



THE I AND THE BODY

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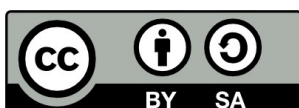
In this paper, I shall try to present the dichotomy of the mind-body problem from the first-person perspective. The problem and the concept of the body itself are, perhaps, best shown through the philosophy of mind. One can argue that the concept is dialectically constructed in the history of philosophy in correlation and as opposed to the idea of the mind. Through the works of Avicenna, Descartes, Fichte, and others I will try to show that the idea of distinction is an epistemological one in nature. Descartes excludes everything not directly known as a certainty as not directly 'himself', thus concluding that he is a 'thinking thing', replacing the idea of himself as a corporeal thing with the idea of himself as a disembodied mind. From these kinds of ideas stems the original insight phrased in wording: "I know that I have a body" or question: "Are you a body with a mind or a mind with a body?", differentiating that which knows (mind or subject) and that which is held (body or object). We can notice dualism in the very question: that which asks (the mind) and that with which that which asks is identified (the body). I shall argue that this direct cognitive accessibility and immediate self-consciousness are the reasons why we are able to distance "ourselves" from objects (in the end, our own body) by objectifying them in the process. And, at the same time, that the argument for the ontological difference is founded on the epistemological one, therefore, questioning its validity.

Keywords: the I; the Body; mind-body dualism; self-consciousness; consciousness.

Introduction

Through the history of philosophy, the concept of the body was (and still is) almost always formed relative to the concept of the mind or in the opposition towards it, the paradigm of which is Cartesian dualism or dichotomy of soul and body from Christianity. The topic is in itself a vast one, therefore I will try to analyze the dichotomy from the first-person perspective of consciousness.

The term 'I' is used here deliberately to signify consciousness from the first-person point of view or *self-consciousness*. The reason behind this is that the term 'I', a substantivized pronoun, is indexically rich, meaning that it refers to the entity that is speaking, and yet it doesn't reveal the nature of this entity. Terms 'consciousness' or 'mind' wouldn't suffice because they lack the aspect of self-referentiality, which is



– and this is one of the main theses of the paper – the basis of accessibility in self-reflection or self-consciousness. In other words, it's not a discussion about two objects (mind and body), but about the subject who in referencing back to himself (as 'Me' or 'Myself') may or may not ascribe an object (the body) to himself. The difference between that which utters the words "I have a body" and that which is the object of that utterance is amplified by regarding the first from a first-person perspective.¹

This further raises the question of how can I, at all, distance myself or have an attitude towards my body, thus making it something *different* than me (the I), or an *object* in my possession, through objectifying it?

The title itself should reflect this basic assumption: when we think and say: 'I' and 'body', we are already making a substantive difference: the I is *Me*, but the body is always something else, something different, *Other* that "I have" or that "I has" (in case of a third-person perspective). The I is always in the place of a subject and body in place of a predicate, or an object. Even further: the I thus conceived, could be regarded as a substance and body as an accident. This could depend on the perspective: from the third-person point of view, the I is the accident of the body because not all bodies have an I, or consciousness.² Regarding us, the body is making/producing the I: brain or neurophysiological processes in the brain give rise to intelligence, mind, and consciousness and, in the end, one aspect of consciousness is being conscious of self or self-conscious, uttered in the indexical term 'I'. On the other hand, from the first-person perspective, the I, and to that extent *me myself*, am not merely a "product" of my body, I simply "am", I exist as Descartes puts it: as long as I am thinking, and I "have" a body, that I don't necessarily need to have. This idea is present throughout the philosophy of mind: in Avicenna's and Descartes' work, but also contemporary in Putnam's "Brains in a Vat" (Putnam, 1981).

