Carroll College
Carroll Scholars

Philosophy Undergraduate Theses

Spring 1949

The "Locus" Of The Soul In The Body

Frank Blake
Carroll College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.carroll.edu/philosophy_theses
Part of the Philosophy Commons, and the Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons

Recommended Citation
Blake, Frank, "The "Locus" Of The Soul In The Body" (1949). Philosophy Undergraduate Theses. 66.
https://scholars.carroll.edu/philosophy_theses/66

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Philosophy at Carroll Scholars. It has been accepted for inclusion in Philosophy Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of Carroll Scholars. For more information, please contact tkratz@carroll.edu.
THE "LOCUS" OF THE SOUL IN THE BODY

by

Frank Blake

A Dissertation submitted to the Department of Philosophy of Carroll College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

Helena, Montana

1949

James R. DeArnot
12 April 1949
Table of Contents

Introduction ................................................................. Page 1
Chapter 1. The nature of the Soul ................................. Page 12
Chapter II. The "locus" of the Soul .............................. Page 23
Bibliography ................................................................. Page 37
Many philosophers from the earliest times to the present have attempted to define the rea in the body where the soul resides. Science and further reasoning have proven them wrong in their explanation. But the most obvious approach to this problem will be from the teaching of the nature of the soul. The term soul comes from the Latin word anima which means "breath", life. An interesting question is where in the body is the most sign or evidence of life? In the brain? the heart? the pineal gland? The point being stressed here is the importance of the question. The writer asked some of his fellow-students the question, "Where in your body is your soul?" Some looked in- kance and smiled; others didn't know and said so. One expressed the statement that the answer would be needed in case he met a materialist who would deny the soul's existence. The burden of proof is on our side because we affirm it's real existence.
real existence.

The question implies many attributes of the soul, such as, the simplicity, the immortality, the substantiality, the nature of the union of body and soul.

Everyone is interested in this problem. The writer wishes to qualify the term 'everyone'. Everyone who tries to prove or disprove the soul is determined to locate its place or to reason its non-existence. It is not essential to salvation to locate the anima. It is essential to believe in its existence and immortality either for one's eternal glory or damnation. Is the soul subject to the laws of gradation, that is, is the soul complete in the healthy individual and partially complete in the person who is stunted, physically imperfect? Does the giant, the victim of an overactive pituitary gland, have more soul than the midget, the victim of an underactive pituitary gland? Is the individual inclined to obesity the possessor of a larger soul than the emanciated prisoner of starvation? If the soul is present in the whole body is the genius greater than the idiot because the former has greater activity in the mind? Is the athlete more soul than the non-athlete? These questions parade across the mind when the seat of the soul is discussed. If the soul is a spiritual entity how does it reside in the accumulation of matter, called the body? Does the immaterial soul depend heavily on the material body? What happens to the soul when the body begins to corrupt soon after death? When the body falls into a state of dissolution does the lapse likewise?
The asylums for the insane are they domiciles for soul-less bodies? What about the incurably sick people who suffer miserable pain in the theores of the dreadful disease which devastates their bodies, are the souls of those unfortunates, according to the worldly-minded, but to us one who is favored by God, experiencing the same agonizing pain and physical torture? The mercy-killers would be humanistic if this is the case. Is physical beauty the external manifestation of a thriving, salubrious soul; and physical non-beauty the reverse of that? Does the color of one’s skin determine the color of his soul? If the soul is present throughout the whole body then it is in the pigment cells also, wouldn’t this be tacitly approving that one racial group is inferior to another. The "herrenvolk" would be absolutely correct if this is the case. These questions will be answered in the appropriate place in the essay. The law of self-preservation is inherent in every man. He will defend his life at all cost. During the recent war a noted writer observed that soldiers going into battle were more careful about their eyes than the rest of their body. The reason given was that they considered their eyes as the most important part of their body. To make this comparison clearer take the case of the man who believes that his soul is located in his heart. He believes in the tremendous role that the soul has in his eternal salvation. Therefore, he wishes to do all in his power to safeguard his heart from injury, and overstrain. His heart is important to him because he has the belief that therein lives the soul.
He would be equally concerned about any portion of his body if he thought that the soul had its residence there. In the tangible world of man the homes of his officials are accorded distinctions of honor. His public buildings are kept in splendid condition. The palaces of his kings and the mansions of his leaders are guarded and conscientiously watched lest any injury come to them. It is obvious that man is not spending money to preserve the mortar and bricks that compose the building. He believes that within these confined areas live men essential to his political welfare.

Many books on psychology omit the soul altogether stating that the treatment of it is not pertinent to psychology. But the heretical German theologian Melancthon coined the term especially for this subject. Psychology is a combination of two Greek words, psyche (ψυχή), logos (λόγος). No wonder the world not only denies the soul but also derides those who would endeavor to explain its abode. A man will lock his house against robbers in order to safeguard the perishable valuables within. He will keep constant care over his body if he knows the imperishable prize locked within. Man is confused in regard to the place of the soul because so many conflicting theories are advanced purporting to show that the seat of the soul is in the brain, in the heart, in the pineal gland. He reels under this weight of contradictory statements.
History of the problem

Whenever the soul has been discussed in the many systems of philosophy the question of its residence has also been treated. But the reason why the diverse and at times contradictory statements have been made is simply that the definition of the anima is not agreed upon by all. The materialist denies any need for the soul therefore he is not concerned about its presence. The agnostic who gropes about intellectually will of course give a puzzled and non-informative look. This last system of philosophy is very negative more so than the sceptic who will assert that we can know nothing with certainty, yet he is sure that we are unable to know different things, that each of us is very well aware of. But the seat of the soul must be in harmony with the teaching of what the soul is, else the question will be more confusing than it now is. The only system of philosophy that has a logical and proven basis for its teaching of the soul and its seat, is Scholasticism.

