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The Unconditioned Soul

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There is a distinction to be drawn between conditioned and unconditioned philosophy. Unconditioned philosophy entails ultimate explanation of how philosophical problems may be formulated. Conditioned philosophy is the attempt to solve philosophical problems without disclosure of their fundamental possibility. A philosophical problem is one we have no method of solving.

In section 1, “The Conditioned Paradigm,” and section 2, “Deconditioning,” I identify some of the components of the conditioned/unconditioned distinction in a preliminary way. In section 3, “Deconditioning and Problems in the Philosophy of Mind,” I roughly outline applications of the distinction to the following questions: what personal identity consists in, whether the mind is the brain, what the difference is between the past and the future, and how free will is possible. I do not pretend there is not much more to be said. There is. However, a result of even these tentative explorations is that physicalism and materialism are clearly false and any plausible theory of the mind entails the existence of the soul.

1. THE CONDITIONED PARADIGM

There are conditioned patterns of thinking and conditioned dogmas, both of which impede the disclosure of the soul. Conditioned patterns of thinking include the following:

Means-to-end thinking and perceiving. Although conducive to the manipulation of nature for the perpetuation or destruction of biological life, means-to-end thinking and perceiving are inimical to *being brought up sharp with the existential reality of one's own existence*. We are lost in regret for the past and hope or fear for the future. Always *on the way*, we are never *all here now*. Noticing this 'all,' this 'here,' and this 'now,' and not just moving on, is necessary for the disclosure of the soul.

Thinking and perceiving in generalities. Often perpetuating a theoretical totalitarianism which masquerades as a profound understanding, thinking and perceiving in generalities is an obstacle to the revelation of the soul. In the philosophy of mind, problem solving is made impossible by using the anonymous 'the mind,' 'persons,' 'the brain.' Even 'the self' and 'the soul' are inadequate tools for problem solving, even if necessary heuristic bridges.

It is your own particularity *as you* which is most difficult to explain about you. This *own-most* particularity not only exceeds any empirical identity and difference but is not even exhausted by 'this very' human being's having the modal properties of being self-identical and numerically distinct from any other. The fact of someone's *being you* cannot be generalized. You escape the language of anonymity. You are the opposite of anonymous.

Scientific thought. Although useful for the predictive description of physical objects in motion, science faces away from the soul. For all its admirable rigor, its detached observations, its careful reporting, its mathematical modeling and predictive power, science is limited by a catastrophic mistake: *Science construes its subject matter as only other.*

In understandably adhering to objective *methods*, science has excluded the study of subjective *subject matter*.

On one level, you are of course another: You are another to another. However, you infinitely exceed what can be observed of you from the standpoint of exteriority. Becoming aware of this infinite interiority is becoming aware of the soul.

Scientific objectivity has caused ob-ject-ivity: the worship of objects. Dispassionateness has caused eliminatory ideology. If not tempered by spirituality, science will extinguish the last vestige of meaning from the world, recognizing only silent matter in motion.

Third-person thinking. Third-person thinking leaves no room for first-person singular psychological ascriptions, let alone spiritual ascriptions. Such ascriptions *seem* not to add any new information because re-couching a first-person sentence in the third person does not alter its truth conditions. For example, 'I am conscious' and 'He is conscious,' said of the same human being, are true or false under the same conditions.

However, the use of the first-person singular pronoun (or cognate devices) is possible only because there is something it consists in to be someone, the person who one is, as opposed to not being any of the people one is not, or no one. The ontological bifurcation between self and other makes possible the bifurcations between grammatical persons, not vice versa. (The power of language was massively over-rated by twentieth-century philosophy.) One's own existence *qua* one's own is omitted from any purely third-person description.

Conditioned dogmas include:

Everything real is other. We could call this the 'suicidal method' in the philosophy of mind and action. To do conditioned philosophy of mind, you treat yourself as though you do not exist. At best, you unquestioningly accept that conclusions about others are easily extrapolated to one's own case. In particular, you do not inquire into how this cosmic chasm between you and everyone else could obtain in the first place.

Science is fundamental. For all its mathematical rigor and predictive power, science has only ever told us about matter in motion. In fact, scientists have not the faintest idea what energy is, what gravity is, what consciousness is, what it means to say something 'exists,' or even, most shockingly, what matter is.

Science rests on metaphysical assumptions. Science is powerless to answer an infinite number of profound questions, including the following: Why is there anything? Why does anything happen? Why are there laws of nature? What is the scientist? Why is someone you? Why is the time now? Science provides us with only a narrow window onto the world. It is not the best window we have. Inference to the best explanation is not inference to the best scientific explanation. Inference to the best explanation is inference to the ultimate explanation.

The present is not real. The growth of science entails the suppression of presence. Physics has no conceptual room for presence, either in the sense of 'now' or in the quasispatial senses of 'presence to' and 'presence of.' Scientific thought is characterized by a complete disregard for the referents of 'I,' 'now,' and 'here.' Science is a subject without a subject. (The deconstructive idea that Western thought is characterized by a *privileging* of presence and 'the subject' is the reverse of the truth.)

If it exists, it can be quantified over. In modern materialist society, the value of anything is essentially its financial value. If it cannot be readily counted, or quantified over, it cannot be bought or sold. If beauty, truth, the soul, God, cannot be readily enumerated, it is *as though* they do not exist. Quantification is blind to the first-person/third-person distinction. (Historically, religion did not facilitate the rise of capitalism. Capitalism supplanted religious *knowledge* and left religious *belief* [or the lack of it]).

Anything knowable is empirically observable or rationally provable. One obstacle to philosophical progress is the dogma that in order to come to know something it is necessary to exercise either the senses or the

intellect or both. Despite the lengthy debate over rationalism and empiricism, the idea that there could be a third epistemology is lacking.

The fundamentals *slip between* rationalism and empiricism. For example, although some things that exist can be detected rationally or empirically, their *existence* is not empirically or rationally detectable. Although spatiotemporal processes, and numbers of things, can be detected empirically, *space*, *time*, and *numbers* cannot. Nor can they be discovered just by thinking. Although *present things* can be perceived, their *presence* cannot. Although the human being you take yourself to be can be sensed, the fact of its being you (rather than no one or someone else) cannot. Nevertheless, all these phenomena, or realities, are *intuited* or are *present*. If they are experienced or thought, then that is in a very broad sense of ‘experienced’ and ‘thought.’

All experience is sense experience. It is a conditioned dogma that experience is either introspection or sense perception, and that if there is introspection, it depends on sense perception. Yet in fact, there is much experience that is neither introspection nor sense perception: mystical experience, meditation, the pure experience which makes both introspection and sense perception possible.

All explaining is explaining away. According to this dogma, the exquisite rendering of Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto is ‘nothing over and above’ sound waves. My anguish at the death of my loved one is ‘nothing over and above’ atoms in motion in my brain.

Yet the claims of ‘scientific reductionism’ are self-evidently false. I mean by ‘self-evident’ (or ‘self evidently true’) that

p is self-evident if and only if perceiving the truth of *p* is a necessary condition for understanding *p*.

I mean by ‘self-evidently false’ that

p is self-evidently false if and only if perceiving the falsity of *p* is a necessary condition for understanding *p*.

If anyone understands the claims of ‘scientific reductionism,’ they know them to be false. If they do not know them to be false, they do not understand them.

This set of views is ‘practical’ and ‘realistic’ and ‘genuinely explanatory.’ I am right. One of the delusions of the conditioned state is that it appears to be a state of knowledge but is in fact a state of ignorance. It says: “How can I be wrong if I am at the cutting edge of scientific progress? I depend upon hypothesis formulation and strict and dispassionate observation. These could not possibly lead me astray, could they? I am a scientist who tests hypotheses open-mindedly by evidence, and I am willing to give the hypotheses up if the evidence falsifies them. Theologians are fools who only follow blind dogma *whatever* the evidence. *Aren’t they?*”

Well, no. Theologians simply do not assume that everything to be found out can be found out only by hypothesis formulation and empirical testing. In particular, the fundamental philosophical questions cannot be answered in this way. (Imagine criticizing a mathematician for not proceeding by experiment.)

