Philosophy of Mind: Living Philosophy in Contemporary Times

WHAT IS CONSCIOUSNESS?
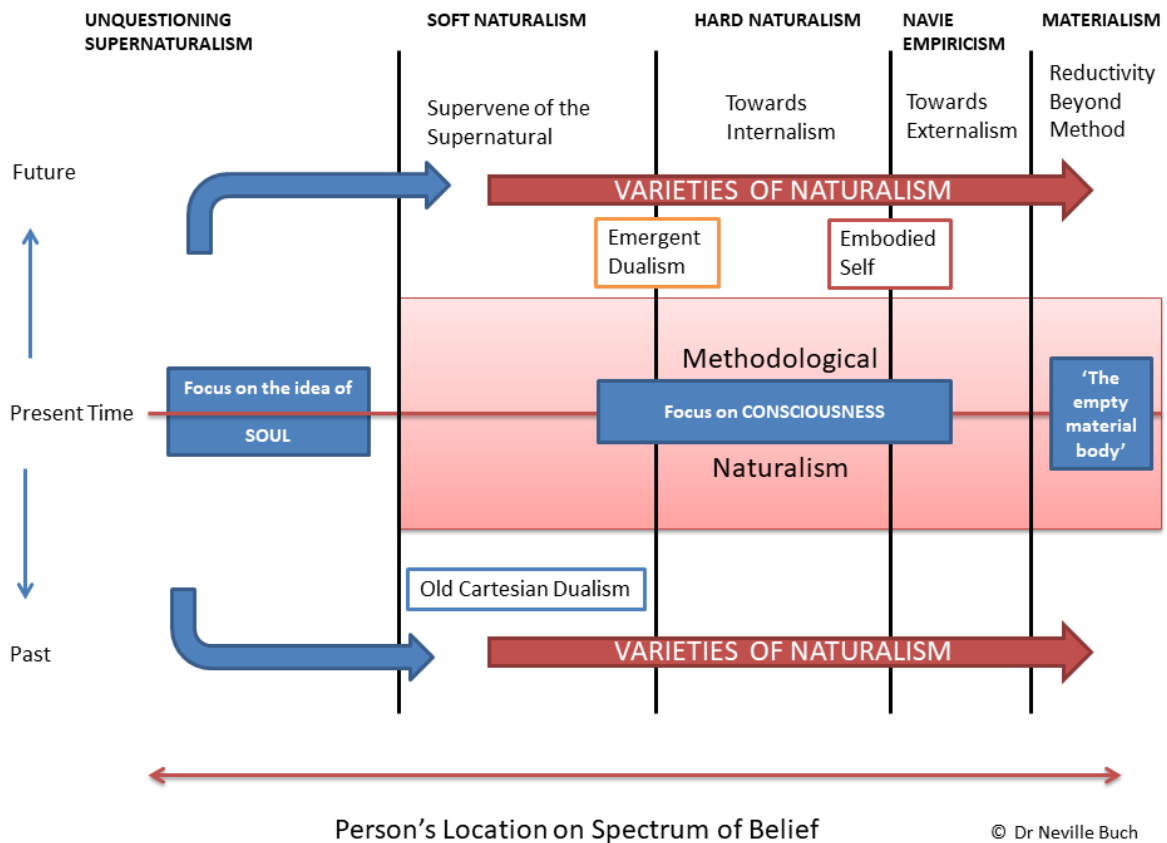
CAN WE REPRODUCE CONSCIOUSNESS?

10 May 2020

Being, Value, Reason, and Passion, the conversation will circle around to where we started, who am I? Who are you? Here, we start to spiral in a slightly different direction. We notice a big difference between the inanimate object, say a stone, and what is animated, what we say is alive. What is that all about?

THE ESSAY

(The works listed are not a complete coverage of the contemporary field but to provide the best known and most significant in contemporary discussions. Apologies if anything important has been missed)

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UNQUESTIONING SUPERNATURALISM | SOFT NATURALISM | HARD NATURALISM | NAVIE EMPIRICISM | MATERIALISM

Supervene of the Supernatural | Towards Internalism | Towards Externalism | Reductivity Beyond Method

Future

VARIETIES OF NATURALISM

Emergent Dualism

Embodied Self

Methodological

Present Time — Focus on the idea of SOUL — Focus on CONSCIOUSNESS — 'The empty material body'