The Egyptians believed in the soul or Ka. This Ka was immersed in matter. Since this religion was pantheistic, they held that the seat of the soul to be in the individual god of the universe. They also believed in the life to come where the soul would be confined to the body of the person. The soul of the dead will be re-united at the resurrection of the body is a tenet of their religion also. Plato assigned the soul to the head. He did make a distinction though. Plato postulated three souls, one in the head which is the
rational; the second in the breast which is the passionate; the third in the abdomen which is the appetitive. Plato said that God made the head round so that it would be a receptacle for the soul. "The receptacle of the divine soul He made round, and called that portion of the marrow brain, intending that the vessel containing this substance should be the head....." (1) In the Phaedo, Plato has the characters using the term "prison" when he refers to the body. The soul is imprisoned in the body. The souls of the bad will be located in the bodies which they had in earthly life. "And they may be supposed to find their prisons in the same natures which they have had in their former lives." (2) The Stoics taught that the soul was a fiery breath. This "breath" was diffused throughout the body. This of course brings the nature of the soul to coincide with matter. Therefore, when matter will fall into dissolutio so will the soul. At least the Stoics were nearer the scholastic doctrine which puts the soul in every part of the body. However, the pagan Greek philosophers, taught that a spiritual entity such as the soul is subjected to the imperfections of matter. This is absurd. For spirituality is intrinsically free from matter. Again, the definition of the soul will give its dependence or lack of dependence upon matter.

Aristotle placed the soul in the heart. (3) Many people today assign the soul to the heart. The expression "he has a good heart because he has a good soul" is typical of the theories that have mis-

(1) W.Hanna Thomson, Brain and Personality, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1907, 7
(3) Ibid., 9
located the soul. The soul is in the heart but not as the central position from which it rules the rest of the body. If the soul were in the heart, how then can the soul be punished for evil? For sin comes through volition and through intellect. To Aristotle the locus of the soul was not the brain. It must be remembered that the structure of the brain and its many parts was not known to the Greeks as it is today. Aristotle believed that the brain was only a cooling device for the heart. The brain to Aristotle was not important so far as the mind was concerned, and he probably leaned to the theory of Hippocrates of Cos who believed that the seat of consciousness was in the blood. This hypothesis should not be entirely ignored because when one loses a certain amount of blood, or when one experiences a fever consciousness is lessened. This reasoned Hippocrates was the heart, which is the muscular pump of the circulatory system, weakening and in the heart was the soul. Again, the pagan Greeks, have a clouded notion of the correct seat of the soul. The blood circulates throughout the whole body, the veins carrying the blood to the heart, and the arteries taking it away. In this way every part of our body is touched by the blood. However, the blood and the heart are composed of material substances, whereas the soul is spiritual. Further, the blood and the heart are extended objects, whereas the soul is simple, i.e. absent of parts.

Epicurus taught that the soul was distributed throughout the
whole body as a fine substance. He divided the soul into parts, the vital force which is in all parts of the body; and a force of understanding and volition which resided in the breast. Since the mind and will are very essential distinctions of man from brute breast, he probably believed that the heart was the seat of the intellect. A common error among the pagan Greeks. It must be remembered that the knowledge of anatomy was not as advanced among them as it is now. But it is noteworthy of the early Greeks philosophers that they came very close to the real and true seat of the animating principle of life, the soul. Today, with the science of physiology so far advanced men propose more untenable theories. Galen in the second century after having dissected the brain postulated the hypothesis that the seat of the mental processes was in the brain. In the sixteenth century Vesalius who thought that the soul was a material entity placed in the brain. He followed the Platonic theory of the three souls, the rational, the vital, and the chief. The rational soul is in the brain as Plato said. Van Helmont gave the orifice of the stomach the honor of being the residence of the soul. It is evident that these men, particularly those who postulated the brain theory, were confusing the soul with the consciousness. Consciousness is an attribute of the soul, but it is not the soul. Willis of Oxford argued a dualistic soul. He brought forth the supposition that there are two souls in man, the rational, and the corporeal. The material soul was further divided
into two parts. The rational soul was in the brain. The divisions of the corporeal soul was in the blood as flame; the other was in the nervous system and the tissues of the body. Willis seems to have been influenced by the Stoical system which said that the soul was a "fiery breath". Descartes claimed the pineal gland as the home of the soul. This organ is a tiny body located in the third ventricle of the brain. But this theory would be inadmissible from the viewpoint and evidence of physiology.

The pineal gland, or epiphysis, is a small reddish-gray body about 8mm. in length that develops as an outgrowth of the third ventricle of the brain and remains attached to the roof of the ventricle. In early life it is glandular and attains its maximum growth about the seventh year. After this period, and particularly after puberty, it decreases in size, and the glandular tissue is replaced by fibrous tissue. The secretions of the pineal body probable inhibit the production of the anterior pituitary hormone. Pathological destruction of the gland is sometimes followed by precocious sexual and skeletal, and possible mental, development. The functions of the gland is still obscure. (4)

What would happen to the soul when the "pathological destruction would occur"?

