

IV.—PLATO'S VIEW OF THE SOUL.

BY ERIC J. ROBERTS.

PLATO did not, like Aristotle, devote a special treatise to the investigation of the nature and functions of the soul. On this, as on many other subjects, his views have to be collected from more or less incidental references scattered throughout the dialogues: and, owing to the—we might almost call it romantic—method of exposition which he adopts, it is not always easy to determine what degree of importance he means us to attach to his statements. In attempting, therefore, to give systematic formulation to his beliefs regarding the soul we must take account of the differing standpoints from which he approaches the subject: as also, of the order in which the dialogues are most likely to have been written: for during the fifty years or so over which Plato's literary activity spread itself his views underwent considerable changes.

The bulk of the material with which we have to deal is contained in the *Phædo*, *Phædrus*, *Republic* (bks. v.-vii. and x.), *Timæus*, and *Laws*. But there are fragmentary passages in several of the other dialogues which must also be considered.

With regard to arrangement we shall adopt Lutoslawski's conclusions, according to which *Symposium* and *Phædo* are put after the Socratic dialogues in what he calls the "First Platonic Group," *Republic*, ii.-x., and *Phædrus* belong to the "Middle Platonic Group" extending to about 379 B.C., these are followed at some interval by *Theætetus* and *Parmenides*, while to Plato's latest period are to be assigned the *Sophist*, *Politicus*, *Philebus*, *Timæus*, and *Laws*, in the order mentioned: the two last-named, and probably also the *Philebus*, being written after 361 B.C.

Socrates in the *Phædrus* (270 C) is represented as maintaining that it is impossible "to comprehend satisfactorily the nature of the soul without comprehending the nature of the universe (τὸ ὅλον)". Similarly we may say that in order to a right understanding of Plato's conception of the soul it is necessary to consider it in relation to his scheme of exis-

tence. But first of all it is important to notice the twofold aspect under which the soul was regarded by Plato, *viz.* : as the subject of knowledge or of cognitive activity in general (*v.* especially *Meno*, *Phædo*, *Repub.*, *Theat.*) and as the principle of movement or of life (*Phædr.*, 245 ; *Repub.*, 611 ; *Laws*). For Plato meant by the soul that which exercises these functions, and only with respect to them can its place in the scheme of existence be determined. This way of regarding soul was in accord with current ideas (*cf.* *Arist. de An.*, I. 3). Throughout Greek literature the primary meaning of the word *ψυχή* was 'vital force' ; and if the conception—now pre-eminent—of soul as the centre or spring of intelligent personality had not previously received explicit formulation it was yet assuredly latent in popular as well as philosophical thought on the subject. The various experiences of thought, will, and emotion which we allude to by the term 'psychical activities' had—so far as they formed topic of reflexion—never been referred to aught but soul as their seat or subject. [It is to be noted, however, that in earlier times these activities had been attributed to the smoke-soul or blood-soul (*θυμός*), from which *ψυχή* was distinguished as—so to say—the 'vital spark' which was separated from the body at death (*v.* Homer, *e.g.*, and *cf.* Gomperz' *Greek Thinkers*, book ii., chap. v., § 7, and C. F. Keary on 'The Homeric Words for Soul' in *MIND*, O.S., vol. vi.). But as the only soul which Plato knew was *ψυχή* this distinction had no existence for him : although an interesting parallel to it may be observed in the *Timæus*, where he speaks of a mortal and an immortal soul.]

By Plato the two functions of motion and cognition are at first treated side by side. Beyond attributing them both to soul, he makes no attempt to establish a connexion between them. It is only later, in the *Timæus*, that he expressly represents them as modes of one activity (*cf.* also *Soph.*, 249). Throughout the dialogues, and especially in the earlier ones, chief prominence is given to the soul's cognitive function : and in this connexion Plato lays stress upon the radical difference of nature that obtains between the soul and the body. This antithesis was prevalent in Orphic doctrine and had become rooted in common belief. Even those nature-philosophers whose monism required them to venture an explanation of soul in physical terms, and who did not recognise cognitive activity as its main characteristic, had still perceived the need for distinguishing soul from the rest of the universe as completely as their main postulates would allow. (Anaximenes, for instance, held *ψυχή* to consist, like *σῶμα*,

of the all-constituting $\acute{\alpha}\eta\rho$; but $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ was the most rarefied form of $\acute{\alpha}\eta\rho$, whereas body was thick and condensed.)

