

## Ana Gelovani

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University  
ana.gelovani@tsu.ge

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1576-3038>

# Conceptual Metaphors of Soul in Philosophical Discourse

## Abstract

Philosophy has historically engaged with fundamental metaphysical questions concerning human life and death, the nature of mind, truth, knowledge, “the existence of God, the immortality of the soul and the freedom of the will” (Broad, 1923, p. 1). Its primary aim has been to clarify human understanding of the external world and the internal structures of thought and reasoning. Among the earliest systematic explorations, Plato and Aristotle developed influential theories of the *soul*, employing numerous analogies to render this abstract concept more comprehensible. In doing so, they unknowingly employed metaphors.

The emergence of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in the 1980s, which posits that metaphors arise from and structure our conceptual system, significantly expanded the scope of metaphor studies. Johnson (2008), after examining the concept of causality, argued that all abstract concepts are necessarily conceptualised metaphorically. From this perspective, philosophy—a discipline concerned with abstract and theoretical constructs—can be regarded as fundamentally engaged in studying metaphor. Nevertheless, relatively little scholarship has examined philosophical discourse through the lens of CMT.

This study therefore sets out to: (a) analyse philosophical discourse, focusing on classical philosophy, to identify conceptual metaphors on the *soul*; (b) classify these metaphors into three principal subtypes—structural, ontological, and orientational; and (c) evaluate their functions and significance. The analysis draws on Steen’s (2010b) Metaphor Identification Procedure in Discourse (MIPVU), supplemented by procedures for transforming linguistic metaphors into conceptual ones (Steen, 1999). The empirical material consists primarily of the works of ancient philosophers, particularly Plato and Aristotle, thereby demonstrating that metaphor has always served as a crucial means of rendering abstract ideas accessible, long before the formalisation of CMT.

The findings reveal 55 examples of linguistic metaphor, which were subsequently grouped into distinct conceptual metaphors. The data underscore the central role of metaphorisation in philosophical discourse: the theories of the *soul* advanced by ancient philosophers were deeply reliant on metaphorical analogies. This emphasises the importance of continued research into the metaphorical dimensions of philosophical texts to enhance our understanding of philosophical reasoning and trace the evolution of metaphoric paradigms across intellectual history.

**Keywords:** *conceptual metaphor theory, philosophy discourse, soul*

## 1. Introduction

In Metaphors *We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) introduced conceptual metaphor theory, which shifted the focus of metaphor from language to cognition. According to their theory, metaphor is not simply an “imaginative employment of words” (Davidson, 1978, p. 33) or solely a literary device demonstrating the writer’s skill at expressing ideas in prose or poetry, as Aristotle believed. Instead, it helps us understand the world around us, as “being tools for exploration, metaphors provide entrée into possible worlds.” (Miller, 2000, p. 163).

The concept of the *soul* has not been extensively examined from the perspective of conceptual metaphor theory, especially within the philosophical context. Relevant works on this subject include Wierzbica’s (1992) analysis of the concept of the *soul* from semantic and cultural perspectives in Russian and English, studies of contemporary metaphors of the *soul* and their significance in popular American culture (Cervantes, 1998), research on metaphorical idioms with the lexeme “soul” in Georgian and English (Rusieshvili-Cartledge, et al., 2023), the linguistic realisation of the *soul* in poetic discourse (Safyanova, 2019), and metaphoric conceptions of the *soul* in Slavic languages (Despot, et al., 2012), among others.

Based on the conceptual metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999) and further developed by scholars such as Grady (1997), Kövecses (2010, 2017), and Jäkel (2002), the aim of this paper is to: 1. identify conceptual metaphors related to the concept of the *soul* within philosophical discourse; 2. categorise these metaphors into ontological, orientational, or structural types; 3. explore the role these metaphors play in shaping our understanding of the *soul* and their importance in developing philosophical thought.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), introduced by Lakoff and Johnson in 1980, recognises metaphor primarily as a cognitive phenomenon. Metaphors originate in our minds and are later expressed through language as linguistic metaphors, i.e. “...metaphor in language can eventually be seen as a reflection of metaphor in thought...” (Steen et al, 2010a, p. 789). Consequently, our conceptual system is inherently metaphorical, shaping and guiding our daily functions.