Then the functions of the gland are not known with certainty. Descartes reasoned in this manner that the pineal gland was the only organ of the brain not doubled. Stahl, Stenson, and Borelli, each advanced an argument for the place of the soul. Haller in the eighteenth century proposed that the pineal gland was not the seat of the soul. Instead, he put the soul in the whole structure of the cerebrum and cerebellum. Gall in the nineteenth century advanced a theory that later fell into disrepute, the pseudo-science of phrenology.

But he did start an investigation which is still being carried on today. In 1861, the Italian anatomist, Broca discovered that a certain portion of the brain was the control center for speech. It is now known as the Broca convolution. It is located in the third frontal lobe. Later, men tried to find if the cortex of the brain or the gray surface of the brain was not the seat of the soul. They compared the growth or development of the brain with the development of mental capacity. They found that a blow on the surface of the brain or when an inflamed condition exists there that consciousness is impaired also. These investigators reasoned that the soul must have its seat in the cortex. The theory advanced by some is that the junction where the nerve centers criss-cross is the seat of the soul. But Wundt who was a teacher of psychological-parallelism disagreed with this hypothesis. He believed in one psychial center—the brain.

Saint Augustine maintained that the soul was, "whole in the whole body, and whole in every one of its parts." (De.Trin.vi.6) (5) In the book of Genesis Moses writes that, "God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face, and man was made a living soul." (Genesis ii,7) This quotation was given to Saint Thomas in the form of an objection which attempted to place the soul in the face. The reply from Aquinas was, Since vital operations are more clearly seen in man's face, on account of the senses

which are there expressed; therefore Scripture says that the breath of life was breathed into man's face." (6) It is interesting to observe that the preposition "into" is used denoting motion toward rather than the preposition "in" signifying place where. Scholasticism teaches that the soul is everywhere in the body under the totality of its essence but not in the totality of its powers. This question of the locus of the soul is not restricted to philosophers alone nor to the educated who have time and leisure to study this perplexing problem. Even the savage understands the soul. The primitive tribes of the Dyaks and Sumatrans have their answer to the locus of the soul. Many savage peoples, such as the Dyaks and Sumatrans, bind various parts of the body during sickness to prevent escape of souls." (7)

Saint Thomas in refuting those who denied that the soul was not in every part of the body makes a distinction between an accidental union of the body and soul and a substantial union of body and soul. Apparently, the men whom this writer has written about failed to make this essential distinction. For here rests a great burden of proof which is in support that the soul is everywhere in the body. "But the soul is the substantial form; and therefore it must be the form and the act, not only of the body, but also of each part." (8) Saint Thomas concludes his article on the locus of the soul with these words:

(6) op. cit. 464
(7) Ibid. 382
Since, however, the soul has not quantitative totality, neither essentially, nor accidentally, as we have seen; it is enough to say that the whole soul is in each part of the body, by totality of perfection and of essence, but not by totality of power. For it is not in each part of the body, with regards to each of its powers; but with regard to sight, it is in the eye; and with regard to hearing, it is in the ear; and so forth. (9)

The second part of this paper will deal with the nature of the soul. For, if we are to understand about the locus, and why the Scholastic philosophy assigns the whole body as the locus, we must know the nature of the immortal soul.

(9) Op.cit. 382
Chapter 1

The Nature of the Soul

The question of the location of the soul will depend on the nature of the soul. The soul is first a substance, a spiritual substance. It is also a simple, immortal one. It must be if the solution to the query of its seat is to be a rational one. Otherwise, we are wasting time trying to deny something that is obvious. This section of the thesis will not be a refutation of any of the other philosophies but rather an exposition of the nature of the soul according to the principles of Scholasticism.

The soul is simple, i.e. it has no parts outside of parts. There are two kinds of simplicity, essential and integral. The first, or essential simplicity, means that there is no composition of matter and form alone. For the soul is not composed of matter and form since matter can not be the principle of life as philosophy.
has demonstrated. The second kind of simplicity, namely integral simplicity means not made of quantitative parts. Quantity is proper to matter as an accident. The soul is not material, it is essentially simple. Therefore the soul is essentially and integrally simple. The human soul is indivisible per se and per accidents. The philosophical principle that opus sequatur esse indicates here the simplicity of the soul. If the soul depends on matter for its essence than it is material. If, and it does has spiritual operations than it is spiritual. The soul can abstract, can think, can reflect, which qualities are spiritual and emanate from a spiritual source. For the effect can never be greater than its cause; it must be proportional to it. The will is a faculty of the soul. The will is a spiritual as most men will agree.

