



“The Death of Socrates” (1787)



Ruins of the Athenian Jail

Defense of the Philosophical Life

- Failed in the *Apology*?
- Another chance before his friends (*Phaedo* 63b & e, 69e).
- “A man who has truly spent his life in philosophy is probably right to be of good cheer in the face of death.” (63e)



“A good man cannot be harmed,
either in life or in death.”
-Socrates (*Apology* 41d)

?

Dangers of Philosophy

- Questioning or challenging how people live can lead to death.
- A philosophical life questions or challenges how people live.
- Should we avoid philosophy?
- Perhaps the soul is immortal.

Is the Soul Immortal?

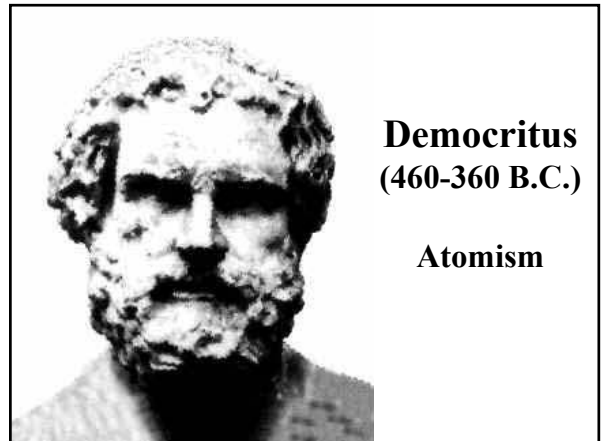
- What did Socrates think (*Ap.* 40c-e)?
- What *is* the “soul”?
- Why no extended discussion of the nature of the soul?
- Greek: “psychē” or “psuchē”
- Psychology/Psychosomatic illness.

What is the Soul?

- Psuchē = Life-constituting characteristics.
- All living things have psuchē (including plants).
- Psuchē is what a living thing loses when it dies (64c).
- = Metabolism?

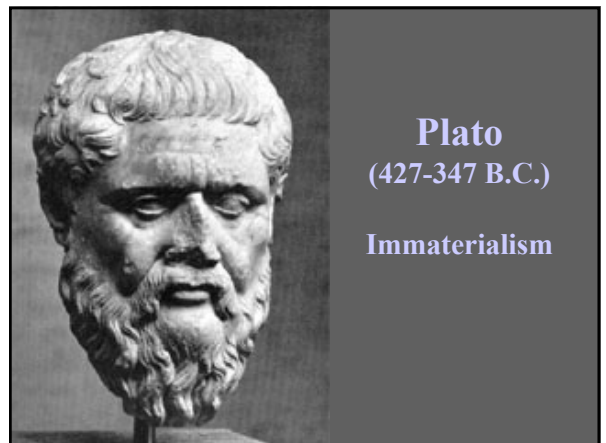
What is the Soul?

- Various Greek conceptions:
- **Atomism:** soul is just a collection of small, fast, smooth atoms (= materialism).
 - I just *am* my body--my soul is a physical thing.



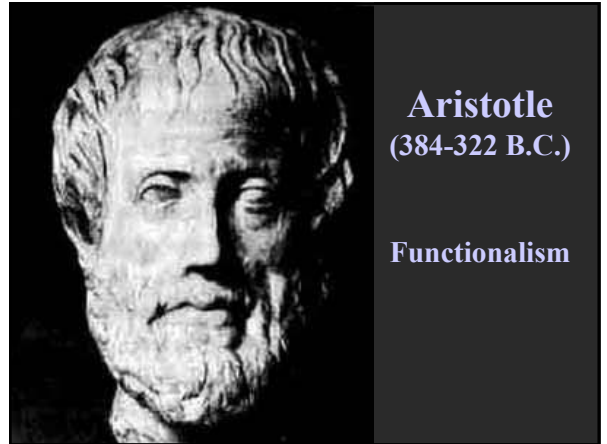
What is the Soul?