A conceptual metaphor involves a mapping — a set of systematic correspondences — between two domains: target and source. This process uses a more concrete concept (source) to understand a more abstract one (target). Metaphors can be succinctly represented as: A (target) IS B (source) (Kövecses, 2010; Forceville, 2016). Since we generally possess greater knowledge of concrete concepts, it is logical that they form the basis for understanding more abstract domains. That is why “in most cases of everyday metaphors the source and target domains are not reversible” (Kövecses, 2010, p. 7). This is known as the principle of unidirectionality.

Not everything from a source domain can be mapped onto a target; later explained by Lakoff (1993) as the “invariance hypothesis,” which states that by preserving the image-schematic structure of the source, only elements that do not conflict with the image-schematic structure of the target domain can be transferred. Additionally, when creating a metaphor, only certain aspects of the target are highlighted while others remain hidden. This explains why multiple metaphors can exist for the same targets, as “different metaphors highlight different aspects of the same target concept and at the same time hide its other aspects” (Kövecses, 2010, p. 93).

Several factors serve as the basis for conceptual metaphors, including the similarity between objects and the correlation of experience between two concepts or image-schemas – skeletal preconceptual structures derived from our recurrent experiences of the world. “Such skeletal preconceptual structures include container, source-path-goal, force, verticality and several others” (Kövecses, 2017, p. 18).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) identified three types of metaphors: structural, where target A is understood through source B’s structure; ontological, where understanding of target concepts is grounded in substances or physical objects; and orientational, where a target concept is understood as a source concept based on spatial orientation. Among ontological metaphors are specific cases of personification, where a target concept is personified by adopting various human aspects. Kövecses (2010) argues that ontological metaphors serve a cognitive function by assigning a new ontological status to abstract targets, which are then elaborately structured through structural metaphors.

Jäkel (2002) also presents the necessity hypothesis, which suggests that conceptual metaphors mainly serve an explanatory function. This applies particularly to highly abstract concepts, which are difficult to grasp without metaphor, as it “serves to make the unfamiliar more graspable” (Grady, 1997, p. 29).

## 2.2 Towards the Relationship Between Philosophy and Metaphor

As mentioned earlier, Aristotle, a philosopher himself, was among the first to develop a theory of metaphor. However, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) note that he failed to identify his conceptual metaphors due to the nature of his theory.

Jäkel (1999) mentions two philosophers — Kant and Blumenberg — as contributors to the cognitive theory of metaphor before Lakoff and Johnson finally presented it in 1980. Although Kant (1790) does not directly use the term “metaphor”, he speaks of symbols. Jäkel claims that these symbols are what we understand to be a metaphor. Kant also wrote about the importance of recognising analogy as a means of rational conceptualisation of phenomena that were otherwise unknown to him, thus hinting at the concept of metaphor while critically examining human understanding.

Blumenberg (1960) was particularly interested in the language of philosophy and how metaphors fostered its development. The linguistic material he chose for his analysis was taken from philosophy, science, and literary classics. However, his theory can be applied to language in general. He distinguished between absolute metaphors, a fundamental component of philosophical language, and background metaphors, which Jäkel (1999) identifies as equivalent to conceptual metaphors. Blumenberg thought that comparing linguistic metaphors could reveal parts of the core structure of human cognition.

According to Johnson (2008), the role of metaphor is immeasurable in philosophy. Western philosophy, especially those supporting the classic objectivist/literalist view, dismissed metaphor as merely a dispensable linguistic phenomenon. Johnson acknowledges Nietzsche as a proponent of the pervasiveness of metaphor in thought. By analysing the concept of “causation” from a metaphoric standpoint (previously in *Philosophy in the Flash* with Lakoff in 1999), he aimed to prove that humans use metaphors to define abstract concepts, including all philosophical concepts. Thus, philosophy’s primary purpose would be conducting a metaphor analysis, as “philosophy is metaphor” (Johnson, 2008, p. 44).

## 3. Methodology

The empirical data in the paper include written works on ancient and modern philosophy by Kenny (2004, 2007) and Plato’s *Phaedo* (380 BC/2021). Regarding the methodology, a technique for identifying metaphorically used words in discourse — MIPVU — and Steen’s *From Linguistic to Conceptual Metaphor in Five Steps* were applied.