Avicenna and self-consciousness

Avicenna devised a thought experiment called *The Floating Man* (Goodman, 1992: 155). Imagine a man that is created instantly, completely formed, floating in air or space; the man is blindfolded and his limbs are separated so that he cannot touch himself. He is blind, deaf, and with no senses or an ability to perceive anything. The question raised is: would that man be self-conscious? Would he know that he exists? Avicenna thinks that there is no doubt that he would affirm his own existence, although not affirming the existence of his limbs, inner organs, heart or brain, or any external thing. That is because the soul itself (or the mind) has *reflexive* and *direct* knowledge of itself, pre-linguistic self-consciousness (Groff, 2007: 40).

He would affirm the existence of himself without affirming that he has a body or spatial properties like length or size. So, the "thing" that affirms its own existence is 'He', not the body. If he would think or imagine that he had a hand, or body in general, he would not imagine it to be a *part of himself* or a *condition of his own existence*. Part of himself in the sense of a part of his *self*, i.e. he would be just as much himself without his hand. The hand is not part of the self, but part of the body. What is a self then?

Avicenna concludes that *that* which knows and understands in this thought experiment, and which affirms its own existence is actually soul or consciousness, something immaterial and ontologically independent of the body, because knowledge (or consciousness) about oneself is not conditioned by anything bodily, nor is it perceived by the senses.³ The consequence is that we can be *self-conscious* without being *conscious of* the body: in the first case, we are directed by the consciousness "backward", towards ourselves and our own consciousness, while in the second, we are directed "forward", towards something which we are not directly ourselves even though it is part of us. Therefore, self-consciousness should be consciousness "returning" in itself, but the consciousness of the body is going "outwards", it's *intentional*. I cannot be self-conscious of my body, only

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- 1 Further, the reason why I didn't use 'ego' or 'self' is because of their overburden with psychological and psychoanalytical traditions and problematics of their own (Krenberg, 1993: 227).
 - 2 As noted in the previous paragraph, the I used in this paper signifies the ineliminable, pure or transcendental, structural component of consciousness: self-consciousness and the first-person perspective (cf. Zahavi, 2015), and not the ability to utter I-sentences.
 - 3 For Avicenna, at this point, there is no substantive difference between the knowledge that 'I am' and self-consciousness.

self-conscious and conscious of a body.⁴ My body for my consciousness is *the Other*, not itself.

The Body is not constitutive of the self, in other words: I can know myself without knowing my body, and also in that knowing of myself the body is present only in a form: “I have a body”.

Descartes: *res cogitans*

That the body is something “external” because it’s “outside” of me, my consciousness, is also Descartes’ view. His skeptical method of *Meditations* is generally known; therefore, I won’t delve deeper into it. What is important here, could be summed up in his words from II meditation:

“But indeed I do not yet sufficiently understand what in fact this ‘I’ is that now necessarily exists; so that from now on I must take care in case I should happen imprudently to take something else to be me that is not me” (Descartes, 2008: 18).

Descartes continues in the same way as Avicenna: he knows that he is, but he is questioning *what* is he exactly. In his doubting everything, he first eliminates the external world, and then his own body – here we can again see relation towards the body: it’s something else, not-I, in the same way, a chair is not me, the body is certainly “closer” to me than the chair, but it’s not immediately “me” or myself. Also, it’s something mechanical: processes in the body, movement, feeding, senses, etc. are not faculties of the soul (as Aristotle thought), but mechanical functions of a body. Similarly, we can’t control directly, with our will, our bodily processes like heart rate or digestion (yet breathing can be manual or automatic).⁵

I am conscious that I exist and *I-who-know* that I exist inquire into *what* I am. So, I exist, but what am I? *Cogito ergo sum* is twofold: I am thinking and I am existing, Des-

cartes concludes: I am *res cogitans*, a ‘thinking thing’ or a ‘thing that thinks’. I cannot *imagine* myself as a body, because imagining, same as with Avicenna, is to contemplate the figure or image of a corporeal thing. Thinking about my body is actually imagining an object, it’s intentional. I cannot be the assemblage of members called the human body (Descartes, 2008: 20). In the idea of *res cogitans*: I am or the I is a substance with its accidents: doubting, understanding, affirming, etc. What I imagine could be false (that I have a body), but not the *act* of imagining, which is part of my thoughts.

