Two Kinds of Questions

- “Natural” questions that arise in thinking about our lives
  - The question of immortality
    - Does death mark the end of our personal existence?
  - The question of freedom in human actions
    - Are our actions (or choices) determined by laws of nature and antecedent conditions, as are all other events in the world, or are they free of such determination (and determined by us)?
- Historical or conceptual questions
  - What is the meaning of terms we commonly use in discussing human beings, e.g., “soul” & “mind”?
  - How are these terms related to the questions above?
  - Are these terms useful or are they relics of past and misleading attempts to discuss human nature?
- We will investigate these questions by focussing on the differences between man, animal, and machine

This is not Theological Anthropology

- Theology can be defined in either of two ways.
  - As a discipline, characterized by its dependence on revelation—what God reveals to man through the Bible and Tradition, which we understand under the guidance of the Church.
  - As a subject matter, theology is a systematic account of God
- Typical questions in theological anthropology would include:
  - How can original sin be inherited?
  - In what sense is man “made in the image and likeness of God”?
- Or (with a focus on the concept of person)
  - How could three persons constitute one being (the triune God)?
  - How could one person (Jesus) have two natures (human and divine)?
- Theological anthropology might concentrate on distinguishing man, God, and angels (though some of this could be done philosophically).

Not Scientific Anthropology

- The scientific study of man uses special techniques,
  - observation
    - e.g., field work to learn about different cultures
  - experiment
    - e.g., to study the physiology of the brain
- For an example of this,
  - see Crick & Koch
  - contrast it to Searle and Chalmers articles (coming up)

Philosophical Anthropology

- The philosophical study of man is based on …
  - induction from ordinary (common) experience
  - conceptual clarification
  - logical argument
- The differences …
  - with scientific anthropology perhaps less sharp
    - since the distinction between common & special experience may be imprecise
  - with theological anthropology
    - in principle, sharper: experience or revelation?
    - in practice,
      - reflection on the truths of revelation can look very philosophical
        - a Catholic philosopher would use the Church doctrine as an external constraint
      » there would be no point in developing ideas that one knew for non-philosophical reasons to be false
- How important is the distinction?
  - In the end, we just want to know the truth
    - but it is important to recognize distinct methods (disciplines)
      - and to know what kinds of reason one has (or can have) for believing something
Two Possible Basic Approaches to Philosophical Anthropology

- An existential approach, focussed on death & freedom
  - This leads directly to ethics
- An ontological approach, focussed on kinds of things there are in the world
  - How is man similar to & different from other kinds of things?
    - This can include the questions
      - Are we free?
      - Are we immortal?
      - Are we distinctive in this respect?
  - It answers these questions in the context of a systematic account of the world and its contents
  - This approach will be the focus of the course

The Ontological Approach (in detail):
What kind of a being is man?

- How are living things different from non-living things?
- How is man different from other kinds of living beings?
- A range of answers on the distinction between man, animal and machine has been offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many kinds of things</th>
<th>Kinds of things</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>man, animal, machines</td>
<td>Aristotle, Aquinas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>organisms &amp; machines</td>
<td>Darwin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>man &amp; machines (incl. animals)</td>
<td>Descartes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>machines</td>
<td>Democritus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two Kinds of Difference

- difference in degree
  - difference based on the fact that one thing has more of a feature present also in the other
  - e.g., the difference between Aristotle and ordinary people in intelligence is a difference of degree
  - both are intelligent, but one is more intelligent than the other
- difference in kind
  - difference based on the fact that one thing has a feature that is completely absent from the other
  - e.g., the difference between Aristotle and a rock in intelligence is a difference in kind
  - Aristotle has something a rock lacks altogether
  - two kinds of difference in kind
    - superficial—a difference in kind based on an underlying difference in degree
      - so, the presence of a feature in some thing (apparently a difference in kind) and its absence in another might be merely the result of one thing’s having greater complexity (a difference in degree) than the other
    - radical—a difference in kind not based on an underlying difference in degree

Are Organisms and Machines Different?

- The real question is not whether man and machine differ in degree, but whether they differ in kind
  - do organisms have a feature or display an activity that is completely lacking in machines?
  - or, can every behavior that an organism engages in be replicated (at least to some extent) in a machine?
    - cf. Kemeny’s concluding remarks, including the comment that “for every human activity we can conceive of a mechanical counterpart”
    - the burden of proof lies on those who assert a difference in kind
  - if one thing has what another thing lacks, those who think that this is true should say what the difference is

The Outline Argument for a Difference in Kind

- (1) Any pair of things in which one has a feature that the other lacks altogether differ in kind
  - this comes from the definition of differences in kind
  - [All] differences in kind are differences in which one of a pair of things has a feature that the other lacks altogether
    - remember that definitions are convertible
- (2) Organisms & machines differ in that one has a feature that the other lacks altogether
  - the defender of the argument will have to show this
- So, (3) Organisms & machines differ in kind

The Outline Argument against a Difference in Kind

- (4) Anything that display no activity that cannot be replicated by a machine does not differ in kind from machines
- (5) Organisms in fact display no activity that cannot be replicated by a machine
  - this will have to be reviewed activity by activity
    - e.g., Kemeny suggests a mechanical analogs
      - of reproduction
      - and of thought
- So, (6) organisms do not differ in kind from machines
The Controversy

- the premises P2 & P5 are, in effect, contradictories
  - the case for P5 ("Organisms display no activity that cannot be replicated by a machine")
  - this will have to be made activity by activity
    - e.g., Kemeny suggests a mechanical analogs
      - of reproduction
      - of thought
  - two salient objections to P5 (arguments for P2: “Organisms & machines differ in that one has a feature that the other lacks altogether”)
    - (1) [Some] organisms are conscious and consciousness cannot be replicated by a machine [the topic of this lecture]
    - (2) [Some] organisms can think and thinking cannot be replicated by a machine [the topic of the next lecture]

The Ontological Approach (in detail): What kind of a being is man?

