *Gorgias*

The concluding section consists of an eschatological account provided by Sokrates to Kallikles, possessing the stated purpose of demonstrating that (a) one should live a virtuous and just life, and (b) acting in an unjust manner is the worst thing one can do, regardless of the situation (522e1-4, 527a5-527e7).²⁷⁰ Consequently, Sokrates emphasizes that part of the afterlife most dependent upon the type of life one has led – the judgement of the soul.²⁷¹ Despite this focus on the details of the judgement, Sokrates includes two particular aspects of importance for the present discussion. First, he provides an explicit definition of death, as it applies to the individual; and second, he introduces the notion of corrective punishment.

In the second conception of the afterlife given in the *Apologia* (40e4-41c7), Sokrates provides a description of the kind of life that awaits the just soul, concluding that death cannot be an evil. Through the notion of corrective punishment, Sokrates completes the account of the afterlife begun in the *Apologia*, providing the kind of life that awaits the unjust soul, concluding, likewise, that death cannot be an evil. In the case of the just soul, this is so as death entails an eternity of happiness.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ Cf. *Menon* 89a3.

²⁷¹ See further Chapter 2.4.4 on the judgement of the soul in the *Gorgias*.

²⁷² Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 177. Brickhouse and Smith argue that Sokrates, in the *Apologia*, only considers the afterlife from the point of view of the good and just human being: 'let us be clear that Sokrates is not here considering what might be the afterlife fates of evil or unjust human beings.' This thesis argues that the *Gorgias* completes the account of the afterlife Sokrates began in the *Apologia*, by describing the fates of the evil or unjust human being. Such must be the case, given that the *Gorgias*' account of the afterlife focuses on establishing the 'threat' of the true judge, who always knows whether a soul is good or bad; no soul being capable of escaping their adjudication. Sokrates then proceeds to describe the fate of the soul after its

For the unjust soul, death consists of a cleansing and purification, removing the pollution and deformities suffered by the soul through the individual's unjust actions. This serves to assist the unjust soul in returning to its natural state of existence, as a pure and divine entity, and to 'cure' it of the ignorance that led to its initial perpetration of injustice.²⁷³

For the purposes of the present discussion, one may divide this eschatological account into two specific parts: the first part (523a1-524a7) relates events of the distant past, and outlines how and why the present laws governing the disembodied soul came into existence. The second part of the account, 524b8-527a4, consists of a Sokratic analysis of the first part, as he applies the laws instituted in the first, in order to describe how and why the afterlife operates in the present fashion. It is this second part of this account that forms the focus of this discussion.

Here, in the second part of Sokrates' account, he provides the first explicit definition of death. In this case, death is defined as 'nothing other than the separation of two entities – of the soul and the body - from each other' ('οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ δυοῖν πραγμάτων διάλυσιν, τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ σώματος, ἀπ' ἀλλήλων,' 524b2-4). From this particular definition, one may draw the following conclusions:

- (a) The body and the soul are understood to be two distinct and independent entities, each possessing their own individual and unique natures.
- (b) The living being, therefore, results from the union between these two entities.

judgement, dedicating most of this description to the fate of the unjust soul – in this case, the curable and incurable souls – with only a proportionally small amount of time being given to the fate of the just soul. Presumably, this is because one may just read the second conception of the afterlife in the *Apologia*. On the other hand, it may be that Sokrates possesses a different motive – to justify the Sokratic way of life; but rather than focus on the benefits associated with the living of such a life (as in the *Apologia*), he focuses on the harm that befalls all those who choose not to live such a life (the curable and incurable souls in the *Gorgias*). In this way, the *Apologia* considers the Platonic Wager by detailing the benefits that await those who opt for the correct choice, whereas the *Gorgias* suggests the evils that await those who opt for the incorrect choice. Either way, both direct the reader to opt for the correct choice and, accordingly, live the Sokratic way of life. See further Kahn (1996): 51-52, 126, who similarly argues that the *Gorgias* functions as an apology for the Sokratic way of life. Morgan (1990): 72, on the other hand, posits that 'the *Gorgias* is intended to comfort the just.' Whilst this may be a secondary function of the account, since the just may read the account and feel vindicated in their mode of life, given the fates of the curable and incurable soul; the main purpose of the account is to convince the ignorant, e.g. Kallikles, that one should believe in the Platonic Wager, and opt for the Sokratic way of life, lest some great evil befall them in the future.

²⁷³ See further Chapter 2.4.4. Johansen (2004): 19.

- (c) Life, however, is an intrinsic property of the soul (see further Chapter 1.3 above), and so upon the soul's departure from the body, it carries with it those properties inherent to its nature.
- (d) Consequently, as the soul departs from the body, so does life.
- (e) Death is, therefore, the separation of the soul from the body.
- (f) According to this definition, death is a purely human construct; for the soul is immortal and so never experiences death. Likewise, the body is by nature inanimate, and so it too never experiences death as its natural lot, as it never experiences life in order to suffer death. Death belongs only to the union that arises from the combination of body and soul, i.e. the living being.²⁷⁴

Although death appears to belong to the living being, alone, in the *Gorgias*, it does not necessarily constitute the cessation of the personal identity of that living being. The soul, according to Sokrates, possesses the sum of all the knowledge, experiences, and memories originating from its period of incarnation – i.e. that time in which it was in union with the body. Based on this understanding of the soul, the soul represents, in this case, the 'true' self, and it is an examination of this 'true' self that forms the basis of the subsequent judgement of the soul (524d3-525a6, hence Sokrates statement in the *Apologia* 38a5-6, that the unexamined life is not worth living). Death, therefore, does not entail the complete dissolution of the personal identity of the living being, at least in the *Gorgias*. In the *Gorgias*, the soul must retain enough of its embodied personal identity in order that a judgement may occur in the afterlife, and since the soul appears to stay in Hades for all time, so some aspect of the soul's embodied personal identity must remain.²⁷⁵ Indeed, death cannot entail

²⁷⁴ In this way, death does not belong to the soul – it being an immortal entity – nor does it belong to the body – it being an inanimate entity by nature. Rather, death belongs only to that entity, (the living being), that results from the union of soul and body, the suggestion being that the living being is, in some sense, unnatural; death existing, therefore, to return both the soul and the body to their natural states of existence, and restore order in the universe.

²⁷⁵ Later, (see further Chapter 3), Plato's conception of reincarnation will necessitate the complete cessation of this personal identity prior to reincarnation, in order that a completely new and separate individual may be created, securing a wholly fair judgement for all individuals; see also Bostock (1999): 418-420. For instance, were personal identity to continue from incarnation to incarnation, then each individual would not be judged

the immediate cessation of personal identity, as this would invalidate the judgement of the soul Sokrates describes subsequently (see further Chapter 2):

- (i) Judgement requires the existence of individuation – one soul must be distinguishable from another.
- (ii) Individuation corresponds to personal identity, which secures a uniqueness for each soul.
- (iii) Predicating this individuation on a personal element, gained only through its period of embodiment, secures for the soul its status as the ‘true’ self – the sum of every decision, memory, perception, and piece of knowledge that occurred during its period of incarnation.
- (iv) It is the soul’s status as the ‘true’ self that permits the soul to be judged as a free agent, possessing complete responsibility for its own actions, thereby validating the complete fairness Sokrates assigns to the judgement.²⁷⁶
- (v) Were there a break in the continuity of this personal identity, this would create a period of time in which the soul does not represent the ‘true’ self. Consequently, any choices made in this period of discontinuity (and any effects arising therein), cannot be said to represent those of the individual. Hence, the soul cannot be taken as a ‘true’ exemplification of the individual, and so the judgement loses its completely fair and just nature.

The necessary continuance of personal identity allows the individual to participate, at least to a certain degree, in immortality, since the soul is immortal (see Chapter 1.3), and so should continue to possess this identity for the remainder of its existence.²⁷⁷ In subsequent dialogues, however,

solely on the actions of the present incarnation, but on the sum actions of all incarnations thus far. Thus, if a just individual, e.g. Sokrates, happened to have been a great tyrant in a prior incarnation, that individual would be judged not on their own just actions in the present, but also on the unjust actions of their prior incarnation as a tyrant. This would invalidate the notion that a just individual may not come to harm in death (*Apologia* 41c-d), since the just individual would only avoid harm in death, if they had the good fortune to have had no unjust incarnations in the past. In other words, only through random chance could the just individual avoid harm in death, which negates Timaios’ claim (see Chapters 1.3.8, 1.4.8, and 3.8.1) that the universe, and everything therein, was created by a divine, ordering intelligence

²⁷⁶ McPherran (2006): 258.

²⁷⁷ The *Gorgias*, however, introduces further the notion of curative punishment in Hades for a particular class of unjust soul (cf. Chapter 2.4.4). If a soul is adjudged worthy of curative punishment, it must necessarily be cured of something. In this case, it is being cured of the ignorance that led to it committing unjust actions, as

Sokrates will introduce the notion of reincarnation – the soul’s incarnation in a number of different bodies. This creates a situation in which the soul partakes in a number of different bodily unions, thereby creating a number of different individuals. In order to ensure the judgement of the soul retains its fair and just nature, it is necessary for a complete termination of the soul’s previous personal identity between each period of incarnation (see Chapter 3). This final cessation of the soul’s prior personal identity, results in the absolute death of that individual, but the soul’s immortality ensures its deliverance from such a fate.

(1.4.3) The *Lakhes*

Sokrates seeks to develop a further aspect of death, which posits that for some individuals it is better to suffer death than to continue living (195c3-196a3, *Gorgias*, 511c4-512d8).²⁷⁸ If Sokrates can demonstrate that this is indeed the case, this will lend further credence to an understanding of the ‘true’ nature of death, whereby death constitutes a good for all souls. In this particular case, Sokrates’ argument relies upon the following presuppositions (established in the *Gorgias*, Chapter 1.4.2, above):

- (i) Death is the separation of the soul from the body.
- (ii) The soul undergoes a judgement subsequent to this separation.
- (iii) The judges categorize the soul as either ‘just’ or ‘unjust.’
- (iv) The ‘just’ soul will experience reward.

well as the effects of this injustice on the soul. Hence, the soul’s possession of an unchanged personal identity, for all time, appears applicable only to the just soul; the curable soul, for example, must experience some kind of change over time. As the curable soul is cured of its ignorance, the arrangement of the soul must change to reflect this reduced amount of ignorance, thereby altering the personal identity the soul possessed when it arrived in Hades. Were this not the case, one would have to ask why are the curable souls given the designation ‘curable,’ and what exactly are they being cured of? Cf. the Ship of Theseus though experiment, which asks one to consider whether an entity that has had all of its constituents replaced remains, fundamentally, the same object.

²⁷⁸ *Kriton* 46e-48b. Irwin (1979): 143-147; Kahn (1996): 132.

- (v) The ‘unjust’ soul will experience corrective punishment; unless it has been classified ‘incurable,’ in which case it will act as a deterrent for other souls.
- (vi) Regardless, death appears to constitute a purification for the unjust soul.
- (vii) Therefore, one might conclude that it is better for one who possesses an unjust soul to die, and undergo the appropriate punishment, in order that the soul might be cleansed of its injustice.²⁷⁹

Sokrates conducts his discussion of this aspect of death, with a consideration of the wisdom, or knowledge, that belongs to the doctor (195c3-196a3):

(195c) ΣΩ. Τί δοκεῖ Λάχης λέγειν, ὦ Νικία; ἔοικεν μέντοι λέγειν τι.

ΝΙ. Καὶ γὰρ λέγει γέ τι, οὐ μέντοι ἀληθές γε.

ΣΩ. Πῶς δὴ;

ΝΙ. Ὅτι οἶεται τοὺς ἰατροὺς πλέον τι εἰδέναι περὶ τοὺς κάμνοντας ἢ τὸ ὑγιεινὸν φεῖπειν οἷόν τε καὶ νοσῶδες. οἱ δὲ δήπου τοσοῦτον μόνον ἴσασιν· εἰ δὲ δεινὸν τῷ τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ ὑγιαίνειν μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ κάμνειν, ἠγῆ σὺ τουτί, ὦ Λάχης, τοὺς ἰατροὺς ἐπίστασθαι; ἢ οὐ πολλοῖς οἶει ἐκ τῆς νόσου ἄμεινον εἶναι μὴ ἀναστῆναι ἢ ἀναστῆναι; τοῦτο γὰρ εἰπέ·
(d) σὺ πᾶσι φῆς ἄμεινον εἶναι ζῆν καὶ οὐ πολλοῖς κρεῖττον τεθνάναι;

ΛΑ. Οἶμαι ἔγωγε τοῦτό γε.

ΝΙ. Οἷς οὖν τεθνάναι λυσιτελεῖ, ταῦτά οἶει δεινὰ εἶναι καὶ οἷς ζῆν;

ΛΑ. Οὐκ ἔγωγε.

ΝΙ. Ἀλλὰ τοῦτο δὴ σὺ δίδως τοῖς ἰατροῖς γινώσκειν ἢ ἄλλῳ τινὶ δημιουργῷ πλην τῶ τῶν δεινῶν καὶ μὴ δεινῶν ἐπιστήμονι, ὃν ἐγὼ ἀνδρεῖον καλῶ;

ΣΩ. Κατανοεῖς, ὦ Λάχης, ὅτι λέγει;

²⁷⁹ Cf. *Gorgias* 486d2-488b1; *Nomoi*, 12.958c7-960c1; and the *Sophistes*, 226d9-231b8.

(e) ΛΑ. Ἐγωγε, ὅτι γε τοὺς μάντις καλεῖ τοὺς ἀνδρείους·
τίς γὰρ δὴ ἄλλος εἴσεται ὅτῳ ἄμεινον ζῆν ἢ τεθνάναι;
καίτοι σύ, ὦ Νικία, πότερον ὁμολογεῖς μάντις εἶναι ἢ οὔτε
μάντις οὔτε ἀνδρεῖος;

ΝΙ. Τί δέ; μάντει αὖ οἶει προσήκει τὰ δεινὰ γινώσκειν
καὶ τὰ θαρραλέα;

ΛΑ. Ἐγωγε· τίτι γὰρ ἄλλῳ;

ΝΙ. Ὡς ἐγὼ λέγω πολὺ μᾶλλον, ὦ βέλτιστε· ἐπεὶ
μάντιν γε τὰ σημεῖα μόνον δεῖ γινώσκειν τῶν ἐσομένων,
εἴτε τῷ θάνατος εἴτε νόσος εἴτε ἀποβολὴ χρημάτων ἔσται,
196.

(a) εἴτε νίκη εἴτε ἥττα ἢ πολέμου ἢ καὶ ἄλλης τινὸς ἀγωνίας·
ὅτι δέ τῳ ἄμεινον τούτων ἢ παθεῖν ἢ μὴ παθεῖν, τί μᾶλλον
μάντει προσήκει κρῖναι ἢ ἄλλῳ ὁτῶοῦν;

[LOEB translation:] “Soc.: What is Laches saying, in your opinion, Nicias? There does seem to be something in it.

Nic. Yes, there is something, only it is not true.

Soc. How so?

Nic. Because he thinks that doctors know something more, in treating sick persons, than how to tell what is healthy and what diseased. This, I imagine, is all that they know: but to tell whether health itself is to be dreaded by anyone rather than sickness,—do you suppose, Laches, that this is within a doctor’s knowledge? Do you not think that for many it is better that they should never arise from their bed of sickness? Pray tell me, do you say that in every case it is better to live? Is it not often preferable to be dead?

Lach. I do think that is so.

Nic. And do you think that the same things are to be dreaded by those who were better dead, as by those who had better live?

Lach. No, I do not.

Nic. Well, do you attribute the judgement of this matter to doctors or to any other skilled worker except him who has knowledge of what is to be dreaded and what is not—the man whom I call courageous?

Soc. Do you comprehend his meaning, Laches? lach. I do: it seems to be the seers whom he calls the courageous: for who else can know for which of us it is better to be alive than dead? And yet, Nicias, do you avow yourself to be a seer, or to be neither a seer nor courageous?

Nic. What! Is it now a seer, think you, who has the gift of judging what is to be dreaded and what to be dared?

Lach. That is my view: who else could it be?

Nic. Much rather the man of whom I speak, my dear sir: for the seer's business is to judge only the signs of what is yet to come—whether a man is to meet with death or disease or loss of property, or victory or defeat in war or some other contest; but what is better among these things for a man to suffer or avoid suffering, can surely be no more for a seer to decide than for anyone else in the world.”

Nikias, one of Sokrates' interlocutors, argues that the knowledge of the doctor amounts to nothing more than the ability to describe health and disease (195c7-d2). The doctor, for Nikias, is able to

- (i) recognize and describe symptoms of a disease;
- (ii) suggest particular cures for this disease;
- (iii) and even identify certain causes for this disease.

However, the doctor is unable to discern whether it is in the individual's interest to recover from this illness, or whether it is more beneficial for this individual to succumb to death (195d4-9; cf. *Gorgias*, 486d2-488b1). The doctor's inability to possess such knowledge lies, for Sokrates, in the doctor's exclusion of the soul from his or her examination, so that they focus, solely, on bodily health.²⁸⁰ Yet, even their focus on bodily health extends only to the short term, the doctor being equally unaware of the long-term effects of a recovery on a particular individual.

For example, an individual might suffer a serious illness, and experience a full recovery; but then proceeds to commit an equally serious crime, e.g. murder, leading to their execution. From a bodily perspective, in the short term, the individual underwent a full recovery, benefitting from an alleviation of their bodily pain. In the longer term, however, the individual suffers pain of an extent even greater than that during their illness, as they are executed. Moreover, from a psychic perspective, the individual recovers from their bodily illness only to commit a greater act of injustice, causing an analogous amount of pollution in the soul. Consequently, it would have been more beneficial for this individual to die at the time of their illness. If they had died, their soul would have

²⁸⁰ Cf. *Protagoras* 324e-325c.

travelled to the judgement, free of the pollution arising from their subsequent act of injustice; in addition to exempting them from the bodily pain of execution. Yet, the doctor, possessing no knowledge of these things, deemed such an individual not worthy of death at the time of their illness, ultimately causing them greater harm than benefit.

Alternatively, an individual might have a disease that leads to the loss of a limb, and so, upon recovery, they are unable to live their life as before. Although their recovery has caused them additional difficulties with respect to their bodily existence, the loss of a bodily limb does not affect the wellbeing of their soul. On the contrary, the psychic health of such an individual is unaffected by their bodily disability, unless they choose to let it, e.g. through the exploitation of their bodily suffering for personal gain. The doctor (of classical Athens), however, is likely to conclude that for such an individual, life is not worth living with such a bodily disability (cf. 195e1-196a3). Although the doctor considers the long term impact of the individual's recovery more than in the above example, they continue to neglect the wellbeing of the soul. In this particular case, the doctor does not necessarily harm the individual by letting them die, since the individual's soul (whether just or unjust) will benefit regardless. However, if this individual possessed a just soul, then the doctor would be committing an injustice and harming their own soul in precipitating the death of a just individual, owing to their own ignorance of the nature of the soul.²⁸¹

(1.4.4) The *Menon*

In order to obtain a complete understanding of death, it is necessary to consider briefly the concept of reincarnation, which Sokrates introduces here in the *Menon*. As reincarnation forms the basis of chapter 3, this discussion will attempt to remain brief so as to avoid any unnecessary repetition. In

²⁸¹ Cf. the Sokratic paradox that one does not err willingly (*Gorgias* 466a4-468e2); the doctor errs through ignorance. Irwin (1979): 143-147; Kahn (1996): 132.

many respects, reincarnation reinforces what Sokrates argues in prior dialogues regarding the nature of death. In particular, reincarnation entails:

- (1) The ultimate expression of dualism, a notion predicated on the belief that soul and body are necessarily two distinct and separate entities.
- (2) A definition of the living being as the combination of body and soul, and thus a definition of death as the dissolution of this union.
- (3) Further support for the existence of a moral component to death; and
- (4) The need to consider death from multiple perspectives: the psychic and the bodily; the ephemeral and the eternal.

Accordingly, Sokrates presents the following description of reincarnation (81a10-e2):

- (81a10) ΣΩ. Οἱ μὲν λέγοντές εἰσι τῶν ἱερέων τε καὶ τῶν ἱερειῶν ὅσοις μεμέληκε περὶ ὧν μεταχειρίζονται λόγον οἷοις τ' εἶναι
- (b) διδόναι· λέγει δὲ καὶ Πίνδαρος καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ὅσοι θεοὶ εἰσιν· ἃ δὲ λέγουσιν, ταυτί ἐστιν· ἀλλὰ σκόπει εἴ σοι δοκοῦσιν ἀληθῆ λέγειν. (i) φασὶ γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι ἀθάνατον, (ii) καὶ τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν—ὃ δὲ ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι—(iii) τοτὲ δὲ πάλιν γίνεσθαι, (iv) ἀπόλλυσθαι δ' οὐδέποτε· (v) δεῖν δὲ διὰ ταῦτα ὡς ὀσιώτατα διαβιώναι τὸν βίον· οἷσιν γὰρ ἄν—
- (b7) Φερσεφόνα ποινὰν παλαιοῦ πένθεος δέξεται, εἰς τὸν ὑπερθεὸν ἄλιον κείνων ἐνάτω ἔτει ἀνδιδοῖ ψυχὰς πάλιν,
- (c) ἐκ τᾶν βασιλῆες ἀγαυοὶ καὶ σθένει κραιπνοὶ σοφία τε μέγιστοι ἄνδρες αὔξοντ'· ἐς δὲ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἥρωες ἀγνοὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπων καλεῦνται.
- (c4) Ἄτε οὖν ἡ ψυχὴ ἀθάνατός τε οὔσα καὶ πολλάκις γεγонуῖα, καὶ ἐωρακυῖα καὶ τὰ ἐνθάδε καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἄιδου καὶ πάντα χρήματα, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτι οὐ μεμάθηκεν· ὥστε οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν

καὶ περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ περὶ ἄλλων οἷόν τ' εἶναι αὐτὴν ἀναμνη-
 σθῆναι, ἃ γε καὶ πρότερον ἠπίστατο. ἅτε γὰρ τῆς φύσεως
 (d) ἀπάσης συγγενοῦς οὔσης, καὶ μεμαθηκυίας τῆς ψυχῆς ἅπαντα,
 οὐδὲν κωλύει ἔν μόνον ἀναμνησθέντα—ὃ δὴ μάθησιν καλοῦσιν
 ἄνθρωποι—τᾶλλα πάντα αὐτὸν ἀνευρεῖν, ἐάν τις ἀνδρεῖος ᾗ
 καὶ μὴ ἀποκάμνη ζητῶν· τὸ γὰρ ζητεῖν ἄρα καὶ τὸ μανθάνειν
 ἀνάμνησις ὅλον ἐστίν. οὐκ οὖν δεῖ πείθεσθαι τοῦτω τῷ
 ἐριστικῷ λόγῳ· οὗτος μὲν γὰρ ἂν ἡμᾶς ἀργοὺς ποιήσειεν
 καὶ ἔστιν τοῖς μαλακοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡδὺς ἀκοῦσαι, ὅδε
 (e) δὲ ἐργατικούς τε καὶ ζητητικούς ποιεῖ· ὃ ἔγω πιστεύων
 ἀληθεῖ εἶναι ἐθέλω μετὰ σοῦ ζητεῖν ἀρετὴ ὅτι ἐστίν.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. They were certain priests and priestesses who have studied so as to be able to give a reasoned account of their ministry; and Pindar also and many another poet of heavenly gifts. As to their words, they are these: mark now, if you judge them to be true. They say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time comes to an end, which is called dying, and at another is born again, but never perishes. Consequently one ought to live all one’s life in the utmost holiness. For from whomsoever Persephone shall accept requital for ancient wrong, the souls of these she restores in the ninth year to the upper sun again; from them arise glorious kings and men of splendid might and surpassing wisdom, and for all remaining time are they called holy heroes amongst mankind.”

“Seeing then that the soul is immortal and has been born many times, and has beheld all things both in this world and in the nether realms, she has acquired knowledge of all and everything; so that it is no wonder that she should be able to recollect all that she knew before about virtue and other things. For as all nature is akin, and the soul has learned all things, there is no reason why we should not, by remembering but one single thing—an act which men call learning—discover everything else, if we have courage and faint not in the search; since, it would seem, research and learning are wholly recollection. So we must not hearken to that captious argument: it would make us idle, and is pleasing only to the indolent ear, whereas the other makes us energetic and inquiring. Putting my trust in its truth, I am ready to inquire with you into the nature of virtue.”

- (i) The soul of the human being is immortal (‘τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι ἀθάνατον,’ 81b3-4).
- (ii) At times it comes to an end, which they call 'to die' (‘τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν—ὃ δὴ ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι,’ 81b4-5);
- (iii) At times it is reborn (‘τοτὲ δὲ πάλιν γίνεσθαι,’ 81b5);
- (iv) But it is never destroyed (‘ἀπόλλυσθαι δ’ οὐδέποτε,’ 81b5-6).

(v) So, one must live their life as piously as possible (‘δεῖν δὴ διὰ ταῦτα ὡς ὀσιώτατα διαβιώναι τὸν βίον,’ 81b6-7).

Sokrates identifies two aspects to death; one pertaining to the soul and the other to the body. The individual, however, is the union of both body and soul; and so an understanding of both these aspects is necessary in order to provide a complete understanding of the nature of death, as it relates to the individual. From a psychic perspective, death does not exist. The soul is an immortal entity (ἀθάνατον, 81b4), and as such it can never admit of death.²⁸² The body is, by its own nature, an inanimate entity, i.e. an entity devoid of life. Consequently, a body left in its natural state of inanimateness, similarly fails to experience death, as it never possessed a life to lose. For instance, a rock is a body that exists, always, in its natural state of inanimateness, as the rock’s body does not possess the capacity to combine with soul effecting a living being. The rock, therefore, never experiences death.

Although the two entities – soul and body – do not both experience death individually, it is clear that their composite – the human being – does experience ‘death.’ Death, therefore, is to some extent a concept predicated on the existence of the living; without the living being, death cannot exist:

- (1) The living being is a composite entity resulting from the union of body and soul.
- (2) Without the soul’s presence in the body; the individual does not exist, and the body retains its natural state of inanimateness.
- (3) The soul’s presence, however, endows the once inanimate body with animation.
- (4) Consequently, the body acquires new properties, e.g. intellect, memory, and perception; and new functions, particularly all of the biological processes associated with the animation, e.g. breathing.

²⁸² Cf. *Timaios* 90b-c, in which Timaios suggests that the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul are mortal, and so experience death; only the reasoning part of the soul appears to be immortal, and so partake of the divine type of Being. See also Sedley (2003): 38.

(5) This creates an entity that participates fully in neither the nature of the body nor the soul, and so acquires a new name: the living being.

(6) Death for the living being is thereby equivalent to the soul's departure from the body, i.e. the dissolution of the union that initially created the living being (81b3-6).²⁸³

Death results, in this case, from the unique composite nature of the living being, it being neither fully mortal (allowing for the body to experience life for a certain amount of time), nor fully immortal (thereby preventing the body from experiencing life for all time). Subsequent to this separation, which human beings call 'death' (81b4-5), both the body and the soul resume their natural states of inanimateness and immortality, respectively. In order to demonstrate that properties such as immortality are indeed intrinsic to the soul, Sokrates utilizes the notion of reincarnation, showing that the soul must continue to possess these properties for all time, as evidenced by its ability to induce these properties, including life, in subsequent bodies.²⁸⁴

(1.4.5) The *Phaidon*

On the occasion of Sokrates' final moments before his (im)pending execution, he takes the opportunity to offer his companions a second '*apologia*' (63e8-64a3); one he hopes will be more convincing than the first one he gave at his trial (the *Apologia*):

(63e8) Ἔα αὐτόν, ἔφη. ἀλλ' ὑμῖν δὴ τοῖς δικασταῖς βούλομαι
ἤδη τὸν λόγον ἀποδοῦναι, ὥς μοι φαίνεται εἰκότως ἀνὴρ τῷ
ὄντι ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διατρίψας τὸν βίον θαρρεῖν μέλλων

²⁸³ In the *Timaios*, Timaios argues that the Demiourgos combines the Same with the Different in order to create soul. However, given the opposing natures of the Same and the Different, a great deal of force was needed to combine the two, and thereby create the soul. (*Timaios* 35a-b). Likewise, the individual is the combination of two entities with opposing natures – body and soul – but whereas the soul is able to contain these contraries indefinitely, the individual cannot not, and there comes a point when the two contraries 'repel' each other, precipitating the death of the individual.

²⁸⁴ See further Chapter 3 on reincarnation.

64.

(α) ἀποθανεῖσθαι καὶ εὐελπὶς εἶναι ἐκεῖ μέγιστα οἴσεσθαι ἀγαθὰ
ἐπειδὴν τελευτήσῃ. πῶς ἂν οὖν δὴ τοῦθ' οὕτως ἔχοι, ὦ
Σιμμία τε καὶ Κέβης, ἐγὼ πειράσομαι φράσαι.

[LOEB translation:] ““Never mind him,” he said. “But right now with you as the jury I want to deliver my argument that it seems reasonable that a man who really has spent his life on philosophy is steadfast when he is about to die and optimistic that he’ll be rewarded with the greatest of good things in the world to come when he dies. So how this may in fact be so, Simmias and Cebes, I’ll try to explain.”

As in the *Apologia*, so in the *Phaidon*, Sokrates seeks to defend the manner in which he has led his life, including his unwillingness to flee from his present situation, and most importantly his lack of fear in the face of death.²⁸⁵ Taking into account an understanding of the individual as the composite of two entities, Sokrates attempts to demonstrate to his companions that death is nothing to be feared. This is particularly so for the philosopher, such as himself, who understands that the most important part of the individual is their soul. The philosopher is aware of the soul’s immortality, and recognizes that death is a great benefit for all souls, but particularly so for the soul that belongs to the philosopher (63e8-64a9, cf. *Politeia* 6.485a1-487a1).

In order to demonstrate his thesis, Sokrates must refute the popular conception of death, which characterizes it as an evil, and something to be feared (64a10-c9):

(64a10) Καὶ ὁ Σιμμίας γελάσας, Νῆ τὸν Δία, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες,
(b) οὐ πάνυ γέ με νυνδὴ γελασεῖοντα ἐποίησας γελάσαι. οἴμαι
γὰρ ἂν τοὺς πολλοὺς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἀκούσαντας δοκεῖν εὖ πάνυ
εἰρησθαι εἰς τοὺς φιλοσοφοῦντας—καὶ συμφάναι ἂν τοὺς μὲν
παρ’ ἡμῖν ἀνθρώπους καὶ πάνυ—ὅτι τῷ ὄντι οἱ φιλοσο-
φοῦντες θανατῶσι, καὶ σφᾶς γε οὐ λελήθασιν ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν
τοῦτο πάσχειν.
Καὶ ἀληθῆ γ’ ἂν λέγοιεν, ὦ Σιμμία, πλήν γε τοῦ σφᾶς

²⁸⁵ Although, of course, Sokrates was already dead by the time of the *Phaidon*’s composition, thus, to some extent, Plato cannot but describe Sokrates as staying to die, because his audience already knows that he did not leave, and he did in fact die.

μὴ λεληθέναι. λέληθεν γὰρ αὐτούς ἢ τε θανατῶσι καὶ ἢ ἄξιοί
εἰσιν θανάτου καὶ οἴου θανάτου οἱ ὡς ἀληθῶς φιλόσοφοι.

(c) εἶπωμεν γάρ, ἔφη, πρὸς ἡμᾶς αὐτούς, χαίρειν εἰπόντες ἐκεί-
νοις· ἠγούμεθα τι τὸν θάνατον εἶναι;

Πάνυ γε, ἔφη ὑπολαβὼν ὁ Σιμμίας.

Ἄρα μὴ ἄλλο τι ἢ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος
ἀπαλλαγὴν; (1) καὶ εἶναι τοῦτο τὸ τεθνάναι, χωρὶς μὲν (2) ἀπὸ τῆς
ψυχῆς ἀπαλλαγέν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα γεγονέναι, (3) χωρὶς
δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν [ἀπὸ] τοῦ σώματος ἀπαλλαγεῖσιν αὐτὴν καθ'
αὐτὴν εἶναι; ἄρα μὴ ἄλλο τι ἢ ὁ θάνατος ἢ τοῦτο;

Οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο, ἔφη.

[LOEB translation:] “Simmias laughed and said: “Yes, by Zeus, Socrates, although I didn’t feel much like laughing a moment ago, you’ve made me laugh. You see I think that most people when they hear this very point would think it’s been very well said against philosophers—and people from our city would very much agree—that philosophers are in the process of dying in actual fact and they would add that they are perfectly aware that the philosophers deserved it.

“And they’d be telling the truth, Simmias, except the bit about their being perfectly aware themselves. You see what they fail to notice is the way in which those who are truly philosophers want to die and the way in which they’re worthy of death and the kind of death it is. Well then,” he said, “Let’s keep this conversation among ourselves, and never mind talking to them. We think death is something specific, don’t we?”

“Certainly,” said Simmias, joining in.

“Is it nothing else but the separation of the soul from the body? And this is what death is: separated away from the soul the body alone by itself; and the soul separated away from the body gets to be alone by itself? Death can’t be anything other than this, can it?”

“No, that’s it,” he said.”

Socrates begins his refutation by arguing that the popular conception of death arose through ignorance. In this case, ignorance results in a misunderstanding of three fundamental aspects: (i) the individual’s composite nature, as a combination of body and soul; (ii) the nature of the soul and the body, respectively; and (iii) the soul’s ultimate primacy over the body (64a10-c9). If the popular understanding of death is predicated on a set of misunderstandings, this inevitably leads to an ‘incorrect’ definition of death (cf. *Kratylos* 436c7-d4).

Accordingly, the first task Sokrates devises for himself is to define his terms, i.e. death, in order that he may place his argument on a solid foundation. For Sokrates, the term ‘death’ represents the following:²⁸⁶

- (1) Death is nothing other than the ‘separation’ of the soul from the body (‘εἶναι τοῦτο τὸ τεθνάναι, χωρὶς μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπαλλαγέν αὐτὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα γεγονέναι,’ 64c5-6).²⁸⁷
- (2) The body comes to be separated from the soul, itself by itself (‘ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπαλλαγέν αὐτὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα γεγονέναι,’ 64c5-6).
- (3) The soul comes to be separated from the body, itself by itself (‘χωρὶς δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν [ἀπὸ] τοῦ σώματος ἀπαλλαγεῖσαν αὐτὴν καθ’ αὐτὴν εἶναι,’ 64c6-8).

Sokrates’ definition of ‘death’ conforms to that given in previous dialogues (above),²⁸⁸ and establishes the individual as a composite entity consisting of a union between two distinct and independent entities – body and soul.²⁸⁹ The individual is, therefore, a created entity, and as such shares in the created entity’s susceptibility to dissolution, in the belief that what has been created can always be destroyed. Death, in this respect, amounts to nothing more than the natural dissolution of a created entity back into its constituent parts – body and soul. Upon the termination of this union, the two constituent entities – body and soul – retain their intrinsic properties, and begin to revert to their original natures. In some sense, therefore, death is nothing more than the natural restoration of the order of things.²⁹⁰ Compare the human notion of a divorce. Here two distinct and independent entities come together to form a union (‘marriage’). Each of these entities

²⁸⁶ Cf. *Phaidon* 105d, 106e; *Politeia*, 10.614b-615c; *Philebos* 30a; *Nomoi* 8.828d, 12.958c-959d.

²⁸⁷ Bostock (1999): 404.

²⁸⁸ Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 253.

²⁸⁹ see note 266.

²⁹⁰ In the *Timaios*, Timaios argues that the Demiourgos combines the Same with the Different in order to create soul. However, given the opposing natures of the Same and the Different, a great deal of force was needed to combine the two, and thereby create the soul (35a-b). Likewise, the individual is the combination of two entities with opposing natures – body and soul – but whereas the soul is able to contain these contraries indefinitely, the individual cannot not, and there comes a point when the two contraries ‘repel’ each other, precipitating the death of the individual.

possess their own unique natures, and brings to the union a specific set of attributes. Once this union breaks down, and a separation occurs (the 'divorce'), the two constituents return to being independent entities, and retain the attributes they brought to the union. They then proceed to revert to their original natures, though this takes time owing to the experiences acquired during the union, and may never be fully realized.

Through this definition of death Sokrates draws out the absurdity of human existence inherent in the popular understanding of death. The individual is a composite entity, and it is by nature ephemeral; believing that death will not come is illogical (64e2-65a8). Given the soul's immortality, it is equally absurd to prioritize the ephemeral existence of the individual, over that existence which lasts for all time, and is most representative of 'true' existence – immortal, immaterial, incorporeal, and changeless. For Sokrates:

- (i) The soul is immortal.²⁹¹
- (ii) Human existence is both ephemeral and finite.
- (iii) If one takes into account time, as a whole, human existence is but a small anomaly, whereas the soul's existence is constant.
- (iv) 'True' existence, therefore, must belong to the soul.
- (v) Hence, it is illogical to prize the ephemeral over the eternal, and fear the everlasting life the soul resumes upon 'death' (cf. 81b1-84b8).

(1.4.6) The *Kratylos*

Sokrates and Hermogenes seek to consider whether the two entities that together comprise the individual, i.e. body and soul, have been given names appropriate to their respective natures (399d7-

²⁹¹ See, for instance, the Affinity argument, 78a-84b, or the Cyclical argument, 69e-72e.

8).²⁹² In the case of the soul, Sokrates identifies two possible derivations of the term ‘soul,’ each reliant upon a different conception of the soul’s nature. The first derivation (399d10-e3), according to Sokrates, represents what he believes the original *nomothetoi* (name-givers) most likely had in mind when giving soul its name. The second derivation (399e3-400b7), on the other hand, proffers a more ‘truthful’ (ἀληθῶς, 400b6) and ‘technical’ (τεχνικώτερον, 400b5) conception of the soul; one which the original *nomothetoi* did not possess.

Sokrates’ presentation of these different derivations, and his characterization of one being more likely what the original *nomothetoi* had in mind than the other, presages the conclusion of the dialogue, in which he refutes both Kratylos and Hermogenes on the correctness of names. Here, he argues that a particular entity does indeed possess a ‘true’ nature, and the individual who knows this ‘true’ nature will seek to embody it in that entity’s name, thereby refuting Hermogenes’ relativistic position towards name. However, the original *nomothetoi* did not possess this knowledge, thus precluding them from embodying that entity’s ‘true’ nature in its name, and so refuting Kratylos’ thesis that a study of names, alone, will proffer an understanding of the ‘true’ nature of reality. Similarly, in the case of the soul, those who gave soul its name (the first derivation) sought to embody within it the ‘true’ nature of the soul, but they lacked ‘true’ knowledge of the soul, and so the nature they embodied in the name ‘soul,’ does not correspond to reality.

The First Derivation of ‘Soul’ (399d10-e3)

ΣΩ. Ὡς μὲν τοίνυν ἐκ τοῦ παραχρηῖμα λέγειν, οἴμαι τι
τοιοῦτον νοεῖν τοὺς τὴν ψυχὴν ὀνομάσαντας, ὡς τοῦτο ἄρα,
(1) ὅταν παρῆ τῷ σώματι, αἰτιὸν ἐστὶ τοῦ ζῆν αὐτῷ, (2) τὴν τοῦ
(e) ἀναπνεῖν δύναμιν παρέχον καὶ ἀναψύχον, (3) ἅμα δὲ ἐκλεί-
ποντος τοῦ ἀναψύχοντος τὸ σῶμα ἀπόλλυται τε καὶ τελευτᾷ·

²⁹² It is no coincidence that Sokrates decides to discuss the name ‘soul’ prior to that of ‘body,’ since it is symptomatic of his understanding of the soul as possessing primacy over the body (a detail he will make use of in his analysis of the name ‘soul’ below); hence his definition of the human being as ‘soul and body,’ rather than ‘body and soul.’ Although this may be due to language convention, given that in English it appears conventional to say ‘body and soul,’ whereas in Greek (even to the present) it is more conventional to say ‘soul and body’ – ‘ψυχή και σώμα.’

(4) ὄθεν δὴ μοι δοκοῦσιν αὐτὸ “ψυχὴν” καλέσαι.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. To speak on the spur of the moment, I think those who gave the soul its name had something of this sort in mind: they thought when it was present in the body it was the cause of its living, giving it the power to breathe and reviving it (ἀναψύχον), and when this revivifying force fails, the body perishes and comes to an end; therefore, I think, they called it ψυχή.”

This derivation relates that conception of the soul the original *nomothetoi* sought to embody in the name ‘soul’ (399d10-11):

- (1) When a soul is present in a body, it causes the body to live (“ὅταν παρῆ τῷ σώματι, αἰτίον ἐστὶ τοῦ ζῆν αὐτῷ,” 399d12).
- (2) The soul bestows upon the body the capacity to breathe and be revitalized (“τὴν τοῦ ἀναπνεῖν δύναμιν παρέχον καὶ ἀναψύχον,” 399d12-e1).
- (3) When this process of revitalization fails, the body dies and is finished (“ἄμα δὲ ἐκλείποντος τοῦ ἀναψύχοντος τὸ σῶμα ἀπόλλυται τε καὶ τελευτᾷ,” 399e1-2).
- (4) Hence, the name ‘soul’ [from ‘to revitalize’] (“ὄθεν δὴ μοι δοκοῦσιν αὐτὸ “ψυχὴν” καλέσαι,” 399e3).

According to this conception of the soul the soul provides the initial spark of life in the body, initiating the body’s natural biological processes, e.g. breathing, which then assume responsibility for the body’s retention of life. When these processes terminate, the body can no longer maintain life, and the individual dies. It is not entirely clear what this derivation believes happens to the soul after providing this initial spark of life. For example, is the soul considered a separate entity that can exist independent of the body? Is the soul a material entity that ceases to be with the body? Or does the soul emerge as a result of the body’s natural processes?

The Second Derivation of ‘Soul’ (399e3-400b7)

(399e3) εἰ δὲ βούλει

—ἔχε ἡρέμα· δοκῶ γάρ μοι τι καθορᾶν πιθανώτερον τούτου
400.

(a) τοῖς ἀμφὶ Εὐθύφρονα. τούτου μὲν γάρ, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ,

καταφρονήσαιεν ἂν καὶ ἠγήσαιντο φορτικὸν εἶναι· τόδε δὲ
σκόπει ἔὰν ἄρα καὶ σοὶ ἀρέσῃ.

ΕΡΜ. Λέγε μόνον.

(1) ΣΩ. Τὴν φύσιν παντὸς τοῦ σώματος, ὥστε καὶ ζῆν καὶ
περιέειναι, τί σοι δοκεῖ ἔχειν τε καὶ ὀχεῖν ἄλλο ἢ ψυχὴ;

ΕΡΜ. Οὐδὲν ἄλλο.

(2) ΣΩ. Τί δέ; καὶ τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων φύσιν οὐ
πιστεύεις Ἀναξαγόρα νοῦν καὶ ψυχὴν εἶναι τὴν διακοσμοῦσαν
καὶ ἔχουσαν;

ΕΡΜ. Ἐγωγε.

(b) (3) ΣΩ. Καλῶς ἄρα ἂν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο ἔχοι τῇ δυνάμει
ταύτῃ ἢ φύσιν ὀχεῖ καὶ ἔχει “φυσέχην” ἐπονομάζειν.

(4) ἔξεστι δὲ καὶ “ψυχὴν” κομψευόμενον λέγειν.

ΕΡΜ. Πάνυ μὲν οὔν, καὶ δοκεῖ γέ μοι τοῦτο ἐκείνου
τεχνικώτερον εἶναι.

ΣΩ. Καὶ γὰρ ἔστιν· γελοῖον μὲντοι φαίνεται ὡς ἀληθῶς
ὀνομαζόμενον ὡς ἐτέθη.

[LOEb translation:] “Soc. But—please keep still a moment. I fancy I see something which will carry more conviction to Euthyphro and his followers; for I think they would despise this attempt and would consider it cheap talk. Now see if you like the new one.

Her. I am listening.

Soc. Do you think there is anything which holds and carries the whole nature of the body, so that it lives and moves, except the soul?

Her. No; nothing.

Soc. Well, and do you not believe the doctrine of Anaxagoras, that it is mind or soul which orders and holds the nature of all things?

Her. I do.

Soc. Then there would be an admirable fitness in calling that power which carries and holds (ἔχει) nature (φύσιν) φυσέχη: and this may be refined and pronounced ψυχὴ.

Her. Certainly; and I think this is a more scientific explanation than the other.

Soc. Yes, it is. But it seems actually absurd that the name was given with such truth.”

Sokrates is dissatisfied with the conception of soul suggested by the *nomothetoi*, and seeks to give his own derivation; one both more truthful and more technical (400b5-6), or at least one we should accept as being more truthful. Indeed, upon hearing this derivation, Hermogenes asserts this conception of the soul is truly more technical (τεχνικώτερον, 400b5), although the ‘truth’ appears to sound funny (γελοῖον, 400b6).²⁹³ Despite Sokrates’ presentation of a more correct conception of soul, he ultimately arrives at the same name as the original *nomothetoi* – ‘soul.’ In terms of the *Theaitetos* (201d8-210a9) these individuals made a true judgement, but were unable to give an accurate account to compliment this true judgement, precluding its identification as knowledge. Sokrates’ derivation asserts:

- (1) The soul sustains and supports the nature of each body, so that it lives and moves (400a5-6).
- (2) This is applicable to the nature of all things, such that all things are ordered and sustained by soul, but also mind, as Anaxagoras had argued (400a8-11).
- (3) So, the power that supports and sustains the whole of nature is appropriately, ‘the nature-sustainer’ (400b1-2).
- (4) This may be further refined to ‘soul’ (400b3).

The soul, in this account, retains its role as the source of life in the living being. However, in the previous derivation, the soul acted to initiate life before ceding the ability to maintain this life to the body’s natural biological processes. Here, the soul does not relinquish this power to the body, but retains it; life is thus not a property the soul transfers to the body, but is intrinsic to the soul itself, the two being inseparable. Consequently, it is only through the soul itself that the individual is able

²⁹³ Cf. *Sophistes* 226e-227c; *Kratylos* 391d4-e1. See also Baxter (1992): 45; Rosen (1999): xlvi-xlvii; Sedley (2003): 41-50, 97; and *contra* Arieti (1991): 249, who appears to interpret the funny (γελοῖον) aspect literally, implying that the reader is meant to ridicule such arguments, even though, in the case of the *Kratylos*, this understanding of the soul accords with later conceptions in the *Timaios*, for example (see Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8).

to continue to live, and so the individual does not die because of a cessation of biological functions, but because the soul departs from the body, taking with it its intrinsic properties, including life.²⁹⁴

Just as Sokrates identified two possible derivations for soul, so he identifies three for the term ‘body’ (400b8-400d1). Unlike the soul, however, Sokrates does not assign any specific derivation to the original *nomothetoi*, rather proffering three different perspectives on the nature of the body. He chooses, nonetheless, to endorse the third perspective, which he assigns to the ‘Orphics,’ saying that their derivation requires the least change, since not even one letter needs to be changed (‘οὐδὲν δεῖν παράγειν οὐδ’ ἓν γράμμα,’ 400c9).²⁹⁵

The First Derivation of ‘Body’ (400c1-2)

καὶ γὰρ σῆμά τινές φασι αὐτὸ

εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς, ὡς τεθαμμένης ἐν τῷ νῦν παρόντι·

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. ...for some say it is the tomb (σῆμα) of the soul, their notion being that the soul is buried in the present life.”

According to this account, the body is the ‘tomb’ (‘σῆμά,’ 400c1) of the soul, the soul being entombed in its present life (400c2). In this case, the soul in its disembodied state of existence represents ‘true’ life, such that the soul’s entombment is akin to the soul’s metaphorical ‘death,’ since it becomes a passive entity, subordinate to the body. Hence the body’s description as a tomb, a place in which the dead are laid to rest, the soul’s existence in the body being akin to that of a

²⁹⁴ Gaiser (1974): 67; though Gaiser attempts to connect the soul with the concept of the self-mover in the *Phaidros* 245c-246e (cf. *Nomoi* 10.895a-c), thereby suggesting that the soul possesses life because it constantly moves. This interpretation is not invalid, but one should be cautious in inferring the existence of the soul as the self-mover in the *Kratylos*, given that (a) Sokrates gives no clear indication in the *Kratylos* that such a conception of motion exists; and (b) Sokrates is supposedly discussing the possible understanding of the original *nomothetoi*, rather than his own understanding. Indeed, he presents it terms of Anaxagoras’ theory of *nous*, which he criticizes in the *Phaidon* 96a-99d for its failure to interpret the soul, ‘correctly’ as the cause of all things, and does not interpret the soul as the self-mover. See also, Baxter (1992): 99-101, and Sedley (2003): 92, 96-97.

²⁹⁵ Baxter (1992): 101-102, 142-143; Sedley (2003): 96. Indeed, Sokrates’ comment that this derivation requires the least change may suggest that one is meant to understand this as being the closest to true nature of the body. Truth is eternal and unchanging, and this derivation requires the least change in order to embody the body’s true nature. Indeed, Sokrates’ use of ‘παράγω’ may be translated as ‘to lead aside from the way, i.e. to lead astray,’ or ‘to mislead,’ ‘to divert from one’s course,’ or ‘to pervert’ (LSJ s.v. ‘παράγω’), suggesting that this derivation is the one that least leads one astray from a true understanding of the body’s nature.

corpse in a tomb. Death, in such a case, is a release for the soul from this metaphorical death, and a chance for it to resume 'true' existence, which alone may be called 'life.'

The Second Derivation of 'Body' (400c2-4)

καὶ

διότι αὖ τούτῳ σημαίνει ἃ ἂν σημαίνει ἡ ψυχὴ, καὶ ταύτη

“σημα” ὀρθῶς καλεῖσθαι.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. and again, because by its means the soul gives any signs which it gives, it is for this reason also properly called “sign” (σημα).”

Others argue, according to Sokrates, that the body is correctly called a 'sign' (σημα, 400c4), because it signifies whatever it wants through the body (400c3-4).

The Third Derivation of 'Body' (400c4-9)

δοκοῦσι μέντοι μοι μάλιστα

θέσθαι οἱ ἀμφὶ Ὀρφέα τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα, ὡς δίκην διδούσης

τῆς ψυχῆς ὣν δὴ ἔνεκα δίδωσιν, τοῦτον δὲ περίβολον ἔχειν,

ἵνα σώζεται, δεσμοτηρίου εἰκόνα· εἶναι οὖν τῆς ψυχῆς

τοῦτο, ὡσπερ αὐτὸ ὀνομάζεται, ἕως ἂν ἐκτεῖσθαι τὰ ὀφειλόμενα,

[τὸ] “σῶμα,” καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖν παράγειν οὐδ’ ἐν γράμμα.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. But I think it most likely that the Orphic poets gave this name, with the idea that the soul is undergoing punishment for something; they think it has the body as an enclosure to keep it safe, like a prison, and this is, as the name itself denotes, the safe (σῶμα) for the soul, until the penalty is paid, and not even a letter needs to be changed.”

This particular understanding of the body posits that the soul is being punished for something, and the body acts as its enclosure or prison, confining the soul until it has paid in full that which is owed ('ἕως ἂν ἐκτεῖσθαι τὰ ὀφειλόμενα,' 400c8).²⁹⁶ Like the first derivation, it presents the soul's disembodied state of existence as akin to 'true' existence; unlike the first, bodily existence does not constitute a metaphorical 'death' for the soul, but rather a temporary punishment for a crime the

²⁹⁶ Cf. a similar notion in the *Phaidon* 62b, though here it is ascribed to the esoteric/mysteries: 'ὁ μὲν οὖν ἐν ἀπορρήτοις λεγόμενος περὶ αὐτῶν λόγος' (62b2-3); see also Empedokles (KRS 399, 400 (=DK 1B18), 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410) and the 'Orphic' eschatological writings (see, for example, Edmonds III (2004) and Edmonds III (2011)).

soul must have committed. The death of the individual thus represents a 'release' for the soul from its prison, enabling it to assume its natural state of existence.²⁹⁷ For Sokrates, neither derivation is necessarily mutually exclusive of his understanding of the soul presented above (399e3-400b7); but the third derivation is the one that best preserves the Platonic Wager, and thereby the exhortation to live the philosophical, examined life.

(1.4.7) The *Phaidros*

In the forthcoming argument, which is meant to serve as a 'proof' of the soul's immortality, Sokrates introduces the notion that motion – the capacity to move oneself – is a further intrinsic property of the soul (245c5-246a2). Indeed, the soul, according to Sokrates, is the only entity in the universe that is capable of motion; all other motion originating from this initial 'self-mover.'²⁹⁸ Sokrates reasons that since the soul is the source of all motion in the universe, it can never be destroyed, lest all motion in the universe ultimately ceases to be.²⁹⁹ Accordingly, all other types of motion 'in reality' mere manifestations of a particular psychic property, and to speak of anything, other than soul, as possessing self-motion is deceptive, including in the case of human being (see Chapter 1.3.7 above).

Sokrates' 'proof' requires him to relate to Phaidros the 'true' nature of the soul (245c5-246a2):

²⁹⁷ Cf. Empedokles' conception of (re)incarnation (KRS 399, 400 (=DK 1B18), 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410). Gaiser (1974): 68-9 argues that the soul's release from the body is not to be interpreted as something positive, since it then journeys to Hades where it is bound there by Hades (*Kratylos* 403a-e), in effect remaining still. For Gaiser, this refutes the supposed Herakleitian aspect of Plato's philosophy, which requires constant motion for the soul. It is true that in the *Phaidros* (245c-246e) for example, the soul is immortal because it is capable of constant self-generated motion; but the soul continues to be understood as immortal in the *Kratylos*, therefore, being bound in Hades cannot entail the soul's death. Moreover, true reality is understood as being both changeless and eternal (if not eternal because it is changeless), and so the soul being bound in Hades, reflects the soul's ability to achieve a certain degree of changelessness, and lack of motion, indicative of true reality. This, in the *Timaios* (40a-b) and the *Nomoi* (10.895a-c), is the kind of motion that belongs to the gods, and to the divine more generally; therefore, the soul being released from the body and being 'bound' in Hades, constitutes an opportunity for the soul to achieve a level of homogeneity with true reality.

²⁹⁸ Cf. *Phaidros* 245c-246e. Johansen (2004): 139; Miller Jr (2006): 289-292.

²⁹⁹ Motion would continue for a certain period of time, but once all the energy has left the system, all motion will cease to exist, and can only restart with a new, external input of energy.

(245c5) (1) Ψυχή πᾶσα ἀθάνατος. (2) τὸ γὰρ ἀεικίνητον ἀθάνατον· (3) τὸ δ' ἄλλο κινουῖν καὶ ὑπ' ἄλλου κινούμενον, παῦλαν ἔχον κινήσεως, παῦλαν ἔχει ζωῆς. (4) μόνον δὴ τὸ αὐτὸ κινουῖν, ἅτε οὐκ ἀπολεῖπον ἑαυτὸ, οὔποτε λήγει κινούμενον, (5) ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὅσα κινεῖται τοῦτο πηγή καὶ ἀρχὴ κινήσεως. (d) ἀρχὴ δὲ ἀγένητον. ἐξ ἀρχῆς γὰρ ἀνάγκη πᾶν τὸ γιγνόμενον γίνεσθαι, αὐτὴν δὲ μηδ' ἐξ ἐνός· εἰ γὰρ ἕκ του ἀρχὴ γίνοιτο, οὐκ ἂν ἔτι ἀρχὴ γίνοιτο. ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀγένητόν ἐστιν, καὶ ἀδιάφθορον αὐτὸ ἀνάγκη εἶναι. ἀρχῆς γὰρ δὴ ἀπολομένης οὔτε αὐτὴ ποτε ἕκ του οὔτε ἄλλο ἐξ ἐκείνης γενήσεται, εὔπερ ἐξ ἀρχῆς δεῖ τὰ πάντα γίνεσθαι. οὕτω δὴ κινήσεως μὲν ἀρχὴ τὸ αὐτὸ αὐτὸ κινουῖν. τοῦτο δὲ οὔτ' ἀπόλλυσθαι οὔτε γίνεσθαι δυνατόν, ἢ πάντα τε οὐρανὸν (e) πᾶσάν τε γῆν εἰς ἓν συμπεσοῦσαν στῆναι καὶ μήποτε αὔθις ἔχειν ὅθεν κινήθεντα γενήσεται. (6) ἀθανάτου δὲ πεφασμένου τοῦ ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ κινουμένου, ψυχῆς οὐσίαν τε καὶ λόγον τοῦτον αὐτόν τις λέγων οὐκ αἰσχυνεῖται. πᾶν γὰρ σῶμα, ὃ μὲν ἔξωθεν τὸ κινεῖσθαι, ἄψυχον, (7) ὃ δὲ ἔνδοθεν αὐτῷ ἐξ αὐτοῦ, ἔμψυχον, ὡς ταύτης οὔσης φύσεως ψυχῆς· εἰ δ' ἔστιν τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχον, μὴ ἄλλο τι εἶναι τὸ αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ

246.

(a) κινουῖν ἢ ψυχὴν, ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀγένητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ψυχὴ ἂν εἴη.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. Every soul is immortal. For that which is ever moving is immortal; but that which moves something else or is moved by something else, when it ceases to move, ceases to live. Only that which moves itself, since it does not leave itself, never ceases to move, and this is also the source and beginning of motion for all other things which have motion. But the beginning is ungenerated. For everything that is generated must be generated from a beginning, but the beginning is not generated from anything; for if the beginning were generated from anything, it would not be generated from a beginning. And since it is ungenerated, it must be also indestructible; for if the beginning were destroyed, it could never be generated from anything nor anything else from it, since all things must be generated from a beginning. Thus that which moves itself must be the beginning of motion. And this can be neither destroyed nor generated, otherwise all the heavens and all generation must fall in ruin and stop and never again have any source of motion or origin. But since that which is moved by itself has been seen to be immortal, one who says that this self-motion is the essence and the very idea of the soul, will not

be disgraced. For every body which derives motion from without is soulless, but that which has its motion within itself has a soul, since that is the nature of the soul; but if this is true,—that that which moves itself is nothing else than the soul,—then the soul would necessarily be ungenerated and immortal.”

This, I believe, may be broken down in the following way:

- (1) Every soul is immortal (245c5).
- (2) The soul is immortal because it is in perpetual motion (245c5).
- (3) Accordingly, in everything else that moves and is moved by something, a cessation of movement leads to the termination of life (245c5-7).
- (4) The soul is in perpetual motion, as it is the source of its own motion, thus it never ceases to move, as to do so would require the soul to cease being itself, which it cannot (245c7-9).
- (5) Therefore, everything else that exhibits motion must derive it from the self-mover, since they are not immortal, and so cannot be self-movers themselves. If they cannot move themselves, the only source for their motion is that which can move itself – the self-mover (245c8-e2).
- (6) As the self-mover is immortal, so it must correspond to the soul, it being immortal also (245e2-4).
- (7) Therefore, what moves itself is soul; and so soul experiences neither birth nor death (245e5-246a2).

If the soul is the self-mover, and experienced birth, then there was a point at which no motion existed.³⁰⁰ If no motion existed, then there was a point in time in which the soul did not move itself; and if there was a point in which the soul did not move itself, it cannot be the self-mover, nor can it be immortal, according to this particular argument. The soul, therefore, must be without birth to

³⁰⁰ See, for example, *Timaios* 28b-c; cf. 34a, 37d-39e, in which Timaios argues that the Demiourgos had to assign motion to the universe, and create time; time being non-existent prior to this creation. For further on the conception of time amongst Plato and his contemporaries, see Bierl, Christopoulos, and Papachryostomou (2017): *passim*. and George (2014): 156-69.

correspond to the self-mover; and if the soul experiences no birth so it must experience no death.³⁰¹

Death belongs only to those things that experience birth, e.g. the human being; and in this particular dialogue, death is analogous to the cessation of movement in the birthed entity.³⁰²

(1.4.8) The *Timaios*

If in the *Phaidros* (1.4.7), Sokrates presents the soul as possessing neither birth nor death, thus confirming its status as both immortal and the self-mover; in the *Timaios*, Timaios relates how soul is, strictly speaking, a created entity, it being created by the Demiourgos.³⁰³ If something was created, then its existence acquires a temporal aspect, since there was once a point in which the created entity did not exist. Just as it once did not exist, so it may cease to exist at some future point. In order to explain, therefore, how soul ‘acquires’ immortality, Timaios relates a speech between the Demiourgos and the gods, following his creation of the gods (41a7-d3). Here, the Demiourgos relates to the gods the purpose for which they have been created, and in order to fulfil their purpose, he affirms that for all intents and purposes they (and by extension, all soul) are immortal.

The Demiourgos relates the following (41a7-b6):

(41a7) “(i) Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς πατήρ τε ἔργων, δι’ ἐμοῦ
γενόμενα ἅλυστα ἐμοῦ γε μὴ ἐθέλοντος. τὸ μὲν οὖν δὴ
(b) δεθὲν πᾶν λυτόν, τό γε μὴν καλῶς ἀρμοσθὲν καὶ ἔχον εὖ
λύειν ἐθέλειν κακοῦ· δι’ ἃ καὶ ἐπέιπερ γεγένησθε, ἀθάνατοι
μὲν οὐκ ἐστέ οὐδ’ ἄλλοι τὸ πάμπαν, (ii) οὔτι μὲν δὴ λυθή-
σεσθέ γε οὐδὲ τεύξεσθε θανάτου μοίρας, (iii) τῆς ἐμῆς βουλήσεως

³⁰¹ Cf. the *Timaios* wherein the Demiourgos appears to adopt the role of the initial self-mover (the initial input of motion into the universe), since all soul is presented as a created entity (41a-d). Miller Jr (2006): 289-292.

³⁰² *Phaidros* Cf. 246b-e, particularly 246c. Miller Jr (2006): 289-292.

³⁰³ Miller Jr (2006): 289-292.

μείζονος ἔτι δεσμοῦ καὶ κυριωτέρου λαχόντες ἐκείνων οἷς ὄτ'
ἐγίγνεσθε συνεδέϊσθε.

[LOEB translation:] “Tim. “Gods of gods, those works whereof I am framer and father are indissoluble save by my will. For though all that is bound may be dissolved, yet to will to dissolve that which is fairly joined together and in good case were the deed of a wicked one. Wherefore ye also, seeing that ye were generated, are not wholly immortal or indissoluble, yet in no wise shall ye be dissolved nor incur the doom of death, seeing that in my will ye possess a bond greater and more sovereign than the bonds wherewith, at your birth, ye were bound together.””

This passage presents the following conclusions:

- (i) As a creature that has come to be, i.e. as a created entity, the gods are neither completely immortal, nor free from dissolution (41a7-b3).
- (ii) However, they will not be dissolved, nor will death happen to be their lot (41b3-4).
- (iii) This is so because only the Demiourgos can destroy their bonds, and this he will not do (41b4-6).

Timaios' argument is predicated on the following understanding of the Demiourgos:

- (i) The Demiourgos is good and perfect.
- (ii) The Demiourgos creates only what is good and perfect.
- (iii) Therefore all soul is good and perfect.
- (iv) Only what is neither good nor perfect may be destroyed.
- (v) Therefore, soul will not be destroyed as it is good and perfect.
- (vi) To destroy soul would require the Demiourgos to have created something neither good nor perfect, which is impossible.
- (vii) Hence what is mortal, i.e. what is liable to destruction, was not created by the Demiourgos.

As a result of the above, although the soul possesses immortality in all but name, it is theoretically possible for the soul to experience death. For the living being, on the other hand, death continues to be an inevitability. In the continuation of the dialogue (80e4-81e5), Timaios discusses the creation of the human being by the gods, showing how the gods created each part of the body for a specific

purpose, dictated, ultimately, by the requirements of the soul. He begins with a description of the birth of the human being, relating how the soul becomes infused in the body, and ends with a description of the human being's death, explaining how the soul comes to be detached from the body.

Timaios posits that, at the point of birth, the soul is bonded to the body through the marrow in one's bones. Consequently, death occurs when the marrow can no longer hold on to the soul, thereby occasioning the marrow's release of the soul from its bonds (81d4-e1). This adds a further dimension to an understanding of death as it pertains to the living being. Previously 'death' for the living being consisted of the separation of body and soul, and though this definition remains unchanged, Timaios adds specific details regarding the process of separation. This allows for a more exact definition of death as that moment in which the marrow of a living being can no longer retain possession of the soul, thereby effecting its release.

Timaios identifies this manner of death as the one naturally envisaged by the gods during their creation of the living being. Describing this manner of death thus allows Timaios to explain further why some deaths appear to be more or less painful than others (81d4-81e5). According to Timaios, all that is unnatural is painful, whereas all that is natural is pleasant (81e1-2). Consequently, a death that occurs from an unnatural cause, e.g. injury or disease, is painful and forced (81e2-5). This is so, as it involves the premature severing of the soul's bonds, and instigates the soul's release from the body, despite the marrow retaining its ability to keep possession of the soul.³⁰⁴ On the other hand, a death that occurs naturally, e.g. through old age, is the least distressing of all deaths, and relatively pleasant (81d4-81e2). Here, the manner of death is less distressing as it conforms to the natural end assigned to the living being by the gods.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ Cf. *Nomoi*, 9.869a-e; 9.873c-d.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Sokrates death is presented as relatively painless in the *Phaidon* 117c-118a, though it is unlikely to have been, given his hemlock poisoning – does Plato portray this as the will of god to provide Sokrates – a philosopher – a painless death, given his closeness to the divine, and the injustice he has suffered at the hands of the ignorant?

(1.5) Conclusion

The soul, according to the *Phaidon* 70c4-72e1, is incorporeal, immaterial, and immortal; the soul, therefore, is akin to the divine (cf. *Kriton*, 47d8-49a3). In the *Kratylos* 391d4-e1,³⁰⁶ Sokrates proffers the notion that the gods – the divine – possess a language different to that of the mortal; one that reflects true reality.³⁰⁷ Consequently, the soul, being divine, will possess a different understanding of the term life than the mortal living being, which does not know this true, divine language. Any attempt to establish a definition of the term ‘life’ in a particular Platonic context must therefore take into account the existence of these two alternate understandings of the particular term. Indeed, this is the approach Sokrates employed in his examination of various etymologies in the *Kratylos*.³⁰⁸ In the case of the *Kratylos*, Sokrates’ determines that a thing’s name only reflects its true nature, if the original *nomothetes*, (understood in this instance as ‘name-giver), possessed an understanding of a thing’s true nature, thereby embodying it within the given name.³⁰⁹

The original *nomothetes*, however, did not possess knowledge of true reality, and so, the names they gave may not accord with the true nature of a particular thing; and if they did, this is not through the possession of true knowledge on the part of the *nomothetes*, but through the making of a true judgement, albeit without a corresponding account to go with this judgement.³¹⁰ In other words, in those cases in which the *nomothetes* arrives at a name that embodies the correct nature of a particular thing, they do so without knowledge of why they are correct. Compare a schoolchild who correctly solves a mathematical problem, but without demonstrating the correct working; or even,

³⁰⁶ ‘Μέγιστα δὲ καὶ κάλλιστα ἐν οἷς διορίζει ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἅ τε οἱ ἄνθρωποι ὀνόματα καλοῦσι καὶ οἱ θεοί. ἢ οὐκ οἶει αὐτὸν μέγα τι καὶ θαυμάσιον λέγειν ἐν τούτοις περὶ ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος; δῆλον γὰρ δὴ ὅτι οἱ γε θεοὶ αὐτὰ καλοῦσιν πρὸς ὀρθότητα ἅπερ ἔστι φύσει ὀνόματα ἢ σὺ οὐκ οἶει;’ (391d4-e1).

³⁰⁷ Cf. Baxter (1992): 10n.3, 12, 46, 112n.22; Sedley (2003): 78.

³⁰⁸ Gaiser (1974): 54-57; Rijlaarsdam (1978): 150.

³⁰⁹ See further Chapter 1.2; Sedley (2003): 4.

³¹⁰ Cf. *Theaitetos* 201c-210d, *Nomoi* 5.739e-731a.

the Presocratic atomists who correctly identified that reality is made up of ‘uncuttable’ parts of matter – atoms – though, as modern physics demonstrate, their particular reasoning was erroneous. Thus it is not necessarily the case that the names given by the original *nomothetes* accord with ‘true’ reality.

This thesis asserts, therefore, that such an understanding permeates the Platonic definition of both life and death,³¹¹ such that each term possesses two definitions:

- (1) The first corresponds to the understanding which the original *nomothetes* embodied within the name. This understanding invariably relates to the mortal, the temporal; and the bodily.
- (2) The second takes into account the immortal, the atemporal, and the psychic; and, by extension, the divine. Since this definition considers the divine understanding of the name, it must, therefore, accord to that name’s ‘true’ nature.

Accordingly, the mortal understanding of life corresponds to the first etymology provided by Sokrates in the *Kratylos* (Chapter 1.4.6):

- (a) It is the soul’s presence in the body that causes it to live;
- (b) The soul presents the body with the capacity to breathe and revive itself; in short, all natural bodily functions and processes begin when soul inhabits the body.
- (c) When these functions and processes begin to fail, it is indicative of the soul leaving the body.
- (d) Once the soul leaves the body in its entirety; the body is dead.
- (e) This distinction is best encapsulated in the twin terms ‘ἐμψυχον’ and ‘ἄψυχον.’³¹²

The immortal understanding of life, however, differs markedly from that of the mortal understanding:

³¹¹ Cf. Rijlaarsdam (1978): 85.

³¹² Cf. Miller Jr (2006): 280-286.

- (a) The immortal and changeless form of Life, as per the *Phaidon* (Chapters 1.3.5 and 1.4.5), cannot admit of Death itself, if it is to be immortal and changeless.
- (b) Thus, any entity that admits of this form of Life must likewise share in its inability to admit Death, i.e. any such entity is deathless.
- (c) The soul, according to Plato, is just such an immortal entity.
- (d) Of necessity, therefore, it must partake of the immortal and changeless form of Life.
- (e) In the *Timaios* (Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8), Timaios argues that the soul was created by the Demiourgos using three ingredients; one of these ingredients being the 'divine' form of Being. In other words, the soul is composed of the immortal and changeless form of Being (or Life).
- (f) The soul, however, cannot be composed of Life alone, lest the soul correspond exactly to Life, such that the soul is Life (where this the case, an infinite regress would be caused).
- (g) Hence, the soul participates of Life, preventing it from admitting Death, but it is not exactly equivalent to Life.

Plato posits the soul as the only immortal entity in the universe; as a result, it is the only entity that possesses the immortal and changeless form of Life. Thus, it is only through the presence of soul in another entity that that entity may participate in life.³¹³ This creates a situation in which the soul alone participates directly in Life, whereas all other living beings participate in a mediated type of life; in this case, through the presence of soul.³¹⁴ Plato thus presents mortal life as an illusory sort of life, akin to one of the shadows on the wall of the cave; real life belongs to the soul alone.³¹⁵

This understanding of life serves to reinforce the Platonic Wager, and why one should consider it seriously. In the Platonic Wager, Plato encourages the individual to wager upon the existence of his conception of the afterlife, as this is the option that takes into account the immortal; it is the option that considers the immortal form of life – 'true' life. 'True' life belongs to the soul alone, and as such,

³¹³ Irwin (1979): 244.

³¹⁴ Cf. *Phaidros* 245c-246e.

³¹⁵ Baxter (1992): 84.

one must choose that option which ensures the attainment of life's greatest rewards – those that belong to 'true' life; those that belong to the soul. Consequently, one must reject the mortal definition of life, which promotes the pursuance of short-term, temporal, bodily rewards. Instead, one should support the immortal definition of life, which allows the individual to share in those rewards that belong to the atemporal, the immortal, and the soul – in short, those rewards that allow the individual to experience true reality.³¹⁶ For Plato, the only way in which to effect such an outcome is to follow the life of the philosopher – the Sokratic way of life.

A consideration of Plato's definition of death proffers a similar conclusion, directing the individual towards a consideration of the Platonic Wager, and the acceptance of the immortal alternative over that of the mortal. To wit, the mortal understanding of death corresponds to the following:

- (1) The body is, by nature, an inanimate entity.
- (2) Through the presence of soul, the body becomes animate.
- (3) It is this combination of body and soul that equates to the individual.
- (4) When the soul departs from the body, the body ceases to be animate.
- (5) This separation of body and soul is what the individual terms 'death.'
- (6) Yet, from the perspective of the body, it results in nothing more than the resumption of the body's original inanimate nature.

The immortal understanding of death, elaborates upon the previous definitions, adding the following corollary:

- (1) Just as the body is, by nature, an inanimate entity; so the soul is, by nature, an animate entity.

³¹⁶ Cf. Morgan (1990): 68; Fine (1999d): 33; Nehamas (1999): 171-191; cf. Bostock (1999): 411.

- (2) This means that the soul is immortal, and shares in the immortal and changeless form of Life, preventing it from participating in Death.³¹⁷
- (3) The soul is, therefore, deathless.
- (4) Thus, from the perspective of the soul, death results in nothing more than the resumption of the soul's original immortal nature.

Consequently, any care and attention one gives to the body is, ultimately, for nought, since upon death the body resumes its natural state of inanimate existence. Thus, any attention given to the body, results only in the short-term appearance of a pretty corpse. This is true, moreover, for all honours or rewards relating to the body since they all share in the temporal. For instance, regardless of whether one cultivates for oneself a reputation for justice, or amasses for oneself a great fortune, all benefits and honours pertaining to the mortal are temporal. As soon as the individual dies, all of these benefits begin to dissipate with the passage of time, such that generations later, many of these benefits all but cease to exist.

On the other hand, the soul is immortal, thus any care and attention one pays to the soul, will never dissipate; for the soul to which the honours and rewards belong, shall never cease to be. Death, for the soul, is nothing other than the resumption of its natural form of existence. One must, therefore, believe in the Platonic conception of the afterlife, choose to favour one's immortal soul, and follow the Sokratic way of life, if one wishes to attain the rewards that last for all time; the rewards that belong to true existence alone. In this way, death is neither an evil nor is it something fear;³¹⁸ so long as one chooses to favour the path of the immortal, death will allow the individual's soul to participate in the true existence that belongs to the divine – the greatest of all rewards.³¹⁹

³¹⁷ Cf. the *Timaios* 41a-d, which argues that the soul can, technically, partake of death as it is a created entity, but the Demiourgos chooses never to allow it, thereby conferring upon it immortality, for all intents and purposes.

³¹⁸ E.g. *Apologia* 41c8-d2; *Kriton* 47d8-49a3; *Phaidon* 59c-69e, 91a, 99a, 114e.

³¹⁹ Hence, Sokrates' remarks in the *Phaidon* (59c-69e) that the philosopher trains for death; see also *Kriton* 47d-49a; *Phaidros* 248d-250b, 278d. Cf. Nussbaum (1982): 85; Rowe (1984): 165; Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 260; Sallis (1996): 62-63; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 173-174.

Chapter 2 – The Judgement of the Soul, Punishment, and Reward

(2.1) Aims

Any examination of the afterlife cannot focus solely on eschatological narrative. Despite the usefulness of such an enterprise for responding to the question, ‘what is it [i.e. the afterlife]?’ it ultimately fails to provide more than a superficial understanding of the topic. In this case, it acts as the raw data through which one must sort in order to derive useful information. To sort through this raw data, one must consider a series of questions:³²⁰

- (1) What is it [i.e. the afterlife] like?
- (2) How is it possible?
- (3) How does one get there?
- (4) Is it worth it?
- (5) What is the point?

The first question is dealt with throughout the thesis as a whole, as it is necessary to provide some description of the afterlife in order to consider issues such as the judgement, punishment, reward (see further Chapter 2), and reincarnation (see further Chapter 3). The second question forms the purview of Chapter One, in which life appears to be an intrinsic property of the soul, alone; and it is the intrinsic nature of this property that ensures the soul’s possession of it for all time, since one cannot be separated from the other. Moreover, if the living being is defined as the union that arises

³²⁰ This set of questions are adaptations of those identified by Matheson (2017): 1-20 who identifies the further questions: ‘Is there any good evidence for the afterlife?’ and ‘Where do afterlife beliefs come from?’. Although a consideration of these questions is useful for an understanding of the afterlife, they are not as applicable to the present thesis. This is particular so, given that these two questions are considered in the aforementioned handbook from (a) a modern scientific perspective; and (b) a modern anthropological perspective, which take into account cultures, societies, ideas, and information of which Plato most certainly would have been ignorant. The handbook aims further to provide a general overview of human beliefs in the afterlife, and the various anthropological functions of a belief in the afterlife; ultimately, the handbook examines why human beings feel the need for recourse to an afterlife at all.

from the combination of body and soul, death is none other than the dissolution of this union. Upon this dissolution, the soul, by virtue of its possession of life as an intrinsic property, continues to exist, thereby creating the space within which the afterlife may exist. Question (5) assumes, to some extent, that the afterlife possesses some teleological aspect; that it exists for some particular reason. In the case of the *Odyssey* (11.51-635), or Pythagorean reincarnation (KRS 260, 261, 262 (=DK36B2; 15), 263 (=DK 14, 1), 281 (=DK 58C2), 282 (=DK 58C2), 283 (=DK 58C1), 284), for example, there does not appear to be an inherent teleological dimension. However, from the second conception of the afterlife in the *Apologia* onwards, it does appear as though Plato ascribes some teleological function to the afterlife, and this is most typified in the notion of reincarnation, which forms the basis of examination in Chapter Three.³²¹

Questions (3) and (4), on the other hand, form the main focus of this chapter, which seeks to examine the following set of issues, from dialogue to dialogue, in a roughly chronological order:

- (i) Upon the soul's separation from the body, it finds itself in its natural form of existence, i.e. incorporeal, immaterial, immortal and disembodied. Consequently, it can no longer interact with the world it once knew – the physical, corporeal, and mortal realm – since it no longer possesses its intermediary with the physical realm, i.e. the body. The soul must now exist apart from the body, but before it can continue its existence it must first be judged. How does the soul travel to the place where it is to be judged? Here, there are two options, both of which will be examined. The first entails the soul travelling to the place of judgement by itself, arriving there through the power of its own cognition. The second consists of the soul being guided to the place of judgement by a guardian spirit, which might be interpreted as the guiding, i.e. reasoning, part of the soul.

³²¹ The establishment of a *telos* for the soul further refines the Platonic Wager, encouraging the individual to undertake a careful consideration of the Wager. Now, a failure to participate in the Wager no longer involves the rejection of a belief in the afterlife, but a rejection in the very purpose of one's soul. It is, therefore, of the upmost importance that one opt for the correct choice in the Wager, in order that one may be best placed to achieve the *telos* of one's soul – in this case, by opting for that choice that necessitates one's adherence to the Socratic way of life.

- (ii) Once the soul arrives at this place of judgement, what is this place like? Of particular importance will be the crossroads of the *Gorgias*, and the place of judgement described by Er in the *Politeia*.
- (iii) At this place of judgement, the soul is judged by a set of ‘true’ judges. Who are these ‘true’ judges? How do they effect the judgement of the soul? What does the judgement entail?
- (iv) Finally, the judges categorize the soul into two broad categories (although as will become clear these two categories do possess important sub-categories): just and unjust; the just experiencing reward, whilst the unjust are punished. Here, the notions of corrective punishment, and punishment as a deterrent will be discussed. However, this will be done selectively so as not to lead to repetition during the examination of reincarnation in Chapter 3. For example, particularly with regards to reward, the soul adjudged to be just, pure, and that of a philosopher, experiences the reward of breaking free of the cycle of reincarnation (in those dialogues in which reincarnation exists).³²² Conversely, in the *Timaios* for example, it appears that the punishment of the soul culminates in a worse reincarnation, e.g. from a human being to fish. This chapter will not consider details such as these, but they will be discussed later in Chapter 3.

(2.2) The *Apologia*

(2.2.1) 17c-18a

(17c) καὶ μέντοι καὶ πάνυ, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοῦτο ὑμῶν δέομαι
καὶ παρίεμαι· ἐὰν διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν λόγων ἀκούητέ μου ἀπο-
λογουμένου δι’ ὧν περ εἴωθα λέγειν καὶ ἐν ἀγορᾷ ἐπὶ τῶν
τραπεζῶν, ἵνα ὑμῶν πολλοὶ ἀκηκόασι, καὶ ἄλλοθι, μήτε
(d) θαυμάζειν μήτε θορυβεῖν τούτου ἕνεκα. ἔχει γὰρ οὕτωςί.

³²² Reeve (1989): 179.

νῦν ἐγὼ πρῶτον ἐπὶ δικαστήριον ἀναβέβηκα, ἔτη γεγονώς
ἐβδομήκοντα· ἀτεχνῶς οὖν ξένως ἔχω τῆς ἐνθάδε λέξεως.
ὥσπερ οὖν ἄν, εἰ τῷ ὄντι ξένος ἐτύγχανον ὦν, συνεγιγνώ-
σκετε δήπου ἄν μοι εἰ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ φωνῇ τε καὶ τῷ τρόπῳ
18.

(a) ἔλεγον ἐν οἷσπερ ἐτεθράμμην, καὶ δὴ καὶ νῦν τοῦτο ὑμῶν
δέομαι δίκαιον, ὥς γέ μοι δοκῶ, τὸν μὲν τρόπον τῆς λέξεως
ἔαν—ἴσως μὲν γὰρ χειρίων, ἴσως δὲ βελτίων ἄν εἴη—αὐτὸ
δὲ τοῦτο σκοπεῖν καὶ τούτῳ τὸν νοῦν προσέχειν, εἰ δίκαια
λέγω ἢ μή· δικαστοῦ μὲν γὰρ αὕτη ἀρετὴ, ῥήτορος δὲ
τάληθῆ λέγειν.

[LOEB translation:] “And what’s more, men of Athens, I do very much beg and implore this of you: if you hear me making my defense using the same arguments that I normally use both in the Agora at the money-changers’ tables, where many of you have heard me, and elsewhere, don’t be surprised and don’t heckle me because of this. You see this is how it is: this is the first time I’ve come to court, even though I’m seventy years old: so I’m simply a stranger to the way people speak here. So, just as if I really happened to be an outsider, I imagine you would excuse me if I were speaking in the dialect and in the manner in which I was brought up, so particularly on this occasion I make this request of you, a just one, at any rate as it seems to me, to indulge my way of speaking—perhaps it could be worse, perhaps better—and consider just this point, and concentrate on whether I’m speaking justly or not: that is the mark of a good juror, but the orator’s is to speak the truth.”

Sokrates presents to his jurors a prefatory outline regarding the manner and style of his forthcoming *apologia* (‘defence-speech’). He begins with a request for forgiveness concerning the ‘plain’ and ‘conversational’ style of his defence.³²³ More specifically he will conduct his defence using the same manner of speech as that used in the *agora* (17c8),³²⁴ and hopes his jurors will, (a) not be surprised, and (b) not create a disturbance because of this.³²⁵ There are various reasons why Sokrates may have made such a statement; for example, to obtain a certain level of latitude from his jurors, due to

³²³ Quotations marks are used here, as Sokrates speech in this dialogue is not as ‘plain’ or ‘conversational’ as Plato would have one believe; the *Apologia* being a highly stylized speech, possessing only slight deviations from the expected norm with regards to a ‘typical’ Athenian lawcourt speech. Cf. the speeches of Attic orators like Lysias; indeed, Plato presents Lysias as an associate of Sokrates in both the *Politeia* (in which his father, Cephalos, and brother, Polemarkhos, are interlocutors), and the *Phaidros* (in which Phaidros’ praise of a Lysian speech on love precipitates the discussion of the dialogue). See also Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 40.

³²⁴ Ἐὰν διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν λόγων ἀκούητέ μου ἀπολογουμένου δι’ ὧνπερ εἴωθα λέγειν καὶ ἐν ἀγορᾷ ἐπὶ τῶν τραπεζῶν, ἵνα ὑμῶν πολλοὶ ἀκηκόασι, καὶ ἄλλοθι, μήτε θαυμάζειν μήτε θορυβεῖν τούτου ἕνεκα, *Apologia* 17c7-d1.

³²⁵ E.g. Demosthenes 57.50 (*Ephesis pros Eubouliden*).

his lack of experience and knowledge of the lawcourt setting. This, he implies, is demonstrative of the exemplary nature of both his character and conduct up to this point, as it shows he is not a career politician; nor is he a litigious sycophant (*sukophantes*, συκοφάντης); a professional orator; or an individual who possesses knowledge of this forensic manner of speech, i.e. he is not a sophist (one who might teach such skills). Sokrates, rather, is an undistinguished individual, who only possesses the type of speech common to all – that of the *agora* (where he conducts many of his philosophical investigations, 17c7-d1).

Sokrates' request for latitude suggests further that the Athenian juror expected to hear a particular style and type of speech in the lawcourt. They expected, it seems, that individuals participating in the trial would adapt their mode of speech and presentation, so as to suit the different setting of the lawcourt, reflecting, perhaps, the more serious character of the lawcourt, but also convention. Whilst there are rules meant to govern the operation of the lawcourt, it is the jurors' interpretation of these rules, usually reliant upon convention, that ultimately defines how the lawcourt is to function, and the parameters of the trial. Indeed, this phenomenon appears to exist even in the present day, as participants in lawcourt trials are similarly expected to adapt their speech and argumentation to the more serious and more formal setting of the lawcourt; and one who cannot do this is generally placed at a disadvantage.³²⁶

In the present context, Sokrates is on trial, charged with subverting Athenian social, cultural, and religious norms. His use of a type of speech more suited to the *agora*, represents a similar subversion of convention, which expects him to use a particular forensic kind of speech. Indeed, even this 'speech of the *agora*' to which Sokrates refers, does not necessarily conform to the juror's expectation of such speech; thereby instigating a further subversion of Athenian convention. The

³²⁶ Hence the prevalence of the lawyer in modern lawcourt trials; but also the tendency for low income, low social status individuals to suffer disproportionately in modern lawcourts because of their lack of knowledge regarding the specialized manner of conduct expected in the lawcourt. Cf. Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 40 who suggest that Sokrates may be trying to prove a specific point in claiming that he is ignorant of the procedures that govern the lawcourt, for example, it demonstrates that he paid no heed to politics (cf. *Apologia* 31c-d, 32c, 40a-c, 41d), instead choosing to focus on the state of his own soul.

‘speech of the *agora*,’ referred to by Sokrates, alludes to that method of argumentation demonstrative of the *elenkhai* he chooses to conduct in the *agora*.

This Socratic ‘*agora* speech’ functions mainly as a tool for investigation into the truth; or, at least, to establish one’s own ignorance of the truth. Of course, in a lawcourt setting, establishing that no one possesses the ‘truth’ is not so useful; regardless, the purpose of this Socratic ‘*agora* speech’ remains: to investigate the truth.³²⁷ The speech of the lawcourt, on the other hand, generally aims to (i) be persuasive, and (ii) win an argument.³²⁸ Its primary aim is not necessarily to uncover the truth (although this is generally purported to be its aim by its practitioners); rather, it utilizes whatever imagery and literary techniques are necessary in order to present that version of events that is most persuasive, and, more importantly, that will win the court case. In a sense, the speech of the lawcourt subordinates the truth to the achievement of victory in a particular debate, employing whatever means are necessary in order to effect this outcome.³²⁹

This does not mean, of course, that Sokrates intended in no way for his speech to be somewhat persuasive – he is on trial for his life after all – but merely that this is not his primary aim. His primary responsibility is always to ‘the truth,’ but even Sokrates recognizes there is no use in possessing the truth if one cannot communicate this truth to others. In an ideal world, it would be enough to communicate this truth alone, unencumbered by any kind of rhetorical device. However, such an ideal world does not exist for mortal beings, and so, in order to communicate this truth to others, it

³²⁷ The divorce between Sokrates’ conception of ‘*agora* speech’ and that of the juror’s allows Sokrates to establish his own parameters for conducting his defence, and the introduction of his usual method of discussion into the foreign setting of the lawcourt. Cf. Rice (1998): 2.

