Cicero's Notions Of Immortality And Their Sources

Patricia Koller
Carroll College

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CICERO'S NOTIONS OF IMMORTALITY
AND THEIR SOURCES

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by
Patricia M. Koller

PREFACE

CHAPTER

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF THE SOUL IN
GREEK THOUGHT UP TO THE SECOND CENTURY B.C.

II. THE IDEA OF THE SOUL AND IMMORTALITY IN
CICERO

A Thesis
Submitted to
The Department of Classical Languages of
Carroll College

Cicero the Philosopher

The Idea of the Soul and Immortality in the
Rutilianae Disputationes, the De Senectute,
and the Epinomis

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for Academic Honors
with the B. A. Degree in Classical Languages

Carroll College
Helena, Montana
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Approved by:
H. J. Countey
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The purpose of this thesis is to trace the history of the ideas of the soul and immortality in Greek thought, and their adoption and comprehension by M. Tullius Cicero in his essays De Senectute, Tusculanae Disputationes, and Somnium Scipionis. Special emphasis is placed upon Plato's Socratic Dialogues which were a summary of the various beliefs and arguments of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. and which served as major sources for Cicero's philosophical essays treating the soul. The second most significant school of thought which had an influence upon Cicero was the Stoa. These two philosophies, one idealistic, the other materialistic, contended for the primacy in the private thinking of the renowned Roman author whose eclectical mind was well suited for selecting the ideas of different philosophical systems and combining them into a whole. The fluctuation of his thinking bears the mark of the scepticism of his age which had a basic attitude of mistrust of convictions. This mistrust is perceivable in his hesitation to give an unconditional assent to the belief in immortality, although he is very close to accepting it.
Reading through several works on the subject one sees the general interest which the men of antiquity devoted to spiritual questions. Most of their beliefs were untrue and most of their speculations were more imaginary than logical, yet their constant occupation with the soul and its afterlife is a proof for the remark of Tertullian that the human soul is "anima naturaliter Christiana."

It is also profitable to realize the slow growth of self-reflection, the difficulty in perceiving the reality of the psyche as independent of the external world, imagination, and reasoning, and as the most intimate, yet most incomprehensible point in human awareness. The gradual process of introversion seems to prove some kind of evolution in consciousness, a progress of spiritual maturing, which prepared for Christianity. The confusion of the first century B.C. manifested the need of a doctrine which could correspond in substantiality with the capacity of mankind to receive. The spirit of man had outgrown mythology and was ready to accept reality.

Simultaneously with stating my purpose I would like to express my gratitude to Fr. Humphrey J. Courtney for correcting my writing and to Fr. James White and Mrs. Peter McHugh for their cooperation in the library.
CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF THE SOUL IN GREEK THOUGHT UP TO THE FIRST CENTURY B.C.

It is natural to man to desire and to believe that once his short life is spent he will not merge into nothingness, but will continue his existence in some way, either as a part of the Spirit governing the universe or as an individual entity subject to reward or punishment according to his observance or lack of observance of religious and moral rules. Since according to the law of dissolution, the material body had not been disposed to be the sharer of eternal life (aside of the eschatological teaching of the Church), man sought for something in himself which might be exempt from this law and which might be thought of as superhuman and divine, the exact opposite of what is human and finite. If a being is not finite, then it has none of the characteristics of finite nature; it has none of the properties of matter; it is immaterial and as such it is invisible and indivisible.

Man's instinctive longing for deathlessness became the source of his idea of the soul — of an eternally existing
and consequently divine and immaterial (invisible and indivisible) substance.

Because this divine element is far more valuable than the human in man, he took greater or lesser care of it depending upon his mental development and the fluctuation of fortunate and adverse circumstances. While he lived in a very primitive stage of development, he feared nature which confronted him with the unknown. It appeared to him as horror-inspiring, because due to his lack of understanding of natural phenomenon he experienced more suffering than relief and more terror than peace. The act of dying which most of the time must have been accompanied with intense pain and perhaps struggles in those primeval times; the cadaver; the mysterious fact that a person known had ceased to give the normal signs of life; and the possible appearance of the image of the dead in dreams shocked the *homo sapiens*, and his instinct of the praeternatural presented the dead as still in existence and as something formidable.

The inhabitants of the early Paleolithic Period in Europe (from 1 million to fifty thousand B.C.) had a cult of the dead which included funeral rites and worship. The body had been buried in a position facing westward, because the abode of the departed had been imagined to be situated in the West (analogous to the sundown). M. Troyons gave a curious, but wholly hypothetical, explanation for their crouching position in the tomb. According to him this pose
Imitating the position of the embryo in the womb expressed the hope of resurrection. These primitives tried to keep the ghost away by placing sharp stones and tools at the mouth of the grave to prevent his escape. However wrong their notions may have been, the earliest men manifested the same belief as the latter speculative philosophers and the adherents of religions — they had a guess of eternal life.

The next stage in the development of this belief, which is known to us through material remnants and written records, had occurred about five thousand years ago, although many of the modern primitives exhibit a system of superstitions not unlike the _homo sapiens_ of the early Paleolithic. The Egyptians, whose advanced civilization was able to support a priestly class which devoted its time to the study of mathematics and to the organizing of prevalent religious beliefs, possessed a body of doctrine describing in detail the destiny of man and his soul. The legend of Osiris, the river-god, is a representation of man's survival after the death of the body. Osiris, the son of Atum-Ra, the sun-god, was cut to pieces by his brother Set, and his remnants were brought and fitted together by his wife Isis. Osiris came to life again and became a king and the judge of the dead in the underworld.

Man consisted of four parts in Egyptian psychology: the flesh (aifu), the double (ka), the shadow (haibit), and the ghost (ku). Ka was the most significant part from the
viewpoint of eternity, because it was considered to be the surviving element in the case of the good man. Only the righteous could have a hope of a life beyond the grave in a blessedness similar to that of the earth. The Book of the Dead, in a translation of Dr. Wallis Budge, gives an account of this belief: "If this chapter be known by the deceased, he shall come forth by day, he shall rise and walk upon the earth among the living, and he shall never fail and come to an end, never, never, never."1 The wicked was to be swallowed down by some unclean animal:

The evil heart or the heart which failed to balance the feather symbolic of the law, was given to the monster Ammit to devour; thus punishment consisted of instant annihilation, unless we imagine that the destruction of the heart was extended over an indefinite period.2

An ancient papyrus depicts the judgment of the dead. Horus or Anubis holds the scale, the left side having a leaf, the symbol of righteousness, the right side the heart of the man about to be judged. If he was found wicked he was devoured by an animal; if he was found good he could dwell in the kingdom of the blessed.

The Egyptians, as the ancients in general before the rise of speculative philosophy in Greece, lacked the ability to arrive at clear conceptions about the soul, and


they did not advance rational arguments to prove the immortality of the soul from its very nature. They believed that the soul is immortal and divine, yet the wicked were punished with personal annihilation. Since they taught metempsychosis not as a retributive mechanism, but as a reward granted to the righteous who could pass from one living being to another without ceasing to exist, they seem to have laid no emphasis on the Ka as a spiritual substance existing independent of matter, but only as a mode of continued individual existence unthinkable without the cooperation of some material body.

Herodotus was right in writing that the Egyptians "were the first to teach that men's souls were immortal" if he meant that they were the first to give some kind of organized form to this belief and to include it in their state religion. But the idea or desire itself was much more universal than to be assigned exclusively to the Egyptians as its originators. Besides, as it has been mentioned above, they were not certain as regards the essential permanence of the soul.

Another great civilization of the Far East, the Hindu, possessed a unified body of belief which in the beginning had not been more than mythology, but gradually, by 650-500 B.C., it grew into a philosophy of distinctive character. The Oriental mind, much more submissive and more inclined to contemplation than the Western, had come to regard

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1Beet, op. cit., p. 15.
the world of phenomenon as illusion or Maya, which was a mere reflection of the true reality of the First Principle, Brahman: "Brahman alone is; nothing else is. He who sees the manifold universe and not the one reality, goes evermore from death to death."1 Going from death to death is the essence of transmigration which is one of the basic tenets of Hinduism. Man, compelled by the law of Karma, is born and born again as a result of the sins of his previous lives, experiencing various forms of existence, until he is purified and is united to Brahman. If he realizes in the lotus of his heart that the universal Brahman and the individual Self (Atman) are the same, then he has arrived at the peak of wisdom and after his death his soul will be submerged in Brahman. This is the teaching of the Upanishads concerning man's destiny.

Buddhism (483 B.C.), which is a corruption of Brahmanism, because it emphasizes practice more than speculation, makes non-existence the end and purpose of existence. Once man succeeds in becoming completely unattached to life by the additional means of abstinence and meditation, he experiences an internal annihilation, a suspension of all activities, and after his death he is "blown out" of existence in the Nirvana (blow out).

These two great civilizations, the Egyptian and

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the Hindu-Buddhist, both taught transmigration, although for different reasons — the first as a reward, the latter as a purgatory. Both built upon the concept of an individual human soul. The Egyptian was almost four hundred years older and The Book of the Dead represents a more primitive attitude toward the nature of the soul than the teaching of the Hindus. For the former the aim of a virtuous life is an existence somewhat like the Island of the Blessed; for the second it is God, although on a merely natural plane. Because of certain similarities between these beliefs — especially the retributive form of metempsychosis and the concept of the soul as an immortal substance — and the belief which the Greeks of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. and even of earlier times, had held concerning the psychology of man, the hypothesis is supported by some scholars that the Hellenes and their predecessors, the Cretans and the Minoans, had adopted the fundamentals of their theology and philosophy from the Egyptians or/and the Hindus. The Alexandrians were the first advocates of an Oriental influence upon Greek thinking, which theory had been passed on to the early Christians. During the Hellenistic age the Egyptians compared their mythology to that of the Greeks, and, discovering an essential likeness, they reached the conclusion that the Greeks copied their mythology after theirs. Of course, this interpretation was unfounded. The collective unconscious contains universal archetypes which come to the fore of consciousness as instinctive notions.
inherent in the mind or as a basic attitude of the human psyche to universal problems. The theory of the diffusion of concepts from some place of origin has not been proved; rather the oneness of human mentality is the answer to the occurrence of such universal beliefs as the belief in transmigration or immortality. The Rig-Veda, the Babylonian poem of creation, The Book of the Dead, and even the epic poetry of distant Scandinavia reveal a universal mythology.

It is true that the Greeks, being a seafaring nation, may have become acquainted with ideas of foreign origin, but this does not disprove the fact that they had the same capacity to develop a mythology of their own as other nations had done. Concerning philosophy, it had been the exclusive product of the Greek genius. Although the Egyptians had been familiar with mathematics much earlier than they, and the Babylonians had established the science of astronomy prior to the acquaintance of the Greeks with this subject, once they took over these sciences they purified them of merely practical elements and organized them into systems of abstract thought complete in themselves. This is a mark of originality and rationality not possessed by other contemporary nations, which gave a superiority to the Greeks in the comprehension of reality and made them the authors of science and philosophy.

The Hellenic civilization and consequently the pattern of religious belief had been the result of the combination of the older Minoan (3000-1400 B.C.) and Mycenean
(1600-1100 B.C.) cultures with the thought of the invading Achaeans, Aeolians, Ionians, and Dorians (between 1125 and 900 B.C.). The Minoans had served their dead with greater devotion and had constructed an elaborate scheme of funeral ceremonies; the newcomers brought with themselves a lighter attitude toward death and the ghosts of the departed, much feared by the Minoans. They banished the souls to Hades, a place far from the world they inhabited, whence there was no return. Because they cremated the cadavers, the fear of the returning ghost had been anticipated, unlike to the Minoans whose care for the dead sprung precisely from the dread of the ghosts which were believed to possess the power to harm. This cult had not become completely extinct in spite of the dominance of the new beliefs, and later recurred in Orphism, a religious sect in many of its tenets quite opposed to the ways and thoughts of the life-loving and easy-going Hellenic character.