- Challenges to the common-sense distinctions
  - Living things as machines?
    - "Man, when deprived of his specifically human traits, can be reduced to a machine, as René Descartes pointed out in the 17th century" —Louis Mumford
    - "Can a machine think? Of course. After all, we’re machines and we think, don’t we?" —Claude Shannon
    - "The cumulative results [of biochemical research since 1950] show with piercing clarity that life is based on machines—machines made of molecules,… Highly sophisticated molecular machines control every cellular process." —Michael Behe
  - Man as an animal?
    - "Recent science shows that, even more than you might suppose, people are animals." —The Economist

- In the course
  - What arguments can be given against the common-sense distinctions?
  - What arguments can be given in its defense?

The Philosophy of Nature

- what is it?
  - τὰ φυσικά (ta physica)—the general account of the world of change
    - lit., “physics”—but that term now means something more specific
    - the world of change
      - material objects, in contrast to God & mathematical objects
      - note that modern science’s focus on particular kinds of things differentiated according to the kinds of change they undergo
        - physics
        - chemistry
        - biology
    - its central questions
      - what kinds of things are there? (ontology)
      - how is change possible?
    - how is it relevant to the philosophy of man?
      - comparison & contrast of man & other things done on the basis of a set of general concepts necessary to describing things in the world of change

A Second Problem: The nature of the diversity of individuals within a common human nature

- In what ways are all human beings the same?
- In what ways do individuals differ?
  - What is the role of nature (genetics, plus …) & of nurture (culture) in this diversity?

Two Terms

Person

- What is the subject of this course—man vs. person? And how do these concepts differ?
  - Man is the name of one of the things that we find in the world alongside animals, plants, minerals, machines, &c. By observation and introspection, we can define man as “a rational animal”
  - Person is a newer, and distinguishable, term.
    - It must be distinguished from the term man because it is possible to think of things other than human beings could count as persons
      - In theology, God and the angels are persons
      - In science fiction, some space aliens might be recognized as persons; others not.
      - We could at least ask whether dolphins and apes are persons
        - but not whether they are human beings
**Person: History of the Term**

- The term developed historically
  - It came from the Greek theatrical term πρόσωπον — the mask worn by an actor.
  - The Latin term persona which translated it came to name the character himself (cf. Lat. dramatis personae)
  - Then it came to name a character on the “stage of life” (an individual)
- It was theologically necessary to elaboration of two difficult Christian doctrines
  - the Trinity — the doctrine that there are three persons in one God
  - the Incarnation — the doctrine that Jesus is one person with two natures (divine & human)

**Person: Definition & Significance**

- The classical definitions were offered by
  - Boethius — “an individual substance of a rational nature”
  - Thomas Aquinas — “a substance that is
    - complete (hence, the human soul is not a person),
    - subsistent by itself (hence, Christ’s human nature is not a person),
    - separate from others (hence, the divine essence itself is not a person, in contrast to the three Persons in God),
    - of a rational nature”
- Why single out “persons”? Persons have a special dignity (in contrast to things). This is a theme that will be developed in the ethics course

**Soul**

- what kind of a concept is soul?
  - popular assumption —
    - “soul” as fundamentally a religious notion
    - existence of soul knowable only by revelation
  - in Greek philosophy
    - ψυχή (psyche) the soul (by definition) is the principle of life
      - it’s what made living things alive
      - life is a kind of activity that some natural things show
      - so, the question is not the existence of the soul
      - since some things are alive, there must be a principle of life
      - the question is what exactly it is that makes living things live
      - i.e., nature of the soul?
    - concept of soul hence necessary to natural account of human powers
      - part of the philosophy of nature because living things are natural things

**The Soul & Catholic Theology I:**

The Concept of Soul in the Bible

- (From John L. McKenzie, Dictionary of the Bible:)
  - Hebrew נפש nepesh
    - “The word ‘soul’ is used in Eng Bibles to translate the Hb nepesh. The translation is unfortunate; soul in common speech reflects a complex of ideas that go back to Gk philosophy as refined by medieval scholasticism…. Hb nepesh reflects none of these ideas.”
    - “The nepesh is distinguished from the flesh, but not precisely as noncarnal in the sense in which spirit is opposed to flesh…. [it] shares the experiences of the flesh…. The association of the nepesh with life is so close that the word is often best translated as life; but to think that the nepesh means life is as deceptive as it is to think that it means soul…. In a large number of phrases nepesh can best be translated by ‘self’ or by the personal pronoun…. The nepesh is the seat of the appetites…. The nepesh is occasionally th subject of mental and volitional processes…. The nepesh is not subject to sensations…. “
  - Gk ψυχή(psyche) in the New Testament
    - “still the totality of the self as a living and conscious subject, and it is the totality of the self which is saved for eternal life”

**The Soul & Catholic Theology II:**

The Teaching of the Church

- Creeds:
  - The Apostles’ Creed
    - “I believe in … the resurrection of the body and life everlasting” —
    - NB: not, explicitly, immortality of the soul
  - Ecumenical Councils:
    - 4th Lateran Council (1215)
      - “The human creature is constituted jointly of spirit and body.”
    - Council of Vienne (1311-1312)
      - “The rational & intellective soul is per se and essentially the form of the human body”
      - against a Franciscan theologian whose views undermined the essential unity of human nature (by keeping the body and soul too loosely connected)
    - 5th Lateran Council (1512-1517)
      - “Every human being possesses an intellectual soul.”
      - condemnation of the propositions that the human intellectual soul is mortal or that there is just one soul that all men share