³²⁸ Cf. for example, *Apologia* 18b-18c, 32e-34b; *Gorgias* 453a, 454e-455a; *Phaidros* 261b-c; *Philebos* 58a-b. See also Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 152-155.

³²⁹ Nevertheless, Sokrates does adhere to some conventions of the lawcourt trial, e.g. 20e-21a, 27b-28a, 31a-31c, 35a1-b8. Cf. the *Gorgias* 523a-527e, in which Zeus deliberately establishes the judgement of the soul in Hades so that the soul is completely alone when it is judged, and so cannot use common lawcourt tactics such as the introduction of eyewitness testimony; testimony that is both fallible, being based upon the bodily senses, and open to corruption. As Sokrates exists presently in the mortal realm, he must utilize the distorted conventions of the mortal lawcourt, but in the presence of the ‘true’ judges in Hades, such practices are not only unnecessary, but ultimately useless. As Reeve (1989): 8 argues ‘the subordination of persuasion to truth-telling in Sokrates’ speech is subordination only, and not the abandonment of persuasion altogether. Sokrates aims to persuade the jury of his innocence...but he is not willing to do so at the expense of truth, justice, or his own deepest convictions.’

is necessary for Sokrates to employ some rhetorical devices, lest his communication of the truth be rejected, thereby allowing ignorance to prevail. Indeed, in the later *Kratylos* for example, Sokrates relates to Hermogenes that sometimes the truth 'sounds funny' (γελοῖον, 400b6), further obstructing the truth's acceptance by others. In such cases it is necessary both to relate the truth and be persuasive, thereby allowing the truth to overcome these mortal, sensory biases and achieve acceptance (*Apologia*, 35a1-b8).

In the latter stages of the *Apologia*, Sokrates juxtaposes the 'true' judges, and their judgement in Hades, with that of the present (τοὺς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, 41a2). In so doing, he suggests that the 'true' judges would not have condemned him to death, but rather have rewarded him, i.e. they would have reached the exact opposite conclusion of the mortal judges. Sokrates juxtaposes his present trial with his future trial, implying that his '*agora* speech,' would succeed in the future where it had failed in the present; and demonstrates to the judges there the truth of his character. This juxtaposition demonstrates further that (a) human lawcourts, and forensic speech, do not necessarily aim at the truth; and (b) human jurors are ignorant of the truth and how it may be recognized. Conversely, one may infer that,

- (i) The 'true' judgement of Hades always aims at the truth;
- (ii) The judges in Hades possess 'true' knowledge (cf. *Apologia* 18a3-6);
- (iii) Therefore, the judges in Hades will always recognize the truth.
- (iv) Hence, the forensic speech of the human lawcourt is ineffective.³³⁰

Indeed, strictly speaking, if the 'true' judges always recognize the truth, it does not matter what type of speech one utilizes, whether it be forensic or 'of the *agora*'; the judgement will be true regardless. However, as the judgements of the human lawcourts will not consistently be in accordance with

³³⁰ Cf. *Gorgias* 463e-466a: Oratory is a part of flattery for the soul. Presumably, therefore, such type of speech will have no effect on the 'true' judges, who care not for flattery and ornamentation, or for illusory rhetorical techniques.

truth, the employment of Sokrates' *'agora speech'* is the closest a human lawcourt may come to the true judgements in Hades.

(2.2.2) 18b-18c

(18b1) ἔμοῦ γὰρ πολλοὶ κατήγοροι γεγόνασι πρὸς ὑμᾶς
καὶ πάλαι πολλὰ ἤδη ἔτη καὶ οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς λέγοντες, οὐς
ἐγὼ μᾶλλον φοβοῦμαι ἢ τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ἄνυτον, καίπερ ὄντας
καὶ τούτους δεινούς· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι δεινότεροι, ὧς ἄνδρες, οἱ
ὑμῶν τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐκ παίδων παραλαμβάνοντες ἔπειθόν
τε καὶ κατηγοροῦν ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον οὐδὲν ἀληθές, ὡς ἔστιν τις
Σωκράτης σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, τὰ τε μετέωρα φροντιστὴς καὶ τὰ
ὑπὸ γῆς πάντα ἀνεζητηκῶς καὶ τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω
(c) ποιῶν. οὗτοι, ὧς ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, <οἱ> ταύτην τὴν φήμην
κατασκεδάσαντες, οἱ δεινοὶ εἰσὶν μου κατήγοροι· οἱ γὰρ
ἀκούοντες ἡγοῦνται τοὺς ταῦτα ζητοῦντας οὐδὲ θεοὺς νομίζουσιν.
ἔπειτὰ εἰσὶν οὗτοι οἱ κατήγοροι πολλοὶ καὶ πολὺν χρόνον
ἤδη κατηγορηκότες, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ λέγοντες
πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν ἧ ἂν μάλιστα ἐπιστεύσατε, παῖδες ὄντες ἔνιοι
ὑμῶν καὶ μειράκια, ἀτεχνῶς ἐρήμην κατηγοροῦντες ἀπολο-
γούμενου οὐδενός.

[LOEB translation:] “You see, for many years now many people have been bringing before you accusations against me saying nothing that was true, and who I’m more afraid of than Anytus and his cronies, though those are formidable enough; but the former, my friends, are more to be feared who took you under their wing when you were boys and gained your confidence and made accusations against me, none of which was any more true: there is someone called Socrates, a wise fellow, who as a thinker has investigated all things above and below the earth and who makes the weaker argument the stronger. These people, fellow Athenians, who spread this reputation around are my formidable accusers: for those who listen to them think that those who make such inquiries don’t even acknowledge the gods. Secondly there are many of these accusers and they’ve been making accusations for a long time now, and in addition, by talking to you at an age when you’d be very likely to believe them, some of you being boys and teenagers, they were making their accusations simply uncontested with no one there to give a defense.”

Sokrates continues his attempt to assuage the prejudices of his jurors, appealing to them not to be swayed by various informal fallacies; particularly those of ‘false attribution,’ ‘false authority,’ and ‘association fallacy.’³³¹ He fears that the many false accusations made against him by previous individuals might prejudice the jury against him (18b1-4). These false accusations are especially damaging, argues Sokrates, since they reached the ears of the jurors in their childhood (18b4-c1), when they were more easily persuadable; winning their case by default, since ‘no defence’ (‘ἀπολογουμένου οὐδενός,’ 18c7-8) was given (18c1-8). In this particular case, Sokrates is referencing (amongst other things) his earlier, comic portrayal by Aristophanes in the *Nephelai* (*passim*; *Apologia*, 18c8-d2);³³² which encapsulates the three fallacies identified above:

- (i) False Attribution: Sokrates fears the untrue things Aristophanes attributes to him in his play, e.g. the apotheosis of the clouds, which might directly impact a juror’s assessment of his alleged impiety (for example: ‘οἱ γὰρ ἀκούοντες ἡγοῦνται τοὺς ταῦτα ζητοῦντας οὐδὲ θεοὺς νομίζειν,’ 18c2-3).³³³
- (ii) False Authority: Aristophanes was a comic playwright, who constructed the character of Sokrates for the purpose of creating comedy. Sokrates fears that a juror will accept such an individual as an authority on his conduct and character.
- (iii) Association Fallacy: Related to the two above fallacies, Sokrates fears that his jurors will be unable to separate the fictionalized, comedy Sokrates, from the ‘real’ Sokrates,³³⁴ convicting him by association.

³³¹ These fallacies are particularly true of Aristophanes’ *Nephelai*, (e.g. 245-428), which may constitute the bulk of the rumours Sokrates refers to in his speech. False attribution: Aristophanes’ attributes to Sokrates things that are untrue, e.g. the apotheosis of the clouds (*nephelai*). False authority: Sokrates is afraid that his jurors might utilize Aristophanes as an authority regarding his conduct and character. Association fallacy: Sokrates is afraid of being associated with the character of Sokrates in the *Nephelai*. See also Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 64-65.

³³² See further Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 64-65.

³³³ Cf. Vlastos (1999b): 56-77 on Plato’s construction of Sokrates as the pious individual *par excellence*.

³³⁴ Although one may level the same allegation at the Sokrates of Plato’s *Apologia*, who likewise does not necessarily bear any resemblance to the ‘real’ Sokrates either; it being possible that he too is a mostly fictional construct, created (in this case by Plato) to serve a particular purpose.

The fears Sokrates outlines here, further juxtaposes the deficient judgement of the human lawcourts, with that of the ‘true’ judgement of Hades:

- (1) A human juror is susceptible to such logical fallacies, a ‘true’ judge is not;
- (2) A human juror utilizes non-rational information to effect their judgement; a ‘true’ judge does not; and
- (3) A human juror cannot discern, consistently, between what is ‘true’ and what is ‘false’; a ‘true’ judge can.³³⁵

(2.2.3) 33a-33b

(33a1) ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου δημοσίᾳ
τε εἴ ποῦ τι ἔπραξα τοιοῦτος φανοῦμαι, καὶ ἰδίᾳ ὁ αὐτὸς
οὔτος, οὐδενὶ πώποτε συγχωρήσας οὐδὲν παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον
οὔτε ἄλλῳ οὔτε τούτων οὐδενὶ οὐς δὴ διαβάλλοντες ἐμέ
φασιν ἐμούς μαθητὰς εἶναι. ἐγὼ δὲ διδάσκαλος μὲν οὐδενὸς
πώποτ’ ἐγενόμην· εἰ δὲ τίς μου λέγοντος καὶ τὰ ἐμαυτοῦ
πράττοντος ἐπιθυμοῖ ἀκούειν, εἴτε νεώτερος εἴτε πρεσβύτερος,
οὐδενὶ πώποτε ἐφθόνησα, οὐδὲ χρήματα μὲν λαμβάνων διαλέ-
(b) γομαι μὴ λαμβάνων δὲ οὐ, ἀλλ’ ὁμοίως καὶ πλουσίῳ καὶ
πένητι παρέχω ἐμαυτὸν ἐρωτᾶν, καὶ ἐάν τις βούληται
ἀποκρινόμενος ἀκούειν ὧν ἂν λέγω. καὶ τούτων ἐγὼ εἴτε
τις χρηστὸς γίγνεται εἴτε μὴ, οὐκ ἂν δικαίως τὴν αἰτίαν
ὑπέχοιμι, ὧν μῆτε ὑπεσχόμην μηδενὶ μηδὲν πώποτε μάθημα
μῆτε ἐδίδαξα· εἰ δὲ τίς φησι παρ’ ἐμοῦ πώποτέ τι μαθεῖν ἢ
ἀκοῦσαι ἰδίᾳ ὅτι μὴ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες, εὖ ἴστε ὅτι οὐκ
ἀληθῆ λέγει.

³³⁵ Cf. the characterization of the ‘true’ judge in Hades in Chapter 2.4.4.

[LOEB translation:] “But throughout my life this is how I shall appear to have been, both in public life, if I suppose I did accomplish anything, and in my private life the same, having never ever colluded with anyone in anything contrary to justice, including any of those who my slanderers claim to be my pupils. I have never been anyone’s teacher, but if anyone, young or old, is keen to hear me speak and getting on with my activities, I have never begrudged anyone; I don’t charge for conversation, nor do I refuse if no money is offered, but I make myself available to rich and poor alike for questioning as well as if anyone wants to hear and give an answer to whatever I have to say. And if any of these people turns out good or not, I would not rightly be held responsible when I have never ever promised anyone anything, nor have I taught them. But if anyone claims he ever learned anything from me or heard anything in private that none of the others have heard, be well assured that he’s not telling the truth.”

Further to the logical fallacies identified above, a particular association Sokrates was keen to distance himself from, was a false equivalency with the sophists.³³⁶ This is a false equivalency of which Aristophanes is also guilty, characterizing Sokrates as charging individuals in exchange for teaching them how ‘to make the weaker argument stronger’ (‘τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιῶν,’ 18b8-c1, 33a1-b8);³³⁷ a sentiment commonly associated with the sophists. Indeed, this presentation of Sokrates highlights the divorce between the ‘character’ of Sokrates and the ‘real’ Sokrates, who moments earlier requested understanding from his jurors, precisely because he did not know the conventions of the lawcourt, and was not a practiced orator. A refutation of his false equivalency with the sophists serves not only to distance himself from a false association with their practices, but also to justify his prior assertions regarding his competency, lest he be deemed a liar by his jurors.³³⁸

This refutation takes the form a series of protestations, in which Sokrates strongly denies charging any individual for money. On the contrary, argues Sokrates, he is happy to converse with all individuals, for free; this is true regardless of age or socioeconomic status (33a1-5). For Sokrates, it seems, all individuals are equal, and none should be denied the opportunity to test the veracity of

³³⁶ Or at least it was considered of importance to Plato; whether or not Sokrates was or was not a sophist depends on one’s perspective. See further the so-called Sokratic dialogues; in particular, those in which Sokrates’ confronts various combative sophists, e.g. Kallikles in the *Gorgias*, Euthydemos in the *Euthydemos*, and Thrasymakhos in the *Politeia*, demonstrating that they do not know as much as they think they do.

³³⁷ See further Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 65-6, and Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 152-155.

³³⁸ Cf. Aristophanes, *Nephelai*, 245-428. Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 64-66, and Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 152-155.

their beliefs in philosophical discussion.³³⁹ In other words, no individual should be denied the opportunity to possess knowledge of what is true.

In concert with the dialogue as a whole, Sokrates is presented as possessing the following characteristics:

- (1) He treats all individuals fairly and equally;
- (2) He pays no attention to prior reputation or rumour;
- (3) He seeks no mortal honours, e.g. money or reputation, only the establishment of the truth;
- (4) He receives from the individuals he meets, an account of their beliefs; and
- (5) He tests and examines this account, in order to identify any unsoundness (cf. 38a5-6).³⁴⁰

Indeed, in 39c1-39d9, Sokrates suggests to both his jurors and accusers that he has been found guilty in order that certain individuals might avoid having to give an account of their life (39c6-8). These individuals, he prophesies, will be unable to avoid giving an account of themselves (39c8-d5). In this sense, Sokrates refers to giving an account of the beliefs in their soul, in order to determine their veracity, i.e. the so-called Sokratic *elenkhos*, rather than being held to account in a political or legal sense. All of the above proffers an image of Sokrates as being akin to the 'true' judge of Hades, as being a 'living judge.'³⁴¹

If the image of Sokrates as 'living judge' is correct, then his *elenkhai* of the Athenians resemble 'pre'-judgements of those the soul will find in Hades. Sokrates, in this case, helping an individual to identify anything 'unsound' in their soul, so that they may rectify their 'errors' prior to the 'true' judgement in Hades.³⁴² This image suggests that the judgement in Hades resembles the *elenkhos* of

³³⁹ Cf. *Apologia* 38a5-6 – the unexamined life is not worth living for a human being. See also Sokrates' discussion with Menon's slave (*Menon* 81e-86b); metics (*Politeia* 1.327b2-3); individuals from *poleis* hostile to Athens (e.g. the Thebans Simmias and Kebes, *Phaidon* 59c1-2); women (e.g. Aspasia, *Menexenos* 235e3-9), and his use of humble occupations and everyday objects as examples (e.g. *Sophistes* 226e1-227c9), further suggesting a belief in the equality of all souls, and the soul's natural inclination to engage in contemplation of true reality, given the opportunity.

³⁴⁰ Cf. the art of midwifery in the *Theaitetos* 148e-151d. Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 210.

³⁴¹ Cf. *Sophistes* 226a-231c.

³⁴² Cf. *Theaitetos* 148e-151d; *Sophistes* 226a-231c.

Sokrates, examining the beliefs in one's soul, with the purpose of identifying the extent to which they are sound.³⁴³ Unlike Sokrates, however, the 'true' judges do not examine the soul prior to death, examining one's beliefs only at the end of their developmental process, when they are in their 'final' form. Moreover, Sokrates remains a human being, and so he remains susceptible to the limits of mortal nature, whereas the 'true' judges, as Sokrates describes below, are both just and divine.³⁴⁴

(2.2.4) 40e-41c

(40e4) εἰ δ' αὖ οἷον ἀποδημῆσαί ἐστιν ὁ
θάνατος ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ἐστιν τὰ
λεγόμενα, ὡς ἄρα ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεώτες, τί μεῖζον
ἀγαθὸν τούτου εἶη ἄν, ὃ ἄνδρες δικασταί; εἰ γάρ τις
41.

(a) ἀφικόμενος εἰς Ἄιδου, ἀπαλλαγείς τουτωνὶ τῶν φασκόντων
δικαστῶν εἶναι, εὐρήσει τοὺς ὡς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, οἵπερ
καὶ λέγονται ἐκεῖ δικάζειν, Μίνως τε καὶ Ῥαδάμανθους καὶ
Αἰακὸς καὶ Τριπτόλεμος καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσοι τῶν ἡμιθέων δίκαιοι
ἐγένοντο ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν βίῳ, ἄρα φαύλη ἂν εἶη ἡ ἀποδημία;
ἢ αὖ Ὀρφεῖ συγγενέσθαι καὶ Μουσαίῳ καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ
Ὀμήρῳ ἐπὶ πόσω ἂν τις δέξαιτ' ἂν ὑμῶν; ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ
πολλάκις ἐθέλω τεθνάναι εἰ ταῦτ' ἔστιν ἀληθῆ. ἐπεὶ

(b) ἔμοιγε καὶ αὐτῷ θαυμαστὴ ἂν εἶη ἡ διατριβὴ αὐτόθι, ὅποτε
ἐντύχοιμι Παλαμήδει καὶ Αἴαντι τῷ Τελαμῶνος καὶ εἴ τις
ἄλλος τῶν παλαιῶν διὰ κρίσιν ἄδικον τέθνηκεν, ἀντιπαρα-
βάλλοντι τὰ ἑμαυτοῦ πάθη πρὸς τὰ ἐκείνων—ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι,
οὐκ ἂν ἀηδὲς εἶη—καὶ δὴ τὸ μέγιστον, τοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐξετάζοντα

³⁴³ In this way, Sokrates – or the philosopher more generally – can engage the individual in a consideration of the Platonic Wager, and direct one's soul towards the correct choice, and the adoption of the Socratic way of life.

³⁴⁴ Cf. the Gorgias 523a1-527e7 for the dangers of judging a soul whilst still alive, and the judge possesses a mortal body. Here, these issues are considered more specifically.

καὶ ἐρευνῶντα ὥσπερ τοὺς ἐνταῦθα διάγειν, τίς αὐτῶν σοφός
 ἐστὶν καὶ τίς οἶεται μὲν, ἔστιν δ' οὐ. ἐπὶ πόσῳ δ' ἂν τις,
 ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί, δέξαιτο ἐξετάσαι τὸν ἐπὶ Τροίαν ἀγαγόντα
 (c) τὴν πολλὴν στρατιάν ἢ Ὀδυσσέα ἢ Σίσυφον ἢ ἄλλους
 μυρίους ἂν τις εἴποι καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας, οἷς ἐκεῖ
 διαλέγεσθαι καὶ συνεῖναι καὶ ἐξετάζειν ἀμήχανον ἂν εἴη
 εὐδαιμονίας; πάντως οὐ δήπου τούτου γε ἔνεκα οἱ ἐκεῖ
 ἀποκτείνουσι· τά τε γὰρ ἄλλα εὐδαιμονέστεροί εἰσιν οἱ ἐκεῖ
 τῶν ἐνθάδε, καὶ ἤδη τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἀθάνατοί εἰσιν, εἴπερ
 γε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀληθῆ.

[LOEB translation:] “If then this is what death is like, I say it is a benefit, for in that case the whole of time seems to be nothing more than a single night. But if death is a kind of migration from here to another place, and what they say is true, that indeed all the dead are there, what greater good could there be than this, members of the jury? For if someone, after getting to Hades, having rid himself of these self-proclaimed jurors, will find real jurors, who also are said to judge cases there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus and others of the demigods who were just in their lives, would this be a bad transfer? Or again, to meet up with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer, what price would any of you pay for that? You see I’m willing to die many times over if this is the truth, since for myself spending time there would be wonderful, when I could meet Palamedes and Aias, Telemon’s son, and any others of olden times who died as a result of an unjust judgment, and compare my experiences with theirs—in my view it would not be unpleasant—and what’s more, the most important thing, I could go round, examine and inquire, just as I did here, who is wise and who thinks he is, but isn’t. What price, members of the jury, would one pay to examine the leader of the great army against Troy, or Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or the countless others one could mention, men and women, to converse with whom there, and meet and examine them would be utmost happiness? At any rate, I don’t suppose they put people to death there for doing this: in fact there are other reasons why they are more blessed there than those down here, not to mention that from then on they’re immortal for the rest of time, if, that is, what is said is true.”

Thus far, discussion of the judge has occupied both a legal and ethical dimension, considering on the one hand the judge’s function in a judgement, and on the other, the moral characteristics a judge should ideally possess, so as to effect a ‘correct’ judgement. Now, Sokrates shall discuss the judge from an explicit eschatological perspective, combining both the legal and the ethical with the eschatological notion of the soul’s judgement. In this particular case, the judge (or rather the ‘true’

judge) makes an appearance in Sokrates' second conception of the afterlife – the one in which death involves a relocation for the soul from here to another place (40e4-41c7).

This conception of the afterlife establishes Hades as constituting an otherworldly location, being completely divorced in some way from the world in which we live ('τις ἀφικόμενος εἰς Ἄιδου,' 40e7-41a1). This is particularly so given Sokrates' emphasis that it is the soul that experiences this relocation – an incorporeal and immaterial entity – implying Hades is of like nature with the soul, i.e. incorporeal and immaterial; hence the body's inability to relocate there also.³⁴⁵ Moreover, in establishing Hades as being both incorporeal, immaterial, and changeless, Hades assumes an affinity to the divine, and a nature more akin to true reality (although one must not necessarily assume the existence of the Forms in the *Apologia*). Sokrates provides no details on how the soul arrives in Hades, but it appears as though the soul possesses a kind of instinctive knowledge of the journey. The lack of details regarding the location of Hades and its nature, and how the soul is understood to journey there, suggest that these particular elements are not meant to be the focus of this particular account (see Chapter 2.8 on the *Phaidon*).³⁴⁶

Subsequent to the soul's arrival in Hades, Sokrates constructs an immediate juxtaposition between his judges in the present world, and the 'true' judges of Hades ('ἀληθῶς δικαστάς,' 41a2). These 'true' judges, according to Sokrates, consist of Minos,³⁴⁷ Rhadamanthos, Aiakos, Triptolemos, and other demi-gods who were equally upright in their own life (41a1-5). In contrast with later accounts

³⁴⁵ The conception of Hades Sokrates possesses cannot be akin to that of the *Odyssey* 11.51-635, for example, in which Odysseus and his companions travel to Hades still in possession of their bodies; or likewise the stories of Herakles, Theseus, and Orpheus travelling to Hades (e.g. [Apollodoros], *Bibliothèque*, 2.61-180). See further Gantz (1993): 120-151, 291-294, 374-466. See contra Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 259 who suggest that Sokrates' second conception of the afterlife does not diverge from the standard 'tales' regarding the afterlife.

³⁴⁶ If Sokrates introduces this account as a means of justifying to his companions both his lack of fear regarding his impending death, and the need to live a virtuous, then the location of Hades, and the soul's journey there, do not necessarily serve to further this argument. In the eschatological account of the *Gorgias*, on the other hand, the judgement occupies a more central role, and so Sokrates feels it is more appropriate to relate these particular details, as they serve to reinforce the main aim of his thesis.

³⁴⁷ Cf. the Athenian on how the common, Athenian conception of Minos is incorrect, *Nomoi* 1.624a, 1.630d, 4.706a.

of the judges,³⁴⁸ in which Sokrates prefers the standard trio of Minos, Rhadamanthos, and Aiakos; here, Sokrates introduces at least four named judges, but the criteria he outlines for the judges – the need to have led an upright life – admit the possibility for many more (‘δίκαιοι ἐγένοντο ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν βίῳ,’ 41a4-5).³⁴⁹ Indeed, it does not preclude the possibility of a mortal who has lived an upright life, such as Sokrates himself, from assuming the position of judge. This would be the ultimate irony, if upon their death Sokrates’ accusers arrive in Hades for the judgement, and they find Sokrates to be their judge, proving conclusively both their own injustice, and the justness of Sokrates.³⁵⁰ In any case, the following relationship is established between Sokrates and the ‘true’ judges:

- (a) The ‘true’ judge lived a just, mortal life;
- (b) Sokrates, at least according to Plato, lives a just, mortal life;
- (c) Therefore, Sokrates shares certain qualities of the ‘true’ judge.

Regardless, the identities of the judges, and the criteria Sokrates establishes, ensure that the judge of the soul once lived in the same physical world as the soul it is judging. The judge, therefore, once shared in the same mortal experience as the soul being judged, e.g. birth and death, anger, joy, fear, etc. This affords the judge knowledge regarding the realities of mortal existence; knowledge that a god might not possess, since god *qua* god does not know mortal existence.³⁵² In this way, Sokrates introduces two features to the judgement, which continue throughout the dialogues:

- (i) The judgement is fair. Sokrates posits that the judges were once human beings, thus they possess knowledge of the human experience; and they were human beings who led a just life. This provides the judge in Hades with knowledge of mortal nature, of what is just, and

³⁴⁸ See further Chapters 2.4 and 2.9.

³⁴⁹ Cf. the fate of the Golden race in Hesiodos, *Erga kai Hemerai*, 106-201.

³⁵⁰ Indeed, one may argue that Sokrates did become their judge, since figures like Meletos and Anytos are immortalized, examined, and evaluated in relation to their role in condemning Sokrates. Through the judgement of Plato's *Apologia* these particular figures have been forever condemned to ignominy (a punishment such individuals may have considered one of the worst of all).

³⁵² Cf. the Christian notion of Jesus as the judge of one's soul, who possesses knowledge of both the mortal and the divine: *Apokalypsis Ioannou*, 11:13-20:15.

the 'correct' way in which to live one's life, since they themselves did so during their embodied existence. All of the above criteria are used to show that the judgement of the soul in Hades is both just and fair. The judge's knowledge of justice ensures their actions adhere to what is just; likewise, their experience of mortal existence ensures an intimate understanding of the practicalities of human life.

- (ii) The gods bear no responsibility for the fate of the soul. As the judges possess knowledge of mortal existence, the soul cannot claim that they have been judged by a transcendent entity, divorced from the realities of humanity. Furthermore, it establishes the former humanity of the soul's judge, demonstrating to it that it is possible for a mortal being to live a life according to justice. Thus, if a soul finds itself on the wrong side of the judgement, their judges are proof that if that soul had made different choices the outcome of the judgement could have been different.³⁵³

(2.3) The *Kriton*

(2.3.1) 43d-44b

ΣΩ. Ἀλλ', ὦ Κρίτων, τύχη ἀγαθῆ, εἰ ταύτη τοῖς θεοῖς φίλον, ταύτη ἔστω· οὐ μέντοι οἴμαι ἤξειν αὐτὸ τήμερον.

44.

(a) ΚΡ. Πόθεν τοῦτο τεκμαίρη;

ΣΩ. Ἐγὼ σοι ἐρῶ. τῆ γάρ που ὑστεραία δεῖ με ἀποθνήσκειν ἢ ἢ ἂν ἔλθῃ τὸ πλοῖον.

ΚΡ. Φασί γέ τοι δὴ οἱ τούτων κύριοι.

ΣΩ. Οὐ τοίνυν τῆς ἐπιούσης ἡμέρας οἴμαι αὐτὸ ἤξειν

³⁵³ Cf. McPherran (2006): 258.

ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐτέρας. τεκμαίρομαι δὲ ἕκ τινος ἐνυπνίου ὃ ἐώ-
ρακα ὀλίγον πρότερον ταύτης τῆς νυκτός· καὶ κινδυνεύεις ἐν
καιρῷ τινι οὐκ ἐγεῖραί με.

ΚΡ. Ἦν δὲ δὴ τί τὸ ἐνύπνιον;

(i) ΣΩ. Ἐδόκει τίς μοι γυνὴ προσελθοῦσα καλὴ καὶ εὐειδής,

(b) λευκὰ ἱμάτια ἔχουσα, καλέσαι με καὶ εἶπεῖν· (ii) ὦ Σώκρατες,
ἦματί κεν τριτάτῳ Φθίην ἐρίβωλον ἴκοιο.”

ΚΡ. Ἄτοπον τὸ ἐνύπνιον, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Ἐναργὲς μὲν οὔν, ὥς γέ μοι δοκεῖ, ὦ Κρίτων.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. Well, Crito, may this be for the best; if it pleases the gods
this way, so be it. However I don’t think it’ll come today.

Cri. Where do you get that idea from?

Soc. I’ll tell you. I must be put to death, I take it, on the day after the boat arrives.

Cri. At any rate that’s what the people responsible for these things say.

Soc. Then I don’t think it’ll arrive on the day coming, but on the one after. My proof
comes from a dream I saw a short while ago this very night: and maybe it was
opportune you didn’t wake me up.

Cri. And what was the dream?

Soc. A beautiful attractive woman appeared to be coming toward me wearing a
white cloak. She called me and said: “Socrates, on the third day you may reach most
fertile Phthia.”

Cri. What a strange dream, Socrates.

Soc. On the contrary, a clear one in my view, Crito.”

Kriton relates to Sokrates the news that the ship containing the sacred fire of Delos will arrive later
today, signaling Sokrates' execution for the day after (43d2-6). Sokrates, however, disagrees with
Kriton's statement, instead citing a dream he had in the night as evidence that his execution will
occur in two days, and not in one as Kriton assumes (43d7-44b4).³⁵⁴ The dream proffers the
following details:

- (i) A beautiful and shapely woman dressed in white approached Sokrates (44a10-b1).

³⁵⁴ Cf. *Theaitetos* 200e, 206c, 208b and the difference between truth vs belief: Kriton uses habitualized
knowledge in order to interpret Sokrates' forthcoming death; Sokrates uses revealed knowledge – true
knowledge – to do so.

(ii) She said, 'Sokrates, may you arrive at fertile Phthia on the third day' (44b1-2).³⁵⁵

Although (ii), in particular, is a poetic allusion to Homeros and Akhilles, Sokrates' dream offers, nonetheless, a potential conception of the place of Hades. For instance, Sokrates' emphasis on the beauty of the woman and the whiteness of her clothing, creates an allusion to the notion of 'purity.'³⁵⁶ This would imply that Sokrates' journey will involve travelling to a place of purity. It is not explicitly labelled Hades, yet it alludes to the second conception of the afterlife given in the *Apologia* (40e4-41c7), since it presents the continued existence of some part of Sokrates, which undergoes a change of location to a place of purity (a place of the divine, e.g. the demi-gods and heroes described by Sokrates in the *Apologia*, 40e4-41c7). This lends further credence to the suggestion that this place is indeed understood to be the location of an afterlife, or a place closer in nature to what-is-pure, i.e. Hades.³⁵⁷

The poetical allusion in (ii) may simply reflect the conventional, literary manner for presenting dreams, which often tend to be poetical, metaphorical, and supernatural in nature.³⁵⁸ In this case, the poetical allusion refers to Akhilles whose home is Phthia, suggesting that, in death, Sokrates will be returning 'home' to a place that constitutes his 'true' home.³⁵⁹ In a sense, death is presented as the accomplishment of the soul's *nostos*, with life constituting the various trials and tribulations the soul must undergo before it may return home.³⁶⁰ This does not say much about the location of Hades or its nature, but it does establish Hades as a 'real' place that exists; a place in which other

³⁵⁵ Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 198.

³⁵⁶ Cf. *Phaidon* 97e, 99b, 108e.

³⁵⁷ It may also be that the woman is an allusion either to Parmenides' Truth (KRS 288), or to the standard description of blessed initiates in Hades, e.g. Aristophanes, *Batrakhoi*, 318-355; regardless, both allusions imply the woman originates from a place of purity, truth, and knowledge. Cf. Atossa's dream in Aiskhylos, *Persai*, 517-531; Xerxes' dream in Herodotos (7.12-18, 7.47); Akhilles' dream of Patroklos in the *Iliad* 23.17-107.

³⁵⁸ For instance, Atossa's dream in Aiskhylos, *Persai*, 517-531; Xerxes' dream in Herodotos (7.12-18, 7.47); Akhilles' dream of Patroklos in the *Iliad* 23.17-107.

³⁵⁹ Such an interpretation suggests the soul's pre-existence to its embodiment, since it must have existed in this place prior to embodiment, if its journey there constitutes a return.

³⁶⁰ Cf. the many travails Odysseus must ensure before he can return home in Homeros' *Odyseia*.

entities likewise exist, and which constitutes the ‘true’ home of the soul (the continuing part of the composite human being), at least in the case of Sokrates.

The woman in Sokrates’ dream presumably inhabits this place also, and was able to communicate with Sokrates in the form of a dream alone. This suggests that the afterlife is a place separated from the present world in some sense. Given the woman's reliance on communication through an oneiric medium, i.e. a non-physical, immaterial medium; it may be that the place which she inhabits is similarly non-physical and immaterial, necessitating the use of a dream in order to communicate with the physical and material Sokrates. If this were the case, this would establish the dream as a point of commonality between the material and non-material worlds, and it is the case that in the *Iliad* (23.62-107) or Herodotos (*Historiai*, 7.12.1-7.18.4), for example, the dead generally communicate with an individual in the form of a dream. This does not mean that to dream is to interact with the non-physical world, or any sort of ‘true’ world, but rather its immateriality provides a useful space through which a similarly immaterial entity might communicate with a material being; the dream and the entity possessing the same immaterial nature.³⁶¹ On the other hand, it may just be a conventional description of a dream meant to indicate Sokrates’ divine favour (in particular his Apollonian favour), or his closeness to death, represented by his increased propensity for encounters with the supernatural.³⁶²

(2.3.2) 46e-48a

—σὺ γάρ, ὅσα γε τάνθρώπεια, ἐκτὸς εἶ τοῦ μέλλειν ἀπο-
47.

(a) θνήσκειν αὔριον, καὶ οὐκ ἂν σὲ παρακρούοι ἢ παροῦσα συμ-
φορά· σκόπει δὴ—οὐχ ἰκανῶς δοκεῖ σοι λέγεσθαι ὅτι οὐ

³⁶¹ Cf. *Ion* 538e; *Symposion* 188b.

³⁶² E.g. *Apologia* 20e, 21b, 39c; *Phaidon* 58b, 60d, 61a-b, 85a, 111b. Kahn (1996): 66-67.

πάσας χρή τὰς δόξας τῶν ἀνθρώπων τιμᾶν ἀλλὰ τὰς μὲν,
τὰς δ' οὐ, οὐδὲ πάντων ἀλλὰ τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' οὐ; τί φῆς;
ταῦτα οὐχὶ καλῶς λέγεται;

ΚΡ. Καλῶς.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν τὰς μὲν χρηστὰς τιμᾶν, τὰς δὲ πονηρὰς μή;

ΚΡ. Ναί.

ΣΩ. Χρησταὶ δὲ οὐχ αἱ τῶν φρονίμων, πονηραὶ δὲ αἱ
τῶν ἀφρόνων;

ΚΡ. Πῶς δ' οὐ;

ΣΩ. Φέρε δὴ, πῶς αὖ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐλέγετο; γυμναζόμενος

(b) ἀνὴρ καὶ τοῦτο πράττων πότερον παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐπαίνῳ καὶ
ψόγῳ καὶ δόξῃ τὸν νοῦν προσέχει, ἢ ἐνὸς μόνου ἐκείνου ὃς
ἂν τυγχάνῃ ἰατρὸς ἢ παιδοτρίβης ὢν;

ΚΡ. Ἐνὸς μόνου.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν φοβεῖσθαι χρή τοὺς ψόγους καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι
τοὺς ἐπαίνους τοὺς τοῦ ἐνὸς ἐκείνου ἀλλὰ μὴ τοὺς τῶν
πολλῶν.

ΚΡ. Δῆλα δὴ.

ΣΩ. Ταύτη ἄρα αὐτῷ πρακτέον καὶ γυμναστέον καὶ
ἐδεστέον γε καὶ ποτέον, ἢ ἂν τῷ ἐνὶ δοκῇ, τῷ ἐπιστάτῃ καὶ
ἐπαίοντι, μᾶλλον ἢ ἢ σύμπασι τοῖς ἄλλοις.

ΚΡ. Ἔστι ταῦτα.

(c) ΣΩ. Εἶεν. ἀπειθήσας δὲ τῷ ἐνὶ καὶ ἀτιμάσας αὐτοῦ τὴν
δόξαν καὶ τοὺς ἐπαίνους, τιμήσας δὲ τοὺς τῶν πολλῶν [λό-
γους] καὶ μηδὲν ἐπαίοντων, ἄρα οὐδὲν κακὸν πείσεται;

ΚΡ. Πῶς γὰρ οὐ;

ΣΩ. Τί δ' ἔστι τὸ κακὸν τοῦτο, καὶ ποῖ τείνει, καὶ εἰς
τί τῶν τοῦ ἀπειθοῦντος;

ΚΡ. Δῆλον ὅτι εἰς τὸ σῶμα· τοῦτο γὰρ διόλλυσι.

ΣΩ. Καλῶς λέγεις. οὐκοῦν καὶ τᾶλλα, ὧ Κρίτων, οὕτως,
ἵνα μὴ πάντα διΐωμεν, καὶ δὴ καὶ περὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ
ἀδίκων καὶ αἰσχυρῶν καὶ καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν, περὶ

ὧν νῦν ἡ βουλή ἡμῖν ἐστίν, πότερον τῆ τῶν πολλῶν δόξη
(d) δεῖ ἡμᾶς ἔπεσθαι καὶ φοβεῖσθαι αὐτήν ἢ τῆ τοῦ ἑνός, εἴ τις
ἐστὶν ἐπαῖων, ὃν δεῖ καὶ αἰσχύνεσθαι καὶ φοβεῖσθαι μᾶλλον
ἢ σύμπαντας τοὺς ἄλλους; ὧ εἰ μὴ ἀκολουθήσομεν, δια-
φθεροῦμεν ἐκεῖνο καὶ λωβησόμεθα, ὃ τῷ μὲν δικαίῳ βέλτιον
ἐγίνετο τῷ δὲ ἀδίκῳ ἀπώλλυτο. ἢ οὐδὲν ἐστὶ τοῦτο;
ΚΡ. Οἶμαι ἔγωγε, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Φέρε δὴ, ἐὰν τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ ὑγιεινοῦ μὲν βέλτιον
γιγνόμενον, ὑπὸ τοῦ νοσώδους δὲ διαφθειρόμενον διολέσωμεν
πειθόμενοι μὴ τῆ τῶν ἐπαϊόντων δόξη, ἄρα βιωτὸν ἡμῖν ἐστὶν
(e) διεφθαρμένου αὐτοῦ; ἔστι δὲ που τοῦτο σῶμα· ἢ οὐχί;
ΚΡ. Ναί.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν βιωτὸν ἡμῖν ἐστὶν μετὰ μοχθηροῦ καὶ
διεφθαρμένου σώματος;
ΚΡ. Οὐδαμῶς.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ μετ' ἐκείνου ἄρ' ἡμῖν βιωτὸν διεφθαρμένου,
ὧ τὸ ἄδικον μὲν λωβᾶται, τὸ δὲ δίκαιον ὀνίνησιν; ἢ φαυλό-
τερον ἡγοῦμεθα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος ἐκεῖνο, ὅτι ποτ' ἐστὶ τῶν
48.

(a) ἡμετέρων, περὶ ὃ ἢ τε ἀδικία καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη ἐστίν;
ΚΡ. Οὐδαμῶς.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ τιμώτερον;

ΚΡ. Πολύ γε.

ΣΩ. Οὐκ ἄρα, ὧ βέλτιστε, πάνυ ἡμῖν οὕτω φροντιστέον
τί ἐροῦσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ' ὅτι ὁ ἐπαῖων περὶ τῶν
δικαίων καὶ ἀδίκων, ὁ εἷς καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ ἀλήθεια. ὥστε πρῶτον
μὲν ταύτη οὐκ ὀρθῶς εἰσηγῆ, εἰσηγούμενος τῆς τῶν πολλῶν
δόξης δεῖν ἡμᾶς φροντίζειν περὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ καλῶν καὶ
ἀγαθῶν καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. You see, in all human probability, you are excluded from the prospect of being put to death tomorrow and the present catastrophe shouldn't knock you sideways. Just think about it: don't you think it has been argued adequately that one should not respect all the beliefs that people have, but just

some and not others, and not those of everyone, but those of some and not of others? What do you say? Isn't this right?

Cri. It is.

Soc. Therefore we should respect good beliefs, but not bad ones.

Cri. Yes.

Soc. And good ones are those of intelligent people, and bad ones those of those who are ignorant.

Cri. Of course.

Soc. Come on then, how were such points established? Would a man in training and fully engaged in it pay attention to the encouragement, criticism and opinion of every person, or only that of one person who is actually his doctor or trainer?

Cri. Only the one.

Soc. Therefore he must fear the criticisms and welcome the encouragement from that one person, and not those of the majority?

Cri. Obviously.

Soc. So he must get down to it and train, eat and drink in the way that seems right to that one person who is the expert and has knowledge, rather than what seems right to everyone else.

Cri. That's right.

Soc. Well then, if he disobeys the one and scorns his opinion and encouragements, but respects those of the majority who have no understanding, surely he'll suffer some harm?

Cri. Of course.

Soc. What harm is this and to what does it tend, and what part of him who disobeys does it affect?

Cri. Clearly his body, for this is what he's damaging.

Soc. You're right, and isn't this true of everything else, Crito, to save us going through all of it; and above all when it comes to matters concerning the just and unjust and dishonorable and honorable and good and bad, those we are now discussing, whether we should follow the opinion of the majority and fear it, or that of the one person, if there is someone with understanding who we should respect and fear rather than all the others? If we don't follow him, won't we destroy and abuse that which was improved by what is just and was ruined by what is unjust: or is that not so?

Cri. I think it is, Socrates.

Soc. Come then, if we're going to destroy that which was improved by what is healthy and ruined by what is diseased by not following the opinion of those who have understanding, are we fit to live if that part is ruined? And this is surely the body, isn't it?

Cri. Yes.

Soc. So are our lives worth living with a distressed and degenerating body?

Cri. Not at all.

Soc. Well then are we to live with that part of us ruined that the unjust damages, but that the just benefits? Or do we consider that that part with which justice and injustice are concerned, whichever part of us it is, is inferior to the body?

Cri. Not at all.

Soc. Rather more to be valued?

Cri. Very much so.

Soc. Then, my good friend, we shouldn't thus be overconcerned by what the majority will tell us, but what the person tells us who has an understanding of just and unjust matters, the single individual, and the truth itself. The result is that firstly you're not going about it in the right way when you propose that we must be concerned with the opinion of the majority about matters just and fine and good and their opposites."

Sokrates and Kriton discuss whether an individual should value the opinions of all people on a given subject, or rather, only the opinions of those who possess knowledge pertaining to that particular subject (46e3-47a12). This discussion leads, ultimately, to a basic characterization of the judge, as an individual who possesses knowledge of both justice and injustice, as well as the capacity to identify the 'truth' with consistency (47c8-48a10).³⁶³ Given the knowledge this individual possesses, one must heed their pronouncements regarding what is, and what is not, just and true. Accordingly, one must follow the instructions of such an individual regarding correction. In the case of the Hadean judge, the judge possesses knowledge of justice and injustice; thus, they make no mistakes in identifying which souls are and are not just. Hence, if the judge prescribes correction for an unjust soul, the soul should recognize that:

- (a) the judge is much more knowledgeable than it;
- (b) the judge's knowledge of what is just and unjust ensures they consistently act in accordance with what is just. Hence,
- (c) this correction is prescribed with the soul's own benefit in mind; proffering the notion that
- (d) punishment is prescribed in order to benefit the offending soul/individual.

³⁶³ Cf. *Hippias Elasson* 365b; *Ion* 531a-531b.

As in the *Apologia*, the description of the judge is suggestive of Sokrates' characterization of the philosopher, such that the philosopher assumes the status of a 'living judge' ('living' in order to distinguish the philosopher from the judge in Hades). Consequently, just as one should heed the advice of the judge with regards to correction, so, Sokrates argues, one must listen to the advice of the philosopher with regards to the wellbeing of the soul.³⁶⁴ The 'true' judge identifies the unjust soul and assigns correction in the afterlife; this correction, if one assumes the temporal limits outlined in the *Apologia* (41c6), lasts for the rest of time. The philosopher (the 'living' judge), on the other hand, attempts to identify the unjust soul before it reaches the afterlife, in the hope that the individual may correct the 'errors' in their soul, so as to avoid the atemporal correction of the 'true' judge. This potentially establishes a *telos* for the soul –to arrive at the judgement in Hades sans corruption in the soul.³⁶⁵

(2.3.3) 54b-54d

(54b2) “Ἄλλ', ὦ Σώκρατες, πειθόμενος ἡμῖν τοῖς σοῖς τροφεῦσι
 μήτε παῖδας περὶ πλείονος ποιοῦ μήτε τὸ ζῆν μήτε ἄλλο
 μηδὲν πρὸ τοῦ δικαίου, ἵνα εἰς Ἄιδου ἐλθὼν ἔχῃς πάντα
 ταῦτα ἀπολογήσασθαι τοῖς ἐκεῖ ἄρχουσιν· οὔτε γὰρ ἐνθάδε
 σοι φαίνεται ταῦτα πράττοντι ἄμεινον εἶναι οὐδὲ δικαιότερον
 οὐδὲ ὀσιώτερον, οὐδὲ ἄλλω τῶν σῶν οὐδενί, οὔτε ἐκεῖσε
 ἀφικομένῳ ἄμεινον ἔσται. ἀλλὰ νῦν μὲν ἡδικοημένος ἄπει,
 (c) ἐὰν ἀπίης, οὐχ ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν νόμων ἀλλὰ ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων·
 ἐὰν δὲ ἐξέλθῃς οὕτως αἰσχροῶς ἀνταδικήσας τε καὶ ἀντικα-
 κουργήσας, τὰς σαυτοῦ ὁμολογίας τε καὶ συνθήκας τὰς πρὸς

³⁶⁴ See further, *Protagoras* 313a-314c and *Kharmides* 156b-157d which present the philosopher as being the doctor of the soul. Cf. Baxter (1992): 105 – the philosopher is able to act akin to the doctor of the soul, since they are the individuals who most associate with soul, rather than the body. See further the *Phaidon* 59c-69e – the philosopher disassociates with the body as far as possible in preparation for the soul's disembodied existence post-death.

³⁶⁵ See further Chapter 2.4

ἡμᾶς παραβάς καὶ κακὰ ἐργασάμενος τούτους οὐς ἤκιστα
ἔδει, σαυτόν τε καὶ φίλους καὶ πατρίδα καὶ ἡμᾶς, ἡμεῖς τέ
σοι χαλεπανοῦμεν ζῶντι, καὶ ἐκεῖ οἱ ἡμέτεροι ἀδελφοὶ οἱ ἐν
Ἄιδου νόμοι οὐκ εὐμενῶς σε ὑποδέχονται, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ
ἡμᾶς ἐπεχείρησας ἀπολέσαι τὸ σὸν μέρος. ἀλλὰ μὴ σε
(d) πείση Κρίτων ποιεῖν ἃ λέγει μᾶλλον ἢ ἡμεῖς.”

Ταῦτα, ὦ φίλε ἑταῖρε Κρίτων, εὖ ἴσθι ὅτι ἐγὼ δοκῶ
ἀκούειν, ὥσπερ οἱ κορυβαντιῶντες τῶν αὐλῶν δοκοῦσιν
ἀκούειν, καὶ ἐν ἐμοὶ αὕτη ἡ ἠχὴ τούτων τῶν λόγων βομβεῖ
καὶ ποιεῖ μὴ δύνασθαι τῶν ἄλλων ἀκούειν· ἀλλὰ ἴσθι, ὅσα γε
τὰ νῦν ἐμοὶ δοκοῦντα, ἐὰν λέγῃς παρὰ ταῦτα, μάτην ἐρεῖς.
ὅμως μέντοι εἴ τι οἶει πλέον ποιήσῃς, λέγε.

ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. [as the Laws of Athens] “Come now, Socrates, obey us your nurturers and don’t value your children, or your life, or anything else more highly than what is just, in order that when you get to Hades you may offer all this in your defense before those who rule there. For just as doing what you propose seems neither better for you in this world, and not more just or more holy, nor for any of your friends, so it will not be better for you when you get to the next. As it is now, you will leave here, if you do leave, having been treated unjustly, not under the auspices of us the Laws, but of men. But if you go having retaliated and caused harm in such a disgraceful way, having broken both your own agreements and covenants with us, and having done wrong to those here who are the last people you should have done it to: yourself, your friends, your native city and us, then we shall be angry with you while you are still alive, and in the next world our brothers the Laws in Hades will not receive you kindly, knowing that you attempted to destroy us in as far as you could. Come now, don’t let Crito persuade you to do what he says rather than what we say.

This, my dear friend Crito, be assured, is what I seem to hear, just as the Corybantes think they hear the flutes, and this sound of these words resonates within me and makes me unable to hear any others. Well, be assured that, as far as my current beliefs go, if you argue against those, you will argue in vain. All the same however, if you think you will accomplish anything more, speak.

C. No, Socrates, I’ve nothing to say.”

This possible *telos* – to arrive in Hades *sans* corruption in the soul (see Chapter 2.3.2 above), receives further support from the notion introduced here, that the judgement in Hades is based upon the condition of each particular soul, molded by all the choices and decisions of that individual.

Furthermore, it introduces the notion that the afterlife, in this case Hades, is subject to a set of laws.³⁶⁶

In the context of this particular passage, Sokrates relates a hypothetical address to himself on behalf of a personification of the Laws of Athens. This hypothetical address functions as a thought experiment, in which Sokrates imagines that the Laws of Athens can speak for themselves. The Laws of Athens relate to Kriton their function in society, as, in effect, establishing a precursor to the theory of the social contract, between the Athenian citizen and the authority of the Athenian *polis* – i.e. the laws.³⁶⁷ In this case, Sokrates submits that he cannot flee his legally prescribed execution, since he has consented, (tacitly), to submit to the authority of the Laws, in return for their protection and their conservation of the social order.

Since birth,³⁶⁸ Sokrates has enjoyed the benefits of this protection and order, and so he believes that he cannot simply abandon the Laws simply because he does not like the outcome of a legal pronouncement of the lawcourt. He would, as he argues, be committing an injustice against the Laws, who have only ever done him good up to this point (54b1-b8). For Sokrates, fleeing his execution would create a dangerous precedent; if all individuals abandoned the Laws in any instance

³⁶⁶ The notion that the afterlife – whether it be punishment or reincarnation – is governed by a set of immovable divine laws, informs all subsequent descriptions of the afterlife, which further present the afterlife as adhering to a divinely set cosmic order; an order truer in nature as it governs the divine, immortal, and incorporeal. In the *Gorgias* 523a-527e, the judgement of the soul and its punishment is governed by the divine law of Zeus; in the *Menon* 80d-82b, reincarnation is governed by divine law. The same is true in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5), *Politeia* (Chapter 3.6), *Phaidros* (Chapter 3.7), and the *Timaios* (Chapter 3.8). See also Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 243-245 who argue that ‘the same picture (or at least one entirely compatible with it) is represented as accepted by Sokrates in *Gorgias* 523a1ff.’

³⁶⁷ Though given Athens’ status as a democracy, the authority, strictly speaking, should lie with the people, rather than the laws; unless one interprets the laws as in some way representing the will of the power, though Sokrates suggests a different, divine origin of the law, given its kinship with the divinely ordained laws of Hades. Nonetheless, if the relationship between the Athenian citizen and the Laws of Athens functions in a manner akin to a social contract, then the same must be true between the Laws of Hades and its citizens – the soul – in effect establishing Hades as being like a *polis*, but this *polis* is a ‘true’ *polis*, since it governs the divine, incorporeal, and immortal. Cf. Johansen (2004): 3, who argues that Hades is the exemplification of the just city suggested in the *Politeia* 9.592b.

³⁶⁸ The laws argue that they are responsible for Sokrates’ birth, presumably this is because the laws legislate which individuals may marry each other, legally, ensuring the conception of legitimate, citizen offspring. Since Sokrates is considered a legitimate, citizen offspring of his parents, and has enjoyed the benefits of this citizenship; he is *ipso facto* the product of the Laws of Athens.

of disagreement, this would result in a general undermining of their authority, and the subversion of the social order.

In order to emphasize his position, Sokrates introduces the argument that the Laws themselves, did him no wrong, but rather his execution results from an 'incorrect' human interpretation of these laws (54b8-c8). This argument serves a twofold purpose:

- (i) it preserves the authority of the laws; indeed, it suggests the laws of Athens embody some kind of 'true' justice, independent of human beings, since Sokrates characterizes their source as being not mortal in nature, but divine; and
- (ii) it emphasizes the ignorance of the jurors, who 'incorrectly' interpreted the 'true' justice embodied in the laws, thereby condemning Sokrates to death.³⁶⁹

Therefore, Sokrates believes he would be committing an injustice against the Laws of Athens were he to flee his execution, since his present predicament is the result of ignorant human interpretation, and not that of the Laws in and of themselves.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁹ Weiss (1998): 153 argues that the Laws of Hades take the place of the 'true' judge as the adjudicators of justice in Hades. However, the Laws of Athens criticize the human judges, arguing that their misinterpretation of the Law, virtue of their ignorance of what is true, lead to the present injustice against Sokrates. Similarly, therefore, the Laws of Hades, if they are function akin to the Laws of Athens, require interpretation by a judge. In this case, the 'true' judge interprets the Laws of Hades, but, virtue of their knowledge of what is true, justice never fails to prevail. Cf. Johansen (2004): 3 who suggests that Hades is the perfectly justice *polis* Sokrates argues in favour of in the *Politeia*. This would establish the judge as being a guardian of the *polis*, interpreting the law in order to ensure the preservation of order and harmony, e.g. *Nomoi* 12.964e; *Politeia* 2.375e-276d, 3.412b-417b, 4.419a-425e, 5.450c-471e, 7.519c-521b, 7.537a-537d, 7.539e-541b, 8.543a.

³⁷⁰ Weiss (1998): 119-120 argues that the Laws of Athens are 'appalled by Sokrates' conduct' because his 'assertion that he is not fearful of death is an assertion that the city has ultimately no hold over him; insofar as the city's severest sanction is death, one who does not fear death does not fear the city.' Yet, the Laws of Athens clearly state that they have not wronged Sokrates, but rather his present fate is the result of infallible human interpretation of the Laws. The suggestion being that were the Laws interpreted by non-human judges – or judges who possessed true knowledge – then Sokrates would not find himself presently sentenced to death. How can the Laws be appalled at Sokrates for his lack of fear in the face of death if they appear to believe that Sokrates' death sentence is incorrect? Moreover, Sokrates chooses to stay in Athens and die in accordance with law; how can Sokrates find contempt in the Laws of Athens if he chooses to honour their pronouncement of death, even if he believes this to be an incorrect adjudication? Surely, it is Sokrates' lack of fear in the face of death that allows him to accept his death sentence, and die in accordance with the law, rather than flee and risk undermining the social contract between the Laws of Athens and its citizens? Is not fleeing his death sentence in Athens, and undermining the social contract more of an act of contempt on Sokrates' behalf, since it directly challenges the authority of the law?

The final argument Sokrates utilizes in order to demonstrate to Kriton why he cannot flee Athens, relates that Hades is likewise subject to a set of laws.³⁷¹ These laws are in some way kindred of the Laws of Athens, suggesting both sets of laws are somehow related ('οἱ ἡμέτεροι ἀδελφοὶ οἱ ἐν Ἄιδου νόμοι,' 54c6-7).³⁷² However, whereas the judges in Athens interpret the laws 'incorrectly,' with only their ignorance to guide them, the 'true' judges in Hades, interpret the laws with knowledge. This knowledge – of what is just and unjust, true and false – ensures that the 'true' judges always interpret the laws 'correctly' (cf. Chapter 2.2). However, it is uncertain whether these laws are meant to be understood as legal prescriptions, similar to human legal laws, or refer to some sort of natural law that always remains the same, and is as applicable to the mortal as to the immortal. It is possible that the latter is most likely to be the case, since it preserves the relatedness between the laws of Athens and that of Hades, and further emphasizes the ignorance of the Athenian juror compared to the 'true' judge.³⁷³

Regardless, the introduction of laws to the governance of Hades establishes the 'true' judge as occupying a similar role to the earthly judge, who attempts to implement a correct understanding of the laws, in order to preserve the social order of the community. In the case of the human judge, their interpretation of the laws is generally based on ignorance of 'the truth,' and is fallible, thus human judgements do not always succeed in safeguarding the community from a disruption to the

³⁷¹ Cf. Weiss (1998): 119-120, Kriton's belief (44c3-5) that death is a great evil for Sokrates, and death somehow constitutes the end is directly challenged by Sokrates introduction of the Laws of Hades which suggest that (a) there is a Hades; (b) Hades is governed by true justice, and (c) Sokrates shall receive here vindication for the manner in which he has lived his life.

³⁷² Presumably they are related because they both purport to embody Justice. This assumes that Justice is immortal and changeless, such that what is just for Hades, must also be just for Athens. Moreover, the Laws of Athens claim it is human interpretation that lead to the injustice of Sokrates' death sentence, suggesting that the Laws of Athens and the Laws of Hades both embody the same immortal and changeless concept of Justice. In order for this to be the case, both sets of laws must have been established by an entity in possession of true knowledge, in this case, true knowledge of Justice. One may understand this as being an entity such as a god, who establishes the laws for both Athens and Hades in possession of true knowledge; or it may be that both the mortal and immortal are governed by the same cosmic order (the same transcendental Justice), and it is this order that is the law of both Athens and Hades. For an analogy one might consider the notion of the 'Laws of Physics' – laws that underlie all of reality, but which require investigation in order to be discovered and communicated (usually in mathematical notation). Sometimes, however, human beings arrive at the incorrect understanding of these laws; cf. Kuhn (1970 2nd ed): *passim*.

³⁷³ See further footnote 311.

social order, e.g. riots, *stasis*, coups, etc. The ‘true’ judge, on the other hand, interprets the law in light of the ‘true’ knowledge they possess, ensuring their judgements are consistent and correct. A ‘true’ judge, therefore, never fails to uphold both the authority of the law, and the conservation of social order. In the case of the ‘true’ judge, the social order they preserve is that of Hades. In this way Sokrates presents an image of Hades as being akin to a *polis*, in possession of a social order, and presumably the ‘citizens’ of this ‘*polis*,’ likewise enter (tacitly in the case of the ignorant, explicitly in the case of the knowledgeable) into a social contract with the Laws of Hades.³⁷⁴ The ‘true’ judge, in a sense, acts like a guardian of the *polis*, ensuring order is maintained in Hades (the ‘*polis*’) through their correct interpretations of the law, assigning the just and the unjust to their appropriate stations. A soul, in this sense, acts like a citizen of the *polis*; agreeing, tacitly, to submit to the punishments of the *polis* in return for its rewards.

(2.4) The *Gorgias*

(2.4.1) 468a-468e

—ΣΩ. Τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἄρα διώκοντες
καὶ βαδίζομεν ὅταν βαδίζωμεν, οἴομενοι βέλτιον εἶναι, καὶ
τὸ ἐναντίον ἔσταμεν ὅταν ἐστῶμεν, τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἕνεκα, τοῦ
ἀγαθοῦ· ἢ οὐ; —ΠΩΛ. Ναί. —ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἀποκτείνου-
μεν, εἴ τιν’ ἀποκτείνουμεν, καὶ ἐκβάλλομεν καὶ ἀφαιρούμεθα
χρήματα, οἴομενοι ἄμεινον εἶναι ἡμῖν ταῦτα ποιεῖν ἢ μή; —
ΠΩΛ. Πάνυ γε. —ΣΩ. Ἐνεκ’ ἄρα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἅπαντα
ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν οἱ ποιοῦντες. —ΠΩΛ. Φημί. —ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν
ὠμολογήσαμεν, ἃ ἕνεκά του ποιοῦμεν, μὴ ἐκεῖνα βούλεσθαι,

³⁷⁴ Cf. Johansen (2004): 3.

(c) ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο οὐ ἔνεκα ταῦτα ποιοῦμεν; —ΠΩΛ. Μάλιστα.
—ΣΩ. Οὐκ ἄρα σφάττειν βουλόμεθα οὐδ' ἐκβάλλειν ἐκ τῶν πόλεων οὐδὲ χρήματα ἀφαιρεῖσθαι ἀπλῶς οὕτως, ἀλλ' ἐὰν μὲν ὠφέλιμα ἦ ταῦτα, βουλόμεθα πράττειν αὐτά, βλαβερὰ δὲ ὄντα οὐ βουλόμεθα. τὰ γὰρ ἀγαθὰ βουλόμεθα, ὡς φῆς σύ, τὰ δὲ μῆτε ἀγαθὰ μῆτε κακὰ οὐ βουλόμεθα, οὐδὲ τὰ κακὰ. ἦ γάρ; ἀληθῆ σοι δοκῶ λέγειν, ὦ Πῶλε, ἢ οὐ; τί οὐκ ἀποκρίνη; —ΠΩΛ. Ἀληθῆ.

(d) ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν εἴπερ ταῦτα ὁμολογοῦμεν, εἴ τις ἀποκτείνει τινὰ ἢ ἐκβάλλει ἐκ πόλεως ἢ ἀφαιρεῖται χρήματα, εἴτε τύραννος ὢν εἴτε ῥήτωρ, οἴομενος ἄμεινον εἶναι αὐτῷ, τυγχάνει δὲ ὄν κάκιον, οὗτος δήπου ποιεῖ ἃ δοκεῖ αὐτῷ· ἦ γάρ; — ΠΩΛ. Ναί. —ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν καὶ ἃ βούλεται, εἴπερ τυγχάνει ταῦτα κακὰ ὄντα; τί οὐκ ἀποκρίνη; —ΠΩΛ. Ἀλλ' οὐ μοι δοκεῖ ποιεῖν ἃ βούλεται. —ΣΩ. Ἔστιν οὖν ὅπως ὁ τοιοῦτος

(e) μέγα δύναται ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ, εἴπερ ἐστὶ τὸ μέγα δύνασθαι ἀγαθόν τι κατὰ τὴν σὴν ὁμολογίαν; —ΠΩΛ. Οὐκ ἔστιν. —ΣΩ. Ἀληθῆ ἄρα ἐγὼ ἔλεγον, λέγων ὅτι ἔστιν ἄνθρωπον ποιοῦντα ἐν πόλει ἃ δοκεῖ αὐτῷ μὴ μέγα δύνασθαι μηδὲ ποιεῖν ἃ βούλεται.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. Thus it is in pursuit of the good that we walk, when we walk, conceiving it to be better; or on the contrary, stand, when we stand, for the sake of the same thing, the good: is it not so?”

Pol. Yes.

Soc. And so we put a man to death, if we do put him to death, or expel him or deprive him of his property, because we think it better for us to do this than not?

Pol. Certainly.

Soc. So it is for the sake of the good that the doers of all these things do them?

Pol. I agree.

Soc. And we have admitted that when we do things for an object, we do not wish those things, but the object for which we do them?

Pol. Quite so.

Soc. Then we do not wish to slaughter people or expel them from our cities or deprive them of their property as an act in itself, but if these things are beneficial we wish to do them, while if they are harmful, we do not wish them. For we wish what

is good, as you say; but what is neither good nor bad we do not wish, nor what is bad either, do we? Is what I say true in your opinion, Polus, or not? Why do you not answer?

Pol. It is true.

Soc. Then, as we agree on this, if a man puts anyone to death or expels him from a city or deprives him of his property, whether he does it as a despot or an orator, because he thinks it better for himself though it is really worse, that man, I take it, does what he thinks fit, does he not?

Pol. Yes.

Soc. Now is it also what he wishes, supposing it to be really bad? Why do you not answer?

Pol. No, I do not think he does what he wishes.

Soc. Can such a man then be said to have great power in that city, if to have great power is something good, according to your admission?

Pol. He cannot.

Soc. Then I spoke the truth when I said that it is possible for a man to do what he thinks fit in a city and yet not to have great power nor to do what he wishes.”

Here, Sokrates introduces Polos to his notion of corrective punishment; but first he would like to relate what punishment should not be (468b1-e5):

- (i) Punishment should not be arbitrary;
- (ii) Punishment should not be administered solely for the sake of eliciting fear;
- (iii) Punishment should not be used as a means of controlling a populace; and
- (iv) Punishment should not constitute an act of retribution or vengeance.

It is no coincidence that the above conceptions of punishment conform, roughly, to the most prevalent contemporary theories regarding the use and purpose of punishment.³⁷⁵ In outlining these conceptions as embodying what punishment should not be, Sokrates is explicitly criticizing contemporary notions of punishment, as having fundamentally misunderstood the nature of punishment. As the *Kriton* suggests that Sokrates' death penalty is the result of ignorance on the part of his jurors in their interpretation of the law (Chapter 2.3.3), so Sokrates posits that the above

³⁷⁵ See, for example, [Aiskhylos], *Prometheus Desmotes*, 27-36, 263-270.

conceptions of punishment result from a similar ignorance. In this case, the ignorance relates to the purpose of punishment, which, when administered in the 'correct' manner, should benefit all involved parties (468b1-d5).

Sokrates' theory of punishment is predicated on the following 'Socratic' paradoxes (468c2-d7):

- (1) One does not desire what is evil.
- (2) One does not err willingly.³⁷⁶

Accordingly, when an individual commits a crime, they do so in the mistaken belief that what they are doing is good. Had this individual been educated so as to possess an awareness of the 'wrongness' of their actions, then, Sokrates believes, this individual would not have committed the crime. For Sokrates, the committing of a crime, injustice, or wrong, are all symptoms of a cognitive failure; a failure that can be easily rectified, at least in theory. Consequently, punishment should seek to rectify this failure through education; instilling in the offender the 'wrongness' of their actions, so as to prevent reoffending, i.e. it is corrective. In so doing, punishment benefits the one being punished, who becomes less ignorant of what is just and unjust. Now that the offender knows the 'wrongness' of their previous action, then, if one does not desire evil, the offender should no longer desire to commit this action.

The punishment, however, also benefits the one administering the punishment, since it reduces both the level of ignorance and the amount of injustice in the community, leading to a

³⁷⁶ Irwin (1979): 143-147; Kahn (1996): 132, 281; cf. Bobonich (2003): 78. Kahn (1996): 231 argues that 'such paradoxes clearly have a normative-protreptic appeal. They are designed to provoke the interlocutor (and reader) into reflecting on what it is that he or she really wants, as what it is that is truly good for them.' This thesis posits that the protreptic function of the paradoxes forces the individual to engage with the Platonic Wager, and reflect upon whether they have opted for the correct choice. The individual who does something bad in the belief that it is good, is encouraged to consider whether the short term gain of their bad action justifies its committal, once they have taken into account the immortal aspect of their nature – their soul (*Gorgias* 523a1-527e7; *Politeia* 10.614b-621d). Sokrates presents ethics to the individual as a problem of probability, and hopes that, if one truly desires what is good, the only reasonable way to live is to adopt the Socratic way of life, which never fails to consider the immortal dimension of one's own decision making. Cf. Christianity (and Pascal's Wager) which similarly encourages the individual to pay heed to the immortal aspect of their nature when making decisions, in order to effect the greatest amount of benefit in the long term.

corresponding increase in the level of knowledge and justice.³⁷⁷ Justice and injustice, in this case, are inversely proportionate to one another; and since injustice and ignorance are directly proportionate, according to Sokrates, then a decrease in ignorance through education should lead to a decrease in injustice, and an increase in the amount of justice.

In Hades, punishment appears to function in accordance with its human counterpart, i.e. it is carried out in the knowledge that it constitutes a benefit for all parties involved. The 'true' judges in Hades possess knowledge of both 'truth' and 'justice,' which ensures they consistently arrive at the correct judgement of the soul.³⁷⁸ Consequently, all unjust souls are (a) identified, and (b) prescribed the correction they require, by the 'true' judge. The human judge, on the other hand, is unable to identify all unjust souls for a variety of reasons. For example, the human judge does not possess the same level of certain knowledge as the 'true' judge; thus it is possible for the human judge to make a mistaken judgement. Moreover, it is possible for the human judge to be influenced by factors extrinsic to the judgement itself, e.g. emotion, wealth, or status. This contrast between the human judge and the 'true' judge, presages the comparison between the embodied and disembodied judge in Sokrates' account of the judgement, in the forthcoming eschatological account of the *Gorgias* (see Chapter 2.4.4).

Sokrates' understanding of punishment appears to rely upon the existence of an intrinsic *telos* to the soul. This *telos* is exemplified by the judgement of the soul in Hades, in which the soul appears to be judged according to two particular criteria: (i) to what extent is it just (or virtuous); and (ii) to what extent is it ignorant? Sokrates, however, appears to believe that (a) one does not desire what is evil, and (b) one does not err willingly. Accordingly, an individual who commits an injustice (an evil) does so through ignorance. It is ignorance that causes this individual to believe, mistakenly, that their action is 'just' when it is 'unjust.' This notion requires further the presupposition of a Form of Justice;

³⁷⁷ E.g. *Nomoi* 1.630a-d, 1.631b-632d, 2.653a-c, 3.688a-d, 3.693b, 5.730e-731a, 6.770b-771a, 7.807c-d, 8.835b-c, 12.962c-d, 12.965c-e; *Politeia* 4.427e, 4.433a-e, 6.485a-487e, 7.518d-520d; cf. *Politeia* 7. 514a-520a.

³⁷⁸ Cf. *Nomoi* 2.668c-d, and 2.669a-b.

or at least a belief in the existence of an immortal, absolute, and changeless notion of justice, allowing some actions to be deemed, definitively, ‘just’ and ‘unjust’.

In this way, it could be argued that the second criterion – the cognitive criterion – is the most important element of the judgement, since the extent to which the soul is just appears to be predicated on the amount of ignorance present in the soul (see Chapter 2.4.4). One may infer from this that the soul appears to possess a *telos*; and this *telos* appears to be the possession of knowledge, or at least, the nonpossession of ignorance.³⁷⁹ Punishment, as presented by Sokrates, thereby serves to direct the soul towards the fulfilment of this *telos*, through a reduction in the level of ignorance in the soul. This appears true whether that punishment pertains to the immortal (the soul) or the mortal (the human being); both forms of punishment being directed towards the same end – the education of the soul. In educating the soul, punishment thus benefits both the soul itself, and the wider community in which it dwells; a more just, less ignorant soul is likely to fare well at the judgement in Hades, but it also contributes to a more just, and less ignorant community, with tangible benefits for all who dwell therein.³⁸⁰

(2.4.2) 469b-469c

(b1) ΣΩ. Τὸν ἀδίκως γε, ὧ̃ ἐταῖρε, ἀποκτείναντα, καὶ ἐλεινόν
γε πρὸς τὸν δὲ δικαίως ἀζήλων.
ΠΩΛ. Ἴη που ὁ γε ἀποθνήσκων ἀδίκως ἐλεινός τε καὶ
ἄθλιός ἐστιν.
ΣΩ. Ἴηττον ἢ ὁ ἀποκτεινύς, ὧ̃ Πῶλε, καὶ ἦττον ἢ ὁ

³⁷⁹ Baxter (1992): 105; Sayers (1999): 96, 118-119, cf., 123, 127; Rice (1998): 108.

³⁸⁰ Cf. the idea that like associates with like (e.g. *Symposion* 195b), and so a higher number of more just, less ignorant souls is likely to lead to more just, less ignorant community, thereby increasing the level of virtue for all who dwell within this community (*Politeia* 4.427e, 4.433a-e, 6.485a-487e, 7.518d-520d; cf. *Politeia* 7. 514a-520a; *Nomoi* 1.630a-d, 1.631b-632d, 2.653a-c, 3.688a-d, 3.693b, 5.730e-731a, 6.770b-771a, 7.807c-d, 8.835b-c, 12.962c-d, 12.965c-e). See also Beversluis (2000): 366.

δικαίως ἀποθνήσκων.

ΠΩΛ. Πῶς δῆτα, ὦ Σώκρατες;

ΣΩ. Οὕτως, ὡς μέγιστον τῶν κακῶν τυγχάνει ὄν τὸ ἀδικεῖν.

ΠΩΛ. Ἴη γὰρ τοῦτο μέγιστον; οὐ τὸ ἀδικεῖσθαι μείζον;

ΣΩ. Ἦκιστά γε.

ΠΩΛ. Σὺ ἄρα βούλοιο ἂν ἀδικεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ ἀδικεῖν;

(c) ΣΩ. Βουλοίμην μὲν ἂν ἔγωγε οὐδέτερα· εἰ δ' ἀναγκαῖον εἴη ἀδικεῖν ἢ ἀδικεῖσθαι, ἐλοίμην ἂν μᾶλλον ἀδικεῖσθαι ἢ ἀδικεῖν.

ΠΩΛ. Σὺ ἄρα τυραννεῖν οὐκ ἂν δέξαιο;

ΣΩ. Οὐκ, εἰ τὸ τυραννεῖν γε λέγεις ὅπερ ἐγώ.

ΠΩΛ. Ἄλλ' ἔγωγε τοῦτο λέγω ὅπερ ἄρτι, ἐξεῖναι ἐν τῇ

πόλει, ὃ ἂν δοκῇ αὐτῷ, ποιεῖν τοῦτο, καὶ ἀποκτείνονται καὶ

ἐκβάλλονται καὶ πάντα πράττοντι κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ δόξαν.

[LOEB translation: "Soc. Only he who unjustly put some one to death, my friend, and I called him pitiable as well: if he acted justly, then he is unenviable.

Pol. I suppose, at any rate, the man who is put to death unjustly is both pitiable and wretched.

Soc. Less so than he who puts him to death, Polus, and less so than he who is put to death justly.

Pol. In what way can that be, Socrates?

Soc. In this, that to do wrong is the greatest of evils.

Pol. What, is this the greatest? Is not to suffer wrong a greater?

Soc. By no means.

Pol. Then would you wish rather to suffer wrong than to do it?

Soc. I should wish neither, for my own part; but if it were necessary either to do wrong or to suffer it, I should choose to suffer rather than do it.

Pol. Then you would not accept a despot's power?

Soc. No, if you mean by a despot's power the same as I do.

Pol. Why, what I mean is, as I did just now, the liberty of doing anything one thinks fit in one's city—putting people to death and expelling them and doing everything at one's own discretion."

The teleological aspect of punishment – as directing the soul towards the fulfilment of its *telos* – reinforces Sokrates' conception of punishment as being beneficial both to all involved parties; in this case for the one being punished, and the judge who imposes the punishment. Punishment, therefore, when administered 'correctly,' constitutes an act of justice from the perspective of the judge, but also that of the offender. This small passage reinforces these particular aspects of punishment, through a refutation by Sokrates of Polos' statement that the one who is put to death unjustly, is the most pitiful and miserable of individuals (469b3-6). From Sokrates' point of view, it is the individual who puts someone to death unjustly who is the most pitiful and miserable (469b1-2, b5-6, b8-9: 'μέγιστον τῶν κακῶν').³⁸¹

Sokrates' argument against Polos proffers the following hierarchy regarding which individual is most worthy of one's pity:

- The one who puts someone to death unjustly;
- The one who is put to death justly;
- The one who is put to death unjustly; and
- The one who satisfies none of the above categories, i.e. the one who neither commits an injustice, nor experiences execution.

The above hierarchy, however, can be amended in light of Sokrates' understanding of punishment introduced above (468b1-468e5):

- The one who commits an injustice, without undergoing correction, is the most pitiable;
- The one who commits an injustice, but undergoes correction;

³⁸¹ Irwin (1979): 147. One must not forget that at the time of the *Gorgias*' composition Sokrates was dead – a fact likely known by all of Plato's contemporary audience – and he died in the manner Polos describes as the most miserable. Therefore, this argument serves, to some extent, as an *apologia* for Sokrates' showing how he was not the most pitiful and miserable of men; on the contrary it is his accusers who are to be more pitied for having committed an unjust act against a just man, failing to take into account the immortal aspect of their natures – their soul – and the harm they might be inflicting thereupon. See also Kahn (1996): 231.

- The one who is ‘incorrectly’ judged to have committed an injustice, and is subjected to correction virtue of this initial error; and
- The one who commits no injustice, and is not ‘incorrectly’ judged to have committed an injustice.

In the amended hierarchy, above, the one who puts someone to death unjustly is to be pitied, because they have committed an unjust act, without the possibility of undergoing correction. This individual, therefore, will remain ignorant of their ‘mistaken’ assumption as to what is and is not just, increasing the likelihood of them repeating the same unjust act. Hence, upon their arrival at the judgement in Hades, they will most likely be adjudged worthy of punishment, and so they deserve to be pitied.

Polos makes this particular assertion as part of a larger thesis, in which he attempts to persuade Sokrates that the tyrant is the happiest of individuals. Sokrates, however, disagrees; and he disagrees because the tyrant conforms to this particular category of person – ‘the one who commits an injustice, without undergoing correction.’ The tyrant generally puts someone to death, not in accordance with any notion of justice, but rather according to their own ‘mistaken’ understanding of what is of benefit to them, e.g. the execution of political rivals. Moreover, the tyrant’s absolutist position places them, in effect, ‘above the law,’ in the following manner:

- (1) It designates the tyrant as being peerless in status, denying any other inhabitant of the polity the authority to prosecute the tyrant, and by extension, administer punishment.³⁸²
- (2) It focuses legal and penal authority in the tyrant, such that they are, to some extent, the law.
- (3) It ensures that no one is willing to go against the tyrant, either through fear of arbitrary reprisal, or the desire to win favour through flattery.

³⁸² Cf. the *Menexenos* 238d and the Great King’s need for the Athenians to cleanse his soul, as he possesses no peer.

Consequently, the tyrant is most likely to live their life in ignorance of what is just and unjust, and thereby repeat the same unjust actions again and again, in the ‘incorrect’ belief that they are in some way ‘good.’ Hence, as Sokrates demonstrates later in the *Gorgias* (525c1-526a1; cf. *Politeia*, 10.615c1-616b1), the tyrant, and those individuals like them, will suffer most of all from the judgement in Hades. They are the ones most likely to be categorized by the ‘true’ judges as being, not only unjust, but ‘incurable’ (a new category Sokrates introduces later, in the *Gorgias*’ eschatological account) – the worst category to which a soul may belong. In terms of the *telos* posited above (see Chapter 2.4.1), the soul of the tyrant, and all other individuals with analogous positions of authority, arrives at the judgement the most ignorant of all souls, and by extension the soul most likely to have committed many unjust acts. The categorization of such a soul as ‘incurable’ (‘ἀνίατος,’ 526b8), suggests that this soul is analogous to Ignorance; thus rendering punishment ineffective, since Ignorance is immortal, absolute, and changeless, and so cannot admit of anything other than ignorance.³⁸³ Were Ignorance to admit, in any way, of its contrary, it could no longer be termed Ignorance, since it would possess a quantifiable amount of Knowledge, even if this amount is, to all intents and purposes, negligible; and the same is true of Knowledge.

According to the amended hierarchy, the one who commits an injustice, but undergoes correction, is less to be pitied than the one who commits an injustice, without undergoing correction (cf. 486d2-488b1, *Sophistes*, 226d9-231b8; and *Nomoi*, 12.958c7-960c1). In this case, the individual who

³⁸³ Though there is no suggestion that the soul is a created entity in the *Gorgias*, in the *Timaios* 41a-d, Timaios posits that the soul was created by the Demiourgos, and given effective immortality, since the Demiourgos does not destroy what he creates, he being good and perfect, and his creations sharing in his nature (cf. Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8). The existence of the incurable soul, however, challenges Timaios’ statement, since the incurable soul is evidently not good, and yet it is not destroyed. If one understands the incurable soul as being the soul closest to immortal and unchanging Ignorance, this might explain why the incurable soul is not destroyed. In creating a spectrum of knowledge, with Knowledge occupying one extreme and Ignorance the other, both Knowledge and Ignorance are understood to share in the same nature, i.e. they are both immortal and unchanging. Therefore, were the incurable soul to represent, in effect, Ignorance, then it could not be destroyed since it represents immortal and unchanging Ignorance, were it destroyed then this Form of Ignorance could no longer exist. Though, as argued below, were the incurable soul literally equivalent to Ignorance, this would ultimately create an infinite regress, since there would either exist several forms of Ignorance, in which case, one must ask what do all of these forms of Ignorance possess in common that makes them Ignorance. Or, if each incurable soul becomes assimilated to Ignorance, then Ignorance undergoes change, in which case it is neither immortal nor changeless, cf. *Timaios* 42c-d, 44a-c, on the interaction of the Same and Different constituting Knowledge and Ignorance, which might help to address this issue.

commits an injustice is to be pitied, as they have committed an unjust act, thereby necessitating the imposition of punishment, which is generally painful to the body. However, they are less pitiable than the tyrant, for example, since their action has been identified as unjust prior to the judgement of the soul in Hades. This allows for the soul of such an individual (the 'curable,'³⁸⁴ 526b8) to be subjected to punishment and education, precipitating a reduction in the level of ignorance in that particular soul. As this is done prior to its final judgement, this soul is less likely to be judged 'incurable' like the tyrant's soul, but it will still receive the designation 'unjust' as it committed acts of injustice. Yet, this soul will not be considered as ignorant as the 'incurable' soul, allowing for their designation as a 'curable' soul (526b8), i.e. allowing for the ignorance they possess to be 'cured' through punishment. As the *Gorgias* does not posit the notion of reincarnation, but suggests that the soul remains in Hades for all time, so the soul possesses eternity to be 'cured' of its ignorance, ensuring that it will eventually be 'cured.' This fate of the 'curable' soul in Hades, suggests further that the soul does possess some kind of *telos* – to be free of ignorance.³⁸⁵

Contrary to Polos' belief, Sokrates identifies the individual who is 'incorrectly' judged to have committed an injustice, and is subjected to correction, to be less pitiable than the tyrant – the unjust, 'incurable' individual – and the unjust but 'curable' individual. From Sokrates' perspective, this individual did not commit this act of supposed injustice, and so they do not possess the corresponding ignorance in their soul. In this way, when the soul of this individual reaches the judgement in Hades they will not be adjudged guilty of having committed injustice, and will receive the appropriate ruling from the 'true' judges. Nevertheless, this individual is worthy of some pity, since they must undergo arbitrary punishment that neither benefits their soul (as they never possessed the ignorance associated with the unjust act), nor their body (as execution inflicts a certain level of bodily pain).

³⁸⁴ 'ἰάσιμος,' 526b8.

³⁸⁵ Rice (1998): 108; Sayers (1999): 96, 118-119, cf. 123, 127.

However, this concept presupposes that the individual is generally just, all other things being equal; as being innocent of one kind of injustice, does not guarantee innocence of another. For example, an individual who engages in racketeering may be incorrectly adjudged guilty of murder, and sentenced to death. Although this individual is innocent of the unjust act of murder, this does not mean that their soul arrives at the judgement in Hades free of the other injustices they have committed and the ignorance they possess, particularly if these actions went unpunished. Although Sokrates is an interlocutor in the dialogue, presumably Plato attempts to evoke the figure of the historical Sokrates in his description of the wrongly punished individual; in which case, the reader is invited to understand this individual as being just in their other actions.³⁸⁶

The final individual in this hierarchy, i.e. the individual least deserving of pity, is the just individual who has been recognized as such by his peers, or at least not suffered 'unjust' punishment. Such an individual fares well in life; suffering no unjust bodily pain, and turning their soul towards the pursuit of learning and the rejection of ignorance.³⁸⁷ Similarly, this individual fares well in Hades, as the 'true' judges there will adjudge this soul not to require punishment. Through this particular category of individual, and the hierarchy more generally, Sokrates points to the importance of the philosopher such as himself. Through philosophical discussion, or the Socratic *elenchos*, the philosopher (or Sokrates at least) effects a 'living' judgement, allowing an individual to identify the ignorance within their soul, both prior to the judgement in Hades, and to the perpetration of any unjust act, requiring punishment.

³⁸⁶ Indeed, there is an element of dramatic irony here, since this is what happens to Sokrates – a fact the audience already knows. From the point of view of the *dramatis personae* of the dialogue, Sokrates inadvertently presages his fate – to be a just individual unjustly put to death; perhaps suggesting he possesses a level of divine foreknowledge. Cf. the figure of Jesus who likewise forewarns that he is to die; though, of course, the Synoptic Gospels were written by his followers after his death; thus, they already knew he had died, prior to writing their works (*Matthew* 26:24-25, *Mark* 14:18-21, *Luke* 22:21-23, and *John* 13:21-30).

³⁸⁷ Cf. *Nomoi* 12.958c7-960c1.

Although a philosopher like Sokrates may not possess absolute knowledge of what is and is not just,³⁸⁸ his characterization as a just individual leads to the following understanding:

- (a) Sokrates, according to Plato, is just.
- (b) Therefore, Sokrates' actions are just.
- (c) Unjust acts are caused by ignorance, and punishment attempts to rectify this ignorance to prevent reoffending.
- (d) If Sokrates' actions are just, then he never requires punishment.
- (e) If he never requires punishment, then he must not possess ignorance (or the ignorance in his soul is undetectable).
- (f) Ergo, of all mortal individuals, he is the one closest to an immortal, absolute, and changeless form of Knowledge.³⁸⁹

As Sokrates demonstrates in the 'Socratic' dialogues, he engages in discussion with various interlocutors, each of whom believe they possess some kind of 'knowledge.' Sokrates seeks to acquire this 'knowledge' from his interlocutors, but discovers that their 'knowledge' does not satisfy his criteria – that a concept be immortal, absolute, or changeless of a particular subject. Consequently, Sokrates concludes that these individuals are ignorant; of both the fact that they do not know, and of the thing being discussed in itself. This ignorance may then lead to the committing of unjust acts at some future time,³⁹⁰ and a corresponding future imposition of punishment. If the individual is 'fortunate' this punishment will come prior to the judgement in Hades, lest they be adjudged 'incurable.' In these discussions, Sokrates, in effect, conducts a 'living' judgement of the soul, preceding that in Hades.

³⁸⁸ Cf. *Apologia* 21d, 29a-d; Chapter 2.4.4.

³⁸⁹ Cf. the Delphic oracle's pronouncement regarding Sokrates' wisdom in the *Apologia* 20e.

³⁹⁰ For example, the character of Euthyphron in the *Euthyphron* (*passim.*), who Sokrates dissuades from committing a potential act of impiety, and violence against his father, due to his ignorance concerning the divine.

