

The Second Pillar - Formation

Form / oxforddictionaries.com

Middle English: from Old French *forme* (noun), *fo(u)rmer* (verb, from Latin *formare* 'to form'), both based on Latin *forma* 'a mold or form'.

Form / dictionary.com

Philosophy.

- the structure, pattern, organization, or essential nature of anything.
- **structure or pattern as distinguished from matter.**
- (initial capital letter) Platonism. idea (def 7c).
- Aristotelianism. that which places a thing in its particular species or kind.

Matter and form / Aquinas

On Aquinas's account, there are certain levels of matter/form composition. On one level we can think of the matter of a statue as being the marble whereas we can think of the shape of the statue as signifying the form. But on a different level we can think of the marble as signifying the form and something more fundamental being the matter. For instance, before the marble was formed into the statue by the sculptor, it was a block of marble, already with a certain form that made it 'marble'. At this level, the marble cannot be the matter of the thing, since its being marble and not, say, granite, is its form. Thus, there is a more fundamental level of materiality that admits of being formed in such a way that the end product is marble or granite, and at a higher level, this formed matter stands as matter for the artist when constructing the statue.

If we think of matter as without any form, we come to the notion of prime matter, and this is a type of matter that is totally unformed, pure materiality itself. Prime matter is the ultimate subject of form, and in itself indefinable; we can only understand prime matter through thinking of matter as wholly devoid of form. As wholly devoid of form prime matter is neither a substance nor any of the other categories of being; prime matter, as pure potency, cannot in fact express any concrete mode of being, since as pure potency it does not exist except as potency. Thus, prime matter is not a thing actually existing, since it has no principle of act rendering it actually existing.

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-meta/#H5>

Formation of Conscience / *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

II. THE FORMATION OF CONSCIENCE

1783 Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings.

1784 The education of the conscience is a lifelong task. From the earliest years, it awakens the child to the knowledge and practice of the interior law recognized by conscience. Prudent education teaches virtue; it prevents or cures fear, selfishness and pride, resentment arising from guilt, and feelings of complacency, born of human weakness and faults. The education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.

1785 In the formation of conscience the Word of God is the light for our path,⁵⁴ we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the Lord's Cross. We are assisted by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, aided by the witness or advice of others and guided by the authoritative teaching of the Church.⁵⁵

54 Cf. *Ps* 119:105.

55 Cf. *DH* 14.

Character / *Catholic Encyclopedia*

Psychology and character

... In general we may say that character is the expression of the personality of a human being, and that it reveals itself in his conduct. ...But in addition to this usage, the term is also employed in a narrower sense, as when we speak of a man "of character". In this connotation character implies a certain unity of qualities with a recognizable degree of constancy or fixity in mode of action. It is the business of psychology to analyze the constituent elements of character, to trace the laws of its growth, to distinguish the chief agencies which contribute to the **formation** of different types of character, and to classify such types.

The four temperaments

... Among the acquired elements which go to the building up of character may be distinguished those pertaining to cognition, whether sensuous or intellectual, and those belonging to the emotional and volitional activities of the soul. Exercise strengthens the power and widens the range of each faculty, creating, not uncommonly, a craving for further exercise in the same direction. The regular use of the intellect, the controlled activity of the imagination, the practice of judgment and reflection, all contribute so the **formation** of habits of mind more or less thoughtful and refined. The frequent indulgence in particular forms of emotion, such as anger, envy, sympathy, melancholy, fear, and the like, fosters tendencies towards these sentiments which give a subconscious bent to a large part of man's behaviour. But finally the exercise of the will plays the predominant part in **moulding** the type of character which is being formed.

Education and character

The true aim of education is not merely the cultivation of the intellect but also the **formation** of moral character. Increased intelligence or physical skill may as easily be employed to the detriment as to the benefit of the community, if not accompanied by improved will. ... the true purpose of education in [is] the **formation** of the highest type of ideal human character.

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Formation / *NAFRA website*

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