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Philosophy of Body: Merleau-Ponty and the Philosophy of Mind

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Abstract
Merleau-Ponty shows to what extent accurate and illusive views could be indistinguishable. His philosophy reveals how it could be hard to tell the truth and falsehood of perception apart from each other. We rightly lay claim to true perception when our body has a precise handle on its object; yet we are not right to make a claim to an all-embracing handle or hold on our object, and, invariably, on truth, because an articulate perception of all the sides, perspectives, and horizons of our object is hardly possible. In perception, we place our faith in a world, and in a *not yet*, and we do this in *the now*, in a "present" that is incapable of invariantly guaranteeing the *not yet*, the future of our perception. The long and short of it all is that the general world we have received is of an "absolute certainty;" beside it, no other particular thing is anything near a certainty that cannot be faulted (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 297). Thus a world does exist for one given that one is not unaware of oneself; and given that one has a world, one cannot be that hidden from oneself. Hence, one's awareness of the world does not hinge on self-awareness, since both are co-extensive and contemporaneous (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 298). Modern philosophy of mind needs Merleau-Ponty's insights. Modern philosophy of mind has its origin in Descartes, even as its fundamental worries date well back to ancient philosophy (Recall Heraclitus and Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle). Even as the psycho-physical dualism of Descartes remains popular, and even as philosophers occasionally argue in its favour, yet majority of philosophers of mind deny its viability as an option and doubt whether Descartes would subscribe to it in our day. What Descartes bequeaths to philosophy of mind is his shaping of our conception of mind and body. His hold is so pervasive that thought habits of his psycho-physical dualism continue to find their way even in the works of those who reject his theory of mind (Burwood, Gilbert, Lennon, 1999, 2). The dominant paradigm in contemporary philosophy of mind articulates a theory of mind in line with that of the physical and mathematical sciences. Here the study of the mind is confined to scientific experimental methods, and the mental is reduced to the physical. Contemporary philosophy of mind is thus reductionist. Reductionist accounts of mind are decidedly materialist, frequently physicalist, often scientistic, and definitely monist.

Keywords
Perspectivity, Corporeity, Self-awareness, The mental, The physical, Reductionism, Physicalist accounts, Absolute certainty, Perceptual incompleteness

1. MERLEAU-PONTY: THE MAN AND HIS LEGACY

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), a French phenomenologist of an exceptional class, had a catholic upbringing in Paris, and graduated from the École Normale Supérieure in 1930. During the Second World War, he served briefly in the French military, which he joined in 1939. Among other works, 1942 saw the publication of his book, *La structure du comportement*, adapted from his doctoral thesis. In 1945, he published his *Phénoménologie de la perception*, said to be an eloquent statement of French existentialist philosophy. *Le visible et l'invisible*, a posthumous publication in 1962 of the manuscripts he was writing when he passed on in 1961, was his last major work. His *La nature: notes, cours du collège de France* (1995) was also published posthumously. He held the chair of child psychology and pedagogy at Sorbonne and subsequently became philosophy professor at the Collège de France.

Curious enough, the ambiguity he insists that characterizes human existence and thought continues to overshadow opinions over his philosophy. For, whereas some find a substantial turn around in his later philosophy others find and read in him a development of thought that is continuous in all his works. He is, though, in many ways significantly different from other prominent phenomenologists, such as Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre; drawing, in contrast to these, from both

theory and practice in the biological and social sciences. He appreciates the relevance of the structural linguistics of Saussure, which he incorporates into his notion of perception as an in-the-flesh (embodied) experience of being-in-the-world, and the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss. The phenomenology he and Sartre discovered (in the 1930s) in Husserl, Heidegger, and Scheler, and brought to France, remains a foremost factor inspiring his philosophy, even as he disagrees with these phenomenologists and radically parts ways with them. He broke ties with Sartre in 1953 over difference of opinion on loyalty to politics and freedom in the philosopher's reflective projects. His approach is said to be as interrogative and dialectical as it is non-adversarial.

It was Husserl who founded the phenomenological method. With this phenomenological method came not only an alternative manner of philosophizing, but also an alternative notion of the nature and purpose of reflecting and philosophizing. Giving up his earlier project of proffering a psychologically oriented analysis of basic mathematical concepts, and terminating his attachment to Brentano's indirect theory of perception, Husserl worked out an elaborate account of Brentano's intentionality of consciousness, namely, the object-directedness of consciousness, its intentional character, what it is *about*, that which it is *of* . It is not as if hitherto nobody knew that mental behaviour was directed towards objects and states of affairs, but Husserl bringing this to bear on the guiding presuppositions (working template) prevalent in philosophical reflections since Descartes was a philosophical landmark" (See Husserl, 1937, 29, § 68).

The theory of indirect representation of ideas of Locke and Descartes held that humans had only direct awareness of their mental states rather than the external objects. The representationist theory of idea posited interior mental tokens that depicted things in the external world. Ideas, representations (*Vorstellungen*), as Kant would have it (See Kant, 1781, tr. Dial. 1. Abs. 1333- RC 401; See also Fortschr. D. Metaph. 2. Abt. Aufloes. Der Aufgabe 111, V3, 141), became the bridge between the inside and the outside; they were at the same time both the effects the outside world brought forth in us and expressed what we knew about this world. Intentionality, for this seemingly representationalist theory, became the phenomenon that emerged from complex mental operations instead of coming from an experiential primitive. In Berkeley this object-directedness of mental behaviour, this state-of-affairs-directedness of mental attitudes, would even become illusory.

Be that as it may the attempt to tear asunder the intentional character of every human experience (a primeval characteristic of our experience) in ideological wrangling over ideas (mere human assumptions) nose-dived at take-off. For, its formulators presupposed, without acknowledging it, the self-evidence of our being aware of our ideas. In conceiving our relationship to our ideas they presupposed intentionality, even as they excluded or proscribed acknowledgment of this relationship as crucial to perceiving and thinking.

Husserlian phenomenology repudiated this theory of knowledge partly by making a distinction between objects of consciousness (things or objects one is aware of) and contents of consciousness (the contents of one's awareness of those things). Thus, intentionality cannot be reduced to the causal links between external objects and inner psychological states. The reason is that the objects or things one is aware of are not the (internal) contents of one's mind; these contents of one's mind are, instead, one's awareness of external things or objects. The things one is aware of are the objects of consciousness. The object-directedness of one's awareness, its *aboutness*, is the intentional content.

It has been said that perception has at once a *raison d'être* (the mental) and a cause (the worldly). Thus Husserl had to differentiate the normative from the non-normative, the ideal (abstract) from the real (concrete) facets of any mental phenomenon, the intentional content of the human experience from the world's or brain's causal conditions that make our experience take on this intentional content. The aspect of a mental phenomenon that reflected some guiding normative principle, that ideal, that content of an intentional state that was not bounded by time and age, Husserl termed *noema*; (Husserl, [1913] 1950, 5, 89) the time-bond token, the psychological episode that took place in time, he tagged *noesis*. Two reductions enabled one access or penetrate the noema, namely, the *epochê* and the eidetic reduction. Epochê or transcendental reduction returned (turned back) one's focus from the transcendent world, which each person received only from a certain perspective, unto the immanent contents of our awareness, which usually had epistemological transparency. It was an abstraction or reduction that took one from the world outside of us (the exterior, outer) to the inner (inside, interior) mental realm. The eidetic reduction, on the other hand, was unbounded, it steered one upwards in the direction of the ideal, the normative aspect of the content of an intentional state, taking or directing one away from its actual properties of time and cause. It was an abstraction, Husserl believed, that moved one away from actual and real psychological facts, and instead moved one in the direction of timeless conceptual and semantic contents; Husserl believed it directed us away from the factual (fact) unto the essential (essence)

Husserlian phenomenology was inspirational because it obliged phenomenologists to make a thorough description of the intentional character of human experience as a prerequisite to any theoretical constructions, constructions that all too frequently only blurred instead of shedding light on *die Sachen selbst* (the things themselves) (Husserl, [1913] 1950, 3, 1, 188.)

Philosophical accounts of reality had been known to miss the mark time and again because they all too frequently started with poor or defaced descriptions of their target-phenomena. Some of these descriptions, having so much altered the phenomena that phenomenologists intended analyzing, left them appearing so unrecognizably strange and murky that the outcomes of the analyses could not but be anybody's guess. Recognizing this regrettable state of affairs and taking account of Merleau-Ponty's unwavering dedication to the Husserlian phenomenological description as a safeguard against the abstract theorizing (that is devoid of any relationship to facts on the ground) and the reductivist philosophizing (that

reduces complex wholes to one or two of their simple elements or parts), the faithful reader observes how Merleau-Ponty remains deeply displeased with Husserlian teachings even as he adopts the spirit of his project.

Thus, even as Merleau-Ponty was passionate about the Husserlian phenomenological project, he was saddened by the details of that program. First, he remained at odds with the Husserlian differentiation of an immanent consciousness from a transcendent outer world, or of the simply psychological data of our sensory experience from the essences that exclusively form its intentionality. Second, he dismissed the Husserlian eidetic or transcendental reductions, as did his fellow phenomenologists, Heidegger and Sartre. He held that the practical, world-oriented, nature of our experiences lent those experiences their intelligibility, and argued that the reductions were but unwarranted and unjustifiable abstractions from these genuine concrete experiences. He was as passionate about the unattainableness of a full-length reduction as he was about (Husserl's emphasis on) the need for a thorough phenomenological description.

Prior to Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger's *Being and Time* was already an implicit denial of the Husserlian reductions. What this did not achieve, his 1920s lectures completed in explicit ways. He dismissed the Cartesian "worldless" subject that the Husserlian "transcendental ego" legitimized, a transcendental ego that had a conceptual distinctiveness in relation to the "concrete psychophysical" man, even as it shared metaphysical identity with him (Heidegger, 1927, 211). Husserl believed that on carrying out the reductions one ceased during that period to be a "human I" (Husserl, 1927-1931, 130). Yet reflecting on our experiences and understanding ourselves as intentional openness to the world are things we are able to do as humans. It is this very fact that necessitates phenomenological description in the first place.

