

Death & Identity: A Philosophical Comparison Between East & West

Christopher Thomas Green

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis offers a thought experiment on death and identity: can one solve interpretational problems in one cultural text through a Comparative Methodology with another cultural text? I make two claims: that cultures distinct in time or geography can have Shared Concerns regarding death and identity; and that using cultural texts with Shared Concerns helps solve interpretational problems within the framework of one of the cultural texts. The methodology is designed to tease out existing, yet implicit, notions within cultural texts.

I offer two test-cases for the Comparative Methodology. Firstly, I put Plato's *Phaedo* in dialogue with the Buddhist *Milindapañha*. I analyse specific Shared Concerns between the texts before attempting to solve the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*. I do so by using John Locke's ideas on identity as a philosophical and terminological framework. Secondly, I analyse Empedocles' poem with the Indian *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as an added test-case to the Comparative Methodology. Specifically, the philosophical concern for Empedocles regards identity and moral accountability in a possible form of liberation. To what extent is the purification and possible liberation of the *daimon* morally conditioned, and does (self) understanding lead to a possible form of liberation?

To my Grandparents

‘I survive,
To mock the expectation of the world’
- William Shakespeare, *Henry IV Part II*

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Introduction

Two certainties attend the scholarly comparison of ancient China and ancient Greece. First, those who pursue this study are participating in a venerable intellectual endeavor that will persist. Second, scholars who enter this daunting field are almost certain to attract sharp criticism...Criticism of the work of others in this field is always easy precisely because the pitfalls of comparative study are so numerous and so difficult, perhaps impossible, to avoid. Chief among these pitfalls is the fact that all of us who make these comparisons stand somewhere, belong to some cultural context, and where we stand can have a profound affect on what we say about a different cultural context (Shankman & Durrant, 2002:1-2).

I begin my introduction by drawing my reader to the quotation taken from Shankman and Durrant's introduction to their exceptionally edited book on *Early China/Ancient Greece: Thinking Through Comparisons* (2002). Although dealing with Sino-Hellenic comparative work, much the same 'endeavor' and 'pitfalls' exist in all comparative work; especially in the postmodern, postcolonial, and poststructural academic world.¹ With such criticisms in mind I offer a tight consequentialist reason for my comparison built around two Claims: that *Shared Concerns*² (Claim 1) between *cultural texts*³ can help offer solutions to problems (Claim 2) in, at least, one of those texts.

I offer two test cases for Claim 1 and 2. In both cases the interpretational focus remains on individual ancient Greek cultural texts; firstly Plato's *Phaedo* in dialogue with the Buddhist *Milindapañha*; secondly Empedocles' poem with the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Far from essentialising,⁴ offering a comparative approach leads to *new*

¹ For an excellent introduction into comparative religion in a postmodern age, see *A Magic Still Dwells* edited by Patton and Ray (2000).

² 'Shared Concerns' is a term I use from now on to denote the similar philosophical issues texts can share through their accounts of the nature of reality or the ontology they are trying to present. The term is not used to denote similarities in answers or ontologies. Indeed, two texts may share a concern with life after death but come to very distinct answers. These texts may share similar concerns about death, but be dissimilar in their answers to those concerns. Shared Concerns, therefore, is a dialogue concerning what individual texts say about specific issues. Identifying and considering Shared Concerns is a means of establishing a dialogue. The issues in this thesis are death, identity, purification and moral accountability.

³ Cultural texts is a term I use to emphasise my desire to keep a text within its cultural setting. More particularly, I also wish my re-interpretations to be viewed within the framework of that culture. Every text is cultural, but I am consciously highlighting that cultural framework. The term refers to a text read within its cultural setting.

⁴ I denote this term to mean reducing or limiting a complex thing/culture to a necessary set of ideas.

readings in the ancient Greek cultural texts, allowing for ‘the concepts of multivocality and multiple interpretations that are essential to the comparative method’ along deconstructionalist postmodern lines (Doniger, 2000: 70). At all times the focus is on examining individual texts aimed at re-interpreting the ancient Greek texts.

There are two aims to this introductory chapter. 1) The first is to introduce the project as a whole: stating the methodology, what is gained, why the specific texts were chosen, what the risks are, introducing current comparative philosophical scholarship, and a full chapter outline explaining the breakdown of each individual chapter. 2) The second aim is to provide a contextual background for Indian philosophical history. This need only be brief, but provides readers without a working knowledge of Indian philosophical history a chance to acclimatise.

Section 1

1.1 The Comparative Methodology

The methodology is as follows: I offer Claim 1. This is the claim that specific Shared Concerns exist. These Shared Concerns are then the basis for Claim 2, that examining different cultural texts together might provide a tool for *problem-solving* within the framework of these cultures. Problem-solving is a specific term I employ to denote interpretational problems. For example, in the chapter on Plato’s *Phaedo* I refer to the problem of moral accountability or the forensic problem; however, this problem does not refer to the first-order philosophical problem modern philosophers are still engaged with today, i.e. *why should we be good*. Instead, the problem I refer to is the interpretational problem of *Phaedo*, i.e. how should *Phaedo* be interpreted regarding moral accountability. The interpretational problem is a second-order philosophical problem concerning Plato’s interpretation. The distinction is vital for the outcomes and claims in this thesis: I aim to solve interpretational problems in a way that is understandable within a Platonic or Empedoclean framework.

Where concerns are shared across cultures, trans-cultural dialogue may help to solve problems encountered in one or other of the cultures, even if those cultures are geographically, temporally, and thematically distant. I call this the *Methodological Hypothesis*,⁵ and I deploy it in two ways. The first proposed test-case is Plato's *Phaedo* and the Buddhist *Milindapañha*. Despite being geographically, temporally, and thematically distanced, *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* have Shared Concerns (Claim 1). Chapter 1 analyses these Shared Concerns. Without first undertaking Claim 1 in Chapter 1, I cannot provide reason to use two distinct cultures together to problem solve—the two cultures may be too diverse in time, or disparate in themes.

Once I have shown Claim 1 to be true, that *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* have Shared Concerns, I move onto the application of the *Comparative Methodology*. The comparative study of *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* in Chapters 2-4 is a test of Claim 1, and validates them through Claim 2. I do so by putting Plato's *Phaedo* in to dialogue with John Locke's *Essay on Human Diversity*,⁶ and then, *Milindapañha*. The logical sequence is: (i) there is a problem in *Phaedo*; (ii) this problem is not fully solved by dialogue with Locke; (iii) the problem can be solved by dialogue with *Milindapañha*. Therefore, Claim 2 solves an interpretational problem concerning identity through moral accountability in Plato's *Phaedo*.

Once Claim 1—that different cultural texts have Shared Concerns—is established in Chapter 1; and Claim 2—that different cultures used together offer a problem-solving tool—is completed in Chapters 2-4, then I test the usefulness of my methodology by once more implementing both Claims in Chapters 5-7. Chapters 5-7 are a confirmatory application of the methodology providing a second validation. The

⁵ The Methodological Hypothesis refers to the implementation of the Comparative Methodology, i.e. the working through of Claim 1 and 2. The method of Claim 1 and 2 is referred to as the Comparative Methodology. The Comparative Methodology refers to both a comparison and a contrast as I am not suggesting that texts can, or should, be synthesised.

⁶ For why Locke is included in this comparative study see *Why Locke* (1.5).

examination of Empedocles' poem through the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is the result of, and the test control of, my original two Claims—that two cultures with shared concerns can be used together to problem solve in one of the cultural texts. Chapter 5 and 6 intend on highlighting the Shared Concern in both texts of identity and moral accountability. Chapter 7 then offers a conclusion—through the established methodology of different cultural texts used together—to the problem of identity in Empedocles' writing.

I therefore defend two Claims through two applications of the Comparative Methodology: Claim 1, that cultures distinct in time or geography can have Shared Concerns regarding death and identity; and Claim 2, that using cultural texts with Shared Concerns helps solve interpretational problems within the framework of one of the cultural texts. By combining Claim 1 and 2 I demonstrate a methodology that has worked twice with separate cultural texts, Plato and Empedocles. Furthermore, the Comparative Methodology could, in future studies, be used with different cultural texts. In the thesis I demonstrate that where two or more cultures are shown to have Shared Concerns, these texts can then be used to problem solve. As a result there are two conclusions: firstly, that the study of different cultural texts is of value for understanding Shared Concerns (Claim 1); and secondly, that through Shared Concerns one can use a cultural text to solve interpretational problems in another cultural text (Claim 2).

Although not defended as part of my two Claims in this thesis there should also be an '*intrinsic* intellectual interest' in comparative studies, 'in particular to show how such studies *enrich* and *deepen* our understanding of the Classical world' (Tanner, 2009: 90).⁷ Indeed, comparative studies can 'broaden our sensibilities' (Tanner, 2009: 94). This helps limit the 'insularity of Classics' (Tanner, 2009: 89) and any 'intellectual insularity' (Tanner, 2009: 105). Tanner in his article on Sino-Hellenic work excellently

⁷ My own emphasis.

describes different methodologies, of which some ‘lack the scrupulous attention to social context’ or ‘the analytical rigour’; however, he believes ‘such criticism misses the point’. And it is Tanner’s conclusion that ‘our understanding of the range of texts explored [even without rigorous attention to social context or analytical rigour] is greatly enriched by reading them against each other, and our cultural sympathies and sensitivities correspondingly expanded’ (2009: 102). Therefore, even when a comparison lacks ‘analytical bite’ there can still exist strengths (Tanner, 2009: 99).

1.2 Why *Phaedo* & Empedocles?

The thesis compares philosophical beliefs in Greece and India regarding death and identity. The primary theme of interest of this thesis is death and related issues of identity. Plato and Empedocles have been chosen, as opposed to Pythagoreanism or early Orphism, since their extant philosophical texts discussing death and identity can be used directly with the Indian textual evidence. By focusing on texts, one is able to examine concrete Shared Concerns and highlight interpretative problems within each text. Therefore, despite the comparative methodological approach, the emphasis remains ancient Greek philosophy specifically—the second-order philosophical problem of interpretation, not the first-order philosophical problem more common in analytical philosophy. One culture will be used to illuminate another culture through the direct analysis of a culture’s philosophical texts.

Empedocles is chosen as an early Greek Presocratic thinker on these themes because there is extant textual evidence, but also due to that textual evidence requiring further interpretation. Empedocles discusses themes of purification and moral accountability. I will demonstrate how distinguishing between a human compound and a *daimon* through the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* example of self as a rider in a chariot is a re-interpretation. Furthermore, I explore the respective approaches to liberation in *Kaṭha*

Upaniṣad and Empedocles: how important is moral accountability in Empedocles compared to the discovery of ontological truths?

1.3 Why India?

India is an excellent comparative ‘tool’ as there is a complex Indian philosophical tradition concerning death and identity and how these relate to purification and moral accountability. The Indian evidence relates to the religions of the Ganges Valley from the Vedic religion through the *Upaniṣads* and finally arriving, chronologically, at Buddhism. Reading Plato with prior knowledge of Buddhism, one recognises similarities despite the differences. The next step is to ask oneself whether these similarities are useful, and, if so, how one can implement a method that generates a new interpretation. Using two cultures in my comparative method helps elucidate Shared Concerns (Claim 1) and problem solve (Claim 2). Sorabji explains why India is used for comparison (2006: 278):

there is great value in looking at another culture to which the question of a continuous self has been much more central, the culture of India.

Sorabji is predominantly focused on Plato. Kahn stated that the ‘time has come to reconsider, in the light of modern research and with more rigorous techniques of comparison’ Empedoclean transmigration alongside the only civilisation that had ‘reached a level of intellectual development comparable to that of early Greece’, that of India (1971: 35). I combine Sorabji’s and Kahn’s statements as a premise for my Comparative Methodology.

For example, comparing Plato to the Buddhist not-Self theory, *anattā*, is a methodological tool to understand what Plato thought about death, identity, and moral accountability. Plato and *anattā* cannot be synthesised; indeed, Plato clearly had a view of an eternal soul, the very idea *anattā* argues against. But both theories pertain to the mis-association of self, and the usefulness of purification to help alleviate that ignorance of self. Buddhism concludes that there is no soul; Plato argues that there is an eternal

soul. The conclusions are starkly different, yet both see moral accountability as a fundamental idea. And by examining the Platonic problem of moral accountability through *anattā*—where there is moral accountability without an eternally stable reference point—we are able to understand Plato’s ideas better.

Ancient thinkers can be philosophical without being Philosophers. The distinction is important. The discipline of Philosophy did not exist in the ancient world. The closest one can come in the ancient world to a specific field of thought with its own parameters are the schools of Plato and Aristotle. However, even the Academy and Lyceum were engaged in a much wider study of knowledge than modern Philosophy Departments. Furthermore, what constitutes Philosophy has not always included ‘Eastern’ thought. Tanner describes how the Chinese ‘canonical texts (*jing*) of the traditional masters...only came to be classified as ‘philosophy’ in the early twentieth century’ (2009: 94). I view each text as philosophical, instead of Philosophical. I problem solve within the interpretational framework of that cultural text.

1.4 A Thought Experiment

Both Greek and Indian traditions stretch across a wide range of time and space within their own cultures. Additionally, Greece and India are separated by a vast geographical land mass of the Near East.⁸ However, divergent geographical locations and chronological dating difficulties do not invalidate this project. For at the heart of this project is a thought experiment. Even without discussing influence, the comparison of Empedocles and Plato with *Upaniṣadic* and Buddhist texts is ‘instructive’. Kahn observes how (1971: 35):

Even if no historical link can be established, the parallel between the two religious patterns would certainly be instructive.

⁸ An interesting historical or sociological aside for a future project is why India and Greece share certain beliefs whilst Persia seemingly does not?

This thesis is a thought experiment making no claims of historical influence or a dissemination of ideas.⁹ I require no argument pertaining to influence or contact.

Contained within the thought experiment lies a question, simple yet complex: can one solve interpretational problems in one cultural text through the Comparative Methodology with another cultural text that has specific Shared Concerns? When faced with problems in ancient Greek philosophy relating to death and identity, is it possible that another culture, that of India, asked similar questions? And then can the latter be used to help explain the former? Through my method I am not attempting to synthesise two distinct philosophical cultures. Santayana believes that a synthesis can ‘only be reached by blurring or emptying both systems in what was clear and distinct in their results’ (Dewey, Radhakrishnan, & Santayana, 1951: 5). One need not agree with Santayana that every synthesis require an ‘emptying’, but there is a danger that one can make any two philosophies have Shared Concerns if one selects and omits evidence carefully enough. However, in this project differences are not to be explained away or omitted. Throughout, differences are drawn out and discussed. For often it is the differences within a broadly similar idea that help expound the key message within that idea. Indeed, differences I present are purposeful within my comparative method.

The methodology is designed to tease out existing, yet implicit, notions within Empedocles and Plato. As such, my new interpretations could in principle have been reached without a comparative method—for otherwise my conclusions would be a grave mis-reading of the original Greek evidence; but up to this point they have not been. Furthermore, this thesis offers something greater than Greek conclusions: it hopes to offer an exploration into the nature of ancient philosophical thought. By using two cultures side-by-side one’s understanding of the ancient world is greater than

⁹ One hopes that education can reach a point where cultural blocks do not exist (Dewey, Radhakrishnan, & Santayana, 1951: 3).

through a single reading alone. The exploration across space and time is not only intrinsically valuable as an exploration of human knowledge, but is also a journey that improves our understanding through problem-solving. Therefore, I do not claim my Comparative Methodology is the *only* way to solve these problems; but the thesis should be judged against its Claims, i.e. that considering Shared Concerns (Claim 1) between two cultural texts, despite being geographically, temporally, and culturally distanced, offers a method to solve specific problems in one of the cultural texts (Claim 2).

1.5 Why Locke?

Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book II, Chapter XXVII, is used to secure the precision of language within the re-interpretation of the ancient philosophical discussion. There are positive and negative outcomes to how I make use of Locke's ideas. To take the positives first, Locke helps distinguish between *kinds* of substances. Locke demarcates difference between humans, persons, and souls. Although philosophers still disagree on whether Person is a different kind from Human Being, because my focus remains on the second-order philosophical interpretations of the ancient texts and not the first-order puzzle of Personhood, I use Locke's distinction to frame Plato's evidence. This means I provide evidence for Plato's concept of human animals and persons in *Phaedo*. This enables me to highlight the locus of moral responsibility for Plato. For Locke, the person is the locus of moral responsibility. According to the *Phaedo*, the *person* is the soul and, by extension, the bearer of moral responsibility. Locke's distinction between kinds is paramount to solving interpretational problems in Plato's *Phaedo*.

Unfortunately, Locke also has certain disadvantages, the most pertinent being his dissonance within a thesis specifically tailored to thought in the ancient world and its interpretation. Locke is a XVII century English philosopher remote in time, place,

and style from the contextual grounding of ancient philosophy. For example, Locke's concept of soul and judgement is heavily Christianised, a culture completely disconnected from the two ancient cultures I have chosen. It must also be noted that Locke, although useful linguistically, does not solve the interpretational problem found in Plato's *Phaedo*. Therefore, *philosophically* Locke is also limited.

However, the positives are more important than the negatives. The philosophical precision of Locke's *kinds* is crucial in my demarcating of moral responsibility in Plato's *Phaedo*. So much so that I chose to make Locke's concepts central to the over-all framework of the discussion. This adds a third dimension to the Comparative Methodology, one where a third cultural text is used as a framework to give direction and philosophical precision to the main discussion. In order to show that Locke's inclusion does not devalue the Indian material Part Two does not make use of the same Lockean framework. Instead I focus directly on Empedocles and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, without the need for philosophical 'stabilisers'.

1.6 What is gained?

Firstly, Claim 1: the value of examining Shared Concerns within the framework of later problem-solving. Secondly, Claim 2: the interpretational conclusions of problem-solving. Claim 2 leads to a new interpretation of Plato and Empedocles concerning death and identity with an emphasis on moral accountability. Overall, two new findings are presented (Chapter 4 and 7).

In Part One the philosophical problem relating to death and identity is the relationship between identity and moral accountability in Plato's *Phaedo*. I argue that the work of John Locke and the *Milindapañha* can be used to solve the problem in a way that is understandable within a Platonic framework.

Part Two offers a second case study to support Claim 2. Here the same philosophical problem concerning the relationship between identity and moral accountability across death is considered in the Presocratic Greek philosopher Empedocles and the Indian *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. The particular aspect of this problem in this section is that of identity in Empedocles' poem, and the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is used to solve it, in a way that makes sense within the Empedoclean framework of thought.

The conclusions are not the same for Plato and Empedocles, therefore, the methods are slightly different for both philosophers. Taking Plato first, the contrast between desire for corporeality and purification is explored in Chapter 1. Using *Milindapañha*'s concepts of desire and purification I conclude that Plato views human desire as the root cause of continual re-embodiment and human un-satisfactoriness for the soul, but that purification is realised through a cutting off, allowing an ascent. I then take the Platonic exploration further, asking whether the problem of Platonic moral accountability can be solved by using Locke's distinction between a human animal and the forensic person. I conclude that, although Locke's distinction is useful, it does not solve the Platonic problem. Therefore, I use the *Milindapañha* to help show how moral accountability can be solved without the need for a stable reference point. For Empedocles, I focus on the purification or liberation of a *daimon* and how/if moral accountability relates to this process. Furthermore, I pose the question whether our ontological understanding of *daimons* and nature helps to improve our situation.

1.7 Why Death and Identity?

The two subjects are interrelated and treated in this study as one. With regards to death one sees a curiosity about philosophical cosmologies and metaphysical arguments often related to a larger religious soteriology. Furthermore, death leads to questions of *purification*, which in turn lead some to question *who* they are and *why* they should be concerned about their fate after death. For example, Empedocles

highlights the Cosmic Cycle and the salvation of the *daimon*. In Plato one sees the emergence of a metaphysical soul within a complex and diverse cosmological system. The same is true of the Indian philosophies: the *Upaniṣads* present a belief in a metaphysical Self/soul,¹⁰ whereas, Buddhism famously posits the absence of a metaphysical Self, but still holds to a cosmology concentrated around moral accountability.

Death is the gateway to a much larger philosophical question regarding identity: how can *I* survive death and should I be *concerned* about my death? All four philosophies attempt to answer, in some way, the question of what it means to survive their death. When asking that question one needs to examine the *how*, the *I*, the *death*, and why the *I* should be concerned to survive death.¹¹

1.8 What are the risks?

There are six main risks. These lie mainly in the interpretation of the Indian evidence, but are not exclusive to them. Firstly (i), approaching this study without a university education in Indian philosophical history or tradition is problematic, but not insurmountable. Furthermore (ii), the thesis has no supervisor who is an expert in Indian philosophy; although, the thesis is indebted to the scholars who have helped along the way.

But one advantage my relative lack of training in Indian history provides is a fresh perspective, one removed from formal or traditional teachings and interpretations. The possibility to read early Indian texts without later commentary influencing one's interpretation is suggested by the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* volume 2 (Craig, 1998: 2):

¹⁰ The capitalised 'Self' refers to a metaphysical entity, contrasted with the empirical de-capitalised 'self'.

¹¹ Important topics are desire, purification/liberation, identity, and moral accountability.

It would be difficult, if not strictly impossible, to read the *Upaniṣads* uninfluenced by the centuries of later commentary and interpretation.¹²

Later Indian commentaries and interpretations are important and can shed light not only on a given text but also the cultural interpretation of the time. However, commentaries can have vested interests, for example, being associated with specific schools of interpretation. These commentaries are from later writers associated with a specific school of thought, as the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* alludes to. Particular schools will be examined in more detail later, but for now it suffices to say that schools were in competition with one another. Therefore, an unbiased critical reading would seem extremely hard to achieve.

The third risk (iii) is that this thesis relies on my own interpretation of Indian philosophy, albeit, with scholarly backing, and this interpretation is through translation. But through the use of translations I can work within two fields. To work in comparison requires one to yield to the greater knowledge of scholars in their specific research field.¹³ My thesis is by no means alone in this endeavour: Obeyesekere in his 2002 book *Imagining Karma* examines Greek and Indian philosophy noting how ‘I have to rely exclusively on translations’ (xxii).

Although still working predominantly from translations of the Greek language, I have a much firmer depth of knowledge regarding the philosophical and cultural tradition at large, as well as the language. That is why the thesis is tailored toward a re-interpretation of Greek philosophy, while the Indian sources remain a methodological ‘tool’. Even if working predominantly in translation is still stigmatised, the positives do outweigh the negatives.

¹² This claim seems false for the lay reader.

¹³ Shankman and Durrant describe the difference between ‘amateur’ and ‘professionals’ and the possible need for the ‘enthusiast’ (2002: 7).

There are, however, restrictions to working in this way. Sorabji, in his 2006 book *Self*, distinguished between objections and uncertainties: Sorabji expressed some ‘uncertainties about the reductionist views in Buddhism, making confessions of uncertainty, not objections, since I depend on the translations and interpretations of others’ (2006: 285). The same is true for this thesis.

Using translations has both positive and negative outcomes. A negative is that one is fully reliant on the availability and the scholarly integrity of philosophical translations. If improperly translated, philosophical terms can take different meanings and can blur the overall philosophical significance. To minimise the risk of working in translation one relies on sources that are both well documented and acknowledged as well translated. The aim is to limit any misinterpretation on my part of key translated words. The texts used have multiple and extremely high quality translations. A positive is that the translations are beyond any feasible level that I could learn to master in three years. Using multiple translations of the Indian texts carefully and with a skilled application ensures readings that are clear and succinct.

A fourth risk (iv), associated with the Classical side, has less to do with the implementation of the methodology and more to do with the reception of the overall project. As Tanner suggests, ‘Classicists have long been wary of comparisons’. Two reasons for this point are the ‘incomparability’ of ‘the Classical’ and the ‘limited illumination’ of comparisons; although Tanner mentions when even done well comparisons have failed to be influential (2009: 89). There are heavily entrenched views regarding Greece’s place in the history of culture and society, both in the ancient past and the present. Therefore, any project that seeks to question Greece’s exclusive position in the ancient world, in the sense of contextualising Greek thought, may be met with misunderstanding.

A core belief is that the ancient world is ‘open’,¹⁴ or, as Tanner describes it, the ‘opening up of Classical studies (2009: 105). The ancient world should be taught and viewed contextually, instead of compartmentalising and inward facing scholarly traditions. In this way comparative philosophy helps (Tanner, 2009: 96):

The goal of comparative philosophy is not some transcendental truth, but the more pragmatic one of being able to develop a conversation between traditions, and for that conversation to be able to go on, establishing and mediating similarities and differences, against a shared ground of commitment to the conversation and developing mutual understanding.

For this reason, Greek philosophers are compared to contemporary thinkers in the Indian tradition.¹⁵ The aim of comparative philosophy is ‘the general examination of the ways in which human beings of all races and cultures reflect upon their actions and act upon their reflections’ (Masson-Oursel, 1951: 6). And this thesis hopes to help with this examination through Indian texts.

Risk five (v) is de-valuing the Indian culture. The great wealth of Indian philosophy is important regardless of Greek philosophy, or, indeed, my project. However, as a Classicist my *main* focus, but not all, is on the interpretation of the Greek philosophical tradition. In this regard alone, the thesis compares Greek philosophy to Indian philosophy, not the other way round. I do not wish to be misconstrued as a Western European thinker desecrating or belittling Indian philosophical or religious truths still important to people to this day. I am not distorting ‘the core philosophical import of such texts by ignoring the original problem-context to which they were addressed in the development of their indigenous traditions’ (Tanner, 2009: 95). One must, however, be conscious of one’s own pre-conceptions. There is a mode of thought that one can only interpret a culture through one’s own culture (Tanner, 2009: 96). But

¹⁴ ‘Open’ refers to the civilisations surrounding Greece throughout the ancient world. Greece did not exist in splendid isolation, removed from the developments of the outside world. Classical Greece was extremely young compared to its neighbours, Egypt and Mesopotamia.

¹⁵ John Locke is used as an exception to provide clarity of expression and thought on the complex issue of identity and forensic responsibility.

for the purposes of this thesis, I can only expound being aware of one's own prejudices and cultural norms.

Indian philosophy is important regardless of other cultural thinkers, and it certainly does not require any statement from this writer. Unfortunately, a thesis without this disclaimer is open to misinterpretation. The point is simply that the thesis does not grade cultural thinkers or philosophers. This writer's expertise lies in the Classical tradition and that alone is why the emphasis remains on Classics. Nevertheless, since a 'comparison must do justice to every item compared' (Liat, 1951: 13), I do believe that the methodology can be reversed and Greek thought could be used as a 'tool' to help the Indian scholarly tradition.

A further sixth risk (vi) is the devaluing of the tradition in another way. This is due to the difference between philosophy and religion. This distinction may be arbitrary, especially in the ancient world; however, it is important for my thesis' reception. Religion is one fundamental difference between the Indian philosophers and their Greek contemporaries. According to Radhakrishnan, the West asks 'what is it all about', while the East asks 'what must I do to be saved' (Dewey, Radhakrishnan, & Santayana, 1951: 4). Much of ancient Indian philosophy has come through the ages as part of the Indian Hindu and Buddhist religious traditions. That means that certain texts and philosophical beliefs have religious meaning to people today. The philosophy of the east is a 'living heritage in the hands of living men' (Liat, 1951: 11). Therefore, my interpretations and methodology mean no disrespect to people who hold religious beliefs in these texts. Whether Greek or Indian, the emphasis is always on the textual evidence and not the religious significance.

1.9 Previous Comparative Scholarship on Plato and Empedocles

What can one learn about a culture through the examination of another culture? I base my project on Sorabji's premise that 'there is great value in looking at another culture to which the question of a continuous self has been much more central, the culture of India' (2006: 278). The thesis implements the premise with regards to Empedocles and Plato's *Phaedo*. Plato and Empedocles have both garnered attention from comparative scholarly work, with Plato receiving more attention. Scholars have previously compared Plato's works with different Indian texts or concepts. For example, West in his book *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* states about Empedocles' comparison (1971: 235):

Only one oriental comparison must be made. According to Empedocles (B 62, 63) the sexes were produced by division of 'whole-natured' creatures, who were themselves evolved from earlier forms of life. According to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, 1.4.1-3, the universe began as the Self in human form.

But, given the diversity and breadth of Indian philosophy it seems strange to conclude that only one *Upaniṣad* comparison is relevant. By taking Sorabji's premise, and applying it to Empedocles, Empedocles' philosophy can be re-interpreted. This process leads not to 'one oriental comparison', or a list of comparisons, but to a fuller understanding of Empedocles.

I will examine the scholarly output on Plato first before moving onto discuss the work on Empedocles. Comparative studies of the *Phaedo* have been undertaken. Cohen compares *Phaedo* to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, concluding that Socrates is akin to a *guru*, and that Plato's fourth proof for the immortality of the soul is as dependent on 'religious faith' as on philosophical enquiry (1976: 318, 321). More recently, Gold compared the *Phaedo* with the Indian tradition of Yoga. The main point of Gold's comparative study was an emphasis on Platonic liberation, which Gold claimed had been previously neglected (1996: 17). Gold made interesting parallels between the connection in both traditions—Plato and Yoga—of liberation with

illumination, and ignorance with bondage (1996: 19). Interestingly, Gold stated that the Buddhist inter-play between self and not-self is found in the Allegory of the Cave (1996: 20). Unfortunately he fails to show why the Buddhist not-self theory had any Platonic reverberation, since there is no elaboration beyond a footnote stating how prisoners in the Cave cannot see themselves or one another, and, therefore, lack self-awareness (1996: 30).

Dillon, in his *Dialogues with Death*, focuses on comparing Plato's *Phaedo* with the Buddhist *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (2000). Both ancient texts deal with the death of an influential teacher—Socrates and the Buddha. The aim of Dillon's work, in his own words, is 'not to claim any direct influence of one teacher on the other, but rather to explore the affinity that seems to exist between them' (2000: 526).¹⁶ Dillon, like Gold, analyses the importance in both traditions of liberation and purification in relation to desire as the cause of imprisonment and suffering within reincarnation (2000: 539). He states that a theory of reincarnation requires continued identity between incarnations, unlike the *anattā* theory (2000: 542). Dillon concludes that Plato has a doctrine of 'self-ness' that is opposite to *anattā* (2000: 543). Where Dillon uses the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, I use the *Milindapañha*. The *Milindapañha* deals specifically with the question of identity, allowing a fruitful comparison.

In his first comparative work, *The Rebirth Eschatology & Its Transformations*, Obeyesekere outlined several rebirth theories from different cultures, both un-ethicized and ethicized. Obeyesekere considers the 'highly developed and ethicized rebirth theories from the Greeks of the sixth century B.C. and after', namely Pythagoreanism and Orphism (1980: 150). He concluded that the Greeks had theories of ethical compensation like *karma* and had salvation from what he termed the '*samsaric* process'

¹⁶ The same emphasis on 'affinity'—through *shared concerns*—instead of 'influence' is fundamental to my thesis.

(rebirth) (1980: 152). In his later work, *Imagining Karma* (2002), Obeyesekere is much more ambitious. Obeyesekere portrays a unified Platonic eschatology spanning the *Timaeus*, *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, and *Phaedo*. Although a bold endeavour, one must be apprehensive about the danger of assimilation. To attempt a single unified Platonic eschatological theory from diverse and complex dialogues risks missing key interpretative meanings within individual texts. One cannot help but recall the words of Julia Annas in *Plato's Myths of Judgement* stressing how important it is 'to relate the content of each myth to the argument of the dialogue in which it occurs' (1982: 119), and resist 'a tendency to assimilate myths that look superficially alike', which Annas claims 'the eschatological myths have been' (1982: 120).

Obeyesekere analyses the *Phaedo* mostly alongside the *Republic's* Myth of Er, concluding that both accounts have otherworldly rewards and punishments but lack an ethical rebirth. Obeyesekere believes the choice of life a soul makes in the Myth of Er is an 'unfree' habit; he concludes that Plato's vision of a soul after death lacks an ethical rebirth; whereas India has the notion of *karma* (2002: 271). Obeyesekere then compares the Platonic eschatology to early Buddhist eschatology, concluding that Plato should have introduced 'a more profound idea of rebirth ethics' because 'Plato's doctrine of free choice is not altogether satisfactory because it is in actuality an unfree reality' (2002: 274).¹⁷

The final comparative scholar, and one who will feature prominently in Chapters 2-4, is Sorabji. Sorabji provides a comparative approach that focuses on self identity. He concludes that for Plato soul is 'true self', and that 'true self' is reason or intellect (2006: 34). Furthermore, Sorabji suggests that reincarnation takes different forms

¹⁷ It must be pointed out that Buddhist ethical rebirth deals with action and consequential essence, whereas in Plato there is an ethical doer, i.e. the soul. Furthermore, once the soul is punished or rewarded the ethical scales have been balanced, but what is left is not a clean slate to start completely again. Instead, there is a soul with a conscious intellect on a continuous causal line.

according to ‘a continuing soul, or a continuing stream’ (2006: 302). But are those two mutually exclusive? It seems that soul is endowed with a fixed identity, hence the term ‘reincarnation’, whereas, the stream metaphor highlights the changeable process. Yet, Sorabji questions whether anything reincarnated into a new environment, ‘class, culture, or race’ can retain the same ‘mental and physical characteristics’ (2006: 303). Therefore, Sorabji concludes that a fixed identity across reincarnations appears illogical. Sorabji is correct to question continued identity across reincarnations. In Chapter 2 I examine Sorabji’s question further, and provide an explicit answer and relevant evidence in Chapter 4.

Therefore, comparing Plato’s *Phaedo* with a Buddhist text is not a new method. But Obeyesekere and the other comparative scholars do not examine the relationship of soul and identity within the Platonic problem of moral accountability. Sorabji is an exception since he looks at ‘true self’. But still there is a need to re-address Plato’s concept of identity in a comparative fashion. For although each scholar mentioned discusses comparatively the nature of the eschatological system, each fails in their own way to analyse and characterise the forensic identity of the soul. How can identity change over time within a purification/liberation eschatology? And where does one locate moral accountability if identity changes over time? In this thesis, the central proposition of forensic identity is challenged through the philosophy of death. Therefore, I am primarily examining the individual entity that relates to the eschatology and only contextually the eschatology itself.

The comparative work on Empedocles, as stated before, has been limited compared to Plato. Obeyesekere examines Empedocles in his book *Imagining Karma*. Empedocles is compared to Pythagoras and to the Buddha, as someone with a ‘mythic persona’ (2002: 215). Examining Empedocles ‘from an Indological perspective’ (2002:

217), Obeyesekere concludes that ‘Empedocles is a god among men, one who has achieved salvation or a god status while living in the world’, what ‘contemporaries in India’ might call ‘a *jīvan mukta*’ (2002: 217). Therefore, what was ‘unique about Empedocles and early Pythagoreans was not their rebirth theories but their doctrines of salvation’ (Obeyesekere, 2002: 218). Obeyesekere suspects Indian ‘influence’, but does not give explicit details or explain why such ‘influence’ may be useful (2002: 218). Instead, Obeyesekere provides his own account of Empedocles’ philosophy and what he calls ‘esoteric knowledge’ (2002: 218). One comparison worthy of note is Obeyesekere’s treatment of Empedocles’ *daimon* as ‘more like the fluid Buddhist concept of “the rebirth-seeking entity”,’ rather than a soul with Platonic implications (2002: 222).¹⁸

1.10 Chapter Outline

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part One on *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* (Chapters 1-4); and Part Two on *Empedocles* and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (Chapters 5-7). In Part One I discuss Plato’s *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha*, and in Part Two I discuss Empedocles and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Each part is structured according to the specific needs of studying each text. The Platonic part is divided into four chapters. In Chapter 1 I focus on the Shared Concerns (Claim 1) of desire and purification. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 follow with a detailed discussion on Plato’s forensic problem (Chapter 2), firstly using Locke’s distinction between human and person for Plato (Chapter 3), and culminating in the *Milindapañha*’s problem-solving of Claim 2 (Chapter 4).

In Plato I explore two aspects: 1) the nature of desire for the corporeal and purification in *Phaedo* when analysed alongside *Milindapañha* (Chapter 1); and 2) the concept of identity, specifically concerning moral accountability (Chapters 2-4). In

¹⁸ Although Obeyesekere’s point may be a valid one, this thesis will show Shared Concerns between Empedocles and the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and use them to problem solve. Buddhist imagery or philosophical ideas are not included in the Empedocles’ chapters.

Chapter 2 I elucidate a problem expressed by Annas and Inwood, amongst others, that the moral accountability of soul in *Phaedo* is blurred.

I do this in two stages. Firstly I turn to Locke's thought on identity. Can the problems of moral accountability in *Phaedo* be solved through Locke's distinction between the human animal and the forensic person? I conclude that, although the distinction between human and person is helpful, Locke's focus on memory is too narrow for *Phaedo*. I, therefore, move on to using the *Milindapañha* as a text that can solve the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*. This is done through the use of an ancestral relation that *Milindapañha* offers not only examples of, but also a credible morally accountable system in practice.

Part Two on Empedocles has a three-chapter structure: the Indian text is introduced in the opening chapter (5); followed by an examination of the philosophical problems within Empedocles (6); and finally the problem-solving chapter ends the section (7). Claim 1 is implemented separately in Chapters 5 and 6, whilst Claim 2 is focused on in Chapter 7. Chapter 5 is an introduction to the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* intended to be less critical in nature due to the framework of the project as a whole. Therefore, it acts as an overview to key themes and concepts within the text. The passages selected within the introductory *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* chapter are the same passages that will later be used in a comparative fashion. Longer quotations are included within the introductory chapter, with a fuller review of the text. This is to allow shorter quotations and reference in Chapter 7.¹⁹

¹⁹ I attempt to give my Classicist readership as much familiarity with complex Indian philosophy and the specific text as the thesis parameters allow. Unfortunately, due to the vast nature of Indian scholarship and the sheer breadth of the Indian philosophical tradition, much must be left out. For those already familiar with Indian scholarship, it is still worth examining the key passages in Chapter 5, as it is here that the comparative passages have a fuller exposition.

The chapters relating explicitly to the Greek texts, Chapters 2 and 6, focus on the examination of critical problems within *Phaedo* and Empedocles. The critical nature of the Empedoclean chapter (6) stands in contrast with the introductory nature of the Indian chapter (5). Chapters 2 and 6 analyse the validity of specific Greek textual arguments in conjunction with the scholarly interpretation of those arguments. My aim is to raise critical objections—my own and by scholars—in Chapters 2 and 6 that I will offer potential solutions for through an Indian comparison in Chapters 4 and 7: the problematic interpretative impasse (Chapters 2 and 6) are potentially solved via Indian texts (Chapters 4 and 7). The focus of the thesis remains on the final objective of Claims 1 and 2: the identification of Shared Concerns on death and identity in the Greek and Indian texts, and their potential to help solve interpretational problems in the Greek texts.

Section 2

2.1 Contextualising – A very brief Indian philosophical history

Immediately a disclaimer must be issued concerning the sheer inadequacy of the following Indian contextualising. Detailed books have been written on the subject of Indian philosophical history and space for a thorough examination of all Indian philosophical development is not afforded here.²⁰ Therefore, what follows is a critical overview of the main progressions of Indian philosophy, intended to help contextualise readers unfamiliar with Indian philosophy.

At this point it might seem prudent to present a list of key terms. Yet even an arbitrary list of key terms is harder than one realises at first for three reasons. Firstly, Indian philosophical terms developed through religious practices and beliefs. Secondly, religious and philosophical terms developed through time, meaning different things at different times. And thirdly, terms mean different things to different religious groups at the same time, both philosophically and religiously. Therefore, terms need to be explained as they appear within the contextualising process. In this developmental way one is able to explain the different meanings within specific contexts.

Before examining the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and the *Milindapañha*, it is important to firmly ground the texts into their social context. Every text is rooted in the social and cultural society to which gave it birth. But dating specific texts and ideas is problematic. India lacks an historiographical tradition (Dillon, 2000: 525). Akira points out that a compilation of definitive history has been seen as impossible (1990: xvi). Therefore, placing texts within a specific time is extremely difficult, if not impossible. As Dasgupta points out, ‘it is hardly possible to attempt a history of Indian philosophy in the manner in which the histories of European philosophy have been

²⁰ For a fuller and more detailed study I refer my reader to those books in the bibliography specifically focused on Indian philosophical history.

written' (1922: 62). India held 'so many divergent systems at so early a period' and had no concrete historical record (*ibid.*).²¹ Indian philosophy is 'a mighty ocean which is difficult to navigate' that spans over 3000 years (Frauwallner, 1973: 3). But I must attempt to ground and understand my Indian texts within their specific cultural origins, if my comparison with Greek texts is to be successful.

The nature of the Indian philosophical tradition is quite different from the European, or indeed, the Greek. The great thinkers of India wrote commentaries on commentaries regarding individual systems of thought; unlike European thinkers who offered 'independent speculation' (Dasgupta, 1922: 62-64). The way the commentaries work is problematic, on which two things must be said. Firstly, commentaries are of a much later date than the works that they comment on. This is not too problematic, except for the second point that commentaries purport to provide textual interpretations of the original texts, but with strong interpretational links to specific philosophical schools existing at a much later date. Therefore, interpreters have an agenda.

The initial important point is chronological history. The most basic outline of the development of Indian thought, relevant for my thesis, is represented in chronological sequence like this:

- 1) Vedic Religion (middle 2nd to 1st Millennium BCE, written in Sanskrit):
 - a) *Samhita*: early ritual verses/secret doctrines: *Rg Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Atharva Veda*;
 - b) *Brāhmaṇas*: prose explaining sacred significance of sacrificial rituals;
 - c) *Āraṇyakas*: 'forest treatise' for recluses unable to instigate ritual sacrifice;
- 2) Early *Upaniṣads* (c.800-300 BCE): prose and verse characterised by abstraction (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2), and a move from ritual to contemplation. Possibly the earliest text is the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is found in the early *Upaniṣads*;

²¹ A very rough estimated time period is late 2nd Millennium early 1st Millennium BCE. Contextually, the correlating Greek history is the fall of the Mycenaean Age leading into the 'Dark' Age, before what is termed Classical Greece.

- 3) *Śramaṇa* movement: a reaction against Vedic/Brahmanist culture from the c.6th century BCE:
- a) Jainism: founded by Mahavira (599-527BCE), texts written in Prakrit;
 - b) Buddhism: founded by Siddhartha Gautama (480-400BCE). The *Tipiṭaka* (three baskets) is a key text, written in Pali. The later *Milindapañha* is a famous Buddhist text.

2.2 Vedas

The beginning of my contextualisation is the Brahmanist religion of the Vedas (1-2 above). There are four main types of texts that make-up the Vedas: *Samhitā* or collection of verses; *Brāhmaṇas*; *Āraṇyakas* or ‘forest treatises’; and the *Upaniṣads* (Dasgupta, 1922: 12). Each is a development of thought. The *Upaniṣads* will be examined in the most detail as they hold interesting philosophical meaning.

The *Samhita* is compiled from four collections of verses: *Ṛg-Veda*; *Sāma-Veda*; *Yajur-Veda*; and *Atharva-Veda*. Each collection of verses has its own intended recipient and purpose: *Yajur-Veda* is a collection of utterances; *Ṛg-Veda* is a collection of hymns; *Sāma-Veda* is a collection of melodies (Frauwellner, 1973: 27); and *Atharva-Veda* a collection of spells and incantations (Dasgupta, 1922: 13). All refer to ritual sacrifice. The *Ṛg-Veda* is most likely the oldest (pre-1st Millennium) (Dasgupta, 1922: 12). However, it may have been written down as late as c.600 BCE (Wolpert, 2006: vol 1. xlvii).

The Vedic texts signify the beginning of Indian literature and philosophy (Frauwellner, 1973: 27). It is the Vedic religion that underpins Indian philosophical advancement in the 1st millennium B.C.E; they are the traditional base. The Vedas dominated religious life with elaborate sacrificial rituals that were at the heart of the Vedic religion (Kalupahana, 1976: 5). The Vedic religion was based on the secret knowledge held by the priestly class (Kalupahana, 1976: 5). The secret doctrine was *Brahman*, the Absolute and supremely real (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 1). The official

priestly cast, Brahmans, were intermediaries between man and god. Therefore, it was exclusive knowledge, not inclusive. The exclusivity regarding sacred knowledge translated into power. This resulted in a symbiotic relationship between the ruling elite class and the Brahmans. The elite needed religious priests for sacrifices and the priests needed the ruling elite; neither could hold absolute control over Indian society.

The beginning of the Vedic tradition is oral, preserving whole masses of literature orally (Frauwellner, 1973: 19). Oral tradition, especially when dealing with sacrificial rituals like the Vedas, is often extremely consistent. However, one limitation to the oral tradition regards continuation and preservation. Consistent preservation requires an uninterrupted tradition, for a break in the tradition means the oral transmission no longer takes place (Frauwellner, 1973: 20). In this regard, it is impossible to calculate how much Indian thought has been lost to us from the early period (pre-1st Millennium BCE), for it is only the Vedic tradition that survived. Although one has little way of knowing what other philosophical traditions existed at the time of the Vedas, it is clear that other traditions did exist.

The Vedas are the start of Indian philosophy, but it is not ‘a consistent collection of philosophical writing’ (Frauwellner, 1973: 27). The Vedic ritual texts are the seed from which Indian philosophy slowly develops. Importantly, one can trace development and growth within the Indian tradition. But the main focus of Vedic religion, until the *Upaniṣads*, was the ritual sacrifice.²² The Vedas, as secret doctrines, were believed to have been ‘revealed at some unknown remote period’ at the start of each creation of the universe (Dasgupta, 1922: 10). The Vedas became the authority to which new philosophical and religious systems attempted to conform (Dasgupta, 1922: 11). The development of thought was directly tied with the ongoing Vedic religion.

²² There is a further debate within Indian scholarship regarding who wrote the *Upaniṣadic* teachings. A suggestion is that the *Upaniṣads* were the result of the ruling elite breaking away from Brahmanical control and presenting their own form of soteriology. The issue is undecided.

The *Brāhmaṇa* texts were created to explain the symbolism of the sacrifice (Frauwellner, 1973:29). The importance of the sacrificial ritual in society drove a development in Indian thought. The success of sacrificial ritual hinged on the exact performance of the ritual, down to the smallest pronunciation of words (Frauwellner, 1973: 28). As Dasgupta explains, the *Brāhmaṇas* are ‘full of dogmatic assertions, fanciful symbolism and speculations of an unbounded imagination in the field of sacrificial details’ (1922: 13). Therefore, both the *Samhita* and *Brāhmaṇa* collections were subordinate to the elaborate sacrificial ritual (Dasgupta, 1922: 13).

There was a development from sacrificial centred religion, characterised by the Vedic texts of the *Samhitā* and the *Brāhmaṇas*, towards critical insight and philosophical investigation. The philosophical investigation began to be formulated in the *Āraṇyakas*. The *Āraṇyakas* were ‘forest treatises’, or ‘wilderness’ treatises, designed for old men who had retired into the forest from worldly life. As a result of this withdrawal, the old men were unable to perform the elaborate sacrifices required of them. Therefore, the *Āraṇyakas* were a meditation on certain symbols (Dasgupta, 1922: 14). These symbols were directly related to the ritual sacrifices. The external sacrifices were turned into internal reflections on sacrificial symbols. The daily life of these men becomes a sacrifice in a deeper sense (Frauwallner, 1973: 29). A development away from ritualistic shackles paves the way for the texts of *Upaniṣads* (Dasgupta, 1922: 14). The development culminated in the *Upaniṣads*.

2.3 Upaniṣads

The early extant *Upaniṣads* were created between c.800-300BCE (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2). However, dating cannot be more precise than a few centuries. The two earliest prose texts are *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Chāndogya* (Olivelle, 1998: xxxvi). *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* can be given a tentative date of c.800 BCE, and can be said to usher in a new period of Indian thought, characterised by abstraction (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2).

The next three prose *Upaniṣads* are the *Taittirīya*, *Aitareya*, and *Kauṣītaki*, and once again these are pre-Buddhist (Olivelle, 1998: xxxvi-xxxvii).²³ The oldest verse *Upaniṣad* is the *Kena*, followed by the *Kaṭha*, and by the remaining three verse *Upaniṣads* *Īśā*, *Svetasvatara*, and *Muṇḍaka* (Olivelle, 1998: xxxvii). All of the verse *Upaniṣads* are post-Buddhist in the last few centuries BCE (Olivelle, 1998: xxxvii). Geographically, the culture that the *Upaniṣads* originally came out of is located in the region of northern India from the upper Indus valley to the lower Ganges; this is the centre of ancient Brahmanism (Olivelle, 1998: xxxvii).

Although *Upaniṣads* are still described as ‘predominantly mystical texts’ (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2), they are the philosophically valuable parts of the broader Vedic corpus (Frauwellner, 1973: 30). The *Upaniṣads* are often characterised as a break from the ritualism of the early Vedic literature (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2). Moreover, the *Upaniṣads* ‘denote a subjective and contemplative turn away from ritualism and priestcraft to ontological musings about the nature of reality and the place of humans within it’ (Prabhu, 2006: vol 4. 199). However ‘subjective’ or ‘contemplative’ the *Upaniṣads* may be, they are still ‘variations on central [Vedic] views’ (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2). That being said, the *Upaniṣads* are a collection of different texts that are not necessarily all analogous. It is ‘futile to try to discover a single doctrine or philosophy in them [*Upaniṣads*]’ (Olivelle, 1998: 4). Even within the earliest *Upaniṣads* there is no consistent world view (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 1). However, the early *Upaniṣads* are fundamentally a ‘search for the reality underlying the flux of things’ (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 48). There exists a consensus regarding the importance of mystical knowledge; but not of what that knowledge is (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 1). The most important development, therefore, is that the ‘interest shifts from

²³ I take the dates of the Buddha to be 480-400 BCE. But Olivelle dates the Buddha at 375-355 BCE (1998: xxxvi).

the objective (Vedic) to the subjective (*Upaniṣads*)’ (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 49). This subjective knowledge has an esoteric tone, and the ideal vehicle for passing knowledge is from teacher to worthy student (Prabhu, 2006: vol 4. 199).

The subjective knowledge, pre-Buddhist, of Indian religious life was equated with ‘seeking for Self’ (Harvey, 1995: 21). The Self to be sought was *Brahman*, the One true reality, to which all life was linked. One must realise the True Self (*ātman*) behind the outward projection of the senses. The *ātman* and *Brahman* are intrinsically linked; *Brahman* relates to the macrocosmic universe, and *ātman* to the microcosmic individual. The *Upaniṣadic* thinkers sought an immortal, eternal, but self-conscious ‘self’; a ‘true self’ that is *ātman* (Kalupahana, 1976: 10). Salvation came through the realisation of the ‘individual self’ with the ‘Universal Self’ (Kalupahana, 1976: 14). Essentially, this process culminated in the realisation of *ātman* with *Brahman*. As a result, change and impermanence are seen as illusionary (*ibid.*). The *Upaniṣadic* ‘self’, therefore, seems to satisfy humanity’s deep-seated craving for permanent happiness through self-preservation (Kalupahana, 1976: 38). Yet at the same time Kalupahana’s idea of self-preservation provides an interesting paradox; that your individual ‘self’ is preserved through a realisation that it is actually a part of the ‘Universal self’.

This overview gives an impression of doctrinal unity, which—as I have already stated—is misleading. Therefore, the previous paragraph does not portray the nuances and doctrinal disputes. The *Upaniṣads*—in later development (CE)—became known as Vedānta, with a central position regarding the speculation on *Brahman* and the relation of self to the world (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 1). The Vedānta school is characterised by a further schism into two opposing theories of *Upaniṣadic* interpretation. On the one hand, there is the Advaita school of non-dualism; and on the other, there is the Vedāntic or Indian theists. What sets the two schools apart is their interpretation of how

Brahman relates to the world (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2). These Vedānta schools ‘systematized the thought of early *Upaniṣads*’ into the psychological monism of the Advaita Vedānta school which relates *Brahman* as self; and the theistic Vedānta school which interprets *Brahman* as a creator God in a real universe (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 3). In the history of Indian thought these interpretations are hugely important. Though the concepts of monism and dualism do not directly relate to this thesis, one cannot help thinking that the complex discussions on the nature of reality in Indian thought may shed light on intricate thinkers such as Parmenides or even Plato. That is, however, a tantalising aside from this project.

For the Advaita school of non-dualist, *Brahman* manifests the world ‘out of God’s own substance, as a spider’s web is spun out of its own body’ (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2). The emphasis is on *Brahman* as a unity and a non-dual self-awareness (*ibid.*). Śaṅkara, the most famous commentator for the Advaitin school, wrote in the early 8th century CE (Phillips, 1998b: vol 9. 591). In contrast, for the Vedānta theists there is a ‘stratified view of reality’ (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 3). The emphasis is on the love between the creator God and the individual human soul (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 4). The theistic tradition is characterised in later texts, such as *Bhagavad Gītā* (c.200 BCE), and in later Indian commentators, such as Rāmānuja (11th c CE), who examined the relationship between God and the soul. The theistic tradition is specifically in opposition to the Advaita assertion that *Brahman* and the self are a unity (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 4).

The ‘dispute [between Advaita and theists] is irresolvable in the *Upaniṣads* themselves’ (Phillips, 1998a: vol 2. 2). Furthermore, the dispute is a clear example of how traditional interpretations can be used to promote a specific reading or interpretation over that of a rival claim. Vedānta is not simply a philosophical school, it

is a religious practice based on the *Upaniṣad* texts. As a religious practice, any interpretation has soteriological repercussions. Contradicting schools of Vedānta are able to exist as the ‘Early *Upaniṣads* do not speak with a single voice’ (Phillips, 1998b: vol 9. 589). Nevertheless, ‘Classical Vedānta is one of the greatest systems of Indian philosophy’ (*ibid.*). With regards to the competing schools of Vedānta, it is clear that a contradiction exists within the early *Upaniṣads*. The contradiction, in its most basic form, can be expressed as follows: the need to reconcile an all-encompassing *Brahman* with the empirical reality of diversity, change, and individuality.

2.4 Śramaṇa Movement

Śramaṇa was a reaction in the 6th Century BCE against Brahmanist culture (Sick, 2007: 261). The reaction was mostly against two concepts: (i) the highly ritualised Vedic religion; and (ii) *Upaniṣadic* ideas of self. Individuals that were part of the *Śramaṇa* movement were commonly known as ‘forest dwellers’, being religious wanderers (Harvey, 1995: 1). These ‘forest dwellers’ renounced Brahmanical society and the highly scripted ritualism of the Vedas. The *Śramaṇa* movement was an ascetic tradition, and yogic concentration was a central practice. The aim of yogic concentration is the gradual elimination of sense impressions and any defiling impulses. It is a process of mental development (Kalupahana, 1976: 6-7). India had a ‘highly developed mythopoetic worldview’ and the philosophical *Śramaṇa* movements challenged that worldview (Dillon, 2000: 525/6). Further evidence of a schism in society is the language used to produce these new *Śramaṇa* philosophies. The texts of the Vedic religion and the *Upaniṣads* were written in Sanskrit, the philosophies of the *Śramaṇa* movement were not. For example, Buddhist texts were written in Pali, and Jain texts were written in Prakrit (Harvey, 1995: 11). On a practical level, the use of different languages leads to complications with terms: *nirvāṇa* is Sanskrit and *nibbāna* is Pali. Also *ātman* is Sanskrit and *attā* is Pali; both mean ‘self’. The term *anattā* in

Buddhism is Pali, meaning no-self; in Sanskrit the same term is *anātman*. Another example of the double spelling of complex terms is the Sanskrit *karma* and the Pali *kamma*. Where appropriate the most commonly held word is used, be that Sanskrit or Pali. For example, *anattā* is the Buddhist term, and is Pali; however, *karma* is more commonly used than *Kamma*, and is Sanskrit.