This 'living' judgement possesses a similar aim to that in Hades – to identify, and rectify, this ignorance. However, this rectification, or punishment, does not seek to instil the 'correct' knowledge into the soul, but rather to remove a particular ignorance. In the 'Socratic' dialogues, Sokrates does not provide his interlocutor with the 'correct' understanding of something after identifying their ignorance, because this is not his aim. If one agrees that the *telos* of the soul is the pursuit of knowledge (see above), then Sokrates' aim is to highlight to his interlocutor their ignorance, so that they themselves may choose to search for the 'truth' of a particular subject.³⁹¹ Sokrates merely identifies a particular conception of a given subject as being ignorance. In a sense, punishment provides a negative definition of the 'truth' of that subject, by informing the soul of what that thing is not; but it is incumbent upon the soul itself to search for the 'truth.'

Similarly, in Hades the judges do not aim to instil the 'truth' in the soul, but to reveal to the soul its ignorance, and remove that ignorance through punishment. This punishment does not result in a knowledgeable soul, but a soul in possession of neither knowledge nor ignorance; it being, once again, incumbent upon the soul to choose to search for knowledge. If this is the case, then a soul that experiences reward in Hades, chose through its own agency to search for the 'truth,' and succeeded, to differing degrees, in its search, further supporting the aforementioned *telos*. The suggestion appearing to be that a removal of ignorance from the soul will allow it to recover its natural inclination towards 'the truth.'

(2.4.3) 471e-472d

(e) ΠΩΛ. Οὐ γὰρ ἐθέλεις, ἐπεὶ δοκεῖ γέ σοι ὡς ἐγὼ λέγω.

(i) ΣΩ. Ὡ μακάριε, ῥητορικῶς γὰρ με ἐπιχειρεῖς ἐλέγχειν,

ὥσπερ οἱ ἐν τοῖς δικαστηρίοις ἡγούμενοι ἐλέγχειν. (ii) καὶ γὰρ

³⁹¹ Cf. *Menon* 86b-c— one must never cease to investigate the truth.

ἐκεῖ οἱ ἕτεροι τοὺς ἐτέρους δοκοῦσιν ἐλέγχειν, ἐπειδὴν τῶν λόγων ὧν ἂν λέγωσι μάρτυρας πολλοὺς παρέχωνται καὶ εὐδοκίμους, ὁ δὲ τάναντία λέγων ἕνα τινὰ παρέχεται ἢ μηδένα. (iii) οὗτος δὲ ὁ ἔλεγχος οὐδενὸς ἄξιός ἐστιν πρὸς τὴν 472.

(a) ἀλήθειαν· ἐνίστε γὰρ ἂν καὶ καταψευδομαρτυρηθεῖη τις ὑπὸ πολλῶν καὶ δοκούντων εἶναί τι. καὶ νῦν περὶ ὧν σὺ λέγεις ὀλίγου σοι πάντες συμφήσουσιν ταῦτ' Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ οἱ ξένοι, ἐὰν βούλη κατ' ἑμοῦ μάρτυρας παρασχέσθαι ὡς οὐκ ἀληθῆ λέγω· μαρτυρήσουσί σοι, ἐὰν μὲν βούλη, Νικίας ὁ Νικηράτου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ, ὧν οἱ τρίποδες οἱ ἐφεξῆς ἐστῶτές εἰσιν ἐν τῷ Διονυσίῳ, ἐὰν δὲ βούλη, Ἀριστοκράτης

(b) ὁ Σκελλίου, οὗ αὖ ἐστιν ἐν Πυθίου τοῦτο τὸ καλὸν ἀνάθημα, ἐὰν δὲ βούλη, ἢ Περικλέους ὅλη οἰκία ἢ ἄλλη συγγένεια ἦντινα ἂν βούλη τῶν ἐνθάδε ἐκλέξασθαι. (iv) ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σοι εἶς ὧν οὐχ ὁμολογῶ· οὐ γὰρ με σὺ ἀναγκάζεις, ἀλλὰ ψευδομάρτυρας πολλοὺς κατ' ἑμοῦ παρασχόμενος ἐπιχειρεῖς ἐκβάλλειν με ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς. ἐγὼ δὲ ἂν μὴ σὲ αὐτὸν ἕνα ὄντα μάρτυρα παράσχωμαι ὁμολογοῦντα περὶ ὧν λέγω, οὐδὲν οἶμαι ἄξιον λόγου μοι πεπεράνθαι περὶ ὧν ἂν

(c) ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος ἦ· οἶμαι δὲ οὐδὲ σοί, ἐὰν μὴ ἐγὼ σοι μαρτυρῶ εἶς ὧν μόνος, τοὺς δ' ἄλλους πάντας τούτους χαίρειν ἔῃς. (v) ἔστιν μὲν οἷν οὗτός τις τρόπος ἐλέγχου, ὡς σὺ τε οἶει καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί· ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἄλλος, ὃν ἐγὼ αὖ οἶμαι. παραβαλόντες οἷν παρ' ἀλλήλους σκεψώμεθα εἴ τι διοίσουσιν ἀλλήλων. (vi) καὶ γὰρ καὶ τυγχάνει περὶ ὧν ἀμφισβητοῦμεν οὐ πάνυ σμικρὰ ὄντα, ἀλλὰ σχεδόν τι ταῦτα περὶ ὧν εἰδέναι τε κάλλιστον μὴ εἰδέναι τε αἰσχιστον· τὸ γὰρ κεφάλαιον αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἢ γινώσκειν ἢ ἀγνοεῖν ὅστις τε εὐδαίμων ἐστὶν καὶ (d) ὅστις μὴ. αὐτίκα πρῶτον, περὶ οὗ νῦν ὁ λόγος ἐστίν, σὺ ἡγῆ οἷόν τε εἶναι μακάριον ἄνδρα ἀδικοῦντά τε καὶ ἄδικον ὄντα, εἴπερ Ἀρχέλαον ἄδικον μὲν ἡγῆ εἶναι, εὐδαίμονα δέ.

ἄλλο τι ὡς οὕτω σου νομίζοντος διανοώμεθα;

ΠΩΛ. Πάνυ γε.

[LOEB translation:] “Pol. No, because you do not want to; for you really agree with my statement.

Soc. My gifted friend, that is because you attempt to refute me in rhetorical fashion, as they understand refuting in the law courts. For there, one party is supposed to refute the other when they bring forward a number of reputable witnesses to any statements they may make, whilst their opponent produces only one, or none. But this sort of refutation is quite worthless for getting at the truth; since occasionally a man may actually be crushed by the number and reputation of the false witnesses brought against him. And so now you will find almost everybody, Athenians and foreigners, in agreement with you on the points you state, if you like to bring forward witnesses against the truth of what I say: if you like, there is Nicias, son of Niceratus, with his brothers, whose tripods are standing in a row in the Dionysium; or else Aristocrates, son of Scellias, whose goodly offering again we have in the Pythium; or if you choose, there is the whole house of Pericles or any other family you may like to select in this place. But I, alone here before you, do not admit it, for you fail to convince me: you only attempt, by producing a number of false witnesses against me, to oust me from my reality, the truth. But if on my part I fail to produce yourself as my one witness to confirm what I say, I consider I have achieved nothing of any account towards the matter of our discussion, whatever it may be; nor have you either, I conceive, unless I act alone as your one witness, and you have nothing to do with all these others. Well now, this is one mode of refutation, as you and many other people conceive it; but there is also another which I on my side conceive. Let us therefore compare them with each other and consider if we find a difference between them. For indeed the points which we have at issue are by no means of slight importance: rather, one might say, they are matters on which it is most honourable to have knowledge, and most disgraceful to lack it; for in sum they involve our knowing or not knowing who is happy and who is not. To start at once with the point we are now debating, you consider it possible for a man to be happy while doing wrong, and as a wrongdoer, since you regard Archelaus as a wrongdoer, and yet happy. We are to conclude, are we not, that this is your opinion?

Pol. Certainly.”

The *Gorgias* concludes with a rather substantial eschatological account concerning the fate of the soul after the death of the individual, with particular emphasis being placed on the manner of the soul’s judgement, as well as the punishment that awaits those who act in an unjust way. Although this account concludes the *Gorgias*, Sokrates utilizes the conception of the judgement he presents there in a systematic manner, in a more *ad hoc* fashion at various points throughout the *Gorgias*, as a means of comparison to the process of judgement in the mortal world; in particular that of Athens (see above Chapter 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 for prior examples). This application of the judgement in Hades –

as a comparative – continues in this section of the *Gorgias* (471e1-472d5), as Sokrates uses it in order to demonstrate to his interlocutors:

- (a) The inherent deficiency of the Athenian lawcourt in pronouncing ‘correct’ judgements (cf. 476d1-477a4); and
- (b) The ineffectiveness of oratory as a method of investigating ‘the truth.’

The most important for the immediate context of the *Gorgias* is (b), as Gorgias is the pre-eminent teacher of oratory in Athens, who believes that oratory is of paramount importance and usefulness to all politically engaged citizens, but in particular to those who participate in the lawcourts of Athens. Polos and Kallikles, his students and Sokrates’ interlocutors, attempt to prove the veracity of this position to Sokrates throughout the dialogue. Sokrates’ disagrees with this assessment of oratory’s usefulness, and utilizes the ‘true’ judgement in Hades in order to demonstrate to his interlocutors that while oratory appears useful in the mortal world, when it matters most – the judgement in Hades – oratory fails completely. Indeed, the concluding eschatological account is, to some extent, a ‘final’ refutation of Gorgias’ position. The crux of Sokrates’ opposition to oratory being that it does not aim consistently at the ‘truth,’ i.e. it has no real concern with the establishment of the truth.

The other point identified above, (a), serves a twofold function; first, it establishes the human jurors of Athens as being fallible. This fallibility arises from their mortal nature, in particular their possession of a higher level of ignorance than the ‘true’ judges of Hades, preventing them from effectively identifying the falsities in another’s argument à la Sokrates in the ‘Socratic’ dialogues. Consequently, the jurors are susceptible to forms of speech that do not necessarily aim at the truth, e.g. oratory, but that aim solely to persuade or win an argument, e.g. through sounding pleasant or plausible, regardless of its correspondence to the truth.³⁹² Second, it functions as an implicit criticism of Sokrates’ own trial, since, from Plato’s point of view, if the Athenian judges were in possession of

³⁹² Cf. *Kratylos* 399e3-400b7.

‘the truth’ then Sokrates would not have been found guilty. The criticism of oratory throughout the dialogue, in addition to the deficiencies of embodied judgement given in the concluding eschatological account, serve as a way for Plato to analyse and explain why Sokrates’ jurors arrived at the ‘wrong’ judgement.³⁹³

To the above end, Sokrates begins with a review of the conduct he believes predominates in the contemporary Athenian lawcourt.³⁹⁴ This review does not purport to relate what the Athenian laws prescribe regarding the conduct of the lawcourt, but rather the way in which individuals conduct themselves, in practice, when in the lawcourt. There appears to be, therefore, a divorce between the prescriptions of the laws themselves, and the practice (or convention) of the Athenians, who justify their practices as valid interpretations of the laws’ intent.³⁹⁵ The need to defer to interpretation of a law’s intent, exposes the jurors to a charge of incorrectness, both in terms of their interpretation of the law, and in their judgements.

From Sokrates’ perspective, the jurors are not experts in the law, and so they do not possess the knowledge to interpret the laws ‘correctly.’ Connected with this lack of expertise, the Athenian jury itself consisted, most likely, of five hundred individuals, drawn at random from the male, Athenian citizenry. If it is necessary for each of these five hundred individuals to interpret the laws, without possessing any expertise of law, it is not difficult to imagine a variety of different interpretations amongst the jurors. Since each juror possessed one vote of equal weight to the others, all of these different understandings of the law are legitimated (cf. 476d1-477a4).

For an individual like Sokrates/Plato this legitimization of all interpretations is rather close to a form of relativism; hence Sokrates’ claim that the lawcourt does not necessarily aim at the establishment

³⁹³ In some ways it functions as an *apologia* of Sokrates; cf. *Phaidon* 69d7-e5 and earlier note 362.

³⁹⁴ It is not clear whether Plato presents the conduct of the lawcourt contemporary to Sokrates and Gorgias, i.e. the *dramatis personae* of the dialogue, or rather contemporary to Plato and his own audience. Of course, it may be that the conduct of the lawcourt remained relatively unchanged between the two points in time.

³⁹⁵ See *Kriton* (Chapter 2.3); and *Theaitetos*, 170c: human beings do not always judge consistently in accordance with what is true, but produce judgements that may be either true or false, depending on the extent of one’s ignorance. For a modern analysis of this phenomenon, i.e. convention, see for example Hobsbawm (1983, repr. 1994): 1-14 and Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983, repr. 1994): *passim*.

of truth. Relativism does not allow for the immortal, absolute, or changeless notion of 'the truth' Sokrates anticipates; or rather it does admit of this 'truth,' but it is no more 'the truth' than any other interpretation. This relativistic approach to truth creates an environment conducive to forms of speech like oratory. If all arguments are equally valid conceptions of the truth, then it is not possible for one to demonstrate the 'truthfulness' of one's argument. All that remains is for one to persuade enough other people to adopt one's conception of the truth, so as to 'win an argument,' in terms of numbers alone. Consequently, one does not necessarily 'prove' the truthfulness of one's argument, but only that more people subscribe to that conception of the truth than to the others on offer (cf. 476d1-477a4). In such a system that desires to 'win an argument,' oratory does prove useful (as Gorgias, Polos, and Kallikles argue), as this 'win' may be achieved through the use of oratorical devices in order to persuade enough people to prefer one's conception of the truth.

Accordingly, Sokrates' review of Athenian lawcourt culture consists of the following:

- (i) In the lawcourts individuals employ an oratorical style in order to refute some claim (471e2-3).
- (ii) An individual believes they are refuting the other if they produce many reputable witnesses on behalf of their arguments, whilst their opponents produce only one or none (471e3-7).
- (iii) This type of refutation, argues Sokrates, is 'worthless' ('οὐδενὸς ἄξιός ἐστιν,' 471e7) since it may be that an individual is defeated by the false testimony of many reputable people (471e7-472a2).
- (iv) The aim of the contemporary lawcourt, therefore, is not necessarily 'the truth' (τὴν ἀλήθειαν, 471e7-a1), but to win an argument (472b3-c2).
- (v) Hence, the oratorical style of refutation is preferred by many, e.g. Polos and the orators, but it is not the style Sokrates believes should be used if one aims to discover 'the truth,' i.e. oratory does not enable a 'true' refutation of an argument (472c2-6).

(vi) As far as Sokrates is concerned (472c6-d4), he believes his method of refutation and discussion in the lawcourt to adhere to the correct interpretation of the laws (cf. 486d2-488b1). His method has, as its primary purpose, the establishment of the truth, which Sokrates believes embodies the intent of the laws (cf. *Nomoi*, 2.667e10-668a5). In this way, the character of Sokrates in the ‘Socratic’ dialogues demonstrates this method for arriving at ‘true’ judgements, in practice.³⁹⁶

The review Sokrates presents above demonstrates a clear dissatisfaction with contemporary Athenian lawcourt procedure;³⁹⁷ in particular its preoccupation with being persuasive and winning an argument, rather than aiming, always, for the ‘truth.’³⁹⁸ If these are the ways in which judgement in a human lawcourt is deficient, the judgement of the soul in Hades that Sokrates presents to conclude the *Gorgias* (see Chapter 2.4.4), represents an ‘ideal’ version of the lawcourt. It is not clear whether Sokrates structures the Hadean judgement in this way, in order to juxtapose the human and ‘ideal’ judgement, thereby emphasizing the fallibility of human judgement. Or, whether the Hadean judgement represents the ‘ideal,’ because it governs those entities akin, in nature, to the divine, i.e. immortal, incorporeal, and immaterial,³⁹⁹ and so as the divine is perfect, so the judgement that belongs to the divine is also perfect.⁴⁰⁰ Regardless, for Sokrates, the fallibility of the human lawcourt and juror is certain; and the following practices of the human lawcourt do not predominate in Hades:

- (1) The judgement of the soul in Hades aims at the ‘truth,’ therefore oratory is ineffective, since it aims at winning an argument, and not the establishment of truth (cf. 480a1-480d6).

³⁹⁶ This further posits a link between the ‘true’ judge and the philosopher, or at least the ‘true’ judge and the figure of Sokrates.

³⁹⁷ See further Edmonds III (2012): 168-171 who argues, and I agree, “in the *Gorgias*, Plato plays off his contemporaries’ understanding of the way a normal Athenian legal contest worked to level a critique at the judicial system that condemned his teacher to death, contrasting the contest of litigation with his ideal of philosophic examination” (page 168).

³⁹⁸ Cf. *Theaitetos* 172e-173b, 200e-201c.

³⁹⁹ Cf. *Phaidon* 78b-84b; *Phaidros* 246b-246e.

⁴⁰⁰ Nehamas (1999): 171-191, posits that what is incorporeal corresponds to true reality; therefore, the type of judgement that belongs to the divine must be closer to true reality, since the divine are incorporeal.

- (2) Conventions of the human lawcourt that assist an individual in persuading jurors of their version of the 'truth,' e.g. the use of witness testimony, are unavailable to the disembodied soul.
- (3) Moreover, the 'true' judges possess knowledge of what is 'true,' and what is 'false,' and so all conceptions of the truth do not possess equal validity; and the 'true' judges can recognize if one is presenting something other than 'the truth' (476d1-477a4).
- (4) The soul must, therefore, utilize a style of argument that always aims at the truth – i.e. the so-called Sokratic method (cf. 486d2-488b1; *Politeia*, 7.531e3-532d1; *Philebos*, 57e6-58e3).⁴⁰¹

(2.4.4) 523a-527e

All of the above argumentation Sokrates provides culminates in the eschatological account that forms the concluding part of the dialogue (523a1-527e7).⁴⁰² This account provides the most information regarding the judgement of the soul in Hades, including the identities of the judges, the kind of nature they are meant to embody, and how the judgement initially came into existence. Of all the eschatological accounts Plato provides throughout the various dialogues, this is the only one that focuses almost exclusively on the judgement and its consequences. Much of this may be due to the nature of the *Gorgias* as a whole, in which Sokrates seeks to demonstrate to his interlocutors, (a) the worst thing a human being can do is commit injustice; and (b) the usefulness Gorgias, Polos, and

⁴⁰¹ In this sense I agree with Edmonds III (2012): 171 who argues, "Plato crafts his description of the reformed afterlife judgement [in the *Gorgias*] to resemble the Socratic elenchos, tailoring the traditional mythic motifs to fit with the process. Like the Socratic elenchos, the afterlife judgement in Zeus' regime takes place between two individuals, an examiner and an examined. In both, the examined is the only admissible witness, and that one witness is sufficient for a judgement, even superior to a crowd of false witness - the body, the clothes, the friends and relatives of the deceased - who could obstruct the examiner in his inquiry. The striking image of the naked soul, unprepared and trembling before the expert judge, depicts the interlocutor whose beliefs are being examined in the elenchos, bereft of appeals to popular opinion or the authority of his social status, and the chronological structure of the narrative in the myth highlights the logical contrast between types of refutations."

⁴⁰² Irwin (1979): 242; Morgan (1990): 71-78; Rutherford (1995): 171-178.

Kallikles assign to oratory is illusory, as it aims to win an argument rather than establish ‘truth.’ Consequently, given oratory's indifference to ‘the truth,’ individuals are able to utilize oratory as a means of justifying the carrying out of injustice (see Chapter 2.4.3 above). Through this eschatological account, Sokrates is able to provide a ‘final’ argument as to why it is necessary for the individual not to commit injustice; and why oratory’s ineffectiveness during the judgement of the soul – the most important judgement of all – substantiates his thesis regarding oratory’s unsuitability for establishing ‘truth.’⁴⁰³

For the purpose of this investigation, this eschatological account can be divided into four parts:

(1) 523a1-524a7:

(b4) (1) τούτων δὲ δικασταὶ ἐπὶ Κρόνου καὶ ἔτι νεωστὶ τοῦ Διὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχοντος ζῶντες ἦσαν ζώντων, ἐκείνη τῇ ἡμέρᾳ δικάζοντες ἢ μέλλοιεν τελευτᾶν· κακῶς οὖν αἱ δίκαι ἐκρίνοντο. (4) ὃ τε οὖν Πλούτων καὶ οἱ ἐπιμεληταὶ οἱ ἐκ μακάρων νήσων ἰόντες ἔλεγον πρὸς τὸν Δία ὅτι φοιτῶν (c) σφιν ἄνθρωποι ἐκατέρωσε ἀνάξιοι. (2) εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ζεὺς· “Ἄλλ’ ἐγώ,” ἔφη, “παύσω τοῦτο γιγνόμενον. νῦν μὲν γὰρ κακῶς αἱ δίκαι δικάζονται. ἀμπεχόμενοι γάρ,” ἔφη, “οἱ κρινόμενοι κρίνονται· ζῶντες γὰρ κρίνονται. πολλοὶ οὖν,” ἢ δ’ ὅς, “ψυχὰς πονηρὰς ἔχοντες ἠμφιεσμένοι εἰσὶ σώματά τε καλὰ καὶ γένη καὶ πλούτους, καί, ἐπειδὴν ἡ κρίσις ἢ, ἔρχονται αὐτοῖς πολλοὶ μάρτυρες, μαρτυρήσοντες ὡς δικαίως βεβιώ- (d) κασιν· (3) οἱ οὖν δικασταὶ ὑπὸ τε τούτων ἐκπλήττονται, καὶ ἅμα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἀμπεχόμενοι δικάζουσι, πρὸ τῆς ψυχῆς τῆς αὐτῶν ὀφθαλοῦς καὶ ὤτα καὶ ὄλον τὸ σῶμα προκεκαλυμ- μένοι. ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῖς πάντα ἐπίπροσθεν γίνεσθαι, καὶ τὰ αὐτῶν ἀμφιέσματα καὶ τὰ τῶν κρινομένων. πρῶτον μὲν οὖν,” ἔφη, “παυστέον ἐστὶν προειδότας αὐτοὺς τὸν θάνατον· νῦν γὰρ προϊῶσιν. τοῦτο μὲν οὖν καὶ δὴ εἴρηται τῷ Προ- (e) μηθεῖ ὅπως ἂν παύσῃ αὐτῶν. ἔπειτα γυμνοὺς κριτέον ἀπάντων τούτων· τεθνεώτας γὰρ δεῖ κρίνεσθαι. καὶ τὸν κριτὴν δεῖ γυμνὸν εἶναι, τεθνεώτα, αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτὴν τὴν ψυχὴν θεωροῦντα ἐξαίφνης ἀποθανόντος ἐκάστου, ἔρημον πάντων τῶν συγγενῶν καὶ καταλιπόντα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς πάντα ἐκεῖνον τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα δικαία ἡ κρίσις ἢ. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ταῦτα ἐγνωκῶς πρότερος ἢ ὑμεῖς ἐποίησάμην δικαστὰς ὑεῖς ἑμαυτοῦ, δύο μὲν ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας, Μίνω τε καὶ Ῥαδάμανθον, 524. (a) ἓνα δὲ ἐκ τῆς Εὐρώπης, Αἰακόν· οὗτοι οὖν ἐπειδὴν τελευ- τήσωσι, δικάσουσιν ἐν τῷ λειμῶνι, ἐν τῇ τριόδῳ ἐξ ἧς

⁴⁰³ Cf. Irwin (1979): 147; Annas (1982): 122-123.

φέρετον τῷ ὀδῶ, ἢ μὲν εἰς μακάρων νήσους, ἢ δ' εἰς Τάρ-
ταρον. καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας Ῥαδάμανθους κρινεῖ, τοὺς
δὲ ἐκ τῆς Εὐρώπης Αἰακός· Μίνω δὲ πρεσβεῖα δώσω ἐπιδια-
κρίνειν, ἐὰν ἀπορῆτόν τι τῷ ἑτέρω, ἵνα ὡς δικαιοτάτῃ ἢ κρίσις
ἦ περὶ τῆς πορείας τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.”

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. Of these men there were judges in Cronos’ time, and when Zeus had but newly begun his reign—living men to judge the living upon the day when each was to breathe his last; and thus the cases were being decided amiss. So Pluto and the overseers from the Isles of the Blest came before Zeus with the report that they found men passing over to either abode undeserving. Then spake Zeus: “Nay,” said he, “I will put a stop to these proceedings. The cases are now indeed judged ill; and it is because they who are on trial are tried in their clothing, for they are tried alive. Now many,” said he, “who have wicked souls are clad in fair bodies and ancestry and wealth, and at their judgement appear many witnesses to testify that their lives have been just. Now, the judges are confounded not only by their evidence but at the same time by being clothed themselves while they sit in judgement, having their own soul muffled in the veil of eyes and ears and the whole body. Thus all these are a hindrance to them, their own habiliments no less than those of the judged. Well, first of all,” he said, “we must put a stop to their foreknowledge of their death; for this they at present foreknow. However, Prometheus has already been given the word to stop this in them. Next they must be stripped bare of all those things before they are tried; for they must stand their trial dead. Their judge also must be naked, dead, beholding with very soul the very soul of each immediately upon his death, bereft of all his kin and having left behind on earth all that fine array, to the end that the judgement may be just. Now I, knowing all this before you, have appointed sons of my own to be judges; two from Asia, Minos and Rhadamanthus, and one from Europe, Aeacus. These, when their life is ended, shall give judgement in the meadow at the dividing of the road, whence are the two ways leading, one to the Isles of the Blest, and the other to Tartarus. And those who come from Asia shall Rhadamanthus try, and those from Europe, Aeacus; and to Minos I will give the privilege of the final decision, if the other two be in any doubt; that the judgement upon this journey of mankind may be supremely just.””

Sokrates relates to Kallikles how the process of the soul’s judgement functioned in the Golden Age of Kronos (ἐπὶ Κρόνου, i.e. “in the time of Kronos” 523a6). During the transition to the Age of Zeus (καὶ ἔτι νεωστὶ τοῦ Διὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχοντος, i.e. “...and when Zeus had but newly begun his reign,” 523b4-5) – the current period – this process began to disintegrate, as the souls being judged were no longer the perfect souls of the Golden Race ((1), 523b4-7), but the ‘lesser’ souls of the contemporary age ((2), 523c1-d1). Consequently, the judges of the soul began to make mistakes, sending ‘the just’ to Tartaros, and ‘the unjust’ to the Isles of the Blessed ((3), 523d1ff. Hades, and the guardians of Isles of the Blessed, ask Zeus to

reform the process of the soul's judgement, in order to institute a judgement more appropriate to the present age ((4), 523b7-c1).⁴⁰⁴

(2) 524a8-525a6:

Ταῦτ' ἔστιν, ὧ Καλλίκλεις, ἃ ἐγὼ ἀκηκοὼς πιστεύω
(b) ἀληθῆ εἶναι· καὶ ἐκ τούτων τῶν λόγων τοιόνδε τι λογίζομαι
συμβαίνειν· ὁ θάνατος τυγχάνει ὦν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, οὐδὲν
ἄλλο ἢ δυοῖν πραγμάτων διάλυσιν, τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ
σώματος, ἀπ' ἀλλήλοιν· ἐπειδὴν δὲ διαλυθῆτον ἄρα ἀπ'
ἀλλήλοιν, οὐ πολὺ ἦττον ἐκάτερον αὐτοῖν ἔχει τὴν ἕξιν τὴν
αὐτοῦ ἢ ἡνερ καὶ ὅτε ἕζη ὁ ἄνθρωπος, τό τε σῶμα τὴν φύσιν
τὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ θεραπεύματα καὶ τὰ παθήματα ἔνδηλα
(c) πάντα. οἷον εἴ τις ἄνθρωπος μέγα ἦν τὸ σῶμα φύσει ἢ τροφῆ ἢ
ἀμφοτέρω ζῶντος, τούτου καὶ ἐπειδὴν ἀποθάνῃ ὁ νεκρὸς
μέγας, καὶ εἰ παχὺς, παχὺς καὶ ἀποθανόντος, καὶ τᾶλλα
οὕτως· καὶ εἰ αὖ ἐπετήδευε κομᾶν, κομήτης τούτου καὶ ὁ
νεκρὸς· μαστιγίας αὖ εἴ τις ἦν καὶ ἴχνη εἶχε τῶν πληγῶν
οὐλὰς ἐν τῷ σώματι ἢ ὑπὸ μαστίγων ἢ ἄλλων τραυμάτων
ζῶν, καὶ τεθνεώτος τὸ σῶμα ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ταῦτα ἔχον· ἢ
κατεαγότα εἴ του ἦν μέλη ἢ διεστραμμένα ζῶντος, καὶ
(d) τεθνεώτος ταῦτα ταῦτα ἔνδηλα. ἐνὶ δὲ λόγῳ, οἷος εἶναι
παρεσκεύαστο τὸ σῶμα ζῶν, ἔνδηλα ταῦτα καὶ τελευτήσαντος
ἢ πάντα ἢ τὰ πολλὰ ἐπὶ τινι χρόνῳ. ταῦτόν δὴ μοι δοκεῖ
τοῦτ' ἄρα καὶ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν εἶναι, ὧ Καλλίκλεις· ἔνδηλα
πάντα ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἐπειδὴν γυμνωθῆ τοῦ σώματος, τὰ
τε τῆς φύσεως καὶ τὰ παθήματα ἃ διὰ τὴν ἐπιτήδευσιν
ἐκάστου πράγματος ἔσχεν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος· ἐπειδὴν
οὔν ἀφίκωνται παρὰ τὸν δικαστήν, οἱ μὲν ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας
(e) παρὰ τὸν Ῥαδάμανθυν, ὁ Ῥαδάμανθος ἐκείνους ἐπιστήσας
θεᾶται ἐκάστου τὴν ψυχὴν, οὐκ εἰδὼς ὅτου ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ
πολλάκις τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως ἐπιλαβόμενος ἢ ἄλλου
ότουοῦν βασιλέως ἢ δυνάστου κατεῖδεν οὐδὲν ὑγιές ὄν τῆς
ψυχῆς, ἀλλὰ διαμεμαστιγωμένην καὶ οὐλῶν μεστήν ὑπὸ
525.

(a) ἐπιπορευῶν καὶ ἀδικίας, ἃ ἐκάστη ἢ πρᾶξις αὐτοῦ ἐξωμόρξατο
εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ πάντα σκολιὰ ὑπὸ ψεύδους καὶ ἀλα-
ζονείας καὶ οὐδὲν εὐθὺ διὰ τὸ ἄνευ ἀληθείας τεθράφθαι· καὶ
ὑπὸ ἐξουσίας καὶ τρυφῆς καὶ ὑβρεως καὶ ἀκρατίας τῶν
πράξεων ἀσυμμετρίας τε καὶ αἰσχροτήτος γέμουσαν τὴν
ψυχὴν εἶδεν·

[LOEB translation:] "Soc. This, Callicles, is what I have heard and believe to be true; and from these stories, on my reckoning, we must draw some such moral as this: death, as it seems to me, is actually nothing but the disconnexion of two things, the soul and the body, from each other. And so when they are disconnected from one another, each of them keeps its own condition very much as it was when the man was alive, the body having its own nature, with its treatments and experiences all manifest upon it. For instance, if anyone's body was large by nature or by feeding or by both when he was alive, his corpse will be large also when he is

⁴⁰⁴ See further Introduction, section (C).

dead; and if he was fat, it will be fat too after his death, and so on for the rest; or again, if he used to follow the fashion of long hair, long-haired also will be his corpse. Again, if anyone had been a sturdy rogue, and bore traces of his stripes in scars on his body, either from the whip or from other wounds, while yet alive, then after death too his body has these marks visible upon it; or if anyone's limbs were broken or distorted in life, these same effects are manifest in death. In a word, whatever sort of bodily appearance a man had acquired in life, that is manifest also after his death either wholly or in the main for some time. And so it seems to me that the same is the case with the soul too, Callicles: when a man's soul is stripped bare of the body, all its natural gifts, and the experiences added to that soul as the result of his various pursuits, are manifest in it. So when they have arrived in presence of their judge, they of Asia before Rhadamanthus, these Rhadamanthus sets before him and surveys the soul of each, not knowing whose it is; nay, often when he has laid hold of the Great King or some other prince or potentate, he perceives the utter unhealthiness of his soul, striped all over with the scourge, and a mass of wounds, the work of perjuries and injustice; where every act has left its smirch upon his soul, where all is awry through falsehood and imposture, and nothing straight because of a nurture that knew not truth: or, as the result of a course of license, luxury, insolence, and incontinence, he finds the soul full fraught with disproportion and ugliness."

After relating the reforms Zeus makes to the process of the soul's judgement, Sokrates relates that process of judgement that governs in the present age; with particular emphasis on how the 'true' judges actually judge the soul. Part One establishes that in the corrupt form of the judgement, many of the erroneous judgements arose from the use of techniques and devices reminiscent of the human lawcourt (see Chapter 2.3.3 and 2.4.3), e.g. the judge's possession of a body, the use of witnesses, and the use of oratory. This part, on the other hand, demonstrates how Zeus' reforms reintroduced a perfect, infallible judgement, as had been the case in the Age of Kronos. In order to achieve this perfect judgement, Zeus did away with those things characteristic of the corrupt judgement, e.g. the body of the judge, the use of witnesses, and the effectiveness of oratory. In this way, Sokrates supports his own thesis by demonstrating oratory's opposition to the 'true' judgement; and that the just and the unjust, without exception, will always be adjudged correct.

(3) 525a6-526c1:

(1) ἰδὼν δὲ ἀτίμως ταύτην ἀπέπεμψεν εὐθὺ τῆς φρουρᾶς, οἳ μέλλει ἐλθοῦσα ἀνατλήναι τὰ προσήκοντα πάθη.
(b) προσήκει δὲ παντὶ τῷ ἐν τιμωρίᾳ ὄντι, ὑπ' ἄλλου ὀρθῶς τιμωρουμένῳ, ἢ βελτίονι γίνεσθαι καὶ ὀνίνασθαι ἢ παραδειγματι τοῖς ἄλλοις γίνεσθαι, ἵνα ἄλλοι ὀρῶντες πάσχοντα ἃ ἂν πάσχη φοβούμενοι βελτίους γίνωνται. (2) εἰσὶν δὲ οἱ

μὲν ὠφελούμενοι τε καὶ δίκην διδόντες ὑπὸ θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων οὗτοι οἱ ἂν ἰάσιμα ἀμαρτήματα ἀμάρτωσιν· ὅμως δὲ δι' ἀληθόνων καὶ ὀδυνῶν γίνεταί αὐτοῖς ἡ ὠφελία καὶ ἐνθάδε καὶ ἐν Ἄιδου· οὐ γὰρ οἷόν τε ἄλλως ἀδικίας ἀπαλ-
(c) λάττεσθαι. (3) οἱ δ' ἂν τὰ ἔσχατα ἀδικήσωσι καὶ διὰ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀδικήματα ἀνίατοι γένωνται, ἐκ τούτων τὰ παρα-
δείγματα γίνεταί, καὶ οὗτοι αὐτοὶ μὲν οὐκέτι ὀνίνανται οὐδὲν, ἅτε ἀνίατοι ὄντες, ἄλλοι δὲ ὀνίνανται οἱ τούτους ὀρῶντες διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας τὰ μέγιστα καὶ ὀδυνηρότατα καὶ φοβερώτατα πάθη πάσχοντας τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον, ἀτεχνῶς παρα-
δείγματα ἀνηρηθένους ἐκεῖ ἐν Ἄιδου ἐν τῷ δεσμωτηρίῳ, τοῖς αἰεὶ τῶν ἀδίκων ἀφικνουμένοις θεάματα καὶ νοθετήματα.
(d) (4) ὧν ἐγὼ φημι ἕνα καὶ Ἀρχέλαον ἔσεσθαι, εἰ ἀληθῆ λέγει Πῦλος, καὶ ἄλλον ὅστις ἂν τοιοῦτος τύραννος ᾗ· οἷμαι δὲ καὶ τοὺς πολλοὺς εἶναι τούτων τῶν παραδειγμάτων ἐκ τυράννων καὶ βασιλέων καὶ δυναστῶν καὶ τὰ τῶν πόλεων πραξάντων γεγονότας· οὗτοι γὰρ διὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν μέγιστα καὶ ἀνοσιώτατα ἀμαρτήματα ἀμαρτάνουσι. μαρτυρεῖ δὲ τούτοις καὶ Ὅμηρος· βασιλέας γὰρ καὶ δυνάστας ἐκεῖνος πεποίηκεν
(e) τοὺς ἐν Ἄιδου τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον τιμωρουμένους, Τάνταλον καὶ Σίσυφον καὶ Τιτυόν· (5) Θερσίτην δέ, καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος πονηρὸς ᾗ ἰδιώτης, οὐδεὶς πεποίηκεν μεγάλας τιμωρίας συνεχόμενον ὡς ἀνίατον—οὐ γὰρ οἷμαι ἐξῆν αὐτῷ· διὸ καὶ εὐδαιμονέστερος ᾗ ἢ οἷς ἐξῆν—ἀλλὰ γάρ, ὧ Καλλίκλεις, ἐκ τῶν 526.

(a) δυναμένων εἰσὶ καὶ οἱ σφόδρα πονηροὶ γιγνόμενοι ἄνθρωποι· οὐδὲν μὴν κωλύει καὶ ἐν τούτοις ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας ἐγγίγνεσθαι, καὶ σφόδρα γε ἄξιον ἄγασθαι τῶν γιγνομένων· χαλεπὸν γάρ, ὧ Καλλίκλεις, καὶ πολλοῦ ἐπαίνου ἄξιον ἐν μεγάλῃ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ ἀδικεῖν γενόμενον δικαίως διαβιῶναι. ὀλίγοι δὲ γίνονται οἱ τοιοῦτοι· ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐνθάδε καὶ ἄλλοι γεγονάσιν, οἷμαι δὲ καὶ ἔσονται καλοὶ κάγαθοι ταύτην τὴν ἀρετὴν τὴν τοῦ δικαίως
(b) διαχειρίζειν ἃ ἂν τις ἐπιτρέπη· εἷς δὲ καὶ πάνυ ἐλλόγιμος γέγονεν καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἄλλους Ἑλληνας, Ἀριστείδης ὁ Λυσιμάχου· οἱ δὲ πολλοί, ὧ ἄριστε, κακοὶ γίνονται τῶν δυναστῶν. ὅπερ οὖν ἔλεγον, ἐπειδὴν ὁ Ῥαδάμανθους ἐκεῖνος τοιοῦτόν τινα λάβη, ἄλλο μὲν περὶ αὐτοῦ οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδὲν, οὐθ' ὅστις οὐθ' ὠντινων, ὅτι δὲ πονηρὸς τις· καὶ τοῦτο κατιδὼν ἀπέπεμψεν εἰς Τάρταρον, ἐπισημνήμενος, ἐάντε ἰάσιμος ἐάντε ἀνίατος δοκῆ εἶναι· ὁ δὲ ἐκεῖσε ἀφικόμενος
(c) τὰ προσήκοντα πάσχει.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. Beholding this he sends it away in dishonour straight to the place of custody, where on its arrival it is to endure the sufferings that are fitting. And it is fitting that every one under punishment rightly inflicted on him by another should either be made better and profit thereby, or serve as an example to the rest, that others seeing the sufferings he endures may in fear amend themselves. Those who are benefited by the punishment they get from gods and men are they who have committed remediable offences; but still it is through bitter throes of pain that they receive their benefit both here and in the nether world; for in no other way can there be riddance of iniquity. But of those who have done extreme wrong and, as a result of such crimes, have become incurable, of

those are the examples made; no longer are they profited at all themselves, since they are incurable, but others are profited who behold them undergoing for their transgressions the greatest, sharpest, and most fearful sufferings evermore, actually hung up as examples there in the infernal dungeon, a spectacle and a lesson to such of the wrongdoers as arrive from time to time. Among them I say Archelaus also will be found, if what Polus tells us is true, and every other despot of his sort. And I think, moreover, that most of these examples have come from despots and kings and potentates and public administrators; for these, since they have a free hand, commit the greatest and most impious offences. Homer also testifies to this; for he has represented kings and potentates as those who are punished everlastingly in the nether world—Tantalus and Sisyphus and Tityus; but Thersites, or any other private person who was wicked, has been portrayed by none as incurable and therefore subjected to heavy punishment; no doubt because he had not a free hand, and therefore was in fact happier than those who had. For in fact, Callicles, it is among the powerful that we find the specially wicked men. Still there is nothing to prevent good men being found even among these, and it deserves our special admiration when they are; for it is hard, Callicles, and deserving of no slight praise, when a man with a perfectly free hand for injustice lives always a just life. The men of this sort are but few,—for indeed there have been, and I expect there yet will be, both here and elsewhere, men of honour and excellence in this virtue of administering justly what is committed to their charge: one in fact there has been whose fame stands high among us and throughout the rest of Greece, Aristides, son of Lysimachus. But most of those in power, my excellent friend, prove to be bad. So, as I was saying, whenever the judge Rhadamanthus has to deal with such an one, he knows nothing else of him at all, neither who he is nor of what descent, but only that he is a wicked person; and on perceiving this he sends him away to Tartarus, first setting a mark on him to show whether he deems it a curable or an incurable case; and when the man arrives there he suffers what is fitting.”

Part three discusses only those souls adjudged to be unjust ((1), 523a6-b4); introducing the theory of punishment into the eschatological account of the judgement, in order to demonstrate how ‘true’ punishment should work. Here, Sokrates distinguishes between those souls that are ‘curable’ ((2), 523b4-c1) and those that are ‘incurable’ ((3), 523c1-8). The introduction of the ‘incurable’ category of souls allows Sokrates to emphasize the need for one to live a life without the committing of unjust acts. As argued above (Chapter 2.4.2) it is the tyrant, and those individuals who possess an analogous level of authority within a polity, that are most at risk of falling into this category ((4), 523d1-e2). In this case, one must question whether Sokrates’ account is not so much aimed at the average individual, but rather at the elite individual, i.e. that individual who constitutes the majority of those Sokrates interacts with, and also the one most at risk of being adjudged ‘incurable’ ((5), 521eff.)

(4) 526c1-526d1:

(526c1) ἐνίοτε δ' ἄλλην εἰσιδὼν ὀσίως
βεβιωκυῖαν καὶ μετ' ἀληθείας, ἀνδρὸς ἰδιώτου ἢ ἄλλου τινός,
μάλιστα μὲν, ἔγωγέ φημι, ὦ Καλλίκλει, φιλοσόφου τὰ
αὐτοῦ πράξαντος καὶ οὐ πολυπραγμονήσαντος ἐν τῷ βίῳ,
ἠγάσθη τε καὶ ἐς μακάρων νήσους ἀπέπεμψε. ταῦτα δὲ
ταῦτα καὶ ὁ Αἰακός—ἐκάτερος τούτων ράβδον ἔχων δι-
κάζει—ὁ δὲ Μίνως ἐπισκοπῶν κάθηται, μόνος ἔχων χρυσοῦν
(d) σκῆπτρον, ὡς φησιν Ὀδυσσεὺς ὁ Ὀμήρου ἰδεῖν αὐτὸν

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. Sometimes, when he discerns another soul that has lived a holy life in company with truth, a private man’s or any other’s—especially, as I claim, Callicles, a philosopher’s who has minded his own business and not been a busybody in his lifetime—he is struck with admiration and sends it off to the Isles of the Blest. And exactly the same is the procedure of Aeacus: each of these two holds a rod in his hand as he gives judgement; but Minos sits as supervisor, distinguished by the golden sceptre that he holds, as Odysseus in Homer tells how he saw him...”

This final part provides a brief description of what happens to the ‘just’ soul after its judgement – it is sent to the Isles of the Blessed. If one wishes to exhort others to live a life in accordance with justice, one might expect this part to be the most descriptive; in particular, if one posits that all individuals always desire what is not evil (see Chapter 2.4.1). Sokrates, however, prefers to utilize the contrary – the fear of punishment. Presumably, Sokrates believes fear to be a better motivator for adhering to justice, since the individuals most likely to commit injustice are those who are ignorant of what is ‘just’; thus they will believe their own conception of the ‘just’ to be more accurate than Sokrates. Hence, Sokrates must emphasize the punitive aspect of his account, in order that these ‘ignorant’ souls might choose to adhere to his conception of justice, once they are aware of the severity of the punishments for noncompliance.⁴⁰⁵ This is aided by the prescriptive nature of the account, characterizing the process of judgement as a divine law. Consequently, as a law, if one transgresses, one is punished; and the severity of this punishment relies upon the extent to which one has transgressed.

⁴⁰⁵ Indeed, though truth is the priority of Sokrates’ type of speech, persuasive is not totally ignored; what use is knowledge of the truth if one cannot communicate this truth, and persuade others its veracity? See further Chapter 2.2.1.

Part One (523a1-524a7)

Sokrates begins his account by establishing the judgement of the soul as the fulfilment of divine law (523a5-b4). In this case, the judgement of the soul does not constitute the law, but rather it is the means by which the divine law is upheld, functioning akin to a human lawcourt. Sokrates does not explicitly relate what this divine law is, but given that the judgement determines which souls are just and unjust, and rewards and punishes respectively, one must assume that this forms the basic premise of the law. In this case, the law prescribes that one should live a just life, which happens to be one of the aims of Sokrates' account, and supports the assertion that this constitutes a *telos* for the soul (see Chapter 2.4.1 and 2.4.2).

The origin of this divine law, Sokrates locates in the distant past, during the Age of Kronos ('ἐν τῷ Κρόνου,' 523a6). The Age of Kronos conjures in the mind of a contemporary the image of a 'Golden Age';⁴⁰⁶ an idyllic time in which human beings were perfect, and lived both in happiness and closer to the divine.⁴⁰⁷ Given the infallibility believed to belong to the human beings of this time, it is unlikely that any soul would have been adjudged anything other than just.⁴⁰⁸ Accordingly, there is no need for Kronos to introduce specific legislation regarding either the procedure of the judgement itself, or the nature of the judges. The Golden Race are just, and so they would never resort to the use of any form of argumentation (read oratory) that does not aim consistently for the truth. Likewise, the judges have no need to possess a 'true' understanding of justice or injustice, nor must they interpret the law to any extent, since they already know that the individual they are judging is just. The judgement of the soul in the Age of Kronos is, therefore, more of a bureaucratic formality.

As the Golden Age of Kronos ended, and the transition to the Age of Zeus (the contemporary period began), the divine law governing the judgement of the soul remained in place, unchanged. Soon, according to Sokrates, mistakes begin to occur, as Plouton (the god) determines that just souls are

⁴⁰⁶ Hesiodos, *Erga kai Hemerai*, 106-201.

⁴⁰⁷ Hesiodos, *Erga kai Hemerai*, 106-201.

⁴⁰⁸ Hesiodos, *Erga kai Hemerai*, 106-201: the golden race of humans are rewarded by becoming guardian spirits.

being sent to Tartaros, and unjust souls to the Isles of the Blessed (523b6-c1). These mistakes, as far as Plouton is concerned, have led to both disorder and disharmony in his realm, as though the underworld were akin to a human *polis*, in need of these qualities in order to function correctly.⁴⁰⁹

Plouton identifies the process of judgement used for the Golden Race to be unsuitable for contemporary human beings, and the cause of these mistakes. Unlike the judges of the Golden Race, Plouton was able to judge each soul correctly, and his 'true' judgement differed from that of the judges. Why was Plouton able to succeed where the judges had failed? Sokrates' account suggests the following reasons:

- (i) Plouton exists entirely within the incorporeal and immortal realm⁴¹⁰
- (ii) Plouton is divine;⁴¹¹
- (iii) Plouton possesses perfect knowledge of what is just and unjust;
- (iv) Plouton encounters the soul in their disembodied state, and whilst they are alone.

Zeus, therefore, uses Plouton as the prototypical judge,⁴¹² seeking to embody in his reforms of the judgement the qualities of Plouton. First of all, Zeus proclaims that an individual must not be judged whilst still 'fully dressed,' i.e. in an embodied state (523c5-6; cf. 523b4-6). In the time of Kronos, the Golden Race were judged whilst still alive, and in possession of their body (523b4-6). Moreover, they were judged on the day they were to die, and by living judges (523b4-6). Zeus identifies this as the largest cause of the inaccurate judgements. Possessing a body allows for an unjust soul to deceive the judge, as it may be that their body is beautiful, or they may possess bodily honour, reputation, and wealth (523c1-d1).⁴¹³ Moreover, the individual's judgement on the day of their death, bestows upon the individual foreknowledge of their death, and as such they may present witnesses to testify

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. Plouton's apparent presentation as a philosopher-king, *Kratylos* 402d, 403e; *Nomoi* 1.627d-628c; 9.855c-d; *Politeia* 5.473d. Cf. Johansen (2004): 3.

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Nehamas (1999): 171-191.

⁴¹¹ Cf. *Phaidros* 246b-246e.

⁴¹² Cf. *Kratylos* 403a-404b, 404c-d for the etymology of Pherrephatta, or Persephone; Plouton's wife and co-ruler of Hades (cf. *Menon* 80d-82b).

⁴¹³ Cf. Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 210.

to their 'justness' (523c1-d1). Simultaneously, the judge's possession of a body increases their susceptibility to the deceptive senses of the body, and allows an individual to use bodily forms of argumentation, e.g. persuasion or appeals to emotion (523d1-5).⁴¹⁴

Zeus' prescription that the soul must be judged in its disembodied state, removes from it its foreknowledge of death (523d5-e1: προειδότας αὐτοῦς τὸν θάνατον). It also deprives the soul of the deceptive body and with it the use of deceptive forms of argument that do not aim at the truth, e.g. oratory (523e1-2). Finally, the judge should also be deprived of their body, i.e. they must be a disembodied soul also. This removes the judge's susceptibility to persuasion and emotion, and allows them to render the judgement using pure reason alone (523e2-6). Consequently, the judgement should consist of a personal and intimate study of the soul, occurring after death, when the soul is isolated from its friends and family, and has left behind all earthly adornment (523e2-6).⁴¹⁵

The final part of Zeus' amendments prescribes specifics concerning the judges – their number, identities, and the place at which they will carry out this judgement. In this case, Zeus appoints three of his sons – Minos, Rhadamanthos, and Aiakos (523e6-524a7) – to be the judges.⁴¹⁶ Moreover, the judgement shall take place at a distance from the 'final' dwelling places available to the soul – the Isles of the Blessed and Tartaros (524a3-4). In this way, Zeus appoints a set of judges that emulate the prototypical judge of Plouton:

- (i) Like Plouton, the judges exist in a disembodied state, dwelling entirely within the incorporeal and immortal realm.
- (ii) Like Plouton, these judges are divine – virtue of their status as sons of Zeus.
- (iii) Like Plouton, they possess a perfect knowledge of what is just and unjust.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁴ Cf. *Phaidon* 65a-67b; Irwin (1979): 243.

⁴¹⁵ The judgement should be of the soul, and the soul alone.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. *Nomoi* 1.624a-625b, 12.948b.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. *Lysis* 210a-c.

- (iv) Like Plouton, they encounter the soul to be judged in its disembodied state, whilst it is alone.
- (v) Finally, like Plouton, they function to safeguard the order and harmony of the underworld community (524a1-3).⁴¹⁸ They judge the soul at a distance from the community, prior to its interaction and integration into the community itself. In this way, the judge ensures that the unjust do not cause disharmony and disorder by ‘infecting’ the just with their pollution.

Part Two (524b8-525a6)

Sokrates begins this second part with a reaffirmation of the veracity of the first part.⁴¹⁹ This is essential for Sokrates who views the information he relates in the first part, as forming the underlying framework upon which he will derive his description of the soul’s judgement in the present age. In the first part, Sokrates establishes that the present age of human beings is not the Golden Race:

- (a) Unlike the Golden Race, the present human is susceptible to the deception of the body
- (b) This susceptibility to deception leads to an analogous increase in ignorance concerning what is just.
- (c) Ignorance of what is just, presents the human beings the capacity to commit unjust actions.
- (d) As the capacity for one to commit injustice is predicated on the possession of ignorance, the present human being now has a choice: either one may remain in ignorance, and commit injustice; or one may investigate justice, in order to learn what is just, and avoid committing injustice.

⁴¹⁸ Unlike Plouton who is characterized as a philosopher-king, the judges appear more akin to the guardians of the Politeia, and the lawkeepers of the Nomoi: e.g. *Nomoi* 12.964e; *Politeia* 2.375e-276d, 3.412b-417b, 4.419a-425e, 5.450c-471e, 7.519c-521b, 7.537a-537d, 7.539e-541b, 8.543a.

⁴¹⁹ Irwin (1979): 243. See *Gorgias* 523a-b in which Sokrates says that he believes in, or trusts, the veracity of the story, in line with the Platonic Wager’s requirement that one must convince oneself of the veracity of the wager, if one does not believe fully.

Sokrates' purported aims in this dialogue are to demonstrate to his interlocutors that (a) the worst thing one may do in life is commit injustice; and (b) oratory is ineffective for investigating 'the truth.'

The establishment of this choice serves to reinforce his aims, demonstrating:

- (i) It is possible for human beings to commit injustice (a response to relativism in which all one's beliefs are true);
- (ii) This injustice is predicated on one's possession of ignorance.
- (iii) Therefore, one must choose to rid one's soul of ignorance through an investigation of 'the truth.'
- (iv) Oratory, according to Sokrates, is ineffective in investigating 'the truth,' and so anyone who teaches or utilizes oratory chooses to remain ignorant, and commit injustice. Consequently, such a person must be prepared for the consequences of their choice (cf. part three, 525a6-526c1).

In this second part, Sokrates relates to his interlocutors how it is impossible for one who chooses to remain ignorant, and commit injustice, to escape the pronouncement of the 'true' judge, who fails to be deceived by any attempt at deception. Sokrates begins with a reaffirmation of his definition of death (see Chapter 1.4), in which death consists of the separation of the soul from the body (524b2-4). Each of these two entities is separate, independent, and possesses its own unique nature. Upon death, each of these entities remains in a condition not much different from its final condition prior to death (524b4-c1).

In the case of the body, Sokrates argues:

- Upon death, the body retains its original nature (at least for a certain period of time), in addition to the care it received whilst in union with the soul (524d1-3).
- It serves, therefore, as a record of all the things that have happened to it (524b6-c1).

- For instance, if a man had a body which was large (either by nature or through nurture, or both) at the time of his death, then his corpse will remain large after he has died too (524c1-3).
- Similarly, if a man had long hair at the time of his expiration, his corpse will continue to have long hair as well (524c4-5).
- If a man had been a criminal, and had been whipped for his crimes, showing scars and traces of beatings, then his corpse will likewise exhibit these same marks (524c5-7).
- Finally, if a man's limbs were broken or twisted while he was alive, these very things will be evident too, when he is dead (524c7-d1).
- Consequently, the body serves as a record of its treatment whilst alive, (or at least most of them, for a certain period) (524d1-3).

If such is true of the body, then Sokrates concludes the same must also be true for the soul (524d3-4). Accordingly, once the soul has separated from the body, it continues to retain all that was present in it prior to its disembodiment (524d4-7); all those things that have come to be in that soul, as a result of all the choices and actions of the individual of whom it was once a constituent part (524d4-7). Likewise, it retains all those things that are intrinsic to its nature (524d4-7). So, just as the body with long hair in life retains its long hair in death, so the soul that is scarred by injustice in life, retains its scars in death. However, whereas the body records the treatment it received in life, in a selective manner, and for a specified period; the soul, by virtue of its immortality, retains this record for a longer period.⁴²⁰

This record of its treatment in life forms the basis of the soul's judgement in Hades. Sokrates relates that when the soul arrives before the judge, the judge studies each soul without knowing to whom it belongs (524d7-e2). In this way, the 'just' and 'fair' nature of the judgement is further emphasized,

⁴²⁰ Cf. in the *Theaitetos*, a dialogue post-dating the *Gorgias*, Sokrates suggests that the soul is the centre of the memory, i.e. that every memory of the individual is stored in the soul, in some manner (163e, 166a, 191b-e, 193b-196a; cf. *Philebos* 38e-39c).

as it removes the effect of reputation and honour on the judgement (see part one, 523a1-524a7, above). The personal and intimate access the judge has to the soul (see part one, 523a1-524a7, above), ensures they possess access to a near-complete record of every action an individual ever made. In this way, the judge may determine whether the soul committed injustice through ignorance of what is just, and whether this ignorance results from a conscious choice on behalf of the soul, e.g. through the active engagement in oratory.⁴²¹

Further to this record contained within the soul, the judge possesses a further method of determining the fate of a soul: looking to its actual shape. When the judge takes hold of the soul, each act of injustice and perjury, does more than leave a record on the soul (524e2-525a2), but Sokrates suggests it actually warps and deforms the soul (525a2-6), i.e. it causes a physical change (to an immaterial entity). If the 'true' judge perceives the soul to possess much distortion and ugliness, then he can be certain the soul is to be categorized as unjust and worthy of punishment (525a6-b4).⁴²² Sokrates' description equates beauty and purity with justice, such that a soul that exhibits neither quality must be considered unjust.⁴²³ Just as a body that belonged to the criminal is made ugly and deformed by the punishment it suffers, so Sokrates equates the deformed and ugly soul with injustice.⁴²⁴ However, whereas the body is corporeal such that its injustice is evident to all who see it, the soul is incorporeal and so mortal beings are unable to see the ugliness of the unjust soul. As Zeus decreed above, (part one, 523a1-524a7), the judgement in Hades must be of a disembodied soul by disembodied judges. The judges, therefore, cannot fail but perceive the ugliness of the unjust soul. Indeed, if the unjust soul possesses a beautiful body, it is likely to have received no correction for its injustice in life, leaving it susceptible to the category of 'incurable' soul.

Part Three (525a6-526c1)

⁴²¹ Cf. *Politeia* 9.576e-577b.

⁴²² Cf. *Kharmides* 154d.

⁴²³ Cf. *Kharmides* 154d.

⁴²⁴ Cf. *Timaios* 43d-44c; *Kritias* 121a-c.

In this third part, Sokrates provides a direct response to his claim that the worst thing one may do in life is commit injustice. This he does by applying his theory of punishment (see Chapter 2.4.1 and 2.4.2) to the disembodied soul, in the process introducing the category of 'incurable' (or punishment by deterrent). Nevertheless, punishment by deterrent is not incompatible with Sokrates' previous assertion of the corrective nature of punishment, since although it does not directly educate the offender, it serves to educate others (particularly through fear). So, punishment by deterrent might not necessarily be beneficial to the specific offender, but it serves both a beneficial and educative function for the community as a whole (525b1-c8).⁴²⁵

Applying his theory of punishment, Sokrates identifies two specific categories of soul that undergo punishment in Hades:

- (1) Those who may benefit from punishment are categorized as 'curable' (525b4-6). Regardless of the curability, Sokrates asserts that their benefit comes, both here and in Hades, in the form of pain and suffering (525b6-c1).⁴²⁶
- (2) Those, however, who do not benefit from punishment, are categorized as 'incurable' (525c1-3). These are the souls who must suffer the deterrent form of punishment, whereby their suffering is meant to benefit and educate others, rather than themselves (525c3-d8). In the *Gorgias*, the notion of reincarnation is absent, and so Sokrates envisions these souls receiving punishment for eternity.
 - a. According to Sokrates, the majority of these souls equate to those who have committed the greatest injustices, which require an equally great amount of ignorance. Such individuals he identifies as consisting of tyrants, kings, and those active in the affairs of the *polis*. These are the individuals most in a position to commit the worst injustices, given their greater influence over others, but also the unlikelihood of them receiving corrective punishment for their ignorance, since they

⁴²⁵ Cf. *Protagoras* 358d.

⁴²⁶ Irwin (1979): 244.

are, according to themselves, peerless (525d1-526a1).⁴²⁷ This statement, in particular serves, to ‘prove’ to Kallikles and Polos that the tyrant is not the happiest of individuals as they claim, but in actuality is the most pitiful, since he is most likely to suffer the fate of the ‘incurable’ soul (cf. 525d1-526a1).⁴²⁸

Part Four (526c1-526d1)

In this final part, Sokrates relates the fate of the just soul, devoted to ‘truth,’ who lives a life of piety: they are sent to the Isles of the Blessed (526c1-d1).⁴²⁹ Regardless of whether or not this account of the afterlife reflects reality, Sokrates, in accordance with the Platonic Wager, chooses to base his conduct on the belief that this account is true: ‘ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν, ὦ Καλλίκλεις, ὑπὸ τούτων τῶν λόγων πέπεισμαι, καὶ σκοπῶ ὅπως ἀποφανοῦμαι τῷ κριτῆϊ ὡς ὑγιεστάτην τὴν ψυχὴν,’ (526d2-4). Indeed, Sokrates exhorts Kallikles specifically, and the reader more generally to follow his belief in this account, in order to ensure for oneself the greatest chance at reward, either in this life or the next.⁴³⁰

(2.5) The *Lakhes*

⁴²⁷ Irwin (1979): 246.

⁴²⁸ Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 156; cf. 210. Brickhouse and Smith posit that Sokrates must prove the tyrant to be the most pitiful, since the tyrant encourages others to possess false beliefs about virtue and justice. An individual might learn of the wealth, honour, and reputation that the tyrant appears to possess, and so conclude, falsely, that one must act in this manner in order to obtain the same things. In other words, the conduct of the tyrant leads an individual away from a consideration of the Platonic Wager, and when that individual does engage with the Wager, the example of the tyrant might encourage the individual to opt for the ‘incorrect’ choice; choosing short term gain over long term benefit.

⁴²⁹ Cf. *Apologia* 40a-e; Vlastos (1999b): 56-77.

⁴³⁰ ‘Παρακαλῶ δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους πάντας ἀνθρώπους, καθ’ ὅσον δύναμαι, καὶ δὴ καὶ σὲ ἀντιπαρακαλῶ ἐπὶ τοῦτον τὸν βίον καὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα τοῦτον,’ 526e1-3.

(2.5.1) 198b-198c

In the eschatological account that concludes the *Gorgias*, Sokrates attempts to demonstrate to his interlocutors that committing acts of injustice is the worst thing an individual can do in life. His basic argument establishes the following conception of injustice and punishment:

- (i) One who commits injustice does so unwillingly.
- (ii) All individuals desire what is good.
- (iii) Therefore, one who commits injustice does so through a mistaken understanding of what is good, i.e. they do so through ignorance.
- (iv) Punishment aims to correct this mistaken understanding.
- (v) Hence, one who never experiences punishment for their injustices, lives their life in ignorance, and is susceptible to performing even greater acts of injustice.
- (vi) According to Sokrates, these individuals are the most pitiable.

As argued above (see Chapter 2.4.4), in his eschatological account, Sokrates utilizes the concept of fear in order to persuade his interlocutors of the veracity of his hypothesis – that doing injustice is the worst thing an individual may do. Throughout the *Gorgias*, Sokrates argued for the ineffectiveness of oratory for investigating ‘the truth’ (see Chapter 2.4). This argument rested on the understanding that oratory does not aim consistently for the truth, but rather to persuade; to win an argument. It is not the ability to argue persuasively that Sokrates criticizes, but the way in which oratory prioritizes persuasion above the truth, employing various rhetorical devices and techniques in order to ensure the success of an argument, paying no heed to whether the argument is strictly true or not. Once such oratorical device consists of an appeal to emotion; fear proving to be a powerful emotion for orators to exploit for personal gain – in this case, to achieve success for a particular argument or position.

Here, Sokrates will put forth a definition of fear, arguing that fear constitutes an expectation of a future evil (198b7-9):

(198b) ΣΩ. Ἐχε δὴ· ταῦτα μὲν γὰρ ὁμολογοῦμεν, περὶ δὲ τῶν δεινῶν καὶ θαρραλέων σκεψώμεθα, ὅπως μὴ σὺ μὲν ἄλλ' ἄττα ἡγήῃ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄλλα. ἃ μὲν οὖν ἡμεῖς ἡγοῦμεθα, φράσομέν σοι· σὺ δὲ ἂν μὴ ὁμολογήῃς, διδάξεις· ἡγοῦμεθα δ' ἡμεῖς δεινὰ μὲν εἶναι ἃ καὶ δέος παρέχει, θαρραλέα δὲ ἃ μὴ δέος παρέχει—δέος δὲ παρέχει οὐ τὰ γεγονότα οὐδὲ τὰ παρόντα τῶν κακῶν, ἀλλὰ τὰ προσδοκώμενα· δέος γὰρ εἶναι προσδοκίαν μέλλοντος κακοῦ—ἢ οὐχ οὕτω καὶ συνδοκεῖ, ὧς Λάχης;

(c) ΛΑ. Πάνυ γε σφόδρα, ὧς Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Τὰ μὲν ἡμέτερα τοίνυν, ὧς Νικία, ἀκούεις, ὅτι δεινὰ μὲν τὰ μέλλοντα κακὰ φαμεν εἶναι, θαρραλέα δὲ τὰ μὴ κακὰ ἢ ἀγαθὰ μέλλοντα· σὺ δὲ ταύτη ἢ ἄλλη περὶ τούτων λέγεις;

ΝΙ. Ταύτη ἔγωγε.

ΣΩ. Τούτων δέ γε τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἀνδρείαν προσγορεύεις;

ΝΙ. Κομιδῆ γε.

ΣΩ. Ἔτι δὴ τὸ τρίτον σκεψώμεθα εἰ συνδοκεῖ σοί τε καὶ ἡμῖν.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. So much for that; thus far we agree: but let us pass on to what is to be dreaded and what to be dared, and make sure that you and we do not take two different views of these. Let me tell you our view of them, and if you do not agree with it, you shall instruct us. We hold that the dreadful are things that cause fear, and the safely ventured are those that do not; and fear is caused not by past or present, but by expected evils: for fear is expectation of coming evil. You are of the same mind with us in this, are you not, Laches?”

Lach. Yes, entirely so, Socrates.

Soc. So there you have our view, Nicias,—that coming evils are to be dreaded, and things not evil, or good things, that are to come are to be safely dared. Would you describe them in this way, or in some other?

Nic. I would describe them in this way.

Soc. And the knowledge of these things is what you term courage?

Nic. Precisely.

Soc. There is still a third point on which we must see if you are in agreement with us.”

Fear, therefore, relies on ignorance; ignorance of what-is-to-come. In such a case, an individual who eschews ignorance will be less susceptible to fear, since they will no longer approach a given situation expecting future evils. A reduced susceptibility to fear, results in oratorical appeals to emotion no longer sufficing to persuade; for such an individual sees through the ornamentation, and the truthfulness (or lack thereof) of an argument is laid bare. In Chapter 1.4 we saw that Sokrates consistently puts forth the position that death is something one ought not fear; and that death does not constitute an evil, as is commonly understood. Applying this understanding to death, one will find that the one who fears death is the one who is ignorant of what-is-to-come. Thus, the eschatological narratives of the *Gorgias*, the *Phaidon*, and the *Politeia*, serve to enumerate an account of what-is-to-come – an account Sokrates advises one should believe (cf. Platonic Wager). In this way, an individual may live in such a way as to know whether their expectation of a future evil is warranted or not; if it is not warranted there will be no fear.

Accordingly, here in the *Lakhes*, Sokrates proffers a definition of fear, associating fear with ignorance. Fear, according to Sokrates, is nothing more than the expectation of a future evil (198b7-9).⁴³¹ Accordingly, the soul that experiences fear of Hades does so because it anticipates a future evil. On the other hand, an individual such as Sokrates, who acts in a just and pious manner, does not experience fear of Hades, since they know what-is-to-come.⁴³² Such an individual, therefore, must not anticipate the existence of future evils in Hades. In order not to experience the anticipation of future evils, one must necessarily possess knowledge that there are no future evils to anticipate. This associates the experiencing of fear with ignorance, since only the individual who does not

⁴³¹ Cf. *Lakhes* 198d-199e; *Protagoras* 358e, 360a-d; *Philebos* 32b-d; *Nomoi* 1.644c-d.

⁴³² Cf. Irwin (1977): 58. Moreover, Sokrates is able to live without a fear of Hades, since he has accepted the Platonic Wager and makes the ‘correct’ choice. Thus, he knows, that whatever the truth may be, he will not lose or come to great harm.

possess knowledge of a particular thing experiences fear. For instance, many individuals fear the dark. Why do they fear the dark? Because the darkness represents the unknown.

Sokrates connects the individual's fear directly with their ignorance. For Sokrates, it is the unjust individual who possesses ignorance, and so it is the unjust individual who experiences fear of Hades. Hence, his eschatological account in the *Gorgias* emphasizes the punishment that occurs in Hades:

- (a) It is the unjust who are more likely to experience punishment in Hades;
- (b) It is the unjust who are more likely to possess ignorance; and so
- (c) It is the unjust who are more likely to anticipate the experience of future evils in Hades.

According to this understanding, the just individual who hears Sokrates' account should not experience fear, since they do not anticipate the 'evils' he describes as lying in their future.⁴³³

However, one might argue that if (i) one commits injustice through ignorance, and (ii) one does not desire evil, then (iii) how could the unjust individual anticipate future evils? Presumably, the unjust individual dies believing their actions to be just, if they have been committed through ignorance of what is evil, as Sokrates claims. In order for this individual to experience fear, it must be that the unjust are aware, to some extent, that their actions are unjust.⁴³⁴ If the unjust are aware of the unjustness of their actions, then (a) do the unjust desire what is not good; and (b) do the unjust

⁴³³ Cf. *Nomoi* 9.875c-d: "ἐπεὶ ταῦτα εἴ ποτέ τις ἀνθρώπων φύσει ἰκανός, θεία μοῖρα γεννηθείς, παραλαβεῖν δυνατὸς εἶη, νόμων οὐδὲν ἂν δέοιτο τῶν ἀρξόντων ἑαυτοῦ· ἐπιστήμης γὰρ οὔτε νόμος οὔτε τάξις οὐδεμία κρείττων, οὐδὲ θέμις ἐστὶ νοῦν οὐδενὸς ὑπήκοον οὐδὲ δοῦλον ἀλλὰ πάντων ἄρχοντα εἶναι, ἔάνπερ ἀληθινὸς ἐλεύθερός τε ὄντως ἦ κατὰ φύσιν. νῦν δέ—οὐ γάρ ἐστιν οὐδαμοῦ οὐδαμῶς, ἀλλ' ἢ κατὰ βραχὺ·" ([LOEB translation:] (the Athenian:) "Yet if ever there should arise a man competent by nature and by a birthright of divine grace to assume such an office, he would have no need of rulers over him; for no law or ordinance is mightier than Knowledge, nor is it right for Reason to be subject or in thrall to anything, but to be lord of all things, if it is really true to its name and free in its inner nature. But at present such a nature exists nowhere at all, except in small degree." I understand the Athenian here as arguing that the just individual requires no laws or instructions to act in a just manner, but since the number of just individuals in society is few, so laws are required. Nevertheless, the Athenian does seem to admit that there are just people in this world, and this just people do not need laws in order to act in a just manner, but rather act in this way by nature (cf. the Ring of Gyges in the *Politeia*, 2.359a–2:360d). Sokrates may reason that a just individual is one likely to accept the Platonic Wager, and opt for the correct choice, thereby accepting Sokrates' account, either because they truly believe it to be true, or because they encourage themselves to believe such is true, as per the Wager.

⁴³⁴ Cf. Menon's paradox and recollection (80d-82b) – does this awareness rely on 'recollected' knowledge within the soul of the Just?

commit injustice willingly? It is not the purpose of this thesis to apologize for Sokrates; nonetheless, Sokrates may respond with the following:

- The ‘incurable’ unjust individual, e.g. the tyrant, does die in the belief they have committed no injustice. This results from their general lack of punishment in life, which fails to remove any ignorance from their soul. Thus, this individual lives in a state of near-complete (or even complete) ignorance, believing their desires to be good, and their actions to be just.
- The ‘curable’ unjust individual, on the other hand, does not possess the level of ignorance of the ‘incurable.’ Such an individual is likely to have experienced punishment in their life, and so be aware that some of their actions have been unjust.⁴³⁵ The awareness that some of their actions have been unjust causes the individual to anticipate future evils in Hades, possibly as punishment for these previous misdeeds. Moreover, their experience of corrective punishment suggests to the individual their unjust actions were caused by ignorance. This might suggest to them that there may be other actions they have committed, which they believed to be just, but were unjust. Given their ignorance, they would be incapable of knowing until the judgement of the ‘true’ judges, in which case they would have to undergo punishment; hence, anticipating future evils.

Finally, this association of fear with ignorance suggests, in an eschatological context, that as the ‘curable’ soul undergoes punishment, and their ignorance decreases, the soul should experience an analogous reduction in their anticipation of future evils. As it ceases to anticipate future evils, so it should cease to experience fear, and presumably, once this occurs, the ‘curable’ soul will become ‘cured’; or at least, exist in some neutral state of neither fear nor pleasure.⁴³⁶ Sokrates, however, never addresses what happens to the ‘cured’ soul in the conception of the afterlife proffered in the *Gorgias*. In later dialogues, Sokrates introduces the notion of reincarnation, which provides a future

⁴³⁵ See note 415.

⁴³⁶ Cf. the average soul in the *Phaidon* 112e-113e.

for the ‘cured’ soul (see further Chapter 3).⁴³⁷ The ‘incurable’ soul, on the other hand, cannot be relieved of its ignorance, and so it must continue to anticipate future evils, and by extension fear, for all time.⁴³⁸

(2.6) The *Protagoras*

(2.6.1) 323b-324d

At this point in the dialogue, Protagoras and Sokrates are discussing the issue of whether virtue is teachable. Protagoras delivers a speech, of which this section forms a part, intended to show to Sokrates that virtue is indeed teachable. In demonstrating virtue’s teachability, Protagoras provides a justification of his profession – the teaching of virtue. Moreover, Protagoras’ speech argues in favour of systems of governance such as democracy, which permit non-experts to influence the administration of the *polis*, since virtue’s teachability ensures that any non-expert may become an expert by means of education.

In order to support his case, Protagoras introduces to Sokrates a theory of corrective punishment he believes demonstrates virtue’s teachability. Up to this point, Sokrates had argued the contrary – that virtue cannot be taught – in order to undermine the status of sophists as philosophers, and educators of virtue. However, Protagoras’ theory of punishment corresponds to that Sokrates proffers in the *Gorgias*, such that the two are indistinguishable. This would suggest that Sokrates must also believe, to some extent, in virtue’s teachability.⁴³⁹ In the *Menon*, Sokrates discusses this issue again, but in more detail; and proffers the theory of recollection in order to suggest that virtue

⁴³⁷ Does this act as a metaphorical ‘restore to factory settings’?

⁴³⁸ Cf. Kahn (1996): 168.

⁴³⁹ Cf. *Menon* 72d-73c, 88e-89b.

is both innate and learnable. This conclusion allows Sokrates to accept virtue's teachability, but continue to undermine the sophists, through portraying them as ignorant of virtue, and purveyors of falsehood and ignorance, rather than virtue.⁴⁴⁰

Like Sokrates in the *Gorgias*, Protagoras's theory of punishment is predicated on the belief that (a) individuals err unwillingly through ignorance; and (b) punishment should benefit all the parties involved (323b7-323d6):

(323b7) ὡς ἀναγ-

(c) καῖον οὐδένα ὄντιν' οὐχὶ ἀμῶς γέ πως μετέχειν αὐτῆς, ἢ μὴ εἶναι ἐν ἀνθρώποις.

Ἵτι μὲν οὖν πάντ' ἄνδρα εἰκότως ἀποδέχονται περὶ ταύτης τῆς ἀρετῆς σύμβουλον διὰ τὸ ἠγεῖσθαι παντὶ μετεῖναι αὐτῆς, ταῦτα λέγω· ὅτι δὲ αὐτὴν οὐ φύσει ἠγοῦνται εἶναι οὐδ' ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου, ἀλλὰ διδακτόν τε καὶ ἐξ ἐπιμελείας παραγίγνεσθαι ᾧ ἂν παραγίγηται, τοῦτό σοι μετὰ τοῦτο πειράσομαι ἀποδείξαι. ὅσα γὰρ ἠγοῦνται ἀλλήλους κακὰ ἔχειν ἄνθρωποι

(d) φύσει ἢ τύχῃ, οὐδεὶς θυμοῦται οὐδὲ νοθετεῖ οὐδὲ διδάσκει οὐδὲ κολάζει τοὺς ταῦτα ἔχοντας, ἵνα μὴ τοιοῦτοι ᾖσιν, ἀλλ' ἐλεοῦσιν· οἷον τοὺς αἰσχροὺς ἢ σμικροὺς ἢ ἀσθενεῖς τίς οὔτως ἀνόητος ὥστε τι τούτων ἐπιχειρεῖν ποιεῖν; ταῦτα μὲν γὰρ οἶμαι ἴσασιν ὅτι φύσει τε καὶ τύχῃ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις γίνεται, τὰ καλὰ καὶ τάναντία τούτοις· ὅσα δὲ ἐξ ἐπιμελείας καὶ ἀσκήσεως καὶ διδαχῆς οἶονται γίνεσθαι ἀγαθὰ ἀνθρώποις, (e) ἐάν τις ταῦτα μὴ ἔχη, ἀλλὰ τάναντία τούτων κακὰ, ἐπὶ τούτοις που οἷ τε θυμοὶ γίνονται καὶ αἱ κολάσεις καὶ αἱ νοθετήσεις, ὧν ἔστιν ἐν καὶ ἡ ἀδικία καὶ ἡ ἀσέβεια καὶ 324.

(a) συλλήβδην πᾶν τὸ ἐναντίον τῆς πολιτικῆς ἀρετῆς· ἐνθα δὴ πᾶς παντὶ θυμοῦται καὶ νοθετεῖ, δῆλον ὅτι ὡς ἐξ ἐπιμελείας καὶ μαθήσεως κτητῆς οὔσης. εἰ γὰρ ἐθέλεις ἐννοῆσαι τὸ

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. *Sophistes* 264b-268d; *Euthydemus* 285a-d.

κολάζειν, ὧ Σώκρατες, τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας τί ποτε δύναται, αὐτό σε διδάξει ὅτι οἷ γε ἄνθρωποι ἡγοῦνται παρασκευαστὸν εἶναι ἀρετὴν. οὐδεὶς γὰρ κολάζει τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας πρὸς τούτῳ τὸν νοῦν ἔχων καὶ τούτου ἕνεκα, ὅτι ἠδίκησεν, ὅστις (b) μὴ ὡσπερ θηρίον ἀλογίστως τιμωρεῖται· ὁ δὲ μετὰ λόγου ἐπιχειρῶν κολάζειν οὐ τοῦ παρεληλυθότος ἕνεκα ἀδικήματος τιμωρεῖται—οὐ γὰρ ἂν τό γε πραχθὲν ἀγέννητον θείῃ—ἀλλὰ τοῦ μέλλοντος χάριν, ἵνα μὴ αὐθις ἀδικήσῃ μήτε αὐτὸς οὗτος μήτε ἄλλος ὁ τοῦτον ἰδὼν κολασθέντα. καὶ τοιαύτην διάνοιαν ἔχων διανοεῖται παιδευτὴν εἶναι ἀρετὴν· ἀποτροπῆς γοῦν ἕνεκα κολάζει. ταύτην οὖν τὴν δόξαν πάντες ἔχουσιν ὅσοι περ (c) τιμωροῦνται καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ. τιμωροῦνται δὲ καὶ κολάζονται οἷ τε ἄλλοι ἄνθρωποι οὐκ ἂν οἴωνται ἀδικεῖν, καὶ οὐχ ἥκιστα Ἀθηναῖοι οἱ σοὶ πολῖται· ὥστε κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον καὶ Ἀθηναῖοί εἰσι τῶν ἡγουμένων παρασκευαστὸν εἶναι καὶ διδακτὸν ἀρετὴν. ὡς μὲν οὖν εἰκότως ἀποδέχονται οἱ σοὶ πολῖται καὶ χαλκέως καὶ σκυτοτόμου συμβουλευόντος τὰ πολιτικά, καὶ ὅτι διδακτὸν καὶ παρασκευαστὸν ἡγοῦνται ἀρετὴν, ἀποδέδεικταί σοι, ὧ Σώκρατες, ἱκανῶς, ὡς γέ μοι (d) φαίνεται.

Ἔτι δὴ λοιπὴ ἀπορία ἐστίν, ἣν ἀπορεῖς περὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, τί δήποτε οἱ ἄνδρες οἱ ἀγαθοὶ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα τοὺς αὐτῶν ὑεῖς διδάσκουσιν ἅ διδασκάλων ἔχεται καὶ τίους ποιοῦσιν. τούτου δὴ πέρι, ὧ Σώκρατες, οὐκέτι μῦθόν σοι ἐρῶ ἀλλὰ λόγον.

[LOEB translation]: “Pro. Since it is held that all without exception must needs partake of it in some way or other, or else not be of human kind.

Take my word for it, then, that they have good reason for admitting everybody as adviser on this virtue, owing to their belief that everyone has some of it; and next, that they do not regard it as natural or spontaneous, but as something taught and acquired after careful preparation by those who acquire it,—of this I will now endeavour to convince you. In all cases of evils which men deem to have befallen their neighbours by nature or fortune, nobody is wroth with them or reproves or lectures or punishes them, when so afflicted, with a view to their being other than they are; one merely pities them. Who, for instance, is such a fool as to try to do anything of the sort to the ugly, the puny, or the weak? Because, I presume, men

know that it is by nature and fortune that people get these things, the graces of life and their opposites. But as to all the good things that people are supposed to get by application and practice and teaching, where these are lacking in anyone and only their opposite evils are found, here surely are the occasions for wrath and punishment and reproof. One of them is injustice, and impiety, and in short all that is opposed to civic virtue; in such case anyone will be wroth with his neighbour and reprove him, clearly because the virtue is to be acquired by application and learning. For if you will consider punishment, Socrates, and what control it has over wrong-doers, the facts will inform you that men agree in regarding virtue as procured. No one punishes a wrong-doer from the mere contemplation or on account of his wrong-doing, unless one takes unreasoning vengeance like a wild beast. But he who undertakes to punish with reason does not avenge himself for the past offence, since he cannot make what was done as though it had not come to pass; he looks rather to the future, and aims at preventing that particular person and others who see him punished from doing wrong again. And being so minded he must have in mind that virtue comes by training: for you observe that he punishes to deter. This then is the accepted view of all who seek requital in either private or public life; and while men in general exact requital and punishment from those whom they suppose to have wronged them, this is especially the case with the Athenians, your fellow-citizens, so that by our argument the Athenians also share the view that virtue is procured and taught. Thus I have shown that your fellow-citizens have good reason for admitting a smith's or cobbler's counsel in public affairs, and that they hold virtue to be taught and procured: of this I have given you satisfactory demonstration, Socrates, as it appears to me.

I have yet to deal with your remaining problem about good men, why it is that these good men have their sons taught the subjects in the regular teachers' courses, and so far make them wise, but do not make them excel in that virtue wherein consists their own goodness. On this point, Socrates, I shall give you argument instead of fable."

Accordingly, Protagoras proffers two categories of punishment, equivalent to the categories of 'curable' and 'incurable' Sokrates identified in the *Gorgias*. In this case, the first category aims to profit the individual through correction ('curable'), whilst the second aims to benefit others by making an example of a particular individual, thereby educating others through deterrence ('incurable') (324a3-b5). Both categories of punishment support Protagoras' initial claim that virtue is teachable: in the first case, the offender is taught directly that their actions have been unjust. In the second case, the wider populace learn that the actions of the offender are unjust and unacceptable, and one should not act in this manner, lest one suffer the same fate.⁴⁴¹ However, in

⁴⁴¹ The first category of punishment consists of a rational appeal to the soul, thorough highlighting its ignorance, and prescribing a course of remedial education. The second category of punishment, on the other hand, consists of an appeal to the bodily. If an individual warrants the second category of punishment, it is evident to Protagoras that such an individual governs the soul with the body, rather than vice versa. Therefore,

this second case, the offender themselves, if they suffer a punishment like execution, does not receive the opportunity to demonstrate the new learning they have required. Their punishment, therefore, is purely for the educational benefit of other individuals, rather than of their own.

Protagoras then proceeds to define of what he understands an 'injustice' to consist; one cannot, according to Protagoras, punish an individual for an injustice completely out of their control. Given that Protagoras was well known for his notion of relativism, it seems odd that he would seek to define so precisely what constitutes an injustice and what does not. Protagorean relativism – man is the measure of all things (cf. *Theaitetos*, 160d8-9) – would posit that what constitutes justice and injustice differs from individual to individual, and each personal conception of these things possesses equal validity. If this theory of punishment 'actually' belongs to Protagoras, how is it possible for him to reconcile relativism with the normative definition he provides regarding what constitutes an 'error' or 'injustice' worthy of punishment?

Nevertheless, Protagoras posits that nobody admonishes, punishes, or tries to correct that individual who suffers due to nature, e.g. through bad luck (323b8-d6). For instance, Protagoras argues that no one would ever attempt to 'correct' one who is ugly or weak, as this forms part of one's natural constitution, over which one has no control (323d3-6). This individual 'suffers' ugliness or weakness through no action or choice of their own, but occupies a completely subordinate role in the matter (either to nature, biology, or god). In punishing the individual who commits an 'error' through no fault of their own, one is not punishing with the intent of correction, since this 'error' cannot be corrected. Punishing such an individual would constitute punishment for punishment's sake, devoid of any educational function (324a6-b3). One cannot, therefore, be punished for an action they did not choose; even the one who commits injustice through ignorance, does so through a conscious choice to commit that action of which they possessed no knowledge.⁴⁴²

punishment must appeal directly to the governing entity – the body – hence the use of bodily pain in the hopes of encouraging others, who similarly govern with the body, of the incorrectness of such actions.

⁴⁴² Cf. *Menon* 88e-89b.

Having delineated what type of 'error' does not warrant punishment, Protagoras proceeds to define those 'errors' that are worthy of correction; a definition that relies heavily upon a belief in the teachability of virtue. The type of 'error' that does not warrant punishment corresponds to that which occurs as a result of nature or some other uncontrollable principle, e.g. god. On the other hand, the type of 'error' that does warrant correction corresponds to those things that result from the contrary, i.e. from things within the control of the human being. For Protagoras, the human being is capable of acquiring certain good things, e.g. virtue, through learning and practice. Consequently, the things that result in errors suitable for punishment correspond to the negative contraries of these good things, e.g. wickedness (323d6-324a3).

According to Protagoras, each of the good things that come to be in the human being, e.g. virtue, goodness, honesty, etc., possess a corresponding binary negative, which similarly might come to be in the human being, e.g. wickedness, badness, dishonesty, etc. (323d6-324a1). The good things that come to be in the human being derive from a process of teaching and learning. If the good things come from teaching and learning, Protagoras concludes so must the negative things. So, if these negative things can be learnt, they can be unlearnt. In other words, since these negative things derive from ignorance – 'bad' teaching and 'faulty' learning – so they possess a seemingly straightforward 'cure' – 'correct' teaching and 'good' learning.⁴⁴³ In this way, all souls possess an equal capacity for knowledge (as well as ignorance), therefore, there is no excuse for every soul not to participate in the Platonic Wager.

