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NOTES FOR UNIT III A

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SOUL
AND BODY

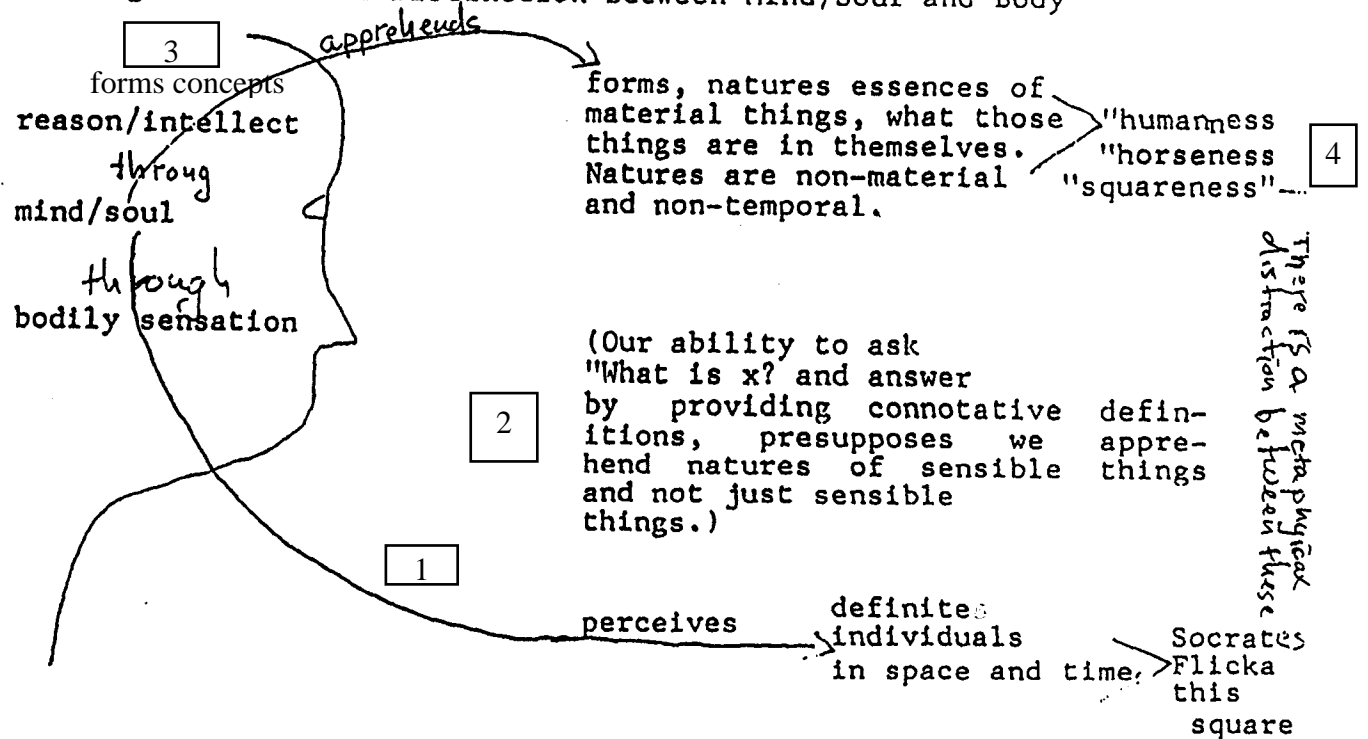
Definitions Pertaining to Unit III A on Rationality

A. With Reference to Material on Distinction Between Soul and Body

1. **Metaphysics:** a rational inquiry into the ultimate causes and principles of reality.
2. **Metaphysical distinction:** a distinction between different orders or reality. Eg., the distinctions between mind and body, individuals and essences, God and creatures.
3. **Epistemology:** a rational inquiry into the nature, limits and conditions of knowledge.
4. **Epistemological distinction:** a distinction between different cognitive capacities, eg., the distinction between reason and sensation.
5. **Definition:** we answer the question "What is 'x'?" by defining x. Two specific kinds of definition are:
 - a. **denotative:** we denotatively define 'x' by enumerating the individuals that are called 'x.' For example, 'triangle' is denotatively defined by listing the various kinds of triangles.
 - b. **connotative:** we connotatively define 'x' by specifying what is common and unique to all those things that are called 'x' by virtue of which they are 'x.' For Plato we apprehend the form or essence of 'x' when we connotatively define it.