Within the *Śramaṇa* movement there were different modes of thought; I will highlight two: Jainism and Buddhism. Mahavira (599-527BCE) was the founder of Jainism (Long, 2009: 34). Jainism held a deterministic theory of moral behaviour; *karma*. This meant man was responsible for his own actions and behaviour, and was unable to avoid the consequences of an action. Therefore, one must prevent the accumulation of *karma* by a process of non-action. *Karma*, in Jainism, is an inexorable law, beyond the power of control; an unalterable external force (Kalupahana, 1976: 46). Long compares *karma* to Newton's Third Law of Motion: 'For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction' (2009: 1). Jainism also posited the existence of a permanent 'soul' (*jiva*) that was comparable to *ātman* (Kalupahana, 1976:13-14). The *jiva* is individually one's own life principle (Harvey, 1995: 1). It is 'the defiled condition of the soul [that] leads to its continuous rebirth in various states of embodiment' (Jaini, 1979: 107). 'Karmic dust' attaches itself to the soul through desire (*raga*) and hatred (*dvesa*) leading to defilement and rebirth (Jaini, 1979: 112). *Karma* in Jainism is deterministic; one is unable to avoid the consequences of an action (Kalupahana, 1976: 13). Indeed, Kalupahana describes a man as 'a victim of his own actions' (*ibid.*). Yet 'victim' is the wrong word; the individual would at the same time be the perpetrator and the victim of an action. The accused aggressor, *karma*, in this instance is wholly justified in a response to the 'victim'. *Karma* requires moral responsibility, and responsibility undercuts any sense of injustice or 'victimisation'.

2.5 The Buddha and Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama is the man born to be Buddha. However, dating the Buddha is contentious. This is unfortunate given the importance placed on the life of the Buddha as a watershed moment in Indian philosophical history, with *Upaniṣads* commonly referred to as being either pre or post Buddha. The estimated time is somewhere around the 6th and 5th centuries BCE (Cousins, 1998: vol 2. 51). The standard date was placed more in the 6th century as 566-486 BCE or c.563-483BCE (Sorabji, 2006: 279). But now the date is more commonly held to be in the 5th century at 480-400 BCE. The latter date would make the Buddha a contemporary of Socrates (Cousins, 1998: vol 2. 52). Olivelle has begun dating the Buddha much later in the 4th century at 375-355 BCE (1998: xxxvi). However, there is no reason for this project not to use the standard accepted middle date of c.480-400 BCE. There is a tremendous difference between the 6th century dating and that of the 4th century, with further ramifications regarding the dating of the *Upaniṣads*. Firm dating is not possible, but as stated already, the *Upaniṣads* are often dated in relation to the life of the Buddha. Therefore, if the Buddha's dates move a few centuries later, so too must the *Upaniṣads*. Granted, which date one chooses to affirm can have ramifications for resulting arguments or theories, but this thesis does not pertain to any arguments of influence, nor does it comment on issues of dating.

What is known is that the Buddha closely followed the early *Upaniṣad* period (Dasgupta, 1922: 65). But the historicity of the Buddha is of little consequence to Buddhist doctrine at large (Hoffman, 1987: 6), the Buddha's philosophical insights are born out of an intrinsic discontent with the *Upaniṣadic* Self, *ātman*. The Buddha was a heretic, his teachings contrasted with the traditional Brahmanical teachings (Kalupahana, 1976: 9). The main point of contrast was the Buddha's new teaching of not-Self (*anātman/anattā*). According to the new philosophical teaching there was no

metaphysical Self, no *ātman*, no *Brahman* within every human body. Therefore, the ‘being who is reborn is neither the same as nor different from the being who dies in a previous existence’ (McDermott, 1980: 166).

Although it is not necessary to go into detail, explanations of some fundamental doctrines of Buddhism are important. The Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths (Harvey, 1995: 4):

- Everything in life is pervaded by un-satisfactoriness/suffering (*dukkha/duḥkha*);
- The main cause of *dukkha* is craving/desire/thirst (*taṇhā*);
- If craving is destroyed so too is *dukkha*, leading to escape from rebirth (*nibbāna/nirvāṇa*);
- The path to the cessation of *dukkha* is the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Four Noble Truths are presented as a doctor’s prescription. The diagnosis is *dukkha* caused by craving; there is a cure and the prognosis is the Noble Eightfold Path. *Dukkha* can be translated in different ways; suffering is often associated with it. The translation and meaning used in this thesis will be ‘un-satisfactoriness’. The world is pervaded by an un-satisfactoriness, which is intertwined with happiness: upon the cessation of one, the other arises. Therefore, it is not that Buddhism denies happiness, but Buddhism believes worldly happiness to be transitory, which in turn leads to pain.²⁴

The Noble Eightfold Path is (Gethin, 1998: 81):

Right view;
 Right intention;
 Right speech;
 Right action;
 Right livelihood;
 Right effort;
 Right mindfulness;
 Right concentration.

Right view is seeing the four truths; right intention is desirelessness, friendliness, and compassion; right speech is refraining from false speech, divisive speech, hurtful

²⁴ Socrates states the connectedness of pleasure and pain at *Phaedo* 60b: ‘It is remarkable how closely it [pleasure] is connected with its apparent opposite, pain. They will never come to a man both at once, but if you pursue one of them and catch it, you are virtually compelled always to have the other as well’.

speech, and idle chatter; right action is refraining from harming living beings, taking what is not given, and sexual misconduct; right livelihood that is not based on wrong speech and action; right effort is to prevent un-arisen unwholesome states, to abandon arisen unwholesome states, and to develop arisen wholesome states; right mindfulness is the contemplation of body, feeling, mind, and *dharma*; and right concentration is the practice of the four *dhyānas* (Gethin, 1998: 81).²⁵ Right view and intention correlate to wisdom (*prajñā*), right speech, action, and livelihood relate to conduct (*śīla*), and right effort, mindfulness, and concentration are to do with meditation (*samādhi*) (Gethin, 1998: 81).

What underpins Buddhist philosophy, and what the Noble Eightfold Path attempts to alleviate, is ignorance (*avijjā*). Ignorance is the root of craving, which in turn leads to the prominence of *dukkha*. Once ignorance is removed, craving can stop, and *dukkha* ceases without craving. There are a further three qualities or marks of existence that support the Four Noble Truths (Harvey, 1995: 5/6):

- Impermanence (*anicca*);
- Un-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*);
- Not-Self (*anattā/anātman*).

Impermanence (*anicca*) is a key Buddhist doctrine. In Buddhism, *anicca* represents how ‘everything in the world, everything we experience, is changing moment by moment...everything is impermanent’ (Gethin, 1998: 61). Due to *anicca*, Buddhism does not believe in an eternal unchanging soul (*anattā*). It is the third of these truths, *anattā*, which is the most complex. The fundamental definition of *anattā* is ‘no permanent, metaphysical Self can be found in personality’ (Harvey, 1995: 7). However, scholars such as Harvey postulate that early Buddhism does have an empirical self. The empirical self is *citta* (mind) and is changeable, and is not ‘my [metaphysical] Self’ (Harvey, 1995: 20). Therefore, Buddhism is in the middle between Annihilationists,

²⁵ *Dhyānas* are a meditational attainment (Gethin, 1998: 320).

who profess that ‘a s/Self does not exist’; and Eternalists who believe that ‘a s/Self exists’ (Harvey, 1995: 29).²⁶ Harvey characterises the problem of *anattā/ātman* as an innocent man having to answer the question ‘have you stopped beating your wife’ (1995: 29)?

A further central Buddhist concept, one that is invaluable to this thesis, is dependent origination, characterised in the text *Majjhima-Nikāya* 1.262 ff:

When this is present, that comes to be;
 from the arising of this, that arises.
 When this is absent, that does not come to be;
 on the cessation of this, that ceases.

There is no such thing as accidental occurrences (Kalupahana, 1976: 28). Humanity is interwoven with each other. Everything that arises does so on the basis of certain principles. The world in which we live is contingent. Nothing occurs in and of itself, in the human sphere. Buddhism, therefore, is a complex philosophical religion. The aim is the cessation of suffering, through a realisation of not-Self and an ending of craving.

2.6 Early Buddhist Literature

Fundamental to early Buddhist literature are three collections of Pāli Scriptures (‘the three baskets’ or *Tipiṭaka*): the *Sutta*, the *Vinaya*, and the *Abhidhamma*. The *Sutta* relates to Buddhist doctrines, the *Vinaya* to the discipline of the monks, and the *Abhidhamma* relates to the same doctrines as the *Sutta*, but in a more scholarly and technical manner. Although individual dates are problematic, it is commonly held that the three collections were completed before 241 BCE (Dasgupta, 1922: 82). There are numerous individual collections within the *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma*. The *Sutta* comprises the *Nikāyas*: *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Samyutta Nikāya*, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, and *Khuddaka Nikāya*. Importantly, the Buddha is not the author of any texts (Gethin, 1998: 35).

²⁶ The capital refers to a metaphysical Self, whereas, the lowercase concerns an empirical self.

The *Milindapañha* is a dialogue between a Greek king, Milinda, and a Buddhist monk, Nāgasena. Dasgupta states that the ‘work known as *Milinda Pañha*...is of considerable philosophical value’ (1922: 83). Indeed, the *Milindapañha* is a very important Buddhist work (Sick, 2007: 254). According to Halbfass, the popular *Milindapañha* pays ‘special attention to reconciling the postulate of personal accountability with the Buddhist ‘no-self’ doctrine’ (1998: vol 5. 211). The text is a long work, with an unknown compiler (Horner, 1964: ix). King Milinda is believed to be the Bactrian Greek king Menander (Horner, 1964: xxii). Attempting to date Menander have not provided any certainty, though he is often placed in the 2nd century BCE (*ibid.*; Sorabji, 2006: 39). It is not possible to state with any certainty whether the text dates from Milinda’s own time. Most likely, the text was written down at a later date, perhaps as late as the first century CE (Horner, 1964: xxi). But crucially, regardless of the date of composition, *Milindapañha* remains part of the early Buddhist literature (BCE) categorised by the earliest traditional Buddhist School of Theravāda.

2.7 Karma and Rebirth

From the mass of Indian tradition I have selected two texts, both deal with identity through rebirth and the ethical parameters of rebirth.²⁷ Within the Greek thought ethical responsibility and continued identity through death is analysed. And both Greek themes are encapsulated by the Indian notions of *karma* and rebirth. *Karma* and rebirth are two pillars of Indian thought central to my thesis. Therefore, an introduction to these doctrines, however brief, is beneficial. It will help my readers to understand, on a basic level, these two theories. There is much that can be said regarding the development of rebirth and consequent karmic theories. Therefore, it is important to present here the terms within this project at large.

²⁷ The Buddhist text deals with *karma* more explicitly than *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*.

The doctrines of *karma* and rebirth appear to be intrinsically entwined. However, the historical roots of both doctrines may be rather different (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 216). It is possible to have a theory of rebirth that is altogether absent of a karmic doctrine, for a theory of rebirth does not require *karma* (*ibid.*). That being said, in India the idea of rebirth developed into a concept of *karma*. *Karma* and rebirth ‘are among the most important regulative ideas in the history of Indian thought’ (*ibid.*). Yet there has ‘never been one identical theory’ (*ibid.*). As a consequence, talking about a *karma* doctrine or a rebirth doctrine in Indian philosophical history ‘is only a convenient label’ (*ibid.*). There is less ambiguity about *karma* and rebirth in the Buddhist texts compared to the early *Upaniṣads* or older Vedic texts (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 213). The Vedas and *Brāhmaṇas* have antecedents but lack recognition of a doctrine (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 209). Rebirth as a theory, or indeed, as a concept, is absent in the Vedas (O’Flaherty, 1980b: 3). This has lead McEvilley to claim that ethical reward and punishment is absent also (2002: 112). In the oldest Indian sources—including early *Upaniṣads*—‘comprehensive and systematic presentations are rare’ (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 210). Therefore, India clearly has a developmental history concerning these doctrines; they do not arrive fully formed.

Halbfass, in his overview, believes *karma* ‘has at least three clearly separable, but interrelated, functions and dimensions’ in the history of Indian thought (1998: vol 5. 217-218):

- 1) A causal explanation linking the present with the past;
- 2) Connecting the present with the future, through perspectives on and incentives for actions;
- 3) A soteriological point of departure through detachment, transcendence, and final liberation from the temporal world.

At the fundamental level *karma* is a ‘retributive power of actions and decisions’ (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 209). I would further add to that a definition that *karma* directly affects the human world in a way that rebirth ontologies need not do. Rebirth can have

rewards and punishments after death, followed by a rebirth that is separable from one's previous good or bad deeds, or the rewards and punishments that one receives after death. For example, after death one can be reborn within the same kin group; this leads to ancestral rebirth. *Karma* does not allow ancestral rebirth or rebirth into the same kin group, for one's actions now are direct causal links to one's own future rebirth state. Therefore, causality becomes intrinsically important.

A progression from rebirth to *karma* is not always seamless. *Karma* is a concept and a religious soteriological practice. Furthermore, *karma* is not strict determinism; there is an important element of choice and responsibility (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 213). The 'small print' provides exceptions. At the most basic level, in some later traditions the exception characterises itself as karmic merit. Principally, karmic merit is the belief that *karma* can be transferred from one person to another, or indeed, from a god. The hope is that through this 'self-less' act of giving away karmic merit, one's own karmic merit will increase, or one's next rebirth will be suitably favourable with the help of the god. The paradox should be self evident.

One can see a transformation from an idea into a soteriological practice concerning people's hopes and fears. Therefore, *karma* and rebirth have a double meaning in Indian history. On the one hand, they are both ideas that reflect a *Truth* about human nature, and phenomenal nature at large; yet on the other hand, both ideas are also part of religious movements. And religious movements are comprised of people who wish to be saved. Therefore, *karma* is both an ontological truth and a religious tool that can be used to comfort, and indeed, save the individual.

The double meaning is important, as it characterises the history of Indian thought in general. Thinking in India is never static or confined to the sphere of thought only: Indian thought is a philosophy of practice. The double meaning can dilute

ontological truths, but it also means that Indian philosophy is firmly rooted in what it means to be human. No two humans are the same and as a result their *karma* will not be the same either. The example used in Buddhist imagery is that, if one throws a grain of salt into a small cup of water, that water will become salty to taste; but, if one throws the same grain into the Ganges, due to the great mass of water the grain of salt will be undetectable (*Aṅguttara-Nikāya*.I.249). Therefore, the same deed done by two different people can have two very different karmic consequences (Kalupahana, 1976: 48).

2.8 Conclusion

Having set out my Claims, defended the risks, and contextualised the comparative scholarship as well as the Indian history, I now turn to my first case study: Plato's *Phaedo* and the Buddhist text *Milindapañha*.

Part One: *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha*

Introduction

The aim of Part One is to present the first test-case, *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha*. In Part One, I present a solution to an interpretational problem in Plato's *Phaedo* concerning identity and moral accountability. Chapter 1 examines *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* concerning concepts of death and identity, and shows that there are Shared Concerns (relating to desire for the physical and purification, specifically concerning death (Claim 1)). In Chapters 2-4 I show how these Shared Concerns can be used to solve the interpretational problem (Claim 2).

The philosophical problem relating to death and identity is the relationship between identity and moral accountability in *Phaedo*. Death is the gateway to a much larger philosophical question regarding identity: how can *I* survive death and should I be *concerned* about my death? Both texts attempt to answer, in some way, the question of what it means to survive their death. When asking that question one needs to examine the *how*, the *I*, the *death*, and why the *I* should be concerned to survive death. I argue that the work of Locke and the *Milindapañha* can be used to solve the problem in a way that is understandable within a Platonic framework. The methodology is designed to tease out existing, yet implicit, notions within Plato. As such, my new interpretations could in principle have been reached without a comparative method—for otherwise my conclusions would be a grave mis-reading of the original Greek evidence—but up to this point they have not been. Claim 2 leads to a new interpretation of Plato concerning death and identity with an emphasis on moral accountability. Overall, new findings are presented (Chapter 4).

In speaking of Shared Concerns I do not intend to synthesise distinct cultural texts, emptying them of their individual value. These two texts have a fundamental difference of viewpoint—the existence of a soul. *Milindapañha* concludes that one

achieves self knowledge in *anattā*; there is no metaphysical, eternal, unchanging self or soul. *Milindapañha* explicitly and continually denies a belief in a soul. But, *Phaedo* is concerned with the fate of a soul. Both dialogues explicitly present a quest of self-discovery, but, differ fundamentally on *what* is discovered. Purification is different: where Plato aims to purify the soul from the body, Buddhism has no soul to purify. By contrast, through these differences come certain Shared Concerns. By using *Milindapañha* I am able to highlight these Shared Concerns more effectively than by reading *Phaedo* without the Buddhist text.²⁸ Differences between these two texts are to be expected given the time variances in writing, the vast geographical dislocation between them, and their individual cultures. It is because of these great differences that their Shared Concerns are so notable and interesting.

Claim 2—building on from Claim 1—is that interpretational problems within one text can be solved through comparative analysis with another text that shares specific concerns. Fundamentally, the Platonic problem in *Phaedo* is identity linked with moral accountability through sequential embodiments. Embodied actions lead to consequences for the soul alone. I will show how this is problematic when combined with moral accountability. How can this problem in *Phaedo* be solved?

Through Chapters 2-3 I use Locke's distinction between a human and a person to show that, although Locke's distinction helps us to understand Plato's concept of a person better, it does not in fact solve the problem. This is mainly due to the problem of memory in Locke's concept. But by taking Locke's fundamental notion of forensic persons as consciousness and linking it with Buddhist examples of ancestral relations, in Chapter 4 I show that Plato's identity and moral accountability is solved through a

²⁸ It is not that one *cannot* draw conclusions about desire in *Phaedo* without the Buddhist text, but that *Milindapañha* highlights aspects that are already in Plato. Therefore, through the methodology I do not Claim to find completely *new* readings that would not be possible any other way, but that, methodologically, issues are highlighted within the context of another cultural text that has Shared Concerns, and this illumination, therefore, helps the reader to understand *Phaedo*'s complex ideas.

forensic soul that represents Locke's person, but does not rely on memory as Locke suggested. Instead the emphasis is placed on an ancestral relation.

In Chapter 2 I examine the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* in three ways: firstly, I look at Plato directly (2.1); secondly, I engage with the modern scholarly commentators—specifically, I highlight the works of Sorabji, Annas, and Inwood, as they offer the clearest critique of sequential identity combined with moral accountability in *Phaedo*—examining issues in Plato's work from their perspective (2.2); and thirdly, I present my own Claims concerning the problems in *Phaedo* (2.3).

Chapter 3 then attempts to solve the problem of moral accountability linked with identity in *Phaedo* by using a more modern philosopher, John Locke. Locke's distinction of kinds of substances is firstly examined on its own, providing the reader with a basic understanding of Locke's argument. I then use Locke's kinds as a basic framework for a further analysis of *Phaedo*, showing how Plato's ideas can be fitted into Locke's kinds—specifically, Human, Person, and Soul—to give a deeper understanding, and a clearer presentation of terminology, in Plato's *Phaedo*. However, Locke's reliance on memory as the fundamental aspect of moral accountability, although useful for Locke, cannot be used to solve the Platonic problem. The individual sections break down as follows: I explain Locke's account of humans and persons (3.1); I apply Locke's distinction to *Phaedo* (3.2); and I explain why Locke's concept of persons reliant on memory cannot fully solve the Platonic problem (3.3).

Finally, in Chapter 4 I use a Buddhist text to solve the problem. But I use *Milindapañha* and Locke's kinds of substance; just as I used *Phaedo* and Locke's terminology. Through the combination of Locke and *Milindapañha* I conclude that Plato's soul is a forensic person who retains moral accountability, not through memory but through an ancestral relation. I offer a solution in Chapter 4 by using the

Milindapañha's idea of dependent origination (or ancestral relation) in the place of Locke's memory.

Chapter 1: Desire and Purification

Introduction

The aim of Chapter 1 is to show that *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* have Shared Concerns relating to death and identity through the specific topics of desire and purification within a particular Platonic framework of thought. To show these Shared Concerns I examine each dialogue—*Milindapañha* (1.1) and *Phaedo* (1.2)—in turn, before finally examining both dialogues together (1.3). The *Milindapañha* explores three aspects of desire for the physical and purification: the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism (1.1.1); craving for the physical world (1.1.2); and the body as a wound as an image of purification (1.1.3). When analysing *Phaedo* I examine three aspects of the dialogue pertinent to desire and purification: the idea of death (1.2.1); the afterlife myth (1.2.2); and the need to care for the soul (1.2.3). Each dialogue is critically examined and explored individually to begin with (1.1 and 1.2). I then move on to the investigation of desire and purification across the two texts. I examine why Socrates and Buddhist monks do not fear death and do not crave bodily life (Death’s Appeal 1.3.1). Conversely I analyse what happens to those individuals who do desire to be bodily and do crave the physical world (Craving Corporeality 1.3.2). Finally I examine the process of continued existence after death for those who crave continued physical life (The Seas of Life 1.3.3).

1.1. *Milindapañha*

1.1.1 The Noble Truths of Buddhist Thought

For Buddhists there is a cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*). The rebirth cycle (*saṃsāra*) perpetuates sorrow (*dukkha*). Sorrow results from desiring the physical. If one desires the world during human life, one will experience sorrow in the here and now but also rebirth must be the outcome after death and so further sorrow will arise. An individual must not crave or cling to the world of existence because craving maintains sorrow.

Human life is characterised by desire that leads to pain, suffering, and rebirth. *Samsāra* is sustained through such desire. Therefore, suffering is linked to the craving for sensory pleasures. Buddhist thought identifies a harmful craving for life (Rhys Davids, 1890: 82) and regards becoming as requiring volitional desire. Confections (*Samkhāra*) are potentialities or possible forms of sentient existence leading on from desire and craving (Rhys Davids, 1890: 82 fn3).

Wisdom is the practical implementation of reasoned truth. It is presented as a form of purification. Purification does not have to refer to a mystical other-worldly transformation, i.e. a ritual cleansing; instead, the term can be used to denote something as simple as ‘to purify’, i.e. to remove contaminants from something. The Buddha is the example that shows that the latter purification is possible. Wisdom (*prajñā*), reason and other good qualities help one escape *samsāra*. They are able to do this because the mark of wisdom is the ability to let go of those things that only bring sorrow, like attachment to the world. Cultivating wisdom (*prajñā*) and escaping *samsāra* is hard, requiring perseverance and endeavour. The process of escaping *samsāra* is spoken of as crossing a sea and as a form of purification. Nāgasena quotes a passage from the *Samyutta Nikāya* where the Buddha spoke of the wise man being purified and crossing a ‘stream’ or ‘sea’ (II.1.10.36):

By faith he crosses over the stream,
By earnestness the sea of life;
By steadfastness all grief he stills,
By wisdom is he purified.

In Buddhism a synonym for *samsāra* is ‘the sea of life’, a ‘wandering’ through birth, death, and re-birth continually (Gethin, 1998: 27). Gethin notes how (1998: 64):

One of the ancient and recurring images of Indian religious discourses is of ‘crossing the ocean of existence’, that is, crossing over from the near shore, which is fraught with dangers, to the further shore, which is safe and free from danger.

The process is an escape from the ‘endless round of rebirth that is *samsāra* and the condition of *duḥkha*’ (Gethin, 1998: 64). The crossing over water requires a raft. In Buddhism that raft is *dharma*. Gethin presents the parable of the raft through a quotation by the Buddha in the *Majjhima Nikāya* II. 58 (1998: 71-72):

...a man who had set out on a long journey...might see a great river in flood, the near shore fearful and dangerous, the far shore safe and free of danger, but there might be no ferry or bridge for crossing from one side to the other...And this man might think, “...What if I were to gather together grass, sticks, branches and foliage and bind together a raft, and then using that raft...safely cross over to the further shore?”.

In the parable the imagery of journeying over a powerful body of water from one shore to another is clearly visible. Problematically, we can become attached even to the Buddha’s teachings. The very raft we are using to try and escape *samsāra* becomes the cause of *dukkha* that perpetuates the cycle (Gethin, 1998: 71). What if the same man thought the raft to be ‘useful’ because he used it to ‘safely cross[ed] over to the further shore’? And what if this man ‘were to now lift it on to [his] head or raise it on [his] back’ to take it with him. Would the man ‘be doing what is appropriate’? The monks who the Buddha is teaching respond, ‘Not at all’. The Buddha suggests that instead of carrying the raft with you, you should instead ‘beach this raft on the shore or sink it in the water and go on [your] way’. The Buddha finishes the parable with the meaning of his lesson about the danger of becoming attached even to the very thing that has been useful in your escape from the dangerous shore to the safe shore (Gethin, 1998: 72):

Even so, monks, as being like a raft, I have taught you how Dharma is for the purpose of crossing over and not for the purpose of holding on to. Those who understand the similarity to a raft will let go even of the teachings and practices (*dhammā*), let alone what are not the teachings and practices (*adhammā*).

Bringing the discussion back to the *Milindapañha*, wisdom is the key to purification and understanding how to cross from one shore to another.

For Nāgasena purification, as well as wisdom, also requires right action. *Karma* builds up through wrong action, requiring purification. Therefore, it must be possible

for one to exhaust one's 'evil Karma'. The end of the Buddhist path is *Nirvāṇa*. *Nirvāṇa* is not discussed in positive language, it is always described as what it is not. *Nirvāṇa* does not prescribe a repression of craving or desire; instead, one should cultivate pacification (Kalupahana, 1976: 60). The first step towards cessation of suffering is recognising that craving the sensory pleasures of this world leads to one's suffering. It is ironic that one craves sensory pleasure thinking it will be pleasurable and end suffering; but ultimately, craving ensures one's future suffering. One must break the cycle; that break is *Nirvāṇa*. Therefore, purification refers to one's actions and motivations now, in this life.

How does the body fit into this concept of purification through non-attachment? Craving leads to becoming, which in turn leads to birth, and the process is characterised by suffering. The body is regarded as impure but a necessary instrument with which to engage with the world. Bodily experience must be endured due to humans being 'name-and-form' (*nāma-rūpa*). In Buddhist philosophy 'Name-and-Form' relates to the two elements of a human composition: body and intelligence. One must learn to use the body without desire, passion, or lust.

The ideas of craving and purification find explicit expression in The Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths are identified in Buddhist thought as: 1. There is suffering (*dukkha*); 2. Suffering is caused by attachment; 3. There is an end to *dukkha* (*Nirvāṇa*); 4. The Eight-Fold-Path (*Magga*) leads to *Nirvāṇa*. Buddhist philosophy is about the individual human being and the life they lead moving from the ignorance and attachment of *saṃsāra* towards the cessation of suffering (*dukkha*), an escape from *saṃsāra* (*Nirvāṇa*), and the cultivation of wisdom (*prajñā*). The individual must change how they perceive themselves and the world around them; then they must change the way they act.

I will now show how the text of *Milindapañha* presents these ideas, examining the detail of its expressions and formulations.

1.1.2 Desire: Craving the Corporeal

Due to the importance of non-attachment, even to the Buddha's teachings, Milinda wants to know more about the Buddhist ideas of non-attachment. He asks Nāgasena about 'renunciation', the very heart of the Buddhist practice. Nāgasena replies that renunciation leads to the cessation of sorrow (II.1.5.31):

Our renunciation is to the end that this sorrow may perish away, and that no further sorrow may arise; the complete passing away, without cleaving to the world, is our highest aim.

There are three points to analyse in this quotation: the cessation of 'sorrow'; a 'complete passing away'; and the necessity to do so 'without cleaving to the world'. The aim of renunciation is tied to this world now, since a happier existence is possible through achieving the cessation of sorrow. This is a psychological state, a state where sorrow has ended and no more 'sorrow may arise'. The sorrow-less state is here on earth in our daily lives, but it can also refer to rebirth. The concept of 'complete passing away' is the cessation of rebirth. Following directly from the advantage and aim of renunciation, Milinda asks if there is anyone who after death is not 'reindividualised' (II.1.6.32). The response is similar to Nāgasena's answer regarding 'the complete passing away'. Nāgasena answers that 'Some are so, and some not'. Therefore, the cessation of sorrow is possible through ending 'reindividualised' embodiment after death; the 'complete passing away' leaves the bodily world behind. Indeed, breaking the cycle of *saṃsāra* is the aim.

The 'craving for existence' or 'cleaving to the world' is what perpetuates *saṃsāra*. If Nāgasena dies 'with craving for existence in my heart' he will be 'reindividualised', 'but if not, no', he will not be reborn. Craving leads to rebirth and

sorrow, the aim is to end sorrow through one's actions now. Therefore, II.1.6.32 is an important insight into the Buddhist concept of desire.

Milinda wishes to understand whether he 'who escapes reindividualisation' does so by 'reasoning' alone (II.1.7.32). What follows is a short analysis of why reason and wisdom are different. Nāgasena says that animals have reason 'but wisdom they have not'. The example used by Nāgasena may only provide a difference between humans and other animals; but, importantly humans have the capability or potential for wisdom. The important distinction is the divergence between animals without and humans with the ability for wisdom. Reason and wisdom are differentiated: 'Reasoning has always comprehension as its mark; but wisdom has cutting off' (II.1.8.32). Whereas reason leads to abstract knowing, wisdom is practical; wisdom leads to a change in action. The 'cutting off' is linked with the ideas of the previous passages concerning 'craving for existence in my heart' (II.1.6.32), 'without cleaving to the world', and 'sorrow may perish away' (II.1.5.31). One cuts away craving for the corporeal so that sorrow ends, i.e. *saṃsāra* ends. The relationship between reason and wisdom is like how 'they reap the barley' (II.1.8.33):

With the left hand they grasp the barley into a bunch, and taking the sickle into the right hand, they cut it off with that.

Just even, so, O king, does the recluse by his thinking grasp his mind, and by his wisdom cut off his failings. In this way is it that comprehension is the characteristic of reasoning, but cutting off of wisdom.

The image of 'cutting off' is prevalent. Reason and wisdom complement each other. However, it is wisdom that leads to a practical change in the individual, by 'cut[ting] off his failings'. There is a difference between, on the one hand, understanding something to be true, and, on the other, being able to implement that truth into one's daily life. One can reasonably know or agree with an argument, but it is something different to put that reasoning into practice. Reason leads to 'comprehension' and understanding; but

wisdom leads to the ‘cutting off’ of ‘sinful’ action, the ‘cutting off’ of sorrow, and the ‘cutting off’ of ‘craving for existence’.

Why is wisdom necessary and what is it that is cut off? A further simile presented by *Nāgasena* offers an image of unravelling. Desires tangle life, creating complication and confusion (II.1.9.34):

Thus shall the strenuous Bhikkhu [monk], undeceived,
Unravel all the tangled skein of life.

Desire becomes entangled with existence. This makes it hard to discern what is true and what is harmful to one’s endeavour. Indeed, the image of a ‘tangled skein’ elucidates the great difficulty in the Buddhist path: it is hard to know which thread is the true path out of *samsāra*. The untangling of a thread, built up through *samsāric* desire, is the goal (*Nirvāṇa*). *Nirvāṇa* is ‘cessation’ (III.4.6.68-69). But how is ‘cessation *Nirvāṇa*’? To understand ‘cessation’ *Nāgasena* explains first why *karma* and rebirth take place (III.4.6.69):

All foolish individuals, take pleasure in the senses and in the objects of sense, find delight in them, continue to cleave to them. Hence are they carried down by that flood, they are not set free from birth, old age, and death, from grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair, - they are not set free, I say, from suffering.

Cleaving to the senses leads to rebirth. *Nāgasena* later in the dialogue describes how for Confections (*San̄khârâ* – potentialities, possible forms of sentient life) to arise ‘all have a gradual becoming’ (II.3.4-5.52). This gradual becoming is caused by ‘longing (*Tanhā*), where there is longing there is grasping (*Upādāna*), where there is grasping there is a becoming’ (II.3.4.52). One must have a thirst (*Tanhā*) for existence or becoming. Grasping (*Upādāna*) is the stretching out in satisfying a thirst. A craving for becoming is described as a ‘flood’, a power so strong that it takes the person involuntarily through the process of birth, death, rebirth, and all the suffering that characterises this process. The ‘flood’ is human passions. The wise man ‘neither takes

pleasure in those things, nor finds delight in them, nor continues cleaving to them’ (II.4.6.69). As a result (II.4.6.69):

...craving (*Tanhā*) ceases, and by the cessation of craving grasping (*Upādāna*) ceases, and by the cessation of grasping becoming (*Bhava*) ceases, and when becoming has ceased birth ceases, and with its cessation birth, old age, and death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair cease to exist.

Therefore, ‘cessation is *Nirvāṇa*’ since *Nirvāṇa* is a ‘cutting off’ of the roots that lead to suffering, i.e. craving/thirst. Unfortunately, according to Nāgasena not ‘all men receive *Nirvāṇa*’. Only the man who lives ‘righteously’, who ‘abandons those conditions which out to be abandoned, practises himself in those conditions which ought to be practised, realises those conditions which ought to be realised--he receives *Nirvāṇa*’ (III.4.7.69).

Enlightenment, therefore, is the process whereby Wisdom leads to *Nirvāṇa*, to an understanding, a cutting off of attachments. To further emphasise his point Nāgasena compares ignorance to darkness and knowledge to a light (II.1.14.39):

When wisdom springs up in the heart, O king, it dispels the darkness of ignorance, it causes the radiance of knowledge to arise, it makes the light of intelligence to shine forth (*Vidamseti*), and it makes the Noble Truths plain. Thus does the recluse who is devoted to effort perceive with the clearest wisdom the impermanency, the suffering, and the absence of any soul.

The contrast between wisdom and ignorance, light and dark, is clearly made. One banishes ignorance through cultivating wisdom. As darkness is the absence of light, ignorance is the absence of knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom. Wisdom is ‘like a lamp’ that is brought ‘into a house in darkness’. The lamp ‘would dispel the darkness, cause radiance to arise, and light to shine forth, and make the objects there plainly visible’ (II.1.14.39). The ‘objects’ that the simile refers to are the Noble Truths, which concern the world we inhabit. Wisdom illuminates the Noble Truths allowing one to see the world as it truly is. Three of four Truths are the ‘impermanency’ in the world and beings, the ‘suffering’ of beings living in ignorance, and the ‘absence of any soul’. Rhys Davids in his translation adds his own bracketed terms when he identifies these as

‘the impermanency (of all beings and things), the suffering (that is inherent in individuality), and the absence of any soul’ (1890: 61).

1.1.3 Purification: The Body as Wound

Due to Buddhist ideas surrounding the negative consequences of craving, is the body an entity that will be hated and totally shunned? When asked is ‘the body dear to you recluses’, Nāgasena replies ‘No, they love not the body’. However, Milinda is confused and asks ‘why do you nourish it and lavish attention upon it?’. The body is compared to being ‘wounded by an arrow’ on the field of battle. The king is asked by Nāgasena in ‘battle, did you never get wounded by an arrow?’ (III.6.1.73). In such cases ‘is not the wound anointed with salve, and smeared with oil, and bound up in a bandage?’ (III.6.1.74). By treating the wound, ‘Is the wound dear to you that you treat it so tenderly, and lavish such attention upon it?’. Milinda replies that ‘it is not dear to me in spite of all that, which is only done that the flesh may grow again’. Therefore, the body for Nāgasena is like an arrow wound (III.6.1.74):

Just so, great king, with the recluses and the body. Without cleaving to it do they bear about the body for the sake of righteousness of life. The body, O king, has been declared by the Blessed One to be like a wound. And therefore merely as a sore, and without cleaving to it, do the recluses bear about the body.

The body is ‘like a wound’ that we endure but do not cleave to ‘for the sake of righteousness of life’. Even though the body is ‘an impure thing and foul...like a sore’, there can be no righteousness of life without an instrument through which to engage with the world. Therefore, the body must be maintained to serve a greater purpose ‘like a wound’ cared for but never craved.

Neither a passion-filled man nor a passionless man ‘desires what is wrong’. However, the man ‘full of passion’ does not understand what is good for him. For the man who is ‘full of passion’, is ‘overpowered by craving’, and therefore ‘is in want’. This passion-filled man enjoys ‘both the taste and the lust that arises from the taste’

when eating food (III.6.7.76). But ‘the man free from lusts experiences the taste [of food] only, and not the lust arising there from’ (III.6.7.77). Therefore, the body must be used and not shunned, but neither must it be an object of lust and desire.

With this account of desire for the world and purification in *Milindapañha* in place, I will now present Plato’s account of the same issues in *Phaedo*.

1.2 *Phaedo*

In this section I will set out and explain Plato’s account in *Phaedo* of the relationships between soul and body in life and death and his aim of promoting the care of the soul. I will show how ideas of desire for the body and the purification of soul are essential to his philosophy.

The section on Platonic deaths (1.2.1) will demonstrate that there are three *types* of death in *Phaedo* and that death means different things to a soul and a human.²⁹ The three types are: 1) death as an *event*; 2) death as a *state*; and 3) death as a *process* of purification. Soul alone—separated fully from the body—is an ideal for the philosopher in this embodied life now, but can only be fully realised after death, when a soul can truly separate from a corporeal body. Then I examine the afterlife myth (1.2.2). Socrates establishes two types of souls, pure and impure, and then deepens his presentation into five types of souls. I present how it is only soul ‘type 5’ that attains an existence completely by itself without a body. I present the immortality of the soul and the following need to care for one’s soul (1.2.3). I also analyse the soul’s potential to become soul ‘type 5’—the purified philosophical soul—and the effect it has on the soul.

²⁹ Pender’s triadic categorisation of soul and body—A) how a soul is joined and separated from a body; B) how soul and body relate during human life; and C) the nature of soul by itself without the body—is used to help further explain the relationship of body and soul (Pender, 2000: 149). All three relate to the relationship between soul and human existence. The first two explicitly concern an embodied soul. Category C) is unique in that the nature of soul is set against human existence, whereas, interestingly, the bodily states of A) and B) relate to a soul both during life and after death.

The process of purification appears to strip away the human elements of the soul, leaving soul alone.³⁰

1.2.1 Death and a Soul's Craving for the Corporeal

Plato's *Phaedo* considers the nature of death itself. From the discussions there emerge three 'types' of death: 1) death as an historical event; 2) death as a state; and 3) death as an active process of purification. When Socrates asks (64c-3) ἡγοῦμεθά τι τὸν θάνατον εἶναι; ('Do we believe that there is such a thing as death?').³¹ Plato is problematising. At this point death relates simply to an historical event (1), an event that takes place within the mortal sphere. One moment a human is conscious and mobile, the next they are unconscious and static. This is death as an historical event and as the resulting state.

Through an intriguing exchange with Simmias, Socrates then describes death as a release of two component parts (64c4-8):

ἄρα μὴ ἄλλο τι ἢ τὴν τῆς φυγῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος [5] ἀπαλλαγὴν; καὶ εἶναι τοῦτο τὸ τεθνάναι, χωρὶς μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς φυγῆς ἀπαλλαγὴν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα γεγονέναι, χωρὶς δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν [ἀπὸ] τοῦ σώματος ἀπαλλαγεῖσθαι αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτὴν εἶναι; ἄρα μὴ ἄλλο τι ἢ ὁ θάνατος ἢ τοῦτο;

Is it simply the release of the soul from the [5] body? Is death nothing more or less than this, the separate condition of the body by itself when it is released from the soul, and the separate condition by itself of the soul when released from the body? Is death anything else than this?

And that it is nothing but the separation of the soul from the [5] body? And that being dead is this: the body's having come to be apart, separated from the soul, alone by itself, and the soul's being apart, alone by itself, separated from the body? Death can't be anything else but that, can it? (tr. Gallop, 1975).

It is suggested that death (θάνατος) is nothing more than 'the release (ἀπαλλαγὴν) of the soul (φυγῆς) from the body (σώματος)' (64c4-5). The separation of soul and body is the event called death; the death of the human composition. But Socrates immediately clarifies that death is also 'the separate condition of the body by itself' (64c5-7). There

³⁰ This process of stripping away the human aspects is important for the problem-solving of Chapters 2-4.

³¹ All translations of *Phaedo* are Tredennick (1954) unless explicitly stated otherwise.

is a change of emphasis between death the event (1) and death the state (2). Death is the ‘separate condition’ or state ‘of the body’ after the event. Furthermore, Socrates alludes to a ‘separate condition’ of the soul after the death event (64c7-8). Therefore, the condition of the body and the condition of the soul are different after the death event. The body is in a state of death, it is inanimate, lifeless, and it has ceased. The body cannot survive the death event. But the soul’s condition is alive, animate, and, importantly, conscious, as is first made clear in the Argument from Opposites (71e-2), affirmed by the Argument from Affinity (79d-8), and maintained in the final myth (107d-2). Therefore, the soul’s condition after the death event is not in a state of death (2), for the soul is not ‘dead’, i.e. inanimate, lifeless, and deceased.

When Socrates asks ἄρα μὴ ἄλλο τι ἢ ὁ θάνατος ἢ τοῦτο; (‘Is death anything else than this?’, 64c9), Plato is anticipating Socrates’ argument that death for a soul is not a state but an active process of purification (3). Socrates has given a clear and precise definition of the death event (1). Socrates’ statement on death as a separation of soul and body indicates that human life is the condition of soul and body together. Death the event (1) is a separation of a human, a coming-apart of two separable entities, body and soul. Death as a state (2) is the separate unconscious condition of the body as a corpse and thus is associated with the body and not with the soul. But Socrates will also develop a theory that for the soul death is an active process (3), since as a continuing, immortal consciousness, the soul is able to purify itself. Purification for Plato thus concerns the continuing conscious soul. At 64c Socrates suggests that the death event is a complete separation, a clean break and from 66d-69c Plato develops the discussion to analyse degrees of separation due to degrees of desire for the body and purification of the soul.

At 66d7-e2 Socrates posits that ‘if we are ever to have pure knowledge of anything, we must get rid of the body and contemplate things in isolation with the soul in isolation’ (ἀλλὰ τῷ ὄντι ἡμῖν δέδεικται ὅτι, εἰ μέλλομέν ποτε καθαρῶς τι εἴσασθαι, ἀπαλλακτέον αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ θεατέον αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα). Whilst embodied the soul cannot be entirely separated from the body. But on separation from the body the soul may be ‘in isolation’. Isolation ‘is only possible after death’ (as an event) for it is ‘only then that the soul will be isolated and independent of the body’ (τότε γὰρ αὐτὴ καθ’ αὐτὴν ἢ ψυχὴ ἔσται χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος, πρότερον δ’ οὐ) (67a-2).

Death as an event turns out not to be a clean break for the soul, since the soul after separation can retain desire for the body and therefore some association with it. A soul is able to ‘become infected (ἀναπιμπλώμεθα) with its [bodily] nature’ during embodied human life (67a5-6).³² For Socrates we must ‘purify ourselves’ (καθαρεύομεν) (67a6) in this life *now*. It is not possible for ‘one who is not pure himself to attain to the realm of purity’ (μὴ καθαρῷ γὰρ καθαρῷ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θεμιτὸν ἦ) (67b2-3) after death. Therefore, the active process of purifying the soul after death (3) places great significance on pre-death, i.e. embodied human life. The importance is placed on us now. We gain everything or lose it all now. For although death as an event destroys the body, the death event does not destroy the desire for bodily association that is rooted in the soul through being previously connected to the body.

At 67d-e Socrates presents the idea of philosophy as a practice for death. At 67c9-d2 he argues that both ‘now and in the future’ one must allow the soul to be ‘freed from the chains of the body’ (ἐκλυομένην ὥσπερ ἐκ δεσμῶν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος). Death requires preparations and so ‘philosophers make dying their profession’ (οἱ ὀρθῶς

³² The infection might be psychological not physical.

φιλοσοφοῦντες ἀποθνήσκειν μελετῶσι) (67e4-5). A philosopher's 'profession' allows for the 'freeing and separation of soul from body' in this life and in the next (67d7-10):

Λύειν δέ γε αὐτήν, ὥς φαμεν, προθυμοῦνται ἀεὶ μάλιστα καὶ μόνοι οἱ φιλοσοφοῦντες ὀρθῶς, καὶ τὸ μελέτημα αὐτὸ τοῦτό ἐστιν τῶν φιλοσόφων, λύσις καὶ χωρισμὸς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος· ἢ οὐ;

And it's especially those who practise philosophy aright, or rather they alone, who are always eager to release it, as we say, and the occupation of philosophers is just this, isn't it—a release and parting of soul from body? (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Importantly, death the event (1) has specific implications for death as the process for a soul (3), which is different from death as a state for the body (2). It seems that although death physically separates body and soul (1), there is a need to anticipate and practise this separation whilst alive. Therefore, death is much more than 'simply the release of the soul from the body...nothing more or less than this' (64c). For if death were *simply* a release, it would come to all *naturally* and there would be no need to practise death as one's 'profession'.

At 69c Socrates develops the ideas of the pure and impure soul. A soul within a body can become 'infected' or filled up (ἀναπιμπλώμεθα) in its nature (67a5). The infection will have negative consequences on a soul both during human life and after death separates it from a body. Socrates presents a two-fold distinction between the pure and the impure after death (69c3-7):

καὶ κινδυνεύουσι καὶ οἱ τὰς τελετὰς ἡμῖν οὗτοι καταστήσαντες οὐ φαῦλοί τινες εἶναι, ἀλλὰ τῷ ὄντι [5] πάλαι αἰνίττεσθαι ὅτι ὃς ἂν ἀμύητος καὶ ἀτέλεστος εἰς Ἄϊδου ἀφίκηται ἐν βορβόρῳ κείσεται, ὁ δὲ κεκαθαρμένος τε καὶ τετελεσμένος ἐκεῖσε ἀφικόμενος μετὰ θεῶν οἰκήσει.

Perhaps these people who have established religious initiations are not so far from the mark, and all the time there has been a hidden meaning beneath their claim that he who enters the next world uninitiated and unenlightened shall lie in the mire, but he who arrives there purified and enlightened shall dwell among the gods.

The ascent is from the 'mire' to the 'gods' through purification. There is a clear distinction between, on the one hand, the soul that prepares for death as a process of purification (death type 3) by initiating a separation of soul and body (death type 1) and,

on the other hand, a soul during human life that fails to understand that it must prepare for death the event (1). It is the soul that becomes purified, but that purification must be instigated whilst embodied.

Examining the *Phaedo*'s presentation of the soul after death, one finds a complex relationship between body and soul with degrees of purity established. When 'soul and body share the same place', or joined together, that is human nature (79e-80a).³³ After the death event one expects to find the soul alone.³⁴ However, the life of most souls after death remains associated with the body.³⁵ For the majority of souls the after-death existence is not disembodied in a strict sense. The souls leave the deceased state of a human body but most do not leave embodiment *per se*. Souls can become attached to the body and bodily desires, and, hence, strive for re-embodiment. At this point, rebirth becomes volitional. A soul that is to *progress* from embodiment to strict disembodiment is described by Socrates as 'pure' with no trace of the body (80e2-81a2):

ἀλλὰ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ὧδ' ἔχει· ἐὰν μὲν καθαρὰ ἀπαλλάττηται, μηδὲν τοῦ σώματος συνεφέλκουσα, ἅτε οὐδὲν κοινωνοῦσα αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἐκοῦσα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ φεύγουσα αὐτὸ καὶ [5] συνηθροισμένη αὐτῇ εἰς ἑαυτήν, ἅτε μελετῶσα ἀεὶ τοῦτο— τὸ δὲ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ ὀρθῶς φιλοσοφοῦσα καὶ τῷ ὄντι [81a] τεθνάναι μελετῶσα ῥαδίως· ἢ οὐ τοῦτ' ἂν εἶη μελέτη θανάτου;

The truth is much more like this: if at its release the soul is pure and does not drag along with it any trace of the body, because it has never willingly associated with it in life; if it has shunned it and isolated itself because that is what it always practises – I mean doing philosophy in the right way and really getting used to facing death calmly; wouldn't you call this "practising death"?

If at its 'release the soul is pure and does not drag along with it any trace of the body, because it has never willingly associated with it in life; if it has shunned it and isolated itself because that is what it always practises' through philosophy it can be said to have been 'practising death'. The 'pure' soul that 'has never willingly associated with' the

³³ ὄρα δὲ καὶ τῆδε ὅτι ἐπειδὴν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ὧσι ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα (79e8-80a)

³⁴ Pender category C (2000: 149).

³⁵ Pender category B (2000:149).

body ‘in life’, departs to a place that is ‘like itself – invisible, divine, immortal and wise’ (81a4-5). This describes the nature of soul when it is by itself.³⁶

In contrast, the state of a soul still actively desiring the body is described as ‘impure’. The soul that ‘at the time of its release...is tainted and impure’, associated with the body during life (81b1-c2):

ἐὰν δέ γε οἶμαι μεμιασμένη καὶ ἀκάθαρτος τοῦ σώματος ἀπαλλάττηται, 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 [5] ἀλλ’ ἢ τὸ σωματοειδές, οὗ τις ἂν ἄψαιτο καὶ ἴδοι καὶ πίοι καὶ φάγοι καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἀφροδίσια χρήσαιτο, τὸ δὲ τοῖς ὄμμασι σκοτῶδες καὶ αἰδές, νοητὸν δὲ καὶ φιλοσοφία αἰρετόν, τοῦτο δὲ εἰθισμένη μισεῖν τε καὶ τρέμειν καὶ φεύγειν, οὕτω [c] δὴ ἔχουσιν οἶε ψυχὴν αὐτὴν καθ’ αὐτὴν εἰλικρινῆ ἀπαλλάξεσθαι;

Because it has always associated with the body and cared for it and loved it, and has been so beguiled by the body and its passions and pleasure that nothing seems real to it but those physical things which can be touched and seen and eaten and drunk and used for sexual enjoyment, making it accustomed to hate and fear and avoid what is invisible and obscure to our eyes, but intelligible and comprehensible by philosophy - if the soul is in this state, do you think that it will be released just by itself, uncontaminated?

This soul has existed with a human body, as part of the sensual human world. More than that, this soul has *enjoyed* this co-existence. This type of soul ‘desires to live in a way which it only can if it has a body’ (Broadie, 2001: 304). In fact, the premise is that a soul such as this will long to re-enter a body after death. Therefore, this type of soul ‘seeks to be in a body’ (Broadie, 2001: 304). It is contaminated by what it enjoyed experiencing in a body – its desires and lusts for physical pleasures. Broadie concludes that ‘some embodied souls cannot live separate from a body suited to their desires, while others, a minority perhaps, can’ (2001: 305). It is not simply being in a body that matters, but the level of association/dissociation that a soul has with that bodily existence.

³⁶ Pender category C (2000: 149).

The ‘tainted and impure’ soul is ‘permeated by the corporeal’ and it is ‘ingrained in its very nature’ (81c5). The language used by Plato to describe the bodily association after death is striking: a soul is ‘permeated’ (διειλημμένην) with, has had ‘intercourse with’ (ὁμιλία), and is ‘ingrained in its very nature (ἐνεποίησε σύμφυτον)’ (81c4-6):

ἀλλὰ [καὶ] διειλημμένην γε οἶμαι ὑπὸ τοῦ σωματοειδοῦς, ὃ αὐτῇ ἢ ὁμιλία τε καὶ συνουσία τοῦ σώματος διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ συνεῖναι καὶ διὰ τὴν πολλὴν μελέτην ἐνεποίησε σύμφυτον.

On the contrary, it will, I imagine, be permeated by the corporeal, which fellowship and intercourse with the body will have ingrained in its very nature through constant association and long practice.

Rather, I imagine, it will have been interspersed with a corporeal element, ingrained in it by the body’s company and intercourse, through constant association and much training? (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Furthermore, Plato uses the imagery of weight and attachment concerning a soul’s bodily association: the ‘corporeal is heavy, oppressive, earthly (γεῶδες) and visible (ὄρατόν)’ so that a soul is ‘weighed down (βαρύνεται) and dragged back into the visible world (ὄρατόν τόπον)’ (81c8-11):

ἐμβριθὲς δέ γε, ὦ φίλε, τοῦτο οἶσθαι 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 ἀίδοῦς τε καὶ Ἄιδου.

And one must suppose, my friend, that this element is ponderous, that it is heavy and earthly and is seen; and thus encumbered, such a soul is weighed down, and dragged back into the region of the seen through fear of the invisible and of Hades; (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Such a soul is unable to leave the visible earthly realm due to a process of a soul becoming bodily in ‘its very nature’ (81c5).³⁷ As noted by Burnet, the ‘suggestion is that of a restless spirit which cannot tear itself away from the body’ (1911: 73). Astoundingly, supposedly separated souls after the death of the body are still corporeal, visible, bodily, and human.

It is true that one could interpret the graveyard section as entirely allegorical. Or, indeed, interpret ‘a touch of Socratic playfulness in this theory’ (Burnet, 1911: 73).

³⁷ In 1.2.2 I use the closing myth with the Argument from Affinity.

But Socrates is describing a specific type of soul. Rowe notes how these souls are ‘non-philosophical’ (1993: 193). In these cases, a soul is still firmly rooted in the previous deceased earthly life. As Archer-Hind notes, the emphasis is on the blend of two materials that ‘become virtually one nature’ (1894: 54).

Thus ‘the question of separability of soul from body is not a simple one’ (Broadie, 2001: 305). If souls desire bodily characteristics as Broadie argues, and are represented by Plato as bodily, then it appears that death alone is not guaranteed to ‘*simply...release...the soul from the body*’ *completely* (64c); physically or psychologically. For although death separates soul from body—the body decays on earth, whilst the soul moves on – nevertheless souls do not become blank slates at death, since they are not separated psychologically from their previous embodied existence. Some souls are still attached to bodily existence after the death event (81c8-d4):³⁸

ἐμβριθὲς δέ γε, ὦ φίλε, τοῦτο οἶεσθαι χρὴ εἶναι καὶ βαρὺ καὶ γεῶδες καὶ ὄρατόν· ὃ δὴ καὶ ἔχουσα ἢ τοιαύτη [10] 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 ὄφθη ἅττα ψυχῶν σκιοειδῆ φαντάσματα, οἷα παρέχονται αἱ τοιαῦται ψυχαὶ εἶδωλα, αἱ μὴ καθαρῶς ἀπολυθεῖσαι ἀλλὰ τοῦ ὄρατοῦ μετέχουσαι, διὸ καὶ ὀρῶνται.

And we must suppose, my dear fellow, that the corporeal is heavy, oppressive, earthly and visible. So the soul which is tainted by its presence is weighed down and dragged back into the visible world, through fear (as they say) of Hades or the invisible, and hovers about tombs and graveyards. The shadowy apparitions which have actually been seen there are the ghosts of those souls which have not got clear away, but still retain some portion of the visible; which is why they can be seen.

