

Application: Soul and Body

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Overview

Reminder & background

The soul as Substantial form

- Parts of the soul

- The Sensory Soul

Soul as substance

Dualism?

Personal identity

Philosophy of mind

Reminder: Matter and Form(s)

What are substances composed of?

- **integral parts**: elements.
- **metaphysical parts**: parts that aren't integral parts.
- **substance** = **prime matter** [is it extended? is it real?] + **substantial form(s)** [how many?] + **accidents** [are they real? what do they inhere in?]

How can we apply this framework to a human being?

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The Soul and the Body

- 1 The soul is the **substantial form** of the living organism
- 2 The soul is a **subsisting substance**, which also provides personal identity to the human being.

But: how can these claims be reconciled? And what do they mean, precisely?

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Soul as Substantial Form

- 1 What enables the essential operations of a substance is the substantial form.
 - 2 The essential operations of human beings is sensing and thinking.
 - 3 Sensing and thinking are enabled by the soul.
- ∴ Therefore, the soul is the substantial form of the living human being.

The soul gives identity and existence to each part of the substance; once it leaves, the body becomes something different.

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Parts of the (Human) Soul

- 1 vegetative soul — shared with plants and animals
- 2 sensitive soul — shared with non-human animals
- 3 rational soul — unique to human beings

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The Sensory Soul

- sensation requires a body; sensation is various body parts undergoing change.
- ⇒ the sensory soul does not transcend matter
- the sensory part is not subsistent either in the animal or the human case

Aquinas, ST 75.3

“Among the functions of the soul, only intellectual cognition is carried out without a bodily organ. Sensation, on the other hand, and the resulting operations of the sensory soul, occur with some change of the body: in seeing, for instance, the pupil is changed by the species of colour. . . . And so it is clear that every operation of the sensory soul belongs to the compound; from this it follows that since the souls of brute animals do not carry out their operations on their own, they are not subsistent.”

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- The sense organs are instruments of the sensitive soul – sensation itself is an entirely physical process.
- In its natural state, even the intellect requires sensory images — no thinking without phantasms!

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What does it mean to “subsist”?

Aquinas, QDP 9.1

A thing subsists when it doesn't need some outside foundation in which it is sustained, but it is sustained in its own self.

- of course, strictly speaking only God subsists (cf. later Spinoza!)
- but more loosely, substances subsist, as well as their parts, while accidents don't
- substantial forms don't usually subsist
- **but the human soul does.**
- subsistence \neq separability (e.g., my hand is not separable, but subsistent)

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The Argument for the Intellect's Subsistence

- 1 That which can have cognition of certain things must have none of those things in its own nature when operating.
 - 2 The intellect can have cognition of all physical things.
 - 3 Therefore, the intellect must have no physical thing in its own nature.
 - 4 Therefore, the intellect does not operate through a bodily organ.
 - 5 What can operate on its own needs to be able to subsist on its own.
- ∴ The intellect can subsist on its own.

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The Operation of the Intellect

- Aquinas thinks we can't get to know our soul introspectively but must pay attention to its operation: "Our intellect has cognition of itself . . . through its act" (ST I.87.1).
- E.g., sight operates through an organ: it is composite of the visual power and the eye.
- Aquinas thinks that cannot be with the intellect, since the intellect can cognize all material things — e.g., possibly, any aspect of the material world.
- If the eye were coloured, it could not see all colours, etc.
- Since the intellect must operate without having any physical organ attached to it, it can operate on its own and hence exist on its own.

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Are We Our Souls?

What are we, as human beings?

- our souls?
- our souls + bodies?
- our souls + bodies + ... (clothing, etc.)?

Test:

“Any given thing is identified with what carries out the [essential] operations of that thing” (Aquinas, ST I.75.4).

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The argument:

- 1 What carries out essential operation of a thing, is part of that thing.
- 2 Sensing is an essential operation of human beings (vs. Plato (*Phaedo*)).
- 3 Sensing occurs through the body (vs. Descartes).
- 4 Therefore, the body is part of the human being.
 - any other essentially human operations besides sensing?
 - do we really need the body to sense?
 - are my eye glasses part of me?

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The Surviving Soul

- the soul survives death
- it can *function* after death, but only by changing its normal mode of operation: in this life, empiricism is the best we have; in the separated state, that's not needed.
- ⇒ Being united to a body and operating through phantasms are natural to the soul, but not essential.
- Even in the separated state, the soul maintains its natural inclination for union with its body.

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Plato (*Phaedo*): death happens to my body; not to me.

Aquinas: when I die, I go out of existence. It is a substantial change.

- resurrection: the resumption of life that had ended
- what guarantees that I will be the same person? — my soul does not go out of existence
- thus, what makes me *me*, is my soul. The soul was originally individuated by the body, but then, the substance is individuated by the soul.
- there is an unchanging core within our soul, of which we know nothing, but which guarantees that we are the same person even though we undergo all kinds of changes.
- “my soul is not me”; but it is an essential part of me!

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Contemporary Philosophy of Mind?

- 1 dualism
- 2 some kind of physicalism
 - 1 reductive
 - 2 non-reductive
 - 3 pan-psychism

The hylomorphist does not fit any of these! (Is that a problem, or an advantage?)

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