It is this belief, that one can learn virtue and its contraries, and the existence of this relatively simple cure, which leads to those who exhibit these negative things being met with anger and condemnation from their peers (324a1-3). As far as their peers are concerned, those who commit injustice do so through choice, having chosen to learn these negative things, and to ignore the relatively easy 'cure' available to all – the learning of virtue. One might even argue that the negative

⁴⁴³ Cf. *Protagoras* 357d-e, 358c, 360a-d.

reactions these contraries illicit from others acts as a method of correction, as these reactions teach the individual the 'incorrectness' of their actions, at least according to the popular conception of what is just and unjust. It is up to the individual, however, to listen to this negative response, and adapt accordingly; an individual's failure to adapt serving to 'justify' their peers' anger, and their belief that the individual chose to be unjust.

This anger, however, must not lead to the punishment of the unjust individual without a view to correction. Such punishment would be 'exercising the mindless vindictiveness of a beast' (324a7-b3). All punishment must be directed towards a didactic purpose. Reasonable punishment, argues Protagoras, does not consist of the distribution of vengeance for some past wrong (324b1-3), since 'one cannot undo what has been done' (324b1-3). Punishing with a view to vengeance serves to neither rectify the initial wrong, nor teach the wrongdoer the 'error' of their action, and reduces the one punishing to an equally unjust state of wantonness. Hence, punishment must either:

- (a) teach the individual being punished their initial 'error,' so they may not repeat the same unjust action (corrective punishment); or
- (b) deter those witnessing the punishment from committing the same 'error' as the offender, teaching through making an example of the offender (punishment through deterrent) (324b3-c5).⁴⁴⁴

(2.7) The *Symposion*

(2.7.1) 198d-199b

⁴⁴⁴ See also Taylor (1991): 90-91, 93, 96.

In the *Gorgias*, Sokrates identifies oratory's ineffectiveness as a means of investigating 'the truth,' thereby establishing its unsuitability for the judgement of the soul in Hades. Here in the *Symposion*, Sokrates identifies a further unsuitable method for investigating 'the truth'; a method equally ineffective for the judgement in Hades: the eulogy. In the particular context of the dialogue, Sokrates and his interlocutors have been discussing the nature of Eros (both the divinity and emotion) through the use of eulogistic speech; praising Eros and his effects.⁴⁴⁵ Following the conclusion to Agathon's speech on Eros, Sokrates comes to the realisation that the discussion of Eros, thus far, has been inadequate, both in terms of content and style. In order to rectify this inadequacy, Sokrates believes he must provide a refutation of the discussion thus far,⁴⁴⁷ in order to establish the 'true' nature of Eros. Sokrates identifies 'the eulogy' as the source of this inadequacy, and proceeds to enumerate the reasons why eulogy is a deficient means of argumentation with which to investigate 'the truth.' Instead, as he argues in the *Gorgias* (see Chapter 2.4.1 and 2.4.2), one must investigate 'the truth' using his own preferred method of investigation.⁴⁴⁸

Sokrates' criticism of eulogy begins with a criticism of himself, and his own 'ignorant' belief that he possessed an understanding of the 'true' nature of Eros (198c5-d3). His own 'ignorance' is further compounded by his equally 'ignorant' belief that his interlocutors likewise possessed an understanding of these things (198d3-6). In the *Gorgias*, Sokrates suggests that the philosopher is akin to the 'true' judge, who through an examination of an individual's soul, is able to identify any ignorance present;⁴⁴⁹ in this way, the philosopher performs a 'living' judgement of the soul. In the present case, Sokrates, who I believe is presented by Plato as being a 'true' philosopher (indeed, perhaps the quintessential philosopher), likewise assumes the position of the 'true' judge, effecting a judgement of not only his own soul, but that of his companions, and identifying an ignorance – in

⁴⁴⁵ See further Osborne (1994): 86-116.

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. *Phaidros* 242e-243c.

⁴⁴⁸ Again, the issue here is that Sokrates' style of speech prioritizes the truth above all; this does not mean, however, that there is absolutely no room for persuasion or eulogy, as long as they serve the pursuit of the truth. If (a) Knowledge exists; (b) Knowledge may be known; and (c) Knowledge may be communicated, then one may use all the tools at one's disposal to communicate this knowledge, but not at the expense of Knowledge itself.

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. the Sokratic art of midwifery, *Theaitetos* 148e-151d.

this case regarding the nature of the god Eros. Sokrates, heeds this self-judgement, and seeks to rectify his ignorance, before it leads to the committing of an injustice. I proffer that Plato presents Sokrates' conduct in the *Symposion* as a paradigm, demonstrating the kind of attitude one should display towards the existence of ignorance in one's soul, and the correction of this ignorance.

After criticising his own ignorance, and that of his interlocutors, Sokrates proceeds to rectify his ignorance with a negative evaluation of eulogy – the belief being that his ignorance of Eros arose from the discussion's use of eulogy as an investigative tool into 'the truth' (198d3-199b10):

(198d3) (i) ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ ὑπ' ἀβελτερίας ὥμην δεῖν τάληθῆ λέγειν περὶ ἐκάστου τοῦ ἐγκωμιαζομένου, καὶ τοῦτο μὲν ὑπάρχειν, (ii) ἐξ αὐτῶν δὲ τούτων τὰ κάλλιστα ἐκλεγομένου ὡς εὐπρεπέστατα τιθέναι· (iii) καὶ πάνυ δὴ μέγα ἐφρόνουν ὡς εὖ ἐρῶν, ὡς εἰδὼς τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ ἐπαινεῖν ὅτιοῦν. (1) τὸ δὲ ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικεν, οὐ τοῦτο ἦν τὸ καλῶς ἐπαινεῖν ὅτιοῦν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὡς (e) μέγιστα ἀνατιθέναι τῷ πράγματι καὶ ὡς κάλλιστα, ἐάν τε ἦ οὕτως ἔχοντα ἐάν τε μή· (2) εἰ δὲ ψευδῆ, οὐδὲν ἄρ' ἦν πρᾶγμα. (3) προουρήθη γάρ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὅπως ἕκαστος ἡμῶν τὸν Ἔρωτα ἐγκωμιάζειν δόξει, οὐχ ὅπως ἐγκωμιάσεται. διὰ ταῦτα δὴ οἶμαι πάντα λόγον κινουῦντες ἀνατίθετε τῷ Ἔρωτι, καὶ φατε αὐτὸν τοιοῦτόν τε εἶναι καὶ τοσοῦτων αἴτιον, (4) ὅπως ἂν 199.

(a) φαίνεται ὡς κάλλιστος καὶ ἄριστος, δῆλον ὅτι τοῖς μὴ γινώσκουσιν—οὐ γὰρ δήπου τοῖς γε εἰδόσιν—καὶ καλῶς γ' ἔχει καὶ σεμνῶς ὁ ἔπαινος. (5) ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐγὼ οὐκ ἤδη ἄρα τὸν τρόπον τοῦ ἐπαινοῦ, οὐ δ' εἰδὼς ὑμῖν ὠμολόγησα καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ μέρει ἐπαινέσασθαι. ἢ γλῶσσα οὖν ὑπέσχετο, ἢ δὲ φρήν οὐ· χαίρω δὴ. οὐ γὰρ ἔτι ἐγκωμιάζω τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον—οὐ γὰρ ἂν δυναίμην—οὐ μέντοι ἀλλὰ τά γε ἀληθῆ, (b) εἰ βούλεσθε, ἐθέλω εἰπεῖν κατ' ἑμαυτόν, οὐ πρὸς τοὺς ὑμετέρους λόγους, ἵνα μὴ γέλωτα ὄφλω. ὄρα οὖν, ὦ Φαῖδρε, εἴ τι καὶ τοιούτου λόγου δέη, περὶ Ἔρωτος τάληθῆ λεγόμενα

ἀκούειν, ὀνομάσει δὲ καὶ θέσει ῥημάτων τοιαύτη ὅποια δ᾿ ἄν
τις τύχη ἐπελθοῦσα.

Τὸν οὖν Φαῖδρον ἔφη καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους κελεύειν λέγειν,
ὅπη αὐτὸς οἶοιτο δεῖν εἰπεῖν, ταύτη.

Ἔτι τοίνυν, φάναι, ὦ Φαῖδρε, πάρες μοι Ἀγάθωνα σμίκρ’
ἄττα ἐρέσθαι, ἵνα ἀνομολογησάμενος παρ’ αὐτοῦ οὕτως ἤδη
λέγω.

[LOEB translation:] “For I was such a silly wretch as to think that one ought in each case to speak the truth about the person eulogized; on this assumption I hoped we might pick out the fairest of the facts and set these forth in their comeliest guise. I was quite elated with the notion of what a fine speech I should make, for I felt that I knew the truth. But now, it appears that this is not what is meant by a good speech of praise; which is rather an ascription of all the highest and fairest qualities, whether the case be so or not; it is really no matter if they are untrue. Our arrangement, it seems, was that each should appear to eulogize Love, not that he should make a real eulogy. Hence it is, sirs, I suppose, that you muster every kind of phrase for your tribute to Love, declaring such and such to be his character and influence, in order to present him in the best and fairest light; successfully, of course, before those who do not observe him, though it must be otherwise before those who know; your praise has such a fine impressive air! No, I find I was quite mistaken as to the method required; it was in ignorance that I agreed to take my turn in the round of praising. ‘The tongue,’ you see, undertook, ‘the mind’ did not; so good-bye to my bond, I am not to be called upon now as an eulogist in your sense; for such I cannot be. Nevertheless I am ready, if you like, to speak the mere truth in my own way; not to rival your discourses, and so be your laughing-stock. Decide then, Phaedrus, whether you have any need of such a speech besides, and would like to hear the truth told about Love in whatsoever style of terms and phrases may chance to occur by the way.”

So Phaedrus and the others bade him speak, just in any manner he himself should think fit.

“Then allow me further, Phaedrus, to put some little questions to Agathon, so as to secure his agreement before I begin my speech.””

In order to explain why eulogy is an inadequate means of investigating ‘the truth,’ Sokrates must first define what eulogy is; this he achieves through a negative definition of eulogy, i.e. a consideration of what eulogy is not:

- (i) Sokrates believed the truth would form the basis of all the speeches presented by his interlocutors on the subject of Eros (198d3-7).

(ii) He thought that upon hearing these speeches, a speaker would select the most beautiful of these as corresponding to the 'truth'; beauty apparently being indicative of the truth (198d3-7).⁴⁵⁰

(iii) Finally, Sokrates concedes his own vanity, believing his use of eulogy constituted a 'good' speech, praising Eros' 'true' nature (198d6-7).

From these three statements, Sokrates appears to suggest that eulogy embodies the following negative aspects:

- (a) The truth does not form the basis of a eulogy.
- (b) Eulogy appeals to the vanity of a speaker, who is more concerned with delivering a 'good' speech that is pleasant to the ear.
- (c) Consequently, the speaker does not present the 'true' beauty of the subject, but constructs an image of this beauty that appeals only to the bodily senses, and not to the soul.⁴⁵¹
- (d) Finally, eulogy heaps empty praise on the thing it purports to honour, discarding the truth with the intention of advancing the personal vanity and reputation of the speaker, or as a means of gaining some sort of favour.

A definition through negation, although a legitimate form of defining a thing, relies, nonetheless, on a certain amount of inference, since one must infer what a thing is virtue of the characteristics it does not possess. Moreover, it provides only an implicit understanding of something, and so is more susceptible to error, and to an accusation of arguing from silence. Fortunately, Sokrates continues his discussion of eulogy by providing a more direct and explicit definition, which appears to support the conclusions given by the negative definition above. Eulogy, according to Sokrates:

⁴⁵⁰ *Phaidon* 78b-84b. If the Forms are understood to be good and perfect; then the truth, insofar as it is the Forms, must also be good and perfect. If the truth is good and perfect, then the truth is beautiful; if the truth is beautiful, then the Forms are beautiful.

⁴⁵¹ See further Introduction, section (C) – On Myth.

- (1) Applies to the thing being praised the grandest and most beautiful qualities, whether it actually possesses them or not (198d7-e2).
- (2) It is of no concern to the eulogist whether these qualities should be 'false' (198d7-e2: ψευδῆ, e2).
- (3) What is of most concern to the eulogist is that everyone believes a particular thing is being praised, regardless of whether the eulogy 'actually' praises the thing or not (198e3-199a3).
- (4) In the context of the *Symposion*, the discussants apply to Eros every word, in order to make their description of him and his gifts appear the best and most beautiful of all things (199a1: φαίνεται ὡς κάλλιστος καὶ ἄριστος).
- (5) This method of argumentation convinces the ignorant listener, appearing to be both beautiful and respectful, but it does not convince one who knows the 'truth' (199a3-b2).⁴⁵²

As Sokrates suggests with his negative definition, eulogy is not concerned with the establishment of 'truth,' but rather in the creation of appearances and illusion, in particular, the attribution of a hyperbolic amount of goodness to something.⁴⁵³ This the eulogist does in order to achieve some purpose other than to relate the 'truth,' and praise something for what it really is, e.g. in order to attain an amount of favour or honour. However, since the ignorant listener possesses no knowledge of the thing being praised, the eulogist's illusions succeeds in convincing them of the eulogy's 'truth.' Consequently, like oratory in the *Gorgias* (see Chapter 2.4.1 and 2.4.2), Sokrates establishes eulogy as being an equally unsuitable means of conducting investigation into the 'truth,' and by extension, its unsuitability for use in the soul's judgement in Hades.⁴⁵⁴ The 'true' judge does possess knowledge

⁴⁵² Hence, *Symposion* 202d-203a – Sokrates' daimonion interrupts the symposium because it has not been convinced by the so-called truth of the eulogistic speeches thus far.

⁴⁵³ Cf. *Sophistes* 264b-268d – the definition of the sophist as a creator and purveyor of illusions.

⁴⁵⁴ This does not necessarily mean that one cannot use eulogy altogether; indeed, it may be that Diotima's speech on Eros is meant to constitute a 'correct' use of eulogy (cf. 199b) just as his speeches in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaidros* may serve as 'correct' uses of oratory. Cf. Kahn (1996): 269 who suggests Sokrates must be able to adapt his speech to the particular audience he finds, as per the *Phaidros* (see further Introduction, section (C)). Thus, he cannot neglect entirely the use of eulogy or oratory, since this may be the most effective means for communicating the truth to a particular audience, so long as the truth itself is not harmed by the use of such techniques.

of justice and injustice, and so he will remain unmoved by the false praise of the eulogy.⁴⁵⁵

Moreover, were a soul to attempt to eulogize the 'true' judge himself, this would only secure the soul's ignorant status, since the judge most certainly knows himself.⁴⁵⁶

(2.8) The *Phaidon*

(2.8.1) 67a-67c

In the dialogues above, Sokrates relates how injustice originates in ignorance; ignorance of what is 'good' and what is not. Accordingly, punishment should serve to rectify this mistaken conception of the good, through making the soul aware of the 'incorrectness' of its understanding, thereby remedying its ignorance. As this soul becomes cognizant of its ignorance, Sokrates suggests that, on an intrinsic level, this soul will be unlikely to commit the same injustice again, given it now knows the action is unjust. However, Sokrates hopes that once the soul becomes aware of its own ignorance, this will instil within the soul a curiosity for 'the truth,' precipitating investigation into such things as the 'true' nature of the good and justice.⁴⁵⁷

Sokrates appears to establish the attainment of knowledge as being the purpose of the soul, i.e. its *telos*. It is ignorance, for Sokrates, that is the direct cause of the injustices of the mortal world, and so it is the responsibility of the individual, and the wider community, to direct the soul towards the removal of this ignorance. Yet, the removal of ignorance cannot be the end Sokrates' envisions for the soul, since, as Sokrates relates in the *Menon* (see Chapter 3.4), one must always seek to recollect the truth – a knowledge of the true nature of the reality. The removal of ignorance through

⁴⁵⁵ Cf. *Politeia* 2.381e-382c.

⁴⁵⁶ Cf. *Apologia* 38a5-6; *Kharmides* 164d; *Nomoi* 11.923a; *Phaidros* 230a; *Philebos* 48c; *Protagoras* 343b. Sheffield (2006): 30-32, 41 cf. 32n32, 41n.1.

⁴⁵⁷ E.g. Sokrates' discussion with Menon's slave, *Menon* 81e-86b.

philosophical discussion or punishment is merely the first step towards the attainment of the soul's *telos*.⁴⁵⁸

This understanding of the soul's *telos* forms the basis of this part of the *Phaidon*. Here, Sokrates relates to his interlocutors the way in which one should live in order to achieve the good that awaits the soul after death. In this case, the manner of life to which Sokrates refers, is that which brings the soul closest to knowledge (67a2-6), which he then uses in order to justify to his companions why he does not fear death:

(67a2) (i) καὶ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ζῶμεν, οὕτως, ὡς ἔοικεν,
ἐγγυτάτω ἐσόμεθα τοῦ εἰδέναι, ἐὰν ὅτι μάλιστα μηδὲν
ὀμιλῶμεν τῷ σώματι μηδὲ κοινωνῶμεν, ὅτι μὴ πᾶσα ἀνάγκη,
μηδὲ ἀναπιμπλώμεθα τῆς τούτου φύσεως, ἀλλὰ καθαρεύομεν
ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, (ii) ἕως ἂν ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸς ἀπολύσῃ ἡμᾶς· (iii) καὶ οὕτω μὲν
καθαροὶ ἀπαλλαττόμενοι τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἀφροσύνης, (iv) ὡς τὸ
εἰκὸς μετὰ τοιούτων τε ἐσόμεθα καὶ γνωσόμεθα δι' ἡμῶν
(b) αὐτῶν πᾶν τὸ εἰλικρινές, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἴσως τὸ ἀληθές·
μὴ καθαρῶ γὰρ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θεμιτὸν ἦ.”
τοιαῦτα οἶμαι, ᾧ Σιμμία, ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι πρὸς ἀλλήλους
λέγειν τε καὶ δοξάζειν πάντας τοὺς ὀρθῶς φιλομαθεῖς. ἢ οὐ
δοκεῖ σοι οὕτως;
Παντός γε μᾶλλον, ᾧ Σώκρατες.
Οὐκοῦν, ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, εἰ ταῦτα ἀληθῆ, ᾧ ἑταῖρε,
πολλὴ ἐλπίς ἀφικομένῳ οἷ ἐγὼ πορεύομαι, ἐκεῖ ἰκανῶς,
εἴπερ που ἄλλοθι, κτήσασθαι τοῦτο οὐ ἔνεκα ἢ πολλὴ
πραγματεία ἡμῖν ἐν τῷ παρελθόντι βίῳ γέγονεν, ὥστε ἢ γε
(c) ἀποδημία ἢ νῦν μοι προστεταγμένη μετὰ ἀγαθῆς ἐλπίδος
γίγνεται καὶ ἄλλῳ ἀνδρὶ ὃς ἠγεῖται οἱ παρεσκευάσθαι τὴν
διάνοιαν ὥσπερ κεκαθαρμένην.

[LOEB translation:] “And during the time we are alive, it seems that we shall be closest to knowledge in this way: if as far as possible we have no dealings and share

⁴⁵⁸ Rice (1998): 108; Sayers (1999): 96), 118-119, cf. 123, 127.

nothing with the body, except where absolutely necessary, and we are not infected with its nature, but cleanse ourselves of it until the god himself releases us: by keeping ourselves untainted in this way away from the foolhardiness of the body it's likely that we shall be among people of like nature and we shall discover through our own real selves all that is pure, and this perhaps is what the truth is. For it may not be allowed by the gods for the impure to lay their hands on what is uncontaminated.' These are the kinds of things, Simmias, I think all who are true lovers of learning should be discussing with each other and believing. Or do you not think this is right?"

"Absolutely, Socrates."

"Well then," said Socrates, "if this is true, my friend, there is every hope for anyone arriving at the place where I am going, that there, if anywhere, he will gain in good measure what most of our preoccupations in our past life have been concerned with, so that the journey hence that is now determined for me will actually take place with good prospects for any other person too who thinks his mind is prepared—purified, as it were.""

For Sokrates it seems:

- (i) One must refrain as much as possible from association with the body, as only in this way will one be closest to knowledge (67a2-4).
- (ii) One must continuously attempt to purify one's soul of the pollution arising from association with the nature of the body, until 'the god himself frees us' (67a6: ἕως ἄν ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸς ἀπολύσῃ ἡμᾶς).
- (iii) Only in this way can the individual escape the inherent irrationality of the body (67a6-7); and
- (iv) Ensure the soul's purity, since only the pure soul is permitted to attain what is akin to it in nature – knowledge of 'the truth' (67a7-b2: τὸ ἀληθές, b1).

The way of life Sokrates describes establishes two contraries: Knowledge and Ignorance. These contraries, however, are not binary but exist on a spectrum.⁴⁵⁹ Ignorance, for Sokrates, embodies all that is corporeal, physical, and mortal; whilst Knowledge embodies the contrary – the incorporeal, the immaterial, and the immortal, i.e. all that is akin to the soul in nature,⁴⁶⁰ though this form of Knowledge is eternally changeless, unlike the soul which is capable of motion, i.e. change.⁴⁶¹ Utilizing the notion that one does not desire what is evil, Sokrates assumes that the soul always desires what

⁴⁵⁹ Morgan (1990): 12; Sallis (1996): 81.

⁴⁶⁰ Cf. *Phaidon* 79a-c.

⁴⁶¹ Sallis (1996): 81; Nehamas (1999): 171-191.

is good; and to know what is good; one must possess Knowledge. Consequently, one must refrain as much as possible from association with the body, (in particular the bodily senses), i.e. that which is contrary to Knowledge and akin to Ignorance.⁴⁶²

Yet, Sokrates recognizes that the beliefs one possesses generally have an empirical origin, since one believes that the world one inhabits is coterminous with reality. This leads to the 'incorrect' notion that one can learn about 'the truth' using bodily perception and experience alone. For Sokrates, however, this 'truth' relates to those things that are akin to Ignorance, such that knowledge of the mortal world represents, to some extent, a knowledge of Ignorance. In order to possess Knowledge, one must utilize an entity akin to it in nature – the soul. Once one makes use of the soul to investigate 'the truth,' it becomes evident, for Sokrates, that reality differs from the everyday experience of the human being. According to Sokrates, it is necessary to purify the soul of the ignorance it might possess due to the body, and henceforth, one must disassociate from the body, and utilize only the soul in order to investigate 'the truth.'

Given the human being is an embodied soul, it is not possible for the human being to possess Knowledge, this can only be achieved once the soul is finally free of the body, i.e. in death. In this way, when the soul returns to its disembodied state of existence, it lays closer to Knowledge on the spectrum, and by extension, closer to the 'good,' 'truth,' and all such things that are akin in nature, e.g. the divine.⁴⁶³ Consequently, when the soul now desires what is good, it will actually know what is good, and thereby attain the 'true' good, whilst the ignorant soul will continue to fall short.

(2.8.2) 80d-82c

⁴⁶² Cf. Irwin (1979): 243; *Phaidon* 65a-67b.

⁴⁶³ See also Pender (2012): 209.

Above, it appears the soul possesses a *telos* – the attainment of knowledge. Although the human being, as an embodied soul, may not possess Knowledge whilst alive, Sokrates argues that one must live that way of life, which brings the soul closest to Knowledge. This notion receives further support from Sokrates’ examination of the fate of the soul, once it journeys to Hades, and undergoes judgement by the ‘true’ judges (80d5-82c8). Sokrates emphasizes in particular the association between the use of the bodily senses as the basis of one’s conception of ‘truth,’ and ignorance. The soul, argues Sokrates, concludes its journey (for now) in a location similar to it in nature. So, an ignorant soul will dwell in a place of ignorance, always anticipating future evils, i.e. existing in a state of fear (see further Chapter 2.5), since they possess no conception of the ‘true’ nature of Hades, punishment, or the soul (81c4-e3). The converse soul, on the other hand, will dwell in a pure place of knowledge (82b10-c1).

Sokrates begins by drawing a distinction between two types of soul: the ‘pure’ and the ‘impure.’ The ‘pure’ soul is roughly analogous to the ‘just,’ soul, closer to Knowledge, whilst the ‘impure’ soul is analogous to the ‘unjust,’ ‘ignorant’ soul. He then describes the different journey each category of soul experiences as it travels to its judgement in Hades. First, however, Sokrates establishes those things that happen to all soul, regardless of whether they are ‘pure’ or ‘impure.’

All Soul

(80d5) Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ἄρα, (i) τὸ αἰδέες, (ii) τὸ εἰς τοιοῦτον τόπον ἕτερον
οἰχόμενον γενναῖον καὶ καθαρὸν καὶ αἰδέη, εἰς Ἄιδου ὡς
ἀληθῶς, παρὰ τὸν ἀγαθὸν καὶ φρόνιμον θεόν, οἷ, ἂν θεὸς
θέλη

[LOEB translation:] ““On the other hand does the soul then, the invisible part, which makes its way to another place of that kind, noble, pure and invisible: Hades in the true sense, to be with the good and wise god where, if the god wills it.””

I believe we can draw the following conclusions:

- (i) All souls are incorporeal, or at least possess an incorporeal part (80d5-6).⁴⁶⁴
- (ii) Upon death – the soul’s separation from the body – the soul journeys to a location of the same incorporeal nature, i.e. Hades (80d5-8).⁴⁶⁵

The Pure Soul

(80d8) αὐτίκα καὶ τῇ ἐμῇ ψυχῇ ἰτέον, αὕτη δὲ δὴ ἡμῖν ἢ τοιαύτη καὶ οὕτω πεφυκυῖα ἀπαλλαττομένη τοῦ σώματος εὐθύς διαπεφύσεται καὶ ἀπόλωλεν, ὥς φασιν οἱ πολλοὶ (e) ἄνθρωποι; πολλοῦ γε δεῖ, ὃ φίλε Κέβης τε καὶ Σιμμία, ἀλλὰ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ὧδ’ ἔχει· (i) ἐὰν μὲν καθαρὰ ἀπαλλάττηται, (ii) μηδὲν τοῦ σώματος συνεφέλκουσα, ἅτε οὐδὲν κοινωνοῦσα αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἐκοῦσα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ φεύγουσα αὐτὸ καὶ συνηθροισμένη αὐτῇ εἰς ἑαυτήν, ἅτε μελετῶσα ἀεὶ τοῦτο— τὸ δὲ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ ὀρθῶς φιλοσοφοῦσα καὶ τῷ ὄντι 81.

(a) τεθνάναι μελετῶσα ῥαδίως· ἢ οὐ τοῦτ’ ἂν εἶη μελέτη θανάτου;

Παντάπασί γε.

(iii) Οὐκοῦν οὕτω μὲν ἔχουσα εἰς (iv) τὸ ὅμοιον αὐτῇ τὸ αἰδὲς ἀπέρχεται, τὸ θεῖόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον καὶ φρόνιμον, οἷ ἀφικομένη ὑπάρχει αὐτῇ εὐδαίμονι εἶναι, (v) πλάνης καὶ ἀνοίας καὶ φόβων καὶ ἀγρίων ἐρώτων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων κακῶν τῶν ἀνθρωπείων ἀπηλλαγμένη, ὥσπερ δὲ λέγεται κατὰ τῶν μεμυημένων, ὡς ἀληθῶς τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον μετὰ θεῶν διάγουσα; οὕτω φῶμεν, ὃ Κέβης, ἢ ἄλλως;

Οὕτω νῆ Δία, ἔφη ὁ Κέβης.

[LOEB translation:] ““my soul too must go directly—will this soul of ours, being naturally of such a kind, be immediately dispersed and destroyed when it is separated from the body, as most people say? Far from it, my dear Cebes and Simmias; on the contrary, it’s much more as follows: if it is pure when it separates off and drags nothing of the body with it since it has not willingly had any association with it in life, but has avoided it and drawn itself together into itself, since this has

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. *Phaidros* 246b-246e.

⁴⁶⁵ True reality for the soul; cf. Nehamas (1999): 171-191.

always been its habit—that is nothing other than practicing philosophy correctly and, in fact, practicing dying readily. Or would this not be the way to cultivate dying?”

“Yes, absolutely.”

“Being in such a condition, does it then make for what is like it, the invisible, the divine and immortal and wise, and on arriving there isn’t it’s lot to be happy, being rid of wandering aimlessly, foolishness, fears, wild sexual passions and the other human evils, and, just as it’s said of the initiated, does it not truly spend the rest of time among the gods? Are we to put it like this, Cebes, or in a different way?”

“Zeus, no! Just like this,” said Cebes.

I believe we can draw the following conclusions:

- (i) Upon arrival in Hades, the soul reaches the place of judgement, and is adjudged ‘pure’ by the judges (80e2).
- (ii) For Sokrates, the ‘pure’ is defined as that soul which neither retains anything of the bodily upon death, nor associated with it willingly, but avoided it and practiced philosophy in the ‘right’ way – ‘ὀρθῶς φιλοσοφοῦσα,’ 80e6, i.e. the Sokratic/Platonic way (80e3-81a1, cf. 82a10-c8).
- (iii) The ‘pure’ soul then continues its journey to another location where it will dwell for a period (81a4ff.).
- (iv) This location is like in nature to the ‘pure’ soul, i.e. divine, immortal, and wise (81a4-11).
- (v) Here, the soul dwells in happiness, free of ignorance, fear, and anything else pertaining to the body (81a6-11).

The Impure Soul

(81b1) (i) Ἐὰν δέ γε οἶμαι μεμιασμένη καὶ ἀκάθαρτος τοῦ σώματος ἀπαλλάττηται, (ii) ἅτε τῷ σώματι ἀεὶ συνοῦσα καὶ τοῦτο θεραπεύουσα καὶ ἐρῶσα καὶ γοητευομένη ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ τε τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν καὶ ἡδονῶν, ὥστε μηδὲν ἄλλο δοκεῖν εἶναι ἀληθές ἀλλ’ ἢ τὸ σωματοειδές, οὔ τις ἂν ἄψαιτο καὶ ἴδοι καὶ πίοι καὶ φάγοι καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἀφροδίσια χρήσαιτο, τὸ δὲ τοῖς

ὄμμασι σκοτῶδες καὶ αἰδέες, νοητὸν δὲ καὶ φιλοσοφία αἰρετόν,
τοῦτο δὲ εἰθισμένη μισεῖν τε καὶ τρέμειν καὶ φεύγειν, οὕτω
(c) δὴ ἔχουσιν οἷε ψυχὴν αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτὴν εἰλικρινῆ ἀπαλ-
λάξεσθαι;

Οὐδ' ὅπωςιοῦν, ἔφη.

Ἀλλὰ [καὶ] διειλημμένην γε οἶμαι ὑπὸ τοῦ σωματοειδοῦς,
ὃ αὐτῇ ἢ ὁμιλία τε καὶ συνουσία τοῦ σώματος διὰ τὸ αἰεὶ
συνεῖναι καὶ διὰ τὴν πολλὴν μελέτην ἐνεποίησε σύμφυτον;
Πάνυ γε.

(iii) Ἐμβριθεὶς δέ γε, ὦ φίλε, τοῦτο οἴεσθαι χρὴ εἶναι καὶ
βαρὺ καὶ γεῶδες καὶ ὄρατόν· ὃ δὴ καὶ ἔχουσα ἢ τοιαύτη
ψυχὴ βαρύνεται τε καὶ ἔλκεται πάλιν εἰς τὸν ὄρατόν τόπον
φόβῳ τοῦ αἰδοῦς τε καὶ Ἄιδου, ὥσπερ λέγεται, περὶ τὰ
(d) μνήματά τε καὶ τοὺς τάφους κυλινδουμένη, περὶ ἃ δὴ καὶ
ὠφθη ἄττα ψυχῶν σκιοειδῆ φαντάσματα, οἷα παρέχονται αἰ
τοιαῦται ψυχαὶ εἰδῶλα, αἰ μὴ καθαρῶς ἀπολυθεῖσαι ἀλλὰ
τοῦ ὄρατοῦ μετέχουσαι, διὸ καὶ ὀρῶνται.

Εἰκός γε, ὦ Σώκρατες.

Εἰκὸς μέντοι, ὦ Κέβης· καὶ οὐ τί γε τὰς τῶν ἀγαθῶν
αὐτὰς εἶναι, ἀλλὰ τὰς τῶν φαύλων, αἵ περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα
ἀναγκάζονται πλανᾶσθαι δίκην τίνουσαι τῆς προτέρας τρο-
φῆς κακῆς οὐσίας. καὶ μέχρι γε τούτου πλανῶνται, ἕως ἂν τῇ
(e) τοῦ συνεπακολουθοῦντος, τοῦ σωματοειδοῦς, ἐπιθυμία πάλιν
ἐνδεθῶσιν εἰς σῶμα· ἐνδοῦνται δέ, ὥσπερ εἰκός, εἰς τοιαῦτα
ἦθη ὅποῦ ἄττ' ἂν καὶ μεμελετηκυῖαι τύχῳσιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ.

(iv) Τὰ ποῖα δὴ ταῦτα λέγεις, ὦ Σώκρατες;

Οἷον τοὺς μὲν γαστριμαργίας τε καὶ ὑβρεῖς καὶ φιλοποσίας
μεμελετηκότας καὶ μὴ διηυλαβημένους εἰς τὰ τῶν ὄνων γένη
82.

(a) καὶ τῶν τοιούτων θηρίων εἰκὸς ἐνδύεσθαι. ἢ οὐκ οἶει;

Πάνυ μὲν οὖν εἰκὸς λέγεις.

Τοὺς δέ γε ἀδικίας τε καὶ τυραννίδας καὶ ἀρπαγὰς προ-

τετιμηκότας εἰς τὰ τῶν λύκων τε καὶ ἱεράκων καὶ ἰκτίνων
γένη· ἢ ποῖ ἂν ἄλλοσέ φαμεν τὰς τοιαύτας ἰέναι;
Ἀμέλει, ἔφη ὁ Κέβης, εἰς τὰ τοιαῦτα.
Οὐκοῦν, ἦ δ' ὅς, δῆλα δὴ καὶ τᾶλλα ἦ ἂν ἕκαστα ἴοι
κατὰ τὰς αὐτῶν ὁμοιότητος τῆς μελέτης;
Δῆλον δὴ, ἔφη· πῶς δ' οὐ;
Οὐκοῦν εὐδαιμονέστατοι, ἔφη, καὶ τούτων εἰσὶ καὶ εἰς
βέλτιστον τόπον ἰόντες οἱ τὴν δημοτικὴν καὶ πολιτικὴν
(b) ἀρετὴν ἐπιτετηδευκότες, ἦν δὴ καλοῦσι σωφροσύνην τε καὶ
δικαιοσύνην, ἐξ ἔθους τε καὶ μελέτης γεγонуῖαν ἄνευ φιλο-
σοφίας τε καὶ νοῦ;
Πῆ δὴ οὗτοι εὐδαιμονέστατοι;
Ὅτι τούτους εἰκός ἐστιν εἰς τοιοῦτον πάλιν ἀφικνεῖσθαι
πολιτικὸν καὶ ἡμερον γένος, ἢ που μελιτῶν ἢ σφηκῶν ἢ
μυρμήκων, καὶ εἰς ταύτον γε πάλιν τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος,
καὶ γίνεσθαι ἐξ αὐτῶν ἄνδρας μετρίους.

Εἰκός.

(v) Εἰς δέ γε θεῶν γένος μὴ φιλοσοφήσαντι καὶ παντελῶς
(c) καθαρῶ ἀπιόντι οὐ θέμις ἀφικνεῖσθαι ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ φιλομαθεῖ.
ἀλλὰ τούτων ἔνεκα, ὧ ἑτάϊρε Σιμμία τε καὶ Κέβης, οἱ
ὀρθῶς φιλόσοφοι ἀπέχονται τῶν κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἐπιθυμιῶν
ἀπασῶν καὶ καρτεροῦσι καὶ οὐ παραδιδόασιν αὐταῖς ἑαυτούς,
οὔ τι οἰκοφθορίαν τε καὶ πενίαν φοβούμενοι, ὥσπερ οἱ
πολλοὶ καὶ φιλοχρήματοι· οὐδὲ αὖ ἀτιμίαν τε καὶ ἀδοξίαν
μοχθηρίας δεδιότες, ὥσπερ οἱ φίλαρχοί τε καὶ φιλότιμοι,
ἔπειτα ἀπέχονται αὐτῶν.

[LOEB translation:] "On the other hand, in my view, if when it is released from the body it is polluted and unclesaned, in that it has been continually with the body and serving it and loving it, and so bewitched by it and the influence of its desires and pleasures as to think that nothing is real but the corporeal, which one can touch and see and drink and eat and use for sexual pleasure, and it has become used to hating, fearing, and avoiding what is obscure and invisible to the eyes, but intelligible and to be grasped by philosophy: do you think the soul in this state would be released untarnished alone by itself?"

"In no way whatsoever," he said.

“No, I think it will have been bound up with the corporeal, which the association and close proximity of the body has made naturally ingrained in it, because of continual association and frequent practice?”

“Very much so.”

“And you must suppose, my friend, that this corporeal element is weighty and heavy, earthy and visible. Indeed such a soul that has this is weighed down and dragged back to the visible world by fear of both the invisible and Hades, so it’s said, circling aimlessly among the tombstones and graves, among which indeed some shadowy apparitions of souls have actually been seen, the kind of images that such souls produce that have not been released in a pure state, but having a share in the visible can thus be seen.”

“It seems likely, Socrates.”

“Indeed it is likely, Cebes, and in no respect are they the souls of good people, but of inferior ones that are forced to roam about in such places paying the price for their former way of life that was evil. Moreover they roam about to the point when through their desire for their close companion, the corporeal, they are bound again to the body. And as you’d expect they’re bound to whatever characters they actually cultivated in their lifetime.”

“What types do you mean by this, Socrates?”

“For example those who have indulged in gluttony, outrageous behavior and love of drinking and haven’t been on their guard against them are likely to take the form of the family of asses and such animals. Or do you not think so?”

“Oh I do. What you say is very likely.”

“And those who have given priority to injustice, tyranny, and stealing belong to the family of wolves, hawks and kites: or where else do we say such souls go?”

“Doubtless,” said Cebes, “into such families.”

“So it’s clear then,” he said, “that wherever the others go is in each case according to the similarity of their training, isn’t it?”

“It’s clear indeed,” he said, “of course.”

“So are the happiest of these and those who go to the best place the ones who have practiced common and civic virtue, which they actually call temperance and justice, which have come about from habit and practice without philosophy and reason?”

“In what respect are these the happiest?”

“In that it’s likely that these return to a civic and cultivated family, such as of bees perhaps, or wasps, or ants, or back again to the very same one, the human race, and from them we get men of moderation.”

“That’s likely.”

“But for one who hasn’t practiced philosophy and who leaves without being thoroughly purified it isn’t sanctioned to go to the family of gods, unless he is a lover of learning. This is the reason, my friends Simmias and Cebes, that those who are rightly philosophers abstain from all bodily desires, strengthen their resolve and do not surrender themselves to them, not through any fear of squandering their

resources, or poverty like the majority of lovers of money; nor again do they keep away from them through fear of dishonor or the disgrace of depravity such as those who are ambitious to rule and be respected.””

I believe we can draw the following conclusions:

- (i) Upon arrival in Hades, the soul reaches the place of judgement, and is adjudged ‘impure’ by the judges (81b1-2).
- (ii) For Sokrates, the ‘impure’ is defined as that soul which is the converse of the pure soul. This soul associated with the body and served it, following the bodily desires. Moreover, it conceives of ‘reality’ in terms of the physical and empirical, avoiding the practice of philosophy, as conceived by Sokrates – i.e. through rational, psychic investigation (81b2-c7).
- (iii) The ‘impure’ soul then continues its journey to another location, wherein it dwells until the time of reincarnation (81c8-81e3).
- (iv) This location – a place of ignorance – is akin to the ‘impure’ soul (81e4-82b9).
- (v) Here, the soul experiences those things associated with ignorance, and its correction: punishment and fear (82b10-82c8).

Sokrates’ account establishes the existence of at least three locations – all incorporeal – that constitute Hades: (1) a place of judgement; (2) a place where the ‘pure’ dwell; and (3) a place where the ‘impure’ dwell. The soul’s admission to either location (2) or (3) depends upon the adjudication of the ‘true’ judges; yet, this adjudication appears predicate upon the soul’s closeness to Knowledge, and everything akin to it in nature, e.g. incorporeal, immaterial, immortal. Consequently, the soul that adhered to the body, basing their conception of reality upon empirical experience, is likely to be closer to Ignorance, and therefore judged to be ‘impure’ (at least according to Sokrates). The future that awaits this ‘impure’ soul is determined by its ignorance, being one of punishment (in order to rectify this ignorance), and fear (since the soul’s ignorance causes it to anticipate future evils). The ‘pure’ soul, on the other hand, experiences the contrary, existing in a place closer to Knowledge in nature – wise, divine, and immortal. Unlike the *Gorgias*, however, this future dwelling place is not

fixed for the majority of souls, but is only a temporary way station before reincarnation, since Knowledge is changeless, but the majority of souls are not (see further Chapter 3).

(2.8.3) 107c-108c

The soul, according to Sokrates, journeys to the place of judgement after its separation from the body. How is this possible? If a soul possesses ignorance, for example, how does it know how to get to the judgement? These questions form the beginning of Sokrates' eschatological account of the afterlife. The purported purpose of this account is to demonstrate to his companions why one should always investigate 'the truth' and pursue knowledge, through the reasoning powers of the soul alone (107c8-d5). Sokrates argues that the soul must rely upon the knowledge it has acquired in life, in order to navigate to the place of judgement (107d5-e2):

(107c8) εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν ὁ θάνατος τοῦ παντὸς ἀπαλλαγὴ, ἔρμαιον ἂν ἦν τοῖς κακοῖς ἀποθανοῦσι τοῦ τε σώματος ἅμ' ἀπηλλάχθαι καὶ τῆς αὐτῶν κακίας μετὰ τῆς ψυχῆς· νῦν δ' ἐπειδὴ ἀθάνατος φαίνεται οὕσα, οὐδεμία ἂν (d) εἴη αὐτῇ ἄλλη ἀποφυγὴ κακῶν οὐδὲ σωτηρία πλὴν τοῦ ὡς βελτίστην τε καὶ φρονιμωτάτην γενέσθαι. οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο ἔχουσα εἰς Ἄιδου ἢ ψυχὴ ἔρχεται πλὴν τῆς παιδείας τε καὶ τροφῆς, ἃ δὴ καὶ μέγιστα λέγεται ὠφελεῖν ἢ βλάπτειν τὸν τελευτήσαντα εὐθύς ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς ἐκεῖσε πορείας. λέγεται δὲ οὕτως, ὡς ἄρα τελευτήσαντα ἕκαστον ὁ ἐκάστου δαίμων, ὅσπερ ζῶντα εἰλήχει, οὗτος ἄγειν ἐπιχειρεῖ εἰς δὴ τινα τόπον, οἷ δεῖ τοὺς συλλεγέντας διαδικασαμένους εἰς Ἄιδου (e) πορεύεσθαι μετὰ ἡγεμόνος ἐκείνου ᾧ δὴ προστέτακται τοὺς ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε πορεύσασθαι·

[LOEB translation:] "You see if death were a release from everything, it would be a godsend for evil people when they die to be simultaneously released from the body and from their evil ways along with their soul. But now, since it appears to be

immortal there would be no other refuge for it from evil and no safety except by becoming as good and wise as possible. You see the soul approaches Hades with nothing but its upbringing and nurture, which are indeed said to bring the most benefit or harm to the one who has died at the very beginning of his journey there. The story goes like this: When each individual has died, the spirit of each one that he was allotted when he was alive undertakes to lead him to some spot where those who are gathered together are compelled to submit themselves to judgment and then make their way to Hades with that guide with whom it has been ordained that those from this world are to go to the next.”

This account is intertwined with a geological account of the earth, apparently mapping the incorporeal world of Hades, on to the corporeal world of the Earth; something with no obvious relation to knowledge.⁴⁶⁶ Moreover, Sokrates introduces the notion of a ‘guardian spirit’ (107d6-7: ὁ ἐκάστου δαίμων, ὅσπερ ζῶντα εἰλήχει) that guides the soul to the place of judgement.⁴⁶⁷

Is the introduction of a guardian spirit compatible with the notion that the soul must use its own knowledge to navigate to its place of judgement? If one connects the later view (found in the *Timaios*, 89d2-90b1; esp. 90a2-b1) that the reasoning, divine part of the soul is also the ‘guiding’ part of the soul, this might suggest that the guardian spirit is akin to the guiding part of the soul.⁴⁶⁸

Such a notion would appear to support Sokrates’ assertion that the soul must use its own knowledge to navigate to its place of judgement. However, the connection of the reasoning part of the soul with the guiding part of the soul, appears in a later dialogue, after the composition of the *Phaidon*. It is not necessarily the case, therefore, that Plato would have such a connection in mind at this particular time.

Nonetheless, a consideration of its consequences may provide a reason for how Sokrates reconciles the guardian spirit, with the assertion that the soul guides itself to the place of judgement using its own knowledge. In this particular case, unless knowledge of this journey is instinctive to all souls, the

⁴⁶⁶ The presentation of a geological account of the physical Earth, in conjunction with an account of the incorporeal world of Hades, suggests a presentation of the Earth as a macrocosm of the individual, being composed of a physical, corporeal part (the earth), and an immaterial, incorporeal part (Hades). The Earth, therefore, like the human being is a constituent entity composed of the physical and nonphysical; cf. Cook (1996): 49.

⁴⁶⁷ See further Chapters 2.9 and 3.8; *Nomoi* 9.877a, 10.905d-907b; *Kratylos* 397d-398c. Cf. Baxter (1992): 142-143.

⁴⁶⁸ *Timaios* 90b-c; Baxter (1992): 142-143; Sedley (2003): 38.

ignorant soul would seemingly fail to navigate to the judgement, according to such a connection.⁴⁶⁹

In effect, the ignorant soul would be able to ‘escape’ justice; this is something Sokrates cannot permit within the context of his account. The introduction of a guardian spirit, however, ensures that even the ignorant soul is able to navigate to the place of judgement, in order that it may not ‘escape’ justice.

Accordingly, the guardian spirit must possess knowledge of the journey. If the guardian spirit possesses knowledge of the journey, and the pure soul possesses knowledge of the journey, then the guardian spirit would be relatively superfluous to the pure soul. Most souls, however, do not possess the knowledge of the pure soul (see further Chapter 2.8.1), and so the guardian spirit is necessary in order to ensure that these souls arrive at their judgement (107e2-108c5):

(107e2) τυχόντας δὲ ἐκεῖ ὧν δὴ τυχεῖν
καὶ μείναντας ὄν χρη χρόνον ἄλλος δεῦρο πάλιν ἡγεμῶν
κομίζει ἐν πολλαῖς χρόνου καὶ μακραῖς περιόδοις. ἔστι δὲ
ἄρα ἡ πορεία οὐχ ὡς ὁ Αἰσχύλου Τήλεφος λέγει· ἐκεῖνος
108.

(a) μὲν γὰρ ἀπλῆν οἶμόν φησιν εἰς Ἄιδου φέρειν, ἡ δ’ οὔτε
ἀπλῆ οὔτε μία φαίνεται μοι εἶναι. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν ἡγεμόνων
ἔδει· οὐ γὰρ πού τις ἂν διαμάρτοι οὐδαμόσε μιᾶς ὁδοῦ
οὔσης. νῦν δὲ ἔοικε σχίσεις τε καὶ τριόδους πολλὰς ἔχειν·
ἀπὸ τῶν θυσιῶν τε καὶ νομίμων τῶν ἐνθάδε τεκμαιρόμενος
λέγω. ἡ μὲν οὖν κοσμία τε καὶ φρόνιμος ψυχὴ ἔπεται τε
καὶ οὐκ ἀγνοεῖ τὰ παρόντα· ἡ δ’ ἐπιθυμητικῶς τοῦ σώματος
ἔχουσα, ὅπερ ἐν τῷ ἔμπροσθεν εἶπον, περὶ ἐκεῖνο πολὺν
(b) χρόνον ἐπτοημένη καὶ περὶ τὸν ὄρατὸν τόπον, πολλὰ
ἀντιτείνασα καὶ πολλὰ παθοῦσα, βία καὶ μόγις ὑπὸ τοῦ
προστεταγμένου δαίμονος οἴχεται ἀγομένη. ἀφικομένην δὲ
ὅθιπερ αἱ ἄλλαι, τὴν μὲν ἀκάθαρτον καὶ τι πεποιηκυῖαν
τοιοῦτον, ἢ φόνων ἀδίκων ἡμμένην ἢ ἄλλ’ ἄττα τοιαῦτα

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. *Phaidon* 108a.

εἰργασμένην, ἃ τούτων ἀδελφά τε καὶ ἀδελφῶν ψυχῶν ἔργα
τυγχάνει ὄντα, ταύτην μὲν ἅπας φεύγει τε καὶ ὑπεκτρέπεται
καὶ οὔτε συνέμπορος οὔτε ἡγεμῶν ἐθέλει γίνεσθαι, αὐτὴ
(c) δὲ πλανᾶται ἐν πάσῃ ἐχομένη ἀπορία ἕως ἂν δὴ τινες
χρόνοι γένωνται, ὧν ἐλθόντων ὑπ' ἀνάγκης φέρεται εἰς τὴν
αὐτῇ πρέπουσαν οἴκησιν· ἡ δὲ καθαρῶς τε καὶ μετρίως τὸν
βίον διεξελθοῦσα, καὶ συνεμπόρων καὶ ἡγεμόνων θεῶν
τυχοῦσα, ᾤκησεν τὸν αὐτῇ ἐκάστη τόπον προσήκοντα. εἰσὶν
δὲ πολλοὶ καὶ θαυμαστοὶ τῆς γῆς τόποι, καὶ αὐτὴ οὔτε οἷα
οὔτε ὅση δοξάζεται ὑπὸ τῶν περὶ γῆς εἰωθότων λέγειν, ὡς
ἐγὼ ὑπὸ τινος πέπεισμαι.

[LOEB translation:] “When they have experienced there those things that they have to, and have waited as long as required, another guide conveys them back here after many long periods of time. But the journey in fact is not as Aeschylus’ Telephus describes it. For he says a simple path leads to Hades, but to me it seems to be neither simple nor single. It wouldn’t have required guides in that case. You see I don’t think anyone would go astray anywhere if it were a single path; as it is it seems to have many branches and crossroads. I say this judging from the evidence of sacrifices and rituals here. Now the well disciplined and prudent soul follows and doesn’t fail to recognize its situation. But the one that lusts after the needs of the body, such as I talked about earlier, having fluttered around it and the visible region for a long time, and having resisted and suffered a great deal, is led away by force and with difficulty by his appointed spirit. When it gets to where the others are, the soul that is uncleansed and has done something such as, for example, committing unjust killings or performing any other such deeds as are akin to these or are actually the work of kindred souls—everyone avoids this soul and turns away from it and is unwilling either to be its fellow traveler or guide; instead it wanders about at a complete loss until certain periods have elapsed, and when they are completed it is conveyed compulsorily to the dwelling appropriate for it. On the other hand the soul that has passed its life in a pure and disciplined way and actually has gods as its fellow travelers and leaders, lives in the place that is appointed for each one. There are many wonderful places on the earth and it is itself neither of the kind nor size imagined by those who are accustomed to talk about the earth, as I am persuaded by someone.”

Socrates’ suggests that the ignorant soul is given, initially, the opportunity to navigate on its own (107e2-108c5). The use of a guardian spirit, therefore, and the time in which the soul arrives at the judgement post its disembodiment, might serve to demonstrate to the judges the extent to which a soul possesses ignorance. In such a case, the pure soul that arrives at the judgement, without

reliance on the guardian spirit, and in an appropriate amount of time, might be akin to the guardian spirit – an entity close to the divine, knowledge, and the good (107e2-108c5).⁴⁷⁰

According to Sokrates, each individual soul is assigned a ‘guardian spirit’ prior to its embodiment.⁴⁷¹ This guardian remains with the soul until it has reached that place to which it has been sentenced by the ‘true’ judges (107d5-e4).⁴⁷² Unlike the guardian spirits of Hesiodos, or the notion of Hermes Psykhopompos, these guardian spirits do not merely lead the soul to its place of judgement, but also to its place of reward or punishment after the judgement (108b3-c5). This is particularly applicable for the impure soul, which through its ignorance, fears the punishment to come, and may delay its departure (108b8-c3). When it is time for the soul to be reincarnated, a new guardian spirit is allotted to the soul in order to lead it back to the mortal realm (107e2-108a4; cf. *Politeia*, 10.620d6-e1).⁴⁷³

(2.8.4) 111c-114c

Above, Sokrates began his eschatological account of the afterlife with a description of the soul’s journey to its place of judgement; now, Sokrates completes his account, relating the fate of the soul via a geography of Hades superimposed upon a geological description of the Earth.⁴⁷⁴ Sokrates’ account identifies five categories of soul, each of which undergo a different experience in the afterlife:

- (1) The impure, ‘incurable’ soul;

⁴⁷⁰ The presence of reincarnation in the eschatology of the *Phaidon* (see Chapter 3.5) suggests the existence of a time element to the soul’s judgement and punishment or reward, since it must, at some later point, be reincarnated as a new living being.

⁴⁷¹ Cf. Chapter 2.9.4 and *Nomoi* 9.877a.

⁴⁷² The notion of a guardian spirit is not necessarily unique to Plato; Hesiodos (*Erga kai Hemerai* 106-201) proffers something similar in his description of the fate that befell the mortals of the Golden Age; as does the popular religious (or poetical) notion of Hermes *psychopompos* – Hermes the soul’s guide to the Underworld.

⁴⁷³ See further Chapter 3. Cf. Bostock (1999): 418-420.

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. Annas (1982): 125; Bobonich (2002): 14. See note 443 above.

- (2) The impure, 'curable' soul;
- (3) The average soul;
- (4) The pure soul; and
- (5) The philosopher's soul.

The Impure soul

- The 'incurable' soul

For each category of impure soul – the 'incurable' and 'curable,' in addition to that of the average soul, Sokrates first provides a geographical description of their location, juxtaposing the incorporeal location of these souls with its corresponding corporeal locale:

(111e6) (i) ἔν τι τῶν χασμάτων τῆς γῆς ἄλλως τε
 112.(a) μέγιστον τυγχάνει ὄν καὶ διαμπερές τετρημένον δι' ὅλης τῆς
 γῆς, τοῦτο ὄπερ Ὅμηρος εἶπε, λέγων αὐτό
 τῆλε μάλ', ἧχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστι βέρεθρον·
 ὃ καὶ ἄλλοθι καὶ ἐκεῖνος καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν Τάρ-
 ταρὸν κεκλήκασιν. (ii) εἰς γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ χάσμα συρρέουσι τε
 πάντες οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ ἐκ τούτου πάλιν ἐκρέουσιν· (iii) γίνονται
 δὲ ἕκαστοι τοιοῦτοι δι' οἷας ἂν καὶ τῆς γῆς ῥέωσιν. ἢ δὲ
 (b) αἰτία ἐστὶν τοῦ ἐκρεῖν τε ἐντεῦθεν καὶ εἰσερεῖν πάντα τὰ
 ῥέυματα, ὅτι πυθμένα οὐκ ἔχει οὐδὲ βάσιν τὸ ὑγρὸν τοῦτο.
 αἰωρεῖται δὴ καὶ κυμαίνει ἄνω καὶ κάτω, καὶ ὁ ἀήρ καὶ τὸ
 πνεῦμα τὸ περὶ αὐτὸ ταύτὸν ποιεῖ· συνέπεται γὰρ αὐτῷ καὶ
 ὅταν εἰς τὸ ἐπ' ἐκεῖνα τῆς γῆς ὀρμήσῃ καὶ ὅταν εἰς τὸ ἐπὶ
 τάδε, καὶ ὡσπερ τῶν ἀναπνεόντων ἀεὶ ἐκπνεῖ τε καὶ ἀναπνεῖ
 ῥέον τὸ πνεῦμα, οὕτω καὶ ἐκεῖ συναιωρούμενον τῷ ὑγρῷ τὸ
 πνεῦμα δεινούς τινας ἀνέμους καὶ ἀμηχάνους παρέχεται καὶ
 (c) εἰσιὸν καὶ ἐξιόν. ὅταν τε οὖν ὑποχωρήσῃ τὸ ὕδωρ εἰς τὸν
 τόπον τὸν δὴ κάτω καλούμενον, τοῖς κατ' ἐκεῖνα τὰ ῥέυματα
 [διὰ] τῆς γῆς εἰσερεῖ τε καὶ πληροῖ αὐτὰ ὡσπερ οἱ ἐπαν-
 τλοῦντες· ὅταν τε αὖ ἐκεῖθεν μὲν ἀπολίπη, δεῦρο δὲ ὀρμήσῃ,

τὰ ἐνθάδε πληροῖ αὖθις, τὰ δὲ πληρωθέντα ῥεῖ διὰ τῶν
ὄχετῶν καὶ διὰ τῆς γῆς, καὶ εἰς τοὺς τόπους ἕκαστα ἀφικνού-
μενα, εἰς οὓς ἕκαστοις ὠδοποιῆται, θαλάττας τε καὶ λίμνας
καὶ ποταμούς καὶ κρήνας ποιεῖ· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ πάλιν δυόμενα
(d) κατὰ τῆς γῆς, τὰ μὲν μακροτέρους τόπους περιελθόντα καὶ
πλείους, τὰ δὲ ἐλάττους καὶ βραχυτέρους, πάλιν εἰς τὸν
Τάρταρον ἐμβάλλει, τὰ μὲν πολὺ κατωτέρω <ῆ> ἢ ἐπην-
τλεῖτο, τὰ δὲ ὀλίγον· πάντα δὲ ὑποκάτω εἰσρεῖ τῆς ἐκροῆς,
καὶ ἕνια μὲν καταντικρὺ <ῆ> ἢ [εἰσρεῖ] ἐξέπεσεν, ἕνια δὲ
κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ μέρος· ἔστι δὲ ἅ παντάπασιν κύκλω περιελ-
θόντα, ἢ ἄπαξ ἢ καὶ πλεονάκις περιελιχθέντα περὶ τὴν γῆν
ὥσπερ οἱ ὄφεις, εἰς τὸ δυνατόν κάτω καθέντα πάλιν ἐμβάλλει.

(e) (iv) δυνατόν δέ ἐστιν ἐκατέρωσε μέχρι τοῦ μέσου καθιέναι, πέρα
δ' οὐ· ἄναντες γὰρ ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς ῥεύμασι τὸ ἐκατέρωθεν
γίγνεται μέρος.

[LOEB translation:] “One of the chasms in the earth happens to be especially huge and is pierced right through the whole earth. It’s what Homer is talking about when he says:

‘Far away where there is the deepest pit under the earth’

which both he and many other poets elsewhere call Tartarus. For into this chasm all the rivers flow together, and flow out from it again. Each of them becomes what it is on account of the nature of the earth it flows through. The reason all liquids flow out of there and in again, is that this fluid has no bottom or foundation. Indeed it oscillates, swells back and forth and the air and the wind around it do the same; for they accompany it both whenever it rushes to that side of the earth over there and when it rushes to this side. And just as the breath of creatures who breathe exhales and inhales in a constant stream, so too over there the breath oscillates with the water and causes enormous terrifying winds as it goes in and comes out. So whenever the water retreats to the so-called nether region, it flows into the places along those streams there through the earth and fills them, like men irrigating. When again it leaves that area and rushes back this way, it fills its streams over here again and those that are full flow through the channels and through the earth, and when they have each arrived at those places where a channel has been made, they form seas and lakes, rivers and springs. From there they sink back under the ground, some going around places greater in size and number, others fewer and smaller ones, and discharge back again into Tartarus, some a long way below the point where they were channeled off, others a little way. All of them flow in lower down than where they flow out, and again some enter opposite the place where they flowed in, some around the same place. There are some that flow around in a complete circle, winding either once or a number of times around the earth like snakes, and having dropped as far as possible, burst out again. It is possible to drop

on both sides as far as the center, but not beyond; you see, for both streams, the direction from either side is uphill.

The 'incurable' soul, according to Sokrates, is sentenced to Tartaros:

- (i) The corporeal locale of Tartaros is the biggest hollow of the earth, constituting a great chasm (111e6-112a4).
- (ii) Into this chasm flow all the great rivers of the earth, and then again flow out (112a4-112a5).
- (iii) These rivers flow into and out of Tartaros, as Tartaros possesses no bottom or solid base, but oscillates up and down in waves, as does the air and wind that accompanies this water (112a5-112c1).
- (iv) The waters flow down as far as the centre, but not beyond, as the sides of the chasms are too steep for the water (112de1-112e3). The bottomless nature would lead to the disappearance of all the water on earth, unless the water were able to return somehow.

Onto this description of the corporeal locale of Tartaros, Sokrates maps the incorporeal location of Tartaros, the place to which the 'incurable' soul is condemned:

(113e1) (i) οἱ δ' ἂν δόξωσιν
ἀνιάτως ἔχειν διὰ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων, (ii) ἢ ἱερο-
συλίας πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἢ φόνους ἀδίκους καὶ παρανόμους
πολλοὺς ἐξεργασμένοι ἢ ἄλλα ὅσα τοιαῦτα τυγχάνει ὄντα,
(iii) τούτους δὲ ἢ προσήκουσα μοῖρα ρίπτει εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον,
ὅθεν οὔποτε ἐκβαίνουσιν

[LOEB translation:] "But those who are judged to be incorrigible on account of the enormity of their wrongdoing, having committed either much great sacrilege or unjust killings and many lawless acts, or any other cases of this kind, their appropriate destiny flings them into Tartarus whence they never emerge."

For Sokrates:

- (i) The 'incurable' are defined as those souls who have committed great impiety, wickedness, unlawful murders, or crimes of equal magnitude (113e1-4).⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁵ Cf. *Nomoi* 9.872c-873c.

(ii) The great injustices of these souls corresponds to the existence of a great amount of ignorance (113e2-4).

(iii) Such souls are condemned to Tartaros, never to emerge (113e5-6).

Unlike the ‘incurable’ souls in the *Gorgias* (see Chapter 2.4.4) who Sokrates describes as experiencing great fear for eternity, in the *Phaidon*, Sokrates condemns these souls to the never-ending chasm of Tartaros.⁴⁷⁶ The ‘incurable’ souls of the *Gorgias* underwent this punishment, in accordance with the notion of deterrence, so that others souls might see their fear and suffering and learn how not to act. In the *Phaidon*, the ‘incurable’ soul still undergoes this kind of punishment, but their suffering is not witnessed, directly, by other souls. Rather, other souls must utilize their own knowledge, in order to understand for themselves the nature of Tartaros and the fate of these souls. This is in line with the purpose Sokrates outlined at the beginning of this account – to demonstrate that one must arrive in Hades as close to Knowledge as possible, since this is all the soul has to rely upon in its disembodied state.

- The ‘curable’ soul

The ‘curable’ soul is sent to a similar location to that of the ‘incurable’ soul, i.e. to Tartaros. Unlike the ‘incurable’ soul, however, there exists a possibility for escape from Tartaros. This escape is related to the four great rivers Sokrates describes as flowing into and out of this chasm. Above (112a5-c1), Sokrates argued that the water, air, and wind associated with the rivers, oscillate in

⁴⁷⁶ Annas (1982a): 125, claims that “in the *Phaedo* there are several shifts of emphasis which together downgrade the role of the judging.” Annas, however, completely ignores the existence of the incurable category of soul in the *Phaidon*, and I think the existence of said category of soul demonstrates that the role of the judge has not been downgraded. The incurable soul is described as remaining in Tartaros for all time; for the incurable soul, therefore, the judgement is a *final* judgement, and so the authority of the judge, I believe, remains as strong here as it was in the *Gorgias*. Indeed, the role of the judge may even increase in the *Phaidon* given the existence of reincarnation. The *Phaidon* presents another category of soul – the philosopher’s soul (or rather the philosopher who followed the Sokratic way of life) – as being the only category of soul that breaks the cycle of reincarnation, and achieves, for lack of a better term, “enlightenment.” All souls get the opportunity to achieve said enlightenment, but if the judge classifies your soul as incurable, then your soul is removed from the cycle of reincarnation prematurely, and according to Plato, your soul can never achieve “enlightenment.” The judge, therefore, may decide whether your soul can *ever* achieve “enlightenment” or whether it will remain in the darkness for eternity; this seems to me to be on par with their role in the *Gorgias*, if not slightly increased.

Tartaros. These elements, and the rivers themselves, are corporeal and physical, unlike the soul in nature. Does Sokrates mean to suggest that this oscillation extends to the incorporeal realm of the soul also? Or, is the impure soul's particular association to the body, and its nature, meant to condemn the soul to experience the oscillations of the chasm, the fires of the Periphlegethon, etc., as though still corporeal? Or, still further, does the punishment rely upon the impure soul's ignorance, such that the soul believes it will experience these things, being ignorant of the soul's 'true' incorporeal and immaterial nature?

First, Sokrates relates the corporeal location:

(113a5) (i) τρίτος δὲ ποταμὸς τούτων κατὰ μέσον ἐκβάλλει, καὶ ἐγγὺς τῆς ἐκβολῆς ἐκπίπτει εἰς τόπον μέγαν πυρὶ πολλῷ καόμενον, καὶ λίμνην ποιεῖ μείζω τῆς παρ' ἡμῖν θαλάττης, ζέουσαν ὕδατος καὶ πηλοῦ· (ii) ἐντεῦθεν δὲ (b) χωρεῖ κύκλῳ θολερὸς καὶ πηλώδης, περιελιττόμενος δὲ τῆ γῆ ἄλλοσέ τε ἀφικνεῖται καὶ παρ' ἔσχατα τῆς Ἀχερουσιάδος λίμνης, οὐ συμμειννόμενος τῷ ὕδατι· (iii) περιελιχθεὶς δὲ πολλάκις ὑπὸ γῆς ἐμβάλλει κατωτέρω τοῦ Ταρτάρου· (iv) οὗτος δ' ἐστὶν ὃν ἐπονομάζουσιν Πυριφλεγέθοντα, οὗ καὶ οἱ ῥύακες ἀποσπάσματα ἀναφυσῶσιν ὅπη ἂν τύχωσι τῆς γῆς· (v) τούτου δὲ αὖ κατακτρῦ ὁ τέταρτος ἐκπίπτει εἰς τόπον πρῶτον δεινόν τε καὶ ἄγριον, ὡς λέγεται, χρῶμα δ' ἔχοντα ὄλον οἶον ὁ (c) κυανός, ὃν δὴ ἐπονομάζουσι Στύγιον, (vi) καὶ τὴν λίμνην ἣν ποιεῖ ὁ ποταμὸς ἐμβάλλων, Στύγα· (vii) ὁ δ' ἐμπεσὼν ἐνταῦθα καὶ δεινὰς δυνάμεις λαβὼν ἐν τῷ ὕδατι, δὺς κατὰ τῆς γῆς, περιελιττόμενος χωρεῖ ἐναντίος τῷ Πυριφλεγέθοντι καὶ ἀπαντᾷ ἐν τῇ Ἀχερουσιάδι λίμνῃ ἐξ ἐναντίας· (viii) καὶ οὐδὲ τὸ τούτου ὕδωρ οὐδενὶ μείγνυται, ἀλλὰ καὶ οὗτος κύκλῳ περιελθὼν ἐμβάλλει εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον ἐναντίος τῷ Πυριφλεγέθοντι· (ix) ὄνομα δὲ τούτῳ ἐστίν, ὡς οἱ ποιηταὶ λέγουσιν, Κωκυτός.

[LOEB translation:] "The third river rises between these two and near its mouth drops into a large area blazing with a huge fire and creates a lake larger than the sea

around us, seething with water and mud. From there it proceeds in a circle, turbid and marshy, band winding round inside the earth it reaches, among other places, along the borders of the Acherusian Lake without mixing with its water. After winding round many times under the earth it discharges into a lower part of Tartarus. This is what they call Pyriphlegethon, whose lava streams spew up detritus at various places over the earth. Then opposite this the fourth river discharges first into a place that is terrifying and wild, so it's said, with a color entirely a kind of blue-gray, which they call Stygian and the lake that the discharging river forms is called the Styx. Having poured in there and gained formidable force in the water it descends underground and winding round passes in the opposite direction to Pyriphlegethon and meets it in the Acherusian Lake from the other side. And the water of this river does not mix with any other, but it too moves round in a circle and discharges into Tartarus opposite Pyriphlegethon. The name of this, so the poets say, is Cocytus."

For Sokrates:

- (i) The third great river that flows into and out of Tartaros, falls into a region burning with much fire, and creates a large lake boiling with water and mud (113a5-8).
- (ii) From there it travels in a circle, like Okeanos and the Akheron, and arrives at the edge of the Akherousian lake, but is incapable of mingling with its water (113a8-b3).
- (iii) It then journeys underground and flows into Tartaros (113b3-4).
- (iv) This river is called the Periphlegethon (113b4-5).
- (v) The fourth great river is called the Stygion, and flows in the opposite direction to the Periphlegethon (113b6-c1).
- (vi) The lake formed by this river is known as the Styx (113c1-2).
- (vii) As it travels in the opposite direction to the Periphlegethon, it arrives at the opposite side of the Akherousian Lake (113c2-5).
- (viii) Its water also do not mingle with those of the lake, and eventually flows into Tartaros also (113c5-7).
- (ix) This river is also known as the Kokytos (113c8).

It is these two rivers, according to Sokrates, that distinguish the 'curable' from the 'incurable' soul, since it is by these rivers that the 'curable' souls are able to escape Tartaros, and travel to the place where the soul awaits reincarnation – the Akherousian lake. According to Sokrates:

(113e6) (i) οἱ δ' ἂν ἰάσιμα μὲν μεγάλα δὲ
δόξωσιν ἡμαρτηκέναι ἀμαρτήματα, οἷον πρὸς πατέρα ἢ μη-
114.

(a) τέρα ὑπ' ὀργῆς βίαιόν τι πράξαντες, καὶ μεταμέλον αὐτοῖς
τὸν ἄλλον βίον βιώσιν, ἢ ἀνδροφόνοι τοιοῦτω τινὶ ἄλλω
τρόπῳ γένωνται, (iii) τούτους δὲ ἐμπεσεῖν μὲν εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον
ἀνάγκη, (iv) ἐμπεσόντας δὲ αὐτούς καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν ἐκεῖ γενομένους
ἐκβάλλει τὸ κύμα, (v) τοὺς μὲν ἀνδροφόνους κατὰ τὸν Κωκυτὸν,
(vi) τοὺς δὲ πατραλοίας καὶ μητραλοίας κατὰ τὸν Πυριφλεγ-
έθοντα· (vii) ἐπειδὴν δὲ φερόμενοι γένωνται κατὰ τὴν λίμνην τὴν
Ἀχερουσιάδα, (viii) ἐνταῦθα βοῶσιν τε καὶ καλοῦσιν, οἱ μὲν οὖς
ἀπέκτειναν, οἱ δὲ οὖς ὕβρισαν, καλέσαντες δ' ἰκετεύουσι
(b) καὶ δέονται ἑᾶσαι σφᾶς ἐκβῆναι εἰς τὴν λίμνην καὶ δέξασθαι,
καὶ ἐὰν μὲν πείσωσιν, ἐκβαίνουσί τε καὶ λήγουσι τῶν
κακῶν, εἰ δὲ μή, φέρονται αὖθις εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον καὶ
ἐκεῖθεν πάλιν εἰς τοὺς ποταμούς, καὶ ταῦτα πάσχοντες οὐ
πρότερον παύονται πρὶν ἂν πείσωσιν οὖς ἠδίκησαν· αὕτη γὰρ
ἡ δίκη ὑπὸ τῶν δικαστῶν αὐτοῖς ἐτάχθη.

[LOEB translation:] “If others are judged to have committed great wrongs that are remediable, such as doing violence to a father or mother out of anger, and have lived the rest of their lives in remorse, or those who have killed in some other similar way, must firstly be thrown into Tartarus, but once they’ve been thrown in and spent a year there, the wave throws them out: the murderers by way of Cocytus, the violators of father and mother by way of Pyriphlegethon. When they’re carried along and come up alongside the Acherusian Lake, there they cry out and call, some to those whom they’ve killed, others to those upon whom they’ve committed outrage. Having called them they beseech and beg them to be allowed to come out onto the lake and be admitted, and if they persuade them, they come out and put an end to their troubles. But if not, they’re carried back to Tartarus and from there back to the rivers and they do not stop suffering in this way until they win over those whom they’ve wronged: for this is the sentence assigned to them by the judges.”

Accordingly:

- (i) The ‘curable’ soul is defined as that soul which has committed a crime but felt remorse or guilt for their actions (113e6-114a3). They are, in other words, souls that have either recognized their own ignorance, or their own unjustness, such that they are willing to learn from their mistakes, and initiate change.

- (ii) The 'incurable' soul enters the bottomless chasm of Tartaros and never returns, i.e. they reach distances where even the great rivers no longer flow.
- (iii) The 'curable' soul, on the other hand, journeys into Tartaros, reaching only as far as the centre – the same terminus as the great rivers. Just as the rivers are able to travel out of Tartaros upon reaching this centre point,⁴⁷⁷ so the 'curable' soul follows the path of these rivers in order to return from Tartaros (114a3-4).
- (iv) After a year in Tartaros, these souls return from the chasm (114a4-5).
- (v) Those who had committed murder return by way of the Kokytos (114a5).
- (vi) Those who had committed a crime against their parents (i.e. impiety) by way of the Periphlegethon (114a6-7).⁴⁷⁸
- (vii) Each category of 'curable' soul then approaches the Akherousian lake where the average souls dwell (see below on the average soul), from their respective side, dependent upon which river returns them from Tartaros (114a7-8).
- (viii) These souls must then ask for forgiveness from the souls they have wronged. If they are forgiven they join the rest of the average souls; if not, they travel back not Tartaros for another year, and the cycle begins anew (114a8-b6).

It is not entirely clear what function this particular aspect serves, since in the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias* Plato argues that punishment ≠ vengeance or retribution (see Chapter 2.6). Given the epistemological purpose Sokrates assigns to his account, it may be that this forms a test of the soul's ignorance. In this case, each of the souls in question perform their own intimate examination of each

⁴⁷⁷ The existence of a centre point suggests, contrary to what Sokrates affirms earlier (*Phaidon* 112a-c), that Tartaros cannot be bottomless. If it were bottomless, it could not possess a centre point, since there would be no centre; it is impossible for one to calculate half of infinity. See further Introduction, section (C) on the use of myth – it is not necessary for all the details of the myth to be true, so long as the underlying truth value of the myth remains intact. In this way, Sokrates may use the tools at his disposal in order to convince his interlocutors of the validity of the Platonic Wager, thereby inciting them to follow the Sokratic way of life that prioritizes truth, knowledge, and virtue above all else.

⁴⁷⁸ Cf. *Nomoi* 4.716d-718a, 9.872c-873c, and 9.880d-881b.

other, in order to test the extent to which ignorance remains in the soul, thereby determining whether it is suitable for reincarnation.⁴⁷⁹

The Average Soul

In addition to the categories: 'pure' and 'impure' souls, the judges in the *Phaidon* identify a further category of soul, the 'average' soul. This category of soul contains those souls that are neither pure nor impure, i.e. they are neither ignorant nor knowledgeable. Corrective punishment, as outlined previously (see, for example, Chapter 2.4 and 2.6), aims to remove ignorance from the soul. This removal of ignorance, however, does not mean that the soul is left in a state of knowledge, but rather not-ignorance with regards to a particular issue. The category of the average soul further supports this understanding, since Sokrates demonstrates it is possible for a soul to be neither knowledgeable nor ignorant, but exist in a state of non-ignorance and non-knowledgeableness.

Sokrates claims his purpose is to demonstrate that the soul must journey to Hades existing close to Knowledge, in order to obtain the goods of the afterlife. The average soul shows, for Sokrates, that it is not enough for an individual to be non-ignorant in order to obtain the good in Hades, but one must actively seek to investigate the 'truth.' Hence, Sokrates assigns the greatest of rewards in Hades to the philosopher – the one who arrives in Hades with their soul closest to Knowledge. It is for this reason Sokrates places the majority of souls in this category, since, in general, most people do not commit great injustices, and so do not possess great ignorance, but neither do most people actively search for the 'true' nature of reality.

The impure souls are sent into the chasm of Tartaros; the average soul is sent to dwell at the Akherousian lake (112e4-113a5, 113d1-113e1). Sokrates describes the lake in the following terms:

(112e4) (i) Τὰ μὲν οὖν δὴ ἄλλα πολλά τε καὶ μεγάλα καὶ παντοδαπὰ
ῥεύματά ἐστι· τυγχάνει δ' ἄρα ὄντα ἐν τούτοις τοῖς πολλοῖς
τέτταρ' ἄττα ῥεύματα, (ii) ὧν τὸ μὲν μέγιστον καὶ ἐξωτάτω ῥέον

⁴⁷⁹ Cf. Chapter 1.3.9; and *Apologia* 38a5-6 – the unexamined life is not worth living for a human being.

περὶ κύκλῳ ὁ καλούμενος Ὀκεανός ἐστιν, (iii) τούτου δὲ καταν-
τικρὺ καὶ ἐναντίως ῥέων Ἀχέρων, (iv) ὃς δι' ἐρήμων τε τόπων
113.

(a) ῥεῖ ἄλλων καὶ δὴ καὶ ὑπὸ γῆν ῥέων εἰς τὴν λίμνην ἀφικνεῖται
τὴν Ἀχερουσιάδα, (v) οὗ αἱ τῶν τετελευτηκότων ψυχαὶ τῶν
πολλῶν ἀφικνοῦνται (vii) καὶ τινὰς εἰμαρμένους χρόνους μείνασαι,
αἱ μὲν μακροτέρους, αἱ δὲ βραχυτέρους, πάλιν ἐκπέμπονται
εἰς τὰς τῶν ζώων γενέσεις.

...

(113d1) (vi) Τούτων δὲ οὕτως πεφυκότων, ἐπειδὴν ἀφίκωνται οἱ τετε-
λευτηκότες εἰς τὸν τόπον οἷ ὁ δαίμων ἕκαστον κομίζει,
πρῶτον μὲν διεδικάσαντο οἷ τε καλῶς καὶ ὀσίως βιώσαντες
καὶ οἱ μὴ. καὶ οἷ μὲν ἂν δόξωσι μέσως βεβιωκέναι, πορευ-
θέντες ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀχέροντα, ἀναβάντες ἅ δὴ αὐτοῖς ὀχήματά
ἐστίν, ἐπὶ τούτων ἀφικνοῦνται εἰς τὴν λίμνην, καὶ ἐκεῖ
οἰκοῦσίν τε καὶ καθαιρόμενοι τῶν τε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες
δίκας ἀπολύονται, εἴ τίς τι ἠδίκηκεν, τῶν τε εὐεργεσιῶν
(113e) τιμὰς φέρονται κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἕκαστος.

[LOEB translation:] ““As for the other streams there are many in number, size and description, but among these many there are some four in particular, of which the biggest and the one that flows in a circle farthest out is the one called Oceanus, and opposite it, flowing in the other direction is Acheron, which flows through other desert regions and in particular flows underground and arrives at the Acherusian Lake where the majority of the souls of the dead arrive and, after remaining for certain appointed periods of time, some longer, some shorter, are sent back to be born as living creatures.”

...

Such is the nature of these things. When the dead reach the place where the spirit brings each one, firstly they submit to judgment: those who have led good holy lives, and those who have not. Now those who are considered to have led a moderate life make their way toward the Acheron, embark on rafts provided for them, and on these they arrive at the lake. There they dwell, are purified and are absolved of their wrongdoings by paying penalties, if anyone has done any wrong, and they win recognition for their good deeds, each according to his worth.”

Accordingly:

- (i) There are four great rivers (112e4-6).
- (ii) The biggest, which flows on the outside of the earth in a circle is called Okeanos (112e6-7).

- (iii) Opposite it, and flowing in the contrariwise direction, is the Akheron (112e7-8).
- (iv) The Akheron flows through many deserted regions and, further underground, makes its way to the Akherousian lake (112e8-113a2).
- (v) It is here the souls of the majority – the average souls – journey after judgement (113a2-3, 113d1-6).
- (vi) Here they remain, undergoing punishment for any ignorance they possess, and reward for any knowledge, reflective of their intermediate position between the pure and impure souls (113d6-e1).⁴⁸⁰
- (vii) After a specified time, these souls then undergo reincarnation (113a3-5).⁴⁸¹

The pure soul

Sokrates' description of the 'pure' soul's dwelling place does not correspond to any particular earthly location, but to what he terms 'the true surface of the earth.' This 'true surface' is a place both pure and divine, wherein the gods directly communicate with those who dwell there (114b7-c2):

(114b7) οἱ δὲ δὴ ἄν δόξωσι
 διαφερόντως πρὸς τὸ ὁσίως βιῶναι, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ τῶνδε μὲν
 τῶν τόπων τῶν ἐν τῇ γῆ ἔλευθερούμενοί τε καὶ ἀπαλλαττό-
 (c) μενοι ὥσπερ δεσμωτηρίων, ἄνω δὲ εἰς τὴν καθαρὰν οἴκησιν
 ἀφικνούμενοι καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς οἰκίζόμενοι.

[LOEB translation:] "But as for those who are judged to have been distinguished in leading a holy life, those are the ones who have been set free, released from these regions in the earth as from prisons, and have come up into the pure dwelling and are settled upon the earth."

Relating it to Sokrates' purported aim, this dwelling place reflects the nature of the pure soul itself: pure, divine, and close to knowledge. The pure soul's ability to communicate directly with the divine, who possess perfect knowledge, rewards that soul that exists close to knowledge, with the opportunity to acquire 'true' knowledge. The description of this place as reflecting 'true' reality,

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. *Nomoi* 5.733c-d.

⁴⁸¹ See further Chapter 3.

suggests further that ‘true’ reality, and existence, is analogous to what is divine, incorporeal, immaterial, and immortal.⁴⁸² Hence, only the soul, which is akin to this reality in nature, is able to participate fully in the acquisition of Knowledge, and ‘true’ existence.⁴⁸³

Finally, Sokrates separates from the rest of the pure souls, the soul of the philosopher (114c2-8):

τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ
φιλοσοφία ἰκανῶς καθηράμενοι ἄνευ τε σωμάτων ζῶσι τὸ
παράπαν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, καὶ εἰς οἰκήσεις ἔτι τούτων
καλλίους ἀφικνοῦνται, ἃς οὔτε ῥάδιον δηλῶσαι οὔτε ὁ χρόνος
ἰκανὸς ἐν τῷ παρόντι. ἀλλὰ τούτων δὴ ἔνεκα χρὴ ὧν διεληλύ-
θαμεν, ὧ Σιμμία, πᾶν ποιεῖν ὥστε ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἐν
τῷ βίῳ μετασχεῖν· καλὸν γὰρ τὸ ἄθλον καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς μεγάλη

[LOEB translation:] “Of these some people, those who have been adequately cleansed by philosophy, lead their entire lives henceforth without the body for the whole of the time to come and they reach dwellings even more beautiful than these, which it’s neither very easy to describe, nor is there enough time in the present circumstances. Well, for these reasons we’ve talked about, Simmias, we must do everything to have a share of goodness and wisdom in our lives: for it’s a noble prize and the expectations are great.”

This soul, argues Sokrates, is freed from the bodily and the physical for all time, as it ascends to dwell above the ‘true’ surface of the earth. Although the gods communicate directly with the pure souls, Sokrates does not describe them as dwelling there, but as appearing at certain designated places, e.g. groves, in order to communicate with the pure souls. This suggests the gods dwell somewhere else, somewhere above even the ‘true’ surface of the earth, it is in this place the philosopher’s soul appears to dwell after death. The philosopher’s soul thus dwells in the realm of the divine, and this originates in their existence as philosopher *qua* philosopher – an individual close to the divine, always seeking to investigate the ‘truth.’⁴⁸⁴ Moreover, Sokrates describes the

⁴⁸² Cf. *Phaidros* 246b-246e.

⁴⁸³ Cf. Chapter 1.5.

⁴⁸⁴ See further Chapters 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8.

philosopher's soul as being removed from the cycle of reincarnation, thereby suggesting this pursuit of the 'truth' and Knowledge constitutes a *telos* for the soul.⁴⁸⁵

(2.9) The *Politeia*

(2.9.1) 2.375d-376c

Above, it has been suggested that the 'true' judges act in a manner comparable to the guardians of a *polis*.⁴⁸⁶ The *Politeia* is the dialogue in which Sokrates introduces the concept of the guardian (along with the philosopher-king), and he seeks to enumerate to his interlocutors the nature of the guardian – their purpose, function, qualities, etc. To this end, he describes the guardian as being similar to the pure breed dog, and embodying a similar set of qualities. This description further supports the understanding of the 'true' judge as being akin to the guardian of a *polis*; the *polis* being Hades.⁴⁸⁷ Yet, his statement that the guardian of the *polis* must possess a philosophical education (2.375d10-376c7), in concert with his description elsewhere (see further Chapter 2.2 and 2.4) that the 'true' judges possess perfect knowledge, suggests the existence of a parallel relationship between the guardian, the 'true' judge, and the philosopher (the forthcoming philosopher-king being an amalgam of these three entities).

Sokrates argues that it is in the very nature of the pure breed dog to be gentle to those it knows, but the contrary to those it does not (2.375d10-376a7), his reasoning running thus:

(375d10) (1) ἴδοι μὲν ἄν τις καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ζώοις, οὐ μὲντᾶν ἤκιστα ἐν ᾧ

⁴⁸⁵ Cf. Baxter (1992): 105; Sedley (2003): 95.

⁴⁸⁶ Cf. White (1979): 103-104; Williams (1999): 255-264; Pender (2012): 226, "for all their horrors, the regions of Tartarus are nevertheless part of a just and ordered universe. As places of punishment, they are still regulated by rational powers: the intelligent design of the universe at large but more specifically also the underworld judges."

⁴⁸⁷ Johansen (2004): 3.

ἡμεῖς παρεβάλλομεν τῷ φύλακι. (2) οἴσθα γάρ που τῶν γενναίων
(ε) κυνῶν, ὅτι τοῦτο φύσει αὐτῶν τὸ ἦθος, (3) πρὸς μὲν τοὺς
συνήθεις τε καὶ γνωρίμους ὡς οἶόν τε πραοτάτους εἶναι,
πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ἀγνωῦτας τούναντίον.

Οἶδα μέντοι.

(4) Τοῦτο μὲν ἄρα, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, δυνατόν, καὶ οὐ παρὰ φύσιν
ζητοῦμεν τοιοῦτον εἶναι τὸν φύλακα.

Οὐκ ἔοικεν.

Ἄρ' οὖν σοι δοκεῖ ἔτι τοῦδε προσδεῖσθαι ὁ φυλακικὸς
ἐσόμενος, πρὸς τῷ θυμοειδεῖ ἔτι προσγενέσθαι φιλόσοφος
τὴν φύσιν;

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(a) Πῶς δὴ; ἔφη· οὐ γὰρ ἐννοῶ.

Καὶ τοῦτο, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ἐν τοῖς κυσὶν κατόψει, ὃ καὶ ἄξιον
θαυμάσαι τοῦ θηρίου.