The ‘impure’ human soul is ‘weighed down (βαρύνεται) and dragged back (ἔλκεται πάλιν) into the visible world’ (ὄρατόν) through the new human emotion ‘fear’ (81c9-10). The human soul ‘hovers about tombs and graveyards’ clinging to the visible, corporeal, and human realm (81d). Socrates is using pre-existing beliefs among the Greeks regarding ghost experiences (Rowe, 1993: 193-194; Bremmer, 1983: 108-23; Burkert, 1985: 195). Plato is therefore using a ‘popular belief’— in ghosts—and is

³⁸ On corrupted souls after the death event as still subject to physical nature, see Pender, 2012: 220.

filling it ‘with a deeper meaning of his own’ (Archer-Hind, 1894: 54): presenting souls that are unwilling to leave. The souls are ‘compelled (ἀναγκάζονται) to wander (πλανᾶσθαι)’ as a ‘punishment (τίνουσαι) for their bad (κακῆς) conduct in the past’ (81d). Furthermore, the desire of the soul is crucial (81d9-e2):

καὶ μέχρι γε τούτου πλανῶνται, ἕως ἂν τῇ [e] τοῦ συνεπακολουθοῦντος, τοῦ σωματοειδοῦς, ἐπιθυμία πάλιν ἐνδεθῶσιν εἰς σῶμα·

And they wander about until, owing to the desire of the corporeal [e] element attendant upon them, they are once more imprisoned in a body. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

The half-life as a ghost (φάντασμα) is an experience for a soul that wishes to be fully corporeal, as it has ‘craving (ἐπιθυμία) for the corporeal (σωματοειδοῦς)’ which ‘unceasingly pursues them (συνεπακολουθοῦντος)’, but cannot be realised in ghostly form. In contrast to the ‘pure’ soul that leaves the corporeal for the ‘happiness’ of the divine realm, the ‘impure’ soul will be ‘imprisoned (ἐνδεθῶσιν) once more in a body’ (81e-2). It is ironic that some souls find happiness in or long for the process that keeps them ‘imprisoned’ in a cycle of humanly death. How is a soul to avoid such existences?

Philosophy is the key to purification, having a liberating and purifying effect on the soul. Plato describes the soul as a ‘helpless prisoner’ directly associated with its prison cell, the body, where it views reality from which (82d9-e):

Lovers of knowledge recognize that when philosophy [e] takes their soul in hand, it has been literally bound and glued to the body, and forced to view the things that are as if through a prison, rather than alone by itself; (tr. Gallop, 1975).

The soul ‘is a helpless prisoner (διαδεδεμένην), chained hand and foot in the body (προσκεκολλημένην), compelled (ἀναγκαζομένην) to view reality not directly but only through its prison (εἶργμοῦ) bars, and wallowing in utter ignorance (ἀμαθία)’ (82e1-5).³⁹ The ‘ingenuity (δεινότητα) of the imprisonment (εἶργμοῦ)’ is illuminated by philosophy showing that ‘the prisoner’s own active desire (ἐπιθυμίας)’ is the very thing

³⁹ Edmonds comments that the negative prison could also translate as the more positive garrison post. He concludes that Plato may be purposefully ambiguous (2004: 177).

that ‘makes him first accessory to his own confinement’ (ὡς ἂν μάλιστα αὐτὸς ὁ δεδεμένος συλλήπτωρ εἴη τοῦ δεδέσθαι) (82e6-83a1). It is the conscious soul that is responsible for continued imprisonment. There is no god-bestowed punishment on the soul to begin with; the ‘first accessory’, the foremost reason for imprisonment, is the soul’s own desire for a bodily life. The fault lies within one’s desire – one’s ‘own active desire’ perpetuates the imprisonment. The soul *desires* to be human and bodily.

The soul’s desire for bodily existence and its resultant imprisonment within a body is not new to Socrates’ argument. Indeed, Socrates presented an example of a soul that after the death event remains ‘tainted and impure’ having ‘associated with the body and cared for it and loved it’ (81b1-3). Consequently, the impure soul is ‘compelled to wander’ through ‘craving for the corporeal’ until the soul is ‘imprisoned once more in a body’ (81d7-e2). It is the desire for bodily existence of the soul that leads to imprisonment/embodiment once again. The soul desires the corporeal, and gets its desire. Therefore, both 81b-e and 82e-83a present a cycle of imprisoned embodiment for the soul perpetuated by the conscious *desire* of a soul.

What is the nature of bodily existence that makes it so treacherous for a soul, keeping it imprisoned? Bodily existence provides a strong sensation of reality for the soul, having to ‘view reality not directly but only through its prison bars’ (82e). The souls become confused due to the strong nature of pleasure and pain whilst embodied (83c5-8):

ὅτι ψυχὴ παντὸς ἀνθρώπου ἀναγκάζεται ἅμα τε ἡσθῆναι σφόδρα ἢ λυπηθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ καὶ ἡγεῖσθαι περὶ ὃ ἂν μάλιστα τοῦτο πάσχη, τοῦτο ἐναργέστατον τε εἶναι καὶ ἀληθέστατον, οὐχ οὕτως ἔχον·

When anyone’s soul feels a keen pleasure or pain it cannot help supposing that whatever causes the most violent emotion is the plainest and truest reality; which it is not.

It's that the soul of every human being, when intensely pleased or pained at something, is forced at the same time to suppose that whatever most affects it in this way is most clear and most real, when it is not so. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

There is a lack of understanding on the part of the soul. Due to the soul feeling new intense 'pleasure or pain' whilst embodied, it starts to believe bodily reality is the 'truest reality'. As Rowe states, the emphasis is no longer on the direct effects of the pleasure or pain, but on the indirect effect that is not taken into account, namely the greatest evil for the soul (1993: 198).

It is the extreme of the feeling that deceives the soul. This results in a dramatic effect for the soul (83d4-6):

ὅτι ἐκάστη ἡδονὴ καὶ λύπη ὥσπερ ἦλον ἔχουσα προσηλοῖ αὐτὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα καὶ προσπερονᾷ καὶ ποιεῖ σωματοειδῆ, δοξάζουσιν αὐτὰ ἀληθῆ εἶναι ἅπερ ἂν καὶ τὸ σῶμα φῆ.

Because every pleasure or pain has a sort of rivet with which it fastens the soul to the body and pins it down and makes it corporeal, accepting as true whatever the body certifies.

Because each pleasure and pain fastens it to the body with a sort of rivet, pins it there, and makes it corporeal, so that it takes for real whatever the body declares to be so. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Both desire and strong emotion attach themselves to a soul creating external features that were not present in the soul prior to embodiment. Therefore, Socrates believes a soul has no need to fear death, but there is a real and substantial fear of the body itself. Through association with strong pleasures, pains, and desires the soul 'cannot help coming to share its character' (ὁμότροπος) (83d8). *Phaedo* thus describes how bodily existence alters the soul (83d) and how the relationship between the soul and the body is complex, since the body 'makes it [soul] corporeal' (83d). The emphasis is on submission and pinning down through external attachments. The soul, according to Socrates, is not just embodied, but becomes bodily through 'rivets' and 'pins'. That is not to say a soul becomes a body, but that a soul through 'rivets' fails to distinguish itself from the body. These 'rivets' could be psychological. A soul in this state after the

death-event: ‘soon falls back again into another body, where it takes root and grows’ (ὥστε ταχὺ πάλιν πίπτειν εἰς ἄλλο σῶμα καὶ ὥσπερ σπειρομένη ἐμφύεσθαι) (83d10-e).⁴⁰ A soul acquires a new body, no longer distinguishing itself from bodily existence. The soul desires to remain bodily, and therefore, is embodied. The soul is becoming or aligning itself with the human.

A soul’s desire is the ‘first accessory’ to embodied imprisonment. The soul attaches itself to the body through rivets ensuring its constant desire for the bodily (ἡδοναῖς καὶ λύπαις) (84a4-5). The consequence is that upon the death event of the body the conscious intelligent soul craves and desires corporeality and embodiment due to its attachments. The most harrowing image of a ‘tainted and impure’ soul portrays the endless rounds of embodiment. A soul in this cycle is ‘thus condemning itself to an endless (ἀνήνυτον) task, like Penelope, when she worked to undo her own weaving’ (84a6-7).⁴¹

At each stage it is the soul’s ‘own active desire’ that sustains the cycle of embodiment.⁴² It is only through realisation of philosophical insight that a ‘soul brings calm to the seas (γαλήνην) of desire’ (84a8). The philosophical soul ‘is rid for ever of human ills’ (ἀπηλλάχθαι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων κακῶν) and, indeed, one might say, human nature itself (84b5). Penelope stops undoing her weaving.

1.2.2 Afterlife Myth: Association and Dissociation after Death

The myth is a complex and multi-layered device, fulfilling several purposes. Scholars agree that the myth can be used literally and allegorically; though disagree on how literal it is. Pender believes that the purpose of the myth is to convey the ‘urgent

⁴⁰ Comparable again to 81b-e.

⁴¹ As Tarrant notes in his introduction to Tredennick’s translation this is an ‘undoing by night [of] what she had woven in the day’ (2003: 101). But as Tarrant also notes (footnote 4, page 101), Penelope does this so that her weaving would never be complete (2003: 114).

⁴² Furthermore, comparisons with *Republic*’s Myth of Er are strong: ‘The fault lies not with God, but with the soul that makes the choice’ (*Rep.* 617e).

need to philosophize in the here-and-now' (2012: 199). Rowe states that the myth is 'in large part allegorical' (2007: 103). Pender and Rowe are correct that by seeing what lies ahead a soul realises how to avoid it, through practising philosophy now. Further as Edmonds and Rowe state, *Phaedo's* closing myth is not simply an allegory of this life now (Edmonds, 2004: 220); and the myth is both an account of 'what awaits us after death *and* an allegory of life as we live it now' (Rowe, 2007: 107). Plato, earlier in *Phaedo*, describes how some souls wander around tombstones after death craving their previous embodied life (81c-d). The earlier account at 81c-d can be used in conjunction with the *Phaedo* myth.⁴³ Moreover, the myth mirrors and elaborates on the earlier account (Affinity Argument), specifically regarding a soul's after death bodily experience.

At the opening of the myth Socrates presents the distinction prevalent throughout *Phaedo* between souls that associate with the body and are therefore impure, and souls that are not attached to a body and are therefore pure (108a6-b3):

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.

Well, the wise and disciplined soul follows its guide and is not ignorant of its surroundings,⁴⁴ but as for the soul which is deeply attached to the body – after a long infatuation with it and with the visible world, as I said before – it is only after much resistance and suffering that it is at last forcibly led away by its appointed guardian spirit.

Now the wise and well-ordered soul follows along, and is not unfamiliar with what befalls it; but the soul in a state of desire for the body, as I said earlier, flutters around it for a long time, and around the region of the seen, and after

⁴³ The justification for collating the myth and the Argument from Affinity is due to what Socrates says. Within the myth, when describing wise unattached and ignorant attached souls, Socrates says 'as I said before' (ὅπερ ἐν τῷ ἔμπροσθεν εἶπον) (108a8). Socrates at 108b is alluding to the graveyard scene at 81c-d. Both scenes are not to be assimilated, they are two different stories. However, when used in conjunction they provide a fuller account of Socrates' argument regarding bodily association and conscious continuation after death. The tombstone scene can be used to help understand soul types 1-4 that are about to be presented.

⁴⁴ 'Guide' here is not in the Greek, but is an inference through 'guardian spirit', and the earlier mention of 'guides' at 108a1-4.

much resistance and many sufferings it goes along, brought by force and against its will by the appointed spirit. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

This connects the myth, 107c-108c, with the Argument from Affinity.⁴⁵ Pender is correct when she suggests that the myth supports the Affinity Argument (2012: 217); the connection is a further deepening of Socrates' original position. Originally, the Affinity Argument presents examples of two paradigm positions: pure and impure. Socrates, described what would happen after the death event to each of the two types of soul, pure and impure. But, Socrates clarifies his earlier discussion of two opposing types of soul, stating that 'extreme instances are few and rare' (90a).⁴⁶ Socrates asks, 'do you think anything is rarer than finding an extremely large or extremely small man?' (90a4-6).⁴⁷ These are opposed to the 'intermediate ones [which] are plentiful and common' (90a7-9). Reading this between the Affinity Argument and the closing Myth draws the reader's attention to what has been said and to what is yet to be said. Socrates leads his interlocutors from a position of binary positions. He leads them towards a more nuanced understanding that the vast majority of things exist in between binary oppositions. And the things that Socrates is most concerned about are souls.

In the myth Socrates begins by presents two binary positions—pure and impure—establishing what has already been posited by the Affinity Argument. And then Socrates elaborates by presenting types of souls within those binary extremes. Given Socrates' statement at 90a8-9, souls are likely to exist in between pure and impure. What follows is a further detailed *five* types of souls, with four separated through a process of judgement⁴⁸ (διεδικάσαντο) (113d-114c):⁴⁹

⁴⁵ The comparison with the Affinity Argument at 81a-84b is intentional on Plato's part.

⁴⁶ Translation: Gallop, 1975.

⁴⁷ Translation: Gallop, 1975.

⁴⁸ I have added a 5th type of soul above the four types identified by the underworld judges.

⁴⁹ There are further judgment scenes in *Republic* 614c-616a and *Gorgias* 523a-526d. In both dialogues the judges are more prominent than in *Phaedo*. Furthermore, *Gorgias* agrees with *Phaedo* that death is a separation of soul from body and that after death the soul 'is left in much the same state as when a person was alive' (524b). This includes 'not only its natural endowments but the *modifications* brought about by various *habits* which its owner has formed' (τά τε τῆς φύσεως καὶ τὰ παθήματα ἃ διὰ τὴν ἐπιτήδευσιν ἐκάστου πράγματος ἔσχεν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος) (524d).

1. ‘neutral’ souls (113d4-e1):

καὶ οἱ μὲν ἂν δόξωσι μέσως βεβιωκέναι, πορευθέντες ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀχέροντα, ἀναβάντες ἃ δὴ αὐτοῖς ὀχήματά ἐστιν, ἐπὶ τούτων ἀφικνοῦνται εἰς τὴν λίμνην, καὶ ἐκεῖ οἰκοῦσιν τε καὶ καθαιρόμενοι τῶν τε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες δίκας ἀπολύονται, εἴ τις τι ἠδίκηκεν, τῶν τε εὐεργεσιῶν [e] τιμὰς φέρονται κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἕκαστος·

Those who are judged to have lived a neutral life set out for Acheron, and embarking in those vessels which await them, are conveyed in them to the lake; and there they dwell, and undergoing purification are both absolved by punishment from any sins that they have committed, and rewarded for their good deeds, according to each man’s deserts.

2. ‘incurable’ (ἀνιάτως) souls (113e1-6):

οἱ δ’ ἂν δόξωσιν ἀνιάτως ἔχειν διὰ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων, ἢ ἱεροσυλίας πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἢ φόνους ἀδίκους καὶ παρανόμους πολλοὺς ἐξειργασμένοι ἢ ἄλλα ὅσα τοιαῦτα τυγχάνει ὄντα, [5] τούτους δὲ ἢ προσήκουσα μοῖρα ρίπτει εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον, ὅθεν οὔποτε ἐκβαίνουσιν.

Those who on account of the greatness of their sins are judged to be incurable – people who have committed many gross acts of sacrilege or many wicked and lawless murders or any other such crimes – these are hurled (ρίπτει) by their appropriate destiny into Tartarus, from whence they emerge no more (ὅθεν οὔποτε ἐκβαίνουσιν).

3. ‘curable’ (ιάσιμα) souls (113e6-114b7):

οἱ δ’ ἂν ἰάσιμα μὲν μεγάλα δὲ δόξωσιν ἡμαρτηκέναι ἀμαρτήματα, οἷον πρὸς πατέρα ἢ μητέρα 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 [5] ἐκβάλλει τὸ κῦμα, τοὺς μὲν ἀνδροφόνους κατὰ τὸν Κωκυτὸν, τοὺς δὲ πατραλοίας καὶ μητραλοίας κατὰ τὸν Πυριφλεγέθοντα·

Other are judged to have been guilty of sins which, though great, are curable; if, for example, they have offered violence to father or mother in a fit of passion, but have spent the rest of their lives in penitence, or if they have committed manslaughter after the same fashion. These two must be cast into Tartarus; but when this has been done and they have remained there for a year, the surge casts them out – the manslaughterers down Cocytus and the offenders against their parents down Pyriphlegethon.

4. Souls of surpassing ‘holiness’ (ὀσίως βιῶναι) (114b6-c2):

οἱ δὲ δὴ ἂν δόξωσι διαφερόντως πρὸς τὸ ὀσίως βιῶναι, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ τῶνδε μὲν τῶν τόπων τῶν ἐν τῇ γῆ ἐλευθερούμενοί τε καὶ ἀπαλλαττόμενοι ὥσπερ δεσμοτηρίων, ἄνω δὲ εἰς τὴν καθαρὰν οἴκησιν ἀφικνούμενοι καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς οἰκίζόμενοι.

But those who are judged to have lived a life of surpassing holiness – these are they who are released and set free from imprisonment in these regions of

the earth, and passing upward to their pure abode, make their dwelling upon the earth's surface.

This fourth class of souls is then further divided to produce a fifth type:

5. The 'purified' (καθηράμενοι) souls (114c2-6):

τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ φιλοσοφία ἰκανῶς καθηράμενοι ἄνευ τε σωμάτων ζῶσι τὸ παράπαν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, καὶ εἰς οἰκῆσεις ἔτι τούτων [5] καλλίους ἀφικνοῦνται, ἅς οὔτε ῥάδιον δηλῶσαι οὔτε ὁ χρόνος ἰκανὸς ἐν τῷ παρόντι.

And of these such as have purified themselves sufficiently by philosophy live thereafter altogether without bodies, and reach habitations even more beautiful, which is not easy to portray – nor is there time to do so now.

And among their number, those who have been adequately purified by philosophy live bodiless for the whole of time to come, and attain to dwelling places fairer even than these, which it is not easy to reveal, nor is the time sufficient at present. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Soul types 1-4 are embodied after death (death types 1 and 2). Only soul type 5 exists disembodied by itself, attaining an existence of soul alone through purification after death (death type 3). It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority of souls retain a desire for the body (death type 2), even after death the event. Surprisingly those souls that 'lived exceptionally holy lives' and are 'freed and delivered' from the hollow regions of the earth to 'make their dwelling above ground' on the true surface, are still embodied (114b7-c1).⁵⁰ Within the holy group there is a sub-group of sufficiently purified philosophers that 'attain to dwelling places fairer even than' the true earth. Furthermore, it is only these philosophically pure that 'live bodiless for the whole of time to come'. A clear hierarchy of progression and degradation is presented. Therefore, Socrates is explicit, if not completely unambiguous, that being a sufficiently purified philosopher is the only guarantee of separating the soul from the body, not death.

Inwood is correct that in the myth 'it is difficult to avoid language that suggests that disembodied souls have shadowy bodies' (2009: 31). Plato describes souls stuck in

⁵⁰ Translation: Gallop, 1975.

the cycle of rebirth (at least soul types 1-3, if not soul type 4 as well) in a quasi-embodied way. Souls after death need to be able to recognise each other and act in a bodily manner: the impure ‘soul is shunned and avoided by all’ (108b-c); the souls ‘embarking in those vessels which await them’ (113d); souls are ‘hurled (ρίπτει)...into Tartarus’ (113e); souls ‘call upon those whom they have killed’ (114b). The souls exist within the after death rivers and lakes, with ‘movement to and fro’ violently being taken from one region to the next, providing a tangible description not possible for fully separated and disembodied souls. Throughout the after death topography the ‘soul’s nature changes’ accordingly (Pender, 2012: 218), meaning one witnesses a process more akin to changeability rather than separability (at least at this stage and for these corrupted souls).

Not all souls become completely disembodied at death, as all souls are not philosophers or sufficiently purified by philosophy.⁵¹ Two of five ‘types’ of soul—4 and 5—are described as being ‘released and set free from imprisonment in these regions of the earth and passing upward to their pure abode’; type 5 is also described as living ‘thereafter altogether without bodies’ reaching ‘habitations even more beautiful’ (114b-c).

Therefore, Soul types 1-4 maintain a basic level of embodiment though, clearly, not all in the *same* way. Soul type 5 is the exception. The souls of type 5 cannot be described as human or bodily at all. After death ‘purified’ souls leave all bodily existence behind and exist as truly disembodied, i.e. not only do they exist without a body, but they no longer *desire* to exist in a bodily way. It is clear why philosophy is seen as a purifying effect given the existence awaiting a non-bodily soul. The ‘purified’ soul lives an intellectual life that is not a human existence.

⁵¹ Such an assertion complements Plato’s Affinity Argument.

1.2.3 Immortality and Caring for the Soul – Soul ‘Type 5’ as a Potentiality

The arguments within *Phaedo* are concerned with the immortality of the soul. However, Hackforth suggests that the purpose of the dialogue is not to prove the human soul to be immortal, although he concedes that ‘much of it is devoted to arguments for that thesis’ (1955: 3). Instead, Hackforth offers this assessment of the main aim of *Phaedo*:

It is, I would say, to extend and deepen, through the mouth of a consciously Platonised Socrates, the essential teaching of Socrates himself, namely that man’s supreme concern is the ‘tendance of his soul’, or (in more modern language) the furthering of his insight into moral and spiritual values and the application of that insight in all his conduct.

Hackforth believes that the ‘essential teaching of Socrates’ is expressed by Plato in the *Phaedo*. That ‘essential teaching’ is ‘man’s supreme concern’ with ‘his soul’. Hackforth references *Apology* 30b, and *Gorgias* 503a as evidence for this ‘essential teaching of Socrates himself’. Is it possible, as a reader, to separate the concern for one’s soul from its immortality? At the least, the concern for the soul over *all* time depends on proving the soul to be immortal. For if not, what is there to be overly concerned about? Socrates, in *Phaedo*, predicates the care of soul over all time on its immortality (107c1-5):

ἀλλὰ τόδε γ', ἔφη, ὧ ἄνδρες, δίκαιον διανοηθῆναι, ὅτι, εἴπερ ἡ ψυχή ἀθάνατος, ἐπιμελείας δὴ δεῖται οὐχ ὑπὲρ τοῦ χρόνου τούτου μόνον ἐν ᾧ καλοῦμεν τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τοῦ παντός, καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος νῦν δὴ καὶ δόξειεν ἂν δεινὸς εἶναι, [5] εἴ τις αὐτῆς ἀμελήσει.

If a soul *is* immortal, then it needs care, not only for the sake of this time in which we call “life” lasts, but for the whole of time; and if [5] anyone is going to neglect it, now the risk *would* seem fearful. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

The immortality demands the care over all time: ‘if the soul is immortal, it demands our care not only for that part of time which we call life, but for all time’.⁵² Perhaps Hackforth’s conclusion is correct, that ‘[i]mportant as Plato clearly conceives it that the human soul should be proved to be immortal, no careful reader of the dialogue can

⁵² There will be a time that is un-like this life.

believe that such proof is its main purpose' (1955: 16); at least concerning 'this time in which we call "life" lasts'. But the soul's immortality is necessary for its care over all time; at least according to the Platonic Socrates.

Rowe sees *Phaedo* as having two main conclusions: that the best life is a philosophical one; and that the soul is immortal. The immortality of the soul and philosophy are 'inseparably connected' (Rowe, 1993: 3). Furthermore, Rowe accepts that if 'none of the arguments proves the immortality of the soul, then on the terms of the discussion, death will be something to be feared', but 'if they are successful, we should not fear death, but rather the manner of our life' (1993: 3). Therefore, Hackforth's emphasis on the importance of care can be conditioned on the soul's immortality. If the soul is not immortal, the care of the soul would be less important, according to Plato's argument. Without a causal connection, death would simply become an escape from the soul's own wickedness. Therefore, the immortality of the soul is paramount to Plato's concept of philosophy as the best way of life. But as Rowe maintained, care and immortality are 'inseparably connected'. Plato confirms a causal link: the soul goes on, therefore, we must care for it.

The soul for Plato has the potential to become a fully perfect rational soul. This is the state of being fully purified. However, very few souls are able to reach this potential. The soul goes on in one of five types of ways. The idea of caring for one's soul relies on the potential for a soul to reach the 4th and 5th type. At death there is no hope of fully uprooting desires from the body for all (Boys-Stones, 2004: 7). But, presumably, death as an event provides a sufficiently purified philosopher (one out of five soul types) with that chance.

How is the 5th philosophical type of soul supposed to relate to Socrates' statement at 80e4-5: 'it [a pure soul] had no avoidable commerce with it [a body] during

life, but shunned it’?⁵³ It seems to have two distinct propositions. Proposition one is that a soul can potentially purify itself and shun the body and not wish to associate with it. This is coherent with Socrates’ general argument. But what exactly is ‘avoidable commerce’?

For Socrates a human must not forcibly separate body and soul through committing suicide (62b). So some interaction with the body is necessary. But the body will eventually die. The soul must have un-‘willingly associated with it in life’. In that way intention is key to keeping a soul ‘pure’, instead of the interaction as a whole being impure. There is a need to avoid excess. It is the excess that is ‘avoidable commerce’. A soul can use a body whilst understanding that it [as a soul] is not a body. The emphasis is on ‘willingly’, or, as Gallop translates, ‘avoidable’. It is the volition of the soul to decide how much interaction it has with the body, beyond what is necessary for survival. Purity is avoiding excess and so allowing soul’s rational potential to develop. The philosopher cares for his soul by becoming pure, by avoiding excess, and by becoming rational.

It appears a fine balance between the soul that, on the one hand, must exist within a body enough as not to kill it, but on the other hand, not enough as to desire it. There are palpable effects for the souls that get it wrong (81c4-6). All this could be interpreted as psychological. If a soul is conscious then this deformity is taking place within that consciousness. As the body is the part Socrates states is most ‘human’, one might tentatively say that ‘impure’ souls are becoming human (80b). Therefore, this ‘impure’ soul is quite literally becoming more human; or akin to the most ‘human’ part, the body. Furthermore, there is a suggestion that emotion is becoming part of the soul. The soul now has ‘hate and fear’ (81b). The process of a soul becoming more human is not desirable for Socrates. The attachment an impure soul shows towards embodiment

⁵³ Translation: Gallop, 1975.

represents a misunderstanding of the true nature of happiness (Broadie, 2001: 307). Hence, souls have different desires according to their differing experiences and different bodily lives. This places them at different variations of soul types 1-5, although for Socrates, all souls should strive for the potential soul type 5. This type is only brought about through philosophy.

Souls are able to achieve their potential through philosophy. A soul is to 'collect and concentrate itself in isolation' from the body, 'trusting nothing but its own isolated judgement' becoming aware of the 'intelligible and invisible' contrasted with the 'sensible and visible' objects (83a-b). Using the conscious intellect, the soul realises that the bodily 'senses abound with deception' and the soul is 'to refrain from using them unless it is necessary' (83a4-7). A minority of souls can separate their desire from bodily existence (Broadie, 2001: 305).

The aim of philosophy, therefore, is to train the soul in order to make the transition from embodied life to disembodied death more complete and uncomplicated. This is a process of purification. One should abstain from the body now in life so that one does not long for bodily existence after death. The philosopher feels no distress at the separation of soul and body because the philosopher has been 'preparing themselves for dying and death all their lives' (64a).

What they are preparing for through fulfilling their potential to be fully rational souls is a state of being that is remarkably different from being human. Socrates states that human nature is embodied: 'are we not part body, part soul?' (79b). Therefore, the potential existence of a 'pure' soul is not in human form. A 'pure' soul upon leaving 'any trace of the body' behind has inadvertently (or advertently) also left 'that which is human' behind at death (80b). The pure soul leaves 'all other human evils' as well as the body (81a). It is hard to reconcile humanity with the Socratic 'pure' soul after

death. But, for Socrates, that is a positive. The separation of soul and humanity is perhaps intentional, given humanity's liability to suffering, death, change, and bodily variance. Gerson, following Plato, describes this process as becoming 'godlike' (2003: 60). Anything to the contrary of aiming for godlike purity is a mistake on the part of the soul. This includes soul types 1-3, and possibly even type 4. These souls, not being in tune with philosophy, misjudge what brings happiness. In this way, it makes little sense to speak of *all* souls (soul types 1-4) as separate from the body. But, for soul type 5 at least, it make little sense to speak of these souls as human.⁵⁴

Therefore, the soul's philosophical ascent to purity strips away the bodily and the human aspects, leaving the human realm behind. That is philosophy's purification, an uncovering of what was always there—the rational soul—by discarding attachments. Rowe is correct to believe souls 'are perpetual players' (2007: 117). But Socrates fails to quell his interlocutors' emotions regarding the fear of death as he has proven the soul to be immortal, but, as a result, confirmed human existence to be mortal. The juxtaposition of emotions, Socrates' calmness and the interlocutors' tears, provide the perfect characterisation of the distinction between a pure disembodied soul (type 5) on the one hand, and an impure embodied soul (types 1-4) on the other. Socrates assumes that his companions want an existence completely devoid of bodily desire, existing as a disembodied intelligent soul. The interlocutors are sad because they have lost Socrates the human, and the immortality of Socrates' soul is no substitute. But, perhaps, it should be.

1.3 Shared Concerns

My claim is that there are specific Shared Concerns relating to ideas of desire and purification in *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha*. I shall now present my evidence to show that three key philosophical themes are used by both dialogues. First, both Plato's ideal

⁵⁴ This issue of the potential purity of the soul being not the kind human being is discussed in detail in Chapter 2-4.

philosopher and the enlightened Buddhist monk see death as a continuation and not something to be feared. Once a Buddhist monk attains enlightenment (*nirvāṇa*) craving and bodily desire cease and upon their death they attain *Parinirvāṇa* (1.3.1). Second, both texts identify a craving for corporeality that keeps an individual rooted in an unsatisfactory cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (1.3.2). Third, both texts advocate using philosophical understanding, associated with purity, to navigate through overpowering craving and desire, an activity presented as a voyage on the sea (1.3.3).

1.3.1 Death's Appeal

For Socrates, death's appeal is that it separates soul from body (64c). Socrates believes a philosopher to be practising death. As discussed at the beginning of 1.2, death can be viewed in three ways: 1) death as an *event*; 2) death as a *state*; and 3) death as a *process of purification*. Dying is a philosopher's profession (87e). Specifically, philosophers are concerned with death 3) the upward process of a soul towards the potential soul type 5. The ideal philosophers 'have actually been looking forward to death' (64a). What is more, 'true philosophers are half dead' whilst living (64b). For the Buddhist the ideal death represented by *Parinirvāṇa* is a removal of something that was there before; literally a 'blowing out', a death 'without remainder', or a 'full going out' (Gethin, 1998: 26). Therefore, *Parinirvāṇa* for an enlightened Buddhist is 'a complete passing away, without cleaving to the world' (II.1.5.31).

Contrasts are apparent between these two views of the ideal death. The Platonic idea of the immortal soul is fundamentally un-Buddhist. In Buddhist thought there is no soul and, therefore, no release of the soul. In contrast to the Buddhist negation, Plato presents a positive afterlife, where the fully purified soul remains and continues on to 'dwelling places fairer even' than the most beautiful physical environments (114c). Thus while Buddhism talks of what *Nirvāṇa* is not, Plato attempts, at least in part, to

map the soul's journey after the separation of the body.⁵⁵ However, it is notable how Plato in *Phaedo* does not illuminate his reader on the nature of the pure philosophical soul's new surroundings, beyond suggesting they are beautiful. The key idea is that they live 'without bodies' (114c1-6):

τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ φιλοσοφία ἰκανῶς καθηράμενοι ἄνευ τε σωμάτων ζῶσι τὸ παράπαν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, καὶ εἰς οἰκήσεις ἔτι τούτων [5] καλλίους ἀφικνοῦνται, ἃς οὔτε ῥάδιον δηλῶσαι οὔτε ὁ χρόνος ἰκανὸς ἐν τῷ παρόντι.

And among their number, those who have been adequately purified by philosophy live bodiless for the whole of time to come, and attain to dwelling places fairer even than these, which it is not easy to [5] reveal, nor is the time sufficient at present.

Therefore, negative formulations are used for both the Buddhist *Parinirvāṇa* and Plato's philosophically pure souls. Neither gives a full topography of what is expected after death. But, importantly, the outcomes remain distinct: Socrates sees a release of a soul while in Buddhism *karma* is 'blown out' (*Nirvāṇa*). Therefore, *Parinirvāṇa* is very different to Plato's idea of the life of a philosophically purified soul.⁵⁶

Plato believes the soul should be removed from the body as much as possible. That is why philosophers 'make dying their profession' (67e). The philosopher has 'trained himself...throughout his life to live in a state as close as possible to death' (67d-e). As a result, at the death of the body a soul is 'freed (ἐκλυομένην) from the chains (δεσμῶν) of the body (σώματος)' (67d1-2). The philosophical death is a 'release (ἀπαλλάττηται)' of the 'pure (καθαρά)' soul that 'does not drag along (συνεφέλκουσα) with it any trace (μηδέν) of the body (σώματος)' (80e2-3).⁵⁷ Socrates' 'pure soul' 'passes into the realm of the pure (καθαρόν)' at death (79d), and is free from wandering (πλανᾶται) in the human realm 'confused and dizzy (μεθύουσα)' (79c7-8).

⁵⁵ There are examples of this positive death in Plato's myths: see *Republic's* Myth of Er, or *Phaedo's* closing myth.

⁵⁶ For more information on *Nirvāṇa* see Gethin, 1998: 74-79. Fundamentally, *Nirvāṇa* is the end of suffering (*dukkha*).

⁵⁷ These represent the very few completely pure souls (1/5) which philosophy has purified of all bodily association, as presented in my section on *Phaedo*.

But despite these important differences, there exist Shared Concerns about craving corporeality here and now. Moreover, both are concerned about the effects such craving will have on following lives. Neither Socrates nor the Buddha sees impending death as an evil to be avoided (Dillon, 2000: 530). Neither believes that bodily life should be desired. Socrates and Nāgasena also have Shared Concerns about what causes continual re-embodiment, as will now be shown.

1.3.2 Craving Corporeality

Both have a Shared Concern about the continuing imprisonment through attachment to corporeality. Socrates believes a soul is imprisoned in a body, whereas, the Buddha speaks of imprisonment in *saṃsāra*, i.e. where the person is a prisoner to *dukkha* and *karma*. Both texts have different views on the *what* that is imprisoned. Both texts see the craving for the corporeal during life as the root of imprisonment.

Further, both philosophical texts describe how an individual is attached to this world by their own desire or craving. For both this results in rebirth after death: for Buddhists this is *saṃsāra* and for Plato is re-embodiment. Obeyesekere correctly states that the '*Phaedo* resembles Buddhist texts in emphasizing craving as the cause of continuity in the rebirth cycle' (2002: 250-1). In *Milindapañha* there are individuals that cannot gain release from *saṃsāra*. Nāgasena states that 'If when I die, I die with *craving* for existence in my heart' then I will be 'reindividualised' (II.1.6.32). The process is put eloquently by Nāgasena later at II.3.4.52:

Where there is sensation there is a *longing*, where there is *longing* there is a *grasping*, where there is *grasping* there is a *becoming*, where there is *becoming* there is *birth*, and at birth old age and death, grief, lamentation, pain, *sorrow*, and despair begin to be.⁵⁸

For Plato the 'I' is different. Socrates expresses how *souls* 'continue wandering (*πλανῶνται*)' after death 'until at last, through craving (*ἐπιθυμία*) for the corporeal (*σωματοειδοῦς*)' *souls* become 'imprisoned (*ἐνδεθῶσιν*) once more in a body' (81d9-

⁵⁸ My own emphasis. Each stage is dependently conditioned by the previous. A fuller account of the twelve-link chain of dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*) can be found in *Samyutta Nikāya* ii.20.

e2). For Nāgasena there is nothing like *soul* that is being imprisoned, instead there is causal continuation of consciousness, fundamentally different to Plato's soul. It is the *craving* for bodily existence that perpetuates rebirth in both *Milindapañha* and in *Phaedo*. But what is continuing differs significantly, since there is no immortal soul in Buddhist thought and since Plato has no doctrine comparable to *anattā*.

Both texts hold that the overall nature of human life is un-satisfactory. For Buddhism this is *dukkha*,⁵⁹ where the fault of the individual in *Milindapañha* leads to un-satisfactory human existence and pain.⁶⁰ The continuation of consciousness in a body is wanted, and such craving leads to suffering. Similarly in *Phaedo* the fault of the soul leads to un-satisfactory human embodiment. The evidence for this opinion is grounded in statements and language throughout the dialogue. At 107b1 Socrates says explicitly: 'I have such a poor opinion of our weak human nature (ἀνθρωπίνην ἀσθένειαν ἀτιμάζων)'. He sees human life as an existence in 'a sort of lock-up (φρουρᾶ)' (62b3-4) and as a period of imprisonment in a body (δεσμῶν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, 67d1-2; ἐνδεθῶσιν εἰς σῶμα, 81e2), where soul is a helpless prisoner (ἀτεχνῶς διαδεδεμένην, 82e). Death is appealing since after death a soul may be 'rid for ever of human ills' (ἀπηλλάχθαι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων κακῶν, 84b3-4). Clearly human existence is un-satisfactory for souls.

A reductive understanding of *dukkha* concludes that this world is painful, and that Buddhism is pessimistic in its outlook. Yet, the nature of *dukkha* combines pleasure and pain. Buddhism recognises that the human world does have pleasures, but that these pleasures are transitory and will be followed by further un-satisfactoriness once the pleasure ceases. It is one's grasping for transitory pleasures again and again

⁵⁹ Gethin translates *dukkha* as approximately 'suffering' (1998: 59). A better translation is *un-satisfactoriness*.

⁶⁰ I am basing the concept on the Buddhist notion of *dukkha*. Although human existence has pain, I wish to emphasise the un-satisfactoriness of human existence for Plato and Buddhism.

that leads to *dukkha*. Therefore, *anicca* underpins *dukkha*. Because everything in this world is impermanent, pleasure too is impermanent, and longing for pleasure, or trying to hold onto pleasurable experiences is, therefore, un-pleasurable. How the Buddhist overcomes *dukkha* is through understanding *anattā*. If I too am impermanent, then there is nothing for pleasure to attach itself to. Therefore, one can experience pleasure without grasping.

Socrates too understands how pleasure and pain are intricately connected ‘like two bodies attached to the same head’, with one you get the other after (60b-c). However, the differences are perhaps more illuminating than the commonality. In Buddhist thought *dukkha* is linked to *anicca* and *anattā* as a Universal Truth. However, the un-satisfactory nature of the human sphere for Plato rests on the fundamental distinction between soul and body. Plato concludes that soul has a permanent nature through its affinity to what is ‘unvarying and constant’. At 80b-6 Socrates contrasts the natures of soul and body:

The soul is most like that which is divine, immortal, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, and ever self-consistent and invariable, whereas body is most like that which is human, mortal, multiform, unintelligible, dissoluble, and never self-consistent.

soul is most similar to what is divine, immortal, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, unvarying, and constant in relation to itself; whereas body, in its turn, is most similar to what is human, mortal, multiform, non-intelligible, dissoluble, and never constant in relation to itself. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Plato’s soul fundamentally differs from Buddhism’s Truths *anicca* and *anattā*: where Buddhism denies finality and an internal tangible core, Plato states that the soul is eternal. Indeed, where Buddhists take refuge in the non-attachment of *anattā*, Plato specifically describes the dangers for the soul of the human bodily world, where the soul is ‘permeated by the corporeal’, having had ‘intercourse with the body’, and so becomes ‘ingrained in its very nature’ (81c4-6). For Plato, unlike the Buddhist counterpart, there is an entity to which desire can attach itself. Buddhists take refuge in

impermanency and the denial of permanency, whereas Plato takes refuge in permanent Being and immortal soul as the permanent part of us. Although Plato does not share the ontology of *anicca* and *anattā*, he does have a clear concept of physical impermanence in his idea of Becoming.

The soul's fault is craving an un-satisfactory existence and one that is ultimately beneath the level a soul can aspire to. In Buddhism, un-satisfactoriness is a Universal Truth within the conditioned world of *saṃsāra* (*dukkha-dukkha*). The *aim* is the absolute cessation of craving, which is *Nirvāṇa* (Kalupahana: 1976: 76). For Socrates, impure souls crave a bodily existence characterised by human un-satisfactoriness and imprisoned suffering. Instead of realising their true nature and habitations as 'bodiless' (114c), some souls cling to corporeal life. Rejecting this approach Socrates says 'I should only make myself ridiculous in my own eyes if I clung to life' (117a). Craving for the corporeal and its pleasures leads to the continuation of embodiment or *saṃsāra* because for Buddhists it causes the delusion of permanency and for Plato this deluded craving leads to bodily existence.

In the *Phaedo* the soul is the 'first accessory to [our] own confinement' within bodily existence (83a).⁶¹ For Plato and Buddhism it is the individual now—however defined—that has the responsibility; we crave the corporeal and so we become. In *Milindapañha* 'All foolish individuals take pleasure in the senses' and 'continue to cleave to them' (III.4.6.69) and the passionate man is 'overpowered by craving', since in a state of 'want', he eats food enjoying 'both the taste and the lust that arises from the taste' (III.6.7.76-77). For Plato the lustful individual 'has been so beguiled by the body and its passions and pleasures that nothing seems real to it but those physical things which can be touched and seen and eaten and drunk' (81b). Thus individuals feel 'a

⁶¹ Plato's conscious soul is confined, but there is nothing to confine in *Nāgasena's* view; *Skandhas* are all there are. Therefore, the language of confinement or imprisonment is more Platonic than Buddhist; though imprisonment within the larger *saṃsāric* cycle is possible.

keen pleasure or pain’ and ‘cannot help supposing that whatever causes the most violent emotion is the plainest and truest reality’ (83c). The *ignorant* fools do not realise that ‘every pleasure or pain has a sort of rivet with which it fastens the soul to the body’ making it ‘corporeal’ (83d). Dillon notes that desire is the cause of imprisonment and suffering (2000: 539).

For Plato and Buddhism, ‘those physical things’ are transitory yet damaging. Man craves permanent happiness, but searches for it in impermanent things; happiness from impermanent things is temporary, hence it results in human sorrow (Kalupahana, 1976: 37). Craving for bodily pleasures leads to suffering, encapsulated in the Buddhist cycle of *samsāra* and in Plato’s cycle of rebirth.

1.3.3 The Seas of Life

The image of human life as a sea or seas is used in both Plato’s *Phaedo* and the *Milindapañha* to present the cycle of life, death and rebirth.⁶² In *Phaedo* the image of human life as a ‘sea’ is explicit at 84a and 85d. First, at 84a the ‘soul brings calm to the seas of desire’ (84a7), where the soul is the purified soul and the desire refers to the presence of pleasures and pains.⁶³ Second, at 85d Socrates speaks of the soul using intelligence as a ‘raft to ride [sail over] the seas of life’ (85d1-4). Socrates is here advising that where it is impossible to attain truth a second-best method is to (85c7-d2):

to select the best and most dependable theory that human intelligence can supply, and use it as a raft to ride the seas of life

adopt the best and least refutable of human doctrines, embarking on it as a kind of raft, and risking the dangers of the voyage through life, unless one could travel more safely and with less risk, on a securer conveyance afforded by some divine doctrine. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

⁶² See 1.1.1

⁶³ The language of purification is prevalent throughout the Argument from Affinity (78b-84b). Specific examples include: 79d; 80e; 81b; 82b9-c1; 82d. See 1.2.

In *Milindapañha* the image of crossing water is seen when Nāgasena refers to the *Samyutta Nikāya* (II.1.10.36).⁶⁴ The passage describes a process of crossing a ‘stream’ and ‘the sea of life’ leading to a state of ‘wisdom’ that is characterised by purity. In 1.1.1 I commented on the inclusion of the Buddhist raft parable. Socrates’ comment on ‘the seas of life’ is thus close to the Buddhist image of *Dharma* as a raft on the sea of *samsāra* (Dillon, 2000: 538). The raft for Socrates is intelligence pointing to the exercise of philosophy while for Nāgasena the stream is passable by the example of the Buddha and the teachings he gave, the *Dharma*. The process of crossing or sailing over the ‘sea of life’ is the journey *from* bodily existence *towards* a purified release – for both Plato’s soul and Buddhism’s consciousness.

However, it is intriguing to postulate a further difference in the use of this imagery. The parable of the raft serves as a reminder for Buddhists to let go of all attachments, including the practices and teachings that helped one cross the sea of desire, *samsāra*. But, Socrates has no such problem with attachment *per se*. Philosophy is the vehicle, the raft to cross the sea of human desires, as it is ‘the most dependable theory that human intelligence can supply’ (85d-2). As such, philosophy purifies the soul of the body. As it were, philosophy helps one move from the near shore to the far shore. But, there is no suggestion that the purified soul (soul type 5—see 1.2.2) once ‘set free from imprisonment’ (114b6-c2) and living ‘altogether without bodies’ (114c2-6) no longer practice philosophy. Therefore, examining the imagery of crossing a sea in the *Milindapañha* and *Phaedo* helps one understand the problem of bodily desire for the Platonic soul, but only in a specifically limited way. Buddhism detaches from *all* attachments, even the *dharma*—the very raft that led to one’s escape of *samsāra*. Socrates, as far as one can infer, sees philosophy and the intellectual journey as carrying on even after one’s release from imprisonment.

⁶⁴ See 1.1.1. By faith he crosses over the stream, By earnestness the sea of life; By steadfastness all grief he stills, By wisdom is he purified (II.1.10.36).

I turn back now to the correlation between both texts concerning the problem of human desires. The image of a journey on a sea is associated with the power of desires, where the seas become turbulent through craving. For Buddhists *saṃsāra* is a painful mix of craving and impermanence and for Plato also the seas the unpurified soul must sail are linked with the continual physical desires of the soul. A connection is made in both between the power of water and the power of desire. Nāgasena states that individuals are ‘carried down by that flood’ of desire (III.4.6.69). The ‘flood’ described by Nāgasena correlates to the ‘delight’ individuals take in the ‘senses’ and the ‘pleasure’ that they ‘continue to cleave to’ (III.4.6.69). It is by quelling the ‘flood’ of the senses and desires that Buddhists achieve *Nirvāṇa*. Similarly, Socrates’ idea of ‘seas of desire’ at 84a refers to the need for the soul to ‘bring calm’ to the turbulence caused by physical pleasures and pains. This idea prepares the way for the later afterlife myth which presents the image of afterlife souls travelling on vast rivers and lakes. For Socrates describes Hades as a system of underground channels through which ‘flows a great volume of water, monstrous unceasing subterranean rivers of waters’ (111d). The underworld rivers produce ‘movement to and fro’ (111e). Just as the ‘seas of life’ require a ‘raft’ on which to travel safely (85d), so too some of the ‘subterranean rivers’ are violent and in need of calming as they oscillate and move wildly. Further, the afterlife souls that ‘embark’ on ‘vessels which await them’ (113d) are comparable to those travelling by a raft during life. In the myth of the underworld it is only those souls still craving bodily existence that are presented as sailing on or immersed in the waters. Nāgasena’s ‘flood’ thus sheds light on the tremendous power of Plato’s water imagery, where souls are condemned to the waters of Tartarus through craving for the body.

Where I claim that the main Shared Concern between Plato’s voyaging and Nāgasena’s flood imagery relates to the power of desire, Gold suggests that Plato’s eschatological topography represents yogic breath control and meditative techniques

(1996: 23).⁶⁵ Gold concludes that ‘In both Plato and Yoga, we have a picture of hot and cold energy surging through channels, conduits, and hollows’, and in Plato they are a coded ‘meditation technique’ (Gold, 1996: 24). Platonic scholars have interpreted the afterlife world as a living organism: Pender states that the Tartarus region is a ‘gigantic bodily system’ (2012: 232); and Edmonds describes Hades as ‘endlessly pulsating like the breathing of a living creature’ (2004: 211). Therefore, Gold’s focus on the myths similarity to a breathing system is in keeping with aspects of Platonic scholarship.

My next point on the shared sea imagery of these two texts is that it provides a further, surprising parallel. At 84a Plato uses the imagery of travelling across the sea in close proximity with that of weaving a web. Speaking about how a soul gains release from the body, Socrates notes that a ‘philosophic man’:

...would not think that while philosophy should release it, yet on being released, it should of itself surrender to pleasures [5] and pains, to bind it to the body again, and should perform the endless task of a Penelope working in reverse at a kind of web. Rather, securing rest [γαληνην] from these feelings, by following reasoning ... [84b] when it has died, it will enter that which is akin and of like nature to itself, and be rid of [5] human ills. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

Plato thus couples the unpurified soul wandering through bodily rebirths with Penelope who is condemned ‘to an endless task’ (84a). Edmonds believes that the sea and raft imagery relate to Odysseus embarking from Calypso’s isle at *Odyssey* V.232-281 (2004: 204). Plato is combining the two images to advise that the soul should use intelligence as a ‘raft’ over the turbulent ‘seas’ to avoid condemning itself to an ‘endless task’, like Penelope herself. Plato’s Penelope image relies heavily on the audience’s knowledge that Penelope wove by day and by night un-wove that which she had worked. Gallop, in his commentary, notes that the unpurified soul is doing the ‘reverse’ of Penelope, because, ‘through sensual indulgence, it weaves again by night the ‘web’

⁶⁵ Gold’s argument is one that I find useful and intriguing, but wish not to defend as part of my thesis. First, meditation is an interesting interpretation and it remains to be seen how the breathing can be uncoded to actually represent a practical technique. Gold’s theory is useful as a further example of how *Phaedo* and Buddhist imagery can be used together.

that philosophy has unravelled by day' (1975: 91). The image of weaving suggests the complexity of human desires. Also, Penelope specifically implies a repetition or longevity where one is constantly striving for something that is then un-done.

Is it possible that Plato uses Penelope's imagery to suggest the complexities of human life and the difficulty of the task facing the soul? In *Milindapañha* Nāgasena also uses an image of unravelling as he posits that desires tangle life, creating complication and confusion (II.1.9.34):

Thus shall the strenuous Bhikkhu [monk], undeceived,
Unravel all the tangled skein of life.⁶⁶

This image of a 'tangled skein' elucidates the great difficulty in the Buddhist path. The un-weaving of a 'tangled skein' is a positive for Nāgasena. It appears that 'wisdom' leads the Buddhist monk to discover the tangles and work to 'unravel' them. The tangled thread refers to the complications of life caused by attachment to the body. The untangling of the thread presents release from the confusions built up through *samsāric* desire, allowing a crossing over from 'the near shore' to 'the further shore', which represents escape from the condition of *duḥkha*. Therefore untangling the thread and crossing the sea can be seen as parallel processes.

Following Gallop's interpretation, Plato's purified soul does something very similar to the Buddhist monk: using philosophy or 'wisdom' the soul and the monk 'unravel' threads. However, Plato's account is not as positive as Nāgasena's since Plato's soul re-weaves by night the web that it has worked to undo by day when it was using philosophy. Whereas Nāgasena uses a single untangling leading to a positive outcome, Plato's web of Penelope stands for a repetitive cycle, where the reference to the plight of Odysseus' wife helps to conjure pity for the endless cycles of the embodied soul. The 'endless task' of the soul's weaving works with the constant backwards and

⁶⁶ I do not intend the Shared Concern to hinge on specific translations of specific words. Rather, I wish to emphasise the general concern towards the complexity of desire.

forwards motion of the dialogue.⁶⁷ This reinforces the idea of the unpurified soul stuck in the cycle of rebirth. In contrast, *Milindapañha* suggests a single ‘crossing’, a linear journey from one point to another without return. But despite this significant difference in aim, the two images of the voyage and the tangled skein/woven web, both used in close proximity, show how these texts have Shared Concerns not only on philosophical themes but also imagery and expression.

1.3.4 Conclusion

There are notable Shared Concerns in the *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* concerning desire and purification in the context of their respective ideas on death and purification. I conclude that both texts see death as something not to be feared and bodily life as an existence not to be desired. The craving for bodily existence is the cause of the recurrence of bodily rebirth and human un-satisfactoriness.

Having discussed the Shared Concerns regarding the nature of death, desire and purification, I analysed the imagery used to describe bodily life now and the transition towards bodily release. I focused on the common image of sea/life and raft/understanding. The ‘raft’ in Buddhism is *Dharma*, the Truth uncovered by the Buddha, carrying one from the dangerous shore to the safe shore. For Plato, the ‘raft’ is philosophical understanding, the Truth available to philosophical reasoning. Although the Truth is not the same for Plato and the Buddha, both see the Truth as the means to escape. However, Buddhists through the raft parable learn to let go of all attachments including the raft itself, whereas Plato suggests that philosophy remains important even

⁶⁷ The concept of journeying there and back is seen within the myth. The rivers flow into Tartarus and ‘flow forth again’ (112a); the water ‘rushes’ to one side of the earth and ‘returns to this’ side (112b), causing ‘terrible and monstrous winds as it passes in and out’ (112b-c). And all the while the soul is travelling around this afterlife topography in a vessel or in the waters themselves. Water imagery is surprisingly dominant in *Phaedo*: ‘we live round the sea (θάλατταν) like ants or frogs round a swamp (τέλμα)’ (109b); ‘as fishes (ἰχθύες) see our world when they put up their heads (ἀνακύπτοντες) out of the sea (θαλάττης)’ (109e); ‘monstrous unceasing subterranean rivers (ὑδωρ ῥεῖν)’ (111d4); ‘rivers (ποταμοὶ) flow together (συρρέουσι), and from it they flow forth again (πάλιν ἐκρέουσιν)’ (112a5-6); and ‘monstrous (δεινούς) winds (ἀνέμους)’ (112b8).

after purification. Also, the journeys appear different. The Buddhist image is of a linear crossing, as opposed to a repetitive cyclical image in *Phaedo*. That being said, the cyclical nature of *samsāra* shares in the cyclicity of Plato's repetitive weaving and un-weaving. Both texts present a journey from an un-satisfactory life of embodiment—due to the over-powering nature of desire—to a disembodied release through purification by quelling/restraining physical desire. Both have a Shared Concern for achieving purification through Truth and a cessation of bodily desire.

Claim 1—that different cultural texts have Shared Concerns—has been established enabling the thesis to now turn to Claim 2: that using different cultural texts with Shared Concerns helps problem solve in one of the texts. Through the foundational Shared Concerns of desire and purification, I delve deeper into the problem of identity and moral accountability within a landscape of continuing identities. As souls journey round the life-death topography what happens to their identities as they become purified or degenerate further into bodily desires? Furthermore, who or what is it being punished? Therefore, Claim 2 builds on Claim 1 by showing how Shared Concerns can lead to problem-solving; and the specific problem analysed here is where moral accountability fits into a landscape of changing identities across death.

Chapter 2: Identity and Moral Accountability in *Phaedo*

Introduction

This chapter aims to set out the problem of identity and moral accountability in Plato's *Phaedo*. It builds on the Shared Concerns of Chapter 1 (Claim 1), and elucidates the problems to be solved (Claim 2). Following on Chapter 1's in-depth study, Chapter 2 offers a succinct appraisal of the problem to be solved (Claim 2). The chapter is split into three sections. Firstly I examine the text itself, providing a short over-view of the main problems; I keep scholarly critics to a minimum, instead focusing on Plato's text (2.1). Secondly I bring in the modern commentators, to show their opinions and analysis of the problem (2.2). In particular I focus on Sorabji's idea of intellect as a true self (2006: 34), Inwood's summation that Plato must convince the reader that 'the soul to be rewarded or punished will be *me*' (2009: 31), and Annas' concern that 'reincarnation and the final judgement myth have not been successfully combined' (1982: 127). Thirdly I present my own solution on how the problem in *Phaedo* can be solved (2.3).