This ‘I am right,’ which has an ethical connotation also of ‘I am *in* the right,’ because the intellectual procedures I have learned are the only truly respectable ones, is an expression of outward confidence. This ‘I am right’ in the attitude of philosophers is haunted by a dread: the possibility that philosophy is really what I thought it was before I was taught it, the possibility that I am a sophist who has betrayed something terribly important.

■ These patterns of thinking and conscious or unconscious dogmas keep the soul hidden. From the conditioned point of view, there seems to be only *belief* in the existence of the soul (as there seems to be only *belief* in the existence of God). From the unconditioned point of view there is *knowledge* of God and the soul.

A mistake of the conditioned view is to assume the existence of the soul is the positing of something *extra* to the world we know. In fact the soul is disclosed through the world we know when we know

that world for what it really is. The 'extra' is extra to our knowledge, not to what our knowledge is knowledge of. The 'extra' is not extraneous. It is in fact intimately present. The difficulty in knowing the soul is not that it is too remote. It is too proximal. You are it.

To the conditioned mind, the findings of mysticism and theology look like extravagant postulates, the products of fanciful imagination and wishful thinking. They appear to be add-ons to the empirical world, which is assumed to be self-sufficient. In fact, God and the soul are fundamental presuppositions of the empirical world. Theology divulges reality shorn of the contents of space-time. If all the physical objects were subtracted from existence, God and the souls would be left over. Theology reveals the fundamental ground. Science is not fundamental. Theology is fundamental.

What is it to be conditioned? There are different senses in which conditioned knowledge is conditioned.

1. A condition is a state, so conditioned knowledge is a state of knowledge, defined by what it includes or excludes. The condition of philosophy is a philosophical standpoint. Something can be in good condition or in bad condition. Within the conditioned paradigm we think our knowledge is in good condition. It is in bad condition.
2. 'Condition' can have the sense of 'necessary condition' or 'prerequisite.' Conditioned knowledge is conditional upon not only its own hidden entailments but upon ignorance. The known presupposes the unknown. Conditioned knowledge is an edifice: the sustaining of conditioned knowledge is a condition for further conditioned knowledge.
3. In its etymology, 'condition' is derived from the Latin 'dicere,' 'to say,' and the prefix 'con,' 'with.' Although etymology is clearly not an infallible guide to current meaning (because "What did it mean?" is a different question from "What does it mean?"), in this case, as in many others, etymology provides insight into truth. The colleagues are *speaking together*. The con-dition is a shared ideology.

In its French etymology 'ignore' is derived from 'ignorant,' which means 'to be ignorant of.' Conditioned philosophy ignores that which it is ignorant of. The mind-body dualist, the idealist, the theist, the mystic (no matter how logically rigorous) is not attacked but ignored.

4. The condition is a premise: a premise which unwittingly rests on other premises.
5. 'To condition' is to impose a character on. The conditioned presupposes the unconditioned. Conditioned knowledge is constrained knowledge.
6. 'Conditional' means 'not absolute.' Conditional knowledge is true because knowledge is truth entailing. Although relativism is a naïve and ultimately self-refuting doctrine, it gestures towards an insight into conditioned knowledge: much knowledge which appears to be of intrinsic properties of entities is knowledge of relations or processes. (For example, if to say someone is tall is to say they are taller than most people, then 'tall' tacitly means 'taller than.' More controversially, 'exists' means 'exists now,' but 'now' means 'when I am,' so 'exists' means 'exists when I am.') Unconditional knowledge is knowledge of what is the case *come what may*.
7. Conditioned knowledge is conditioned and reactive in the way of a conditioned reflex: a quick response which is only through habit. In conditioned philosophy, the instinct to refute overrides the care to understand (or even hear).
8. Conditioned knowledge is subject to conditions, subject to what other people say. Conditions are the contents of stipulations or commands: "On this condition . . ." The parameters of the conditioned paradigm are implicit prohibitions and commands: "Do not endorse a theological view. That is superstitious"; "Do aspire to the detachment or objectivity of science. That is academically respectable"; and so on.

It is a historical rather than a philosophical question why the conditioned paradigm exists. It has *levels* of origin—economic, pragmatic, biological—but finds its *ur* source in desire. Desire is essentially a distraction from the present, but it is precisely the disclosure of presence which facilitates the disclosure of the soul.

2. DECONDITIONING

Different philosophies exhibit different degrees of understanding. Here I restrict the taxonomy to theories which bear closely on the philosophy of mind.

Conditioned philosophies include:

Materialism (def.) Everything is physical. This view is conditioned by the third-person perspective. The materialist has not noticed his own existence.

Physicalism (def.) Everything is either physical or reducible to the physical. This view is conditioned by the third-person perspective. Anything spiritual or inner is identified with the physical and outer.

Functionalism (def. 1) What anything is, is what it is for. This view is conditioned by means-to-end thinking. It is an ideological legitimization of capitalism and, ultimately, survivalism.

Functionalism (def. 2) Anything is either a cause or an effect or both.

Essentialist functionalism (def.) Anything is essentially what it is for.

Logical behaviourism (def.) The inner is reducible to the outer. The psychological is reducible to the behavioral. This view is conditioned by the third-person perspective. Anything private or inner or spiritual has to be rewritten as publicly observable, which means, in effect, physical.

Atheism (def.) God does not exist. This view is conditioned by the assumption that the existence of God is a matter of belief or disbelief based on evidence. Not seeing any evidence, the atheist understandably chooses, not just not to believe, but to disbelieve.

Philosophies that break with conditioning include:

Buddhism (def.) Suffering can be ended by realizing enlightenment. Through detachment, meditation, and leading an ethical life, the Buddhist is freed from means-to-end thinking and the third-person perspective.

Phenomenalism (def.) Any sentence or set of sentences about physical objects may be translated into a sentence, or set of sentences, about sense contents, without loss of meaning.

Phenomenology (def.) The description of what appears to consciousness, as it appears, with no commitment to its reality. The conditioned is part of the natural attitude so is suspended by the *epochē*.

Existentialism (def.) The attempt to solve fundamental problems of human existence. Confronting one's own freedom and the responsibility it entails, facing death, becoming aware of one's own existence, is a

shedding of conditioning and a being brought up sharp with the here and now.

Solipsism (def.) Only my mind exists. At a conditioned level, solipsism is a laughably improbable conjecture or a kind of conceit. To feel the plausibility of solipsism is to feel the terror of solipsism.

Agnosticism (def.) Neither 'God exists' nor 'God does not exist' is certain. Perhaps because there are unanswered metaphysical questions, the agnostic chooses not to disbelieve in God even though he does not believe in God.

Pantheism (def.) There is nothing that is not either God or a part of God. A crucial stage in deconditioning is the endorsing of pantheism: the ascribing of the properties of God to reality as a whole. After all, if anything does everything, if anything is infinite, then these properties seem most plausibly ascribed to the totality of what is.

Fundamental ontology (*Fundamentalontologie*) (def.) The attempt to answer the question of Being (*Seinsfrage*). The break with the ontic is a break with conditioning. The clarification of the question of being and the disclosure of Being are only possible by a suspension of ordinary means-to-end thinking.

Deconditioned philosophies include:

Mind-body dualism (def.):

- (i) Both minds and physical objects exist.
- (ii) No mind is a physical object and no physical object is a mind.
- (iii) No mind depends upon a physical object for its existence.
- (iv) No physical object depends upon a mind for its existence.

This view does justice to both the third person and the third-person perspective on the person.

Idealism (def.) Everything is mental or reducible to the mental. This view does justice to the first-person perspective on the person but does not retain the conditioned and third-person view of physical objects as mind-independent.

Theism (def.) God exists. To the conditioned mind, God seems like an extravagant postulate. To see the plausibility of theism, consider the

much stronger claim, 'Necessarily, there is a God,' and then deduce 'God exists' from that. 'Necessarily, there is a God' is derived from the conjunction of the unconditioned insight that, necessarily, Being is the being of God and, necessarily, there is not nothing. Being is necessarily the being of God because Being qua being has all and only the essential properties of God essentially.

Fundamental theology (def.) The attempt to answer the question of Being (*Seinsfrage*) theologically. It is a deconditioned insight that Being is the being of God. Being qua being has all and only the properties of God. This truth is not obvious at a conditioned level, because there it is hard to draw a clear distinction between Being and beings and therefore hard to inspect the properties of Being.