- Various Greek conceptions:
- **Atomism:** soul is just a collection of small, fast, smooth atoms.
- Immaterialism:** soul is something non-physical (= Dualism).
 - I *have* a body, but I *am* a non-physical soul.



What is the Soul?

- Various Greek conceptions:
- Atomism: soul is just a collection of small, fast, smooth atoms.
- Immaterialism: soul is something non-physical.
- Functionalism: soul is an organization of the physical body.



Aristotle
(384-322 B.C.)

Functionalism

Plato:
student of
Socrates



Aristotle:
student of
Plato



Soul : Body ::
Impression : Wax

Functionalism

- I am a body with a soul--not as two things.
- I am a body that is "ensouled".
- Contemporary AI: "artificial intelligence".
- Mind is just a complex physical *activity* serving certain functions.

Plato's *Phaedo*

- "Middle Dialogue"--written long after Socrates' death.
- May not be very accurate historically.
- May be more Plato's ideas than Socrates'.
- **Plato, like Socrates, is a *trickster*.**

Plato's *Phaedo*

- “Philosophers practice dying” (64a).
- Body is a distraction to philosophers (64d-65d, 66b-67b).
- Philosophers seek pure (= a priori) knowledge.
- Pure knowledge *not* gained through the body (= senses).

Plato's *Phaedo*

- Pure knowledge is of *the Forms*.
- Forms (“Eidos” ≠ Ideas):
 - Perfect Equality
 - The Just itself.
 - The Beautiful, The Good.
- Perfect embodiments of these qualities.

Plato's Forms

- Known a priori by *thought*, invisible
- Abstract entities
- Immaterial, non-spatial, eternal, unchanging
- Perfect essence of quality
- Not through senses (65d-e).
- Not in the mind
- Not physical
- Physical examples are only approximations

Plato's Forms

- One Form for each quality.
- Many physical instances of each quality.
- Physical things “partake of” or “participate in” Forms.
- Forms are most Real of all things.
Physical world : Forms :: Dream : Reality.

Arguments for Immortality

- We have pure knowledge.
- Pure knowledge is not gained through the body.
- ∴ We have a means to gain knowledge apart from the body.
- The soul is the only part of us other than the body.
- ∴ The soul can operate apart from the body.
- When the soul is apart from the body, the body is dead.
- ∴ The soul gains knowledge while we are dead.

Arguments for Immortality

- We have pure knowledge.
- Pure knowledge is not gained through the body.
- ∴ We have a means to gain knowledge apart from the body.
- Is this a sound argument?
“not through the senses” = “not through the body”?
“not through” = “apart from”?
- We have a means to gain knowledge not through the senses.

Arguments for Immortality

- ∴ We have a means to gain knowledge apart from the body.
- The soul is the only part of us other than the body.
- ∴ The soul can operate apart from the body.

The soul can operate without using the senses.

Arguments for Immortality

The soul can gain knowledge without using the senses--mental vision/thinking about it.

- ∴ The soul can operate apart from the body.
- When the soul is apart from the body, the body is dead.
- ∴ The soul gains knowledge while we are dead.

Arguments for Immortality

- Cyclical Argument (70e-72a):
- All things come to be from their opposite.
 - Larger/smaller
 - Awake/asleep
- Alive/dead?
- The dead come to be from the living.
- The living come to be from the dead?

Arguments for Immortality

- Cyclical Argument (70e-72a):
 - The living come to be from the dead?
 - Does this work?
- Do awake/asleep always “come to be from” one another?
- Are awake/asleep opposites of one another?
- Some things are neither awake nor asleep.
- Process starts/ends with a “non-sleepable” thing.

Arguments for Immortality

- Cyclical Argument (70e-72a):
- The living come to be from the dead?
- Does this work?

Dead comes to be from the living.

Does the living come to be from the dead?

Some things are neither living nor dead.

Process starts with a “non-livable” thing.

Objections to Socrates' Arguments

- Objections by
 - Simmias (84c-86e)
 - Cebes (87a-88c)
- Emotional crisis (88c-91c)
- Socrates' responses
 - to Simmias (91d-95a)
 - to Cebes (95a-106e)