Τὸ ποῖον;

(5) Ὅτι ὄν μὲν ἂν ἴδη ἀγνωῦτα, χαλεπαίνει, οὐδὲ κακὸν
προπεπονθῶς· ὄν δ' ἂν γνώριμον, ἀσπάζεται, κἂν μηδὲν
πῶποτε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαθὸν πεπόνθη. ἢ οὐπω τοῦτο ἐθαύμα-
σας;

Οὐ πάνυ, ἔφη, μέχρι τούτου προσέσχον τὸν νοῦν· ὅτι δέ
που δρᾷ ταῦτα, δῆλον.

(b) (6) Ἀλλὰ μὴν κομψόν γε φαίνεται τὸ πάθος αὐτοῦ τῆς φύσεως
καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς φιλόσοφον.

Πῆ δὴ;

Ἴη, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὄψιν οὐδενὶ ἄλλω φίλην καὶ ἐχθρὰν
διακρίνει ἢ τῷ τὴν μὲν καταμαθεῖν, τὴν δὲ ἀγνοῆσαι. καίτοι
πῶς οὐκ ἂν φιλομαθὲς εἶη συνέσει τε καὶ ἀγνοίᾳ ὀριζόμενον
τό τε οἰκεῖον καὶ τὸ ἀλλότριον;

Οὐδαμῶς, ἦ δ' ὅς, ὅπως οὐ.

Ἀλλὰ μέντοι, εἶπον ἐγώ, τό γε φιλομαθὲς καὶ φιλόσοφον
ταύτόν;

Ταυτόν γάρ, ἔφη.

Οὐκοῦν θαρροῦντες τιθῶμεν καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ, εἰ μέλλει

(c) πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους καὶ γνωρίμους πρᾶός τις ἔσεσθαι, φύσει

φιλόσοφον καὶ φιλομαθῆ αὐτόν δεῖν εἶναι;

Τιθῶμεν, ἔφη.

Φιλόσοφος δὴ καὶ θυμοειδῆς καὶ ταχύς καὶ ἰσχυρὸς ἡμῖν

τὴν φύσιν ἔσται ὁ μέλλων καλὸς κάγαθὸς ἔσεσθαι φύλαξ

πόλεως.

Παντάπασι μὲν οὖν, ἔφη.

[LOEB translation:] ““We did not notice that there are natural dispositions that we didn’t think existed which have these opposing qualities.”

“Where are they in that case?”

“We may see it in other animals, not least in the one we compared to our guardian. I’m sure you know about dogs with good breeding: that their character is naturally to be able to be most friendly to those they are used to and recognize, but the opposite with those they don’t know.”

“Yes, I did know that.”

“Then this is possible,” I said, “and we are not looking for our guardian to be the type that contradicts nature.”

“It doesn’t appear to be so.”

“Do you then think he who is going to be watchful still lacks something: in addition to being strong-spirited, he must be naturally interested in philosophy?” “How come? I don’t understand.”

“You will also see this in dogs, something that deserves our admiration in the animal.”

“What is that then?”

“That at the sight of someone unknown to it, it becomes aggressive, even if it hasn’t had an adverse experience before. But whoever it sees that it recognizes, it welcomes them even if it has never been well treated by that person. Or have you not yet wondered about that?”

“Up to now, I haven’t really thought about it,” he said.

“That it does do this sort of thing is clear enough I suppose.”

“Furthermore this natural instinct of the animal makes it seem clever and truly a philosopher.”

“In what way?”

“In that it distinguishes what it sees as either friendly or hostile, by no other means than being familiar with the one and not recognizing the other. Yet how could it not

be eager to learn when it can distinguish by what it knows and what it does not know what belongs to its world and what is alien to it?"

"There's no way this can't be true," he said.

"And as a further point," I said, "is passion for knowledge the same thing as the passion for wisdom?"

"Indeed they're the same."

"In that case, let's go for it and apply it to mankind as well. If a person is going to be amenable toward his own kind and those who are known to him, then he must be naturally passionate about knowledge and wisdom."

"Let's do that."

"Then the man who is going to be a good fine guardian of our city-state will be naturally passionate about wisdom, and noble-minded, quick and strong."

"Yes," he agreed, "absolutely."

I believe the following conclusions may be drawn:

- (1) The pure breed dog is pure (375d10-11).
- (2) The pure breed dog is pure in both body and soul (375d11-e1).
- (3) The pure breed dog is able to identify other entities akin to it in nature (375e1-3).
- (4) Since the pure breed dog knows what is pure; it knowing its own nature and what is not (375e5-376a2, see further Chapter 2.2 and 2.4).
- (5) Therefore, when the pure breed dog meets another dog or a human being, it is able to judge correctly whether this other entity is like itself, i.e. pure, or not like itself, i.e. impure (376a5-10).
- (6) Whatever the pure breed dog judges to be like itself, it rewards by being gently disposed towards it; but whatever it judges to be unlike itself, it punishes by displaying the contrary disposition (376b1-c7).

Applying this to the guardian, Sokrates argues that the just and good guardian will act in a manner similar to the pure breed dog. The guardian, like the dog, will be able to identify correctly those individuals akin to them in nature, and be positively disposed towards them. Conversely, should they identify an individual unlike them in nature, i.e. an unjust and wicked individual, then they will display towards them the appropriate attitude. This ability to judge correctly is, according to

Sokrates, symptomatic of their philosophical nature, allowing the guardian to judge those who are unjust, since they possess knowledge of the just, virtue of knowing themselves (2.376b1-8).⁴⁸⁸

Although a knowledge of the just does not guarantee knowledge of the unjust, only of what is not-just; hence Sokrates' suggestion that the guardian and judge must associate with a variety of souls in order to acquire this knowledge (3.408c5-409e2).⁴⁸⁹ In effect, the guardian performs a 'living' judgement upon those souls it encounters, identifying those souls who are just and rewarding them, whilst punishing those souls that are unjust and ignorant.

The above characteristics Sokrates ascribes to the guardian are also applicable to the philosopher, and the 'true' judges. In the 'Socratic' dialogues, Sokrates frequently associates with a range of individuals, and identifies the ignorance that dwells within their soul. Meanwhile, the 'true' judge (see further Chapter 2.4.4) utilizes the same method as the guardian and pure breed dog, in order to effect the judgement of the soul in Hades. This serves to proffer yet another reason why Sokrates (see further Chapter 2.6) views the sophist as constituting a danger. The sophist is not a philosopher;⁴⁹⁰ they are neither just, nor do they know themselves. Conversely, they are ignorant, and they utilize this ignorance in order to effect their own judgements of the soul. Yet, their ignorance leads to false judgements, relating to an ignorant soul that they are not ignorant, or to a non-ignorant soul that they are. This ensures these individuals do not live just lives, and arrive at the judgement in Hades in possession of much ignorance.

Indeed, in an eschatological context, the most famous guardian of Hades happens to be a three-headed dog names Kerberos (e.g. 9.588c2-5). Kerberos allegedly guards Hades by preventing embodied souls from entering, and disembodied souls from escaping, thereby ensuring the conservation of order/social cohesion. The corrupting influence of the body and the corporeal is prevented from entering the community of Hades. Likewise, the 'ignorant' souls, who experience

⁴⁸⁸ Cf. *Politikos* 309a-310a; *Menon* 89a3; *Apologia* 38a5-6.

⁴⁸⁹ Cf. *Politeia* 3.409a-e, and 6.485a1-487a1.

⁴⁹⁰ Cf. *Sophistes* 264b-268d – the final definition of the sophist; but also 217a-b in which the Xenos relates that the sophist, statesman, and philosopher are three separate entities, not one entity with three variant names.

fear, or think they know more than the divine (either the judges, or the god Plouton himself),⁴⁹¹ are prevented from escaping, and disrupting not only the order of Hades, but the natural order that exists between the living and the dead; the corporeal and incorporeal; the mortal and immortal. Kerberos acts, therefore, in a similar manner to the guardian of the *polis*, and the ‘true’ judge of Hades, both of whom attempt to maintain order by identifying the ignorant and the unjust, and ensuring their ignorance does not disrupt the wider order.⁴⁹²

(2.9.2) 3.414b

The relationship established above between the guardian of the *polis*, the ‘true’ judges, and Kerberos, receives further support in this brief passage, in which Sokrates summarizes the basic functions of the guardians.⁴⁹³ According to Sokrates:

(b) Ἄρ’ οὖν ὡς ἀληθῶς ὀρθότατον καλεῖν τούτους μὲν φύλακας παντελεῖς τῶν τε ἔξωθεν πολεμίων τῶν τε ἐντὸς φιλίων, ὅπως οἱ μὲν μὴ βουλήσονται, οἱ δὲ μὴ δυνήσονται κακουργεῖν, τοὺς δὲ νέους, οὓς δὴ νῦν φύλακας ἐκαλοῦμεν, ἐπικούρους τε καὶ βοηθοὺς τοῖς τῶν ἀρχόντων δόγμασιν;

Ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, ἔφη.

[LOEB translation:] ““Does this then mean that it is truly most correct to refer to these men as guardians in the fullest sense, fighting against our enemies from without and looking after our friends within, so that the latter will not wish and the former will not be able to cause us harm, and the young men whom we are now calling our guardians will be the auxiliaries who assist the governors and implement their decrees?”

“I think so,” he said.”

We can draw the following conclusions:

⁴⁹¹ Plato prefers the term Hades for the location, and Plouton for the god.

⁴⁹² Indeed, Kerberos was understood to be a dog with three heads who guarded Hades. In this way, Kerberos is akin to a guardian of the *polis* – Hades – who guards with his three heads – the three judges: Minos, Rhadamanthos, and Aiakos. Cf. Baxter (1992): 12; Johansen (2004): 3.

⁴⁹³ Cf. *Politeia* 4.428c-429a, 6.501e.

- (i) The guardian guards against external enemies, depriving them of the power to harm the *polis*; and
- (ii) The guardian guards against internal friends, depriving them of the desire to harm the *polis* (3.414b1-6).⁴⁹⁴

This summarization of the guardian's function within the community is clearly comparable to the function of the 'true' judge in Hades.⁴⁹⁵ The 'true' judge, therefore, is a guardian of Hades. He protects Hades from 'external' enemies:

- (a) In the case of the 'curable' soul, the judges ensure it undergoes the necessary correction in order to deprive them of their ignorance, thereby preventing them from harming the community of Hades through the committing of injustice.
- (b) In the case of the 'incurable' soul, there is both a greater chance of them causing harm to the community, and also a greater chance of them causing great harm to the community. Consequently, the judges ensure it undergoes consistent punishment in order to deprive the 'incurable' of the power ever to do harm to the order and harmony of Hades.

Similarly, however, the judges protect Hades from 'internal' friends, using a system of reward in order to deprive the pure souls, (that do not belong to the philosopher),⁴⁹⁶ from ever desiring to disrupt the order and harmony of the community.⁴⁹⁷

(2.9.3) 9.584c-585a

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. *Kratylos* 403a.

⁴⁹⁵ Cf. White (1979): 103-104.

⁴⁹⁶ Cf. *Politeia* 6.485a1-487a1 for some characteristics of the philosopher that may explain why only the philosopher is exempt.

⁴⁹⁷ Cf. the *Kratylos* 403a and the definition of Hades Sokrates provides therein. Cf. Kraut (1984): 218-228; Irwin (1986): 410-414; Reeve (1989): 103n.44; Baxter (1992): 12; Rutherford (1995): 210; Johansen (2004): 3.

The passage above (Chapter 2.9.2) argues that the ‘true’ judge, in his capacity as guardian of Hades, deprives both the pure and impure souls from causing harm to order and harmony of the community, i.e. Hades. In the case of the impure souls, this takes the form of punishment, which is understood as possessing an element of suffering (*Politeia*, 10.614e-616b). On the other hand, in the case of the pure souls, this deprivation takes the form of reward, understood to possess an element of pleasure. Pleasure and pain thus appear to play some role in the judges’ ability to maintain order in Hades. Accordingly, Sokrates attempts to present an understanding of both pleasure and pain, considering how it is that a soul, particularly the rational disembodied soul, might experience these sensations, given their association with the body, and empiricist notions of knowledge, no longer pertain.

Sokrates begins by assuming the existence of both pleasure and pain. These he then subdivides into the following categories:

(1) Pleasure = (i) Bodily Pleasure A; and (ii) Psychic Pleasure A_1 .

(2) Pain = (i) Bodily Pain B; and (ii) Psychic Pain B_1 .

Implicit in Sokrates’ categorizations of pleasure and pain is the notion that the psychic versions of these sensations somehow represent the ‘true’ nature of these things, since they come to be in the soul. In this way, the bodily forms of pleasure and pain represent likenesses of these ‘true’ psychic forms of the sensations. More explicitly, pleasure, according to Sokrates, can be defined as the anticipation of future goods, whilst pain can be defined as the anticipation of future bad things (9.854b9-c1, c7-10, e6-585a7):⁴⁹⁸

(854b9) Μὴ ἄρα πειθώμεθα καθαρὰν ἡδονὴν εἶναι τὴν λύπης

(c) ἀπαλλαγὴν, μηδὲ λύπην τὴν ἡδονῆς.

Μὴ γάρ.

Ἄλλὰ μέντοι, εἶπον, αἱ γὰρ διὰ τοῦ σώματος ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν

τείνουσαι καὶ λεγόμεναι ἡδοναί, σχεδὸν αἱ πλεῖσταί τε καὶ

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. *Philebos* 32b-d; *Nomoi* 1.644c-d; 1.646e-648a; Chapter 2.5.

μέγιστα, τούτου τοῦ εἴδους εἰσί, λυπῶν τινες ἀπαλλαγαί.

Εἰσί γάρ.

Οὐκοῦν καὶ αἱ πρὸ μελλόντων τούτων ἐκ προσδοκίας
γιγνόμεναι προησθήσεις τε καὶ προλυπήσεις κατὰ ταῦτά
ἔχουσιν;

Κατὰ ταῦτά.

(d) Οἷσθ' οὖν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, οἷαί εἰσιν καὶ ᾧ μάλιστα ἐοίκασιν;

Τῷ; ἔφη.

Νομίζεις τι, εἶπον, ἐν τῇ φύσει εἶναι τὸ μὲν ἄνω, τὸ δὲ
κάτω, τὸ δὲ μέσον;

Ἔγωγε.

Οἷει οὖν ἂν τινα ἐκ τοῦ κάτω φερόμενον πρὸς μέσον ἄλλο τι
οἷεσθαι ἢ ἄνω φέρεσθαι; καὶ ἐν μέσῳ στάντα, ἀφορῶντα ὅθεν
ἐνήνεκται, ἄλλοθί που ἂν ἠγεῖσθαι εἶναι ἢ ἐν τῷ ἄνω, μὴ
ἔωρακότα τὸ ἀληθῶς ἄνω;

Μὰ Δί', οὐκ ἔγωγε, ἔφη, ἄλλως οἶμαι οἰηθῆναι ἂν τὸν
τοιοῦτον.

Ἀλλ' εἰ πάλιν γ', ἔφην, φέροιτο, κάτω τ' ἂν οἷοιτο φέρεσθαι

(e) καὶ ἀληθῆ οἷοιτο;

Πῶς γὰρ οὐ;

Οὐκοῦν ταῦτα πάσχοι ἂν πάντα διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔμπειρος εἶναι
τοῦ ἀληθινῶς ἄνω τε ὄντος καὶ ἐν μέσῳ καὶ κάτω;

Δῆλον δὴ.

Θαυμάζοις ἂν οὖν εἰ καὶ ἄπειροι ἀληθείας περὶ πολλῶν τε
ἄλλων μὴ ὑγιεῖς δόξας ἔχουσιν, πρὸς τε ἡδονὴν καὶ λύπην καὶ
τὸ μεταξὺ τούτων οὕτω διάκεινται, ὥστε, ὅταν μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ
585.

(a) λυπηρὸν φέρωνται, ἀληθῆ τε οἶονται καὶ τῷ ὄντι λυποῦνται,
ὅταν δὲ ἀπὸ λύπης ἐπὶ τὸ μεταξύ, σφόδρα μὲν οἶονται πρὸς
πληρώσει τε καὶ ἡδονῇ γίνεσθαι, ὥσπερ <δὲ> πρὸς μέλαν
φαιὸν ἀποσκοποῦντες ἀπειρία λευκοῦ, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἄλυπον
οὕτω λύπην ἀφορῶντες ἀπειρία ἡδονῆς ἀπατῶνται;

Μὰ Δία, ἧ δ' ὄς, οὐκ ἄν θαυμάσαιμι, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον, εἰ
μὴ οὕτως ἔχει.

[LOEB translation:] ““So let us not believe that pure pleasure is a relief from pain,
nor pure pain a relief from pleasure.”

“No.”

“While on the other hand,” I said, “the so-called pleasures which spread through the
body toward the soul are mostly the greatest in size and number and are of this
form: a kind of getting rid of pains.”

“Yes, they are.”

“So does that mean that by the same process the anticipation of pleasure and pain
comes about through expectation, before they actually occur?”

“Yes, it’s the same.”

“So then you are aware what sort they are like?”

“What?” he said.

“Do you reckon that there is in nature a top, a bottom, and a middle?”

“I do.”

“Then do you think anyone being carried from below toward the middle is aware
he’s being conveyed any way but upward? And when he’s standing in the middle
looking at where he’s come from, could he think he’s anywhere but at the top, even
though he hasn’t seen the real top?”

“No, by Zeus, I myself don’t think anyone in this position would think otherwise.”

“But if he were brought back down again, he would think he was being conveyed
downward and he’d be right in so thinking?”

“Of course.”

“So he’d experience all this because he’s not had experience of the true top, middle,
and bottom?”

“Obviously.”

“Would you be surprised, then, if people who have no experience of the truth also
have no sound opinions of many other things and are so conditioned in their minds
as to pleasure and pain and what lies between that when they are moved toward
the painful they think it’s real and actually feel pain, and when they move away from
pain toward the center, they seriously think they’ve found gratification and
pleasure? But just as they are misled by looking at gray against black in their
inexperience of white, so too aren’t they also misled when they compare pain
against painlessness in their inexperience of pleasure?”

“No, by Zeus, I wouldn’t be surprised, but I would be much more surprised if this
weren’t the case.””

Accordingly, with regards to the body,

(1) Bodily Pleasure A = the anticipation of future good things, in accordance with a bodily understanding of what constitutes the good, e.g. being free of bodily pain, and more generally, the attainment of those things the body desires.

(2) Bodily Pain B = the anticipation of future bad things, in accordance with a bodily understanding of what constitutes the bad, e.g. the suffering of bodily tortures.

As is evident, the bodily conception of what constitutes pleasure and pain, relies upon an understanding of 'the good' and 'the bad' originating in empiricist reasoning, in which the perspective of the soul is not taken into account. This, for Sokrates, is why bodily pleasure and pain does not represent the 'true' forms of these things, since they arise, ultimately, from ignorance – ignorance of the 'true' nature of the body and the soul, and the relationship between the two entities.⁴⁹⁹ On the other hand, the psychic forms of these sensations appear to consist of the following:

(1) Psychic Pleasure A₁ = the anticipation of future good things, in accordance with an understanding of the immortal and unchanging good.

Psychic pleasure, according to this understanding, belongs only to that soul that possesses an understanding of pleasure purely through the reasoning faculties of the soul alone. For Sokrates the only soul capable of arriving at such an understanding belongs to the philosopher,⁵⁰⁰ and so the future 'good' it anticipates is the acquisition of wisdom and knowledge of the 'true' nature of reality.

⁴⁹⁹ This is why I disagree with Annas (1982a): 128 who argues, in reference to the *Phaidon* myth, that "if the philosophers' reward is final disembodiment, then the Isles of the Blessed, the second-best reward of the non-philosophical good, will have to represent some kind of embodiment. Yet this has been put forward as a repulsive punishment, whereas the Isles of the Blessed must symbolize some afterlife reward." I believe the rewards that Sokrates presents as belonging to the pure souls who dwell on the true surface of the Earth (what Annas calls the Isles of the Blessed), are in accordance with the Bodily understanding of Pleasure and Pain I have outlined above. The souls that dwell here are *not* the souls of philosophers, so they do not possess a philosophical understanding of what-is-good. These souls acted in a just way in this life via a bodily understanding of pleasure and pain, which meant they avoided certain actions not because those actions were in and of themselves bad, but because they learnt, either through convention or the desire to avoid bodily pain, not to do these things. Similarly the good they did was not because those actions were good in and of themselves, but because they acted either out of convention or the desire to be rewarded.

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. *Phaidon* 59c-69c, 111c-114c.

This is so, since Sokrates assumes that pleasure, on a basic level,⁵⁰¹ occurs when one lacks something. This lack leads to a desire for that thing, such that the fulfilment of this desire leads to pleasure. The philosopher as a lover of wisdom desires the acquisition of ‘true’ wisdom or knowledge, indicating a corresponding lack of ‘true’ knowledge on the part of the philosopher. Consequently, the fulfilment of this desire, i.e. the acquisition of ‘true’ knowledge, results in pleasure for the philosopher. Since, the philosopher’s desire relates only to the soul, and not to the body, Sokrates assumes that this must constitute ‘true’ pleasure. If this represents ‘true’ pleasure, this further supports the assertion that the soul possesses a *telos* – the acquisition of ‘true’ knowledge.⁵⁰² In this way, alone, may the soul experience ‘true’ pleasure, and fulfil its desire.

The fulfilment of this desire suggests the soul no longer lacks anything, a condition Sokrates assigns to the gods.⁵⁰³ One must assume, therefore, that this state of existence, wherein the soul lacks for nothing, constitutes its ‘true’ existence (or its original existence). Hence, the notion that the soul’s *telos* consists of the acquisition of ‘true’ knowledge, since only in this way may the soul return to its original state of existence, being free of want and desire.⁵⁰⁴

If psychic pleasure belongs to the philosopher’s soul, understood by Sokrates as being a ‘pure’ soul close to both Knowledge and the divine,⁵⁰⁵ then psychic pain must belong to the opposite kind of soul. The opposite soul, in this case, is the ‘incurable’ soul, which exists close to Ignorance, such that it is no longer capable of deriving benefit from corrective punishment, so near complete is its ignorance.⁵⁰⁶ Accordingly, psychic pain is not based simply on an empirical understanding of pain (as Bodily Pain B, above), as this can be ‘cured’ through corrective punishment. Rather, psychic pain consists of an understanding of pain based on an ignorance, impervious to any form of correction.

⁵⁰¹ Cf. *Philebos* 32d-33c

⁵⁰² Cf. Rice (1998): 108; Sayers (1999): 96, 118-119, cf. 123, 127.

⁵⁰³ E.g. in Sokrates’ recollection of his discussion with Diotima in *Symposion* 201d-212b.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. *Philebos* 32d-33c.

⁵⁰⁵ Cf. Chapter 2.8

⁵⁰⁶ See Chapters 2.4. and 2.9.

An ignorance, in this case, that runs deep in the soul, such that the unjust soul believes, truly, that the injustices they commit are just, i.e. that the 'bad' is the 'good.'

- (2) Psychic Pain B_1 = the anticipation of future bad things, based on a near-complete ignorance, resulting in the belief that what is 'just' is 'unjust,' and vice versa.

For example, the soul of a tyrant travels to the judgement in the belief that their unjust actions were just in every way. The 'true' judges, however, adjudge the tyrant's soul to be 'incurable,' and prescribe that it must be made an example of, so that their punishment may be of benefit to others if it cannot be to themselves. The tyrant's soul, being 'incurable,' continues to feel as though its unjust actions were just, and so rather than anticipate future bad things, they feel as though they should receive future good things.⁵⁰⁷ In other words, the 'incurable' soul, through its own reasoning faculties, misunderstands the 'true' nature of the Just and the Unjust. Consequently, their punishment is two-fold, since first, it must remove this mistaken reasoning from the soul and try to show the 'incurable' soul that its understanding of the Just and the Unjust is contrary to reality. Then, it must attempt to remove any ignorance arising from a reliance on the bodily senses to form an understanding of justice.

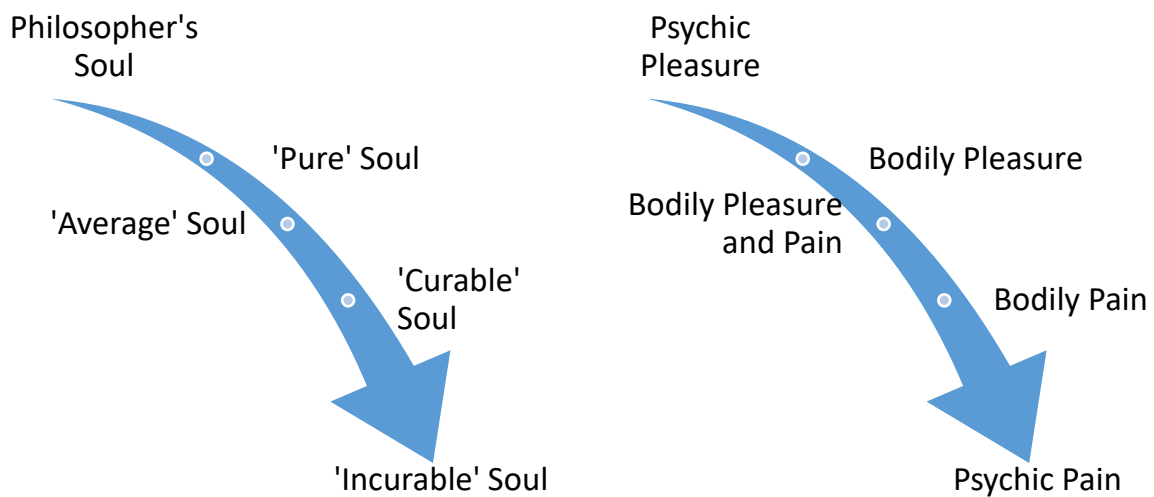
Combining the above definitions of pleasure and pain suggest, with the eschatological account of the *Phaidon* (see further Chapter 2.8.4), each category of soul conforms to one of these particular categories of pleasure or pain:

- (1) The philosopher's soul experiences Psychic Pleasure.
- (2) The 'pure' soul experiences Bodily Pleasure.
- (3) The 'average' soul (which is absent from the *Politeia*, see further Chapter 2.9.4 and **3**) experiences both Bodily Pleasure and Pain.
- (4) The 'curable' soul experiences Bodily Pain.

⁵⁰⁷ See Chapters 2.4. and 2.9.

(5) The 'incurable' soul experiences Psychic Pain.⁵⁰⁸

The type of pleasure or pain the soul experiences, thus depends on the extent to which the soul exists close to Knowledge. The most ignorant soul – the 'incurable' soul – experiences the 'true' form of pain that belongs to the soul; whereas the most knowledgeable soul – the philosopher's soul – experiences the 'true' form of pleasure: psychic pleasure.⁵⁰⁹ These two categories constitute the extremes of the spectrum, and all other souls lie somewhere in between; the more ignorance the soul possesses the more pain it experiences:



Socrates considers the epistemological component of pleasure and pain, offering a theory to explain why it is that the more knowledgeable soul experiences pleasure, whilst the more ignorant soul experiences pain (9.584b9-585a7). In this case, he reduces this explanation to the idea of descent and ascent, so that a soul that experiences a 'descent' suffers pain, whereas a soul that undergoes an 'ascent' experiences pleasure. Here, 'ascent' is analogous to a move closer to Knowledge, whilst

⁵⁰⁸ Cf. Irwin (1977): 93; Bobonich (2003): 6-7, 476.

⁵⁰⁹ See also Frede (1999): 345-372.

‘descent’ consists of moving closer to Ignorance.⁵¹⁰ Hence, the philosopher’s soul, which exists closest to Knowledge, experiences the greatest ascent, and so the greatest pleasure – the pleasure that belongs to the soul (psychic pleasure). Meanwhile, the ‘incurable’ soul, which exists closest to Ignorance, experiences the greatest descent (see diagrams above), and thus the greatest pain – psychic pain.

Knowledge is used as the determinant factor in whether the soul’s experience of a descent or ascent, and so pleasure or pain. This further establishes the possession of knowledge as the only means by which the soul may experience ‘true’ pleasure, and undergo an ‘ascent’ back to its original state of self-sufficiency, which happens to be the same state of existence as the divine.⁵¹¹ In this way, the ignorant soul not only experiences the greatest descent, and so the greatest pain, but it also places the ignorant soul the furthest from its *telos*, being almost the contrary of the divine.⁵¹²

(2.9.4) 10.614b-619e

The *Politeia* culminates in the eschatological account of the afterlife known as ‘the Myth of Er.’ In this account, Sokrates provides an account of the soul’s journey from corpse to Hades, and back again.⁵¹³ In particular, Sokrates seeks to emphasize the notion that the greatest of rewards await that soul, which has lived a life of justice, far from ignorance. As he suggests above, Chapter 2.9.3, it is the philosophical life that affords the soul the best opportunity to achieve this kind of life, and experience the ‘true’ kind of pleasure – psychic pleasure. Even if the soul does not live the philosophical life, Sokrates attempts to demonstrate through his description of reincarnation, that

⁵¹⁰ Cf. Sayers (1999): 162 who posits that there is no suggestion the just may escape from the cycle of reincarnation. This is true of the *Politeia* (see further Chapter 3.6), but in subsequent descriptions of (re)incarnation in the *Phaidros* (Chapter 3.7) and *Timaios* (Chapter 3.8), the just soul – the philosopher’s soul – regains the ability to break free of the cycle of reincarnation, as it possessed in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5.3).

⁵¹¹ E.g. *Philebos* 32d-33c.

⁵¹² See further White (1979): 229.

⁵¹³ Cf. *Nomoi* 10.903e-905d.

any soul which prizes truth and knowledge, will be in a better position to navigate the afterlife, and choose an acceptable next life.⁵¹⁴ In this sense, the Myth of Er serves as a response to the account of the afterlife offered by Cephalos in Book 1. Sokrates proffers an ‘improved’ account of the afterlife; one that will ensure the individual lives a life closer to justice and knowledge, far from the ignorance and fear characterized by Cephalos. In this way they might experience some reward in Hades, and secure for themselves the opportunity to choose an adequate next life.⁵¹⁵

Journey to Hades

(614b1) Λέγοις ἄν, ἔφη, ὡς οὐ πολλὰ ἄλλ’ ἥδιον ἀκούοντι.
 Ἄλλ’ οὐ μέντοι σοι, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, Ἀλκίνου γε ἀπόλογον ἐρῶ,
 ἀλλ’ ἀλκίμου μὲν ἀνδρός, Ἡρὸς τοῦ Ἄρμενίου, τὸ γένος
 Παμφύλου· ὃς ποτε ἐν πολέμῳ τελευτήσας, ἀναιρεθέντων
 δεκαταίων τῶν νεκρῶν ἤδη διεφθαρμένων, ὑγιῆς μὲν ἀνη-
 ρέθη, κομισθεὶς δ’ οἴκαδε μέλλων θάπτεσθαι δωδεκαταῖος ἐπὶ
 τῇ πυρᾷ κείμενος ἀνεβίω, ἀναβιοῦς δ’ ἔλεγεν ἃ ἐκεῖ ἴδοι.

[LOEB translation:] ““Please tell us,” he said, “as there are not many other things I would more gladly hear.”

“Mind you, I’m not going to give you an Alcinous’ tale,” I said, “but the story of a brave man, Armenius’ son Er, by race from Pamphylia. Once upon a time he was killed in battle, and when the bodies of those who had already decayed were collected up ten days later, his was found to be sound, and when he’d been taken home for burial, on the twelfth day, as he lay on the pyre, he came to. Having done so, he described what he had seen on the other side.”

The Myth of Er begins with the apparent separation of Er’s soul from his body (10.614b1-7). His soul then travels, in the company of many others, until it reaches somewhere divine (δαμόνιον, 10.614c1). Unlike in the eschatological account in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 2.8.4), there is no mention of a guardian spirit guiding each soul to the place of judgement. Nevertheless, in the conclusion of the process of reincarnation a guardian spirit is assigned to the soul (10.620d6-621a3). One might argue that the guardian spirit does exist in the Myth of Er, but it does not operate in the same way as in the *Phaidon*. This may reflect the differing needs of the two accounts, since the notion of a

⁵¹⁴ Cf. Chapter 3.6.

⁵¹⁵ Cf. *Politeia* 7.514-520a.

guardian spirit possesses greater relevancy to Sokrates' thesis in the *Phaidon*, than it does here in the *Politeia*.

Nonetheless, both in the *Phaidon* and the *Politeia*, Sokrates argues in favour of the thesis that one's soul should arrive in Hades being free of both ignorance and injustice. This would suggest the two accounts possess the same basic thesis, and so if the guardian spirit is relevant to the *Phaidon*, so it should be for the *Politeia*. It is possible, therefore, that given the guardian spirit's appearance later in the account, one is meant to assume the guardian spirit's presence in the soul's journey to the place of judgement, though it is not mentioned explicitly. This must necessarily be so, since all souls are described as arriving at the palace of judgement, even the souls of the ignorant. Thus, either all souls possess an instinctive knowledge which allows them to navigate to the judgement,⁵¹⁶ or the guardian spirit helps to shepherd the souls there. If this were not the case, then the ignorant soul would wander for a large period of time, potentially avoiding the judgement, and by extension, justice; a situation unacceptable to Sokrates.⁵¹⁷

The Place of Judgement

(614b8) Ἔφη δέ, ἐπειδὴ οὗ ἔκβῆναι, τὴν ψυχὴν πορεύεσθαι μετὰ
(c) πολλῶν, καὶ ἀφικνεῖσθαι σφᾶς εἰς τόπον τινα δαιμόνιον, ἐν ᾧ
τῆς τε γῆς δὴ εἶναι χάσματα ἐχομένω ἀλλήλοισιν καὶ τοῦ
οὐρανοῦ αὖ ἐν τῷ ἄνω ἄλλα καταντικρῦ. δικαστὰς δὲ μεταξὺ
τούτων καθῆσθαι, οὐς, ἐπειδὴ διαδικάσειαν, τοὺς μὲν δικαί-
ους κελεύειν πορεύεσθαι τὴν εἰς δεξιάν τε καὶ ἄνω διὰ τοῦ
οὐρανοῦ, σημεῖα περιάψαντας τῶν δεδικασμένων ἐν τῷ
πρόσθεν, τοὺς δὲ ἀδίκους τὴν εἰς ἀριστεράν τε καὶ κάτω,
ἔχοντας καὶ τούτους ἐν τῷ ὀπίσθεν σημεῖα πάντων ὧν
(d) ἔπραξαν. ἑαυτοῦ δὲ προσελθόντος εἰπεῖν ὅτι δέοι αὐτὸν
ἄγγελον ἀνθρώποις γενέσθαι τῶν ἐκεῖ, καὶ διακελεύειντό οἱ
ἀκούειν τε καὶ θεᾶσθαι πάντα τὰ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ.

⁵¹⁶ Cf. *Timaios* 89e-90d.

⁵¹⁷ Cf. *Phaidon*, Chapter 2.8.4

[LOEB translation:] ““He said that his soul left him and made its way with many others and they came to a sacred spot where there were two openings in the ground next to each other, and two others opposite them in the sky above. Between them sat judges who, when they had passed sentence, ordered the just to make their way to the opening on the right leading up through the sky, and they fixed placards on the front of their bodies indicating their judgments, while the unjust were sent to the left-hand downward path and they also had indications of all they had done attached to their backs. But when he himself came forward, they said that he must become the messenger to mankind of what was happening there, and they ordered him to listen to and observe everything in that place.”

According to Er, the souls arrive somewhere divine, in which there are two adjacent openings in the earth going below, and two opposite them going upward; between these openings sit the judges (10.614b8-d3). This creates an image of five potential paths for the soul:

- (1) One going to the place of judgement;
- (2) One going upward to the place of reward;
- (3) One going downward to the place of punishment;
- (4) One going downward from the place of reward; and
- (5) One going upward from the place of punishment.

Despite the introduction of five paths, the imagery Sokrates utilizes remains fairly consistent with previous accounts in which there are three paths, one leading to the place of judgement, one to the place of reward, and one to the place of punishment. The use of five paths in this particular account, reflects (a) the presence of reincarnation in this accounts – something that did not exist in the *Gorgias*, for example; and (b) the particular process of reincarnation described here, which differs in some aspects from the previous iteration given in the *Phaidon*, it being both more formalized and systematized.⁵¹⁸

The Judgement

Sokrates' aim is not to provide a detailed account of the soul's judgement, as in the *Gorgias* (Chapter 2.4.4) for example; rather, he provides only a brief overview of the judgement, insofar as it pertains to the progression of the soul to the system of reincarnation. Indeed, it appears as though Sokrates

⁵¹⁸ See further Chapter 3.

assumes one is already familiar with the procedure governing the soul's judgement, as outlined in the *Gorgias* (even though the *Gorgias* was composed prior to the introduction of reincarnation).⁵¹⁹

The soul, according to Er, arrives at the judgement, and here it is separated into 'just' and 'unjust'; the 'just' journeying upwards, and the 'unjust' downwards (10.614b8-d3).⁵²⁰ This accords with the idea of ascent and descent Sokrates introduced above (Chapter 2.9.3), in which a descent results in pain, whilst an ascent results in pleasure. Here, the soul adjudged unjust and worthy of punishment, experience a descent; whilst the contrary – the just souls – experience a clear ascent, suggestive of pleasure.

In the specific context of this account, Sokrates introduces a further detail: each soul travels upwards or downwards, with a record of their judgement attached to their chests. The record attached to the unjust soul included, further, a catalogue of the deeds that condemned that soul to its present fate (10.614c8-d3). In outlining, specifically, the deeds that resulted in this adjudication, the unjust soul is able to learn which of their acts were unjust, in order that they may understand the nature of their injustice. Yet, the inclusion of a record detailing the soul's injustice affixes a further condition to the corrective punishment of the unjust soul – an element of public humiliation. Public humiliation serves (a) as a form of correction, since it shames the unjust soul into not committing the same acts of injustice; and (b) as a form of deterrence for other souls, wishing to avoid such a public display of humiliation. Consequently, the judges utilize both categories of punishment: corrective and deterrence, in order to ensure the unjust, 'curable' soul benefits from their punishment and learns from their mistakes. In the case of the 'incurable' soul, the catalogue of their deeds serves merely to accentuate their being made an example, by demonstrating to other souls the punishment of the 'incurable' is complete.⁵²¹

Punishment and Reward

⁵¹⁹ Beversluis (2000): 382; cf. Bobonich (2002): 57-58.

⁵²⁰ Cf. *Politeia* 9.584c-585a.

⁵²¹ Cf. Rice (1998): 29.

(614d4) Ὅραῖν δὴ ταύτη μὲν καθ' ἑκάτερον τὸ χάσμα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ
τε καὶ τῆς γῆς ἀπιούσας τὰς ψυχάς, ἐπειδὴ αὐταῖς δικασθεῖν,
κατὰ δὲ τῷ ἐτέρῳ ἐκ μὲν τοῦ ἀνιέναι ἐκ τῆς γῆς μεστὰς
αὐχμοῦ τε καὶ κόνεως, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ἐτέρου καταβαίνειν ἐτέρας
(e) ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καθαρὰς, καὶ τὰς ἀεὶ ἀφικνουμένας ὡσπερ ἐκ
πολλῆς πορείας φαίνεσθαι ἤκειν, καὶ ἀσμένας εἰς τὸν λειμῶνα
ἀπιούσας οἶον ἐν πανηγύρει κατασκηνᾶσθαι, καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι
τε ἀλλήλας ὅσοι γνώριμοι, καὶ πυνθάνεσθαι τὰς τε ἐκ τῆς γῆς
ἠκούσας παρὰ τῶν ἐτέρων τὰ ἐκεῖ καὶ τὰς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὰ
παρ' ἐκείναις. διηγεῖσθαι δὲ ἀλλήλαις τὰς μὲν ὄδυρομένας τε
615.

(a) καὶ κλαούσας, ἀναμνησκομένας ὅσα τε καὶ οἷα πάθοιεν καὶ
ἴδοιεν ἐν τῇ ὑπὸ γῆς πορείᾳ, εἶναι δὲ τὴν πορείαν χιλιέτη, τὰς
δ' αὖ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ εὐπαθείας διηγεῖσθαι καὶ θεὰς ἀμηχά-
νους τὸ κάλλος.

Τὰ μὲν οὖν πολλά, ὧ Γλαύκων, πολλοῦ χρόνου διηγῆσα-
σθαι· τὸ δ' οὖν κεφάλαιον ἔφη τόδε εἶναι, ὅσα πώποτε τινα
ἠδίκησαν καὶ ὅσους ἕκαστοι, ὑπὲρ ἀπάντων δίκην δεδωκέναι
ἐν μέρει, ὑπὲρ ἐκάστου δεκάκις, τοῦτο δ' εἶναι κατὰ ἑκατον-
τατηρίδα ἐκάστην, ὡς βίου ὄντος τοσούτου τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου,
(b) ἵνα δεκαπλάσιον τὸ ἔκτεισμα τοῦ ἀδικήματος ἐκτίνοιεν, καὶ
οἶον εἴ τινες πολλοῖς θανάτων ἦσαν αἴτιοι, ἢ πόλεις προδόντες
ἢ στρατόπεδα, καὶ εἰς δουλείας ἐμβεβληκότες ἢ τινος ἄλλης
κακουχίας μεταίτιοι, πάντων τούτων δεκαπλασίας ἀλγηδόνας
ὑπὲρ ἐκάστου κομίσαιντο, καὶ αὖ εἴ τινες εὐεργεσίας εὐερ-
γετηκότες καὶ δίκαιοι καὶ ὅσοι γεγονότες εἶεν, κατὰ ταῦτα
τὴν ἀξίαν κομίζονται. τῶν δὲ εὐθύς γενομένων καὶ ὀλίγον
(c) χρόνον βιούντων πέρι ἄλλα ἔλεγεν οὐκ ἄξια μνήμης· εἰς δὲ
θεοὺς ἀσεβείας τε καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ γονέας καὶ αὐτόχειρος
φόνου μείζους ἔτι τοὺς μισθοὺς διηγεῖτο.

Ἔφη γὰρ δὴ παραγενέσθαι ἐρωτημένῳ ἐτέρῳ ὑπὸ ἐτέρου
ὄπου εἶη Ἄρδιαῖος ὁ μέγας· ὁ δὲ Ἄρδιαῖος οὗτος τῆς

Παμφυλίας ἔν τινι πόλει τύραννος ἐγεγόνει, ἤδη χιλιοστὸν
ἔτος εἰς ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον, γέροντά τε πατέρα ἀποκτείνας
(d) καὶ πρεσβύτερον ἀδελφόν, καὶ ἄλλα δὴ πολλά τε καὶ ἀνόσια
εἰργασμένος, ὡς ἐλέγετο. ἔφη οὖν τὸν ἐρωτώμενον εἰπεῖν,
“Οὐχ ἦκει,” φάναι, “οὐδ’ ἀνήξει δεῦρο. ἐθεασάμεθα γὰρ οὖν
δὴ καὶ τοῦτο τῶν δεινῶν θεαμάτων· ἐπειδὴ ἐγγὺς τοῦ στομίου
ἦμεν μέλλοντες ἀνιέναι καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα πεπονθότες, ἐκεῖνόν
τε κατειδομένον ἐξαίφνης καὶ ἄλλους, σχεδόν τι αὐτῶν τοὺς
πλείστους τυράννους, ἦσαν δὲ καὶ ἰδιῶταί τινες τῶν μεγάλα
(e) ἡμαρτηκότες· οὐς οἰομένους ἤδη ἀναβήσεσθαι οὐκ ἐδέχετο
τὸ στόμιον, ἀλλ’ ἐμυκᾶτο ὅποτε τις τῶν οὕτως ἀνιάτως
ἐχόντων εἰς πονηρίαν ἢ μὴ ἱκανῶς δεδωκῶς δίκην ἐπιχειροῖ
ἀνιέναι. ἐνταῦθα δὴ ἄνδρες, ἔφη, ἄγριοι, διάπυροι ἰδεῖν,
παρεστῶτες καὶ καταμανθάνοντες τὸ φθέγμα, τοὺς μὲν
διαλαβόντες ἦγον, τὸν δὲ Ἄρδιαῖον καὶ ἄλλους συμποδίσαντες
616.

(a) χεῖράς τε καὶ πόδας καὶ κεφαλὴν, καταβαλόντες καὶ ἐκδεί-
ραντες, εἴλκον παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ἐκτὸς ἐπ’ ἀσπαλάθων κνάμ-
πτοντες, καὶ τοῖς ἀεὶ παριοῦσι σημαίνοντες ὧν ἔνεκά τε καὶ
ὄτι εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον ἐμπεσοῦμενοι ἄγοντο.” ἔνθα δὴ φόβων,
ἔφη, πολλῶν καὶ παντοδαπῶν σφίσιν γεγονότων, τοῦτον
ὑπερβάλλειν, μὴ γένοιτο ἐκάστῳ τὸ φθέγμα ὅτε ἀναβαίνοι,
καὶ ἀσμενέστατα ἕκαστον σιγήσαντος ἀναβῆναι. καὶ τὰς μὲν
δὴ δίκας τε καὶ τιμωρίας τοιαύτας τινὰς εἶναι, καὶ αὖ τὰς
(b) εὐεργεσίας ταύταις ἀντιστρόφους.

[LOEB translation:] ““In this way, then, he said he saw the souls, when judgment had been passed, leaving by one of the openings in the sky and one in the ground, while by the other two, out of the one coming up from the ground, were souls covered in filth and dust, and down from the other one from the sky came others purified. Those arriving in a steady stream seemed to have come from a long journey and gladly came into the meadow and settled themselves down as if at a public festival, and those who were acquainted greeted each other. And those coming up out of the ground asked the others about what was up there above, while those coming down from the sky asked the others about where they had been. They conversed with each other, the former lamenting and weeping when they recalled how much and what kind of things they had suffered and seen on their journey underground, and

that the journey took a thousand years. And those coming from the sky described in their turn their pleasant experiences and the sights overwhelming in their beauty.

Now he said that most of this, Glaucon, would need a long time to describe, but the main thing was this: whatever wrongs they had committed, and however many people they had individually wronged, they had paid for them all in turn, ten times over for each one, that is each one a hundred years on the grounds that such was the life span of a human being, so that they might pay a tenfold penalty for their wrongdoing. For example, if any of them had been responsible for the deaths of many people, or they had betrayed cities, or armies, or thrown people into slavery, or had been responsible for any other maltreatment, they would bring upon themselves ten-fold pain for every one of these, and again if they had performed some good services and become just and devout, by the same token they would gain a worthy reward. He made some other remarks not worth mentioning about those who had just been born and only lived a short time. He explained the still greater rewards and punishments for those impious and pious toward the gods or their parents, and for murder.

He said, you see, that he was there when someone asked another where Ardiaeus the Great was. This man Ardiaeus had made himself tyrant in one of the cities in Pamphylia (it was already a thousand years back to that time), and it was said that he had killed his aged father and his elder brother, and committed many other wicked deeds. So he said that the man questioned answered, 'He hasn't come, nor will he ever come up here. For we saw the following among the terrifying sights: when we were near the entrance waiting to come up when all our other sufferings were over, we suddenly saw him and others: nearly all of them had been tyrants, but there were also some private individuals from those who had committed great misdeeds. They already thought they would be on their way up, but the exit didn't let them through, but roared whenever any of those who were so incorrigible as regards their depravity, or hadn't sufficiently paid the penalty, tried to go up. Thereupon,' he said, 'men wild and fiery to look at who were standing by and paying attention to the noise, took hold of some and led them away, but they tied Ardiaeus and others up by their hands, feet, and necks, threw them down and flayed them. They dragged them away by the side of the road, carding them on thorns and indicating to those who were continually passing by the reasons for this and the fact that they were being led off to be thrown into Tartarus.' Then, he said, of the many fears of every kind they experienced there, the one that predominated was in case the sound should break out when each one went up: indeed, each one went up most gladly when there was silence. So these were the various kinds of punishment and retribution, and again their counterparts the rewards for the good.'"

Er continues his account of the afterlife with a recounting of the fates of the 'just' and 'unjust' souls

(10.614d4-616b1). In particular, Er details the length and scale of punishment or reward

respectively. In dialogues such as the *Gorgias* or the *Apologia*, the notion of reincarnation was

absent. It was enough, in these cases, to relate that punishment or reward occurred for the rest of

time. The *Phaidon*, however, introduces the notion of reincarnation into the afterlife. This

necessitates the existence of a timescale in relation to punishment and reward, as the soul must

cease, at some point, to experience these things and proceed to reincarnation. The *Phaidon* provided no details regarding the length of time a soul spent in Hades, but it is evident that the soul does not spend eternity in the afterlife, unless it happens to belong to two particular categories of soul: 'the philosopher's soul' and the 'incurable' soul.⁵²² In the *Phaidon*, these two categories appear to correspond to those that experience psychic pleasure and psychic pain (see further Chapter 2.9.3), thus proffering the suggestion that only those souls that experience bodily pleasure or pain in the afterlife continue to experience reincarnation. These two categories of soul continue to exist in the *Politeia*, but whilst the incurable soul continues to be exempt from re-entering the cycle of reincarnation, the philosopher's soul re-enters the cycle, in contrast to the *Phaidon*. Thus, either the philosopher's soul does not experience psychic pleasure in Hades, or Sokrates does not believe it possible for even the philosopher to achieve true knowledge, thereby attaining full psychic pleasure (See further Chapter 3.9).

First, Er relates the length and scale of the punishment that belongs to the 'curable' soul. It is useful to note that in the *Politeia*, the category of soul identified in the *Phaidon* as the 'average' soul, no longer appears to exist. This category appears to have been subsumed by the wider categories of 'just' and 'curable' souls. It could be that this category is removed given the theory of ascent and descent Sokrates introduces in the *Politeia*. The 'average' soul in the *Phaidon* experiences neither a descent nor ascent but remains at the Akherousian Lake, and undergoes both punishment and reward for its deeds. In the *Politeia*, it is not possible for the soul to experience punishment or reward without experiencing some kind of ascent or descent; therefore, it is not possible for the 'average' soul to exist, whilst still undergoing punishment and reward. This may be why the soul, upon its return from punishment or reward, is described as travelling, prior to reincarnation, to a meadow. At the meadow, the souls undergo neither punishment nor reward, and so require neither an ascent nor descent, allowing them to exist as 'average' souls. Indeed, the Akherousian Lake is

⁵²² Cf. Chapter 3.9. Despite the clear finality of the judgement for both the philosopher's soul and that of the incurable soul, Annas (1982a): 131 makes the absurd claim that "in the *Republic* ... there is no longer any suggestion that this is a final judgement."

described in the *Phaidon* as the place where souls dwell prior to their reincarnation, and the meadow in the *Politeia*, occupies a similar function. Here, according to Er, the souls dwell prior to their reincarnation.⁵²³

The punishment of the 'curable' soul consists of the following:

- (a) The sign that accompanies the 'curable' soul relates the unjust deeds of that soul, including the people they have wronged (10.614e6-615a2).
- (b) The 'curable' soul pays the penalty for each individual injustice they committed, and for each person they wronged (10.615a5-8).
- (c) The 'curable' soul pays the penalty ten times over, once in every century of their journey (10.615a8-9).
- (d) A century corresponds, roughly, to the length of a human life, thus the 'curable' soul pays a tenfold penalty for each injustice (10.615a9-b1).
- (e) In this way, the unjust soul suffers ten times the pain they had caused to each individual (10.615b4-5).

The punishment an individual suffers lasts ten times an average human lifetime of one hundred years, thus the period of punishment lasts approximately $10 \times 100 \text{ years} = 1,000 \text{ years}$.⁵²⁴

Punishment, therefore, last for roughly one thousand years, and by extension, one may understand a particular period of incarnation as lasting for a similar one thousand years. Moreover, the nature of this punishment combines the different conceptions of punishment given throughout the dialogue:

- (a) Punishment occurs to the 'curable' soul due to its ignorance, which leads it to commit injustice. The soul thus experiences punishment in order to rectify this ignorance, and prevent reoffending.

⁵²³ Cf. Chapter 3.5.3 and 3.6.

⁵²⁴ See also *Phaidros* 248e-b.

- (b) Punishment occurs because the 'curable' soul experiences bodily pain, anticipating future bad things based on its bodily conception of the bad (10.618b7-619e5), indicative of its aforementioned ignorance. Thus, the 'curable' soul experiences pain and fear.
- (c) Finally, punishment occurs because the 'curable' soul experiences a descent, travelling downwards from the place of judgement.⁵²⁵ Thus, the 'curable' soul experiences punishment as it believes it undergoes a perceptible descent.

Conversely, the 'just' or 'pure' soul (as it is described in the *Phaidon*, Chapter 2.8.4), undergoes reward on the same scale as the 'curable' soul undergoes punishment (10.615b5-7). Just as the 'curable' soul experiences one thousand years of punishment, paying the penalty tenfold, so the 'just' soul experiences one thousand years of reward, each reward occurring tenfold. The 'just' soul, like the 'curable' soul, experiences reward in such a manner that combines the different conceptions of reward given throughout the dialogues:

- (a) Reward occurs to the 'just' soul due to its lack of ignorance, such that it commits more acts of justice than injustice. The soul thus experiences reward demonstrative of the just manner in which it lived its life.
- (b) Reward occurs to the 'just' soul as it experiences bodily pleasure, anticipating future good things. These 'good' things, however, are based upon a bodily conception of the good (10.618b7-619e5), indicative of the fact that they still possess ignorance, though of a lesser extent than the 'curable' soul. The 'curable' soul's conception of justice is both based on ignorance, and the source of injustice, whereas the 'just' soul's conception of justice, is based on ignorance, but does not cause the same level of injustice.
- (c) Finally, reward occurs because the 'just' soul experiences an ascent, travelling upwards from the place of judgement.⁵²⁶ Thus, the 'just' soul experiences reward as it believes it undergoes a perceptible ascent.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁵ Cf. *Politeia* 9.584c-585a.

Er's description of punishment and reward proffers the same spectrum of pleasure and pain as that in Chapter 2.9.3 (cf. the two diagrams there). Here, the two categories of 'philosopher's' soul, and 'incurable' soul (10.615a5-c2) occupy the two extremes, whilst the other categories exist at various points along this spectrum.⁵²⁸ The 'philosopher's' soul dwells closest to Knowledge, experiences the largest ascent, and that pleasure most akin to psychic pleasure ('true' pleasure). The 'incurable' soul experiences the contrary – it dwells closest to Ignorance, experiences the largest descent, and psychic pain ('true' pain, 10.615c1-3, 615c4-616b1).⁵²⁹

It is for this reason that I must disagree with scholars, such as Edmonds III (2012) who argues that Plato uses "a threat of hell-fire" to convince his readers that "justice pays 'in the end.'"⁵³⁰ This I understand to mean that Plato is using the threat of physical pain in the afterlife as the "greatest of punishments," in order to, essentially, scare his readers into acting a particular way. First, I proffer that such arguments are too entrenched within Western Christianity and the popular image of "Hell" as a place of eternal torment and the worst things a human mind could imagine (e.g. Dante's *Inferno*, or Milton's *Paradise Lost*). This Western Christian tradition leads many Western scholars into assuming that any conception of the afterlife that proffers a system of punishment and reward for some kind of disembodied soul, must rely on the existence of "hell-fire," since this is ultimately the default position of their conceptual framework.

Second, as I believe I have shown above, the greatest "punishment" Plato can think of is being as close as possible to Ignorant on the Knowledge-Ignorance spectrum. Rather than undergoing some kind of physical suffering, Plato presents an Incurable soul as being a soul forever in "the dark" far away from the "love" of wisdom/knowledge, and the "light" of the "truth," possessing none of the

⁵²⁶ Cf. *Politeia* 9.584c-585a.

⁵²⁷ Cf. *Nomoi* 10.903b-903e.

⁵²⁸ This may explain their initial exclusion from Er's account, necessitating for the separate description.

⁵²⁹ Cf. White (1979): 263-4, 265-6; McPherran (2006): 258.

⁵³⁰ Edmonds III (2012): 165.

“good.”⁵³¹ I admit that just as Western scholars are influenced in their conception of the afterlife by the culture and society to which they belong, so it is true that I may be influenced by the culture and society to which I belong. In my case, I belong come from a predominately Eastern Christian culture and society, one which conceives of “Hell” differently to Western Christianity; rather than eternal “hell-fire,” an Eastern Christian “Hell” is more a place of eternal darkness, far away from the loving embrace, and the truth of Jesus Christ.

Nonetheless, having enumerated this potential influence on my reasoning, I think Plato’s description of the punishments and rewards that await in the afterlife, in addition to the Knowledge-Ignorance spectrum I have enumerated, and the existence of Incurable souls, are consistent with that understanding of the “greatest of punishments” I have outlined above. This understanding, in turn, emphasizes the importance of the Platonic Wager, since the *only* way in which one can avoid this “greatest of punishments” is by accepting the Wager, and following the Sokratic way of life – one devoted to truth and knowledge.

(2.10) The *Theaitetos*

⁵³¹ See also Rowe (2012): 195 who argues, in reference to the *Gorgias* myth, “Socratic ‘punishment,’ as I have argued, is Socratic dialectic: as Socrates himself puts it at 505c3-4”; and “Socrates claims that the [*Gorgias*] myth, for him, is a logos, because it says what is true. An what it says, above all, is that the unjust suffer, are damaged, harmed, and go on being harmed, by the very fact that they commit injustice ... Tyrants like Archelaus are supposed already to have plumbed the depths of bad judgement and ignorance. What makes their lives so bad is just the distance that separates them from the good and wise life” (page 197). I believe that Rowe’s arguments here support that which I have argued for above. See too Pender (2012): 199 who, in reference to the geographic account of the afterlife in the *Phaidon*, argues “my view [is] that the myth presents five distinct regions of the true earth, where the different terrains and climates match the moral condition and cognitive capacities of the souls dwelling there”; and Pender (2012): 217, “The most significant outcome of this further application is the identification of Tartarus as a place where the soul cannot philosophize.” Cf. Pender (2012): 209-210, 216-217, 220, 223, 227, 229, and especially Pender’s refutation of Annas’ analysis of the *Phaidon* from pp. 231-232; indeed, I highly recommend Pender’s article for a more in-depth application of the above understanding of punishment and reward to the eschatological myth of the *Phaidon*.

(2.10.1) 150a-151d

Throughout Chapter 2, one idea appears consistently – the idea that the philosopher, through discussion and dialectic, effects ‘living’ judgements of the soul. In this way, the philosopher (or maybe ‘Philosophy’ in the abstract), helps an individual identify the fallacious beliefs in their soul. These fallacious beliefs, according to Sokrates, constitute ignorance, and it is this ignorance that leads to the perpetration of injustice. This particular conclusion Sokrates bases on the notion that one does not desire what is evil, therefore, one cannot commit injustice willingly. Only through ignorance may one commit such an act, mistakenly believing that what they desire is ‘good’ when it is not.

The philosopher’s ability to examine an individual’s beliefs, and identify any ignorance that may exist within the individual’s soul, affords that individual the opportunity to rectify their ignorance – to ‘cure’ themselves. Why would it be necessary to avail one’s soul of ignorance? From an ethical perspective, Sokrates argues the individual will be less likely to commit a future injustice, based upon this present ignorance. In this way, one lives a life closer to justice, free of wickedness and impiety, and all those things encompassing the category ‘evil.’ From an epistemological perspective, the recognition of one’s own ignorance, Sokrates believes, will exhort and incite one to engage in discussion, and investigate ‘the truth.’⁵³²

Finally, from a metaphysical perspective, identifying an individual’s ignorance, prior to their death, ensures they are afforded the opportunity to correct any injustice they may have committed because of this ignorance, and, in learning of their ignorance, to refrain from committing future injustice. This ensures their soul arrives at the judgement in Hades in as ‘pure’ a state as possible, free from injustice, and in the possession of something other than ignorance. Only in this way may the soul, according to Plato, achieve its *telos* (see above). Of course, both the ethical and

⁵³² Cf. Sokrates’ discussion with Menon’s slave, *Menon* 82bff. Sayers (1999): 123, 127.

epistemological perspectives exist independent of the metaphysical. Yet, it is through this metaphysical thesis that Plato unites these disparate threads, in order to justify the need to avail oneself of ignorance, and live a just life.

The so-called 'Socratic' dialogues, in particular, present a Sokrates actively engaging in this form of 'living' judgement of the soul. He demonstrates to various interlocutors the 'ignorance' of their beliefs; their *aporia* serving to instigate their corrective punishment, beginning the removal of this ignorance, and the desire to investigate 'the truth.' In addition, the various eschatological accounts Sokrates relates, e.g. the Myth of Er (Chapter 2.9.4), serve to compliment these 'living' judgements, by exhorting the individual to action:

- (i) to choose a life free of injustice and ignorance;
- (ii) to choose to discover whether they possess ignorance within their soul;
- (iii) to choose to engage in philosophical discussion, and test their beliefs; and
- (iv) to choose to investigate 'the truth'; rectify their ignorance, and avoid the committing of future injustice.

The role given to philosophy and the philosopher in identifying the ignorance within the soul culminates in Sokrates' so-called 'art of midwifery' (ἐμῆ τέχνη τῆς μαιεύσεως, 150b6), first introduced in the *Theaitetos* (150a1-151d6), though this might be retroactively applied to the 'Socratic' dialogues in particular.

The Socratic Art of Midwifery

(150a) ΣΩ. Οὐ γάρ. ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἄδικόν τε καὶ ἄτεχνον συναγωγὴν ἀνδρῶς καὶ γυναικός, ἧ δὴ προαγωγία ὄνομα, φεύγουσι καὶ τὴν προμνηστικὴν ἄτε σεμναὶ οὔσαι αἱ μαῖαι, φοβούμεναι μὴ εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν αἰτίαν διὰ ταύτην ἐμπέσωσιν· ἐπεὶ ταῖς γε ὄντως μαίαις μόναις που προσήκει καὶ προμνησασθαι ὀρθῶς.
ΘΕΑΙ. Φαίνεται.

ΣΩ. Τὸ μὲν τοίνυν τῶν μαιῶν τοσοῦτον, ἔλαττον δὲ τοῦ ἔμοῦ δράματος. οὐ γὰρ πρόσεστι γυναιξιν ἐνίοτε μὲν (b) εἶδωλα τίκτειν, ἔστι δ' ὅτε ἀληθινά, τοῦτο δὲ μὴ ῥάδιον εἶναι διαγνῶναι. εἰ γὰρ προσῆν, μέγιστόν τε καὶ κάλλιστον ἔργον ἦν ἂν ταῖς μαίαις τὸ κρίνειν τὸ ἀληθές τε καὶ μὴ· ἢ οὐκ οἶει;

ΘΕΑΙ. Ἐγωγε.

ΣΩ. Τῆ δέ γ' ἐμῆ τέχνη τῆς μαιεύσεως τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ὑπάρχει ὅσα ἐκείναις, διαφέρει δὲ τῷ τε ἄνδρας ἀλλὰ μὴ γυναικας μαιεύεσθαι καὶ τῷ τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν τικτούσας ἐπισκοπεῖν ἀλλὰ μὴ τὰ σώματα. μέγιστον δὲ τοῦτ' ἐνι (c) τῆ ἡμετέρα τέχνη, βασανίζειν δυνατὸν εἶναι παντὶ τρόπῳ πότερον εἶδωλον καὶ ψεῦδος ἀποτίκτει τοῦ νέου ἢ διάνοια ἢ γόνιμόν τε καὶ ἀληθές. ἐπεὶ τόδε γε καὶ ἐμοὶ ὑπάρχει ὅπερ ταῖς μαίαις· ἄγονός εἰμι σοφίας, καὶ ὅπερ ἤδη πολλοὶ μοι ὠνείδισαν, ὡς τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐρωτῶ, αὐτὸς δὲ οὐδὲν ἀποφαίνομαι περὶ οὐδενὸς διὰ τὸ μηδὲν ἔχειν σοφόν, ἀληθές ὀνειδίζουσιν. τὸ δὲ αἴτιον τούτου τόδε· μαιεύεσθαι με ὁ θεὸς ἀναγκάζει, γεννᾶν δὲ ἀπεκώλυσεν. εἰμὶ δὴ οὖν αὐτὸς (d) μὲν οὐ πάνυ τι σοφός, οὐδέ τί μοι ἔστιν εὕρημα τοιοῦτον γεγονὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς ἔκγονον· οἱ δ' ἐμοὶ συγγιγνώμενοι τὸ μὲν πρῶτον φαίνονται ἐνιοὶ μὲν καὶ πάνυ ἀμαθεῖς, πάντες δὲ προϊούσης τῆς συνουσίας, οἷσπερ ἂν ὁ θεὸς παρεῖκη, θαυμαστὸν ὅσον ἐπιδιδόντες, ὡς αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις δοκοῦσι· καὶ τοῦτο ἐναργές ὅτι παρ' ἐμοῦ οὐδὲν πώποτε μαθόντες, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ παρ' αὐτῶν πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ εὐρόντες τε καὶ τεκόντες. τῆς μέντοι μαιείας ὁ θεὸς τε καὶ ἐγὼ (e) αἴτιος. ὧδε δὲ δῆλον· πολλοὶ ἤδη τοῦτο ἀγνοήσαντες καὶ ἑαυτοὺς αἰτιασάμενοι, ἐμοῦ δὲ καταφρονήσαντες, ἢ αὐτοὶ ἢ ὑπ' ἄλλων πεισθέντες ἀπῆλθον πρῶταίτερον τοῦ δέοντος, ἀπελθόντες δὲ τὰ τε λοιπὰ ἐξήμβλωσαν διὰ πονηρὰν συνουσίαν καὶ τὰ ὑπ' ἐμοῦ μαιευθέντα κακῶς τρέφοντες

ἀπώλεσαν, ψευδῆ καὶ εἰδῶλα περὶ πλείονος ποιησάμενοι
τοῦ ἀληθοῦς, τελευτῶντες δ' αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις
151.

(a) ἔδοξαν ἀμαθεῖς εἶναι. ὧν εἷς γέγονεν Ἀριστείδης ὁ Λυσι-
μάχου καὶ ἄλλοι πάνυ πολλοί· οὕς, ὅταν πάλιν ἔλθωσι
δεόμενοι τῆς ἐμῆς συνουσίας καὶ θαυμαστά δρῶντες, ἐνίοις
μὲν τὸ γινόμενόν μοι δαιμόνιον ἀποκωλύει συνεῖναι, ἐνίοις
δὲ ἔῃ, καὶ πάλιν οὕτοι ἐπιδιδόασιν. πάσχουσι δὲ δὴ οἱ ἐμοὶ
συγγιγνόμενοι καὶ τοῦτο ταύτῳ ταῖς τικτούσας· ὠδίνουσι
γὰρ καὶ ἀπορίας ἐμπίμπλονται νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας πολὺ
μᾶλλον ἢ 'κεῖναι· ταύτην δὲ τὴν ὠδῖνα ἐγείρειν τε καὶ
(b) ἀποπαύειν ἢ ἐμὴ τέχνη δύναται. καὶ οὕτοι μὲν δὴ οὕτως.
ἐνίοις δὲ, ὧ Θεαίτητε, οἷ ἄν μοι μὴ δόξωσι πως ἐγκύμονες
εἶναι, γνοὺς ὅτι οὐδὲν ἐμοῦ δέονται, πάνυ εὐμενῶς προμνῶμαι
καί, σὺν θεῷ εἰπεῖν, πάνυ ἱκανῶς τοπάζω οἷς ἄν συγγεγό-
μενοι ὄναιτο· ὧν πολλοὺς μὲν δὴ ἐξέδωκα Προδίκῳ, πολλοὺς
δὲ ἄλλοις σοφοῖς τε καὶ θεσπεσίοις ἀνδράσι. ταῦτα δὴ
σοι, ὧ ἄριστε, ἔνεκα τοῦδε ἐμήκυνα· ὑποπτεύω σε, ὥσπερ
καὶ αὐτὸς οἶει, ὠδίνειν τι κυοῦντα ἔνδον. προσφέρου οὖν
(c) πρὸς με ὡς πρὸς μαίαις ὑὸν καὶ αὐτὸν μαιευτικόν, καὶ ἂ ἄν
ἔρωτῶ προθυμοῦ ὅπως οἷός τ' εἶ οὕτως ἀποκρίνασθαι· καὶ
ἐὰν ἄρα σκοπούμενός τι ὧν ἄν λέγῃς ἠγήσωμαι εἰδῶλον
καὶ μὴ ἀληθές, εἶτα ὑπεξαίρωμαι καὶ ἀποβάλλω, μὴ ἀγρίαινε
ὥσπερ αἱ πρωτοτόκοι περὶ τὰ παιδία. πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη,
ὧ θαυμάσιε, πρὸς με οὕτω διετέθησαν, ὥστε ἀτεχνῶς δάκνειν
ἔτοιμοι εἶναι, ἐπειδάν τινα λῆρον αὐτῶν ἀφαιρῶμαι, καὶ οὐκ
οἶονταί με εὐνοίᾳ τοῦτο ποιεῖν, πόρρω ὄντες τοῦ εἰδέναι ὅτι
(d) οὐδεὶς θεὸς δύσοντας ἀνθρώπους, οὐδ' ἐγὼ δυσνοίᾳ τοιοῦτον
οὐδὲν δρῶ, ἀλλὰ μοι ψευδός τε συγχωρῆσαι καὶ ἀληθές
ἀφανίσαι οὐδαμῶς θέμις. πάλιν δὴ οὖν ἐξ ἀρχῆς, ὧ
Θεαίτητε, ὅτι ποτ' ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμη, πειρῶ λέγειν· ὡς δ' οὐχ
οἷός τ' εἶ, μηδέποτ' εἴπῃς. ἐὰν γὰρ θεὸς ἐθέλῃ καὶ ἀνδρίζῃ,

οἷός τ' ἔσῃ.

[LOEB translation:] "Soc. No; but because there is a wrongful and unscientific way of bringing men and women together, which is called pandering, the midwives, since they are women of dignity and worth, avoid match-making, through fear of falling under the charge of pandering. And yet the true midwife is the only proper match-maker.

Theaet. It seems so.

Soc. So great, then, is the importance of midwives; but their function is less important than mine. For women do not, like my patients, bring forth at one time real children and at another mere images which it is difficult to distinguish from the real. For if they did, the greatest and noblest part of the work of the midwives would be in distinguishing between the real and the false. Do you not think so?

Theaet. Yes, I do.

Soc. All that is true of their art of midwifery is true also of mine, but mine differs from theirs in being practised upon men, not women, and in tending their souls in labour, not their bodies. But the greatest thing about my art is this, that it can test in every way whether the mind of the young man is bringing forth a mere image, an imposture, or a real and genuine offspring. For I have this in common with the midwives: I am sterile in point of wisdom, and the reproach which has often been brought against me, that I question others but make no reply myself about anything, because I have no wisdom in me, is a true reproach; and the reason of it is this: the god compels me to act as midwife, but has never allowed me to bring forth. I am, then, not at all a wise person myself, nor have I any wise invention, the offspring born of my own soul; but those who associate with me, although at first some of them seem very ignorant, yet, as our acquaintance advances, all of them to whom the god is gracious make wonderful progress, not only in their own opinion, but in that of others as well. And it is clear that they do this, not because they have ever learned anything from me, but because they have found in themselves many fair things and have brought them forth. But the delivery is due to the god and me. And the proof of it is this : many before now, being ignorant of this fact and thinking that they were themselves the cause of their success, but despising me, have gone away from me sooner than they ought, whether of their own accord or because others persuaded them to do so. Then, after they have gone away, they have miscarried thenceforth on account of evil companionship, and the offspring which they had brought forth through my assistance they have reared so badly that they have lost it; they have considered impostures and images of more importance than the truth, and at last it was evident to themselves, as well as to others, that they were ignorant. One of these was Aristeidēs, the son of Lysimachus, and there are very many more. When such men come back and beg me, as they do, with wonderful eagerness to let them join me again, the spiritual monitor that comes to me forbids me to associate with some of them, but allows me to converse with others, and these again make, progress. Now those who associate with me are in this matter also like women in childbirth; they are in pain and are full of trouble night and day, much more than are the women; and my art can arouse this pain and cause it to cease. Well, that is what happens to them. But in some cases, Theaetetus, when they do not seem to me to be exactly pregnant, since I see that they have no need of me, I act with perfect goodwill as match-maker and, under God, I guess very

successfully with whom they can associate profitably, and I have handed over many of them to Prodicus, and many to other wise and inspired men.

Now I have said all this to you at such length, my dear boy, because I suspect that you, as you yourself believe, are in pain because you are pregnant with something within you. Apply, then, to me, remembering that I am the son of a midwife and have myself a midwife's gifts, and do your best to answer the questions I ask as I ask them. And if, when I have examined any of the things you say, it should prove that I think it is a mere image and not real, and therefore quietly take it from you and throw it away, do not be angry as women are when they are deprived of their first offspring. For many, my dear friend, before this have got into such a state of mind towards me that they are actually ready to bite me, if I take some foolish notion away from them, and they do not believe that I do this in kindness, since they are far from knowing that no god is unkind to mortals, and that I do nothing of this sort from unkindness, either, and that it is quite out of the question for me to allow an imposture or to destroy the true. And so, Theaetetus, begin again and try to tell us what knowledge is. And never say that you are unable to do so; for if God wills it and gives you courage, you will be able."

The basic aim of this Sokratic midwifery is to distinguish between 'true' and 'false' offspring (150a8-b4). A regular midwife helps a woman to deliver her offspring; however, the midwife is unable to distinguish whether the offspring is 'true,' both in terms of legitimacy and concerning its nature.⁵³³ Were the 'natal' midwife to possess an understanding of these things, then the midwife would be able to determine whether:

- (a) they have performed a just act in assisting in the birth of that particular child, i.e. whether it is of benefit to the community that this child has been born; and
- (b) the child they have helped to birth is 'truly' worthy of life, or whether it is not better both for the child's soul and the souls of others, for the child to die before it commits a grave injustice.

In the case of this Sokratic midwifery, on the other hand, the philosopher-midwife is able to determine whether the offspring of the soul, i.e. one's beliefs and opinions, are 'true.' The philosopher-midwife hears what the individual has to say, ensuring they study the individual's soul as thoroughly as possible. In this way, the philosopher-midwife distinguishes between:

⁵³³ Cf. *Gorgias* 511dff.

- (1) that belief that is 'true' and of benefit to the soul, thus warranting further care and nurture, in order that it might lead to a more just and knowledgeable arrangement of the soul; and
- (2) that belief that is 'false' and of harm to the soul, thus warranting immediate erasure (or rectification), lest it precipitates a future injustice or harm (151b6-d6).⁵³⁴

This Sokratic midwifery, however, assumes two particular suppositions:

- (i) the philosopher knows the 'truth,' (or at least 'the false'), or else they will be unable to distinguish between what is 'true' and what is 'false';
- (ii) the philosopher knows (in a sense) the future, or else they will be unable to determine whether a particular belief will cause more future harm than benefit, thereby warranting correction.

The first assumption derives from the well-known Delphic maxim, 'Know Thyself',⁵³⁵ a maxim adopted by Sokrates in the notion that the unexamined life is not worth living (*Apologia* 38a5-6). If the philosopher-midwife is to know themselves, they must inevitably know whether their beliefs are 'true' or 'false.' In the case of Sokrates, for example, he exclaims that he does not know. Nevertheless, in knowing that he does not know, he knows, at least, what is not-true. For example, if A is not-true; B is not-true, and C is not-true; then one knows that ABC is not-true, thus allowing for D to be 'less' not-true than previous attempts.⁵³⁶ Knowing what is not-true allows the philosopher-midwife to identify the falsity of another's beliefs through comparison to this knowledge of what is not-true.

In the *Theaitetos*, Sokrates defines a true belief as consisting of two elements: a true judgement, and an account of this true judgement (201c-210d). The philosopher-midwife is able to combine their knowledge of what is not-true with their knowledge of philosophical method, e.g. dialectic, *diairesis*, and *elenchos*, in order to identify structural weaknesses in another's account of their beliefs. This

⁵³⁴ *Nomoi* 2.661c-e.

⁵³⁵ *Kharmides* 164d; *Nomoi* 11.923a; *Phaidros* 230a; *Philebos* 48c; *Protagoras* 343b.

⁵³⁶ Cf. Kuhn (1970 2nd ed): *passim*.

allows the philosopher-midwife to identify another's beliefs as 'false' by either declaring it a 'false' judgement, or as a problematic account. In either case, the individual's belief cannot be declared a 'true' belief, as defined in the *Theaitetos* (201c-210d).

The second assumption appears as though it requires a knowledge of the future.⁵³⁷ Yet, this knowledge of 'the future' is not so much foreknowledge in a religious esoteric sense, but more prediction in a modern scientific sense. In this case, in knowing what is not-true, and utilizing the philosophical method, the philosopher-midwife is able to extrapolate, in a reasoned manner, whether a particular belief is likely to cause future harm to the soul. For example, a modern scientist knows that if one drops an apple from a height on the earth, the apple will never fall upwards. Consequently, whenever an individual seeks to drop an apple from height on the earth, the scientist, in effect, 'predicts the future' by reasoning that the apple will not fall upwards.

Likewise, the philosopher-midwife might reason that Homer's anthropomorphic descriptions of the gods are not-true.⁵³⁸ So, were the philosopher-midwife to detect this belief within the soul of an individual, either as a 'true' judgement or as part of an account, then the philosopher-midwife might extrapolate from this that the belief of the individual is impious. Given the impiety of this notion, the philosopher-midwife will 'predict the future,'⁵³⁹ concluding that this belief is likely to cause future harm to the soul, either as the source of an unjust act, or as the reason for the soul's future punishment in Hades.⁵⁴⁰ Therefore, this particular belief must be considered fallacious, and extinguished from the individual's soul.

⁵³⁷ Cf. the *Symposion* 188b.

⁵³⁸ E.g. *Euthyphron passim.*, *Phaidros* 246b-e.

⁵³⁹ This is possible if one has knowledge of the Forms – believed to be immortal and changeless; for the Forms were true in the past, are true in the present, and will be true in the future. Therefore, one who possesses knowledge of Justice, for example, will be capable of determining what was just in the past, what is just in the present, and what will be just in the future, effectively 'predicting the future.' Cf. the use of mathematical formulae in modern physics, which allow one who possesses knowledge of these formulae to 'predict the future,' since, like the Forms, they are understood to be immortal and changeless truths. Thus, whether one wants to calculate the mass of the sun billions of years ago, in the present, or billions of years in the future, one will utilize the same mathematical formula.

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. Vlastos (1999b): 56-77 on Sokrates characterization as the pious individual, *par excellence*.

The above understanding of the 'art of midwifery' receives further support in Sokrates description of how this form of midwifery should be carried out:

- (a) This kind of midwifery attends to men rather than women, or maybe men as well as women (150b6-8).
- (b) It consists of a close inspection of the soul, rather than the body (150b8-9).⁵⁴¹
- (c) It requires the ability to apply all possible tests to the soul's offspring, in order to determine whether the offspring is an 'image' or 'likeness,' i.e. a falsity, or 'true' (150b9-d2).
- (d) Regardless of whether the soul 'births' a truth or a falsity, continued exposure to this midwifery results in positive progress for the soul (150d2-8).
- (e) On the other hand, those who abandon this form of midwifery, and leave the company of the philosopher-midwife, fall into a state of ignorance, and the potential 'truths' in their soul are 'miscarried' or 'neglected' (150d8-151b6).⁵⁴²

This description emphasizes the similarity between this form of midwifery and the judgement of the soul by the 'true' judges, as outlined in the *Gorgias* (Chapter 2.4.4). In this case, that it consists of a close and intimate examination of the individual's soul in order to determine its arrangement, including the extent to which it is ignorant. The philosopher-midwife, in this regard, functions similar to the 'true' judge in Hades, effecting a 'living judgement of the soul. Yet, it is not enough merely for an individual to recognize the ignorance that exists within their soul, but they must continue to investigate and search for the 'truth.' Only in this continued search for truth and knowledge may the individual's soul ensure it never descends into ignorance, since even the most just of individuals may fall into a state of ignorance should they cease to investigate, and allow their beliefs to 'miscarry.'

The philosopher-midwife's soul serves the further function, in this case, to encourage and exhort the individual not to allow their beliefs to become neglected. In a sense, the philosopher-midwife must,

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Chapter 2.3.

⁵⁴² See *Theaitetos* 151aff.; Sokrates *daimonion* prevents him from allowing certain former students to return to his tutelage, presumably so that the ignorance in the souls of these former pupils do not pollute the soul of Sokrates.

therefore, descend back into the cave, and guide others to learn for themselves what is an illusion (a shadow on the wall), and foster an environment within their soul conducive to the recollection of true belief.⁵⁴³ When considered in this manner, the philosopher-midwife evokes the ideal of the modern university educator, who seeks to guide the student in their own search for knowledge, and helps to counsel the student, should their search begin to err. In order to perform this task, the university educator, like the philosopher-midwife, does not need a complete knowledge of what is 'true,' but needs only know what is not-true, and what is likely 'true' belief.⁵⁴⁴

(2.11) The *Nomoi*

(2.11.1) 5.731b-732b

(731b3) θυμοειδῆ μὲν δὴ χρὴ πάντα ἄνδρα εἶναι, πρᾶον δὲ
ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα. τὰ γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων χαλεπὰ καὶ δυσίατα
ἢ καὶ τὸ παράπαν ἀνίατα ἀδικήματα οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως ἐκ-
φυγεῖν ἢ μαχόμενον καὶ ἀμυνόμενον νικῶντα καὶ τῷ μηδὲν
ἀνιέναι κολάζοντα, τοῦτο δὲ ἄνευ θυμοῦ γενναίου ψυχὴ πᾶσα
(c) ἀδύνατος δρᾶν. τὰ δ' αὖ τῶν ὅσοι ἀδικοῦσιν μὲν, ἰατὰ
δέ, γιγνώσκειν χρὴ πρῶτον μὲν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ἄδικος οὐχ ἐκῶν
ἄδικος· τῶν γὰρ μεγίστων κακῶν οὐδεὶς οὐδαμοῦ οὐδὲν
ἐκῶν κεκτηῖτο ἂν ποτε, πολὺ δὲ ἦκιστα ἐν τοῖς τῶν ἑαυτοῦ
τιμιωτάτοις. ψυχὴ δ', ὡς εἵπομεν, ἀληθεία γέ ἐστιν πᾶσιν
τιμιώτατον· ἐν οὖν τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ τὸ μέγιστον κακὸν οὐδεὶς
ἐκῶν μὴ ποτε λάβῃ καὶ ζῆ διὰ βίου κεκτημένος αὐτό. ἀλλὰ
ἐλεεινὸς μὲν πάντως ὁ γε ἄδικος καὶ ὁ τὰ κακὰ ἔχων, ἐλεεῖν
(d) δὲ τὸν μὲν ἰάσιμα ἔχοντα ἐγχωρεῖ καὶ ἀνείργοντα τὸν θυμὸν

⁵⁴³ Cf. *Politeia* 7.514-520a.

⁵⁴⁴ See also McDowell (1973): 116-117.

πραϋνεῖν καὶ μὴ ἀκραχολοῦντα γυναικείως πικραινόμενον
διατελεῖν, τῷ δ' ἀκράτως καὶ ἀπαραμυθίως πλημμελεῖ καὶ
κακῶ ἐφίεναι δεῖ τὴν ὀργήν· διὸ δὴ θυμοειδῆ πρέπειν καὶ
πρᾶξόν φαμεν ἐκάστοτε εἶναι δεῖν τὸν ἀγαθόν.

Πάντων δὲ μέγιστον κακῶν ἀνθρώποις τοῖς πολλοῖς ἔμ-
φυτον ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἐστίν, οὗ πᾶς αὐτῷ συγγνώμην ἔχων
(ε) ἀποφυγὴν οὐδεμίαν μηχανᾶται· τοῦτο δ' ἐστίν ὃ λέγουσιν
ὡς φίλος αὐτῷ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος φύσει τέ ἐστίν καὶ ὀρθῶς
ἔχει τὸ δεῖν εἶναι τοιοῦτον. τὸ δὲ ἀληθείᾳ γε πάντων
ἀμαρτημάτων διὰ τὴν σφόδρα ἑαυτοῦ φιλίαν αἴτιον ἐκάστῳ
γίνεται ἐκάστοτε. τυφλοῦται γὰρ περὶ τὸ φιλούμενον ὁ
φιλῶν, ὥστε τὰ δίκαια καὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ καλὰ κακῶς
732.

(α) κρίνει, τὸ αὐτοῦ πρὸ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἀεὶ τιμᾶν δεῖν ἡγούμενος·
οὔτε γὰρ ἑαυτὸν οὔτε τὰ ἑαυτοῦ χρῆ τὸν γε μέγαν ἄνδρα
ἐσόμενον στέργειν, ἀλλὰ τὰ δίκαια, ἐάντε παρ' αὐτῷ ἐάντε
παρ' ἄλλῳ μᾶλλον πραττόμενα τυγχάνῃ. ἐκ ταύτου δὲ
ἀμαρτήματος τούτου καὶ τὸ τὴν ἀμαθίαν τὴν παρ' αὐτῷ
δοκεῖν σοφίαν εἶναι γέγονε πᾶσιν· ὅθεν οὐκ εἰδότες ὡς ἔπος
εἶπεῖν οὐδέν, οἰόμεθα τὰ πάντα εἰδέναι, οὐκ ἐπιτρέποντες δὲ
(β) ἄλλοις ἢ μὴ ἐπιστάμεθα πράττειν, ἀναγκαζόμεθα ἀμαρτάνειν
αὐτοὶ πράττοντες. διὸ πάντα ἄνθρωπον χρῆ φεύγειν τὸ
σφόδρα φιλεῖν αὐτόν, τὸν δ' ἑαυτοῦ βελτίῳ διώκειν ἀεὶ,
μηδεμίαν αἰσχύνην ἐπὶ τῷ τοιούτῳ πρόσθεν ποιούμενον.

[LOEB translation:] "Ath. Every man ought to be at once passionate and gentle in the highest degree. For, on the one hand, it is impossible to escape from other men's wrongdoings, when they are cruel and hard to remedy, or even wholly irremediable, otherwise than by victorious fighting and self-defence, and by punishing most rigorously; and this no soul can achieve without noble passion. But, on the other hand, when men commit wrongs which are remediable, one should, in the first place, recognize that every wrongdoer is a wrongdoer involuntarily; for no one anywhere would ever voluntarily acquire any of the greatest evils, least of all in his own most precious possessions. And most precious in very truth to every man is, as we have said, the soul. No one, therefore, will voluntarily admit into this most precious thing the greatest evil and live possessing it all his life long. Now while in general the wrongdoer and he that has these evils are to be pitied, it is permissible to show pity to the man that has evils that are remediable, and to abate one's

passion and treat him gently, and not to keep on raging like a scolding wife; but in dealing with the man who is totally and obstinately perverse and wicked one must give free course to wrath. Wherefore we affirm that it behoves the good man to be always at once passionate and gentle.