Therefore, the I in itself is a thing that thinks. I thought I was a man – but what is a man? If rational animal, then what is an animal, and what does ‘rational’ mean? I can’t say that I “have” arms and legs, because a corpse also has them.⁶ So, in the dualism of the body and the soul, I must be a soul – but what is a soul? Also, I could posit the same question as with the body: do I have a soul? Or: “I am” and “I have” a soul. Opposite to Avicenna, Descartes could argue that he is also not a soul. Anything and everything that could be imagined or thought by me, or the I, could be a dream (like having a soul):

“I do not yet accept that there is anything in me but a mind. [...] I am a thinking thing, that is, one that doubts, affirms, denies, understands” (Descartes, 2008: 25).⁷

If I’m a thinking thing and a thing that thinks is a mind – I *am* just my mind. We can see here how the body is completely eliminated from the self-knowledge (in terms of self-evident access) and self-consciousness: that which I am, is a mind – my identity (and being) *is* my mind. My body is not part of myself or the self. We could argue that here we have a case of a *disembodied* mind, but I will later point that this could also be true for an *embodied* mind.

4 In being self-conscious, *oneself* is already implied. It would be a mistake and redundancy to formulate it as being self-conscious of oneself, because self-consciousness, as an auto-referential act, doesn’t have a proper object; one *is* self-conscious, not self-conscious of something (be it even himself).

5 Gilbert Ryle will call this a dogma of the ghost in the machine (Ryle, 2009).

6 In this sense, my body has limbs and they are a part of it, not part of Me or Myself. I “have” a body and my body “has” limbs; therefore, if I’m to cut my hand off, I would still be me, but my body would be lacking a part.

7 The classical interpretation of Descartes is that he explicitly states that he is a soul, opposite to the body in soul-body or mind-body dualism. But actually, he dissolves the traditional Aristotelian concept of the soul as having vegetative, sensitive, and rational parts, by treating the first two as mechanical processes of the body and the rational part as action, thinking. Further, the mind is not posited *ad hoc*, rather it is defined through the faculty or process of thinking: that which does the thinking is the mind. Only then does Descartes – not being able to see the possibility of further reducibility or identifying the thinking

An interesting conclusion from this idea is the ontological independence of the mind: the body is a machine that has its processes and abilities like movement, feeding, sensing, etc. But the idea that Descartes inherits from Aquinas and Avicenna before him, is that thinking doesn't require a body or bodily processes for it to occur. Therefore, thinking is not an ability or faculty of a body, in other words: thinking is not an accident of a body which is in itself a substance, but actually *vice versa*: thinking thing is a substance and it having or not a body is an accident.⁸ These are actually two modes of thinking: first, (1) starting "from" the body, and second one, (2) starting "from" the mind or the I, which are perfectly summed up in the question: are you a body with a mind, or a mind with a body? Which one is the substance, and which one an accident?

It's obvious that Descartes starts and ends with epistemological certainty – that which I know perfectly is myself and that which I don't know in the same way, is not. But he, just like Avicenna, "jumps" from epistemological difference to ontological one. As Descartes defined the mind in accordance with the process of thought, that which *does* the thinking is the mind, the I with Descartes becomes the substance:

"I am now admitting nothing except what is necessarily true: I am therefore, speaking precisely, only a thinking thing, that is, a mind, or a soul, or an intellect, or a reason" (Ibid: 19).

Mind, conceptualized in this way, is impossible to combine and reconnect back with the material world and the

body, which is why with the Cartesian philosophy begins the (in)famous mind-body problem. The body is not a part of me, but a part of the external, material world – because I can doubt in it: *I can doubt in a body*, but *I can't doubt in myself*.