Naturalism

Old Cartesian Dualism

Past

VARIETIES OF NATURALISM

Person's Location on Spectrum of Belief

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There are very different ways to come at questions which are grouped under the generalised term of 'The Philosophy of Mind'. The popular debate, even today, focuses on the inadequacy of Cartesian Dualism (see below), which was where the academic literature was in the first half of the 20th century. By mid-century the philosophers' debates shifted out of such coarse ontology, with a greater focus on studies in consciousness where matters of experience, language, and cognition were paramount. The popular discussion, on the other hand, is still fixated on the ontological questions – is the physical brain the same 'thing' as what we describe as the 'Mind'; how is 'Brain' and 'Mind' related if they exist? These questions spin around the idea of Epiphenomenalism, which is the view that mental events are caused by physical events in the brain, but have no effects upon any physical events. These are still philosophical questions, but generally-speaking philosophers are less concerned with the discussion on distinct entities of Brain-Mind, but rather puzzle on the experience or language of consciousness. The reason is that the traditional concepts and language of Brain-Mind are historically leftovers from an era that had no concept of what we now see as cognition. So, many members of the public, even in the 21st century, are quite unaware in the various usages of 'Brain-Mind', and how that has changed or still being contested. It is easy to identity that confusion in places of worship and the language used there, but the confusion is pervasive, even among those who reject the language of spirituality.

For this reason I published the above diagram, called, 'Mapping Locations on the Mind-Brain Belief Spectrum'. In the diagram or graph a person can map their own beliefs on questions of mind-brain, and map the positioning of other thinkers across the past-present-future continuum. The spectrum ranges from the idea of a 'soul' as a distinct entity to the idea that only empty material body exists; in history, from unquestioning supernaturalism to a hard materialism. Now, this is the difficult truth for the popular reading of philosophy, today all ontological stances are still on the table. Nothing really gets defeated, *generally-speaking*. Cartesian Dualism is out the door among contemporary philosophers, but dualism is still possible in different variants, understood as Emergent or Property Dualism. So what is meant by 'Cartesian Dualism'? Ontologically, it is the modern western doctrine of 'Self'. From Descartes' method of doubt, there is a Self as a distinct entity. What makes this traditional version of dualism out-of-date is the homunculus argument, a view that the Self is like a 'little man' who is like someone viewing an 'internal movie', projected somewhere in the brain; the motion picture being the imagery of the external world ('theory of the Cartesian theatre'). The idea is suggested in *Cogito, ergo sum* of René Descartes, and in modern times, from Freud in the ideas of id, ego and super-ego, but none of these ideas necessitate the homunculus (representation of a small human being). A view of a 'Self' is still possible as the mental construct inescapable in the discussion on consciousness. In

2001, David Chalmers and Frank Jackson argued that claims about conscious states should be deduced *a priori* from claims about physical states alone.

This is a good segue into looking at the contemporary philosophical discussions. These discussions are concurrent in the history of mid and late twentieth century but I found it helpful to take the steps from 'experience' to 'language' to 'cognition'. Where the history has end up has been in a revival of metaphysics, bringing together the different concepts.

EXPERIENCE AND LANGUAGE

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the way into these issues was the new discipline of psychology, with contributions from phenomenology. The founders of phenomenology – Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), and others – believed that judgements of explanation had to be avoided and the understanding of the 'Mind' settled on 'unbiased' descriptions. Psychology from the modern founders – Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), William James (1842-1910), Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936), Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Alfred Adler (1870-1937), and Carl Jung (1875-1961) – were seeking the judgements of explanation, which often drew from the language of the long philosophical traditions. Psychology is, in fact, a field that goes back to the ideas of 'Self' in both the ancient Platonic and Aristotelian schools. Phenomenology is a modern reaction to these threads of western philosophy and seeks to hark back before Plato and Aristotle, to the pre-Homer philosophers, rejecting ideas of 'reflection' and 'representation' in thinking. It is a selfless perspective, with a group of contemporary philosophers who deny having any experience of 'Self'. There are strengths and weaknesses in the two approaches. Those who subscribe to phenomenology claim to be scientific, unbiased in a selfless perspective. The psychologists are divided. In the Continental tradition behavioural psychology was more in favour, following the phenomenological selflessness. In the Anglo-American tradition psychologists have been more skeptical of the 'scientific' accreditations of those who take 'Self' out of the equation, with the pre-existing language inescapable to the description. Try and speak as if there was the non-existence of 'Self' and 'Other' [non-Self]; the language is inescapable in the semantics, if not also the references.

