

Plato's Ingredient Principle (*Phaedo* 105a2-5)

Abstract

In his final argument for the immortality of the soul in the *Phaedo*, Plato relies on the following principle: Whenever something A enters another thing B and as a result, B comes to be F, A does not admit the opposite of F. This principle seems to be either mistaken or unhelpful. For, on one reading, it says that A itself cannot exhibit the opposite of F, but it seems that in some cases, this is possible. On another reading, it says that as long as A is present in B, B cannot exhibit the opposite of F. For instance, saccharine makes your coffee sweet but is bitter in itself. This, however, would not lead to the desired conclusion that the soul, which brings life to the body, cannot be the opposite of alive. It rather shows that the ensouled body cannot be the opposite of alive. This paper will show that we can accept the first reading, and thus understand why Plato thought that a disembodied soul cannot perish, if we replace the distinction between things and their properties with a slightly different one.

1. The First Two Arguments

In Plato's *Phaedo*, Socrates develops several arguments that are supposed to lead to the conclusion that his soul will not perish after his death. I will defend a certain step in the last one of these arguments against a certain objection. Let me begin with a brief, rough, and sketchy outline of the overall argument in the *Phaedo*. Socrates wants to show that a philosopher need not be afraid of death. He is confident that after his own death, he will be able to achieve what philosophers strive for during their lives, namely intellectual cognition and wisdom. This confidence is justified only if Socrates will continue to exist after his death in a form that makes cognition and thought possible. This, then, needs to be shown. Socrates thinks that he can show it by means of a number of arguments, the first of which rests on the following

principle of opposites: Everything that comes to be and has an opposite can only come to be out of this opposite (*Phaedo* 70e4-6). Since death is the opposite of life, this principle entails that everything that comes to be alive must come to be alive out of something dead, just as everything that dies must come to be dead out of something alive. Therefore, when a living being dies, it comes to be what it used to be before it was born (72a4-8). This does not yet entail that after death, the soul of a human being will be capable of cognition and thought. The second argument, the *argument from recollection*, is supposed to establish this conclusion. It is taken to show that all beings that are capable of a certain kind of cognition during their lives must already possess a certain kind of knowledge before they are born (75c1-d5).

The validity and soundness of the first two arguments may of course be questioned, but I will not do this here. Socrates' interlocutors, at any rate, accept them. By the end of the first third of the dialogue, Socrates is thus in a position to draw the following conclusion. When humans die, they come to be what they used to be before they were born. Before they were born, they were capable of a certain kind of cognition. Therefore, they will be capable of this kind of cognition after they die (77c6-d5). The remaining problem in the *Phaedo* is not whether these arguments are successful as far as they go, but rather whether they prove enough.

If the first two arguments are successful, there will be two things that remain after a person dies: Her disembodied soul and her disensouled body. Her body will start to disintegrate and eventually cease to be a discernible unit. The open question is whether this might also happen to the soul. That the body of a living being persists for some time after its death does not imply that it cannot perish. By the same token, that the soul of a human being persists after its death does not imply that it cannot perish. We therefore need a further argument in order to show that the disembodied soul will not suffer the same fate as the disensouled body.

2. The Ingredient Principle

So the question is: Even if the soul of a person can exist and know certain things after leaving her body, might it not eventually cease to exist all the same? The final argument in the *Phaedo* aims at settling this question. It rests on a principle that Socrates introduces in one passage as follows:

Not only does the opposite not admit the opposite, but also that which brings some opposite to that to which it comes itself, i.e. the thing itself which does the bringing, never admits the opposition of that which is brought in. (105a2-5)¹

That is to say, if one thing A enters another thing B and as a result, B comes to be F, then A does not admit the opposite of F. Assume, for instance, that you put something in your coffee and as a result, the coffee tastes salty. Then you may assume that the thing you put in your coffee does not admit the opposite of saltiness. In this case, the reason is presumably that what you put in your coffee was itself salty, hence not the opposite of salty. Since the principle is initially plausible in cases where ingredients are added to mixtures, I will refer to it as the *Ingredient Principle*.