As a result of the study, 55 examples were selected based on their distinctiveness and originality from 280 and 27 examples containing the lexeme 'soul' in Kenny's 2004 and 2007 books, respectively, and 161 sentences from Plato's *Phaedo*.

MIPVU is an expanded version of MIP, developed by the Praggeljaz group in 2007 and revised by Steen in 2010. After analysing a text, this method aims to identify metaphorically used words (linguistic metaphors) by comparing these words with their indirect meanings, including not only indirect expressions but also instances of direct (such as similes and analogies) and implicit expressions (ellipsis, substitution).

Steen's (1999) *From Linguistic to Conceptual Metaphor in Five Steps* goes beyond merely indicating linguistic metaphors by providing a comprehensive five-step process for creating nonliteral mappings.

Based on the abovementioned methods, the following procedures were undertaken for the data analyses:

1. The sections of the texts related to the concept of *soul* were examined on a word-by-word basis;
2. Non-literally used lexical units were detected and marked as metaphors;
3. The identified metaphorical expressions were analysed to reveal their connection to the concept of *soul*;
4. Finally, the underlying metaphorical image schemas were established.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

"Once philosophy began, the possibility of an afterlife and the nature of the soul became central concerns, bridging the gap between religion and science." (Kenny, 2004, p. 229). The concept of the *soul* has been defined by many philosophers in various, often conflicting ways. Lorenz (2024), for example, states that in the 5th century BC, before Socrates' death, the *soul* was seen as the defining feature of living beings (specifically humans), serving as a container for virtues such as bravery and justice. The theories of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics are some of the most notable hypotheses from antiquity, discussed below.

##### 4.1 Metaphor – SOUL IS A HUMAN BEING

According to the analysed data, the *soul* is generally depicted as a being possessing humanlike qualities – it sins, feels, reflects, has free will, etc. (Cervantes (1998) outlines the same metaphors - Soul as Human, particularly, "inner man", and an Emotional Human):

- (1) ...the soul **sins** by necessity. (Kenny, 2004, p. 254)
- (2) ...the soul is **willing** it does not so act as to abandon what is higher for what is lower... the soul is **doing what it wants**. (Kenny, 2004, p. 255)
- (3) ...there is one part of the soul that **reflects** and a different one that **feels** bodily desires. (Kenny, 2004, p. 238)
- (4) The soul itself **contemplates** the common terms that apply to the deliverances of all of the senses. (Kenny, 2004, p. 154)
- (5) The soul is **wallowing** in total ignorance... (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 28)
- (6) ... the soul... **wanders, is confused, and it is dizzy as though drunk** because it is in contact with things of that sort. (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 24)

Soul is sometimes referred to with a female pronoun, as in "... it is impossible for soul to perish whenever death approaches **her**" (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 51). We can argue that the soul is not just a human being but a female.

As for example (6), **SOUL IS A DRUNK PERSON** who wanders this earth “in utter *perplexity*” (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 53), this unknown world, deprived of its (*soul*’s) home. The conceptualisation of *soul* as a wanderer is discussed later in greater details.

One of the ways in which the relationship between body and *soul* is explained is through marriage: “...they *wander* until they are *bound* once more in a body by the desire belonging to the bodily form, their close *consort*” (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 27). Body and soul are bound together as a united whole, obliged to go through life together until death parts them.

In some cases, the *soul* is not just perceived as a human being but as a homunculus – a small, fully formed human being residing in the body:

(7) *Some say that the body does not perceive or sense anything, but only the soul, conceived as an inner homunculus.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 249)

(8) *... later philosophers were more inclined to view the soul as an internal homunculus than as an internal arthropod.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 232)

Among other examples of ontological personification, the following are noteworthy:

#### 4.2 Metaphor – **SOUL IS A PRISONER**

In *Phaedo*, Plato explores various conceptions of the *soul* to understand it thoroughly, including the idea that the *soul* is imprisoned in the body as a punishment for its misdeeds. Life is lived “to pay the penalty” (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 27), to redeem its sins until God releases it, or to return to existence in another form. Therefore, based on the structural metaphor – **LIFE IS A PUNISHMENT** – we can point out the following mappings: **SOUL IS A PRISONER** (an example of ontological personification); **HUMAN BODY IS A PRISON/PRISON CELL**; **HUMAN IS AN IMPRISONED SOUL**.