It therefore becomes clear why Heidegger is impatient with Husserl's willful and considered neglect of concrete existence. In sharp contrast to Husserl, he identifies intentionality with the embodied human agent and with the factical self, instead of assigning it to a transcendental subject, practically devoid of a world and lacking in any world-orientedness, as Husserl had done. We conceive of ourselves as existing humans at once delineated by the features of our existence and by the characteristics of our nature. Thus Heidegger would dismiss as an originary misconception any "ideative contemplation" of any being whose being is solely to be rather than anything else (Heidegger, 1985, 152). Hence for Heidegger, the Husserlian phenomenological reductions were nothing more than theory-motivated abstractions that distorted phenomena and our genuine experience of them. His *Being and Time* would then account for our everydayness, our commonplaceness, our *In-der-Welt-sein* (our being-in-the-world).

Although Merleau-Ponty's characteristic attitude of treating others in a conciliatory interpretative way (as evidenced in his treatment of mythical and dreamy minds) conceals the phenomenological divide between him and Heidegger, yet the gulf between the two remains large. One can easily draw attention to his effort at reading the Husserlian conception of the intuition of essences into the Heideggerian notion of our existence as *In-der-Welt-sein*, even as regarding an object as an essence clearly remained the objective of the Husserlian eidetic reduction (cf. Merleau-Ponty, 1962, ix, xiv-xv). Besides, what the Husserlian phenomenology expressly excluded was exactly what the Heideggerian existential analytic, in its teaching on existence and facticity, proposed. Thus, while Merleau-Ponty towed the line of the Heideggerian existential analytic, as did his landsman and colleague, Sartre, he abhorred the Husserlian eidetic or essential phenomenology, a phenomenology of essences that was in many ways at variance with the Heideggerian *Dasein* analytic.

On the one hand, Merleau-Ponty picked up from Husserl the recognition of the importance of describing phenomena faithfully, rather than merely engaging in speculative metaphysics and in a philosophy whose main aim is system-building. On the other hand he got from Heidegger the realization that *die Sachen selbst* hardly backed up or corroborated the categories and distinctions upon which the Husserlian phenomenological abstractions and descriptions are built. Instead of unveiling a domain of "transcendental subjectivity" isolated from the world out there by the Husserlian "veritable abyss" (Husserl, 1983, 93), a domain of "ideal essences" recognizably different from the facts of our world, phenomenological investigation rather discovers bodily beings steeped in this-world-conditioned state of affairs, and whose behavioural tendencies perceptually or affectively bear contents that all too frequently reveal conceptual indeterminacy.

Much more than Heidegger, though, Merleau-Ponty knew the mutuality (and reliance on each other) of our attitudinal or behavioural ideals (ideal truth or normative content) and the earth-bound, this-world-motivated, status of our behaviours (facts on the ground, causal and temporal, factual content). This is so given that, for all his rejection of the Husserlian idea of man as devoid of a world (an idea reminiscent of Descartes) and his distaste for the ontological obscurity associated with Husserl's "separation of the Real and the ideal" (Heidegger, 1927, 217), he still detached the ontological from the ontic, in other words, isolating the intelligible character of being from the contingency of the factual or the entities (the concrete, world-oriented realities). Arguably, Heidegger's insistence on an ontological differentiation of being from entities did indeed keep him from establishing the strong link between the broad-spectrum of the structural dimensions of intelligibility and the specific particulars of concrete phenomena, especially in relation to the body and the act of perceiving. Curiously, in the whole of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* he hardly said a thing about perception, and when he eventually did succeed in referring to the body, the corporeal nature of *Dasein's* spatiality, it was only to shut it out from his existential analytic, saying that it was a theme that belonged elsewhere. He would argue: "This 'bodily nature' hides a problematic of its own, though we shall not treat it here" (Heidegger, 1997, 108).

On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty held that body and perception jointly formed the phenomenon critical for comprehending *être au monde*, being-in-the-world. His major philosophical legacy consisted in his explanation of the corporeal character of human perception, and his articulation of how our existence rested on perceptual fundamentals.

Gestalt psychology, therefore, became for him a natural ally. Instead of regarding sensory experience as an assemblage of sensations, with each one arranged to match a particular stimulus, as mechanistic and atomistic thinking supposed, Gestalt psychology understood the act of perceiving as involving configurations of components that reinforced one another, and that were frequently unable to fit into any one to one match with single stimuli. Such constellations, configurations and meaningful forms, it is held, formed the primitives in the act of perceiving, and understanding these could not be a question of some insignificant signals passively impressing on us or a matter of doing some ideational or notional judging we are not aware of. It, instead, consisted in some form of perceptual intelligence informing conceptual usage and inferential reasoning. This structural totality that goes with human experience, i.e., the operation of some sort of perceptual insight rather than of the act of sensing or judging, finds expression, for example, in the context-sensitivity in our experience of perceiving the constancy of color or size.

Merleau-Ponty agreed with Gestalt psychology over the philosophical import of the meaningful intentional configuration and structure of perceptual experience, but expressed displeasure and disappointment over their failure to realize that a whole universe of philosophy was implicit in the very criticism of the constancy hypothesis. It is an implicit philosophy that compelled us to take a fresh look at the act of perceiving and conceive it anew as a crucial part of our being instead of a mere part of some operation or power of the mind (cf. Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 154 & 122, Merleau-Ponty, 1968, 181). Gestalt psychology attempted to lay down general rules of perceptual form, and, regrettably, laid the groundwork for the final turning of these rules into the brain's causal apparatuses and mechanisms. But then, we relate to the world and to ourselves in rather intelligible and practical ways instead of in some cause and effect fashion, and there can hardly be any theory-based explanation of generic rules that can articulate the content of the intuitive comprehension associated with our pre-reflective self-understanding.

In addition, Merleau-Ponty found credible support in the neurological studies of A. Gelb and K. Goldstein. Both had studied aphasia in patients with brain lesion and considered how biological knowledge could be rooted in the philosophical (the meaningful). Goldstein was opposed to the mechanistic and modular thinking in philosophical psychology. He rather drew the attention of physiological and medical sciences to the fundamental unity of organisms and the global (but never instantly obvious) intermixing of functions and organs (that on the face of it appeared estranged from one another). Even as Goldstein took exception to the tenets of gestalt psychology, he believed, as did gestalt psychology, that human experience was of a holistic nature and that animals by nature tended toward behavioural integration, lessening perceptual disruption, keeping and sustaining balance in their sensory-motor orientation. This important understanding, that in perceiving and behaving we are led by the normative idea of properness or equilibrium, a meeting point between Gestalt psychology and Goldstein, remained a major contributory factor to the Merleau-Pontyian style of phenomenology.

Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the intentionality of perception; perceiving is not identical with having some meaningless sensation, it is not one and the same with thinking rationally either. It is rather a facet of the intentional grip of the *Leib* on its socio-physical surrounds. It could be argued, following Merleau-Ponty, that the non-conceptual content of perception could be traced to the fact that objects appear to our senses in some context-dependent manner, as well as to the fact that qualities appear to our senses in a rather object-dependent way. The same objects take on a different appearance in different situations, in much the same way as properties known to be generally alike show some phenomenological dissimilarity consequent on the objects whose properties they are.

Merleau-Ponty, therefore, seems right to hold that our situated corporeal perspective on the world affects all aspects of the human existence. Even painting is not left out of this configuration. As ordinary as it appears, painting embodies primitive components of our behavioural pattern. It displays gesture, shows expression, and manifests style. It too is a perspective on the world. As with poetry and music, painting belongs to the expressive domain. Painting echoes man's effort, the way we perceive the world, the way we live. An artwork is a certain manifestation of the human condition the way the human body does, as it realizes in gesture a specific coherent pattern, a manner of understanding, a style of sensitivity, a certain way of *être au monde*. Style is at once a characteristic of great art and an important component of our everyday acting and perceiving. In art, as in the human body or behaviour, style is conceptually elusive and ubiquitous; it is seen everywhere in handwritings and prototypical behaviours. Merleau-Ponty recommends what he thinks could help us realize the philosophical import of the human body and perception. It is, he says, recognizing the link between the expressive potential of artworks and the knowledge our knowing our characters give us about ourselves and others.

Arguably, the structure in Merleau-Ponty's *Structure of Behaviour* was initially about the form, constellation, configuration, assemblage or ensemble postulated by the *Gestaltists* to account for the intelligible meanings we immediately feel in our experience of perception. In the course of his phenomenological program, however, a further idea of structure dawned on him. This added conception of structure was that proposed by the structural linguistics of Saussure and the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss. Both outlined structures that formed objective or impersonal regulatory systems and that functioned unintentionally beyond the limits of everyday experience. Saussurean linguistics provided Merleau-Ponty with the wherewithal for his philosophy of history that blended with his phenomenology of perception. He read in the theory of signs, formulated therein, a notion of the meaning of history that transcended the orthodox things-conscious subjectivity bipolar thought; a historical signification that indicated a new philosophy of history. Remarkably, if Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* displaced the Cartesian *cogito*, and turned from a personal *cogito* to a new and prepersonal *cogito*, it at the same time created opening for coexistence of one's point of view and the perspective

of the other, a coexistence of one's transcendence as a subject and one's facticity as an object for the other" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, 13). For Merleau-Ponty this communion of our perspectives as transcendent subjects and as usable objects for one another, this common social space, possibilitated philosophy of history, and its basis was to be found in the impersonal field of symbolism that recognized meaning as being extraneous to personal consciousness.

Merleau-Ponty discovered in structural anthropology a critical appraisal of reason in the western world, an implied critical review that appeared to mirror his cares and worries. Agreeing with Lévi-Strauss, he began working for a broader mind capable of conceiving what in *us and them* came before and went beyond reason (cf. Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 154 & 122). In contradistinction to the Sartrean object-subject divide where all meaning began with human agents, structures of common social existence and language provided mechanisms for generalized significations that functioned in the social and linguistic forms as well as in the entire history, generalized significations or meanings that resonated for everyone rather than being any lone person's thinking. Merleau-Ponty reads in linguistics and its theory of signs a belonging-together of things and consciousness and a dismantling of the consciousness-things opposition. He sees in living language a "togetherness of thinking and thing." Linguistic change, he argues, bears witness to the presence in each other of the individual and the institution, mediated through a "constant need for communication" that reflects a "lived logic" and a "union of contingency and meaning in history." He believes, therefore, that Saussurean linguistics "sketched a new philosophy of history" (Merleau-Ponty, 1988, 54 & 55).