2.1 The Problem of Moral Accountability: *Phaedo*

Socrates' own soul is fundamental to the *Phaedo* discussion. Having given his interlocutors his arguments for why death should not be feared and how this soul is immortal, Socrates proclaims 'I shall remain with you no longer' (*Phd.* 115d) and 'when I am dead I shall not stay, but depart and be gone' (*Phd.* 115d-e). But Socrates means something more than a cessation at death: Socrates the person is identical to Socrates the soul. Socrates believes who he really is 'shall not stay', he will 'depart' but not cease. According to McCabe, for the philosopher 'my death has no sting because *my* soul marches on afterwards' (McCabe, 1994: 29). To achieve this position McCabe believes that Plato 'needs to show that souls are separate from bodies in the sense that they survive the separation from the body and death loses its sting' (1994:

64). The Argument from Affinity is a product of the interlocutors' fear that the Theory of Recollection proves that a soul existed before our birth, but not that our souls exist after the death event or have a different existence to the death state of the body, i.e. the corpse (77a-78b). Socrates argues that souls are separable from bodies as the Cyclical Argument shows immortality both before and after the death event. Furthermore, recollection shows that souls have consciousness/intellect when disembodied meaning souls are different from the state of death found with the body. Socrates believes that the Cyclical Argument establishes the continued existence of souls (77c6-d4):

ἀποδέδεικται μὲν, ἔφη, ὃ Σιμμία τε καὶ Κέβης, ὁ Σωκράτης, καὶ νῦν, εἰ θέλετε συνθεῖναι τοῦτον τε τὸν λόγον εἰς ταῦτον καὶ ὃν πρὸ τούτου ὁμολογήσαμεν, τὸ γίνεσθαι πᾶν τὸ ζῶν ἐκ τοῦ τεθνεῶτος. εἰ γὰρ ἔστιν μὲν [d] ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ πρότερον, ἀνάγκη δὲ αὐτῇ εἰς τὸ ζῆν ἰούση τε καὶ γιγνομένη μηδαμόθεν ἄλλοθεν ἢ ἐκ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ τεθάναι γίνεσθαι, πῶς οὐκ ἀνάγκη αὐτὴν καὶ ἐπειδὴν ἀποθάνη εἶναι, ἐπειδὴ γε δεῖ αὐθις αὐτὴν γίνεσθαι;

‘That’s been proved already, Simmias and Cebes’, said Socrates, ‘if you will combine this argument with the one we agreed on earlier, to the effect that all that is living comes from that which is dead. [d] Because if the soul does have previous existence, and if when it enters upon living and being born, it must come from no other source than death and being dead, surely it must also exist after it has died, given that it has to be born again?’ (tr. Gallop, 1975).

By combining the Theory of Recollection and the Cyclical Argument Socrates believes the proof has been made, that what already existed was born and that it must survive death to be born once more, since ‘every living thing comes from the dead’ (77c6-d5).

McCabe goes on to say that ‘any soul...will be individual, not universal’, and this is because ‘what survives is Socrates, or you, not just a world soul’ for there is ‘no consolation otherwise’ (*ibid.*). What McCabe means by ‘individual’ is the same as personal: ‘*Phaedo*’s arguments are emphatically concerned with personal survival’ (McCabe, 1994: 64 fn20). Therefore, Socrates’ soul, taking McCabe’s point, is personally Socrates. However, taking a different perspective, Broadie correctly states that ‘the self that is Socrates’ intellect is the self bound up with his body’ (Broadie, 2001: 303). Socrates whilst alive is human, whether his person is mainly his conscious

soul or not, and whilst human, Socrates lives in a bodily way. Chapter 1 analysed the difficulty certain souls had with leaving the body at the death event. Socrates describes certain souls that are unable to leave their individual human life behind (81e2-3):

ἐνδοῦνται δέ, ὥσπερ εἰκός, εἰς τοιαῦτα ἤθη ὅποῖ' ἅττ' ἂν καὶ μεμελετηκυῖαι τύχῳσιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ.

And as you might expect, they [souls] are attached (ἐνδοῦνται) to the same sort of character or nature which they have developed during life.

The ‘same sort of character’ provides a causal link between t_1 and t_2 , which challenges McCabe’s reassurance that ‘my death has no sting’.⁶⁸ As Broadie surmises, the self is ‘bound up with a body’: it is the ‘nature...developed during life’ that continues. Therefore, for Gerson ‘one’s disembodied fate flows from one’s embodied career’ (Gerson, 2003: 87) and for Rowe a soul turns into an animal that suits their behaviour (Rowe, 2007: 107).

Socrates takes his immortality argument further when he states that ‘we shall know whether to feel *confidence or fear* about the fate of our souls’ (καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο αὖ ἐπισκέψασθαι πότερον ἢ ψυχὴ ἐστίν, καὶ ἐκ τούτων θαρρεῖν ἢ δεδιέναι ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας ψυχῆς) (78b7-9).⁶⁹ It is the moral accountability that comes with the soul’s immortality that is the utmost concern. For the language ‘fate of our souls’ shows moral concern and care for our souls. Rowe states that if Socrates succeeds in his arguments then ‘we should not fear death’ (1993: 3). However, to feel care for one’s soul in future requires further arguments.

It is the afterlife myth that provides the most abundant source of evidence on the problem of moral accountability. However, due to the contested allegorical and literal readings of *Phaedo*’s myth, interpretations exploring moral continuation through lives

⁶⁸ T_1 being this human life now and t_2 being the next life after death.

⁶⁹ My own emphasis highlights the moral accountability of the immortal soul.

are contested. All souls are judged specifically on their previous bodily life.⁷⁰ The ‘judgement’ is to determine who has ‘lived well and holily, and those who have not’ (113d). At no point in *Phaedo* does Socrates or Plato describe the judgement of souls as a *final* judgement. And it is certainly not the case, as Annas believes, that a ‘final morally rectifying judgement is still there’ in the myth (1982: 127). But it seems highly unjust to have a ‘final judgement’ for one mortal life. For the eternal soul has led countless human and animal lives. Therefore, wherever the forensic focus is, it cannot justifiably be as specific as *one* of those countless lives. Indeed, a *final* judgement for all souls seems unlikely. Once a final judgement is cast, the chance to change is severely reduced if not diminished entirely. The soul would then be stuck with the consequences of *one* directly preceding life. The only judgement of the myth that can be seen as ‘final’ is that of the worst morally corrupt souls at 113e5-6 where the souls cast into Tartarus will emerge ‘nevermore’.

The judgement of souls in *Phaedo* lacks a ‘morally rectifying judgement’, one that Annas would rather have (1982: 129). The lack of ‘finality’ that Annas distinguishes is precisely due to the fact that the life that is being judged is only one of many lives for the soul; a perennial punishment for a finite life would be severely unjust. For Plato souls are not eternally condemned by what they did, but continue on by means of what they can achieve.⁷¹

Phaedo’s judgement is of the soul’s previous embodied existence. It is the soul that undergoes judgement, but it is the particular human life that is being judged. The two are linked, death does not end moral continuity. The problem of moral

⁷⁰ Scholarship is divided on the issue of judgement and its relationship with re-embodiment as discussed in Chapter 1.

⁷¹ The worst souls in Tartarus have taken a number of lives to get into that morally corrupt state and are probably seen as not able to return to the cycle since they would be unable to achieve any improvement in those conditions. But as Tarrant notes in footnote 191 of his commentary, line 113e5-6 seems to contradict the Argument from Opposites (2003: 250).

accountability across t_1 and t_2 becomes apparent.⁷² Rowe states that belief in the immortality of an individual soul on the one hand and the cycle of reincarnation of souls on the other is an incompatible position (1993: 9). This view links to a question asked by Annas: why should I be just if it is only my *soul* that will bear the consequence? (1982: 129). If *I* am in *command* of *my* soul, but it is only the soul that will be punished, there appears no reason for *me* being afraid or deterred from moral depravity. It appears that death may still be ‘a godsend for the wicked’ (Gallop, 1975: 107c6-7).

In 2.2 I turn to the scholarly work on identity and the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*. I rely on Sorabji, Inwood, and Annas to help shape the problem in *Phaedo*, further clarifying the question I aim to solve.

2.2 The Problem of Moral Accountability: Sorabji, Inwood, and Annas

Sorabji, in his 2006 book *Self*, provides a comparative approach that focuses on, in his terms, the concept of ‘self’. Sorabji’s personal view is ‘that there is an embodied self plain to see, which *has* or *owns* both psychological and bodily characteristics’ (2006: 32). Additionally, he believes the ‘answers that are furthest from the one I have favoured are probably those in the Platonist tradition’ (2006: 33). Sorabji concludes that soul for Plato is the ‘true self’, and that ‘true self is the reason or intellect’ (2006: 34). For Plato *all* souls are potentially Sorabji’s ‘true self’ as ‘reason or intellect’ (2006: 34). However, as seen in 1.4, some souls are not fulfilling that potential.

Sorabji asks ‘Does the idea of reincarnation provide a possible way to avoid annihilation?’ (2006: 302). Sorabji’s answer is that annihilation can only be avoided if ‘it is the very same person as before who is reincarnated’ (2006: 302). The emphasis is placed on the re-incarnation of ‘the very same person’.⁷³ But, Sorabji correctly

⁷² Once again, t_1 represents this life now and t_2 the life post death.

⁷³ Later, in Chapter 3, I will analyse Locke’s concepts of Human and Person. Person is a very specific term. Locke shows that one needs continuation of consciousness and memory for the ‘same’ person to be attributed at different stages.

questions whether two sequential lives for the reincarnated soul can be thought of as the ‘same individual’ (2006: 302). Is there a discrepancy between ‘the very same person’ and the ‘same individual’? Sorabji rhetorically questions whether a *soul* can retain a strong ‘psychological connection’ through reincarnation (2006: 303):

But even reincarnation as a baby in a new environment, let alone class, culture, or race, seems to involve the loss of many mental and physical characteristics. Can the psychological connection, then, be strong enough?

If Sorabji is correct and there is not enough ‘psychological connection’ between soul at t_1 and soul at t_2 , then who, or what, is morally accountable for the human life lived? Rowe, Annas, and Inwood are also specifically concerned with the question of why I should be morally accountable across different reincarnations.

Rowe concludes that the immortality of an individual soul is incompatible with a cycle of transmigrating souls as there is no ‘continuity of consciousness between one period of incarnation and another’ (1993: 9). The donkey and Sardanapallus lack resemblance and memory, and, therefore, cannot retain an identity (Rowe, 1993: 9).⁷⁴ Likewise, Annas believes that ‘reincarnation and the final judgement myth have not been successfully combined’ (1982: 127). Conversely, Pender believes that reincarnation is consistent with the ‘myth of final judgement’, since while most souls continue on the cycle of rebirths, a minority – those condemned to Tartarus – have received a ‘final’ sentence (2012: 199). Edmonds sees a contradiction between the Cyclical Argument and eternal punishment or reward, although he relegates this issue to a footnote (2004: 218, fn179). But Inwood is even more critical, stating that the ‘doctrine of reincarnation is not very plausible’ (2009: 37), although he justifies Plato’s ‘doctrine of reincarnation’ as it seems to serve ‘the cause of justice’, at least for Plato (2009: 38). Inwood correctly states how embodied persons perform acts but since ‘the

⁷⁴ Additionally, Inwood comments that although souls may retain ‘idiosyncratic tastes and aversions’ of their former life, the ‘souls differ significantly from their embodied possessors’ (2009: 31), except perhaps in ‘their moral condition’ (2009: 30).

souls [after death] differ significantly from their embodied possessors' (2009: 31), 'what is rewarded or punished is not these embodied people' (Inwood, 2009: 30). Therefore, the views of Rowe, Annas, and Inwood raise the question of whether I should feel concern for my soul.

The forensic problem for Annas and Inwood stems from the problem of moral accountability when individuals do not continue at t_1 and t_2 . The moral concern is the problematic interpretation focused on here. The problem of continuation through time can be summarised by Inwood (2009: 31):

If the myth is to persuade me to improve my earthly life, I must be convinced that the soul to be rewarded or punished will be 'me'.

For the myth to work allegorically and literally, I must be sure that it is me who will benefit after death from the philosophy I now practice. Or, I must feel concern for the future. Inwood identifies that benefit as reward and punishment. But Inwood's objection also concerns the here-and-now: for if I practise philosophy now hopefully I will observe some benefit in my life before being rewarded or punished after death.

Other scholars have raised an issue with continuity through time and its relationship with morality. Annas asks: 'Why should I be deterred from injustice by the thought that my soul will be reincarnated in a wolf?' (1982: 129). Both Annas and Inwood believe it must still be 'me' after the death of 'my' body if the myth is to deter me from evil now. Indeed, the concern for the soul at t_2 by the soul at t_1 is affirmed by, according to Annas and Inwood, the soul at t_1 and t_2 being me and me again. Annas argues that the myth gives one 'a reason to be just which is clearly consequentialist', whilst maintaining that 'reincarnation blurs this message' by making justice more about oneself and removing the 'finality of the morally rectifying judgement' (1982: 129). Therefore, the issue is whether these consequences need be final to be just.

Does Plato's view of justice need a final 'morally rectifying judgement'? Due to the role of purification in *Phaedo* any punishment or reward need not be final. Annas prefers the idea of final rewards and punishments as the consequences of moral behaviour towards others has a finality that binds the soul to justice. However, reincarnation prevents this finality, and, therefore, the justice, in Annas' opinion. Annas sees the effects on others as our best reason for being just, and is disappointed with Plato's best reason for being just: promoting one's own purity. The objection raised by Annas corresponds with Hackforth's note that in *Phaedo* 'ethics are wholly individualistic: every man is to be concerned with his own spiritual welfare' (1955: 7). The issue for my thesis is not whether the effects on others are more important than the effects on one's self, but whether *any* effect or consequence is *final*.

2.3 The Problem of Moral Accountability: the possible solution

For Plato there is a causal link between a soul's life, death, and rebirth. In the soul's next embodiment they have the 'same sort of character'. This is morally problematic, especially concerning Socrates' care argument. If the soul becomes re-embodied and takes on a new individual personality, with only the 'same sort of character', then it shall not be me and me again, and so I shall feel no need to *care* for my soul at that future time. For example, after death there is no assumption that Socrates the individual is still Socrates the human being. Is it enough, therefore, to conclude that Socrates the person continues after the death event, and not Socrates the human being, and that Socrates the person—as identified with his rational soul—is the forensic locus?

By not distinguishing the identity of human and person, the separability of soul from the body at death is blurred. Therefore Socrates' proof of the soul's immortality and his reasoning for being just are also blurred. Various scholars, Inwood, Annas, and Rowe, conclude that moral accountability—underpinning the idea of a judgment of

souls—is incompatible with a soul that becomes embodied once more: t_2 is the result of t_1 but the connection in identity is too weak to maintain a moral concern for welfare; therefore, I have no concern for my soul at that future stage.

In Chapters 3-4 I present an argument that what survives death is not Socrates the human being. Instead I argue that Socrates the person is the conscious rational soul. Furthermore, it is Socrates the person—the conscious rational soul—that is the locus of moral accountability. As such, it is the person who is judged after death, and not the human; thereby solving the problem of locating moral accountability in the judgement and re-embodiment of souls. It is important to clarify that it is the soul, not the human being, that is judged to be morally accountable. And, therefore, our care *now* does equate with our care *later*.

Sorabji's rhetorical question concerning individuality surviving physiologically dissonant embodiments is a guiding principle. Why should we be concerned for the fate of our souls later, if the soul is immortal but develops resultant characters and natures? Can a soul in sequential re-incarnations be the 'same individual', but not the same *human*? In this case, the soul is the same *soul* and so its consciousness is linked through reincarnations and it remains the same person.

Annas' disappointment is with a view in which a certain condition of soul is better regardless of external consequences because it is a better way of being a *person*, and that the value of this condition partly derives from fulfilling a role in something larger and more significant than one human composition. If I want to be just because I want to be rewarded, then I will be disappointed to realise that my rewards do not last for eternity. But if reincarnation, judgement, and justice are decided on the basis of something greater than one single embodied human life, then Plato answers Annas' objection about being 'deterred from injustice'. For on this view Plato would broaden

his concerns: what matters is no longer *your* human rewards, but justice as a whole in a de-individualised, but still an inter-connected, way.

But would being the same *person*, but not the same *human*, satisfy the requirement for moral accountability through t_1 and t_2 ? Is it possible to solve this moral accountability problem by using Locke's distinction of kinds as a guide and so splitting humans (as individuals) and persons (as forensic souls)? Annas, Rowe, and Inwood all suggest that there is a discrepancy between an individual human life and the soul that travels after the human's death; that distinction is why they object that reincarnation blurs the moral judgment. Their objections are significant, but need not be insurmountable to Plato's argument.

In Chapter 3 I will examine the Lockean ideas of human, person, and forensics, in order to assess whether placing the forensic nature with the soul rather than the human enables Plato to account for continuing moral accountability across distinct embodied existences at t_1 and t_2 .

Chapter 3: Locke and *Phaedo*

Introduction

In Chapter 3 I attempt to solve the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* by using the philosophy of Locke presented in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in Chapter XXVII entitled ‘Of Identity And Diversity’. Particularly I am interested to observe whether creating two *kinds*, person and human, solves the Platonic issue of moral accountability across rebirths. Locke’s idea of a conscious person helps us to understand *Phaedo*’s soul as consciousness in a loose sense (3.2.2), but issues of memory lead to further problems in *Phaedo* when thought of in a strict Lockean sense (3.2.3). That is why I turn to *Milindapañha* in Chapter 4. *Milindapañha* is useful as a working model of a philosophy which has had to deal in practical terms with issues of moral accountability and continuity between embodiments.

Although too fixated on memory to solve the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*, Locke’s work is useful in clearly articulating ideas on the human, the person, and forensic questions. I use Locke as a framework in which I firstly attempt to solve *Phaedo*’s problem on its own, but then secondly as a framework for the solution through my comparative method. Locke grounds my discussion between *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha* within an over-arching philosophical framework. This framework is applied individually on both texts and then during the discussion of both texts together. I use Locke for clarity of expression and thought, and to also maintain a basic philosophical grounding independent of both cultural texts but applicable to both cultural texts.

3.1 Locke’s Human, Person, and the Problem of Memory

Locke’s discussion of identity begins with what identity consists of. To find the answer of where identity resides Locke suggests that one must compare a thing now to a

thing later. What makes the thing ‘similar’ across time and place will be identity (II, 27: 182-183):

when considering anything as existing at any determined time and place, we compare it with itself existing at another time, and thereon form the ideas of *identity*. When we see anything to be in any place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) that it is that very thing, and not another.⁷⁵

So, what is it to be the same person at t_1 and at t_2 ? For Locke, one must know what kind of ‘substance’ one is dealing with. There are three ‘substances’/‘things’ that Locke identifies: 1) lumps or masses of atoms, 2) living organisms, and 3) Persons. The *identity* of each of the three ‘things’/‘substances’ will be different since the appropriate criterion of identity depends on what ‘substance’ is described. This is known as the ‘principle of the relativity of identity’ (Mackie, 1976: 173): a person is different from a living organism which in turn is different from a lump of matter. What constitutes sameness of identity over time for a lump of atoms is different to that for a Person. Rey highlights how ‘the identity of persons at a given time is also inescapably bound up with the identity of those persons *across* time’ (1976: 51). Therefore, the difficulty is with identity and diversity through time, not at any one time (Mackie, 1976: 140). Locke concludes that what constitutes a Person is the psychological line of consciousness, i.e. consciousness is the pre-eminent criterion of personal identity over time. Taking each type of substance in turn I show Locke’s findings and then express the problem of memory within Locke’s idea of a morally accountable person.

3.1.1 Mass of Atoms

Locke describes the identity of a lump (mass) of atoms (II, 27: 185):

whilst they exist united together, the mass, consisting of the same atoms, must be the same mass, or the same body, let the parts be never so differently jumbled: but if one of these atoms be taken away, or one new one added, it is no longer the same mass, or the same body.

⁷⁵ But does Locke ‘beg-the-question’ here? Locke assumes that there *is* a concept of identity, and to find that concept we compare a thing to the same thing previously’.

Locke's theory is strict. If *one* atom is removed from the lump of atoms, what Locke terms 'the mass', then the identity of that lump has changed, i.e. it is no longer one-and-the-same lump of atoms. So if I had a lump of clay and worked it with my hands into a shape, the fact that some atoms that made-up the clay are now on my hands means that the lump of clay is no longer strictly one-and-the-same lump of clay. The clay 'is no longer the same mass' *because* atoms have been taken away.

Mackie explains how the continuous solid lump of matter is one-and-the-same at t_1 and t_2 'only if there is a spatio-temporally continuous history' (1976: 141). As Mackie surmises, things that are identical over *time* with each other must share identical properties (1976: 170):

it is a fact that our present concept of identity is in itself a clear and a strict one, with well-defined logical rules attached to its standard terms, especially the rules that each thing is identical only with itself and hence that if *A* is identical with *B*, *B* has all the same properties as *A*.

What do we claim when saying something that exists at a later time, t_2 , is identical with something which existed at an earlier time t_1 (Mackie, 1976: 141)? What for Locke does it mean to be *the same*? Two things perhaps: to be qualitatively similar or numerically identical.

3.1.2 Living Creatures: Man

Lumps or mass require numerically identical atoms for *X* to retain its identity. However, 'In the state of living creatures, their identity depends not on a mass of the same particles, but on something else' (Locke, II, 27: 185). By definition living creatures change: food is consumed and waste is excreted; atoms are changing. Therefore, something keeps going whilst being gradually modified and repaired, creating a continuous animal linking t_1 and t_2 (Mackie, 1976: 142). To explain how the identity of living creatures 'depends not on a mass of the same particles, but on something else' Locke uses the differences between an oak and a mass of matter. In the

case of a living creature—the oak—it is not about change of matter but more about the organization of matter (Locke, II, 27: 185):

[The] variation of great parcels of matter alters not the identity [because] one [mass of matter] is only the cohesion of particles of matter anyhow united, the other [oak] such a disposition of them as constitutes the parts of an oak, and such an organization of those parts.

A living organism thus has ‘parts’ and ‘organization’. Living organisms are individuated by their functional organization, the purpose of which is to preserve the same life through changes of matter (Uzgalis, 2007: 64). There is one continuous history of one living life, concurrent with acquiring and losing matter; one life history equals one living organism (Locke, II, 27:185):

For in them the variation of great parcels of matter alters not the identity; an oak, growing from a plant to a great tree, and then lopped, is still the same oak: and a colt, grown up to a horse, sometimes fat, sometimes lean, is all the while the same horse. The reason whereof is that in these two cases—a mass of matter and a living body—identity is not applied to the same thing.

For Mackie, Locke attempts to ‘apply the concept of identity to a persisting but changeable thing’, hence, the old oak is the same as the sapling (Mackie, 1976: 145). Therefore, if Locke believes that man is the same man—due to organization of body and the same continued life—regardless of sequential atomistic change, then he requires for identity no stable *thing* within the man. As a result, Locke has no need for a traditional or Platonic view of soul. Ultimately consciousness replaces soul as the bearer of personal identity (Uzgalis, 2007: 67), but continuity of organization of body in one continued life is sufficient for a man’s identity. Locke presents various arguments for why a soul is a bad criterion for identity of a man over time (II, 27: 186-187). I mention this now in keeping with the structure of Locke’s argument, but I will examine soul in further detail below (3.1.5).

Man, as a human animal, is a living organism and, therefore, consists of parts and organization.⁷⁶ Therefore, what constitutes the identity of man over time is (II, 27: 186):⁷⁷

nothing but a participation of the same continued life by constantly fleeting particles of matter, in succession vitally united to the same organized body.

For Locke an organism has ‘the same continued life communicated to different particles of matter, as they happen successively to be united to that organized living body’ (II, 27: 187). Therefore, Locke’s principal concern is continuity ‘successively’ through change. For this idea Mackie’s uses the phrase ‘spatio-temporal continuity’. The appropriate criterion for the identity of man is a continuous sequential organization linked to a body.

3.1.3 Persons

Locke’s third substance is that of Persons. Locke’s *Person* stands for ‘a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places’ (II, 27: 188). There is a clear distinction between man and person: man is species specific, whereas a person is not (Uzgalis, 2007: 65). By a thought experiment of the rational Parrot or Cat, Locke posits that a rational Parrot or Cat may be a Person, albeit not a Man. Therefore, Locke admits ‘a trans-species conception of person’ (Uzgalis, 2007: 65). The ‘essential’ element to thinking is ‘consciousness’; ‘consciousness which is inseparable from thinking’ (Locke, II, 27: 188):

and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now [as] it was then.

Personal identity over time, therefore, is the continuity of consciousness over time. This

Person for Locke can exist in different substances (II, 27: 189):

⁷⁶ Man or ‘human’ is the name of a particular animal species, just as ‘lion’ is the name of a particular animal species.

⁷⁷ But, Rey suggests that ‘physical continuity seems to withstand replacement of parts only so long as that replacement is gradual over time’ (1976: 60).

For it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only, whether it be annexed only to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances.

Therefore, the ‘same’ continuation of consciousness remains the ‘same’ person regardless of ‘distance of time, or change of substance’, just as a man would not become ‘two men by wearing other clothes to-day than he did yesterday, with a long or short sleep between’ (Locke, II, 27: 189).

Presumably, substances, i.e. bodies, are like clothes for persons—neither necessary nor unique. Locke distinguishes between the same person and the same man, as Mackie notes (1976: 174). One can have the same person even if not the same substance; therefore, substance is not a necessary condition for personal identity (Uzgalis, 2007: 69). As Uzgalis notes, ‘Locke treats the presence or absence of consciousness as a necessary and sufficient condition for being the same person’ (2007: 69). To articulate his point further Locke provides an example of a man whose hand is cut off (II, 27: 190):

the substance, whereof personal self consisted at one time, may be varied at another, without the change of personal identity; there being no question about the same person, though the limbs which but now were a part of it, be cut off.

The hand that is cut off ‘is no longer a part of that which is himself, any more than the remotest part of matter’. Therefore the identity of persons does not rely on their bodily make-up.

Locke is aware that ‘in the ordinary way of speaking, the same person, and the same man, stand for one and the same thing’ (II, 27: 193). But, ‘consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended...united existences and actions...into the same person, as well as it does the existence and actions of the immediately preceding moment’. Therefore, ‘whatever has the consciousness of present and past actions is the same person to whom they both belong’ even when in different bodies (II, 27: 193). Therefore, a man and a person are two separate things.

Persons are not species-specific, but a confusion stems from this given that for the moment ‘human beings are the only persons we recognize’, as Dennett points out. Yet as he goes on to say, ‘on the one hand we can easily contemplate the existence of biologically very different persons’ (Dennett, 1976: 175):

I am a person, and so are you. That much is beyond doubt. I am a human being, and *probably* you are too. If you take offence at the “probably” you stand accused of a sort of racism, for what is important about us is not that we are the same biological species, but that we are both persons, and I have not cast doubt on that.

This quotation from Dennett highlights the distinction prevalent in Locke’s writing, that a human being is one ‘thing’ and a person another ‘thing’. For Dennett, as for Locke, the importance is placed on being a *person*, not necessarily being a *human*. Dennett deems this aspect of personhood the ‘metaphysical notion’, i.e. there is an intelligent, conscious, feeling agent (1976:177).

3.1.4 The Forensic Question

Forensic means related to law and legal matters, i.e. it refers to one’s desert and punishment. Dennett describes the forensic aspect of personhood as the moral notion of rights and responsibilities (1976: 176). The distinction between Person and Man leads Locke onto rewards and punishments: I am concerned with my future in a particularly intimate way; in a practical, not simply theoretical, way. Locke uses this idea of intimate concern and looks into a person’s past. He describes how the sequential succession of consciousness through different substances makes the person accountable. He concludes that the substance which consciousness finds itself in now at t_2 , is accountable for any action done in a previous substance at t_1 , however long ago down that continuous conscious past. Locke at II, 27: 194 states:

For as to this point of being the same self, it matters not whether this present self be made up of the same or other substances, I being as much concerned and as justly accountable for any action was done a thousand years since, appropriated to me now by this self-consciousness, as I am for what I did the last moment.

On a strict view of ‘consciousness’ if ‘you are conscious of something someone did a thousand years ago then you are the same as that person’ (Uzgalis, 2007: 69). Locke’s hyperbole may be rhetorical in design, but there is no reason why in Locke’s understanding the same person cannot theoretically traverse vast periods of time. The main point is Locke’s insistence on the forensic nature of persons and the concern that it should necessitate, and on its being based on memory.

Locke’s moral accountability of the *person* is based on his view that ‘person’ is ‘a forensic term appropriating actions and their merit’ (II, 27: 198). As Mackie states, ‘the sameness of a person is intended to carry with it legal and moral responsibility for actions’ (1976: 176). Therefore, since the hub of moral accountability lies with the consciousness—the continuous person—there is a radical distinction between consciousness and substance (Uzgalis, 2007: 69).

To conclude, for Locke it is the consciousness alone that makes the self. Therefore, ‘the same numerical substance is not considered as making the same self’ (II, 27: 196). Instead ‘the same continued consciousness, in which several substances may have been united’ can be ‘the same person preserved under the change of various substances’ (II, 27: 198). Furthermore, since personhood is a forensic concept, the person with their continuation of consciousness ‘becomes concerned and accountable, owns and imputes to itself past actions, just upon the same ground and for the same reason that it does the present’ (II, 27: 198-199).

Locke claims moral continuity between past and future actions within one continuous conscious person regardless of the person’s differing substances. Continuity is, therefore, both retrospective and prospective. The prospective aspect is seen in the future concern for the ‘great day’, where at the Christian final judgement everyone receives what they deserve ‘according to his doings, [because] the secrets of all hearts

shall be laid open' (II, 27: 198). As Mackie notes, the concern is based on memory (Mackie, 1976: 177):

If I know that the future self for which I have this special concern will be punished for my wrong actions (which it will remember and impute to itself), this gives me a reason for now refraining from wrong actions.

Hence, it is not the 'man' that is punished for previous actions that it did not do, but it is the *person* who is punished for actions committed. The consciousnesses 'are the *same* that committed those actions, and deserve that punishment for them' (II, 27: 199). Therefore, for Locke in Dennett's eyes, the 'metaphysical personhood is a necessary condition of moral personhood' (1976: 177). For Locke, the man is not the person, and man is not a forensic concept.

3.1.5 Locke on the Soul

Locke does not view the 'soul', or sometimes what he calls the 'spirit', as the necessary condition for human animals or personhood (II, 27: 186):

For if the identity of soul alone makes the same man, and there be nothing in the nature of matter why the same individual spirit may not be united to different bodies, it will be possible that those men living in distant ages, and of different tempers, may have been the same man: which way of speaking must be, from a very strange use of the word man, applied to an idea out of which body and shape are excluded'.

Using problem cases and thought experiments Locke explains why soul should not be considered fundamental.

Much of what being a man, a living organism, entails is bodily existence. For Locke, there is 'nothing in the nature of matter why the same individual spirit may not be united to different bodies' leading to problems such as if 'the soul of Heliogabalus were in one of his hogs, would [he] say that hog were a man or Heliogabalus?' (II, 27: 187). Since no one would call a 'hog' a man, regardless of what soul inhabited the 'hog', man's identity resides in the body. Therefore, the same soul does not make the same man. Rather, continuity of organised substance makes the same man.

Does the same soul equal the same person? Locke splits consciousness from soul (II, 27: 192):

The same immaterial substance [i.e. soul], without the same consciousness, no more making the same person by being united to any body, than the same particle of matter, without consciousness, united to any body, makes the same person.

Consciousness for Locke replaces the traditional Christian soul as the bearer of personal identity (Uzgalis, 2007: 67). Therefore, the same identical soul in two successive bodies is not necessary or sufficient to make the same identical person. For Locke the determinant of personal identity is not ‘whether it be the same identical substance [i.e. soul] which always thinks in the same person’ (II, 27: 189). It is instead whether there is continuity of consciousness. Locke concludes that soul, no more than matter, without the same consciousness, cannot be the same person.

3.1.6 Locke: The Problem of Memory

It is now important to analyse in further detail Locke’s idea of moral accountability based on memory to see if it can be applied to Plato’s account in *Phaedo*. Locke’s idea of the forensic person is based on memory. The ability of the person to remember previous actions necessitates concern for the person in the future. Thereby Locke establishes memory as the necessary condition for concern. I now present reasons why such a view is problematic.

According to Locke whether the same immaterial substance becomes two distinct persons depends on memory (II, 27: 191):

the same immaterial being, being conscious of the actions of its past duration, may be wholly stripped of all the consciousness of its past existence, and lose it beyond the power of ever retrieving again: and so, as it were, beginning a new account from a new period.

Therefore, in this instance a new line of consciousness is created, resulting in a new person. The ‘substance cannot unite remote existences into one person while consciousness can’ (Uzgalis, 2007: 67). Locke wonders whether, if it could be proved

that I had the same identical soul as Socrates but none of Socrates' memory, I would be Socrates (II, 27: 192):

‘would any one say that [I], being not conscious of any of Socrates' actions or thoughts, could be the same person with Socrates?’

Not under Lockean rules, since the consciousness does not reach back to any of Socrates' actions or thoughts in the past. A numerically identical soul does not create the same person any more ‘than if some of the particles of matter that were once a part of Nestor were now a part of’ me (II, 27: 192-3):

The same immaterial substance, without the same consciousness, no more making the same person by being united to any body, than the same particle of matter, without consciousness, united to any body, makes the same person. But let him once find himself conscious of any of the actions of Nestor, he then finds himself the same person with Nestor.

Without conscious memory there is no continuous person for Locke. And without memory the continuation of Locke's forensic person is not possible. For Locke it is the memory that predicates the concern and consequently moral accountability.

For Locke, to be the same person one must have conscious memory of past actions - his whole argument for moral accountability of persons affirms so much. Without memory Locke envisages a situation where you will have different persons in the same man (II, 27: 195-6):

But yet possibly it will still be objected, Suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond the possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thoughts, that I was once conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, That we must here take notice what the word *I* is applied to; which in this case, is the man only...But if it be possible for the same man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times, it is past doubt the same man would at different times make different persons.

In strict Lockean logic, ‘If you really cannot remember some act that was done yesterday, then you are not the same person who did that act’ (Uzgalis, 2007: 69). Somehow this new *person* interrupted what had been a conscious I-history. Mackie states that (1976: 172):

we might believe the successive intermittent occurrences to be not only similar but directly causally connected with one another across and despite the temporal gaps.

But Mackie remains sceptical as ‘we have at present no reason to believe that any such form of causation occurs’ (1976: 172). Mackie is primarily talking about a ‘discontinuous series of thing-occurrences’ where the ‘same thing exists at different times but exists intermittently’. Interestingly Mackie is unsure why in these instances we ‘talk about identity...rather than about a mere sequence of numerically diverse but qualitatively similar things’ (1976: 172). It is clear how far Locke requires memory as a necessary criterion of personal identity. Memory of past actions is a vital criterion for Locke, preventing splicing of consciousness into two distinct person lines.

However, stating the importance of memory recall, above a continuous line of continuation, has overtly negative consequences for Locke’s theory. Locke requires ‘perfect recall of all actions’ for moral accountability, but that is ‘a distinctly non-naturalistic account of memory’ (Uzgalis, 2007: 72). Locke asks, what if I lose parts of my memory (II, 27: 195):

[If I] lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond the possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again...am I not the same person that did these actions, had those thoughts, that I was once conscious of, though I have now forgot them?’

Locke’s answer is not satisfactory for the *forensic* notion of person: ‘we must here take notice what the word *I* is applied to; which in this case, is the man only’ (II, 27: 195). The person who did those forgotten actions is not the same person that I am now—no matter if ‘memory bridges’ connect them (Mackie, 1976: 181). The importance is ‘to relate rewards or punishments for actions done’ and, therefore, understand why you are being punished (Uzgalis, 2007: 70). In order to be the same person one must *remember* (Mackie, 1976: 182):

having identified a person at a particular time we are to take as belonging to that person all and only those past actions and experiences which he could now be brought to recollect, and, presumably, all and only those future person-

occurrences for which he feels a concern somewhat like the special, intimate concern that one feels for one's present self.

But imagine a man who drink-drives one night. And what if the *person* that night— whoever that is—was involved in a hit-and-run accident. Furthermore, what if the person who wakes up has no recollection of what happened the night before. If the *person* is a forensic concept, then who is it that the law should punish? Being the same *man* is not enough, for man is not a forensic concept. Indeed, we see a situation where 'what we will have is the same man but not the same person' for the reason that (Uzgalis, 2007: 72):

if I cannot remember, beyond the possibility of recall, something which 'I' did, then it was done by a different person, even if that person happened to be operating in the same living human body.

Locke should have realised 'that fragmentary memories and interruptions of consciousness are... a problem for his own theory' (Mackie, 1976: 182). Does this account provide any practical framework for moral accountability? Or, indeed, for persons?

Can we exclude the one forgotten night from the I-history, and say that, even though there happened to be a different person on that night, overall the person who woke up is the same person who remembers waking up the previous morning, but that for a confined time—an I-occurrence—the very same man was a different person? If personhood is so slippery, perhaps it is the concept that is flawed. Further support for this view comes when Locke further states the issue of memory within I-histories and I-occurrences (II, 27: 192-3):

But let him once find himself conscious of any of the actions of Nestor, he then finds himself the same person with Nestor.

How can that be true? If I am conscious of *any* of Nestor's actions then I am Nestor? *Any* action? What if my memory now links to one of Nestor's actions previously? I will be the I-history Nestor, but what are we to make of the intervening I-occurrences? Is remembering an inconsequential action in Nestor's youth sufficient for calling myself

the very same person as Nestor, i.e. the I-history Nestor? If I remember this one action but have no recollection of any council at Troy, I cannot claim to be the very same person who was at Troy. What does that mean for how we understand Nestor as an I-history?

What troubles Locke's argument further is the assumption that there is an I-history that is Nestor. The idea of Nestor as a fully-remembering person is a fallacy. There are points in Nestor's life that even Nestor can't remember, and, therefore, Nestor is not the very same person at those points in his life. The very idea of 'Nestor'—of the identity of persons—breaks down at any memory lapse. And, therefore, so too does moral accountability. Mackie suggests that at this point we are with Hume, where 'identity is a nest of fictions' (Mackie, 1976: 147). Locke's forensic person becomes meaningless: if persons are to be punished, and persons can disappear as I-occurrences, who is left to be morally accountable? A culture is left with no alternative but to punish the very same man, something that Locke suggests should not happen.

Locke's notion of personal responsibility disappears quickly. The continuous and remembered I-history of personal identity based on memory is a mirage; it has not provided a positive explanation for why I should feel concern for the future person. The importance of memory for Locke does not provide a sure account for moral responsibility in the past either. At best there are I-occurrences inter-dispersed and interwoven into a continuing consciousness that the person may or may not remember.

In Locke's view of forensic persons, the person at t_2 now sober would not be responsible for what the person at t_1 did when drunk, if the person at t_2 had no memory. Under Locke's terms, no one is punished, as it is wrong to punish the man. Mackie is correctly hesitant regarding the validity of Locke's terms of personal identity when considered within the moral sphere (1976: 183):

do we also want to say, with Locke, that I am not now responsible for all those actions, good or bad, which were performed by the man that I am, and performed under normal conditions, while the man was sane, sober, and wide awake, but the memory of which I have in a quite ordinary way lost beyond recall?

There is a solution to Locke's insistence on memory as the necessary condition for the moral accountability of persons. In 3.1.7 I will analyse Thomas Reid's polemic against Locke's forensic person and Mackie's explanation of an 'ancestral relation'.

3.1.7 Memory - the Solution

I begin with Reid's objection and then move onto the ancestral relation as a solution. Reid's objection to Locke's use of memory comes in the form of a thought experiment. Suppose that an elderly general remembers capturing a standard as a young officer, but cannot remember being flogged as a boy for stealing from an orchard, whereas the young officer can remember being flogged. Therefore, the general is one-and-the-same person as the young officer, but not with the boy; and the boy is one-and-the-same person with the young officer but not with the general (1975: 114). The problem stems from memory.

Reid gives four specific problems for Locke's person based on memory (1975: 115-117). One of which is the breakdown of Locke's idea of a forensic person based on memory. Moral accountability becomes redundant: because 'reward and punishment are founded on personal identity, no man could be responsible for his actions' once personal identity breaks down (Reid, 1975: 117).

In the end Mackie concludes that Locke has described a 'theory of action appropriation', rather than a theory of personal identity (1976: 183):

Since a man at t_2 commonly remembers only some of his experiences and actions at t_1 , whereas what constituted a person at t_1 was all the experiences and actions that were then co-conscious, Locke's view fails to equate a person identified at t_2 with any *person* identifiable at t_1 . It is only a theory of how some items which belonged to a person identifiable at t_1 are appropriated by a person who can be identified as such only at t_2 . It is therefore hardly a theory of personal identity at all, but might be better described as a theory of action appropriation. Locke seems to be forgetting that 'person' is not only 'a forensic

term, appropriating actions and their merit', but also the noun corresponding to all the personal pronouns.

Is action appropriation not enough? Do the personal pronouns beg the question? If at the end one finds no identical persons at t_1 and t_2 , does it matter as long as moral accountability remains?

Responsibility and concern need not be wholly linked to memory. What if one turned the problem of transitivity into an advantage, where a unit of consciousness is not determined by '*could remember*', but by its ancestral—ancestor to parent—relation (Mackie, 1976: 180)?⁷⁸ The ancestral relation solves the difficulty of memory concerning forensics: X is an ancestor of Y if either X is a parent of Y or X is a parent of an ancestor of Y. One can still have a human animal and a conscious forensic person but memory cannot be the strict determinant for moral accountability. And it is moral accountability that is important, not persons.

The ancestral relation is recursive in its definition, but ostensibly offers a solution comparable to emphasising the causal connection between the boy and the general, instead of emphasising the memory of the general as the boy. It is an extension of Locke's account that allows iterated memories to count in forensic terms; a continuity of experience. Because the general can remember the officer's experiences, and the young officer can remember the boy's, 'the general's experiences and the boy's, as well as the young officer's, all belong to the same unit of consciousness, the same unified mental history' (Mackie, 1976: 180). Mackie concludes that successive I-occurrences overlap into one another, generating a 'continuous I-history', of which, the 'person, the I, is what is taken to be there, all at once, at each moment in an I-history' (Mackie, 1976: 180). Therefore, the consciousness history, made from many individual I-occurrences, is the person; the person is not divided into many distinct I-occurrences,

⁷⁸ Ancestor to parent is a sequential line of continuation: parent gives rise to child that gives rise to new generation continuously. Therefore, at each stage identity is numerically individual, yet at the same time, qualitatively lined in succession. This idea was developed by Grice, 1941: 330-350.

but is held together in a whole I-history, regardless of memory. This leaves the person as one conscious transitive, yet symmetrical, person (Mackie, 1976: 181).

Locke argues against the transitivity of personal identity *because* ‘he sees persons as bearers of responsibility’ (Mackie, 1976: 182). But Locke’s concept is of little practical use, especially regarding moral concern. To be clear, the ancestral relation ‘is a revision, not an interpretation, of Locke’s account’ (Mackie, 1976: 181). In this instant the forensic concept is retained. Locke’s option is to have a concept of a person but forensic redundancy.

3.2 Applying Locke’s Distinctions to *Phaedo*

Does applying Locke’s forensic person to *Phaedo* help to solve the problem of moral accountability outlined in Chapter 2? Locke’s distinction between human and person provides an interesting, and ultimately enlightening, way of reading *Phaedo*. It offers glimpses into new ideas on identity and moral accountability, highlighting where moral accountability should be located. But, I conclude that Locke’s forensic person is still not enough to solve the problem of Platonic moral accountability due to the problem of Locke’s account of memory. Plato’s idea of soul as consciousness is similar to Locke’s idea of a forensic person in a loose sense (3.2.2), but in a strict sense Plato’s soul cannot allow for Locke’s necessity of memory (3.2.3). The Theory of Recollection might be regarded as bridging the gap between ideas of memory and moral accountability in Plato and in Locke, but unfortunately there is a discrepancy between Locke’s necessity for memory and Plato’s account in *Phaedo*. I confront this question of compatibility here and find that Locke’s idea is problematic for moral accountability in *Phaedo*. To start with I examine Plato’s concepts of the Human Animal (3.2.1) and the Person (3.2.2) in Lockean terms, and then I analyse why Plato’s idea of soul as consciousness cannot satisfy Locke’s criterion of memory, and, consequently, why the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* remains unresolved (3.2.3).

3.2.1 Locke's Human Animal in *Phaedo*

In *Phaedo* Plato presents a stark opposition between human and soul that requires further explanation and refinement as the dialogue progresses. This distinction between human and soul rests on the opposition between 'composite' and 'incomposite' things (78c6-8):

οὐκοῦν ἄπερ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταῦτά καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχει, ταῦτα μάλιστα εἰκὸς εἶναι τὰ ἀσύνθετα, τὰ δὲ ἄλλοτ' ἄλλως καὶ μηδέποτε κατὰ ταῦτά, ταῦτα δὲ σύνθετα;
 What is always constant and invariable is incomposite, and what is inconstant and variable is composite.

An entity made whole by the process of parts being put together is more liable to division than an incomposite whole. The form of absolute beauty is 'constant and invariable' (78d3-7); whereas, the 'many instances of beauty' in the sensory world 'are never free from variation' (78e1-4). Socrates is presenting a twofold world, where the senses and what they perceive are variable but reason and what it knows is constant. This duality is explicit within the language of body and soul, of sensory world and Forms.

Human beings are composite. Socrates asks 'are we not part body, part soul?' to which Cebes replies that we are (79b). But Socrates is problematising. It is possible that Socrates and Plato do not believe Cebes' positive reply to be true. We should believe Cebes' reply because, as Rowe states, the composition of 'part body, part soul' has been assumed since 64c due to the definition of the death event as the separation of soul from body (1993: 185). Therefore by asking this question explicitly now, Socrates may be suggesting a new idea: that whereas 'we', in actuality, are human now, 'we' are not ultimately human. Human existence is unsatisfactory for Plato and Socrates. As human beings 'You and I are composites' (Harte, 2002: 8). Therefore if we as a human are 'part body, part soul', then we are 'inconstant and variable', being a 'composite' of two parts. That means that we as embodied humans 'are never free from variation'

(78e). Humans exist in the realm of soul and body, i.e. the fluctuating and variable sensory world.⁷⁹

But this suggestion remains implicit, since Socrates does not explicitly enquire about the nature of human composition at this point in the discussion. This section rather analyses the distinction between soul and body as separate entities. Nevertheless, being alert to Socrates' argument throughout *Phaedo*, Socrates is making clear here at 79b that, although now human and made from two parts, I am the soul, i.e. I should be concerned with being a person, not a human being. Thus, whilst a soul is in our human charge, we should help prepare the soul for its future disembodied existence. This is achieved by associating more with the intellect than with our body in the here and now (79d-81a).

Both soul and body have distinct separable natures: 'soul is more similar than body to the invisible, whereas body is more similar to that which is seen' (ὁμοιότερον ἄρα ψυχῇ σώματός ἐστιν τῷ ἀιδεῖ, τὸ δὲ τῷ ὀρατῷ) (79b16-17).⁸⁰ What is 'always constant and invariable is incomposite, and what is inconstant and variable is composite' (78c6-8). Furthermore, things put together by parts are more liable to division 'where it was put together'; as opposed to something without divisible parts that 'is not affected in this way' (78c-4).⁸¹ Therefore, within the composite bodily world of sense perception (soul and body), stability is in short supply. The idea of a human composition fits into Socrates' duality. As Rowe states, the soul has a 'potentiality to achieve a godlike rationality' that is opposed to 'what it is forced to be by its conjunction with a body' (1993: 9). Therefore, a potential or ideal for a soul to

⁷⁹ I hold this to be true even when engaged in internal intellectual meditation. One reasons *within* a spatial body. One is aware of thinking *here* and not somewhere external.

⁸⁰ Translation Gallop, 1975.

⁸¹ This argument disproves the continuation of human beings, which should not be a surprise, given Socrates' definition of the death event.

reach, Rowe's 'godlike rationality', is a process of upward purification.⁸² But there also exists an actuality, where the soul associates with a body within the human sphere of sense perception, i.e. the variable world.

There is then a clear and tangible difference between soul and body. But the interplay between the two parts within embodied human form is complex. Importantly, body and soul come into contact as 'human nature'. To be human for Socrates, or at least for his interlocutors, is to be 'part body, part soul'. Therefore, human nature is highly changeable, but with *potential* inner stability achieved through the exercise of reason. At birth, the immortal, previously pure, soul becomes embodied, forgets the knowledge of the Forms through sense perception, becomes 'confused and dizzy' and 'loses its way' within the 'realm of the variable' (79c6-8). Therefore, embodiment and human existence present real dangers for a soul. Human nature is embodied, but a soul's true nature is disembodied.

Within one's human nature Socrates presents a dichotomy between the soul and the bodily (80b-5):

τῷ μὲν θείῳ καὶ ἀθανάτῳ καὶ νοητῷ καὶ μονοειδεῖ καὶ ἀδιαλύτῳ καὶ ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἔχοντι ἑαυτῷ ὁμοίωτάτων εἶναι ψυχῇ, τῷ δὲ ἀνθρωπίνῳ καὶ θνητῷ καὶ πολυειδεῖ καὶ ἀνοήτῳ καὶ διαλυτῷ καὶ μηδέποτε [5] κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἔχοντι ἑαυτῷ ὁμοίωτάτων αὖ εἶναι σῶμα.

The soul is most like that which is divine, immortal, intelligible, uniform, indissoluble, and ever self-consistent and invariable, whereas *body* is most like that which is *human*, mortal, multiform, unintelligible, dissoluble, and never self-consistent.

The statement is the culmination so far of the Socratic argument concerning the distinction between body and soul. There is nothing regarding body and soul that is extraordinary or contrary to what one would expect within a Platonic framework of thought. However, there is something shocking when the ideas here are combined with Socrates' account of 'human nature': ἄλλο τι ἡμῶν αὐτῶν τὸ μὲν σῶμά ἐστι, τὸ δὲ ψυχῇ

⁸² See Chapter 1.

(79b-2). Human nature is ‘part body, part soul’. At 80b3 Socrates further states that it is the body that is most like that which is ‘human’ (ἀνθρωπίνῳ) (80b3), i.e. the body is the most human characteristic. As one examines the remaining features that are likened to human nature, one does not feel exceptionally confident about immortality at all: the body is most like that which is ‘mortal, multiform, unintelligible, dissoluble and never self-consistent’. If human nature is body and soul then it is true that we as humans are ‘multiform’ and ‘dissoluble’. The striking conclusion is that soul for Socrates is not very human at all. Indeed, since consciousness is not specifically human, a person is not human. In a soul’s purest form it is most like the incomposite and the things that are incomposite, i.e. Forms. No wonder Socrates’ interlocutors still fear death, for Socrates has described the human part as the part that dies. They are not reassured by the continuity of the soul because they understand themselves as human, i.e. they identify with the composite which is extinguished by death. Socrates argues for why *we* are not human but his interlocutors fail to grasp his argument. The implication in Socrates’ argument in *Phaedo* is that there is a distinction between persons—as conscious souls—and humans.

Plato discusses the relationship between parts and wholes and how this affects the identity of a thing or substance.⁸³ Human nature is fundamentally made of two parts: ‘part body, and part soul’ (*Phd.* 79b).⁸⁴ An individual human is a temporary union of soul and body. It is an entity constantly changing. It remains organised through one life, but separates from the body at death, with one part continuing and the other part ceasing. Therefore, according to Locke’s criterion, the human animal ceases, i.e. the organization has separated. Therefore, after death the individual is no longer the *human animal*, but is the conscious soul. Let us now see if the conscious soul can be a

⁸³ In the *Theaetetus*, Socrates states that a wagon’s nature is made of its ‘wheels, axle, body, rails, yoke’ (207a). And to understand a wagon fully one must go ‘right through the thing element by element’ (*Tht.* 207b). If one must go through a ‘thing element by element’ what are the constituent parts of a human?

⁸⁴ Or translated by E.E. Pender as: something of us is body, something of us is soul.

forensic person in Locke's terms, hence solving the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*.

3.2.2 Soul as Person in a Loose Sense of Lockean Memory

In Plato is it possible to imagine personal existence without a body? For clarity, I take 'Person' to refer to Locke's definition of continuing consciousness with memory. I wish to show why Plato's person can be Lockean in a loose sense, through the idea of soul as consciousness. This is in preparation for the succeeding demonstration (3.2.3) of why Plato's person cannot be Lockean in a strict sense, i.e. with memory of its personal experiences, as the Theory of Recollection does not satisfy Locke's criteria.

Robinson believes that when Socrates says 'our souls do exist in the other world' this 'can only mean individual survival' (1995: 26). Furthermore, Robinson categorically states that a 'person is definitely not the body' (1995: 33). Robinson assumes that the individuality that survives is us. But Plato, through Socrates, suggests that we, although human now, need not be human before and after embodiment. Stating that an individual soul had intelligence and a pre-embodied existence is not necessarily the same as saying that I had a previous existence as a disembodied soul; since that depends on what the *I* is, person or human. As Robinson suggests, the 'true person is the soul: the body is a necessary evil' (1995: 33). Therefore, by using Locke's human and person distinction we can clarify that for Plato there is a human animal, but the person—as soul—is also distinct from that animal.

According to Locke what would make Plato's soul a person would be the continuation of intelligent consciousness. This idea is presented in *Phaedo* in the Cyclical Argument and in the Theory of Recollection. There is a distinction for Socrates between the embodied human now and the disembodied soul then. But is that the same as saying there is a human and a person, with the latter existing before the

former's birth? The human composite cannot exist independently of the soul, and it is the soul that brings consciousness, existing before the human composite.

For Gerson, Plato's 'person is a soul and a human being is a composite soul and body' (2003: 2). Gerson suggests that 'we' are not human beings (2003: 2/3). The person we are now is connected to, but at the same time is not, the ideal achievement possible (Gerson, 2003: 3). Personhood is for Plato an ideal, a goal for realisation. Perhaps as Dennett suggests, we should not be concerned with being human, but only with being a person. For, according to the Cyclical Argument, it is the conscious intellect that carries on as soul. Therefore, if anything in *Phaedo* is to be called a person, on Locke's terms, at this point in the argument the intellect has the best claim, and for Plato that is soul as rational.

Gerson correctly states that the 'proofs for the soul's immortality, which includes the Cyclical Argument, provide the context and the justification for distinguishing persons and human beings' (2003: 50). Long, however, comments on the illogicality of stating that a human being has a body and a person (2005: 176). But is this illogical? Even when one agrees that for Plato personhood rests on soul, i.e. on Locke's continued consciousness, there is still a human *now* that interacts with the sensory world. Indeed, Locke does not deny this; nor does Plato.