(9) *... soul’s union with the body is in some way a punishment for evil done in an earlier life.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 78)

(10) *... a human being as a soul imprisoned in a body.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 234)

(11) *In the case of human beings, he himself made the immortal soul, leaving it to the lesser gods to encase this in a skull and add the rest of the body below it.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 294)

(12) *... it is literally fettered within the body, glued to it, and the soul is compelled to view things that are, through the body as if it were a prison...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 28)

(13) *... soul... being set free from the body as though from bonds?* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 11)

Not only is the *soul* encased in the body, but it is also bound, bonded, and fettered to it. Example (11) does not merely describe the body as a prison for the *soul* but specifies that the skull is the locus of the *soul*, with the rest of the body just an addition. This could be explained by the idea that many philosophers, including Aristotle, considered the mind and reason/brain the seat of the *soul*.

This metaphor can also give rise to a different kind of mapping. Since Plato, many philosophers have viewed the body “as a corrupter of the soul” (Kenny, 2004, p. 258). However, Democritus developed an opposite view. He regarded the **BODY AS A VICTIM**, while the **SOUL is a CULPRIT** responsible for the suffering of the body.

(14) *If a body, at the end of life, were to sue the soul for the pains and ills it had suffered, a fair judge would find for the body. If some parts of the body have been damaged by neglect or ruined by debauchery, that is the soul’s fault...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 258)

He then utilises an analogy of the owner (*soul*) and the tool (body) to prove his point: “...but if a tool is in a bad shape you blame not the tool but its owner.” (Kenny, 2004, p. 258). The *soul* controls and bends its

body to its will, therefore making it responsible for its (body's) state. This idea will be developed below as well.

Death, generally a negative phenomenon, is presented as a desired event as the *soul* becomes capable of “*a happier life when disembodied*” (Kenny, 2004, p. 66). Every person or philosopher should strive for death, as it is the only way for the *soul* to be set free and acquire the truth. Therefore, **DEATH IS A DESIRED EVENT/THE END OF THE PUNISHMENT**:

(15) ... *a true philosopher has throughout his life in effect been **craving for death***. (Kenny, 2004, p. 234)

#### 4.3 Metaphor – SOUL IS A TRAVELLER

Another example of an ontological personification is **SOUL IS A TRAVELLER** metaphor supported by Pythagoras. According to this mapping, the human body is a temporary residence for a soul. Simultaneously, life itself is depicted as a journey, relating to the metaphor **LIFE IS A JOURNEY** outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Plato regarded the *soul* as “*ill-housed in a base body*” (Kenny, 2004, p. 242), emphasising that a body is not a natural environment or home, but an uncomfortable place for the *soul* to dwell. This is also reflected in example (16):

(16) ...*this body is not a **home** but a **short-term hostelry** which one must **leave** as soon as one sees one is becoming a burden on one's **host***. (Kenny, 2004, p. 107)

(17) *Souls could **transmigrate** in this way...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 229)

(18) ... ***journeys** in the underworld of the soul after it survives death*. (Kenny, 2004, p. 46)

(19) *But once it **has arrived** and then **departed**, couldn't it too then come to an end and be **destroyed**?* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 22)

According to this metaphor, the body functions as a short-term house/building for the banished *soul*, “*an exile from a better world*” (Kenny, 2004, p. 242), which it is incapable of leaving until the body is destroyed.

Death, on the other hand, is shown as a final point, the end of the journey, once again a positive event of coming back home (example (20)) or a beginning of a new journey (examples (18) and (21)):

(20) *To die is to **return** to one's real home*. (Kenny, 2004, p. 67)

(21) ... *at death the soul **entered** a different and shadowy world...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 229)

Empedocles then specifies that the human body is not a sole dwelling place for a *soul* (“*wandering spirit*”). Murderers and perjurers are reborn in many different forms, including animals and even plants: “*Since the bodies of animals are thus the **dwelling places** of punished souls...*” (Kenny, 2004, p. 231).

#### 4.4 Metaphor – SOUL IS A MASTER

The relationship between a *soul* and a body is also compared to that of a master and its subordinate. The *soul* is represented as a controlling force, a responsible being, which “*has the major **responsibility** for sensation*” (Kenny, 2004, p. 248), but only through its bond with the body.