Merleau-Ponty observes that the reciprocity in the relationship between the "will to express and the means of expression" tallies with that between the productive forces and expressive forms, and in general, between forces of history and institutions. In much the same way as language is a system of signs that mean something only when related to one another, and each of these signs has its particular use in the language in question, so is every institution a system of symbols that one absorbs, makes into his own and integrates as a personal manner of functioning, as a "global configuration," bereft of any "need to conceive" of the symbolic system. And in the event of any disorganization or disintegration of balance, the reorganization that follows, as in language, involves an "internal logic" that is independent of being "clearly thought out by anyone." Thus, given the fact that we all collectively share and participate in a symbolic system, the "will to speak and be understood" brings forth needed linguistic changes where a *meaning* that is "neither a thing nor an idea" (but a belonging-together of both) develops (Merleau-Ponty, 1988, 55 & 56).

It does seem, though, that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological and philosophical sensibilities did not take into account the level of the structuralist discontent with subjectivist thought. For, while Merleau-Ponty saw the linguistics of Saussure as providing a pattern and an exemplar for an impersonal perspective on history, his contemporaries in structural linguistics, psychoanalysis, and literary criticism embraced it as a current that functioned entirely without subjectivity. Structuralist anthropology also launched a straight-out criticism of the rational systems in the West (Northern, Southern, Western Europe and North America), that surpassed the Merleau-Pontyian program to extend the scope of philosophy by making it incorporate what it considered irrational.

Arguably, in the years immediately following Merleau-Ponty's death, his contribution to philosophy took on a twist. When Merleau-Ponty adapted the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss and the philosophy of Sartre, and when he advocated for a philosophy of history grounded in the structuralist precepts of the structural linguistics of Saussure in order to counter the voluntarist thought and the subjectivist philosophy of his era, he was, unknown to him, *ipso facto* working against his very program of getting phenomenology to enter into fruitful dialogue with the human sciences. For structuralism did not remain a model that located meaning outside the subject, as Merleau-Ponty saw it, but became a movement that understood meaning as a process that operated completely without the subject. Thus rather than help Merleau-Ponty modify and cut to size Sartrean-type philosophy of the subject, structuralism after Merleau-Ponty completely severed ties with the subject and with the phenomenology and philosophy Merleau-Ponty was working to develop. It could, therefore, be argued that this element of a lost opening in the development of philosophy has made revisiting Merleau-Pontyian philosophy a pressing need of our time. It is hoped that phenomenological and structuralist thoughts interacting with each other would offer an alternative to the unsettling trends that have pervaded the humanities for more than three decades now, namely, the poststructuralist anti-humanist thinking and the politics of identity that grew out of it (Robert Audi (ed.), 1999, 883-884).

A few attempts have been made at explaining the loss of the relevance of Merleau-Pontyian philosophy. First, his untimely death made his contribution unclear. Second, it has been noted that his program could hardly have triumphed anyway, given that these other intellectual disciplines, in their self-reliance, were already running a somewhat natural course: they were conceptually emerging, and had no need for either a philosophical interpretation of their findings, or of the guidance of a philosopher. This was particularly true of the 1968 contemporaries, a group (basically in Germany) that aimed at obliterating almost everything that preceded it, which ended up slotting Merleau-Ponty's revolutionary project into the same category with those of Husserl, Sartre (1943, 1965) and others.

What is more, the final work of Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, not yet completed when he passed away, has not helped matters. It could be argued that it bore the same anti-subjectivist resonance customary with the 1968 contemporaries. It appears to have marked a significant shift from the phenomenological project of his major work, the *Phenomenology of Perception.* If the overall import of this shift was a transition from the phenomenological to the ontological, then its specific orientation was clearly a downright critique of the subjectivist overhang in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. *The Visible and the Invisible* showed his recognition of the troubles his beginning with a consciousness-object distinction caused for his phenomenological program (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, 200). Perhaps

Merleau-Ponty's recourse to an ontology of the flesh was an attempt at overcoming the stalemate of dualistic residues that, as he retrospectively discovered, endangered his phenomenological program: the flesh is the unity and blending of the act of feeling and the experience of that which is felt. In this way *The Visible and the Invisible* resonated with the philosophical climate of poststructuralist France.

Be it as it may, people have noted that the Merleau-Pontyian program for a philosophy of history did meet an unfavorable climate in the works of M. Foucault. Foucault aimed at showing how processes could be conceived without subjects. Likening the philosophy of the subject to a dying humanist thought, he attempted to expose the underpinnings of subjectivist philosophy in anthropological projects. However, because he did not realize Merleau-Ponty's increasing preoccupation with the sciences of experimentation and his last work that sought to go past the transcendental deadlock of the subjectivity-object differentiation, Foucault slotted Merleau-Ponty into the category of the philosophy of the subject, lumping him together with Sartre, Husserl and others that Merleau-Ponty had critiqued.

Jacques Lacan (See Lacan, 1953, 12-15), a structuralist psychoanalyst, and Jacques Derrida (See Derrida, 1982, 195,) a deconstructivist philosopher, have also accused the phenomenological enterprise of adherence to a humanist subjectivism (See Lacan, 1977, 80-90; Derrida, 1973, 75.) Lacan accused the Merleau-Pontyian phenomenology of overlooking the pre-personal dimension of the gaze in its undue preoccupation with the mineness of the field of perception (i.e., preoccupation with the condition for perceiving), in other words overlooking an impersonal dimension that, in the opinion of Freud, constituted the subject as a deficiency in its being (which is a neglect of the very element that makes one a subject). On a slightly different level, dragging phenomenology back to Husserl, Derrida's philosophical program undertook to demonstrate the impossibility of the Merleau-Pontyian program for a phenomenology of history. Going back to the foundational problem of truth in the Husserlian phenomenological project, Derrida attempted to show that truth did not reveal itself as an initiatory or maiden fact to which one came back again and again afterwards. Instead, remembering in various traditions leans on the supportive roles of artificial techniques, and this works against the phenomenological close relation and interdependence of being and meaning. However, it has been argued that whereas Derrida knew a great deal about Husserl, he did not know as much of Merleau-Ponty, and this explains why he integrates Merleau-Ponty into Husserl, and the fact that, for all his deconstructive philosophy, none of Merleau-Ponty's works featured in any of his critiques. To a large extent acceptance and rejection of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, during the philosophical epoch that directly succeeded his own era, had been, regrettably, based on a systematic incorporation of Merleau-Ponty into Husserl.

This writer believes that returning to Merleau-Ponty, among other things, could help us evolve novel and appreciable manners of penetrating the ontological correspondence between man and his world, a program that resonates in the neuroscience of Francisco Varela as he seeks to polish off what separates the humanities from the sciences. Instead of analytical argumentation and empirical discovery, Merleau-Ponty contributes to philosophy and the humanities an innovative way of conceiving of perception and its corporeal relationship with the world. He succeeds in re-joining the way we conceive perception and our body to the phenomena to which we are primitively (beforehand) accustomed prior to our applying them in our conceptual categorizations, investigating them critically, or articulating theories with them. From Merleau-Ponty we learn afresh what we knew before, even if only inexplicitly, of the body, of perceiving, and of historical accounts, a knowledge not within the scope of the sciences of experimentation and logic. His thought effectuates that activity of recollection that in Platonic thought belongs to philosophy. It reminds one of what one already knew but has stopped remembering due to one's thoughtless submergence in the perceptible world.

2. THE ROCKY ROUTES TO THE QUESTION OF BEING HUMAN (HUMAN EXISTENCE)

In *The Structure of Behaviour*, Merleau-Ponty correctly considers human existence as the problem of human behaviour and conceives of behaviour as a matter of structure or pattern.

In his attempt to develop these striking thoughts in his *Phenomenology of Perception* he seems to digress when he considers the body as an original form of consciousness and creates a gulf between body and world. With *The Visible and the Invisible*, and *Nature*, though, he reconnects to the original idea of *The Structure of Behaviour*, that is, that of the living body as a unitary and integral phenomenon. In this book, probably for lack of better terminology, we shall refer to the coherent body of thoughts expressed in *The Structure of Behaviour* (and some relevant ideas in the *Phenomenology of Perception*) as the structural Merleau-Ponty. We shall also designate as the phenomenological Merleau-Ponty the major part of the ideas in the *Phenomenology of Perception*. The thoughts contained in *The Visible and the Invisible* and Nature we shall regard as the ontological Merleau-Ponty.

Merleau-Ponty makes the point that human behaviour is neither the result of a succession of sheepish responses to outside stimuli nor the exhibition of acts propelled by the pure ideas of a mind bereft of a world and a body. Human behaviour is not entirely subjective; it is not solely objective either. It is rather a dialectical exchange between the human being and the world that can only be poorly articulated should we think in orthodox causal categories. Human behaviour is thus a "circular dialectic" where the autonomous beings of the vital order of life, pre-selected by the body's structure, occasion an additional process of selection in the activities of the body. Human consciousness is a confluence of the objective and the subjective - a dialectical exchange from which meaning evolves. Significations arising from this dialectical exchange are not the products of passive assimilations from a predetermined and pre-established exterior order of the cosmos, as realism would have us believe; nor are they the novel constructions of a "creative mind," as idealism would have it (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xiv-xv).

Merleau-Ponty advocates the perspectivism of perception. One perceives at a time only this or that aspect of the world with its "immediate horizon" and the existence of objects that do not fall into the range of what one perceives is a matter of logical necessity rather than of reality. For, truth is not only true when one is contemplating it. Given that objects do not totally give themselves to us in perception, perceiving or apprehending existences in a way that would exhaust reality or the perceptible things is logically inconceivable. In their mode of being, the aspects of the world or of objects outside one's perceptual range are "significations" instead of "existences." This shows the perspectival nature of perception (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 212). A pure perception identical with its object is, therefore, a logical inconsistency.

Besides, one's phenomenal body reveals even more of the *perspectivism* of perception than the external objects do. Unlike things that could be inspected one side after the other, it is not accessible to a boundless examination. To have a body, therefore, means that the objects of one's knowledge, given to one in the "mode of actual existence," never present their sides to one all at once (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 214).