Of course, it is not enough that the Ingredient Principle be plausible in a number of given cases. It must be shown to apply to the case that is at stake, which is the following. Socrates assumes that the soul is that in a living being which renders it alive (105d3-4). When the soul enters a body, it brings life to

¹ μὴ μόνον τὸ ἐναντίον τὸ ἐναντίον μὴ δέχεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκεῖνο, ὃ ἂν ἐπιφέρῃ τι ἐναντίον ἐκείνω, ἐφ' ὅτι ἂν αὐτὸ ἴη, αὐτὸ τὸ ἐπιφέρον τὴν τοῦ ἐπιφερομένου ἐναντιότητα μηδέποτε δέξασθαι. Translation (roughly) according Rowe 1993, 257.

Another version of the same principle (104d1-3) is textually difficult (cf. Kanayama 2000, 67-9; Gallop 1975, 202-3; Rowe 1993, 256). Therefore, I stick to the above formulation.

this body. By the Ingredient Principle, Socrates can infer from this that the soul of a living being cannot admit the opposite of life (105d10-11). If this is taken to mean that the soul cannot be the opposite of alive, it will lead to the desired conclusion, that the soul cannot at all cease to exist.

However, that the soul does not admit the opposite of life may be understood in two ways. On a fairly natural reading, it means that the soul cannot *be* the opposite of alive. On an alternative reading, however, it merely means that when the soul is in a body, *this body* cannot be the opposite of alive. Both readings are problematic.

First Reading. The first version of the Ingredient Principle, according to which an ingredient must itself exhibit the feature that it brings with it, is prone to counter-examples. For instance, saccharine may bring sweetness to your coffee, but in itself, saccharine is bitter and not sweet (Gallop 1975, 213). Likewise, a spice that makes a soup tasty may in itself be the opposite of tasty (Ebert 2004, 388), and a virus may bring death to a living being, but only if it is the opposite of dead (Hartman 1972, 221).

Among the examples that Socrates mentions in order to motivate the Ingredient Principle, fever (πυρετός) is accordingly controversial (105c2-4). Socrates assumes that fever brings sickness to a body, but this should not be taken to entail that fever *is* sick. This is, to be sure, not exactly what the Ingredient Principle would require. All it requires is that a fever is not the opposite of sick, and since fever is itself neither sick nor the opposite of sick, we may accept it in this case (Ebert 2004, 387). However, if we were to conclude, by analogy, that the soul is neither alive nor dead, the Ingredient Principle would not get us where we want to be. It would not entail that the soul is alive. So, if the principle is to lead to the conclusion that the soul is alive, it should also lead to the conclusion that fever is sick.

Nicholas Denyer tries to circumvent this difficulty by stating the case as follows: "fire is hot, snow cold, fever an illness, and three an odd number" (2007, 93). He thus avoids calling fever itself sick. But this is only to shift the problem to a different place, since whereas a fire renders a stove hot

and the number three renders a collection of things odd, fever does not render the body *an illness*. The case of fever still does not behave like the others. Unlike fire and the number three, fever does not seem to exhibit what it brings with it, for what it brings with it is being ill and what it exhibits is being an illness.

David Bostock justifies his version of the Ingredient Principle by inferring it from a more general *principle of causation*: "It is necessary that: if anything x is the cause of a thing's being P , then it is necessary that if x exists x is P " (Bostock 1985, 181 fn. 2; cf. Dancy 2004, 149). Thus, if the soul is the cause of a body's being alive, this entails that necessarily, the soul is alive as long as it exists. This principle, however, is even more vulnerable to counter-examples than the Ingredient Principle itself. A man-eating tiger may be the cause of someone's being dead, but the tiger is not necessarily dead if it exists (Hartman 1972, 221). Also, the Ingredient Principle is weaker than Bostock's principle of causation. It does not require that the cause that makes something P must be P ; it merely requires that it cannot admit the *opposite* of P (Gallop 1975, 186; Dancy 2004, 303). Therefore, the Ingredient Principle may well be true in cases where Bostock's principle of causation fails. For our purposes, we don't need Bostock's stronger principle of causation; all we need is the weaker Ingredient Principle. So we should not justify the latter by inferring it from the former.