As to whether the human soul is composed of matter and form Saint Thomas says:

The soul has no matter. We may consider this question in two ways. First, from the notion of the soul in general; for it belongs to the notion of a soul to be the form of a body. Now, either it is a form by virtue of itself, in its entirety, or by virtue of some part of itself. If by virtue of itself in its entirety, then it is impossible that any part of it should be matter, if by matter we understand something purely potential: for a form, as such, is an act; and that which is purely potential is repugnant to actuality as being opposed thereto. If, however, it be a form by virtue of a part of itself, then we call that part the soul; and that matter, which it actualizes first, we call primary matter.
Secondly, we may proceed from the specific notion of the human soul, inasmuch as it is received into something is received according to the condition of the recipient. Now a thing is known in as far as its form is in the knower. But the intellectual soul knows a things in its nature absolutely: for instance, it knows a stone absolutely as a stone; and therefore the form of the stone absolutely, as to its proper formal idea, is in the intellectual stone. Therefore the intellectual soul itself is an absolute form, and not something composed of matter and form. For if the intellectual soul were composed of matter and form, the form of things would be received into it as individuals: just as it happens with the sensitive powers which receives forms in a corporeal organ; since matter is the principle by which forms are individualized. It follows, therefore, that the intellectual soul, and every intellectual substance which has knowledge of forms absolutely, is exempt from composition of matter and form. (10)

The soul is not extended for then it would be composed of parts and this is false. The soul is ubiquitously present in the body. It does depend on matter only insofar as it exercises certain functions in the various parts of the body. It uses the eye for seeing; the ears for hearing; the feet for the purpose of locomotion but it does not "shrink" when that part of the material body is functionally out of order. It simply does not operate in that part. The word ubiqititious does not imply diffusion. The soul suffers what Barrett calls, "virtual diminution of power" when it no longer operates in the amputated leg or arm. "With the loss of one of the members of the body the soul may be said, figuratively, to experience a virtual diminution of power." (11)

The rational soul, i.e. the soul of man is incomplete by reason of species: whereas the angelic soul is complete by reason of substance and of species. This places the rational soul at the

(10) St. Thomas of Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 366
(11) James F. Barrett, This Creature Man, Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1937, 290
bottom of intellectual life. It is true that the soul needs primary matter before it can actualize. But it must be remembered that prime matter needs the soul before it can be actualized. The hylomorphic theory explains this very clearly in cosmology. The angels are mere spirits. Tanquerey gives the definition of angels quoad rem, "substantia creatae, mere spiritualis, intellectualis et subsistens." He proceeds to analyse the definition. Mere spiritualis means that the angels are ordained to inform a body; intellectualis, their knowledge unlike man's is infused; man's is acquired by reason; subsistens, they are able to exercise (exercere) their own operations through themselves (per se seipsam). Angels are in place definitively; whereas the body of material creatures are in place circumscriptively. Angels also know God naturally through innate ideas and a fortiori they know man and other angels. They know future necessaries naturally because these effects are contained necessarily in their causes. They do not know with certitude the free will of man nor his secrets but with conjecture only. Angels enjoy free will together. This is proved in biblical history with the "non serviam" of Lucifer and his cohorts of bad angels. Bad angels are notable to act directly in intellect and will. For these are faculties of created beings immediately from God. But this thesis is not concerned with the apologetical argument concerning the angels and their attributes and powers.
The human soul is simple. It is the life-principle of man. It differs from the vegetal and sentient soul in that these souls are depended upon matter for their existence. When the body of an animal dies its soul dies also per accidens. If the human soul were such then the locality of the soul would be of little importance to philosophy or to man. Then the natural law which commands man to do good and to avoid evil would be meaningless and futile. Is the rational soul the same species as that of the angel? The rational soul and the soul of the angel is not of the same species from the proximate and the natural end, and as to the degree of intellectualiaity and to the union of body and soul. The proximate end of man is happiness here on earth. Happiness is of two kinds, namely, absolute and relative. The former man will enjoy when and if he is received into heaven with God; the latter is his temporal pleasure here on earth enjoying the gifts which it gives, such as, wealth, power, fame, and glory. The angelic soul differs from the rational soul as to intellectuality in this manner. Intellectualiaity is indeterminate and subject to many degrees of difference. St. Thomas says, "Hence, as all sensible things are not of one species, so neither are all intellectual things of one species." (12) The soul of man is distinguished from the soul of the angel as to the union of body and soul. The angels are not composites of soul and body but are pure spirits and complete rational substantialis; whereas the rational soul requires the body for

\[\text{§12}\] St. Thomas of Aquinas, Summa,
its operations. There are different grades of angels but not different species. To use an analogy in the civil administration of a city there are various offices to be filled from the mayor to the lowest secretary but they are all of the same species—man.

The human soul is a spiritual substance or a form per se subsistens. Spirituality is not to be confused with simplicity. Simplicity as was stated above is the negation of matter; while spirituality is intrinsically independent from matter both in its essence and in its operations. But per se subsistens is twofold: it is complete in essence or it is incomplete in its essence. The human soul is ordained to the body and therefore is incomplete in its essence. The angelic soul is complete in its essence and in its species. Abbot Vonier lists the following perfections which a true spirit should have. It must be: (1) incorruptible, here a distinction should be made between the absolute and ordinary power of God. In His absolute power God can annihilate a soul, that is reduce it to non-existence but this would be contrary to His Divine Wisdom and purpose. With His ordinary power He is not able to reduce the soul to non-existence. (2) It must possess innate knowledge; (3) it must never reverse its decision; (4) it knows inferior things and acts to full extent of its knowledge and will power. He concludes with these words, ".....the human soul must possess them all, if the human soul is to be considered a spirit." (13)

Father Lortie, the distinguished philosopher in tract De Spiritualitate Animae says that every nature seeks what is good, such as, knowledge, justice, beauty, and power each of which is an intangible and abstract quality. The philosophical axiom "operatio sequatur esse" again proves that the soul is spiritual. Lortie also writes that the materialistic proponents agree with us when we speak of God, and the abstract things of happiness, sadness, and those of like quality.