(22) ...*the souls that **control** our own bodies...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 37)

(23) ... *the soul that **keeps** the body **in order***. (Kenny, 2004, p. 236)

(24) ... *it is the soul's function to **direct** the person whose soul it is*. (Kenny, 2004, p. 160)

(25) *Once soul and body are together, nature directs the body **to serve** and **be ruled**, and the soul **to rule** and **dominate***. (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 25)

As stated in example (25), the *soul* is superior to the body it commands. **BODY IS A SERVANT** expected to obey its ruler. The idea of the *soul* as a master controlling its body is developed even further by some philosophers. It is an entity of its own, continuing its life after the human body dies, joining the World Soul, which guides the entire universe and the sun, thereby establishing it as a god itself (27). The latter presents an interesting case of conceptual metaphor, where we do not see a more concrete concept being defined by a more abstract one – God and *soul* can be regarded as equally abstract and unknown to humans. The analogy can be explained as being based on the immortal and intangible nature of both, as they are divine entities that transcend humans.

(26) *Soul is the immanent, **controlling element** in the universe of nature...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 314)

(27) *Soul... or rather souls, that **control** the heavens... which is in contact with the sun and **impels** it on its course; or the soul is entirely immaterial, and **guides** the sun on its path by some spiritual force... the soul is clearly a **god** of some kind...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 295)

However, some argue that the relationship between the two has an opposite nature – it is the body that subdues the soul and commands it to act according to its will, holding the body accountable for the evil deeds of human beings.

(28) *And in fact, it is only the body and its desires which bring about wars, insurrections, and fighting. For all wars arise on account of the possession of wealth, and we are compelled to acquire wealth because of the body, as **we are slaves in its service**.* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 10)

(29) *... it departs from the body, sullied and impure, because the soul constantly associates with it, **serving it** and loving it and being **enchanted by** it through desires and pleasures...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 26)

#### 4.5 Metaphor – SOUL IS A WEAVER

By the analogy between a human body covered by garments/clothes, or a coat as seen in example (31), the body functions as a covering coat of the *soul*, hence the following mapping – **BODY IS GARMENT**. Furthermore, as people replace their worn-out garments, *soul* similarly continues to live in a new body after the death of the former.

(30) *... the body suffers frequent **wear and tear** and needs constant **repair** by the soul.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 236);

(31) *Even if it transmigrates from body to body, perhaps one day it will pass away, **just as a weaver**, who has made and **worn out** many **coats** in his lifetime, one day meets his death and **leaves a coat behind**.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 236);

(32) *... each of the souls **wears out** numerous bodies... the soul is constantly **weaving anew** whatever has been **worn away**.* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 32)

Positive qualities and virtues are presented as adornments of the soul:

(33) *... **adorned** the soul, not with an alien adornment but with its own, with **sound-mindedness, justice, courage, freedom and truth**.* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 58)

Pleasure is not viewed as a virtue; it appears “as the **crony** of the lowest part of the soul” (Kenny, 2004, pp. 264-65). Situated in the lowest part, it acts as a crony (personification) of the disgraceful part of the *soul*. Thus, we can say that **NEGATIVE QUALITIES (VICE) ARE DOWN**, whereas **VIRTUES** such as mind and reason **ARE UP**: “For Aristotle as for Plato the **highest part** of the soul is **occupied** by mind or reason, the locus of thought and understanding.” (Kenny, 2004, p. 245).

We also come across the following conceptualisation: **NEGATIVE PERSONAL TRAITS ARE AILMENTS (VICE IS A DISEASE)** tarnishing the purity of the human soul, while the existence of positive characteristics proves the health of the soul:

(34) ... *Vice is the characteristic **disease** of the soul: but it does not destroy the soul... the soul's own disease cannot kill it...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 240)

(35) *Justice and injustice in the soul are **like health and disease** in the body.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 264)

#### 4.6 Metaphor – SOUL IS A SOURCE OF LIFE

Aristotle (in *De Anima*) argued against the conception of the *soul* by Plato. For him, the *soul* is the body's sustaining cause. Many philosophers agreed that the *soul* was the only distinguishing factor between animate and inanimate entities, making it the **PROOF OF LIFE INSIDE A BODY**:

(36) *the **actuality** of a body that has life* (Kenny, 2004, p. 242);

(37) *Living bodies are **kept alive** by the soul, which is their **sustaining** cause.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 193)

(38) *The soul... is also the **origin of change and motion** in the body, and above all it is also the **final cause**...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 243)

#### 4.7 Metaphor – SOUL IS A PHYSICAL STRUCTURE/BUILDING

Some of the qualities that can be assigned to *soul* are strength and endurance, which are typical vocabulary items employed while speaking of structures.