The Greeks regarded the psyche, "the breath of life," as the element distinguishing life from death. This was the ghost which could leave the body after death, during swoon, or in sleep. It was the same as the Ka of the Egyptians, different from the sensory soul, the instrument of feeling and perceiving, which was located at the midriff of the heart and perished with the body.

The Iliad and the Odyssey record the first description of the soul after death. It was fancied to be a shadow (σκιά) or an image (ἐιδωλον), like the reflection in the
mirror and even less than a ghost, because a ghost can at least walk and communicate with the living. The shades, on the other hand, had to drink blood in order to regain consciousness for a short time.

Their life in the underworld was not a happy one. They wandered in a gloomy surrounding in a country of twilight, which had been situated either under the earth or far out by the distant stream of Oceanus. The ghost of Achilles gave a true revelation of their misery: "Speak not lightly to me of death, O glorius Odysseuus. For so I might be on earth, I would rather be the servant of another than to be a lord over all the dead." ¹

There were only a few exceptional cases. The souls of the wicked suffered eternal punishment like the soul of Tantalus who was guilty of filicide, while the souls of the virtuous enjoyed a life of eternal bliss in the Island of the Blessed, like Menelaus on account of his being the husband of Helena, the daughter of Zeus. Lucian's picture of Charon and his boat depicts the sixth century belief in the fate of the souls. They were small, winged beings, weeping on the bank and beseeching Charon to take them aboard.

The emphasis on life represented by the cult of the Olympian gods, who pictured the society of earthly men and women with all of their shortcomings and sins clothed in an ideal splendour, suppressed the cult of the dead which centered

the attention of the living around a future spirit-world, dark and sad, yet inevitable for the common man. Nevertheless, care for the dead still continued even in later times, enjoying in some places greater, in others less, popularity.

The Hellenic concept of the soul as a lifeless shade was not designed to give a greater impetus to the development of a more mature understanding of the nature of the soul and of immortality. It had a tendency to disregard the spirituality of man by focusing his attention upon the body, its beauty and cultivation, for the sake of enjoying the delights of a merely physical existence. Why would the Greeks, a nation endowed with a great capacity for a materialistic civilization and with a sense of the grandeur of life and of the world, why would they have pondered upon such abstruse concepts as the immaterial soul and its immortal life, if its reality could not be tested through the senses — their minds not being yet sufficiently mature for speculation — and if the contrast between the bloodless shades with their misery and the full-blooded Olympians with their happiness turned man to the latter, perhaps to forget an impending death and an undesirable future existence. The primitive ghost-worship of the Minoans, which was a cult based upon fear, had become extinct, and the majority paid little heed to the dead.

Only one custom remained still in vogue which had an influence upon the idea of immortality. It was the cult of heroes, men of an earlier age, who had been outstanding
either in war or in wisdom, and who after their death had been granted the status of gods. A significant motive lay hidden in this act of wishful thinking, man's desire for eternal life, a prerogative of the gods. At first only the great men, later on even the small, could hope for an immortality of happiness if he developed his nature and capacities to the full as the citizen of the polis and as a human being. The average man began to cherish a hope of an afterlife more alluring than the twilight of Hades.

Although the worship of the Olympian gods continued, another religious cult, the Orphic, gained gradually greater popularity by the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. The founder of the cult was Orpheus, the son of a Thracian king Oeagrus or Apollo and of the Muse Calliope or Polyhymnia according to the legend. But the view that Orpheus was the title given to the Thraco-Phrygian priest-kings, the incarnations of Dionysius, has a greater historical validity. Orphic literature, which includes different versions of the origin of the universe, of gods and men, and of the right way of life, has been ascribed to Onomacritus of the sixth century B.C. Some of the Orphic writings had been attributed to Pythagoras and other writers of succeeding centuries (e.g. Ion of Chios said that Pythagoras claimed Orpheus as the author of some of his works). Herodotus, on the other hand, connected the Orphic mysteries with the Egyptians and Plato asserted the same.
The Neo-Platonists and the Christians of the third and fourth centuries A.D. accepted the authorship of Onomacritus, and the attempt to give credit to the Egyptians for a certain doctrine not in harmony with Hellenic character was only one of the blunders the ancient scholars had committed in seeking the origins of some of the mystical teachings of the Greeks outside of Greece. It is true that Thrace did not belong to Greece proper, but even the theory of the Scythian origin of the doctrine of metempsychosis according to which it had spread simultaneously from the North to Thrace and to Greece on the one hand and to India on the other, cannot invalidate the fact that some of the features of the cult had had their roots in an earlier age of the Aegean civilization (Minoan), because the geographical places which provided some evidence of religious cults endowed with mystical elements were located in that area. (Prophetic books had been found in Acadia and Crete, the contents of which had been almost the same, although written in different dialects, and in the latter place the worship of Zeus included mystical rituals similar to those of the Orphics.)

The Orphic initiates believed that they were souls imprisoned in their bodies. They were of divine origin, being the particles of the young Dionysius, the God of Light (Phanes), who had been devoured by the Titans. Zeus struck the latter with his thunderbolts and from their ashes had sprung man, a unity of good and evil, divine and
mortal. The body was considered as a tomb (σώμα-σώμα) and the aim of human life was the liberation of the soul from this imprisonment through purification (καθαρσί). A set of rules provided for this purification and included ascetic and ritualistic practices. Bloodshed, animal sacrifice, and flesh were taboo; wool garments could not be used in temples or for burials. Suicide was forbidden, because man was considered the chattel of the gods who had no right to quit existence whenever he wished. The orgiastic rituals aimed at a temporal union of the soul with the divinity (βασιλεία) through which it could acquire a foretaste of eternal happiness. The rituals were connected with the resurrection of the god of vegetation in the spring which paralleled the resurrection of man after death. Man became conscious of his twofold nature—matter and spirit.

Eternal happiness was reserved only for the righteous and although it was in contrast with the misery of life here below, nevertheless it did not dispense with mundane elements, because as Adeimantus in Plato's Republic said, the good life was made an everlasting feasting and drunkenness. In this feature the Orphic cult was in agreement with the other primitive religions concerning future life, which was thought of as an ideal earthly existence. The wicked man was doomed to everlasting suffering either in a hell of mud or among such activities as filling sieves and other frustrating tasks.

Golden plates unearthed in Greece dating from the fourth century B. C. and in Crete dating from the second
century B. C. to the second century A. D. contain directions which guided the dead to the underworld. The soul had to pass by two springs, Lethe and Memory, and had to ask the guard to give him a drink from the latter: "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven and my race is heavenly. I am parched with thirst. Give me cold water from the pool of Memory." Once the soul had drunk from this water he became eligible to be counted among the heroes who changed into divinities from a human state of being. This notion of metamorphosis was not exclusive to Orphism and to other mystery cults, because the same motive can be found in the worship of the Olympian gods also. It expressed a tendency of the human psyche to regard itself as divine and eternal.

Before, however, the soul could have become divine it had to appear before Persephone and the other gods in Hades to ask for admission to the company of the blessed from where it had been banished by Fate when Zeus struck the Titans with his thunderbolts and the sacred remains of Dionysius were united to their sinful ashes. The words the soul uttered to convey his wish were symbolic. Referring to his liberation from under the law of rebirth, he said that he has "flown out from the circle"; rejoicing in his victory his words were: I "stepped on the crown with swift feet"; and describing his arrival to Hades to receive

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2 Ibid., p. 17.
3 Ibid.
Judgment, he announced that he "slipped into the bosom of the Mistress, the Queen of the Underworld." Until the cult of the Olympian gods was centered upon the body and its life, the Orphics preferred a mystical otherworldliness and a longing for an afterlife absolutely happy and granted only to the soul redeemed through its own efforts and forever liberated from the body-tomb. The emphasis was placed upon the obscure and the emotional. Only the initiated was supposed to be acquainted with the meaning of the allegorical vocabulary, although some of the literature was known to many. According to Damascius, the Neo-Platonist, the substance of the cult was unintelligible and inexpressible which was symbolized also by their first principle, Night.

The cult spread and became popular especially among the lower classes which are usually more inclined to the irrational and the ecstatic, but it also had an influence upon learned philosophers, as the Pythagoreans. Even the first great philosophical system, that of Plato, had been based upon a spirituality, originated by the Orphics with its characteristic aversion to the sensible world. The doctrine of metempsychosis which Herodotus liked to ascribe to the Egyptians, had been taught by the Orphics as is revealed by the vocabulary of Plato, although there is no written record left in the early Orphic literature which would mention it.

1Ibid.
The discrimination made by the rule against the wicked gave rise to a consciousness of good and evil, an ethical significance up to this time lacking among the Greeks whose gods acted not less capricious and amoral than the people after whom they were fashioned. In spite of the occurrence of this new trait of the Greek mind, the ethical code of the Orphics was not similar to our Christian one, because their orgies which were held in religious reverence as occasions of communicating with the divinity, could not be described as moderate or decent. Their criterion of righteousness was the adherence to a rule which served as the sole determinant of the difference between saint and sinner. Apart from their rituals, abstinence, and purification there was nothing to guard their souls against deeds considered sinful by our standards.

In spite of their misunderstanding of the nature of the soul and immortality, the Orphic cult constituted the first awakening of the Hellenic soul to its own reality. It was no longer on the level of the primitive ghost worship of the Minoans and the homo sapiens of the Paleolithic, but it occupied a higher plane of religious awareness, in the center of which stood instead of an animal instinct of fear a truly human motive of immortality and identification with the divine. Most of their tenets were the products of the imagination, but compared to the more popular Olympian and Elusian cults they meant a real progress toward a realistic view of the human soul, because poetic imagination was substituted by an allegorical expression of man's spiritual
aspirations. The mythological form received a spiritual content. Although he taught that the soul, an exhalation of

The next stage in the intellectual development of man occurred in the fifth century B.C. Up to that time the universe and life were explained by myths and mythologies and only the imagination and the emotions were given a place in human consciousness. But now rational thought emerged and laid the basis for future speculation, both philosophical and scientific. Thales of Miletus (640-546 B.C.), the father of philosophy, sought an answer to the question of the nature of the universe and he found it in water, the first principle according to his thinking. Some of the succeeding philosophers claimed him the author of the idea of self-motion and the power of moving other things as the signs of life. By stating that the world is full of gods he seems to have conceived of a universal mind or soul penetrating all matter, but being a stark materialist he did not consider immateriality.

Another member of the Ionian school, Anaximanes, arrived at the pantheistic concept of the world soul which he thought of as nothing else but air, part of which was enclosed in the body of man for the time being.

Heraclitus of Ephesus (500 B.C.) by observing the similarity between the constantly changing nature of the world and of fire arrived at the conclusion that the latter was the principle of the former. The soul was only a stage in the process of rarefaction of fire which burned bright
and dry in waking and life and was extinguished in sleep and death. Although he taught that the soul, an exhalation of fire, had the final destiny of a complete reabsorption in the Primal Fire, he did not deny individual immortality. Rather he advocated the belief in reward and punishment after death, granting the former especially to warriors who died in battle and the latter to the teachers of false fables, aimed at obscuring men's minds and making them disinclined to truth. He also believed in Hades and a shadowy existence.

The general effect of these speculations about the nature of the universe and the soul were unfavorable to the doctrine of immortality, because a teaching which identified matter and spirit could not lead to the assertion of the indestructibility of a spiritual substance. If the soul was but a part of the World Soul then after death the body returned to the earth and the soul to the air or fire or any other element imagined to be the first principle, as the line of Euripides expressed it: "Earth to earth and air to air."¹ (from the Suppliants).