A thing is known by its actions. Thus the soul demonstrates its nature by its properties of intellection and volition. No material thing can think or will, the hand cannot will the fingers to act nor the foot reasoned the powers of locomotion. Some acts of the human soul are not spiritual as experience clearly shows. The sense organs of seeing, hearing, smelling are subject to material organs. These facts are incontestable and acknowledged by almost all of mankind with perhaps the exception of the Spiritualists of the Berkeley school. Driscoll and Glenn say that spiritual is another word for "super-organic and "supra-organic" respectively.

The data of experience is known that sense organs are exposed to a stimulus for prolonged period by too intense an impression will weakened that particular organ. The soul, because of its spirituality, does not tire of learning and loving.
The soul is a substance. A substance is a reality which is fitted to exist in itself. An accident is something that adheres in or belongs to a substance. Substance is of two kinds, namely, complete, that is it is fitted to exist by itself alone; and incomplete, that is it must be joined to some other principle in a substantial union. The human soul is a complete substance. The human soul is the constitutive and specifying principle of man. It is the soul which distinguishes man from the lower animals. But a substance is that which specifies a thing to be what it is and not something else. Accidentals are incapable of doing this because it is above their very nature. So that which differentiates a thing from something else substantially must be a substance. The human soul does this in man. The vital principle is not an accident. It cannot be removed and the substance remain complete. If the soul and the body were fitted for existence themselves then the composite, man, would be composed of two principles and dualistic theories would be correct.

The human soul is immortal. Immortality is the inadmissibility of life. There are two kinds of immortality, absolute, which is proper to God alone; natural which is proper to human souls and angels; and supernatural which is attributed to mortal and corruptible nature of a thing and which through the benevolence and goodness of God it is allowed to live after it dissolution. A thing can be corrupted in two ways, per se or per accidens.
Corruption per se is the dissolution of a thing into its parts; corruption per accidents is the passing of a substance from existence by reason of the dissolution of the material or organic body on which the substance depends. If a thing cannot be corrupted either per se or per accidents that thing is said to be intrinsically immortal. The soul of man cannot be corrupted in either way. Therefore the rational soul is intrinsically immortal and since absolute immortality belongs to God alone, the human soul is naturally immortal. The human soul because of its simplicity is not subject to per se and a fortiori per accidents corruption.

One point should be made here and that is this that the human soul may be destroyed by the absolute power of God but this would be against His Goodness and Wisdom. Under His ordinary power He is not able to destroy the soul.

The nature of the soul was given more as a preface to the actual problem of localization of the soul in the body. In the various books on philosophy the writer observed that the argument consisted of explaining the soul and its qualities in order that the answer to the problem would be more accurately understood. Barrett says, "It is quite evident, therefore, that the solution of the problem of the location of the soul in the body will depend in large measure on the preconceived opinion that is held concerning the nature of the soul itself." (14) The Angelic Doctor also adopts the outline of giving some of the necessary at-

tributes of the soul before he attempts to give his reasons as to the residence of the soul in the body.

The next difficulty to be explained is what the writer means by place. How can a thing be in place? Is the soul in place in the same manner as this paper, this typewriter? Is the soul in place in the same manner as the angels? These questions will be answered in the next chapter. After this problem of the locus is solved only then will the scholastic doctrine be understood with some degree of clarity and in accordance with logic.

A thing can be in place, circumscriptively, informatively, operatively, and definitively. Place is defined by McWilliams "..... place is a limited portion of space considered in reference to its position in an extended field," (15) A thing can be in place circumscriptively, that is, its bodily dimensions agree with the bodily dimensions of the spot where it exists. A circle drawn on paper is a good example of this. The area within the circle is in place circumscriptively. A thing can be in place informatively, that is, the form is located in the place occupied by the body. The human soul is in the body informatively. A thing can be in place operatively, that is, through the application of the exercise of its powers in that place. The human soul is in the body operatively. A thing can be in place definitively, that is, the form of the thing is in that body and exercises its effect there and in no other place at the same time. Father Lortie goes somewhat further. He distinguishes

---

three kinds of totality. They are: quantitative, essential, virtual, or potestative totality.

Quantitative totality is spoken of concerning the whole, as it results from many parts of quantity. Essential totality because it responds to the collection of essential parts, or it signifies a complete essence whether simple or a complete. Virtual totality is affirmed from the whole as it results from diverse powers or virtues. (16)

The human soul is present in the human body under the totality of its essence and not under the totality of its powers.

(16) Stanislao A. Lortie, Elementa Philosophiae Christianae ad mentem S. Thomae Aquinatis Exposita, Quebec, 1912, 163.
Chapter 2

The Seat of the Soul

When the soul leaves the body at death, biological life departs with it. A corpse remains. On the other hand a person whose feet, or hands are amputated is not a corpse. Why? Because the soul is still present in the body although the body suffers a defect. The soul is the first act and the form of the entire man. Man walks, talks because he has a soul; he thinks because he has a soul and not because he thinks. Barrett in quoting Saint Thomas of Aquinas on this point: "The immateriality of the created intelligent substance is not its intellect; but through its immateriality it has the power of intelligence.....Wherefore it follows not that the intellect is the substance of the soul, but that it is its virtue and power." (17) This note seems to be common to them that the soul is in the brain.