We can ask then: where does the body end and the mind, the I begins?⁹ That question is the core of (contemporary) philosophy of mind; also, why are they so different: the *Me* and the *Other*?

Fichte: 'I am I'

The third moment in this egology is Fichte's concept of *Tathandlung*. We could interpret it as going one step further than Descartes, as for him saying "I am *res cogitans*" would be wrong for all the same reasons as identifying myself as a human, or a body is wrong. In the I, Fichte would say, it's not defined *what* the I or a mind is, for we could ask: *what is a mind?* – That way postulated, the mind is an object. In saying "I am" *nothing is contained*: it doesn't say if I am a body, or a man, a mind or what a mind is.¹⁰ The only reason Descartes deduced that the I is a mind is because nothing else does the thinking, except for the mind. In *cogito ergo sum*, we first think (*cogito*) and then conclude that we exist (*sum*), and only after that we investigate exactly *what* that which thinks and exists, *is*. Therefore, if we think of ourselves "purely", we will first think that '*think*', or *cogito*, and not that *which thinks*, or a thinking thing, *res cogitans*. We don't think of ourselves as a thing, we only understand what a thing is – in and during the thinking (process).¹¹

The main difference here is a subtle one: for Fichte,

with mechanical processes of the body – identifies thinking and mind with the soul (Patterson, 2000).

- 8 My point here is not to represent or plead for any kind of dualism or interactionism, or any other kind of ontological standpoint about mental states. As stated in the introduction, my only intention is to show the mind-body dichotomy from the first-person point of view – for the subject or consciousness that is thinking that dichotomy and its own body. More on this will be said in the last chapters, together with McGinn's new mysterianism.
- 9 In accordance with the distinction in this paper the mind would be formulated in third-person perspective and the I in first-person. In other words, from first-person perspective, strictly speaking, it's not meaningful to utter "I *have* a mind", because I *am* the mind that utters that sentence, and not something different from it. The same goes for "I *have* an I". The precise distinction between the I and the consciousness or the mind, is not relevant for this paper.
- 10 Originally Kant's idea of a logical subject of transcendental apperception (Kant, 1998: 246ff).
- 11 Few notes are necessary here: first, philosophy after Kant, especially Fichte and Husserl, differentiates between empirical I – the ego or the self of each individual which could be known as an object – and the transcendental I – the experiencing, unifying subject, an actuality of mind that can never be conceived as an object, pure consciousness or even stream of consciousness. Secondly, Fichte defines the absolute I as a primordial activity that constitutes itself through itself and is the basis of all knowledge. On one hand, in the spirit of German Idealism, the I is regarded as an Absolute, on the other, the absolute I is interpreted just as

thinking does not accept any being beforehand, or in advance. Transcendental idealism starts from freedom, not from being, in the sense that freedom is a process, something that is happening (Fichte, 1982). So, Fichte would criticize Descartes in a way that thinking is not a thing, but thinking itself, a *process* – thinking does not start from some object (mind), but is itself producing it. For Descartes, we would have a substance whose essence is thinking, but for Fichte, we have thinking itself which concludes for itself that it is that substance; and in itself is a *de-substantialized* subject: the I that thinks and thinks itself as *self-thinking-I* (Todorović, 2014: 235). What is “before” or “behind” that process of thinking in which everything is thought? – Nothing can come before that process or act (Fichte, 1982: 98; 1994: 42);¹² I am only defining myself as a mind in the process of thinking, or during thinking.

Fichte notices the same idea as Descartes: *being of the subject* (subject’s being, or *res cogitans*) and *being for the subject*. But he goes further than him: the subject’s being is being for the subject (Fichte, 1982) – so, we as subjects need to abstract even from our own beings.

“[We] must grasp this subject entirely apart from any representation of being [...]. But if we abstract from all being of and for this conscious subject, then nothing pertains to it but acting.” (Fichte, 1994: 40; cf. 111-112ff).