It is Thomas Nagel who famously links the 'experience' to its 'expression' in the well-known essay, "What is Like to be a Bat?" (*Philosophical Review*, Vol. 83, No 4, October 1974). Nagel asserted that, "an organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something

that it is like to be that organism—something it is like for the organism." This assertion has achieved special status in consciousness studies as the standard 'what it's like' locution. Even critics, like Daniel Dennett, who sharply disagreed on some points, acknowledged Nagel's paper as "the most widely cited and influential thought experiment about consciousness." The thinking here immediately explained why the popularly-discussed mind-body problem was insoluble – we had facts beyond the reach of human concepts, and there were ultimate limitations: the limits of objectivity and reductionism, the 'phenomenological features' of subjective experience, the limits of human imagination, and what it means to be a particular, conscious thing.

Concepts of language studies are central to the movement forward, with the limitations that Nagel presented. John Searle's *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (1969) is the clearest example. In this work Searle has yet to wander into 'The Philosophy of Mind' field. It was the subject of last month's discussion in The Philosophy Café Meetup. It is Searle's *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind* (1983) which links the thinking on language and on consciousness. Intentionality was a favoured term of Husserl. For Searle, 'intentionality' was the capacity of mental states to be about worldly objects, and it should not to be confused with 'intensionality', the referential opacity of contexts that fail tests for 'extensionality'. Intentionality, for Searle, is exclusively mental, being the power of minds to represent or symbolize over, things, properties and states of affairs in the external world. In contrast to intentionality, Searle introduced the idea of 'Background'. Background, as the technical term, is the set of abilities, capacities, tendencies, and dispositions that humans have that are not themselves intentional states but that generate appropriate such states on demand. An example helps. When someone asks us to "cut the cake" [the intention] we know to use a knife [the background] and when someone asks us to "cut the grass" [the intention] we know to use a lawnmower [the background] (and not vice versa), even though the request did not mention this. Searle states that this is a radical underdetermination of what is said by the literal meaning, and the 'Background' fills the gap, being the capacity always to have a suitable interpretation to hand. Searle supplements the idea of the Background with the idea of 'the Network', that one's network of other beliefs, desires, and other intentional states are necessary for any particular intentional state to make sense. The Background is related to the intentional states as a particular network.

For Searle, ascribing intentionality to a statement was a basic requirement for attributing it any meaning at all. This insight has been useful in understanding what went wrong with radical forms of postmodernism. Against Derrida's view that a statement can be disjoined from the original intentionality of its author, for example when no longer connected to the original author, while still being able to produce meaning, Searle argued that even if one was to see a written statement with no knowledge of authorship it would still be impossible

to escape the question of intentionality, because "a meaningful sentence is just a standing possibility of the (intentional) speech act".

In his book *The Rediscovery of the Mind* (1992), as well as the previous book, Searle shows the alternative view of consciousness, of behaviourism that places the discussion completely out of intentionality, and in objectivity or externality, ends with dissatisfactory statements:

- "Having a hand is just being disposed to certain sorts of behaviour such as grasping" (manual behaviourism);
- "Hands can be defined entirely in terms of their causes and effects" (manual functionalism);
- "For a system to have a hand is just for it to be in a certain computer state with the right sorts of inputs and outputs" (manual Turing machine functionalism); or
- "Saying that a system has hands is just adopting a certain stance toward it" (the manual stance).

Searle argues that consciousness is a real subjective experience, caused by the physical processes of the brain, and like many contemporary philosophers, his stance is a rejection of a dichotomy between a hard physicalism (only physical entities exist) and overblown (sophistic) subjectivism. As such, Searle defeats ontological subjectivity critics like Daniel Dennett. Here the role of science, according to Searle, gets confused – the goal of science is to establish and validate statements which are *epistemically* objective, (i.e., whose truth can be discovered and evaluated by any interested party), but are not necessarily *ontologically* objective. The argument follows the traditional value-fact distinction. Any value judgment epistemically subjective, e.g. "McKinley is prettier than Everest", is "epistemically subjective", whereas "McKinley is higher than Everest" is 'epistemically objective'.' In other words, the latter statement is evaluable (in fact, falsifiable) by an understood ('background') criterion for mountain height, like 'the summit is so many meters above sea level'. No such criteria exist for prettiness. Furthermore, Searle thinks there are certain phenomena (including all conscious experiences) that are *ontologically* subjective, i.e. can only exist as subjective experience. For example, although it might be subjective or objective in the epistemic sense, a doctor's note that a patient suffers from back pain is an *ontologically objective* claim: it counts as a medical diagnosis only because the existence of back pain is "an objective fact of medical science". The pain itself, however, is *ontologically subjective:* it is only experienced by the person having it. This has profound implications for a view of 'Mind'. As Searle stated, "where consciousness is concerned, the existence of the

appearance is the reality". But let's not be confused on what is being said; appearance is the intentional or internal reality – there is no conclusion that such consciousness is at all external, beyond subjectivity.