(39) ... *the soul is so **strong** by nature that it can **withstand** being born many times.* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 32);

(40) ... ***destruction** to the soul...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 32);

In some cases, it is specified as being a building or a room with windows and corners – **SOUL IS A ROOM**:

(41) *Freud, on the other hand, wanted to **turn up the lights on the dark corners** of the soul in order to rid the world of enchantment.* (Kenny, 2007, p. 314)

(42) ... *those who are asleep have the **windows** of their soul **blocked up** and keep contact with nature only through their breathing.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 15)

#### 4.8 Metaphor – SOUL IS A MATERIAL OBJECT

As a highly abstract and invisible entity, the *soul* is presented as a material object that has beauty: “**beautiful souls**” (Kenny, 2004, p. 293), can be inherited, dragged or nailed as per the following examples:

(43) *He himself claimed to have **inherited** his soul from a distinguished line of spiritual ancestors,* ... (Kenny, 2004, p. 229)

(44) ... *the kind of soul which possesses this is **weighed down** and **dragged** once more into the visible realm...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, pp. 26-27)

(45) ... *each pleasure and pain has a sort of **nail** which **fastens and pins** the soul to the body and makes it **corporeal**...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 28)

#### 4.9 Metaphor – SOUL IS A LIQUID

While trying to prove that both body and *soul* are mortals, he proposes an analogy of water that flows out of its broken vessel, therefore introducing the mapping: **HUMAN BODY IS A VESSEL FOR THE**

**SOUL** (46). In a different water-based conception (48), **BODY IS A NET** and **SOUL IS A SEA**, which directs the body as it will:

(46) ... *how much faster must soul's tenuous **fluid leak** away once the body is **broken**!* (Kenny, 2004, p. 249)

(47) ... *the souls of the wise after death can be **absorbed** into the divine World Soul that permeates and **governs** the universe.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 250)

(48) *Body **floats** in soul, as a net floats in the sea...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 315)

(49) ... *it always departs **contaminated with the body**, so that it quickly **falls into** another body and **grows there like a seed that is sown**.* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 29)

On the other hand, Plato maintains that the *soul* is not dissoluble – “... *the soul is most like the divine, immortal, single in form and **indissoluble**...*” (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 25), thereby making it impossible for the *soul* to be liquid – it is a solid, indestructible entity. Example (49) not only presents the *soul* as a contaminated liquid but also as a plant that grows inside the body after it replaces its former one. This conceptualisation is uncommon, as the *soul* is predominantly seen as a fully developed entity that settles into the body.

#### 4.10 Metaphor – **SOUL IS A PUFF OF SMOKE**

This analogy is based on the lightness of both *soul* and smoke, which cannot be grasped or held on the earth once it leaves the body. Some philosophers believed that *souls* cease to exist with the death of the body, disappearing like smoke (50). However, arguably, based on (51) and (52), the *soul* does not necessarily cease to exist once it leaves the body. It simply becomes invisible to the eye until it finds another dwelling.

(50) ... *at death the soul ceases to exist, vanishing into nothingness **like a puff of smoke**.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 234)

(51) ... *as soon as it is separated from the body, and going forth, **dispersed like breath or smoke**, it **takes flight**...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 13)

(52) ... *the wind **will blow the soul away and scatter** it when it **departs** from the body...* (Plato, 380 BC/2023, p. 22)

#### 4.11 Metaphor – **SOUL IS AN OCTOPUS**

Stoics compare the *soul* to the octopus, in which every single tentacle is responsible for the functioning of various human parts.