A sceptical attitude toward religion arose gradually at Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. It was the consequence of the gradually widening gap between the intellect investigating the true nature of things and fancy which deprived of the naive belief in anthropomorphic gods

lost its creativity in the realm of religion and assumed its proper place in art. Although even some of the outstanding personalities, as Pindar, Aeschylus, and Sophocles, retained their traditional beliefs and the people at Athens were antagonistic to any religious innovations, the philosophers indirectly and the Sophists directly succeeded in undermining the public opinion toward the reality of mythological gods. Until the former tried to maintain a neutrality (with the exception of the Eleatic school which criticised anthropomorphism), the Sophists openly criticised the possibility of even knowing whether there were gods or not. Protagoras and Gorgias taught nihilism: "There is nothing - or if there exists ought, it is unknowable."

Poetry also changed its role from creating and popularizing mythology to destroying it by criticism. Pindar's Dirges still sang about the soul as an image of life in the Homeric tradition and even asserted its divine origin, but Euripides' dramas already took to ridiculing the immortality and senselessness of the gods and spread the spirit of scepticism. Zeus appeared not as a licentious royal figure, but as necessity, human intellect, or aether surrounding the universe. Even Pindar who wrote that "He is all" and Aeschylus whose Heliades records that: "Zeus is the aether, Zeus is the earth, Zeus is the heaven."


2Burnet, op. cit., p. 26. 3Ibid.
had a pantheistic attitude which had occurred simultaneously with scepticism and later grew to an entire system of philosophy among the Stoics.

The belief in immortality continued its flourish only in connection with the mystery cults, especially the Orphic, and among those who remained loyal to the traditional faith. The average man (as known from Athenian literature) thought of the soul as the subconscious or dream-consciousness — a place of gloom, despair, low spirits, great passions, and the sense of guilt; a mysterious and obscure part of man, but not immortal. The Ionian philosophers, who shared the scepticism of the average Athenian as regards immortality, transferred the soul from a stage of dream-consciousness to waking consciousness, thereby furthering the development of a rational concept of the soul which was to succeed the emotional and imaginary, half-mythical and half-mystical belief in the basically divine and immortal nature of man.

Before the growth of this rational concept of the soul in Plato's philosophical system, and the corrections and misinterpretations of some of his conclusions by Aristotle, a religio-philosophical school must be treated, the Pythagoreans (sixth century B.C.), which united the mysticism of the Orphics and the rationality of the Ionians. The most authentic sources of the Pythagorean teachings are Alomaeon of the fifth century B.C. who wrote on natural science and was a member of the school of medicine in
Croton, at the same time belonging also to the Pythagorean
brotherhood; and Philolaus of Tarentum (latter half of the
fifth century B. C.), the teacher of Archytas, and Cebes
and Simmias of the Phaedo. There was a tradition which
connected him with Plato who either heard him lecturing
or knew three of his books written about Pythagoras.

Pythagoras himself (530 B. C.) had left no writings
and his teachings were reserved exclusively for the mem-
bers of his school, although even in his own days some of
the doctrines diffused out of his school, because not all
of his disciples remained loyal to the vow of secrecy. The
teachings ascribed to him are a collection of genuine tra-
ditions, legends, and forgeries which continued in vogue
from the sixth century B. C. to the fourth century A. D.
when the school experienced its second revival after the
first which occurred in the first century B. C.

The personality of the founder had become more leg-
endary than real due to the enthusiasm and admiration of
his disciples who ascribed to him a greatness bordering on
divinity even in his lifetime. He was the son of Apollo
or Hermes and besides having a golden thigh and prophetic
ability, he had the capacity of bilocation. Like Orpheus
he too had descended into Hades.

Not only his admirers but he himself also was con-
vinced of being more than human. Aristotle's description
of him may express his own opinion about himself: "There
is a species of reasonable animal which is god; a second
is man. Pythagoras is an example of the third.¹

The school he founded at Croton, Sicily, had the unique character of combining religion and science. It was a brotherhood with the sole purpose of perfecting man through purifications similar to the Orphics. The two societies had much in common and the difference could be found only in their attitude toward the same idea. Both believed in man's divine origin and spiritual nature. Both had the same fundamental tenet: man is the soul and he is imprisoned in the body. However, while the Orphics in their frantic ways, in which they sought to assimilate themselves to Dionysus, the god of wine and intoxication, tried to experience divinity through orgiastic frenzy, the Pythagoreans attempted to ascend to Apollo, the god of light, through the intellect. Their aim was the attainment of wisdom which, since it could not be possessed without moral perfection, demanded obedience to a strict rule. This rule included daily examinations of conscience, adherence to ritualistic practices, loyalty to friends, abstinence from certain foods especially meat, a cult of silence, and the vow of secrecy. Apart from their speculations in mathematics and their philosophy of the first principle Peras (limited) as opposed to Aperion (unlimited), their cult was more religious than philosophical or scientific, because they cultivated both mathematics and music solely for

the purpose of disciplining their minds and strengthening their morals. Later, however, after the separation of the (μαθηματικοί) from the (ακουσματικοί), the former group inclined toward purely scientific investigation devoid of almost all religious content.

One of the major doctrines was that of metempsychosis in which they were again almost in complete agreement with the Orphics. Since they considered the soul as man himself, it was imagined by them as a real and divine substance and not the bloodless shadow of Hades. It had fallen from a god-like state of existence and had become subject to the law of transmigration for purposes of purification and a return to the original state. Some of the wandering souls, the privileged ones, could remember their previous lives. To these Pythagoras belonged, upon whom his father Hermes conferred the gift of an extraordinary memory to remember all of his previous bodies. He had been Athelides, the son of Hermes, Euphorbus the Trojan, Hermatimus, the prophet of Clazomenae, Pyrrho’s, a Delian fisherman, finally Pythagoras. Xenophanes’ poem relates an incident which reveals Pythagoras’ belief in transmigration. One day he stopped a man beating his dog, because he believed that he heard the voice of a friend from the dog. The same belief influenced his ascetical teaching which was not a reaction to anti-hedonism, but a system of taboos aiming at the prevention of the killing of animals which might serve as means to the purification of souls; and the destruction of plants especially suited to receive
Souls from the underworld (e.g., beans which have straight stalks designed to be passageways for the souls arising from Hades). This theory of palingenesia was the origin of the doctrine that all animal beings are of the same kind. The theory had its parallel among the Orphics.

Memory was explained by the Pythagoreans as the sign of continuing existence. Plato adopted this view. One of his proofs for immortality was based upon the alternating process from life to death and from death to life, during which process the remembrance of a prenatal existence was retained.

While the Orphics posited the doctrine of immortality, the Pythagoreans made an attempt to prove it in some rational way. Observing the continually revolving movement of the heavenly bodies, they applied the same type of motion to the soul which was divine, being of the same nature as the stars, and which moved itself in the same way as they — continually and in a circle. Some of the ancients had assigned this theory to Thales, but it was only a supposition, and it may well have appeared first among the Pythagoreans due to their preoccupation with natural phenomenon for scientific reasons. If, indeed, Thales had been the father of this idea, they at least had seen its applicability to prove immortality, and being scientifically minded, they had adopted it. A motion which is self-caused, eternal, and circular may have appeared to them a sufficient reason for immortality. As
opposed to the soul, the body had to perish, because it could "not join the beginning to the end," the requirement for all circular motions.

Their study of musical harmony gave rise to another theory of the soul which had not been so generally accepted as the former. It tried to account for immateriality by explaining the soul as the harmony of the body, an opposition between hot and cold (high and low pitch), which was stretched by contraries and united by correlates. This unorthodoxy, which doomed the soul to death even before the dissolution of the body in case the internal harmony was disturbed, must have been the result of the speculation of the mathematicians who were less concerned with dogmatic beliefs than the akousmatikoi.

The Phaedo relates that Cebes thought of the soul as the weaver of bodies which might die even before the last body-cloth had been worn out. Aristotle gives an account of two theories which in his opinion came from the Pythagoreans. One of them describes the soul as the dust floating in the air and made visible by sunlight; according to the other theory the soul is the principle of movement of the dust.

The first explanation of the nature of the soul and its immortality must have been the fundamental and generally accepted one, because immortality was endangered by the other two and without it the entire system of Pythagorean teaching would have become empty of meaning. The
circular and eternal motion of the soul, its divinity, the recognition that the sign of life is motion and, for this reason, that the soul is the principle of life, are the most important contributions of the Pythagoreans to the concept of the soul. The first and the last may have resulted from the Ionian thinkers and may have been only adoptions by the Pythagoreans. But even in this case they made their own contribution to the hypothesis by joining to the notion of immortality perhaps its most important prerequisite, that of the divinity of the soul, which is less artificial and more instinctive than the theory of circular motion.

The condemnation of suicide, which appeared among the Orphics, was taken over by the Pythagoreans. Man, the property of the gods, was not allowed to attempt an escape from the cycle of reincarnations, because it served as a means of expiation for his sins.

The "Great Year" of Cicero (Scipio's Dream) had been a product of Pythagorean cosmology. It progressed toward a point of good or fulfillment, after which all started over again an infinite number of times and all things, events, living beings occurred in the same way in each of the repetitions of the world.

Their idea of the universe had been formed according to the number ten, the sacred figure. There are ten spheres, the first being the sphere of the fixed stars, the next seven bearing the five planets, the sun and moon,
then comes the sub-lunary region which is the place of the earth (a sphere of imperfection and becoming), and in the tenth moves the counter earth turning with the earth in a small orbit and visible only from the hemisphere we do not inhabit. In the center there is a fire around which all the spheres are arranged and another fire opposite to the central one, in which are all the elements in their original purity. The harmony of the spheres is the result of the movement of the stars, each having a different speed and consequently a different sound equal to the vibrations of the spheres. Man cannot hear the harmony because he never has ceased to hear it.

Pythagoreanism was a merging of the religious spirit of the Orphics and the scientific thought of the Ionians under the pressure of the circumstances at the end of the Ionian civilization, when man looked for some supernatural assurance and consolation. When they tried to find an answer for the purpose of life they turned to their internal world and discovered there a spark of the divine and eternal.

Pythagoreanism and Orphism had spread in Sicily and South Italy where the social and political restrictions were less, but they became popular in Greece proper also. Many of the succeeding philosophers had been acquainted with Pythagorean doctrines and they adopted them with more or less faithfulness to the original. Empedocles of
of Acragas (450 B.C.), the author of the book On Nature and the Katharmoi, accepted the idea of the divinity of the soul and advocated a continued existence after death, although his philosophical convictions reveal the materialistic monist. Similarly to Pythagoras he believed that he had fallen from heaven in consequence of a murder (he recognized the shedding of blood as the most outrageous crime), but his migration from one living form to another was about to end and a metamorphosis into divinity awaited him. He described the earth as "roofed cavern," which metaphor later occurred in Plato's writings.

Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (460 B.C.) was the first to ascribe the formation of the universe to some spiritual agent which he called Mind and which had two characteristics: knowing and rotary motion. The individual soul was a part of the Mind and it shared its properties — knowing and moving —, but it had no personal immortality being reabsorbed into the universal Mind after death. The periods preceding birth and after death were similar.

In spite of the attempts of religious movements and philosophical schools to comprehend the nature of the soul, there was no true knowledge of its nature in Greece in the fifth century B.C. Some believed that it was a shadowy, subconscious entity with a prospect of a gloomy existence in Hades; others thought that it was a part of the universal mind or soul imagined to be some element or a spiritual substance (Anaxagoras), and it was to be
submerged in this element losing all individuality. Some (the Ionians) considered it as waking consciousness, some (general opinion at Athens) as dream-consciousness and neither of these two believed in any form of immortality. There were those who could not be satisfied with purely mythological or purely physical explanations and turned to mystery cults which emphasized the divinity of the soul and promised eternal happiness to the honest man or the initiate; and these were those who tried to combine religion and philosophy in order to give a greater authenticity to their teaching about the soul. None of them could present a complete picture, and it required a Socrates to separate the essential notions from the non-essential ones and to create a simplified and truer version of the nature of the soul.

