Descartes’ Meditations

1. I exist (as a thinking thing)
2. God exists
3. C & D perceptions are accurate
4. Math, Geom., Phys obj’s exist
5. Mind ≠ Body

Descartes’ Meditations

Mind-Body Interaction

Mind-Body Interaction

Descartes’ Dualism

• If Descartes is right, that mind is distinct from body, what is their relationship?
• Each affects the other—“Interaction”:
  – Physical injury causes mental pain.
  – Mental decisions cause physical actions.
• How does interaction occur?
• The “common” sense (p. 56) = Pineal gland

Pineal Gland

Mind-Body Interaction

Mind-Body Interaction

“Swing your right arm now!”
Satellite : Ground Antenna :: Soul : Pineal Gland?

Mind-Body Interaction
- Soul causes things to happen in the brain that wouldn’t have happened if soul had not intervened.
- If non-physical soul can influence physical brain, then human brain must not be completely governed by the laws of physics!
- Why not?

Solar System
- What if God changed the course of a planet?
- Can we predict an eclipse?

Descartes’ Dualism
- The “Ghost in the Machine”?
- Soul : Body :: Captain : Ship?
- “No” (p. 53):
  - Soul and body are “commingled”.
  - I am a “union” of soul and body.
- I feel damage, I don’t “learn about it”.

Descartes’ Dualism
- Like a captain at the helm of a ship?
**Descartes’ Dualism**

- How can a physical event *cause* a non-physical mental event?
- How can a non-physical mental event *cause* a physical event?
- Perhaps it’s impossible.

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**Psychophysical Parallelism**

Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716)

- Mind and physical world *cannot* causally interact.
- So God must have arranged them to line up together.
- “Pre-established Harmony”

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**Psycho-physical Parallelism**

- Relationship of visual track to sound track in a movie.

“Yow!”

“Pull back arm!!”

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**Visual-Audio Parallelism**

- What you see on the screen *doesn’t really* cause what you hear.
- It’s just arranged by the director to seem like that.

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**Nagel’s Dual-Aspect Theory**

Thomas Nagel (1937-)

- *What Does It All Mean?* pp. 33-36.
- There is only one kind of substance—matter.
- But matter can have two different kinds of states: mental states and physical states.

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**Nagel’s Dual-Aspect Theory**

- Computers are just physical things.
- But we can describe them two ways:
  - Physically: “The circuits are....”
  - Mentally: “It is looking for my document.” or “It is checking the spelling of my paper.”
Positions on Mind-Body

Nature of Reality

- Dualism
  - Mind / Body
  - Cartesian Interactionism
  - Psychophysical Parallelism
- Monism
  - Mind = Body
  - Materialism
    - Only Matter
  - Idealism
    - Only Mind
  - Dual-Aspect
  - Scientific