Sketch for a Classical Argument for the Distinction Between Mind/Soul and Body

There is an epistemological distinction between reason and sensation and a metaphysical distinction between mind/soul and body.



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Question: can mind/soul as reason/intellect be a bodily reality or must it be different from the body. For Plato and Aristotle, it must be different. This is because (1) the body as a material thing can only apprehend material realities; (2) 'like knows like'; and (3) the forms, natures and essences of things are not material realities.

Now a cognitive capacity can only know those things which it is like or structured to know. For example, the eyes cannot apprehend sounds because they are only structured to apprehend certain frequencies of electromagnetic radiation. Similarly for the ears. So as the body is essentially material, the mind can only apprehend material entities through it. But since the mind through reason and intellect apprehends natures which are non-material, the mind must be non-material and different from the body.

Argument for a Distinction Between the Mind/Soul and the Body

This is a prose summary of the diagrammed argument on the previous page:

The goal of this argument is to show that there is a metaphysical distinction between the mind/soul and the body: that is, the body is a material reality while the mind/soul is immaterial. We're working through this argument both for its own sake and to see how philosophers often set up an argument.

I'm giving an argument that is given in various forms by many classical Greek philosophers as well as later medieval philosophers.

1) Naturally, one tries to begin an argument with premises that seem uncontroversial. In this case, it seems uncontroversial that we have bodies, that we exist in a material world and that our soul/mind gains awareness of the material world through our senses. Our senses allow us to gain awareness of individuals existing in space and time: Socrates, a particular horse Flicka, or a particular triangle.

2) We ask "what is X?" about things. That is, we seek to define things. We don't just seek denotative definitions that give examples of things to which a term refers, rather we aim to give connotative definitions: what is common and unique to all of the things signified by a term that makes the things what they are—what determines them according to their species or kind. A connotative definition seeks to express the nature, essence or form of a species of things. Socrates seems to have been the first person to really notice the distinction between these kinds of definition.

3) Notice that when we give a connotative definition we are not just creating mental constructs. Rather, we are forming concepts by which we apprehend the natures of things. While concepts exist in our mind; the natures and essences of things exist independently of our minds. At least this is what Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and many other classical and medieval philosophers claimed. So too did the framers of the Declaration of Independence. The claim in the DI that have certain inalienable rights means that we have these rights by nature -- by virtue of what we are, not by virtue of how we think about ourselves. OTOH, If we reduce the natures of things to concepts in the mind, then things are what they are because of the way in which we think about them. This would mean that humans would have rights only if they were recognized as humans by themselves or by others.

Concepts are formed by reason or the intellect. So, the mind through reason/intellect forms concepts by which it apprehends the natures of things. Note that intellect is not the same as imagination. Imagination is picture thinking. Imagination always involves picturing individuals in terms of sensory characteristics. But the nature of something, say a human being, is not another human being. We can conceive the nature of a human but we can't imagine it, since we can only imagine a particular human beings or group of human beings.

Accordingly, there is an epistemological distinction between reason/intellect, imagination, and the various senses—that is, they are different cognitive capacities.

4) There is a metaphysical distinction between the essences/natures/forms of things and material things. The material things that we apprehend by the senses exists in space and time. But the natures of things are not of this sort. Note, while individual human beings change over the course of their lives, the nature of what a human being does not. Human beings have the same nature regardless of when they might exist. Classical thinkers typically believe that the natures of things are unchanging. This contrasts sharply with, say, modern biology in which both species as well as individuals are subject to change. In any event, the natures of things have a different kind of reality -- an immaterial reality -- from individual material beings.

5) You can see the diagram for the final section of the argument since this part of the argument is written out on the chart.

Unit IIIA , part 2. On the relation between the mind/soul and the body.

Having argued that there is a distinction between the mind/soul and body, we need to ask about the nature of that relation. In particular, we want to ask whether the soul/mind can exist apart from the body or separately from the body. We are going to consider the views of three thinkers: Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas, all of whom have slightly different views on this matter.

We will focus on two particular questions:

1) What is the relation between the soul/mind and body?

Is there a sense in which the soul/mind is separable from the body? Can the soul/mind exist independently of the body?

2) Is there any immortality and, in particular, personal immortality.