The Theory of Recollection is important in understanding the consciousness of a soul before embodiment, and provides an insight into the nature of personhood in *Phaedo*. It becomes clearer that Plato is talking about soul only, and not the human, and often in an idealised sense. We understand ourselves better once we realise our own disembodied personhood, liberating us from the desire and misinformed need for bodily life. Therefore, Plato encourages us to split the human animal and the conscious person. The Cyclical Argument described how the 'living have come from the dead no less than

the dead from the living' (72a4-6). The statement seems to require a transmigrating soul (Morgan, 2000: 195). This means that, 'the souls of the dead must exist in some place from which they are reborn' (72a6-8). The view that 'learning is really just recollection' (72e6) depends on the idea of the pre-existence of a conscious soul before human life. Socrates clarifies that to recollect 'we must have learned at some time before', and that this 'is impossible unless our souls existed somewhere before they entered this human shape' (τοῦτο δὲ ἀδύνατον, εἰ μὴ ἦν ποῦ ἡμῖν ἢ ψυχὴ πρὶν ἐν τῷδε τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ εἶδει γενέσθαι) (72e7-73a2). A better translation is Gallop's, 'before being born in this human form'. In the myth it is said that the soul carries intellect, consciousness, and knowledge with it as it travels through a cycle of rebirth (107d). The soul *existed* before *becoming* this human form; and since it carried things with it, there is a causal line linking past and future states of consciousness. It therefore makes sense within Plato's framework to call the soul a person, and distinguish it from the human composition. Therefore, the Theory of Recollection presents an insight into the soul's consciousness, an idea which Locke's idea of personhood illuminates in a loose sense.

3.2.3 The Problem of Soul as Person in a Strict Sense of Lockean Memory

But Locke in a strict sense places great importance on personal memory. Plato in *Phaedo* links memory with moral accountability, using memory of consciousness in a loose sense. But, as I shall show, this does not satisfy Locke's criterion for moral accountability.

Immortal souls allow recollection, i.e. the exercise of memory stretching back before this life. Such a causal line of consciousness is very important in Locke's personhood. Speaking of losing and regaining memories of knowledge Socrates says (75e2-6):

εἰ δέ γε οἶμαι λαβόντες πρὶν γενέσθαι γιγνόμενοι ἀπωλέσαμεν, ὕστερον δὲ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι χρώμενοι περὶ αὐτὰ ἐκείνας ἀναλαμβάνομεν τὰς ἐπιστήμας ἃς ποτε καὶ πρὶν [5] εἶχομεν, ἄρ' οὐχ ὁ καλοῦμεν μανθάνειν οἰκείαν ἂν ἐπιστήμην ἀναλαμβάνειν εἴη;

But on the other hand, I suppose that if, having got them before birth, we lost them on being born, and later on, using the senses about the things in question, we regain those pieces of knowledge that we possessed at some former time, in that case wouldn't what we call 'learning' be the regaining of knowledge belonging to us? (tr. Gallop, 1975)

Socrates considers the possibility that 'we acquired our knowledge before our births, and lost it at the moment of birth' (75e2-3). Thus the process called 'learning' is simply the 'recovery of our own knowledge' (75e5-6). Memories, although forgettable, are retrievable; the souls carry pieces of knowledge from the pre-human to the human life.

But Plato's Theory of Recollection does not amount to Locke's idea of forensic personhood based on memory for moral concern. After all, Platonic Recollection is not the soul remembering its own past actions but abstract universal concepts within the universe. This is not necessarily personal memory. As a result Plato's Theory of Recollection in *Phaedo* is not explicitly committed to the conscious awareness of previous actions across re-embodiments. Thereby the Theory of Recollection does not provide valid grounds for previous or future concern, in Lockean terms.

Socrates suggests a disembodied existence of the soul, in which the soul's pre-embodied existence 'had intelligence' (76c12-13). The soul carries this intelligence through its lives, thereby linking consciousness and memory; but where the consciousness can be of a personal type, the memory is not presented as of a personal history. The soul's knowledge is intelligible, not sensory. A purified and disembodied soul has intelligible knowledge but forgets due to its association with a body.⁸⁵ Socrates adheres firmly to the belief that the exact process of embodiment, i.e. a soul coming into

⁸⁵ Compare to *Republic* Myth of Er 621a-b. There is an ambiguity in Plato whether the soul forgets or the human forgets. But according to *Phaedo* the human never *directly* 'saw'/realised the knowledge. The human only has indirectly acquired knowledge through its soul part.

contact with a body, makes a soul forget (76c6-7). Socrates reinforces the idea that soul has/is conscious, has specific knowledge, which it forgets, but still has a continuous causal line of consciousness.

For Plato, the distinction between human and person is complex and blurry. After death as an event, the soul can retain memories of its human life for a period, even though the body is gone and the human composition has separated. At the opening of the myth Socrates states on the soul: ‘For it takes nothing with it to the next world (Ἄιδου) except its education (παιδείας) and training (τροφῆς)’ (107d2-5):

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 εὐθὺς ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς ἐκεῖσε πορείας.

For the soul enters Hades taking nothing else but its education and nurture, which are, indeed, said to do the greatest benefit or harm to the one who has died, at the very outset of his journey yonder. (tr. Gallop, 1975).

There is a distinction, yet a connection, between the soul that has learned as an embodied human, and the physically dead human. The soul as consciousness takes something with it after death, but can these be called memories? Perhaps this is, at best, only a very limited kind of memory.

Given Socrates’ statement at 107d regarding παιδείας τε καὶ τροφῆς—‘education and nurture’—continuing with the soul, there is a continuity of consciousness. Annas states that ‘nothing in the *Phaedo* suggests that there is continuity of consciousness between reincarnations’ and expresses a concern regarding the unavailability of ‘the experiences of different incarnations’ to ‘the same self’ (1982: 129). Rowe agrees that there is no ‘continuity of consciousness between one period of incarnation and another’ (1993: 9). But can a continuity of consciousness be seen as coming from the numerically identical soul, with its ‘education and nurture’? The soul continues, and the soul is conscious, intelligent, and has knowledge. The numerically identical soul is alive after death and engaging with other souls: disembodied souls are conscious

throughout the myth of *Phaedo*. The soul after death is numerically the same soul that was previously embodied, and it is the same soul that becomes embodied once more, unless it escapes the cycle of rebirth. But here is where Annas and Rowe find difficulty with Plato. It is clear that Socrates believes in continuity, at least with regards to 'education and training' (107d), intellect (Cyclical Argument), and knowledge (Theory of Recollection) in this life. But the position on the soul's memory is harder to establish through re-embodiments. It is unclear how far 'education and training' can be moralised.

Locke's distinction between a human and a person is useful because just as a person can have many bodies, so too can a soul. And that is not the same as saying a soul has many persons. But on strict Lockean terms, if the soul does not remember, if it has no memory of its previous lives, then the soul is not the same *person*. And if the soul is not the same person, then according to Locke, it does not retain moral accountability. Is this a problem still for Plato? If we take the immortal soul in *Phaedo* as lacking personal memory across incarnations, then in a Lockean sense, yes it remains a problem. This is because, although the soul has a continuous consciousness, the fact that it cannot retain personal memories means that it cannot maintain concern for its future and past embodiments. As a result, moral accountability in Plato's *Phaedo* remains a problem.

But is memory a problem for Plato as it is for Locke? The Theory of Recollection seems to use a non-personal form of memory, thereby not providing a Lockean type of memory and there is nothing else in *Phaedo* that suggests memory of previous lives and personal experiences. But is it possible to remove Locke's stringent need for memory as the basis for moral concern and still retain moral accountability in *Phaedo*?

I suggest that Plato, unlike Locke, does not place too much importance on memory for the continuation of persons. In Plato's *Phaedo* moral accountability depends on continuation of consciousness, not memory. And there is continuity of consciousness in *Phaedo* through the soul. While that consciousness does change across incarnations, change does not rule out 'continuity'. Locke's forensic account of memory helps to clarify a single t_1 to t_2 relation, but in Plato, as the soul's rebirth cycle continues to t_3 and to t_4 , such memory is lost. Hence, Locke's view of memory does not solve Plato's problem of moral accountability.

In conclusion, Socrates the person is his rational soul: 'when I am dead I shall not stay, but depart and be gone' (115e). Socrates the person has continuation of consciousness. Inwood states how Socrates' soul 'is after all very different from Socrates' the individual who is embodied (Inwood, 2009: 33). Through my use of the Lockean framework I can clarify that Socrates' soul is a person and that is very different from Socrates the human animal. And what Plato wants us to be concerned about is the person, i.e. the soul, and not the human animal. For Plato, the soul is a person, but not a fixed person; instead, a Platonic soul can be seen as similar to Locke's causal consciousness but without the necessity of continuing personal memory. The lack of continuing memory means that the Lockean framework has not solved the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*, for Plato's soul can be viewed as a person, but not a forensic person.

The soul as a person, in a strict Lockean sense, does not solve the problem of moral accountability across incarnations. This is due to Locke's insistence on memory. Plato's soul cannot adequately remember its past knowledge and seems not to remember its past lives and, therefore, is not Locke's forensic person. However,

Locke's idea of personhood has produced useful insights helping us to notice the soul as a conscious person.

Conclusion

By using Locke's ideas I have clarified the distinction in Plato between the human animal and the person (Chapter 3). But the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* was not solved by implementing Locke's ideas on the forensic person, due to the importance he places on remembering past actions as the chief cause for concern for the future. In Chapter 4 I will present an alternative theory of a morally accountable person without Locke's need for memory, by using instead the idea of ancestral relations. My aim is to solve the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* by emphasising the continuity of consciousness. I suggest that divorcing the human being from forensic responsibility, as Locke suggests, is of paramount importance also to Plato. But where Locke retains a problematic view of personhood due to memory, Plato can admit the redundancy of memory whilst retaining moral accountability. Therefore, I look at Plato without Locke in Chapter 4.

The solution to the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* is the ancestral relation. This has been suggested through the Lockean tradition, as seen in 3.1.7, but in Chapter 4 I offer a working and practical model as used in the Buddhist text *Milindapañha* instead of a merely theoretical solution. I am thus putting the term 'ancestral relation' into the Buddhist context, alongside the similar Buddhist term of 'dependent origination'. The ancestral relation or dependent origination, as I will show, is at the heart of Buddhist ethics, and can also be usefully applied to Plato's soul in *Phaedo*. You are the inheritor of previous conscious actions *because* this consciousness now is the inheritor of that previous consciousness then, i.e. the consciousness of X and Y are linked through a causally dependent line continuing across rebirths.

In Chapter 4 I examine the *Milindapañha* within the Lockean framework in order to ground the Buddhist text in the terminological framework of the discussion so far. By the end of Chapter 4 I will have offered conclusions on how Shared Concerns, when combined in a specific methodology, can offer solutions to specific problems (Claim 2), namely those of identity and moral accountability in *Phaedo*.

Chapter 4: *Milindapañha* and *Phaedo*

Introduction

There are specific reasons for moving away from the Lockean tradition and towards the Buddhist tradition as a means to interpret Plato's account of immortal soul and identity in *Phaedo*. The first is *Milindapañha*'s practical usefulness. This cultural text provides a working model of a philosophy which has had to deal with issues of moral accountability and continuity between embodiments. The second reason is the usefulness of analysing two cultural texts specifically dealing with the issue of rebirth. Locke and the extended Lockean tradition worked within a Christian cultural setting. Locke spoke of continuing identity, but not specifically within a tradition of rebirth in different bodies. I have highlighted ethical problems that require solving in *Phaedo* and I will now show how using the *Milindapañha* with its developed philosophy offers possible solutions for the Platonic problems.

Even the smallest shift in understanding can have large implications. Using the Lockean tradition that emphasises continuity of consciousness and forensic responsibility over and above an idea of an unchanging person has helped to clarify Platonic forensics. The emphasis in Buddhism, in contrast, is on continuity through sequential change, drawing on the idea of an ancestral relation. Applying the idea of an ancestral relation that retains moral continuation to Plato shows how Plato's soul retains moral continuity, even if one challenges the continuation of a numerically identical person. Plato's main issue is answering why *I* now should be concerned for the fate of *my* soul later.

For clarity of expression and terminology I firstly bring the *Milindapañha* into the Lockean framework. Using Locke's differentiation between human animal and person, I show what the *Milindapañha* believes about humans and persons, as well as about forensic accountability. I claim that the *Milindapañha* retains moral

accountability without the need for Locke's ideas on memory as necessary for concern about a future self.

4.1 Buddhist Ideas Within the Lockean Framework

I start by analysing the relevant Buddhist ideas within the Lockean framework (4.1). The issues are the human animal (4.1.1), the soul (4.1.2), the person (4.1.3), the ancestral relation (4.1.4), and forensics (4.1.5). Once I have grounded the Buddhist ideas expressed in *Milindapañha* within the Lockean framework, I then move on to show how reading the Buddhist text alongside *Phaedo* can solve the Platonic problem of moral accountability via the idea of ancestral relation (4.2).

4.1.1 Human Animal

In *Milindapañha* the venerable Nāgasena is asked by the King 'How is Your Reverence known, and what is your name, sir?' (II.1.25.1); to which Nāgasena replies:

I am known as Nāgasena, O king, and it is by that name that my brethren in the faith address me. But although parents, O king, give such a name as Nāgasena...yet this, Sire, - Nāgasena and so on – is only a generally understood term, a designation in common use. For there is no permanent individuality involved in the matter.⁸⁶

This passage is extremely important. Rhys Davids translates *Na puggalo upalabbhati* as 'no permanent individuality'. Instead I use the term 'no person', as 'person' (*puggalo*) is better than Rhys Davids' 'individuality'. Nāgasena rejects any notion of a person existing in the ultimate sense (Giles, 1993: 187). This means that there is 'no permanent, metaphysical Self [that] can be found in personality' (Harvey, 1995: 7). The King is astounded, and Milinda proclaims 'this Nāgasena says there is no permanent person implied in his name. Is it now even possible to approve him in that?' (II.1.25.1).

⁸⁶ All translations are by Rhys Davids. In his translation Rhys Davids provides the bracketed 'no soul' after 'individuality'. I have left Rhys Davids' inference out from my quotation hoping to avoid prejudging the unfolding argument.

To understand what it is Nāgasena means, i.e. that there is no permanence, Milinda attempts to locate the part of Nāgasena that is Nāgasena. Milinda starts by asking whether the individual bodily characteristics are Nāgasena, i.e. Nāgasena's hair (II.1.26.1). However, Nāgasena is not the individual bodily features seen before the King. Milinda asks about the individual components (*Skandhas*) of character (II.1.26.1):

Is it the outward form (*Rūpa*) then that is Nāgasena, or the sensations (*Vedanā*), or the ideas (*Saññā*), or the confections (*Samkhāra*), or the consciousness (*Vigñāna*), that is Nāgasena?

These five *Skandhas* include the physical and mental constituents that comprise a human being in the *Milindapañha* (Rhys Davids, 1890: fn 42:3). To further convey this position Nāgasena implements what is known as 'The Chariot Simile'.

The simile attempts to locate the fixed aspect that can be called chariot. It starts with a request from Nāgasena to King Milinda: 'please explain to me what that (chariot) is' (II.1.27.1). Nāgasena asks 'Is it the pole that is the chariot?', to which Milinda replies 'I did not say that'. Then what part is the chariot (II.1.27.1):

Is it the wheels, or the framework, or the ropes, or the yoke, or the spokes of the wheels, or the goad, that are the chariot?

To 'all these he [Milinda] still answered no'. The chariot is not any individual component part. But is a chariot 'all these parts' in combination? What makes a combination a chariot and not simply a collection of parts?

The simile employs the same logic as in the case of the individual, starting with individual parts, moving to a combination of parts, and finishing 'outside' the parts. Milinda realising that the chariot is not 'outside' the combination of its parts is beaten and Nāgasena declares 'I can discover no chariot' (II.1.27.1). The irony is that Milinda arrived in a physical chariot, but now concedes that the chariot does not exist. Nāgasena concludes that (II.1.27.1):

It is *on account of* its having all these things - the pole, and the axle, the wheels, and the framework, the ropes, the yoke, the spokes, and the goad – that it comes under the generally understood term, the designation in common use, of ‘chariot’.

Both conclude that the chariot is equivalent to *no permanent person*, but ‘chariot’ is instead a ‘generally understood term’ lacking permanence. That is the discussion; the logic needs to be examined. The first examination regards the chariot as individual parts, then as a combination, and finally as an entity ‘outside’ the combination. Nāgasena concludes that it is a ‘generally understood term...*on account of*’ its parts. Therefore, the combination of parts gives rise to the term. As a result, the term is dependent on the combination of parts.⁸⁷

Picturing a chariot, one can see that it moves spatially as a single object. But the unity of the chariot is not very strong. The wheel is a wheel regardless of its attachment to a chariot. Moreover, a wheel remains distinct whether it is on a chariot, plane, or car. One can go through every individual part of the chariot with certainty that none of these parts individually is what one would call *chariot*. If one was asked to point to a chariot one could point to the combination that is present. Therefore, why is a chariot not the combination of all its parts, as Nāgasena suggests? A chariot is made when certain parts are brought together. The clearest explanation, and one that fits into the overall argument of *Milindapañha*, is that simply bringing all these individual parts into the same place does not make a chariot. These parts have to be put in a specific order, to make a chariot function properly. Therefore, a chariot requires a complex ordering of parts. However, even with its complex ordering, a chariot is still an impermanent combination, as it is loosely held together, with the parts easily detachable. It does not matter how well put together a thing is: using better bolts or welding equipment would not help because even in combination there is no *chariot*. It is on account of the combination that we use the *term* ‘chariot’.

⁸⁷ This is the Buddhist notion of Dependent Origination.

To further the claim that a chariot is an organized combination of parts, one can examine what happens when the chariot stops working. Although an individual part is broken or damaged, by a figure of speech we say that ‘the chariot’ is broken. Yet, it is true that through the breaking of an individual part the combination is damaged. For when one of these carefully ordered parts breaks, other parts may not be broken, but the combination overall fails to achieve its function. The next step will be to locate which part has broken and fix that one part. Therefore, because of this relation, it seems that one cannot fully distinguish the chariot from the parts.

Is a chariot, therefore, *reduced to* its parts? Sorabji states that ‘it cannot be said that the chariot is nothing but its parts’, as the ‘structure and function of the chariot is something extremely important, which does not belong to the parts’ (2006: 285). Indeed there is no *chariot to have* possession of the parts. Ascribing the ‘function of the chariot’ based on a fundamental movement of some sort, there is one error.⁸⁸ The chariot itself is devoid of movement. It requires something living to make it move, i.e. a horse. There is also something more with regards to Sorabji’s use of the phrase ‘belong to the parts’. Nāgasena would deny that anything ‘belongs to’ the parts. It is the unity of each individual part, each working towards its individual goal, that makes the chariot function. Granted there is a distinction between the function of a chariot, and the functioning of individual parts. The function of the chariot, whatever we call that, ‘does not belong to the parts’, but a functioning chariot is intricately dependent on those parts all fulfilling their individual goals. The identity of a chariot appears dependent on parts, which, in turn, are dependent on an overall purpose each fulfilling

⁸⁸ Granted one may wish to postulate a function of a chariot not based on movement, i.e. a passive potentiality to be moved in some specifiable way.

their own goal. Therefore, a *chariot* is not the sum of *its* parts,⁸⁹ as parts are all there is physically. But the parts are greater together than individually.

Therefore, all that is left to conclude is whether Nāgasena is correct in postulating that ‘no person’ exists ‘outside’ the combination of parts. Do these parts create a *new* whole, an independent object? By the very nature of how one assembles a chariot, it remains composite. The chariot may appear to be a whole, but it is very easy to start taking individual parts away from that perceived whole until all that is left is a set of individual parts, i.e. the five *Skandhas*. Furthermore, how many parts must one remove before the combination stops being a chariot; as many that are non-essential to functioning? If the chariot was made to float and move through water with very few alterations, then could this chariot become a ‘boat’? Does it matter what we call it? For Nāgasena a chariot or a person is simply a designation dependent on functioning individual parts working together providing *individual functions*; they remain conventional names empty of substantial value. A combination of parts does not *make* a chariot, but we *term* the combination ‘chariot’. One concludes that Nāgasena is correct—‘I can discover no chariot’ that has something akin to a ‘permanent person’. The designation of a whole is not false, but a belief that the designation relates to a permanent combination is fictitious. There is no fixed chariot; but empirically there *is* a combination. As Milinda concluded, the chariot is a mere name given to a collection of individual parts working as a whole. Such a designation is dependent on ‘all’ of its individual parts, all in the correct order, and all serving their correct function. But there are only individual parts functioning together. This is what one perceives a *chariot* to be.

Applying the Chariot Simile to a human being, the King can ‘discover no Nāgasena’. Like the chariot, the individual is dependent on its parts. It is in

⁸⁹ Having no more meaning than the sum of parts combined.

dependence on ‘the thirty-two kinds of organic matter in a human body, and the five constituent elements of being [the five *Skandhas*], - that I come under the generally understood term, the designation in common use, of Nāgasena’ (II.1.28.1). The designation Nāgasena is ‘dependent on’ each personality factor, that, like chariot parts, must be rightly set and functioning properly (Harvey, 1995: 36). The five *Skandhas* are the constituent parts of a human; they are connected through causality (Kalupahana, 1976: 39); they are ‘elementary and fleeting constituents, which succeed each other to form streams’ (Sorabji, 2006: 280); and they do not possess a self or soul (Ghose, 2007: 261). The combination is not static but gives rise to the different states in succession. Sorabji is correct that ‘the chariot is a construct that depends on its most basic constituents...so the self is a construct that depends on its most basic constituents’ (2006: 280). But there is ‘no permanent person’ apprehended within or outside those parts. *Milindapañha* is clear that there is dependence and causality, but no *ātman*, no immortal unchanging person, just the human animal (II.1.28.1):

Just as it is by the condition precedent of the co-existence of its various parts that the word ‘chariot’ is used, just so is it that when the *Skandhas* are there we talk of a ‘being’.

Importantly, there is a ‘co-existence’ of individual parts: chariot or person. It is this ‘co-existence’ that makes a person dependent on individual parts. Crucially though, *we are* the co-existing individual parts. That is *all* there is. And, for our identity, the arrangement makes all the difference (Sorabji, 2006: 285). The failure is to assume that these terms denote permanent persons. The ‘person’ is an aggregation dependent on the five *Skandhas* (Giles, 1993: 196). We are a causal collection of experiences (Giles, 1993: 197). There is a difference between an ‘outside’ Metaphysical Self and a fluctuating empirical self (Harvey, 1995: 17); or what Perez-Reimon terms the ontological metaphysical self and the existential empirical self (1980: 11).⁹⁰ The

⁹⁰ The contrast is between a permanent person and a changeable combination of parts.

empirical self exists as a changing flow of mental and physical states (Harvey, 1995: 33). An identity is ‘personality as a flux of causally-related states’ (Harvey, 1995: 65); within the boundaries of the constituent parts. Nothing exists ‘outside’ the combination of parts; or hidden within. Therefore, a permanent Metaphysical Person is denied, but an empirical changeable identity is accepted existing as a human, i.e. the five *Skandhas*. Hence, there is no permanent person, only an identity dependent on the parts.

4.1.2 The Soul

In *Milindapañha* a soul is discussed but its existence is denied. Milinda has differing conceptions of soul within the dialogue. The two concepts in *Milindapañha* are: the soul as ‘the inner breath’ (II.1.4.30) and the ‘living principle within’ the body (*Abbhantare gīvo*) (II.3.6.54). A soul can be distinct from a body and seen as a viewer of external reality, like a person looking out of palace windows (II.3.6.54; III.7.15.87).⁹¹ This self looks at the world through the senses like different windows in a room (Ganeri, 2007: 194). The soul exists within a human but at the same time is removed. For this reason, soul in Indian thought is viewed as the permanent person that remains unchanged through changing parts. Throughout the dialogue Milinda asks about the existence of a soul and Nāgasena repeatedly replies that a soul does not exist.⁹² Plato relies on the concept of soul for his ideas of consciousness and ethics. Even though Locke does not explicitly deny the soul’s existence, he relegates it to being meaningless for identity. Therefore, Nāgasena’s denial of a soul is closer to Locke’s account than to Plato’s.

4.1.3 The Person

I use the Buddhist idea of a causally continuous, yet impermanent, consciousness as the alternative to Locke’s person who requires perfect memory recall

⁹¹ Ganeri compares the self that looks through the senses as one who looks through windows in a room to *Theaetetus* 184d (2007: 194-5). This is an interesting comparison that also includes *Phaedo* c.90b. But it must be noted that Socrates seems to endorse an inner viewer, whereas Nāgasena rejects the notion.

⁹² II.1.4.30; II.1.14.39; II.2.3.41-42; II.3.6.54-55; III.5.6.71; III.7.15.86-87.

to ensure moral responsibility. Siderits, Sorabji and Harvey retain the idea of a reductionist self as an empirical stream of mental and physical states in Buddhism (1997; 2006: 279; 1995: 33). Alternatively, Giles differentiates between a reductionist and a no-self theory, stating that ‘the no-self theory is an eliminative rather than a reductive theory of personal identity’ (1993: 175). One seeks to reduce the self to a stream of causally conditioned events; the other eliminates the notion of self. Sorabji believes that the famous Buddhist interpreter Vasubandhu ‘seems to waver somewhat between reducing and eliminating the self’ (2006: 279). The not-self theory is *an-ātman*, Nagasena’s ‘no person’. The reductionist theory of not-self will be used instead of the eliminative interpretation in this discussion because Plato has a very clear idea of self as soul. Therefore, to eliminate the self entirely will not produce a fruitful comparative dialogue between the two texts, Greek and Indian. The reductionist theory argues that ‘the existence of a person just is the occurrence of certain impersonal elements’, rejecting the idea ‘that a person is identical with a certain sum of impersonal elements’ (Siderits, 1997: 460). Specifically, I will accept Harvey’s distinction between a metaphysical Self and an empirical self, the former denied and the latter endorsed (1995: 17). Therefore, on my interpretation of Plato there is an empirical human individual and a causally connected conscious person, impermanent yet continuous.

What does the idea of ‘no person’ (*Na puggalo upalabbhati*) (II.1.25.1) mean for personhood and forensics? As discussed in 4.1.1, Nāgasena is not the individual bodily features seen before the King. Milinda therefore moves on to ask about the individual components of character (II.1.26.1):

Is it the outward form (*Rūpa*) then that is Nāgasena, or the sensations (*Vedanā*), or the ideas (*Saññā*), or the confections (*Samkhāra*), or the consciousness (*Vigñāṇa*), that is Nāgasena?

Nāgasena, as a permanent person, is not a combination of the five *Skandhas*: ‘is it all these *Skandhas* combined that are Nāgasena?’; the answer given by Nāgasena is ‘no’.

Is Nāgasena correct in positing ‘no permanent person’ in ‘a combination of the five *Skandhas*’? *Rūpa* accounts for physical distinctions between individuals, with the possibility of distinct individuality. But it is hard to see permanence in one’s outward form, except in a causally continuous way; yet continuity need not be permanent. Eventually, every *Rūpa* will cease and decay, leaving no permanence.

Although *Rūpa* individuates people rather well, it lacks permanence in the way Milinda hopes. At first it appears that sensations (*Vedanā*) are overtly individual: no one else can feel the sensation arising in my body. But still sensations are not permanent. Sensations rise and fall, they differ from moment to moment and from situation to situation.

If sensations are not permanent, are ideas (*Saññā*) permanent? Ideas develop through education and insight. A human baby is not born with a set belief system or an intact foundation of ideas.⁹³ One sees this empirically through a baby’s inquisitive nature. A baby must learn, as an adult continues to learn. The same development can be said regarding the ‘confections’ (*Samkhāra*): they are the constituent elements of character. One never has a ‘permanent’ character from birth until death. There is a causal line that is individual to the experience of growing older but that causal line is defined by change.

Another key aspect of the changing individual is consciousness (*Vigñāṇa*). This appears harder to grasp than the previous *Skandhas*. Consciousness is not as heavily influenced by external environments as the previous four *Skandhas*. Consciousness may prescribe a form of personhood; indeed, Locke’s account does just that with memory: because *I* remember, these are *my* thoughts and not *yours*. Death seems the best example of why consciousness may not be for Buddhists the best

⁹³ Plato disagrees fundamentally with this point: Argument from Recollection.

explanation for a ‘*permanent person*’. As far as modern science can postulate and the empirical evidence of our eyes show, one moment there is a conscious person and the next moment there is an inanimate body. Consciousness can cease. Furthermore, consciousness can deteriorate through life through conditions like dementia and amnesia. Therefore, consciousness is a highly complex concept that cannot be explained assuredly; and any arguments pertaining to the permanence of consciousness must also suffer through the same complexity. What matters for my study is that Buddhism is arguing against the idea of a stable fixed person, which Locke also does not endorse. The five *Skandhas* individually provide no basis for a permanent person. But why is a combination of all five *Skandhas* not a permanent person?

Nāgasena concludes that a chariot is ‘on account of its’ parts, and so too, identity is dependent on the parts; change the parts and the identity adapts accordingly. Why does Nāgasena not explicitly state that a chariot or a person is a combination of parts? Sorabji questions why the argument that ‘the person might be the parts “combined” with physical form and other bundles’ was not finally endorsed (2006: 285). What motives might Nāgasena have? The answer relates to what Nāgasena is attempting to prove and disprove. The discussion is concerned with Nāgasena explaining why ‘there is *no permanent person* involved in the matter’ (II.1.25.1). Therefore, when viewed in relation to a ‘permanent person’, it is clear why Nāgasena argues that a chariot or a person is not a permanent combination of parts. There is a chariot, as there is a person, but nothing permanent; there is continuous, but not permanent, existence. Nāgasena is arguing that there is ‘no permanent person’ within or outside the combination of parts. And that is why Nāgasena’s concluding remarks echo the concept of a combination. It is simply that ‘on account of its’ parts a designation exists *without* a ‘permanent person’. As a result, there is no fixed, unchanging *chariot*,

just a succession of individual parts continuously existing and each providing a function with a demarcating term.

The entity that is the sum of changeable parts must itself be changeable; for the sum cannot be permanent when it is created through change. Therefore, there is no permanence through combination. But that is not to say there is no individuality, changeable though it must be.⁹⁴ Hence, it is important to understand what Nāgasena is arguing against, i.e., *ātman*. Nāgasena promotes a philosophical concept of impermanence permeating through the world itself and persons. The person in Buddhism is not a permanent essence. But there is a continuous consciousness based on causality.

4.1.4 Ancestral Relation – The Person

I will now show by using the ancestral relation how the term ‘person’ is a causally conditioned term in Buddhism, but one that retains its forensic nature. I use three similes in the Buddhist text: Baby and Adult; Flame and Lamp; and Milk and Ghee, to explain how conscious persons are impermanent yet causally connected. Through these three examples it becomes clear that the Buddhist notion of a person—continuous consciousness—can be applied to the ancestral relation presented as an extension to Locke’s theory of forensic persons.

How does the continuation through worldly impermanence work; are moments simply episodic, or is there a more dependent connection, like the Buddhist concept of momentary *dharmas*? The notion of *anicca* includes momentary change: this change happens on the molecular level constantly. I conclude that neither changing nor static things are important for Buddhists. Instead what is important is the causal dependence

⁹⁴ This is Harvey’s distinction between an empirical changeable self, and a permanent Metaphysical Self (1995: 17).

that maintains a thing through change. The human world can be impermanent but cannot be random.

A) Baby and Adult

Since Nāgasena denies the existence of a ‘permanent person’ and states the ‘absence of any soul’, is a person the same or different throughout his life? Milinda asks: ‘He who is born, Nāgasena, does he remain the same or become another?’ (II.2.1.40). Nāgasena responds that he is ‘*Neither the same nor another*’. Ikeda uses the opposite and contradictory terms ‘neither identical nor non-identical’ (1977: 63), correlating with a denial of permanent identity but not of continuity, in view of the fact that Nāgasena believes in ‘no permanent person’, and the ‘absence of any soul’. One expects Nāgasena to answer that one does not ‘remain the same’, as this conclusion would support his previous arguments. However, Nāgasena recognises the causal line and the nature of the dependant arising. When asked if the adult and the infant are the same person, Nāgasena responds in an unusual way. The king was ‘once a baby, a tender thing, and small in size, lying flat on your back. Was that the same as you who are now grown up?’. To which the king answers ‘No. That child was one, I am another’. Milinda suggest that there have been two different persons; the child being one and now ‘another’. Milinda supposes ‘that personal identity over time requires the continued existence of some one entity through the distinct stages in the life of a person’ (Siderits, 1997: 462); an ‘entity’ that the discussion has previously shown to be non-existent. Instead, Nāgasena promotes causal continuity (Kalupahana: 1976: 40). Whilst there are obvious differences between infant and adult, Nāgasena wishes to emphasise the causal dependence between different stages of development. The adult is dependent on the child; as the child is dependent on its parents before. There is change over time. The king concludes that there has been enough change to warrant two distinct persons

along one sequential causal line; the baby then and the king now. But Nāgasena's response is different:

Is the mother of the baby a different person from the mother of the grown-up man? Is the person who goes to school one, and the same when he has finished his schooling another? Is it one who commits a crime, another who is punished by having his hands or feet cut off?

Milinda replies 'Certainly not'. Nāgasena has shown that, by Milinda's reasoning, there would be 'no mothers or fathers, no educated persons, and no one who deserves punishment for past crimes' (Siderits, 1997: 462). The discussion denies the existence of a new person moment to moment, a world of complete flux that would degrade personhood and moral responsibility to the point of absurdity. According to Milinda's initial ideas the person who goes to school is one and the person who leaves school is 'another'; but Nāgasena explains how the two are not independent of each other. As Siderits notes, 'those Skandhas making up the adult have as their causal antecedents the Skandhas that made up the infant', providing 'causal relations' (1997: 462). This is what I call the ancestral relation in the *Milindapañha*. The connection is in the causal dependence, as one gives rise to another. However, even that conclusion does not quite match Nāgasena's:

I should say that I am the same person, now I am grown up, as I was when I was a tender tiny baby, flat on my back. For all these states are included in one by means of this body.

Nāgasena presents a spatial argument. Throughout the time that has elapsed there has only ever been spatially one person; the parts may have changed but the designating term remains the same 'person'. Within this process it is possible to have many constructed self-images (Giles, 1993: 195). A changing self is accepted (Harvey, 1995: 42). Moreover, there is only one continuous person; therefore, there can never be a baby and an adult person, as that would imply the end of one thing and the start of another. Nāgasena is the 'same person' since there is 'no person' at either time; there are only changeable *Skandhas*.

Neither the baby nor the adult have priority in terms of personhood. Personhood is the changeable process typified by the expression ‘Neither the same nor another’ (II.2.1.40). Change takes place along a causal line of ‘dependent origination’ (*Pratītyasamutpāda*), meaning that nothing arises except in dependence on certain conditions (Harvey, 1995: 5). The idea of dependent origination links well with the ancestral relation concept, meaning that Nāgasena, unlike Locke, does not suffer the same problem of Reid’s critique of Locke in the General and the young boy. Nāgasena concludes that ‘the continuity of a person or thing [is] maintained’ through change (II.2.1.40). The continuation means that ‘neither as the same nor as another does a man go on’, but the two are dependent on each other.

B) Flame and Lamp

The notion of dependent origination is akin to one light coming from a changeable flame (II.2.1.40). Nāgasena asks the king whether a lamp that burns through the night remains the same throughout:

‘Suppose a man, O king, were to light a lamp, would it burn the night through?’
 ‘Yes, it might do so.’
 ‘Now, is it the same flame that burns in the first watch of the night, Sir, and in the second?’
 ‘No.’
 ‘Or the same that burns in the second and in the third?’
 ‘No.’
 ‘Then is there one lamp in the first watch, and another in the second, and another in the third?’
 ‘No. The light comes from the same lamp all the night through.’

Nāgasena and the king are referring to one night’s watch and the multiple stages of the one night. Why is it not ‘the same flame that burns’? There is no hint of it being extinguished; moreover, the illustration is based on the premise that one lamp can last an entire night. The change is to do with the process of burning. The flame is maintained by and dependent on burning oxygen and the substance of the candle or fuel in the lamp. Moreover, ‘a flame is a collection of...incandescent hydro-carbon

molecules’, through which, ‘these entities [are] undergoing constant replacement’ (Siderits, 1997: 462). The flame constantly changes because what is burning must constantly be renewed and destroyed. At any given moment the flame is ‘numerically distinct from that which illuminates at any other moment’ (Siderits, 1997: 462). The process gives the impression of one stable flame, but in reality the flame is constantly changing. Therefore, there is ‘one lamp’ that the ‘light comes from...all the night through’, but the flame is constantly going through causally-conditioned change. One may wish to conclude that there is never a flame, only a designation representing a combustible chemical process. The flame is ‘on account of’ a chemical process that is constantly developing. It is not an invisible chemical process, as one can see the flame, but the change appears invisible, for there appears to be only one flame. The flame appears the same throughout the night. It is not possible to discern when one flame ends or how another flame begins. We do not say there were many distinct lights throughout the night (Siderits, 1997: 462-463).

Similarly, one does not say there were many persons throughout one life. As with the lamp the causal connection of persons is complex. There is the appearance of one fixed person being maintained, but in fact, there is only a causal line of dependent consciousness. Nāgasena concludes:

Just so, O king, is the continuity of a person or thing maintained. One comes into being, another passes away; and the rebirth is, as it were, simultaneous. Thus neither as the same nor as another does a man go on to the last phase of his self-consciousness.

One stage is dependent on the last. The 4am flame has the 9pm flame as its causal antecedent (Siderits, 1997: 463). The appearance seems permanent, but any permanence is an illusion through the changing process that remains constant and causally conditioned.

C) Milk and Ghee

The issue at the heart of the previous two examples concerns identity through time; the human that was a baby is now an adult; and the same flame burns through the night. A further illustration elaborates on the issue of the progress of time (II.2.1.40-41):

It [the process of time] is like milk, [41] which when once taken from the cow, turns, after a lapse of time, first to curds, and then from curds to butter, and then from butter to ghee. Now would it be right to say that the milk was the same thing as the curds, or the butter, or the ghee?

The answer is neither the same nor another. Moreover, ‘would it be right to say that the cow is the same as the ghee? Is it not true that the latter comes from the former? This illustration is perhaps easier to use than the previous flame analogy, for there is a clear and discernible process of change maintained through a causal line of dependence. There is a ‘lapse of time’, which is important, between the cow producing milk and the ghee forming. The gradual lapse of time may mask the process of change, as it is not always possible to notice changes happening until there is a discernible difference.⁹⁵ In the example, one can see that milk is not ghee, but during the process it is hard to indicate when milk turns into curds and is no longer milk. Ghee is not milk, but neither is ghee independent of milk, as milk is not a cow, but comes from a cow. One would not say all are the same as milk (McDermott, 1980: 167). Change happens, but neither *annihilation* nor *genesis* takes place.⁹⁶ It is as Milinda concludes: milk is not ‘the same thing as the curds, or the butter, or the ghee’ but ‘they are produced out of it’. The impermanence of a person over time is likened by Nāgasena to a process of milk turning to butter.⁹⁷

In conclusion milk and butter are not the same, but neither are they completely different. Similarly, a baby is taken from a mother and ‘after a lapse of time’ becomes

⁹⁵ Buddhists’ term this momentary *dharma*s.

⁹⁶ I use these terms to denote a complete cessation and a complete birth, i.e. into nothing, and from nothing.

⁹⁷ Perez-Reimon interprets the analogy as un-Buddhist (1980: 14). But Nāgasena employs it, and it is a useful analogy to depict change over time.

an adult. It would be incorrect to ‘say that milk was the same thing as the curds, or the butter’. However, ‘they are produced out of it’ (II.2.1.41). The baby and adult are not unchanged, but neither are they completely different. Also the flame that continually changes is neither the same nor different. Identity is grounded in one causal line of sequential change.⁹⁸ There are ‘enduring traces in the stream’ (Sorabji, 2006: 282), and in the same way, the ‘continuity of a person or a thing [is] maintained’ in an ancestral relation.

4.1.5 Ancestral Relation - Forensic

Having seen that a person in Buddhism is a dependently originated line of change, akin to the process of a baby changing into an adult, a changeable flame, and milk turning into ghee, I now move onto the Buddhist ideas of moral accountability within its not-self framework. If one is neither the same nor another, how does one retain moral accountability? There is ‘special attention to reconciling the postulate of personal accountability with the Buddhist ‘no-self’ doctrine’ (Halbfass, 1998: vol 5. 211). Kalupahana recognises a possible paradox relating to moral responsibility and a denial of a permanent self, but believes that the paradox stems from misunderstandings (1976: 38). Furthermore, Kalupahana believes that ‘no doctrine [is] more misunderstood and misinterpreted than this doctrine of nonsubstantiality’, this not-self (1976: 38).

Milinda wishes to understand the most important Buddhist concept of not-self (*anattā*) and its relation with moral accountability: ‘Who is it’ that ‘enjoys’, ‘lives a life of righteousness’, and ‘devotes himself to meditation?’ (II.1.25.1). Milinda believes that if there is ‘no permanent person’ then ‘there is neither doer nor causer of good or evil deeds; there is neither fruit nor results of good or evil Karma’ (II.1.25.1). The interplay of moral responsibility and not-self is set up by Milinda’s questions. For

⁹⁸ McCabe states perfectly how the process of ‘growing older does not imply growing older than oneself’ (1994: 121).

Milinda there cannot be action or consequence if there is no stable reference point for the action and consequence to attach itself to. Conversely, Nāgasena will attempt to show why moral responsibility and the theory of not-self (*anattā*) are actually compatible. Scholars either conclude that moral responsibility and not-self are not paradoxical (Kalupahana, 1976: 38); or they retain uncertainties regarding the lack of a ‘doer’ with regards to reward and punishment (Sorabji, 2006: 285). Indeed, for an eliminativist—where the self is denied—‘Prudential concern, hopes, fears and regrets, judgements of responsibility, merit, and praise and blame – all these are irrational’ (Siderits, 1997: 461).⁹⁹ The fear of death in this case constitutes an attachment to an illusionary concept of self. For Buddhists, a person is interested in an afterlife if they are attached to the present life (Kalupahana, 1976: 74).

The desire for continued life, the hope that it will be *me* now that survives, although natural or understandable, leads for Buddhists to further sorrow through rebirth. Therefore, the Buddhist theory of not-self undercuts the desire for continued earthly existence and helps the cessation of sorrow. The aim of *anattā* (not-self) is to ‘reduce [the] fear of the loss of self at death, and to make us less selfish in ethical attitude and conduct’ now (Sorabji, 2006: 279). Not-self promotes ethical responsibility, since the denial of a permanent person does not deny continuity (Kalupahana, 1976: 53) or, indeed, moral responsibility.

There is a hint of punishment in the idea of rebirth, although at no point does Nāgasena suggest that a being is explicitly punished for their previous actions. The further illustrations Nāgasena employs, helping the king to understand the complex idea of rebirth based on action alone, are dependent on cause and effect (II.2.6.46):

⁹⁹ For clarity, it is my belief that the not-self doctrine and moral responsibility need not be paradoxical when interpreted as an empirical reductionist self though it remains a knotty concept.

Suppose, O king, some man were to steal a mango from another man, and the owner of the mango were to seize him and bring him before the king, and charge him with the crime. And the thief were to say: “Your Majesty! I have not taken away this man’s mangoes. Those that he put in the ground are different from the ones I took. I do not deserve to be punished.” How then? Would he be guilty?

One man stole a mango from another man, stating that it was not the same mango that the owner had placed in the ground previously. Evidently, the second mango is dependent on the first mango. One has a mango and plants its seed in the ground, and by that seed another mango grows. When the second mango was stolen, the thief ‘would be guilty in respect of the last mango which resulted from the first’ (II.2.6.46), since the seed and the mango are causally connected through natural growth. In one sense the thief’s defence is correct, the seed planted and the fruit taken are not the same. But there is a causal connection that proves that the man is guilty of theft. Just as for Locke, the person now and the person later are causally the same person through the causal connection of consciousness.

So far the argument is like the previous milk to butter simile: neither the mango nor the seed are completely the same nor are they completely separate. However, Nāgasena develops the simile and argument further than the milk to butter simile by emphasising the causal connectedness between mango and seed through the employment of an ethical example, supporting causation; just as Locke bases his person on consciousness. The causal connection between one state, the seed at t_1 , and the other state, the fruit at t_2 , affirms the guilt of the second man for stealing the first man’s fruit. For if a man plants a seed, that seed is connected with the resulting fruit. In the same way, the deeds done by the person whilst embodied are like seeds planted that must one day bear fruit (III.5.9.73). These deeds cannot be pointed out, as one cannot ‘point out the fruits which a tree has not yet produced’, but they ‘follow it [the person], like a

shadow that never leaves it' (III.5.8.72).¹⁰⁰ The 'being who experiences the fruits of a deed in one life is neither the same as nor different from the being who performed that deed in a previous existence' (McDermott, 1980: 166). So too, the guilt of a person resulting from the immorality of its previous embodied life requires Locke's conscious connection, i.e. the same person.

Comparably, if a man lit a fire to keep himself warm and then went away, but that fire set another man's field a light, the man who started the fire would still be responsible for the burning of the other man's field, even though, as shown with the flame analogy, there is no one flame or fire. The man would be guilty because it was 'the subsequent fire that resulted from the previous one' (II.2.6.47). Again, a man who used fire in a lamp to see but then causes an entire village to be burnt down, cannot in defence say that the 'flame of the lamp...was one thing; the fire which burnt your village was another thing' because 'the one fire was produced from the other one'. These illustrations are examples of how 'the other is the result of the first'. For Buddhism moral accountability is maintained through causally changing states (II.2.6.48). Even with a not-self theory, Buddhism retains moral accountability through causation.

The third illustration used by Nāgasena to convey moral responsibility despite the Buddhist concept of *anattā* is the lighting of a lamp (III.5.5.71):

Suppose a man, were to light a lamp from another lamp, can it be said that the one transmigrates from, or to, the other?

'Certainly not' is Milinda's reply. Why does the flame of a lamp/candle not transmigrate? One flame on a candle is used to light another candle. A new flame is created that is dependent on the previous one; it is neither exactly the same nor

¹⁰⁰ Plato in *Republic* also explains how actions have specific consequences (615a4-b):

τὸ δ' οὖν κεφάλαιον ἔφη τόδε εἶναι, ὅσα πάποτε τινα ἠδίκησαν καὶ ὅσους ἕκαστοι, ὑπὲρ πάντων δίκην δεδωκέναι ἐν μέρει, ὑπὲρ ἑκάστου δεκάκις—τοῦτο δ' εἶναι κατὰ ἑκατονταετηρίδα [b] ἑκάστην, ὡς βίου ὄντος τοσούτου τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου—ἵνα δεκαπλάσιον τὸ ἔκτεισμα τοῦ ἀδικήματος ἐκτίνοιεν,

completely different. For Nāgasena the causal line connected to *karma* and rebirth is like energy passing between two candles (Ghose, 2007: 261). Both the second and first flame can continue to exist but the latter is dependent on the former. However, the second flame is also dependent on the new candle that has been lit. This candle is not dependent on the first, as it is a spatially different candle. But the second flame is dependent on the second candle body. Therefore, the flame on the second candle is neither the same nor completely different from the first flame. The flame does not transmigrate since the process does not require the extinguishing of the original flame. Rebirth is dependent origination characterised as neither completely different from nor the same as the first life.

For Buddhism, there is no fixed being or person transmigrated across separate bodies (III.5.7.72). But given that there is a causally connected rebirth, an individual is not freed at death ‘from its evil deeds’. The illustrations given and the following discussion can be compared to the earlier section at II.2.6. The process of continuation across embodiments by an individual name-and-form is not transmigration but rebirth:

This name-and-form commits deeds, either pure or impure, and by that Karma another name-and-form is reborn. And therefore is it not set free from its evil deeds.

Karma is the causal origin of the consequent rebirth. There is ‘no permanent person’ or *ātman* continuing; there is only action and consequence. If there was no *karma*, there would be nothing reborn. The causal line has many individual beings but none *are* the causal line nor *have* the causal line. In Buddhist rebirth, deeds ‘committed by one name-and-form...follow it, like a shadow that never leaves it’ (III.5.8.72). Even if one can never specify the individual ‘deeds that are done’, one can understand the potential for deeds to result in consequences as ‘long as the continuity of life is not cut off’.

Rebirth ceases when the root of rebirth has been extinguished. Until that point one can discern that one will be reborn in future, just as a farmer knows that once one

has planted a ‘seed in the ground’, if ‘it were to rain well...a crop would be produced’ (III.5.9.73). For no rebirth to take place one ‘has passed away by that kind of passing away in which nothing remains which could tend to the formation of another individual’, a passing away in which ‘no root remains for the formation of another individual’. This is the cessation of *karma*, a ‘cutting off’. Therefore, rebirth is discernible through actions and the consequences that ensue; but cessation as *Nirvāṇa* cannot be pointed out, as it is not possible ‘to point out any one flame that has gone out’ in a ‘great body of fire blazing’. Nāgasena denies a permanent continuation from t_1 to t_2 , but not the causal consciousness and moral accountability between t_1 and t_2 . Just as seeds become fruit, so deeds have future consequences. Therefore, due to the causal continuation of morality, the changeable person is a forensic term even across death and rebirth.

4.2 Solving moral accountability in *Phaedo* with *Milindapañha*

I shall now show that combining Locke’s consciousness as personhood and *Milindapañha*’s ancestral relation approach to forensics solves *Phaedo*’s problem of identity and moral accountability. I shall argue that within the Platonic framework the soul is a forensic person establishing an I-history with changeable I-occurrences that do not require a fixed identity over time or memory of previous events to uphold moral accountability. Rather a sequential ancestral relation is all that is required to defend Plato’s account of moral accountability through the judgment of souls after the death event.

4.2.1 Impermanence

Buddhism shows how impermanence can be consistent with continuity and progression. What comes later is dependent on what comes before; it is not the same, nor is it completely different. However, Plato insists on an eternal soul as the carrier of consciousness; an entity that Nāgasena continually denies. In this section I show how

Nāgasena's examples of butter to ghee and baby to adult can be applied to Plato's idea of soul in *Phaedo*. This happens through the idea of being *neither the same nor different*. Socrates the person is changeable. When a body dies there is 'no permanent person' that remains fixed; a person changes but is still causally continuous, and so retains moral accountability.

The soul is changeable even after death according to *Phaedo*, showing that Plato has a concept of a soul travelling on one causal line of dependent origination.¹⁰¹ As a result, this creates one person—like Locke's theory of consciousness—yet not needing Locke's strict account of memory. This conclusion comes by means of my comparative method with *Milindapañha*. Through this method I answer Annas', Inwood's, Rowe's, and Sorabji's challenges of moral accountability by explaining that Plato recognises that different bodies constitute different humans but carry the same numerically identical soul. Nāgasena argues against an *ātman*, a fixed eternal *unchanging* Self, and Plato does not disagree: Plato's soul, although eternal, is not unchanging. Indeed, Plato's soul is a conscious person linked through its Cyclical journey between life and death and its fulfilment or otherwise of its rational potential. Plato's soul is a conscious person, distinct from the human animal, which is a combination of body and soul. Nāgasena's person is not a soul, but a continuous consciousness. Due to the ancestral relation such as that of milk to ghee or a flame through the night we retain the same personhood through embodiments. Through comparison with Nāgasena's Milk and Ghee simile I argue that Plato's soul is a causally continuous person that does not require a fixed or static identity. The soul is a person for Plato, contrary to Nāgasena's denial of such an entity. Plato's person continues to be conscious and to have a fundamental capability to recollect through embodiments and to exercise its reason to differing extents. Plato thus

¹⁰¹ *Pratītyasamutpāda*.

sees the new human or animal as a new combination of the same person with a different body.

4.2.2 Moral Responsibility - Mango and Seed Again

I claim that Plato's soul is a forensic term. Although the souls of most beings after death do not receive a *final* judgement, nevertheless Plato's reborn souls maintain across different lives a continuous causal line of moral accountability. Buddhism provides an example of how a morally rectifying system can exist without requiring static personhood. Bringing in the Buddhist text shows why a morality based on an ancestral relation within a framework of rebirth helps quell certain objections to Plato's account of his moral agent, the immortal person/soul.

The question of causal connectedness and moral responsibility is posed by Annas, 'Why should I be deterred from injustice by the thought that my soul will be reincarnated in a wolf?' (1982: 129).¹⁰² Similarly, a problem for Inwood is that 'I must be convinced that the soul to be rewarded or punished will be me' (2009: 31). Principally, Annas' and Inwood's objections arise from seeing the *human* individual as the continuing soul; I should either feel responsibility for my soul, or be shown that I am my soul. But Plato is concerned with showing that the person is the rational soul. Now I shall show how that person is still morally accountable in Platonic terms regardless of its capacity to remember the personal experiences of its past lives.

In Nāgasena's example of the Mango there is a seed and an ensuing fruit. The fruit is not the seed. But crucially the fruit is dependent on the seed. Though interpreters may still find Plato's argument for moral accountability unsatisfying, as, indeed, Socrates' interlocutors often do, through Nāgasena's examples I show that Plato's ideas of an ancestral relation are valid. The *Milindapañha* helps show how a

¹⁰² Locke, too, wishes to answer such questions.

soul for Plato is causally and morally connected to successive states of consciousness. The comparison with Nāgasena's Mango and Seed simile draws on the shared assumptions of ethical connection and continuity. Importantly, I am not arguing that the seed and fruit is a good analogy for Plato's human soul overall. Rather, I am pointing out that the specific aspect of morality concerning the Platonic soul is illuminated by the seed and fruit simile *because* Plato emphasises conscious continuation of soul/person over and above the forensic need for the soul to remember its past lives. The mango does not need to remember the seed to be shaped by it.

The causal connectedness of one man planting a seed, and another man stealing a fruit, explains why, for Plato, one must be just in the here-and-now. The seed planted at one stage bears fruit at a later stage. For Plato, the moral aspect rests in the causal connection of the soul's continuing consciousness, the person. Although seed and fruit are different in form, the latter is the natural descendent of the former. Platonic justice is not concerned with the individual human animal. For Plato, one must be just now, not in the hope of future rewards or punishments, but in view of the fact that justice is tied to something greater than one human animal, i.e. the future development of your forensic soul. Therefore, those that still wish rewards for *me* in the future miss the larger point of Platonic forensics and persons: i.e. consciousness continues through change due to an ancestral relation based on the forensic nature of a Platonic Person, that is a soul.

It is the causal connection of consciousness in persons that, for Plato, and for Nāgasena in a different manner, upholds moral responsibility. This is because as persons souls continue on one continuous *causal line* of dependent origination. The example used by Nāgasena of the mango and the seed, answers, to an extent, the objections raised by Annas, Rowe, and Inwood concerning why one should be just *now*

if you are not the one being rewarded or punished *later*. Although, there are fundamental differences between Plato and Nāgasena, nevertheless, generally ‘you’ are the same person before rebirth and now in human life through one continuous I-history. This I-history is made up of I-occurrences. And the moral accountability is established by the continuation of the very same consciousness shaped by its experiences. And to be morally accountable, this consciously continuing soul need not be static nor remember its past. Because the person, the forensic concept, is a changeable line of continuous consciousness, the only ‘thing’ that can be punished is the person, as that is the basis of moral accountability. Although Nāgasena ultimately denies the existence of a soul (*anattā*), while Plato’s person is identical with soul, in both occurrences there is only one I-history with changeable, yet dependent, I-occurrences. Both Plato and Nāgasena show a commitment to a continuation of consciousness arising from dependent origination as grounding responsibility.