But by Plato this antithesis is sharpened into a dualism corresponding to, and finding confirmation in, the dualism of his ontological scheme. The ideal of knowledge which, under the influence mainly of Eleatic and Socratic teaching, he had been led to form, required him to conceive of the objects of knowledge as fixed and unchangeable, and as on this account essentially different from the ceaseless flow of particulars perceptible by the senses. Knowledge for him consisted in the apprehension of truth, i.e. of true being, of absolute reality (*Phædo*, 65 sqq. ; *Repub.*, 585 C, 508-509 ; *Theat.*, 186) : for, as Lotze points out (*Logic*, bk. iii., chap. ii.), he drew no distinction between the true and the real, between the valid and the existent. The real, then, being characterised as changeless and consequently incorporeal, the changing objects of perception were relatively unreal. Existence was divided into two classes—on the one hand the world of true Being (*οὐσία*), consisting of Ideas, the objects of knowledge (*Repub.*, 477), and on the other hand the realm of Becoming or generation (*γένεσις*), with which opinion based on sense-perception was concerned. There is reason to suppose that this distinction was never really abandoned by Plato, although he qualifies and supplements it in various ways. It is maintained in the *Philebus* (59 A) as of equal authority with the fourfold scheme there introduced, and it is reaffirmed very definitely in the *Timæus* (27 E, 51-2 ; cf. also *Laws*, 894 A).

The body, Plato teaches, evidently belongs to the world of generation, but the soul is 'like' or 'akin to' the Ideas. The precise nature of this relationship or affinity (*ξυγγενεία*) between the Soul and Ideas he does not define ; what he is desirous of emphasising is the fact that there is a relationship of some kind. For he holds that without it knowledge would be impossible. Affinity is the condition 'in virtue of' which the soul 'contemplates' or 'apprehends' true being (*Repub.*, 490). Now, inasmuch as this activity of apprehension or cognition could likewise be exercised with regard to the changeable, we might suppose that in this case also affinity must be postulated. Alcmaeon, Empedocles, Diogenes of Apollonia, Democritus had—each in his own fashion—made some such hypothesis the basis of their respective theories of sense-perception. Plato, however, influenced manifestly by ethical as well as ontological considerations, tends to deny that there is any essential relationship between the soul and the objects of sense. All intercourse with them, he held, vitiated the soul (*v.* especially *Phædo passim*).

For truth and the Good were to be regarded as one, and knowledge *pro tanto* as identical with virtue. What was in antithesis to knowledge was therefore in antithesis to virtue, and consequently the soul could not in its true nature be connected with the world of generation.

Cognitive activity as such was the same whatever might be the nature of the objects towards which it was directed, and the soul was its single subject. But the conditions under which the activity could be exercised, and the results it could attain, differed according to the different character of the objects dealt with. In apprehending sensible objects the soul had to act "through the bodily faculties," "the organs of sense"; whereas it was capable of contemplating the Ideas "through itself" immediately (*Theat.*, 185 E, *cf. Phædo*). What resulted was in the one case sense-perception, in the other knowledge; and these results were regarded by Plato as so radically distinct from one another that he was constrained to postulate a similar antithesis between the processes employed in reaching them. He came to regard these as two distinct activities, assigning to them the names of Sense (*αἰσθησις*) and Reason (*νοῦς*) respectively, and referring them each to a different part (*μέρος*) of the soul (*Repub.*, 532, and *cf.* 490, 611). Such references are of course metaphorical, for Plato would not have admitted that the soul consisted of concrete divisible substance. The point on which he is concerned chiefly to insist is not so much the separateness of the parts as the difference in value between the two employments of the soul's cognitive activity. It is the character of the object, ideal or phenomenal as the case may be, that alone gives to the function exercised upon it specific character and, in a teleological reference, determines its value (*cf. Repub.*, 524 B). And this is but to say, in other words, that Plato's doctrine of psychical activity is "epistemological rather than psychological" (Adamson), the epistemology moreover being dominated by ethical interests. He was reluctant to admit that activities concerned with two fundamentally opposite orders of objects, and giving rise to results ethically disparate, could yet be one in kind.

Plato certainly has to admit that in so far as the soul deals with sensible objects it is brought into kinship with them; but he holds that in so occupying itself it is untrue to its nature, it is turning its activity in the wrong direction (*Repub.*, 518). When it acts according to its true nature it concerns itself exclusively with the eternal realities, because of its affinity with them (*Phædo*, 79; *Repub.*, 611). "To understand its real nature we must fix our attention on one

part of it exclusively . . . on its love of wisdom" (*Repub.*, 611), and 'wisdom' is that state of the soul in which it "deals with" or "apprehends"—"of its own self," and not through the senses—"the pure and eternal and immortal and unchangeable" to which it is akin (*Phædo*, 79).

But the relationship which is denied so far as the soul's cognitive activity is concerned has to be admitted with respect to its function of movement. As the principle of self-motion (*Phædrus*, 245); or of life (*Phædo*, 105 C, and *cf. Laws*, 895, where life and self-moving power are identified), the soul is undeniably connected with the world of generation as the "source and beginning" of the motion which characterises everything belonging to that world. It does not seem likely that in the *Phædrus* Plato is using the conception—which appears in later dialogues—of a universal soul. He probably means that the kind of motion that is to be attributed to soul must be regarded as more original in character than that which is manifested in external nature. The latter kind of motion, he held, must in every case be due in the first instance to motion in a soul, otherwise it would be quite inexplicable. Beyond speaking of it as self-originated Plato does not tell us what is the nature of the soul's motion, nor distinguish it from the mechanical motion which he considers to be dependent upon it. We might suppose that he had the phenomena of volition in view did we not know that he included will-power in reason (*Repub.*, 441 E, *v. Lutoslawski, Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 278), and that at this stage he regarded reason as incompatible with change.