What Is the Relationship between Conditioned and Unconditioned Philosophy?

There is a hierarchy of understanding between levels 1 (conditioned philosophies), 2 (philosophies that break with conditioning), and 3 (deconditioned philosophies). For example, a philosopher operating at level 1 will think all the philosophies at level 2 false. However, they will consider philosophies at level 3 not only false but grossly implausible. They will find it utterly incomprehensible why anyone should subscribe to them, and they will put this down to wish fulfillment, fantasy, or ignorance of science. Philosophy at level 1 seems to its practitioners the most sophisticated and explanatory philosophy. It is in fact the most naïve.

A philosopher operating at level 2 has some insight. Perhaps through aesthetic experience, they have seen the falsity, the limitations, of the philosophies at level 1. They have seen that the prospects for a scientific explanation of everything are nil. They have seen that the philosophies at level 1 are not even scientific but are pseudoscientific. A level 2 philosopher has begun to notice their own existence but does not yet know what they are. They realize that they are the living refutation of level 1 philosophies, but their understanding is still only egocentric. Philosophy at level 2 is of extreme interest and importance, because it breaks up the assumptions upon which conditioned philosophy, level 1, relies.

A philosopher at level 3 can fully understand the plausibility of levels 1 and 2 and is able to explain them as part of the truth. Philosophy at level 3 seems to the conditioned mind to be the most naïve and groundless and extravagant philosophy. In fact it approaches the truth. It seems the most abstract but is in fact the most concrete. It deals with what exists, not with what is only thought to exist. Level 3 philosophy is unconditioned knowledge, that is, unconditional knowledge.

Level 1 philosophers are not capable of grasping philosophical questions. Level 2 philosophers are capable of grasping philosophical questions but regard them as unanswerable. Level 3 philosophers grasp philosophical questions and have techniques for answering them.

This tripartite taxonomy seems unwarranted to philosophers operating at level 1. It should be pointed out, firstly, that the faith in science and dismissal of metaphysics at level 1 is largely unargued at level 1. The justification is at best an inductive faith in science. Secondly, a good reason for preferring one theory over another is that one can explain what the other cannot. Levels 1–3 are increasingly explanatory. Level 3 includes level 2, and level 2 includes level 1. Finally, in the case of philosophy, the test is problem solving. Level 3 philosophy can answer philosophical questions unanswerable at levels 1 and 2.

Conditioned philosophies are not so much false as incomplete. They are true in their positive theses, false in what their practitioners deny (even though p may be rewritten as p *salva veritate* and vice versa). They mistake part of the truth for the whole of the truth about the relevant domain.

For example, it is just about possible to believe materialism is true of any human being, *except one*: yourself. It is in one's own case that one is presented with a constellation of mental events, saturated with emotion and meaning. Conditioned philosophies *seem* to be genuinely explanatory because they are explanatory *at their own level*. For example, physicalism works as an explanation of events within the physical world. It breaks down straight away as an explanation of consciousness. Trying to understand thinking in terms of the brain activity which is its empirical and contingent prerequisite is as absurd as trying to learn mathematics by studying the sound waves

emitted from mathematicians' bodies when they speak. The level of explanation is completely wrong.

Conditioned and unconditioned philosophies rely, tacitly or explicitly, on different root metaphors. Conditioned philosophers think of themselves as going forwards, making progress. Unconditioned philosophers think of themselves as going down to the more and more fundamental, the primordial.

How Is Deconditioning Possible?

For any individual, there is a distinction between

(1) their worldview, that is, the constellation of words, beliefs, symbols, and images (however rigorously ordered or however loose and impressionistic),

and

(2) the stark existential reality of their being-all-here-now.

The worldview is abstract but masquerades as concrete. Being-all-here-now is concrete but is abstract, or even undetected, from the standpoint of the worldview. We are lost in thought. Being-all-here-now is repressed by the worldview, but it makes the worldview possible. Deconditioning requires breaking with the worldview and being-all-here-now (which is to arrive where you have been all along, to arrive intellectually where you are existentially). In authentic philosophy, existentialism and metaphysics coincide.

There are many methods of deconditioning. They include the asking of philosophical questions, the having of mystical or religious experiences, the revelatory use of imagination, and meditative techniques (which are not ways of thinking).

The Asking of Philosophical Questions

Conditioned ontology rests on metaphysical assumptions. Although it is part of doing level 1 philosophy to assume metaphysical questions are senseless (as though they were like "What is north of the north pole?"), the questions force themselves upon level 1, on pain of

inauthenticity (that is, denying what you presuppose): Why is there anything? Why are there laws of nature? What caused the big bang? And so on.

Level 2 philosophy rests on metaphysical assumptions as well. Although it is part of doing level 2 philosophy to regard metaphysical questions as genuine but unanswerable, they are forced on level 2 on pain of inauthenticity. Why do you exist? What is the space in which sensations arise and subside? (Plus all the metaphysical questions put to level 1.)

Some questions are too proximal, too close, for conditioned philosophy and science to answer, some too macroscopic, too remote. “Why is someone you?” is too proximal. “Why does anything happen at all?” is too remote. Unconditioned philosophy does not let go of these questions until they are answered.

The Having of Spiritual Experiences

There is spiritual knowledge by acquaintance, not just by description. (Spiritual knowledge cannot be ‘explained away’ by neurology. Neurology is powerless to explain how even ordinary, day-to-day awareness is related to atoms in the brain. A fortiori, it tells us nothing whatsoever about mystical or religious experience.)

Acquaintance with the soul is self-intimating (like the rare acquaintance with God granted to some individuals). By ‘self-intimating’ I mean that it is not possible to be in the state without realizing the state is veridical:

- (i) Anyone in the state believes they are in the state.
- (ii) Anyone in the state believes the state is veridical.
- (iii) The belief of anyone in the state that the state is veridical is true.

These hold because, at the unconditioned level, there is no distinction between appearance and reality. The distinction between appearance and reality paradigmatically applies to perception of the physical world, although, obviously, one might make a mistake in mathematics; or, less obviously, from the fact that one is in a mental state it does not follow as a matter of logic that that belief is true. (I am not saying there are not exceptions: “I possess at least one belief,” for example.)

The Use of Imagination

There is a conditioned and an unconditioned use of the imagination.

The conditioned use of the imagination is inventive or playful: the generation of mental images of empirical objects which might or might not exist. This use of imagination is familiar; it is thought useful for artistic creation and for doing inventive science. However, it is not normally considered knowledge generating per se.

The unconditioned use of the imagination is the reverse of the conditioned use. Its function is to discover, in the sense of dis-cover, not to invent. The imagination is not used to generate mental images but to 'experience' the infinity of Being, the unbounded expansiveness of one's own psyche. Why is this imagination? Because it is the deployment of the same faculty used in generating images of the empirical.

The conditioned use of the imagination is known to both the conditioned and the unconditioned mind. The unconditioned use of the imagination is beyond the grasp of the conditioned mind. It is utterly incomprehensible and so will seem ridiculous fancy or, at the very least, not knowledge yielding. There is knowledge and ignorance of what the mind is capable of.

Self-Knowledge

A step in self-knowledge is feeling the plausibility of solipsism. Your own existence is a clue, a portal, to the unconditioned. At the conditioned level we glide over our own case in an instant and think of 'the' person, 'the' mind, 'the' brain, and so on. Deconditioning requires being-all-here-now, being brought up sharp with one's own existence in the present or, more profoundly, as the present. For this, we cannot validly extrapolate from third-person cases to our own case. (Of course, to the conditioned mind it looks as though we can. This is thinking by habit, which is hardly thinking at all.) Everyone has to realize their own existence for themselves. By 'realize' is meant both 'understand' and 'make real,' 'real-ize.' Although the inner space of the soul is a discovery, this uncovering is in a sense a making real. The uncovering is not only epistemological but, because it is a change in you, ontological. There is an ontology of the epistemological. You are hidden from yourself at the conditioned level. By deconditioning you are dis-closed.

Doing History

Doing history produces a sense of the deep contingency of the world as it appears in the present. Taking this contingency seriously is a kind of deconditioning. What is constant and what is variable? What is permanent and what is impermanent? Physical objects, for example, are impermanent.