There is an evil, great above all others, which most men have, implanted in their souls, and which each one of them excuses in himself and makes no effort to avoid. It is the evil indicated in the saying that every man is by nature a lover of self, and that it is right that he should be such. But the truth is that the cause of all sins in every case lies in the person's excessive love of self. For the lover is blind in his view of the object loved, so that he is a bad judge of things just and good and noble, in that he deems himself bound always to value what is his own more than what is true; for the man who is to attain the title of "Great" must be devoted neither to himself nor to his own belongings, but to things just, whether they happen to be actions of his own or rather those of another man. And it is from this same sin that every man has derived the further notion that his own folly is wisdom; whence it comes about that though we know practically nothing, we fancy that we know everything; and since we will not entrust to others the doing of things we do not understand, we necessarily go wrong in doing them ourselves. Wherefore every man must shun excessive self-love, and ever follow after him that is better than himself, allowing no shame to prevent him from so doing."

The theory of punishment presented by Sokrates (Chapter 2.4), and Protagoras (Chapter 2.6), is taken up by the Athenian here in the *Nomoi*. For the proposed Kretan colony, it is this conception of punishment the Athenian argues should be instituted. This presents a consistent conception of punishment from the *Gorgias* of the early period, to the *Nomoi* of the late. However, whereas in prior discussions, punishment was discussed in a more abstract sense, the Athenian, in the *Nomoi*, attempts to take this conception of punishment and put it into practice. In this way, the Athenian demonstrates that it is possible for this theory of punishment to exist beyond theory and the hypothetical, but to constitute the basis for practical application in a civic community.

Accordingly, the Athenian's theory of the proposed colony's system of punishment relies on the following familiar assumptions:

- (1) All desire what is not evil;
- (2) All who commit injustice, do so unwillingly;
- (3) This 'unwillingness' is the result of ignorance (5.731c1-3).⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. Chapter 2.4.

The Athenian transforms these assumptions into the basis of law, and since injustice, according to the law, originates in ignorance (5.732d6-732b4),⁵⁴⁶ so the Athenian introduces into the proposed law the two categories of ignorant soul introduced in the *Gorgias* (Chapter 2.4): the ‘curable’ and the ‘incurable.’ In this way, these once ethical, epistemological, and metaphysical categories of soul become legal civic categories also.

Punishment in this proposed colony will not utilize punishment for punishment’s sake, or as a means of exacting vengeance. Rather, punishment in this colony will consist, in the first instance, of corrective punishment. Injustice, according to the law, is the result of ignorance, and so civic punishment should be directed towards a rectification of this ignorance. This rectification is achieved through education and learning, e.g. the law sentences the ‘curable’ atheist to a course of educational correction, after which they are free to re-enter civic society, being, in theory, cured of their ignorance and so unlikely to commit a future injustice.⁵⁴⁷

However, as in the *Gorgias* (Chapter 2.4), there are some individuals for whom education is ineffective (5.731b3-c1). These individuals may either not pay attention to their corrective education, or they may fail to absorb this learning (5.731d3-5). Such individuals, according to the Athenian, exert a conscious choice to do so, and because they actively choose to disregard their correction, the Athenian reasons it is unlikely for them ever to accept the ‘cure’ of their ignorance (5.732b5-d7). This individual then falls into the category of ‘incurable,’ and in this case, the community will be justified in executing this individual. The individual’s unwillingness to accept the ‘cure’ for their ignorance, corresponds to an acceptance of injustice. Thus, by allowing this ‘incurable’ individual to live, one is putting the wider community at future risk, either from the performance of a great act of injustice against the community, e.g. a violent revolt; or by ‘infecting’

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. *Nomoi* 9.860c-861a, 9.863a-e, 9.869e-870e.

⁵⁴⁷ *Nomoi* 7.797d-e, 9.862c-863a, 10.907d-909d. Cf. Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 64-65.

other individuals, and inciting or deceiving them into committing injustice themselves (5.732b5-d7).⁵⁴⁸

(2.12) Conclusion

A human being (A) is born. According to Plato, this human being is nothing more than the amalgamation of body (A₁) and soul (A₂). Human being (A) lives their life and then dies. Death, according to Plato, is nothing more than the separation of body (A₁) from soul (A₂). Upon the soul's departure, body (A₁) resumes its natural state of inanimate existence. Soul (A₂), on the other hand, resumes its natural state of existence – immortal, incorporeal, and immaterial. As an immortal entity, the soul, according to Plato, undergoes a change in location, travelling from here to a place akin to it in nature. This place – Hades – is immortal, incorporeal, immaterial, and divine; here, all disembodied souls gather, and exist together like a community. Like the ideal *polis* of the *Politeia*, this community is governed by a philosopher-king, Plouton,⁵⁴⁹ in conjunction with a trio of judges – Minos, Aiakos, and Rhadamanthos – who serve as both guardians of the *polis* and the law. In this way, the judges ensure the maintenance of the perfect order and harmony that belongs to this divine and immortal community.⁵⁵⁰

The soul, (A₂), arrives at these judges, who are located outside of the *polis* of Hades, so as not to give any unjust soul the opportunity to disrupt the perfect order and harmony of this psychic community.⁵⁵¹ Here, soul (A₂) is judged; and the judges categorize it as being either just or unjust; pure or impure. This establishes the basis of the judgement as being the extent to which a soul is just

⁵⁴⁸ *Nomoi* 9.860e-861, 9.862e-863a, 10.907d-909d, 12.957d-958a.

⁵⁴⁹ E.g. *Kratylos* 403aff.; Baxter (1992): 84n.134.

⁵⁵⁰ Taylor (1991): 90-91, 93, 96.

⁵⁵¹ Cf. Allen (2000): 99ff.

and pure, virtuous and knowledgeable.⁵⁵² Yet, knowledge and ignorance are not strict binaries, each soul being either knowledgeable or ignorant; but rather, they constitute two contraries on a spectrum from the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge, to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance. The judge's classification of soul (A_2) depends on its position along this spectrum:

- (a) If soul (A_2) is adjudged knowledgeable, then the judges determine that it lies closer to Knowledge than to Ignorance.
 - a. The judges then make a further distinction, determining whether soul (A_2) is that of a philosopher or not.
 - b. If soul (A_2) does not belong to a philosopher, then the judges adduce it belongs to an individual who was just, but who possessed no knowledge of why they were just, e.g. the individual who acts just through habituation.⁵⁵³ In this case, soul (A_2) receives its appropriate reward, undergoing the kind of pleasure applicable to its understanding of the term. So, if soul (A_2) only understands pleasure in terms of the bodily, then it receives the bodily type of pleasure, defined as the anticipation of good things.
 - c. If soul (A_2) does belong to a philosopher, then the judges adduce it belongs to an individual who was just, but who possessed a knowledge of why they were just. In this case, soul (A_2) lies close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge (though it is not exactly equivalent to it, lest an infinite regress be caused). As such, the philosopher's soul undergoes the kind of reward appropriate to its understanding of pleasure. So, if soul (A_2), being a philosopher's soul, possess knowledge of 'true' pleasure, so it will receive the truest kind of pleasure, that relates to the immortal and the psychic, and assimilate to the divine (see further Chapter 3).

⁵⁵² Cf. *Menon* 89a.

⁵⁵³ Irwin (1977): 93; Bobonich (2002): 476.

(b) If, however, soul (A_2) is adjudged unjust, then the judges determine that it lies closer to Ignorance than to Knowledge.

- a. The judges then make a further distinction, determining whether soul (A_2) is 'curable' or 'incurable.' This subsequent distinction is grounded on two of the so-called Sokratic paradoxes: (i) no one desires what is evil; and (ii) no one errs willingly.⁵⁵⁴
- b. If soul (A_2) belongs to an individual whose soul lies closer to the centre of the spectrum, than to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance, then it is classified as being 'curable.' The judges determine that this individual possessed an incorrect understanding of what-is-good, and so committed injustice through ignorance. Yet, their proximity to the centre of the spectrum, suggests they still possess the capacity to partake of Knowledge. Therefore, they must undergo a course of corrective punishment in order to instil in them a knowledge of what-is-good, in the belief that they will cease to commit injustice, once they are in possession of this knowledge. This punishment corresponds to the understanding of pain that soul (A_2) possesses. So, if soul (A_2) is 'curable' it will possess an understanding of pain that relates to the bodily, understood as being the anticipation of future evils.⁵⁵⁵
- c. If soul (A_2) belongs to an individual whose soul lies closer to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance, then it is classified as being 'incurable.' The judges determine that such a soul's proximity to Ignorance signifies a lack of capacity to partake of Knowledge, since Ignorance itself can never partake of Knowledge itself. This kind of soul, therefore, will not benefit from any sort of corrective punishment, and so it must serve as a deterrent to others, so that they may not suffer the same

⁵⁵⁴ Irwin (1979): 143-147; Mackenzie (1981): 12-17, 34-50, 133-157; Kahn (1996): 132; Allen (2000): 71, 121, 135, 147, 179, 247-251, 266, 277.

⁵⁵⁵ Irwin (1979): 245-246; Taylor (1991): 90-91, 93, 96.

fate. Accordingly, the 'incurable' soul undergoes that punishment appropriate to its understanding of pain, such that it experiences fear and an anticipation of future evils for the rest of eternity.⁵⁵⁶

Each aspect of the soul's journey to Hades, and its judgement, is thus structured in such a way as to determine the soul's place on this Knowledge-Ignorance spectrum. Hence, if soul (A₂) arrives at the place of judgement relatively quickly, it is more likely to be classified as a knowledgeable soul; the judges reasoning that soul (A₂) was able to recollect the true knowledge required to navigate to Hades. On the other hand, should soul (A₂) arrive at the place of judgement after a long period of time, and only after being compelled to do so by its guardian spirit (who must deliver the soul to the judgement to maintain the perfect order and harmony of Hades), then it is likely to be adjudged 'incurable.' This is so since it clearly demonstrates a lack of knowledge of the incorporeal, the immortal, and thus 'true' reality. Plato, therefore, establishes a purpose, a *telos*, for the soul – to attain a position a close to Knowledge, without being Knowledge itself.

This conception of the soul's judgement and reward or punishment serves to reinforce the importance of the Platonic Wager. All animate beings possess a soul, and so all individuals are forced to make a wager, whether they accept its existence or not; one cannot choose not to participate. If one wagers on the immortal, and believes in the continuance of the soul and its judgement in Hades, then such an individual may not only achieve the soul's *telos*, but the greatest of all pleasures: 'true' pleasure – to become assimilated to the divine (see further Chapter 3). On the other hand, should one wager on the mortal, or choose not to participate, then one will ensure the soul's failure to attain its *telos*, and so secure for oneself the status of 'curable' at best, 'incurable' at worst.

In order to achieve this truest of pleasures, Plato argues that one must follow the Sokratic way of life. One should endeavour to make sure that one's beliefs are true; hence one should engage in discussion with others in order to determine the extent to which one's beliefs are true, and so

⁵⁵⁶ Irwin (1979): 245-246; Taylor (1991): 90-91, 93, 96.

knowledge, or false, and so ignorance. This method is demonstrated most clearly in Sokrates' examination of his interlocutor's beliefs, and identifying the extent to which they are true or false.⁵⁵⁷ In this way, Sokrates' examinations may be called 'living' judgements, since they indicate to the individual the ignorance in their soul, allowing them the time to rectify their ignorance prior to the Hadean judgement.⁵⁵⁸ Once the individual has identified the ignorance within their soul they must pursue the truth using all means available, including oratory and eulogy, but they must always ensure that truth remains the principal purpose of their investigations, never choosing to win an argument, sound pleasant, or flatter, over attaining the truth.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁷ Cf. the Sokratic art of midwifery, 148e-151d.

⁵⁵⁸ Kahn (1996): 116; Bobonich (2003): 6-7, 78.

⁵⁵⁹ Baxter (1992): 84n.134.

Chapter 3 – Reincarnation

(3.1) Aims

In the 'Aims' section of Chapter 2.1, a series of five questions were identified pertinent to the present consideration of the Platonic afterlife. These five questions were:

- (1) What is it [i.e. the afterlife]?
- (2) How is it possible?
- (3) How does one get there?
- (4) Is it worth it?
- (5) What is the point?

The first question continues to inform this chapter as it is necessary to provide first, a description of reincarnation in order that one might then discuss its ramifications. The second question forms, for the most part, the purview of Chapter One, since life appears to be an intrinsic property of the soul, alone. It is this intrinsicity that ensures the soul possess 'life' for all time; the one being inseparable from the other. Moreover, Chapter One establishes the living being as being the union that arises from the combination of body and soul, death is none other than the dissolution of this union. Upon this dissolution, the soul, by virtue of its possession of life as an intrinsic property, continues to exist, thereby creating the space within which the afterlife may exist.

Questions three and four formed the main focus of the Chapter Two. Here, upon the separation of the soul from the body, the soul travels to the place of judgement. In an ideal scenario, the soul utilizes its own knowledge in order to navigate the way to the judgement, but, inevitably, there are those souls that do not possess the requisite knowledge. Consequently, each soul is assigned a 'guardian spirit' whose duty it is to ensure that those souls that lack knowledge (i.e. souls in

possession of various degrees of ignorance) remain capable of arriving at the place of judgement. As Plato argues from the *Apologia* (Chapter 2.2) to the *Nomoi* (Chapter 2.11), it is impossible for an unjust soul to ‘escape’ justice; and a soul that loses its way to the judgement through its own ignorance must not be allowed to avoid having to give an account of itself to the judges.⁵⁶⁰

After the soul’s judgement, the judges then assign either punishment or reward depending upon the level of ignorance present within the soul. The less ignorance the soul possesses the more likely it is to experience reward; the most ignorant of souls receives the most severe and long-lasting form of punishment – punishment as a deterrent; whereas the most knowledgeable of souls – the philosopher’s soul – receives the greatest form of reward.⁵⁶¹ Question four, however, is only partly answered by Chapter Two; rather, Chapter Two constitutes a comprehensive consideration of question four only from the perspective of the *Apologia* (Chapter 2.2.4) and the *Gorgias* (Chapter 2.4.4), since both of these dialogues possess a conception of the afterlife sans reincarnation.

To answer fully this fourth question – is it [i.e. the afterlife] worth it? – for the remainder of the dialogues, one must take into account an apparently new theory introduced between the *Gorgias* and Sokrates’ next eschatological account of the afterlife in the *Phaidon*. This new theory is reincarnation, and it appears to have been introduced for the first time in the *Menon*, though in a more explicit epistemological, rather than predominately eschatological, context.⁵⁶² For the dialogues after the *Menon*, reincarnation constitutes an overarching factor that must be taken into account when considering whether the afterlife is ‘worth it’; this forms one part of this final chapter.

However, when one asks ‘is it [i.e. the afterlife] worth it?’ one inevitably assigns to the afterlife a purpose; a *telos*. In order to answer a question such as this, one must possess at least the following:

- (i) A concept of a ‘good’ afterlife;
- (ii) A concept of a ‘bad’ afterlife;

⁵⁶⁰ See below Chapters 3.9 and 4.

⁵⁶¹ See below Chapters 3.9 and 4.

⁵⁶² White (1976): 41; Bostock (1999): 420.

- (iii) And a set of criteria that determines whether one's afterlife is closer to that of the 'good' or 'bad.'

This set of criteria were introduced in Chapter 2, along with the notion of the soul's judgement, and its allotment of either reward or punishment, as per the level of knowledge and/or ignorance contained therein. Yet, this teleological aspect of the afterlife is embodied more fully in the fifth question – 'What is the point?' – and, from a Platonic perspective, in the notion of reincarnation.

In order to investigate these questions, this chapter will adopt a similar method as those previous, examining these issues from dialogue to dialogue, in a roughly chronological order. As mentioned earlier, reincarnation only applies to those eschatological accounts post-*Gorgias*, and most likely to those dialogues post-*Menon*. Nevertheless, this chapter will consider briefly both the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*, despite not possessing a notion of reincarnation. This is done in the hope of demonstrating how the lack of reincarnation affects these particular conceptions of the afterlife, in relation to those that do possess reincarnation.⁵⁶³ In other words, whether the presence of reincarnation affects their response to questions (4) and (5). Finally, this Chapter will continue to consider, throughout, both questions one and two – 'What is it like?' and 'How is it possible?'. In this case, 'How does Plato conceive of reincarnation?' and 'How is reincarnation possible?'

(3.2) The *Apologia*

As noted above in the aims (Chapter 3.1), reincarnation is absent from both the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*. Yet, as argued in the aims (Chapter 3.1), it is the notion of reincarnation that helps to respond most fully to the interrelated questions: 'is the afterlife worth it?' and 'what is the point?' Given that reincarnation is absent from the eschatological accounts given in the *Apologia* and the

⁵⁶³ Cf. McDowell (1973): 116-117; Baxter (1992): 104-106; Scott (1999): 101; Sedley (2003): 95.

Gorgias, one might consider a discussion of these two dialogues impertinent to an understanding of reincarnation. However, in understanding how these two dialogues respond to the above questions, without reincarnation, one gains a better understanding of the role reincarnation plays in an understanding of the Platonic afterlife. The introduction of reincarnation in later dialogues is done with a purpose in mind. Plato evidently identifies a deficiency in these earlier eschatological accounts, (or maybe his philosophical thesis more generally), necessitating the ‘solution’ of reincarnation.⁵⁶⁴ In this way, this chapter will consider both the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*, in order to identify (a) the initial question to which these eschatological accounts seek to respond; and (b) why these responses became deficient in Plato’s eyes, thereby necessitating the ‘solution’ of reincarnation.

(3.2.1) 40c-41c

(40c4) Ἐννοήσωμεν δὲ καὶ τῆδε ὡς πολλὴ ἐλπίς ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν αὐτὸ εἶναι. δυοῖν γὰρ θάτερόν ἐστιν τὸ τεθνάναι· ἢ γὰρ οἷον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν τεθνεῶτα, ἢ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολὴ τις τυγχάνει οὔσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῆ ψυχῆ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον. καὶ εἴτε δὴ μηδεμία αἴσθησις ἐστὶν ἀλλ’ (d) οἷον ὕπνος ἐπειδάν τις καθεύδων μηδ’ ὄναρ μηδὲν ὀρᾶ, θαυμάσιον κέρδος ἂν εἴη ὁ θάνατος—ἐγὼ γὰρ ἂν οἶμαι, εἴ τινα ἐκλεξάμενον δέοι ταύτην τὴν νύκτα ἐν ᾗ οὕτω κατέδαρθεν ὥστε μηδὲ ὄναρ ἰδεῖν, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας τὰς τοῦ βίου τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ ἀντιπαραθέντα ταύτῃ τῆ νυκτὶ δέοι σκεψάμενον εἰπεῖν πόσας ἄμεινον καὶ ἥδιον ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας ταύτης τῆς νυκτὸς βεβίωκεν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ βίῳ, οἶμαι ἂν μὴ ὅτι ἰδιώτην τινά, ἀλλὰ τὸν μέγαν βασιλέα εὐαριθμή-

⁵⁶⁴ White (1976): 41; Bostock (1999): 418-420; Blondell (2002): 242n.254; cf. Ferguson (1978): 115.

(e) τους ἂν εὐρεῖν αὐτὸν ταύτας πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας ἡμέρας καὶ
νύκτας—εἰ οὖν τοιοῦτον ὁ θάνατός ἐστιν, κέρδος ἔγωγε
λέγω· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλείων ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται οὕτω
δὴ εἶναι ἢ μία νύξ. εἰ δ' αὖ οἶον ἀποδημησαί ἐστιν ὁ
θάνατος ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ἐστιν τὰ
λεγόμενα, ὡς ἄρα ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεώτες, τί μεῖζον
ἀγαθὸν τούτου εἶη ἂν, ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί; εἰ γὰρ τις
41.

(a) ἀφικόμενος εἰς Ἄιδου, ἀπαλλαγείς τουτωνὶ τῶν φασκόντων
δικαστῶν εἶναι, εὐρήσει τοὺς ὡς ἀληθῶς δικαστάς, οἵπερ
καὶ λέγονται ἐκεῖ δικάζειν, Μίνως τε καὶ Ῥαδάμανθυς καὶ
Αἰακὸς καὶ Τριπτόλεμος καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσοι τῶν ἡμιθέων δίκαιοι
ἐγένοντο ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν βίῳ, ἄρα φαύλη ἂν εἶη ἡ ἀποδημία;
ἢ αὖ Ὅρφεϊ συγγενέσθαι καὶ Μουσαίῳ καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ
Ὀμήρῳ ἐπὶ πόσῳ ἂν τις δέξαιτ' ἂν ὑμῶν; ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ
πολλάκις ἐθέλω τεθνάναι εἰ ταῦτ' ἐστιν ἀληθῆ. ἐπεὶ

(b) ἔμοιγε καὶ αὐτῷ θαυμαστὴ ἂν εἶη ἡ διατριβὴ αὐτόθι, ὅποτε
ἐντύχοιμι Παλαμήδει καὶ Αἴαντι τῷ Τελαμῶνος καὶ εἴ τις
ἄλλος τῶν παλαιῶν διὰ κρίσιν ἄδικον τέθνηκεν, ἀντιπαρα-
βάλλοντι τὰ ἑμαυτοῦ πάθη πρὸς τὰ ἐκείνων—ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι,
οὐκ ἂν ἀηδὲς εἶη—καὶ δὴ τὸ μέγιστον, τοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐξετάζοντα
καὶ ἐρευνῶντα ὥσπερ τοὺς ἐνταῦθα διάγειν, τίς αὐτῶν σοφός
ἐστιν καὶ τίς οἶεται μὲν, ἔστιν δ' οὐ. ἐπὶ πόσῳ δ' ἂν τις,
ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί, δέξαιτο ἐξετάσαι τὸν ἐπὶ Τροίαν ἀγαγόντα

(c) τὴν πολλὴν στρατιάν ἢ Ὀδυσσέα ἢ Σίσυφον ἢ ἄλλους
μυρίους ἂν τις εἴποι καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας, οἷς ἐκεῖ
διαλέγεσθαι καὶ συνεῖναι καὶ ἐξετάζειν ἀμήχανον ἂν εἶη
εὐδαιμονίας; πάντως οὐ δήπου τούτου γε ἔνεκα οἱ ἐκεῖ
ἀποκτείνουσι· τὰ τε γὰρ ἄλλα εὐδαιμονέστεροί εἰσιν οἱ ἐκεῖ
τῶν ἐνθάδε, καὶ ἤδη τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἀθάνατοί εἰσιν, εἴπερ
γε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀληθῆ.

[LOEB translation:] “And let’s look at it this way too: that there is much hope that it
is a good thing. You see death is one of two things, for either it’s as if the dead

person has no existence, and has no perception of anything, or according to what we're told, it's actually a change and removal of the soul from its place here to another place. And if there's no sensation, but as in sleep, when someone while sleeping sees nothing, not even in a dream, then death would be a wonderful benefit. For I would think, if someone had to choose that night during which he slept so deeply as not even to dream, and compare all the rest of the days and nights of his life with this night and then after consideration say how many days and nights he had spent during his lifetime better and more pleasantly than this night, I think that not just a private citizen, but the Great King of Persia himself would find these easy to count up when set against the rest of his days and nights. If then this is what death is like, I say it is a benefit, for in that case the whole of time seems to be nothing more than a single night. But if death is a kind of migration from here to another place, and what they say is true, that indeed all the dead are there, what greater good could there be than this, members of the jury? For if someone, after getting to Hades, having rid himself of these self-proclaimed jurors, will find real jurors, who also are said to judge cases there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus and others of the demigods who were just in their lives, would this be a bad transfer? Or again, to meet up with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer, what price would any of you pay for that? You see I'm willing to die many times over if this is the truth, since for myself spending time there would be wonderful, when I could meet Palamedes and Aias, Telemachus's son, and any others of olden times who died as a result of an unjust judgment, and compare my experiences with theirs—in my view it would not be unpleasant—and what's more, the most important thing, I could go round, examine and inquire, just as I did here, who is wise and who thinks he is, but isn't. What price, members of the jury, would one pay to examine the leader of the great army against Troy, or Odysseus, or Sisyphus, or the countless others one could mention, men and women, to converse with whom there, and meet and examine them would be utmost happiness? At any rate, I don't suppose they put people to death there for doing this: in fact there are other reasons why they are more blessed there than those down here, not to mention that from then on they're immortal for the rest of time, if, that is, what is said is true."

In this well-known passage of the *Apologia* (for further discussion see Chapters 1.3.1, 1.4.1, 2.2.4), Sokrates relates to his companions two potential conceptions of the afterlife. Each of these conceptions, however, do not purport to relate the afterlife as it pertains to all, but rather only to those individuals who have lived both a 'good' and 'just' life. In this particular case, this 'good' and 'just' life is understood as being that life akin to the Socratic life. This is particularly so given that these two conceptions of the afterlife are introduced by Sokrates, in order to demonstrate to his companions that an individual like him has nothing to fear in death (39e5-40a6).

One may argue that this 'choice' of alternative afterlives is characteristic of an agnosticism towards the afterlife shown by Sokrates, which Plato preserves in this particular instance.⁵⁶⁵ This is not an invalid conclusion to draw, since it may be that Sokrates himself may have held this kind of position. However, the Sokrates presented here by Plato is not as agnostic as he appears on the surface, but rather the supposed alternatives offered by Sokrates are, to a certain extent, 'illusory.'⁵⁶⁶

The identification of the questions these alternative afterlives are meant to answer help to demonstrate why this is so. What questions do these afterlives seek to answer? Plato frames the *Apologia* as being a lawcourt defence speech, and as a defence speech, the *Apologia's* main goal is to respond to the charges made against Sokrates, and show that they are, in fact, false. The charges made against Sokrates by his accusers include the corruption of the young (19a8-20c3), and the introduction of new deities (24b3-c3). However, from the outset of the speech, Plato utilizes these charges in order to answer another question: is Sokrates justified in living the way of life he has lived? Throughout, Plato presents Sokrates as believing this issue to be the 'true' purpose of the trial.

It appears that Sokrates understands the charges against him as constituting attacks on the core tenets of his way of life, thereby necessitating a justification of his manner of life in order to provide a full response to his accusers. The *Apologia* thus becomes a more encompassing *apologia* of Sokrates the individual, rather than just a localized *apologia* relating to the specific charges of his accusers. For example, Sokrates introduces both the Apollonian Oracle at Delphi, and his *daimonion*, in order to explain to his jurors (a) why he lives the life he does, and (b) why he is justified in living this way of life. This is further reinforced by his assertion that he would rather suffer death than cease to live his characteristic way of life (28b3-29d7).⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁵ For instance, C. Rowe (2011), "Self-Examination," in D.R. Morrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 201-214; and T.C. Brickhouse and N.D. Smith (2004), *Plato and The Trial of Socrates*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 178ff., and 244.

⁵⁶⁶ See further the Platonic Wager in Introduction, section (C); Chapters 1.5, and 4.

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. *Kriton* 45c, 53d.

This is the context with which one should view the two alternate afterlives offered by Sokrates: does each alternative afterlife justify the Sokratic way of life? The first possibility Sokrates proffers regards the afterlife as being a state of nothingness; or rather a state of existence in which the dead individual possesses no perception whatsoever, akin to a 'dreamless sleep' (40c9-e4). In 40e3-4, Sokrates suggests further that if this afterlife constitutes reality, then 'eternity would seem to be no more than a single night,' Sokrates presenting this possibility as being in some way pleasant. Yet, this conception of the afterlife fails to justify the Sokratic way of life. It is not clear whether this 'dreamless sleep' lasts, somehow, forever, or whether it lasts only as long as the physical remains of the deceased individual remain in some form. If this form of the afterlife lasts only for a finite period of time for all individuals, regardless of their manner of life, this fails to provide any justification for Sokrates' mode of life. It is true that this form of the afterlife does not posit that Sokrates' way of life is 'incorrect,' but it emphasizes that were such an afterlife 'true' then there is no especial benefit in living the Sokratic way of life.

Such a conception of the afterlife provides no differentiation of the Sokratic way of life from any other. In this way, regardless of whether one has led a 'just' or 'unjust' life, one will experience the same afterlife. Indeed, in Sokrates' specific case, he believes he has lived both a 'good' and 'just' life (40e4-41c7, 41c8-d7). Yet, if this conception of the afterlife were 'true' for Plato, then Sokrates' life demonstrates that one can live as 'good' and as 'just' a life as possible, but ultimately one will derive no benefit from such a mode of life, either in life or death. In life, the Sokratic life procures death, dishonour, and poverty for the adherent, whereas an 'unjust' life, for example, might procure wealth, honour, and fame. In death, the Sokratic life procures the same honour and reward as that of the 'unjust' life. However, the 'unjust' life might ensure an individual retains their fame and honour amongst the living, whereas the Sokratic life will continue to be remembered amongst the living as leading to death and dishonour.

Finally, as alluded to above, this conception of the afterlife permits no differentiation between different modes of life, so that the 'unjust' way of life is just as valid, and possibly even more beneficial, than that of the Sokratic. For Plato, this might lead to the unacceptable conclusions that (a) all modes of life are equally valid; and (b) there is no one, 'true' way of life. These conclusions evoke the notion of relativism, a notion Plato associates with the sophists, and therefore they cannot be allowed to stand.⁵⁶⁸ In 19a8-20c3, Sokrates complains that he has been unfairly and incorrectly equated with the sophists thanks to the *Nephelei* of Aristophanes, and so it is unlikely that Plato would willingly assign to Sokrates a conception of the afterlife that permits sophistic relativism to retain its validity. It may be that the 'real' Sokrates did hold beliefs reminiscent of relativism, but Plato did not, and it seems unlikely that Plato would introduce this conception of the afterlife with the expectation that his reader would agree with its inherent relativism, as this constitutes an agreement with the sophists.

The second possible afterlife, on the other hand, presents a different response to the question of whether Sokrates' manner of life is justified; a response that more directly demonstrates the validity of the Sokratic life.⁵⁶⁹ This conception of the afterlife describes death as 'a relocation for the soul from here to another place' (40c7-9). In this other place – Hades – the soul exists, separate from the body, and undergoes a judgement (40e7-41a5). Sokrates then relates the belief that after his soul has undergone its judgement, it will then dwell amongst other souls of like nature, i.e. 'good' and 'just' souls, e.g. Homeros, Palamedes, and Odysseus (41a6-c4). Here, his soul will dwell for the rest of time, being both forever 'happy' and 'deathless' (41c4-7).⁵⁷⁰

This conception of the afterlife involves a judgement; subsequent to this judgement, Sokrates relates how 'good' and 'just' souls such as his own exist for all time in happiness. The way Sokrates presents this conception of the afterlife, establishes the judgement of the soul as considering the extent to which a soul has been both 'good' and 'just' in life. A soul adjudged to have been 'good' and 'just'

⁵⁶⁸ Cf. the *Kratylos* 385e5ff., 391c2f.; *Theaitetos* 151d-186e.

⁵⁶⁹ Cf. White (1979): 30.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. *Apologia* 41c8-d2. Reeve (1989): 57.

then receives the reward Sokrates relates; the reward he believes awaits his own soul. In this particular case, therefore, Sokrates presents only the experience of the 'good' and 'just' soul in the afterlife, omitting what happens to a soul that does not fare as well in the judgement, though one is left to infer the contrary.

One reason for this construction may relate to Sokrates' presentation of these accounts of the afterlife as forms of consolation for his companions.⁵⁷¹ Sokrates does not necessarily need to relate what happens to a soul that is not like his own, since this will not result in a significantly increased level of consolation a companion of his may feel. Yet, the first conception of the afterlife may also serve this consolatory function. Its failure consists of its inability to justify the validity of the Sokratic life, which is perhaps the ultimate form of consolation for his companions, as it demonstrates to the wider community that Sokrates offers is 'correct'; that his thesis is valid, and that he is no criminal.

In this regard, the second conception of the afterlife Sokrates succeeds where the first had failed.

Sokrates presents the judgement as being reliant upon the extent to which a particular soul has been 'good' and 'just.' He makes sure to portray his own soul, and thus his own way of life, as being more than sufficient to succeed in this judgement, and receive, as reward, eternal happiness. In contrast to the 'dreamless sleep,' this version of the afterlife presents a more teleological version of the afterlife, which appears to suggest that one must live that kind of life that will receive favourable judgement in the afterlife, and attain reward for the soul. In this way, the Hadean afterlife Sokratic presents responds to the sophistic thesis of relativism, demonstrating that there is indeed a 'true' and 'correct' way of living one's life that accords with this apparent *telos* – the Sokratic life.⁵⁷² This provides ample demonstration that not only is Sokrates valid in living the manner of life he has led, but that his life is the one that all must lead if one hopes to attain the reward of the afterlife.

Consequently, of the two alternative afterlives Sokrates presents only the second conception – the relocation of the soul to Hades – serves to justify the manner of life Sokrates has led to this point. In

⁵⁷¹ Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 242.

⁵⁷² Cf. White (1979): 30.

a sense, only this second conception acts as an *apologia* of Sokrates, or at least an *apologia* that makes sense to Plato's contemporaries.⁵⁷³ In the 'dreamless sleep' Sokrates' way of life results in dishonour and death in life, and nothingness in death; but the soul's relocation to Hades shows that dishonour and death in life are of no 'real' consequence. What is more important is for one to be adjudged 'good' and 'just' by those who 'matter' – the 'true' judges of Hades; in this way, one will attain honour and reward far surpassing that available amongst mortals. As a result, this conception of the afterlife demonstrates that relativism – or perhaps plurality – is incorrect, and that there exists only one valid manner of life that will enable an individual to attain these rewards in the afterlife – the Sokratic life. In this way, the second conception of the afterlife acts not only as a justification of Sokrates' life, but an exhortation for all individuals to follow the Sokratic way of life.⁵⁷⁴

(3.3) The *Gorgias*

(3.3.1) 523a-527e

If the *Apologia* demonstrates the validity of the Sokratic life through a description of the benefits such a life confers upon the soul in the afterlife, the *Gorgias* takes the contrary approach. Here, the *Gorgias* seeks to respond to the same question as the *Apologia* – is the Sokratic way of life justified? He drops the potential afterlife of the 'dreamless sleep' (Chapter 3.2), viewing only the second conception of the afterlife – a relocation of the soul to Hades – as the more valid of the two⁵⁷⁵. In the *Apologia*, Sokrates relates that the soul arrives in Hades and is judged by the 'true' judges; a soul

⁵⁷³ This, of course, assumes that Plato's audience is in some way philosophical in nature, and so shall appreciate the philosophical argumentation Plato utilizes in order to justify Sokrates' way of life.

⁵⁷⁴ White (1979): 30; Rosen (1999): xlviii; de Strycher and Slings (2005): 82-85.

⁵⁷⁵ See Introduction, section (C) on myth, Chapter 1.3.1, 1.4.1, Chapter 2.2.4, and Chapter 3.2.

such as his own then receives eternal happiness (*Apologia* 40c7-41c7). This makes it clear the benefits conferred by the Sokratic life on the disembodied soul in Hades.⁵⁷⁶ Sokrates, however, does not relate what happens to the soul that fails this judgement, i.e. the soul that does not live the Sokratic way of life. This strand of the afterlife is taken up by the *Gorgias*; here, Sokrates demonstrates to his interlocutors what happens to the soul that fails the judgement. In particular, Sokrates attempts to show how living a life that is 'unjust' is the worst thing one may do to one's soul. Throughout the dialogue, Kallikles and Polos have tried to persuade Sokrates (through their oratory) that living the life of the tyrant (the embodiment of the 'unjust' life, 470d5-e7, 470e8-471d2, 472d1-4, 479c8-e7) is the most desirable life to live. Sokrates' account of the afterlife serves as the culmination of his refutation of this claim, making sure to emphasize the fate of the tyrant in Tartaros (524d7-526c1).

Central to Sokrates' account of the afterlife in the *Gorgias* is the judgement of the soul, presenting a description not dissimilar from that of the *Apologia*. He suggests, once more, that the judgement seeks to answer one question – to what extent is a particular soul 'good' and 'just' (524d3-526d1)? It is the centrality of this question in the account Sokrates proffers that suggests a similar brief to that in the *Apologia*, i.e. to justify the Sokratic way of life. In this way, the Sokratic way of life is positioned as the most comprehensive manner in which to ensure a favourable assessment of the soul by the judges in Hades. This is particularly so given that the other modes of life offered by his

⁵⁷⁶ E.g. *Phaidon* 78b-84b; White (1979): 30. See *contra* Arieti (1991): 92 who posits that Plato wants the reader to reject the Sokratic life in the *Gorgias*, since Sokrates argues in favour of his way of life, only for the reader to know that, ultimately, Sokrates shall suffer an unjust death regardless. This, however, is based on the assumption that the dialogues function as completely separate entities, there being no continuity from one to the next. Arieti, however, appears to endorse a radical interpretation whereby there is absolutely no progression in Plato's argumentation, such that he possesses no beliefs, i.e. he suggests Plato is a radical sceptic. This thesis, however, posits that Plato believes that (i) Knowledge exists; (ii) Knowledge can be known, and (iii) this Knowledge may be communicated (see further Chapter 3.4). For Plato to endorse otherwise would be to accept the validity Protagorean relativism and Gorgian epistemological nihilism, both of which prescribe to a similar radical scepticism. This would be unacceptable to Plato who argues vehemently against the validity of both in the *Kratylos* 385e5ff., 391c2f.; *Theaitetos* 151d-186e; *Gorgias* 448e-461b, 482c4ff., 486e5ff., 494d1f.; *Menon* 70a5ff., 71b9ff., 73c, 76c4ff., 95b9f. (cf. Chapter 3.4; the Platonic Wager, and Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 152-155). Indeed, it would invalidate Sokrates' assertion in the *Apologia* 19e that his assimilation to the sophists by contemporary Athenian society is incorrect; if not suggest further that Plato himself is a sophist.

interlocutors, e.g. the tyrant's life are specifically shown to lead to negative adjudications by the judges, and terrible torments in Tartaros for an adherent (524d7-526c1). As with the *Apologia*, this account of the afterlife responds to sophistic relativism, specifically attacking oratory's ability to 'make the weaker argument stronger,' thereby allowing individuals to present all modes of life as valid and 'just.'⁵⁷⁷

The *Apologia* and the *Gorgias* are the only accounts of the afterlife that do not possess the notion of reincarnation.⁵⁷⁸ Both of these accounts attempt to use their eschatological accounts in order to justify the Sokratic way of life, and respond to sophistic notions of relativism, which result in no way of life being any less valid and just than another. Subsequent accounts of the afterlife, however, do possess the notion of reincarnation; reincarnation being introduced (as will be discussed below) in the *Menon* in order to answer one particular question: 'how is it possible for one to know anything?' i.e. to answer the so-called Menon's Paradox.⁵⁷⁹ What changes between the eschatological accounts

⁵⁷⁷ Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 152-155.

⁵⁷⁸ Cf. Irwin (1979): 246; Annas (1982a): 124-5.

⁵⁷⁹ See Kahn (1996): 68, 128. Kahn adopts a clear unitarian understanding of the Platonic dialogues, arguing that Plato utilizes the *Gorgias* to prepare his audience for the introduction of reincarnation and recollection in the *Menon*. This, argues Kahn, he does by creating philosophical problems in the *Gorgias* that naturally lead to the response he introduces in the *Menon* – recollection and reincarnation. Yet, argues Kahn, it is only in the *Phaidon* that Plato introduces to his audience a fully elaborated version of these notions, incorporating the theory of Forms in response to further philosophical problems introduced, in turn, in the *Menon* (cf. Dancy (2004): 241). For an example of the developmentalist position, see *contra* Rutherford (1995: 24-25). Rutherford argues that the absence of reincarnation from the *Gorgias* does not indicate that Plato did not yet feel interested in revealing the doctrine, but rather its formulation did not meet the 'needs and priorities of the dialogue in question, or the particular concerns of the participants.' This argument, however, does not necessarily preclude the unitarian position as espoused by Kahn, since Plato may have possessed the notion of reincarnation but chose not to utilize it on this particular occasion. Nonetheless, in the *Gorgias*, Sokrates claims the purpose of his eschatological account is to demonstrate to Kallikles that one must live a life in accordance with justice and virtue (i.e. one must live the Sokratic life). Yet, Sokrates' eschatological accounts in both the *Phaidon* and *Politeia*, in addition to Timaios' account of (re)incarnation in the *Timaios*, possess the same purported aim – to demonstrate to their respective interlocutors that one must live a life in accordance with justice and virtue. On these particular occasions Plato does include reincarnation in order to meet the 'needs and priorities of the dialogue in question, or the particular concerns of the participants.' This would lend further credence to Rutherford's position, as why would Plato introduce reincarnation in these latter accounts, but not in the *Gorgias*, even though they purport to demonstrate the same purpose. As related in the Introduction, section (A), this thesis adopts a synthetical approach to the dialogues, such that it agrees with Rutherford that reincarnation's absence from the *Gorgias*, and subsequent appearance in the *Menon*, is due to the particular needs and priorities of the two respective dialogues. However, this thesis agrees with Kahn that reincarnation appears in the *Menon* in order to answer certain philosophical problems that arose in the *Gorgias* (though not necessarily as a result of a conscious choice on the part of Plato). In this particular case, this thesis posits that the philosophical problem in question relates to the Platonic Wager; namely, how can one know that it is the Sokratic way of life that enables the soul to achieve the infinite benefits that a

of the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*, and those subsequent, is the addition of this question to Plato's conception of the afterlife, a question missing from the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*. To put it another way, in both the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*, Sokrates' eschatological accounts conclude that an individual's soul will derive the most benefit from an adherence to the Sokratic life – a life both just and good. If Sokrates asserts that he is wise because he does not know, how is it possible for the Sokratic life to be just and good, i.e. how does Sokrates know what is just and good? In order to answer this question, Sokrates shall introduce the theory of recollection, and the associated notion of reincarnation, in the *Menon* below.⁵⁸⁰

(3.4) The *Menon*

(3.4.1) 80d-82b

The dating of the Platonic dialogues is rather contentious, there being no definitive chronology. However, one constant throughout all modern arrangements of the Platonic dialogues is the positioning of the *Menon* prior to that of the *Phaidon*.⁵⁸¹ This results in one important consequence – the *Menon* becomes the first Platonic dialogue to utilize explicitly the notion of reincarnation, through the character of Sokrates. It is this introduction of reincarnation, which is done in the *Menon* for epistemological purposes rather than for any specific eschatological purpose, that

belief in the afterlife offers? This, moreover, is an issue present in Pascal's original Wager; a Wager that argues in favour of a belief in God. Implicit to Pascal's Wager is the belief that not only should one believe in God, but that this belief be in the Christian God of Catholicism; Pascal provides no justification in the Wager for why one should follow, specifically, the Catholic God. In terms of the Platonic Wager, if the *Gorgias* establishes that one should accept the validity of the Wager and look to the care of one's immortal soul, then the *Menon* introduces the twin theories of recollection and reincarnation to qualify that the way of life that best cares for one's immortal soul is none other than the Sokratic way of life.

⁵⁸⁰ Kahn (2006): 119-122, 126-127; cf. Scott (1999): 97.

⁵⁸¹ See Introduction Section (B).

differentiates the *Phaidon* (and subsequent accounts of the afterlife) from those of the *Apologia* and the *Gorgias*.⁵⁸²

The *Menon* purports to discuss the issue of virtue; whether virtue may be taught, or whether it is something natural, i.e. whether it is inherent to those who are virtuous and lacking from those who are not. As in the later *Protagoras*,⁵⁸³ Sokrates' response to this issue appears to lay somewhere in the middle, so that the knowledge of virtue is, to some extent, inherent to all souls, but that one must choose to search for, and identify, this knowledge. In a sense, I believe Sokrates relies on an argument from *a posteriori* knowledge. I suggest that Sokrates most likely begins with the above conclusion, and infers from this the existence of the following set of assumptions, which I outline below:

- (a) If virtue were only teachable this would ultimately lead to a regress: how does the teacher know what virtue is? Their teacher taught them. How does their teacher know what virtue is? Their teacher taught them, and so on *ad infinitum*. Consequently, only if one can demonstrate a direct line of teacher and student since the beginning of humanity can one know that one is learning 'true' virtue. Moreover, it does not answer how the first teacher came to know of virtue.
- (b) If virtue were only natural, inherent to some and not to others, this would result in a certain proportion of the population being naturally devoid of virtue. Thus, such an individual could not be held responsible for their lack of virtuous conduct, since it is naturally impossible for them to act otherwise. In this way, the aspect of human agency and choice present in the Platonic notion of the soul's judgement and its punishment no longer retains its validity. How can a tyrant, for example, be held responsible for his or her actions if they are naturally incapable of ever possessing virtue? In such a case, the tyrant cannot but act in an unvirtuous manner.

⁵⁸² see Note 556.

⁵⁸³ See Chapter 2.6

(c) Therefore, each individual must possess an equal capacity for virtue if personal responsibility for one's actions is to be retained. However, if each individual naturally possesses the capacity for virtue, why do some individuals appear virtuous, whilst others do not? This occurs because some individuals choose to search and acquire knowledge of this virtue, whilst others do not. In this way, virtue is available to all individuals, but the individual must decide to learn of this virtue, so that the unvirtuous individual is the individual who chooses not to search, not to learn, not to discover, and not to be virtuous.

Menon responds to this synthesis with what Sokrates terms 'a debater's argument' (80e1-5).⁵⁸⁴

(ε) ΣΩ. Μανθάνω οἷον βούλει λέγειν, ὦ Μένων. ὁρᾷς τοῦτον ὡς ἐριστικὸν λόγον κατάγεις, ὡς οὐκ ἄρα ἔστιν ζητεῖν ἀνθρώπῳ οὔτε ὃ οἶδε οὔτε ὃ μὴ οἶδε; οὔτε γὰρ ἂν ὃ γε οἶδεν ζητοῖ—οἶδεν γάρ, καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖ τῷ γε τοιοῦτῳ ζητήσεως—οὔτε ὃ μὴ οἶδεν—οὐδὲ γὰρ οἶδεν ὅτι ζητήσει.

[LOEB translation:] "Soc. I understand the point you would make, Meno. Do you see what a captious [I use "debater's argument" below] argument you are introducing—that, forsooth, a man cannot inquire either about what he knows or about what he does not know? For he cannot inquire about what he knows, because he knows it, and in that case is in no need of inquiry; nor again can he inquire about what he does not know, since he does not know about what he is to inquire."

This argument consists of the following three principles:

- (i) How can one search for something, when one does not know at all what it is?
- (ii) How can one aim to search for something when one does not know it at all?
- (iii) How will one know that it is the thing one did not know, if one should meet with it?

This 'debater's argument' ("ἐριστικὸν λόγον," 80e2, translated in the LOEB edition as "captious argument") to be known as 'Menon's paradox,' and, as the argument suggests, it may be reduced to the question: 'how is it possible for one to know anything?' One particular response to this

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. *Euthydemus* 293; *Phaidon* 101e; *Philebos* 17a; *Politeia* 5.454a, 6.499a, 7.539b; *Sophistes* 216b, 225d, 259c; *Theaitetos* 165b, 167e.

argument, or maybe the problem phrased in another way, is found in Gorgias' *Peri Physeos* (DK 82B3);⁵⁸⁵ here, either

- (1) Knowledge does not exist;
- (2) Knowledge exists, but one cannot know it; or
- (3) Knowledge exists, one can know it, but this knowledge is uncommunicable.
- (4) Knowledge exists, one can know it, and it is communicable, but it cannot be understood.

Consequently, Sokrates' response to Menon's paradox serves as an epistemological foundation of any subsequent philosophical thesis.⁵⁸⁶ There is no point in arguing over 'minutiae' such as whether it is possible for virtue to be taught and thus learned, if it is impossible for (a) knowledge of virtue to exist; (b) knowledge of virtue to be known (presumably by humans); and (c) knowledge of virtue is uncommunicable.

At this particular juncture, I believe it useful to outline my reasoning as to why I think, Menon's "debater's argument" is a reference to Gorgias, and his epistemeological challenge. My reasoning runs as follows:

- (1) Who are the "debaters" to whom Sokrates refers? Or, who are the people who employ "eristic" ("ἐριστικὸν λόγον," 80e2)? Elsewhere in the dialogues, Plato uses the term "ἐριστικῆς" to describe what the sophists Euthydemos and Dionysodoros do (*Euthydemos*, 272b). Moreover, earlier in the *Meno* 75c-e Sokrates states the following in response to similar aggressive questioning from Menon:

⁵⁸⁵ Menon is represented as a student of Gorgias, who appears to be the source of his views; thus, a refutation of Menon is, by proxy, a refutation of Gorgias (70a, 71b-d, 73c, 76a-c, 95b, 96d). Morgan (1999): 47; Bruell (1999): 167-170; Nehamas (1999): 4; Dancy (2004): 220-221; McCabe (2006): 39.

⁵⁸⁶ Cf. Aristoteles, *Analytikon Proteron*, 67a. See also White (1976): 40-41; Clegg (1977): 48; Irwin (1977): 138-140, 144; Ferguson (1978): 126; Hare (1982): 20; Rowe (1984): 61; Rowe (1986): 182; Morgan (1990): 33, 47-54; Asmis (1992): 342; Fine (1992): 209, 211, 213-214; Kraut (1992): 7; Moravcsik (1992): 29-33; Morgan (1992): 227, 236-237; Irwin (1995): 130-133, 136; Cook (1996): 119; Kahn (1996): 64, 150, 158, 160-164; Sallis (1996): 81; Rice (1998): 51, 68; Fine (1999b): 8; Nehamas (1999): 3-4; Sayers (1999): 123, 127; Scott (1999): 93; Vlastos (1999): 60-61; Dancy (2004): 218-221; Kahn (2006): 119-122.

“Τάληθῆ ἔγωγε· καὶ εἰ μὲν γε τῶν σοφῶν τις εἴη καὶ ἐριστικῶν τε καὶ ἀγωνιστικῶν ὁ ἐρόμενος, εἵποισμ’ ἂν αὐτῷ ὅτι ἐμοὶ μὲν εἴρηται· εἰ δὲ μὴ ὀρθῶς λέγω, σὸν ἔργον λαμβάνειν λόγον καὶ ἐλέγχειν. εἰ δὲ ὡσπερ ἐγὼ τε καὶ σὺ νυνὶ φίλοι ὄντες βούλοιντο ἀλλήλοις διαλέγεσθαι, δεῖ δὴ πρατότερον πως καὶ διαλεκτικώτερον ἀποκρίνεσθαι. ἔστι δὲ ἴσως τὸ διαλεκτικώτερον μὴ μόνον τάληθῆ ἀποκρίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι’ ἐκείνων ὧν ἂν προσομολογήειδέναι ὁ ἐρωτώμενος. πειράσομαι δὴ καὶ ἐγὼ σοι οὕτως εἰπεῖν. λέγε γάρ μοι· τελευτην καλεῖς τι; τοιόνδε λέγω οἶον Επέρας καὶ ἔσχατον· πάντα ταῦτα ταύτόν τι λέγω· ἴσως δ’ ἂν ἡμῖν Πρόδικος διαφέροιτο.”

[LOEB translation:] “The truth, from me; and if my questioner were a professor of the eristic and contentious sort, I should say to him: I have made my statement; if it is wrong, your business is to examine and refute it. But if, like you and me on this occasion, we were friends and chose to have a discussion together, I should have to reply in some milder tone more suited to dialectic. The more dialectical way, I suppose, is not merely to answer what is true, but also to make use of those points which the questioned person acknowledges he knows. And this is the way in which I shall now try to argue with you. Tell me, is there something you call an end? Such a thing, I mean, as a limit, or extremity—I use all these terms in the same sense, though I daresay Prodicus might quarrel with us.”

In the above passage, Sokrates identifies “eristic” as something that is (i) taught by “τῶν σοφῶν” (i.e. the wise men, or sophists), and (ii) this “eristic” is taught in concern with the “ἀγωνιστικῶν,” i.e. the contentious or debating style of discussion. Finally (iii) he identifies another teacher associated with this sort of discussion – Prodikos. I believe, therefore, that the “debaters” to whom Sokrates refers is meant to be an allusion to the popular sophists of contemporary Athens, i.e. Prodikos, Euthydemos, Dionysodoros, Protagoras, and Gorgias (cf. the characterisation of Gorgias’ students Polos and Kallikles in the *Gorgias*, as practicing the eristic and contentious type of speech, that ultimately seeks to win an argument rather than discover the truth).

(2) If the “debaters” here is a reference to the sophists, as I believe it is, then one must ask, “where did Menon learn such arguments?” or “from whom did he learn such arguments?”. Throughout the dialogue Plato makes several allusions to the person from whom Menon would most likely have learn such arguments – Gorgias. Sokrates begins the dialogue in 70b-c stating the following to Menon: “καὶ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἔθος ὑμᾶς εἴθικεν, ἀφόβως τε καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἀποκρίνεσθαι, ἐάν τις τι ἔρηται, ὥσπερ εἰκὸς τοὺς εἰδότας.” [LOEB translation:] “Nay more, he has given you the regular habit of answering any chance question in a fearless, magnificent manner, as befits those who know.” We can see from this passage that Sokrates considers Menon’s method of questioning to have come from Gorgias, a method of questioning Sokrates believes is the reserve only of those who actually possess knowledge – which he believes Menon and Gorgias do not (cf. *Menon* 71d where Sokrates dares Menon to demonstrate that he, and Gorgias, do possess knowledge). In 73c, Sokrates further establishes that Menon agrees with his teacher Gorgias with regards to the definition of virtue: “Ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ πάντων ἐστί, πειρῶ εἰπεῖν καὶ ἀναμνησθῆναι, τί αὐτό φησι Γοργίας εἶναι καὶ σὺ μετ’ ἐκείνου.” [LOEB translation:] “Seeing then that it is the same virtue in all cases, try and tell me, if you can recollect, what Gorgias—and you in agreement with him—say it is.” So also, 76c, wherein Sokrates further establishes that Menon likes to have discussions in the manner of Gorgias: “Βούλει οὖν σοι κατὰ Γοργίαν ἀποκρίνωμαι, ἢ ἂν σὺ μάλιστα ἀκολουθήσῃς;” [LOEB translation:] “Then would you [i.e. Menon] like me [i.e. Sokrates] to answer you in the manner of Gorgias, which you would find easiest to follow?” Finally, Sokrates states quite clearly, in 96d, that Gorgias has been a faulty teacher of Menon: “Κινδυνεύομεν, ὦ Μένων, ἐγὼ τε καὶ σὺ φαῦλοί τινες εἶναι ἄνδρες, καὶ σέ τε Γοργίας οὐχ ἰκανῶς πεπαιδευκέναί.” [LOEB translation:] “I fear, Meno, you and I are but poor creatures, and Gorgias has been as faulty an educator of you.” I believe it is safe to say, therefore, that Menon learnt his “debater’s argument” from his teacher, Gorgias.

(3) If Menon's "debater's argument" alludes to the sophists and teachers of speech, and Menon learnt his "debater's" style of argumentation from his teacher, Gorgias, one of said teachers of speech, then I believe it valid to say that the content of Menon's argument, originates, at least to some extent, from Gorgias also. Throughout the dialogue, Sokrates and Menon are trying to establish what virtue is, and whether virtue can be taught. In the end, Menon and Sokrates cannot agree on what virtue is or whether it can be taught; they both seem to assume, however, that virtue is something *real* that exists *in reality*. The only real challenge to such an assumption, in my opinion, is if one argues that virtue simply does not exist; and if virtue does not exist, then knowledge of virtue can also not exist (except insofar as one knows that virtue does not exist), and so a teacher of virtue can also not exist, since one cannot communicate what does not exist. To me, at least, this seems reminiscent of Gorgias' argument concerning knowledge (outline above). I posit, therefore, that Menon's "debater's argument" serves as a Platonic straw-man of Gorgias' argument concerning knowledge. Gorgias' argument, in effect, renders the search for knowledge impossible or maybe futile, since either knowledge does not exist, it exists but cannot be known, or it exists, can be known, but cannot be communicated. I believe that Plato presents Menon's "debater's argument" as essentially arriving at the same conclusion – that the search for knowledge is impossible and futile. In Sokrates' subsequent response to Menon, Sokrates, I believe, demonstrates to Menon through his discussion with Menon's slave (and his introduction of recollection and reincarnation) that knowledge exists, it can be known, and it can be communicated to others; in other words, he seems to be replying to Gorgias' argument regarding the knowledge. Thus, I am led to conclude that Menon, in this instance, serves as a stand-in for his teacher Gorgias, and presents to Sokrates a straw-man version of his teacher's argument regarding knowledge. Without the existence of knowledge, and the ability to know and communicate this knowledge, then one can never know what something such as virtue is. Moreover, without the existence of knowledge (and the ability to

communicate this knowledge) then Sokrates' method of discussion (dialectic), which consists of an oral discussion between one or more people, with the aim of establishing the truth through reasoned argument, is essentially worthless, or at least no better than the eristic or "debaters" style Menon employs.^s

In order to refute Menon, and respond to this epistemological challenge, Sokrates introduces the theory of recollection.⁵⁸⁸ The theory of recollection elaborates upon the synthetical approach outlined above, and makes one important assumption: each individual possesses in their soul an inherent knowledge of virtue and everything more generally. It is evident, however, that not all individuals appear to possess a knowledge of virtue, thus this knowledge is not intuitive. Rather, one must search for and learn (or re-learn) this knowledge, and since this knowledge dwells within the soul, this search must take place utilizing those faculties that belong to the soul alone, namely reason.⁵⁸⁹ This 're-learning' of the knowledge already present in the soul, Sokrates terms 'recollection,' since one is not learning something new, but recollecting a forgotten or hidden piece of knowledge already present in the soul.

In this way, Sokrates believes he has successfully responded to Menon's paradox:

- (i) How can one search for something, when one does not know at all what it is? All individuals possess a knowledge of all things through their soul.
- (ii) How can one aim to search for something when one does not know it at all? When one searches for something unknown, one is not searching for something 'truly' unknown but only forgotten; all knowledge being present in the divine soul.

⁵⁸⁸ See further Scott (1999): 98-102.

⁵⁸⁹ Cf. *Phaidon* 63e-69e, 78a-84b.

(iii) How will one know that it is the thing one did not know, if one should meet with it? Since this unknown subject is a forgotten piece of knowledge rather than a 'true' unknown, when one's soul meets this knowledge it re-learns, or recollects, that which it already knew.⁵⁹⁰

Yet, Sokrates' theory of recollection generates another set of questions that require answering, the most relevant for reincarnation being, 'when does the soul come to possess knowledge of all things?' Sokrates' answer to this question is that the soul comes to possess this knowledge prior to its incarnation in a mortal body.⁵⁹¹ This presents the following conception of the soul's incarnation:

- (1) All individuals possess an equal capacity for virtue;
- (2) Therefore, all soul must possess an equal knowledge of virtue.
- (3) Since individuals do not seem to possess knowledge of virtue at birth, this knowledge ought to exist in the soul prior to birth – with the process of being born the event that causes the soul to forget.⁵⁹²
- (4) Thus, the soul exists prior to incarnation.
- (5) It is during this period, prior to incarnation, that the soul comes to know virtue and all things.

As is evident from Sokrates' response, this does not necessarily require the existence of reincarnation, but only the pre-existence of the soul. Nevertheless, Sokrates quite clearly believes that this question requires the necessary existence of reincarnation, rather than the soul's pre-existence alone. The following argument, which may explain why reincarnation is necessary rather than pre-existence alone, is not stated in the *Menon*, but is included in subsequent formulations of reincarnation present in the *Phaidros* and the *Timaios* (see Chapters 3.7 and 3.8).⁵⁹³ This argument posits that all soul came into existence at the same point in time, at which time all soul came to

⁵⁹⁰ In a sense, when the soul come across a piece of knowledge in the mortal realm, it functions as a mnemonic device, allowing the soul to recollect the knowledge it already possessed when it dwelt in the divine, incorporeal realm prior to its embodiment.

⁵⁹¹ *Menon* 81e-86b.

⁵⁹² Cf. *Menon* 89a3ff.

⁵⁹³ Cf. White (1976): 49 and Johansen (2004): 16-17.

know all things, and then experienced the same initial incarnation.⁵⁹⁴ According to this argument, no new soul may come into existence subsequent to this initial phase.

As Sokrates argues in the *Phaidon* (see further Chapter 3.5), since no new soul may come into existence, reincarnation must exist in order to conserve, more or less, the number of souls available for incarnation.⁵⁹⁵ If this were not the case, then there could eventually come a time in which new human beings are born without souls, i.e. soul ceases to be, a situation that Sokrates considers absurd. Moreover, given the soul's immortality, reincarnation secures the existence of knowledge in the mortal realm for all time. Without the certainty of the soul's continued existence in the mortal realm, knowledge is forever denied to mortal beings.⁵⁹⁶

It is possible that the Sokrates of the *Menon* has some similar conception in mind, though this is not stated specifically, and does not have to be the case. Nevertheless, some combination of the above appears to be the most likely explanation as to why Sokrates insists on the existence of reincarnation as opposed to the soul's pre-existence alone.

Regardless, Sokrates intends to utilize reincarnation as a 'proof' of the existence of recollection; Sokrates' main focus always being to demonstrate the veracity of recollection.⁵⁹⁷ This is something that one must keep in mind when discussing reincarnation in the *Menon*, as this likely explains why the account of reincarnation in this dialogue remains rather brief and lacking in details. As alluded to above, later dialogues discuss reincarnation in far more detail.

Sokrates' Account of Reincarnation

In practice, the account of reincarnation given by Sokrates in the *Menon* is rather brief, and runs as follows (81b3-c):

(81b3) (i) φασὶ γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ

⁵⁹⁴ Cf. Dancy (2004): 234.

⁵⁹⁵ Cf. Morgan (1990): 47.

⁵⁹⁶ Cf. *Parmenides* 133a-134e; *Menon* 86b-c; *Phaidon* 85b-d.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. *Phaidon* 72e-73a.

ἀνθρώπου εἶναι ἀθάνατον, (ii) καὶ τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν—ὃ δὴ
 ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι— (iii) τοτὲ δὲ πάλιν γίγνεσθαι, (iv) ἀπόλλυσθαι
 δ' οὐδέποτε· (vi) δεῖν δὴ διὰ ταῦτα ὡς ὀσιώτατα διαβιῶναι τὸν
 βίον· οἷσιν γὰρ ἄν—
 Φερσεφόνα ποινὰν παλαιοῦ πένθεος
 δέξεται, εἰς τὸν ὑπερθεὺν ἄλιον κείνων ἐνάτῳ ἔτει
 ἀντιδοῖ ψυχὰς πάλιν,
 (c) ἐκ τᾶν βασιλῆες ἀγαθοὶ
 καὶ σθένει κραιπνοὶ σοφίᾳ τε μέγιστοι
 ἄνδρες αὔξοντ'· ἐς δὲ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον ἥρωες ἀγνοὶ
 (c3) πρὸς ἀνθρώπων καλεῦνται.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. They say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time comes to an end, which is called dying, and at another is born again, but never perishes. Consequently one ought to live all one’s life in the utmost holiness.”

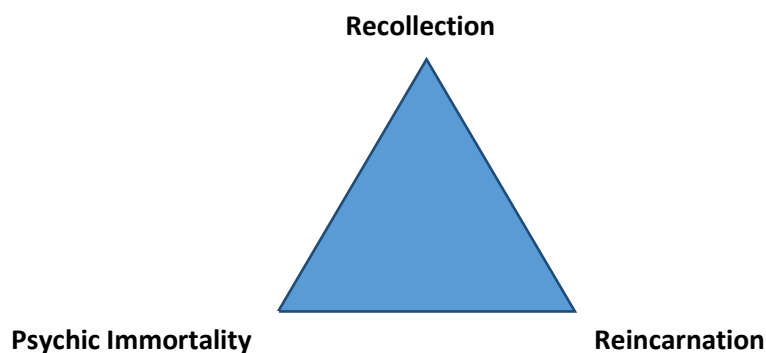
For from whomsoever Persephone shall accept requital for ancient wrong, the souls of these she restores in the ninth year to the upper sun again; from them arise glorious kings and men of splendid might and surpassing wisdom, and for all remaining time are they called holy heroes amongst mankind.”

I believe this can be broken down thus:

- (i) The soul is immortal (81b3-4).
- (ii) At some point, the present incarnation of the soul comes to an end, which human beings term ‘dying’ (“ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι,” 81b4-5).
- (iii) At some other point, it [i.e. the soul] is reborn (81b5).
- (iv) But it [i.e. the soul] is never destroyed (81b5-6).
- (v) Consequently, according to Sokrates, one must live life as piously as possible (81b6-c3), although it is not clear how Sokrates arrives at this point, given that there is no prior assertion or evidence to support such a conclusion.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁸ It is not entirely clear how Sokrates arrives at this particular conclusion employing only the soul’s immortality, recollection, and reincarnation to support his claim. None of these elements, separately or together, suggest an ethical component in and of themselves. It is possible that Plato inferred the existence of a moral element to reincarnation through a consideration of the Pindaric fragment (81b-c) he introduces, which argues that the souls of the dead return to the land of the living, only after Persephone has exacted from them what is owed. On the other hand, this moral aspect of reincarnation may have originated in the

One important detail that emerges from Sokrates' account, which continues throughout all subsequent descriptions of reincarnation, is the establishment of a triangular relationship between three particular concepts: (i) recollection (81c4-e2); (ii) psychic immortality (81b3-4); and (iii) reincarnation (81b3-c3).⁵⁹⁹ This relationship being triangular in the sense that two of these concepts are used to 'prove' the existence of the other (or at least allow for the existence of the other), thereby creating a situation in which all three concepts coexist in concert with one another.



(3.5) The *Phaidon*

(3.5.1) 69e-72e

Empedoklean conception of reincarnation, which describes the embodiment of the soul as being a punishment for some earlier crime committed by the soul (KRS 399, 400 (=DK 1B18), 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410). The soul must pass through incarnation to incarnation until it has sufficiently cleansed itself of the pollution of this crime, thereby allowing for its return to its natural dwelling place with the divine. This thesis, on the other hand, adopts the position that Plato infers an ethical dimension to reincarnation in order to satisfy the particulars of the Platonic Wager. If the Platonic Wager posits that one should opt for the path that best cares for the soul, thereby attaining the most benefit over an infinite period of time, then placing an ethical importance upon reincarnation, serves to reinforce this assertion. The choice that requires one to care for one's soul possesses an inherent ethical component, embodied in the Sokratic paradox that one always seeks what is good. In order for one to know what is good, one must follow the Sokratic way of life (according to Plato); and following the Sokratic way of life obtains for the soul the benefits of the infinite (cf. *Politeia* – 10.614b-619e) promised to it by the Platonic Wager – this it does via reincarnation and recollection. Cf. Reeve (1989): 179 and Kahn (1996): 67-68.

⁵⁹⁹ Hare (1982): 20; Morgan (1992): 236-237.

In the *Menon* (above, Chapter 3.4), Sokrates identifies a triangular relationship between (i) recollection; (ii) psychic immortality; and (iii) reincarnation. Here, two elements of this relationship – psychic immortality and reincarnation – were utilized in order to establish the existence of the third – recollection. The *Phaidon* continues to utilize this triangular relationship, but whereas the *Menon* employed reincarnation and psychic immortality to establish the existence of recollection; recollection and reincarnation are employed in order to establish psychic immortality.⁶⁰⁰ In the particular context of the dialogue, Sokrates attempts to demonstrate to two of his companions – Simmias and Kebes – the veracity of the soul’s immortality, in order to justify the lack of fear he displays towards his impending death. All the while, Sokrates makes it clear that this discussion constitutes a second *apologia* (69d7-e5), serving to defend not just the soul’s immortality, but the Socratic way of life, as he had tried to do at his trial in the *Apologia*.⁶⁰¹

Kebes issues a challenge to Sokrates’ assertion that the soul is immortal; more precisely, he argues that certain individuals find it hard to believe that the soul continues to exist upon its separation from the body (69e7-70b4):⁶⁰²

(69e6) Εἰπόντος δὴ τοῦ Σωκράτους ταῦτα, ὑπολαβὼν ὁ Κέβης
 ἔφη· ὦ Σώκρατες, τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ καλῶς λέγεσθαι,
 70.

(a) (1) τὰ δὲ περὶ τῆς ψυχῆς πολλὴν ἀπιστίαν παρέχει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις
 μή, ἐπειδὴν ἀπαλλαγῆ τοῦ σώματος, οὐδαμοῦ ἔτι ᾗ, (2) ἀλλ’ ἐκείνη
 τῇ ἡμέρᾳ διαφθείρηται τε καὶ ἀπολλύεται ᾗ ἂν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπο-
 θνήσκη, εὐθύς ἀπαλλαττομένη τοῦ σώματος, (3) καὶ ἐκβαίνουσα

⁶⁰⁰ Hare (1982): 20; Morgan (1990): 67-69; Moravcsik (1992): 48-50; Morgan (1992): 236-237; Cook (1996): 48; Kahn (1996): 317; Scott (1999): 103; Dancy (2004): 253-283; Kahn (2006): 122-124.

⁶⁰¹ Indeed, Plato’s presentation of this discussion as a second *apologia* for Sokrates supports the assertion, made above, that the *Apologia* attempts to do more than just respond to the specific charges made against Sokrates, but rather to provide a defence of the Socratic way of life more generally; in this case, via the Platonic Wager. See also Kahn (1996): 314.

⁶⁰² Cf. the Platonic Wager which posits that (a) all individuals have no choice but to participate in the Wager; (b) one must opt for the correct choice, which, for Plato, requires a belief in the immortality of the soul; and (c) one must convince oneself of the Wager’s veracity. The hypothetical individuals of whom Kebes speaks are individuals who have not accepted these particular elements of the Wager; and Sokrates’ arguments in favour of the soul’s immortality are designed in order to encourage such sceptics that they must accept the Wager’s existence and opt for the correct path.

ὥσπερ πνεῦμα ἢ καπνὸς διασκεδασθεῖσα οἴχηται διαπτομένη
καὶ οὐδὲν ἔτι οὐδαμοῦ ἦ. ἐπεὶ, εἴπερ εἶη που αὐτὴ καθ'
αὐτὴν συνηθροισμένη καὶ ἀπηλλαγμένη τούτων τῶν κακῶν
ᾧν σὺ νυνδὴ διήλθες, πολλὴ ἂν εἶη ἐλπίς καὶ καλή, ᾧ
(b) Σώκρατες, ὡς ἀληθῆ ἐστιν ἃ σὺ λέγεις· ἀλλὰ τοῦτο δὴ
ἴσως οὐκ ὀλίγης παραμυθίας δεῖται καὶ πίστεως, ὡς ἔστι τε
ψυχὴ ἀποθανόντος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ τινα δύναμιν ἔχει καὶ
φρόνησιν.

[LOEB translation:] “Now when Socrates had said this, Cebes joined in and said: “Socrates, everything else that’s been said seems fine to me, but what was said about the soul arouses much disbelief in people that when it separates from the body it may no longer exist anywhere, but be destroyed and annihilated on that very same day the person dies, at the very moment of being separated from the body and emerging like a breath or puff of smoke it may fly away and disappear and no longer exist anywhere. Since, if it indeed were somewhere, gathered together alone by itself and separated from all those evil things you described just now, there would be considerable and auspicious hope, Socrates, that what you are saying is true. But perhaps this needs not a little reassurance and proof that the soul exists after the person has died and has some power and intelligence.”

In presenting this argument as belonging to ‘certain individuals’ rather than to himself, Kebes creates a distance between himself and the belief that the soul is not immortal. This leaves open the possibility that Plato utilizes Kebes in order to present various theories regarding the soul’s immortality, with the specific purpose of allowing Sokrates to refute them, thereby supporting his own thesis.⁶⁰³ According to Kebes, these individuals argue that once the soul separates from the body:

- (1) The soul exists nowhere (70a1-2).
- (2) The soul is destroyed and dissolved at the moment of death, when the soul departs from the body (70a2-4).
- (3) The soul being dispersed like breath or smoke upon the winds (70a4-6).

⁶⁰³ This would establish Kebes as a kind of straw man, allowing Sokrates to defend not only the soul’s immortality, but the veracity of the Platonic Wager (see further note 525 above).

To respond to this challenge, Sokrates makes use of an earlier form of the Cyclical Argument, wherein an opposite comes to be from its opposite, so that hot comes to be from cold; tall comes to be from short; and the living come to be from the dead (71c1-72e1):⁶⁰⁴

(71c) (i) Τί οὖν; ἔφη, τῷ ζῆν ἐστὶ τι ἐναντίον, ὡσπερ τῷ ἐγρηγορέναι τὸ καθεύδειν;
Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη.
Τί;
Τὸ τεθνάναι, ἔφη.
Οὐκοῦν ἐξ ἀλλήλων τε γίνεταί ταῦτα, εἴπερ ἐναντία ἐστίν, καὶ αἱ γενέσεις εἰσὶν αὐτοῖν μεταξύ δύο δυοῖν ὄντων;
Πῶς γὰρ οὐ;
Τὴν μὲν τοίνυν ἐτέραν συζυγίαν ὧν νυνδὴ ἔλεγον ἐγώ σοι, ἔφη, ἐρῶ, ὁ Σωκράτης, καὶ αὐτὴν καὶ τὰς γενέσεις· σὺ δέ μοι τὴν ἐτέραν. λέγω δὲ τὸ μὲν καθεύδειν, τὸ δὲ ἐγρηγορέναι, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ καθεύδειν τὸ ἐγρηγορέναι γίνεσθαι καὶ (d) ἐκ τοῦ ἐγρηγορέναι τὸ καθεύδειν, καὶ τὰς γενέσεις αὐτοῖν τὴν μὲν καταδαρθάνειν εἶναι, τὴν δ' ἀνεγείρεσθαι. ἰκανῶς σοι, ἔφη, ἢ οὐ;
Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.
Λέγε δή μοι καὶ σὺ, ἔφη, οὕτω περὶ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου. οὐκ ἐναντίον μὲν φῆς τῷ ζῆν τὸ τεθνάναι εἶναι;
Ἔγωγε.
Γίνεσθαι δὲ ἐξ ἀλλήλων;
Ναί.
Ἐξ οὖν τοῦ ζῶντος τί τὸ γιγνόμενον;
Τὸ τεθνηκός, ἔφη.
Τί δέ, ἢ δ' ὅς, ἐκ τοῦ τεθνεώτος;
Ἄναγκαῖον, ἔφη, ὁμολογεῖν ὅτι τὸ ζῶν.
Ἐκ τῶν τεθνεώτων ἄρα, ὧ Κέβης, τὰ ζῶντά τε καὶ οἱ ζῶντες γίνονται;

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Chapters 1.3.5 and 1.4.5; *Phaidon* 107d-108a.

(e) Φαίνεται, ἔφη.

(ii) Εἰσὶν ἄρα, ἔφη, αἱ ψυχαὶ ἡμῶν ἐν Ἄιδου.

Ἔοικεν.

(iii) Οὐκοῦν καὶ τοῖν γενεσέοιν τοῖν περὶ ταῦτα ἢ γ' ἑτέρα σαφῆς οὔσα τυγχάνει; τὸ γὰρ ἀποθνήσκειν σαφές δήπου, ἢ οὐ;

Πάνυ μὲν οὔν, ἔφη.

Πῶς οὔν, ἢ δ' ὅς, ποιήσομεν; οὐκ ἀνταποδώσομεν τὴν ἐναντίαν γένεσιν, ἀλλὰ ταύτη χωλὴ ἔσται ἢ φύσις; ἢ ἀνάγκη ἀποδοῦναι τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν ἐναντίαν τινὰ γένεσιν;

Πάντως που, ἔφη.

Τίνα ταύτην;

Τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι.

(iv) Οὐκοῦν, ἢ δ' ὅς, εἴπερ ἔστι τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι, ἐκ τῶν 72.

(a) τεθνεώτων ἂν εἴη γένεσις εἰς τοὺς ζῶντας αὕτη, τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι;

Πάνυ γε.

Ὅμολογεῖται ἄρα ἡμῖν καὶ ταύτη τοὺς ζῶντας ἐκ τῶν τεθνεώτων γεγονέναι οὐδὲν ἦττον ἢ τοὺς τεθνεώτας ἐκ τῶν ζῶντων, τούτου δὲ ὄντος ἰκανόν που ἐδόκει τεκμήριον εἶναι ὅτι ἀναγκαῖον τὰς τῶν τεθνεώτων ψυχὰς εἶναι που, ὅθεν δὴ πάλιν γίνεσθαι.

Δοκεῖ μοι, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐκ τῶν ὁμολογημένων ἀναγκαῖον οὕτως ἔχειν.

(v) Ἴδὲ τοίνυν οὕτως, ἔφη, ὦ Κέβης, ὅτι οὐδ' ἀδίκως ὁμολογήκαμεν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ. εἰ γὰρ μὴ αἰεὶ ἀνταποδοίη τὰ

(b) ἕτερα τοῖς ἑτέροις γινόμενα, ὡσπερὲν κύκλω περιόντα, ἀλλ' εὐθεῖά τις εἴη ἢ γένεσις ἐκ τοῦ ἑτέρου μόνον εἰς τὸ καταπτικρὺ καὶ μὴ ἀνακάμπτοι πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἕτερον μηδὲ καμπὴν ποιοῖτο, οἷσθ' ὅτι πάντα τελευτῶντα τὸ αὐτὸ σχῆμα ἂν σχοίη καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πάθος ἂν πάθοι καὶ παύσαιτο γινόμενα;

Πῶς λέγεις; ἔφη.

Οὐδὲν χαλεπόν, ἦ δ' ὅς, ἐννοῆσαι ὃ λέγω· ἀλλ' οἷον εἶ
τὸ καταδαρθάνειν μὲν εἶη, τὸ δ' ἀνεγείρεσθαι μὴ ἀνταποδιδοίη
γιγνόμενον ἐκ τοῦ καθεύδοντος, οἷσθ' ὅτι τελευτῶντα πάντ'
(c) <ἀν> λήρον τὸν Ἐνδυμίωνα ἀποδείξειεν καὶ οὐδαμοῦ ἀν
φαίνοιτο διὰ τὸ καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα ταύτῳ ἐκείνῳ πεπονθέναι,
καθεύδειν. κἂν εἰ συγκρίνοιτο μὲν πάντα, διακρίνοιτο δὲ
μή, ταχὺ ἂν τὸ τοῦ Ἀναξαγόρου γεγονὸς εἶη, “Ὀμοῦ πάντα
χρήματα.” ὡσαύτως δέ, ὧ φίλε Κέβης, καὶ εἰ ἀποθνήσκοι
μὲν πάντα ὅσα τοῦ ζῆν μεταλάβοι, ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀποθάνοι,
μένοι ἐν τούτῳ τῷ σχήματι τὰ τεθνεῶτα καὶ μὴ πάλιν
ἀναβιώσκοιτο, ἄρ' οὐ πολλὴ ἀνάγκη τελευτῶντα πάντα
(d) τεθνάναι καὶ μηδὲν ζῆν; εἰ γὰρ ἐκ μὲν τῶν ἄλλων τὰ
ζῶντα γίγνοιτο, τὰ δὲ ζῶντα θνήσκοι, τίς μηχανὴ μὴ οὐχὶ
πάντα καταναλωθῆναι εἰς τὸ τεθνάναι;

Οὐδὲ μία μοι δοκεῖ, ἔφη ὁ Κέβης, ὧ Σώκρατες, ἀλλὰ μοι
δοκεῖς παντάπασιν ἀληθῆ λέγειν.

Ἔστιν γάρ, ἔφη, ὧ Κέβης, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, παντὸς μᾶλλον
οὕτω, καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἐξαπατῶμενοι ὁμολογοῦμεν,
ἀλλ' ἔστι τῷ ὄντι καὶ τὸ ἀναβιώσκεσθαι καὶ ἐκ τῶν τεθνεώ-
των τοὺς ζῶντας γίνεσθαι καὶ τὰς τῶν τεθνεῶτων ψυχὰς
(e) εἶναι.

[LOEB translation:] “And what does that imply?” he asked. “That there’s an opposite to living, just as being awake is to sleeping?”

“Indeed there is.”

“What?”

“Being dead,” he said.

“So do these things come into being from each other, if indeed they are opposites and are the processes of their coming into being two, as they are in pairs?”

“Of course.”

“Right then, I’ll give you the first pair that I was telling you about just now,” said Socrates, “both itself and its processes, and you give the other one. I mean sleeping and being awake, and that being awake comes about from sleeping and sleeping from being awake and their processes are first going to sleep and second waking up. Is that enough for you,” he asked, “or not?”

“Perfectly.”

“Good. Now you tell me in this way,” he said, “about life and death. Aren’t you saying that being dead is the opposite of being alive?”

“I am.”

“And they come about from each other.”

“Yes.”

“So what is it that comes about from that which is living?”

“That which is dead,” he said.

“And what is that comes from that which is dead?”

“It must be agreed,” he said, “that it’s the living.”

“Then living things and beings must come into existence from the dead, Cebes?”

“It looks like it.”

“So then our souls exist in Hades” he said.

“It seems so.”

“Then is the one of the two processes regarding these things actually obvious? Dying is quite obvious presumably, or isn’t it?”

“Very much so,” he said.

“How shall we deal with this then?” he asked. “Shall we not put forward the opposite process as a counterbalance, otherwise the nature of things will be lopsided in this respect? Or should we set some opposite process against dying?”

“Yes I suppose we should,” he said.

“What will this be?”

“Coming back to life.”

“Therefore,” he said, “if there is a return to life, then this process of coming back to life would be from the dead to the living.”

“Indeed.”

“In that way too we’re agreed then that the living have come into being from the dead no less than the dead have from the living, and this being the case I presume that it seemed sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must exist somewhere from where indeed they come back into being.”

“It seems to me, Socrates,” he said, “from what we’ve agreed this must be how it is.”

“Then consider it in this way, Cebes,” he said, “and you will see, I think, that we’re not wrong to have made this agreement. For if things did not always balance out with their opposites when they come into being, going round in a circle as it were, but if coming into being were only in a straight line from the opposite to the opposite and did not bend back to the other side and make the turn, do you realize

that all dying things would have the same pattern and would undergo the same process and coming into being would cease.”

“How do you mean?” he said.

“It’s not at all difficult to understand what I’m saying,” he said; “after all, for example, if there was a going to sleep, but waking didn’t balance it up by coming into being out of sleeping, do you realize that in dying everything would show that Endymion is insignificant and would nowhere to be seen on account of everything else being in the same state as he, namely being asleep? And if everything were combined together and not separated out, then Anaxagoras’ maxim would soon come true: ‘All things together.’ Likewise also, my dear Cebes, if everything that partakes of life were to die, and when it died the dead were to remain in this form and not come back to life again, isn’t it absolutely inevitable that all things that are dying would be dead and nothing would be alive? For if the living came from things other than the dead and the living died, what means are there to prevent everything being consumed in death?”

“None whatsoever, it seems to me, Socrates,” said Cebes, “and I think what you’re saying is true in every respect.”

“Yes this is most certainly the case, Cebes, as I see it, and we’re not being misled in agreeing just these things: there really is coming back to life and the living come into being from the dead, and the souls of the dead do exist.””

According to Sokrates’ response, the souls arriving in Hades come from here, i.e. from the living; and those that arrive here, come from there, i.e. from Hades. In this way, the living are ‘born from the dead’ (70c7-8: γίνονται ἐκ τῶν τεθνεώτων). In other words, Sokrates utilizes the idea of reincarnation in order to demonstrate to Cebes that the soul is immortal.⁶⁰⁵

This particular conception of reincarnation presents a scenario in which:

- (i) The soul separates from a body resulting in the death of a living being (71c1-e1).
- (ii) This now disembodied soul then travels to Hades (71e2-3).
- (iii) As this soul travels to Hades, other souls depart from Hades (71e4-13).
- (iv) These recently departed souls then become incarnate in mortal bodies, creating new living beings (71e14-72a10).
- (v) This new living being eventually experiences death, and the cycle continues (72a11-e1).

⁶⁰⁵ Cf. Chapter 3.3 above; *Phaidon* 72e-77b, 72e-73a.

As Sokrates' description shows, the souls that inhabit the bodies of all animate beings appear to come from Hades. Hades, as Sokrates' demonstrates in his later eschatological account,⁶⁰⁶ is the place where the souls of the deceased dwell. The only souls that exist in Hades being those souls that were once incarnate in mortal body and experienced 'death.' Accordingly, the souls of the living, if they come from Hades, must have once belonged to prior living beings in order for that soul to experience 'death' and arrive in Hades in the first instance. This suggests all soul that exists came into being in one specific instance, and subsequent to this event, no new soul may come into being. In this way, it is necessary for the number of individuated souls to be conserved, lest the number of souls available for incarnation in mortal bodies reach zero, preventing any animate beings from existing at some point in the future.⁶⁰⁷

In order to conserve the number of souls, Sokrates believes reincarnation exists, so that the number of souls available for incarnation never reduces to zero.⁶⁰⁸ This, for Sokrates, 'proves' the immortality of the soul, as no new soul may come into being, thus preventing any soul from being destroyed, lest the amount of soul in existence eventually reach zero, and animate beings cease to exist. Hades, therefore, constitutes the source of all souls that now exist in the mortal realm and will ever exist in the mortal realm (71e2-72e1); and reincarnation is the process that ensures the conservation of this supply of soul so that it never ceases to be.

In 77a9-77e2, Sokrates elaborates further on this early form of the Cyclical Argument. Here, Sokrates provides the same 'proof' of the soul's immortality as above, but now situates it within the more formalized and normative theory of opposites. This theory argues that opposites come to be out of their opposites; for example, Individual A is tall next to Individual B who is short, yet Individual A becomes short next to Individual C who is taller. However, these opposites can never participate fully in each other, so that the Form of the Tall can never be the Form of the Small (70d7-71b11):

⁶⁰⁶ Cf. Chapter 2.8.4.

⁶⁰⁷ Cf. *Timaios* 39e3-41d3 – these mortal creatures must exist.

⁶⁰⁸ Sayers (1999): 159; cf. Bostock (1999): 418-420; Blondell (2002): 242n.254.

(70d7) Μὴ τοίνυν κατ' ἀνθρώπων, ἦ δ' ὅς, σκόπει μόνον τοῦτο, εἰ βούλει ῥᾶον μαθεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ ζῶων πάντων καὶ φυτῶν, καὶ συλλήβδην ὅσαπερ ἔχει γένεσιν περὶ πάντων (e) ἴδωμεν ἄρ' οὕτωςί γίγνεται πάντα, οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἢ ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίων τὰ ἐναντία, ὅσοις τυγχάνει ὄν τοιοῦτόν τι, οἷον τὸ καλὸν τῷ αἰσχυρῷ ἐναντίον που καὶ δίκαιον ἀδίκῳ, καὶ ἄλλα δὴ μυρία οὕτως ἔχει. τοῦτο οὖν σκεψώμεθα, ἄρα ἀναγκαῖον ὅσοις ἔστι τι ἐναντίον, μηδαμόθεν ἄλλοθεν αὐτὸ γίνεσθαι ἢ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτῷ ἐναντίου. οἷον ὅταν μεῖζόν τι γίγνηται, ἀνάγκη που ἐξ ἐλάττονος ὄντος πρότερον ἔπειτα μεῖζον γίνεσθαι;

Ναί.

Οὐκοῦν κἂν ἔλαττον γίγνηται, ἐκ μεζονος ὄντος πρότερον 71.

(a) ὕστερον ἔλαττον γενήσεται;

Ἔστιν οὕτω, ἔφη.

Καὶ μὴν ἐξ ἰσχυροτέρου γε τὸ ἀσθενέστερον καὶ ἐκ βραδυτέρου τὸ θᾶπτον;

Πάνυ γε.