COGNITION

John Searle's biological naturalism opened up the key argument on human cognition and artificial intelligence (A.I.) – whether A.I. can be anything like human cognition and in what limitations. In his famous essay, "Minds, Brains, and Programs" (1980), Searle introduced 'the Chinese room' argument:

> Assume you do not speak Chinese and imagine yourself in a room with two slits, a book, and some scratch paper. Someone slides you some Chinese characters through the first slit, you follow the instructions in the book, transcribing characters as instructed onto the scratch paper, and slide the resulting sheet out the second slit. To people on the outside world, it appears the room speaks Chinese—they slide Chinese statements in one slit and get valid responses in return—yet you do not understand a word of Chinese.

The thought experiment suggests that no machine, as oppose to a sentient being, can 'understand' even as it can execute certain syntactic manipulations. Douglas Hofstadter and Daniel Dennett in their book, *The Mind's I: Fantasies and Reflections on Self and Soul* (1981) severely criticizes Searle's argument. Dennett and Hofstadter are both proponents of the idea that the wonders of human mentality can be accounted for by mechanical brain processes—which leaves nothing theoretical to prevent us from building human-like mental processes into our mechanical devices. The problem with Dennett and Hofstadter's perspective, and indeed the challenge of the book, is that such a stance conflicts not only in how Searle reads machines and technology, but the insights of Jorge Luis Borges, Alan Turing, Richard Dawkins, Raymond Smullyan, John Searle, Stanisław Lem, and Thomas Nagel. Indeed, the book takes on earlier thinking of Hofstadter and Dennett themselves. This is not only the challenge of Dennett and Hofstadter's work, but the value in idea that we can learn much about human minds and 'souls' by exploring human mentality in terms of information processing.

In the Chinese room argument, Searle has identified 'strong AI' (the view that machines 'think' equivalent to human cognition) as 'computer functionalism', a term he attributes to Daniel Dennett. Functionalism holds that we can define mental phenomena (such as beliefs, desires, and perceptions) by describing their functions in relation to each other and to the outside world. According to functionalism, a computer program can accurately represent functional relationships as relationships between symbols, a computer can have mental phenomena if it runs the right program. Computationalism argues that the mind can be accurately described as an information-processing system. Stevan Harnad argued that Searle's depictions of strong AI can be reformulated as "recognizable tenets of computationalism", which are:

- Mental states are computational states (which is why computers can have mental states and help to explain the mind);
- Computational states are implementation-independent—in other words, it is the software that determines the computational state, not the hardware (which is why the brain, being hardware, is irrelevant); and that
- Since implementation is unimportant, the only empirical data that matters is how the system functions; hence the Turing test is definitive.

Searle's biological naturalism takes the opposite view. Searle argued the impossibility of the transference of informational process system and that it would be the same thing – if we wrote a computer program that was claimed to be conscious, we could run that computer program on, say, a system of ping-pong balls and beer cups and the system would be equally claim to be conscious, because it was running the same information processes. The arguments from Dennett and Hofstadter, in relation to the Chinese Room, points out the lack of sophistication that Searle has in his intuitive challenge – the idea of language transference sounds basically wrong, but that ignores the complex layering of data. It is a fair counter-argument, but Searle points out that the sophistication in human cognition has to extend from the view that consciousness is a physical property, like digestion or fire. No matter how good a simulation of digestion you build on the computer, it will not digest anything; no matter how well you simulate fire, nothing will get burnt. By contrast, informational processes are observer-relative: observers pick out certain patterns in the world and consider them information processes, but information processes are not things-in-the-world themselves. Since they do not exist at a physical level, Searle argues, they cannot have *causal efficacy* and thus cannot cause consciousness. There is no physical law, Searle insists, that can see the equivalence between a personal computer, a series of ping-pong balls and beer cans, and a pipe-and-water system all implementing the same program.