His doctrine was simple insofar as it was not based upon a structure of metaphysics or upon the scientific observation of the external world, but upon the ability of reflection or of knowing one's self. It was truer than the myths of the mystery cults or the doctrines of philosophers, because it was focused upon man's internal reality and it deduced its notions from this, instead of from mere imagination or speculation. Man's soul is not the subconscious, the shade of Hades which is deprived of all strength when separated from the body, but it is the waking consciousness which is fully aware of the distinction between good and evil and of its ability to choose between them.
To this concept he united a strong faith in immortality which may have been the result of his own religious inclination conditioned by the current spirituality of the mystery cults. He considered the soul as a thing divine, and although the rational proofs advanced in favor of immortality had been the creations of Plato's mind, his idea of divinity meant a progress toward speculation. It was different from the dramatic and emotional attitude of the mystery cults insofar as their obscurity became flooded with an intellectual light in Socrates' treatment. As if the latent, instinctive aspirations of the soul would have passed from an adolescence of allegorical expression to a maturity of intuition free from the old and doubting age of speculative reason which is needed only when the spirit begins to decline and must be supported, although not revived, by speculation. He realized that the poetry of mysticism which could not even discriminate the good from the evil, the moral from the immoral, and philosophy, with an ambition of being scientific, could arrive at no conclusion concerning the most important fact, man himself. For this reason he abandoned both, taking the best from each — the scientific fact of the ego which proves itself by reflection and the intuition of divinity — and combined them. The result was the discovery of the eternally existing (divine) and reflecting ego which is man's soul. This is Socrates' contribution to the doctrine of the soul and immortality.
He did not stop at a passive recognition of the fact, but became the propagandist of a new doctrine which emphasized wisdom as the sole purpose of human existence. Man must live for his soul and he can do this only by striving for knowledge and goodness, the two being inseparable in his philosophy.

Although it is an almost impossible task to separate the Socratic and Platonic elements in Plato's writings, in a few instances like the doctrine of the soul it is very probable that Socrates had been the author and Plato only adopted and incorporated it in his philosophy. The proof for this is in Aristophanes whose plays make it clear that Socrates taught strange things about the soul even before 423 B.C. when Plato was only approximately five years old. In the same way the maeutic method of Socrates may have been the origin of Plato's idea of reminiscence ("bringing thoughts to life" serving as a model for recalling the ideas seen in a prenatal existence by the aid of sensible copies); and the doctrine of love also may have sprung from Socrates.

His disciple, Plato, had too much of a poetic and rationalistic or rather ascetical bent. (His escape from the sensible world, which attracted his sensitive nature, found security in metaphysical speculation and a denial of the importance of the senses.) In his hands the simple doctrine of Socrates became the basis of a grand and complicated system of thought. He could not disentangle himself from the snare of popular mythology, though he used
it allegorically, somewhat like the Orphics, and he was also receptive to the speculations of the Eleatics and the Pythagoreans. He knew about the former and mentioned them as "ancient theologoi" and during his sojourn in Sicily he became acquainted with the Pythagoreans. Heraclitus' philosophy and the Eleatic school were also familiar to him.

He imbibed the spirit of each of these schools with the exception of Heraclitus whose emphasis on the sensible and the mutable was contrary to his inclination towards the spiritual and the immutable; and his threefold approach to the doctrine of the soul and immortality reflects their influence. Whenever he uses symbolism, he follows the Orphic pattern or Pythagorean religious dogma; whenever he is advancing arguments to prove something, he is acting according to the Eleatics or the mathematically minded Pythagoreans. And when he talks about the love of wisdom or beauty, his mind is moulded by the remembrance of his master. The soul is seen by him from three angles—the allegorical, the speculative, and the intuitive. The first of these is used to picture the unthinkable: the prenatal existence of the soul, her judgment or the future life which awaits her. As soon as Plato turns to mythology he ceases to be a mere philosopher and reverts to his youthful literary genius which he could not renounce together with the sensible world. He employs symbolism even in his cosmological dialogue, the Timaeus, and the soul
is depicted by him either as a charioteer with two winged horses or as a prisoner of the body-tomb in his Socratic dialogues, the Phaedo and the Phaedrus.

Some of his major concepts are not original. Metempsychosis, the legend of the soul fallen from a divine state of existence on account of some ancient crime, its imprisonment in the body, and its subjection to the will of the gods in the matter of death had been prevalent both among the Orphics and the Pythagoreans.

Transmigration is treated most extensively in the Phaedrus and the Vision of Er, although it occurs in the Phaedo, the Meno, and in some of the other dialogues too. The souls accompany the gods in their ascent upon the revolving dome of heaven, each following the god which is his prototype, and in this region above the heavens they behold the Ideas: "knowledge absolute in existence absolute."¹ This is the greatest happiness attainable and each soul strives to keep pace with the gods (who are the Olympians of the mythology) in order to behold it again and again. Because the soul's nature is like a charioteer with winged horses - one of them noble, the other ignoble - he must try to tame the latter if he does not want to fall into the gulf which leads to mundane existence. Most of the souls, in spite of all their endeavors, are unable to re-

strain their recalcitrant horse which plunges them to
earth where they pass into the bodies of men. Plato
makes a distinction between the body which is unable to
move itself, and the soul which once united to it imparts
its self-motion to the body. The composition of body and
soul is the living, mortal creature.

There is a gradation from higher to lower types
of soul, from philosophers, artists, musicians, lovers,
to rulers and warriors, to politicians and traders, ...to
artisans and husbandmen, and finally to tyrants. Ten
thousand years must pass until the souls are permitted to
the company of the gods. The one exception is the class
of philosophers who grow wings in three thousand years and
fly away to the gods; the others must choose new lives in
each thousand years, which choice depends upon the vir-
tuousness or wickedness of their previous existence.

The Vision of Er narrates the ceremonial life-choice
of the souls which is their judgment, self-inflicted yet
inevitably following upon the goodness or badness ac-
quired in their former lives. The souls, some from heaven,
some from earth, proceed to the place where the rainbow-like
column joins heaven and earth, and where Necessity is sit-
ting with her spindle and whorl in the company of her
three daughters, the Fates. Lachesis sings the past, Clotho
the present, and Anthroponos the future. Upon the command of
the prophet to choose their lives or geniuses which will be
their destiny, they proceed to make their choices, each one
according to his previous experiences and acquired character. The prophet made it clear that "Virtue is free; and as a man honors or dishonors her, he will have more or less of her; the responsibility is with the chooser - God is justified." 1 Ajax chose the life of a lion (because of his fierce nature), Agamemnon that of an eagle, both fleeing the sufferings of human existence; Atalanta became an athlete, and the soul of Epeus clothed into the shape of a woman, "cunning in the arts." 2 Having received their geniuses from Lachesis they are drawn into the spindle of Clotho and are fastened by the threads of Anthropos, the sign of their destiny. Then they pass beneath the throne of Necessity into the plain of Forgetfulness. After drinking from the water of Unmindfulness, they are shot to the earth among thunder and lightening to start their migration all over again.

The mythological form contains a moral message - the motive of reward or punishment. The latter is transmigration itself, except in the case of the worst criminals who receive special treatment; the former is the gradual progress from a god to a better life, in the course of which the persevering soul approaches the time of his final departure from the cycle of rebirth. Transmigration is retributive, but insofar as it provides a means of purification necessary for final liberation, it has the aspect

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2 Ibid. p. 415.
of reward. The lot of the philosopher is even better, because he may leave after three thousand years if each time he chose a noble life. By declaring God free from all responsibility the weight of decision is placed upon the individual. He is the maker of his own destiny. Plato by means of the imagination tried to enforce upon men the Socratic necessity of being virtuous for the sake of their own souls.

The idea of reminiscence is closely bound up with metempsychosis, because it is the Ideas seen in company with the gods which the soul recollects through imperfect, sensible copies, and her ability to recollect them reminds her that she had a life preceding the present one. It is only another step to argue in favor of its continued existence after death, as in the Phaedo where the generation of things from their opposites is sufficient for Plato to account for a circle of existence. Reminiscence may be the outgrowth of the maeutic method of Socrates by which the philosopher helped the laboring soul to the bringing forth of knowledge, as in the Meno where a boy is made to discover for himself the famous geometrical theorem of Pythagoras through the questioning of Socrates.

In the same dialogue the "glorious" doctrine of immortality is expressed which was held true by certain priests and priestesses. This property of the soul imposes an obligation upon man to live a perfect life in order that he may rise to the position of kings, men of great wisdom, and heroes. He had fallen due to an ancient
crime, and after nine years spent in the underworld Persephone sends them back to the earth with their penalty paid. This is a different version from the Phaedrus and the Vision of Er, but its essence is the same. Metempsychosis, reminiscence, and the soul's divine origin are links in the same chain of thought.

There is a distinction between the ability of recollection for the philosopher and the lover (of beauty) and the lower types of men. The former ones endeavor to recollect as much of the Ideas as they can. During their striving their wings grow out and they are victims of divine madness — the love of wisdom. Being wrapped up in this inspiration they continually meditate upon heavenly things, essences, and are initiated into the divine. This receptivity of the philosopher is the reason for his relationship with the artist and the lover who fall into a "delirium" at the sight of particular and sensible beauty, because it awakens in them the memory of the Beautiful. The average man, however, easily forgets the Ideas and his memory is slow in recalling them because of his intimate association with the material. The Pythagorean concept of the soul as the chattel of the gods which has no right to open its prison, is another traditional thought in Plato's philosophy (Phaedo).

Plato's imagination influenced by Pythagorean cosmology plays an important role in the Timaeus where he describes the creation of the world and man. His intellectual concepts, such as the Nous, the World Soul, the
harmony which exists in the well-ordered soul, etc. are represented symbolically as Demiurgus, as the spheres of the world, and as actual musical harmony.

The Nous or the Demiurge contemplating the ideas in himself (which constitute the intellectual prototype of the material universe) and knowing that it is better if a thing exists than if it not exists, creates the World Soul from two elements: the immutable and indivisible and the mutable and divisible, adding a third one which is a mixture of these two. He divides the soul into two and makes the outermost circle of the universe, the "Same", and the seven spheres, the "Other", which begin to move due to the self-motion of the soul in opposite directions. These eight spheres are taken from the Pythagoreans, though they counted ten according to their sacred figure including the earth and the counter-earth, which were not considered by Plato as made of spirit but of matter.

The soul is an intermediary between the intellectual and the sensible realities, because it is a mixture of these two and has a nature similar to the mathematical numbers which bridge the gap between the ideal and the sensible numbers. Due to its numerical nature the soul tends to be harmonious in its movement and it is disturbed only when the ability to know matter compels it to "go wrong" - to be agitated by passion and appetite (the recalcitrant horse of the Phaedrus). When it thinks, wills,
and reflects it regains its quiet and regular movement. The World Soul, which envelops the world of matter, shares its nature with the "astral souls" or stars imagined by Plato to be divinities because of their brightness and regular motion. They are many and not one as the World Soul, but they obey the Nous or governing intellect and for this reason they are like the World Soul.

The human soul is formed directly by the Demiurge and it is less perfect than the World Soul due to the less pure, material elements mixed with its basic matter which is the same as that of the World Soul - a compound of the divisible and the indivisible, the mutable and the immutable. Each soul is placed on a star as in a chariot, and each one is acquainted with the nature of the universe and the laws of destiny. It is the duty of the astral gods to clothe the souls with flesh before they leave for the earth to embark upon their wandering from one living form to another. First all souls are male, but soon they degenerate into inferior types. Man's primary purpose should be the ordering of his soul according to the movements of the heavenly bodies and the World Soul, because harmony is a sign of perfection and is the life the gods had planned for man.

The Timaeus is a good example of Plato's aversion to the material and his aspiration to the spiritual which is awakened by the sight of the night-sky with its stars whose beauty and harmonious movement confirmed the belief that they are truly gods and man must imitate them.
cosmology of the Pythagoreans becomes in his treatment a vehicle for the expression of his intellectual and spiritual imagination.