According to Plato's doctrine, then, the soul possesses two quite distinct but equally essential characteristics—cognition and motion, of which the former connects it with the world of eternal reality, the latter with the world of ceaseless change. At the same time the soul has an identity of its own and is not absolutely merged in either world. It possesses reason in common with the Ideas, motion in common with the world of generation; but this very fact that it presents features which unite it to the two opposite realms of existence at once is proof that its nature is to be distinguished from both. A certain degree of difference is implied also in the term 'kinship' (*συγγενεία*) which is used to express the connexion between the soul and Ideas: for kinship is not predicable where there is no differentiation. And from the terms in which the functions of the soul are described a more definite inference can be drawn. For on the one hand as 'apprehending' or 'contemplating'

the Ideas the soul must be considered to occupy a lower plane of existence than they do, and on the other hand as the self-moving, while it is connected with the world of generation, it is yet superior to all the other elements and objects of that world, it does not take its rise in the same fashion as they do (*Phædr.*, 245). "All that is soul presides over all that is without soul" (246 C, and *cf. Laws*, 892, and 966).

We conclude then, with respect to the earlier form of Plato's theory, that soul must be regarded as holding a position intermediate between the two realms of existence (*cf. Zeller, Plato*, ch. vii., n. 136), and as reproducing in itself the antithesis which they present. This conclusion is not, however, one which we need suppose Plato himself to have recognised as necessary. For in the dialogues to which we have been referring it is with the ethics rather than with the ontology of the soul that he is primarily concerned. Thus in the *Phædo* stress is laid upon the soul's affinity to the Ideas in order to demonstrate its immortality, and this with a view to showing that it is a philosopher's duty to be unperturbed in prospect of death. So too in the *Republic*, whenever the constitution and destiny of the soul are discussed it is with reference to the central question as to what sort of life human beings ought to live. In the *Phædrus* myth also the ethical note is prominent. The truth seems to be that when Plato wrote these dialogues he was not aware of any problem as regards the soul's ontological status. So far as concerns his Theory of Being the soul was an unexamined presupposition. From an epistemological standpoint he enlarges upon its necessary affinity to the Ideas, and in the domain of physics he postulates its existence as the originator of motion. But while he thus discusses its position with reference to each of the two terms in his scheme of existence he does not seem to realise that no place in that scheme is actually provided for the soul itself. As already shown, it cannot, for ethical reasons, be reckoned among the particulars of the world of generation: and even if, like them, it could be said to have in the eternal world an Idea corresponding to it, it could not, like them, be said to depend for its existence upon its Idea. Nor can it, on the other hand, hold rank as itself an Idea: for not only does it possess the attribute of motion, while the Ideas are unchanging, the very fact that it knows them is sufficient to distinguish it from them. Although it is not by any means certain that, as Mr. Archer Hind maintains (note to *Phædo*, 105), Plato would have been ready to posit an Idea of soul, at the

same time had he done so we should not have reason to regard the metaphysical entity thus created as in any degree more "monstrous" than the rest of its tribe. For, on Plato's premisses, if the soul were known, then as object of knowledge to itself it must necessarily be an Idea. Of course as Idea it would be, like the other Ideas, distinct from the soul as knowing subject. But unless there were an Idea of soul how could soul be known, the Ideas being by hypothesis the only objects of knowledge? Since, however, we have no ground for supposing that Plato did postulate an Idea of soul, we must suppose the problem regarding the soul's knowledge of itself to be among those which he overlooked.

This anomalous position of soul as excluded from the scheme of existence may be taken, then, as pointing to certain defects of that scheme—defects which the very conception of soul might have helped to remedy. For if Plato could maintain the unity of soul in spite of its supposed opposite characteristics, then surely the respective spheres of existence to which in virtue of these characteristics it bore relation were not so absolutely disparate in nature as he represented them to be. The recognition that soul was related to both spheres might have led to the discovery that only for soul were they separated, that only for soul were they at all, that soul was indeed the reality of both, in other words that they had no existence save as elements in a unitary experience. How far Plato moved in the direction of such a discovery remains to be seen.