The phenomenal body, as one lives it from within, is quite dissimilar to the objective body that is observable by others from without. Each of these perspectives has its legitimacy, though; and they overlap each other at some moments, bringing about an ambiguous human situation. One is at once one among many in the universe, and a cradle of the entire global order where one lives. Behaviour is neither explained by materialistic realism nor by mentalist realism (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,182 &183). Also, the living body is neither accounted for by an "objective behaviourism" nor a "vitalistic psychism" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xv). This is so because the lived body is neither a mere thing (*en-soi*) nor a mere "manifestation of a pure mind" (*pour-soi*) (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xxvi; See also Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 207). Given that behaviour has a structure, a meaning structure, it is not possible for any of these positions, taken singly, to account for one's being (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,125).

Ours is being-in-the-world. Should one be either a mere thing or pure consciousness, one would be incapable of being in the world. The reason is that as a mere thing one would be merely coexisting with other things, rather than transcending them and projecting towards one's horizons. On the other hand, were one to be a pure consciousness, one would be capable of unraveling the world we encounter. If one were a pure conscious subject, the world or one's world would not imply anything for one. If one were a totally conscious subject, one would not be involved in one's world. Being a completely conscious being would put one in a situation where one's world would neither resist one nor pose any obstacles to one. This would have made one's life not to be ambiguous. Incidentally this runs contrary to all that we know to be the case (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xviii).

The conscious subject (consciousness) is not abstract or without a world; he is instead historical, engaged, and exists in the world. With Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty insists that our world is not reducible to the "objective variables and functional relations" that the physico-mathematical sciences disclose. Instead being about realities of a different order, and having its own "meaning structure," it needs analyses and explanations of a different sort, so as to avoid reductionism and distortion. This is not to say that the philosopher need not understand the methods of the empirical sciences, though. However, a careful study of these sciences reveals that they have been guided by the "facts themselves" to uncritically appropriate perspectives about our world and life, which their rather narrow methodologies do not allow them to critically investigate (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xiii). This follows from the fact that, like all humans, scientists spontaneously take ontological positions. The scientific experience that has come to stand for human behaviour, is inconsistent with the perspectives of the natural experience that these sciences of experimentation unreflectively take up (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xxvii).

One cannot be treated as an object or product of scientific investigation. This is so because even this investigation bears the unacknowledged individual viewpoint, *Weltanschauung*, or personal encounter with the world that the scientist shares, and in the absence of which the symbols he uses would hardly mean anything. Science never affords the true, basic experience, because it is only a "second-order expression" of a world whose basic experience we share. One is what science says one is; for science is "naive" and "dishonest," given that, without acknowledging it, it concedes or presupposes the viewpoint of the conscious subject, through which from the very beginning a world already exists for the scientist, sociologist, or psychologist. We must, therefore, return to the things themselves, that is to say, come back to that world that is prior to knowledge, which our knowledge is about, and relative to which the articulations of science are mere abstractions and derivations (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, viii-ix). That world is the "primary embodiment of rationality," and our rationalizing is not only grounded in some claims or propositions but also on some encounter or relation with it (the world) (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, xxi).

The soul is not a separate substance or vital force wielding some unique and immaterial influence on the body (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,, 189). The Aristotelian metaphor that associates one's relationship to the body with a pilot's relation to his ship is erroneous (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 188). Should one perceive one's body in this manner, it would hardly be one's body, Merleau-Ponty would seem to argue. What is more, one is not given to utilizing one's body as some instrument. The more appropriate thing to say is that one is body. One's significations are discovered in the structures of one's body's behaviour. This body is the centre of the world that one inhabits (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, xv).

Merleau-Ponty disavows the dualistic philosophy of Descartes. What there is, is a duality of functions rather than of substances, he insists (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 210 & 181). He rejects Descartes' use of the relation between an artisan and his tool as a metaphor for the relation between the soul and the body. Given that an organ exists and functions in relation to an "integral functioning," we cannot compare it to an instrument, he objects. Rather than use the body, the mind "realizes itself" via the body as it moves the body beyond the physical field. Thus, comparing the mind to some

artisan who would put it to use the way he does his tools, would be synonymous with adopting the Aristotelian external relationship between a pilot and his ship that Descartes attempts to avert. When we analyze the structures of behaviour, we see that it cannot be reduced to the interaction (polemic) of physical stimuli and muscular contractions, as if it were a mere thing lacking in meaning for the conscious organism involved. We see in the analysis of the structures of behaviour, a consciousness coming into the world as it expresses itself in its conduct (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 208-209).

Such is the case that factors (stimuli) external to the sensory domain do not wield any considerable influence on isolated parts of the sensory-motor functioning; their influence is rather realized in enabling a fundamental pattern of functioning. This points to how the structure rests on some biological signification. The whole pattern indicates intelligibility. The experience of organisms, including that of man, reveals "meaningful patterns" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 11). "Structure is an object of consciousness," Merleau-Ponty would say (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 145).

Merleau-Ponty contends that right from the start man's natural experience places him in the world of things, and this experience entails that man orients himself among these things and takes a position in relation to them. Thus while appreciating Kant's explication of the *a-priori* and the *a-posteriori*, he rejects the application of the differentiation between the *a-priori* forms and the contents of the empirical to the analysis of "nascent consciousness." In conceiving the *a-priori*, we cannot split it into parts and engage in bit-by-bit conceptualization of it. The *a-priori* is an essence, and so we cannot decompose it; all of it must be conceptualized at once. In contrast, by putting together the external parts, we can conceptually construct the *a-posteriori*. Kant, Merleau-Ponty admits, teaches that two forms of experience alone have an *a-priori* structure, namely, the experience of a universe of external objects and that of states of the internal sense. Kant assigned other types of experience, for instance, consciousness of linguistic forms and consciousness of the other to *a-posteriori* contents.

Hence in Kant the other exists for one because one derives the idea of one's existence from a coordination of external experiences included in a concept that one develops from the internal sense. Also, to relate meaning to word, one has to conceptualize this connection; word-meaning relation seems to be something of a secondary attachment. Thus consciousness remains simply a conceptualized phenomenon, a representative consciousness, which is of course only one of the forms of consciousness. Kant, *ipso facto*, recognizes only known consciousness (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,171).

But then consciousness is much more than a mere intellectual phenomenon, Merleau-Ponty objects. There is also this rather "blind recognition" of the objects of our desire, and of the "good by the will." Long before the intellectual, representative consciousness, the other is already "given" to a child via this other form of consciousness (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,172). The child already associates his smiles with joyous states long before he begins to recognize his face in a mirror (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,156). Thanks to this capacity for "blind recognition" also "confused sensory ensembles" become the foundation of some "human intention." Thus, from the very beginning, the gestures and attitudes of the living body are endowed with a structure proper to them and with an immanent meaning that makes them a certain kind of behaviour, instead of mechanical muscle contractions and senseless stimulus-response relations (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 157). Given that the infant is already capable of thumbnail sketches of the acts that lend their significations to "words and gestures," he is able to comprehend what bodies and objects of use mean for humans as well as the significative usefulness of language (Merleau-Ponty, 2002,170). Hence, having a representation or exercising a judgment does not exhaust the phenomenon of consciousness. Instead, as a network of intentions that signify things for us, the human consciousness is here clear and known there, "lived rather than known" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 173).

The foregoing, Merleau-Ponty notes, highlights the extent to which accurate and illusive views are indistinguishable, i.e., it shows the indistinguishability of the truth and falsehood of perception. We rightly lay claim to true perception when our body has a precise handle on its object; yet we are not right to make a claim to an all-embracing handle or hold on our object, and, invariably, on truth, because an articulate perception of all the sides, perspectives, and horizons of our object is hardly possible. In perception, we place our faith in a world, and in a *not yet*, and we do this in *the now*, in a "present" that is incapable of invariantly guaranteeing the *not yet*, the future of our perception. The long and short of it all is that the general world we have received is of an "absolute certainty;" beside it, no other particular thing is anything near a certainty that cannot be faulted (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 297). Thus a world does exist for one given that one is not unaware of oneself; and given that one has a world, one cannot be that hidden from oneself. Hence, one's awareness of the world does not hinge on self-awareness, since both are co-extensive and contemporaneous (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 298).

The Cartesian Legacy

Modern philosophy of mind has its origin in Descartes, even as its fundamental worries date well back to ancient philosophy (Recall Heraclitus and Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle). This is the case because modern philosophy of mind is in the main preoccupied with mind-body relations. It investigates how "meaning, rationality and conscious experience" (meaning, reason, consciousness) relate to, or come from a world of matter that lacks such features. Descartes and the philosophers of his era take virtually all the credit for the way this problem is presently formulated (Burwood *et al*. 1999, 1). We credit the turn to Descartes in philosophy with not only the articulation and philosophical formulation of this problem but also with the sides we have been taking till date.

Descartes proffers a major solution to the problem, a psycho-physical dualism, of sorts, where mind and body interact causally as distinct substances. Even as the psycho-physical dualism of Descartes remains popular, and even as philosophers occasionally argue in its favour, yet majority of philosophers of mind deny its viability as an option and

doubt whether Descartes would subscribe to it in our day. What Descartes bequeaths to philosophy of mind is his shaping of our conception of mind and body. His hold is so pervasive that thought habits of his psycho-physical dualism continue to find their way even in the works of those who reject his theory of mind (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 2).

The Dominant Paradigm in contemporary philosophy of mind (Reductionism)

As if the foregoing is not worrisome enough, the dominant paradigm in contemporary philosophy of mind articulates a theory of mind in line with that of the physical and mathematical sciences. Here the study of the mind is confined to scientific experimental methods, and the mental is reduced to the physical. Contemporary philosophy of mind is thus reductionist. On the whole, reductionism contends that in any two areas of discourse the propositions of the two domains refer to each other (and their meanings include each other) such that whatever applies in the one (area) applies in the other (area). Typically, reductionism privileges one of the domains of discourse over the other and regards it as a more fundamental explanatory vehicle. Thus in philosophy of mind, reductionist paradigms argue that whatever "mental entities, attributes, or descriptions" can account for that physical entities, attributes, or descriptions can also explain. Since reductionism privileges the physical, classical reductionism maintains that mental states and their descriptions can be reduced to physical states and their descriptions. In its functionalist brand, reductionism now claims that the "intentional idiom of the mental" can be reduced to a "non-intentional functionalist idiom" (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 3).