(53) ... ***eight tentacles sprouted out** from the master-faculty into the body, five of them being the senses, one being a motor agent to effect the movement of the limbs, one controlling the organs of speech, and the final one a tube to carry semen to the generative organs. Each of these tentacles was made out of breath.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 250)

#### 4.12 Metaphor – **SOUL IS A CHARIOTEER**

Plato compared soul to a charioteer; however, he never fully explained the analogy:

(54) ... *a **charioteer with a pair of horses**, one good and one bad, **driving towards** a heavenly banquet. The good horse strives upwards, while the bad horse constantly pulls the chariot downwards. The horses are clearly meant to represent two different parts of the soul...* (Kenny, 2004, p. 237)

#### 4.13 Metaphor – SOUL IS A CITY

In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates introduces an analogy between the *soul* and the city in order to explain that justice is not just a method devised to avoid crimes:

(55) *In his imagined city the virtues are allotted to the different classes of the state: the city's wisdom is the wisdom of its rulers, its courage is the courage of its soldiers, and its temperance is the obedience of the artisans to the ruling class. Justice is the harmony of the three classes: it consists in each citizen, and each class, doing that for which they are most suited. The three parts of the soul correspond to the three classes in the state, and the virtues in the soul are distributed like the virtues in the state. Courage belongs to temper, temperance is the subservience of the lower elements, wisdom is located in reason, which rules and looks after the whole soul. Justice is the harmony of the psychic elements.* (Kenny, 2004, p. 264)

#### 5. Conclusion

As demonstrated by the study, a wide range of conceptual metaphors were employed in classical philosophy to describe the *soul*. The prevalence of ontological personifications can be attributed to the essential role of the *soul* itself: life is impossible without it, as the *soul* sustains human beings through its connection with the body. Yet, owing to its invisible and highly abstract nature, the *soul* has remained an unresolved mystery. In their efforts to articulate what it is, ancient philosophers turned to analogy and metaphor as their primary tools for theorisation.

The total number of conceptual metaphors identified in this study comprises 27 can be classified into the following subtypes: Orientational metaphors with 2 instances make up approximately 7.4% of the total amount; Ontological metaphors form the largest subgroup with 21 instances (77.7%) in which 9 (33.3%) are the examples of personification (which constitute 42.8% of the ontological subset); and Structural metaphors which account for 14.8% (4 metaphors) of overall metaphors examined. These metaphors include:

Orientational: **VICE OF THE SOUL IS DOWN; VIRTUE OF THE SOUL IS UP.**

Ontological: **HUMAN BODY IS A PRISON/PRISON CELL; BODY IS GARMENT; VICE OF THE SOUL IS A DISEASE; SOUL IS A SOURCE OF LIFE; SOUL IS A MATERIAL OBJECT; SOUL IS A LIQUID; HUMAN BODY IS A VESSEL FOR THE SOUL; BODY IS A NET; SOUL IS A SEA; SOUL IS A PUFF OF SMOKE; SOUL IS AN OCTOPUS; SOUL IS A CHARIOTEER.**

Ontological personification: **SOUL IS A HUMAN BEING; SOUL IS A DRUNK PERSON; SOUL IS A PRISONER; SOUL IS A CULPRIT; BODY IS A VICTIM; SOUL IS A TRAVELLER; SOUL IS A MASTER; BODY IS SERVANT; SOUL IS A WEAVER.**

Structural: **LIFE IS A PUNISHMENT; SOUL IS A PHYSICAL STRUCTURE/BUILDING; SOUL IS A ROOM; SOUL IS A CITY.**

#### References

- Aristotle. (2004). *Rhetoric* (Roberts, W. R., Trans.). Courier Corporation, ISBN: 0486437930, 9780486437934 (original work written in 350 BC)
- Blumenberg, H. (1960). "Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie" [Paradigms for a metaphorology] (Jäkel, O., Trans.). In Rothacker, E. (Ed.), *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, Vol.6. Bonn: Bouvier. 7-142
- Broad, C. D. (1923). The Subject-matter of Philosophy, and its Relations to the special Sciences. *Scientific Thought*, 1st Ed., Imprint Routledge, ISBN 9781315822815
- Cervantes, R. (1998). Metaphors of the soul. In *English Review*, (13), 17–34. Turkish Gakuin University Repository. <https://stars.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/8444>