My being thus, for me, becomes a not-I. Thought, thinking some being for its foundation actually thinks something other and different than itself, something that it isn’t and utters: “Oh, that’s me!”, similarly as seeing its reflection in a mirror. Analogously with contemporary neuroscience, brain processes that are the neurophysiological basis of my consciousness (and me) are, for me, something *not-me* in the same way a table or a chair is not me.¹³

So, the main problem that Fichte would probably have with this ‘thinking thing’ is the *thing*. I cannot be a thing, because a thing is an object and the I is always a subject; a thing is “static”, but the ‘I’ is always “dynamic”, thinking, a process. A process that produces itself for itself. If I put anything else in the place of the I (or before it), like the body, or a soul, or a mind, or *res cogitans* – I am putting an object in place of a subject. So, I am conscious of myself as consciousness, not as a *being-that-is-conscious*. My body, my soul, my mind, etc. are all *objects of my consciousness*. Anything else thought together with the I, Fichte calls “subjoined” to the *pure act* and is a thinking of an object (Fichte, 1982: 17).

In a parallel with Avicenna, the first knowledge of the floating man would be ‘I am’, ‘I exist’, which only states the existence of the subject of that statement, not what that subject is, who he is, or if he has a body. Some philosophers emphasize that self-consciousness is immediate and direct (Henrich, 2016: 39). I can be conscious of my

an abstraction of individual empirical I’s. There is extensive literature on this problem for which I don’t have room here. I am inclined to the latter interpretation, as Husserl puts it: “Can the ego which posits itself, of which Fichte speaks, be anything other than Fichte’s own?” (Husserl, 1970: 202). For more on this topic see (Guilherme, 2010; Breazeale, 1995; Carr, 1977; Natanson, 1959; Henrich, 2016).

- 12 Anything we think as “before” thinking or as a “substance” of thinking (mind, brain, body, etc.), is just thinking something *as-before-thinking*, but during the thinking process.
- 13 Here we could refer to Colin McGinn’s new mysterianism (McGinn, 1989; 1993; 1999). How can consciousness think of something as itself, like neurophysiological processes? Consciousness can learn, think or imagine that there are processes in the brain that give rise to it and that consciousness is a neurophysiological process, but it will never be “sensible” for it to say “I am a neurophysiological process” because for me I am “me”, this person, with this identity and memories, etc. This doesn’t imply that there is some substance that is me (as a soul or spirit), rather that it’s irrational for a consciousness, which is essentially a first-person view, to be grounded or to ground itself in third person point of view. A similar analogy would be with sight: eyes “do” the seeing, but they cannot see themselves in that seeing as themselves – they can only see a reflection in a mirror or a photograph of themselves. Furthermore, when I look at a table do I simply “see” a table, or is it, in fact, a very complicated physicochemical process of photons ‘bouncing’ off some physical structure and onto my retina and receptors where the information is translated into electrochemical signals that go to different regions of my brain? – Answer is both: neither statement is wrong, they are only on different levels of complexity; and “for me” I will never “have” photons or chemical signals – I will just have a table in front of me. Similarly, I don’t “have” my memories or emotions as neurochemical reactions or activities in brain regions, rather I have them as my memories or emotions, I am “experiencing” them phenomenally.

body (imagine it in this or that way, maybe even mistake something other for my body), but self-conscious only of myself, and that “myself” is actually the consciousness stating the I, not me as an empirical subject, or my body.