In truth the Ideal theory as first presented had an abstractness and oneness which prevented it from being an adequate solution of the problem it was framed to meet. The twin facts of knowledge and opinion called for explanation. The Ideas were conceived of as having the necessary characteristics of objects of knowledge, and over against these were set the particulars of sense as sufficiently accounting for the admitted relativity and incertitude of perceptive opinion. But an explanation to be satisfactory should be self-consistent, and if the Ideas were to be regarded as truly real and all-explanatory it should have been possible to explain from them the existence and nature of the things of sense, as also the relation of these to the Ideas. Change and the unchanging, however, are in radical contradiction to one another and the latter can never be assumed as principle of explanation for the former; and, as for the connexion between the two, Plato himself finds it necessary, in the *Parmenides*, to reject as illogical the various metaphors (*παρουσία, κοινωνία, μίθεξις, μίμησις, ὁμοίωσις*) by which he had

endeavoured to represent it. The soul, again, as we have seen, was a third kind of entity of which no explanation was afforded, although it, no less than the Ideas themselves, was an essential presupposition of knowledge.

Evidently there was need for a sort of 'Copernican change,' in the Kantian sense of the expression, if any approach to a more adequate theory were to be made. And this is in fact what we find taking place in the later dialogues. The Ideas by degrees vacate their position of transcendence and are seen to be dependent upon soul. Thus, as Lutoslawski puts it (*loc. cit.*, p. 413), "the centre of gravity of the Platonic system" changes, and it is to soul, as the source at once of the Ideas and of motion, that supreme reality is accorded.

Of necessity there is involved in this change much more than a mere re-adjustment of the factors that were arrived at as the result of the original analysis. A new investigation is undertaken, and the scheme of existence is gradually reconstructed, increasing attention being given to the subjective factor. For all that, however, Plato's fundamental dualism continually reappears. Although in one regard the soul may be considered as principle of intermediation between the intelligible and the sensible, yet the abstract opposition between these two realms is still maintained. And, in addition to this, the new prominence given to the soul as the subjective factor in knowledge brings to light a new dualism, *viz.*, that between the soul on the one hand and its antithetically related objects on the other. Moreover the references to two kinds of soul point to a yet further dualism within the subjective sphere itself, corresponding to the dualism originally postulated between the two classes of the objective world.

The beginnings of this reconstructive process are discoverable in the *Theatetus* and *Parmenides*. In the former of these two dialogues the objects of knowledge are represented rather as categories—*i.e.* subjective notions—of state and relation than as self-existent ideas, and the soul's cognitive function undergoes a closer analysis than any that is to be found in the earlier dialogues. Again, whereas in the earlier dialogues the soul in its progress towards a knowledge of the Ideas was supposed to use as a stimulus the relations which sense-objects disclosed to it (*Phædo*, 76 ff.; *Repub.*, 523), in the *Theatetus* those relations are represented as themselves objects of knowledge, discoverable not by means of the senses but by the activity of judgment or comparison proper to Soul alone (185 *sq.*). Further, certain qualities of relation (*e.g.* magnitude and number) which in the *Phædo* (100 *sq.*) were

represented as pertaining to objects in consequence of the immanence of the relevant Ideas are in the *Theatetus* shown to be the outcome of activity or change (155). Inasmuch, then, as soul is the source of change, it is perhaps possible to detect here an indication of the process by which soul is being exalted to the position of supremacy previously held by the Ideas.

In all this there is no explicit renunciation of the Ideal scheme, for the *Theatetus* is less directly metaphysical than either the *Phædo* or the *Republic*. Nor is there any attempt to determine the kind of existence to be attributed to the soul. Such psychology as the *Theatetus* contains is introduced subordinately to the epistemological discussion, just as the psychology of the *Phædo* and the *Republic* is subordinate to ethics. But the expressions of uncertainty used (184 D) regarding the soul may indicate that in giving closer attention to its function Plato had begun to be aware of problems regarding its nature. [The separate senses "manifestly unite into one nature (*ἰδέα*), call it the soul or what you will" (*Theat.*, 184 D).]

In the *Parmenides* the absolute separation of Ideas and particulars is definitely rejected, although scarcely any mention is made of the soul. In the course of the argument the suggestion is put forward that the Ideas may be conceived of as thoughts in the soul, or, again, as fixed types in nature. Neither suggestion is repudiated, but both are shown to be incompatible with the former hypothesis of transcendent Ideas.

In the *Sophist*, from the familiar assumption that that which is truly real is the object of knowledge, it is argued that to the truly real belongs the capacity of being affected, i.e. motion, for knowledge is admittedly activity. Again, motion and life and soul and mind are mutually concomitant and it cannot be imagined that the highest reality is devoid of any of them (248-249). Thus we see that the fact of knowledge remains fundamental for Plato, and that he is allowing increasing importance to its presuppositions on the subjective side. The activity which knows, life in its aspect as mind or soul, this is what he now recognises as the supreme reality. In this way the dualism between the real and the changing has been departed from.