The *Milindapañha* comparison shows that the objections to the Platonic concept of moral continuity are objections to Plato’s concept of personhood, instead of objections about the causal continuity of a soul’s consciousness. The distinction is extremely important. Annas’ and Inwood’s dissatisfaction with the Platonic moral continuity does not mean that the concept is inconsistent or unsound. For once the connection between a soul’s continuity of consciousness has been presented through the perspective of the ancestral relation, it is not possible to claim that Plato lacks an account of moral continuity through death and rebirth.¹⁰³ The person equals the morally

¹⁰³ Indeed, the myths are a literal or allegorical representation of conscious souls bridging the gap of death. It can be said that Plato’s idea may still be classed as naive. Plato is himself aware that his philosophy will seem unsatisfactory to individualistic mentalities: Plato has Glaucon, recapping Thrasymachus’ position in book 1, say in *Republic* 2 that there is ‘no one [having Gyges’ ring] who would have such iron strength of will as to stick to what is right and keep his hands from taking other people’s property’ (360b). Clearly, arguing that morality along a causal line of consciousness is similar to a seed and a fruit is not enough to convince everyone to be just now, because for many people the only way to stop men from being unjust is to have them ‘forcibly restrained’ from doing so by ‘the law’ (*Rep.* 359c).

continuous consciousness—Plato’s soul—and the ancestral relation solves the problem of memory in Locke.

Siderits explains the concept of continuity perfectly as it concerns Buddhist moral responsibility, and I wish to use Siderits’ words in a Platonic setting (Siderits, 1997: 467):

Since the continued existence of a person in one life just consists in the obtaining of appropriate causal connections among various physical and psychological events, the continued existence of a person over several lives is likewise possible in the absence of an enduring self, provided the right sorts of causal connections obtain between lives.

In Plato, ‘the right sorts of causal connections’ do ‘obtain between lives’ through the numerically identical soul.¹⁰⁴ The pure soul’s experiences of the Forms shape its existence as a human and the soul ‘takes its education and nurture with it’ to the afterlife. Nāgasena uses the terminology ‘neither the same nor another’ to categorise causal dependence of this kind between lives. Milk and butter, baby and adult, mango and seed, all share the same causal line of dependent origination; one comes into existence *from the other*. Nothing arises except in dependence on certain conditions (Harvey, 1995: 5). For Plato, the continuation of the person is as ‘neither the same nor another’. A new embodied existence for soul comes about in dependence on the previous embodied existence and is the natural moral descendent. *Phaedo*’s souls become donkeys *because* of their previous existence (*Phd.* 82a). It is the causal line of consciousness with the soul that sustains the existence of ‘neither the same nor another’ through death.

The process of causal dependence is complex. The soul is distinct but the new human animal or other animal cannot remain exactly the same as the previous human animal; the person, however, can, and does remain the same through conscious

¹⁰⁴ This is a difference, but not a problem as I am not suggesting Plato is Buddhist, or Buddhism is Platonic.

continuation. Thus it is the person that is a forensic term, not the human. A new combination of parts through a new body will lead to the formation of a new human animal or new animal. For if a human soul becomes a ‘swan’, or, indeed, any ‘other perverse animals’ presented in *Phaedo* (82a-b), it is wrong to assume that the soul remains within a *human animal*. Humans may need a soul, but a soul is not human. Yet, it is the same soul, the same person, and the same consciousness. Therefore, as one life gives rise to the other in rebirths a morally rectifying causal line of ancestral relations is followed. For Plato soul is the forensic consciousness, pertaining to one I-history but made up of sequentially changeable but dependent I-occurrences.

Conclusion

Plato’s problem of moral accountability is solved by combining Plato’s ideas of soul as person with the Buddhist ancestral relation within a Lockean framework, thereby fulfilling Claim 2 of the thesis. For Plato the *soul* is the causal connection linking each successive life stage without being exclusively any single life stage. Granted, this conclusion is very different from Nāgasena’s conclusion, but, by examining Plato’s *Phaedo* alongside the *Milindapañha* I am able to show more clearly how moral continuity works for Plato. Hence, the person is neither the same nor another; simply a changeable continuous consciousness of soul with moral accountability separate from the human. For Plato the soul is dynamic, not fixed, as it changes through many different experiences and through the extent of its exercise of reason. The person is a forensic term based on the ancestral relations argument expressed in *Milindapañha*’s simile of seed and fruit.

There are three points to clarify regarding human beings following Plato’s account: 1) a human composition ceases at death, as death is a separation of body and soul; 2) the cessation of the human being is not a *complete* annihilation, since the soul ‘marches on’ as ‘neither the same nor another’, but still as a person; and 3) the soul

‘marching on’ continues to retain moral accountability through an ancestral relation with its past and future lives.

I began Chapter 2 with the claim made by Sorabji that soul as reason is one’s ‘true self’. Sorabji was correct to rhetorically question whether one identity could persist through completely different cultural and physical situations. By using the *Milindapañha* I have shown persons—as souls—to be a continuous, yet changeable, consciousness. I have also shown why preventing annihilation does not require a view of persons as unchanging. Being human is characterised by mortality, and being a person is characterised by immortality, yet the person is still changeable. The eternal continuation of a changeable soul and its moral accountability is based on the ancestral relation. In Plato, one need not hold onto the need for a ‘me and me again’ approach to rebirth, i.e. needing to see the person in a fixed way for moral accountability. Annihilation and eternalism are both prevented by one continuous line of dependent origination rooted in a soul; Locke’s idea of the continuity of consciousness makes a person. The mango and seed analogy helped to explain Plato’s concept of moral responsibility. As the fruit is the descendent of the seed, so too is a soul the descendent of the embodied deeds, an ancestral relation exists independent of memory. And the inheritance works out via the continuation of the person in a new animal form.

There is one final qualifier to make: Locke gets us part of the way to solving the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo*, but *Milindapañha* was instrumental in getting past a limitation in Locke’s argument, i.e. the problem of memory in Locke’s idea of a forensic person. I could have followed the Lockean tradition further, using Reid’s objection in more detail, focusing more on the analytical tradition of identity over time. But each individual tradition necessarily has its own points of limit and it may be that any specific tradition—i.e. Locke and the analytical tradition—deals with

only a specific set of questions. The *Milindapañha* is useful in practical terms since it adds a working philosophical model of moral accountability based on an ancestral relation. My use of this Indian tradition encompassing a range of overlapping questions, principally rebirth, provided a better opportunity to problem-solve as it moved from a theoretical to a practical application of the solution of the ancestral relation. In this case, throughout Part One I have used two traditions together—Plato and Buddhism—to reach a conclusion that is specifically insightful.

To clarify my point about the limitation of Locke’s philosophical tradition further, using the *Milindapañha* has been useful because it had to deal with issues of moral accountability and continuity between embodiments specifically concerning rebirth, death, and identity. Neither Locke and the predominantly Christian tradition nor his secular interpreters engage with rebirth in the same way as Plato and Buddhism do. Therefore, the *Milindapañha* is useful in part because it, like Locke, denies a soul but, unlike Locke and our predominantly Christian or secular analytical traditions, it engages with a tradition of multiple embodiments through rebirth. Because we do not share the tradition of multiple embodiments we, as readers, may be open to a blind-spot in our understanding of Plato’s *Phaedo*. By placing Plato’s *Phaedo* in dialogue with *Milindapañha* I have shown how multiple embodiments means that we have to look beyond the human psyche alone to see what might be underlying it, i.e. the causal dependency between different lives. Because of the embeddedness of certain ideas of *psyche* as self culturally in ancient Greece, Plato did not need to analyse the nature of self explicitly, or to the same extent as the Buddhist tradition. Due to Buddhism’s radical denials of *ātman* it needed to be explicit because it challenged a specific tradition. The interesting dialogue between these two separate traditions, set up through my methodology based on establishing Shared Concerns, has shown in Part One how *Milindapañha* provides a means of solving an important problem in Plato.

In Part Two I will show that two further ancient texts, which likewise have Shared Concerns, can be read together to solve problems in one cultural text without the help of a later philosophical mediator. I therefore now turn to my second test case, where *Kaṭha Upanishad* will be used to solve problems of death and identity in Empedocles' poem.

Part Two: Empedocles' Poem and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*

Introduction

I now turn to the second of my test cases, Empedocles' poem and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Part One saw the application of Claims 1 and 2 using Locke's philosophical ideas as a framework. Part Two shows the application of my Comparative Methodology with two cultural texts that have Shared Concerns leading to problem-solving that does not make use of Locke as a philosophical framework. The methodology teases out implicit notions within Empedocles, specifically, the philosophical concern regarding the relationship between identity and moral accountability across death.

To start with I examine each text individually due to the interpretational difficulty of the texts. Chapter 5 examines *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* within the framework of its own cultural setting. Chapter 6 examines Empedocles' poem within the context of its own cultural setting. Chapters 5 and 6 show that three key Shared Concerns exist between the two texts: death, identity, and moral accountability. These Shared Concerns (Claim 1) are then used in Chapter 7 as an instrument for problem-solving (Claim 2), through the comparative application of the two texts. The key problem arising from this study is to what extent the *daimon* is morally conditioned, and does (self) understanding lead to a possible form of liberation from the Cosmic Cycle?

Chapter 5: *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*

Introduction

The aim of Chapter 5 is to familiarise the reader with *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s specific philosophical arguments placing the text within my Comparative Methodological structure. As such, in Chapter 5 I am concerned with beginning to introduce Claim 1. Although Chapter 5 alone cannot show Shared Concerns with Empedocles, I am able to highlight three key ideas in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. These three key ideas are as follows: the use of 'roots' and 'tree' as a philosophical image of an all-encompassing reality (6.1; discussed in my section 5.6); the 'two selves' theory that shows two kinds of entities, *ātman* as a rider and the human intellect as a charioteer and the relationship between the two (3.1-3.3; discussed in my section 5.3); and the concept of moral accountability in transmigration, where 'what they have done' and 'what they have learned' leads to liberation from transmigration (5.7; discussed in my section 5.5).

But I also wish to place these philosophical ideas within the framework of the text in general. I follow the structure of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* at this point, instead of imposing my comparative structure on the text. At the beginning of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, the scene is set around the opening dramatic conversation about the uncertainty of death (1.20); followed by the discussion on the nature of *Brahman* and the search for knowledge (2.12); then an important image of the two selves is presented (3.1) which is combined with a simile of a chariot (3.3); due to the uncertainty regarding the structural integrity of the rest of the original text there is an analysis of the remaining sections with specific focus on how they relate to the earlier parts of the text (4.1 and 5.5);¹⁰⁵ finally I end with a key image, 'the eternal banyan tree' (6.1).

¹⁰⁵ The last sections, especially 4-6, are more likely later additions, intended to compliment the dialogue between Yama and Naciketas (Olivelle, 1998: 231).

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is convoluted and problematic. According to Olivelle, it does not form a coherent and unified whole (1998: 231). The text itself is ‘challenging’ and ‘contains several difficult and unique terms whose meanings are far from clear’ (Olivelle, 1998: 231). This is in part because the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*’s story of Yama and Naciketas is a retelling from *R̥g-Veda* 10.135 and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.11.8.1-6 (Ganeri, 2007: 15). The text belongs to the Kāṭhaka school of the Black *Yajur-Veda* (Olivelle, 1998: 231). Dating the text closer than a few centuries is not possible; but this is true of all *Upaniṣads* (Olivelle, 1998: xxxvi). Olivelle believes that the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is not one of the earliest, and is more likely post-Buddhist (after 5th century BCE), composed in the last few centuries BCE (1998: xxxvii). But this date is not definite as other interpretations have been offered. For example, Radhakrishnan dates the text to the 8th-7th century BCE, which would make it pre-Buddhist (1953: 22). West suggests that it is contemporaneous with early Buddhism (1971: 181). One must remember that ideas written within a text can be considerably older than the actual date of that text.

My aim is to engage with the text, offering insights and explanations where appropriate, but not critical objections. Given more time and space, a fuller critical account of the scholarly literature and interpretation surrounding *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* would be fruitful. Here, however, I will remain an observer of the text, not a critic. Methodologically, this is appropriate given the focus on *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as a tool for solving Empedoclean problems through Shared Concerns.

Concerning traditional interpretations, I have deliberately minimised the use of traditional scholarly interpretations, i.e. Saṅkara (8th century CE). The motivation behind this approach is that traditional Indian interpretation is heavily influenced by a specific school of thought. Individual commentators interpret specific lines favourably

relating to their school of thought. For a scholar studying the history of Indian philosophical thought such dialogues and commentaries are worthwhile engaging in. However, given that this project focuses around a thought experiment and a methodology of problem-solving, it need not be weighed down by the vast scholarly interpretive tradition. Moreover, by travelling interpretively light the focus remains on the text and not a school of thought.

As Olivelle noted, the text is challenging. Therefore, the text would in itself be worthy of a thesis. As a result, I am fully aware of the limitations of this chapter if taken in isolation. But within the constraints of this project, a vigorous engagement with critical interpretations is not required. Chapter 5 serves the larger purpose of the project. Where possible I will use longer quotations in Chapters 5, allowing for succinct arguments in Chapter 7. Repetition is a potential by-product of my Comparative Method. But I believe slight repetition is worth risking given the difficulty of the two individual texts.

5.1 *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1: Setting the Scene

Section 1 introduces the dramatic scene between a father and his son, Naciketas. Faith is said to take hold of Naciketas while his father's cows were being 'presented as sacrificial gifts' (1.2).¹⁰⁶ Naciketas reflected on the unworthiness of the cows he and his father were sending to sacrifice (1.3):

They've drunk all their water, eaten all their fodder,
They have been milked dry, they are totally barren –
“Joyless” are those worlds called,
to which a man goes
who gives them as gifts.

¹⁰⁶ Translation Olivelle (1998), unless explicitly stated otherwise.

The ‘faith’ that ‘took hold’ of Naciketas is the fear that these sacrificial cows will lead to “Joyless” worlds, presumably after death. The cows are barren, and as a result, are unworthy. The cows have become useless to the father and son, having ‘drunk all their water, eaten all their fodder’ and given up all the milk they can. Therefore, the father and son are not sacrificing anything meaningful. As a result, the son expects nothing significant in return.

It is unclear why Naciketas asks, ‘Father, to whom will you give me?’ (1.4). Naciketas may believe he is to take the place of the ‘barren’ cows. Another interpretation is that the father, by giving ‘away all his possession’ (1.1), intends to include his son among them (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 596). By asking his father the same question three times, Naciketas elicits the response ‘I’ll give you to Death’ (1.4). In anger at his young son’s intrusiveness the father says ‘go to Hell’ (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 596). So it is that Naciketas contemplates his obligation to go to Death as his father commands (1.5):

I go as the very first of many.
 I go as the middlemost of many.
 What’s it that Yama [Death] must do,
 That he will do with me today?

Death is a fundamental part of human existence, existing before Naciketas was born and after he has died. There have been ‘those who have gone before us’ and there will be ‘those who will come after us’ (1.6). Rebirth through death is introduced at 1.6, and is presented as a cyclical continuation of vegetation: ‘mortal man ripens like grain, And like grain he is born again’ (1.6). Death is not an end, a man is ‘born again’ like grain in the next harvest. The cycle of grain represents ‘perpetual rebirth’ and ‘is not an escape from the wheel of becoming into a deathless eternity’ (Radhakrishnan 1953: 597). As Radhakrishnan explains, rebirth is not an ‘escape’ from death; neither is the

image of the cycle of grain an optimistic example for the individual. The grain that grows, falls, and grows once more is not the same numerically. Therefore, by analysing the grain image one concludes that men cannot survive through rebirth unchanged. Men are mortal within a cycle of birth and death (Nikhilananda, 1951: 119). The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* presents a strong understanding of the nature of mortal life early in the text.

The dramatic conclusion of the text requires the offering of three wishes to Naciketas. To fulfil the offering of the wishes a host-guest relationship is described. A ‘Brahmin guest enters a house’ like a fire that must be appeased by water (1.7) If a ‘Brahmin guest enters a house’ but ‘resides without any food’ then that ‘foolish’ owner of the house risks his ‘Hopes and expectations, fellowship and goodwill, Children and livestock, rites and gifts’ (1.8). Therefore, the text places a high demand on welcoming guests into one’s house.¹⁰⁷ This is a custom of hospitality in India (Nikhilananda, 1951: 119). Naciketas arrives at the house of Death and stays for three nights ‘without any food’ (1.9). To make sure Death has no ill consequences (1.8), he offers a wish for every night ‘you [Naciketas] stayed in my house...without food’ (1.9). The dramatic device is clear; by using the custom of hospitality the writer is able to convey the dramatic concept of three wishes.

The first wish is simply to allay his father’s anxieties and anger about Naciketas going to Death (1.10). There is a slight hint that Naciketas is also asking Death for his father to recognise him in his next embodied life: ‘That he greet me with joy, when by you I’m dismissed’ (1.10). For if Naciketas has died and gone to Death’s house, then the way he leaves is through rebirth already mentioned (1.6). Death agrees to Naciketas’ first wish (1.11).

¹⁰⁷ This is later understood due to the Oneness of all things with *Brahman* (4.11; 6.1). If you do not show kindness to a guest, you are not showing kindness to your self. Due to the fundamental Oneness of life, bad *karma* is the result of a house owner’s ignorance regarding hospitality.

Naciketas' second wish conveys the old sacrificial teachings of the Vedas; similar to the ritual sacrifice presented at the beginning of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Through ritual sacrifices one hopes to gain a better life after death, or as Naciketas is worried, avoid a less favourable after-life. This is the Vedic sacrificial religion preceding the *Upaniṣads*. Naciketas wishes to learn the fire ritual which will see him reborn in a heavenly state (1.12-13). In this heavenly state there is 'no fear of old age or you (Death)'. The 'world of heaven' transcends 'both hunger and thirst', and is 'beyond all sorrows' (1.12). Naciketas believes 'People who are in heaven enjoy th'immortal state' (1.13). This is the view of 'immortality' held in the Vedas. But the Vedic concept of immortality is now shown to be relative immortality by the *Upaniṣadic* third wish (Nikhilananda, 1951: 121).

Naciketas has been given the ritualistic knowledge allowing access to heaven; it therefore seems strange that Naciketas is still troubled by death in his third wish. Heaven is described as free from Death at 1.12. But now the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* deviates from and develops further the concepts set out by the Vedic religion. Although the *Upaniṣads* are not breaking away from their Vedic predecessors entirely, wish three represents a fear that cannot be quelled by ritual practice alone. Naciketas has acquired Vedic ritual knowledge, leading to a heavenly state, but he still has a doubt regarding existence after death (1.20):

There is this doubt about a man who is dead.

'He exists,' say some; others, 'He exists not.'

I want to know this, so please teach me.

This is the third of my three wishes.

Put simply, does a man continue to exist after death or not? This yearning is tied to Naciketas' second wish. Radhakrishnan believes Naciketas has no doubt about his survival, having already likened mortality to grain (1.6); the problem is about the

condition of the liberated soul (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 603-604). But Naciketas is worried about survival, i.e. the survival of the man. Naciketas is not interested in some form of continuation, i.e. that of 'grain'. What use is the fire sacrifice if the man that attains the heavenly world after death is not the same man that instigated the fire sacrifice? Naciketas needs to *know* that *he* continues through death. Otherwise, Vedic ritual is irrelevant to the individual.

Unfortunately for Naciketas, it is a 'subtle doctrine' that is 'hard to understand', so hard that 'even the gods of old had doubts' (1.21). Death begs Naciketas to pick another wish. But Naciketas understands that he will never have a teacher like Death to explain it to him again. Still, Death tempts Naciketas with all the earthly possessions imaginable to change his wish. Death suggests becoming immortal through his offspring, or being the ruler of the earth, indeed, even live as long as he wishes (1.23). Death offers the enjoyment of desire at Naciketas' will and command (1.24-25). The offers are all things that humans supposedly covet, 'but about death don't ask me' (1.25).¹⁰⁸ Death is actively testing Naciketas (Nikhilananda, 1951: 127). Before Death reveals the Truth, Naciketas must prove himself worthy.

The testing of Naciketas is a plot device preparing the unveiling of a new *Upaniṣadic* Truth. The truth is expressed by Naciketas first: 'With wealth you cannot make a man content; Will we get to keep wealth, when we have seen you [Death]' (1.27). As a result 'even a full life is but a trifle' (1.26). Naciketas was offered all that he could ever dream of, but through insight he realised that mortal life and all that comes with it is transitory (Nikhilananda, 1951: 128). These earthly lives are

¹⁰⁸ The temptations of Naciketas can be compared to the temptations of Buddha and Jesus (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 605). All three temptation scenes are the renouncing of worldly achievements in favour of other-worldly truth. All three can be interpreted as a test that must be passed. Although, Buddha and Jesus were said to be tested by a devil figure who does not reveal any truth.

impermanent. Sensual desire is fleeting and ephemeral in nature (Schiltz, 2006: 455). But Naciketas still needs to understand ‘what happens at the great transit’, what happens to a man after death? (1.29). For no matter how many worldly possessions one has, they cannot stop decay and death (Nikhilananda, 1951: 129). Section 2 takes up the challenge of ‘probing the mystery deep’ where Death reveals the truth regarding *Brahma* and Self.

5.2 *Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2: Brahma-Knowledge*

Having tested Naciketas, Death reveals the truth about a man after death and during one’s life. It is obvious why Naciketas had to be tested previously since a man must choose between desire and truth (2.2):

Both the good and the gratifying
 present themselves to a man;
 The wise assess them, note their difference;
 and choose the good over the gratifying;
 But the fool chooses the gratifying
 Rather than what is beneficial.

What should we pursue: a self-controlled life of wisdom or the satisfaction of desires (Schiltz, 2006: 452)? Naciketas was offered the gratification of earthly pleasures, but instead he stayed true to his wish for knowledge (2.3). Both the good and the gratifying have their relevant goals and ‘both bind a man’ (2.1). The goals are Truth and illusion respectively. As Schiltz correctly notes, ‘the problem is not with the duration of the desires but with their effects on the self’, desires are ephemeral, but also bad for us (2006: 455). The concept of action binding itself to a man is noticeable in the law of *karma*. One must see through the fruits of one’s labours. By rejecting the earthly world Naciketas is bound for the eternal through his ‘yearning for knowledge’ (2.4). Death contrasts Naciketas’ position with that of the ignorant lovers of worldly desire (2.5):

Wallowing in ignorance, but calling themselves wise,

thinking themselves learned, the fools go around,
 staggering about like a group of blind men,
 led by a man who is himself blind.

The contrast is clear between the wise and the ignorant fools, with the fools believing themselves to be wise. Moreover, the latter are ignorant even of their own ignorance (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 609). The ignorant life of pleasure is likened to the blind leading the blind (Schiltz, 2006: 459). Sensual desire akin to the blind leading the blind is a powerful image. Additionally, the phrase ‘fools go around’ does not restrict itself to earthly life. Nikhilananda comments that ‘go round’ means the fools ‘assume different bodies’ after death (Nikhilananda, 1951: 132). Therefore, the line also refers to the grander scale of rebirth. The rebirth results directly from their ignorance (Nikhilananda, 1951: 132). A characteristic belief of these ignorant fools is that ‘This is the world; there is no other’ (2.6). The failure is to make no distinction between the earthly world and the hidden reality that lies beneath it. Ignorance means the ignorant man ‘falls into my (Death’s) power again and again’ (2.6). For the ignorant it is an endless cycle of birth and death (Nikhilananda, 1951: 132). Quintessentially, rebirth is sustained through ignorance.

Unfortunately, as Death has already mentioned (1.21), true knowledge is hard to comprehend and cannot be grasped by ‘argumentation’ (2.9). For such knowledge is ‘a thing beyond the realm of reason’ (2.8). The Truth about self transcends mental states, where intellectual reasoning is likely to mis-associate self with impure mind (Nikhilananda, 1951: 134). Furthermore, knowledge can only be taught by someone who has direct personal experience of the doctrine. The Truth is beyond reason as it is altogether beyond the human sphere of sense experience.

In verse 2.10 there is uncertainty regarding who is talking. But regardless of whether Death or Naciketas utters the words, the sentiments are the same. All earthly

pleasures are ‘transient’, and as a result ‘by fleeting things one cannot gain the perennial’ (2.10). It is only ‘by things eternal I have gained the eternal’ (2.10).¹⁰⁹ Therefore, Naciketas has seen the worldly pleasures and rejected them. He has also witnessed the Vedic fire sacrifice which leads to heaven, ‘And having seen, firmly rejected’ (2.11). The Vedic sacrifices can only get one so far. As the Vedic sacrifice is firmly established in the transient earthly world, it is only fitting that on an *Upaniṣadic* reading, transitory rituals have ephemeral outcomes.

The distinction between the earthly world of desire and the true reality that lies hidden behind the ignorant world has been noted. But Death has not yet revealed the Truth, or indeed, how it relates to an individual after death. Given that the true reality exists behind the ignorant world, one may expect that the search for Truth to be external. In fact, the Truth is the search for *Brahman* and it is entirely internal (2.12):

The primeval one who is hard to perceive,
 wrapped in mystery, hidden in the cave,
 residing within th’impenetrable depth-
 Regarding him as god, an insight
 gained by inner contemplation,
 both sorrow and joy the wise abandon.

The ‘primeval one’ is ‘hard to perceive’ being ‘wrapped in mystery’, hidden behind the senses, the mind, and understanding (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 613). One is to regard the ‘primeval one’ as god (*devam*) after ‘insight gained by inner contemplation’ (2.12). The ‘primeval’ god is ‘hidden in the cave’ of the heart, which is hidden within a body as

¹⁰⁹ The fire sacrifice mentioned previously does not provide true eternal being. Sacrifice gains one entry into heaven (*Brahmaloka*), but this is only relatively permanent (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 612). As Radhakrishnan states, the ‘performer of the Naciketa fire will endure as long as the cosmos lasts but such endurance is not eternity, since the cosmos with all that it contains will be absorbed into the eternal at the end of the cosmic day’ (1953: 612). Heaven, and by association the beings living in heaven, will be dissolved once the cosmic cycle is completed. Therefore, an immortal life in heaven may seem desirable, but it is still one step down from eternity. For eternity one must realise Self’s association with *Brahman*. In essence, one must realise the inter-connectedness of all life with the Ultimate Self *Brahman*.

previously expressed at 1.14. This is comparable to how the Truth is hidden behind the external illusion of the sensual world. Fundamentally, the ‘primeval’ god is hidden behind the phenomenal knowledge caused by the sensory world. It is the ‘inmost reality which is the object of [Naciketas’] search’ (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 614). The realisation goes beyond pairs of opposites and desires. And internal realisation is through internal meditation. One turns away from the external world to find the ‘primeval’ god that is ‘hidden’ within you.

The internal ‘primeval’ god is described by Death as having no birth, no death, and remaining stable through different existences (2.18):

The wise one-

he is not born, he does not die;

he has not come from anywhere;

he has not become anyone.

He is unborn and eternal, primeval and everlasting.

And he is not killed, when the body is killed.

The inner ‘wise’ ‘primeval’ ‘god’ is without cause and is changeless. It is self-existent (Nikhilananda, 1951: 140). The inner god is the fundamental principle, distinct from the bodily self (Schiltz, 2006: 459). It is the inner reality that realises itself apart from names or form (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 616). Although the inner ‘god’ inhabits the body, it remains distinct and separable. As a result, the death of the body has no effect on the inner ‘god’. The inner ‘god’ is separate from an external individual, as the ‘god’ ‘has not become anyone’ (2.18). Furthermore, it is assumed here that no individual embodied person has an influence on the inner ‘god’. The inner ‘god’ is ‘bodiless within bodies’ and ‘stable within unstable beings’ (2.22). It is ‘immense’ and ‘all-pervading’ existing in everything and as everything ultimately (2.22). The ‘killer’ and the ‘killed’ both ‘fail to understand’ that ‘He neither kills, nor is he killed’ (2.19). At this point a ‘wise man ceases to grieve’ having realised the true reality of an inner ‘god’.

Radhakrishnan believes Naciketas' question is answered: the inner 'god' is eternal and death has no reference to it (1953: 617). But Death has answered Naciketas' question with reference to an 'eternal' inner 'god'; not with reference to the individual that will die.

To grasp the concept of an inner 'god' one must 'quit his evil ways', be 'calm or composed', and possess a 'tranquil mind' (2.24). One must turn away from the sensual world, as the 'god' is unknowable otherwise (Schiltz, 2006: 460). The individual must renounce desire, and instead favour knowledge and the liberation knowledge brings (Nikhilananda, 1951: 144-5). Furthermore, there is an ethical dimension presented. Although the process is internal meditation, one cannot be externally 'evil', as supposedly, 'evil' behaviour will contrast directly with the internal understanding one is trying to possess; that all life is One. There is a presentation of moral psychology, that ethical behaviour is determined by an individual's essential nature and function (Schiltz, 2006: 462). Until our 'mind and heart are effectively purged, we can have no clear vision of God' (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 620). Therefore, the spiritual and the ethical are directly related (*ibid.*). The text presents an 'internalist justification of the best life' (Schiltz, 2006: 462). An ethical internal path of learning cares little for worldly society; the two top castes, 'the Brahmin and the Kṣatriya', are 'both like a dish of boiled rice' with death as a sauce.¹¹⁰ For Death comes to all ignorant men regardless of their social standing.

5.3 *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 3: The Two Selves

Section 3 is philosophically the most important, and has received the most critical observations, especially from comparative scholars.¹¹¹ However, section 3 also remains hard to interpret. Yama (Death) is teaching Naciketas the nature of self

¹¹⁰ These are the priestly and kingly class of Vedic society. Although they are not as rigidly enforced as the later caste system, they do hold the top two positions of power.

¹¹¹ Especially Schiltz (2006) and McEvelley (2002).

(Schiltz, 2006: 463). There are two selves presented by Yama, through a comparison with a chariot. The chariot comparison ‘stresses the inter-action and interdependence of the parts of the individual’ (Schiltz, 2006: 460). But it is hard to infer how the original two selves depicted by Yama at 3.1 relate to the chariot illustration at 3.3. Ultimately, the comparison culminates in a distinction between a charioteer and a rider, the former connected to the chariot, and the latter a removed passenger. Nikhilananda suggests that the two selves are an individual soul and a Supreme Self, where the ‘Supreme Self is the detached Witness of the activities of the individual soul’ (1951: 146). It remains to be seen whether Nikhilananda’s suggestion is correct. But the connection and interdependence of *Brahman* and *ātman*, the macro and the micro, is fundamental to the *Upaniṣads* (West, 1971: 105):

[T]he basic doctrine of all the Upanishads, [is] that Brahman, the changeless life-soul of the world, is identical with Ātman, the individual self, in other words, our personal awareness of being alive is only a local and imperfect observation of a universal reality.

Therefore, it is the relationship between the individual and the universal that garners discussion through 3.1. The passage is a key scholarly interpretive section for the different Indian schools of thought. But as shown below, exact interpretation is extremely knotty (3.1):

They are these two ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light’, the two who have entered-the one into the cave of the heart, the other into the highest region beyond, both drinking the truth in the world of rites rightly performed (Olivelle, 1998: 238).

There are two selves that drink the fruit of Karma in the world of good deeds. Both are lodged in the secret place (of the heart), the chief seat of the Supreme. The knowers of *Brahman* speak of them as shade and light (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 621).

Two there are who dwell within the body, in the buddhi, the supreme akasa of the heart, enjoying the sure rewards of their own actions. The knowers of Brahman describe them as light and shade (Nikhilananda, 1951: 146).

Section 3 opens with a description of two entities, ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light’, known only to the man who understands *Brahman*, the inner ‘primeval’ god. Both ‘Shadow’ and

‘Light’ comprise different attributes respectively. Olivelle suggests that ‘Shadow’ refers to the person in the heart, and ‘Light’ to the person in the firmament, with the intention to show the connection between the human heart and the highest heaven (1998: 379). Yet exactly what ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light’ refer to is not explicitly rendered in 3.1.

In 3.2 there is a suggestion of movement from here to there. The fire sacrifices are a ‘dike’ or a method for ‘those who wish to cross the danger’ to ‘the farther shore’ (3.2). The ‘farther shore’ is ‘the imperishable, the highest *brahman*’ (3.2). The highest *Brahman* correlates to the ‘Light’ in the ‘highest region beyond’. *Brahman* at 3.2 appears to be something more than previously stated by Death in section 2. No longer is *Brahman* merely the inner ‘primeval’ god. Now there is a two-pronged distinction, there is an inner god *and* one in the ‘highest region’. Crucially, both are connected like shadow and light, one resides in ‘the cave of the heart’, as the inner ‘primeval’ god; and the other resides in ‘the highest region beyond’ (3.1). The primeval god exists both internally and externally from the individual body. Now, the primeval god and the ‘highest *brahman*’ are intrinsically connected.

The inner and outer god are connected, as ‘Shadow’ is dependent on ‘Light’ and physical things. Therefore, the inner god is dependent on the Light of the ‘highest *brahman*’, but there needs to be an interaction with something else as well. The most one can tentatively interpret is that these two, as ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light,’ are not mutually exclusive.

5.3.1 *Kātha Upaniṣad* 3.1: The Chariot Simile

Yama has presented two intricately connected selves, ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light’, the inner self in the ‘cave of the heart’ and the self as ‘highest *brahman*’ in the ‘highest region beyond’. Death introduces the simile of the chariot to illustrate the distinction of

selves. The chariot simile represents a psycho-physical vehicle with a passenger. This is where *ātman*, the word for self can be seen clearly in the text. Unfortunately, the text becomes even more convoluted with the introduction of additional technical terms. Furthermore, it is unclear what *ātman* relates to, ‘Shadow’ or ‘Light’. But given that *ātman* usually refers to an internal self it is likely that *ātman* refers to the ‘Shadow’, one’s inner self. Death correlates the component parts of a self with those of a chariot (3.3-4):

3. Know the self (*ātman*) as a rider in a chariot,
and the body, as simply the chariot.
Know the intellect as the charioteer,
and the mind, as simply the reins.
4. The senses, they say, are the horses,
and sense objects are the paths around them;
He (*ātman*) who is linked to the body, senses, and mind,
the wise proclaim as the one who enjoys.

There are four essential points presented in 3.3: 1) the self as a rider; 2) the body as the physical chariot; 3) the intellect as a charioteer or driver; and 4) the mind as the reins or controls. The rider and the charioteer must be in the same chariot, and it is the charioteer that has the means of control, i.e. the reins. The reins/mind are attached to the horses/senses. In this interpretation the self/rider is a detached witness, at least from the physical driving of the chariot, which is done by the intellect through the mind.

The text describes the internal process within the self: the charioteer/driver is the intellect; and the mind is the means of control, i.e. the reins. In this interpretation, Light and Shadow correlate to the highest *Brahman* and the individual self in the body, a macrocosm and microcosm. The illustration returns to the chariot and the demarcation of bodily characteristics: the bodily senses are the horses powering the physical chariot; and the paths on which they run are said to be the sense objects (3.4):

The senses, they say, are the horses,
and sense objects are the paths around them;

The mind holds the reins, being either in control or dragged along by the senses (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 623). In reverse the illustration can be interpreted as follows:

The horses run along paths	The senses pursue sensual objects
Which pulls the chariot along,	Which engages the body in the world,
The reins are attached to the horses,	The mind discriminates between sensual desires,
And the charioteer is holding the reins.	And the intellect controls the mind.
The self should be known as a rider in a chariot	The self should be known as a rider in a chariot.

Nikhilananda interprets line 3.3 as referring to an embodied soul, the individual (1951: 148). There appears to be a general interpretational distinction between two selves: an individual self and a Universal Self. These are the Shadow and Light, the inner god and the ‘highest *brahman*’. There are three prominent interpretations: Saṅkara sees the Universal Self as identical with an individual self in a non-dualistic interpretation (early 8th century CE); Ramanuja believes an individual self is eternally one with and also different from the Universal Self (11th century CE); and Madhva sees the individual self as eternally different from the Universal Self (c.1238-1317 CE). Nikhilananda, in line 3.4, associates the *ātman* with the individual soul, reasoning that the Supreme Self (highest *brahman*) cannot be an enjoyer of the world (1951: 149). However, in 3.1 ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light’ are said to be ‘both drinking the truth in a world of rites rightly performed’. Nikhilananda distinguishes between the individual self and the Universal Self, stating without textual evidence that one enjoys in the body while the Universal Self does not. Nikhilananda suggests that the chariot simile refers to the individual soul/self entirely. The Eternal Self appears as the individual soul/self, until such an individual self realises its true nature as an Eternal Self (Nikhilananda, 1951: 149). On Nikhilananda’s reading there is only an illusion of division: one witnesses the individual

self as a chariot, with various component parts, only until one realises *Brahman*; upon which all individuality ceases.

The debate outlined above concerns the reciprocal nature of the inner god ‘Shadow’, and the ‘highest *brahman*’ ‘Light’. Moreover, the debate appears to be characterised by how interpreters view the larger philosophical system and the philosophical nature of *Brahman*; how is it that the *ātman* relates to *Brahman*, or put another way, how does ‘Shadow’ correlate with ‘Light’? What exactly is the relationship between the rider and the charioteer within the illustration? Line 3.4 is problematic regarding the relationship (3.4):

He (*ātman*) who is linked to the body, senses, and mind,
the wise proclaim as the one who enjoys.

It is ambiguous in 3.4 regarding who or what is being referred to. Most likely, *ātman* represents the rider, the inner god of ‘Shadow’. Nikhilananda terms *ātman* here, the individual soul (1951: 149). But the relationship between the *ātman* and the charioteer is still complicated by the term ‘linked’. The charioteer may lay claim to such enjoyment as it is he who is physically ‘linked’ to the chariot, the reins, and the horses. Yet the rider (*ātman*) is still said to be in the chariot as well. Therefore, it is not implausible to interpret, on textual evidence alone, that both the rider and the charioteer could equally be the ‘one who enjoys’ (3.4). But would this compromise the nature of *ātman* as a distanced rider?

If *ātman* is the ‘one who enjoys’, that would mean that there is a complex relationship between *ātman* and the human intellect, especially due to the intellect holding the reins. What about the relationship between the inner ‘Shadow’ and the human intellect? The separation of self (*ātman*) and intellect is one evident interpretation within the text, especially as the ‘Shadow’ is in ‘the cave of the heart’, which is perhaps a metaphor for a hidden self (Ganeri, 2007: 21). Ganeri is correct to

postulate a hidden self; the text supports such a reading at 2.12 and 3.12. The hidden self promotes a project of self-discovery (Ganeri, 2007: 22). And there is no greater wish than self-knowledge (Nikhilananda, 1951: 127). Therefore, it is the intellect as the charioteer that is key to the embodied individual (Schiltz, 2006: 460), at least until the individual realises the Truth. Therefore, the interpretation that we as a human intellect have an unknown god-like rider (*ātman*) is intriguing.

The ignorant never have their mind under control, meaning their senses never obey them ‘as bad horses, a charioteer’ (3.5). Thus, the ignorant man who ‘lacks understanding’ and who ‘is unmindful and always impure’ continually does ‘not reach that final step, but gets on the round of rebirth (*samsāra*)’ (3.7).¹¹² However, ‘when a man has understanding’ and ‘his mind is ever controlled’, then his ‘senses do obey him, as good horses, a charioteer’ (3.6). Understanding and a controlled mind lead to the realisation of ‘that final step, from which he is not reborn again’ (3.8). Importantly, this ‘final step’ does not mean a person ceases to exist (Nikhilananda, 1951: 150). The duality is clearly expressed between the ignorant and the wise. The wise have a union of intellect and soul (*ātman*) (Schiltz, 2006: 459). There is a balance suggested in this passage achieved through training, not submission or repression of sensual desires. The natural tendency of a horse is to run wild, therefore, it must be trained (Nikhilananda, 1951: 149).¹¹³ It is one’s full possession of a controlled mind which an individual needs, more so than trained horses. For within the simile it is the mind that is the tool (reins) used by the intellect to bring the bodily senses under control. Both mind and body are dependent on the intellect for good direction (Schiltz, 2006: 460). Therefore, a wandering mind is of no use to the intellect, or indeed, to the individual on their ascent

¹¹² The term *samsāra* appears for the first time in the early *Upaniṣads* (Olivelle, 1998: 370).

¹¹³ Although, to take the simile to its fullest conclusion, a horse must first be broken before it can be properly used.

towards ‘the end of the road, that highest step of Viṣṇu’ (3.9).¹¹⁴ The intellect must turn away from the external world towards the self at 3.5-9; whilst the intellect is focused on sensible objects one cannot grasp something insensible (Schiltz, 2006: 460).

The chariot can take its ‘rider to his destination only when it is well built, when the driver knows his way, and when the reins are strong, the horses firmly held, and the roads well chosen’ (Nikhilananda, 1951: 151). Discrimination and inner calmness are the two most important elements of self-control endorsed in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (Nikhilananda, 1951: 151). Importantly, the intellect and the *ātman* must work as one.

There follows a list describing the order of progression to the Supreme (3.10-11). Senses lead to objects, then to mind, followed by intellect, and after that ‘the immense self’ (3.10). The ‘immense self’ (*ātma mahan*), literally, the great self.¹¹⁵ Such an ‘immense self’ is beyond the intellect, meaning that the intellect/charioteer is not ‘the immense self’. It is hard to place the individual—the embodied self—within such a process. There are the building blocks of human beings with the senses, sense objects, mind, and intellect; but how is one to interpret the ‘immense self’? It seems that the ‘immense self’ is distinct from the human characteristics previously described. Such an interpretation accentuates the notion that the ‘immense self’ is ‘Higher than the intellect’. One realises ‘the immense self’ once one has transcended ‘Higher than’ the bodily process. The second echelon of the process moves from the ‘immense self’ to the ‘unmanifest’, followed by the ‘person’ or ‘spirit’, ‘Higher than the person there’s nothing at all’, and that is the goal (3.11).¹¹⁶ If the ‘unmanifest’ represents a Oneness behind the world of sense objects, then an unmanifested reality has individuation as its

¹¹⁴ The name Viṣṇu is used for the Eternal Supreme Self, *Brahman* (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 625).

¹¹⁵ Radhakrishnan acknowledges two interpretations of *ātma mahan*: referring to the world soul (*Hiranyagarbha*); or the individual self (1953: 625). Nikhilananda interprets the *ātma mahan* as *Hiranyagarbha* (1951:153).

¹¹⁶ The ‘unmanifest’ refers to *Brahman*, the ultimate cause of all causes (Nikhilananda, 1951: 153). The ‘person’, or better translated as ‘spirit’, denotes the Eternal within a body. The realisation of the final goal is that all things are finally absorbed by *Brahman*, the Reality underlying all things (Nikhilananda, 1951: 154).

ultimate projection. Therefore, reality is ‘unmanifest’ and at the same time it is an individual One, and there is ‘nothing at all’ higher than the individual One. As such, the ‘immense self’ is a useful step on a transcending scale, but the further up the scale one progresses, the more one realises the illusion of distinct individuals; since there is only One ‘person’, and it is ‘Higher than the unmanifest’. Verses 3.10-11 represent a ‘pass from outward nature to the one world-ground, *avyakta* [unmanifest], and from it to the spirit behind’ (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 626). One must turn one’s attention from the external world of sense perception, towards the internal world of contemplating the One behind all external distinctions.

The One is ‘Hidden in all beings’, requiring ‘keen vision’ to see ‘this self’ (3.12). Such a Self is hidden like the sun behind a patch of clouds (Nikhilananda, 1951: 154). It is important to note that it is the same divine Self that exists in all beings.¹¹⁷ It is ‘with eminent and sharp minds [intellect]’ that people ‘see him’ (3.12). One uses the ‘intelligent self’ to control ‘speech and mind’ (3.13); as the charioteer controls the senses and the reins in his grasp. Then one turns the ‘intelligent self’ away from discrete individuality upon realisation of the ‘immense self’ (3.13). Here the distinction between intellect and the ‘immense self’ is once more made clear. The ‘tranquil self’ that controls the ‘immense self’ refers to the ‘person’ of 3.11. The Eternal is free from any distinction or difference to others or itself (Nikhilananda, 1951: 155). The ‘person’ ‘has no sound or touch, no appearance, taste, or smell; It is without beginning or end, undecaying and eternal’ (3.15). Furthermore, once a man has perceived the ‘unmanifest’ followed by the ‘person’, then ‘He is freed from the jaws of death’ (3.15). He is freed from death because death affects only distinct bodily individuals. For what is a person if not a distinct individual? Upon the realisation that all is One there can be no death, or, indeed, individuality. Therefore, one must ‘Arise! Awake!’ from the sleep

¹¹⁷ It is only the ignorant body that accounts for diversity within the universe (Nikhilananda, 1951: 154).

of ignorance quickly as the path to Oneness is difficult like a ‘razor’s sharp edge is hard to cross’ (3.14). But the path to freedom lies within every man, literally.

Section 3 portrays the two selves theory by means of a chariot simile. There are two distinct attributes of the individual self and the Eternal Self; the former entangled in the world, the latter free from it (Nikhilananda, 1951: 146). Possibly one exists in the ‘cave of the heart’ and the other in the ‘highest region beyond’ (3.1). However, in two different translations the two selves are both said to exist in the ‘secret place of the heart’ (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 621; Nikhilananda, 1951: 146). Both selves are described as ‘drinking the truth’ of karmic action. Though, Nikhilananda believes karmic fruit should only attach itself to the individual self, as the Eternal Self is ‘the detached Witness’ (1951: 146). Such an interpretation goes against the literal rendering of the text. What is clear, however, is that this section shows that meditation on the inner self will lead to Supreme knowledge due to the close connection between the Eternal Self and the individual self (Radhakrishnan, 1953: 621). Both selves appear to be ‘drinking the truth’ and inter-related (3.1). Even if the Supreme Self is a detached Witness, as Nikhilananda believes, the Eternal Self is still witnessing that individual self and the results of its karmic fruits. Therefore, there is an attachment between Eternal and individual, even if the Eternal Self has no karmic fruits of its own. After all, they inhabit the same body, the same chariot. With the Eternal Self hidden, an individual human self is required to account for individualism. That individual self, expressed in the chariot simile, is a connection between the *ātman* and the human intellect.

5.4 *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 4: Wise Men and Fools

Section 4 is where Radhakrishnan believes *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* ends, with the next six sections being later additions (1953: 629). Whether this is true or not is only important if dating is a specific issue. However, with this problem in mind it is only necessary to analyse extracts and individual verses, rather than whole sections as

previously done. Extracting individual verses and lines enables one to correlate the outstanding material with what has been argued previously. That way, if these final sections are a later addition, they are giving further support to the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* doctrine, rather than the arguments resting on the later section's validity.

Examining the common set of principles, one finds an emphasis once more on the inward sight as opposed to outward perception. The wise man 'turned his sight inward and saw the self within' (4.1). The 'wise man in search of immortality' is actually searching for the 'Self-existent One' (4.1); an inward journey into the very Reality of the human and the universe. Such a 'Self-existent One' is not reliant on any *external* cause to account for its reality; as the phrase suggests it is 'Self-existent' and individually One. Therefore, if it is One it is the cause of all other existence, as it 'pierced the apertures outward' causing men to look out instead of in (4.1).

In contrast to the inward journey of the 'wise man', the 'Fools' pursue 'outward desires' (4.2). The 'Fools' are constantly entering 'the trap of death' as a result of their pursuit of desire (4.2). Once more it is the pursuit of bodily desire that keeps death re-occurring. The world of desire is unstable and in direct contrast with the stable world of the 'Self-existent One' that lies behind the sensory world. As a result, 'in unstable things here do not seek the stable' (4.2). The term 'here' denotes the sensory world, and the 'unstable things' are the sense objects pursued by our 'outward desires'. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* has already described how the One is 'without beginning or end, undecaying and eternal...fixed and beyond the immense' (3.15), it is that 'stable' unto which we seek.

A man experiences outward reality of 'Appearance and taste, smell and sounds, touches and sexual acts' and by that 'which one experiences these, by the same one understands' (4.3). It is the same 'one' that experiences the outward reality and is the

inner Reality. Upon such an understanding ‘what then is here left behind?’ (4.3). If a man ‘understands’, then nothing remains ‘here’ in the sensory world worth caring for. One must understand that a man is ‘th’immense, all-pervading self’; at such a point ‘a wise man does not grieve’ (4.4). The ‘immense, all-pervading self’ is the ‘living, honey-eating self’ (4.5). An interpretation of such a verse is that the ‘immense’ self is an enjoyer of action.¹¹⁸ Again, such an ‘immense’ self is characterised as eternal through the description the ‘lord of what was and what will be’.

Diversity and ‘unstable things’ are part of the sensory world. With ‘your mind alone you must understand’ through inner contemplation that ‘there is here no diversity at all’ (4.11). Therefore, duality is illusionary. This world and that world do not really exist. Anyone who fails to comprehend the truth instead ‘see[ing] here ... diversity’, goes from ‘death to death’ (4.11).¹¹⁹ The text’s pronouncement that a ‘person [*ātman*/Self] the size of a thumb resides within the body’ is problematic (4.12). If there is no diversity, how can there be a hidden Self the ‘size of a thumb’ within a body? Without diversity the thumb-sized Self would be hiding within its Self. There appears a need for a division between, on the one hand, the thumb-sized Self and, on the other hand, what it is that the thumb-size Self is hiding in. If all diversity is just mis-association of sensory perception, within the phenomenal world there cannot be a thumb-sized Self. Therefore, there is a problem concerning the relationship between the manifest phenomenal sensory world and the True reality. The problem correlates directly to another issue; the relationship between the individual and Eternal Self. This relationship is set out within the chariot simile, but is not successfully concluded.

¹¹⁸ This can be applied retrospectively to the chariot simile, and the argument about which part of a man enjoys the fruits of *karma* (action).

¹¹⁹ It seems an appropriate question to ask why the multiform sensory world ever came into fruition? If indeed, all is One, the phenomenal world can have come from no-where else.

5.5 *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 5: Embodiment

In section 5, the distinct nature of self and bodily senses appears once more. The realisation of self leads to a separation from the body at the point of death. When the ‘embodied self dwelling in the body comes unglued and is freed from the body – what then is here left behind?’ (5.4). The ‘embodied self’ is ‘dwelling in the body’ but has no ties to that body; as the self is to become ‘unglued and is free from the body’ leaving nothing behind with the body at the point of death. This is an important point to establish fully. Death is only a physical occurrence for the body. Furthermore, death is the process of ungluing the self from its embodiment. But crucially, death has no effect on the embodied self, as nothing is left behind with the dead physical body.¹²⁰ One can realise that an individual leaves the sensory body behind and understand that the world of sense desire is a fallacy. The preceding verses (5.1-3) suggest that the ‘embodied self’ referred to in 5.4 is the Eternal Self;¹²¹ for, ‘On it all the worlds rest; beyond it no one can ever pass’ (5.8).

If death is a bodily event that frees the ‘embodied self’, then what brings life to the body? Section 5 explicitly suggests that the source of life is the Eternal Self (5.5):

Not by the out-breath, not by the in-breath;

does any mortal live;

By another do people live, on which those two depend.

The physical animation of the body, breathing in and out, is dependent on the Eternal Self. The Self is the cause of vitality. The suggestion in 5.5 is that the body does not have intrinsic life on its own, without the ‘embodied self’.

The Eternal Self is the source of life and the narrator describes ‘what happens to the self...when it encounters death’ (5.6-7):

¹²⁰ The phrasing is unusual, for if the realisation of *Brahman* is a realisation of all being One, how can there be a separation from anything?

¹²¹ Therefore, there is a problem relating to dualism and monism, regarding self and sensory objects.

7. Some enter a womb by which
 an embodied self obtains a body
 Others pass into a stationary thing –
 according to what they have done,
 according to what they have learned.

Here is the strongest description of the rebirth doctrine present in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. It is clear that an ‘embodied self’ does not animate everything that it embodies, as it can exist in a ‘stationary thing’. Furthermore, rebirth is directly correlated to ‘what they have done’ and ‘what they have learned’ (5.7). It is one’s actions, memory, and understanding that pass on through rebirths. Therefore, it is this life *now* that explicitly correlates to the next life after.

What is truly remarkable, though, is how this One Eternal Self correlates to the individual that is created in a new rebirth (5.9):

As the single fire, entering living beings,
 adapts its appearance to match that of each;
 So the single self within every being,
 adapts its appearance to match that of each,
 yet remains quite distinct.

There is a ‘single self within every being’ that ‘adapts its appearance to match that of each’ individual ‘living being’ (5.9). Such an adaptation correlates to 5.7 and the rebirth that is instigated from previous action, memory, and understanding. The ‘single self’ must also ‘adapt its appearance’ to fit the new body it has obtained. However, the ‘single self’ ‘remains quite distinct’ from individual appearances (5.9). There seems to be a subtle and fragile relationship presented between individual bodies and the ‘single self’.¹²² At the same time the ‘single self within every being’ must be all encompassing

¹²² Does the ‘single self within every being’ become the ‘embodied self’; meaning that the ‘single self’ remains distinct, but the ‘embodied self’ can change according to individual lives? Or are the ‘single self’ and the ‘embodied self’ referring to the same self?

and also ‘distinct’ residing in an individual body. It is a relationship stressed but also blurred in section 5.9-13. On *Brahman* it is believed that ‘the whole world rests’; as all is One with *Brahman* (5.8). Yet the ‘single self’ ‘is not stained by the suffering of the world’ (5.11). As a result, distinct individuality is an illusion (5.12):

The one controller, the self within every being,
 who makes manifold his single appearance;
 The wise who perceive him as abiding within themselves,
 they alone, not others, enjoy eternal happiness.

The ‘single self’ is the ‘one controller’ of a living being. Furthermore, it is this ‘single self’ that is responsible for individual diversity through making itself ‘manifold’ in the world. However, *Kāṭha Upaniṣad* has previously stated (5.9-11) that the ‘single self’ remains ‘distinct’. Therefore, the ‘wise who perceive’ the *one* ‘single self’ that is ‘abiding within themselves’ realise that they are ‘eternal’. At such a point individuation must cease to exist in any meaningful way. The ‘single self’ is ‘changeless, among the changing, the intelligent, among intelligent beings’ (5.13). But the ‘single self’ is also the one responsible for ‘dispens[ing] desires among the many’ (5.13). Section 5 clearly states that the ‘single self’ is ‘distinct’ from change, but is at the same time ‘manifold’ within that ‘changing’ world. The ‘single self’ ‘adapts its appearance’ making itself ‘manifold’ and numerous, is the ‘one controller’, and ‘dispenses desires’; but it remains ‘distinct’, One, and ‘not stained by the suffering of the world’. It is simply the fault of the individual to associate themselves with the ‘manifold’ sensory adaptation, instead of the ‘distinct’ ‘single self within every being’.

5.6 *Kāṭha Upaniṣad* 6: The Eternal Banyan Tree

An interesting comparative image is made between *Brahman* and ‘the eternal banyan tree’ that inverts the typical tree root image (6.1):

Its roots above, its branches below,
 this is the eternal banyan tree.