(17) Barrett, This Creature Man, 231
We cannot admit that there are two principles in man. One takes care of the vegetative functions; the other that has charge of the psychic operations. For if we did we would be compelled to advance some teleological factor operating in organisms. This is the position one would find himself if he denied that the soul has any control over the mechanical actions of the body. One is forced by reason to conceive that the soul is in charge in the guidance of bodily growth. This may be accomplished directly or indirectly which would be under the supervision of a general control under some system of lesser psychic agents. (18)

Plato taught that man has three souls, the rational, the spiritual, and the appetitive. To each of these souls he assigned a special place: the rational soul in the brain, the spiritual soul in the chest, and the appetitive soul in the abdomen. The main activity of the soul, according to the platonic system is exercise of reason and the willing of those things which reason comprehends. It is only when the soul "depants" from its spiritual field and comes into the field of matter that the soul performs functions of higher emotions and lower bodily desires. Here is where Plato postulated three souls in man. McDougall believes that Plato did not mean three different parts of the soul, or three activities but rather he placed the soul's faculties on three levels mentally. He continues,

(18) Cf William McDougall, Body and Mind, London, Methuen and Company Ltd., 1920, 373
the highest only being exercised apart from the body. Reason controls the lower functions, but not always with complete success; and when the lower faculties in their contaminating intimacy with the body, get out of control, the soul suffers a debasement, which must be expiated by future incarnations in lower bodily forms, even animal forms. (19)

Plato throughout his dialogues refers time and again to three souls. He places the rational soul first each time, claiming that reason is supreme. He symbolizes the rational soul as the philosopher, the wise man. The other souls are depicted as wantons, gluttons and the like. How much of this writing is his own philosophy is difficult to say since he has Socrates as the interlocutor. (20)

Aristotle did not agree with his master, Plato, in placing the soul in the brain. Rather he assigned the soul to the heart. To Aristotle the brain was one great refrigerating plant for the blood. (21) He did however explain the relationship between the soul and the rest of the body. In the lower animals and plants he believed that psychial powers are exercised in all of the body and by all parts of the body. In man this is not the case. Man's psychial powers are concentrated in certain parts of the body.

The dominating organ of sensation in all sanguineous animals is found in the heart, for the common sense that serves all the special senses must be situated there. There are two senses, taste and touch, whose channels lead manifestly to the heart, and what is true of those must be true of the other senses. Movement in the other sense-organs may be transmitted to the heart, but with the upper parts of the body these two senses do not communicate in any way. Apart from these considerations, if the principle of life of all animals is seated in the heart, the sensory principle must evidently be there also. (22)

(20) Loc.cit. Walter J.Black  
(21) Thomason, Brain and Personality, 8  
(22) Ibid., 25
Aristotle's grasp of physiology was faulty. The heart is the great muscular pump of the circulatory system. The knowledge of the nervous system was somewhat obscure in Aristotle's mind. Even today the nervous system still offers problems to the neurologists.

Other men of the scientific and philosophical world attempted to locate the soul. Some of their theories are identical in some respects; while others differ very widely.

Galen, in the second century, A.D. disproved the theory of Aristotle when he pioneered in the tracing of the nervous system. He demonstrated that the brain is connected with the muscles and by the nerves to the sense-organs. He added that the brain is somehow connected with the mental process. How, he did not attempt to show. His teaching persisted for a thousand years, or until Vesalius taught that man has three souls, a revival of the platonic notion. His teaching of the soul is materialistic. The brain was the chief seat of the main soul, the one that contains all the animal spirits. The function of this soul is mental. To him the brain was the dispatcher which sends to all parts of the body, sensations. The brain was the organ that influenced the muscles and other organs by sending these animal spirits along the nerves. By the method of vivisection he found that when the brain is removed sensation and movement are lost. He could go no farther than this in his teaching.
observed that the brain of man is the heaviest and attains its highest dimensions in man, the lord of the animal world. He, then put forth the observation that the proportion of the body has something to do with the brain. Willis, a contemporary of Descartes, postulated that the rational soul was in the brain. He, however, distinguishes a corporeal soul having two divisions to it, namely, one section residing in the blood and the other of light diffused throughout the nervous system. His reasons for this distinction is not clear. Saint Gregory of Nyssa who lived in the fourth century, A.D. has this to say concerning the brain theory:

Their warrant for the truth of this affirmation is because the activity of the perceptive faculty can never be located otherwise, than in this part where both the ear is attached and receives the sounds that fall upon it; where also the sight, inseparably connected with the base of the eyes, transmits the image that strikes the pupils and makes an impression of the within; where also the different kinds of scent are discriminated through the sniffing of the organs of smell; and where also the sensation of taste is determined by the tasting power of the membrane of the brain, which sends out certain fibrous runners bearing sensations, and proceeding through the vertebrae of the neck into the filterlike passage to the muscles there. (23)

Haller rejected the views of Stahl, who said that the soul operated in all parts of the body. Haller posits the argument that the soul resides in the area where the nerves have their origin. He bases his theory on the accidental attribute of size, here meaning that this junction of the nerves is the smallest place that the soul can reside. As the results of some experiments of his he concludes with the words, "...we cannot admit as the exclusive seat of the soul, either the corpus callosum or the septum lâcidum or

the tiny pineal gland, or the corpus striata or any particular region of the brain." (24) He concludes his argument thusly: "...both sensation and movement have their source in the medulla of the brain. This therefore is the seat of the soul." (25)