Τί δέ; ἂν τι χειρόν γίγνηται, οὐκ ἐξ ἀμείνονος, καὶ ἂν δικαιότερον, ἐξ ἀδικωτέρου;

Πῶς γὰρ οὔ;

Ἰκανῶς οὖν, ἔφη, ἔχομεν τοῦτο, ὅτι πάντα οὕτω γίγνεται, ἐξ ἐναντίων τὰ ἐναντία πράγματα;

Πάνυ γε.

Τί δ' αὖ; ἔστι τι καὶ τοιόνδε ἐν αὐτοῖς, οἷον μεταξὺ

ἀμφοτέρων πάντων τῶν ἐναντίων δυοῖν ὄντων δύο γενέσεις,

(b) ἀπὸ μὲν τοῦ ἐτέρου ἐπὶ τὸ ἕτερον, ἀπὸ δ' αὖ τοῦ ἐτέρου πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἕτερον· μεζονος μὲν πράγματος καὶ ἐλάττονος μεταξὺ αὐξήσις καὶ φθίσις, καὶ καλοῦμεν οὕτω τὸ μὲν αὐξάνεσθαι, τὸ δὲ φθίνειν;

Ναί, ἔφη.

Οὐκοῦν καὶ διακρίνεσθαι καὶ συγκρίνεσθαι, καὶ ψύχεσθαι
καὶ θερμαίνεσθαι, καὶ πάντα οὕτω, κἂν εἰ μὴ χρώμεθα τοῖς
ὀνόμασιν ἐνιαχοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔργῳ γοῦν πανταχοῦ οὕτως ἔχειν
ἀναγκαῖον, γίνεσθαι τε αὐτὰ ἐξ ἀλλήλων γένεσίν τε εἶναι
ἐκατέρου εἰς ἄλληλα;
Πάνυ μὲν οὔν, ἦ δ' ὄς.

[LOEB translation:] “Well then, don’t look at this,” he said, “only from the human angle, if you want to understand it more easily, but from that of all animals and plants, and by looking collectively at all things that come into being let’s see whether everything comes into being in this way, from nowhere but opposites from their opposite, where they happen to have this kind of characteristic, for example: the beautiful is opposite to the ugly, I suppose, the just to the unjust; and indeed there are countless others like this. So let’s consider whether for those things that have an opposite, it must follow that a particular thing comes into being from nowhere else but what is opposite to it. For example, when something larger comes into being it must, I suppose, be from something that was previously smaller and that then became larger, mustn’t it?”

“Yes.”

“Likewise, if something comes to be smaller, will it then come to be smaller from something that was previously larger?”

“That’s right,” he said.

“And furthermore, the weaker from the stronger and the quicker from the slower.”

“Yes indeed.”

“And what about if something worse comes into being, isn’t it from something better, and the more just from the more unjust?”

“Of course.”

“Then we’re satisfied on this point then,” he said, “that all things come into being in this way: opposite things from their opposites?”

“Very much so.”

“But what about this? Is there also something like this in them: two kinds of generation between all the pairs of opposites, as they occur in pairs, from one to the other and conversely from the second to the first? You see, between a larger object and a smaller one isn’t there a process of growing and diminishing, and so we refer to the one as increasing and the other as decreasing?”

“Yes,” he said.

“And so too, we have separation and combination, cooling and warming and everything like this; even if sometimes we don’t use these terms, in actual fact it must apply in all instances that their coming into existence from each other is the process of coming-to-be into each other?”

“Very much so,” he agreed.

Having elucidated this theory of opposites, Sokrates reinterprets his account (above) in light of this theory, arguing once more that the living come from the dead, but that Life itself can never be the same as Death.⁶⁰⁹

In this way, participants in a state of coming-to-be (i.e. Becoming) may exhibit properties of contrary Forms, so that Individual A may be both tall and short, and experience both life and death. Yet, the Form itself, i.e. that-which-is (Being), cannot partake of its contrary, as it must exist forever changeless (78c1-e5). If this were not the case, the Form would not 'be,' but exist in a state of Becoming. For Plato, this cannot stand, since it would render reality in a state of constant change, thereby destroy the existence of 'truth' within the universe, as one cannot know something that is always changing. This would invalidate Sokrates' response to Menon's paradox in both the *Menon*

⁶⁰⁹ Sokrates' explanation, however, relies upon certain assumptions he never fully addresses. For instance, Sokrates provides a false equivalency between life and death, and the other opposites he utilizes in order to demonstrate the veracity of his theory of opposites. In demonstrating his theory of opposites, Sokrates refers to 'the larger coming from the smaller,' 'the weaker from the stronger,' and 'the worse from the better.' All of the examples Sokrates utilizes refer to subjective properties that require some kind of comparison in order to be imbued with any meaning. For example, one can only identify something as being large, in relation to something else; and the same is true for the other examples Sokrates provides. Although one might be able to identify a particular entity as being 'dead' by contrasting it with something that is 'alive'; death, at least for human beings, is a demonstrable state of existence that is both empirically verifiable and finite. One might be able to say that Person A is dead, in comparison to Person B who is alive, but regardless of whether Person B is there or not, Person A will always be dead. Conversely, if Person A is large in comparison to Person B who is small, Person A might not continue to be large if Person B were absent; or in relation to another person, Person C. 'Life' and 'death' are definite qualities, whilst 'smallness' or 'largeness' are indefinite properties, at least as they pertain to the human being. It does not necessarily follow that what is applicable to extrinsic or relational properties such as 'large and small'; 'worse and better,' and 'weaker and stronger,' are equally applicable to intrinsic qualities such as 'life and death.' Thus it may be that an opposite coming from an opposite is a valid observation for an extrinsic property, but can this be extrapolated to intrinsic qualities, such as life and death? See further Chapters 1.3.5 and 1.4.5: Sokrates appears to assume that Life is equal to soul, allowing him to argue for its immortality via the notion that an opposite may not partake of its opposite. Therefore, the soul, as Life, can never die, since it cannot partake of its opposite – Death. The soul, however, cannot be equivalent to Life itself, since the soul possesses other qualities absent from Life, e.g. motion, intelligence, virtue, or ignorance. Therefore, either Life is not a Form, eternal and changeless, or else the soul is not Life. In the *Phaidon*, 95b-102a, however Sokrates determines that things acquire their name by having a share in the Forms; thus, it may be that the soul can be called 'life' because it partakes of Life. If human beings are alive, virtue of the presence of soul, then only the soul, strictly speaking, may be called 'alive,' since it is the only entity in the universe that partakes of Life. In this example, the soul is the particular that partakes of the universal, Life. As the soul appears to be the only particular in the universe that participates in Life, so the soul must be immortal, given that no new soul may come into existence after its initial point of inception. Were soul to cease to be, then there would be no entity left in the universe that participates in Life, thereby causing the inanimation of the universe itself.

and the *Phaidon*, and allows for the responses of two sophists to this paradox – that of Protagoras (relativism) and Gorgias (nihilism – cf. Chapter 3.4) – to retain their validity.⁶¹⁰

(3.5.2) 72e-77b

As alluded to in the above argument (Chapter 3.5.1) Sokrates utilizes reincarnation to introduce a form of the Cyclical Argument, in order to demonstrate the soul's immortality. In this section of the *Phaidon*, Sokrates introduces a corollary to the above argument, employing recollection, in conjunction with reincarnation, to present a formal theory of opposites. Returning to the triangular relationship outlined above, Sokrates' applies both reincarnation and recollection (two constituents of this relationship) to establish the existence of the third constituent – psychic immortality.

The theory of recollection, however, is not introduced into the conversation by Sokrates, but rather by the character of Kebes. Upon hearing Sokrates' above use of reincarnation, Kebes is moved to 'recollect' an argument he claims Sokrates has mentioned frequently on previous occasions – the theory of recollection (72e3-7). Thus, by the time of composition of the *Phaidon*, the theory of recollection, and by extension reincarnation, are established as being older, more authoritative notions that Sokrates and his companions appear to take for granted as being true.⁶¹¹ This allows the present discussion to remain focused upon demonstrating the veracity of psychic immortality, so that Sokrates does not have to embark on long digressions, and 'prove' both recollection and reincarnation each time he wishes to mention them.

Kebes, accordingly, provides a summary of the recollection (72e2-73a3) introduced by Sokrates in the *Menon*:

⁶¹⁰ Protagoras: DK 80A13, A14, A19, B1; Gorgias: DK 82B3. See also Chapter 4 below.

⁶¹¹ Morgan (1990): 47; Rutherford (1995): 24; Scott (1999): 102-118; Dancy (2004): 241, 253-283; cf. Kahn (1996): 64, 150 whose unitarianism considers this intentional Platonic design.

(72e2) (1) Καὶ μὴν, ἔφη ὁ Κέβης ὑπολαβῶν, καὶ κατ' ἐκεῖνόν γε τὸν λόγον, ὧ̃ Σώκρατες, εἰ ἀληθὴς ἐστίν, ὃν σὺ εἴωθας θαμὰ λέγειν, ὅτι ἡμῖν ἢ μάθησις οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ ἀνάμνησις τυγχάνει οὔσα, καὶ κατὰ τοῦτον ἀνάγκη που ἡμᾶς ἐν προτέρῳ τινὶ χρόνῳ μεμαθηκέναι ἃ νῦν ἀναμιμνησκοόμεθα. (2) τοῦτο δὲ 73.

(a) ἀδύνατον, (3) εἰ μὴ ἦν που ἡμῖν ἢ ψυχὴ πρὶν ἐν τῷδε τῷ ἀνθρώπινῳ εἶδει γενέσθαι· ὥστε καὶ ταύτη ἀθάνατον ἢ ψυχὴ τι ἔοικεν εἶναι.

[LOEB translation:] ““And furthermore,” said Cebes taking up the point, “according to that argument, Socrates, if what you’ve frequently put forward is true, that for us learning is actually nothing other than recollection, then according to that I think it must be that what we now recollect we have learned at some previous time. But this is impossible unless our soul existed somewhere before it came into being in this human form. So in this way too the soul seems to be immortal.”

Accordingly:

- (1) When one learns, one is recollecting what the soul learnt at some previous time (72e2-6).
- (2) This previous time occurred prior to the soul’s embodiment (72e6ff.).
- (3) Therefore, the soul existed somewhere prior to its present incarnation (73a1-3).
- (4) Combining this with Sokrates’ argument in Chapter 3.5.1, this ‘somewhere prior’ is Hades.

As with Sokrates’ introduction of recollection in the *Menon*, Kebes’ summation raises similar criticisms, e.g. this version of recollection posits the pre-existence of the soul, but not necessarily its continued existence post-death, nor the existence of reincarnation.⁶¹² Nevertheless, by combining this summation of recollection with the early form of the Cyclical Argument Sokrates introduces above (Chapter 3.5.1), this provides a response to some of these associated issues, e.g. it argues that the soul exists prior to embodiment, but also after death, in Hades (77a8-e2).⁶¹³

One issue, however, that neither of these arguments address, is how the soul initially came into being.⁶¹⁴ This understanding of reincarnation, establishes it as a cycle that possesses no apparent

⁶¹² Cf. Chapter 3.4.

⁶¹³ Morgan (1990): 47; Kahn (1996): 64, 160-164, 314.

⁶¹⁴ See Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8, in particular, for a consideration of this issue.

beginning nor end. In this way, Sokrates appears to suggest that the soul did not undergo a creation, but always existed; and since there was no point in time, in the past, in which the soul did not exist, so there will be no point in time, in the future, in which the soul ceases to exist.⁶¹⁵ Yet, the theory of recollection described by Sokrates in the *Menon* (see Chapter 3.4), and by Kebes here, implies a point in which the soul was not part of this never-ending cycle. If learning is understood to be the recollection of knowledge already contained within the soul, then the soul must contain knowledge of all things; otherwise, it would be impossible for certain individuals to learn certain things, thereby invalidating recollection's use as a response to Menon's paradox.⁶¹⁶

Yet, the judgement of the soul presented in the *Phaidon*, consists of an attempt by the judges to ascertain the extent to which a soul possesses knowledge (see Chapter 2.8.4). This would suggest there are things the soul does not know, leading to the same conclusion mentioned previous, i.e. the invalidation of recollection as a response to Menon's paradox. Presumably, therefore, the criterion of the judgement refers to the extent to which the soul, in its present incarnation, was able to recollect the knowledge it contains within itself, thereby preserving the soul's retention of all knowledge. This would create a situation in which the soul does not learn anything new whilst in Hades, since it already possess all there is to know. If the soul cannot learn anything new in Hades, and the soul dwells in Hades prior to incarnation, then there must have been a point in which the soul dwelt in a disembodied state, somewhere other than Hades, at which time it acquired all of its knowledge. Were such the case, then this would dispute the entirely cyclical nature of the reincarnation Sokrates presents here.⁶¹⁷ On the other hand, it is possible that if Sokrates envisions

⁶¹⁵ Cf. Sokrates' presentation of the soul in the *Phaidon* (Chapters 1.3.5 and 1.4.5) as being equivalent to Life, and therefore, incapable of partaking of Death leading to its immortality. If the soul is understood to be equivalent to Life, and all animate beings are alive virtue of the presence of soul, then the soul could not have been born, since all life in the universe stems from the soul. Were life to have existed in the universe prior to soul, then all animate beings are not alive virtue of the soul, in which case the soul cannot be interpreted as being equivalent to Life, as there would exist another source of life in the universe. Of course, it is possible for the soul to have been created if it was created at the very inception of the universe, see for example, the *Timaios* (Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8).

⁶¹⁶ Irwin (1999): 144; Cf. Chapter 3.4

⁶¹⁷ Indeed, this is the case in both the *Phaidros* and the *Timaios* – see further Chapters 3.7 and 3.8.

the soul as always having existed, then the soul likewise existed always omniscient, though this is not specifically stated in the dialogue.⁶¹⁸

(3.5.3) 113d-114c

(113d1) Τούτων δὲ οὕτως πεφυκότων, ἐπειδὴν ἀφίκωνται οἱ τετε-
λευτηκότες εἰς τὸν τόπον οἷ ὁ δαίμων ἕκαστον κομίζει,
πρῶτον μὲν διεδικάσαντο οἷ τε καλῶς καὶ ὀσίως βιώσαντες
καὶ οἱ μή. (3) καὶ οἷ μὲν ἂν δόξωσι μέσως βεβιωκέναι, πορευ-
θέντες ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀχέροντα, ἀναβάντες ἃ δὴ αὐτοῖς ὀχήματά
ἐστίν, ἐπὶ τούτων ἀφικνοῦνται εἰς τὴν λίμνην, καὶ ἐκεῖ
οἰκοῦσί τε καὶ καθαιρόμενοι τῶν τε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες
δίκας ἀπολύονται, εἷ τίς τι ἠδίκηκεν, τῶν τε εὐεργεσιῶν
(e) τιμὰς φέρονται κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἕκαστος· (1) οἷ δ' ἂν δόξωσιν
ἀνιάτως ἔχειν διὰ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων, ἢ ἱερο-
συλίας πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἢ φόνους ἀδίκους καὶ παρανόμους
πολλοὺς ἐξεργασμένοι ἢ ἄλλα ὅσα τοιαῦτα τυγχάνει ὄντα,
τούτους δὲ ἢ προσήκουσα μοῖρα ρίπτει εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον,
ὅθεν οὐποτε ἐκβαίνουσιν. (2) οἷ δ' ἂν ἰάσιμα μὲν μεγάλα δὲ
δόξωσιν ἠμαρτηκέναι ἀμαρτήματα, οἷον πρὸς πατέρα ἢ μη-

114.

(a) τέρα ὑπ' ὀργῆς βίαιόν τι πράξαντες, καὶ μεταμέλον αὐτοῖς
τὸν ἄλλον βίον βιῶσιν, ἢ ἀνδροφόνου τοιοῦτω τινὶ ἄλλω
τρόπῳ γένωνται, τούτους δὲ ἐμπεσεῖν μὲν εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον
ἀνάγκη, ἐμπεσόντας δὲ αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν ἐκεῖ γενομένους
ἐκβάλλει τὸ κῦμα, τοὺς μὲν ἀνδροφόνους κατὰ τὸν Κωκυτόν,
τοὺς δὲ πατραλοίας καὶ μητραλοίας κατὰ τὸν Πυριφλεγ-
έθοντα· ἐπειδὴν δὲ φερόμενοι γένωνται κατὰ τὴν λίμνην τὴν
Ἀχερουσιάδα, ἐνταῦθα βοῶσιν τε καὶ καλοῦσιν, οἱ μὲν οὐς
ἀπέκτειναν, οἱ δὲ οὐς ὕβρισαν, καλέσαντες δ' ἰκετεύουσι

⁶¹⁸ Cf. Ackrill (1997): 13.

(b) καὶ δέονται ἑᾶσαι σφᾶς ἐκβῆναι εἰς τὴν λίμνην καὶ δέξασθαι, καὶ ἂν μὲν πείσωσιν, ἐκβαίνουσί τε καὶ λήγουσι τῶν κακῶν, εἰ δὲ μή, φέρονται αὖθις εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον καὶ ἐκεῖθεν πάλιν εἰς τοὺς ποταμούς, καὶ ταῦτα πάσχοντες οὐ πρότερον παύονται πρὶν ἂν πείσωσιν οὐς ἠδίκησαν· αὕτη γὰρ ἡ δίκη ὑπὸ τῶν δικαστῶν αὐτοῖς ἐτάχθη. (4) οἱ δὲ δὴ ἂν δόξωσι διαφερόντως πρὸς τὸ ὀσίως βιώναι, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ τῶνδε μὲν τῶν τόπων τῶν ἐν τῇ γῆ ἐλευθερούμενοί τε καὶ ἀπαλλαττό- (c) μενοι ὥσπερ δεσμητηρίων, ἄνω δὲ εἰς τὴν καθαρὰν οἴκησιν ἀφικνούμενοι καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς οἰκίζόμενοι. (5) τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ φιλοσοφία ἱκανῶς καθηράμενοι ἄνευ τε σωματῶν ζῶσι τὸ παράπαν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, καὶ εἰς οἰκήσεις ἔτι τούτων καλλίους ἀφικνοῦνται, ἃς οὔτε ῥάδιον δηλῶσαι οὔτε ὁ χρόνος ἱκανὸς ἐν τῷ παρόντι. ἀλλὰ τούτων δὴ ἕνεκα χρὴ ὧν διεληλύθαμεν, ὧ Σιμμία, πᾶν ποιεῖν ὥστε ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἐν τῷ βίῳ μετασχεῖν· καλὸν γὰρ τὸ ἄθλον καὶ ἡ ἐλπὶς μεγάλη.

[LOEB translation:] “Soc. “Such is the nature of these things. When the dead reach the place where the spirit brings each one, firstly they submit to judgment: those who have led good holy lives, and those who have not. Now those who are considered to have led a moderate life make their way toward the Acheron, embark on rafts provided for them, and on these they arrive at the lake. There they dwell, are purified and are absolved of their wrongdoings by paying penalties, if anyone has done any wrong, and they win recognition for their good deeds, each according to his worth. But those who are judged to be incorrigible on account of the enormity of their wrongdoing, having committed either much great sacrilege or unjust killings and many lawless acts, or any other cases of this kind, their appropriate destiny flings them into Tartarus whence they never emerge. If others are judged to have committed great wrongs that are remediable, such as doing violence to a father or mother out of anger, and have lived the rest of their lives in remorse, or those who have killed in some other similar way, must firstly be thrown into Tartarus, but once they’ve been thrown in and spent a year there, the wave throws them out: the murderers by way of Cocytus, the violators of father and mother by way of Pyriphlegethon. When they’re carried along and come up alongside the Acherusian Lake, there they cry out and call, some to those whom they’ve killed, others to those upon whom they’ve committed outrage. Having called them they beseech and beg them to be allowed to come out onto the lake and be admitted, and if they persuade them, they come out and put an end to their troubles. But if not, they’re carried back to Tartarus and from there back to the rivers and they do not stop suffering in this way until they win over those whom they’ve wronged: for this is the sentence assigned to them by the judges. But as for those who are judged to have been distinguished in leading a holy life, those are the ones who have been set free, released from these regions in the earth as from prisons, and have come up into the

pure dwelling and are settled upon the earth. Of these some people, those who have been adequately cleansed by philosophy, lead their entire lives henceforth without the body for the whole of the time to come and they reach dwellings even more beautiful than these, which it's neither very easy to describe, nor is there enough time in the present circumstances. Well, for these reasons we've talked about, Simmias, we must do everything to have a share of goodness and wisdom in our lives: for it's a noble prize and the expectations are great.””

The *Phaidon* concludes with a representation of Sokrates' death. Prior to this formal conclusion of the dialogue, Sokrates completes his second *apologia* with an account that is part geographical account of Hades, and part eschatological account concerning the progression of the soul from disembodiment (i.e. 'death') to reincarnation.⁶¹⁹ During Sokrates' account, he describes how the soul travels to the place of judgement in Hades; the judgement itself, and its subsequent organization into five identifiable categories of soul (113d1-114c8). These categories are:

- (1) The Incurable Soul – the unjust soul that cannot be cured of its ignorance via corrective punishment, and so serves henceforth as a deterrent to other souls (113e1-6).⁶²⁰
- (2) The Curable Soul – the unjust soul that can be cured of its ignorance through corrective punishment (113e6-114b6).⁶²¹
- (3) The Average Soul – the soul that is neither unjust nor just, being some combination of both; and experiences both punishment and reward (113d4-e1).⁶²²
- (4) The Pure Soul – the just soul that did not belong to a philosopher, and experiences reward on 'the true surface of the earth' (114b6-c2, cf. 110b5-111c3).⁶²³
- (5) The Philosopher's Soul – the just soul that did belong to a philosopher, and experiences reward in a place free of the confines of earth, above that of the 'true surface of the earth' (114c2-6).⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁹ Kahn (1996): 314.

⁶²⁰ See further Chapters 2.4.4, 2.8.4, and 2.9.4.

⁶²¹ See further Chapters 2.4.4, 2.8.4, and 2.9.4.

⁶²² See further Chapter 2.8.4.

⁶²³ *Phaidon* 82b5-8: best of ordinary human beings come back as bees, wasps or ants, or as moderate human beings; see further Chapter 2.8.4.

⁶²⁴ See further Chapter 2.8.4.

Thus far, the *Phaidon* presents a similar conceptualization of the afterlife as that of the *Gorgias*, though it includes the extra category of the 'average soul.' In between the *Gorgias* and the *Phaidon*, however, Plato introduces the notion of reincarnation. Consequently, Plato attempts to integrate the notion of reincarnation into his wider conception of the afterlife as presented in the *Gorgias*. This presents the following relationship between the five categories and reincarnation:

- (1) The Incurable Soul is removed from the cycle of reincarnation (113e1-6).
- (2) The Curable Soul remains in the cycle of reincarnation (113e6-114b6).
- (3) The Average Soul remains in the cycle of reincarnation (113d4-113e1).
- (4) The Pure Soul remains in the cycle of reincarnation (114b6-c2).
- (5) The Philosopher's Soul is removed from the cycle of reincarnation (114c2-6).

As the above shows, all categories of soul undergo reincarnation, except for two specific categories, the incurable soul and the philosopher's soul. Why is this so? In Chapter 2 (see, for example, Chapter 2.12) it became evident that the judges use both ethical and epistemological criteria to judge the soul, though ultimately the ethical criteria are subsumed by the epistemological. In this case, the incurable soul is the unjust soul that commits especial acts of wickedness in life. However, this soul, (unlike that of the curable), derives no benefit from corrective punishment, and so it must serve as a deterrent to others, conferring upon them some kind of benefit, thereby ensuring that this punishment is not wanton. This relies upon a conception of punishment whereby an individual commits an act of injustice through ignorance, and so the purpose of punishment should be to correct this ignorance, in the belief that no knowledgeable individual would willingly commit an act of injustice.⁶²⁵ Integrating the theory of recollection into this understanding, the incurable soul becomes the soul that failed to recollect the knowledge contained within itself. The incurable soul, therefore, is the ignorant soul.

⁶²⁵ See further Chapters 2.4.1, 2.4.2, and 2.6.1.

According to this understanding, the philosopher's soul becomes the knowledgeable soul; the soul that succeeded in recollecting the knowledge contained within itself. Since this soul is knowledgeable, it precludes the possibility of it committing acts of injustice, as injustice results from ignorance, which this soul does not possess. Yet, how is the philosopher's soul different from that of the pure soul, as they both appear to be 'just' souls? Using the theory of recollection presented in the *Menon* and the *Phaidon*, the pure soul is the 'just' soul that does not commit injustice, but it is not necessarily the knowledgeable soul. The pure soul need only possess enough knowledge not to commit acts of injustice. This knowledge, moreover, need not derive from reasoned investigation, but may derive from trial and error or habituation, such that the pure soul may commit an injustice, pay the penalty for this injustice, and refrain from repeating their error. As long as this occurs prior to death, the soul will be adjudged pure.⁶²⁶ The philosopher, on the other hand, consistently seeks to use reasoned investigation in order to recollect knowledge of all things, never ceasing to search and investigate.⁶²⁷ In this way, only the philosopher's soul can be considered 'truly' knowledgeable. One may argue that the pure soul fulfils the ethical criteria of the judgement, but not the epistemological, whereas the philosopher's soul fulfils both.

This creates a situation in which the incurable soul becomes the contrary of the philosopher's soul, so that the philosopher's soul represents Knowledge, it having recovered the inherent omniscience of the soul, whilst the incurable soul represents Ignorance, it having recovered none. Utilizing the Cyclical Argument introduced in the *Phaidon* (69e7-72e1), the philosopher's soul (Knowledge) and the incurable soul (Ignorance) are binary opposites. Therefore, knowledge may come out of ignorance, and ignorance out of knowledge, but Knowledge can never become Ignorance, and Ignorance, Knowledge.⁶²⁸ Consequently, the philosopher's soul is removed from the cycle of

⁶²⁶ Cf. Chapter 1.3.9.

⁶²⁷ Cf. *Menon* 86b-c.

⁶²⁸ Cf. the remaining categories of soul, *Phaidon* 112e-114b (see also Chapter 2.8.4).

reincarnation as it represents Knowledge, and so it can never become its contrary – Ignorance.⁶²⁹

This soul is thus unsuitable for reincarnation, as it would result in an individual being born in possession of a demonstrable knowledge of all things. Such an individual cannot fail but be all-knowing and just, thereby removing from this individual any personal agency; their choices being meaningless, as it has been predetermined that they will be knowledgeable and just. On the other hand, the incurable soul is removed from the cycle of reincarnation as it represents Ignorance, and so it can never become its contrary – Knowledge. This soul is thus unsuitable for reincarnation, as it would result in an individual being born in possession of total ignorance. Such an individual cannot fail but be ignorant and unjust, thereby removing from this individual any personal agency, as it has been predetermined that they will be forever ignorant and unjust.⁶³⁰

Annas (1982), on the other hand, presents the following understanding of the role of reincarnation in the *Phaidon*:

“Running through the dialogue [i.e. the *Phaidon*] has been the thought that soul and body are sharply distinct and opposed. In fact Plato notoriously wavers, between different arguments, in his treatment of the soul/body relation and the nature of the soul; but in Socrates' extended discussions of the philosopher's attitude to the soul and the body (64a-69e) and their respective affinities (78b-84b) he develops the idea that excellence for a soul lies in separation from the body and defectiveness in attachment to the body and commitment to its concerns. In this context he describes the good soul as parting easily from the body at death, while the bad soul lingers on round it, and because of its desire for embodiment is compelled to re-enter other bodies again, of a kind appropriate to its former

⁶²⁹ Cf. the suggestion in Chapter 2.12 that the philosopher's soul appears to be understood as existing close to the changeless and immortal form of Knowledge. Hence, were a philosopher's soul reincarnated, it could never be anything other than knowledgeable, since it will be incapable of participating in Ignorance, virtue of its closeness to the changeless form of Knowledge.

⁶³⁰ Cf. the suggestion in Chapter 2.12 that the incurable soul appears to be understood as existing close to the changeless and immortal form of Ignorance. Hence, were an incurable soul reincarnated, it could never be anything other than ignorant, since it will be incapable of participating in Knowledge, virtue of its closeness to the changeless form of Ignorance.

life (80d5-82c8). Reincarnation thus appears as a punishment for a bad life, and the highest kind of virtue is said to belong to the philosopher, who by refusing to identify with the body's concerns renders his soul at death "pure", unattracted by the body and presumably not liable to reincarnation" (pp.126-127).

I ultimately disagree with Annas' assessment of reincarnation in the *Phaidon* on the following grounds:⁶³¹

- (1) I agree that the philosopher's soul is presented as escaping the cycle of reincarnation. I disagree, however, that this is because of their refusal to identify with the body, but rather due to the pure soul of the philosopher having achieved a higher state of existence that no longer requires a permanent body. In **114c** Sokrates describes how those pure souls that have been cleansed by philosophy (αὐτῶν οἱ φιλοσοφία ἰκανῶς καθηράμενοι), exist for the rest of time without the body. I think it is important that Sokrates draws a distinction here between the pure souls and those that belong to philosophers, as I believe the two are not the same. I believe that when Sokrates refers to the souls of those cleansed by philosophy, Plato intends us to understand philosophy as that philosophy which Plato proffers, i.e. only those souls that have followed the Sokratic way of life escape reincarnation. Thus, Plato uses the philosopher's soul's escape from reincarnation in a protreptic manner (consistent with the Platonic Wager), in order to demonstrate to his audience that it is not enough to be a philosopher – a sophist, for example, may call themselves a philosopher (cf. the *Sophist*) – rather one must be a philosopher, in the vein of Sokrates, i.e. one must follow the Sokratic way of life.
- (2) As with the *Gorgias* myth so with the *Phaidon* myth, Annas utterly ignores the existence of the incurable soul. The incurable soul, like the soul of the philosopher, likewise "escapes"

⁶³¹ I feel I should point out that on page 138, Annas (1982a) states rather problematically that "we find reincarnation implausible, and even grotesque." Given that there is a sizeable percentage of the contemporary population that believes in the existence of reincarnation, e.g. Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, I think this statement is rather ill-thought-out, and may suggest the existence of potential confirmation bias.

reincarnation, since it dwells in Tartaros for the rest of time. If the philosopher escapes reincarnation because they do not identify with the body, and reincarnation is a punishment for living a bad life, then by this logic the incurable soul must not only remain within the cycle of reincarnation, but must be subject to “super”-embodiment given its attachment to the body. By “super”-embodiment I mean the incurable soul must be so attached to the body, in contrast to the philosopher’s soul, that it must, to some extent, become entirely body if the philosopher’s soul becomes entirely soul. Yet nowhere does Plato argue that the incurable soul ceases to be soul; indeed, in describing the punishment of the incurable soul as occurring for eternity, it suggests the divine, immortal part of the incurable soul remains intact, otherwise, the punishment would not last an eternity.

(3) This brings me to the third point, which is that I do not believe, based on my understanding, that Plato presents reincarnation as punishment *per se*. Reincarnation, I believe, is not inherently good or bad, it simply is; it exists of necessity (cf. the Myth of Er discussed in Chapter 3.6.1). It is an unfeeling, amoral, and inevitable process that is required to maintain the underlying order of the universe,⁶³² hence Sokrates’ statement that the incurable soul is dragged to its judgement by its guardian, whether it wants to go or not. The moral part enters with the judgement of the soul, which Annas dismissed earlier (pp.125-126) as playing a lesser, downgraded role in the *Phaidon*.

(4) Having said the above, I do believe that Plato intends for an optimistic reading of reincarnation, rather than the pessimistic (almost nihilistic) reading of Annas.⁶³³ As Sokrates describes in the *Phaidon*, it is not enough for a soul simply to be pure, but it must be a soul

⁶³² See also Saunders (1973): 234: “The whole object of the eschatological exercise is explicitly said to be the arranging of every ‘part’ of the universe, souls included, in the position which will contribute most to the good of the whole ... Further, the process is not, apparently, subject to more than minimal guidance from any personal agency: it seems to be automatic or semi-automatic, with perhaps some remote control from a supervisor who may have done no more than construct the system in the first place, which thereafter operates by virtue of its own built-in mechanisms. Most of the verbs used to describe the soul’s movement are neutral: it ‘moves’, ‘goes’, ‘travels’, rather than ‘is sent’ or ‘is conducted’ by a guide. The whole process seems as automatic and inevitable as the motion of a cork or stone when released half-way down a depth of water: the stone automatically sinks, the cork bobs up.”

⁶³³ Annas (1982a): 129, 135, and 138.

that practices philosophy; here one should reunderstand philosophy as the Sokratic way of life. Thus, reincarnation may *seem* pessimistic, since no matter how good one leads their life, they will only escape reincarnation if they live the Sokratic way of life, which is not possible for certain members of society, e.g. slaves or women, due to societal factors outside of their control. However, reincarnation seems to continue indefinitely until escape is achieved. This therefore, gives all souls an infinite amount of time to try again. Given infinity it is likely every soul will eventually escape the cycle. Plato, via the Platonic Wager, provides the “cheat-code” (the privileged knowledge) for escaping the cycle sooner rather than later: do not live the life of the incurable soul, but believe that the afterlife (and reincarnation) exist, live the Sokratic way of life *now*, and break free of the cycle.

(3.6) The *Politeia*

(3.6.1) 10.614b-621d

The *Politeia* culminates in the eschatological account known as ‘the Myth of Er’ (10.614b2-621d2). This account presents a description of the afterlife, apparently from the point of view of Er, who outlines the journey of the soul from its disembodiment to its eventual reincarnation. Sokrates’ account retains the description of reincarnation presented above in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5.3), with three caveats. First, Sokrates reduces the five categories of soul from five to four – the ‘average’ soul being absorbed into the categories of ‘curable’ and ‘pure’ (see further Chapters 2.8.4 and 2.9.4). Second, in the *Phaidon* Sokrates does not describe exactly how a soul is reincarnated, merely that the souls await at the Akherousian Lake until the time of reincarnation (*Phaidon* 113a2-5, d1-e1). In the *Politeia*, Sokrates elaborates on this facet of reincarnation, introducing the idea that

each individual soul uses the knowledge they recollected in life, in order to choose for themselves their next life (10.617d2-621b7).⁶³⁴

(617d2) Σφᾶς οὔν, ἐπειδὴ ἀφικέσθαι, εὐθύς δεῖν ἰέναι πρὸς τὴν
Λάχεσιν. προφήτην οὔν τινα σφᾶς πρῶτον μὲν ἐν τάξει
διαστῆσαι, ἔπειτα λαβόντα ἐκ τῶν τῆς Λαχέσεως γονάτων
κλήρους τε καὶ βίων παραδείγματα, ἀναβάντα ἐπὶ τι βῆμα
ὑψηλὸν εἶπεῖν· “Ἀνάγκης θυγατρὸς κόρης Λαχέσεως λόγος.
Ψυχὰὶ ἐφήμεροι, ἀρχὴ ἄλλης περιόδου θνητοῦ γένους
(e) θανατηφόρου. οὐχ ὑμᾶς δαίμων λήξεται, ἀλλ’ ὑμεῖς δαίμονα
αἰρήσεσθε. πρῶτος δ’ ὁ λαχὼν πρῶτος αἰρείσθω βίον, ὃ
συνέσται ἐξ ἀνάγκης. ἀρετὴ δὲ ἀδέσποτον, ἦν τιμῶν καὶ
ἀτιμάζων πλέον καὶ ἔλαττον αὐτῆς ἕκαστος ἔξει. αἰτία
ἐλομένου· θεὸς ἀναίτιος.”

Ταῦτα εἰπόντα ῥῖψαι ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς κλήρους, τὸν δὲ παρ’
αὐτὸν πεσόντα ἕκαστον ἀναιρεῖσθαι πλὴν οὔ, ἔ δὲ οὐκ ἔαν· τῷ
618.

(a) δὲ ἀνελομένῳ δῆλον εἶναι ὀπόστος εἴληχεν. μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο
αὔθις τὰ τῶν βίων παραδείγματα εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν σφῶν θεῖναι
ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, πολὺ πλείω τῶν παρόντων. εἶναι δὲ παντοδαπά·
ζῶων τε γὰρ πάντων βίους καὶ δὴ καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρωπίνους
ἅπαντας. τυραννίδας τε γὰρ ἐν αὐτοῖς εἶναι, τὰς μὲν διατε-
λεῖς, τὰς δὲ καὶ μεταξύ διαφθειρομένας καὶ εἰς πενίας τε καὶ
φυγὰς καὶ εἰς πτωχείας τελευτώσας· εἶναι δὲ καὶ δοκίμων
ἀνδρῶν βίους, τοὺς μὲν ἐπὶ εἴδεσιν καὶ κατὰ κάλλη καὶ τὴν
(b) ἄλλην ἰσχύν τε καὶ ἀγωνίαν, τοὺς δ’ ἐπὶ γένεσιν καὶ προγόνων
ἀρεταῖς, καὶ ἀδοκίμων κατὰ ταῦτά, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ
γυναικῶν. ψυχῆς δὲ τάξιν οὐκ ἐνεῖναι διὰ τὸ ἀναγκαίως
ἔχειν ἄλλον ἐλομένην βίον ἀλλοίαν γίνεσθαι· τὰ δ’ ἄλλα
ἀλλήλοις τε καὶ πλούτοις καὶ πενίαις, τὰ δὲ νόσοις, τὰ δ’
ὑγιείαις μεμεῖχθαι, τὰ δὲ καὶ μεσοῦν τούτων.

⁶³⁴ Cf. Irwin (1999b): 164-185.

Ἔνθα δὴ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὧ φίλε Γλαύκων, ὁ πᾶς κίνδυνος
ἀνθρώπων, καὶ διὰ ταῦτα μάλιστα ἐπιμελητέον ὅπως ἕκαστος
(c) ἡμῶν τῶν ἄλλων μαθημάτων ἀμελήσας τούτου τοῦ μαθήμα-
τος καὶ ζητητῆς καὶ μαθητῆς ἔσται, ἐάν ποθεν οἴός τ' ἦ
μαθεῖν καὶ ἐξευρεῖν τίς αὐτὸν ποιήσει δυνατὸν καὶ ἐπιστή-
μονα, βίον χρηστὸν καὶ πονηρὸν διαγιγνώσκοντα, τὸν βελτίω
ἐκ τῶν δυνατῶν ἀεὶ πανταχοῦ αἰρεῖσθαι· ἀναλογιζόμενον
πάντα τὰ νυνδὴ ῥηθέντα [καὶ] συντιθέμενα ἀλλήλοις καὶ
διαιρούμενα πρὸς ἀρετὴν βίου πῶς ἔχει, εἰδέναι τί κάλλος
πενία ἢ πλοῦτω κραθὲν καὶ μετὰ ποίας τινὸς ψυχῆς ἕξω
(d) κακὸν ἢ ἀγαθὸν ἐργάζεται, καὶ τί εὐγένειαι καὶ δυσγένειαι
καὶ ἰδιωτεῖαι καὶ ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἰσχύες καὶ ἀσθένειαι καὶ εὐμαθίαι
καὶ δυσμαθίαι καὶ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν φύσει περὶ ψυχὴν
ὄντων καὶ τῶν ἐπικτήτων τί συγκεραννύμενα πρὸς ἄλληλα
ἐργάζεται, ὥστε ἐξ ἀπάντων αὐτῶν δυνατὸν εἶναι συλλογι-
σάμενον αἰρεῖσθαι, πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς φύσιν ἀποβλέποντα,
(e) τὸν τε χεῖρω καὶ τὸν ἀμείνω βίον, χεῖρω μὲν καλοῦντα ὃς
αὐτὴν ἐκέῖσε ἄξει, εἰς τὸ ἀδικωτέραν γίνεσθαι, ἀμείνω δὲ
ὅστις εἰς τὸ δικαιοτέραν. τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πάντα χαίρειν ἐάσει·
ἔωράκαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ζῶντί τε καὶ τελευτήσαντι αὕτη κρατίστη
619.

(a) αἴρεσις. ἀδαμαντίνως δὴ δεῖ ταύτην τὴν δόξαν ἔχοντα εἰς
Ἄιδου ἰέναι, ὅπως ἂν ἦ καὶ ἐκεῖ ἀνέκκλητος ὑπὸ πλοῦτων τε
καὶ τῶν τοιούτων κακῶν, καὶ μὴ ἐμπεσῶν εἰς τυραννίδας καὶ
ἄλλας τοιαύτας πράξεις πολλὰ μὲν ἐργάσθαι καὶ ἀνήκεστα
κακά, ἔτι δὲ αὐτὸς μείζω πάθη, ἀλλὰ γινῶ τὸν μέσον ἀεὶ τῶν
τοιούτων βίον αἰρεῖσθαι καὶ φεύγειν τὰ ὑπερβάλλοντα ἕκα-
τέρωσε καὶ ἐν τῷδε τῷ βίῳ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν καὶ ἐν παντί τῷ
(b) ἔπειτα· οὕτω γὰρ εὐδαιμονέστατος γίνετα ἄνθρωπος.
Καὶ δὴ οὖν καὶ τότε ὁ ἐκεῖθεν ἄγγελος ἠγγελλε τὸν μὲν
προφήτην οὕτως εἶπεῖν· “Καὶ τελευταίῳ ἐπιόντι, σὺν νῷ
ἐλομένῳ, συντόνως ζῶντι κέῖται βίος ἀγαπητός, οὐ κακός.

μήτε ὁ ἄρχων αἰρέσεως ἀμελείτω μήτε ὁ τελευτῶν ἀθυ-
μείτω.”

Εἰπόντος δὲ ταῦτα τὸν πρῶτον λαχόντα ἔφη εὐθύς ἐπιόντα
τὴν μεγίστην τυραννίδα ἐλέσθαι, καὶ ὑπὸ ἀφροσύνης τε καὶ
(c) λαίμαργίας οὐ πάντα ἱκανῶς ἀνασκεψάμενον ἐλέσθαι, ἀλλ’
αὐτὸν λαθεῖν ἐνοῦσαν εἰμαρμένην παίδων αὐτοῦ βρώσεις καὶ
ἄλλα κακά· ἐπειδὴ δὲ κατὰ σχολὴν σκέψασθαι, κόπτεσθαι τε
καὶ ὀδύρεσθαι τὴν αἴρεσιν, οὐκ ἐμμένοντα τοῖς προρρηθεῖσιν
ὑπὸ τοῦ προφήτου· οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτὸν αἰτιᾶσθαι τῶν κακῶν, ἀλλὰ
τύχην τε καὶ δαίμονας καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἀνθ’ ἑαυτοῦ. εἶναι δὲ
αὐτὸν τῶν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἠκόντων, ἐν τεταγμένη πολιτείᾳ ἐν
τῷ προτέρῳ βίῳ βεβιωκότα, ἔθει ἄνευ φιλοσοφίας ἀρετῆς
(d) μετεληφότα. ὡς δὲ καὶ εἶπεῖν, οὐκ ἐλάττους εἶναι ἐν τοῖς
τοιούτοις ἀλισκομένους τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἠκοντας, ἅτε
πόνων ἀγυμνάστους· τῶν δ’ ἐκ τῆς γῆς τοὺς πολλούς, ἅτε
αὐτούς τε πεπονηκότας ἄλλους τε ἑωρακότας, οὐκ ἐξ ἐπι-
δρομῆς τὰς αἰρέσεις ποιεῖσθαι. διὸ δὴ καὶ μεταβολὴν τῶν
κακῶν καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ταῖς πολλαῖς τῶν ψυχῶν γίνεσθαι
καὶ διὰ τὴν τοῦ κλήρου τύχην· ἐπεὶ εἴ τις ἀεὶ, ὁπότε εἰς τὸν
(e) ἐνθάδε βίον ἀφικνοῖτο, ὑγιῶς φιλοσοφοῖ καὶ ὁ κληρὸς αὐτῷ
τῆς αἰρέσεως μὴ ἐν τελευταίοις πίπτει, κινδυνεύει ἐκ τῶν
ἐκεῖθεν ἀπαγγελλομένων οὐ μόνον ἐνθάδε εὐδαιμονεῖν ἄν,
ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε καὶ δεῦρο πάλιν πορείαν οὐκ ἂν
χθονίαν καὶ τραχεῖαν πορεύεσθαι, ἀλλὰ λείαν τε καὶ οὐρανίαν.
Ταύτην γὰρ δὴ ἔφη τὴν θέαν ἀξίαν εἶναι ἰδεῖν, ὡς ἕκασται
620.

(a) αἱ ψυχαὶ ἠροῦντο τοὺς βίους· ἐλεινὴν τε γὰρ ἰδεῖν εἶναι καὶ
γελοῖαν καὶ θαυμασίαν. κατὰ συνήθειαν γὰρ τοῦ προτέρου
βίου τὰ πολλὰ αἰρεῖσθαι. ἰδεῖν μὲν γὰρ ψυχὴν ἔφη τὴν ποτε
Ὅρφέως γενομένην κύκνου βίον αἰρουμένην, μίσει τοῦ
γυναικείου γένους διὰ τὸν ὑπ’ ἐκείνων θάνατον οὐκ ἐθέλουσαν
ἐν γυναικί γεννηθεῖσαν γενέσθαι· ἰδεῖν δὲ τὴν Θαμύρου

ἀηδόνας ἐλομένην· ἰδεῖν δὲ καὶ κύκνον μεταβάλλοντα εἰς
ἀνθρωπίνου βίου αἴρεσιν, καὶ ἄλλα ζῶα μουσικὰ ὡσαύτως.
(b) εἰκοστὴν δὲ λαχοῦσαν ψυχὴν ἐλέσθαι λέοντος βίον· εἶναι δὲ
τὴν Αἴαντος τοῦ Τελαμωνίου, φεύγουσαν ἄνθρωπον γενέσθαι,
μεμνημένην τῆς τῶν ὄπλων κρίσεως. τὴν δ' ἐπὶ τούτῳ
Ἀγαμέμνωνος· ἔχθρα δὲ καὶ ταύτην τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου γένους
διὰ τὰ πάθη ἀετοῦ διαλλάξει βίον. ἐν μέσοις δὲ λαχοῦσαν τὴν
Ἀταλάντης ψυχὴν, κατιδοῦσαν μεγάλας τιμὰς ἀθλητοῦ
ἀνδρός, οὐ δύνασθαι παρελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ λαβεῖν. μετὰ δὲ ταύτην
(c) ἰδεῖν τὴν Ἐπειοῦ τοῦ Πανοπέως εἰς τεχνικῆς γυναικὸς ἰοῦσαν
φύσιν· πόρρω δ' ἐν ὑστάτοις ἰδεῖν τὴν τοῦ γελωτοποιοῦ
Θερσίτου πίθηκον ἐνδουομένην. κατὰ τύχην δὲ τὴν Ὀδυσσεῶς
λαχοῦσαν πασῶν ὑστάτην αἰρησομένην ἰέναι, μνήμη δὲ τῶν
προτέρων πόνων φιλοτιμίας λελωφηκυῖαν ζητεῖν περιοῦσαν
χρόνον πολὺν βίον ἀνδρὸς ἰδιώτου ἀπράγμωνος, καὶ μόγις
εὔρεῖν κείμενόν που καὶ παρημελημένον ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ
(d) εἰπεῖν ἰδοῦσαν ὅτι τὰ αὐτὰ ἂν ἔπραξεν καὶ πρώτη λαχοῦσα,
καὶ ἀσμένην ἐλέσθαι. καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων δὴ θηρίων ὡσαύτως
εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἰέναι καὶ εἰς ἄλληλα, τὰ μὲν ἄδικα εἰς τὰ
ἄγρια, τὰ δὲ δίκαια εἰς τὰ ἡμερα μεταβάλλοντα, καὶ πάσας
μείξεις μείγνυσθαι.
Ἐπειδὴ δ' οὖν πάσας τὰς ψυχὰς τοὺς βίους ἠρῆσθαι, ὥσπερ
ἔλαχον ἐν τάξει προσιέναι πρὸς τὴν Λάχεσιν· ἐκείνην δ'
ἐκάστω ὄν εἴλετο δαίμονα, τοῦτον φύλακα συμπέμπειν τοῦ
(e) βίου καὶ ἀποπληρωτὴν τῶν αἰρεθέντων. ὄν πρῶτον μὲν ἄγειν
αὐτὴν πρὸς τὴν Κλωθὴν ὑπὸ τὴν ἐκείνης χεῖρά τε καὶ
ἐπιστροφὴν τῆς τοῦ ἀτράκτου δίνης, κυροῦντα ἦν λαχῶν
εἴλετο μοῖραν· ταύτης δ' ἐφαψάμενον αὖθις ἐπὶ τὴν τῆς
Ἀτρόπου ἄγειν νῆσιν, ἀμετάστροφα τὰ ἐπικλωσθέντα
ποιοῦντα· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ δὴ ἀμεταστρεπτεῖ ὑπὸ τὸν τῆς
621.
(a) Ἀνάγκης ἰέναι θρόνον, καὶ δι' ἐκείνου διεξεληθόντα, ἐπειδὴ

καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διήλθον, πορεύεσθαι ἅπαντας εἰς τὸ τῆς Λήθης
πεδῖον διὰ καύματός τε καὶ πνίγους δεινοῦ· καὶ γὰρ εἶναι αὐτὸ
κενὸν δένδρων τε καὶ ὅσα γῆ φύει. σκηναῖσθαι οὖν σφᾶς ἤδη
ἐσπέρας γιγνομένης παρὰ τὸν Ἀμέλητα ποταμόν, οὗ τὸ ὕδωρ
ἀγγεῖον οὐδὲν στέγειν. μέτρον μὲν οὖν τι τοῦ ὕδατος πᾶσιν
ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι πιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ φρονήσει μὴ σωζομένους πλέον
(b) πίνειν τοῦ μέτρου· τὸν δὲ ἀεὶ πιόντα πάντων ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι.
ἐπειδὴ δὲ κοιμηθῆναι καὶ μέσας νύκτας γενέσθαι, βροντὴν τε
καὶ σεισμόν γενέσθαι, καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἐξαπίνης ἄλλον ἄλλη
φέρεσθαι ἄνω εἰς τὴν γένεσιν, ἄττοντας ὥσπερ ἀστέρας.
αὐτὸς δὲ τοῦ μὲν ὕδατος κωλυθῆναι πιεῖν· ὅπη μέντοι καὶ
ὅπως εἰς τὸ σῶμα ἀφίκοιτο, οὐκ εἰδέναι, ἀλλ' ἐξαίφνης
ἀναβλέψας ἰδεῖν ἤδη ἔωθεν αὐτὸν κείμενον ἐπὶ τῇ πυρᾷ.

[LOEB translation:] “‘Now when they arrived there they had to make their way immediately toward Lachesis. So a sort of interpreter first made them stand in ranks, then took from Lachesis’ lap allocations and samples of lives. Then going up to a high platform he said: ‘The word of the maiden Lachesis, daughter of Necessity. Souls of a day, this is the beginning of another round of mortal kind that ends in death. No divine spirit will select you by lot, but you will be the one to choose a divine spirit. Let the one who draws the first lot be the first to choose a life to which he will adhere of necessity. But virtue has no master; by honoring or dishonoring it, each will have a greater or lesser share of it. The responsibility is the chooser’s; god is not to be blamed.’

When he had said this he threw the lots out among them all, and each picked up the one which fell beside him, except Er himself: he was not allowed to. It was clear to them as they picked them up which number they had chosen. After this he again placed samples of lives on the ground in front of them—many more than the number of those present. They were of all kinds; for there were the lives of all animals as well as all sorts of human beings. There were lives of tyrants among them, some uninterrupted, others cut off in midcourse and ending up in poverty, exile, and beggary. There were lives of notable people, some famous for their beauty of appearance and for other strength and prowess; others for their distinguished families and the virtues of their ancestors; and there were lives of men undistinguished in these same areas, and likewise for women. There was no arrangement of the soul in all this because the choice of a different life inevitably implied a soul’s different constitution. But the other qualities were combined together: with wealth, poverty, sickness and health, and states in between.

This indeed then, my dear Glaucon, seems to be where the overall danger to humankind lies, and for this reason especially we must pay heed to how each of us, having neglected all other lessons, will become a searcher and student of this one, if by some means he can learn and discover who will give him the ability and understanding, by distinguishing the good and bad life, always and everywhere to be able to choose the better one out of those that are possible; by considering all that

has been said up to now and putting it all together and analyzing how it makes for virtue in life, to know how beauty combined with poverty or wealth and the possession of what kind of state of what kind of soul achieves good or evil; and what can be achieved by high or low birth, one's personal life, political offices, and physical strengths and weaknesses, and a readiness or reluctance to learn, and all such things which belong to the soul, naturally or are acquired, when blended together. The result of all this is that he can, by taking thought, choose, with regard to the nature of the soul, the worse and better life, calling the worse the one which will lead to becoming more unjust, the better the one which will lead to becoming more just. All the rest he'll say goodbye to, for we have seen that this is the supreme choice in life and death. One must approach Hades unshakable in this belief, in order that even there one will be undaunted by wealth and suchlike evils, and avoid committing many intolerable evils by falling into tyrannical and other such practices and oneself suffer even more, but will know how to choose the life that lies midway between such things and avoid excess in either direction, both in this life as far as is possible, and the whole of the life hereafter. For this is the way a human being becomes most happy.

And at that point our messenger from the other side also said the interpreter spoke as follows: 'Even for the one who comes last, provided he chooses intelligently and lives strictly, a contented life awaits, not a bad one. Let the first not be careless in his choice, nor the last despondent.'

When he had announced this, Er said, the first to choose his lot came forward and immediately chose the most absolute tyranny and made his choice through thoughtlessness and greed without considering all its aspects adequately, but what he failed to notice was that in among this it was fated that he would devour his children and commit other evil deeds. But when he thought about it at his leisure, he beat his breast and bewailed his choice and did not keep to what had been said before by the interpreter. You see, he didn't blame himself for his misfortunes, but chance, heaven, and everything but himself. Yet he was one of those who had come down from the sky and in his previous life had been living under a well-run constitution, where he shared in virtue out of habit, without philosophy. Generally speaking, a number not less than the others, caught in such circumstances were those who came down from the sky, in that they were unfamiliar with suffering; but the majority of those from the earth, in that they had both suffered themselves and seen others suffering, did not make their choice on the spur of the moment. For these reasons, then, as well as through the chance of the lottery, the majority of souls made the exchange between evil and good lives. Yet if an individual, whenever he arrived at the life in this world, constantly practiced sound philosophy and the lot he chose did not fall out among the last, there is a chance, from all that has been reported from the other world, that not only he may be happy here, but also that his journey from here to there and back again will not be a rough one through the earth, but a smooth one through the sky.

This sight was worth seeing, he said, how each of the souls chose its life: you see, it was pitiful and laughable and astounding. For the majority of choices were made through familiarity with their previous existence. He said he saw the soul of the erstwhile Orpheus choosing the life of a swan out of hatred for the female sex on account of its death at their hands, and so refusing to be conceived and born in a woman. He saw the soul of Thamyras choose the life of a nightingale, and a swan exchange its life for a human one and other musical creatures doing likewise. The twentieth soul chose the life of a lion. It was that of Telamon's son Ajax avoiding

becoming a human being, remembering the judgment of the weapons. After him Agamemnon's soul, also through its enmity with the human race because of what it had suffered, made an exchange for the life of an eagle. In the middle of them Atalanta's soul drawing its lot, seeing the great honors of the male athlete, was unable to pass by, but took it. After her he saw the soul of Panopeus' son Epeius entering the nature of a female craftworker. Further on among the last he saw the soul of the absurd Thersites taking on the life of a monkey. And as chance would have it, last of all the soul of Odysseus came forward to make its choice and, mindful of its previous toils and taking a rest from ambition, went around for a long time looking for the life of a private citizen with no interest in public affairs, and it found it with difficulty, lying somewhere and passed over by the rest, and when it saw it, it said that it would have done the same even if it had been the first to draw the lot, and was glad to choose it. Similarly, of other wild animals, some passed into human beings and some into each other, the unjust ones changing into wild animals, the just into tame ones, and all possible combinations.

So when all the souls had chosen their lives, according to the draw they approached Lachesis in order and she gave each the spirit they had chosen to escort them as protector through their lives and as fulfiller of their choices. This spirit led it first toward Clotho, under her hand and the spinning of the whirling spindle, ratifying the fate it had chosen by lot. After receiving her touch it again led the soul toward Atropos' spinning, which made the assignment irreversible. And then, without turning round, it went beneath the throne of Necessity, and after passing through it, when the rest had also passed through, they all made their way to the plain of Lethe through terrifying choking fire: for the place was empty of trees and anything else that grows in the earth. So as evening was already approaching they encamped beside the river of Forgetfulness, whose water no vessel can hold. Now they all had to drink a measure of this water, but those who did not have enough sense to be moderate drank more than their measure, while each one, as he drank, forgot everything. When they had fallen asleep and it was midnight there was a thunderbolt and an earthquake, and then suddenly they were taken up, one this way, another that, to their birth, like shooting stars. But Er himself was prevented from drinking the water. However, where and how he returned to his body, he did not know, but suddenly he looked up and saw it was now dawn and that he was lying on the pyre."

Finally, although the incurable soul continues to be removed from the cycle of reincarnation, as per the *Phaidon*, no specific mention is made that the philosopher's soul is capable of breaking free of the cycle. Indeed, he argues that the philosopher's soul is in an advantageous position with regards to the choosing of their next life, than any other soul, firmly establishing the philosopher's soul as remaining entrenched in the cycle of reincarnation (10.619d7-e5, 621a4-b1; cf. 621b5-7).⁶³⁵

In the *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5.3), the conclusion was reached that the philosopher's soul is removed from the cycle of reincarnation as it represents Knowledge, thus it can never become its contrary:

⁶³⁵ Cf. *Phaidros* and *Timaios* where this reverts to the situation found in the *Phaidon*, in which the philosopher's soul is exempt from the cycle of reincarnation; see further Chapters 3.7 and 3.8 below.

Ignorance. This makes the philosopher's soul unsuitable for reincarnation, as it results in an individual being born in possession of a demonstrable knowledge of all things. Such an individual could not fail but be all-knowing and just, thereby removing from this individual any personal agency; their choices being meaningless, as it has been predetermined that they will be knowledgeable and just.⁶³⁶ This final caveat, however, implies that the philosopher's soul is suitable for reincarnation. Indeed, Sokrates describes how the philosopher's soul *qua* philosopher's soul is able to make the most apt choice of next lives, given the knowledge it recollected in life. Sokrates posits further that the philosopher's soul *qua* philosopher's soul is able to preserve some of this recollected knowledge in their next incarnation. This occurs as it is able to regulate the amount of water it partakes of from the river Ameles ('τὸν Ἀμέλητα ποταμόν,' 621a5; generally equated with the Lethe, i.e. forgetting) prior to its reincarnation,⁶³⁷ whereas the other souls are not, thereby forgetting all the knowledge they possess (10.620e6-621b7).

The removal of the philosopher's soul from the cycle of reincarnation suggested, in the *Phaidon*, that the philosopher could recollect all the knowledge contained within their soul; or, at least, it suggested that the potentiality for total recollection to exist. However, the continued existence of the philosopher's soul within the cycle of reincarnation, proffers the suggestion that this potentiality no longer exists. In such a case, no matter how much reasoned investigation one conducted in life, it is impossible for the soul in a mortal body to achieve perfect recollection. This runs counter to Sokrates' comment to Menon in the *Menon* that an individual should never cease their search for knowledge, as recollection confirms that, with enough investigation, an endpoint exists; and that which is sought after – knowledge – may be obtained (*Menon* 86b1-c3).⁶³⁸

⁶³⁶ In a sense, it would be the birth of a god in a mortal body; cf. *Phaidros* 245c-246e, in which Sokrates argues that such a combination of body and soul is impossible for a god. Hence, in order for the soul of a human being to achieve its *telos* and become assimilated to the divine, it must, of necessity, possess no body.

⁶³⁷ The TLG (Thesaurus Linguae Graecae) equates the Ameles with the River Lethe: <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/Iris/inst/browser.jsp#doc=tlg&aid=0059&wid=042&st=667535&pp=start&td=greek&l=40&links=tlg>, accessed on the 18th December 2019. See also *Phaidon*, 75d7-76d6, which argues that the individual forgets their knowledge of the forms at birth, and thus the only way to regain it is via recollection.

⁶³⁸ Cf. Ferguson (1978): 126; Clegg (1977): 32, 191.

The conception of reincarnation presented in the *Politeia* removes this endpoint, and with it, the motivating factor in continuing the search for knowledge, for which Sokrates argued with vehemence in the *Menon* (86b1-c3). Now, it is impossible for one to achieve perfect recollection whilst alive; and since the soul in Hades appears to retain only that which it has recollected in its present incarnation, perfect recollection remains impossible in the soul's disembodied state also. This is particularly so, given that Sokrates presents the soul in Hades as,

- (a) Utilizing only the knowledge it recollected in its present incarnation to decide upon its next incarnation (10.617e3-5; 618b7-619e5); and
- (b) Utilizing this same knowledge in order to regulate the amount of water of which it partakes from the Ameles/Lethe (Forgetfulness), thereby determining the amount of recollected knowledge persist to its next incarnation (10.620e6-621b7).

This leaves no feasible amount of time in which the disembodied soul can possess a full knowledge of all things, since the selection of next lives takes place near the end of the soul's time in Hades, and its partaking of the Lethe takes place almost immediately prior to its reincarnation.

It is possible that Sokrates chose to present this state of affairs in order to place especial emphasis upon the possession of knowledge in opposition to ignorance. For instance, whilst the philosopher's soul can no longer break free of the cycle of reincarnation, the incurable soul continues to be removed from the cycle, presumably for a similar reason to that in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5.3), and endure eternal torment.⁶³⁹ On the other hand, it may be that the presentation of reincarnation in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5.3), invites the conclusion that the philosopher's soul, in order to be removed from the cycle of reincarnation must, in some sense, become analogous to Knowledge (if not Knowledge itself). The philosopher's soul in order to partake of Knowledge, must possess no quantity of Ignorance; it must, therefore, participate consistently and without change in Knowledge.

⁶³⁹ Cf. Ferguson (1978): 126; Clegg (1977): 32, 191.

In order to effect this changeless participation in Knowledge, the soul must be immortal, immaterial, and incorporeal (all of which are inherent properties of all soul), but, above all, it must be stationary – it must not possess motion. It is motion that allows for the capacity to change (see further Chapter 3.7), and if the soul can change, then it retains the ability to partake of Ignorance. For example, if the soul continues to change, then the soul will possess a past (the period prior to the change), a present (the period of the change), and a future (the period after the change). The soul, therefore, is left open to ignorance – ignorance of the future, in this case; and so, it cannot partake in changeless Knowledge. For the philosopher’s soul to partake of Knowledge, it must, therefore, be stationary; and if Knowledge is itself, incorporeal, immaterial, immortal, and changeless (*Phaidon* 80a10-b5), how does the philosopher’s soul and Knowledge retain their individuation, i.e. how can they continue to be two separate entities? Moreover, if the philosopher’s soul assimilates to Knowledge, would this not cause Knowledge itself to change? If Knowledge itself changes, then it can no longer be Knowledge? In the *Politeia*, it may be that the reintroduction of the philosopher’s soul to the cycle of reincarnation is meant to serve as a solution to this particular issue, an issue that receives further consideration in the *Parmenides* (130a-134e), and the *Sophistes* (236d–264b).⁶⁴⁰ Were this solution absent, it would, in effect, allow for one to conclude that Knowledge is never changeless but rather, it is susceptible to change. If Knowledge is susceptible to change, then what constitutes knowledge will never be stable; and so, as far as Sokrates is concerned, it can no longer be related to that which is divine – i.e. the immortal, changeless, immaterial, and incorporeal. The Form of Knowledge, in other words, is destroyed; Knowledge being reduced to that which is mortal, allowing for epistemological notions, like relativism, to retain their validity.⁶⁴¹

⁶⁴⁰ Indeed, in the *Sophistes*, the Xenos suggests that the Forms themselves partake of five greater kinds: Being, Same, Different, Motion, and Rest; which may serve to secure the individuation between the Form of Knowledge and the philosopher’s soul; although the soul’s continued ability to move, (at least to a certain extent), in both the *Phaidros* (Chapter 3.7 below) and the *Timaios* (Chapter 3.8 below), serves to suggest that the soul cannot become assimilated to Knowledge itself, since it will always retain some capacity for motion, and so change.

⁶⁴¹ Plato invariably criticizes Protagorean relativism (*Kratylos* 385e4ff., 391c2f.; *Theaitetos* 151d-186e), Gorgian nihilism (*Gorgias* 448e-461b, 482c4ff., 486e5ff, 494d1f.; *Menon* 70a5ff., 71b9ff., 73c, 76c4ff., 95b9f., 96d5ff.,

Given that Plato does not abandon the theory of recollection in the *Politeia* (5.474b3ff., 7.523a5ff.), nor does he do so in subsequent accounts of reincarnation in the *Phaidros* and the *Timaios* (see Chapter 3.7 and 3.8); its continued existence suggests it retains its importance in underpinning his epistemological position. Indeed, in both the *Phaidros* and the *Timaios*, Plato reintroduces the notion that the philosopher's soul can break free of the cycle of reincarnation, and attempts to integrate it within the description of reincarnation he presents here in the *Politeia* (10.617d2-621b7). This suggests that Plato understood the ability for the philosopher's soul to break free of the cycle of reincarnation to be of importance, i.e. that it must be possible for one to achieve a state of knowledge, and not participate in an endless, and ultimately futile, search for truth.⁶⁴² Consequently, it is possible that his explicit reference to this ability in subsequent dialogues is a response to the ramifications that arise (some suggested above) when the philosopher's soul is unable to break free of the cycle, as presented here in the *Politeia*.⁶⁴³ For example, subsequent to the *Politeia*, Plato continues to criticize notions such as relativism, making it less likely that he would be sympathetic to arguments that allow for such notions to retain their validity (see, for example, *Nomoi* 8.907d4-910d4, in which the adoption of a relativist position regarding the gods might lead to atheism, and hence, impiety).

In the *Menon* (Chapter 3.4), this thesis argues that Sokrates draws a relationship between the so-called Menon's paradox, and Gorgias' epistemological argument, outlined in his work: *Peri Physis*.

This argument posits that:

- (a) Either knowledge does not exist;
- (b) Knowledge exists, but it cannot be known; or
- (c) Knowledge exists; it can be known, but it cannot be communicated.
- (d) Knowledge exists, one can know it, and it is communicable, but it cannot be understood.

and Chapter 3.4), and Herakleitian flux (*Kratylos* 401d4f., 411b3ff., 416a10f., 436d7ff., 439d-440e; *Theaitetos* 152d2ff., 156a, 160d5ff., 179c7ff., 181c9ff.).

⁶⁴² Rice (1998): 65.

⁶⁴³ See further White (1979): 264-266; Arieti (1991): 242; cf. Blondell (2002): 173; McPherran (2006): 258.

Sokrates, as discussed in Chapter 3.4 and reinforced further by the Analogy of the Cave (7.514a2-517a7), maintains the contrary position:

- (a) Knowledge exists;
- (b) Knowledge can be known; and
- (c) Knowledge can be communicated.
- (d) Knowledge exists; it can be known; it is communicable, and it can be understood.⁶⁴⁴

The presentation of reincarnation here in the Myth of Er serves as a further reinforcement of this position:

- (a) The reintroduction of the philosopher's soul into the cycle of reincarnation preserves the existence of Knowledge (see above).⁶⁴⁵
- (b) The entire procedure whereby the soul decides upon its next incarnation is meant to demonstrate that it is possible for the soul to possess knowledge. Indeed, the myth's omniscient narrator argues explicitly that it is the soul's possession of knowledge (or lack thereof) that decides whether the soul opts for the 'correct' life of the philosopher, for example; or rather the unjust life of the tyrant (10.617e6-620d5).
- (c) The myth demonstrates on several occasions that knowledge may be communicated. For instance, the spokesperson (προφήτην, 617d3) of the Fates relates to those souls waiting to be (re)incarnated the procedure they must adhere to; a procedure that belongs to Necessity and is changeless (10.616b2-617d6). The philosopher's soul, according to the myth,⁶⁴⁶ is the only soul that does not partake fully of the Lethe, thereby retaining more of the knowledge it possesses in its disembodied state, which presumably allows the philosopher's soul to then communicate this knowledge in its embodied state (10.620e6-621b7).⁶⁴⁷ At the beginning of the myth, the gods give Er the task of witnessing the afterlife – an immortal,

⁶⁴⁴ Cf. *Nomoi* 5.730e-731a.

⁶⁴⁵ Cf. Chapters 3.7 and 3.8 below.

⁶⁴⁶ Cf. *Politeia* 7.514a-520a.

⁶⁴⁷ Cf. *Politeia* 7.514a-520a.

immaterial, incorporeal, and changeless realm. Er, however, must not just witness the afterlife, but he must be able to communicate what he sees there (Er is an ‘ἄγγελον,’ 10.614d2), i.e. the ‘true’ knowledge he acquires; hence his body is brought back to life (10.614d1-3, 10.621b5-7). Finally, Sokrates’ relation of the Myth of Er to his interlocutors is itself an example of knowledge being communicated to others (as is, indeed, Plato’s composition of the entire dialogue).⁶⁴⁸

(3.7) The *Phaidros*

(3.7.1) 246a-246e

The natural function of the wing is to soar upwards and carry that which is heavy up to the place where dwells the race of the gods. More than any other thing that pertains to the body it partakes of the nature of the divine. But the divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and all such qualities

The Myth of Er ends with the soul partaking of the river Ameles/Lethe (Forgetfulness), and then its subsequent reincarnation. Although he does not describe this specifically, Sokrates mentions that the soul’s reincarnation is akin to a shooting star falling from the heavens (*Politeia* 10.621b2-4; cf. *Politikos* 272d6-e3, *Timaios* 41d8-e1). In the *Politeia*, this image of the shooting star appears to function in a metaphorical sense, like a simile. The *Phaidros*, on the other hand, takes this image and transforms it into the well-known Chariot Allegory (246a3-255a1).⁶⁴⁹ Initially, Sokrates introduces this allegory in order to present a particular conception of the soul’s structure (245c2-4, 246a3-6). Sokrates’ presents the soul’s structure in the following manner:

⁶⁴⁸ Cf. 10.614b in which Sokrates begins by claiming Er’s story is no tale of Alkinous; Alkinous being the king Phaikioid to whom Odysseus related his adventures in the *Odysseia*.

⁶⁴⁹ Kahn (1996): 374; cf. Arieti (1991): 198.

(246a6) (1) ταύτη οὖν λέγωμεν. εἰκέτω δὴ συμφύτω
δυνάμει ὑποπτέρου ζεύγους τε καὶ ἠνιόχου. (2) θεῶν μὲν οὖν
ἵπποι τε καὶ ἠνιόχοι πάντες αὐτοὶ τε ἀγαθοὶ καὶ ἐξ ἀγαθῶν,
(b) (3) τὸ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων μέμεικται. (4) καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἡμῶν ὁ ἄρχων
συνωρίδος ἠνιοχεῖ, εἶτα τῶν ἵππων ὁ μὲν αὐτῷ καλός τε καὶ
ἀγαθός καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων, ὁ δ' ἐξ ἐναντίων τε καὶ ἐναντίος·
(5) χαλεπὴ δὴ καὶ δύσκολος ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἢ περὶ ἡμᾶς ἠνιόχησις.
πῆ δὴ οὖν θνητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ζῶον ἐκλήθη πειρατέον
εἰπεῖν. (i) ψυχὴ πᾶσα παντὸς ἐπιμελεῖται τοῦ ἀψύχου, πάντα δὲ
οὐρανὸν περιπολεῖ, ἄλλοτ' ἐν ἄλλοις εἶδεσι γιγνομένη. (ii) τελέα
(c) μὲν οὖν οὔσα καὶ ἐπτερωμένη μετεωροπορεῖ τε καὶ πάντα
τὸν κόσμον διοικεῖ, (iii) ἢ δὲ πτερορρυήσασα φέρεται ἕως ἂν
στερεοῦ τινος ἀντιλάβηται, οὗ κατοικισθεῖσα, σῶμα γήϊνον
λαβοῦσα, αὐτὸ αὐτὸ δοκοῦν κινεῖν διὰ τὴν ἐκείνης δύναμιν,
(iv) ζῶον τὸ σύμπαν ἐκλήθη, ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα παγέν, θνητόν τ'
ἔσχεν ἐπωνυμίαν· ἀθάνατον δὲ οὐδ' ἐξ ἐνὸς λόγου λελογι-
σμένου, ἀλλὰ πλάττομεν οὔτε ἰδόντες οὔτε ἰκανῶς νοήσαντες
(d) θεόν, ἀθάνατόν τι ζῶον, ἔχον μὲν ψυχὴν, ἔχον δὲ σῶμα, τὸν
ἀεὶ δὲ χρόνον ταῦτα συμπεφυκότα. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ,
ὄπη τῷ θεῷ φίλον, ταύτη ἐχέτω τε καὶ λεγέσθω· τὴν δὲ
αἰτίαν τῆς τῶν πτερῶν ἀποβολῆς, δι' ἣν ψυχῆς ἀπορρεῖ,
λάβωμεν. ἔστι δὲ τις τοιάδε.

[LOEB translation:] "Soc. Let us therefore speak in that way. We will liken the soul to the composite nature of a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. Now the horses and charioteers of the gods are all good and of good descent, but those of other races are mixed; and first the charioteer of the human soul drives a pair, and secondly one of the horses is noble and of noble breed, but the other quite the opposite in breed and character. Therefore in our case the driving is necessarily difficult and troublesome. Now we must try to tell why a living being is called mortal or immortal. Soul, considered collectively, has the care of all that which is soulless, and it traverses the whole heaven, appearing sometimes in one form and sometimes in another; now when it is perfect and fully winged, it mounts upward and governs the whole world; but the soul which has lost its wings is borne along until it gets hold of something solid, when it settles down, taking upon itself an earthly body, which seems to be self-moving, because of the power of the soul within it; and the whole, compounded of soul and body, is called a living being, and is further designated as mortal. It is not immortal by any reasonable supposition, but we, though we have never seen or rightly conceived a god, imagine an immortal being

which has both a soul and a body which are united for all time. Let that, however, and our words concerning it, be as is pleasing to God; we will now consider the reason why the soul loses its wings. It is something like this.”

Accordingly:

- (1) The soul is like the natural union of a team of winged horses and their charioteer (246a6-7).
- (2) The gods possess horses and have charioteers that are all good in their nature (246a7-8).
- (3) Everyone else, on the other hand, possesses a mixture, with the result that the charioteer (Intelligence) must contend with two horses of differing and opposing natures (246b1).
- (4) One of the horses embodies all that is naturally beautiful and good, whilst the other embodies all that is opposite in nature (246b1-3).
- (5) The existence of these two mutually exclusive natures (at least to some extent), results in a painful and difficult experience for the charioteer (246b4).

The chariot allegory then develops beyond its initial use as a means of discussing the soul’s structure, as Sokrates utilizes it in order to explain the process of (re)incarnation (246b5-d2). In particular Sokrates relates the initial process by which the soul becomes incarnate in a mortal body, i.e. he attempts to explain how and why (re)incarnation comes to exist. Integrating the chariot allegory into the notion of reincarnation, Sokrates relates the following explanation of (re)incarnation’s existence:

- (i) The natural dwelling place of the soul is heaven (246b6-7).
- (ii) As long as the soul’s ‘charioteer’ (Intelligence) is able to control its two horses (the one virtuous and the other wicked), it flies high in heaven (246b7-c2).
- (iii) However, should the charioteer fail to keep control of its horses, the soul will ‘shed its wings’ (πτερορρηΐσασα, 246c2) and descend from heaven until it comes across something solid – a mortal body – and inhabits it (246c2-d2).
- (iv) This, according to Sokrates, is how the soul first came to be incarnate in a mortal body (246c5-6).

According to Sokrates' explanation, there are at least two types of soul: one that belongs to the gods, and one that belongs to all other animate entities. Both of these types of soul possess the same basic structure – a charioteer and two horses, thereby establishing the 'mortal' soul's affinity to the divine (246a6-b4). However, whereas the soul that belongs to the gods possesses two horses of the same virtuous nature, the other type of soul that belongs to human beings possesses two horses of opposing natures, one virtuous and one wicked. Consequently, the charioteer of the gods' soul – Intelligence – never fails to 'fly high,' since it can never fail to control its horses. The intelligent and virtuous nature of the gods' soul ensures that the gods consistently act in accordance with knowledge, as they do not forget the knowledge of all things contained within their soul,⁶⁵⁰ and so retain their position in heaven for all time.⁶⁵¹

On the other hand, the soul that belongs to other animate beings does not possess two virtuous horses like the gods, but rather two horses, contrary in nature. This results in human beings, and other living beings, possessing the capacity to manifest both virtue and its contrary – wickedness. According to the Platonic theory of punishment (see, for example, Chapters 2.4 and 2.6), an individual commits an injustice or a wicked act out of ignorance. Consequently, the existence of this wicked horse as part of the structure of the human's soul ensures the existence of attributes such as ignorance, which leads to the potentiality for the human being to follow injustice. An unjust individual, therefore, is that individual that ignores their charioteer – Intelligence – and allows their wicked horse to lead, i.e. they allow ignorance to control the direction of their soul. In the context of the first incarnation, ignorance leads to the soul's descent from heaven, leading to its initial incarnation in a mortal body.

⁶⁵⁰ For the gods, there is no need for recollection, since they never undergo incarnation in a mortal body, and so they do not forget any of the knowledge they possess; cf. *Phaidon* 78b-84b, and *Parmenides* 133a-134e.

⁶⁵¹ The gods' souls are the closest to Knowledge, their own knowledge being changeless; although as the *Phaidros* demonstrates (and is further supported in the *Timaios* and the *Nomoi*), the souls of the gods continue to possess motion, although this is presented as the least amount of motion possible without being stationary. Presumably this is for the same reason argued for in Chapter 3.6.1 concerning the philosopher's soul: if the gods were stationary, and in possession of perfect knowledge, would they not be the equivalent to the Form of Knowledge? Given Plato continues to utilize a polytheistic notion of the gods, this would create several Forms of Knowledge, in effect, destroying the existence of a static, changeless, immortal Form of Knowledge.

All human souls, according to this understanding, were once knowledgeable like the souls of the gods, but through ignorance, they all experienced a descent from heaven to become incarnate in mortal bodies. In this way, the soul's existence in the mortal realm is, in some sense, an aberration; a deviation from its natural existence in the heavens with the gods.⁶⁵² This establishes the human soul as possessing a *telos* – to return to its natural dwelling place in heaven. In order to effect this outcome, the soul must utilize its knowledge and intelligence (its inherent charioteer) and follow the virtuous horse, so that it may return to its natural dwelling place.⁶⁵³ Hence the reintroduction of the idea that the philosopher's soul is able to escape the cycle of reincarnation, lacking from the *Politeia*.

The philosopher's soul is the knowledgeable soul, and so it is able to follow virtue consistently, ensuring that it retains its position in heaven, and does not undergo a descent.⁶⁵⁴ This freedom from descent is akin to the soul's removal from the cycle of reincarnation. In the case of the incurable soul, it is possible that the great ignorance it possesses is understood as preventing it from ever returning to its natural dwelling place, thus the incurable soul can never rise high enough to experience a descent into a mortal body, effectively removing it from the process of reincarnation. Consequently, the soul must strive consistently to return to its natural dwelling place in heaven, and not undergo a further descent, i.e. it must break free of the cycle of reincarnation (cf. 246d6-248b1). This constant striving preserves Sokrates' statement in the *Menon* that one must never cease to search for knowledge (86b1-c3), and the soul's ability to break free of the cycle preserves Plato's response to Menon's paradox, that (i) Knowledge exists; (ii) this Knowledge is knowable; (iii) this Knowledge is communicable; and (iv) this Knowledge can be understood.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵² Cf. Empedokles' conception of reincarnation (KRS 399, 400 (=DK 1B18), 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410); and the *Timaios* wherein the Demiourgos must overcome, with the force, the natural inclination of the Same and the Different to repel one another in the creation of the soul (see further Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8).

⁶⁵³ Cf. Rice (1998): 108; Sayers (1999): 96, 118-119, 123, 127.

⁶⁵⁴ Cf. *Menon* 89a3.

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. the Platonic Wager, *Politeia* 7.514-520a, *Nomoi* 5.730e-731a, and Chapters 3.4. and 4 (below).

(3.7.2) 248a-249d

In both the *Menon* and the *Phaidon* (see Chapter 3.4 and 3.5) Sokrates' use of both recollection and reincarnation proffers the idea that the soul does not result from a creation event, but has always existed and will always exist. Likewise, both recollection and reincarnation are presented as having undergone no inception, but rather as having existed, in concert with the soul, for the entirety of the soul's existence. As discussed above (Chapter 3.7.1), this conception of the relationship between the soul and reincarnation poses the question of how the soul is believed to acquire the knowledge of all things required in order for recollection to retain its validity. Recollection suggests that the soul cannot acquire this omniscience whilst it is incarnate in a mortal body, but that it must come to exist within the soul prior to its embodiment (e.g. *Menon* 81c4-86c3, *Phaidon* 72e3-78b3).⁶⁵⁶ Yet, the conception of reincarnation prior to the *Phaidros* suggests that

(a) for the vast majority of its disembodied state of existence the soul undergoes reward or punishment; and

(b) throughout the entirety of its disembodied state of existence the soul retains its individuation, and so possesses only that knowledge it recollected in the life of its present incarnation.

This left, therefore, no conceivable period of time in which the soul could come to possess a knowledge of all things, resulting in three possibilities:

- (1) Either recollection is invalid; or
- (2) The soul has always existed in a state of omniscience; or
- (3) Reincarnation did experience an inception.

⁶⁵⁶ Irwin (1977): 172-174; Bobonich (2002): 298-314; cf. Kahn (1996): 374.

Plato's continued use of recollection throughout the *Menon*, the *Phaidon*, the *Politeia*, and other dialogues suggest that he, at least, did not view recollection as being an invalid theory.⁶⁵⁷ Regarding the second possibility, it is possible that this is what Plato had in mind when composing these prior dialogues. However, if (a) the soul has existed for all time, rendering it an immortal entity; (b) the soul possesses within it an inherent omniscience; then (c) this omniscience must also be immortal. In such a case, it should not be possible for the incurable soul to exist, as this entails the soul becoming near complete in its ignorance, despite omniscience being an inherent and immortal attribute of the soul.

Only the third and final possibility thus remains, which suggests that reincarnation did not exist at the outset of the soul's existence, but rather it came into existence after a period of time. This presents a situation whereby the soul exists for an unspecified period in a disembodied state of existence. The soul then experiences a descent, precipitating an initial incarnation. After this initial incarnation, the soul experiences an initial 'death,' and it is at this point that reincarnation comes into existence. Indeed, the Chariot Allegory presented here in the *Phaidros* (246a3-255a1), presents the soul as experiencing an initial incarnation, as will the later conception of reincarnation in the *Timaios* (see Chapter 3.8).

Although the *Phaidros* appears to suggest the final possibility, this possibility generates a substantial inconsistency – how does the soul come to be incarnated at all? In order to respond to this inconsistency, Sokrates might point to the Chariot Allegory. However, if all souls are supposed to contain a knowledge of all things prior to their incarnation,⁶⁵⁸ how is it possible for ignorance to enter the soul, thereby precipitating the required descent resulting in the soul's embodiment? The soul of a god is able to retain its position in heaven due to its possession of knowledge, allowing it to control its horses, and follow, consistently, the 'good' horse of virtue. This same arrangement allows the philosopher's soul to remove itself from the cycle of reincarnation, as the knowledge it

⁶⁵⁷ Kahn (1996): 366; Scott (1999): 118-124.

⁶⁵⁸ See further Chapters 3.4, 3.6, and 3.8.

possesses allows it to reject the ‘bad’ horse of ignorance, and follow the ‘good’ horse of virtue.⁶⁵⁹ If the possession of knowledge is the determinant factor in the soul’s ability to retain a position in heaven, then no soul should be capable of experiencing a descent, bringing about the first incarnation of the soul.⁶⁶⁰

This is so, of course, only if one conceives of the soul as possessing knowledge of all things prior to its first incarnation, and in the earlier *Menon* (Chapter 3.4) and *Phaidon* (Chapter 3.5) this does appear to be the case. The *Phaidros*, on the other hand, appears to construct a conception of reincarnation wherein it is not necessarily the case that all souls possess a knowledge of all things prior to incarnation (see below). It may be that this conception of (re)incarnation is required for the specific context of the *Phaidros*, and the discussion of different types of speech between Sokrates and Phaidros. Yet, Timaios’ reintroduction of this concept, i.e. that all souls possess a knowledge of all things prior to incarnation, in the later *Timaios* (see Chapter 3.8), might suggest that Plato recognized the ramifications of such a notion, for example it invalidates the theory of recollection,⁶⁶¹ thereby necessitating its eventual reutilization. On the other hand, it may be that in order to answer the question – how does the soul come to be incarnated? – Plato believed the Chariot Allegory to be the best response. By the time of the later *Timaios*, this response had been discarded in favour of the Demiourgos, as the cause of the soul’s descent, further cementing the notion of a teleological soul.

Regardless, in the *Phaidros* it does appear the case that the soul does not necessarily possess a knowledge of all things prior to its first incarnation, i.e. it is not necessarily the case that knowledge is inherent to the soul. This is particularly so given Sokrates’ description of the first incarnation of the

⁶⁵⁹ Allowing it to remain relatively static, and therefore, changeless, ensuring it does not experience a descent from heaven.

⁶⁶⁰ *Menon* 89a3.

⁶⁶¹ It does so because it suggests that all souls do not possess a knowledge of all things prior to incarnation, therefore, it is not possible for certain souls to recollect this knowledge, no matter how much investigation they attempt, because this knowledge is simply lacking from the soul. In the *Menon*, 81e-86b, Sokrates’ demonstration with Menon’s slave, shows that all souls – even if they be that of a slave – are equal, prior to (re)incarnation.

soul that belongs to mortal beings, i.e. the soul that possesses two ‘horses’ of opposing natures, rather than two of the same (248a6-249d3). According to Sokrates, the true nature of reality – the Forms – exist in a place beyond the edge of the universe (247c3-e6: ‘Τὸν δὲ ὑπερουράνιον τόπον,’ 247c3). The Chariot Allegory proffers the notion that the souls of the gods possess two horses of the same good and virtuous nature. These horses allow the souls of the gods to exist in a sufficiently high and fixed position, such that they may consistently observe the Forms, and possess omniscience. The souls of living beings, however, do not possess the same structure, having two horses of a contrary nature. Consequently, the position of these souls does not remain fixed, but is subject to fluctuation.

Previously in the dialogue, Sokrates introduces the notion of the soul as self-mover, and the origin of all movement in the universe (245c5-246a2, 246c2-4).⁶⁶² This, he argues, ensures the soul’s immortality, as were the soul to cease to exist, then all motion in the universe would likewise cease, and there would be no way for motion to resume.⁶⁶³ In this case, it is necessary for the soul to undergo a descent to the mortal realm, in order for motion to exist amongst mortal beings.⁶⁶⁴ The way in which Sokrates envisions this descent requires the soul to move in accordance with ignorance, since only the ignorant soul would follow the ‘bad’ horse and thus undergo the required descent.