Dorothea Frede takes the claim that the soul is alive to be warranted by the following *eponymy condition*: That which necessarily brings a feature with it may be called by the same name as the things that exhibit this feature, and hence it is one of them (2011, 147 fn. 4). As stated by Socrates in 102b1-3, however, the eponymy condition merely says this much: If something participates in an idea, it may be called after this idea. Thus if your coffee participates in sweetness, it may be called after sweetness, e.g. sweet. This condition does not warrant calling the soul alive unless it is already established that the soul participates in the idea of life. But this is not yet established; rather, it is exactly the thing that needs to be shown. A little later,

Socrates says that he is concerned with “those things of which, since they are in them, the things which are named bear the eponym” (103b8-9; Frede 1978, 37).² This does imply that we are here speaking about cases where the name of a thing is derived from the name of one of its ingredients. However, even if we already knew that the soul and the ensouled body are both eponyms of life, this need not imply that both of them participate in life. That something participates in an idea implies that it is an eponym of this idea, but that something is an eponym of an idea does *not* conversely imply that it participates in it (cf. Bestor 1978).

Therefore, if Socrates were to rest his case on the eponymy condition, he would have to assume without further argument that the soul is alive, and infer from this that it brings life to the body by being alive (cf. White 1976, 141; White 1988, 403). He would not need the Ingredient Principle in order to establish that the soul cannot admit the opposite of life. This is probably the reason why the Ingredient Principle does not occur in Frede's outline of the final proof (1978, 29-30). However, if Socrates were to assume without argument that the soul is necessarily alive, there would not be much left to prove.

In any case, if the Ingredient Principle would have it that all ingredients must exhibit whatever they bring into the things to which they are added, it would not be generally true. There would be cases where it fails, and there is no guarantee that the soul's bringing life to the body is not one of these cases. The soul might well bring life to the body without being alive.

Second Reading. Alternatively, the Ingredient Principle may be read as the claim that whenever an ingredient brings a feature into a thing, *this thing* cannot exhibit the opposite of the feature (cf. Keyt 1963, 170; Kanayama 2000, 72). In itself, saccharine may be the opposite of sweet, but once it sweetens your coffee, your coffee cannot be the opposite of sweet.

² περὶ ἐκείνων αὐτῶν ὧν ἐνόητων ἔχει τὴν ἐπονυμίαν τὰ ὀνομαζόμενα.
Translation (roughly) according to Rowe 1993, 253.

On this reading, it may still be feasible to call an ingredient by the name of what it brings with it. Even if saccharine is not sweet, it is a *sweetener*, and this name also derives from the word “sweetness.” Saccharine is thus an eponym of sweetness without literally participating in sweetness. Edwin Hartman accordingly suggests that ingredients possess the feature they bring with them in something like a “pauline” sense (1972, 222). This sense is usually explained as follows: When St. Paul says in I *Corinthians* 13,4 that “charity suffereth long,” all he really means is that everything that exhibits charity also suffers long (cf. Peterson 1973). In roughly the same sense, when we say that saccharine is sweet, we may merely mean that everything that contains saccharine is, to that extent, sweet. Just as charity brings patience with it, saccharine brings sweetness with it. This will not imply that saccharine itself participates in sweetness.

Commentators who argue that in the *Phaedo*, ingredients are properties (O’Brien 1967, 220-1; Vlastos 1973, 103; Bestor 1988, 38-40) or immanent characters (Hackforth 1955, 162; Rowe 1993, 257-8)³ will have to read the Ingredient Principle in this way. The property by virtue of which your coffee is sweet is not literally sweet; it merely makes things sweet. It is sweet only in Hartman’s pauline sense. However, if the Ingredient Principle is to apply to the soul, we cannot assume that all ingredients are properties. The soul is not a property of the body (cf. Schiller 1967; White 1976, 129-30). Now as Socrates states the Ingredient Principle it is sufficiently neutral: Nothing, be it a property or a thing, that brings a feature into another thing, can admit the opposite of this feature (Hartman 1972, 219; Frede 1978, 34; Kanayama 2000, 71; Frede 2011, 149). Stated thus generally, the principle applies to the soul even if the soul is not a property.

The trouble with the second reading of the Ingredient Principle is that plausible though it is, it does not any longer establish the conclusion that we need in order to go on with the argument. We want to show that the soul

³ For references on immanent characters (particularized properties) in Plato, see Dancy 2004, 309-10 fn. 41; cf. also Frede 2011, 148.

cannot be the opposite of alive; but now all we get is that the ensouled *body* cannot be the opposite of alive (Keyt 1963, 170; Hartman 1972, 227; Ebert 2004, 396).

The overall problem is thus that in one sense, the Ingredient Principle would get us what we need, if it applied to the soul; but in this sense it may very well not apply to the soul. In another sense, it does apply to the soul but does not yield the desired conclusion. This is the objection against the final argument in the *Phaedo* that I will be concerned with for the rest of this paper.