These poetic creations of Plato are accompanied by arguments based upon reason and aimed at to prove immortality from the natural properties of the soul. The Phaedo contains most of these arguments, although there are a few also in the Phaedrus and the Republic. The cyclic theory of nature underlies the first argument in the Phaedo which posits the return of all things to their opposites and is akin to the Pythagorean concept of the continuous recurrence of identical worlds at an infinity of times. Life must be born of death, otherwise all things would be swallowed up in death and the chaos of Anaxagoras would again appear, in which there is no distinction of substances, only an undistinguished composition of all things.

The opposites are generated out of one another by the gradual process of change of one into the other, e.g. the great and the small change into one another by a process of decrease. Life ends in death and death brings forth life. The theory of reminiscence is a proof for prenatal existence. This theory attributes the acquisition of knowledge, which is gained apparently through the senses, to a prenatal state of perfect knowledge - the sight of all the Ideas of the ideal world. During the learning process man compares individual instances of a category to each other and perceiving their general agreement combined with particular characteristics, the basis of their difference, he
realizes that each of them is an imperfect copy of an ideal prototype. He becomes aware that his learning is merely a recollection of previously seen Ideas. According to the cyclic theory applied to the souls their number must remain the same, otherwise they would have to be supplied from mortal nature which would lead to the disappearance of the latter. All things would become spiritual and the law of recurrence would be violated. In order to anticipate this all the souls must be in a continuous progress from life to death and from death to life. There is no complete extinction.

Another proof for immortality is the simplicity of the soul. Like is known by like and the soul which contains simple, invisible, and unchanging ideas like beauty and equality must have these characteristics. If a thing cannot be broken up into parts it cannot be destroyed; therefore, it is eternal. Excessive love of material things tend to attach the soul more and more to its prison and the philosopher must practice a withdrawal from the things of matter, especially from pleasure and pain, in order to arrive at an internal state of purity, eternity, and immortality, which state of the soul is called wisdom. Plato here is again under the influence of Socrates for whom wisdom did not mean the contemplation of some external Idea, but a self-reflecting and internally free state of the soul in which it fully experiences its own nature detached from the disturbing influence of the senses.
It was Plato who created an artificial system of immaterial beings which can communicate with the soul and as Walter Pater remarked, he endowed the ideas with human personalities for whom the contemplative could feel the same love or even greater than he feels for human beings. If this is true then Plato introduced a very subtle type of anthropomorphism which elicited human emotions for superhuman objects, invisible essences. His attitude is somewhat similar to our Christian love of the invisible and incomprehensible God.

It is a basic tenet of Platonism that the spirit is superior to matter; consequently, the soul is destined to rule the body. If the latter is allowed to overwhelm the former it will be unable to leave its prison after death and being dragged down by corporeal elements, it lingers on earth at the grave of the body. This is the ancient concept of the ghost surviving alongside of the philosophical speculation and scepticism prevalent in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

The true philosopher is a disciple of death. He is happy to greet death as a deliverer from the bondage of the body and its passions and sufferings and as a gate to the nether life which is a life of rational freedom in divinity and immortality where he will be truly at home in the company of gods and good men. Or perhaps, as it is written in the Apology, the soul may continue its search for truth in Hades.
The argument of Simmias who tried to disprove immortality by making the soul the harmony of the body, is refuted by Socrates who points to the fact that the soul is a substance independent of and prior to the body which would not be the case if it were its harmony. A musical harmony is more or less a harmony in proportion to its being more or less well harmonized; but a soul cannot be more or less a soul, because virtue or vice does not alter its nature. If the soul were a harmony then it would be impossible for it to be wicked because the very notion of harmony excludes anything disharmonious or discordant; otherwise if it is thought of as harmony it must include another harmony when it is in a state of virtue, and lose this harmony when in the state of vice.

The last argument is the most compelling. It postulates the theory of participation by which things are what they are because they participate in their prototype or essence. One form can partake of another form and by the participation it can change the nature of the latter; e.g. snow partakes of cold which is an attribute of its nature, but if cold would be exchanged with heat, snow would cease to remain snow or would retire before heat. This constant change of contraries is the reason for the continuous change in the sensible world (Heracleitus).

The soul's very nature is life (it participates in the idea of life) - self-motion - and this itself is the exclusion of death. By being eternal the souls "ensure
perpetuity of becoming and prevent the final triumph of
death.\footnote{Robin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 191.}

The argument for self-motion occurs in the \textit{Phaedrus}. This quality had been assigned to the soul as its essential nature by Thales and the Pythagoreans and it reached its culmination in Plato only to be criticized and disproved by Aristotle. The argument is as follows. There must be an element which causes the motion of the world. This is the very first of all things and itself can neither be begotten nor destroyed. If it could be begotten it would not be the beginning of all and if it could be destroyed then there would be a constant danger of the annihilation of the entire universe. This primordial element must cause its own motion, must be self-moving and because of its eternity (unbegotten) and indestructibility it is immortal. This element is the soul, the World Soul, the star-gods, and the human souls of the \textit{Timaeus}, though according to this dialogue the soul is created by the Nous, the Divine Intellect. There are several other contradictions in Plato's writings whose ideas were not always free from the fault of inconsistency; nevertheless, it does not detract from their value which is either purely artistic or intellectual and self-reflective and as such it does not require a scientific exactitude, only spirit, of which he had perhaps more than any other of the pagans.

Book X of the \textit{Republic} adds another unscientific
but speculative proof for immortality. If vice which is the only evil threatening the soul cannot destroy it, than there is no power apart from God which could cause its destruction. Material destruction cannot affect the soul because their natures are different. God who created the soul out of sheer goodness cannot will the dissolution of a creature so beautiful. Although, depending upon its nature alone, which is that of a generated essence, the soul could be destroyed.

In summary these are the rational arguments of Plato for the immortality of the soul:

1. The necessity of a cyclic progression from life to death and from death to life which excludes the possibility of extinction for the soul. The number of souls is the same and reminiscence is a proof for prenatal existence.

2. The simplicity of the soul which is perceivable from its ability to possess immaterial and indivisible ideas.

3. The very nature of the soul which is life due to its participation in the form of life which involves the exclusion of death.

4. The self-motion of the soul which must move itself being the first unbegotten and indestructible substance upon which depend all the movements in the world.

5. The indestructibility of the soul which survives even in vice, its sole injurer.

6. The goodness of God who does not annihilate His own creation, although he has the power to do so.

These arguments may have had a hold upon Plato himself and perhaps upon other ancients who sought for some assurance of deathlessness, but it scarcely would convince the
materialist of the scientific age. The first argument is untenable, being Plato's own mythology; the fourth had been disproved by Aristotle; the rest - simplicity, indestructibility, immanent motion (life), and the goodness of God - are held by the religious and the spiritually minded, but neither can have the convincing force which scientific (physical science) evidence has. They remain merely speculation, although logical, and they will suffice for those who have a greater desire for eternal life than the usual. The fact of their own wish is a stronger proof for immortality than all the speculative arguments.

Plato's nature had something of the mystic and when one reads the Symposium, it appears as if he would have had some supernatural experiences or that his emotions were directed to the invisible with such a persistence and with such an utter contempt for the sensible, that he actually loved his own Ideas - the creatures of his own mind and heart.

His intuitive approach to immortality is expounded in the Symposium and the Phaedrus, and it is referred to in the Theatetus and the Republic. The definition of love is the clue to immortality according to Plato. Love is the everlasting possession of the good, therefore love is immortality. In revealing the essence of man whose desire is to be deathless love becomes a proof for man's immortality. Or as Robin wrote, love "manifests an effort of the mortal being to make
itself immortal as far as it can.  

Love was born of Poverty (Penia) and the Spirit of Gain (Poros) which means that love has an unsatisfied desire for the good and especially for wisdom (Poros is the son of Metis, Intelligence). The first is physical generation which Plato calls "birth in beauty" in the body. The second is the love of an immortality of fame which had a great attraction for many of the more talented and ambitious men of classical times. (Cicero for example). The third is the creative activity of the soul which results in wisdom and virtue, artistic and poetic works, and the intellectual products of friendship. The fourth and the last is the contemplation of absolute beauty - Plato calls it "birth in beauty" in the soul. It is an ascent from the beautiful form of one person to beautiful bodily forms in general, to beautiful mind, to beautiful institutions and laws, and finally to the love of wisdom which is the intuitive realization that beauty is everywhere and absolute. Through contemplation man beholds beauty "with the eye of the mind" and brings forth "not images of beauty but realities; ...and bringing forth and educating true virtue" he will "become the friend of God

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1Leon Robin, op. cit., p. 187.
3Ibid. p. 336.  
4Ibid. p. 343.  
5Ibid.
This is the life above all others which man should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute."

The Phaedrus enumerates four types of madness, prophecy, purification by mysteries, poetry, and the love of the beautiful. The last one is possessed only by the most sensitive and noble souls who are unusually receptive of any form of earthly beauty, because they remember the idea of Beauty they had seen in the company of the gods with great vividness and are transported by the sight of her earthly copies. If Wisdom and the rest of the ideas could be seen in their imitations they would be none the less attractive; but sight being the best developed of the senses and Beauty being the best represented on earth, it has the greatest influence upon the soul striving to recollect the prototype itself from its copies. The soul is exulted at the sight of beauty and the person appears insane to the insensitive onlookers. These souls are keenly aware of their immortality, because they remember the perfectly happy state before their births in matter and they grow wings of longing to fly whence they came. According to the Homeric Apocrypha what is called by men love is called by the gods dove.

1Ibid.
2Ibid. p. 342.
Mortals call him Eros
But the immortals call him Pteros
Because fluttering of wings is a necessity to him.¹

This dialogue repeats what the former one has said: the "dove-ness" of the soul is the proof of her immortality.

The Theatetus has a more moralizing tone, but even here the flight of the soul to God is emphasized. The reasoning goes as follows: since evil cannot be exterminated, the soul must fly away to God; this flight is becoming like Him: holy, just, and wise. One must be good not in order to be thought good, but in order to be free from unrighteousness of which God is free.

The X book of the Republic describes the beauty of the soul which cannot be seen because of her imprisonment in the body. The soul being immortal must be the most beautiful of all creatures and her beauty is not perceptible due to her relations with the body. She is likened to the image of Glauous, the sea-god, whose original image disappears overgrown with sea-weed, shells, stones, and its members are damaged by the waves. If the soul would emerge from the sea by a divine impulse and would shake off the good things of this world, she would appear as beautiful as she is.

Plato attempted to prove immortality from the natural characteristics of the soul, by speculative arguments and by an appeal to the spirit of man which longs to

¹Plato: Phaedrus, op. cit., p. 411.
be deathless. He incorporated the popular beliefs, especially of the mystery cults, into his philosophy and drawing upon some of the ideas of former philosophers, especially of Socrates, he constructed a body of doctrine which was studied and used by later thinkers. Many of the inconsistencies of his philosophy were corrected and completed by others, especially by Aristotle who refuted the opinions of earlier philosophers. According to him the soul cannot be a mere harmony between the parts of the body because then it could not be the principle of movement. This theory had already been disproved by Plato. The soul cannot be formed of four elements, because its activity is of a different kind. This is a refutation of all of the mechanists and materialists who thought that the world soul is one of the elements and the soul of man is a part of it. Aristotle pointed out the difference between intellectual and material processes which is perhaps the most convincing proof in favor of the immaterial nature of the soul. The theory of self-motion was also discarded. The soul cannot have self-movement, because this would necessitate its corporeality, because there can be no movement which is not in space and only physical bodies are in space. The soul itself, therefore, is unmoved, although it moves physical bodies.

Aristotle took up a position opposed to immortality. He divided the soul into two parts, psyche which is the principle of vegetative and sensitive faculties and
is the form of the organized body; and nous which is pure intellect, immortal, and independent of the body (separatus et immixtus).