If I have personal immortality, then I must survive my death. Whatever of me survives my death must be identical to me. Personal immortality is, thus, different from a kind of general immortality -- say a view that when I die the 'life force' in me becomes absorbed in the life force of the universe.

Let me summarize the three views of Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas

Plato: the soul and body are separate substances. Socrates is identical with Socrates' soul. Socrates is essentially his soul but not his body. The soul is to the body as a captain is to a ship. That is, the captain governs the ship, but the captain is a being that is ontologically distinct from the ship and can exist when not on the ship.

Aristotle: soul is to the body as form is to matter, The individual human being is a composite of form and matter. Form is Greek is morphe; matter is hyle. So the human being is called a hylomorphic composite. So, Socrates is an individual essentially composed of matter and form. Socrates is the composite and not simply a soul. For Aristotle, soul is to body like the power of sight is to the eye that sees. Hence, for Aristotle, the soul cannot exist independently of the

body. Aristotle seems to think that intellect (nous) can survive the body, but there is no personal immortality, since Socrates is not his intellect but the composite of soul and body.

Aquinas follows Aristotle in viewing the individual human as a composite of form (soul) and matter (body). Socrates is a hylomorphic or psychosomatic composite. Aquinas also believes that the soul has an intellectual dimension that has a substantial existence to it. So, when we die, the soul/intellect can survive the death of the body. BUT, Socrates is not simply Socrates' soul. For Aquinas, there can be no personal immortality unless Socrates as a psychosomatic unity survives. For Aquinas, personal immortality is assured through faith in the event of the resurrection of Christ. It's Christ's body that is resurrected. Aquinas tries to give a philosophical justification for the resurrection of the body.

Let's look at the positions in more detail:

Plato: Knowledge is cognition that is always true and can never be mistaken. Belief is cognition that can be true or false.

We can't get knowledge of reality through the senses. Why? The senses are mistaken and they confuse us. We often make mistakes about things when we use the senses to get cognition about them. Moreover, the objects of the senses are always subject to change. In principle, then, we can't get knowledge or certain cognition from the senses. Note that if knowledge is always true cognition freed from the possibility of error then the objects of knowledge must be unchanging. No physical objects are like this. Only immaterial things -- the forms or natures of things -- fit the bill: the just itself, beauty itself, strength itself, etc.

Hence, so long as our soul is associated with the body in this life, then either we can have no real knowledge or we can have knowledge but only if the soul can exist without the body. When would it do that: after death. But for Plato since we have some cognition of the forms in this life, the soul must already have the capacity for being separated from the body. At death the soul survives the body. But that means that even while associated with the body, the soul is substantially different from the body.

Plato holds what is often called a substance dualist view of human beings. That is, the soul and body are distinct things. More importantly, the individual such as Socrates is essentially identified with his soul. The body is ultimately accidental to who we are. Hence, the survival of Socrates' soul after death is the survival of Socrates in a complete sense after death.

Aristotle:

The soul is the principle of life -- all living things have a soul. Aristotle, however, distinguishes three types of soul. The nutritive soul -- metabolic processes (growth, self-motion) common to all living things. The sensitive or sentient soul has the capacity for sensory experience (pleasure and pain). All animals have this soul. The rational soul -- the capacity to act and think in universal terms -- belongs only to human beings.

Aristotle notes that there are three senses in which we use the term substance: the Matter (that out of which something is made); Form – the nature/essence which gives shape to something, and the individual or the composite of matter and form (material beings). All material beings can be understood as a composite of matter and form or a hylomorphic (matter)/morphic (form) composite. The relation between matter and form is also that between potency and act. The matter of something is that which receives and loses form; the form is the actuality of something. If there was no form, matter would be pure potentiality since it would lack all determinateness. Form is the source of determinateness and, thus, of actuality. Note that an acorn and an oak tree have the same form -- they belong to the same species. But the acorn is a far less actualized oak tree than a mature oak tree. More particularly, as the acorn develops into an oak tree (or a human conceptus develops into an adult), the form remains the same while the body changes.

In the case of living things: matter is the body; form is the soul. For, if life was the body (if a body had life in virtue of itself every body would be alive). Since only some bodies are alive, the principle of life cannot be a body. Soul is the principle of life; form of a living body as living. Aristotle defines soul as the actuality of a natural body having life potentially within in. The soul is the principle/form of a living body as living.