Reductionist accounts of mind are thus materialist, frequently physicalist, often scientistic, and definitely monist. The dominant theories of mind are materialist and monist in the sense that, contrary to the dualistic theory of Descartes, they insist that the world consists of only a sort of constituent, namely, material constituents. They are physicalist in that they articulate the nature of this unitary constituent from the perspective of the physical sciences. They are also scientistic because they privilege this manner of conceptualisation (of the physical sciences) and exclude others. On theses scores, and also because they deny the immaterial component of the world and insist on explaining mind only from the perspective of the physical, the dominant paradigms are at odds with Descartes theory of how mind relates to the physical world (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 3). Dominant theories of mind (reductionist paradigms) claim to be a resolution of the sticky troubles of dualism and a rejection of Descartes. Yet, they retain "categories and assumptions" that reflect a strong Cartesian hold and inheritance.

The Dualistic Philosophy of Descartes

Descartes' motivation for formulating a philosophy of mind is, in part, to highlight the special position of the mental in a universal science grounded in reason. This necessitates his parting with the Aristotelian tradition and articulating a new beginning in philosophy that reveals a self-evident truth that becomes axiomatic for an epistemological edifice (project). Even as Descartes seeks to conceive of reality objectively, he remains first-personal in approach and method. By applying a methodic doubt he discovers the specifically axiomatic (for his epistemological project) in the certainty of his own being. By catching himself thinking, Descartes realizes his existence; for only in being is thinking possible; the one who thinks, exists. The *cogito,* the intuitive apprehension of his existence, becomes the axiom, the cornerstone/under-structure for his epistemological structure. That God exists and that he is benevolent further vouches for the certainty of the axiomatic cogito.

Be it as it may, the self the Cartesian systematic doubt brings forth is not the "embodied or social self" that we ordinarily associate ourselves with. Instead, this procedure provides us with a self devoid of all bodily features and of all relations and attributes we humans can identify with (Burwood *et al.* 1999, 4).

The Cartesian project places the epistemological above every other thing; and this has far-reaching consequences for both philosophy and politics (See C. Taylor, 1995, 1-19). What further worries us is how this initial epistemological project metamorphoses into metaphysics, turning around in its wake the way we conceive of ourselves and the world around us.

Thus, Descartes builds his dualistic philosophy on two interconnected tenets; the one, epistemological; the other, metaphysical. The epistemological tenet teaches that the mental has primacy over everything else. One has epistemological certainty about one's own mind, not about the body, other minds, or the world. What one knows best is one's own mind and this is what is important. The metaphysical teaching claims that the mental is autonomous. The mental and the material do not depend on each other. And, by extension, each can have an independent existence.

It could well be that the problem with Cartesianism is not merely that it takes as a given the cleavage between mind and matter. The real trouble is that it legitimizes and entrenches ideas of "exclusion, autonomy and privilege". Often, we (thinkers) have no problem affirming that some of these dichotomies are at the heart of the development of western thought. Such binary oppositions include, "self/other, subject/object, universal/particular, mind/body, private/public, male/female, master/slave, reason/emotion, culture/nature." The real problem with these binary oppositions, though, is that they tend to be "exclusionary (that things are one or the other but not both)." Again, they incline toward autonomous existence, giving the impression that each one of the concepts has a separate existence and cannot imply the concept it opposes. Besides, we privilege the first concept in each binary opposition. The first in the poles takes up a "primary importance" and becomes that to which the other must play a second fiddle and do the work of opposition (Burwood *et al*., 1999).

The crux of the matter is not that Cartesian dualism/dichotomy recognises difference, which is a natural phenomenon. It is rather that Cartesianism and the thought habits associated with it construe difference as an antagonistic

and "combatitive opposition" between the terms that make up the binary poles. It does seem, for instance, that the notions of freedom, justice, equity, fairness, and even-handedness that are important to us mean next to nothing when put in the context of privilege, exclusion, and autonomy that such (Cartesian) combatitive oppositions entrench.

Dispensing with these divisive poles is the mission of this book. And showing how to do difference, not in an oppositional and exclusionary way, but in an inclusive and natural way, will perhaps be the contribution of this book to knowledge. Part of the assumption of this work is that this exclusionary dualism has a history, and it is possible to return to that natural equilibrium we had before the thematisation and articulation of our being and knowing by Cartesian habits of thought. We shall indicate alternative habits of thought, wherein doing difference is an inclusive and harmonious thing rather than an oppositional and exclusionary one.

Our sense (understanding) is that any philosophy of mind that is articulated in the oppositional framework we have been describing is in essence dualistic. Cartesianism describes the phenomenal as either entirely incorporeal or totally corporeal. In this way it constructs an exclusivist paradigm that slots all human features into two separate classes. Hence, given the phenomenon of pain, we are either referring to an entity we can objectify and quantify, as in "muscle spasms and nerve impulses," or we are referring to a phenomenon completely incorporeal and subjective, as in how we perceive pain from the "perspective of the person in pain"(Burwood *et al*., 1999, 6).

All the same, Descartes himself does not completely consent to the truth and rationality of an exclusivist articulation of phenomena. At least, he admits that one phenomenon does not fit into these clear-cut divisions. This is the phenomenon of the body, which in the *Sixth Meditation*, he calls his "by some special right". He is not able to divide or "separate" himself from this living body, this natural body, "mine" body, the body about which he is unable to give any "explanation" but about which "nature" teaches him (Cottingham *et al*, 1984, 113).

Yet, this oppositional and divisive paradigm is the direct consequence of his articulation of mind and body in oppositional and exclusionary terms. Even as it is an "incidental feature" of his theory of mind, it is of the essence for his new science that require one to pull back from the viewpoint of the individual in order to understand the physical world. This new attitude reads the world and the mind from the viewpoint of the geometrical properties it abstracts from the world and from what it abstracts from the minds interaction with the physical (See: Cottingham *et al*, 1984, 224). Neither in the phenomenon of perceiving nor in acting does it interpret the world and the mind from the perspective of the one that engages with the world or from the perspective of a mind tied up with the physical. In relation to the body and the physical surrounding, the mind is distinct, and has autonomy and independence. So, neither does the mind's milieu affect it, nor do the nature and content of our world influence it (the mind) (Burwood *et al*, 1999, 6).

From the foregoing, it seems clear that in this thought habit the mind is "disengaged" from "embodied relations" with material entities in its milieu. The mind also does not get involved with "social or cultural relations" with other people. It does not engage in "shared projects" with others either. Stephen Burwood and his colleagues show how this "I alone" attitude "continues to inform our understanding of the mind" (Burwood *et al*, 1999, 7).

The Forgetfulness of the Body

Understanding the human phenomenon requires, though, that we extend the same level of attention we give the mind to the body, both our own body and the body of the other. Studies in philosophy initially, in the mentalist attitude, seemed to give the impression that the human situation could be articulated mainly, if not exclusively, from the perspective of the mind. Perhaps, this is traceable to our conception of the body as that which plays a "secondary and oppositional role to the mind". Today, in modern physicalism, we seem to opine that the physical sciences can adequately explain the human condition.

Thus in both traditional mentalism and modern physicalism the body, it would seem, is merely presumed. In neither of the two philosophical currents is the natural body (as we experience it in our natural setting) appropriately thematised, properly accounted for, and adequately articulated. So it is that the "invisibility of the body in our thinking is the invisibility of the normal" (Burwood *et al*, 1999, p. 8). Little wonder then that the dominant paradigms in philosophy of mind seem to accent to Keith Campbell's description of the body as nothing more than the "collection of cells" and a "mass of matter" (Campbell, 1970, 2).

From the foregoing we see, it would seem, how we curiously move form acknowledging the body's materiality to reducing the body to the exclusively material and to the "sum of its anatomical parts". Yet this notion of body and the thought habit that gives rise to it are part of our Cartesian heritage. In this thought pattern, the mind is exclusively interior, and exists independently of the material milieu. The body, for its part, is exclusively exterior, and bereft of all meaning. But the real trouble is, as Burwood and his colleagues observe, since this "exclusionary dichotomy still informs our conceptualizations, that there continues to be an explanatory gap between the mental and the physical should really be of no surprise".

Merleau-Ponty who understands (the complexity, ambiguity, and) the paradoxity of the human phenomenon well enough writes that Cartesianism underscores the difficulty in explaining how "significance and intentionality" come to reside in molecules and cells (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 351). But if Cartesianism is to a great extent responsible for this "exclusionary dichotomy," it is still not the only culprit. Modern physicalist paradigms share these thought habits with dualist theories of mind. Thus, both also share an understanding of the physical as lacking in meaning. And they share a notion of the human body consistent with the notion of the physical entities. They seem to give the impression that there is no viable alternative to the idea of the human body as a mere "mass of matter" and "collection of cells".

The "peculiarity of our Cartesian inheritance" is that the "cultural dominance" of this thought pattern makes us regard the world it constructs as "common-sense". In the main, we seem to regard the world it describes as the way the world is and take its account as sacrosanct, and deny any other account. This "cultural dominance," it would seem, prevents us from recognising that other philosophical traditions and cultures may have helpful accounts of the world and of being human (See, for instance, the Chinese philosophy of mind or the African embodied account of being human). Even with Descartes, this does not seem to be the case. Descartes and his colleagues do not seem to see things as so "clear-cut" as contemporary accounts seem to do. It is also not clear that Descartes would accept this sort of exclusionary dichotomy or reductionist monism that are the offshoots (perhaps unintended consequences) of his philosophy (Burwood *et al*.,1999, 9). Even as Descartes argues for mind (res cogitans) and body (res extensa) as being of two different essences, still he acknowledges the specificity of being human. He recognizes the unity of the two substances and essences in the human being. Our everyday experience, he admits, reveals that the human phenomenon is an intimate link of these two essences.

The experience of sensation, he argues, reveals this more clearly. Hunger and pain are good examples of this. When there is an injury in the body, one does not merely have an intellectual awareness of it; one feels the pain. Descartes' difficulty lies in harmonising this natural and correct insight with the rational inferences of the intellectual world he constructs, where mind and body are but separate substances. How can he piece together the world his natural insight offers (the world as we experience it prior to all intellectual thematisation) with the dualist world his intellectual exercise constructs, where the corporeal is totally external to the mental (the world that results from his solipsist rational activity that turns the world of our lived experience upside down)? Descartes does not succeed in eliminating this discord. And the way this affects his theory of mind is there for all to see.