- Davidson, D. (1978). What Metaphors Mean. In *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Special Issue on Metaphor. The University of Chicago Press. 31-47. URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1342976>
- Despot, K., Skrynnikova, I., Ostanina-Olszewska, J. (2012). Cross-linguistic Analysis of Metaphorical Conceptions of душа/dusza/duša (ἡ ψυχή) in Slavic Languages (Russian, Polish, and Croatian). *Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*. 38. 465. 10.3765/bls.v38i0.3347.
- Forceville, Ch. (2016), Pictorial and Multimodal Metaphor. In: Nina-Maria Klug and Hartmut Stöckl (Eds.), *Handbuch Sprache im multimodalen Kontext* (The Language in Multimodal Contexts Handbook). Linguistic Knowledge series. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. 241-260
- Grady, J. (1997). *Foundations of meaning: Primary metaphors and primary scenes*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley.
- Halliwell, S. (1987). *The Poetics of Aristotle: translation and commentary*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press
- Jäkel, O. (1999). Kant, Blumenberg, Weinrich Some Forgotten Contributions to the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor. In Gibbs, R. W. and Steen, G. J. (Eds), *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics*, Volume 175. John Benjamins Publishing Company. 9-28
- Jäkel, O. (2002). Hypotheses Revisited: The Cognitive Theory of Metaphor Applied to Religious Texts. *Metaphorik.de*, 2(1), 20-42. URL: [https://www.metaphorik.de/sites/www.metaphorik.de/files/journal-pdf/02\\_2002\\_jaekel.pdf](https://www.metaphorik.de/sites/www.metaphorik.de/files/journal-pdf/02_2002_jaekel.pdf)
- Johnson, M. (2008). Philosophy's Debt to Metaphor. In: Raymond W., Gibbs, Jr. (Eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge University Press. 39-52.
- Kant, I. (1790). *Kritik der Urteilskraft* [Critique of Judgement]. (Jäkel, O., Trans.). Hamburg: Meiner.
- Kenny, A. (2004). *A New History of Western Philosophy, Volume I, Ancient Philosophy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kenny, A. (2007). *A New History of Western Philosophy, Volume IV, Philosophy in the Modern World*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2010), *Metaphor A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2017). Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In Semino, E. and Demjén, Z. (Eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Metaphor*, New York, Routledge, Taylor&Francis Group. 13-27
- Lakoff, G. (1993). The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd edition, A. Orthony (Ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 203-251
- Lakoff, G., Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy In The Flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lorenz, H. (2024b, May 15). *Ancient Theories of Soul*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>
- Miller, A. I. (2000). Metaphor and Scientific Creativity. In F. Hallyn (ed.), *Metaphor and Analogy in the Sciences*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 147–164, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-9442-4\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-9442-4_9)
- Plato. (2021). *Phaedo*. (Horan, D., Trans) <https://www.platonicfoundation.org/media/2023/01/platos-phaedo-english-translation-by-david-horan-1.pdf> (original work written in 380 BC)
- Pragglejaz Group. (2007). MIP: A method for identifying metaphorically used words in discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 22 (1). 1–39.
- Rusieshvili-Cartledge, M., Dolidze, R., Keburia, M. & Totibadze, S. (2023). *Metaphoric idioms with the lexeme soul in Georgian and English languages and cultures* [Conference presentation]. 7th International Conference on Modern Approaches in Humanities and Social Sciences. 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.33422/7th.icmhs.-2023.11.100>
- Safyanova, I. (2019). Linguistic realization of the concept soul in poetic discourse. *International Research Journal*, 1(79). <https://doi.org/10.23670/IRJ.2019.79.1.050>.
- Steen, G. (1999). From Linguistic to Conceptual Metaphor in Five Steps. In Gibbs R. and Steen G. (Eds), *Metaphors in Cognitive Linguistics*, University of Ottawa, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Volume 175. 57-77

- Steen, J. G., Dorst, A., Herrmann, J., Kaal, A. & Krennmayr, T. (2010a). Metaphor in usage. In *Cognitive Linguistics*, 21(4), 765-796. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cogl.2010.024>
- Steen, J. G., et al (2010b). *A Method for Linguistic Metaphor Identification*. Converging Evidence in Language and Communication Research (Vol. 14). John Benjamins Publishing Company - Pérez-Sobrino, Paula. (2014). ISBN 9027288151, 9789027288158.
- Wierzbica, A. (1992). *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 

***Author's Biographical Data:***

*Ana Gelovani is Ph.D. student as well as an English Language Teacher at the Department of English Philology at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia. She has authored a few scholarly articles published in national and international journals. Her research interests include cognitive linguistics and stylistics and she studies scientific discourse from the perspective of Conceptual Metaphor Theory.*