Philosophy has a 'commonsensical' starting point (which engages 'the' skeptic). This 'common sense' is historically constituted. How did it look a thousand years ago? How will it look in a million years' time? This should affect our attitude to science. How will science look in a million years' time?

Discovering Portals

There are *portals* or *gaps* in the empirical world, portals to the unconditioned, for example,

- (a) your own existence
- (b) space
- (c) now
- (d) being
- (e) fear of death
- (f) the aesthetic
- (g) being disconcerted
- (h) that which you exclude, deny, (profess to) treat with contempt, dismiss as impractical or delusional.

The empirical world as a whole is a portal, because it is not complete, not self-sufficient, not a substance. The empirical world as a whole does not exhaust reality as a whole.

Meditation

Meditation is not a kind of thinking. Meditation is not introspection. If the many practices called 'meditation' have anything in common, it is the peaceful or relaxing disclosure of the emptiness, or inner space, or zone of Being, which is the originary synthesis of one's own existence and essence. It is in this boundless inner space that thoughts and experiences arise and subside. Techniques of meditation range

from the Zen 'just sitting,' through the repetition of a mantra, or the focus of attention on a flame, or tantra, to numerous Yogic or quasi-yogic breathing exercises. Meditative states are not states of hypnosis, nor are they states of sleep, or half sleep. Meditative states typically involve great relaxation of the body but sharp alertness of the mind. Meditation is a third state which is neither being awake nor being asleep. If you have not learned how to meditate, you have little reason to believe this. It is outside your experience.

Mysticism

The spiritual practices of the world's great mystics are, inter alia, methods of deconditioning:

- (1) The mind is turned away from the senses.
- (2) The world is apprehended as an aesthetic whole.
- (3) The senses are revealed as limited.
- (4) There is a dissolution of the physical world.
- (5) There is a dissolution of the psychical world.
- (4) There is the stillness of being-all-here-now.
- (5) The infinite inner space of the soul is disclosed.

Deconditioning and the following of an ethical life are routes to moral knowledge, as opposed to moral opinion. These are paths to acquaintance with your own soul, paths to God.

Conditioned knowledge is knowledge of the changing. Unconditioned knowledge is knowledge of the unchanging. For example, in the case of the soul, what you are looking for is already here, but it is not what you think it is. You are what you are looking for, but you do not know what you are.

Conditioned and Unconditioned Meaning

Is the unconditioned ineffable? God and the soul infinitely exceed any description of them in empirical terminology. One of the difficulties of doing deconditioned metaphysics or theology is that ordinary language is geared to making intelligible the world of physical and psychophysical processes. In metaphysics, this language is stretched

beyond the bounds of sense in the sense of 'sense experience' but not beyond the bounds of sense in the sense of 'meaning.' Metaphysical meaning makes empirical meaning possible. Empiricist theories of meaning are not false but incomplete, metaphysically inadequate. The conditioned can be described, in scripture, in great mystical writing, in poetry. However, unconditioned writing can be understood only by an unconditioned mind.

Is the soul ineffable? Is space ineffable? Are you ineffable? Is the you-ness of being you ineffable? Is absolute interiority ineffable?

We can understand an explanation only if it is couched in concepts we already have. Understanding the unconditioned cannot be done using conditioned concepts. If we use the same old ways of thinking, the same old pigeonholes, it will be impossible to learn anything new. Conditioned concepts keep us at the conditioned level.

The soul can be described, but we need to deploy a terminology which breaks with the conditioned secularism of physicalism. In its Old English etymology 'soul' is derived from 'sawel' (saw[el], -ol, -ul), which is etymologically related to the notion of *sea* or *lake* through the German 'See.' The German for soul is 'Seele.' The Dutch for 'soul' is 'ziel.' As usual, etymology is a clue to profound metaphysical meanings covered over by contemporary empirical use. The soul is sea-like. The soul is sea-like because the soul is the expansive space of your own being. The soul is oceanic. The soul is where sensations and the events of mental life happen, as the sea is where waves happen. Although the soul is infinite, unbounded, and any sea is finite, the soul and the sea are broad and deep. There are depths of the soul. The soul is the *sol*: the ground and the sun.

It is therefore meaningful to talk about unconditioned souls. Prima facie, if meaning is public and rule governed and outer, meaning does not extend to the private and inner. However, the theory that meaning is public rule following is only half a theory of meaning. The language of exteriority is inadequate to the inner life, because experience is necessary for understanding first-person singular psychological ascriptions.

On an empiricist theory of meaning, meaningful terms either refer to the immediate contents of experience or are members of chains of sequentially defined terms terminating in those referring to

the immediate contents of experience. At the level of the soul, the distinction between empiricism and metaphysics breaks down. In the broad sense of 'experience' there is experience of the soul. There is experience of the soul insofar as the soul is disclosed, insofar as the soul is presence. Although on any metaphysically antirealist view, the truth or falsity of sentences does not outstrip the capacity to know their truth or falsity, there is knowledge of the soul, so there are truth-valued claims about the soul.

The criteria for counting souls are the criteria for counting spaces. In particular, it is impossible to be mixed up about which soul is one's own soul. (One might be mixed up about which fingers are one's own in playing the children's game of intertwining fingers.) One is only ever directly presented with one absolute interiority: the one that one is.

Certain concepts admit of both a conditioned and an unconditioned use, an empirical and a metaphysical deployment. For example:

(1) Empirically, your own existence is the existence of a certain human being, born in a certain place of just those parents, socialized and educated in just those ways. Metaphysically, your own existence consists in this human being 'being' you. I place 'being' in single quotation marks here because the relation between you and this human being is not identity. You view the world from this human being. You are partly where it is. You control it. You are present through it.

(2) Empirically, 'now' is an indexical expression. (For example, the word 'now' in 'I am speaking now' picks out the time at which I am speaking.) Metaphysically, there is no time that is not now. The past does not exist, because it is over. The future does not exist, because it does not exist yet. The metaphysical now, or Now, is when anything happens. The now is the eternal present.

(3) The empirical concept of being or existing is used to refer to particular things that exist. The metaphysical concept of existence or Being is used to refer to whatever it is that the existing of the particular things that exist consists in.

(4) Empirical space is a totality of spatial relations between physical objects or processes. Metaphysical space is either Newtonian space or the subjective phenomenological space in which one's

own experiences are located. Understood as including the visual field, the tactile field, the olfactory field, the auditory field, and where thoughts happen, this could be called the 'field of experience' or 'consciousness.'

The intuitive idea of space, or the intuition of space, is a heuristic for the soul. Phenomenological space, devoid of contents, is the soul. The soul is a private space but not a place. Places are spatially related, so putatively distinct places are in fact parts of one and the same space. Private spaces are not spatially related, and are therefore distinct spaces. As a space,

- (i) the soul is infinite;
- (ii) the soul is immaterial;
- (iii) the soul 'contains' phenomena;
- (iv) the soul is an atom.

Space qua soul is not quite void (*kenon, vacuum*), not quite emptiness, but no-thing-ness. Space qua the soul is a private, quasiabsolute (Newtonian) space, not a relational (Leibnizian) space. Space, in this sense, is what we normally understand by 'consciousness.' Although there is a difference between being conscious and being unconscious, space is the background against which changes take place. Newtonian space being empty or containing physical objects is analogous to the space of the soul being empty or containing phenomena. Numerically distinct souls are numerically distinct inner spaces individuated by privacy; by the ontological analogue of privacy, absolute interiority; and by qualitative difference. Each soul is qualitatively distinct from every other soul. For example, the *you-ness* which saturates the inner space of your soul is qualitatively distinct from the *me-ness* of my soul.

No-thing-ness

There is an ontological and theoretical distinction between *thing-ness* and *no-thing-ness*:

Thing-ness. Whatever exhibits thing-ness may be readily individuated, discriminated in thought or perception, in principle singled out,

especially as an object, 'there,' or 'over there.' In a mainly automatic and unacknowledged way, thing-ness is exhibited by any thing in front of me, paradigmatically: physical objects, but derivatively, physical and psychophysical processes. (Through a tenuous psychological projection of physical metaphors, even mental processes, numbers, sets, and members of sets are construed on the model of thing-ness.) Thing-ness is an individuated synthesis of form and content.