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Daniel Dennett's better arguments came in *Consciousness Explained* (1991), where he was able to modify and unite several earlier works. In contrast to Searle's biological naturalism, Dennett take a broader paradigm in 'Neural Darwinism' (from Gerald Edelman's book, *The Mindful Brain*, MIT Press, 1978). It is an argument against *qualia*, going back to reinstate his teacher Gilbert Ryle's (1900-1976) approach of redefining first person phenomena in third person terms. Clarence Irving Lewis, in his book *Mind and the World Order* (1929), was the first to use the term 'qualia' in its generally agreed upon modern sense – "recognizable qualitative characters of the given, which may be repeated in different experiences, and are thus a sort of universals." Frank Jackson later defined qualia as "...certain features of the bodily sensations especially, but also of certain perceptual experiences, which no amount of purely physical information includes". It is equivalent to Thomas Nagel's 'What it is like to be a Bat' argument. Dennett suggested that *qualia* was "an unfamiliar term for something that could not be more familiar to each of us: the ways things seem to us." Dennett used his 'Intuition Pump' (a type of thought experiment coined by Dennett; ironically because it was first used as a criticism of John Searle's Chinese room thought experiment) brings qualia into the world of neurosurgery, clinical psychology, and psychological experimentation, believing that, so imported, it turns out that we can either make no use of it in the situation in question, or that the questions posed by the introduction of qualia are unanswerable precisely because of the special properties defined for qualia.

Without the need for qualia – the subjective quality of 'what it is like' – and having been removed, Dennett developed his 'multiple drafts model of consciousness'. Dennett explains that, "all varieties of perception—indeed all varieties of thought or mental activity—are accomplished in the brain by parallel, multitrack processes of interpretation and elaboration of sensory inputs. Information entering the nervous system is under continuous 'editorial revision'. Dennett would go on to assert, "These yield, over the course of time, something rather like a narrative stream or sequence, which can be thought of as subject to continual editing by many processes distributed around the brain". Here, although I think Dennett has none a reasonable job in the explanation of consciousness, the reference to 'subject', who ('what'?) has the function of the editing, would appear problematic to his conclusion. A third-person reference to 'subject' does not make sense if there not also a first-person qualia.

One way forward, beyond the Searle-Dennett impasse, is Hilary Putnam's idea of 'Multiple Realizability', a thesis that argues that the same mental property, state, or event can be implemented by different physical properties, states, or events, and mental states are not the same as — and cannot be reduced to — physical states. Ironically, the thesis was originally used to defend 'machine-state functionalism' (the mind is a machine state, defined by function). Putnam was the primary articulator of machine-state functionalism

and then abandoned functionalism on the same argument of 'Multiple Realizability'; on reflection, you can see a better fit with Searle's argument. The earlier functionalist Putnam argued that, contrary to the famous claim of the type-identity theory, it is not necessarily true that "Pain is identical to C-fibre firing." Pain may correspond to utterly different physical states of the nervous system in different organisms, and yet they all experience the same mental state of 'being in pain'. The functionalism was, in the view of these multiple physical states, that each state can be defined in terms of its relations to the other states and to the inputs and outputs, and the details of how it accomplishes what it accomplishes and of its material constitution is completely irrelevant. In the late 1980s, Putnam abandoned this position. Putnam thought that there were too many difficulties that computational theories had in explaining certain intuitions with respect to the externalism of mental content. He explained the problem in his Twin Earth thought experiment:

We begin by supposing that elsewhere in the universe there is a planet exactly like Earth in virtually all aspects, which we refer to as "Twin Earth". (We should also suppose that the relevant surroundings are exactly the same as for Earth; it revolves around a star that appears to be exactly like our sun, and so on). On Twin Earth, there is a Twin equivalent of every person and thing here on Earth. The one difference between the two planets is that there is no water on Twin Earth. In its place there is a liquid that is superficially identical, but is chemically different, being composed not of H_2O, but rather of some more complicated formula which we abbreviate as "XYZ". The Twin Earthlings who refer to their language as "English" call XYZ "water". Finally, we set the date of our thought experiment to be several centuries ago, when the residents of Earth and Twin Earth would have no means of knowing that the liquids they called "water" were H_2O and XYZ respectively. The experience of people on Earth with water and that of those on Twin Earth with XYZ would be identical.

Now the question arises: when an Earthling (or Oscar for simplicity's sake) and his twin on Twin Earth say 'water' do they mean the same thing? Here Putnam is coming at the problem in the opposite direction to Searle's (internal) intentionality. In the thesis of semantic externalism, Putnam famously summarized his conclusion with the statement that "meanings' just ain't in the head." A better way of providing a definition is that semantic externalism (the opposite of semantic internalism) is the view that the meaning of a term is determined, in whole or in part, by factors external to the speaker. Put another way, two speakers could be in exactly the same brain state at the time of an utterance, and yet mean different things by that utterance, that is, the term picks out a different extension.