This, however, still fails to explain how ignorance comes to be in the soul at this early stage of its existence. Nonetheless, a conception of the soul as both the self-mover and the origin of all motion, introduces a further perspective from which to suggest a response to this issue.⁶⁶⁵ Rather than conceiving the issue as one of whether or not the soul possess a knowledge of all things prior to

⁶⁶² Cf. the *Nomoi*, book 12.

⁶⁶³ Cf. *Phaidros* 245c-246e; *Nomoi* 10.895b.

⁶⁶⁴ See conversely Zenon’s paradoxes, which argue that motion is impossible, it being an illusion like Sokrates argues in the *Phaidros* 245c-e, but not because motion belongs only to the soul, rather because there exists only the One, which is constant, changeless, and at rest (KRS 317 (=DK 29A25), 318 (=DK 29A25), 319 (=DK 29A25), 320 (=DK 29A25), 321, 322, 323 (=DK 29A27), 324). Cf. Strange (1999): 401-406; Johansen (2004): 145-146, 189; Miller Jr (2006): 289-292; Clark (2010): 175.

⁶⁶⁵ See also Miller Jr (2006): 289-292.

incarnation, it may serve to consider the issue as one of change. In the context of this dialogue, motion appears to be a synonym for change; if something moves, it is changing, and if something is changing, it is moving.⁶⁶⁶ In describing the souls of the gods', Sokrates presents their motion as fixed in a manner akin to that of a planetary orbit. The gods' thus experience motion, but a systematic and predictive motion. The souls that belong to mortals, on the other hand, do not appear to possess a systematic and predictive kind of motion, but rather their motion seems to be random and subject to larger deviations than that of the gods.⁶⁶⁷ Accordingly, both types of soul experience motion and so they experience change, but the souls that belong to mortal beings experience considerable change.

This greater capacity for change, in concert with the seemingly unpredictable nature of this change, presents the following potential scenario:

- (i) The souls of the gods possess a knowledge of all things, virtue of their ability to observe the Forms (247c3-e6).⁶⁶⁸
- (ii) The soul that belongs to mortal beings, likewise possesses a knowledge of all things, virtue of their ability to observe the Forms;
- (iii) The souls of the gods move in a systematic, though not entirely fixed, manner, precipitating a negligible change in position.
- (iv) This negligible change ensures that the souls of the gods continue to observe the Forms, preserving their knowledge.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁶ Cf. Zenon's paradoxes, which argue that since motion equates to change, motion cannot exist, since the One is changeless, and so it does not move (KRS 317 (=DK 29A25), 318 (=DK 29A25), 319 (=DK 29A25), 320 (=DK 29A25), 321, 322, 323 (=DK 29A27), 324). See also Johansen (2004): 139.

⁶⁶⁷ Cf. Leukippos: KRS 555 (=DK 67A6), 557 (=DK 67A14), 558 (=DK 67A13), 584 (=DK 67A14); Demokritos: KRS 556 (=DK 68A37), 561 (=DK 68A43), 583 (=DK 68A37); Epikoureanism: IG I-2.40-41, I-3.116, I-14.18, I-15.18, 22-25, 46-48, I-17.69, I-28, I-29, I-31, I-77, I-84, I-85, I-86. Cf. Taylor (1991): 89; Johansen (2004): 74-75, 102-103; particularly Johansen (2004): 74-75 who argues that 'what is caused without intelligence brings about a random disordered result.' Thus, if the soul that belongs to mortal beings acts without intelligence, it will lead to seemingly random results, e.g. larger deviations in motion than that of the gods, leading to the soul's 'descent' and embodiment.

⁶⁶⁸ *Menon* 89a3.

⁶⁶⁹ They cannot descend as they are close to rest, and therefore, virtually changeless.

- (v) The soul that belongs to mortal beings, on the other hand, is susceptible to random motion, precipitating a larger change in its position.⁶⁷⁰
- (vi) This larger change in position prevents the soul that belongs to mortals from observing the Forms, causing the existence of ignorance, and its existence in the soul.⁶⁷¹
- (vii) As a result of this ignorance, the soul experiences a descent and its first incarnation in a mortal body (246c2-d2, 248a6-d2).

If one accepts this motion as being random, or at least variable, then it should be the case that different souls can experience different levels of motion, and by extension, change. Consequently, it should be possible for a soul to experience more or less motion than another, thereby establishing a scenario in which a soul may be more or less knowledgeable/ignorant than another. This serves to secure a level of individuation amongst the souls as they descend to the mortal realm, such that each descending soul possesses differing levels of knowledge and ignorance. According to Sokrates (248d2-e5), this individuation results in each descending soul undergoing a different first incarnation, based upon the level of knowledge and ignorance present in each soul.⁶⁷² Sokrates proffers the following hierarchy of first incarnations, in descending order, from the most knowledgeable to the most ignorant (248d2-e5):

(248c2) θεσμός τε Ἄδραστείας ὄδε.
 ἥτις ἂν ψυχὴ θεῶν συνοπαδὸς γενομένη κατίδη τι τῶν ἀλη-
 θῶν, μέχρι τε τῆς ἐτέρας περιόδου εἶναι ἀπήμονα, κἂν αἰεὶ
 τοῦτο δύνηται ποιεῖν, αἰεὶ ἀβλαβῆ εἶναι· ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνα-
 τήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδη, καὶ τινα συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη
 λήθῃς τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῆ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ
 περορρησῆ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ, τότε νόμος ταύτην
 (d) μὴ φυτεῦσαι εἰς μηδεμίαν θήρειον φύσιν ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ

⁶⁷⁰ Cf. Leukippos: KRS 555 (=DK 67A6), 557 (=DK 67A14), 558 (=DK 67A13), 584 (=DK 67A14); Demokritos: KRS 556 (=DK 68A37), 561 (=DK 68A43), 583 (=DK 68A37); Epikoureanism: IG I-2.40-41, I-3.116, I-14.18, I-15.18, 22-25, 46-48, I-17.69, I-28, I-29, I-31, I-77, I-84, I-85, I-86.

⁶⁷¹ Cf. Clegg (1977): 56; Johansen (2004): 139.

⁶⁷² Bostock (1999): 418-420; Blondell (2002): 242n.254.

γενέσει, (1) ἀλλὰ τὴν μὲν πλεῖστα ἰδοῦσαν εἰς γονὴν ἀνδρὸς γενησομένου φιλοσόφου ἢ φιλοκάλου ἢ μουσικοῦ τινος καὶ ἔρωτικοῦ, (2) τὴν δὲ δευτέραν εἰς βασιλέως ἐννόμου ἢ πολεμικοῦ καὶ ἀρχικοῦ, (3) τρίτην εἰς πολιτικοῦ ἢ τινος οἰκονομικοῦ ἢ χρηματιστικοῦ, (4) τετάρτην εἰς φιλοπόνου <ἢ> γυμναστικοῦ ἢ περὶ σώματος ἴασιν τινος ἐσομένου, (5) πέμπτην μαντικὸν βίον (e) ἢ τινα τελεστικὸν ἔξουσιν· (6) ἕκτη ποιητικὸς ἢ τῶν περὶ μίμησιν τις ἄλλος ἀρμόσει, (7) ἑβδόμη δημιουργικὸς ἢ γεωργικὸς, (8) ὀγδόη σοφιστικὸς ἢ δημοκοπικὸς, (9) ἐνάτη τυραννικὸς. ἐν δὲ τούτοις ἅπασιν ὅς μὲν ἂν δικαίως διαγάγη ἀμείνωνος μοίρας μεταλαμβάνει, ὅς δ' ἂν ἀδίκως, χείρονος· εἰς μὲν γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ ὅθεν ἤκει ἡ ψυχὴ ἐκάστη οὐκ ἀφικνεῖται ἐτῶν μυρίων—
249.

(a) οὐ γὰρ πτεροῦται πρὸ τοσούτου χρόνου—πλὴν ἢ τοῦ φιλοσοφῆσαντος ἀδόλως ἢ παιδευαστήσαντος μετὰ φιλοσοφίας, αὗται δὲ τρίτη περιόδῳ τῆς χιλιετεί, ἐὰν ἔλυνται τρεῖς ἐφεξῆς τὸν βίον τοῦτον, οὕτω πτερωθεῖσαι τρισχιλιοστῷ ἔτει ἀπέρχονται. αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι, ὅταν τὸν πρῶτον βίον τελευτήσωσιν, κρίσεως ἔτυχον, κριθεῖσαι δὲ αἱ μὲν εἰς τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς δικαιοτήρια ἐλθοῦσαι δίκην ἐκτίνουσιν, αἱ δ' εἰς τούρανου τινα τόπον ὑπὸ τῆς Δίκης κουφισθεῖσαι διάγουσιν ἀξίως οὗ ἐν
(b) ἀνθρώπου εἶδει ἐβίωσαν βίου. τῷ δὲ χιλιοστῷ ἀμφότεροι ἀφικνούμεναι ἐπὶ κλήρωσιν τε καὶ αἵρεσιν τοῦ δευτέρου βίου αἰροῦνται ὃν ἂν θέλη ἐκάστη· (10) ἔνθα καὶ εἰς θηρίου βίον ἀνθρωπίνῃ ψυχῇ ἀφικνεῖται, καὶ ἐκ θηρίου ὅς ποτε ἄνθρωπος ἦν πάλιν εἰς ἄνθρωπον. οὐ γὰρ ἢ γε μήποτε ἰδοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν εἰς τόδε ἤξει τὸ σχῆμα. δεῖ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον συνιέναι κατ' εἶδος λεγόμενον, ἐκ πολλῶν ἰὸν αἰ-
(c) σθήσεων εἰς ἓν λογισμῷ συναιρούμενον· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἀνάμνησις ἐκείνων ἃ ποτ' εἶδεν ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ συμπορευθεῖσα θεῷ καὶ ὑπεριδοῦσα ἃ νῦν εἶναι φαμεν, καὶ ἀνακύψασα εἰς τὸ ὄν ὄντως. διὸ δὴ δικαίως μόνη πτεροῦται ἢ τοῦ φιλοσό-

φου διάνοια· πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις ἀεὶ ἐστὶν μνήμη κατὰ δύναμιν,
πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεϊὸς ἐστὶν. τοῖς δὲ δὴ τοιούτοις ἀνήρ
ὑπομνήμασιν ὀρθῶς χρώμενος, τελέους ἀεὶ τελετὰς τελοῦ-
μενος, τέλος ὄντως μόνος γίγνεται· ἐξιστάμενος δὲ τῶν
(d) ἀνθρωπίνων σπουδασμάτων καὶ πρὸς τῷ θεῷ γιγνόμενος,
νουθετεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ὡς παρακινῶν, ἐνθουσιάζων
δὲ λέληθεν τοὺς πολλοὺς.

[LOEB translation:] “And this is a law of Destiny, that the soul which follows after God and obtains a view of any of the truths is free from harm until the next period, and if it can always attain this, is always unharmed; but when, through inability to follow, it fails to see, and through some mischance is filled with forgetfulness and evil and grows heavy, and when it has grown heavy, loses its wings and falls to the earth, then it is the law that this soul shall never pass into any beast at its first birth, but the soul that has seen the most shall enter into the birth of a man who is to be a philosopher or a lover of beauty, or one of a musical or loving nature, and the second soul into that of a lawful king or a warlike ruler, and the third into that of a politician or a man of business or a financier, the fourth into that of a hard-working gymnast or one who will be concerned with the cure of the body, and the fifth will lead the life of a prophet or someone who conducts mystic rites; to the sixth, a poet or some other imitative artist will be united, to the seventh, a craftsman or a husbandman, to the eighth, a sophist or a demagogue, to the ninth, a tyrant. Now in all these states, whoever lives justly obtains a better lot, and whoever lives unjustly, a worse. For each soul returns to the place whence it came in ten thousand years; for it does not regain its wings before that time has elapsed, except the soul of him who has been a guileless philosopher or a philosophical lover; these, when for three successive periods of a thousand years they have chosen such a life, after the third period of a thousand years become winged in the three thousandth year and go their way; but the rest, when they have finished their first life, receive judgment, and after the judgment some go to the places of correction under the earth and pay their penalty, while the others, made light and raised up into a heavenly place by justice, live in a manner worthy of the life they led in human form. But in the thousandth year both come to draw lots and choose their second life, each choosing whatever it wishes. Then a human soul may pass into the life of a beast, and a soul which was once human, may pass again from a beast into a man. For the soul which has never seen the truth can never pass into human form. For a human being must understand a general conception formed by collecting into a unity by means of reason the many perceptions of the senses; and this is a recollection of those things which our soul once beheld, when it journeyed with God and, lifting its vision above the things which we now say exist, rose up into real being. And therefore it is just that the mind of the philosopher only has wings, for he is always, so far as he is able, in communion through memory with those things the communion with which causes God to be divine. Now a man who employs such memories rightly is always being initiated into perfect mysteries and he alone becomes truly perfect; but since he separates himself from human interests and turns his attention toward the divine, he is rebuked by the vulgar, who consider him mad and do not know that he is inspired.”

Accordingly:

- (1) This soul descends to the mortal realm having undergone the least amount of change, thereby retaining the largest amount of knowledge. Such a soul becomes incarnate as a philosopher in its first incarnation (248d2-4).
- (2) The next soul in the hierarchy, i.e. the soul that retains less knowledge than the philosopher's soul but more than the remainder, becomes incarnate as a lawful king or a warlike commander (248d4-5).
- (3) The next soul in the hierarchy becomes incarnate as a statesman, a manager of a household, or a financier (248d5-6).
- (4) The next soul in the hierarchy becomes incarnate as a trainer who loves exercise, or a doctor who cures the body (248d6-7).
- (5) The next soul in the hierarchy becomes incarnate as a prophet, or a priest of the mysteries (248d7-e1).
- (6) The next soul in the hierarchy becomes incarnate as a poet, or another type of representational artist (248e1-2).
- (7) The next soul in the hierarchy becomes incarnate as a labourer or farmer (248e2).
- (8) The next soul in the hierarchy becomes incarnate as a sophist or demagogue (248e3).
- (9) This penultimate soul in the hierarchy descends to the mortal realm having undergone a great amount of change, thereby retaining only small amount of knowledge. Such a soul becomes incarnate as a tyrant (248e3).
- (10) The final soul in Sokrates' hierarchy descends to the mortal realm having undergone the greatest amount of change. Consequently, this soul retains the least amount of knowledge, and is the most ignorant of the descending souls. Such a soul, according to Sokrates, cannot become incarnate as a human being, since it is ignorant of basic human concepts, e.g. speech, and so its first reincarnation is that of a wild animal (249b3-c4, cf. 248c8-d2).

Sokrates establishes this hierarchy of first incarnations as the result of an apparent random change in the soul's motion that leads to its descent into the mortal realm. This change in the soul's

motion/position does not appear to result from a conscious desire for change on the part of the soul itself, but appears to be, in some sense, natural. If this change in motion is not a decision of the soul, then the hierarchy of first incarnations appears to be a natural consequence of the random change in the soul's motion.

In establishing this particular hierarchy of incarnations as being (a) natural, and (b) reliant upon the level of knowledge in the soul, Sokrates proffers the idea that the soul's reincarnation adheres to the same hierarchy (248e3-249b5). For example, if the soul of the farmer returns to Hades having lived a more knowledgeable, and so more virtuous, life than that ostensibly available to it, then it will naturally be reincarnated as a poet, i.e. it will rise up the hierarchy of incarnations (248e3-5). This is so as its 'base' level of knowledge is now akin to that of the poet, rather than that of the farmer, and so it cannot undergo the same incarnation. Conversely, were the farmer's soul to have lived a more ignorant and wicked life, it will be naturally reincarnated as a sophist or demagogue (248e3-5). In this case, the farmer's soul no longer possesses the 'base' level of knowledge appropriate to the farmer, but that of the demagogue or sophist, and so it is reincarnated accordingly.⁶⁷³

Sokrates presents the soul's natural dwelling place as being amongst the gods in heaven (246b6-7). He suggests that the soul, in its natural dwelling place, is able to observe the Forms, and possess a knowledge of all things. The soul, however, experiences a descent and becomes incarnate in a mortal body. This incarnation is subject to a hierarchy of incarnations, reliant upon the level of knowledge the soul retains from its time observing the Forms. The peak of this hierarchy is the philosopher's soul – the soul retaining the greatest amount of knowledge subsequent to its descent. Consequently, the philosopher's soul is that soul most akin to the soul's pre-descent state of existence, i.e. the most at rest and changeless. As suggested above, the soul is capable of ascending or descending this particular hierarchy of incarnations. Together, this suggests a *telos* for the soul. In

⁶⁷³ Cf. Irwin (1977): 93, 139-140; Bobonich (2002): 477-478. See also *Phaidros* 240b1-3: τῷ δὲ χυλιοστῷ ἀμφοτέραι ἀφικνούμεναι ἐπὶ κλήρωσίν τε καὶ αἵρεσιν τοῦ δευτέρου βίου αἰροῦνται ὃν ἂν θέλῃ ἐκάστη; presumably, because of the level of knowledge associated with each life, the more knowledgeable person will choose a better life than their contrary, see also the *Politeia* on the choice of lives and knowledge, 10.614b-621d (Chapter 3.6).

this case, the *telos* of the soul appears to be to return to its natural state of existence pre-descent, through an increasing accumulation of knowledge, precipitating an analogous increase in virtue.⁶⁷⁴

According to Sokrates the soul must achieve this *telos* within a particular time period, adding a sense of urgency to the soul's progression; particularly when the soul appears to possess no awareness of its place within this time period. The soul, argues Sokrates, undergoes ten incarnations, each consisting of one thousand years (248e3-249d3).⁶⁷⁵ In order to achieve its *telos*, the soul must become incarnate as a philosopher for three successive incarnations, i.e. for three thousand years in succession (249a1-5; cf. 248c2-5). This requirement ensures that the soul possesses an amount of knowledge and virtue sufficient to control its motion and change, and prevent it from descending back to the mortal realm.⁶⁷⁶ If the incarnation of the soul appears to have originated in a random movement, precipitating a significant change in the soul, then the soul's return to its natural dwelling place requires the soul to effect the converse. The soul must control its own motion, such that it is akin to that of the gods, and may observe enough of the Forms, in order that it may not experience a descent back into the mortal realm.

Should the soul fail to achieve its *telos* within the requisite time, it is unclear what happens to the soul. If all souls return to their natural dwelling place at the expiration of this time, this would invalidate the soul's *telos*, since regardless of the amount of knowledge it possesses, following ten incarnations it will return to its natural dwelling place.⁶⁷⁷ Furthermore, this would remove all motivation for the soul to live a knowledgeable and virtuous life, thereby invalidating the Sokratic way of life Plato has sought to defend since the *Apologia*.⁶⁷⁸ Yet, the soul's immortality (245c5-246a2: 'Ψυχὴ πᾶσα ἀθάνατος,' 245c5) ensures that the soul will not be destroyed, nor will it ever cease to be, following the expiration of this time period. Something, therefore, must happen to those souls that fail to achieve their *telos* within the requisite time. It is possible, for example, that

⁶⁷⁴ Kahn (1996): 66-67; Johansen (2004): 19.

⁶⁷⁵ Cf. *Politeia* 10.614b-621d.

⁶⁷⁶ *Menon* 89a3; cf. Baxter (1992): 105; Sedley (2003): 95.

⁶⁷⁷ *Phaidros* 248e-249a, 250c; Bobonich (2002): 549n.9.

⁶⁷⁸ See Chapter 3.2, and *Menon* 86b1-c3.

the souls return to their natural dwelling place, and a new descent occurs, precipitating the start of ten new incarnations for the soul. This time, however, those souls that achieved their *telos* will not be a part of this new descent. In this way, the motivation to achieve its *telos* remains for the soul, as does the validity of the Sokratic way of life; however, the dialogue does not mention this explicitly.⁶⁷⁹

In addition to the above issue regarding the soul's *telos*, the conception of reincarnation delivered by Sokrates here, presents two further issues:

- (1) It adds a deterministic element to the soul's incarnation; and
- (2) It omits women from its hierarchy of incarnations.

In previous accounts of the afterlife, Sokrates emphasizes consistently the role of individual choice and action in determining the fate of the soul.⁶⁸⁰ According to the account of incarnation presented by the *Phaidros*, each soul does not undergo the same initial incarnation. On the contrary, the first incarnation of each soul is predetermined by the amount of change each soul undergoes prior to its embodiment. This change does not originate from a conscious choice on the part of the soul, but rather it appears to result from a random movement. Each soul, therefore, has no control over which incarnation shall be its first. Whether the soul becomes incarnate as a philosopher or as a tyrant appears to result from happenstance.

This places the soul of the philosopher at a distinct advantage in achieving its *telos*, whereas the soul of the tyrant is at a clear disadvantage, through no apparent choice of their own. The philosopher's soul requires only two more incarnations as a philosopher in order to return to its natural dwelling place. The soul of the tyrant, on the other hand, must undergo at least nine reincarnations before it reaches the level of philosopher, rendering it virtually impossible for the tyrant's soul to achieve its *telos* in ten incarnations. Nevertheless, whether the soul is able to achieve its *telos* rests, ultimately, with the soul itself, since subsequent to this initial incarnation, each successive reincarnation does

⁶⁷⁹ Cf. Scott (1999): 124.

⁶⁸⁰ See Chapters 3.3, 3.4, 3.4, and 3.6.

appear to result from the choices and decisions of the soul alone (248c2-8, 248e3-5, 249b1-3, 249b6-d3).⁶⁸¹

This concept of reincarnation, therefore, is not completely deterministic, but there is room for free will, i.e. Sokrates presents a kind of compatibilism.⁶⁸² Regardless of this compatibilism, in the later *Timaios*, Timaios responds to this issue with the idea that each soul experiences the same first incarnation, in an apparent attempt to remove certain deterministic elements from this process (41e2-4). Since each soul in the *Timaios* experiences the same first incarnation, this will proffer a new hierarchy of incarnations, that responds to both of the issues identified above (see further Chapters 1.3.8, 1.4.8, and 3.8). First, the introduction of an equal first incarnation for each soul emphasizes the role of individual choice and action as the determining factors in whether the soul moves closer, or further away, from its *telos*. Second, this new hierarchy of incarnations includes women (90e6-91d6), in contrast to the present hierarchy in the *Phaidros*. The present hierarchy does not necessarily exclude women, but it is unlikely that, in contemporary Athenian society, a woman would have possessed the opportunity to occupy several of the positions noted in the hierarchy, e.g. tyrant, statesman, demagogue, commander, etc.⁶⁸³

(3.8) The *Timaios*

(3.8.1) 29e-30c

(29e1) ἀγαθὸς ἦν, ἀγαθῷ δὲ οὐδείς
περὶ οὐδενὸς οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγνεται φθόνος· τούτου δ' ἐκτὸς
ὣν πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα ἐβουλήθη γενέσθαι παραπλήσια ἑαυτῷ.

⁶⁸¹ Cf. *Theaitetos* 176a-e.

⁶⁸² Sayers (1999): 162.

⁶⁸³ E.g. Schaps (1979); Blundell (1999), and Connelly (2010). It was not necessarily impossible for a woman to occupy such a position, but unlikely, cf. the portrayal of Aspasia in the *Menexenos*, and Diotima in the *Symposion*.

ταύτην δὴ γενέσεως καὶ κόσμου μάλιστ' ἂν τις ἀρχὴν κυριω-
30.

(a) τάτην παρ' ἀνδρῶν φρονίμων ἀποδεχόμενος ὀρθότατα ἀπο-
δέχοιτ' ἂν. βουλευθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον
δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν, οὕτω δὴ πᾶν ὅσον ἦν ὄρατὸν
παραλαβὼν οὐχ ἠσυχίαν ἄγον ἀλλὰ κινούμενον πλημμελῶς
καὶ ἀτάκτως, εἰς τάξιν αὐτὸ ἤγαγεν ἐκ τῆς ἀταξίας, ἡγη-
σάμενος ἐκεῖνο τούτου πάντως ἄμεινον. θέμις δ' οὐτ' ἦν
οὕτ' ἔστιν τῷ ἀρίστῳ δρᾶν ἄλλο πλὴν τὸ κάλλιστον·

(b) λογισάμενος οὖν ἠϋρισκεν ἐκ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ὀρατῶν οὐδὲν
ἀνόητον τοῦ νοῦν ἔχοντος ὅλον ὅλου κάλλιον ἔσεσθαι ποτε
ἔργον, νοῦν δ' αὖ χωρὶς ψυχῆς ἀδύνατον παραγενέσθαι τῷ.
διὰ δὴ τὸν λογισμὸν τόνδε νοῦν μὲν ἐν ψυχῇ, ψυχὴν δ' ἐν
σώματι συνιστὰς τὸ πᾶν συνετεκταίνετο, ὅπως ὅτι κάλλιστον
εἶη κατὰ φύσιν ἄριστόν τε ἔργον ἀπειρασμένος. οὕτως
οὖν δὴ κατὰ λόγον τὸν εἰκότα δεῖ λέγειν τόνδε τὸν κόσμον
ζῶον ἔμψυχον ἔννου τε τῇ ἀληθείᾳ διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ
(c) γενέσθαι πρόνοιαν.

Τούτου δ' ὑπάρχοντος αὖ τὰ τούτοις ἐφεξῆς ἡμῖν λεκτέον,
τίνοι τῶν ζῶων αὐτὸν εἰς ὁμοιότητα ὁ συνιστὰς συνέστησεν.
τῶν μὲν οὖν ἐν μέρους εἶδει πεφυκότων μηδενὶ καταξιώσωμεν
—ἀτελεῖ γὰρ εἰκότος οὐδὲν ποτ' ἂν γένοιτο καλόν—οὗ δ'
ἔστιν ἄλλα ζῶα καθ' ἑν καὶ κατὰ γένη μόρια, τούτῳ πάν-
των ὁμοιότατον αὐτὸν εἶναι τιθῶμεν.

[LOEB translation:] “He was good, and in him that is good no envy ariseth ever concerning anything; and being devoid of envy He desired that all should be, so far as possible, like unto Himself. This principle, then, we shall be wholly right in accepting from men of wisdom as being above all the supreme originating principle of Becoming and the Cosmos. For God desired that, so far as possible, all things should be good and nothing evil; wherefore, when He took over all that was visible, seeing that it was not in a state of rest but in a state of discordant and disorderly motion, He brought it into order out of disorder, deeming that the former state is in all ways better than the latter. For Him who is most good it neither was nor is permissible to perform any action save what is most fair. As He reflected, therefore, He perceived that of such creatures as are by nature visible, none that is irrational will be fairer, comparing wholes with wholes, than the rational; and further, that reason cannot possibly belong to any apart from Soul. So because of this reflexion

He constructed reason within soul and soul within body as He fashioned the All, that so the work He was executing might be of its nature most fair and most good. Thus, then, in accordance with the likely account, we must declare that this Cosmos has verily come into existence as a Living Creature endowed with soul and reason owing to the providence of God.

This being established, we must declare that which comes next in order. In the semblance of which of the living Creatures did the Constructor of the Cosmos construct it? We shall not deign to accept any of those which belong by nature to the category of "parts"; for nothing that resembles the imperfect would ever become fair."

In the *Phaidros* (Chapter 3.7), Sokrates appears to suggest that the soul becomes incarnate in a mortal body due to a random deviation in its motion, akin (maybe) to the later Epikourean swerve.⁶⁸⁴ This creates a scenario in which the soul experiences embodiment as the result of happenstance. Despite the apparent teleology Sokrates assigns to the process of reincarnation, as the soul attempts to advance through the hierarchy of incarnations, and restore its position in its natural dwelling place; the experience of incarnation, according to this description, ultimately derives from no purpose. Happenstance is happenstance because it is unpredictable and random; if it were predictable then it would no longer be happenstance.

In between the *Phaidros* and the *Timaios*, Plato proffers in the *Sophistes* the notion that the universe (and everything contained therein) possesses a divine Producer, through whom nothing occurs via happenstance (265a4-266d7). The *Timaios* is a cosmogonical account of the universe, seeking to relate how the universe, and all that exists within, came into existence. To effect this outcome, Timaios adopts the above notion, arguing that the universe came into existence as the result of a Demiourgos (a Creator). In describing the universe and everything therein as created entities, the incarnation of the soul no longer relies on happenstance, but stems from some purpose known initially only to its creator – the Demiourgos.

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. Leukippos: KRS 555 (=DK 67A6), 557 (=DK 67A14), 558 (=DK 67A13), 584 (=DK 67A14); Demokritos: KRS 556 (=DK 68A37), 561 (=DK 68A43), 583 (=DK 68A37); Epikoureanism: IG I-2.40-41, I-3.116, I-14.18, I-15.18, 22-25, 46-48, I-17.69, I-28, I-29, I-31, I-77, I-84, I-85, I-86.

A creator, according to this understanding, creates something for some particular purpose.⁶⁸⁵ For example, consider the relationship between a carpenter, and a chair. In this case, the carpenter – the creator of the chair – does not produce the chair without purpose, but with intentionality. On the one hand, the carpenter might produce the chair simply as a means of having something comfortable upon which to sit. On the other, the carpenter might make the chair with the intention of its sale; as a display of skill, or even through a love of making chairs, i.e. for pleasure. Regardless, the carpenter does not produce the chair through happenstance, but with purpose.⁶⁸⁶

Accordingly, the Demiourgos, as the creator of the soul, does not create the soul without reason, but for a particular purpose. This understanding responds to the seeming randomness of the soul's incarnation in the *Phaidros*, by eliminating it altogether. No longer does the soul's descent into the mortal realm result from a random deviation in its motion, but rather the soul experiences incarnation because the Demiourgos – its creator – intended this to be so.⁶⁸⁷ Why did the Demiourgos intend for the soul to undergo incarnation?

- (a) Timaios argues that the Demiourgos is both perfect and good in all respects (29d7-e2).
- (b) Consequently, the Demiourgos sought, as far as possible, to create something akin to himself in nature (29e2-30a3, 30a6-b6), i.e. the Demiourgos sought to create something good and perfect.
- (c) The Demiourgos, however, created the soul that belongs to mortal beings out of lesser quality ingredients than that of the gods (41d4-7; cf. *Phaidros* 246a3-d2).
- (d) Yet, the Demiourgos sought to create something good and perfect (29d7-30c1).
- (e) It is possible, therefore, that in order to create the best soul out of the lesser ingredients available to him, the Demiourgos established the soul's incarnation.

⁶⁸⁵ Cf. Shields (2014): 73-115.

⁶⁸⁶ Cf. *Phaidon* 98b – Sokrates' criticism of Anaxagoras. Strange (1999): 401-406; Johansen (2004): 2-3, 69, 77, 92, 95; Freeland (2006): 199-213; Cf. White (1979): 71; Wright (2000): 10-11.

⁶⁸⁷ Johansen (2004): 145-146, 189.

- (f) In this way, the soul is assigned a *telos* – to return to its natural dwelling place – and in order to do so, it must progress through a series of (re)incarnations; becoming more knowledgeable, and more virtuous with each upward progression, until its goal is achieved (39e3-40b8, 41d4-42d2).⁶⁸⁸
- (g) Despite the soul's ingredients being of a lesser quality, the establishment of (re)incarnation, provides the soul the opportunity to transcend the limitations of its ingredients. As a result, incarnation, from the Demiourgos' perspective, fulfils his apparent intention to create something as perfect and as good as possible (29d7-30c, 39e3-40b8, 41d4-42d2, 46e7-47c4).⁶⁸⁹ This, of course, relies on the belief that the Demiourgos possesses no control over his ingredients. Otherwise, he purposefully chose to construct the soul of lesser ingredients, thereby deliberately choosing not to create as good and as perfect a soul as possible, contrary to the nature assigned to him by Timaios.⁶⁹⁰

(3.8.2) 41d-42d

In the *Phaidros*, the apparent randomness of the soul's motion established a situation wherein it was possible for different souls to descend to the mortal realm in possession of differing levels of knowledge and ignorance. Accordingly, this instituted a hierarchy of first incarnations determined by the extent to which a soul possessed knowledge or ignorance, so that the most knowledgeable soul became incarnate as a philosopher, and the least a tyrant. As argued above (Chapter 3.7), this introduces a deterministic element to the soul's ability to achieve its *telos*, since it would be practically impossible for the soul whose initial incarnation was that of a tyrant to achieve its *telos* in one period of incarnation. One period of incarnation, according to the *Phaidros*, consists of ten

⁶⁸⁸ Cf. Baxter (1992): 105; Sedley (2003): 95.

⁶⁸⁹ *Politeia* 7.514a-520a; *Nomoi* 10.903b-e.

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. *Protagoras* 320d, 321b, 361c. Johansen (2004): 145-146, 189.

individual incarnations for the soul, and in order to achieve its *telos* the soul must become incarnate as a philosopher for three successive incarnations.⁶⁹¹ The soul whose initial incarnation is that of a tyrant, requires nine of these ten incarnations in order to reach the position of the philosopher, thereby rendering it unlikely to achieve its *telos*.

The *Timaios*, on the other hand, portrays the soul as an entity created by the Demiourgos, and as such the Demiourgos created it with purpose (see further Chapter 3.8.1). This removes the random aspect of the soul's incarnation present in the *Phaidros*; the soul no longer becoming incarnate due to a random deviation in its motion, allowing for the existence of ignorance, and a descent to the mortal realm.⁶⁹² Since the soul no longer becomes incarnate due to happenstance, each soul no longer descends to the mortal realm possessing differing levels of knowledge and ignorance, but rather they become incarnate in possession of the same level of knowledge and ignorance.

Consequently, each soul in the *Timaios* experiences the same first incarnation, in contrast to the *Phaidros* (Chapter 3.7.2); and so *Timaios* presents an amended version of (re)incarnation taking into account the ramifications of the soul's creation by the Demiourgos.

As noted above (see further Chapters 1.3.8, 1.4.8, and 3.8.1) the Demiourgos creates the soul that belongs to human beings from ingredients of a lesser quality than those he used to create the souls of the gods (41d4-7). According to *Timaios*, the Demiourgos creates enough soul equal to all of the stars in the universe (41d8). He then assigns each soul to a star, so that every soul has a corresponding star (41e1). In this way, *Timaios* is able to respond to two particular issues; first, he establishes the existence of a sufficient number of souls to satisfy the multitude of animate beings in observable reality. Second, he establishes the natural dwelling place of the soul as being with the gods in heaven, in accordance with the Chariot Allegory of the *Phaidros* (246a3-255a1; cf. *Timaios*, 41d4-e2, 42b2-5).

⁶⁹¹ Rice (1998): 108; Sayers (1999): 96, 118-119; cf. 123, 127.

⁶⁹² Cf. Johansen (2004): 95, 102-103.

Whilst the soul resides in heaven, it acquires a knowledge of the universe (41e1-2); in other words, the Demiourgos sets the revolution of the Same in the soul in alignment with that of the World Soul (42c4-d2, 44a7-c4), the most perfect form of soul created by the Demiourgos (41d4-7). Timaios argues that when soul becomes incarnate in a mortal body, this alignment is disrupted (42e5-44a7), and in order for the soul to achieve its *telos*, and return to its natural dwelling place (see below), it must realign its revolution of the Same with that of the World Soul (42c4-d2, 44a7-c4). The only way the soul is able to achieve this realignment is because the Demiourgos, at the creation of the soul, aligned its revolution of the Same correctly with that of the World Soul. In this way, the soul once possessed the correct alignment of the Same (i.e. full knowledge); this alignment was then disrupted by the soul's embodiment (i.e. this knowledge was forgotten), and the realignment of the soul's Same with that of the World Soul is nothing other than recollection – the recovery of the knowledge it once had.⁶⁹³ Thus far, Timaios' account accords with that of the *Phaidros*; but unlike the *Phaidros*, the incarnation of the soul does not result from happenstance, but through the agency of its creator – the Demiourgos – who brings about incarnation with purpose. Consequently, each soul receives the same initial incarnation (41e2-4, 42d2-e4), thereby providing each soul an equal foundation with which to work towards its *telos*, removing the possible determinism arising from the variability inherent to the initial incarnation of the soul in the *Phaidros* (see Chapter 3.7).

This variability in the *Phaidros* arose from a level of individuation evident in each soul prior to incarnation, necessitating different initial incarnations for each individual soul. In the *Timaios*, although each soul is nominally individual, virtue of the Demiourgos assigning each soul to a star, in practice each soul does not possess the same level of individuation as those in the *Phaidros*. Thus far, each soul in the *Timaios* is the same in almost every way, sans their assigned star; they possess the same level of knowledge, and the same first incarnation. In the *Timaios*, therefore, it is only

⁶⁹³ See also Chapters 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5. Cf. Kahn (1996): 367n.42; Johansen (2004): 173-174. See however, Rowe (1984): 61 and Scott (1999): 97 who argue that Plato does not refer to the theory of recollection again after the *Phaidros*, though, as argued above, this thesis does not endorse this position.

through the existence of reincarnation that the soul is able to manifest its individuation more explicitly.⁶⁹⁴

During the initial incarnation of the soul, each soul begins their incarnation in possession of the same level of knowledge. One would assume, therefore, that each soul would act in the same manner, never failing to act in accordance with knowledge. However, the soul is now incarnate in a mortal body, and must contend with bodily perception (42a3-6), emotions (42a6-b1), and the nature of the body more generally (42e5-44c2; 69a6-92c9). Consequently, some souls are better able to act in accordance with knowledge than others, introducing the variability in knowledge and ignorance that, in the *Phaidros*, serves to individuate more explicitly each soul. At the end of the soul's initial incarnation each soul no longer possesses the same level of knowledge, but rather each soul possesses a differing amount of knowledge and ignorance. In the *Phaidros*, this factor necessitated the introduction of the hierarchy of incarnations, as it was not possible for such individuated souls to experience the same incarnation.

The *Timaios* adopts the same conclusion as that of the *Phaidros*, and so Timaios introduces a hierarchy of incarnations, that govern the soul subsequent to its initial incarnation. In this respect, Timaios' hierarchy of incarnation functions in a similar manner to that in the *Phaidros*; it outlines a series of incarnations that a soul must progress through in order that it may attain its *telos*. It differs, however, in two respects: (i) Since each soul experiences the same initial incarnation, in possession of the same knowledge, the soul's position on the hierarchy is determined by its own ability to act in accordance with this knowledge, despite the 'disadvantages' of embodiment, e.g. emotions, bodily perception, etc. In this way, if a soul finds itself in a low position in the hierarchy, it is a consequence of its own choices, rather than happenstance as in the *Phaidros*. (ii) Timaios is relating a cosmogony, and he attempts to relate to his audience how different mortal beings came into existence. The hierarchy of incarnations, therefore, serves a second function, which is to explain the inception of

⁶⁹⁴ Blondell (2002): 242n.254; Bostock (1999): 418-420.

these different mortal beings. In this case, different mortal beings come into existence because of the soul's second incarnation.⁶⁹⁵ The soul's second incarnation is determined by the extent to which it utilized the knowledge it possessed in its first incarnation. According to Timaios:

(41d4) Ταῦτ' εἶπε, καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸν πρότερον κρατῆρα, ἐν ᾧ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ψυχὴν κεραννύς ἔμισγεν, τὰ τῶν πρόσθεν ὑπόλοιπα κατεχεῖτο μίσγων τρόπον μὲν τινα τὸν αὐτόν, ἀκήρατα δὲ οὐκέτι κατὰ ταῦτὰ ὡσαύτως, ἀλλὰ δεύτερα καὶ τρίτα. συστήσας δὲ τὸ πᾶν διεῖλεν ψυχὰς ἰσαριθμούς τοῖς ἄστροις, (e) ἔνειμέν θ' ἐκάστην πρὸς ἕκαστον, καὶ ἐμβιβάσας ὡς ἐς ὄχημα τὴν τοῦ παντὸς φύσιν ἔδειξεν, νόμους τε τοὺς εἰμαρμένους εἶπεν αὐταῖς, (1) ὅτι γένεσις πρώτη μὲν ἔσοιτο τεταγμένη μία πᾶσιν, ἵνα μή τις ἐλαττοῖτο ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, δέοι δὲ σπαρείσας αὐτὰς εἰς τὰ προσήκοντα ἐκάσταις ἕκαστα ὄργανα χρόνων 42.

(a) φῦναι ζώων τὸ θεοσεβέστατον, διπλῆς δὲ οὐσης τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως, τὸ κρεῖττον τοιοῦτον εἶη γένος ὃ καὶ ἔπειτα κεκλήσοιτο ἀνήρ. ὁπότε δὴ σώμασιν ἐμφυτευθεῖεν ἐξ ἀνάγκης, καὶ τὸ μὲν προσίοι, τὸ δ' ἀπίοι τοῦ σώματος αὐτῶν, πρῶτον μὲν αἴσθησιν ἀναγκαῖον εἶη μίαν πᾶσιν ἐκ βιαίων παθημάτων σύμφυτον γίνεσθαι, δεύτερον δὲ ἡδονῆ καὶ λύπη μειγμένον ἔρωτα, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις φόβον καὶ θυμὸν ὅσα

(b) τε ἐπόμενα αὐτοῖς καὶ ὅποσα ἐναντίως πέφυκε διεστηκότα· ὧν εἰ μὲν κρατήσοιεν, δίκη βιώσοιντο, κρατηθέντες δὲ ἀδικία.

(2) καὶ ὁ μὲν εὔ τὸν προσήκοντα χρόνον βιούς, πάλιν εἰς τὴν τοῦ συννόμου πορευθεὶς οἴκησιν ἄστρου, βίον εὐδαίμονα καὶ συνήθη ἔξοι, (3) σφαλεις δὲ τούτων εἰς γυναικὸς φύσιν ἐν τῇ

(c) δευτέρῃ γενέσει μεταβαλοῖ· (4-7) μὴ παυόμενός τε ἐν τούτοις ἐτι κακίας, τρόπον ὃν κακύνοιτο, κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα τῆς τοῦ τρόπου γενέσεως εἰς τινα τοιαύτην ἀεὶ μεταβαλοῖ θήρειον φύσιν, (8) ἀλλάττων τε οὐ πρότερον πόνων λήξοι, πρὶν τῇ ταύτῃ

⁶⁹⁵ Cf. Johansen (2004): 145-146, 189; Clark (2010): 175.

καὶ ὁμοίου περιόδῳ τῇ ἐν αὐτῷ συνεπισπώμενος τὸν πολὺν
ὄχλον καὶ ὕστερον προσφύντα ἐκ πυρὸς καὶ ὕδατος καὶ ἀέρος
(d) καὶ γῆς, θορυβώδη καὶ ἄλογον ὄντα, λόγῳ κρατήσας εἰς τὸ
τῆς πρώτης καὶ ἀρίστης ἀφίκοιτο εἶδος ἕξεως. διαθεσμο-
θετήσας δὲ πάντα αὐτοῖς ταῦτα, ἵνα τῆς ἔπειτα εἴη κακίας
ἐκάστων ἀναίτιος, ἔσπειρεν τοὺς μὲν εἰς γῆν, τοὺς δ' εἰς
σελήνην, τοὺς δ' εἰς τᾶλλα ὅσα ὄργανα χρόνου·

[LOEB translation:] “Tim. Thus He spake, and once more into the former bowl, wherein He had blended and mixed the Soul of the Universe, He poured the residue of the previous material, mixing it in somewhat the same manner, yet no longer with a uniform and invariable purity, but second and third in degree of purity. And when He had compounded the whole He divided it into souls equal in number to the stars, and each several soul He assigned to one star, and setting them each as it were in a chariot He showed them the nature of the Universe, and declared unto them the laws of destiny,—namely, how that the first birth should be one and the same ordained for all, in order that none might be slighted by Him; and how it was needful that they, when sown each into his own proper organ of time, should grow into the most god-fearing of living creatures; and that, since human nature is two-fold, the superior sex is that which hereafter should be designated “man.” And when, by virtue of Necessity, they should be implanted in bodies, and their bodies are subject to influx and efflux, these results would necessarily follow,—firstly, sensation that is innate and common to all proceeding from violent affections; secondly, desire mingled with pleasure and pain; and besides these, fear and anger and all such emotions as are naturally allied thereto, and all such as are of a different and opposite character. And if they shall master these they will live justly, but if they are mastered, unjustly. And he that has lived his appointed time well shall return again to his abode in his native star, and shall gain a life that is blessed and congenial; but whoso has failed therein shall be changed into woman’s nature at the second birth; and if, in that shape, he still refraineth not from wickedness he shall be changed every time, according to the nature of his wickedness, into some bestial form after the similitude of his own nature; nor in his changings shall he cease from woes until he yields himself to the revolution of the Same and Similar that is within him, and dominating by force of reason that burdensome mass which afterwards adhered to him of fire and water and earth and air, a mass tumultuous and irrational, returns again to the semblance of his first and best state.

When He had fully declared unto them all these ordinances, to the end that He might be blameless in respect of the future wickedness of any one of them, He proceeded to sow them, some in the Earth, some in the Moon, others in the rest of the organs of Time.”

Accordingly:

- (1) The first incarnation of the soul is that of a male (άνήρ, 42a3) human being (41e3-42a3, 90e6-91a1).⁶⁹⁶
- (2) Once the soul's initial incarnation comes to an end, it travels to Hades, where it undergoes judgement (44c3-4: εἰς Ἄιδου πάλιν ἔρχεται).⁶⁹⁷ If the judges determine the soul to have led a just and knowledgeable life, the soul returns to its natural dwelling place – its companion star – having attained its *telos* (42b3-5, 90a2-7).
- (3) However, should the judges determine the soul to have led a life of cowardice, then the soul becomes incarnate as a female human being in its second incarnation (42b5-c1, 90e6-91d6).
- (4) If the judges decide that the soul had led an 'innocent' though 'simpleminded' life, then its second incarnation is that of a bird (91d6-e1, cf. 42c1-4):

(91d6) τὸ δὲ τῶν ὀρνέων φύλον μετερρυθ-
 μίζετο, ἀντὶ τριχῶν πτερὰ φύον, ἐκ τῶν ἀκάκων ἀνδρῶν,
 κούφων δέ, καὶ μετεωρολογικῶν μὲν, ἡγουμένων δὲ δι' ὄψεως
 (e) τὰς περὶ τούτων ἀποδείξεις βεβαιότατας εἶναι δι' εὐήθειαν.

[LOEB translation]: "And the tribe of birds are derived by transformation, growing feathers in place of hair, from men who are harmless but light-minded—men, too, who, being students of the worlds above, suppose in their simplicity that the most solid proofs about such matters are obtained by the sense of sight."

- (5) If the judges determine that the soul made no use of its knowledge, and allowed the emotions and perception of the body to govern its decisions, then it becomes incarnate as a non-human, land animal with legs in its second incarnation (91e2-92a4, cf. 42c1-4):

(91e2) τὸ δ' αὖ πεζὸν καὶ θηριῶδες γέγονεν ἐκ τῶν μηδὲν προσχω-
 μένων φιλοσοφία μηδὲ ἀθρούντων τῆς περὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν
 φύσεως πέρι μηδὲν, διὰ τὸ μηκέτι ταῖς ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ χρῆ-
 σθαι περιόδοις, ἀλλὰ τοῖς περὶ τὰ στήθη τῆς ψυχῆς ἡγεμόσιν

⁶⁹⁶ The term *Timaios* uses in order to describe the first incarnation being 'άνήρ' (42a3; cf. ἀνδρῶν at 90e7); moreover, the description of the body *Timaeus* provides in 69a6ff. appears to be that of a male human being. See *contra* Campbell (2000): 159, who claims that the original human being was genderless, despite *Timaios'* use of 'άνήρ' and 'άνδρῶν' to describe the first incarnation of the soul (42a3, 90e7), and γυναῖκες (90e8) to describe the second incarnation. Cf. the story *Aristophanes* proffers in the *Symposion* 189d-193d, which claims that the first human beings were either a combination of (i) male-male; (ii) female-female; or (iii) male-female.
⁶⁹⁷ Strictly speaking, *Timaios* does not mention either a judgement or the judges in his account. It is possible for one to assume that these subsequent transformations occur 'ἐξ ἀνάγκης' (42a3-4), in accordance with the level of knowledge the soul has been able to recollect; in other words that this version of reincarnation is a more Buddhist type of natural reincarnation. However, *Timaios'* mention that the soul will 'εἰς Ἄιδου πάλιν ἔρχεται' (44c3-4) suggests that it is likely the judges are assumed to exist in this version of reincarnation, since the disembodied soul does not immediately become incarnated in another body, but rather travels somewhere else first, presumably where the next transformation is determined.

ἔπεσθαι μέρεσιν. ἐκ τούτων οὖν τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων τά τ' ἐμπρόσθια κῶλα καὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς εἰς γῆν ἐλκόμενα ὑπὸ συγγενείας ἤρεισαν, προμήκεις τε καὶ παντοίας ἔσχον τὰς 92.

(a) κορυφάς, ὅπη συνεθλίφθησαν ὑπὸ ἀργίας ἐκάστων αἱ περιφοραί· τετράπουν τε τὸ γένος αὐτῶν ἐκ ταύτης ἐφύετο καὶ πολύπουν τῆς προφάσεως, θεοῦ βάσεις ὑποτιθέντος πλείους τοῖς μᾶλλον ἄφροσιν, ὡς μᾶλλον ἐπὶ γῆν ἔλκοιντο.

[LOEB translation:] “And the wild species of animal that goes on foot is derived from those men who have paid no attention at all to philosophy nor studied at all the nature of the heavens, because they ceased to make use of the revolutions within the head and followed the lead of those parts of the soul which are in the breast. Owing to these practices they have dragged their front limbs and their head down to the earth, and there planted them, because of their kinship therewith; and they have acquired elongated heads of every shape, according as their several revolutions have been distorted by disuse. On this account also their race was made four-footed and many-footed, since God set more supports under the more foolish ones, so that they might be dragged down still more to the earth.”

- (6) If the judges decide that the soul lived a life devoid of reason, dedicated solely to the body, then the soul becomes incarnate as a non-human, land animal, with no legs (92a4-7, cf.

42c1-4):

(92a4) τοῖς δ'

ἄφρονεστάτοις αὐτῶν τούτων καὶ παντάπασιν πρὸς γῆν πᾶν τὸ σῶμα κατατεινομένοις ὡς οὐδὲν ἔτι ποδῶν χρείας οὔσης, ἄποδα αὐτὰ καὶ ἰλυσπώμενα ἐπὶ γῆς ἐγέννησαν.

[LOEB translation:] “And inasmuch as there was no longer any need of feet for the most foolish of these same creatures, which stretched with their whole body along the earth, the gods generated these footless and wriggling upon the earth.”

- (7) Lastly, if the judges determine that the soul made no use of reason or bodily perception, living a life in complete ignorance, then it becomes incarnate as a fish in its second

incarnation (92a7-c1, cf. 42c1-4):⁶⁹⁸

(92a7) τὸ δὲ

(b) τέταρτον γένος ἔνυδρον γέγονεν ἐκ τῶν μάλιστα ἀνοητοτάτων καὶ ἀμαθεστάτων, οὓς οὐδ' ἀναπνοῆς καθαρᾶς ἔτι ἤξιωσαν οἱ μεταπλάττοντες, ὡς τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὸ πλημμελείας πάσης ἀκαθάρτως ἐχόντων, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ λεπτῆς καὶ καθαρᾶς ἀναπνοῆς ἀέρος εἰς ὕδατος θολερὰν καὶ βαθεῖαν ἔωσαν ἀνάπνευσιν· ὅθεν ἰχθύων ἔθνος καὶ τὸ τῶν ὀστρέων συναπάντων τε ὅσα ἔνυδρα γέγονεν, δίκην ἀμαθίας ἐσχάτης ἐσχάτας οἰκήτε ὅσα ἔνυδρα γέγονεν, δίκην ἀμαθίας ἐσχάτης ἐσχάτας οἰκή-
(c) σεις εἰληχότων.

⁶⁹⁸ Campbell (2000): 159-162; Johansen (2004): 187; cf. Clegg (1977): 108.

[LOEB translation:] “And the fourth kind, which lives in the water, came from the most utterly thoughtless and stupid of men, whom those that remoulded them deemed no longer worthy even of pure respiration, seeing that they were unclean of soul through utter wickedness; wherefore in place of air, for refined and pure respiring, they thrust them into water, there to respire its turbid depths. Thence have come into being the tribe of fishes and of shellfish and all creatures of the waters, which have for their portion the extremest of all abodes in requital for the extremity of their witlessness.”

(8) This process continues, apparently *ad infinitum*, until the soul has achieved its *telos* (42c4-d2, 44b8-c2, 89d2-92c3).

According to the *Timaios*, each soul experiences the same initial incarnation, in possession of the same knowledge. As the soul lives through this incarnation, it attempts to act in accordance with the knowledge it possesses, despite the limitations of embodiment. Some souls are able to succeed in this task, and upon the end of this incarnation, they return to their natural dwelling place, having attained their *telos*. Those souls that fail in this task, undergo a second incarnation corresponding to the extent to which they lived their initial incarnation in accordance with knowledge. In this way, according to *Timaios*, women and non-human animals came into existence, as these souls were no longer the same but possessed a degree of individuation precluding their undergoing of the same incarnation. This necessitates, according to *Timaios*, the creation of new bodies within which these more clearly individuated souls may become incarnate; hence, the existence of birds, fish, etc.

Subsequent to the second incarnation of the soul, the hierarchy *Timaios* introduces here to explain the creation of new mortal beings, is used to govern all subsequent incarnations of the soul (41e4-42d2, 92c1-3). In earlier dialogues, e.g. the *Phaidon* (see Chapter 3.5), the soul appeared to be an entity without creation, it having always existed. In the *Phaidon*, therefore, such a hierarchy was not possible, since the soul could not undergo an initial incarnation, since there was never a point in time in which the soul did not exist and experience incarnation. The *Timaios*, on the other hand, no longer adheres to this conception of the soul, but it now appears to be an entity created by the Demiourgos. As a created entity, there was a point in time in which the soul did not exist, and was not incarnate in a mortal body. This allows for the conceptual space within which a first incarnation

of the soul may exist, as well as that of a second. Were it not possible for either a first or a second incarnation to exist, then Timaios would no longer be able to explain how all perceptible living beings came into existence.

Having established the possibility for a first and a second incarnation, Timaios' hierarchy of incarnations functions akin to that in the *Phaidros* (see Chapter 3.7.2). It outlines an individual's position on the hierarchy, and the incarnations the soul must progress through in order to achieve its *telos*. If a soul is presently incarnate in the body of a male human being, then the soul is one progression from achieving its *telos*. If a soul is presently incarnate in the body of a fish, then the soul is six progressions from attaining its *telos*. Moreover, in contrast to the *Phaidros*, Timaios' hierarchy of incarnations governs the soul until it returns to its natural dwelling place (42c4-d2, 44b8-c2, 89d2-92c3).

The indefinite aspect of reincarnation in the *Timaios* responds to an issue raised in the *Phaidros*. In the *Phaidros*, the soul becomes incarnate for a series of ten incarnations, each of one thousand years (see Chapter 3.7.2), imposing a time restriction on the soul attaining its *telos*. Subsequent to this period of incarnation, Sokrates gave no explanation as to the fate of those souls that failed to attain their *telos*. Moreover, though it is nominally able for all souls to attain their *telos* during this time, in practice it is impossible for the soul that becomes incarnate as the tyrant, for example, achieving its *telos* in the requisite time.⁶⁹⁹ The *Timaios* responds to this issue by doing away with time restrictions, and positing that reincarnation governs the soul until it has achieved its *telos*, thereby securing the notion that the soul has a *telos*, and that to achieve this *telos*, the soul must live a life of knowledge; the philosophical life, the Sokratic life.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁹ Indeed, the *Timaios* appears to suggest that the incurable no longer exist, but remain in the cycle indefinitely until they have achieved the *telos*. Moreover, the need for four types of living being in the universe to make it akin to its eternal model, suggests that some souls must remain constantly in the cycle of reincarnation, lest there be no more souls available for incarnation in mortal body, and so the number of living beings in the universe no longer be four, in accordance with the eternal model (cf. Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8).

⁷⁰⁰ Clegg (1977): 167-169; Irwin (1977): 91-92; White (1979): 30; Hare (1982): 20; Morgan (1990): 69; Baxter (1992): 105; Kraut (1992): 9-10; Morgan (1992): 235; Kahn (1996): 51-52, 66-67, 366-367, 383; Rice (1998):

(3.9) Conclusion

In the conclusion for Chapter 1 (Chapter 1.5), I identified what I believe to be Plato's definitions of both life and death, urging the individual to opt for the immortal in the Platonic Wager, since this most accords with true existence. Then, in Chapter 2 (Chapter 2.12), I believe that he introduces the notion of a Hadean judgement of the soul, based upon the soul's position along the Knowledge-Ignorance spectrum. The knowledgeable soul, in this case, is analogous to the virtuous soul, the just soul, and the good soul; whereas the ignorant soul embodies the contrary – wickedness, injustice, and evil. In this way, Plato establishes a purpose for the embodied soul, a *telos*; arrive in Hades as close as possible to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge. To achieve this *telos*, I believe Plato encourages one to follow the Sokratic way of life – the life of a philosopher. This notion serves to reinforce further the belief that one must opt for the immortal in the Platonic Wager, since it prioritizes the possession of the immortal form of Knowledge familiar to other immortal entities only, e.g. the immortal soul. Only in choosing to believe in the existence of the soul's journey to Hades, and its subsequent judgement, does Plato believe that the individual can attain for the soul its *telos* and acquire Knowledge, thereby securing for oneself the greatest of rewards – assimilation to the divine.

A contemporary of Plato's, however, is by no means under obligation to accept the veracity of the above argumentation he offers. Indeed, a contemporary might proffer one of three theories in response:

(1) Protagorean relativism: this theory is most famously embodied in Protagoras' belief that

'Man is the measure of all things: of the things that are, that they are, of the things that are

108; Sayers (1999): 96, 118-119; Strange (1999): 415; Blondell (2002): 92; Bobonich (2002): 18-19, 22, 337-338; Sedley (2003): 95; Johansen (2004): 2-3, 22, 69, 200; Sheffield (2006): 146-147.

not, that they are not' (*Theaitetos* 151d-186e). Protagoras, in effect, denies the existence of an immortal and changeless form of Knowledge, (or indeed, the Forms altogether), positing instead that no individual's conception of the truth is any more valid or invalid than another's, such that 'What is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me' (DK 80A13, A14, A19, B1). For instance, were an individual to believe that murder is good, then according to Protagorean relativism, one must accept that this belief is true for that individual. In which case, no soul could fail to arrive in Hades in possession of the truth, since all of the soul's beliefs will be true for that soul. This serves to destroy the notion of a judgement, since the judges' beliefs will be no more or less valid than those of the soul itself.

(2) Gorgian nihilism: this theory is espoused in his work *Peri Physis* (DK 82b3). Here, his argument consists of the following: (i) Knowledge does not exist; (ii) If Knowledge does exist it cannot be known; (iii) If Knowledge exists, and can be known, it cannot be communicated; and (iv) If Knowledge exists, can be known, and can be communicated, it cannot be understood. This argument nullifies the idea of the Knowledge-Ignorance spectrum; the soul's *telos*, and the advantages of the Sokratic way of life. According to Gorgias: (i) an immortal and changeless form of Knowledge does not exist; (ii) if it did exist, it cannot be known; (iii) if it did exist, and can be known, it cannot be communicated; and (iv) if it did exist, can be known, and can be communicated, it cannot be understood. Thus, no soul will arrive in Hades having achieved its *telos*; and all souls, regardless of whether they lived the life of a philosopher or not, will never be judged worthy of reward (if, of course, it is even possible for the judges to possess this knowledge).

(3) Herakleitian flux: this theory is encapsulated by the saying that 'no man ever steps in the same river twice' (*Kratylos* 401d4f., 411b3ff., 416a10f., 436d7ff., 439d-440e), i.e. everything is in a constant state of change (flux); all things are constantly in a state of Becoming and never *is*. As with the above theories, this notion (whether it reflects the historical Herakleitos or not), nullifies the idea of an immortal and changeless form of Knowledge. If

everything is in a constant state of flux, then by the time an individual comes to know something, it will have changed, and invalidate the individual's knowledge of that thing, *ad infinitum*. No individual, therefore, can ever possess a true knowledge of anything.

Plato, in response to these potential criticisms, introduces the ideas of reincarnation and recollection, in the belief that (i) an immortal and changeless form of Knowledge exist; (ii) this Knowledge may be known; (iii) this Knowledge may be communicated; and (iv) this Knowledge may be understood.⁷⁰¹ Accordingly, Plato argues that:

- (a) The Forms – immortal and changeless Knowledge – exist.
- (b) Prior to incarnation, the soul exists in a disembodied state of existence – incorporeal, immaterial, and immortal – indicative of the divine, and close to the true reality of the Forms.⁷⁰²
- (c) In this initial disembodied state, the soul comes to know the Forms.
- (d) The soul then undergoes a transformation from the incorporeal to the corporeal, as it becomes incarnate in mortal body.
- (e) The disruption of this embodiment causes the soul to 'forget' its knowledge of the Forms.
- (f) The soul, however, does not forget completely, since the individual is able to recollect this knowledge, thereby ensuring that it is possible for true knowledge to be known; and if it can be known, the individual may utilize the bodily appendages, (e.g. the mouth and hands), to communicate this knowledge to others.⁷⁰³
- (g) Yet, this does not mean that the individual understands what they are recollecting, like the soul in Chapter 2.12 who acts in a just manner without knowing why.⁷⁰⁴
- (h) Only the philosopher, argues Plato, is able to recollect this knowledge with understanding.⁷⁰⁵

⁷⁰¹ Cf. Rowe (1984): 61; Kahn (2006): 119-122, 126-127.

⁷⁰² Cf. Clegg (1977): 48; Rowe (1984): 61.

⁷⁰³ Rowe (1984): 61.

⁷⁰⁴ Cf., for example, the soul in the *Politeia* 10.614b-621d that unknowingly chooses the life of the tyrant, despite having experienced one thousand years of reward, suggesting that the judges found it to be just (or at least more just than unjust), and therefore, relatively knowledgeable.

- (i) Thus, after the separation of the soul from the body (i.e. death); after the soul's judgement, and after its punishment or reward, it is only the philosopher's soul that escapes the cycle of reincarnation.
- (j) The philosopher's soul is that soul closest to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge; it is, for all intents and purposes, as close to changeless as it is possible for any entity within the universe to be. Consequently, it no longer experiences reincarnation, since this would constitute a great change, and the philosopher's soul no longer possesses the capacity for such change. The philosopher's soul has achieved the greatest of all rewards (its *telos*) – assimilation to the divine.⁷⁰⁶
- (k) Yet, there is another category of soul incapable of experiencing reincarnation – the 'incurable' soul. The incurable soul, like that of the philosopher, no longer experiences reincarnation, being close to changeless. In this case, however, the incurable soul exists closest to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance; in effect, the incurable soul may never achieve its *telos*.

The above conception of reincarnation serves to further reinforce the need for the individual to accept the seriousness of the Platonic Wager, and wager on the immortal, and follow the Sokratic way of life. In following the Sokratic way of life, the individual may achieve the greatest of all rewards – removal from the cycle of reincarnation, and assimilation to the divine. If, however, one wagers on the mortal, or chooses not to participate in the wager, then one risks existing close to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance. This individual, likewise, experiences removal from the cycle of reincarnation, but unlike the philosopher, not only will this individual fail to attain the greatest of rewards, but they will be incapable of ever achieving this reward. Their soul will exist forever close to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance, incapable of admitting any kind of knowledge, and so experiencing an eternity of fear and pain as their ignorance leads them to

⁷⁰⁵ Bobonich (2002): 19, 299, 301.

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. Papanoutsou (1971): *passim.*; Morgan (1990): 69-70; Weiss (1998): 34; Bobonich (2002): 22, 196.

consistently expect future evils. Plato urges the individual, therefore, to accept the Wager, to opt for the immortal, and live the philosophical way of life, so as to avoid this terrible fate.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰⁷ Burley (2016): 1.

Chapter 4 – Conclusion

In Chapter 2.1 this thesis argued that any examination of the Platonic conception of the afterlife cannot focus solely on the exposition of an eschatological narrative. Accordingly, a series of five questions were identified, in the belief that these particular questions shall offer the greatest insight into Plato's understanding of the afterlife. These five questions were:

- (1) What is it [i.e. the afterlife] like?
- (2) How is it possible?
- (3) How does one get there?
- (4) Is it worth it?
- (5) What is the point?

This thesis is now in a position to answer these series of questions; though these questions will be considered in the following series:

- (1) How is it [i.e. the afterlife] possible?
- (2) How does one get there?
- (3) What is it like?
- (4) Is it worth it?
- (5) What is the point?

(1) How is it [i.e. the afterlife] possible?

In order to answer this question, one must return to Chapter 1, and the definitions of both life and death. Here, (see further Chapter 1.4 and 1.3), Plato establishes that the individual is nothing more than the amalgam of body and soul; the body being mortal, corporeal, and physical, whilst the soul embodies the contrary – the immortal, incorporeal, and immaterial. This, in my opinion, leads to the existence of two definitions of life, and two of death; one pertaining to the mortal, the other to the

immortal. In order to answer the question of how the afterlife is possible, one must look to the immortal definition of both life and death.

The immortal understanding of life, according to Plato, consists of the following:

- (a) The immortal and changeless form of Life, as per the *Phaidon* (Chapters 1.3.5 and 1.4.5), cannot admit of Death itself, if it is to be immortal and changeless.
- (b) Thus, any entity that admits of this form of Life must likewise share in its inability to admit Death, i.e. any such entity is deathless.
- (c) The soul, according to Plato, is just such an immortal entity.
- (d) Of necessity, therefore, it must partake of the immortal and changeless form of Life.
- (e) In the *Timaios* (Chapters 1.3.8 and 1.4.8), Timaios argues that the soul was created by the Demiourgos using three ingredients; one of these ingredients being the 'divine' form of Being. In other words, the soul is composed of the immortal and changeless form of Being (or Life).
- (f) The soul, however, cannot be composed of Life alone, lest the soul correspond exactly to Life, such that the soul is Life (where this the case, an infinite regress would be caused).
- (g) Hence, the soul participates of Life, preventing it from admitting Death, but it is not exactly equivalent to Life.

The immortal understanding of death, meanwhile, adds the following corollary:

- (1) Just as the body is, by nature, an inanimate entity; so the soul is, by nature, an animate entity.
- (2) This means that the soul is immortal, and shares in the immortal and changeless form of Life, preventing it from participating in Death.⁷⁰⁸
- (3) The soul is, therefore, deathless.

⁷⁰⁸ Cf. the *Timaios* 41a-d, in which Timaios argues that the soul may, technically, partake of death given it is a created entity, but the Demiourgos chooses never to allow it.

(4) Thus, from the perspective of the soul, death results in nothing more than the resumption of the soul's original immortal nature.

Given that (a) Plato defines the individual as being the amalgam of body and soul; and (b) the above conceptions of life and death, then (c) it appears that the afterlife, according to Plato, exists of necessity. The soul is understood to be immortal; therefore, it can never partake of death or be destroyed. Consequently, when the individual experiences death (the separation of body and soul), the soul is not destroyed but continues to exist. The soul continues to exist somewhere not nowhere, and is understood to be both incorporeal and immaterial besides; nothing precludes, therefore, the existence of a likewise incorporeal and immaterial location, i.e. a place alike in nature to the soul.

Yet, Plato ascribes the characteristics of incorporeality and immateriality to more than just the soul, but to the divine also (as well as the Forms). In this case, Plato must, I believe, of necessity posit the existence of an incorporeal and immaterial location wherein the soul may dwell after its disembodiment, lest he deny the existence of the gods (if not also the Forms), and the soul itself, both of which he believes to be immaterial.⁷⁰⁹ If it were not possible for there to exist an incorporeal and immaterial location, then (i) where do the gods dwell; why can we not see them, and why do they not possess bodies (cf. *Phaidros* 245c-246e); and (ii) how can the soul be said to exist at all, in a state other than the material? Thus, Sokrates in the *Phaidon* (Chapter 2.8.4), and Timaios in the *Timaios* (Chapter 3.8), demonstrate that the earth, and the very universe itself, are macrocosms of the individual; they are living beings also that arise from the amalgam of body and soul; the mortal and immortal; the corporeal and incorporeal, and the material and immaterial. This provides the conceptual space within which an incorporeal and immaterial location, an afterlife, may exist.

(2) *How does one get there?*

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. Ferguson (1978): 115, 126; Strange (1999): 401-406; Johansen (2004): 16-17, 22 69, 92, 102; cf. Freeland (2006): 199-213.

Having established the existence of an incorporeal and immaterial location, Hades, how does the soul arrive at this location? First, in order for an entity to exist amongst the incorporeal and immaterial, so it must be like in nature, i.e. it must be itself incorporeal and immaterial. Therefore, the soul cannot travel to this location still in possession of a body, (it being unlike Hades in nature), but rather, it must travel in a disembodied state. This requires the soul travel to Hades only after its separation from the body – which living beings term ‘death’; hence, the name ‘afterlife’ possesses an inherent bodily bias.

Once the soul finds itself in its natural disembodied state of existence; it must navigate to the place of judgement, using the knowledge it has recollected alone (see Chapter 2.8). It is not necessary for the soul to have to journey to a place of judgement, since virtue of its separation from the body it exists, naturally, amongst the incorporeal; however, it is necessary for Plato to portray it thus, in my opinion, in order to emphasize the importance of the philosophical life, and the attainment of the soul’s *telos* (cf. Chapters 2.12 and 3.9). Hence, the soul that belongs to the philosopher, which exists close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge, navigates to the place of judgement with ease. On the other and, the contrary type of soul – the ignorant soul that exists close to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance – cannot find its way to the place of judgement. Such a soul did not follow the Sokratic way of life, and did nothing to assist in the furtherance of its *telos*. Consequently, Plato utilizes the notion of a guardian spirit (cf. Chapters 2.8.3 and 2.9.4); an agent of the divine, that forces the ignorant soul to the place of judgement, so as to maintain the perfect order and harmony that belongs to the truer realm of the incorporeal and the divine.

(3) What is it like?

Once the soul leaves the body, it does not travel immediately to Hades, but first it must arrive at a place of judgement. This place of judgement is located away from the rest of the disembodied souls, thereby creating an image of Hades as functioning akin to a human *polis*. Hades, in this sense,

functions as the *polis* itself, ruled in this particular instance by the philosopher-king, Plouton.⁷¹⁰ Plouton ensures that order and harmony is maintained within the *polis* of Hades.⁷¹¹ In order to do so, each incoming inhabitant of the *polis*, i.e. each soul, must be judged in order to discover their position along the Knowledge-Ignorance spectrum. The idea being that a soul close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge, will also be just, virtuous, and good, since they possess a knowledge of these things. On the other hand, the soul closest to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge, will likely be unjust, wicked, and bad, since they possess all but a total ignorance of the truth. Consequently, were a soul closer to Ignorance to inhabit the same place as a soul closer to Knowledge, it is possible that such an ignorant soul might spread their pollution to others, causing disorder and disharmony amongst the *polis*. Yet, since the realm of the incorporeal and immaterial is closer to the true reality of the Forms than the mortal realm, perfect order must exist there, as the judges and the gods exist, always, close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge.

The judges, therefore, serve to guard both the *polis* itself and the laws of said *polis*, ensuring that order and harmony is maintained by assigning each soul to its appropriate dwelling place. This is done by determining the extent to which a particular soul lies close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge. As put forth in Chapter 2.12, the judge's classification of the soul consists of the following:

- (a) If the soul is adjudged to be knowledgeable, then the judges determine that it lies closer to Knowledge than to Ignorance.
 - a. The judges then make a further distinction, determining whether the soul is that of a philosopher or not.
 - b. If the soul does not belong to a philosopher, then the judges adduce it belongs to an individual who was just, but who possessed no knowledge of why they were just,

⁷¹⁰ Plato generally refers to the location as Hades, and the god as Plouton.

⁷¹¹ Cf. *Gorgias* 523a-527e, and *Kratylos* 403aff.

e.g. the individual who acts just through habituation.⁷¹² In this case, the soul receives its appropriate reward, undergoing the kind of pleasure applicable to its understanding of the term. So, if the soul only understands pleasure in terms of the bodily, then it receives the bodily type of pleasure, defined as the anticipation of good things.

- c. If the soul does belong to a philosopher, then the judges adduce it belongs to an individual who was just, but who possessed a knowledge of why they were just. In this case, the soul lies close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge (though it is not exactly equivalent to it, lest an infinite regress be caused). As such, the philosopher's soul undergoes the kind of reward appropriate to its understanding of pleasure. So, if the soul, being a philosopher's soul, possess knowledge of 'true' pleasure, so it will receive the truest kind of pleasure, that relates to the immortal and the psychic, and assimilate to the divine (see further Chapter 3).

(b) If, however, the soul is adjudged unjust, then the judges determine that it lies closer to Ignorance than to Knowledge.

- a. The judges then make a further distinction, determining whether the soul is 'curable' or 'incurable.' This subsequent distinction is grounded on two of the so-called Socratic paradoxes: (i) no one desires what is evil; and (ii) no one errs willingly.⁷¹³
- b. If the soul belongs to an individual whose soul lies closer to the centre of the spectrum, than to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance, then it is classified as being 'curable.' The judges determine that this individual possessed an incorrect understanding of what-is-good, and so committed injustice through ignorance. Yet, their proximity to the centre of the spectrum, suggests they still

⁷¹² Irwin (1977): 93; Rice (19998): 21; Bobonich (2002): 57-58, 476.

⁷¹³ Irwin (1979): 143-147; Kahn (1996): 132.

possess the capacity to partake of Knowledge. Therefore, they must undergo a course of corrective punishment in order to instil in them a knowledge of what-is-good, in the belief that they will cease to commit injustice, once they are in possession of this knowledge. This punishment corresponds to the understanding of pain that the soul possesses. So, if the soul is 'curable' it will possess an understanding of pain that relates to the bodily, understood as being the anticipation of future evils.⁷¹⁴

- c. If the soul belongs to an individual whose soul lies closer to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance, then it is classified as being 'incurable.' The judges determine that such a soul's proximity to Ignorance signifies a lack of capacity to partake of Knowledge, since Ignorance itself can never partake of Knowledge itself. This kind of soul, therefore, will not benefit from any sort of corrective punishment, and so it must serve as a deterrent to others, so that they may not suffer the same fate. Accordingly, the 'incurable' soul undergoes that punishment appropriate to its understanding of pain, such that it experiences fear and an anticipation of future evils for the rest of eternity.⁷¹⁵

This establishes for the soul a purpose, a *telos*, to arrive in Hades as close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge as possible; such a *telos* being most achievable for the individual who lives the life of a philosopher – the Sokratic way of life.

(4) Is it worth it?

Question (3) above, establishes the existence of an apparent *telos* for the soul – to arrive in Hades as close to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge as possible. One, however, may counter in Gorgian fashion (See further Chapter 3.9) that (i) Knowledge does not exist; (ii) If Knowledge did exist, it cannot be known; (iii) If Knowledge did exist, and can be known, it cannot be communicated;

⁷¹⁴ Irwin (1979): 245-246; Taylor (1991): 90-91, 93, 96.

⁷¹⁵ Irwin (1979): 245-246; Taylor (1991): 90-91, 93, 96.

and (iv) If Knowledge did exist, can be known, and can be communicated, it cannot be understood.

This, and other such responses, e.g. Protagorean relativism, and Herakleitian flux, serve to nullify the existence of an immortal and changeless form of Knowledge, thereby rendering Plato's judgement of the soul (and the pursuit of the philosophical life) void, or at least no more or less valid than any other theory.

Plato, in response to such potential criticisms, introduces, I believe, the ideas of reincarnation and recollection; the belief that (i) an immortal and changeless form of Knowledge exist; (ii) this Knowledge may be known; (iii) this Knowledge may be communicated; and (iv) this Knowledge may be understood.⁷¹⁶ Accordingly, Plato argues that:

- (a) The Forms – immortal and changeless Knowledge – exist.
- (b) Prior to incarnation, the soul exists in a disembodied state of existence – incorporeal, immaterial, and immortal – indicative of the divine, and close to the true reality of the Forms.⁷¹⁷
- (c) In this initial disembodied state, the soul comes to know the Forms.
- (d) The soul then undergoes a transformation from the incorporeal to the corporeal, as it becomes incarnate in mortal body.
- (e) The disruption of this embodiment causes the soul to 'forget' its knowledge of the Forms.
- (f) The soul, however, does not forget completely, since the individual is able to recollect this knowledge, thereby ensuring that it is possible for true knowledge to be known; and if it can be known, the individual may utilize the bodily appendages, (e.g. the mouth and hands), to communicate this knowledge to others.⁷¹⁸

⁷¹⁶ Cf. Rowe (1984): 61; Kahn (2006): 119-122, 126-127.

⁷¹⁷ Cf. Clegg (1977): 48; Rowe (1984): 61.

⁷¹⁸ Rowe (1984): 61.

- (g) Yet, this does not mean that the individual understands what they are recollecting, like the soul in Chapter 2.12 who acts in a just manner without knowing why.⁷¹⁹
- (h) Only the philosopher, argues Plato, is able to recollect this knowledge with understanding.⁷²⁰
- (i) Thus, after the separation of the soul from the body (i.e. death); after the soul's judgement, and after its punishment or reward, it is only the philosopher's soul that escapes the cycle of reincarnation.
- (j) The philosopher's soul is that soul closest to the immortal and changeless form of Knowledge; it is, for all intents and purposes, as close to changeless as it is possible for any entity within the universe to be. Consequently, it no longer experiences reincarnation, since this would constitute a great change, and the philosopher's soul no longer possesses the capacity for such change. The philosopher's soul has achieved the greatest of all rewards (its *telos*) – assimilation to the divine.⁷²¹
- (k) Yet, there is another category of soul incapable of experiencing reincarnation – the 'incurable' soul. The incurable soul, like that of the philosopher, no longer experiences reincarnation, being close to changeless. In this case, however, the incurable soul exists closest to the immortal and changeless form of Ignorance; in effect, the incurable soul may never achieve its *telos*.

In this way the only soul that achieves its *telos*, and attains the greatest of rewards – assimilation to the divine – is the soul that (i) possesses Knowledge; (ii) can communicate this Knowledge; and (iii) understands this Knowledge. I suggest this soul, for Plato, can only be the soul of the philosopher – the individual who lives the examined life, pursues the truth through the use of reason, eschews the desires of the body, and 'trains for death.'⁷²² It is in death that the philosopher achieves pre-

⁷¹⁹ Cf., for example, the soul in the *Politeia* 10.614b-621d that unknowingly chooses the life of the tyrant, despite having experienced one thousand years of reward, suggesting that the judges found it to be just (or at least more just than unjust), and therefore, relatively knowledgeable.

⁷²⁰ Bobonich (2002): 19, 299, 301.

⁷²¹ Cf. Papanoutsou (1971): *passim.*; Morgan (1990): 69-70; Weiss (1998): 34; Bobonich (2002): 22, 196.

⁷²² Cf. *Phaidon* 59c-69e.

eminence amongst all living beings; the pre-eminence denied to philosophers such as Sokrates in mortal life.

Plato begins his philosophical oeuvre with the *Apologia* of Sokrates; seeking, in my opinion, to defend not only Sokrates, but the Sokratic way of life. From this initial juncture, I think that Plato chooses to construct a defence of the Sokratic way of life (the philosophical life) that encompasses every facet of the philosophical whole, extends throughout his entire oeuvre, and is best encapsulated in his interrelated concepts of the afterlife and what I term “the Platonic Wager” (which in turn I base on Pascal’s Wager).⁷²³

According to my conception of the Platonic Wager:

- (i) Plato’s conception of the afterlife either is or is not; but one cannot determine with certainty which of the two alternatives is correct.⁷²⁴
- (ii) Thus one is forced into a playing a game, in which one must endorse a position before one’s death, at which point it is too late.
- (iii) Like Pascal’s Wager, this wager is not optional – one cannot choose not to participate in the game.⁷²⁵
- (iv) If one wagers upon the immortal, believing that Plato’s conception of the afterlife is true, and so lives the Sokratic way of life, then one will gain the greatest of rewards. If it is not true, then one has lost relatively little save a small amount of bodily pleasure.⁷²⁶
- (v) If, on the other hand, one wagers upon the mortal, believing this conception of the afterlife to be false, or refuses to participate in the game, then one will suffer a loss comparatively greater than one who wagers on its truthfulness (cf. the fate of the incurable soul, Chapter 2.12).

⁷²³ See also the Analogy of the Cave, (*Politeia* 7.514a-520a), which serves as a reaffirmation of the Platonic Wager.

⁷²⁴ Cf. *Gorgias* 526d-527e; *Menon* 86b-c; *Nomoi* 4.719c-420a, 4.722c-723d, 6.772e, 9.870d-e; *Phaidon* 114c-115a, *Politeia* 10.608b-614b.

⁷²⁵ Cf. Rice (1998): 12.

⁷²⁶ Cf. Rice (1998): 109.

- (vi) If this conception of the afterlife does prove to be false, then one neither loses nor gains anything; but if it proves to be true, then one loses everything.
- (vii) Probability/Reason thus suggests that one should endorse the existence of this conception of the afterlife, and live the philosophical life accordingly.
- (viii) Like Pascal, however, Plato is aware that some will continue to wager against the existence of this afterlife, and these individuals should endeavour to convince, or be convinced by a philosopher, that it is worthwhile to wager on the immortal.⁷²⁷

Ultimately it is irrelevant for Plato whether the afterlife ‘truly’ exists or not; what matters most is that one believe in the existence of the afterlife and the Platonic Wager regardless.⁷²⁸ In this way, one is encouraged to follow the path of the immortal; prioritize the wellbeing of the soul, and take up the Sokratic way of life.⁷²⁹ Once an individual starts down the path of the Sokratic life, the expectation is that such an individual will attain a level of knowledge and virtue that, as the Athenian argues in the *Nomoi*, it will no longer be necessary for them to defer to the Platonic Wager, as they will act in accordance with the good regardless, being both virtuous and knowledgeable in nature (cf. *Menon* 89a3).⁷³⁰

At the historical trial of the historical Sokrates, the Athenian jury found Sokrates’ defence of his way of life to be wanting; condemning him to the status of an impious and immoral criminal,⁷³¹ and conferring upon him the ignominy of a civic execution. Though Plato’s reconstruction of these events in the *Apologia* must result in the same outcome – Sokrates’ condemnation – Plato begins the construction of a defence of that will extend throughout all of the dialogues, and demonstrate the veracity and validity of the Sokratic way of life. Plato will demonstrate to the Athenians that their

⁷²⁷ Cf. *Gorgias* 526d-527e; *Menon* 86b-c; *Nomoi* 4.719c-420a, 4.722c-723d, 6.772e, 9.870d-e; *Phaidon* 114c-115a, *Politeia* 10.608b-614b. Cross and Woosley (1964): 288; Irwin (1979): 243, 246, 248, 250; Rowe (1984): 165; Rice (1998): 7, 29, 66; cf. Beversluis (2000): 5, 376, 382; Bobonich (2002): 57-58.

⁷²⁸ Cf. Burley (2016): 1.

⁷²⁹ White (1979): 52; Arieti (1991): 224, 242; Morgan (1992): 243; Kahn (1996): xiv-xv, 51-52, 116, 126; Rice (1998): 30; Rosen (1999): xlviii; Blondell (2002): 3, 39-40, 42, 92.

⁷³⁰ *Nomoi* 6.770b-771a, 9.853a1ff, 9.880d-e; Bobonich (1999): 373-403; cf. 57-58.

⁷³¹ Cf. Vlastos (1999b): 56-77.

condemnation of Sokrates was unjust; and, moreover, he will demonstrate that the Sokratic way of life is the only way of life that is worth living (*Apologia* 37e5-38a8).⁷³² This he achieves through the interrelated concepts of the afterlife and the Platonic Wager, which I believe he uses to exhort the individual to prioritize the immortal; to believe in the afterlife; attain the soul's *telos*, and gain the greatest of rewards – assimilation to the divine – a reward tacitly understood to have been the ultimate fate of Sokrates (cf. *Theaitetos* 176b1-2).⁷³³

Plato's defence of Sokrates in this manner proved to be both, in my opinion, both authoritative and influential. On the one hand, by the time of Diogenes Laertios (2.5.43), the unjust condemnation of Sokrates by the Athenians had become 'common knowledge'; indeed, this 'common knowledge' continues to predominate even in the modern day. On the other hand, Plato's construction of the afterlife, and the establishment of the Platonic Wager, became the new paradigm. He demonstrated not only the interrelatedness between different areas of philosophy, e.g. ethics and psychology; but further, the interrelatedness between theory and practice; philosophy and the way in which one should conduct one's life. In short, he offered a way for the individual to acquire truth and meaning in their life, in an ever changing and more connected world, perceived by Plato to be increasingly 'post-truth' in nature. Subsequently all conceptions of the afterlife (at least in Europe and the Middle East) either accepted (e.g. the Neoplatonists), reconceptualised (e.g. the Christians), or responded (e.g. the Epikoureans) to this Platonic exemplar.⁷³⁴ It is through the reconceptualization of Plato's exemplar by the Abrahamic religions (e.g. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) that a belief in an afterlife, encompassing some place of reward and punishment, came to dominate both popular and

⁷³² Irwin (1977): 93; Hare (1982): 20; Kraut (1992): 1, 6, 10, 12; Janaway (1995): 160; Kahn (1996): 383; Rice (1998): 51, 88; Sayers (1999): 10; Bobonich (2003): 78; Kraut (2008): 71.

⁷³³ Clegg (1977): 167-169; Nussbaum (1982): 107; Rowe (1984): 3; Brickhouse and Smith (1989): 266, 270-271; Reeve (1989): 179; Morgan (1990): 150-151; Arieti (1991): 224, 242; Baxter (1992): 12, 105; Morgan (1992): 232; Kahn (1996): 66, 97; Rice (1998): 65, 90, 104, 108-109; Bostock (1999): 411; Nehamas (1999): 171-191; Sayers (1999): 118-119; Sedley (1999): 309-328; Strange (1999): 415; Vlastos (1999): 60-61; Beversluis (2000): 1; Blondell (2002): 79-80, 86, 286n.148; Bobonich (2002): 19, 22; Sedley (2003): 95; Brickhouse and Smith (2004): 210; de Strycker and Slings (2005): 82-85; McPherran (2006): 244, 255-258. Cf. Weiss (1998): 3n.1, 16-17, 19, 23, 30, 32.

⁷³⁴ Such an investigation, though of interest, does not fit within the remit of the present thesis.

scientific discourse for over two thousand years; this belief facing serious challenge only in the age of modern science and atheism.⁷³⁵

⁷³⁵ Tracing this development, however, would require another thesis in itself. Cf. Bremmer (1983): 3; Sallis (1996): 62-63; Ahbel-Rappe (2006): 434-451.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

BNJ = Brill's New Jacoby, edited by Ian Worthington (Macquarie University), E.M. Carawan (Missouri State), K. Dowden (Birmingham), J. Engels (Köln), Andrew Erskine (Edinburgh), R. Fowler (Bristol), Nicholas Jones (Pittsburgh), et al.

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