The construal of any subject matter on the model of thing-ness is partly a derivation from acquaintance with physical objects, partly a product of technology, of manipulation, of control, of counting, of buying and selling, of imposition. Thing-ness as a worldview is the result of the sword, the masculine. It appears strong but is fragile.

No-thing-ness. No-thing-ness is a property of whatever does not admit of straightforward individuation: space, time, God, the soul, Being, Nothingness, consciousness, presence, Now. The world of no-thing-ness is the world of God and Being. No-thing-ness does not admit straightforwardly of a distinction between form and content. No-thing-ness is disclosed by openness, by revelation, by relinquishing control, by letting go. No-thing-ness is the opening of the flower, the feminine. It appears fragile but is strong.

From the conditioned point of view, that is, from the point of view of thing-ness, no-thing-ness is either mistaken for nothing at all or misconstrued on the model of thing-ness: Space is a container or nothing. Consciousness is a mechanism or nothing. Time is motion or nothing. God is a huge intelligence the other side of the sky or nothing. Thing-ness allows no ontology of the subtle. No-thing-ness seems to be nothing but it is nearly everything.

For present purposes, the crucial application of the distinction is this: You think of yourself on the model of thing-ness. You have to understand yourself on the model of no-thing-ness. Your essential being is not that of a thing. Your essential being is an unbounded inner space or presence.

Even now, immense caution is needed not to misunderstand these claims. I do not mean a space construed on the third-person model: a kind of vapor, or cloud, or a place enclosed by surfaces;

something individuated on the model of thing-ness. I mean: You are the inside of unbounded space. Similarly, when I say you are a presence, I mean just that. I do not mean *that which is* present but the presence itself. Your idea of yourself as one flesh-and-blood human being among others is a product of third-person and generalized thinking. Thing-ness is recuperated and self-imposed. This imposition, on an empirical level, is not false. It is, however, a distraction from your true nature. You are a presence. You are the inside of space. You are the inside of time.

The transition from thing-ness to no-thing-ness is effected by the techniques of deconditioning (see above, under "*How Is Deconditioning Possible?*"). There is an intermediary ontology in which some of the properties of both thing-ness and no-thing-ness are exhibited. Processes are individuated, but their essential entailment of change precludes their being physical objects, the paradigmatic things. Sensations are roughly individuated but have an amorphous phenomenology characteristic of no-thing-ness. Numbers are sharply individuated but not objects. The subatomic constituents of matter cannot be straightforwardly singled out in space-time. Matter is mainly emptiness. Appreciation of realities which are not straightforwardly thing-like effects the transition from taken-for-granted thing-ness to the disclosure of no-thing-ness.

Thing-ness is temporal. No-thing-ness is atemporal. Thing-ness is changing. No-thing-ness is the unchanging, the permanent. Thing-ness is plurality. No-thing-ness is unity in the sense of *one-ness*: a unity that is not a bundle of parts; a unity that does not in principle admit of plurality. The dependencies between no-thing-ness and thing-ness are as follows:

- (i) No-thing-ness is necessary for thing-ness.
- (ii) Thing-ness is not necessary for no-thing-ness.
- (iii) Thing-ness is sufficient for no-thing-ness.
- (iv) No-thing-ness is not sufficient for thing-ness.

The Disclosure of the Soul

There are stages of that deconditioning which is revelatory of the soul:

(1) You are surrounded by physical objects on every side. You view the world from the physical object you call your body. You have a worldview, a picture, or a complex representation of what there is. This is ordinary, conditioned existence at the level of thing-ness.

(2) Your worldview is, ontologically speaking, a constellation of thoughts and emotions. (This tells us nothing about which parts of it are true or which false.)

(3) It is as though phenomenalism is true (even though phenomenalism might be false).

(4) It is as though solipsism is true. A distinction may be drawn between kinds of solipsism. Firstly, solipsism is the doctrine that only I have a mind, a subjective point of view, a psychological interiority. Others are pure exteriority. They have no subjectivity, no point of view, no mental life. Secondly, solipsism is the doctrine that only I exist. I include what is presented to me. That is, I include what someone who is not a solipsist would count as what is presented to them, not as part of themselves.

Both doctrines are false but disclose an important truth which is not solipsism. Solipsism is false because the other (unless dead) is never presented as a pure exteriority. The other is presented as living, breathing, speaking, gesturing, threatening, ingratiating, subservient, and so on, with a reality which cannot be reduced to behavior, to matter in motion. The other is the presence of the other. This presence of the other is the kind of presence you feel yourself to be as you view the world from your body. It is in fact this presence which is absent from the body in death. In the appearance of a corpse the *presence* of the other is absent.

The important truth disclosed by solipsism is that your own existence is the existence of a substance. That your own existence qua your own depends upon nothing empirical is the explanation of the plausibility of solipsism. This substance which is your own existence is a subjective space. To perceive the plausibility of solipsism is to reveal the phenomenological space where sensations arise and subside, the space where events take place.

(5) Inner space is still (there) when sensations no longer arise and subside.

(6) Inner space is the space of no-thing-ness. The space of no-thing-ness is unchanging, because all becoming has ceased.

(7) Inner space is a form of intuition.

(8) Inner space is the field of transcendental subjectivity which survives the *epochē*.

(9) Inner space is the originary synthesis of the fields of the sensory modalities as one field, that is, the field in which phenomena arise and subside: the phenomenal field, the *phield*.

(10) Inner space as no-thing-ness is the site or the *Lichtung* or the zone in which Being is disclosed to Being.

(11) Inner space is *Hiersein*. I say 'Hiersein,' not 'Dasein,' because the being of inner space as no-thing-ness is not being-in-the-world but pervasion of the world. We could call this 'being in the world' (unhyphenated) to signal both the fact that this 'in' is not an 'in' of inclusion and the fact that whatever being in the world pertains to inner space pertains to it contingently.

(12) Inner space, as no-thing-ness, has all and only the characteristics of the soul. It is immaterial, immortal, a thinking substance, someone, unchanging, always now, private, an inner space, an absolute interiority. I define each of these terms below.

Immaterial (def.): (i) Not physical. Not composed of matter nor of any of the constituents of matter. (ii) Not amenable to natural destruction. (iii) If existing at a time then existing at any time later than that time.

Thinking (def.) Capable of engaging in doxastic activity. ('Thinking,' despite its present continuous tense, is used in a dispositional rather than occurrent sense.)

Substance (def.): (i) That which depends upon nothing natural for its own existence. (ii) That which bears properties but is not itself a property. (iii) That which can be meaningfully said to possess a separate existence.

Someone (def.) A being rightly mentioned in answer to the question 'Who?' For example: (the lived existential reality of) you. The being you are. Any being truly called 'you' or 'I.'

Unchanging (def.) Not gaining or shedding any properties.

Always now (def.) The timeless present.

Inner space (def.) Where the experiences of one, and (under normal circumstances) only one, person always take place.

Private (def.) Given to only one subject. Known by acquaintance by only one subject.

Absolute interiority (def.) An inside without an outside.

The site of the disclosure of Being to Being (def.): (i) The space in which what is is dis-closed. (ii) The space in which the being of what is is dis-closed.

Soul (def.): both (i) immaterial, immortal, thinking substance and absolute interiority which is someone; and (ii) unchanging and private space which is the site of the disclosure of Being to Being.

The soul is a simple immaterial finite presence. Your soul is essentially you, therefore logically necessary and sufficient for your existence. The soul is not intrinsically mental or physical. The soul is not of this world, so it is not a natural entity. The soul is a kind of presence, and so accounts for your own presence in, or as, this human being. The soul is immaterial, simple, and invisible. This is one's own true nature revealed by deconditioning. Spiritual development is possible beyond this. It is possible to know God.

Fantastic as it seems to conditioned thought, you are not included in the physical universe. You peer into the universe from outside it. The idea that you are a member of the physical universe is a sophisticated achievement of that conditioned thinking which construes everything as other. You have perceived human beings. You have had the thought "I am one of those," and you have imposed the picture of the human being as another on yourself. Many layers of psychophysical conditioning constitute this recuperation, this re-writing of the self as other, as just another member of the public. From a third-person perspective the person appears to be included in the world. The third-person perspective is radically incomplete. The universe is not anonymous.