Aristotle regards as causes of life the "vegetative" or "sensitive soul", or a "principle of movement." In parting with Aristotle on this, Descartes practically classes animal and human bodies together and regards both as mechanistic and material objects. And as Descartes later concedes, this makes accounting for human sensation, perception and imagination difficult (Burwood *et al*., 1999,10). The trio cannot be accounted for within the "either/or dichotomy" of mind or body. Hence, he compromises his exclusionary dichotomy of mind and body, and admits that sensation and imagination can only be explained in the context of both mind and body (See: Cottingham *et al*., 1984, 224).

All the same, in the *Meditations* he reinstates the mind's autonomous existence by restricting perception, imagination, and sensation to thought; and thought, for him, is the essence of the mental, rather than the essence of the unity of the mental and the corporeal (See: Cottingham et al., 1984, 19). In taking this position, Descartes supposes that we can class distinct and divergent phenomena under the category of the mental. He also assumes that what makes theses phenomena mental states (thoughts) is their being conscious states (See: Cottingham *et al*., 198 113). These presumptions have their philosophical imports: The human body, a "causal, mechanical" extension, retains its character of externality/exteriority vis-à-vis the mind; the mind holds on to its interiority and privacy.

In contemporary philosophy of mind, the dominant theories of mind disapprove of an oppositional dichotomy between two distinct substances. However, they hold on to the idea that we can account for the body in a manner consistent with the methods of the medical and physical sciences. Besides, they retain the notion of the human body as a "self-contained inner realm". (Burwood *et al*., 1999, p.12) (Burwood, Gilbert, Lennon 1999, p.12) These Cartesian ideas of mind and body, and also these contemporary ways (dominant paradigm) of understanding being human are what this book aims at denying.

Aristotle's Separation of Life from Reason (Aristotle and Merleau-Ponty).

Philosophy has been claiming rationality for man ever since rational thought began. The idea that man may not after all be that rational is sure to raise eyebrows in philosophical circles. Yet this is the thesis of the French phenomenologist, Maurice Merleau-Ponty. In at least three of his major works on philosophy he restates this position in various ways. In *The Structure of Behaviour*, he opines, "Man is not a rational animal" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 181). In the *Phenomenology of Perception*, he states, "Human society is not a community of reasonable minds" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 56). In the *Nature*, he maintains that man is a "different kind of corporeity". The human being is not a coupling of a mechanistic animality and reason. Man has experienced an evolutionary transition from animality to the human body. Thus, when we talk of reason it is about the *"Ineinander*" (union) of soul, body, animality, and humanity (Merleau-Ponty, 2003, 208 & 271).

Although this notion (man is not rational) develops into a philosophy of man, Merleau-Ponty does not set out to articulate a philosophical anthropology. He aims at constructing a philosophy of the act of perceiving. This philosophy of man is the unintended consequence of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy of the act of perception.

When Aristotle defines man as zoon logikon, he, as it were, detaches reasoning from living. It is the intellect that the embryo receives from the outside that enables it to reason. Given man's vegetative and sensory life, he is of the animal world. However, due to his meta-biological functions, he belongs to the rational and the metaphysical order. So, even as we credit Aristotle with the well thought-out notions of vegetative soul, or rational soul, or principle of movement as causes of life, yet he is perhaps part of this culture of separation of the biological from the rational.

Merleau-Ponty denies this type of metaphysics that separates the biological from the meta-biological. Man is a functional unit, an embodied mind, an originary type of corporeity. The human being is not rational because he has a mind; and he is not an animal because he has a body.

Reason and the Mind's Causality in Descartes

Reason in Descartes

Descartes stresses the subjective perspective. For him what matters is how the world appears from the viewpoint of the one who has a mental state. With that, he highlights the subjectivity of the mental state. This feature of the mental state, subjectivity, is perhaps crucial for any theory of mind. Even so, by emphasizing subjectivity the way he does, he bequeaths to philosophy a theory of mind that has unsettling and destabilizing unintended consequences. In effect, Descartes supposition implies that the content of one's mental state remains what it is, regardless of how things are. The content of the mental state holds, even as things may be in every way at variance with the way one assumes them to be; and, in truth, they may not at all exist (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 12.) That is to say, despite the fact that one's intentional state has no reference to, or one's phenomenal state lacks the "physical cause" one assumes, or these are completely devoid of any physical cause, they still have the content they have for the sole reason that they seem that way to one.

From the foregoing, it becomes clear how this theory of mind isolates feelings and thoughts from the realities of the extra-mental world. In this way, it creates two distinct worlds. The first is the inner or "private world of subjective conscious experience". The second is the outer or "shared public world of objective facts". Of course, this dichotomy creates problems for epistemology and metaphysics. Given this account of the mind, epistemology would ask whether and how we know the self, the world, and the other. Metaphysics would like to inquire into what we mean when we talk of mental states, what being a mental state is.

Descartes distinguishes the knowledge one has of one's own mind from the knowledge one has of the world of matter, of one's own physical attributes, and of the mind of the other. First, for him and many others, we know the external, "shared public word" indirectly and in a mediated manner. It is a mediated apprehension that results when the sense organs of our body causally interact with the objects that constitute the world. Again, one has an indirect, knowledge of the mind of the other that comes from (and depends on) one's observation of the other's behaviour. (Contrary to the Cartesian claim that knowledge of other people's minds is by nature only inferential, common sense and direct realism, of a sort, teach us that in some clear-cut, non-deceived, cases we can have unmediated perception of other people's minds. For instance, we can directly perceive, without any inference, that others are in pain when we see them writhing around in agony on the floor before us. This insight, though, is controversial, because one may be wrong (See: Pritchard, 2009, 129-135).

Second, for Descartes, a mental state is a conscious state. So, one knows one's own internal world, one's subjective conscious states, directly and immediately (with immediacy, immediate apprehension). Thought is that mental state of which one has an immediate and unmediated awareness. Hence, one has a definitive grasp of one's mental state in the way one cannot have of the other's mental state or of extra-mental entities in general. Although the physical world and the mind of the other are such that one cannot see-through, one's mind is lucid to one (Burwood *et. al*. 1999, 13).

If, according to this Cartesian model of mind, one can only know this internal domain called one's own mind, then this portends problem for the knowledge of the external domain, namely, physical objects and other people. True, the model does not deny that a physical world, external to our minds, exists; yet, privileging one's own mind, as it does, casts doubt on the nature of other minds (whether the minds of others, what they believe or experience are the way mine is), or on the being of other minds (whether others have minds, whether they believe or experience things at all).

The implications of this theory are far reaching. It makes it difficult to be certain of "what it is to be someone else" or whether there is anything shareable in the way we experience the world. One is also uncertain whether sameness and shareability in speech and behavioural patterns translate into proof that a mind is at work (Burwood *et al*.,1999, 14). By implying that one's mental state has the content it has no matter how things are out there (in the external world), Cartesian account of mind also, by extension, implies that the contents of one's mental states are "narrow" and not "broad". In Cartesianism, facts that constitute the mental states, facts that make up feeling, belief, and so on, are only facts about the mind of the one who has the mental states. It is all about how things seem to the one who has the mental states. Mental states here are said to be narrow. Descartes is only concerned with what is accessible to the conscious mind, to consciousness. On the contrary, when mental states are made up of other facts as well, when they admit of facts about things outside the mind of the one who has the mental states, they become "broad".

In contemporary philosophy of mind, when mental states are narrow, we refer to this as internalism or individualism. When they are broad we talk of externalism. For contemporary internalism, though, facts about the internal states of one's body, for instance, states of the central nervous system, belong to relevant states about the one who has mental states. Some argue that (granted there is a broad content) it is only the narrow content that is relevant to psychology and that this should be the only concern of psychological accounts. In this sense contemporary internalism and Cartesianism agree, even as Cartesian immaterialism remains out of fashion (Burwood *et al*., 1999, p.14).

Descartes affirms that human behaviour is an integral part of human reason. He teaches that two principles regulate the body's movements. On the one we have a mechanical principle that accounts for bodily motions independently of the mind. On the other hand, there is the will, a "faculty of the rational soul" (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 15). Descartes opines that a huge variety of bodily motor behaviours are traceable to mechanical factors or causes rather than to consciousness or to conscious states. In affirming this, Descartes regrettably lumps together the automatic movements of reflex motions or of the internal organs of the body and the choreographed bodily movement of walking or of dancing.

Shaking my head instinctively to protect my eyes from flies (reflex motion) cannot be the same as the choreographed movement of dancing, walking or running in a certain way. Again, even as stretching out your hand to

protect yourself reflects automaticity and nature, stretching it out to give a handshake is completely something else. The former is a reflex motion; the latter, a human action. Possibly, for Descartes, a human action emanates from a mental activity, a certain action of our will that sets in motion desired changes in the body's physiology. That is to say that, in human action, we do something of which the "doer" is in a way consciously aware. Descartes also acknowledges that human beings are agents, and human reason makes us answer to circumstances not only mechanically but also in purposive and goal-directed ways. Only "reason" rather than a "machine" can do this (Cottingham *et al*, 1999, 140).

The Mind's Causality in Descartes

One other essential element of the Cartesian theory of mind is the mind's causal function. In spite of its autonomy and distinctness from the human body and the physical world, the Cartesian mind still has the power of causal engagement with the world. The mind effectuates this causal engagement by means of its unity with the corporeal, even as Descartes explains this "union" in rather "mysterious" terms. A crucial feature of the Cartesian mind/body interaction is that the mind and the body causally influence each other. It is not only that the mind causally acts on the body, but also the body wields causal power on the mind. This mind-body causal relation is not only agent-driven, it is also automatic, that is to say, it is as well driven by physiological changes in the body. Such is the case that human actions and the movements of the body are controlled by two principles: the human will and the physiological changes in the human body.

On the one hand, Descartes teaches that from experience we learn how the movements of the body follow from the will. On the other hand he asserts that bodily injuries reveal how psychological changes (automaticity) in the body give rise to pain sensation. The will stands for agency in human action; while physiological changes in the body indicate automaticity in human behaviour. Both instances of bodily behaviour and movement entail the mutual causal influence existing in the body-mind interaction. Even so, the autonomy and exclusion in Descartes's mind-body relation, and his idea of causation as one thing pushing another, make it difficult for him to explain how this mind-body interaction takes place. Of-course it is hard explaining how res extensa and res cogitans do causally act on each other.

