

Dualisms Dissoluble and Indissoluble

Dualism Schmalism: does mind really matter, as long as he's a good boy and loves his Des Cartes

I am going to argue that the mind/matter dualism is foundational and indissoluble but that this then opens the way to *resolvable* “spectrum” dualisms, like psyche/soma, preverbal/verbal, primary process/secondary process, volition/cognition and so on.

Introductory Extracts

The Red King (AKA Bishop Berkeley?) in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*

“ ‘He's dreaming now,’ said Tweedledee: ‘and what do you think he's dreaming about?’

Alice said ‘Nobody can guess that.’

‘Why, about you!’ Tweedledee exclaimed, clapping his hands triumphantly. ‘And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?’

‘Where I am now, of course,’ said Alice.

‘Not you!’ Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. ‘You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!’

‘If that there King was to wake,’ added Tweedledum, ‘you'd go out— bang!—just like a candle!’

‘I shouldn't!’ Alice exclaimed indignantly. ‘Besides, if I'm only a sort of thing in his dream, what are you, I should like to know?’

‘Ditto,’ said Tweedledum.

‘Ditto, ditto!’ cried Tweedledee.

He shouted this so loud that Alice couldn't help saying ‘Hush! You'll be waking him, I'm afraid, if you make so much noise.’

‘Well, it's no use your talking about waking him,’ said Tweedledum, ‘when you're only one of the things in his dream. You know very well you're not real.’

‘I am real!’ said Alice, and began to cry.

‘You won't make yourself a bit realer by crying,’ Tweedledee remarked: ‘there's nothing to cry about.’

‘If I wasn't real,’ Alice said—half laughing through her tears, it all seemed so ridiculous—‘I shouldn't be able to cry.’

‘I hope you don't suppose those are real tears?’ Tweedledum interrupted in a tone of great contempt.

‘I know they're talking nonsense,’ Alice thought to herself: (Carroll, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, Ch. 4)

Hume defeated - on Scepticism with Regard to the Senses

Having thus given an account of all the systems both popular and philosophical, with regard to external existences, I cannot forbear giving vent to a certain sentiment, which arises upon reviewing those systems. I begun this subject with premising, that we ought to have an implicit faith in our senses, and that this would be the conclusion, I should draw from the whole of my reasoning. But to be ingenuous, I feel myself at present of a quite contrary sentiment, and am more inclined to repose no faith at all in my

senses, or rather imagination, than to place in it such an implicit confidence. I cannot conceive how such trivial qualities of the fancy, conducted by such false suppositions, can ever lead to any solid and rational system. They are the coherence and constancy of our perceptions, which produce the opinion of their continued existence; though these qualities of perceptions have no perceivable connexion with such an existence. The constancy of our perceptions has the most considerable effect, and yet is attended with the greatest difficulties. It is a gross illusion to suppose, that our resembling perceptions are numerically the same; and it is this illusion, which leads us into the opinion, that these perceptions are uninterrupted, and are still existent, even when they are not present to the senses. This is the case with our popular system. And as to our philosophical one, it is liable to the same difficulties; and is over-and-above loaded with this absurdity, that it at once denies and establishes the vulgar supposition. Philosophers deny our resembling perceptions to be identically the same, and uninterrupted; and yet have so great a propensity to believe them such, that they arbitrarily invent a new set of perceptions, to which they attribute these qualities. I say, a new set of perceptions: For we may well suppose in general, but it is impossible for us distinctly to conceive, objects to be in their nature any thing but exactly the same with perceptions. What then can we look for from this confusion of groundless and extraordinary opinions but error and falshood? And how can we justify to ourselves any belief we repose in them?

This sceptical doubt, both with respect to reason and the senses, is a malady, which can never be radically cured, but must return upon us every moment, however we may chace it away, and sometimes may seem entirely free from it. It is impossible upon any system to defend either our understanding or senses; and we but expose them farther when we endeavour to justify them in that manner. As the sceptical doubt arises naturally from a profound and intense reflection on those subjects, it always encreases, the farther we carry our reflections, whether in opposition or conformity to it. Carelessness and in-attention alone can afford us any remedy. For this reason I rely entirely upon them; and take it for granted, whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment, that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and internal world; and going upon that supposition, I intend to examine some general systems both ancient and modern, which have been proposed of both, before I proceed to a more particular enquiry concerning our impressions. This will not, perhaps, in the end be found foreign to our present purpose. (Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, book 1, part 4, ii, *Of Scepticism Regarding the Senses*)