He nowhere mentions personal immortality. Rather when he asserts that the active intellect (nous) preserves no memories of former events he means that it preserves no individual thought and has no individual consciousness. In the Nicomachean Ethics he writes that death is terrible because it is the cessation of individual personality. There is no future life of reward or punishment. He had a fundamentally materialistic approach when he described the soul as animal heat with a center in the heart which is extinguished by death.

During the centuries which followed the flowering of the great philosophical systems of Plato and Aristotle, a change was inaugurated in Greece which led to scepticism on the one hand, the denial of the possibility of arriving at certain knowledge, and to new philosophies on the other, which emphasized ethics above logic and physics (including theology), and which aimed at the construction of a criterion of moral values capable of satisfying man's search for some enduring and internal good. The conquests of Alexander the Great broke down the barriers which separated the civilized Hellenes and the barbarian Orientals, and a merging of cultures began which continued for years. The Greek polis lost its former importance. Local patriotism, traditional state-religion, mythology, and the ethical
codes of Plato and Aristotle gave place to cosmopolitanism, Oriental cults (Isis and Osiris; Great Mother and Atys), and to new systems of thought.

Philosophy manifested a gradual process to home centrality. It developed from the earliest materialists and mechanists who inquired after the nature of the universe to man himself as a being of intellect and will whose activities must correspond to certain ethical standards (Sophists, Socrates). This development culminated in the religio-philosophical systems of the third century B.C., such as Stoicism which built upon the Socratic tradition and focused its attention upon the individual.

The founder Zeno, a native of Citium in Cyprus, had come to Athens in 314 B.C. and had studied the philosophies of the Cynics, the Megalics, and the Academicians. He left no writings and it is very probable that his successors, Cleanthes and Chrysippus (the second founder of the Porch) altered and added to his doctrines. They modelled much of their teachings upon Heraclitus and Aristotle, both of whom had compared the individual soul to some fiery element: heat or burning air; and thereby they admitted the possibility of its total annihilation, although Heraclitus had retained some of the traditional beliefs (such as the souls abode in Hades). Aristotle conceived of a human nous which was related to the Universal Intellect, the Prime Mover, and returned to it after losing all individual consciousness.
Heraclitus was a materialistic pantheist who saw the world as a constant flux of antitheses governed by the unchangeable Logos, a kind of universal pattern or law. The Logos creates, sustains, and reabsorbs the world into Himself and is best described as fire (Heraclitus had no idea of an immaterial principle cause). This impersonal law became personalized whenever Heraclitus talked about it as Reason or Universal Intelligence immanent in nature. The Stoics adopted Heraclitus' concept and they named the divinity inherent in the World - as if it were its soul - the World Soul. This fiery substance was identified also with force or energy and it represented one of the two principles of Aristotle, the spiritual (the other is the material). Its nature entails a continuous creative activity which is manifested in the progression of the world from a stage of beginning and growth to its end, a general conflagration which reoccurred at an infinity of times (similar to the Pythagorean concept of an infinity of identical worlds or to the cyclic theory of nature).

There is another continuity of development inherent in this living world and this is a gradation of beings which unfold themselves from the logos spermatikoi or universal ideas of the Divine Mind; and which contain all the possible forms of creation from the inorganic matter to man.

The fiery pneuma, the "artistically creative fire"

generates the world out of itself. Each order of beings has a different tension; inorganic matter being exposed to the least, plants which manifest a higher degree of life (growth), to a greater, and beings possessed of soul which reveals itself in instinct to an even greater tension. Only man shares in the Universal Reason enveloping and penetrating the world. Because of the regularity of order in the world and because of its greatest perfection in man who alone possesses reason, the world itself must have reason and must be an intelligent being: an animal endowed with wisdom.

Man's soul which is a detached part of the intelligent and fiery pneuma can communicate with it and comprehending its nature, which is that of a predetermined order (or law), incurs the obligation of obeying it. To live in harmony with Nature means to live in harmony with the divinity. This obedience is the sole guarantee for man's happiness and his freedom is nothing else than a freedom to obey Destiny which is another name for World Soul. The Whole and the parts are mutually interdependent and there must be a harmonious interaction between them.

The nature of the human soul is that of an intelligent, fiery breath which pervades the whole body and which has its ruling center (hegemonikon) in the heart. The body itself is a condensation of the soul—energy, force becomes matter under the cooling effect of moisture. The eight parts of the soul (Reason, the five senses, the
faculty of speech, and the reproductive faculty) were described as air-currents of the fiery pneuma. This basically material substance does not have too much chance of surviving, because matter, even the most refined, airy matter, is dissoluble, and the only life which can be granted to it is not immortal, only continuing until the next conflagration of the world. This is Cleanthes' theory which Chrysippus somewhat altered giving a temporary future existence only to the souls of the wise.

Panaetius, a Stoic prominent in the Scipionic circle at Rome, denied immortality altogether; but his disciple, the eclectic Posidonius, incorporating some of the Platonic teachings into his philosophical outlook, believed that the souls ascend to the nebulous region surrounding the world where the World Soul is in the purest and most divine condition, and they abide there until the next conflagration of the world. They are not dissipated like smoke, as Epicurus maintained, but remain one and entire, because it is not the body which keeps the soul together, but the soul keeps the body from dissolving (as if it were its form according to Aristotle). These souls purified even more in the pure, airy region become demons and these demons are the many gods of Greek and Roman polytheism. The air is filled with demons, spiritual beings, which are far superior to the beings of the earth (because of their imperishability and eternity - unbegotten) and man receives spiritual power from them. Posidonius refused to believe in hell because he could not
locate it, the air alone being a heaven-like place and under the earth nothing could exist because the earth is solid. The punishment of the wicked is a return to some body after death and a new period of suffering another mundane existence. If the soul is not too impure it can await her purification in the sublunary regions and when it has been cleansed from all of her material pollutions, it flies to the sphere of the stars. Here she can satisfy her desire for knowledge, because the ways of the stars, the eclipses, earthquakes, and tides are intelligible or visible in this super-mundane sphere.

The belief of Posidonius reveals Plato's influence. This method of borrowing was characteristic of the time he lived (first century B.C.), when those who sought some explanation for universal human problems did not have a recourse to the dogmatic teachings of the Old Academy or the early Peripatetics, but had to construct their own system of philosophy from the doctrines of several schools which were most in agreement with their mentality.

The other trend which paralleled the establishment of Stoicism had been classified under the title: Scepticism, because they had less need of a faith in something they considered true and preferred to withhold their opinion concerning problems they were convinced were beyond solution.

Pyrrho of Elis and his disciple Timon were the first exponents of this view of life which advised men to
retire into themselves finding a tranquility of soul unattached from all things and renouncing the desire for knowledge which could not be attained, being purely sensible. (Pyrrho was a pupil of Democritus, the atomist who denied the existence of an immaterial intellect).

The spirit of negation pervaded the Academy which for seventy years after Plato's death had guarded his dogmas. Under Arcesilaus and Carneades (Middle Academy) it experienced a reaction to these dogmas in a denial of the possibility of knowledge, both intellectual and sensible. The latter, as they were convinced, was not free from error (a false sense perception may be thought of as true; each true sense perception may have a counterpart which is false: visions, hallucinations, dreams) and the former was based upon the latter.

Their chief adversaries were the Stoics whose doctrine of the living universe being equal to God was refuted by them on the grounds that the "excellence" of the world (which was the key word of the Stoics to prove the rationality of the universe) was no proof for its intelligence; the same way Rome or the world might be thought musical, mathematical, or philosophical.

About the soul and man's intellect their opinion was that it had been produced by nature which works according to its own impersonal laws. They criticized the Stoics for their high regard for fire which is nothing more than matter requiring support (fuel) and is not more essential
for life than the other elements. If man's sensations depended upon fire, then fire itself could feel pleasure and pain and was itself destructible. In the same way the World Soul has no basis for eternal existence either. We cannot be sure of the existence of God.

From the first century B.C. the scepticism of the Middle Academy gave way to a more flexible approach to the problem of knowledge which did not teach that man's inquiry for certain facts was completely ineffectual. Philo of Larissa who taught at Rome in 88 B.C., gave concessions to the opponents of Scepticism by admitting that knowledge can be acquired, though not by Stoic standards. His disciple, Antiochus of Ascalon, after a prolonged opposition to the Stoics and an adherence to the Scepticism of Carneades, yielded to the former, asserting the possibility of knowing and adopting the criterion of the Stoics. However, his concession to the superiority of his adversaries was not complete because he claimed their doctrines as his own by reason of their origins in Plato from whom almost all of the philosophical schools had derived their tenets (including Aristotle, Theophrastus, and even Zeno who had been a disciple of the Academician Polemo) according to the opinion of Antiochus.

Stoicism was introduced to Rome by Panastius and became more popular with the practical Romans than with the aesthetical Greeks. Besides the support it gave to state-religion, its greatest appeal to the Romans was its
emphasis on duty and activity in contrast to the rest of philosophical schools which esteemed speculation and contemplation above political cooperation and involvements in public affairs. It did not demand a subtlety of intellect in which the Romans were not outstanding, but it satisfied their earnestness, vigor, and religious spirit with its emphasis upon the wise man who does not yield to pleasure and pain but goes on the straight road of virtue and renunciation.

By the time of Panaetius and Posidonius the dogmatic attitude of the Stoa was relaxed and several of the traditional beliefs became substituted with the doctrines of other philosophical schools, especially that of Plato. Simultaneously with the change in Stoicism, the Academy and the Peripatetics also (whose teaching was the same in content as that of the Academy) yielded to eclecticism. The Roman character was well-fitted to this free method of philosophising which represented a middle way between Scepticism and dogmatism (of both Stoics and Epicureans) and which enabled the thinking individual, distrustful of popular mythology, to form his own philosophy.
although he undertook the teaching of young Roman friends in his Tusculan villa; he neither created nor adhered to dogmas. In spite of the lack of originality he was esteemed for almost two thousand years as a philosopher because being a politician, and an essayist. His contribution to philosophy was the popularisation of Greek thought in dialogues, stylistically excellent and readable.

CHAPTER II

THE IDEA OF THE SOUL AND IMMORALITY IN CICERO

Cicero the Philosopher

The great Roman exponent of the eclecticism of the first century B.C. was M. Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.). He combined in himself the scepticism of his age which resulted from the loss of faith in the reality of Roman deities and the eagerness for a truth which could satisfy the spiritual aspirations and the need of personal dedication so characteristic of the Roman who was a Stoic by nature. Cicero was a man of literary genius who channelled his talent into politics and public service under the influence of the popular opinion which considered only three fields of activity—war, politics, and agriculture—as worthy of a man's ambition. Literary pursuits were in low esteem because of their effeminate nature. Cicero had no other choice than to obey the spirit of his age, if he wished to attain success and reputation; nevertheless, he remained always a writer with a philosophical bent. His talents were not those of a man of original and abstract thought; he was not a professional philosopher,
although he undertook the teaching of young Roman friends in his Tusculan villa; he neither created nor adhered to dogmas. In spite of the lack of originality he was esteemed for almost two thousand years as a philosopher besides being a politician, an orator, and an essayist. His contribution to philosophy was the popularization of Greek thought in his own times and its preservation for posterity in dialogues stylistically excellent and readable.

His philosophical knowledge was the result of a training which began during his earliest years and also of his continued interest in the field. To this interest he owed the acquaintance and friendship of many of the most remarkable contemporary philosophers. He received a philosophical education unusually comprehensive for a man of his status (an equestrian and a novus homo). Phaedrus the Epicurean was his first teacher whom he and Atticus liked well. For a while Epicureanism seemed to exert an abiding influence upon Cicero, and even his Stoic teacher, Diodotus, could not avert him from it. The pupil had an affection for this teacher too in spite of his lack of interest in Stoicism which during his later years changed to enthusiasm. According to the custom introduced by the Scipios Diodotus lived in Cicero's home and even made him his heir.