Some commentators assume that Plato deliberately presents a defective argument, so that the reader is supposed to spot the flaw and put it right (Ebert 2004, 420; Kanayama 2000, 86). I think that Plato takes the final argument to be valid as far as it goes, and my aim is to show how it can be made to look valid. (Note that the overall proof of the immortality of the soul will be shown to also depend on the first two arguments, so that it may still turn out to be unsuccessful.) Roughly, I think that we fail to appreciate the final argument because we impose on Plato a distinction between things and properties that he does not draw in this form in this context.⁴ We think of ingredients as something in a thing that brings a certain *property* with it, so that the question is whether all ingredients exhibit the property they bring with them. This question, it seems, should be answered in the negative. Either the ingredient is a thing that causes its host to have a certain property, and then this thing need not have the property it causes. Or the ingredient is itself something like a property, and then again, the property need not exhibit itself. My approach can be motivated as follows: If things and properties were not as

⁴ Mills also argues that we fail to understand the final argument “because we do not accept Plato’s semantical presuppositions” (1958, 49). However, he describes these presuppositions in a way that differs from my account. He subscribes to a view that Cresswell (1972, 151) and Bestor (1988, 48) also endorse, namely that according to Plato, only the property F-ness may truly be called F (Mills 1958, 55). In contrast, I agree with Heinaman (1989) that for Plato, F-ness is F in the same sense in which all other F things are F.

distinct as we think, or at least distinct in a different way, ingredients might not differ as much from what they bring with them. This would help with the argument, since it would imply that the soul is not as distinct from the life it brings to the body as we think. So far, however, this is only a rough and enigmatic way of putting the general idea. In order to flesh it out, I need to do some semantics.

3. Simple Platonic Semantics

It is often noted that in the final argument in the *Phaedo*, Plato does not draw a very clear distinction between things and their properties (White 1976, 130; cf. Hackforth 1955, 162 und 165; O'Brien 1967, 227; Hartman 1972, 224; Bostock 1985, 186-7; Rowe 1993, 264; Ebert 2004, 395-7; Strobel 2007, 246). I think that we cannot understand Plato's argument if we stick to our "clear" version of this distinction. Plato is not confused, he merely draws distinctions that differ from the ones we are familiar with. In order to bring this out, I will now suggest replacing our distinction between things and properties with a distinction that performs the same semantic function in a rather different way. I am not here concerned with the question of whether Plato distinguishes between things and properties at all (for which see Prauss 1966 and Mann 2000). Here I want to defend the comparatively modest claim that what an ingredient brings into a thing is not a property, and that the soul is neither an ordinary thing nor a property.

In order to establish the distinction that I want to put in the place of our distinction between a thing and its properties, I will consider simple statements in which we describe a given thing as such and such. For instance, "Your coffee is salty" or "Socrates is alive." This investigation serves roughly the same purpose as Socrates' own excursus about the ideas as causes (95e-102a), namely to clarify what it means for a thing to exhibit a feature, and thus what it means for a thing to bring a feature into another thing. Unless we understand this, we will not properly understand what it means for the soul to bring life to a body.

It is commonly assumed that in a sentence such as “Your coffee is salty,” the predicate term “salty” stands for a property. I will suggest a semantics according to which this is not so.⁵ In order to make this move, I need to introduce some terminology.

A sentence such as “Your coffee is salty” consists of three parts: the copula “is” and two categorematic phrases, “your coffee” and “salty.” The phrase before the copula will be called the *subject term* and the phrase that follows it the *predicate term*. I assume that for both terms, there is something they *stand for* and something they *refer to*.

The important bit is that the predicate terms “salty” and “alive” do *not* stand for the *properties* of being salty and being alive, but for something salty, insofar as it is salty, and for something alive, insofar as it is alive. Thus in “Your coffee is salty,” the subject term *stands for* your coffee and the predicate term *stands for* something salty (insofar as it is salty). Further, the subject term *refers to* your coffee.

What does the predicate term *refer to*? My answer is: it too refers to your coffee.⁶ One may use “something salty” as a subject term in order to refer to your coffee, and in the context of the statement “Your coffee is salty,” the salty thing in question is indeed your coffee. Thus the predicate term stands for something salty and refers to your coffee; this is why it describes your coffee *as* something salty.