If the I is only an activity and is for itself as an I, then thinking, again as an activity, can think itself *as* a thinking, as a process, but it cannot go beyond that if not to miss or go *beyond* itself. In other words: I cannot think beyond myself and still think ‘that’ (which I find there) as myself. I can think that I am none other than I, but I cannot think meaningfully that my thoughts are a product of brain processes, etc. For the I, the brain processes that give rise to consciousness and I, are also the *Other*, just like the body.¹⁴

The act of thinking oneself is, in fact, the act (action) that is returning to itself, or reverting into itself – not directed outwards to an object (Fichte, 1982: 63). Anything thought of as an object or a thing, is consciousness “going away” from itself, moving outwards. ‘I am I’, the I posits itself as the I, *for itself*. Saying: “I am a *thinking thing*” would be for Fichte the same as saying “I am an object”, “I am *something else* (not-I)” – because I am not a thing, but *the thinking* itself. The I cannot define itself through an object, because it’s always a subject, so the I posits itself as *self-positing-I*, with the same apodictic certainty as *cogito ergo sum*.

That means that I cannot be anything else than that which asks what it is in the first place, or posits that *it itself* is the I. Only after does the I find itself as finite and determined, as something: a human being, rational animal, this and not that person; i.e. the I is structurally (logically) *limited* to itself, not empirically *determined*. It is a difference between necessary and transcendental features on the one hand and contingent and empirical on the other. That is why Fichte says:

“This determinacy appears as the absolutely contingent, and provides the *merely empirical* constituent of our knowledge. It is that, for example, whereby among possible rational beings I am a *man*, and among men am this *particular* person, and so forth.” (Ibid: 61).

Anything else we think instead of that I would be contingent and in form of “*I am... X*”, where X could be anything we “find” empirically: a man, human being, animal, mind, computer, etc. ‘I am...’ part of the sentence is consciousness’ part, and ‘X’ is that what consciousness finds itself in empirically and identifies itself; but self-consciousness doesn’t have to “*identify*” itself with something, it already is *self-identification*. One can assume that if a computer becomes conscious, it would do so in the form: “I am...”, followed by “...a computer”. Self-consciousness is immediately followed by consciousness of something, of some ‘X’ which is contingent, but what is necessary for self-consciousness is that ‘restrictedness’, as Fichte calls it, of the I.

Our thinking of an I is in fact I’s thinking of itself, or it’s an act upon itself. The I is not an individuum or empirical or psychological subject, but a pure logical form of consciousness that thinks itself:

“You are undoubtedly able to think ‘I’; and insofar as you do this you will discover that your consciousness is internally *determined* in a specific manner and that you are thinking of *only* one thing: viz., precisely what you comprehend under the concept ‘I.’” (Fichte, 1994: 106).

Consciousness is determined from the *inside* by the faculty of self-consciousness. Everything and anything else is derived as secondary, from that act.

We have made a circle and came back to the title of this paper: the I and the Body – why is the I so immediate to ourselves and why is our body something conceived as an object that we own. We could answer: because when we say “I have a body”, we are “on the side” of that I that only finds itself in a human body, or a body at all; we are consciousness, or more precisely: consciousness is *us*.¹⁵ It’s not I that *is* conscious, in a sense that the I is a substance and its being conscious or not an accident; but that consciousness *is* the I. I am not “something” that is conscious, rather I’m consciousness that finds itself “in” something, i.e. the body. Or: I’m not conscious, I am *consciousness*.

That is not about a person who is thinking itself or

14 This simply means that for the I or self-consciousness, knowledge of its “basis” is irrelevant. As in the theory of psychophysical identity, the identification of mental with physical events in the brain is a contingent one, albeit for the consciousness. The reason being that consciousness is “closed in itself”. This closedness of consciousness is, what is argued here, the reason for there being the discrepancy or duality between mind and body, i.e. that the body is something *different* from me.

15 This would also entail that the possibility of self-consciousness does not presuppose embodied existence, or, more precisely,

returning to itself in self-consciousness, and an I, but it is the *act itself*, the consciousness, that is thinking itself. A person is just a specific *expression* of the mind.

“For them,¹⁶ their own individual I is the only true substance, and reason is merely an accident of this substance. Their own person does not present itself to them as a particular expression of reason”. (Ibid: 90).