Rene Descartes, the celebrated French philosopher began a new system of philosophy with his famous principle, Cogito, ergo sum. He began a whole new set of trends which are still being felt today. What Martin Luther was to religion Descartes was to philosophy. He taught that the soul was spiritual. The soul is of the nature which has relations to dimensions, or other properties of matter. He then locates the soul in the pineal gland thus making it circumscribed. Matter can be circumscribed but not spiritual things. He also postulates that the soul is joined to matter. His conception of the union of soul and body is an accidental union. But St. Thomas proves that it is a substantial union. Descartes after placing the arguments for the residence of the soul in the brain and the heart points out where the adherents of these theories are wrong. He places the soul in the pineal gland in the brain. His reasons for so doing are that since the other parts of the brain are doubled, and by analogy he points out the obvious facts that each of us has two ears, two eyes, and in general our external senses are doubled, that the pineal gland alone is not bilateral in its formation. The impressions we receive are gathered by the

(24) McDougall, Body and Mind, 100
(25) Ibid., 101
bilateral senses and conveyed to the brain as one. He says that, "... but there is no other place whatever in the whole body, where they can thus be united, except as they have first been united in this gland." (26) Another reason he gives for his placing the seat of the soul in the pineal gland is,

...for it is certain that the soul must be joined to some part of the body, and there is no point which is not as much or more liable to alteration than this gland, which, although it is very small and very soft, nevertheless, on account of its situation is so well protected, that it can be almost as little subject to any disease as the crystalline humor of the eye.....(26)

But in comparative Anatomy this pineal body or eye is termed a vestigial organ. If the theory of evolution is correct did the soul undergo a process of evolution? According to our study of the nature of the soul this would be repugnant to its nature. For material things are subject to the law of change and not simple things.

Gall and Spurzheim in the early part of the 20th century brought forth the pseudo-science of phrenology. The specious theory was supposed to explain by the "bumps" on one's skull his character and his propensities. The theory has lost all vestiges of truth and the writer will waste no time in elaborating on it further. Its importance to the question is that it brought into greater light the theory of cerebral localization. Maher reports that some of the leading writers on this subject have declared that scarcely any portion of cerebral substance is necessary to the performance of psychial operations. Father Moore in summing

(27) Ibid., 175
up his unit concerning cerebral localization has this to say. "Concepts, the knowledge of laws, principles, ideals, the higher aspirations of the will, are pure acts of the entelechya, unlocalized and incapable of localization in the nervous system." (23)

In our own times the question still is asked in which part of the body does the soul reside. The theories have come and in turn have been disproved but still someone is always challenging the doctrine of where the vital principle sits. Some of the modern philosophers have adopted the negativistic attitude and pontifically pronounced that the soul no longer exists. James declared that the soul was old-fashioned and therefore not worthy of study. The materialists will say that the soul does not exists as an independent being in the body. To them the body houses the soul but their concept of the soul is inadmissible. McDougall in his book, work defends the doctrine of Animism but even he believes that those spiritual qualities are capable of being localized. If he means motor and sensory areas no one denies him but if he is also teaching that consciousness is able to be pick out and shown to us, he is wrong.

In his last paragraph of his treatment of the seat of the soul McDougall concludes with the pessimistic note that the seat of the soul does not exist.

(28) Dom Thomas Verner Moore, Cognitive Psychology, Chicago, J.B. Lippincott Company, 1939, 89
Thus the search for a punctual seat of the soul, for some one spot at which the sensory nerves might be supposed to play to act upon the soul and at which in turn the soul might be supposed to play upon the central ends of the motor nerves, has been shown to be a hopeless one: it is proved that there is no such seat of the soul. (29)

After these different philosophers and scientists advanced their theories concerning the "locus" of the soul the writer now wishes to present the scholastic doctrine, particularly the one expounded by Saint Thomas of Aquinas. Saint Augustine also taught that the soul was in each and every part of the body. The writer has already defined the terms place and what is meant by totality in a previous chapter. These definitions are those laid down by the scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages. The reason why so many false opinions have been made concerning the "locus" of the soul is this: too many men have the idea that the soul is related to the spatial quality of a mathematical point. Therefore, these men must set the soul, no matter how minute, in some part of the body. But to assign even the space of a mathematical point to the soul would be to deny its simplicity, which would be absurd. For the soul were small and microscopic these investigators would have found it by this time. The progress of medicine and comparative anatomy would have held this discovery as the greatest of time. During the frightful years when materialism held sway not even the most avid and industrious materialist could find the soul. They, then assume the position of denying the existence of

(29) Mc Dougall, Body and Mind, 105
such a being. They called it "a fi gment of our imagination," some­thing the religious used to keep the unlearned and misguided in place. Holt sarcastically remarks that the physiologist may ex­amine the brain and not find the seat of the soul in the pineal gland. "Yet for the most part the physiologist has come to feel that he may now examine the cerebral cortex and even the pineal gland, without apprehending an uncanny surprise." (30)

McDougall again come to the fore in defense of the soul with these words.