Controversially, and at the cutting-edge on the cognition side of the debates, are Andy Clark and David Chambers, with their essay, "The Extended Mind" (1998). The extended mind thesis (EMT) says that the mind does not exclusively reside in the brain or even the body, but extends into the physical world. The idea folds into the larger 'active externalism', advocating the active role of the environment in driving cognitive processes (similar to semantic externalism). The implication of this thought is that some parts of a person's identity can be determined by their environment. Andy Clark and David Chambers are very different in their approaches to arrive at the same conclusion; so each is considered in turn. Clark demolishes the traditional models of cognition and computational accounts. In the first instance, Clark rejects the traditional idea of cognitive processing and representation – the process of creating, storing and updating internal representations of the world. He sees this as a grand illusion where impressions of a richly detailed world obscure a reality of minimal environmental information and quick action. We do not reconstruct the detail of this world, according to Clark, but the neural process extract information 'just in time'. This alludes to the rejection of the traditional models of cognition and Clark's replacement in the concept of predictive processing. Clark rejects the view of a one-way flow of sensory information from the periphery towards more remote areas of the brain. Instead, according to Clark, there are, in the neural process, interactions between forward flow of error (conveyed by 'error units') and backward flow of prediction (predictive processing). There is, in fact, as the neural process, useful discrepancies between the expected signal and actual signal, in essence the 'prediction error' travel upward to help refine the accuracy of future predictions. Admittedly much of these ideas are highly technical, compared to the traditional models, and it is difficult for the general philosopher to understand how it can 'hang-together' as a sufficient worldview and the view of the author (Self) in it. Indeed, what is troubling about Clark's approach is his arrival in the concept and worldview of transhumanism with its vision of natural-born cyborgs. Clark believes the merger of technology and biology is inevitable and present. All prescient on the dangers of the technology agenda (Jacques Ellul) are forgotten.

David Chalmers, although working with Clark, comes at these questions in the opposite direction. As opposite to Clark's technological vision, Chalmers subscribes to 'naturalistic dualism': naturalistic because he believes mental states supervenes ['supervenience' discussed below] 'naturally' on physical systems (such as brains); dualist because he believes mental states is ontologically distinct from and not reducible to physical systems. He has also characterized his view by more traditional formulations such as property dualism. As with Clark, Chalmers' mind is extended, but extended in 'Panprotopsychism' – a variant of 'panpsychism', the view that mind or a mind-like aspect is a fundamental and ubiquitous feature of reality. Chalmers argues that consciousness is a fundamental property

ontologically autonomous of any known (or even possible) physical properties and that there are (possibly) 'psychophysical laws' that determine which physical systems are associated with which types of qualia. In getting to these ideas, Chalmers was famous for introducing for the 'Zombie' thought experiment. Others had also suggested the thought, notably Robert Kirk and Keith Campbell, but in Chalmers' version it goes something like this:

> Zombies are complete physical duplicates of human beings, lacking only qualitative experience. Such zombies are conceivable, and must therefore be logically possible. Since they are logically possible, then qualia and sentience are not fully explained by physical properties alone; the facts about them are further facts.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER IN METAPHYSICS

Chalmers' and Clark's approaches well illustrate the major divide in contemporary philosophy. One group of philosophers have come to reject metaphysics for work in cognitive *science*, although expressed in generalised *philosophical* language. Other philosophers have engaged in a revival of metaphysics to open up the difficult questions of 'Mind-Brain'.

It was David Chalmers' *The Conscious Mind* (1996) that pointed out the significance of the metaphysics. Chalmers made a distinction between 'easy' problems of consciousness, such as explaining object discrimination or verbal reports, and the single hard problem, which could be stated "why does the feeling which accompanies awareness of sensory information exist at all?" The essential difference between the (cognitive) easy problems and the (phenomenal) hard problem is that the former are at least theoretically answerable via the dominant strategy in the philosophy of mind: physicalism. Chalmers argues for an 'explanatory gap' from the objective to the subjective, following Gottfried Leibniz's 'mill' argument:

> It must be confessed, moreover, that perception, and that which depends on it, are inexplicable by mechanical causes, that is, by figures and motions, And, supposing that there were a mechanism so constructed as to think, feel and have perception, we might enter it as into a mill. And this granted, we should only find on visiting it, pieces which push one against another, but never anything by which to explain a

perception. This must be sought, therefore, in the simple substance, and not in the composite or in the machine. (Gottfried Leibniz, *Monadology*, 1714)