Before 88 B.C., Philo of Larissa came to Rome and in his person Cicero became acquainted with the New
Academy. The lectures of this philosopher impressed the student so profoundly that he abandoned his Epicurean convictions and took a membership in the Academy. He had the opportunity of learning the teachings of the three major contemporary schools of thought before his twentieth year and the impression he received was so great as to continue for the rest of his life. He was a diligent student of philosophy which he never gave up for long, not even during his busiest years.

His correspondence with his friends reveal his scholarly nature. He preferred study and retirement, although until the end of his life he pursued a public career driven by his own ambition and desire for reputation. In his letters to Atticus he wrote about his love for books which he considered as the support of his later years. In the De Republica he claimed that he had never been divorced from philosophy, and in another letter to Atticus, written in 54 B.C., he announced his return to the occupation of a student after quitting politics. He spent much time studying in his villas - Tusculum, Antium, Formiae, etc. - after his consulship in 62 B.C. Only Varro surpassed him in erudition.

From 79 to 77 B.C. he sojourned in Athens where he audited the lectures of Zeno of Sidon, a prominent

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1 Cicero Ad Atticum i. 10. 11.
2 Cicero De Republica i, 7.
3 Cicero Ad Att. iv. 19, 2.
Epicurean, and conversed with Atticus who remained faithful to their first teacher and his Epicurean philosophy. Perhaps the most significant philosopher Cicero met was Antiochus of Ascalon, the successor of Philo in the Academy. He had a great respect for Antiochus — for his intellectual powers, his pointed style, and his cultivated personality, but at that time he was still under the spell of Philo. Later, however, he turned to Antiochus.

The next person who influenced his philosophical outlook to a great extent, was Posidonius, with whom he became acquainted in Rhodes while studying rhetorics under Molo. He esteemed Posidonius perhaps beyond all the other philosophers because he most frequently referred to him in his writings and regarded him as an outstanding Stoic and a most distinguished philosopher. He read more of his works than of any other of the Stoics.

In 51 B.C. he returned to Athens, but this time he was disappointed with the state of philosophy there. He stayed with Antiochus' brother, Aristus, the teacher of Brutus, and met Cratippus, the head of the Peripatetics.

Philosophy served as an aid for Cicero in his oratorical and literary endeavours and the personalities of the philosophers were so familiar to him that he contrasted Caesar to Plato's tyrant and himself, while staying at Rome during the civil war, to Socrates, when facing the rule of the thirty tyrants at Athens.

Cicero counted himself among the members of the
Academy. The dialectic of the Middle Academy, of Arxesilaus and Carneades, had a special appeal to him because it was in agreement both with the Scepticism of his age and his own vacillating, unprejudiced, and impresible character which had nothing of the self-confidence of a dogmatist. His very profession, that of a lawyer, influenced his view of philosophy insofar as it developed his ability to see both sides of an argument in the court and both sides of a problem in philosophy. He could weigh the evidence for or against a philosophical doctrine and this was the attitude natural to a member of the Academy. The fact that great philosophers could not agree upon certain basic points convinced him of the practical impossibility of knowing the truth. As a Roman he despised dogmatism and maintained that it was opposed to the Roman character which was occupied with the actuality of life much more than with any abstraction or dogma. In addition, he was an open-minded man of learning who understood that freedom is an absolute necessity to the development of thought, and for him a philosopher was he who examined all philosophies and adhered to none to the exclusion of all others.

The dialectics of Carneades enabled the members of the Academy to select those tenets of any philosophical school which appeared to them the most probable for the time being. If they found a new concept with a promise of greater certainty they were permitted to abandon the old
one and resort to the new. The road was open to eclecticism which occasioned the formation of independent and individual philosophies of life, such as Cicero's, from the deposits of the old schools. Cicero justified himself for the inconsistencies of opinion in his De Finibus and the Tusculanae Disputationes in the fashion of a genuine Academic: "Modo hoc, modo illud probabilius videtur."

While Cicero's dialectics was that of the Middle Academy he followed the Old Academy in physics and ethics. Physics never interested him too much, although he recognized it as a branch of philosophy necessary for intellectual culture. What he esteemed most in it was rather metaphysics or theology - problems about God, the soul, immortality, man's destiny. He needed some metaphysical basis for his ethics which was for him the most important division of philosophy.

During his youthful years when he was engaged in political life, he had neither time nor interest for thoughts about the supernatural. He was successful and satisfied; he had no great sorrow to compel him to turn his back upon life. It is very probable that he was an agnostic at that time, although in his public speeches he advocated faith in the existence of God because he thought of religion as a social necessity. In his private life he held these problems uncertain and immortality interested him only as far as it meant the immortality of glory.

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1Cicero Academica 11, 121.
Nevertheless, being a man of weak nerves, gentle temper, and literary talents, he had a great receptivity for spiritual ideas, and as he grew older and more misfortunes beset him, he fled to philosophy and began to ponder upon God, the soul, and immortality. He had connections with mystery religions also. During his Athenian stay he was initiated into the Eleusian mysteries, and in the De Legibus he expressed his high esteem for these cults "by which the harshness of our uncivilized life has been softened, and we have been lifted to humanity"; "We have in truth found in them seeds of new life. Nor have we received from them only the means of living with satisfaction, but also of dying with a better hope as to the future."¹

Almost at the same time as this evaluation of mystery religions (during 51 B. C., in his fifty-fifth year) he discussed the problem of immortality with Nigidius Figulus, the Neo-Pythagorean whose sect was a survival of the original Pythagorean school. This sect attracted especially those individuals of that philosophically confused age who found the only solace for the inadequacy of life in the supernatural. They practiced asceticism and revealed a mysticism in their endeavour to mount up to the divinity whom they believed to be an infinite distance from man, but whose uplifting grace could overcome this distance.

Toward the end of his life, Cicero reverted to the

¹Cicero De Legibus 11, C. XIV.
Stoics and followed them in almost all of their teaching with the exception of fatalism. The reason for his conversion was the Carneadean dialectics which with its scepticism brought confusion into ethics, the center of Cicero's philosophy. Although he never divorced himself from the Academy whose head, Antiochus, introduced much of the Stoic doctrines into his school and returned to original Platonism, he appealed to it to keep its peace in order that he might believe in Stoicism. He even confessed a fear that perhaps they were the only true philosophers.

Under the influence of Antiochus, however, his respect was not given to Zeno, the founder of the Stoa, but to Socrates from whom, according to Antiochus, the former derived his ideas. Cicero's conviction was that he followed Socrates and Plato (and Aristotle) in the "old" Academy of Antiochus, but in reality he followed Zeno and his successors.

Among the contemporary Stoics Posidonius impressed him the most, whose writings were eclectic combining Stoic and Platonic ideas. Platonism reigned in both the Academy and in the philosophy of the most distinguished Stoic of the time, and Cicero shared in their esteem for the founder of the Academy. He even translated the Timaeus, although he admitted that it was difficult to understand. His philosophical dialogues reveal the twofold influence of Plato and the Stoa.
Cicero's purpose in his philosophical writings was manifold. The republic, his ideal, was overthrown by Caesar whose autocratic rule made it impossible for Cicero to assume his former political activity at Rome, after the battle of Pharsalus (48 B.C.). This was the first great loss in a series of afflictions which compelled him to devote himself exclusively to writing. At first he wrote the oratorical works of Brutus, Orator, Partitiones Oratoriae, etc., but in 45 B.C. he gave his full attention to philosophy and composed dialogues in the later Greek form for two whole years. He was in need of the consolation of philosophy. His life-long marriage with Terentia broke up and his second wife, whose age was a third of his, proved a disappointment. The greatest blow, however, which drove him out of Rome to the quiet retirement of Aeturia, was the death of his daughter, Tullia. In order to assuage his grief he wrote for days and studied philosophy in the forest near his villa. The products of this critical period were the Consolatio, the Hortensius (neither of which are extant), the De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum, the Academica, and the Tusculanae Disputationes. The last one is a rehearsal and elaboration of the ideas contained in the Consolatio which was devoted to the subject of immortality.

In the introductory passage of the Tusculanae Disputationes Cicero states that he translated Greek philosophy into Latin, because the study of wisdom is important
for a good life and because in his estimation the Romans were by no means inferior to the Greeks in those subjects which they deemed worthy of their attention (e.g. oratory). He wanted to spur them to the study of philosophy and thereby to be of service to his countrymen even in his leisure. He knew also that the ascendancy of Caesar would decrease the opportunity for public professions and would steer intelligent men to philosophy. This subject had been neglected in Rome in the first century B.C. and before, and the only school of thought well known by the Romans was Epicureanism. Cicero despised the Garden and wished to create a reaction against it by acquainting the Romans with the Academy and the Stoa.

He never claimed originality in composing these dialogues, although he maintained that he did more than merely translate because he selected only those parts of various works of the Greek philosophers which he judged significant and arranged them according to his own discretion.

In the following year (44 B.C.), he continued his philosophical activity and among other essays – *De Natura Deorum, De Divinatione, De Officiis, De Amicitia* – he wrote the *De Senectute* which contains his encouragement to Atticus, his lifelong friend, by that time sixty-five years old, to face old age cheerfully. His grief upon the loss of his daughter became somewhat assuaged and his interest in the soul and in afterlife was rather the curiosity
of an old man who wanted to know what would be his lot after death. The same thought occurs in one of his earlier essays, in the De Republica, written in 54 B.C., where the Somnium Scipionis gives an account of the soul's life, after death—similar to that of Plato's Vision of Er.

In both the Falsusulnae Disputationes and De Senectute, the idea of immortality is closely related to death or rather springs from the fear of death. In the former dialogue Μ. and Α. are conversing, Μ. meaning perhaps Marcus or Magister, Α. Atticus, Multanum or Auditor. The former undertakes the task of expelling the latter's fear of death by embarking upon a long discussion or onologue, scarcely interrupted by Α. which includes many types of arguments in favor of immortality, but it does not omit the possibility of complete extinction either.

The De Senectute deals with the same question at the end of the dialogue as a finale for the arguments against the dislike of old age. It brings up almost the same arguments for immortality as the Falsusulnae Disputationes although in a more compressed form. The Somnium Scipionis relates an imaginary incident in which some of the less philosophical and more mythological explanations of immortality are set forth.

The first two dialogues commence with the refutation
The Idea of the Soul and Immortality in the Tusculanae Disputationes, the De Senectute, and the Somnium Scipionis

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of the fear of death. Death should not be thought of as tragic because it is either a passage into another and a better life or a deliverance from existence. If it is the latter it equals the cessation of personal consciousness and therefore it causes no abiding pain. If non-existence is terrible then the period before birth is nonetheless painful; but both suppositions are untenable because non-existence cannot be sensed. Death is not sad, not even for the living, because its role is that of a redeemer. It frees all men from the miseries of life and even if the life of a few has more of joy than sorrow, even then they should acquiesce in death because they will not be aware of their loss.

Perhaps some are frightened from the act of dying. This fear is unreasonable for it takes a very short time. The wise man regards all things coming from nature unavoidable and good; death is the natural end of old age; therefore it is good. Man drops as a ripe fruit. Nobody dies before his time because nature loans life as money and does not fix the time of repayment. Even the longest life compared to eternity is not more than the life of a one year old insect.

Cicero thinks as a Stoic when he tries to convince his readers of the senselessness of their fear of an end, which may be complete, but not even Plato was entirely free from a hesitation as regards non-survival, as it is evident from the Apology where Socrates' words reveal some
doubt: "The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways — I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows."¹ This is a classical statement of man's ultimate ignorance of his last end which, however, should not worry him while he is alive. That which is in accordance with the law of nature, cannot be evil.

The hope of immortality is too strong in man to allow him to look at death with the eye of a Stoic. Even Cicero who as a Roman was by nature a Stoic found Plato and the rest of the spiritually disposed philosophers a much better source of encouragement than the Stoics. When it came to immortality he was a Platonist. He even made the statement that the majority of mankind is Platonist when he applied the Stoic idea of the consensus gentium to be the first proof of immortality. It is natural to man to believe in God and in the endlessness of individual existence. Even the ancients were of this opinion because otherwise they would not have had such elaborate systems of funeral rites. Transmigration is also a universal belief expressing a form of immortality and the apotheosis of great men finds its origin in this instinct. The mysteries teach similar notions.