In the *Philebus* existence is divided anew into four classes: (1) the limit, (2) the unlimited, (3) the mixed that is generated out of these two as its elements, and (4) the cause of the mixture. It is probably beside the mark to suppose that any one of these classes corresponds to the

Ideas of the earlier scheme. By the 'mixed' Plato seems to have meant the realm of concrete existence, all that is the determinate outcome of *γένεσις* (26 E), while the limit and the unlimited represent respectively the formal and material elements of that realm discoverable by logical analysis. We may note here a certain similarity to the Kantian account of experience as a combination of sense-manifold and logical forms. But Plato, like Kant, finds that besides these a further factor is necessary to make experience possible—a factor which he names the agent or cause and which he identifies with mind or wisdom. Kant named this factor the Ego or unity of apperception, and represented experience to be the outcome of its synthesising activity. He distinguished, however, between the empirical and the transcendental Ego, the one being a psychological phenomenon the other a logical abstraction. In somewhat similar fashion, Plato, having postulated soul as that in which mind and wisdom are contained, argues from the soul which acts as organising principle in the individual to a supreme soul in the universe, from which the souls of individuals derive their being (*Philebus*, 30 A).

It is to be observed that while four classes of existence are thus distinguished the classes are far from being co-ordinate with one another. The first two have place only as elements in the third; and the main division would appear to be that between the mixed and its cause the soul. The fact that there is present in *τὸ μικτόν* the element of determinateness—*τὸ πέρας*—explains how it is possible for *τὸ μικτόν* to become object of cognition to the soul. It is to be noted, however, that Plato still retains the antithesis between *γένεσις* and *οὐσία*, the latter being characterised as "eternal and unchangeable and unmixed" (59) and as the highest object of cognition. The real advance, then, that he has made in this dialogue consists in that besides according supremacy to the soul he has recognised the importance of the world of *γένεσις* and shown in what way it may be considered as to some extent intelligible. In place of a scheme in which Ideas and particulars are set over against one another and the soul is almost completely disregarded, we have a scheme in which the soul occupies a position of supremacy, while objects are recognised to be dependent upon it and to be essentially complex in character.

The fact that in the "fanciful" classification of human goods at the end of the dialogue *νοῦς* is assigned only the third place need not blind us to the real supremacy that from the metaphysical point of view is accorded to the soul as

constitutive alike of individual experience and of universal reality. For it is to be remembered that Plato did not, like Kant, assume experience and reality to be radically discrepant with one another. The same postulates were regarded by him as at once the logical conditions of experience and the constitutive elements of reality. So that in its perfected form experience would coincide with reality. Hence while Kant taught that all experience was for a thinking subject, for mind, but that reality was "for itself," and in no way accessible to human knowledge, Plato represented experience and reality as alike due to the causal activity of soul.

This conception of the soul as causal principle in the universe may reasonably be regarded as the outcome of two notions which appeared in the earlier dialogues, *viz.*: the notions (1) of mind as the final cause of all things (which Anaxagoras had enunciated but had failed to develop) (*cf. Phædo*, 97 *sqq.*), and (2) of the soul as the originator of motion (which Plato probably derived from Alcmaeon). These two notions taken together lead by a natural extension to the notion of a universal soul sustaining and ordering all things.

In the professedly mythical account of creation given in the *Timæus* this universalised conception of soul reappears as a teleological postulate. We are told that the universe—*i.e.* the world of generation regarded in its entirety—could not be, as it is, the best possible had not the creator implanted in it soul. Only on the assumption that soul is everywhere present can the orderly motion which characterises the universe be explained. The world as ζῶον is ἔμψυχον, and in being ἔμψυχον it is also ἐνοον—instinct with reason (*Tim.*, 30 B): for if soul appertains to body no less does reason appertain to soul. And to this fact, evidently, is to be traced the orderliness, the rationality, of the world's motion, since all motion due to soul must necessarily take place under the guidance of reason—the activity which contemplates the Ideas.

In accordance with this conception of it as combining in itself the activities of motion and of cognition, the world-soul is described as of composite formation, a blend of all modes of existence and activity—Ideal or archetypal ("undivided") and phenomenal ("divided") alike (*Tim.*, 34-35). By the "indivisible" elements of Being, and of the Same and the Other, which enter into soul Plato would seem to indicate that, whether regarded from the point of view of existence or of activity, of its nature or of its function, the soul shares in absolute reality; and by the "divided" elements—κατὰ τὰ σώματα—of these three—Being, the Same, and

the Other—he would seem to indicate that soul is as it were distributed throughout the multiplicity of the generated, appertaining in some way to, or being manifested in every changing object, and always carrying with it its motions of the Same and of the Other—the activities of thought and perception. For every portion into which soul is divided contains within it all the three components, is homogeneous with the whole (*cf. Phædo*, 93 A-94 B, “the nature of all souls is to be equally souls”).