Descartes identifies a tiny gland in the middle of the brain, the conarion or pineal gland as the likely major place where the mind-body interaction happens. The soul makes this causal interaction occur in the pineal gland through "slight movements on the part of this gland, which in turn affects the course of animal spirits (a very fine wind) through cavities in the brain, driving these spirits towards pores of the brain, which then direct them through the nerves to the muscles in various ways so as to make the limbs move in the manner required. And conversely, the gland can be moved by these spirits in as many different ways as there are" (Burwood *et al*., 1999,18).

Critique of Descartes' Interactionism

First, Descartes indicates where causal interactions happen, but fails to give a philosophical account of their very possibility. He admits the inability of human reason to adequately account for the mind-body causal relation, even as (he insists that) experience continues to teach its truth.

Second, Descartes interactionist account of mind over-determines the physical. This over-determination of the physical is the outcome of his notion of physical realities. Descartes' philosophy of mind involves a mechanistic theory in which the material world is a "closed system," requiring only a mechanical account of the events developing in it. Here physical causes are sufficient causes of physical events. This underpinning claim that the principles of physics are complete in themselves underlies modern science. In line with this account, bodily movements result from the body's "internal material arrangements". If we accept the interactionist principle, though, any event of the body, say, walking or running, will have at once a physical cause and a mental cause, each of which is sufficient to cause the event. In this way, we will be over determining the effect. On the contrary, we can argue that the cause of the effect is partly mental and partly physical, such that put together the mental and the physical become a sufficient cause. But then, conceding either of the two options will negate the claim of completeness of the principle of physics.

Psychophysical Dualism and Other Dualist Theories

Our dismissal of the Cartesian psychophysical interactionism as a botched theory does not imply the possible downfall of any other form of dualism.

Epiphenomenalist Dualism

One who is sympathetic to dualism may reject Descartes interactionist theory and hold an epiphenomenalist theory that makes the mind a physical "by-product of causal events" that is neither material nor causally effective (Burwood, *et al.*, 20.) Here the mind has causal neutrality that makes it "effected rather than affected by the body." The epiphenomenalist theory has two advantages. First, one is not compelled to explain how the body is control by the mind. Second, one avoids the danger of over determining the physical. Its disadvantage, however, is that one still has to explain how the "non-material by-product" that is the mind is caused by the physical.

Leibnizian-Styled Dualism

A dualist theory can only evade difficulties associated with causality if it denies with Leibniz that there is any mind-body causal relation. This will make the two run on parallel lines. Contemporary philosophical reflections will hardly subscribe to this, though. Philosophers are, in the main, sympathetic to the reasons leading to Descartes assumptions. Experience

informs Descartes that the mind and the body affect each other causally. We experience and think of states such as pain, belief, and desire as mental states casually responsible for people's behaviour. The problem, though, is to explain the mind's causal importance within a setting that denies the immaterial, even as it retains that which is "distinctively mental about the mind" (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 20.).

Summary

The Philosophical enterprise time and again forgets its historical antecedents. Yet philosophical reflections take place within certain historical settings. Most of the philosophical problematics of contemporary philosophy of mind derive from Descartes reflections (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 20.) That a disembodied conceptualization of mind remains paradigmatic indicates the extent of Descartes' influence over our conception of mind and body. Merleau-Ponty's "sedimentation of history" articulates this phenomenon well enough. We all build on the philosophical antecedents of earlier thinkers. The result is that, for instance, we find ourselves denying some of Descartes thoughts from viewpoints that grow out of his other thoughts. Hence, Merleau-Ponty proposes that it is difficult answering the question "Is this author or position Cartesian or not?" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 11). This is the case especially in contemporary philosophy of mind. Theories that claim an anti-Cartesian stance find themselves merely continuing Cartesian reflection in some other ways. One is thus drawn to assume that we have all in some form become Cartesians.

We recall how Descartes's philosophy of mind, his formulating a new science, and his conception of the nature of the material universe form one piece. Descartes supposes that to understand our world we need to avoid an individual and active engagement with it. This enables us externalise and objectify it, and let it be run exclusively by the laws of physics. Given its coupling with the body, the mind intermittently intervenes in this world; and this, when it does happen, takes place, probably, exclusively "within the localized area of the pineal gland" (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 20, 21.)

Irrespective of his more informed insight, he still identifies this body with the mechanistic world outside of the mind. His dualistic philosophy, therefore, has its motivation in his longing for the preservation of the unique position of the mental in his new science. But then, this is possible, probably, only if he places the mental in a different domain of interior "none material substance." We note that he does not intend the mind to be a material object. In fact his conception of mind recognizes the crucial first personal perspective that is only possible in a non-materialist paradigm.

Ironically, for all the correctness of his philosophy of mind, Descartes' dualism creates an opening for a "reductive materialist" notion of mind. Regrettably, a large chunk of thinkers after him take their cue from this reductionist opening. Possibly the modern physicalist account no longer has much of the stringently mechanistic trappings of science in the 17th century, yet it in a lot of ways derives from the Cartesian new science. Cotemporary philosophy of mind is an example of a side of the Cartesian equation trying to engulf the other. Here the physical part tries clipping the feathers of the mental by prioritising the physical side of the material-immaterial split (Burwood e*t al*., 1999, 20, 21.)

Descartes adopts immaterialist metaphysics in recognition of both the distinctive features of the mental and its causal powers. An all-out mechanistic characterisation of the human phenomenon will be at odds with subjectivity and rationality, two principle examples of mental characteristics, Descartes finds. Following the downside of Cartesianism, contemporary theories adopt materialist metaphysics and attempt to provide a causal role for the mental within this full-blown physicalist mechanistic depiction of the human being (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 20, 25.)

Contemporary philosophy of mind thrives on these "conceptual resources." Be it as it may, we can hardly resolve the problem of a disembodied mind if we choose to ignore our "Cartesian heritage." This is so because this heritage generates problematic questions that we can hardly gloss over. Contemporary philosophy of mind has, as it were, two key motivations. First, it is inspired by a couple of highly "powerful arguments." Second, it is driven by the aspiration to position the human mind in a "single, non-mentalistic causal explanatory" order. This, challengingly, calls for our resolving the very ostensibly unresolvable dilemma that we identify as the motivation for Cartesian dualistic philosophy. On the one hand, the mind is endowed with rationalist and subjectivist qualities and other similar "distinctive features" that prevent it from being included in the received view of a scientific world that comes from Descartes and his colleagues. On the other hand, it possesses features (for instance it is causally effective) that indicate that it fits into this mechanistic picture. Our essay will take a cursory look at these alternatives. In the end, it does seem, there will be no alternative to an embodied theory of mind (Burwood et al., 1999, 21.).

FUNCTIONALISM ON THE HEELS OF REDUCTIONISM

Reductionism

Reductionist accounts of mind take various forms. They have, perhaps, two chief motivations. First, they intend to offer an account of what makes something a mental state in line with the ontological physicalist paradigm. Second, they aim at providing for the "causal explanatory role of the mental" in accordance with the demands of the explanatory physicalist theory. The refutation of immaterialism by the science-oriented dominant paradigms in contemporary philosophy of mind leaves them with a lone option: the mental state is nothing but the state of a "material substance" (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 24.)

This "scientific realist ontology" with its causalist twist creates a psychological state that is the state of an entity with a causal power to generate behaviour. This scientistic and causalist psychological state has features that science can always investigate (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 28.)

Ontological Physicalism
This is a scientific realist model, a physicalist realism, which articulates material realities and properties exclusively from the standpoint of the physical sciences and only in relation to physicalist theories.

Explanatory Physicalism
Explanatory physicalism accounts for the causal explanatory role of mental states in terms of brain states. It does seem to make mental states brain states. It gives a total causal account in physicalist idioms of any phenomena we can characterize in physical terms (Burwood et al.,1999, 28.) It would, for example, refer to the movement of one's body in any action to one's inner bodily states, which stem from one's central nervous system. It explains psychological causal states, intentions, desires, beliefs, feelings in physicalist causal terms. It attempts to make the psychological identical with the physical, and to reduce "psychological descriptions" to selecting the kinds that appear in "physical causal explanations" (Burwood *et al*., 1999, 29.)

Modified Explanatory Physicalism
The modified explanatory physicalist theory rejects classical reductionism. However, it accepts the physics is complete and self-sufficient, even as it "rules out causal over-determination by means of the conditional dependencies between the instantiation of the mental and the physical properties that follow from the supervenience claims" (Burwood *et al*., 41).

Critique of Ontological and Explanatory Physicalism
One trouble with ontological and explanatory physicalism is that they pose a challenge for present-day philosophy of mind to account for mental states in a way that recognizes the "causal role of the mental" in line with explanatory and ontological physicalist tenets (Burwood *et al*., 29.)

Type/Type Identity Theory
By type we mean kind (e.g. fear of snakes in general), as distinct from token that refers to the particular (e.g. fear of this snake here and now). The type/type identity theory assumes that to be a mental state is to be a "certain psychological kind." It claims it can offer an account in physicalist terms for every psychological kind of what it is to be the kind of state it is (Burwood *et al*., 30). The theory is encouraged by the claimed discovering of the "intrinsic properties of psychological kinds." The hope is that we will find out that, for instance, "pain is the firing of C-fibres", in the same way we now know that water is H_20 (Hydrogen plus Oxygen). It identifies mental states with brain states. It demands a certain physical kind that will be co-extensive with a certain psychological kind. The properties of this physical kind will explain all that psychological kinds explain and provide the features that identify psychological kinds (Burwood *et al*., 32.).

Critique of Type/Type Identity Theory
(i) The mental has distinctive features that cannot be identified by any physicalist co-extension. For instance, the intentional and qualitative contents of mental states, intentionality and rationality, cannot be captured by physicalist co-extensions. How can physicalist co-extensions capture an intentional state, such as *wanting to drink water*, in which one can be on diverse occasions and in wide-ranging circumstances?
(ii) The multiple-realizations argument shows how any "single kind of psychological state can have multiple correlates, in different persons/organisms or even in the same person at different times"(Burwood *et al*., 1999, 33.)

Token/Token Identity Theory
Wanting to avoid the multiple-realizations problem, some argue for a token/token identity theory. This theory holds that any given mental state or event is identical with an event or state that we can characterize in physicalist terms (Burwood *et al.*,1999, 33.) Any given mental state has at once physical and mental features, although no claim is made of any link joining the kinds of states that are physical with the mental.

