

Chapter 15, The Problem of Dualism

Dual Aspect Theory – Spinoza

1. Neither mind nor body subordinate to the other
2. No relation between them
3. Both aspects of infinite substance – God or nature
 - a) What occurs to one occurs to the other
 - b) Mental and physical = just 2 ways of looking at God or nature
 - c) One subjective; the other objective
4. Problem = mysterious 'something' of which mind and body = different aspects:
– in solving one mystery we embrace another – and one that we can't solve if it is neither physical nor mental

Psychophysical parallelism – Leibniz

1. Mental states run in parallel with physical states
2. Exactly co-ordinated
3. Physical events don't cause mental events nor v. v. – only physical events cause other physical events as mental events cause other mental events
4. Monads – everything that can possibly happen to it = fixed by its nature
5. Pre-established harmony – events occurring in one = harmonious with events in the other
6. Problems:
 - a) mind = mere spectator
 - b) reluctant to call mental events causes for physical events – they = just 'necessary conditions' – but what is the difference between necessary conditions and causes?

Epiphenomenalism

1. Mind cannot causally affect the body – but the body can causally affect the mind
2. Mental events = by-product of complex processes in brain and nervous system – an 'epiphenomenon'
3. Problems:
 - a) fails to do justice to our mental life
 - b) proof – would have to split the brain event from corresponding mind event

Dualism of properties

1. Mind ≠ distinct from matter – mental properties that are distinct from physical properties
2. Mental properties = emergent properties – more than the sum of the parts of the brain
3. Still the probs of interactionism – do our mental properties cause any part of our behaviour?

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The Identity Theory

1. Mental and body events = same

– mental = identical with certain processes in the brain and nervous system

2. Same event = mental-neurological event described using 2 different languages

3. Accepts the influence of mental events on our lives – decisions really do result in actions

4. Empirical – not just logical – identity therefore has to be established through methods of modern science – not just a logical identity between the 2 grounded in linguistic conventions

5. Problem – Jerome Shaffer: if they are identical they should share same properties:

- a) Brain processes occur in specific spatial location/thoughts and consciousness don't
- b) Brain process = publicly observable/but not a thought or sensation
- c) Mind must be found in the same space – in the brain – otherwise it cannot be numerically identical with what is in the space i.e. the brain
- d) Identity = either 2 things sharing everything except spatio-temporal properties or one thing (numerically identical), same spatio-temporal properties, and brain-states and mental states = same thing
- e) But we are describing 2 different sets of characteristics – conscious states have different qualities from physical states – if they differ in just one respect they can no longer be identical
- f) Identity theorists: their identity = empirical not logical – so the meaning of each description = different but they denote the same thing – same denotation/different meanings e.g. patch of red/molecular process
- g) Claim: no amount of scientific research will show that brain processes = same as thought processes – correlation ≠ identity

Behaviourism

1. Methodological:

- a) Refuses to accept any evidence of events that cannot be publicly witnessed
e.g. introspective reports
- b) Don't deny mental events their existence – just don't define 'behaviour' to include consciousness which we can't observe and publicly test – experience of feelings, thoughts and emotions = beyond study
e.g. Polygraph – responses to some questions = different from those answered truthfully = all the behaviourist can know

2. Logical/Metaphysical behaviourism:

Concern = what we mean when we talk about minds and mental events
what are the logical implications of the way we use these terms

Key assumptions:

No conscious mental events, just behaviour – complex tendencies to behave in uncertain ways
No non-material minds or mental properties, just behaviour and dispositions to behave

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a) 2 forms:

- (i) Instrumentalists – NB. Dewey
Mind ≠ a noun, but an adjective describing certain kind of behaviour – the way we respond to uncertainty – problem solving behavioural
- (ii) Logical or 'new' behaviourists – NB. Ryle
 - I. The mind = simply the way a person behaves ≠ some private sort of thing behind our behaviour; but the pattern of our behaviour
 - II. The traditional Cartesian theory of the 'mind' as 'the ghost in the machine' – the 'double-life theory' = the result of a 'category mistake'
e.g. visitor to Oxford or Cambridge

b) Advantages:

- (i) Can **translate** all talk about the mysterious entity (the mind) into statements about behaviour
- (ii) **Problem of dualism disappears and interaction** = now a causal connection between a disposition and the consequent behaviour

c) **But we seem to mean more than this** – an inner episode ≠ behaviour, although usually the cause of behaviour

d) Behaviourist argument **works better the more distance there is between us and the mental state** we're describing – but not when it's ours
e.g. 'I am in pain' ≠ a description of what I do
= the way someone else gets to know I'm in pain ≠ the way I know it – I'm describing what I feel ≠ what I do
= 'insideness' – **not everything can be described from the outside**

e) To argue the case is to acknowledge existence of something beyond patterns of behaviour

Functionalism

Are mental processes physical processes that are not brain processes?

1. **Minds** ≠ kinds of material but the **product of relations of their parts** – a function – like software – complex patterns in physical workings of the brain
2. **Searle – computer = a poor analogy** for the brain
– possibly the case that the mind works in quite different way on levels in parallel in a faster more complex way than a computer