Cicero gives a psychological explanation for man's inability to think in abstractions and to recognize the soul's non-material nature. Man is bound by his senses

to imagine the departed as possessing a shape similar to
his material body and to be some kind of spiritualized
body with needs like those of his material body. This
belief compels the relatives of the departed to furnish
the graves of the dead with all the necessities a living
person requires. These people, not educated in philosophy,
believe that the visions which appear to them during
their sleep are real and these appearances all the more
confirm their belief in a human-shaped soul.

The proof of immortality based upon the consensus
gentium is perhaps the most primitive and the most natural
one, and it is parallel to the development of the idea of
immortality in the earliest civilizations and even in pre-
historic times. Cicero relies upon it almost as much as
on the rational arguments of later philosophers.

The second proof of immortality according to Cicero
is man's love of immortal glory. The greater a man is the
more he wants enduring fame. This must point to the reality
of deathlessness because great men have keener perception
of nature and if they wish to be immortal it must mean
that they have sensation after death. If this wish would
not affect them they would not strive to excel and to lead
honorable lives in the service of their fellow men. The
Somnium Scipionis modifies this interpretation because it
depreciates fame as compared to the happiness of heaven,
though it admits that excellent lives receive the reward
of immortality at any rate. This argument is similar to
Plato's in the Symposium where Diotima numbers the love of immortal fame among the various ways of becoming immortal.

The third proof is a series of arguments taken mostly from Plato and Pythagoras. Stoicism also shows its influence in the description of the soul and of heaven. Cicero rejects those philosophers who refuse to accept the doctrine of immortality (Dicaearchus, Democritus, Panaeitus, Epicurus). The first of the speculative arguments and the one most convincing for Cicero who uses it in all of these three essays is the argument for self-motion which he translates closely from the Phaedrus. He is of the opinion that man is conscious of this circular self-motion. The reason for his conviction is his great respect for Plato whom he calls the prince of philosophers and whom he does not subordinate to Aristotle. In the Somnium Scipionis he distinguishes between nature and mind, attributing the power of eternal self-motion only to the latter which transmits it to the former and gives rise to animated beings.

The homogeneity of the soul also proves its indestructibility because a homogenous substance is not composed of parts and cannot be divided.

The divinity of the soul is evident from its faculties. Self-reflection is the way to the realization of the existence of a spiritual entity inherent in man whose body is incapable of self-knowing. This is an echo of the
original Socratic teaching which drew man into the realization of his being in order to detach him from all external things and to make him realize his divine origin.

His intellectual powers, especially memory which Cicero admired very much; the power of investigating and discovering the nature of things and also of naming them, (which ability was judged by the Pythagoreans as the peak of wisdom); the formation of societies; the observation of planets; the building of civilizations which refine men—all these abilities disclose the divine nature of man.

God and the soul are of the same nature. Archimedes' understanding of the course of the planets is an activity similar to that of the law-making and ordering divine intellect. Poetry, eloquence, prophecy, and philosophy also must trace their origin to some divine power. There are other properties of the soul mentioned by Cicero which he takes for granted but for which he advances no arguments. The soul is free, simple, without corporeal limits, and omniscient.

We know solely by the soul and not by the senses which are only channels of perception for the soul (Platonic concept). Sometimes in meditation or in bodily ailments, though our senses are uninjured we can perceive nothing because our souls are withdrawn from the sensible world. On the other hand, in dreams and visions the soul
has experience of the supernatural or praeternatural and can even see the future, although completely detached from the senses. The soul can operate independent of the body, and without its cooperation the body is not aware of itself or of its surroundings. Because of its independence, the soul, invisible both in the body and outside of it, must increase its intelligence once liberated from its unintelligent abode. It may seem to have ceased to exist because it cannot be seen, but there is at least as great a chance for its continued existence as for its death, for it cannot be seen while it is in the body either.

The theory of recollection worked out in the Meno of Plato is used by Cicero as the fourth proof of immortality. The divine nature of the soul renders it either completely spiritual or composed of the finest matter. Cicero rejects the gross materialists of the ancient world who thought that the soul was heart, blood or brain, because in this case it would necessarily perish. The Stoic theory which explains the spirituality of the soul by a composition of the two lighter elements, fire and air, is sometimes accepted, sometimes refuted by Cicero. When he is thinking as an Academic he points out the lack of logic in the Stoic doctrine which ascribes divinity and eternity (although not individual) to a merely material substance. When he thinks about heaven he follows his Stoic conviction. Heaven is the upper regions of the
universe and is of a fiery-airy nature. The souls fly to this place being attracted to it by its affinity to their nature which is that of a fiery breath. Even if they are of number or of the continually moving spiritual entelechy of Aristotle (the fifth nature), even then their destiny is to depart to a great distance from the body.

When Cicero describes the activity of souls in heaven, which is an intuition of truth, he follows Plato. It is the greatest advantage for the soul to be freed from corporeal desires and to become able to see the truth it thirsted for while it was in the body. The spirituality of the region itself will increase its desire to know because it will also increase the soul's vision. Plato's Phaedrus is the dialogue which contains this theme with its mythological details, but which has the same meaning — the nature of the soul is to know the truth. The Pythagorean escape of matter and the Orphic ecstasy had the same purpose.

Cicero always admired the great men of the past and in his hero-worship he found it quite legitimate to employ their examples as arguments for immortality. Socrates is the first on the subject of a spiritual substance, and Cicero likes to dwell upon the courage with which he drank the poison and upon his cheerfulness which was nourished by his confidence in the eternity of soul and the happiness awaiting it in the company of the gods. Socrates knew that the thyrsus-bearers, the true mystics,
the pure souls, ascend to heaven, and to illustrate the joy of the dying philosopher he compared him to the dying swan which sings before his death a song of joy and not of sorrow.

Cato is another one of Cicero's favorites. This powerful Roman was also happy to die and he gave the same reasons for his happiness as Plato whose works he read. The true philosopher is a student of death all his life, and when it comes he is only too happy to leave the abode of darkness for light. In the De Senectute Cato is expecting to see those whom he revered, among them his beloved son, and also the famous personalities of history. He would never want to be born again. Life is like an inn and man's true home is the otherworld. This is an anticipation of our Christian concept of the difference between the world and heaven.

The old Cyrus dies with an exhortation to his son to obey him as a god because he is destined to live among the gods once he has died. Even if his soul would perish his memory should be preserved. It is universally true that the wise die with the greatest cheerfulness and the unwise with the least. Since the wise have the clearer vision they must know for certain that they will not die altogether; otherwise they could not be cheerful.

The Somnium Scipionis presents two famous historical characters, Africenus the Elder and his son Paulus, as appearing to the young Scipio in his dream. Their
appearance is the reality of their spirits which come to
instruct their descendant in heavenly things in order to
exhort him to the perfect accomplishment of his patriotic
duties. Africanus asserts that only man's spiritual na-
ture is of any value to him for his true being is his soul
and not his body, and calls to Scipio's attention the
philosopher's saying: "Know thyself to be a god." ¹

Although these men of extraordinary spirit did
not fear death but rather looked forward to it, they con-
demned suicide which they interpreted as disobedience to
the divinity in whose possession man belonged.

The last argument in favor of immortality is the
goodness of God. Here both Platonists and Stoics meet:
the design in the universe reveals the existence of a
power proceeding either from the gods or from Nature (which
is God according to the Stoics). This power cannot be
so unreasonable as to create man for eternal misery.

Besides the arguments for immortality and the
description of the nature of the soul and of heaven,
Cicero writes about the Pythagorean or Platonic cosmology
combined with Stoicism. The universe consists of nine
spheres; the outermost being God contains the whole. Upon
this sphere are the stars. The next seven spheres are the
orbits of the seven planets and the ninth is the earth. It
is immovable and all of its parts are mortal but beyond it

¹Greek and Roman Classics in Translation, trans.
Ch. Th. Murphy, et al. (New York: Longman, Green and Co.,
t-stretches the region of immortality. The music of the
spheres is imitated by expert musicians, but men's ears
are unable to comprehend the sounds due to their weak-
ness. The Orphic idea of man's divine origin and fall;
the Platonic myth of men's souls being sown into their
bodies by the gods (the Demiurge); and the Pythagorean
belief of man's soul as a part of the divine intelligence
are all incorporated into the De Senectute.

The oration at the end of the first book of
the Tusculanae Disputationes is an exhortation to receive
death as a boon. We should prepare ourselves cheerfully
if we know the time of our death because we either return
to our true home or fall eternally asleep. If we do not
know the time, even then Cicero exhorts us to look for-
ward to death without fear as if it were a good rather
than an evil.

It took a Socrates to combine the vatic consciousness
of the philosophers with the divine substance of the
mystics.

The idea of the soul and its immortality grew
from humble origins among the primitives and the earliest
civilizations to a philosophy in Plato and his successors.
It developed through successive stages. At first the soul
was a formidable ghost who had to be propitiated. Among
the lively Greeks it became a lifeless shade which was not
conscious of itself and whose gloomy existence scarcely
was better than non-existence. The Orphics were the first
to realize a true spiritual aspiration in man for something perfect — an unalloyed happiness which they associated with the union of the human soul and the divinity, although in the inferior way of Dionysiac ecstasy. The philosophical awakening effected a change of thought which tended to divest the soul of its individuality equating it with the divine but material element in the universe and depriving it of the hope of a future life. Man's soul was only a part of his psychological consciousness — either the dream or the waking consciousness which ceased to exist individually after his bodily death.

The Pythagoreans tried to unite mysticism and science and thereby to arrive at a more penetrating view of the reality of the soul, and though their attempts were not entirely successful they at least tamed the emotional extremes of the Orphics with their stress on mental and physical discipline.

It took a Socrates to combine the waking consciousness of the philosophers with the divine substance of the mystics and to call men's attention to their internal world which is a spiritual reality accessible only by self-reflection. This internal reality demanded all of man's energies to purify it and to free it from externals and passions. Socrates in Plato's interpretation believed in the continued existence of a spiritual soul and lived a life of a true philosopher denying his lower appetites to prepare himself for death.
In Plato's writings the soul became the center of a system of arguments for immortality which are threefold: allegorical, rational, and intuitive. He concentrated less upon self-reflection than Socrates and devoted almost as much time to mythology and poetry as to speculation. His most successful attempts to prove immortality are realized in some of his rational arguments and in his emphasis upon the mystical love of the soul which has its root in its affinity with the divine.

Aristotle marked a decline in the development of the understanding of the soul. His corrections of Plato and other philosophers are right but his approach is that of a materialist who cannot conceive of an individual post mortem existence. A general decline succeeded upon the establishment of the great schools of thought in Greece and the political uncertainties of the times bred a confusion in philosophy. A movement accompanied the dissolution of speculative thought which concentrated upon ethics and theology. Stoicism and Epicureanism represented this tendency and the Academy (Middle) responded to it with a reaction which championed scepticism. The result of the confusion in thought was eclecticism which meant the burgeoning of individual philosophies both in Greece and Rome. It was especially well received by the latter.

The best known Roman eclectic was M. Tullius Cicero in whose philosophical dialogues posterity found the essence of the philosophies of the ancients. Cicero
professed himself a member of the Academy and his method of building up his own convictions reflected the free spirit of this school. In the question of the soul and immortality he showed a clearly idealistic and Platonic tendency, although some of his concepts were fashioned by the materialistic Stoics. He strove to convince himself of the spiritual nature of the soul and of the truth of immortality by upholding Plato as the surest authority upon whose word he must accept immortality almost as a fact. Nevertheless, he remained hesitant and could not dissuade himself of the possibility of a complete extinction which, however, did not discourage him. Rather it compelled him to assume the attitude of a Stoic who faced the inevitableness of Nature with serenity and resignation.
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