

Paper 1: June 4th 2019 Morning: Soul, Mind, Body and Life After Death

The Mind/Body Question: What makes a human being. What makes us us despite the changes we go through over time? **Do we have a soul / mind? Are we just our material bodies? Socrates thought death was like walking it another room.** What is the connection between the physical brain and my consciousness? **Mystery of Consciousness:** *We are conscious of ourselves behind our eyes but still feel pain. Is my hand me? Or is my hand something I have or part of what I am? No one knows our thoughts (logical privacy), we have subjective conscious experiences only we feel (qualia) which seem not in physical space.*

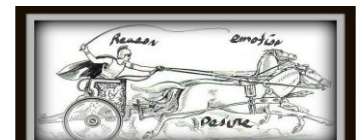


Substance Dualism states there are two parts / elements / aspects to us – the mental and physical. There is a material body and mind/ spirit/ soul / self (non-physical). This is the opposite of materialism. For some people, this soul mind or self will live on from our body dies in disembodied existence or the immortality of the soul. For others, like John Hick, the soul and body are one (monism), a psycho-somatic unity (monism). Hick believes an all-powerful God will create a replica of us at death. **Richard Swinburne** called the soul the Divine Spark proved by morality. **For Kant**, Life After Death was essential to ensure the moral fairness of the universe. **HH Price** envisioned the next life to be like a dream. **Other evidence for disembodied existence or consciousness beyond our body comes from mediums, ghosts and near death or out of body experiences where people see their own body, walk down tunnel, see bright light (Raymond Moody).**

Plato's Dualism: Plato provided one of the first examples of dualism. His philosophy often deals in opposites. **He argued the soul was more important than the body.** Plato was influenced by **Pythagoras** who made a distinction between spiritual soul and material body and this world was in ratio to the next. **The divisible body was part of the transient, temporal, empirical world and subject to change – it could not be a reliable guide to truth. It was a source of opinion via the senses. It distracts us from philosophy. The mortal, multiform, changeable, impermanent body is a source of endless trouble through food, illness, loves, fears, lusts, foolery.” ((Plato) The eternal, unchanging, immortal, indivisible soul (Greek psyche), trapped in the body, enables us to have true knowledge.** The soul is simple (unbreakable into parts) and pre-existed in the Realm of the Forms and has knowledge of them before being pulled down to earth. It is incarnated in the body and experiences all the tension and conflict between body and soul. The soul is liberated from the prison and shell of the body at death. It will be freed and reincarnated or return to the Forms. When we use our reason, the soul re-awakens. *Plato compares the soul to a charioteer in charge of two horses. There are three aspects present within the soul (tripartite division) – reason, spirit (or emotion), appetites /desire.* **The soul works best when reason is in charge but the horses can lead us in different directions.** Spirit or will is helpful to do the right thing but appetite not. **A good person is one properly balanced with reason in charge.** **Plato also states everything comes into being from its opposite - dark and light, death comes from life, life from death.** Plato argues the soul is required to explain innate or a priori knowledge. In **Plato's Dialogue Meno**, Socrates questions an uneducated slave to show the slave knows about **Pythagoras' theorem.** **Our innate understanding of the Forms seems to suggest the soul pre-exists the body.** Plato also draws a distinction between who we speak of ourselves and our body (the linguistic argument). He believes we say “I have a body” when we say “I am happy” or “I am thinking.” This works in the same way as if we said “I have a house”. **This suggests we are not our bodies. We are the user of the body and the body is the used.**

The most famous defender of substance dualism is Rene Descartes, the Father of Modern Philosophy. In his *Meditations* he explains that it is possible to doubt all things including whether his body was real. *Descartes says this because his senses could and can be unreliable, he could be dreaming or (hypothetically) an evil demon could be in charge of the universe and could be deceiving us. Descartes thought it was perfectly possible to doubt everything including the existence of the body.* Descartes wanted to push doubt as far as it could go (Scepticism). **But, in his Second Meditation, Descartes thinks there is one thing that it is possible not to doubt – his existence.** He calls this the First Certainty. **We cannot doubt the “I” or thinking thing.** He uses one of the most famous phrases in philosophy, called the Cogito (from the first word of the Latin translation) – **“I think therefore I am.”** Even if he were wrong about everything the very act of thinking proves there is a thinker. **For Descartes, this proves the existence of the thinking part of us. There is a difference between the mind or soul and the body. One can be proved, the other doubted.** So Descartes argues the existence of the mind is logically independent of the body. If it was identical, it would need to share all the properties. Differences demonstrate the two things are not one. This is called Leibniz’s Law and says if objects are identical they have to have exactly the same properties. **So, Dualism must be true because there is difference between mind and body.** They are two substances with incompatible qualities (indivisible immaterial non-physical thought and divisible physical space). Descartes argues I think therefore I am enables him to identify the essential nature of the mind as a thinking thing. The essence of the mind is non-physical thought. He **gave the example of being the same person even if I had a leg amputated (even though I see myself as a whole person).** Descartes believed the body and mind connected through pineal gland (imagination, common sense) in brain. **The mind was the pilot of body, body and soul not identical**