Nevertheless, with sensitivity, the presence or absence of the soul can be discerned in the third-person case. When a human being is dead, something is lacking in their appearance:

- (i) The presence of the other is absent.
- (ii) The subjectivity of the other is absent.
- (iii) Movement is replaced by stillness.

The soul is the presence which is absent from a corpse. Subjectivity can be essentially understood only from your own case. Nevertheless, in life, anyone's subjectivity is their pervasion of a body (as opposed to that person being only a complex physical object). The soul is invisible in the way that space is invisible but present in the way that space is present. In death there is a transition from becoming to being. The human body and mind are temporal. The soul is timeless.

The existence of a soul is necessary and sufficient for the existence of a person qua that person.

Your being is only partly and contingently being in the world, because your being is essentially being-out-of-this-world. I hyphenate the expression 'being-out-of-this-world' to signal the ontological inseparability of the terms of this relation. I leave 'being in the world' unhyphenated to signal the ontological separability of the terms of that relation. The 'here' of *Hiersein* is a subjective space, not an empirical location. Being in the world and facing the world are conditioned states (even though immensely psychologically compelling while one is in them). The conditioned state is being in time. The unconditioned state is being out of time, or being in eternity, that is, being in the eternal Now.

In being in the world, the world is revealed and God is hidden. In being-out-of-this world, God is revealed but the world is hidden. Presence is the presence of God. In the world, presence as the presence of God is hidden by the presence of the things the world makes present. Out of the world, presence as the presence of God is overwhelming.

Is the Soul a Substance?

Having broken with the conditioned paradigm of level 1, how do we know that we should not simply stop at level 2 and, say, engage in pure phenomenology and not the metaphysics of level 3? How can we be certain that the soul is a substance? To decide this we have to decide how to decide whether anything is a substance.

Suppose matter is a substance. In this case, we are willing to say that something is a substance if, no matter how thorough the inspection, nothing is found which this depends upon. The materialist does

not say that matter is not a substance because it could, under further investigation, be found to depend upon something else. Suppose the totality of what is, whatever is, is a substance. Suppose God is a substance. In these cases, it is necessary and a priori that they are substances, so the search for extraneous necessary conditions is logically futile. To the conditioned mind it looks as though the soul could turn out *not* to be a substance (“Doesn’t all this depend on the brain?”). To the unconditioned mind it is necessary and a priori that the soul is a substance in the sense that it depends on nothing empirical. It is not a substance in the sense that it is necessary and a priori that the soul depends on God, rather as it depends on reality as a whole.

Suppose a substance is something that can be meaningfully said to possess a separate existence. For example, a physical object might depend upon the physical universe but be a substance in this sense. Newtonian space and time depend upon God yet are substances in this sense. The soul is a substance in this sense. The soul can be meaningfully said to possess a separate existence. It is given as though it could be all there is.

Knowledge of the Soul

The disclosure of the soul is between rationalism and empiricism. To see this, consider that there is in a sense apprehension of space, of time, of the being of what is. This apprehension is not the same as perception of spatial things, perception of temporal things, perception of actual things, perception of existent things. It is not right either that this apprehension is a kind of detection by thought, a kind of intellectual intuition. Rather, space, time, actuality, and existence *are present* in any experience of spatial, temporal, or existent things. They are not sensed in the sense of ‘perceptually discriminated from items of the same type with which they are not identical.’ This *presence* is an entailment of perception, or knowledge by acquaintance. The acquaintance in knowledge by acquaintance is presence. The disclosure of the soul is the presence of the soul. Presence is presupposed by both thought and experience as ordinarily understood. Therefore presence is presupposed by rationalism and empiricism. It infinitely exceeds both.

Incredible as it might seem, observation and thought reveal the world only at a conditioned level. Presence is the revelation of the world at the unconditioned level. So, is there experience of the soul? There is not experience of the soul as one thing among others.

Unconditioned knowledge of the soul is not only propositional knowledge but knowledge by acquaintance. Acquaintance with the soul entails the presence of the soul. The presence of the soul is not something extra to a certain presence. For example, by 'your presence' I mean what sees these words on the page now. I do not mean the image this presence has of itself as one human being among others in the world. That is to lapse back into the old habits of third-person and generalized thinking.

If we construe experience as only sense experience, then the logico-epistemological status of unconditioned claims is synthetic a priori. Unconditioned claims are knowable to be true independently of sense experience and so a priori in that sense. On the other hand, they are knowable through experience only in the broad sense of 'experience' which admits mystical and meditative states. In a wide sense of 'a posteriori' they are therefore a posteriori. On the other hand, their truth is a necessary condition for any experience whatsoever, and so in that sense of 'a priori' they are a priori.

Knowledge of the soul is synthetic because informative, not merely tautologous. The soul is present but not perceived, apprehended but not sensed as a discriminable particular, so a being devoid of sensory faculties could in principle acquire unconditioned knowledge.

The soul does not necessarily exist even though there is a necessary inference to the existence of the soul from the existence of oneself. The soul is necessary *for* the world as it is presented in experience; therefore the world as it is presented in experience is sufficient for the soul. This does not show that the soul necessarily exists in any strong or logical sense. The denial of the existence of the soul is not contradictory, but it is self-refuting. "The soul exists" is necessary in this weaker sense: nothing empirical can refute the existence of the soul, because the existence of the soul is necessary for the empirical world (qua object of experience). The existence of the soul is in this sense a priori.

3. DECONDITIONING AND PROBLEMS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

When we engage in philosophy, including philosophy of mind, we operate with a set of background, taken-for-granted pictures of the subject matter under investigation. I call these pictures ‘thought pictures.’ They seem necessary for understanding philosophical problems, but their inaccuracy, or at least the philosophical assumptions embedded in them, prevents the problems’ solution. Here I sketch some constraints on solutions to the problem of personal identity, the mind-body problem, the problem of distinguishing between the past and the future, and the problem of freedom and determinism. I show in each case how the formulation of the problem rests on a thought picture: a conditioned and contingent constraint. I then suggest that any plausible solution to each problem entails the existence of the soul: an unconditioned and essential constraint.

What Does Personal Identity Consist In?

In trying to solve the problem of personal identity we habitually operate with a taken-for-granted picture of what it is to be a person. We think of a person as one human being among others, paradigmatically, somebody who is not oneself but someone else. They are pictured as distinct from but situated within their environment. They think or experience. Because the problem is about identity over time, we entertain a picture of a person at one time, and of a qualitatively distinct person at a distinct time. We think of the person as extended between the two times. We rightly wonder what the necessary and sufficient conditions are for the earlier person being the later person. The problem of personal identity is, then, really ‘the problem of the identity of the human being over time,’ especially ‘the problem of the identity of the human being who is somebody else, over time.’ Crucially, this picture is essentially the residue of perceptual encounters with human beings other than yourself. As in the case of so many philosophical problems, to solve the problem of personal identity, you have to bring yourself into the picture.

Physical and psychological solutions to the problem of personal identity fail because they provide no account of the reality of one's own existence. They do not entail necessary and sufficient conditions for the identity of 'the' person over time because they eschew the soul.

If the spatiotemporal continuity of the body is what personal identity consists in, then the later person is the earlier person if and only if a certain human body exists at the earlier time, exists at the later time, and exists at all intervening times. The body is a space-time continuant, and an earlier and a later person being the same person is their being (necessary and sufficient for) slices or portions of that continuant.

The spatiotemporal continuity of the body is not sufficient for personal identity, because there is no contradiction in the supposition that numerically distinct subjects of consciousness should occupy the same body over time (where a subject, for example, views the world from that body). The inference from '*. . . is the same body as . . .*' to '*. . . is the same person as . . .*' fails.

It is often assumed that the spatiotemporal continuity of the body at least provides a necessary condition for the identity of the person over time. This is, however, not the case because there is no contradiction in the notion of intermittent existence. Suppose we are perceptually presented with a human being. Suppose then that human being ceases to exist and we therefore cease to perceive them. Suppose next a human being qualitatively similar to the one who ceased to exist begins to exist and is perceptually presented to us. In this case, we would be presented with a conceptual choice. We either say that spatiotemporal continuity has not been preserved, so the later person is not the earlier person, or we say the later person is the earlier person because they say they are, they are where the earlier person was, they look and behave in the same ways, and so on. The fact that nothing compels us to choose the first way shows that the continuity of the body is not a necessary condition for personal identity.