Two Stages in Freud, Pre-Verbal to Verbal, Primary Process to Secondary Process

Freud takes a profound step, which implicitly confirms Hegel as the first 'Object Relations' thinker. But Freud, like Hegel, is going to show us the *ontological or metaphysical transformation*, how conceptual transformation alters being, upon

which this is based, and returns to his first love, philosophy, as he once wrote to Fliess, in the process. In Melanie Klein's parallel thinking we *begin as split*, though each side of the split is experienced as a unity, - or rather as a totality, - whether that of complete merger into myself, or that of complete annihilation of what is alien. This is the - pre-Hegelian - phase I relate to phenomenology, in the modern sense. Freud goes on to succinctly map, in Hegelian terms, the emergence of what we realise is the classic Aristotle analysis of an entity or being with attributes (*to on, ousia*), the dominant paradigm of the Western traditions. And here ontology is profoundly welded together with developmental transformation, by means of transformational reversal, *Aufhebung*:

"The function of judgement is concerned in the main with two sorts of decisions. It affirms or disaffirms the possession by a thing of a particular attribute; and it asserts or disputes that a presentation has an existence in reality. The attribute to be decided about may originally have been good or bad, useful or harmful. Expressed in the language of the oldest - the oral - instinctual impulses, the judgement is: 'I should like to eat this', or 'I should like to spit it out'; and, put more generally: 'I should like to take this into myself and to keep that out.' That is to say: 'It shall be inside me' or 'it shall be outside me'. As I have shown elsewhere, the original pleasure-"I" wants to introject into itself everything that is good and to eject from itself everything that is bad. What is bad, what is alien to the "I" and what is external are, to begin with, identical." (Freud, *On Negation*)

This is the first phase, roughly the paranoid-schizoid position, in Klein's terms, but *we*, looking back retroactively, see both good and bad together, as related. However, in reality, *for the child*, the phase of their co-existence has not been attained.

If we contrast the phenomenological and the dialectical, and we say that in pure phenomenological mode everything is *experienced just as it is*, that it is as it is purely as it is, as pure being; this is how the child experiences this phase, as pure being or pure annihilation, without any sort of dialectical reconciliation. This primary desire for pure 'is-what-it-is-ness' is at the root of the philosophical-ontological dilemmas of the west, such as the problem of perception and knowledge (as in the famous argument between A.J. Ayer - *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* - and J.L. Austin - *Sense and Sensibilia*: Ayer defends sense impressions as the ultimate reality and hence is a phenomenalist; Austin defends a sophisticated version of commonsense realism. Neither are prepared to risk systematically exploring dualistic analysis. And the positions of Husserl and Heidegger, as phenomenologists, roughly correspond to those of Ayer and Austin. Heidegger even denounces Kant for requiring a 'proof of the external world'.) I believe the 'is-what-it-is' is at the root of phenomenology (c.f., Derrida on Husserl: *Voice and Phenomenon*).

Kant, Hegel and post-modernism move on into the next, dialectical, or deconstructive, phase, implicitly dualistic, where the 'not' and the 'as if' of reflection become possible. And, this is where Freud likewise, incredibly succinctly and without explanation, like a sleepwalker, goes next!! This is the prototype of the phase of reflexivity, mentalisation, agency, and re-recognitional memory. It is what Piaget calls 'object constancy', and Daniel Stern (*Interpersonal World of the Infant*) the phases of the 'intersubjective' and the 'verbal self'. For a fuller account:

<http://hewardwilkinson.co.uk/sites/default/files/Freud-Hegel-and-Dialectics2.pdf>

In Freud's second step, the last sentence quoted could almost have come from Winnicott:

“The other sort of decision made by the function of judgement - as to the real existence of something of which there is a presentation (reality testing) - is a concern of the definitive reality-“I”, which develops out of the initial pleasure-“I”. It is now no longer a question of whether what has been perceived (a thing) shall be taken into the “I” or not, but of whether something which is in the “I” as a presentation can be rediscovered in perception (reality) as well. It is, we see, once more a question of external and internal. What is unreal, merely a presentation and subjective, is only internal; what is real is also there outside.

In this stage of development regard for the pleasure principle has been set aside. Experience has shown the subject that it is not only important whether a thing (an object of satisfaction for him) possesses the 'good' attribute and so deserves to be taken into his “I”, but also whether it is there in the external world, so that he can get hold of it whenever he needs it. In order to understand this step forward we must recollect that all presentations originate from perceptions and are repetitions of them. Thus originally the mere existence of a presentation was a guarantee of the reality of what was presented. The antithesis between subjective and objective does not exist from the first. *It only comes into being from the fact that thinking possesses the capacity to bring before the mind once more something that has once been perceived, by reproducing it as a presentation without the external object having still to be there* [my italic - HW]. The first and immediate aim, therefore, of reality-testing is, not to *find* an object in real perception which corresponds to the one presented, but to *refind* such an object, to convince oneself that it is still there. Another capacity of the power of thinking offers a further contribution to the differentiation between what is subjective and what is objective. The reproduction of a perception as a presentation is not always a faithful one; it may be modified by omissions, or changed by the merging of various elements. In that case, reality-testing has to ascertain how far such distortions go. But it is evident that a precondition for the setting up of reality-testing is that objects shall have been lost which once brought real satisfaction.” (Freud, *On Negation*)