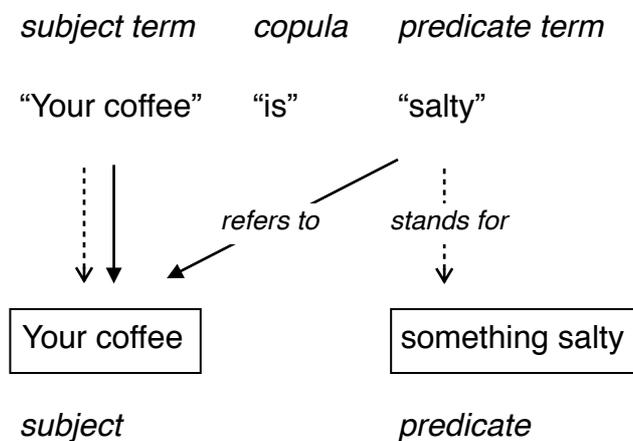
It does not matter much whether the statement “Your coffee is salty” is true or false. If it is true, the predicate term “something salty” refers to your coffee. If it is false, the predicate term purports to refer to your coffee but does not actually do so. In any case, we see what a statement means by considering

⁵ For the record, semantics without properties have been proposed e.g. by Leśniewski (cf. Śłupecki 1984), Woodger 1951, Martin 1953, and Sommers 1982.

⁶ Here I depart from Cresswell, who thinks that according to Plato, the predicate term F is a proper name of F-ness (1987, 135).

the case in which it is true.

On the side of things, there is one entity that both terms refer to when the statements is true, namely your coffee; but there are two distinct entities they *stand for*. The subject term stands for what it refers to, namely your coffee. The predicate term, however, refers to your coffee but stands for something salty, insofar as it is salty. I will reserve the label “predicate” for that which the predicate *stands for*. Subject terms stand for subjects, and predicate terms stand for predicates.



In “Your coffee is salty,” the predicate is *something salty*, and in “Socrates is alive,” the predicate is *something alive*. What I call the predicate of a sentence is thus a *thing*, not a word or string of words. This is a semantic category that may be unfamiliar to modern readers. I have introduced it by saying that the predicate term “salty” stands for something salty, *insofar as it is salty*. It might therefore seem as though I reduce predicates to aggregates of things and properties, namely *things as having a certain property*. In the present context, however, I wish to treat predicates as simple and fundamental entities. After all, the property *sweetness* certainly has no better claim to fundamentality than the predicate *something sweet*.

The trick is to think of something salty or “the salty” in it *not* as a *thing with an added qualification*, but rather as a *qualified something* on its own. Gareth

Matthews calls aggregates of things and qualifications “kooky objects” (Matthews 1982, 224), and Marc Cohen develops this into the notion we need here. Cohen speaks of *simple kooky objects* where something is not thought of as a subject-cum-quality, but merely as *a quale* (Cohen 2008, 13). So, where *the salty coffee* is a kooky object in Matthews’ sense, *the salty* is a simple kooky object. Using this terminology, we may say that predicates are simple kooky objects. The predicate of your salty coffee is not saltiness, nor is it the coffee plus its saltiness; it is simply “the salty” in your cup, merely insofar as it is salty.

Another way of achieving the same result is to point out that the predicate term of a simple sentence may always be turned into a noun phrase, even where it starts out as an adjective. Thus instead of saying that your coffee is salty, one may just as well say that your coffee is *something salty*, and instead of saying that Socrates is alive, one may say that Socrates is *something alive*. In Greek, the distinction between adjectives and predicative noun phrases is not even marked. The Greek for “Socrates is alive” and “Socrates is something alive” is exactly the same. This is, presumably, the reason why most ancient grammars do not distinguish between substantives and adjectives (ἐπίθετα) as separate classes of *words*, but rather between adjectival and substantival *uses* of nouns (Steinthal 1890, 251-4; cf. Kahn 1973, 102-4). What we call an adjective, they refer to as a noun in predicate position.

If there is no distinction between substantives and adjectives in predicate position, the general form of the simple statements under consideration should be stated as follows: *This thing is that kind of thing*. This is not the way Frege would parse these statements. On a Fregean analysis, “Your coffee is salty” would have the form *This thing has that property*, and to refer to the property of a thing is not to refer to this thing. In contrast, to refer to a salty

kind of thing is, in a given context, to refer to your coffee.⁷

On this analysis of simple predication, it is rather natural to think that if your coffee is salty, the subject term “your coffee” and the predicate term “(something) salty” refer to the same thing (and if your coffee is not salty, they do not).⁸ Yet, since predications are not identity statements, there must be a difference between the two terms. There are in fact two such differences.