One result of admitting corporeal (“divided”) existence as a constitutive element of soul is that for the soul to apprehend the sensible, and so generate opinion, is no longer regarded as an illegitimate use of its activity. The “*λόγος*” of the soul—what it declares to itself—“is true alike whether it deal with the Same or with the Other” (*Tim.*, 37). Opinions and beliefs, as well as knowledge, have truth (*ibid.*); although, presumably, in the case of the former the truth is only relatively absolute, holding only of the sensible.

We may note also that the soul’s cognitive and motor functions having been thus combined tend, further, to become identified. For in attributing alike to soul and to what is physical (or corporeal, τὸ σωματοειδές, *Tim.*, 36 D) the motions of Same and of Other, Plato would appear to represent the cognitive activity of soul, in both its aspects, as cognate with physical motion. In this way there would seem to be indicated a certain unity of nature between the soul and the world of generation, making explicable the relation of causality which had been asserted in the *Philebus*.

A similar conception prevails in the *Laws*, where the universality of soul and its priority to all the generated is repeatedly emphasised. Soul, we are told, is “the primeval element” (892 B); it is “the first origin and moving power of all that is, or has become, or will be, and their contraries,” and is “prior to” and “ruler of” the body (896). In 967 B it is argued that if the sun and the stars “had been things without soul, and had no mind, they could never have moved with a numerical exactness so wonderful”. The net purport, then, of Plato’s much-bruited doctrine of a ‘world-soul’ we may conclude to be as follows, *viz.*, that the whole universe must in some way be accredited with soul because its motion is rational, *i.e.* to say, exhibits calculable features (*cf. Laws*, 898).

Logically, as we have seen, the conception of the soul of the universe is derived from that of the human soul. The human soul was postulated in order to account for the facts of knowledge and movement, and the universal soul was

assumed as the source of human souls and as the ground and explanation of the intelligibility of existences and of the orderly movement of the heavenly bodies. Plato, however, unaware that he is dealing with abstractions, reverses the logical relation and represents the human soul as somehow dependent upon the universal soul. In the *Philebus* the soul of the universe is spoken of—vaguely enough—as the source of the human soul, the latter being a derived copy of the former. Doubtless the only way in which the distinction could be more expressly determined was by resorting to more definite metaphors, as is done in the *Timæus*. There the human soul is represented as a part of the world-soul enclosed—so to speak—in a mortal body. It is said to be composed of the same elements as the world-soul but in a less pure state (41 D). Thus the world-soul would appear to be considered as an ideal of which human souls are imperfect realisations, just as in the world of objects the Ideas rank as ideals which are imperfectly represented by the generated particulars.

In the *Timæus* we are further told (43 sq.) that when the soul enters into combination with the body the elements which have affinity with the body tend to preponderate, and their motions to become violent and irregular. Indeed the opposition to the true divine nature of the soul is so marked as to make it necessary to suppose that a second soul, a "mortal soul," is built into the trunk of the body: the "immortal soul" residing in the head, so as to escape pollution as far as possible, and to secure to *vous* its rightful supremacy (*Tim.*, 69 C, and 90). The mortal soul, again, is divided into a nobler and a baser part. Thus three forms or kinds (*eîden*) of soul dwell in us, "in a threefold manner" (*τριχῆ*) (*Tim.*, 89 E).

This is evidently a re-statement of what had already appeared in the *Republic* as to the three forms of activity—Reason, Spirit and Appetite—of the soul, and had been indicated in the *Phædrus* by the figure of the charioteer and the two steeds. Obviously this attribution of triplicity to the human soul is made from an ethical standpoint, and is an attempt to give explanatory formulation to the various and apparently conflicting tendencies which soul-activity manifests in the experience of every individual. Except in the *Phædrus*—and even there the ignoble horse belongs to the 'human' soul and not to the 'divine'—it is to be noted that the 'three parts' are only attributed to souls in combination with earthly bodies. This is an indication that they are not thought of actually as 'parts,' but merely represent modes of

the soul's activity, of which those that exhibit antagonism to what is rational are conceived not to appertain to soul in its true nature but to be a development altogether incidental to its manifestation in human life. The main division, however, as Mr. Archer Hind points out (Introduction to *Phædo*, p. 27), is "dual not triple," and is influenced by—or rather is another expression of—the broad antithesis between the absolute and the imperfect which runs through all Plato's thinking. Having cleft existence asunder into that which is known by reason alone and that which is apprehended by sense it is only natural that he should make a like cleavage in the human soul between pure intelligence or reason and every sense-tainted activity. Nor is it surprising that he should further find it necessary to suppose (*Laws*, 896) that there are two world-souls—one the author of good and the other of evil.

