
HUMAN CONSTITUTION

DS212—Doctrine of Humanity
Camden M. Bucey

MAN AS PSYCHO-SOMATIC UNITY

- I encourage you to review the assigned and recommended reading on this subject, especially John Cooper’s *Body, Soul, and Life Everlasting*.
- Please review Dr. Beach’s helpful class notes as well. The material under this bullet point is a very brief summary of pp. 11–23.
 - Theologians have presented two main views regarding the nature of human constitution.
 - Dichotomy holds that man is body and soul.
 - Trichotomy holds that man is body, soul, and spirit.
 - Scripture speaks of man as a body/soul unity. Yet some passages of Scripture use terminology of three aspects: body, soul, and spirit.
 - 1 Thess 5:23—Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Hebrews 4:12—For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
 - Trichotomous views (that view body, soul, and spirit as different components of man) do not comply with the fullness of Scripture’s testimony.
 - The creation accounts, which speak of two aspects. Genesis 2:7 speaks of man being formed from the dust of the ground and then God breathing life into him.
 - Moreover, spirit and soul are used interchangeably (cf. Gen 41:8; Ps 42:6, Jn 12:27; 13:21; Mt 20:28; 27:50; Heb 12:23; Rev 6:9).
 - Other passages of Scripture speak of four parts of man’s constitution (cf. Mark 12:30).
 - The Reformed confessions support the view of dichotomy (Belgic Confession, Article XXXVII; Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day I, Question 1; Lord’s Day XXII, Question 57; Westminster Confession of Faith 32.1; Westminster Larger Catechism, Questions 17, 87, 89, 90; Shorter Catechism, Questions 37–38).
 - Some theologians advocate a doctrine of *wholism* that stresses the whole person rather than focuses on different parts or components.
 - In this view, the human being does not merely possess a body as an “accident” (non-essential part) but *is* a body as well as a soul.

- This view may struggle to do justice to the intermediate state in which man dies physically though does not cease to exist. But it is strong on emphasizing the unity of what God has created in his image.
 - In philosophical terms, it's best to consider the position of dichotomy as *holistic dualism*. We should not isolate one aspect of man's constitution, yet we must always maintain that man is properly a psycho-somatic (soul-body) unity.
- The Origin of the Soul
 - Two main theories exist as to the immediate origin of the soul: creationism and traducianism.
 - Preexistence is a third theory of the "origin" of the soul. Versions of this view are found in Plato and Origen.
 - These views have been rejected as orthodox.
 - Traducianists deny that the soul is created, but see it as something derived from one's parents.
 - "Traducianism" comes from the Latin *ex traduce*, which means something akin to "out of transmission" or "passed on."
 - This view assumes that God only works through means.
 - As a man and woman procreate, the soul is produced according to a law of generation in a way similar to how the body is formed.
 - God is not immediately involved in the origination of a soul any more than he is with the body.
 - Traducianists do not appeal to Scripture, since no passage explicitly teaches on this point.
 - As we will see in future lectures, this view is similar to realist and mediated views of the imputation of Adam's sin.
 - Creationists maintain that God creates the soul immediately and directly at the time of conception. They deny that the soul is generated or otherwise derived from the parents.
 - Body and soul are represented as different substances. Man's body was formed from the dust.
 - His soul was breathed into him by God. His soul is from God immediately, underived.
 - Scripture maintains that the soul is immaterial and indivisible. The traducian view requires some way of passing the soul onto to one's progeny.
 - Furthermore, as with realist views of imputation, traducianism calls into question the impeccability of Christ, who would seem to have a corrupt body and soul in their view.

PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

- Faculty Psychology and the Unified Operations of the Soul
 - The Christian tradition has often used the language of the intellect, will, and emotions to speak of the human person. These are called "faculties."