In contemporary times it has been metaphysical arguments of Thomas Nagel, Hilary Putnam, and John McDowell who brought matters forward in the more traditional frame of Mind-Body. It was Thomas Nagel's *The View from Nowhere* (1986) that helped Chalmers' 'explanatory gap' from the objective to the subjective by overcoming the false dichotomy in the language. Quite simply, from a perspectivist's thesis (Fredrick Nietzsche), Nagel contrasts passive and active points of view in how humanity interacts with the world, relying either on a subjective perspective that reflects a point of view or an objective perspective that takes a more detached perspective. Nagel described the objective perspective as the 'view from nowhere', one where the only valuable ideas are ones derived independently. In Thomas Nagel's *Mind and Cosmos* (2012) the ontological argument was extended to demonstrate the shortcomings in a pure scientific approach, and more specifically a Neo-Darwinist conception. Nagel argues that the materialist version of evolutionary biology is unable to account for the existence of mind and consciousness, and is therefore at best incomplete. Nagel's argument is controversial but his metaphysical thesis is supported by different arguments which demonstrate that 'common sense' language is inescapable and cannot be substituted by computer language or the technical language of other sciences.

Hilary Putnam's movement across his works, *Representation and Reality* (1988), *Realism with a Human Face* (1990), and *Naturalism, Realism, and Normativity* (2016) represents that shift back from a reductive functionalism to more nuanced metaphysics. In the first book Putnam had concluded that the computer was an apt model for the mind through his radical theory of functionalism (explained above). In the second book Putnam reverses his position and joins Chalmers. Putnam makes it clear that science is not in the business of describing a ready-made world, and philosophy should not be in that business either. Thus Putnam also takes aim at Nagel and those who follow his approach. Putnam rejects the contemporary metaphysics that insists on describing both the mind and the world from a God's-eye view. He is taking a middle pathway. Putnam is arguing that the collapse of philosophical realism does not entail a fall into the abyss of relativism and postmodern skepticism. He does this by the concept of 'Quasi-Realism' or 'Internal Realism'. It is the rejection of metaphysical realism (the 'God's Eye Point of View') for a view that truth is (somehow) epistemically constrained, and to (some version of) conceptual relativism. In finding further answers, in a complete different field of meta-ethics, Simon Blackburn derived quasi-realism from the Humean account of the origin of our moral opinions, thus formulating the meta-ethical claims that:

1. Ethical sentences do not express propositions.
2. Instead, ethical sentences project emotional attitudes as though they were real properties.

This makes quasi-realism a form of non-cognitivism or expressivism. Non-cognitivism is the meta-ethical view that ethical sentences do not express propositions (i.e., statements) and thus cannot be true or false (they are not truth-apt). One must immediately caution in thinking that the concept of 'Internal Realism' necessities non-cognitivism, and there is an automatic divorce with traditional metaphysics. Bernard Williams, I would argue, comes at the concept of 'Internal Realism' better, in a compatiblist stance, where the ideas have a better fit. Williams does this by the distinction between thinking and acting, in following G. E. Moore (1873-1958): to think rationally is to think in a way compatible with belief in the truth, and "what is takes for one to believe the truth is the same as what it takes for anyone else to believe the truth" [Moore]. This would seem to infer that *one* can act rationally by satisfying one's own desires (what Williams calls 'internal reasons for action'). The stance of Williams is a rejection of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and his view of rational agents *must* act on 'principles of pure rational agency' [Moore's phrase]. Williams argued that there are only internal reasons for action: "A has a reason to ф if A has some desire the satisfaction of which will be served by his ф-ing." An external reason would be "A has reason to ф," even if nothing in A's "subjective motivational set" would be furthered by her ф-ing. Williams argued that it is meaningless to say that there are external reasons; reason alone does not move people to action. In my view Williams preserves a version of the value-fact distinction, where value aligns with internal reasoning, a form of cognitivism (truth values are apt in the valuation), and facts aligned with Putnam's semantic externalism.

In debates with Williams, John McDowell is a primary engager. In *Mind and World* (1994) McDowell takes a slightly different approach to Williams, but there is common ground. All claims about objectivity are to be made from the internal perspective of our actual practices, and that part of McDowell's view he takes from the later Wittgenstein (Williams draws more from Hume and Moore). According to McDowell, there is no standpoint from outside our best theories of thought and language from which we can classify secondary properties as 'second grade' or 'less real' than the properties described, for example, by a mature science such as physics. Characterising the place of values in our worldview is not, in McDowell's view, to downgrade them as less real than talk of quarks or the Higgs boson. John McDowell's *Having the World in View: Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars* (2009) demonstrates well that the arguments from scientism (science explains everything) are well-overblown and metaphysics has not been defeated.