First, the predicate term describes the thing it refers to in a more general way than the subject term. Intuitively, if your coffee is salty, one may refer to your coffee as something salty; but your coffee is not the only thing one may refer to in this way. Aristotle makes this point by saying that the predicate term can never be a singular term. In his words, what is predicated in common is always τοιόνδε and never τόδε τι (*Sophistical Refutations* 22, 178b37-39 and 179a8-10; cf. Kung 1981; Strobel 2007). The subject term, in contrast,

⁷ Wilfrid Sellars might have something similar in mind when he says that in Aristotle, “all predication is built on one fundamental form, namely ‘X is a Y’” (1957, 690). Here, the indefinite article implies that Y is a place holder for a noun phrase, not for an adjective. If X is a Y, X may be referred to as a Y. Similarly, Allan Bäck (2000) suggests that in Aristotle, one may read “S is P” as “S exists as a P,” and this also involves the assumption that P is a predicate noun.

⁸ Cresswell starts out with the assumption that for Plato, subject terms and predicate terms refer to the same entity; but he thinks that the predicate term “tall” refers to *tallness* (1987, 147-8). From this he concludes that strictly speaking, “Simmiias is tall” is false and only “Tallness is tall” is true (1972, 151; cf. Clegg 1973, 37). I argue, in contrast, that “tall” stands for *something tall*, so that for Plato, “Simmiias is tall” is literally true, given that Simmiias is something tall. (In *Phaedo* 102b-c, Socrates says that “Simmiias is taller than Socrates” is not exactly true. What he means is that strictly speaking, *the tall one* is taller than *the small one* – where the tall one happens to be Simmiias and the small one happens to be Socrates.)

may be a proper name (e.g. "Socrates") and thus not at all describe the subject in a general way.⁹

Second, the subject term is naturally taken as referring *de re* and the predicate term as referring *de dicto*. Suppose that your coffee is the drink I gave you. Then, the two statements "Your coffee is salty" and "The drink I gave you is salty" are *about the same thing*. They say the same thing of the same thing. The predicate term, however, cannot be replaced by a co-referential term in the same way. The resulting statement will have the same *truth value* as the original; but it might not at all say *the same thing* of its subject. Suppose that everything that is salty reminds you of the Atlantic Ocean and vice versa. Then "Your coffee is (something) salty" and "Your coffee (is something that) reminds you of the Atlantic Ocean" do not say the same thing of your coffee.

Put in a nutshell, whereas it does not matter how the subject term refers to the subject, as long as it does so successfully, it matters how the predicate term refers to the subject. This is so because the predicate term refers to the subject merely insofar as it is something such, not insofar as it is something other. I express this by saying that the predicate term stands for something salty, insofar as it is salty.

This view of what a predicate is is in line with Plato's description of ideas as *uniform* (μονοειδής: *Phaedo* 78d5, 80b2, 83e3 and *Symposium* 211b1, e4).¹⁰ I take this to mean that predicates are something like simple kooky objects. Ideas are not predicates, to be sure, since they do not enter the realm of changing things. But predicates are counterparts of ideas. Something salty,

⁹ Hackforth seems to infer from this that subjects are "devoid of all attributes" (1955, 155); but this does not follow. They are not *referred to* in terms of a specific attribute, but they may in fact *have* many of them.

¹⁰ Cf. Prauss 1966, 36-7; Mills 1958, 45-6; Hicken 1957, 50; Vlastos 1973, 62-3. Note that there are dialogues in which the ideas do not appear to be uniform.

insofar as it is salty, corresponds to the idea of the salty as such. In the present context, I am only concerned with the salty in your coffee, not with the salty as such.¹¹ Just like the salty as such, the salty in your coffee is uniform. The salty in your coffee is your coffee, merely insofar as it is salty. Insofar as your coffee is salty, it is not black, nor is it hot. It is nothing but salty (plus the things that immediately follow from its being salty). In this sense, all predicates are uniform. They can be referred to as such only under one description. Subjects, in contrast, are *multiform* (πολυειδής, *Phaedo* 80b4). The very same subject may be referred to by means of many different names and descriptions.