- The intellect is a person’s rational ability, his thinking and knowing.
 - The will is his determination to choose one thing over another.
 - The emotions are his dispositional feelings, such as love, joy, anger, etc.
 - Augustine uses this philosophical framework for discussing the human personality. Edwards speaks of the affections, which for him, are animated emotions. Pure emotions would be animal spirits.
- Philosophical Terms (from Edward Feser’s glossary in *Philosophy of Mind*¹)
 - **Aristotelian realism**—Aristotelian realism, like **Platonic realism**, takes **forms** (for example, the forms of tables, chairs, and animal and human bodies) to be in some sense real and irreducible to physical properties, but unlike Platonic realism it also holds that in general, forms exist in some sense only “in” the physical substances they inform.
 - **Behaviorism**—A philosophical theory which holds that for a creature to exhibit mental states or capacities is just for it to have certain behavioral dispositions. The theory is sometimes called “logical behaviorism” or “philosophical behaviorism” to distinguish it from behaviorism in psychology, which is the view that a scientific approach to the study of the mind ought to eschew inner states and processes and focus on outward behavior.
 - **Dualism**—Dualism holds that **mind** and **matter** are equally fundamental aspects of reality, neither reducible to the other. Two main versions are usually distinguished: *substance* dualism, which holds that there are two fundamental kinds of **substance**, namely **mental** substance and **physical** substance; and *property* dualism, which allows that there is only one fundamental kind of substance, namely physical substance, but holds that physical substance nevertheless has two fundamental kinds of **property**, namely, physical properties and mental properties. But **Thomistic dualism** would seem to be yet a third variety.
 - **Form**—The form of a thing is its organizational structure; something irreducible to the sum of its parts. **Platonic realism** about form holds it to exist completely independently of either the **mind** or the **material** world. **Aristotelian realism** takes it generally to exist in some sense only “in” the things it informs.
 - **Functionalism**—Functionalism holds that **mental** states and processes can be analyzed in terms of the causal relations they bear to those environmental influences on the body that typically generate them, to the behavioral tendencies they in turn tend to generate, and to the other mental states they are typically associated with. The specific set of causal relations a particular mental state bears to these other elements is commonly said to constitute its “functional role.”
 - **Hylomorphism**—Hylomorphism holds that all **physical** substances are composites of **matter** and **form**, and that in the case of a living thing, its **soul** is to be identified with the form of its **body**.
 - **Material**—Material things are those composed of **matter**.

¹ Edward Feser, *Philosophy of Mind: A Beginner’s Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2008), 241–258.

- **Matter**—There is, perhaps surprisingly, no general agreement on the precise meaning of this term, crucial though it is to science and philosophy in general and to the **mind-body problem** in particular. For **hylomorphism**, matter is defined essentially in terms of its contrast with **form**, where form is just what gives matter its organizational structure. For some versions of **dualism** and **materialism**, matter tends to be defined instead in terms of its contrast with **mind**, where mind is understood as essentially involving consciousness and/or **intentionality** and matter as essentially involving neither. For other versions of these doctrines, matter is defined as whatever is characterized by the basic properties to be posited in a completed physics, though this definition seems unhelpful if it is allowed that a “completed physics” could take **mental** phenomena like consciousness and intentionality to be among the basic physical properties. Yet for some advocates of **structural realism**, such as certain defenders of the **Russellian identity theory**, the intrinsic nature of matter just is mental; while for other advocates of structural realism, we cannot know the intrinsic nature of matter. Given this variety of uses of “matter” and “material,” the content and status of **materialism** seem far less clear than is usually assumed.
- **Nominalism**—Adherents of nominalism, in opposition to both **Platonic realism** and **Aristotelian realism**, deny that there are any genuine universals, and also usually hold that there are no abstract objects of any sort (**forms**, numbers, propositions, etc.).
- **Platonic realism**—Platonic realism holds that abstract entities like propositions, numbers, universals and **forms** exist completely independently of either the **physical world** or the **mind**. It is usually contrasted with **Aristotelian realism** and **nominalism**.
- **Substance**—A substance, in the metaphysical sense, is an independently existing thing, and is usually contrasted with a **property**, which typically exists as an attribute or characteristic of a substance. For example, a red ball is a substance, but the redness of it is a property.
- **Thomistic dualism**—A version of **dualism** derived from St. Thomas Aquinas, which regards the human **soul** neither as a distinct **substance**, à la **substance dualism**, nor as a bundle of non-**physical** properties, à la **property dualism**, but rather as the **substantial form** of the human **body**, à la **hylomorphism**. It also regards the human soul as being unique among the **forms** of **material** bodies in being subsistent, that is, capable of continuing in existence beyond the death of the body. The view is also sometimes known as “hylomorphic dualism.”
- **Zombie**—A “zombie,” in the philosophical sense, is a creature behaviorally, organizationally, and physically identical to a normal human being down to the last particle, but which is nevertheless devoid of any conscious experiences whatsoever.