

## Phaedo II 70a–84b<sup>1</sup>

*Introduction.* Cebes reminds Socrates of the widespread opinion that the soul perishes when we die. In response, Socrates tries to prove the soul's immortality with three arguments: the argument from opposites, the argument from recollection, and the argument from affinity (similarity).

*Questions.*

1. Socrates mentions an 'old legend' (70c). What is this legend, and what is it used for in the discussion?
- 2.★ The argument from opposites (70d–72d) aims to prove the old legend, i.e. that there is a place where the souls reside after death. Sketch the argument and briefly evaluate it.
3. Socrates presents a supplementary argument at 72a–d: (i) If living things came from other living things, then everything would be dead. (ii) But not everything is dead. (iii) So, living things do not come from living things. Do you think this is this a plausible argument?
4. Sketch the theory of recollection (72e ff.).
5. Complete the table (78b–80d).

<i>Class of dispersible things:</i>	<i>Class of indispersible things:</i>
compound	

- 6.★ Socrates claims to show that the soul is immortal (80b). How does he argue for this? Is this a good argument?
7. What happens to a soul that does not manage fully to detach from the body (81b–82b)?
- 8.★ At 83d, Socrates suggests that bodily pleasures 'pin down' the soul and make it 'corporeal' (*καὶ ποιεῖ σωματοειδῆ*, kai poiei sômatodeidê). Do you find this 'bodification' of the soul plausible?

*Background.* (a) At 73b, Socrates mentions a diagram. This is an allusion to the famous passage in *Meno* (82a ff.), where a slave boy 'recollects' geometrical knowledge. (b) There is an interesting passage at 75b, which is reminiscent of the way in which rationalists argue for innate knowledge: e.g., we can know *that x* is the case, but how do we know that *x* is *necessarily* the case? It seems the senses cannot show this. More in class. (c) The passage at 82e ff. closely resembles the famous cave analogy presented in the *Republic* (514a ff.).

<sup>1</sup> *The Last Days of Socrates*, pp. 132–54.