If the salty in your coffee is your coffee, merely insofar as it is salty, it is not at all a *property* of your coffee. That is, it is not the property of being salty. It is natural to say that your coffee, insofar as it is salty, is salty; but the property of being salty is not salty. There is a clear distinction between salty things and their saltiness, and Plato does not seem to draw any such distinction between the form, the salty itself, and its instances. In one passage in the *Phaedo* he uses “the equal itself” (αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον, 74a12) and “equality” (ἰσότης, 74c1) interchangeably (Mills 1958, 48). Some commentators conclude from this that when Plato speaks of “the F as such,” what he really means is the property, F-ness (e.g. Matthen 1984, 288; cf. Gallop 1975, 196-7). However, one may just as well conclude that when Plato speaks of F-ness (ποιότης), what he really means is not the property of being F but rather something F, insofar as it is F (Geach 1956, 72-3).¹²

¹¹ Some commentators have noticed that the ideas as such, as beings that are independent of their instances, do not play an important role in the final argument (cf. Frede 1999, 147; Ebert 2004, 378). Note that although Socrates mentions the form of life in 106d5-6, he does not identify it with the soul.

¹² Cf. also Crombie 1963, 303. To follow Geach in this point is not to subscribe to his view that the idea of the equal relates to equal things in the same sense as the standard pound relates to the things measured by it (Geach 1956, 74; cf. against Geach: Allen 1959; Clegg 1973, 34-5; Gallop 1975, 96 and 127).

It is true that an expression such as “the equal itself” (αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον) may either have a concrete sense or a very general one. But in its most general sense, it is best taken to refer to *the equal as such* (Webster 1952, 24), and there is still a considerable difference between *the equal as such* and the property, equality (Dancy 2004, 121 fn. 13).

4. The Ingredient Principle Again

The problem was that in one sense, the Ingredient Principle says that the ingredient must be what it brings with it, but this does not always seem to be the case. Either the ingredient is a thing that causes its host to have a property, and then it need not exhibit this property. Or it is itself something like a property, and then again, it need not exhibit itself. In most cases it won't. In another sense, the Ingredient Principle does not imply that the ingredient is what it brings with it, but this would not lead to the desired conclusion that the soul is necessarily alive.

I have now pointed out a way of accepting the first reading of the Ingredient Principle. I have replaced the notion of a property by the notion of what I call a predicate: something such, merely insofar as it is such. This concerns what is brought into a thing by an ingredient. The stuff that you put in your coffee does not bring saltiness with it, so to speak, but rather something salty. It does so by being something of this very kind: something salty. It is something salty, and because of this, the coffee is something salty, too.

In general, then, ingredients make their hosts F by being F. Since the ingredient is F, something F is in the host, and this makes the host F. If the ingredient were not F, its presence in the host would not be a reason for the host's being F. This is just what the Ingredient Principle says. For instance, fire makes a stove hot by being hot. It is something hot in the stove that turns the stove into something hot. As for Saccharine, as long as it is in your coffee, it is as sweet as your coffee, so it, too, makes the coffee sweet by being sweet. It is the sweet in your coffee. If it weren't sweet as long as it is in your coffee, it could not be the reason why your coffee is sweet. Man-eating tigers

and viruses, on the other hand, are not at all ingredients. They do not kill their hosts by being the dead in them. They are not relevantly similar to the soul.

The case of fever requires some more comment. According to Plato, fever makes a body sick. Now the word that is translated as fever (πυρετός) may be taken to refer to “a particular form of hotness in a body” (Rowe 1993, 260). Given the semantics introduced above, this means that fever is something hot. But the thing that is hot when fever is in a body *is* this body. So fever is actually body, insofar as it is hot. Unlike fire in a stove, fever is not some additional hot thing in your body. It is your body insofar as your body is hot. Therefore, that which is hot is also that which is sick.

In all these cases, the feature that the ingredient brings into the host actually remains the ingredient's feature. The heat in the stove is actually the heat of the fire in it, the sweetness of your coffee is actually the sweetness that saccharine does exhibit as long as it is in your coffee,¹³ and the hotness of your sick body is actually the hotness of its fever. Ingredients do not simply cause a feature to be present in the host, they bring it with them into the host.