Other philosophers have continued the debates between approaches of ('pure') cognitive science and of metaphysics. I would argue that these debates keep returning to the one debate on 'externalism versus internalism' but across several fields – meta-ethics, ontology, philosophy of science – where the basic ideas of 'Mind-Body' (capital M-B) are no longer *as relevant* to the philosophical language. John Heil's *The Universe as we Find It* (2012) is the most recent and most comprehensive thesis to offer a combining of physicalism and metaphysics. He, as the argument goes, achieves holding together 'the manifest image', inherited from our culture and refine in the special sciences, and 'the scientific image' as we have it in fundamental physics. The conceptual references goes back to the argument of Wilfrid Sellars' "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" (1962). Sellars distinguished between the 'manifest image' and the 'scientific image' of the world. The manifest image includes intentions, thoughts, and appearances. Sellars allows that the manifest image may be refined through 'correlational induction', but he rules out appeal to imperceptible entities. The scientific image describes the world in terms of the theoretical physical sciences. It includes notions such as causality and theories about particles and forces. The two images sometimes complement one another, and sometimes conflict. Sellars argued for a synoptic vision, wherein the scientific image takes ultimate precedence in cases of conflict, at least with respect to empirical descriptions and explanations.

Tyler Burge, in such works as the article, "Individualism and Self-Knowledge" (1988), and the book, *Origins of Objectivity* (2010), raises a question on how far the externalism can be brought to it hardest point. The stance Burge takes is calls, 'Anti-individualism'. The term, though, is a larger approach to linguistic meaning. The common view is that what *seems to be internal* to the individual is to some *degree* dependent on the *social* environment, thus self-knowledge, intentions, reasoning and moral value *may* variously be seen as being determined by factors outside the person. That is uncontroversial for most internalists. Even for Williams, if 'moral value' was taken out from the statement, it would present no problem.   How hard one would argue is to say there is no warrant to an epistemic narrow state of mind (i.e. privileged access) and that there is *only* a 'wide state of mind' as influenced by the *conditions of individuation* of thought. It *appears* (?) that such an argument has taken the idea of 'being an individual' away from something that is integral in the concept of personhood. One could *think* (?) what is being said is that personhood and self-knowledge is socially through and through and thus is completely external. However, this interpretation of Burge's explanation is, in fact, offered by Michael McKinsey in his debates with Anthony Brueckner, in McKinsey's article "Accepting the Consequences of Anti-individualism" (1994). Burge's statements suggests a much softer stance, the content of one's thoughts depends *partly* on the external environment. However, whether misinterpreted or not, Burg's thesis has come under strong criticisms – the thesis

undermines a person's authoritative knowledge of their own thought contents. (McKinsey 1991); or it would cause problems for our understanding of the way that mental states cause behaviour (Fodor 1991). Burge (1988, 1989) denies that there are any problems for understanding of causation and argued that anti-individualism is compatible with knowledge of our own mental states.

In the other direction, of internalism, two recent philosophers brought two traditional concepts back on the table for contemporary debates. Helen Steward's *Agency and Action* (2004), and *A Metaphysics for Freedom* (2012), revisits the place of agency and the capacity of action in relation to the free will problem. Steward's insights are how to bring causation and explanation into the relations between humans and animals. For Jaegwon Kim, in *Supervenience and Mind* (1993), and *Essays in the Metaphysics of Mind* (2010), it has been the question of supervenience among various mind-body theories. The idea of supervenience plays an important role in the mind-body problem, but starts as a piece of logic – a relation between sets of properties or sets of facts. X is said to supervene on Y if and only if some difference in Y is necessary for any difference in X to be possible. Here are some examples:

- Whether there is a table in the living room supervenes on the positions of molecules in the living room.
- The truth value of (A) supervenes on the truth value of (¬A).
- Molecular properties supervene on atomic properties.
- The quality of Nixon's moral character supervenes on how he is disposed to act.

The rule of supervenience is that in each case the truth values of some propositions cannot vary unless the truth values of some other propositions vary. What is at issue with respect to the mind-body problem is whether mental phenomena do in fact supervene on physical phenomena. Kim had begun defending a version of the identity theory in the early 1970s, and then moved to a non-reductive version of physicalism, which relied heavily on the supervenience relation. Recently, he has rejected strict physicalism, and concluded that the hard problem of consciousness—according to which a detailed and comprehensive neurophysical description of the brain would still not account for the fact of consciousness—is insurmountable in the context of a thoroughgoing physicalism. In fact, in two monographs, *Mind in a Physical World* (1998) and *Physicalism, or Something Near Enough* (2005), Kim boldly claimed "that physicalism will not be able to survive intact and in its entirety." Qualia (the phenomenal or qualitative aspect of mental states) cannot be reduced to physical states or processes.

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