That alone is the Bright! That is *brahman*!

That alone is called the Immortal!

On it all the worlds rest;

beyond it no one can ever pass.

Brahman is said to have ‘Its roots above, its branches below’ (6.1). The image of a tree is reversed; usually a tree’s roots are below and the branches above. However, in this image the roots are above and the ‘branches below’. Roots are a stable image for growth and stability; they provide the nutrients for the branches to grow. Therefore, the roots are above existing in the eternal *Brahman*. All things come from *Brahman*, ‘On it all the worlds rest, beyond it no one can ever pass’ (6.1). Furthermore, the branches are below belonging to the corporeal world of embodiment. There are individual branches that have distinct special existences, but there is still only *one* tree. This can be applied to human individuals’ relationship to *Brahman* and the ‘single self’. There are many appearances as there are many branches; but there is only one ‘single self’, one tree that holds all appearances together and gives all life.

There is an especially intriguing verse in section 6 regarding a representation of *Brahman* and the ‘single self’ that is hard to interpret and understand (6.5):

As in a mirror, so in the body;

As in a dream, so in the fathers’ world;

As in water a thing becomes somewhat visible,

so in the Gandharva world;

Somewhat as in shadows and light,

so in *brahman*’s world.

A ‘mirror’ has a reflection; a ‘dream’ has a remembrance; and ‘water’ has an imprecise reflection. Yet in ‘*brahman*’s world’ it is clearly ‘shadows and light’. Such a portrayal can be compared to section 3.1’s opening remark about ‘the two who have entered’ being ‘Shadow’ and ‘Light’. In that section one was in the ‘cave of the heart’ and the

other in ‘the highest region beyond’ (3.1). These dual natures can be compared to the ‘eternal banyan tree’ that has ‘roots above’ and ‘branches below’ (6.1). There is the Reality and then there is the projection or manifestation. Verse 6.5 is describing the different levels or types of projection.

A further connection is made to section 3 when the narrator asserts that the ‘senses are firmly reined in’ (6.11). Once this has happened, ‘From distractions a man is then free’ (6.11). An individual is bound to this sensory world through desire. It is only when the ‘desires lurking in one’s heart’ are ‘banished’ that one ‘becomes immortal’ (6.14). Therefore, it is the very process of desiring that keeps death re-occurring. Such desires ‘bind one’s heart on earth’ until ‘the knots are all cut’ (6.15). One must ‘draw him [Self] out of the body with determination’ (6.17). Such talk once more makes Self sound distinct from the earthly world. The language is one of dualism, where the Self must be cut free from the bondage of the body and their desires. This is different from the idea that Self is One, and that individuals place the emphasis incorrectly on individuality through sense perception. But the difference could be explained through section 4 and beyond being later additions.

Conclusion: Key Ideas

Having analysed *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as an individual cultural text, I can now identify the three key ideas that will be used for the Comparative Method. Firstly, I finished the chapter with ‘the eternal banyan tree’ (6.1; my section 5.6). The concept of ‘roots’ and a ‘tree’ show the interconnectivity between the manifest world and *Brahman*. The image specifically showed how beyond it—*Brahman*—nothing can pass. This shows the interconnectivity between the manifest world and *Brahman* as well as the connection between *ātman* and *Brahman*. Moreover, the eternal banyan tree shows the interconnectivity between the single, all-encompassing reality of *Brahman*

and its many projections. This is an all-encompassing nature of reality as opposed to a changing, multiple world, expressed via the root image.

Secondly, *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (3.1-3.3; my section 5.3) draws attention to two entities, *ātman* and charioteer. The *ātman* is described as the ‘rider’, or the self that is removed, and the charioteer is the intellect, or the human mind. The key idea here is identity, specifically the identity of the ‘two selves’ of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Thirdly, I presented a cultural view in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* where understanding leads to liberation from transmigration. The key idea here is moral accountability. According to *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, what affects the liberation of the *ātman* is ‘what they have done’ and ‘what they have learned’ (5.7; my section 5.5). The ‘fools go round’, led themselves by one ‘who is himself blind’ (2.5). The poignancy of the metaphor is apt. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* has an ethical dimension to transmigration and liberation, as what someone has done keeps an *ātman* within the cycle of transmigration. This is *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*’s *karmic* element. But it is understanding that above all else leads to liberation.

I now turn in Chapter 6 to my examination of Empedocles’ poem. First I shall show how Empedocles shares three specific concerns with these ideas from the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, in his discussions relating to death, identity, and moral accountability. Second, I shall show how the three Shared Concerns give rise to a specific problem of liberation in his poem in need of solution through three interrelated questions.

Chapter 6: Empedocles: The Shared Concerns

Introduction

The overall aim of Part Two is to investigate discussions of death and identity in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles' poem. In this chapter I show how Empedocles and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* have Shared Concerns (Claim 1) on: the all-encompassing nature of a single reality and its relation to the world of change, expressed through an image of roots; questions of identity and the existence of two selves or kinds; and moral accountability across death and rebirths.

I shall demonstrate how in Empedocles' poem these questions of death and identity are present in his discussions of first the Cosmic Cycle as all-encompassing reality (6.1); second the composition of different substances relating to human identity, where two distinct selves or kinds emerge (6.2); and third the moral accountability of those substances across deaths and rebirths (6.3).¹²³ Thus I shall defend Claim 1, that Shared Concerns exist between Empedocles' poem and the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. But in this chapter I shall also set up Claim 2. For while examining these key discussions in Empedocles' poem, it will be shown that all three result in interpretative problems within Empedocles. This chapter will thus lay the ground for the Comparative Methodology to be applied in Chapter 7, where the ideas of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* will be used to solve specific problems in Empedocles in areas of Shared Concerns. There is one main issue—liberation—emerging from the three Shared Concerns when taken together.

¹²³ The term composition here refers to the composition of human beings; I am not commenting on the composition of Empedocles' writing.

6.1 Empedocles' Cosmos

Empedocles introduces his four material substances, which are described as traditional theological gods (Fragment 7/6):¹²⁴

τέσσαρα γὰρ πάντων ριζώματα πρῶτον ἄκουε·
 Ζεὺς ἀργῆς Ἥρη τε φερέσβιος ἠδ' Ἀϊδωνεύς,
 Νῆστις θ' ἢ δακρύοις τέγγει κρούνωμα βρότειον.

Hear first the four roots of all things:
 bright Zeus and life-bringing Hera and Aidoneus
 and Nestis, whose tears are the source of mortal streams.

In Wright's commentary the term ριζώματα is described as 'root clumps', literally referring used 'of trees', or 'ancestry' and 'offspring' (1981: 164). These 'four roots' are often expressed as elements; the constitutional make-up of 'all things'. However, Empedocles' own terminology 'roots', instead of using the later term 'element', will be used here. There is disagreement regarding the allocation of the roots to the divine gods, which stems from antiquity. For the purposes of this discussion, the correct allocation of roots to gods is not necessary. Instead the importance is placed on the roots themselves, not their personification as divinities. Importantly, however, the four roots correspond to earth, air, fire, and water as seen in the physical world.¹²⁵ After the four roots, Empedocles introduces the motive forces Love and Strife. It is here that Empedocles describes a reciprocal process of One from Many, and Many from One (8/17: lines 6-8):

καὶ ταῦτ' ἀλλάσσοντα διαμπερὲς οὐδαμὰ λήγει,
 ἄλλοτε μὲν φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἓν ἅπαντα,
 ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ δίχ' ἕκαστα φορεύμενα νείκεος ἔχθει.

And these things [four roots] never cease their continual exchange of position, at one time all coming together into one through love, at another again being borne away from each other by strife's repulsion.

¹²⁴ For all fragments Wright's translation is used. The numbering system I employ states Wright's order of composition followed by that of Diels-Kranz. Where the fragment is of sufficient length I will also provide the line numbers. Where other translators are used alongside Wright, they are named. Where Inwood is used, these translations refer to Inwood, 1992.

¹²⁵ According to Wright, the best tradition is the Theophrastean one: Zeus is fire, Hera is air, Aidoneus is earth, and Nestis is water (1981: 165).

And these things never cease from constantly alternating,
 at one time all coming together by love into one,
 and at another time again all being borne apart separately by the hostility of
 strife. (Inwood, 25/17: 6-8).

The two motive forces instigate a continual process of reciprocal cosmic change, where Love brings the four roots into One and Strife once again separates the One into Many. Both One and Many are the extremes of the Cosmic Cycle, with human life existing in the middle. On a cosmic level ‘birth’ is a change from one state to another; this creates no ‘abiding life’ for individual states (8/17: 9-11). Nevertheless, since this process of cosmic change/‘birth’ is continual and eternal, the ‘roots’ exist ‘forever unaltered in the cycle’ of change (8/17: 12-13). In essence, Empedocles ascribes uniformity and stability to a Cosmic Cycle where change is universally present, thus creating an equilibrium. Change occurs within an unchanging framework and according to an unchanging pattern of change. It is change within the same.

The term ‘forever unaltered’ appears to contradict the existence of change. However, on closer examination Empedocles believes that it does the exact opposite. Empedocles ascribes ‘abiding life’ to the roots, as they remain ‘forever unaltered’ at their most fundamental numerical level. Explicitly, the uniformity of the roots is present within the framework of eternal cosmic change (8/17: 12-13):

ἦ δὲ διαλλάσσοντα διαμπερὲς οὐδαμὰ λήγει,
 ταύτη δ’ αἰὲν ἕασιν ἀκίνητοι κατὰ κύκλον.

Insofar as they [the roots] never cease their continual exchange,
 so far they are forever unaltered in the cycle.

but insofar as they never cease from constantly interchanging,
 in this respect they are always unchanged in a cycle. (Inwood, 25/17: 12-13).

No one mixed qualitative state of the cycle has ‘abiding life’. But the fundamental component parts—the roots—have ‘abiding life’. Therefore, it is each mixed state’s correlation to the *whole* cycle of change, and the mixed roots, that provides continuity. The very *nature* of the Cosmic Cycle determines that each state will once again have

‘birth’ through continual mixing. One will come from Many, and Many will come from One *continually*. For Empedocles, change is qualitative; what changes has ‘no abiding life’ to begin with, i.e. the mixed states. According to Empedocles, the roots mix and un-mix, creating different states at different times, but fundamentally the roots do not change their numerical characteristics, i.e. their individual ‘root-ness’. Therefore, Empedocles believes stability exists within the cosmic change, provided by the individual four roots and the equilibrium of the cycle of reciprocity.¹²⁶

The reciprocal process of the four roots becoming One and then Many is all there is (8/17: 30-31 and 34-35):

nothing comes to birth later in addition to these, and there is no passing away,
for if they were continuously perishing they would no longer exist.

No, these are the only real things, but as they run
through each other they become different objects at different times, yet they are
throughout forever the same.
(Wright, 8/17).

And in addition to them nothing comes into being nor ceases [to be];
for if they constantly perished, they would no longer be.

But these very things are, and running through each other
They become different at different times and are always, perpetually alike.
(Inwood, 25/17).

There can be nothing added to or taken away from the roots. The four roots are all-encompassing; there is nothing added or taken away from the Cosmic Cycle. Empedocles does not see change as the annihilation of one state and the genesis of another new state. Change occurs dependent on what came before. There is a continuation. The four roots, and the process of continual change attached to them, are the only things that *are*; even when ‘they become different objects at different times’ they are ‘forever the same’ (8/17: 34-35). In essence, Empedocles rejects the concept of complete change; nothing comes ‘into existence from that which is not’ and for that

¹²⁶ There is a fundamental problem in this theory: how do you explain that something that is capable of undergoing change remains, nonetheless, unchanged? Can this problem be solved? Or might this be a fatal flaw in the whole theory?

which ‘exists [four roots] to be completely destroyed cannot be fulfilled’ (9/12). Beings are complex and contain a multiplicity of determinations. Those determinations are not all the same for the establishment of an identity. But the root, which is characterised by being, for example, pure water, is mixed with something else, then it changes radically, becoming something other than pure water. The problem for Empedocles, therefore, is not change in something that is intrinsically complex (i.e. the worldly compositions), but rather change in something that is simple (i.e. a root). At the cosmic level there are uncertainties about the continued identity of a ‘root’ as it mixes. But Empedocles pre-empted the objection by describing the roots as eternal, fundamental, and elemental. The roots were not born and will never perish. The cycle is an all-encompassing reality with the four roots as the building blocks from which all else is mixed.

As with all else within the cycle mortals are a composition of the four roots, and therefore cannot have the same justification as the four roots for being eternal or elemental. Attention must now turn to the composition of mortal beings and a specific problem that arises concerning the relation between humans and *daimons*.

6.2 Composition and Identity of Substances

In this section I will show how Empedocles’ account of living creatures gives rise to two kinds of substances: humans (6.2.1), and *daimons* (6.2.2). Mortal beings are compositions (13/9). There is ‘only mixing, and separating of what has been mixed’ (12/8). In section 6.1 I dealt with the physical component parts. But what has not been explained is how the mixing and separating of the four roots relates to an individual person. However, to begin talking about individuals, I first examine the constituent parts.

The mixing process is what humans call ‘birth’ (12/8). Therefore, human ‘birth’ represents a mixing of different component parts that already exist in some form.

Ultimately, there is nothing absolutely new created. Compositions of mixing and un-mixing abolish genesis and annihilation. Human death is simply the compound separating and continuing to exist in different forms. Physically, mortals are compositions that have birth through the mixing of already existent parts, with death being the separation of these existent parts. The fundamental constitution of mortal beings is reliant on the ‘four roots of all things’. Empedocles explicitly tells his reader (14/21: 9-14):

ἐκ τῶν πάνθ' ὅσα τ' ἦν ὅσα τ' ἔστι καὶ ἔσται ὀπίσσω,
 [10] δένδρεά τ' ἐβλάστησε καὶ ἀνέρες ἠδὲ γυναῖκες,
 θῆρες τ' οἰωνοὶ τε καὶ ὕδατοθρέμμονες ἰχθῦς,
 καὶ τε θεοὶ δολιχαίωνες τιμῆσι φέριστοι.
 αὐτὰ γὰρ ἔστιν ταῦτα, δι' ἀλλήλων δὲ θέοντα
 γίγνεται ἀλλοιωπά· †τόγον† διακρισις ἀμείβει.

From them [four roots] comes all that was and is and will be hereafter – trees have sprung from them, and men and women, and animals and birds and water-nourished fish, and long-lived gods too, highest in honour. For these are the only real things, and as they run through each other they assume different shapes, for the mixing interchanges them. (Wright, 14/21: 9-14).

For these very things are, and running through each other
 They become different in appearance. For the blending changes them. (Inwood, 26/21: 13-14).

As a statement, fragment 14/21 is extremely powerful. Instead of Wright's translation the ‘only real things’ referring to the ‘four roots’ I use Inwood's alternative ‘very’, translating αὐτὰ as ‘these very things are’. The mortal compositions are ‘real’; they exist manifold in the world. There is no distinction in Empedocles between an un-‘real’ material world and a ‘real’ immaterial world; or unreal compositions and a real world of roots. However, the roots exist in their own right, everything else is compounded roots, though these compounds are not said to be ‘unreal’. The roots are material and elemental to their later compounds. Therefore, Wright's translation ‘real’ could be misleading if taken to allude to a real/non-real duality which the text does not posit.

The distinction between the roots and their ensuing compounds is one of fundamental contrasted with non-fundamental substances. Furthermore, it is only the

four roots that have existed before, during, and after human life has ended.¹²⁷ Therefore, the compositions of mortal beings are only temporary states of mixtures. These compositions are not a fundamental whole, since the separable roots are the only things that ‘are’. And unlike the elemental roots that cannot be annihilated, the mixture can cease to exist once separation has taken place. The mixture has no continued existence or reality removed from the relationship with the elemental constituent parts. Once separation takes place at an individual mixture’s death, that mixture no longer *is* but *was*; whereas, the roots fundamentally ‘are’.¹²⁸

Empedocles specifies what constitutes mortality. Mortal creatures are susceptible to dissolution (14/21: 9-12):

ἐκ τῶν πάνθ’ ὅσα τ’ ἦν ὅσα τ’ ἔστι καὶ ἔσται ὀπίσσω,
 [10] δένδρεά τ’ ἐβλάστησε καὶ ἄνδρες ἠδὲ γυναῖκες,
 θῆρες τ’ οἰωνοὶ τε καὶ ὕδατοθρέμμιονες ἰχθῦς,
 καὶ τε θεοὶ δολιχαίωνες τιμῆσι φέριστοι.

From these all things that were, that are, and will be in the future
 [10] have sprung: trees and men and women
 and beasts and birds and water-nourished fish,
 and long-lived gods first in their prerogatives. (Inwood, 26/21: 9-12).

Men, women, plants and animals are included as one might reasonably expect. Astonishingly, Empedocles includes ‘gods’ in the list concerning mixtures (14/21: 12). Therefore, gods for Empedocles are no more elemental or fundamental than humans; they too must at some point separate like all mixtures. It is discernible that Empedocles views gods as mixtures by the epithet he bestows on them: ‘long-lived gods’. Gods are not eternal, they are ‘long-lived’. For reasons that are not clear, gods have the ability to hold onto a current mixture for a longer time than humans and other mortal creatures. And yet, Empedocles still banishes gods from the realm of the eternal to that of the

¹²⁷ Interestingly, this statement holds true whether referring to an individual human composition or humankind as a species. The ‘roots’ outlive us all.

¹²⁸ However, once again, it is difficult to understand how the roots remain as they are even when they are mixed.

mortal. It is clear, due to the Cosmic Cycle, that the elemental ‘four roots of all things’ are the only things that have eternal life.

Empedocles describes the process of mixing and separating of roots through a simile of a painting (15/23). Painters ‘take in their hands pigments of various colors, and after fitting them in close combination...produce from them shapes resembling all things’ (15/23). The ‘pigments of various colors’ represent the four roots. And as the four roots combine to make mortal mixtures, so too do the ‘pigments’. To secure the comparison between the ‘pigments’ and the roots, Empedocles uses the same list of terms from fragment 14/21: 10-14 in fragment 15/23: 5-8:

ἐκ τῶν εἶδεα πᾶσιν ἀλίγκια πορσύνουσι,
 δένδρεά τε κτίζοντε καὶ ἀνέρας ἠδὲ γυναῖκας,
 θῆράς τ’ οἰωνούς τε καὶ ὕδατοθρέμμονας ἰχθῦς,
 καὶ τε θεοὺς δολιχαίωνας τιμῆσι φερίστους·

They produce from them shapes resembling all things, creating trees and men and women, animals and birds and water-nourished fish, and long-lived gods too, highest in honor.

There seems no reason to assume that mixtures of roots are any more fundamental than the paintings that decorate temple walls (15/23). In the case of representative paintings and mixtures of roots, both are fundamentally coupled to their elemental constituent parts. So much so that changing one elemental part of the mixture changes the whole, fundamentally. However, mixtures of roots, unlike the paint, are not necessarily ‘shapes *resembling* all things’, as the mixtures of the roots *are* things; but both paintings and mixtures are created through the mixing of elemental constituent parts and produce representations of parts. The mixtures are derivatives of the roots as paintings are derivatives of the pigments. Fundamental stability is held only by the ‘four roots of all things’. A painting of a god is as susceptible to perishing as a living god in the Cosmic sense. There are differences between a living god and a painting, but neither sustains their mixture for the entirety of the Cosmic Cycle. Therefore, the painting and the god are both perishable.

In addition to the four roots, Empedocles' account shows how the formation of viable objects requires also a particular principle of formation: ratio. What are the principles of ratio for mortal creatures? And how do the mixtures work to create a living, walking, and thinking creature? Empedocles' key idea is proportion.

6.2.1 Human Substance

When describing how living creatures come into being, Empedocles accounts for the construction of individual limbs, and then the separate process of individual limbs combining to make a whole form. A ratio for the construction of bones is provided (48/96). One can infer that the ratio of the mixture is of high importance for creating parts and limbs. Once a ratio has been established and limbs have been created, then limbs must be properly fitted together. Fitting whole creatures is a process that requires a ratio, but in a different way to the fitting together of the individual limbs.

The incorrect sequencing of limbs will result in a mixture that is flawed in 50/57:

ἦ πολλὰ μὲν κόρσαι ἀναύχενες ἐβλάστησαν.
 γυμνοὶ δ' ἐπλάζοντο βραχίονες εὐνίδες ὤμων,
 ὄμματα τ' οἷ' ἐπλανᾶτο πενητεύοντα μετώπων

Here many heads sprang up without necks,
 bare arms were wandering without shoulders,
 and eyes needing foreheads strayed singly.

The building materials are the four roots, yet without the correct ratio successful mortal life will not come to fruition. Additionally, as Wright states, it is not the roots 'of which something is made that gives it its character, but the *logos* of their combination' (1981: 209). The '*logos* of their combination' may result in many wondrous mortal forms coming into existence before the most successful mixtures come to be (52/61; 53/62).

If a ratio of individual limbs is to be seen as a *logos*, what is it that gives whole mixtures order? The sequencing of limbs requires another important factor: Love. Love is found in every mixture as Love 'binds' the material parts together (60/71). Mortal creatures have a combination of the 'four roots' and a constituent part of Love.

But equally a mortal creature's constitutional make-up must also have an element of Strife. For this prevents mortal creatures becoming indistinct Ones, which would happen through a complete possession by Love. Strife is the motive force within mortals keeping the parts separate enough to be distinct, yet not absolutely disconnected. Just as the ratio in bones, in whole creatures one sees a similar balance between Love and Strife.

So far the human being is a composition like all other material substances, formed from a mixture of the four roots and the forces of Love and Strife. What is it that gives mortal creatures their perception and thought? At the elemental level there is perception. The roots and motive forces have a specific kind of 'thought' (77/109):

γαίη μὲν γὰρ γαῖαν ὀπάπαμεν, ὕδατι δ' ὕδωρ,
αἰθέρι δ' αἰθέρα δῖον, ἀτὰρ πυρὶ πῦρ ἀίδηλον,
στοργὴν δὲ στοργῆ, νεῖκος δέ τε νεῖκεϊ λυγρῶ.

With earth we perceive earth, with water water,
with air divine air, with fire destructive fire,
with love love, and strife with baneful strife.

The aspect of thought the roots allow is 'like for like' perception.¹²⁹ This means that some level of perception is distributed throughout the entire natural world (Kahn, 1971: 10). Each root and motive force can perceive its counterpart in another. Therefore, the ability to perceive is simply the result of our material constitution comprising the six principles of the four roots and Love and Strife (Trepanier, 2004: 160). Hence, at a mortal creature's most fundamental level of composition there is basic perception. Such a conclusion is astounding, as it presupposes that mind and body are homogeneous (Kahn, 1971: 11). Moving onto which part of a human specifically allows for thinking, and so differentiating between inanimate and animate beings, Empedocles introduces his ideas on blood.

¹²⁹ 'Like for like' is a phrase I employ to denote how with love one perceives love etc. Because of our internal make-up we are able to perceive the same substances in other mixtures.

A basic ‘like for like’ perception may be astonishing for a bush, when Empedocles states that he has previously been one (108/117). But pertaining to human compositions, rational thought requires more sophistication than ‘like for like’ perception. Empedocles expounds rational thought without requiring something distinct from the mortal material mixture. The four roots and motive forces are the means by which compositions that can think do think, and also are able to ‘think and feel pleasure and pain’ (78/107). Empedocles states that ‘All things are fitted together and constructed out of these, and *by means of them* they think and feel pleasure and pain’. So thought and perception are enabled by the composition of the four roots with Love and Strife. But the specific composition that is needed for thought is blood. Thought is found in the physiological mixture of every man (100/110: 10), and can be found around the heart because ‘for men, blood around the heart is thought’ (94/105). Perception, thought, and feelings manifest themselves through the combination of the ‘four roots’ and the two motive forces. And the difference between thought in inanimate and animate objects is blood. Therefore by having blood, every mortal mixture has a share in thought (81/103; 100/110: 10).

Empedocles’ astounding idea frees his account from the requirement of a rational substance distinct from the body itself to initiate thought. And through ‘like for like’, Empedocles has all he needs internally for basic perception, and this applies throughout all of mortal creation.

Having established the nature of the human composition, I turn now to a further kind of living, thinking substance in Empedocles: his *daimon* and consider how these two kinds of substances – human and *daimon* – are related.

6.2.2 Life-force and *Daimon*: Two Kinds of Substances

Empedocles' physiological theories state that each mixture is a ratio or *logos* from the constituent parts of the four roots and the two motive forces. With nothing else these mixtures have perception, sensation, thought, and intelligence. With this constitution from the four roots alone, under the influences of Love and Strife, there is philosophically no need for a soul as an animating life-force (Barnes, 1979: 186; Kahn, 1971: 8; Kirk, Raven, & Schofield, 1983: 322). This account seems complete and coherent until Empedocles introduces the idea of a *daimon*, for example in DK 115/Wright 107. What is a *daimon*?¹³⁰ In a changeable and unsustainable mixture is there room to accommodate a *daimon*? And what is meant when Empedocles describes the ability to 'lead from Hades the life-force of a dead man' (ἄξεις δ' ἐξ Αἴδαο καταφθιμένου μένος ἀνδρός) (101/111: 9)? Inwood translates μένος as 'strength' (Inwood 15/Wright 101/DK 111). Does μένος refer simply to restoring the physical breathing of a dead man, as Wright suggests (1981: 262-3), or is μένος linked with a *daimon*? Empedocles has made no mention of *daimons* in his mortal compositions and so the introduction of the idea of this further being is difficult to interpret, for example, does every mortal composition have a *daimon*?

These are challenging questions and there are many basic assumptions that must be challenged (Osborne, 1987: 33). Further, Plato cannot be allowed to enter these discussions. It is too easy to allow oneself to be drawn into statements such as: it is hard not to connect the *daimon* with the Platonic soul (Inwood, 1992: 53).¹³¹ Comparisons between Empedocles and Plato would be welcome if they were not so often anachronisms. I accept that the Platonic soul has similarities with Empedocles'

¹³⁰ This problem of composition will be answered without referring to two separate Empedoclean books.

¹³¹ Empedocles' philosophy does not require an entity such as a Platonic soul. The very view that Empedocles requires a Platonic soul is paradoxical for the reason Platonic souls do not exist yet. On this methodological point of comparison it should be Plato who is compared to Empedocles and *not* Empedocles likened to Plato. Empedocles has no need for a principle of movement within living creatures due to Love and Strife.

daimon. And yet, if the Platonic soul is so similar to Empedocles' *daimon*, why did Plato not use Empedocles' term for the soul? For if Plato wanted to express a philosophical concept similar or comparable to Empedocles' *daimon*, Plato had a vocabulary already fully loaded with conceptual content, i.e. *daimon*. Kingsley sets out the problem of anachronism in the Greek philosophical tradition so succinctly that I find it hard to use any words but his (1995: 18):

[The] Desire to view western philosophy as a continuous tradition moving towards ever greater sophistication, self-consciousness, and understanding inevitably involves looking at early Greek philosophers through the eyes of later ones.

There is a famous Buddhist Koan that suggests 'if you meet the Buddha, kill him'. Thus, the fear of reading Plato backwards into Empedocles is so great, that if we meet Plato in this discussion, we should do as the Buddhist Koan suggests, and 'kill' him.¹³² It is with great irony that Empedocles himself was acutely aware of how hard it is for humans to let go of established beliefs (103/114). With all that said, let us delve into the Empedoclean world of *daimons* in order to explain how these two kinds of substances – human and *daimon* – are related.

Given what has been established so far, one should expect to find a thread of philosophical consistency regarding the *daimon* and the Cosmic Cycle. One should not suppose that doctrines are incompatible or contradictory from the outset (Osborne, 1987: 32). After all, it is the same philosophical mind at work and there is no explicit evidence of Empedocles changing philosophical direction within his theory of the Cosmic Cycle. Of course, this evidence may be lost to us. But no extant ancient commentator discussed Empedocles changing philosophical direction.

¹³² The point of the Buddhist Koan is to free the human mind even from the attachment to the Buddha's teachings. I feel the Koan symbolically represents how attached ancient philosophy has become to Plato and not Empedocles.

The *daimon* is a composition of the ‘four roots of all things’. But how does a *daimon* fit into the composition of mortal beings, particularly humans? It would seem that the composition of the *daimon* is placed into the constitution of ‘mortal forms’. For when speaking of ‘*daimons*’ at 107/ 115, Empedocles switches to the singular and proclaims that such a creature is ‘born ... as all kinds of mortal forms, exchanging one hard way of life for another’ (107/115: 7-8). And yet, the composition of the *daimon* is able to survive the decomposition of the individual ‘mortal’ constitution, i.e. the individual ‘mortal’ life, as is shown in 107/115 when Empedocles says that he is born ‘throughout the time as all kinds of mortal forms’ This birth in different mortal forms over time is possible in part because Empedocles ascribes ‘life long-lasting’ to the *daimon* (107/115: 5); the *daimon* survives mortal decompositions for ‘three times countless years’ (107/115: 6). Therefore, the *daimon* is able to maintain its individually-distinct composition for a very long time indeed; surviving the breakdown of many shorter mortal lives. However, Empedocles has still not explained how the *daimon* fits with the mortal composition or what its function is in a specifically human life. The *daimon* is mortal and subject to dissolution, as any possible claim of eternal survival is undercut by the four roots being the only eternal substances, alongside Love and Strife (Trepanier, 2004: 86). When Love is completely dominant in the Cosmic Cycle all things will become One, and Strife’s dominance will create Many, unformed items; nothing individual apart from the four roots will survive the extremes.¹³³ Therefore, no matter how ‘long-lasting’ a composition is, it is not ‘long-lasting’ enough; the four roots, Love and Strife are the only eternal things.

Given the ultimately mortal life of the *daimon* as a composite, it is incorrect to state that the *daimon* is set apart from the material elements (Graham, 1999: 172). Graham has a

¹³³ One possible explanation is that, Empedocles’ *daimon escapes* the Cosmic Cycle. The idea of escape is fashionable because it can be found in many different cultures that hold rebirth beliefs. However, this is an interpretational problem that needs solving.

view that Empedocles does not fully distinguish the four roots and two motive forces from matter (1999: 164). It seems strange, however, to expect Empedocles to distinguish his principles from matter when that is what they are. Empedocles grounds thought into matter and so a distinction between thought and matter for Empedocles is paradoxical. It is anachronistic to use Graham's terminology of the *daimon* as an everlasting soul set apart from the material roots (1999: 172). In contrast to Graham's view, the *daimon* is firmly established within Empedocles' Cosmic Cycle and linked to the four roots, as shown explicitly in fragment 107/115 (9-12):

αἰθέριον μὲν γὰρ σφε μένος πόντονδε διώκει,
 [10] πόντος δ' ἐς χθονὸς οὐ̅δας ἀπέπτυσσε, γαῖα δ' ἐς αὐγὰς
 ἡελίου φαέθοντος, ὁ δ' αἰθέρος ἔμβαλε δίναις·
 ἄλλος δ' ἐξ ἄλλου δέχεται, στυγέουσι δὲ πάντες.

For the force of air pursues him [*daimon*] into sea, and sea spits him out onto earth's surface, earth casts him into the rays of blazing sun, and sun into the eddies of air; one takes him from another, and all abhor him.

Intrinsically, the *daimon* is linked with the cycle of the four roots here (Osborne. 1987: 24). There is a cyclical nature to the above lines; air releases the *daimon* eventually returning to being air once more. .

The interpretation of a *daimon*'s composition does not require one to postulate the immaterial nature of a *daimon* as Kahn has done (1971: 14). By placing a *daimon* into the four roots of all things through composition, one is securing the Cosmic Cycle. At no point does Empedocles distinguish between material and immaterial. Mind and matter are one and the same through the mixing of the four roots. Empedocles explicitly states τέσσαρα γὰρ πάντων ριζώματα πρῶτον ἄκουε: 'the four roots' are those 'of all things' (7/6); not merely of *some* things. Kahn's conclusion that there is no suggestion that the *daimon* is constituted by the four roots (1971: 13) seems incorrect.

Human perception, sense, thought and intelligence are present in a human constitution without explicit reference to a *daimon*. The *daimon* has existed before it

takes ‘mortal forms’ and indeed it will survive through ‘many kinds of mortal forms’ as 107/115 explicitly states. In contrast the human constitution will change at the point of death since humans are not ‘long-lasting’. Therefore, what is the relationship between the pre-existing *daimon* and the *individual* mortal form that it temporarily inhabits when it is born as a human? At the point of death for the individual mortal form what is reborn with the *daimon*? Is the *daimon* an individual identity that sustains that identity through several incarnations, i.e. are we the *daimon*? Or does identity change and develop accordingly? Can a *daimon*’s identity stay unchanged through incarnations? I answer these questions by referring to the *daimon* and human as two different *kinds* of substance (Chapter 7).

In this section I have examined two kinds of living and thinking substances within Empedocles’ poem: humans (6.2.1), and *daimons* (6.2.2) and have demonstrated that the *daimon* is comparable to mortal forms, made up from the same four roots, even though it is a stronger composition, able to live for a much longer time. But the question of how exactly the *daimon* relates to the human is not yet clear and will be explored in Chapter 7. For now, the third key idea I wish to highlight in Empedocles’ thought is that of moral accountability and its role in the rebirth of mortal compositions, whether those are human or *daimon*.

6.3 Moral Accountability

Within his theory of the Cosmic Cycle Empedocles offers an account of the births and deaths of mortal creatures as the formation and dissolution of their composition of the four roots. In this section I will consider how Empedocles offers in addition a moral story, particularly relating to the life of the *daimon*, which raises questions of moral accountability. As critics have observed, Empedocles has successfully embedded the individual microcosm of the individual life onto that of the

cosmic macrocosm.¹³⁴ At the level of the macrocosm the four roots travel through the cycle as eternal essences. At the level of the individual mortal composition one can deduce that personal salvation would be unachievable. And yet the poem sets out how in the microcosm the *daimon* ‘wanders’ through ‘all kinds of mortal forms’ (107/115: 6-7), suggesting a personal survival. The *daimon*’s particular composition gives it ‘life long-lasting’, and it can survive more than one mortal form. Unlike the roots, however, a *daimon* is not self-sustainable eternally. The *daimon*, like the human being, is a compound and is, therefore, liable to dissolution, unable to withstand the force of Strife, certainly when it is complete on a cosmic scale (Inwood, 1992: 53). However, Empedocles need not rely on the cosmic, abstract force of Strife. For Love and Strife have psychological and moral associations in the microcosm (Guthrie, 1950: 53) and therefore Strife can be enacted in individual, concrete actions at the level of living beings who can act and make moral choices. Further, Strife is the motive force that drives the *daimon* through ‘mortal forms’. Importantly, it is through a specific moral action that the motive force of Strife instigates a *daimon*’s journey (107/115):

ἔστιν ἀνάγκης χρῆμα, θεῶν ψήφισμα παλαιόν,
 αἰδίων, πλατέεσσι κατεσφρηγισμένον ὄρκοις·
 εὐτέ τις ἀμπλακίησι φόβῳ φίλα γυῖα ἴμιν ἴ
 ἴδῳ καὶ ἴ ἐπίορκον ἀμαρτήσας ἐπομόσση,
 [5] δαίμονες οἴτε μακραιῶνος λελάχασι βίοιο,
 τρίς μιν μυρίας ὄρας ἀπὸ μακάρων ἀλάλησθαι,
 φύομενον παντοῖα διὰ χρόνου εἶδεα θνητῶν
 ἀργαλέας βίοτοιο μεταλλάσσοντα κελεύθους.
 αἰθέριον μὲν γάρ σφε μένος πόντονδε διώκει,
 [10] πόντος δ’ ἐς χθονὸς οὐδ’ ἀπέπτυσσε, γαῖα δ’ ἐς ἀνγὰς
 ἡελίου φαέθοντος, ὁ δ’ αἰθέρος ἔμβαλε δίναις·
 ἄλλος δ’ ἐξ ἄλλου δέχεται, στυγέουσι δὲ πάντες.
 τῶν καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν εἶμι, φυγὰς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης,
 νείκει μαινομένῳ πίσυνος.

There is a decree of necessity (ἀνάγκης), ratified long ago (παλαιόν) by gods (θεῶν), eternal (αἰδίων) and sealed by broad oaths, that whenever one in error, from fear, (defiles) his own limbs, having by his error (ἀμαρτήσας) made false the oath he swore (ἐπίορκον) – *daimons* to whom life long-lasting (μακραιῶνος) is apportioned (λελάχασι) – he wanders from the blessed (μακάρων) ones for

¹³⁴ Cornford, 1957: 230; Kirk, Raven & Schofield, 1983: 348; Inwood, 1992: 57/8; Trepanier, 2004: 192.

three times countless years, being born (φύομενον) throughout the time (χρόνου) as all kinds of mortal (θνητῶν) forms, exchanging one hard way (κελεύθους) of life for another.

For the force of air pursues him into sea, and sea spits him out onto earth's surface, earth casts him into the rays of blazing sun, and sun into the eddies of air; one takes him from another, and all abhor him. I too am now one of these, an exile from the gods and a wanderer, having put my trust in raving strife.

This account of making false a sworn oath offers a moral explanation for the *daimon*'s wandering. The 'trust in raving strife' that Empedocles describes is shown through the action of breaking an oath (107/115: 3). Thus it is wrong action that instigates the motive force Strife, and the consequent cycle of rebirths, as the *daimon* is reborn in all kinds of mortal forms.

Cornford calls such reincarnation the 'most primitive' of 'several cardinal doctrines of mysticism' (1957: 161). Unfortunately, Cornford's evaluation is a hindrance rather than a helpful assessment. It is necessary to have a detailed and dispassionate appraisal of what Empedoclean rebirth entails. The problem concerns the continuity of existence and identity within an Empedoclean framework; specifically, what is it exactly that is reborn?

When considering this problem, discussions may be affected by preconceptions of characteristics one might find in rebirth theories, characteristics such as *karma*, and salvation or liberation. For those who posit rebirth theories, characterised by a confidence that the same person is reborn into various different physical bodies over a prolonged period of time, reconciling continued personal identity through successive mortal lives is a notorious problem. But rebirth need not mean individual continuation. Attempting to discover individual continuation within a rebirth theory that actually lacks this idea leads to problematic interpretations. There is a profound difference in the three doctrines stated above—rebirth, *karma*, and salvation—when the term *individual* is added to each one.

Empedocles' Cosmic Cycle is similar to rebirth or reincarnation theory. The four roots travel through a process of One becoming Many and returning back to One throughout time. The four roots migrate from one state to the next, taking many different forms as they travel. Rebirth for Empedocles can be seen as a cosmic law. In Empedocles' Cosmic rebirth there are specific motive forces instigating the continuation of lives: the cosmic '*karma*' or motive force comprising Love and Strife. Love drives the four roots into One; and Strife drives them apart into Many. Neither force has total dominion over the other; there is reciprocity through alternating supremacy. In this Cosmic Cycle of reincarnation ultimate salvation is impossible, since that would require the Cosmic Cycle to stop by means of one motive force superseding the other. And cosmic necessity prescribes that neither shall dominate permanently. Therefore, on a cosmic scale, escape from the cycle is not possible; the cycle is all that there is.

But a problem arises with this account, a problem concerning moral accountability and liberation. Before incarnation in human form, the *daimon* is said to defile 'his own limbs'. It seems therefore that the *daimon* prior to human incarnation is a sentient and material being since the act is committed to material 'limbs' (107/115: 3).

Therefore the *daimon* story introduces an ethical dimension to the idea of incarnation in human form. Moral accountability suggests a need for continuation, at least of the *thing* that is morally accountable. Does Empedocles have such an idea of a continuing *thing*? In line with his account of the Cosmic Cycle of change Empedocles is explicitly clear that the death of mortal creatures is not annihilation (104/11).

νήπιοι· οὐ γάρ σφιν δολιχόφρονές εἰσι μέριμναι,
οἳ δὴ γίγνεσθαι πάρος οὐκ ἔδον ἐλπίζουσιν,
ἢ τι καταθνήσκειν τε καὶ ἐξόλλυσθαι ἀπάντη.

Fools, for their meditations are not far-reaching thoughts, men who suppose that what formerly did not exist comes into existence, or that something dies and is completely destroyed.

But saying that when ‘something dies’ it is not ‘completely destroyed’, does not imply a complete continuation. It certainly is not an ‘emphatic affirmation of continuous existence’ for men before birth and after death, as Wright claims (1981: 268). Examining fragment 104/11 closely, all one can emphatically conclude is that the building blocks of life do not come from nothing, *ex nihilo*.

Rather, change requires something to exist prior to that change. After a change what previously existed is not annihilated, just as something completely new has not come into being. There is continuation through change; a causal link between the previous composition X and the post-change composition Y. The ‘new’ Y shares certain characteristics with the ‘old’ X. To say Y is completely independent of X is false, just as it is incorrect to say X has been ‘completely destroyed’. That is very different from saying something dies and is ‘completely’ continuous. Empedocles says at 104/11 that at death something is not ‘completely destroyed’ but what exactly that ‘thing’ is, is not clear. Within the context of the passage, the ‘thing’ appears far more likely to be a ‘root’, than a human individual. Placing these ideas at 107/115 and 104/11 into broader Empedoclean thought from across the poem produces the following narrative of the four roots and their changing nature in the lives of the *daimon* and human:

- A) There are ‘Four roots of all things’;
- B) The composition of *daimon* results from ‘four roots’ mixing;
- C) The *daimon* after breaking his oath becomes part of a human constitution;
- D) The human constitution dies, i.e. un-mixing and change takes place;
- E) The *daimon* goes into another mortal constitution;
- F) The *daimon* eventually decomposes into the ‘four roots’ once more.

All compositions for Empedocles are liable to alter and change. It is probable that through C) to E) a *daimon* changes. For it comes into contact with different compositions with different levels of perception, sense, thought and intelligence. Thus, a *daimon* will interact with the world differently according to what mortal form it finds

itself in. Therefore, Empedocles' proclamations about his own previous lives cannot claim that the constitutional *human* has existed throughout every previous mortal form numerically (108/117):

ἤδη γάρ ποτ' ἐγὼ γενόμεν κοῦρός τε κόρη τε
θάμνος τ' οἰωνός τε καὶ ἐξάλος ἔλλοπος ἰχθύς.

I have been at some time boy and girl, bush, bird, and mute fish in the sea.

Instead, the claim may be that the mortal constitution 'Empedocles' is the result of being 'at some time boy and girl, bush, bird, and mute fish'. There is a vast difference between the two claims. For the latter places the constitution of Empedocles on a causal line linked to previous incarnations, while the former concludes that Empedocles the human was still Empedocles as a 'bush, bird, and mute fish', regardless of the compositional vehicle used in each case to interact with the world. But whichever of the two claims is preferred, each gives rise to a number of problems concerning moral accountability through rebirth. Specifically, what is morally accountable and is liberation possible?

There are two possible conclusions one can draw: 1) Empedocles' philosophy is inconsistent on moral accountability because there is no *thing* that retains moral accountability and escapes the Cosmic Cycle; 2) Empedocles' philosophy is consistent because he believes individual salvation or escape from the Cosmic Cycle to be impossible. My solution is the latter and in Chapter 7 I will show that Empedocles uses rebirth itself as an example of moral accountability in order to philosophically manoeuvre around the impossibility of personal survival within the Cosmic Cycle.

Conclusion: Shared Concerns

I have examined three aspects of Empedocles' thought. Firstly I analysed the 'four roots' within the reality of the all-encompassing Cosmic Cycle. I then examined two kinds of substances (6.2): what are humans (6.2.1), and what are *daimons* (6.2.2).

Finally I looked at moral accountability (6.3). In the conclusion for Chapter 5 I drew attention to three key ideas in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. I am now able to show how these key ideas are Shared Concerns between the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles' poem, thereby supporting Claim 1 for these texts from different cultural traditions.

Firstly, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s concept of 'roots' and a 'tree' used in the image of the 'eternal banyan tree' supports the idea of an all-encompassing reality, *Brahman* (as discussed in Ch 5.6). Like the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* Empedocles' poem is concerned with an all-encompassing reality, that of the Cosmic Cycle, and uses the language of 'roots' to express its nature. Secondly, *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s 'two selves' theory, involving *ātman* and charioteer (as discussed in Ch. 5.3), raises issues of identity that can be seen as comparable with Empedocles' discussion of the two kinds of composition in humans and *daimons*. Thirdly, *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s concern with moral accountability across rebirths and different embodiments (as discussed in Ch. 5.5) is comparable to Empedocles' concern with the ethical dimensions of the Cosmic Cycle as manifested in the lives and rebirths of *daimons* in different compositions.

With these three Shared Concerns established, I can now move on to my second main claim: that setting up a dialogue between the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles' poem allows problems in Empedocles to be solved; specifically, to what extent a *daimon* is morally accountable within the Cosmic Cycle, and whether a final liberation from the Cosmic Cycle is possible.

I do this by firstly showing how using the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s 'eternal banyan tree' can illuminate Empedocles' idea of the Cosmic Cycle and the root image more fully. Thus this builds on the main problem concerning liberation *from* the Cosmic Cycle. Secondly, I use the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s 'two selves' theory to establishing the identity of Empedocles' two kinds of substances and so clarify how exactly the *daimon*

relates to the human being, thereby allowing one *kind—daimon*—to be potentially morally accountable whilst allowing the other *kind—human*—to be not morally accountable. Finally, I compare the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s account of right action (*karma*)—‘what they have done’—and right understanding—‘what they have learned’—and their correlation to liberation from rebirth, with Empedocles’ account of moral responsibility. The specific problem raised and solved here is whether liberation from rebirth is possible within Empedoclean thought, and to what extent does Empedocles place importance on action and understanding as a form of punishment or liberation?

Having examined *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles’ poem on their own terms, and highlighted these areas of Shared Concern relating to death and identity, I can now turn to my Claim 2 – that Shared Concerns between cultural texts can be used to offer solutions to problems in one of those texts. The ultimate problem to be considered is whether Empedocles has a concept of liberation from the cycle of rebirth, as in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, and how far he places importance on ethical action and right understanding as a form of punishment or liberation.

Chapter 7: Problem-Solving: *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles

Introduction and the Problem

Chapters 5 and 6 have identified three Shared Concerns in Empedocles and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (Claim 1): a reality that is all-encompassing spoken of by means of root imagery; the presence of two selves in a complex view of human identity; and moral accountability across rebirths in a cycle of lives. I now turn to what is achieved by examining these Shared Concerns together. In Chapter 6 I set out the key problem to be examined in this chapter: whether Empedocles has a concept of liberation from the cycle of rebirth, as in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, and how far he places importance on ethical action and right understanding as a form of punishment and liberation. This is the question of moral accountability across rebirths in Empedocles. In this chapter I will solve this main problem by using the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and drawing on the other two subsidiary questions relating to the ‘roots’ of reality and the identification of two selves. First I will examine the identity of the four roots of all things through focusing on the root imagery as combined with the eternal Banyan tree to express ideas of all-encompassing reality (7.1); second, I will clarify the relationship between an individual human and an individual *daimon* through understanding human and *daimon* as two different *kinds* comparable to Yama’s two selves of charioteer and rider (7.2); and finally I will consider the moral accountability of a *daimon* in relation to karma — specifically the relationship between self-knowledge and an ethic of non-harm within a concept of liberation from rebirth (7.3).¹³⁵ The themes of death and identity run through all discussions and the earlier studies of roots and two selves will build towards the final conclusion of 7.3 on moral accountability within Empedocles’ cycle.

Trepanier believes Empedocles ‘will continue to live on after his current incarnation’ (2004: 83), but that the Cosmic Cycle denies a ‘happily ever after’ (2004: 128). Graham suggests that humans have an ‘everlasting soul’ that ensures an escape

¹³⁵ Or, as scholars such as Obeyesekere state: an ‘ethicization’.

from the Cosmic Cycle given that the ‘everlasting soul’ is apart from the material elements (1999: 162 & 172). Therefore, since the ‘everlasting soul’ is not made from the four roots in Graham’s interpretation, as a separate material entity it is able to transcend or escape the Cosmic Cycle. Trepanier accepts a continuity of an individual self within the Cosmic Cycle, whilst Graham posits the existence of a substance that can escape the Cosmic Cycle. In contrast Inwood suggests that *daimons*, being compounds, are dissoluble resulting in the extinction of personal identity (1992: 53). Similarly, Kahn suggests that there is no individuality in transmigration (1971: 9). However, Kahn does not say that there is no transmigration. According to Kahn there is a ‘deified human soul’ that he characterises as deathless (1971: 8 and 10). Kirk and Raven provide examples implying individual survival (1957: 477), and ones suggesting the opposite (1957: 480 and 467).

By using my Comparative Method I wish to offer a new interpretation of Empedocles’ position: that humans and *daimons* exist separately as two kinds within the Cosmic Cycle. Kahn comes close to distinguishing between a human and a *daimon*, correctly stating that the modern conception of soul as a non-bodily conscious self is excluded from Empedocles’ cosmology (1971: 8-9). In this regard, Empedoclean survival is never that of a full human being, but just that of ‘one single element of our empirical self, one whose isolated existence after death involves a complete break with the conditions of human life’ (Kahn, 1971: 9). To clarify, I take Kahn’s ‘element’ to be the *daimon*. If this is a valid interpretation, then on a numerical level the *daimon* compound is ‘long-lasting’ and the human compound breaks apart at death. However, Kahn further distinguishes between an immortal divine soul and an empirical thought or consciousness (1971: 10; 14). Therefore, I cannot agree with Kahn’s terminology and range of distinctions. Nor should one accept Kahn’s conclusion that there is no suggestion that the *daimon*’s nature is constituted by the four roots, or as Kahn calls

them, ‘elements’ (1971: 13). Therefore, even Kahn falls short of the new interpretation that humans and *daimons* exist separately as two kinds within the Cosmic Cycle. But one can take from Kahn’s interpretation the need to distinguish the human compound from the *daimon* compound. At the same time, however, one must reject Kahn’s decision to place the *daimon*’s material nature outside the four roots, which leads to his conclusion that the *daimon*’s nature is deathless (1971: 10). Kahn’s divine, deathless soul is actually only a long-lasting material compound comprised of the four roots.

As seen in the scholarly work, the problem of liberation from the cycle of lives and its relationship to moral accountability is a complicated one. It is not clear what role the *daimon* plays in mortal composition, or, indeed, if all mortal compositions have a *daimon*. But if one asks, ‘what question is the *daimon* an answer to?’ one may tentatively postulate an answer. The *daimon* appears to be an attempt by Empedocles to avoid the complete cessation of human beings at death. After all, it can be inferred that the *daimon* is more akin to the gods and the divine in its kind of composition. Fragment 133/147 claims that with ‘other immortals’ *daimons* will ‘share hearth and table, having no part in human sorrows, unwearied’. It seems that after wandering for many ‘countless years’ *daimons* will ‘arise as gods, highest in honor’ (132/146). Therefore, *daimons* appear to be more divine and ‘long-lasting’ in their compositional make-up of the four roots than the other earthly kind of creatures. But is there liberation from Empedocles’ Cosmic Cycle and, if so, what role does moral accountability play?

I now attempt to solve the key problem of whether there is liberation in Empedocles’ poem and, if so, whether moral accountability is part of it. I do so by using *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and examining two sets of supporting issues before moving on to the main problem. Firstly I examine the identity of the ‘roots’ as the fundamental component of the Cosmic Cycle (7.1), and address whether it is possible, even in principle, to escape the all-encompassing Cosmic Cycle. Secondly I examine the two

kinds of substances most prevalent within Empedocles' ideas on identity: the human and *daimon* (7.2). My central questions here are: what are the individual identities of these substances and are they similar, interrelated, or completely distinct from each other? Finally, I reach the main problem of whether Empedocles has a concept of liberation at all, where I examine the role of right action and right understanding in Empedocles' Cosmic Cycle and consider whether moral accountability has a place (7.3).

7.1 The Four Roots and Eternal Banyan Tree

The 'four roots' that mix and un-mix to create the world that surrounds us are a key feature of Empedocles' ontology. It is possible to think of these 'roots' as elements, a view that stems from a modern scientific understanding of the world. The word *element* for a modern reader will suggest different connotations to the word *root*; this may become a problem if *root* is assimilated to *element*. Therefore, I propose stripping Empedocles' 'root' image of the modern scientific 'element' and instead examining it alongside another ancient 'root' image, that used in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Of course, these 'root' images will not be exactly the same, and I do not intend to replace one synthesis for another more ancient one. Instead, I simply wish to view the Empedoclean image through the lens of a text that uses the 'root' image to describe an ontological truth in an evidently literary way. Having set out the basic skeleton of the Cosmic Cycle in Chapter 6, the identity of the roots needs to be examined, and, more specifically, what it means to be a 'root', since this underlies the question of continued existence across rebirths in Empedocles.

The root image of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (cf. *KU* 6.1, discussed in Ch 5.6) is significantly different from Empedocles' and the differences will be helpful. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the image of a tree is reversed: the tree's roots are above and the branches are below. Normally the roots of a tree are foundational in the earth providing

stability and nutrients, thus allowing the tree to grow upwards. But in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the roots are above symbolising the divine, whilst the branches represent the sensible world below. Empedocles does not use this distinction between the divine roots and the corporeal branches of the tree but focuses on the specific symbolism of roots. He thus uses an image of stability and growth, suggesting the gathering nutrients, and that there is something attached to the roots. It makes little sense to think of roots without also thinking of a tree or plant. But this is not immediately obvious if one thinks of Empedocles' roots as elements. Indeed, thinking of roots as elements detracts from the image that Empedocles purposefully conveyed. While Empedocles' roots have a strong connection with scientific elements, modern scientific connotations prevent a full appreciation of Empedocles' root imagery, which carries further ideas of stability, nourishment, and the growing tree. It is hard to imagine roots mixing and un-mixing as tree roots, whereas, roots as elements, or abstract concepts, can mix and un-mix. But still, the abstraction of elements detracts from the root image, and the material and organic nature it conveys. Empedocles' roots are not abstract concepts but are material things that mix to create life. Therefore, the idea of roots being the source of stability and growth for a tree is highly relevant to Empedocles' cosmic philosophy. For the roots give rise to material compounds through their mixing, and at the same time sustain the existence of material compounds.

There are further similarities between Empedocles' roots and the eternal Banyan tree image of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 6.1. The roots in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 6.1 represent 'Brahman', the 'Immortal'. While *Brahman* has religious connotations, taking 6.1 in isolation, there are two comparisons worth noting.¹³⁶ Firstly, in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* it is *Brahman* and in Empedocles it is the four roots that are described as roots. The statement 'On it all the worlds rest' is true for both *Brahman* and Empedocles' four

¹³⁶ For scholarly debate on *Brahman* see Chapter 5.

roots. In *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* this dependence on *Brahman* is explained through the relationship between a tree and its roots; and in Empedocles the world is equally dependent on the four roots, since it is created through their mixing. Therefore, just as the world is dependent on *Brahman* so for Empedocles it is dependent on the four roots. In reality, it is not possible to separate the manifest world—the tree—from the fundamental roots as cleanly as in language. The roots are as part of the tree as the tree is part of the roots. There is a clear inter-dependence between root and tree; the tree gives a root a purpose, and the roots help sustain the tree. The tree grows from the roots as the roots from the tree. Therefore, while the world comes into existence from *Brahman* or the four roots, at the same time the world cannot be conceived as entirely separate or removed from them. The tree cannot live without the roots, and one cannot completely disconnect the roots and the tree. The world is reliant on the four roots.