Aristotle rejects the substance dualism of Plato. The soul is not something completely extra and different to the body. This was based on his theory of Form. He thought Plato’s theory of Forms unnecessary. For him a Form is a property that is possessed by something but is not additional to an object. For example, Bertrand Russell said football could not exist if there were no footballers, redness if no red objects. By contrast, Plato thought beauty existed as an idea even if there were no beautiful things. **Aristotle said beauty is an idea we only have from observing beauty in beautiful things. Without beautiful things there would be no beauty. For Aristotle the soul is inseparable from the body.** It is the description of the essence or properties of the body, our personality and abilities. The soul is the form of the body and two cannot be divided. **We are body and soul. If the body were an axe its soul would be to chop. If the body were an eye the soul would be an ability to see. There can be no soul without the body.** Aristotle believed in the 4 Causes (Material, Efficient, Formal, Final). The formal cause gives something shape/structure. **The soul was the formal cause of the body giving essence to living things, distinguishing living from dead. Otherwise it was just matter. Matter needs the soul. The soul animates my body. The soul is like a stamp in wax.** Inseparable from body. Soul is something’s purpose. All living things possess a soul. **The human soul has a rational part made up of a vegetative and appetitive element. Plants only have vegetative – the ability to gain nutrition. Animals also have the appetitive element involving movement and desires.** Human souls are different as they have the ability to reason. This separates us from animals. This is known as the **hierarchy of being. There is some evidence that Aristotle thinks reason survives death but this is not a belief in personal life after death and it is undeveloped.**



Materialism is the idea that human beings are made of physical matter alone. Humans are flesh, blood, nerves and cells. Consciousness can be explained by physical or material interactions. The soul is not a separate substance. The mind is the workings of the human brain. Reductionism believes everything about a person reducible to statements about physical processes. Reductive Materialism/Identity Theory states the brain and mind are identical. Mental events physical events. Behaviourism states all mental states are learnt behaviours of bodies.

Richard Dawkins is a Biological Materialist. He believes there is no immortal soul or “spirit-driven life force” or “mystic jelly.” There is no empirical evidence for this bizarre notion. It is a myth, primitive superstition based on fear of death, chemical processes in the brain and wish fulfilment. The soul is evasion not explanation. It was invented by the ancients to explain consciousness just as people used to blame the gods for thunder. **“Life is bytes and bytes of digital information. We are DNA survival machines.”** DNA survival is our life goal (evolution). So, Dawkins rejects the Platonic and religious idea of the soul as a separate thing and principle of life. He calls this Soul 1. However, he does use the term Soul metaphorically as long as we do not believe it is the actual thing. **He advocates the metaphorical Soul 2 which means intellectual or spiritual power and high development of mental faculties. This soul is not separate from brain or body and is metaphorical. We only survive death through memories/ intellectual feeling (Memes or Soul 2).** Susan Blackmore argues our minds are shaped by culture.

Neuroscience is the branch of science that studies the brain. We now know which parts of the brain are responsible for language, memory and emotions. Our states of consciousness are affected by brain chemistry. For example, depression can be treated with medication that alters the chemistry of the brain. Dawkins argues that one day science will identify all mental processes and give a complete explanation of consciousness. **Materialists ask how a non-physical mind or soul could interact with the brain.** It is like asking how a ghost rides a bicycle – its non physical feet could never pedal! Our thought to have a cup of coffee is a non-physical thing how does it transmit to our brain and lead to our action to make the coffee. Anthony Flew it makes no sense for personality to survive without a body. It would be like the Cheshire Cat in Alice In Wonderland whose grin survives without his body (but this is a joke).

Gilbert Ryle argues that the belief that the soul is separate is a category mistake or error. Ryle imagines taking a visitor to Oxford or Cambridge University. He is shown the colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, accommodation and offices. The visitor then asks where the university is. The university is what the visitor has just been shown. Ryle says Descartes makes the same category mistake. There is no ghost in the machine. Other examples of category errors Ryle highlights are - A rhinoceros is not a type of butterfly. Pair of gloves not something different from a matching left and right hand glove. Team spirit not separate from the team playing the cricket match. A division of soldiers not separate to a squadron or platoon (make up a division). **Materialists also argue that consciousness being explained by physical and material events is the brain is the simplest explanation and, using Ockham’s razor.**

Linda Badham states modern science questions life after death. Near Death Experiences are explained by drugs or a lack of oxygen. We need our environment to live as we are constantly exchanging atoms with it. What causes our death would surely cause our death again as we are not beings that can be repaired without changing identity. We can question the amount of people in Heaven, asking how God chooses who enters Heaven and suggesting that the Next Life would surely need to things like trees and food to sustain life. When in evolution were we given souls? Our bodies are essential to our brains shown when we do not have food or sleep.