Personal identity does not consist in a memory criterion holding. From the fact that I remember someone it does not follow that I am the person whom I remember, so the memory criterion is not sufficient for personal identity. From the fact that I cannot remember a

certain person it does not follow that that person was not I. If the inference were valid, then I did not exist for any periods of my life that I am unable to remember, and I did not perform any actions that I cannot remember myself performing. These entailments are false. Therefore the memory criterion is not necessary for personal identity. Although some of the conceptual resources essential to the formulation of the memory criterion are derived from the first-person singular case, the question "What remembers?" is only superficially answered.

The literature on personal identity contains a fatal error. It takes lasting as what identity over time fundamentally consists in. Lasting, however, is not the fundamental concept. Lasting itself needs explanation. To see this, ask: *What lasts?* It is the numerical identity of something between an earlier time and a later time which explains how something can last between those times. Lasting presupposes identity. It is not what identity consists in. Continuity presupposes identity, but identity does not presuppose continuity. Identity consists in the existence of something changeless.

On one definition of 'changeless' anything is changeless if it lasts but does not gain or shed any properties over time. The definition captures one sense of 'changeless' but not one adequate to your own changelessness. That a *person* changes presupposes an inherently changeless subject of change: that which changes in the sense of that which *undergoes* change.

By deconditioning, it is revealed that despite the coming and going of thoughts and experiences, there is something utterly unchanging which is the core of your own being. This is the eternal now, inner space, you-ness, a disclosure of Being, no-thing-ness. The unchanging has all and only the properties of the soul, so the soul is the changeless. Personal identity consists in the existence of a soul. In referring to the soul at different times, reference is made to the changeless reality which is the essence or innermost being of the person. That the same timeless reality is referred to at different times does not entail that the reality referred to is in fact not timeless. A timeless being is simply referred to at different times. Leibniz's Law is preserved, and the problem of personal identity solved. It will not be solved in any other way.

What Is the Relationship between the Mind and the Body?

As in the case of the problem of personal identity, in trying to solve the mind-body problem we paradigmatically operate with a background picture of a human being who is somebody other than oneself, distinct from their environment but embedded within it. Because the mind-body problem is that of stating the relation between the mind and the brain, we entertain a crude picture of the brain and of mental life 'above' it, perhaps like a cloud. Compared to the sophistication of our attempts to think the relation between them, the picture of the *relata* is primitive.

It is the existence of the soul which makes the mind-body problem hard. It is the existence of the soul which provides the mind-body problem with its solution.

The existence of the soul makes the mind-body problem hard for two kinds of reason. Firstly, the mind-body problem depends upon a more profound problem for its formulation: Why are human beings divided into two mutually exclusive but jointly exhaustive categories: the category which has only one member, oneself, and the category with many members, everyone else? Understanding this dichotomy is necessary for understanding how the mind-body problem is thinkable. We are conditioned into thinking of persons in the abstract, as psychophysical wholes or human beings. By deconditioning, that is, by reversing conditioning, we can become aware of the component parts of the human being which we assimilate to form the conditioned picture. One part is one's own first-person psychology and the inner space of the soul in which it takes place. The other part is the physical exteriority of the other, and their intimidating or inviting presence (which makes it impossible not to believe in other minds).

Materialism, logical behaviorism, physicalism, and other secular views are derived from a picture of the person as 'other' as 'not oneself.' Mind-body dualism and various kinds of idealism are derived from a model of the person as oneself. In their conceptual possibility, in their conceivability, materialist philosophies are third person. Philosophies of consciousness are first-person singular. (This dichotomy

is fully consistent with the truth that the same facts may be reported about the same human being in both first- and third-person terms: “I am thinking” said by me is made true by the same fact as “He is thinking” said by you when you are referring to me, and so on.) If people were only *other* people, materialism would look plausible (even if ultimately refuted by the glow of the other’s presence). It is one’s own existence which introduces directly the following: consciousness, subjectivity, agency, free will, me-ness, and all the other phenomena which resist materialist analysis.

The dichotomy between being someone, the person who you are, and not being all the people you are not, exists because your soul exists and other souls exist. The soul is your presence. Your presence in the world contrasts with the presentation of the exteriority of the other to you. The dichotomy of self and other makes the mind-body problem hard. The existence of the soul creates the dichotomy of self and other. Therefore, the existence of the soul makes the mind-body problem hard.

The second way in which the existence of the soul makes the mind-body problem hard is this. The soul bestows on mental states some of the properties which make them mental. In particular, the privacy of mental states exists because the soul is an inside without an outside. The absence of any exteriority to the soul, which is to say, the absence of any physical property from the soul, makes the soul (ordinarily) undetectable from a third-person standpoint. Mental events *qua* mental are episodes within the phenomenological space of the soul and so are equally undetectable from the standpoint of exteriority.

Before showing that the soul is the solution to the mind-body problem, I say something briefly in criticism of materialism and physicalism.

Materialism is false because, ontologically, from the point of view of what exists, the body is only billions of atoms moving in empty space. It is absolutely self-evident that there is more to a human being than that. I think, therefore materialism is false.

The existence of mentality is a necessary condition for denying mentality. Materialism entails the denial of mentality, so materialism is self-refuting. Therefore materialism is false.

Physicalism either collapses into materialism or collapses into mind-body dualism. Physicalism collapses into materialism if it is, for example, the doctrine that everything is physical or the doctrine that the mental is ontologically, semantically, or otherwise 'reducible' to the physical. In those cases physicalism is false because materialism is false. Physicalism collapses into mind-body dualism if it entails even the tiniest bit of mentality. For example, the doctrine that the only substances are physical substances but there are mental properties is a mind-body dualist doctrine. The doctrine that mental events in various senses 'supervene' on physical events is a mind-body dualist doctrine. To fail to realize this is to fail to realize that the brain is only billions and billions of atoms in motion in empty space. So-called physicalist views, so sustaining of modern secularism, leave wholly unexplained the relation between thoughts and experiences on the one hand and billions of atoms in motion on the other. Physicalism presupposes the mind-body problem. It is not its solution.

Materialism and physicalism are grossly implausible positions in the philosophy of mind. Even though great logical ingenuity went into *formulating* materialism and physicalism, there are no good logical arguments for them. They are in fact advocated on ideological grounds: either through the massive misconception that these philosophies are genuinely scientific, or through the current rage for secularism, the wish to deny the existence of God and the soul.

The relationship between mental and physical events is psychophysical causal interaction: mental events cause physical events, and physical events cause mental events. Any solution to the mind-body problem has to do justice to these facts:

(1) *Some physical events are sufficient for some mental events.* Standing barefoot on the sharp end of a nail causes a sharp pain in the foot. Drinking claret, a physical liquid, revises one's perceptual world.

(2) *Some mental events are sufficient for some physical events.* Other things being equal, my belief that this bus goes to the city center, conjoined with my desire to reach the city center, precipitates my stepping onto this bus.

(3) *Some physical events are necessary for some mental events.* Well-functioning eyeballs, connected by optic nerves to a living brain, are needed for seeing. A well-functioning living brain is a necessary condition for thinking.

(4) *Some mental events are necessary for some physical events.* If I had not felt angry, I would not have stormed out of the room. If I had not seen him, I would not have crossed over the road.

Any putative solution which entails that psychophysical causal interaction does not occur is false. Accommodating psychophysical causal interaction is a requirement of any solution to the mind-body problem.

It is an elementary logical principle that if *a* is necessary for *b*, then *b* is sufficient for *a*, and if *a* is sufficient for *b*, then *b* is necessary for *a*. Applying this principle to the four tenets shows that (1) and (4) are logically equivalent and (2) and (3) are logically equivalent.

These consequences, although soundly derived, are counterintuitive. We balk at the consequence that a pain in the foot is a necessary condition for the treading on the nail which predates it, or that thinking a thought is a sufficient condition for the whole history of the universe prerequisite to it. Nevertheless, neither the logic of the entailments nor the truth of the premises can be plausibly challenged.