Since the statement, ‘On it all the worlds rest’ can be extended from *Brahman* to Empedocles’ four roots, it is worth considering whether the following line is also comparable: ‘beyond it no one can ever pass’ (6.1). In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* this is due to the nature of the root/tree relationship. The tree is the world, the roots are *Brahman* and the relationship between the two is dependent. But also, those are the parameters, and as a result there is nothing beyond or behind the root/tree relationship. This further idea applied to Empedocles would carry ethical and soteriological ramifications. There is nothing outside of the Cosmic Cycle and the world is indeed the four roots.¹³⁷ The four roots *do* mix and un-mix and the roots ‘never cease their continual exchange’ within the cycle (8/17: 12-13). Therefore, change happens within the Cosmic Cycle. It is the change that creates human reality as it is understood. Importantly, the change is a process; and the change takes place in reality. For Empedocles change is not

¹³⁷ An obvious failing of the root image for both texts is the concept of a root’s function. A root extracts sustenance from the ground which sustains the tree. However, with a concept as ‘on it all the world rests’, the full imagery of a root cannot be fulfilled, i.e. there is nothing for the root to extract nutrients from.

illusionary. Therefore, Empedocles has a cyclical changeable reality that is all-encompassing: ‘these things never cease their continual exchange of position’ (8/17: 6) and, as with *Brahman*, the roots help to convey the idea of an all-encompassing, eternal reality.

However, Empedocles’ roots are very different from *Brahman* in certain key ways. *Brahman* is not only eternal but also constant and stable. The roots have stability through change, but they still mix and un-mix. And, although the roots are fundamentally eternal, at the height of Love’s power they become One together, and in Strife’s domination they become Many in separation. Therefore, the comparisons I have used are underpinned by significant differences. And none more so than a soteriological one: knowledge of *Brahman* within an individual is enough to offer liberation from continual death. However, in his natural treatise Empedocles makes no statements concerning escape or release through knowledge of the four roots.¹³⁸

The comparison of the two uses of ‘roots’ in the respective ontological discussions of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles has therefore brought to light the idea that nothing can exist outside the Cosmic Cycle: just like the eternal banyan tree where it is said ‘On it all the worlds rest’ (6.1), so for Empedocles all material beings are made from a combination of the four roots, under the influence of Love, and Strife. Thinking of the four roots as organic, instead of ‘elements’, highlights the dependency between the roots and tree; or, the manifest world and the fundamental roots. The four roots and the Cosmic Cycle, through my comparison appear all-encompassing.

7.2 The relationship between a human individual and a daimon

For Empedocles nothing can exist outside the Cosmic Cycle and all things are made from the mixing of the four roots. An individual compound of mixed roots has

¹³⁸ The most Empedocles suggests is a power to control natural occurrences (101/111).

perception and thought through its basic structure of four roots, with Love, and Strife (78/107, 94/105, and 100/110:10 “for know that all things have intelligence and a share of thought”). Perception, therefore, exists throughout all compounds, not limited to humanity, due to all being made from the ‘four roots of *all* things’. This is the essential nature of the Empedoclean universe and the account of human nature is entirely consistent with it. But how does a *daimon* fit into this picture? What role does Empedocles envision his *daimon* fulfilling? Osborne correctly postulates that one should not suppose immediately that the two doctrines—the Cosmic Cycle and *daimons*—are incompatible or contradictory (1987: 32). Following this approach, and using comparable ideas from the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I suggest that a *daimon* is a specific *kind* of compound of the four roots, that it is material, and is an integral part of the Cosmic Cycle.

Through an examination alongside the two selves theory of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, it is suggested that a human individual and a *daimon* are distinct kinds of substances, existing simultaneously within a body but not requiring—as Kahn worries—a psychologically ‘split personality’ (Kahn, 1971: 3). My conclusion is that for Empedocles there are two selves/kinds, the individual mortal *human* compound and the individual mortal *daimon* compound. Applying the ideas of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* to Empedocles also highlights that there are also significant differences in kind, differences that open up questions of moral accountability and the nature of liberation from a cycle of lives.

The comparison begins by comparing characteristics of the *daimon* to the ‘primeval one’—*Brahman*—in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.12). There are key similarities between *Brahman* and the *daimon*, that can be used and explained comparatively, but,

there are also explicit differences that must be clarified.¹³⁹ A key passage on *Brahman* is *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.12 (cf. Ch. 5.2):

The primeval one who is hard to perceive,
 wrapped in mystery, hidden in the cave,
 residing within th'impenetrable depth-
 Regarding him as god, an insight
 gained by inner contemplation,
 both sorrow and joy the wise abandon.

The language in 2.12 describes the 'primeval one' as being 'hard to perceive' and 'wrapped in mystery', which can be used in conjunction with a *daimon*. Statements on *Brahman* elsewhere in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* can be seen as more akin to the eternal four roots, Love, and Strife, rather than a *daimon*.¹⁴⁰ Like *Brahman* 2.18:

he is not born, he does not die;
 he has not come from anywhere;
 he has not become anyone.
 He is unborn and eternal, primeval and everlasting.
 And he is not killed, when the body is killed.

Equally, the four roots are not 'born', do not 'come from anywhere' or from nothing, and they are 'eternal...and everlasting' (9/12; 11/16; 12/8). Therefore it is imperative to understand that the *daimon* is comparable to *Brahman* in *some* respects but not in others. The *daimon* is not *Brahman* nor *ātman*, just as the *daimon* is not the roots. Nevertheless, certain specific representations and expressions of *Brahman* can be used in a comparative way to help illuminate complex concepts in Empedocles concerning the distinction in kind between an individual human and a *daimon*. My claim (Claim 2) is that the comparison helps one learn about the relationship between *daimon* and human compositions in Empedocles' thought, which in turn illuminates the central problem of moral accountability and whether there is any liberation from the cycle.

¹³⁹ The roots can be compared with a *daimon*—macrocosm and microcosm—therefore, as *Brahman* relates to *ātman*, so too, *Brahman* will relate to a *daimon*.

¹⁴⁰ For the *daimon*, although comparable to the four roots, is not the four roots of all things.

Verse 2.18 speaks of the nature of *Brahman*: lines 4 and 6 state that ‘he has not become anyone’ and ‘he is not killed, when the body is killed’. These ideas are intriguing when thought of as characteristics of Empedocles’ roots. Line 4 has a specific counterpart in Empedocles’ fragments (8/17: 12-13).¹⁴¹ In these passages from their respective texts the fundamental identity of *Brahman* and the roots remain constant, even when they enter several individual bodies. *Brahman* enters human individuals as *ātman*, the divine Self (2.20, 22, 23; 3.12, 15), and the roots mix and un-mix to create the manifest world. Furthermore, there is an even stronger comparison in fragment 8/17: 34-35. When the roots ‘become different objects at different times’ they are ‘forever the same’. In essence, Empedocles describes a process very similar to that of *Brahman* in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*: ‘he has not become anyone’ (2.18: 4).

A further benefit from reading these texts in dialogue is that the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* provides an insight into how the roots could change, yet remain distinct (5.9). *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* describes a complex interplay between the numerically distinct ‘fire’, the ‘single self’, and the qualitative distinctions prevalent within the world. The distinction between the divine Self *ātman* and the individual human shows how *Brahman* ‘has not become anyone’ numerically, but only qualitatively adapts to each individual. As the *ātman*, *Brahman* remains hidden within a human individual (2.20). I will now show how similarly a *daimon* is hidden within the human compound.

7.2.1 The Four Roots and the *Daimon*

How can a human be successfully distinguished from a *daimon*? Empedocles presents the *daimon* in fragment 107/115. The fragment is crucial but fraught with difficulties (Wright, 1981: 271). By splitting the fragment into two sections I can make my interpretation easier (107/115: 1-8). The fragment does not end at line 8 but it is a natural point to stop for analysis. A *daimon* is ‘being born (φύομενον) throughout the

¹⁴¹ See p.204 for reference.

time as all kinds of mortal forms'. A comparison with the four roots is suggested, hinging on what the term φυτόμενον refers to and how it is to be understood. Wright translates φυτόμενον as 'born'; but, Inwood prefers the term 'growing' (11/115: 7). The term φυτόμενον cannot refer to the first life for the *daimon* because, as the fragment indicates, he has existed before this event. Further, how exactly one is to understand 'being born as a mortal form' needs consideration. What sort of birth is this?

Referring to birth and death for a *daimon* during its 'long-lasting' life span requires a special understanding of the terms. Thus Empedocles provides his own definition of the term 'born' in fragment 12/8, where birth and death are described as mixing and un-mixing. Therefore, the term 'being born' according to Empedocles' own terminology is a synonym for being *mixed*. This equivalence between birth and mixing is significant in understanding a *daimon*'s role through the *daimon*/ roots comparison. The roots are not *becoming* the mortal forms, but are mixing to *create* the mortal forms. As Empedocles says, the four roots mix into mortal compounds, but they never become those compounds (8/17: 34-35). In the same way the *daimon* is not literally *becoming* the mortal forms, but is being *mixed* into them. But while the roots sustain all mortal compounds, those mortal forms do not seem to rely in any way on the *daimon*. This is significantly different to *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* where the *ātman* is necessary for human life, as it is the divine element in the human constitution. Again, the differences are fundamental: a *daimon* is not an *ātman*. A *daimon* is a kind of substance that is 'long-lasting', able to mix with, while remaining distinct from, other kinds of substances, as is seen when it finds itself mixing into shorter-lived mortal compounds.

Although I compare the macrocosmic four roots with the microcosmic *daimon*, the *daimon* remains distinct from the four roots. Fragment 107/115 line 5 makes this distinction explicitly clear: δαίμονες οἷτε μακροαἰωνος λελάχασι βίοιο; 'daimons to

whom life long-lasting is apportioned’; or as Inwood translates, ‘[of] the *daimons* [that is] who have won long-lasting life’ (11/115: 5). The term μακραίωτος, ‘long-lasting’, is not comparable to the roots or to *Brahman/ātman* which are both eternal. Rather, ‘life long-lasting’ is similar to the term δολιχάϊωνες used to describe the gods as ‘long-lived’ in fragments 14/21: 12 and 15/23: 6-8. The language indicates that both gods and *daimons* fall short of the four roots’ eternal nature.

Having established the similarities and differences between the four roots and the *daimon*, we can now turn to the principal distinction and relationship requiring examination: between the individual human being and the *daimon*.

7.2.2 The “Two selves/kinds” Theory: Self Realisation

What is the relationship between human and *daimon* for Empedocles? Why has he set up a distinction in kind between an individual human and a *daimon*? The distinction is evident in the fact that an individual human has one birth and death in the cycle, whereas the *daimon* has many—as is seen at 107/115, where a *daimon* is said to mix with ‘all kinds of mortal forms’ as it ‘wanders’ for ‘three times countless years’. But what is the purpose of this distinction?

I reject the idea that a *daimon* is necessary to support the existence of a mortal form, or human compound and indeed see a distance between the *daimon* and the form it mixes with. Empedocles describes how the *daimon* wears ‘clothing in an unfamiliar garment of flesh’ (110/126). The *daimon*, having ‘life long-lasting’, un-mixes from one individual human compound and mixes again with another individual human compound, ‘exchanging one hard way of life for another’. There is thus a level of detachment or at least a notable distinction between the individual human compound and the *daimon*. The relationship seems to me comparable with that of *Brahman* and the body at *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.18: ‘And he is not killed, when the body is killed’. For just

like *Brahman*, the *daimon* is able to survive when the human composition ends, when for Empedocles it is un-mixed. In Chapter 6, I examined Empedocles' description of the mixing and un-mixing of human compounds, showing how these kinds of substances had a specific material make-up. Empedocles does not include a *daimon* in his articulation of the kind of compounds we term 'normal' mortal life and never states that a *daimon* is necessary for mortal compounds. Therefore, human or mortal compound and *daimon* can be seen as different kinds of entities and the connection between them as weak.

'Normal' mortal compounds do not require a *daimon*, and a *daimon* does not require the 'normal' mortal compounds. And yet Empedocles presents a situation where the two kinds, although distinct, come together through the mixing process. Empedocles states 'I too am now...an exile' (107/115: 13-14). There is thus a distinction between a time when Empedocles was not, or did not realise that he was, 'an exile' and the present moment when he is aware of being 'an exile'. This distinction suggests a comparison with Empedocles' fragment 95/132:

ὄλβιος ὃς θεῖων πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλοῦτον,
δελὸς δ' ᾧ σκοτόεσσα θεῶν πέρι δόξα μέμηλεν.

Happy the man who has gained the wealth of divine understanding, wretched
he who cherishes an unenlightened opinion.

Empedocles seems to have 'gained the wealth of divine understanding' which has resulted in his realisation that 'I too am now...an exile'. There is a contrast between Empedocles before and Empedocles after. There is thus a categorical shift in Empedocles' self-awareness¹⁴² and two different selves seem to open up: a pre-*daimon* self and a post-*daimon* self. One sees evidence of the changing self-awareness in fragment 102/112: 4-5:

ἐγὼ δ' ὑμῖν θεὸς ἄμβροτος οὐκέτι θνητός

¹⁴² But, as will be shown in 7.3, self-understanding must lead to actions; unlike, *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* where self-realisation of *ātman* is enough to offer liberation.

[5] πωλεῦμαι μετὰ πᾶσι τετιμένος, ὥσπερ ἔοικα,

I tell you I travel up and down as an immortal god, mortal no
Longer, honored by all as it seems.

I, in your eyes a deathless (ἄμβροτος) god (θεός), no longer mortal (θνητός),
Go among all, honoured, just as I seem. (Inwood, 1/112:4-5).

At one time Empedocles characterised himself as ‘mortal’—human in kind. Now Empedocles distinguishes between his own two kinds—the ‘immortal god’ (*daimon* kind) and the mortal human (human kind). The realisation is that there are two separate kinds of substances in the same mixed compound. The human Empedocles thought the limits of his nature were human; but now the *daimon* Empedocles sees himself as a different kind.

My reading of Empedocles has been illuminated by the two-selves theory of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* can be used to help solve the problem in Empedocles of how Empedocles the human can simultaneously be Empedocles the *daimon*. *Brahman* can be used as a tool to interpret the self-realisation of Empedocles as *Brahman* is both the macrocosmic eternal banyan tree (6.1), and the internal ‘primeval one who is hard to perceive’ ‘wrapped in mystery’ within a human being (2.12).¹⁴³ The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* explicitly describes the relationship between two selves/kinds: 1) *Brahman* and *ātman*; and 2) the human. The former is likened to a rider and the latter to a charioteer (3.3). These two selves/kinds refer to ‘the self as a rider’ (*ātman*), and the ‘intellect (*buddhi*) as the charioteer’ (3.3). The ‘rider’ is the detached or hidden Self of *Brahman* characterised as *ātman* within an individual. The ‘intellect’ represents the human. The interplay between the two correlates to levels of ignorance and understanding (3.5-8). The human self is linked to the body through the mind and

¹⁴³ However, there are fundamental differences: in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* *Brahman* and *ātman* can be described as the same *kind* of substance; indeed, *ātman* is a representation of *Brahman* in the mortal body. The self-realisation of *ātman* is at the very same instance a realisation of *Brahman*: the self-realisation of *ātman* as immortal in turn is the realisation that one is a drop in the ocean of *Brahman*, being as they are the same kind. However, due to *daimons* being a specific kind of compound, different from the human kind, *daimon* cannot be an *ātman*.

senses, and acts as the driver. Conversely, the divine Self—*ātman*—is a removed ‘rider’, a passenger within the chariot or body. Therefore, a human has an intelligent self and a divine ‘rider’. These two selves co-inhabit the same body; one obvious, the other hidden.

This idea applied to Empedocles’ poem leads to an important new insight about the *daimon*. Empedocles distinguishes between the two selves/kinds expressed in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 3.3, when announcing that ‘I am superior to many-times-dying mortal men’ (105/113). There is a distinct contrast between the self-understanding of a *daimon* and that of an individual human unaware of a ‘life long-lasting’ *daimon*. Self knowledge is key for both texts, the hidden must become known.

The two selves theory of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* can therefore be applied to Empedocles’ two kinds: the human compound is comparable to the ‘intellect as the charioteer’; a *daimon* is comparable to ‘the self as a rider (*ātman*) in a chariot’. The *daimon* is a ‘rider’ in the bodily chariot and is not ‘killed’ when the chariot ceases. The *daimon* does not die with the body, as the *daimon* is not the same kind of compound as ‘many-times-dying mortal men’. Empedocles is ‘superior’ to ‘mortal men’ because he is ‘wise in such matters’ (106/15) and this leads to a self-identity focused on being ‘an exile’. The self-understanding shifts Empedocles from actually being a ‘many-times-dying mortal’ man (intellect) to being a ‘life long-lasting’ wandering exile, i.e. being a *daimon* (*ātman*). It appears that, as in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, self-realisation for Empedocles has a positive effect.

The emphasis, in 3.3 and Empedocles, is that the ‘rider’ and *daimon* are hidden; or not normally recognisable (103/114; 95/132; 60/71). The shift in self-understanding from ignorance to enlightenment is illuminated by the “two selves/kinds” theory where there is a hidden ‘rider’ and a human ‘charioteer’. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* there is no

contradiction in identity or a resulting assumption that this equates to a split personality and equally there seems no need to introduce these issues into Empedocles' account. The charioteer can exist either in a pre-*daimon* state of self-understanding or a post-*daimon* state of self-understanding. One can associate one's self with an 'immortal god' only if one understands the distinction between human and *daimon*. Empedocles implores us to search for the divine 'rider'. This is the solution made possible through the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*: Empedocles distinguishes between two kinds of compound—'normal' mortal compounds and *daimons*—and understands that the hidden *daimon* requires self realisation.¹⁴⁴ This conclusion is possible despite the fundamental difference between *daimon* and *ātman*. A *daimon* certainly is not an *ātman*. However, reading the two texts in dialogue and so comparing these two concepts brings to light the centrality of self realisation in both accounts.

7.3 Ethicization: Hierarchy, Time, and Exile

What is the improvement for Empedocles after self-realisation and to what extent is Empedocles' philosophy ethicized? Once more *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is the methodological tool used to solve the problem of moral accountability in Empedocles' poem. I solve this by showing that Empedocles, like *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, emphasises right understanding leading to right action, but unlike *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and the Indian notion of *karma*, Empedocles does not have a morally motivated hierarchy of lives dependent on moral accountability or a final liberation from the Cosmic Cycle.

In 7.3 I will show how Empedocles' ethicization revolves around non-harm, based on right understanding and right action without a final liberation; thereby solving the problem of moral accountability in Empedocles by defining it and limiting it specifically within the constraints of Empedocles' poem and the ideas he expresses therein. In 7.3.1 (Hierarchy) using the framework of *karma* from *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I

¹⁴⁴ This leads to a form of improvement but I leave what that improvement might be until section 7.3.

examine whether sequential lives could be viewed in a hierarchal way by suggesting a reward and punishment ethic akin to *karmic* rewards and punishments; this however is not finally endorsed, thereby showing Empedocles' rebirth is not ethically motivated or morally hierarchical. In 7.3.2 (Time as a Punishment) I examine the punishment for harmful actions, showing how it is one numerically identical *daimon* that traverses the various lives, through a banishment that has a set time. And in 7.3.3 (Strife and Action and Liberation?) I look in more detail at the harmful action committed by the *daimon*. The *daimon* in 7.3.2 and 7.3.3 is shown to be the bearer of moral accountability through the consequences of their actions. In 7.3.3.1 (Right Understanding) I examine the difference between *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles, the latter emphasising the need for more than the former's reliance on right understanding for escape. In 7.3.3.2 (Love and Purification) I turn to the cessation of the *daimon*'s banishment; I analyse whether Love has a symmetrical role to Strife: harmful action led to the banishment, could non-harmful action lead to purification and liberation? The final conclusion is that, although right-understanding and right-action through love improves the *daimon*'s existence, i.e. their punishment stops, unlike the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* Empedocles' *daimon* is unable to find liberation from the Cosmic Cycle. Therefore, Empedocles' problem of moral accountability and liberation is solved through the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* comparison by specifying exactly what is morally accountable and to what extent a *daimon* can improve its situation through Love, but also concluding that the Cosmic Cycle due to its all-encompassing nature does not allow for a *daimon*'s liberation.

After the un-mixing of Empedocles the human, the *daimon*—Empedocles the person (as he claims through self-realisation)—will continue, similar to the continuation of the *daimon* before Empedocles the individual was mixed. As Wright states, there seems to be some common factor stopping complete dispersal at death (Wright, 1981: 69), this common factor can now be seen as the *daimon*.

Is Kahn, therefore, correct to state that Empedocles ‘is assured of imminent release’ (1971: 22)? The question has to be qualified with ‘release’ from what exactly? It cannot be the Cosmic Cycle, due to my comparison with the eternal banyan tree and the conclusion that the Cosmic Cycle is all-encompassing. Kahn himself states that individual human personality does not live on (1971: 9). Therefore, is there anything to suggest that, to use Kahn’s terminology, there would be some form of assimilation into the divine for the *daimon* (1971: 9)? But the *daimon* is a material entity.¹⁴⁵ One would not expect to find a final cessation from the Cosmic Cycle, because Empedocles believes the Cosmic Cycle is eternal. Perhaps the Cosmic Cycle reduces even personal liberation to nonsense. Is personal survival outside the Cosmic Cycle in Empedocles’ work philosophically impossible? Does, as Trepanier suggests, the eternal Cosmic Cycle deny the ‘happily ever after’ moment (2004: 128)?

Fragment 107/115 is the starting point. The *daimon* ‘wanders from the blessed ones for three times countless years’ (107/115: 6). Immediately, one detects a hierarchy of existence. There exist the ‘blessed ones’ to which the *daimon* had been akin. Through wrong action, the *daimon* finds itself cast out, wandering apart from the ‘blessed ones’. This wandering after separation from the ‘blessed ones’ is being born ‘as all kinds of mortal forms, exchanging one hard way of life for another’ (107/115: 7-8). There has been a devaluation of the *daimon*’s stock. The *daimon* was once ‘blessed’ and now it suffers during numerous ‘hard’ mortal lives. It seems that ‘all kinds of mortal forms’ exist on a plane of existence that is lower and harder than the one the *daimons* have come from, i.e. with the ‘blessed’. Yet this banishment is ratified in the constraints of time. It appears that the *daimon* serves a set time of ‘three times countless years’. This need not be taken literally, but Empedocles seems to anticipate a

¹⁴⁵ Granted there is a distinction between a short-lived human composition and a ‘long-lived’ material *daimon* composition. But both are material.

point of return. The time served is both punishment and reformatory. In fragment 107/115 there is no mention that a *daimon* will not be accepted back after ‘three times countless years’, regardless of a *daimon*’s ‘moral’ behaviour. The trust in bloodshed results in an action of bloodshed, which is a wrong action.

During this ‘exile from the gods’ the *daimon* goes through every root unable to find peace with any. There seems to be a structure to their wandering. They ‘wander’ in ‘exile’ for ‘three times countless years’ through the cosmic four roots. *Daimons* have a privileged position, interacting with the elemental cosmic building blocks. What stops a *daimon* finding ‘peace’ with each root is the *daimon*’s ‘trust in raving strife’. It is Strife that keeps a *daimon* separate from the godly roots.

7.3.1 Hierarchy

Is there a hierarchy of existence, one that requires a complex ordering of rewards and punishments correlating to one’s next life? If so, Empedocles would be offering an ethical dimension akin to *karma*. But, as the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* comparison shows, Empedocles lacks an idea similar to *karma*.

Is there any consistency with the rest of Empedocles’ fragments? Empedocles offers reassurance that there is a cosmic hierarchy; describing himself as ‘superior to many-times-dying mortal men’ (105/113). Through interpreting Empedocles’ fragments there appears to be a hierarchy to which the *daimon* relates. Hierarchy is perhaps too strong a term. There certainly is an order of existence for a *daimon*, as it ‘wanders from the blessed ones’ (107/115). A *daimon* who was previously part of the ‘blessed ones’ is now banished and separated, no longer existing with them. Therefore, a *daimon* prefers a ‘blessed’ life to that of a human. But that need not mean human life is hierarchically lower or less preferable for humans. All life has a place within

Empedocles' Cosmic Cycle. A *daimon* is unique being able to traverse many different types of mortal existence; human, animal, and 'blessed'.

It is not explicit who these 'blessed ones' refer to. The 'blessed ones' could be a reference to the 'long-lived gods', as Empedocles is an 'exile from the gods', (107/115: 12). The 'blessed ones' may be the goal for a *daimon* wandering within mortal creatures. The goal is desirable for it lacks the cycle of transmigration. The reason for this being desirable is because transmigration is the punishment for the *daimon*. Transmigration is a punishment implemented by taking the *daimons* from the 'blessed ones' to the human composition that is full of sorrow. A *daimon*'s unethical action is causing bloodshed. The *daimon*'s action leads to banishment and the punishment of transmigration within 'all kinds of mortal forms'. The result of humanity's 'slaughter' (118/128) is remaining an 'unhappy race' (114/124). As a result, 'That is why, being distraught with bitter misfortunes, you will never lighten your hearts of grievous sorrows' (123/145). Here is the morality of Empedocles' work. But notice what Empedocles does and does not say. Firstly, that if one continues killing one's heart 'will never lighten' from 'grievous sorrows'. Secondly, Empedocles does not say that 'you will never' "escape" or "become free" until you stop killing. Therefore, the outcome for Empedocles is different from *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 3.8. There is a mirroring of the *daimon*'s punishment with humanity's sorrow through Strife's action of causing bloodshed (114/124; 123/145). The *daimon* who defiled his limbs is banished to an existence full of bloodshed and defilement of limbs; once again Empedocles promotes 'like for like'. The *daimon* is sent to live an existence suitable to its actions. Thus the *daimon* is held to be morally accountable and pays the price for evil actions.

But through their punishment does a *daimon* move up and down from the 'blessed ones'? This view would require a more complex form of ethicization,

whereby, actions have a system of reward and punishment beyond what has already been described. The system might be construed within a cycle of transmigration, where good lives are rewarded with a better birth next time and vice versa; which would constitute a developed idea similar to *karma*. Could Empedocles' transmigration be ethicized in such a way? Such ethical rebirth would be closer to a more complex theory of *karma*. I am using Kaṭha Upaniṣad here to see if Empedocles' theory could be extended in this way i.e on a *karmic* model.

Empedocles appears to rank the forms of mortal life (131/127 & 132/146). There is a hierarchy in the animal world and one in the world of men, and above both those worlds 'they arise as gods, highest in honor' (132/146). At a godly stage the *daimons* co-exist with 'other immortals' with which 'they share hearth and table, having no part in human sorrows' existing 'unwearied' (133/147).

Empedocles does believe in a quasi-hierarchy of mortal beings, with 'long-lasting' gods at the top. But this hierarchy is not based on ethics. The *daimons* are cast out through wrong action and can return once more in 'three times countless years'. The 'ethical' notion revolves around harm rather than improvement: there is a punishment for a harmful action; there is a description of a 'Golden Age' where non-harm was practiced; and there is an ethical plea to cease harmful actions now. Does a *daimon* travel up and down re-births due to their ethical actions?

The *daimon* exchanges 'one hard way of life for another', there is nothing explicit in fragment 107/115 to interpret a process of reward and punishment within the cycle of transmigration. Transmigration is itself a punishment: a *daimon* has one 'hard way of life' followed by another. Empedocles describes how a *daimon* cannot find

solace with the four roots as it travels through them (107/115: 9-12). Strife keeps the *daimon* separate.¹⁴⁶

There is little room for moral improvement, for ‘all abhor’ him in turn. The four roots are not ethically hierarchical. When Empedocles states that ‘before now I have been at some time boy and girl, bush, bird, and a mute fish in the sea’, there seems to be no evidence of incremental improvement through transmigration (108/117). There appears no moral difference between animal and human life (Inwood, 1992: 61). In fact, the lives previously lived appear akin to the four roots, perhaps these lives are characterisations of fragment 107/115: 8-13.¹⁴⁷ It seems increasingly probable that how one should interpret a *daimon* wandering is as an expression of the cycle through the four roots (Osborne, 1987: 24). There is no hierarchal ordered existence, nor any ethically motivated movement.

Importantly, the cycle of transmigration for the *daimon* is a punishment that lacks ethical rewards and punishments regarding the next life that could be compared to *karma*. The *daimon* travels through the cycle of transmigration regardless of *karmic* effects on action. Instead, Empedocles appears to be personifying a *daimon*’s relationship to the four roots. The moral responsibility is only for the original action. The strife-full action described by Empedocles has moral consequences for a *daimon* but *karma*, as ethical ramifications for the next life, is absent within Empedocles. So by using the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and the *karmic* framework I have been able to clarify this idea—Empedocles’ transmigration is an ethically motivated punishment but lacks an ethically motivated re-birth. Instead, the morality is established through the ethical force of ‘necessity’ (107/115). There is a hierarchy between the ‘blessed ones’ and humanity. But a *daimon* travels through the four roots in turn with no ethical reward or punishment regarding the next life.

¹⁴⁶ This will be looked at in more detail in 7.3.3.

¹⁴⁷ The obvious exception is an example of fire.

7.3.2 Time as a Punishment

To what extent is Empedocles' philosophy ethicized? Once more *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is the methodological tool used to solve the problem of moral accountability in Empedocles' poem. My aim in this section is to explore Empedocles' ideas on moral accountability by comparing Shared-Concerns with the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. My solution to the problem in Empedocles is that as *ātman* retains an identical numerical identity, a *daimon* also remains numerically identical, thereby retaining moral accountability.

Empedocles describes the journey of the *daimon* as σαρκῶν ἀλλογνῶτι περιστέλλουσα χιτῶνι 'clothing (the *daimon*) in an unfamiliar [alien] garment of flesh' many different times during the course of the exile (110/126). Examples of punishment were used to distinguish qualitative change from numerical continuity in fragment 107/115: 1-8. But can the punishment be interpreted as justified? As a *daimon* transmigrates through 'all kinds of mortal forms' it does not become numerically that individual compound. The single *daimon* is the hub of moral accountability. If a *daimon* numerically changes then moral accountability ceases on Empedocles' terms. For example, a *daimon* is banished due to an 'error' for a set number of 'three times countless years'. As he 'wanders' he is 'exchanging one hard way of life for another'. The nature of Empedoclean punishment requires a numerically identical *daimon* to be punished. Fragment 107/115 describes a punishment which would make no sense if there was no fixed numerical individual punished through transmigration. As indicated above, the transmigration is the punishment, for it is not a natural process for *daimons*.

Punishments generally correlate with change, either corrective or punitive. Therefore, the implication is that the *daimon* will change. If a *daimon* can change, then it suggests that a *daimon* can wish to return once more to where it came from. Stated a different way, a numerically identical *daimon* can qualitatively change without becoming numerically different. If the *daimon* became a different numerical identity as

it ‘wanders’, then the punishment seems diminished, if not completely corrupt. One would be punishing a different numerical identity from the one that committed the punishable deed.

Therefore, one can talk about the *daimon* and the four roots being ‘within every being, adapt[ing] its appearance to match that of each, yet remain[ing] quite distinct’ (5.9). However, the *daimon* is not like the *ātman* in the way that an *ātman* is ‘not born...does not die...has not come from anywhere’ (2.18). The distinction is due to the *daimon* being a material mortal compound made from the mixing of the four roots, Love, and Strife. A *daimon* is a kind of compound that retains its identity, but it is still mixed and un-mixed in the Cosmic Cycle.

One cannot definitively answer the question of how far a *daimon* is changeable. However, one can infer from fragment 107/115, and the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* comparison, that complete change is not preferable. Fragment 107/115 also suggests that some change is necessary, i.e. punishment as reformative. The *daimon* has numerical identity and qualitative change; it is not subject to numerical change, even if it has some aspect of qualitative change.

I now turn to examine whether right understanding alone leads to liberation as for *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*’s *ātman*, or if Empedocles places more emphasis on right action. For example, is Empedocles’ assertion that he is now a god, superior to many times dying men more important than his actions, or, does the realisation itself lead Empedocles to behave in a more ethical way, by his own terms. The latter places emphasis on actions, specifically the ethical importance of non-harm, over and above that of self-realisation.

7.3.3 Strife and Action and Liberation?

Transmigration is founded on the Cosmic Cycle and the ‘four roots’ as seen in fragment 107/115. In this system, transmigration has a time restriction and sends the wandering *daimon* through the four roots in turn regardless of ‘ethical’ action. Yet, is there an ‘ethical’ side to Empedocles’ doctrine? The *daimon* was sent into ‘exile’ because of wrong action based in Strife. Therefore, if a *daimon* eradicates actions based on strife from his incarnations, is there the possibility that the ‘four roots’ will no longer ‘abhor him’; and that the *daimon* may then return to the ‘blessed ones’ sooner than ‘three times countless years’?

The evidence for right action revolves around Empedocles’ belief in not spilling blood. In fragment 107/115 the wrong action is the defilement of the *daimon*’s ‘own limbs’ through ‘fear’. The defilement breaks the ‘broad oaths’ of the Cosmic Cycle and results in the ‘exile’ of the *daimons*. Empedocles characterises these actions as ‘having put my trust in raving strife’. Furthermore, the whole of the mortal race is characterised as a ‘poor unhappy race’, having been ‘born’ from ‘strifes and lamentations’ (114/124). There is a clear pessimistic view of mortal life developing; a view that seems highly dependent on the existence of Strife.

Empedocles describes a ‘sinful’ act of bloodshed leading to banishment as a punishment (107/115: 3-4):

εὔτε τις ἀπλακίησι φόβῳ φίλα γυῖα μίηνῃ
ἦδ’ οὐδ’ ἐπίορκον ἀμαρτήσας ἐπομώσει

whenever one, in his sins, stains his dear limbs with blood
...[the text is corrupt here] by misdeed swears falsely. (Inwood, 11/115: 3-4).

Unfortunately the text is corrupt in this fragment, and Wright and Inwood differ in what they establish as the Greek. Empedocles states that an action ‘in error, from fear’, or as Inwood translates, ‘in his sin’, has ‘made false the oath he [*daimon*] swore’ (107/115: 3-4). The language in fragment 107/115 regarding a ‘decree of necessity...sealed by broad

oaths' recalls fragment 23/30: the 'time of exchange' between Love and Strife that 'has been defined by a broad oath'. Therefore, the action made 'in error' by a *daimon* seems to be intrinsically linked with the cycle of Love and Strife. The cycle of transmigration for a *daimon* was initiated by a 'voluntary action' (Osborne, 1987: 36). The basic perception is like for like; we perceive 'with love love, and strife with baneful strife' (77/109).

The ethical action of the *daimon* is linked with Strife, especially, as the action itself refers to a defilement of 'his own limbs' and 'trust in raving strife' (107/115). There is an ethical dimension regarding the action of the *daimon*. Unequivocally, Empedocles states that the 'greatest defilement among men' is 'to bereave of life and eat noble limbs' (118/128). There is a connection between the *daimon*'s defilement of 'his own limbs' and the 'greatest defilement' of killing and eating meat. Importantly, the significance is on individual responsibility for actions (Wright, 1981: 65).

Obeyesekere believes that one cannot have temporary salvation, and he postulates that once a *daimon* has reached the gods once more it is 'impossible' for a '*daimon* to be reborn on earth', for if a *daimon* could relapse, then the 'Empedoclean eschatology could not possess a doctrine of salvation. But surely that is not the case?' (2002: 232). One can only wonder what Obeyesekere means by ending his Empedoclean chapter with a rhetorical question. Of course, Obeyesekere is correct that 'ephemeral bliss is not salvation' in a permanent way (2002: 232). Therefore, one should be prudent and conclude that, although Empedocles has a concept of ephemeral salvation within the Cosmic Cycle, it is best not to use the term 'salvation' due to the connotations of the term in reincarnation eschatologies. One should not, as Obeyesekere does, hold onto the need for salvation when the evidence is lacking or contradictory.

7.3.3.1 Right Understanding

The ethical nature of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is concerned with the law of *karma*, but relies heavily on self realisation. Salvation from *karma* and the escape from the cycle of re-birth (*samsāra*) is the final goal: salvation (*moksa*) is the ‘final step, from which he is not reborn again’ (3.8). Therefore, in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* there is a clear and ‘final’ goal for the ‘self as a rider’ (3.3). To reach that final step requires both an ethical aspect and the knowledge of *Brahman* (2.24; 5.7). Similarly, the Empedoclean punishment is ‘according to what they have done’ and ‘according to what they have learned’ (5.7). Verse 2.5 is perfect for a comparative examination (2.5):

Wallowing in ignorance, but calling themselves wise,
 thinking themselves learned, the fools go around,
 staggering about like a group of blind men,
 led by a man who is himself blind.

The idea of people ‘calling themselves wise’ who are actually ‘Wallowing in ignorance’, recalls Empedocles’ general view about the unenlightened: ‘wretched he who cherishes an unenlightened opinion about the gods’ (95/132). Empedocles distinguishes between the enlightened mind and the ‘blind men’ who are ‘wretched’. Therefore, Empedocles’ poem, like the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, places emphasis on knowledge and understanding. But for *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* understanding is enough to lead to escape. Ignorance perpetuates the cycle of re-birth in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*; literally the ‘fools go around’ and the wise escape. But escape through right understanding alone *cannot* be applied to Empedocles. For even though Empedocles has a similar view of required understanding, for Empedocles the Cosmic Cycle is driven by the ‘necessity’ of the two motive forces, Love and Strife. As a result, Empedocles’ knowledge is not equated with salvation from the Cosmic Cycle as a whole, since this is eternal. Yet there is a return to blessedness, since a *daimon* after coming from the ‘blessed ones’ into ‘mortal forms’, has the chance of returning to the ‘blessed ones’ after ‘three times countless years’

(107/115). There is a possible cessation of transmigration for the *daimon*, and that is linked to the morality of punishment. A cessation is a positive outcome for a *daimon*, but one must not overstate it. A *daimon* can find release from the cycle of transmigration, but there is no salvation from the all-encompassing Cosmic Cycle. A *daimon* will un-mix like every mortal compound when the correct time comes. There can be no personal salvation from the Cosmic Cycle for material humans, *daimons*, or gods. Therefore, Empedocles differs significantly from *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* where *saṃsāra* can be overcome through right understanding.

Next I use the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as a means to illuminate Empedocles' ideas of right understanding leading to right action of non-harm through Love.

7.3.3.3 Love and Non-harm

I present three reasons for a non-harm ethic: the *daimon*'s banishment; a 'Golden Age' of non-harm; and an ethical plea to cease harmful actions. As with other ethical issues in Empedocles, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* serves to illuminate his ideas on right understanding and right action of non-harm through Love.

Empedocles' philosophy is highly symmetrical. If strife produces bloodshed then there should be the opposite possibility. Love does not disappear until Strife is completely in control, therefore, an example of Love is needed to complete the reciprocal image. There is no explicit statement like 'trust in raving strife'. But there is a suggestion of ending one's 'trust in raving strife'. Once the punishment has been completed there is nothing to suggest that a *daimon* will not rejoin the 'blessed ones' after its exile of 'three times countless years'. However, there is a possible interpretation suggesting a *daimon* could rejoin the 'blessed ones' sooner—through right understanding and right action. This interpretation is derived from a comparison with *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 5.7.

The process of transmigration/rebirth in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* is expressed by action and learning: ‘according to what they have done, according to what they have learned’. And these two directly correlate to one’s next life. Empedocles likewise places emphasis on ‘what they have done’ and ‘what they have learned’—specifically concerning a *daimon*.

Regarding ‘what they have done’, a *daimon* put his ‘trust in raving strife’ and ‘in error, from fear’ defiled ‘his own limbs’; thereby breaking a ‘decree of necessity...eternal and sealed with broad oaths’ (107/115). It is this action that instigates the cycle of transmigration, the punishment for a *daimon*. Therefore, right action is central. However, one requires the specific knowledge of what right action is before one can cultivate it. The knowledge, Empedocles explains, refers to ‘the greatest defilement among men – to bereave of life and eat noble limbs’ (118/128). The reason killing is the ‘greatest defilement’ is due to fragment 124/137 explaining how all material creatures are kin:

The father will lift up his dear son in a changed form, and, blind fool,
as he prays he will slay him...In the same way son seizes
father, and children their mother, and having bereaved them of life
devour the flesh of those they love.

Interestingly, ‘blind fool’ is comparable to *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.5: ‘a group of blind men, led by a man who is himself blind’. Those that fail to realise the truth cannot see their way, they are ‘blind’ to the truth. The truth for Empedocles is that all life is interconnected. This belief stems from ‘the four roots of all things’ and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*’s idea of *Brahman*. Therefore, once one understands ‘what they have learned’, then one can implement right action based on that knowledge. The right action is to ‘cease from the din of slaughter’ (122/136). Empedocles’ right action of non-harm is based on his knowledge that all life is interconnected.

The process described is from right understanding to right action. It redresses the balance that was disrupted by a *daimon*'s wrong action of defilement. Therefore, it may be possible for a *daimon* to practice right understanding and right action to help speed up the process of punishment, i.e. transmigration. If a *daimon* understands and acts accordingly, then there seems little reason to carry on punishing him through transmigration; for the required outcome has been achieved. However, this remains inferred conjecture.

What would the end of the punishment look like? Empedocles states: at 'the end they come among men on earth as prophets, minstrels, physicians, and leaders, and from these they arise as gods, highest in honor' (132/146). These are the best human lives available according to Empedocles. Obeyesekere believes 132/146 denotes a 'graduation of human reincarnations, culminating in the final and most desirable rebirth' (2002: 227). The conclusion seems strange given that Obeyesekere also states that 'there is little in the extant fragments that suggests a clear-cut status hierarchy' (2002: 226). I maintain that despite Empedocles' declaration that some human lives are better than others, there is no hierarchy of lives dependent on ethical rewards or punishments. However, Empedocles clearly views certain human lives as more desirable, and indeed, he views his own life as superior. These lives could relate, not to rewards and punishments in a hierarchical system but instead to knowledge, e.g. right understanding. Each of the lives expressed has a link to intelligence: prophets *know* the future; minstrels sing of the past; physicians *know* how to heal people; and leaders bring people together. It is knowledge of the future, past, health, and people that links these lives, not a hierarchical system of rewards or punishments.

To understand 132/146 more fully we need to know who 'they' are and what 'at the end' refers to (132/146). Empedocles describes some *thing* 'at the end' of a process.

The most likely *thing* Empedocles refers to is the wandering *daimon*. There are two interpretations for what the ‘end’ refers to: 1) at the end of the ‘three times countless years’ or; 2) whether the *daimon* has practised right understanding and right action and has been able to ‘arise as gods’ among the ‘blessed ones’ through Love’s purification. There are a number of scholars that believe 2) to be correct. Trepanier believes Empedocles’ entire doctrine is a recipe for divinization, a path to salvation with the gods (2004: 112, 31). Wright also believes in purification and salvation stating that this life will affect the *daimon* in the next (1981: 56). On the other hand, Cornford can be tentatively aligned with 1), in that what he terms the ‘soul’ will reunite with God at the end of our world (1957: 239). Interestingly, Osborne seems to align 1) and 2) in her assessment that ‘necessity’ and moral choice are important (1987: 33). Furthermore, according to Osborne it is only the ‘*daimons* choosing to act in accordance with love’ that brings about the return of love in the Cosmic Cycle (1987: 40).

As Osborne suggests, it may be possible for the *daimon* to better its condition within this limited hierarchy/order that Empedocles presents. Self realisation leads to action. Rejoining the ‘blessed ones’ is based on an ethical understanding of *like for like* perception: we perceive ‘with love love, and strife with baneful strife’ (77/109). The reciprocal *like for like* perception is based only on one’s own ethical choices. Love is a positive and Strife is a negative within individual action. Therefore, because a *daimon* can perceive Love, it can act in a Loving way. Empedocles combines like for like perception with an ethical counterpart: as one perceives, so one should act.

Fragments 116/122 and 117/123 depict several groups of opposites. Therefore, wherever there is pessimism there is optimism. Empedocles describes a time when man’s ‘altar was not drenched by the slaughter of bulls’ and men did not ‘bereave of life and eat noble limbs’ (118/128). It seems Empedocles is describing a previous ‘Golden

Age’ of mankind, whether allegorically or historically. In the ‘Golden Age’, all creatures ‘were tame and gentle to men, and bright was the flame of their friendship’ (119/130). Empedocles is quite clearly contrasting the age he finds himself in with this blessed existence. If Empedocles sees the rule of Strife in his time, then what he describes as the ‘Golden Age’ is the age of Love. As a result, Empedocles mirrors the macrocosm of the Cosmic Cycle with the microcosm of mortal life. Mortal creatures at one time existed as One under the rule of Love (119/130); and now they exist as Many under the action of Strife (107/115).

After describing the current and previous state of Strife and Love, Empedocles’ message is laconic (122/136):

οὐ πάυσεσθε φόνοιο δυσηχέος; οὐκ ἔσορᾶτε
ἀλλήλους δάπτοντες ἀκηδείησι νόοιο;

Will you not cease from the din of slaughter? Do you not see that you are devouring one another because of your careless way of thinking?

Empedocles’ ethical message revolves around a practice of not killing. Empedocles pleads for individuals to mirror the Cosmic Cycle on an individual level. Individuals must turn away from the rule of Strife which has divided all mortal creatures into Many, and must create a rule of Love within themselves, so that all mortal creatures can live as One. Empedocles implores loving behaviour on an individual level. As Empedocles previously put his trust in raving Strife (107/115), now he places his trust in Love’s rule. Only by following Love can individuals ‘lighten your hearts of grievous sorrows’ (123/145).

Conclusion

What, therefore, has been established by using Shared Concerns in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles to Problem-Solve? Firstly, in 7.1 I explained how the Cosmic Cycle for Empedocles is all-encompassing through a comparison with *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*’s eternal banyan tree. This provided the basis for why liberation finally could

not be endorsed within Empedocles' poem. Secondly, concerning identity, using the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* showed (7.2) that there is a need to distinguish between two kinds of substances which does not, however, result in a psychologically 'split personality' (Kahn, 1971: 3). The distinction between an individual human and a *daimon* is illuminated by *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 3.3. The *daimon* is 'a rider in a chariot' and the individual human is the 'intellect as the charioteer'. The distinction is comparable to Kahn's (1971: 10) and Obeyesekere's (2002: 224) split between a *daimon* and a conscious mind. However, the distinction should go further and postulate that the conscious mind is a human individual separable from a *daimon*. In this view both a *daimon* and a human intellect are numerically distinct. One sees the distinction within Empedocles who was mortal but upon realisation of the *daimon* is 'mortal no longer' (102/112).

While the *daimon* can return to the 'blessed ones' and return to a happy state away from the hard life of humanity, that is only limited salvation within an overarching process of the un-escapable Cosmic Cycle, while in the context of rebirth discussions salvation as a term predominantly refers to an *escape* from a cycle. Therefore, through comparison with the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* it is clear that the term salvation should not be used in conjunction with Empedocles, since salvation, within the context of a rebirth theory, implies a state of permanent escape. This is a prominent difference between the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles.

Thirdly, in section 7.3 I used the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* to explore ideas of moral accountability in Empedocles and showed how applying the *karmic* framework illuminates the degrees of ethical understanding in Empedocles' philosophy. Empedocles has a basic view of cause and effect. But Empedocles' philosophy lacks the fuller understanding of *karma* as part of a transmigration cycle, i.e. directly affecting

the next life. The ethics of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles rely heavily on ‘right actions’ and ‘right understanding’ (5.7). For Empedocles one cannot have the former without the latter. Empedocles also suggests that the *daimon* through Love’s right action hopes to return to the ‘blessed ones’ and live with the gods once more (132/146). But the *daimon*’s exile from and return to the ‘blessed ones’ exists within the all-encompassing Cosmic Cycle. As a result, Empedocles’ religious thought is not a soteriology based on the hope of personal salvation. This is a major difference. For the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* advocates eternal integration with the all-encompassing *Brahman* through self-realisation of *ātman*. But in contrast, for Empedocles the all-encompassing Cosmic Cycle means that nothing can exist independent of it, and, therefore, that nothing finds release from it.

I have thus fulfilled my Claim 2 that Claim 1’s three Shared Concerns—the concept of ‘roots’ and a ‘tree’; the ‘two Selves’/kinds theory; and the concern with moral accountability across rebirths and different embodiments—has helped solve the problem of death and identity in Empedocles’ thought.

Conclusion

There are two aims for this conclusion. Firstly, the originality of the Comparative Methodology is evaluated (1.1). Secondly, the conclusions of Claims 1 and 2 (1.2); what interpretational problems have been solved by examining Shared Concerns in one culture text with that of another cultural text? Aim two is divided into 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. Respectively, these parts correlate to the thesis' partition: Part One *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha*; and Part Two the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and Empedocles' poem. In brief, Part One solved the interpretational problem of identity and moral accountability through Shared Concerns identified as the desire for the corporeal and purification in *Phaedo* and *Milindapañha*. Part Two solved the interpretational problem of liberation through examining Empedocles' ideas of identity and moral accountability. I concluded that differentiating in kind between a human compound and a forensic *daimon* through the use of Shared Concerns with *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* solved the problem of liberation by limiting liberation to within the Cosmic Cycle and clarifying Empedocles' concept of moral accountability.

Originality Claims

To begin, a few concluding words concerning the thesis' originality. The Comparative Method takes an Indian cultural text, evaluates Shared Concerns about death and identity, and uses them to solve an interpretational problem in an ancient Greek cultural text. As stated throughout, the method of comparison is not new. In my introduction, *Previous Comparative Scholarship on Plato and Empedocles*, I highlight a number of excellent works within the comparative field. For example, Dillon compares Plato's *Phaedo*, a text about the death of Socrates, with the Buddhist text *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, similarly a text regarding the death of a great teacher, the Buddha (2000). Superficially, my Comparative Method appears analogous to Dillon's: Plato's *Phaedo* compared with a Buddhist text. A different Buddhist text, in a similar

comparison, is hardly grounds for striking originality. However, the originality of my Comparative Method stems from the methodology and the problems solved. To explain further, permit me to continue using Dillon as an example of credible comparative scholarly research. Dillon takes a Greek extant text about the death of a teacher and compares it to an Indian extant text concerning the death of a teacher. Immediately one recognises the concurrent theme of the two dialogues (one might call it a Shared Concern). Dillon's important and useful comparison originates from two similar texts, i.e. a treatise on the death of Socrates or the Buddha. There is already a convergence in theme, which need not develop into similar philosophical concepts, but Dillon masterfully guides his reader through his fruitful comparison. Here lies my originality: the use of Shared Concerns—in cultural texts not overtly obvious—to solve interpretational problems in one cultural text. I emphasise Claim 2; Claim 1 being a useful mode. The Comparative Methodology I employ is original due to the specifics and relationships of the claims.

The texts chosen for comparison in Part One were preferred for their problem-solving potentials, and not on the basis of already existing similar conclusions. Indeed, the conclusions to their Shared Concerns are starkly different: Plato posits that the soul is eternal, and Nagasena continually refutes the existence of a soul. These are fundamentally different conclusions to a Shared Concern of death and identity. However, through the Shared Concerns and the different conclusions I have solved an interpretational problem in Plato's *Phaedo*.

In Part Two, I offered a second case study as a test of my Comparative Method. Empedocles' poem was shown to have Shared Concerns with the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* through independent analysis of both texts. And these were then used to demarcate between a human compound and a morally accountable *daimon*. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* has

previously been compared to Greek thought. Both McEvelley (2002) and Schiltz (2006) compare the chariot simile of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* with Plato's *Phaedrus*, and the intriguing chariot composition expressed at 246a3-249d. Though Plato's use of the chariot comparison for a soul remains obscure and remarkably similar to *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, and despite the limited scholarly attention of the two chariots—though Schiltz is far better than McEvelley—my thesis intentionally uses the *Upaniṣad* text with Empedocles, and not with Plato's *Phaedrus*. The comparison of the two chariot images has already been noted, and the method would be limited to the literary comparison, i.e. what is similar, what is different, is Plato using the image in a different way?

My Comparative Method succeeds in moving beyond the comparable similarities and differences, seeking to solve important interpretational problems within the Greek texts. The aim of the methodology is not a comparison for the sake of comparison; simple compare and contrast. Although the method does, at a basic level, confront similarities and divergences, what I aim for, at a further level, is the re-interpretation of a Greek cultural text, with definite conclusions. This thesis is not an uncomplicated check list, or a comparative sourcebook. I use a specific Comparative Method—between east and west—to reach interpretational conclusion that have not been fully possible before. Having stated the thesis' originality, one must now turn to those important new conclusions.

Project Conclusions

Phaedo and Milindapañha

In Part One the problem of moral accountability in *Phaedo* was solved through the use of *Milindapañha*'s idea of ancestral relation. Chapter 1 focused on the Shared Concerns of the two texts. These are death's appeal (1.3.1) due to the danger of craving the corporeal (1.3.2), and the use of water imagery to denote purification from or a continual return to bodily existence (1.3.3).

Chapter 2 discussed the issue of moral accountability in *Phaedo*, setting out the problem in the text, what scholars have suggested, and my own interpretation of the problem. Chapter 3 then tried to solve the problem by using Locke's distinction between a human and a forensic person. This distinction did prove useful in my interpretation of *Phaedo*, however it did not solve the original problem. Locke's forensic person was too focused on consciousness as memory. Therefore, in Chapter 4 I brought the *Milindapanha* back into the discussion, showing how an ancestral relation akin to Buddhism's dependent origination can clarify *Phaedo*'s concept of moral accountability. Therefore, the originality of Part One is demarcating the soul as the forensic person within a morally dependent ancestral relationship.

Empedocles and *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*

Empedocles is aware that a human intellect is different from, and does not require, a *daimon*. In the extant fragments, there is no suggestion that a human intellect requires a *daimon*; that thought necessitates a *daimon*; or that being alive involves a *daimon*. The fundamental distinction between human and *daimon* is significant throughout the extant fragments. Furthermore, Empedocles never assures his reader that every human being has a *daimon*; one might believe the opposite to be true, that very few humans have a *daimon*. Due to the knottiness of interpretation, I explicitly argued that human and *daimon* are distinguishable kinds of substances.

The method of analysing a human and *daimon* as two kinds was provided through the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*'s chariot simile. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* presented a human psychology through distinguishable parts: rider, charioteer, reins, chariot, horses; self, intellect, mind, body, senses (3.3-4). Through the comparative method I showed that Empedocles identifies a *daimon* as a detached rider within the bodily chariot, with the human intellect holding the reins of the body, as the charioteer. With the human intellect 'driving', the *daimon* is forced to endure countless deaths in mortal form,

continually unable to alleviate its transmigrating condition; which according to Empedocles is a punishment for previous wrong actions. I suggested that Empedocles posited an ethical theory based on knowledge and action. This, however, is unlike the Indian notion of *karma* and the moment of understanding in itself does not set a *daimon* free—unlike in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Through right action and right understanding it may be possible for a *daimon* to return to the blessed before the fulfilment of the transmigration punishment. But a *daimon* must separate eventually like all material compounds and therefore, there is no offer of a final liberation from the Cosmic Cycle.

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