The soul is not separable from the body. For Aristotle, the form and matter are correlative and interdependent for every material being. One never finds pure matter; one only finds matter shaped or formed in some way. Conversely, one never finds the form of a material thing apart from material thing. Aristotle uses this example: if the eye were a individual living thing, the body would be the eyeball and the form or soul would be the power of sight. The eyeball only exists as an eye when it is capable of the power of sight. Conversely, the power of sight only exists as the form or power of some eyeball. Hence, the soul -- as the power of life for a body capable of life-- can only exist in connection with a body and not apart from it.

For Aristotle, Socrates is the integral composite of soul and body. When Socrates dies both the body and soul cease. So, there is no immortality. OTOH, Aristotle seems to think that intellect (nous) can survive the body, but there is no personal immortality, since Socrates is not his intellect but the composite of soul and body.

Aquinas:

For Aquinas, the individual human being is a composite of form and matter. He follows Aristotle here. Form and matter and the principles of actuality and potency that constitute the individual. It is the individual that is a definitely existing substance, the principles – the form and the matter – are not independently existing or separable from the body. The soul is to form and the body is to matter.

However, the intellectual operation of the soul knows all material things – that is, the natures of all material things. It couldn't do that if it had some determinate material nature, just as the eye could not see all colors if the eye had some colored filter that belonged to it by nature.

So, the intellectual operation of the soul acts independently of the body.

Recall, there is no operation of seeing apart from an eye that sees. So, there is no intellectual operation (activity) apart from a mind/soul that engages in that operation. Hence, the intellectual soul has its own substantial existence. That is, it can exist separately from the body. Notice: the

intellectual operation/activity of Socrates is Socrates' intellectual operation. So, the being that engages in that operation is Socrates. Hence, Socrates' has a substantial soul – in his intellectual activity – that can exist independently of the body.

All humans desire happiness (well being). But perfect well –being requires a complete absence from any evil or defect. Perfect happiness cannot be attained in this life since we are never free of evil and defects in this life. We desire happiness to abide -- that is continue uninterrupted. The object of our desire that satisfies happiness must be itself eternal and unchanging. So just as if we are to have genuine knowledge , we must apprehend an eternal and unchanging object if it is ever to apprehend the truth free from the possibility of error, so only God can satisfy our desire for happiness since only God is perfectly good and unchanging. Moreover our desire for happiness can be satisfied only if we have some sort of existence beyond the present life. Since “Nature does nothing in vain”, we can conclude that we have a life after our death. If we didn't our natural desire for happiness would be naturally frustrated.

OTOH, the individual is a hylomorphic composite. So even if Socrates' soul survives his death it is not completely Socrates. Hence if Socrates life is not to be made in vain, Socrates must enjoy immortality. This means that just as the selfsame soul of Socrates survives his death so at some point the selfsame body of Socrates must be resurrected. In this way, Aquinas tries to provide a philosophical justification for the Christian doctrine of the resurrection.

To compare:

Plato: the soul and body are substantially different from one another. The soul is to the body as the captain is to the ship. The individual is essentially identified with the soul and not the body. There is personal immortality for the soul without the body.

Aristotle: the individual is a hylomorphic composite of soul and body -- or a psychosomatic composite of soul and body. Soul and body are correlative principles of the individual; neither can exist without the other. Soul is to body as the power of sight is to an eye capable of seeing. When the individual dies the body loses the power of life and the soul no longer exists. There is no personal immortality for Aristotle. At most there seems to be a kind of impersonal immortality of the intellect.

Aquinas: The individual is a hylomorphic composite of soul and body -- or a psychosomatic composite of soul and body. Soul and body are correlative principles of the individual. However, the soul has an intellectual operation that functions independently of the body and hence, the rational soul has some substantial existence apart from the body. There must be a life after death otherwise our desire for happiness could not be satisfied and we would have been made in vain. But I can have life after death only if my body and soul ultimately survive death. Hence, like Plato, Aquinas hold to personal immortality. But unlike Plato believes that the soul and resurrected body enjoy immortality.

Paul Churchland
Matter and Consciousness
A brief summary of the material from class lecture.

Materialism – all reality is material in nature. There does not exist any non-material reality. Consequently, human beings are entirely material beings. No such thing as an immaterial soul, consciousness, reason or spirit exists. All of our psychic, rational and spiritual activities are and can be explained in completely material terms. The soul is nothing more than the brain.