....that the long search for a punctual or central seat of the soul has proved fruitless, and that this result has contribut­ed to bring about the rejection of Animism. We have now to see that the search for a sensorium commune has proved equally fruit­less, and that this result provides one of the strongest arguments in support of Animism. (31)

As the writer mentioned in the initial pages of these essay if the soul is denied existence then the search for its seat is foolish. The quest for the location of the soul must be in logi­cal accord with its attributes and functions.

The soul is the vital principle and its union with the body is a substantial one and not an accidental union as Descartes taught.

For since a whole consists of parts, a form of the whole which does not give existence to each of the parts of the body, is a form consisting of composition and order, such as the form of a house; and such a form is accidentally But the soul is a substantial form; and therefore it must be the form and the act, not only of the whole, but also of each part. (32)

Union, in its widest meaning, is the conjoining two or more things into one thing. Union is divided into accidental union, which is the conjoining of two or more things into one thing accidentally. Substantial union is the conjunction of two or more things into one thing substantially. Substantial union is further subdivided into essential and personal. Essential union would be the forming of a new essence from the union of substantial elements, e.g., hydrogen and oxygen to form water (H₂O). But essential union takes on a new meaning when the new union is a complete substance of the rational order. This is titled a personal union. What is meant by the term "Person" philosophically? Scholastic philosophy calls a person a suppositum which means a complete individual substance which is not a part of something else. For in man, his actions whether of the body or soul are attributed to one principle resulting from this union. For man says, "I think, I know, I act, etc." The suppositum is the principium quod of activity; whereas the form through which an agent acts is the principium quo of actions. But the operations are attributed to one subject, and this is the principium quod, and therefore one person. Since we have stated that the soul was a substance we may assume without further argument that the union is also a substantial one.

To those who advocate that the union of body and soul is accidental St. Thomas calls their opinions "absurd for many reasons"
of which he lists four.

The first from the intellect which does not move the body except through the appetite, and this presupposes an intellect; secondly, because the individual is in a nature of one essence with a composition of matter and form. If therefore the intellect is not the form, then it must be outside the essence and this would mean that the intellect is to the whole as the motor to the thing moved. Thirdly, the action of a motor is never attributed to the thing moved, except through an instrument... Fourthly, because the action of a part is attributed to the whole, it is never attributed to another part, except perhaps indirectly. Therefore if the intellect and the individual are united as stated above, the action of the intellect is not attributed to the individual. (33)

One of the objections against the "locus" of the soul in the whole body was that it is not necessary to postulate that the soul be in each part of the body. It is sufficient to say that the soul be in some principle of the body which would cause the other parts of the body to live. Each part of the body has movement of its own naturally. Saint Thomas replies very succinctly: "The Philosopher is speaking there of the motive power of the soul." (34) Some will argue that if the soul is in each part of the body this would mean that the eye can hear, that the foot can see, the ear talk. This would follow, they aver, because the powers of the soul are imbedded in its essence. This, if it is true, would be absurd and contrary to experience. To which the Angelic Doctor replies:

Some of the powers of the soul are in it according as it exceeds the entire capacity of the body, namely, the intellect and the will; whence these powers are not said to be in any part of the body. Other powers are common to the soul and body; wherefore each of these powers need not be wherever the soul is, but only in that part of the body, which is adapted to the operative of such a power. (35)

(33) Summa Theologiae, 371
(34) Ibid., 381
(35) Ibid., 382
If the union of soul and body were an accidental one then it would be inadmissible and wrong to assign each part of the soul as the locus of the soul. For then the soul would need only be in that portion of the body in which it could move the other parts of the body. This would give credence to the centralized theories which assign a definite place in the body for the residence of the soul. If this were true the best theory would be the brain hypothesis. For most of man's actions are of the intellectual character; this one quality in man, aside from his soul, places him above the brute beasts. Man possesses the vegetative and sentient qualities as well as the rational. The higher always contains the perfections of the lower to a greater degree. But because the accidental union is the wrong solution, it must be rejected. St. Thomas says: "But since the soul is united to the body as its form, it must necessarily be in the whole body, and in each part thereof." (36)

In his closing remarks on this question St. Thomas has this to say.

For it is not in each part of the body, with regard to each of its powers; but with regard to sight, it is in the eye; and with regard to hearing, it is in the ear; and so forth. We must observe, however, that since the soul requires variety of parts, its relations to the whole is not the same as its relations to the parts; for to the whole it is compared primarily and essentially, as to its proper and proportionate perfectible; but to the parts, secondarily, inasmuch as they are ordained to the whole. (37)

The soul is in every part of the body because it is the form of the body. It is the source and principle of corporeal life. It is whole and entire in each part because it is simple. Because it is

(36) Loc. cit.
(37) Loc. cit.
the vital substantial form of the body it communicates and gives life and movement to that body. As to the question that some will bring forth concerning the limbs that atrophy, or the eyes that are blinded, or the legs that are amputated, the answer which is in logical accordance with the "locus" of the soul, is that those parts of body no longer function and therefore since the soul is present only under the totality of its powers, it cannot operated in those areas. It it were present under the totality of its essence the parts would still not function and the soul would then not be simple. For it would infer that it had parts outside of parts.
Bibliography


Driscoll, John T., *Christian Philosophy*, New York, Benziger Brothers, 1893

Glenn, Paul J., *Psychology*, St. Louis, B. Herder Book Company, 1936


Thomson, W. Hanna, *Brain and Personality*, New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1907