Kant’s Construction – or Foundational Inference

(Two extracts from the *Transcendental Deduction*, 1781 version, A)
Kant’s implicit *reductio ad absurdum* argument, in *Critique of Pure Reason*, ironically, corresponds to Freud’s *primary process*. Dreamlike, it almost delights in the contradictions of rational consistency, though presented as *reductio ad absurdum*, and it runs:

“If cinnabar were sometimes red, sometimes black, sometimes light, sometimes heavy, if a man changed sometimes into this and sometimes into that animal form, if the country on the longest day were sometimes covered with fruit, sometimes with ice and snow, my empirical imagination would never find opportunity when representing red colour to bring to mind heavy cinnabar. Nor could there be an empirical synthesis of reproduction, if a certain name were sometimes given to this, sometimes to that object, or were one and the same thing named sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, independently of any rule to which appearances are in themselves subject.” (Kant, trans. Kemp Smith, 1964)

This is supplemented by the positive explanation, which appeals to the *function of unification and correlation of phenomena*, which is also central in Freud. The dream function of radical unification is fundamental for him (Freud, 1958). Kant

here makes it opaque in the characteristic Kantian fashion. Nevertheless, it makes the core Kant differentiation between, on the one hand, *the self in its pathway through the world*, and, on the other, *the systemic constructive organisation or constitution of the **experience** of an objective world*, which presupposes our *consistency of rule-organisation and repeatability* of experience:

“This transcendental unity of apperception forms out of all possible appearances, which can stand alongside one another in one experience, a connection of all these representations according to laws. For this unity of consciousness would be impossible if the mind in knowledge of the manifold could not become conscious of the identity of function whereby it synthetically combines it in one knowledge. *The original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self is thus at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts* [my italic - HW], that is, according to rules, which not only make them necessarily reproducible but also in so doing determine an object for their intuition, that is, the concept of something wherein they are necessarily interconnected. For the mind could never think its identity in the manifoldness of its representations, and indeed think this identity *a priori*, if it did not have before its eyes the identity of its act, whereby it subordinates all synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity, thereby rendering possible their interconnection according to *a priori* rules.” (Kant, trans. Kemp Smith, 1964)

So, this is Kant’s core argument for *how the unity of self-consciousness* is made possible by the possibility of differentiating out a **constructed phenomenal objectivity** in *Critique of Pure Reason*. It clearly implies, by the above *reductio ad absurdum* argument, appealing, in inadvertent ironic Freud-like formulas, to the ‘impossible’ contradictions, that the objectivity of experience is based upon *reliable repetition*. Now *this* account of objectivity is based upon *the consistency of experience*, out of which (repetition as consistency of experience) it is a construct, that is, in Freud’s framework, *secondary process*. This means it is entirely phenomenal, entirely appearance. We do not see/experience ‘things in themselves’. We experience a proxy or surrogate, organised in and through consistent experience.

But, a more radical view of Kant, one which does not accept his rejection of temporality as applying to things beyond perception, might argue that here he gives us the systematic basis for a dualism, which, transcending the phenomenal, *infers the physical world* from the systematic correlations of the phenomenal Kant articulates. We would then (*simply!*) be left to deal with Hume’s arguments against causal inference, to permit us to infer material things from our perceptions.

And there G.E. Moore’s argument from the pencil might (heaven!) help us:if you directly apprehended the sense-data which you would apprehend, if you took this pencil in your hand and split it or cut it – you would, that is, under certain conditions, directly apprehend other sense data, visual and tactual, of the sort to which I have referred. They allow, that is, that these sense-data, which you now directly apprehend, really are signs of something else: are signs, not indeed that anything else will, even probably, exist, but only that certain other sense-data would exist, if in addition to the sense-data which you now directly apprehend, you are also

to apprehend directly certain others. But neither view pretends that these other sense-data, of which those which you now see are in this remote way signs, do exist now. Neither view pretends that that cylindrical shape, which you would feel if you handled the pencil, exists now; or that the sense-data, which you might feel or see, if you split the pencil or cut it open, exist now. (Moore, *Hume's Theory Examined*, in *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*, 1953, republished in *Selected Writings* Ed. Thomas Baldwin)