Now consider what happens when these ingredients are taken out. Different kinds of ingredients behave in rather different ways. Fever cannot be taken out of the body without ceasing to exist. As we have seen, it is the body insofar as it is hot; so it must cease to exist when the body ceases to be hot. Fire, in contrast, may be taken out of a stove without ceasing to exist. As a consequence, there are two ways in which the stove may cease to be hot: the fire in it may be either extinguished or be taken elsewhere (103d10-12). In both cases, the fire must be something hot as long as it exists, but it may well cease to exist. Saccharine is like fire in that it may be taken out of your coffee without ceasing to exist. It is unlike fire in that it may also cease to be what it

¹³ I am here assuming that saccharine is sweet as long as it is in your coffee. Being an empirical assumption, this could be false, in which case saccharine would merely cause your coffee to be sweet in the way a tiger causes you to be dead, thus it would not be an ingredient in the required sense.

caused your coffee to be, i.e. something sweet, without ceasing to exist.

The question is what happens when the soul leaves the body. As long as the soul renders your body alive, it may either be something alive in your body, like fire and saccharine, or it may be your body insofar as it is alive, like the fever. In both cases, it is certainly something alive. This is implied by the Ingredient Principle. The question is whether it may cease to be alive after leaving the body. The first two arguments are supposed to have shown that just like fire and saccharine, the soul may leave the body without ceasing to exist. However, after leaving the body, various things might happen to the soul. Like fire, it might continue to exist for a while, but then eventually perish. Or, like saccharine, it might continue to exist but cease to be what it caused its host to be (i.e. alive). For the final argument to be successful, both of these scenarios need to be excluded. This can be done by pointing out that although the soul is not a predicate, it behaves like a predicate in an important respect.

Like a predicate and unlike fire or saccharine, the soul is *uniform*. In the *Republic X*, in the context of a different proof for the immortality of the soul, Socrates says that once the soul is considered in separation from the body, one will be able to see whether it is uniform or multiform (612a4), and he suggests that in itself, the soul is indeed devoid of plurality (611b). This does not make it a predicate; but it means that just like a predicate, the soul is only one thing. If it is alive, it is nothing but alive (plus everything that is entailed by its being alive).

It might seem that in addition to merely being alive, the soul must also be a subject of cognition. However, the soul (and thus the ensouled human being) is a subject of cognition *insofar as* it is alive. The argument from recollection is taken to show that the immortal soul is capable of thought and cognition, and for this rational soul, to be alive is to be a subject of cognition.¹⁴ Therefore, that the soul is alive and a subject of cognition does not mean that it is two

¹⁴ In contrast, for fire to be something hot is not for it to be something bright.

things rather than one. It is one by being the other.

In one important respect, then, the soul behaves like a predicate. A predicate, as I have introduced this notion, is something such, merely insofar as it is such, and the soul is likewise something alive, merely insofar as it is alive. It is nothing but alive. For the next step in the argument, the important thing to note is that a predicate can only cease to exist if something other than this predicate undergoes a change. A predicate is what it is only under a certain description, so that this description can never cease to be true of *it*. In order that this description may cease to be true of anything, it must cease to be true of something other than the predicate itself. Therefore, for a predicate to perish is always for a subject to cease to fall under it.¹⁵ The salty in your coffee, for instance, can only cease to exist if your coffee ceases to be salty and comes to be something other than salty.

Thus in general, for something uniform to cease to exist, another thing that is multiform must cease to host it. However, the first two arguments are supposed to have shown that the soul is able to leave its host, the body, without ceasing to be alive and capable of a certain kind of cognition. This makes the soul rather special. Like a predicate, it is uniform, so that the only way for it to cease to exist would be for something other to cease to be alive. Unlike a predicate, however, the soul can exist on its own, without being in a body as in a subject.

This is how the soul differs from fire and saccharine. Fire may eventually perish after leaving a stove because for fire to exist is for something else to burn. Even after fire has left the stove, it is still in something else. It will cease to exist when this other thing ceases to burn. Saccharine is something sweet in your coffee that may cease to be sweet after leaving your coffee. This is possible because in itself, it is something more than merely sweet. Saccharine is not uniform. The soul, in contrast, can exist without being in anything

¹⁵ A subject S falls under a predicate P if the simple statement "S is something P" is true.

further, and it is nothing but alive. Since it is uniform and something uniform can only cease to exist when its host changes, this means that once the soul has left the body for good, it cannot any longer cease to exist.

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