Dualism – a view that there exists non-material/immaterial reality in addition to material reality. Substance dualism is the view that the mind/soul is an immaterial substance that exists/can exist independently of the body. Plato is a typical representative of this view. Property dualism is a view that there are immaterial properties/realities associated with brain activities; they do not exist independently of such activities but cannot be reduced to them. Aristotle might be regarded as a representative of this view, but it is a more modern view.

Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas all thought that they could prove some version of dualism that would refute materialism. Churchland DOES NOT claim to demonstrate a materialist refutation of dualism. Rather he wants to say that the dualist arguments against materialism are not completely persuasive and that there are powerful materialist arguments against dualism, which nevertheless remain to be decisively proved.

Arguments for dualism:

- 1) Argument from religion – I'll leave that to you.
- 2) Argument from introspection – self-consciousness of our mental activities does not involve a consciousness of any material activities. That is in doing a math calculation we are not aware of our brain running. Therefore, self-conscious awareness is not awareness of a material activity but of an immaterial activity.
- 3) Arguments from irreducibility
 - a. There are mental/rational activities which are in principle immaterial – rational calculation. For Descartes and others, the complexity and variability of certain kinds of reasoning (mathematical reasoning) and our use of language seems unable to be accounted for in purely mechanistic fashion. Plato/Aristotle and other classical philosophers hold the activity of the intellect is immaterial since it grasps the natures of things of things, which are immaterial. Churchland does not consider this view but would probably reject it precisely because he is a materialist and, thus, would reject any immaterial natures.
 - b. The meanings that we associate with sensory phenomena are not material in nature. The meaning of a color is not itself a property of electromagnetic radiation nor can it be reduced to neural activity in the brain.
 - c. Para-psychological phenomena cannot be reduced to the brain (I'll leave this to you.)

Churchland's response to these arguments:

- 1) Religion – I'll leave that to you.
- 2) Argument from introspection – when we perceive color we don't perceive a matrix of electrons. Hearing a sound does not involve hearing or being aware of the underlying physical

structure. But from this it doesn't follow that colors are something other than electromagnetic radiation interpreted by the brain.

Churchland thinks that the argument from introspection is a fallacious argument from ignorance. A is true because we don't know that A is false. Note the similarity between Churchland's response here and that of the hard determinist to our everyday claim that we are free because we experience ourselves acting freely -- that is, having options we are not compelled to choose but can reject or choose. The HD would say merely because we aren't aware of all of the causal factors that compel us to choose doesn't mean that such factors exist.

3) Arguments from irreducibility

- a. Not reducibility of rational activity (math calculation, reasoning, apprehension of natures, etc.)
Can human thought processes be fully replicated in terms of artificial intelligence? The argument here is whether human thought processes can be completely replicated by machines which no one pretends has an immaterial component. As we discussed in class, the apparent ability of machines to engage in interactive responses with users is made possible by branching routines in the programs. The question is whether the complexity and spontaneity of human use of language, egg., can ever be captured in such routines. The materialist will say that all aspects of human consciousness and thought can be replicated in terms of artificial intelligence. The dualist would deny this.

B meanings with sensory phenomena – skip,

c. Para psychological phenomena I'll let you read.

Arguments against dualism:

- A) argument from simplicity – don't explain something in terms of more entities than are necessary. Basically Churchland's argument is that human cognitive and conscious processes can be adequately understood in terms of purely material factors. Hence, it is unnecessary to introduce immaterial factors. Consider defects and trauma – when the brain is injured or traumatized in various ways, human cognitive functions are impaired or eliminated. There seems to be a one-one correspondence here. That is, the capacity for various cognitive activities is directly dependent upon the function of parts of the brain. So, why bring in an immaterial soul to explain such cognitive activities?

b) argument from evolution – human beings like all organic beings on the planet are understood to be completely the products of evolutionary activity. But evolution is an entirely bio-physical process. From what process would human beings develop/have an immaterial soul or consciousness. Not from evolution since only biophysical organisms develop from evolutionary process. So, if humans like all other organisms on the planet are the result of evolutionary processes then humans will be entirely bio-physical beings. If there is an immaterial component to humans, then where has it come from. There would have to be a cause of human beings that pertains only to them and no other life forms on the planet (on the assumption that such life forms are purely material beings).