But although this dualism remained with Plato to the end there are many indications of attempts to qualify its absoluteness. The movement towards unity apparent in his ontological theory reflects itself in his psychology—whether with reference to ethics or to the process of knowledge. Although the general tendency of his ethics was towards an ascetic intellectualism, consequent upon the view which regarded reason, in abstraction from sense-activity, as the essential characteristic of soul; yet his theory of education shows that he conceived of the relation between the soul and the sensible universe in no merely negative fashion. In the *Phædo* he teaches that the body is a hindrance to the soul, preventing it from reaching pure truth; but at the same time he admits the part played by sense-perception in conveying to the soul suggestions of those Ideal realities of which in its perfect state it had had cognisance. And in the *Republic*, where the Idea of the Good is represented as an organising principle in the universe and in knowledge, express and detailed recognition is accorded both to the value of habit in the formation of virtuous character and to the use of the sciences as stepping-stones towards the knowledge of the truth.

The immortality of the soul is frequently adverted to in the dialogues and was apparently one of Plato's most cherished convictions. In setting forth, in the *Phædrus*, "to investigate the truth with regard to the nature of the soul, both human and divine," Socrates begins by affirming that "every soul—soul as such—is immortal". From the argument adduced in support of this proposition it appears that by immortality is meant indestructibility—the soul can never

cease to exist and to exist as soul (*Phædr.*, 245 ; cf. *Repub.*, 611 A, "always existing and therefore immortal"; *Phædo*, 105-106, "immortal, indestructible, imperishable"; *Laws*, 966 D, "perpetual existence"). The proof turns upon the identification of soul with the power of self-motion. As the self-moved everything that moves is dependent upon it. Thus its continued existence is bound up with that of the whole created universe—were it destroyed "the whole heavens and all creation would collapse and come to a standstill" (*Phædr.*, 245). It is to be noted that the same argument involves as well that the soul always has existed as that it will always continue to exist. The myth thus prefaced indicates in pictorial fashion the nature of the successive manifestations through which souls may be supposed to pass. Its main purport is to explain and commend the soul's love of wisdom: and it is with this feature of soul that immortality (including pre-existence) is most fundamentally connected in Plato's thinking. This connexion is very prominent in the *Phædo*, where—although the argument has in the end to fall back upon a position very similar to that assumed in the proem to the *Phædrus*-myth—yet what is considered to afford the strongest presumption in favour of the soul's immortality is its close resemblance and affinity to the divine and eternal, as implied in its knowledge of the Ideas. Plato while regarding either line of proof—that from self-motion or that from knowledge—as valid, yet seems to have the impression that both are necessary. At the same time he can only add the one to the other, without establishing any real connexion between them. In fact the different proofs indicate that the word 'immortal' is used in two senses quite distinct from one another—although perhaps not definitely distinguished by Plato himself. As principle of life and motion soul takes its place—the supreme place, it is true—among the elements of the world of generation (*Laws*, 892). It is cognate with—while "in origin and excellence older than"—body (*Tim.*, 34 E). Accordingly the only immortality which self-motion proves is that of indestructibility or continued existence in time; and this—or something very like it—must be allowed to pertain to body as well as to soul. That which originates motion and that in which motion is originated must always co-exist. The difference is that soul never changes from itself (*οὐκ ἀπολείπον ἑαυτό*, *Phædr.*, 245): each soul retains its identity throughout its various manifestations, is the same part of the world-soul (cf. *Repub.*, 611 A, "the souls that exist must always be the same [in number]"). The combination of soul and body is broken up at

death ; but the soul can never be separated from itself. Soul in general and souls in particular alike abide. Whereas while the generation of bodies never ceases, while body in general—or, as Aristotle would say, the ' form ' of body—may thus be said to have immortality, it is the nature of particular bodies to perish, to be transmuted : they are in this reference mortal. Hence it is that the defilements of and additions to soul which arise when it enters the mortal frame are described as the " mortal soul," inasmuch as they share the fate of the body when at death the immortal soul is separated from it.

It is evident then that immortality in the sense of continued existence was conceived by Plato to appertain to *νοῦς* alone. Yet it is equally evident that such immortality was regarded by him as both ' individual ' and ' personal '. For he considered *νοῦς* to be the principle of personality, the essential self. In the *Laws* (959, and cf. 904 B) he countenances the belief that " that which makes each one of us to be what we are is only the soul," and it was his unwavering conviction that that which makes the soul to be what it is is only *νοῦς*, the principle of reason. What individual characteristics souls may retain when at the death of the body they are bereft of every feature that is contingent upon the conjunction of soul and body, Plato does not specify. All that we can legitimately infer is that souls would differ from one another according to the respective degrees of development to which—as instances of *νοῦς*—they had attained while inhabiting the body.