The solution is to adopt a plausible view of causation on which causes, when they are causally efficacious, are *simultaneous* with their effects. Then, if a physical event is necessary for a mental event, that mental event is sufficient for that physical event, and for anything necessary for that physical event, but *causally* sufficient only for the prerequisite events it is simultaneous with. If a mental event is necessary for a physical event, then that physical event is sufficient for that mental event, but *causally* sufficient only because it is simultaneous with it.

How does consciousness push atoms around? To understand the relation between the soul and the human being, we need a new concept: 'pervasion,' which we may define as follows:

a pervades *b* if and only if *a* is at least where *b* is, and *a* is not *b*.

The soul pervades the human being. For example, you are at least *where* your body is, but you are not *identical* with your body. 'At least' is required because you do not end where your body ends. Inner space infinitely exceeds the exterior of the body.

Agent causation is explained by the existence of the soul. Insofar as the first-person singular pronoun (or cognate forms in other

languages) is used in true ascriptions, there is a secret reference to the soul. At a conditioned level, or empirically, 'I' is a word that each English speaker uses to refer only to him- or herself. (I say 'a' word because there are other such words: 'me' and 'mine' for example.) Also, insofar as it is true of someone that they *do* something, as opposed to events simply taking place in them, they act as a soul. The agent is the soul. It is not wrong to say the human being is an agent, but they are an agent only because there is a soul.

It is often said that there cannot be mental causation, because it would violate the Third Law of Thermodynamics, according to which the amount of energy in the universe remains constant. The existence of mental causation is, however, no threat to this law. If something physical causes something physical, then energy is displaced or transferred from cause to effect. There is no reason why mental causation should not merely *displace* energy and neither add to nor subtract from the quantity of energy in the universe.

I suggest we replace the term 'consciousness' with the term 'soul.' How does the soul move atoms? The soul moves atoms by being where they are but not being them. You pervade your body as an initiator: you cause without being caused to cause. What is this causation like? You have direct experience of this kind of causation when, for example, you raise your hand or your head. You move your hand by moving your hand. You move your head by moving your head. The conditioned model of causation, one billiard ball colliding with another, is inapplicable to mental causation.

What Is the Difference between the Past and the Future?

We think of the past as 'behind' us. We think of the future as 'in front' of us. Why?

I venture the following explanation of the picture. It is caused by travel. In this explanation I make use of the case of travel by train. Nothing rests on this. Travel on foot would also work, but the explanation is simply clearer and more obvious in the case of travel by train (because it is fast but not too fast).

If you are traveling, in a train, facing forward and looking out of the window, say to the left, the objects in the landscape are visually

presented momentarily in front of you, and then alongside you, and then they have passed behind you. Because the train is moving, the objects are presented as event-like as though the objects, or set of objects at a time, are moving to the rear. Although still known to be objects, they are sometimes presented as stretched or blurred in the direction of the back of the train, the opposite direction of the direction of travel. As this happens, clock time of course moves from earlier to later. When the objects are in front of you, but not yet visible, they are in the future. As you perceive them, they are in the present. When they are behind you, and no longer visible, they are in the past. This experience ties the future to what is in front, and the past to what is behind. It should now be easy to see how the picture of the past as a trail left behind oneself is mentally built up. One's route through the world does map a physical trail or a line, with witnessed objects along it. The continued appearance of new objects causes one to acquire the picture of the future as in front.

The picture is a conditioned picture. Shorn of the conditioned picture, only the changing contents of the present remain. From an unconditioned point of view, only the present exists. The unconditioned content of the present is Heraclitean. The unconditioned present itself is Parmenidean. What happens in the present constantly replaces itself. The present when this happens is utterly unchanging. (Even at a conditioned level we can see that the past did exist but does not and that the future will exist but does not. Therefore the past and the future do not exist.)

This present is the presence of the soul, or, to put it another way, now is the time it is within the soul. At the unconditioned level, one is not presented with *two* realities: both inner space and the unchanging now. On the contrary, inner space is the space of the now, and the now is the eternal now of inner space. Within the unchanging present of the soul, events replace one another, and this gives rise to the conditioned ideas of past and future. In fact it is only ever now. You personally demarcate everything that has happened from everything to come. Any event that is not yet has not been simultaneous with an event in the soul. Any event that is over has been simultaneous with an event in the soul. (Every event is necessarily simultaneous with itself.) If the soul did not exist, events would nevertheless be ordered

by the before/simultaneous-with/after relation. Now is the time it is inside the soul. You are the difference between the past and the future.

How Is Freedom of the Will Possible?

In order to understand freedom of the will it is necessary to contrast

(A) *the linear sequence of events in which each event is the effect of the predecessor events*

with

(B) *The exploding spontaneity of the present.*

(A) is a conditioned thought-picture. (B) is existential reality. The exploding spontaneity is the constantly changing events replacing one another in the eternal present. The present is a fountain. The linear sequence is our conditioned picture of this. We mis-take the picture for reality. The linear picture is not fundamental but itself takes place in the present.

It follows that the present, not the past, is the source of what happens. That the present is conditioned by the past is a conditioned idea. It is not wrong at an empirical level, but if we remain with this picture, we miss the source of what is. If this seems odd, consider reality as a whole. It has no cause except itself. If we ask who or what does everything, it is not too misleading to say 'the whole.' Analogously, the soul is an independent reality.

I said above that the soul is an initiator. It causes actions but is not caused to cause those actions. At the unconditioned level it is disclosed both that the soul is the cause of its own actions and that there is always the possibility of not acting, or acting otherwise, which is to say the soul has free will. At a conditioned level the following objection naturally arises: "You do not know that there are no *hidden* causes of every action you seem to initiate. Your so-called choices might well be the inevitable result of your neurology. You are simply not aware of the neurology." This is not right. The objection takes the dependence of mind and action on the brain from the conditioned

level and applies it to the unconditioned. This is to fail to realize that the unconditioned massively undercuts the conditioned. Science is not fundamental. The empirical is not fundamental. The unconditioned is fundamental. The unconditioned is the level of Being, Now, spiritual space, no-thing-ness. The unconditioned is necessary for the empirical world, but the empirical world is not necessary for the unconditioned. There are no beings without Being, no empirical events without now, no persons without spiritual spaces, no agents without initiators, no neurologists without souls. The converse dependencies do not hold.

I consider one more objection to free will. It is sometimes argued that my behavior could in principle be predicted, given enough knowledge of the prior state of the universe, and it is concluded, from these premises, that determinism is true.

The inference from predictability to determinism is invalid. From the fact that you can predict my behavior it does not follow that I do not behave freely. Perhaps I exercise my freedom in regular patterns with which you have been acquainted. Perhaps you are thereby able to inductively infer my future actions. None of this entails determinism.

The soul is the source of freedom of the will. The exercise of freedom of the will consists in being a cause without being an effect. I am free because I am the uncaused cause of my actions.

■ None of these problems admits of solution unless the soul exists. To the conditioned mind, the soul is a groundless conjecture, a product of wishful thinking or fear of death, a meaningless pseudoconcept, an indeterminate figure without solidity cast a priori over nothing. The unconditioned mind has knowledge of the soul: self-knowledge.

Benedikt Göcke asked me to write about mind-body dualism for his book. A sound proof of the existence of the soul is not sufficient for the truth of mind-body dualism, even if souls are minds, because it is consistent with idealism. Here I offer no proof of the existence of the physical world, and so offer only reasons for accepting a necessary condition for the truth of mind-body dualism (in the sense of 'substance dualism').

Most philosophy, however ingeniously argued, is done at the conditioned level, so its prospects for solving fundamental philosophical problems are slight, even though at the conditioned level there might, for example, be true belief in God and the soul. Fundamental philosophical problems exist because some problems understood by the conditioned mind can be solved only by the unconditioned mind.

Modern philosophy made a catastrophic mistake in taking its dominant models of problem solving from the natural sciences. In order to solve philosophical problems, it is necessary to synthesize scientific models with the theology on which they ultimately depend. Synthesizing science and theology requires deconditioning. In this paper I have outlined some of the applications of unconditioned thought to the philosophy of mind. There are many more applications. Unconditioned knowledge is ultimately knowledge of God, in both senses of 'knowledge of God.'

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