Critique of Token/Token Identity Claims
(i) The difference in classificatory principles that we see in mental and physical types/kinds, which faults the type/type identity theory may as well fault tokens (particulars).
(ii) The token/token identity theory does not show how mental properties relate to physical ones. It merely replaces the Cartesian dualism of substance with a dualism of properties, and so does not say what having a mental state of a certain kind involves.
(iii) Again, if what causally accounts for one's action is one having a psychological state of a certain kind, then how do the causal properties of physical and psychological relate to each other without over-determining one's behaviour Burwood *et al*., 34)?

The Modified Ontological Physicalist Theory of Supervenience
The shortfalls of the token/token identity theory makes some to modify and reformulate ontological physicalism in terms of supervenience relations, where the mental/psychological supervenes on the physical (Burwood *et al*., 36). This involves both the indiscernibility of the mental and the physical, and the ontological priority of the physical (Burwood et

al., 37). First, any two things we are unable to discern physically, we can also not discern mentally. Second, physical properties determine mental ones. Briefly put, the theory states that if the mental is instantiated, the physical must be present and in some way sufficient to account for it (Burwood *et al*., 38.)

We can concede that mental features supervene on physical ones without claiming that mental tokens are identical to physical tokens. Thus, supervenience demands much less than the token/token identity theory does. (Burwood *et al*., 39.)

Critique of Supervenience Theory

Supervenience theory does not explain what it is having a mental state. And it does not make it "intelligible" how being in a particular mental state is "sufficient" for being in a particular physical state (Burwood, p.44.) It does seem, instead, to merely reformulate the mind/body question rather than solve it (Burwood *et al*., 39.)

Epiphenomenalism

It is the theory that "only physical states have causal power, and that mental states are completely dependent on them". Mental states are only side effects that make no difference to the course of nature. My having cold, it seems to argue, does not cause my sneezing, instead, both my having cold and my sneezing are effects of a neural state that underlies them (Campbell, k. and Smith, N.J.J., 1998, 351.) It is the "theory that the mental, though caused by the physical, has itself no causal impact on the physical" (Burwood *et al*. 1999, 42-43).

Critique of Epiphenomenalism

The epiphenomenalist theory creates three problems for philosophy, namely, the evidence problem, the evolution problem, and the meaning problem.

(i) The Evidence Problem: We usually have evidence of a thing's existence or nature through its effect on the mind. Since conscious states have no effect, how do we know when or whether at all we are in a conscious state?

(ii) The Evolution Problem: Consciousness confers no "reproductive advantage," and so does not surface in an "evolutionary development," even as there is selection for "complex neural organization". It is also difficult to explain how consciousness always accompanies neural complexity (Campbell, k. and Smith, 1998, 353.)

(iii) The Problem of Meaning: For epiphenomenalism "meaning does not span the gap between mental and physical; meaning remains on the mental side, causation on the physical". There is no semantic relation on both ways between utterance and mental state/event or between feeling (mental state) and utterance (report) (Campbell, k. and Smith, 1998, 354.)

Functionalism

Functionalism regards mental states as functional ones that play some specific roles in explaining behaviour; they give the agent the reasons for acting (Burwood, 1999, 160.) We distinguish between two major divisions of functionalism, namely, reductionist functionalism and non-reductionist functionalism.

Reductionist functionalism identifies psychological properties with non-mentalistic properties. It proffers non-mentalist characterisations and descriptions of the functional roles of psychological states. This type of functionalism is the leading paradigm in contemporary philosophy of mind. We isolate two forms of reductionist functionalism. *Common-sense functionalism* derives its non-mentalist descriptions and definitions from our day-to-day practices. *Scientific functionalism* with its scientific realism entrusts scientific psychology with the responsibility of functionally defining our psychological states in non-mentalistic terms (Burwood *et al. 1999,* 49.)

For *non-reductionist functionalism*, psychological states are functional states. Here functional descriptions derive from our day-to-day explanatory patterns and psychological descriptions. Such a functional characterisation and definition is not reductive. It is so because it does not identify psychological properties with non-mentalistic properties (Burwood *et al. 1999,* 48.) However, because at some point it uses "psychological vocabulary" to articulate the causal roles our "psychological kinds" play, even as we know these to be part of our everyday experience, it compromises its non-reductionist profile. This is the case especially against the backdrop of the overarching physicalist scheme of the functionalist paradigm (Burwood *et al. 1999,*49.)

Justifying the claim that physical states exemplify causal roles requires some measure of transparency. It calls for our ability to describe the causal properties that we use to functionally characterise psychological states in "theory-neutral, non-psychological, vocabulary." This is another challenge for non-reductionist functionalists.

Functionalism, especially in its reductionist guise, comes on the heels of the shortfalls of the modified ontological physicalist theory of supervenience. It purports to explain what it is to have various kinds of mental states. It also supposes it can make understandable how to be in a specific physical state is enough, putting ontological and explanatory physicalism into account, to explain being in a specific psychological state. Besides, it claims it can tell how a couple of physical states can form the same psychological state.

Classical reductionism brings "mental and physical properties" together with the aid of an inappropriate descriptive level for the "physical properties." It seeks "physical correlates for mental kinds" by dealing with "physical kinds" made separate and distinct by virtue of their material components, the firing of neurones, and the like (Burwood *et al. 1999,* 44.)

Conversely, functionalism holds that the one effective way to reduce our psychological states to our physical ones is by categorizing our physical states relative to their "relational properties, their overall functional role" in the organizational systems part of which they remain. For the functionalist, a "mental property is a functional property," a property whose functional role individuates. The function in question is a causal function. An agent of behaviour is, thus, in a certain mental state, let's say, fearing it will be cold, if he is in a certain state that in some specific way causally has a hand in deciding the way he responds to his surroundings, let's say, taking a winter jacket (Burwood *et al. 1999,* 45.)

Psychological states are "inner states" whose essential character as "distinct psychological states" rest on the part they play in motivating and justifying the way we answer back to stimuli from our surroundings. The way states causally relate to each other, to state of affairs in the environment, and to responses or reactions in behaviour all make up their "functional role." Functional states are "causal states" whose "causal role" identify; and they take part in "causal claims" devoid of the risk of "over-determination" (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 45.)

Functionalism has a notable factor favouring it in relation to behaviourism. It lets the mental have a causal role in behaviour. This is the case because in functionalism psychological states are "inner states" that are the cause of behaviour (Burwood *et al., 1999, 45.)* Thus, psychological states, inner states, are, so to say, inputs, stimuli (cause), while behaviours, response patterns, are, so to speak, outputs, responses (effect.)

Functionalism, thus, has an answer to the question of what being in or having a certain mental state is. It is to have or to be in some specific inner state that has a specific kind of "functional role."

Critique of Functionalism

As functional states mental states not only do their part in explaining behaviour, but they also afford the subject of behaviour reasons for acting. Yet functionalism explains their "status as reasons" with their rather "abstract relations to other states and to behaviour." One does not play any part in "scrutinizing the content" of one's states. The status of these psychological states as reasons for acting neither rests on the subject's scrutiny nor does it reflect the subject's "first personal perspective" (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 160.) Consciousness has no distinctive place in this characterisation of mental states. Functionalism can hardly accommodate states that are in essence conscious, such as our experience of pain. Pain is the firing of 'C' fibre, it would seem to say.

Functionalism misses one of the merits of Cartesianism. Cartesianism, in contradistinction to functionalism, recognizes that "reasons explain actions" in virtue of the perspective of the subject of behaviour, especially when that subjective viewpoint "confronts the world through experience." Functionalism gives up this asset so as to steer clear of the Cartesian "mysterious metaphysic of a mental substance whose existence is constituted by its continuous self-scrutiny" (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 160.) Bereft of this self-scrutiny the human subject, the higher animal, can no longer be separated from the lower animal. He joins the lower animal in acting via an animalistic stimulus-response system.

Functionalists are mostly physicalists. Functionalism, even at its inception, is a response to the demands of the physicalists for evading the tenets of the type/type identity theory. It supposes that the inner states necessary for "functional descriptions" can only be states that are physical (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 46.) Besides, functionalist theories are unable to account for the normativity of our conventional "psychological explanations" (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 163.)

For the claims of reductionist functionalism to hold we must see "functional kinds" that we can characterise or define non-psychologically and which will be "coextensive with mental kinds." These must also be capable of explicating and predicting what these mental kinds are capable of explicating and predicting. In addition, they must be capable of accommodating the features we deem "distinctive of our mental kinds" (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 49.).

The Computational Account of Mind

The computational account of mind is a functionalist attempt at allowing for intentionality and rationality that are the interrelated distinctive elements typical of our experience of the mental. The driving hypothesis here is that the "mind/brain is a computer" (Smolensky, 1998, 176.) The computational theory attempts capturing (representing) the "rationalizing links between intentional states… as objective patterns of transitions between formal features" of intentional states (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 71.)

The Trouble with Attempting to Represent Rationalizing Links as Objecvtive Patterns (Critique of Computation)

The trouble with this attempt is that "even calculative patterns of rationality" can hardly be accurately represented in an entirely formal manner, devoid of the aid of an "intentional vocabulary."

Besides, the sort of "intelligibility that rationalizing" relationships give our "intentional states and our intentional acts" outstrips what we can accurately represent in the patterns we objectively characterize. This sort of intelligibility requires our engaging with the point of view of the behavioural subject in question. Such perspectivist intelligibility runs counter to that "naturalizing project" that aims at characterising the world as such instead of describing specific perspectives in the world.

The physico-mathematical sciences still need, perhaps, to examine whether it is tenable for human bodies that are intentional subjects to have "brain states" that we can systematize in computational functionalist terms.

Be that as it may, this kind of computational functionalist model of mind can hardly live up to the philosophical aspiration of reducing to the physical and thus "naturalizing the rationalizing and normative features" that are the hallmarks of the mental dimension of the human life. So the challenge for the rationalizing scheme of the computational

functionalist is to accurately represent "rationalizing relations in a topic-neutral functional vocabulary" (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 71.)

The naturalizing projects of computational functionalism cannot adequately accommodate the mental in its physicalist scheme; and it vitiates the claim of intelligibility of the supervenience theory. Again, it leads to two unpalatable options. We either drop the "causal explanatory role of the mental" or admit we have causal links we cannot map onto "lower- level" ones (Burwood *et al., 1999,* 72.).

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