The other kind of immortality—that to which the soul approximates in virtue of its kinship with the Ideas—is qualitative rather than durational. The existence of the Ideas is eternal, *i.e.* timeless and self-explanatory. To this the human soul can never completely attain : soul and body as indestructible have an immortality in time, but it is distinctly stated that they are " not eternal " (*Laws*, 904), as their nature is never entirely and absolutely at one with reason. Still, the more the soul, by exercising her rational cognitive function upon the Ideas, brings herself into harmony with them the more nearly does she become immortal in this higher sense. " He whose heart has been set on the love of learning and on true wisdom, and has chiefly exercised this part of himself, this man must without fail have thoughts that are immortal and divine, if he lay hold upon truth ; and so far as it lies in human nature to possess immortality he lacks nothing thereof " (*Tim.*, 90, cf. *Sympos.*, 212 A). The soul shares in timelessness in proportion as

she lives the life of reason as opposed to that of mere unexamined impulse. Her soulhood can at no time be either increased or diminished—it is the nature of all souls to be equally and perpetually souls—*life* is with her a constant (*Phædo*, 93 A-94 B); but she can “change the place of her life,” the plane of her existence, according to that with which she has *κοινωνία* (*Laws*, 904, E): and upon this depends the degree of her approximation to true eternity.

Clearly this abstract Spinozistic view of the mind's eternity does not of itself involve the hypothesis of pre-existence. Strictly held, indeed, it precludes durational concepts altogether. If the Ideas are conceived of as essentially non-temporal existences then the kind of existence to which the soul can lay claim in virtue of its affinity with them must likewise be regarded as non-temporal, not subject to conditions of continuance in time, having neither past nor future. But it is to be remembered that while the soul is ‘akin to’ the Ideas its nature is never completely identified with theirs. It cannot attain but only approximate to their eternity; and such approximation it achieves *pari passu* with and by means of its knowledge of them. So, then, the soul's immortality rests upon the same conditions as those under which its knowledge of the Ideas is gained, conditions which Plato unequivocally represents as temporal. Thus his ultimate conception of immortality is to be regarded neither as exclusively durational nor as exclusively qualitative. Mere duration, as we have seen, the soul shares with the body. On the other hand, for the soul to have precisely the same kind of eternity as that which is attributed to the Ideas would be for it to forfeit its distinctive character of life. Hence Plato lays emphasis both on the endless prolongation of the soul's existence and on its quality, kind, or grade. He conceives of immortality as a life, a life of perpetual approximation towards Ideal ‘eternity’ or rationality, a life that is wrought out under temporal conditions while it progressively transcends them.

The soul's affinity to the Ideas was the basal condition apart from which any intercourse between it and them such as is involved in knowledge would have been impossible. But this affinity, while thus necessarily presupposed, did not in itself contain the explanation of how knowledge comes about. For knowledge was regarded by Plato as a process, requiring further explanation than any that could be given merely from the side of its objects. And, although he held that the soul might be prepared for its contemplation of the Ideas by exercising itself about the things of sense in which

they were imperfectly envisaged, yet he recognised that, for the actual transition from perception to true knowledge, the conditions must needs be other than sensuous. In order, then, to explain how the soul comes to know the Ideas ere yet it has escaped from its imprisonment in the body, he had recourse to the hypothesis that it knew them in a previous existence, before it became subject to that imprisonment. It is clear, however, that this hypothesis merely puts the difficulty a stage farther back chronologically, while from the logical standpoint it is rather a complication than a solution. The process of knowledge remains as mysterious as ever, no matter at what period of the soul's existence it is conceived of as taking place. And, if we suppose that in this life knowledge comes about by recollection, we are just as much in the dark as to the nature of recollection itself. Thus the doctrine of recollection or reminiscence, together with that of pre-existence which is involved in it, must be taken as indicating that, even with the aid of his far-reaching conception of the soul, Plato found it impossible to explain knowledge so long as he supposed that its objects were entirely different in nature from those of sense-perception.

The truth to which the various aspects of Plato's theory of knowledge seem to point, but which he does not appear to have grasped completely, is that of the unity of nature throughout all existences and all processes whether psychical or physical. It is this truth that receives partial expression in his insistence on the affinity between the soul and the Ideas and that may be supposed to underlie his—somewhat hazy—conception of the world-soul as the source at once of human souls and of their objects. Although Plato does not explicitly say so, yet there is nothing in his language that need prevent us from supposing that he would have been ready to regard the Ideas—metaphorically at least—as the thoughts of the world-soul, the results of its intellection. Had he done so, then, since he regarded the world-soul as the active informing principle of the entire universe and human souls as akin to it, he could have inferred that knowledge has its origin in the nature of souls, is a development of possibilities that are innate in them, and further that perception itself is but imperfectly developed knowledge. But such a view could only be worked out by one who like Aristotle had reached the idea of evolution. Some such view as this it is, doubtless, that causes the modern mind to find spatial metaphors more adequate than those of time for describing the nature of knowing. Thus when we make allusion to some one who excels in knowledge we speak of

the 'depth' and 'penetration' of his intellect. Or, if we do employ temporal categories with regard to those indications which Plato was attempting to interpret, we incline to think that their reference is to the future rather than to the past. What for Plato seemed to be recollections we speak of as premonitions: the inspired soul of to-day is prophetic rather than retrospective.