The empirical or psychological I is in fact *selfhood*, the contingent conglomerate which makes me this and not that person, but the pure I is that form, not the content; the consciousness itself, not that which we are conscious of. That I am *an* I is substantive, *what* or *who* am I is accidental. All of us are I’s, but I am *myself* and you are *yourselves*.

I also argue that it’s precisely because of this that we find thought experiments like Avicenna’s, Descartes’ or Putnam’s so convincing, and can meaningfully believe that we are, for example, living in a simulation of some sort; that our body is not ours or is an illusion; that we (our soul) could potentially survive the death of the body, because we are not “of” the body (i.e. neuropsychological processes); or, ultimately, to be able to distance ‘ourselves’ from our bodies by objectifying it. For, in the end, how could the sentence: “I have a body” be meaningful if I *was* that body which is held?

Body as neurons

Mind or consciousness from the first-person point of view becomes epistemologically “enclosed” or “encapsulated” in itself: I was first seen as soul, then “secularized” as the mind through faculty of the process of thinking and finally as the process itself which posits itself as self-positing-process. Epistemologically, this *enclosedness* doesn’t

that it isn’t dependent on it.

16 I.e. the people who are unable to make this distinction.

17 I argue that this epistemological enclosedness, or immediate cognitive access, is what gives rise to the notion of ontological difference or dualism. This doesn’t mean that the capacity to know ourselves directly, limit ourselves to ourselves, but *vice versa* – the fact that we are limited to ourselves (through the pure form of our self-consciousness), makes our self-knowledge evident. Here, the notions of limitedness and determination are used in the Fichtean sense (cf. Fichte, 1994: 74-75, 78ff).

18 And Putnam did insist that functionalism has its inspiration in Aristotle’s theory of forms. As he points out: “what we are really interested in, as Aristotle saw, is form and not matter. What is our intellectual form? is the question, not what the matter is. And whatever our substance may be, soul-stuff, or matter or Swiss cheese, it is not going to place any interesting first order restrictions on the answer to this question.” (Putnam, 1975, 302).

19 The Pythagorean theorem applies to every right triangle, regardless of its composition. It tells us about the fundamental relation in Euclidean geometry among the three sides of a right triangle. So, the shape itself and its properties and relations, are not intrinsic to the material or dependent on it.

imply that there is nothing “outside” (solipsism) or that consciousness itself isn’t grounded in some natural or physical process; it just means that it is limited in itself (or to itself) by self-consciousness, in immediate cognitive access and determined by the form of thinking.¹⁷

In contemporary philosophy of mind, we can see a similar idea about the relation of the I and the body in functionalism, but only if we exclude the “typical causes and effects of mental states” concept. Early functionalism states that mental states are constituted by their functional role and causal relations with other mental states, i.e. it doesn’t depend on the internal and material constitution (Putnam, 1975; Lewis, 1983). For example,¹⁸ a triangle is a triangle, be it made of metal or wood. For it to be a triangle it’s irrelevant of what material it’s made, what is relevant is its geometrical shape, with its own properties (Putnam, 1975: 296).¹⁹ If we apply this analogy to consciousness, it would be irrelevant if it is realized in brain neurons or silicon microchips.

In thinking physical foundation of thought – body, brain, neurons, biochemical processes, atoms in the end – we are going “behind” and “beyond” the thinking, or the I; stepping outside, so to speak, of introspection. Our mental states are phenomenal and qualitative, and in our thinking we are not going “beyond” thoughts and into its physical realizations.

Today, with the advances in modern neuroscience and technology, we could say that we *know* that the Body produces or creates the Mind, or the I. The body does that “through” the neurophysiological processes in the brain, communication between 86 billion neurons and brain regions, creating consciousness. Then, the question arises: where is the line between the mind and the body? Ac-

According to McGinn's new mysterianism, we can't actually and directly "think" and "know" that. We understand our minds and the I through reflection, which is personal and subjective, but we understand and think our brains in the same way as we do our bodies – objectively and verifiably:

"We have direct cognitive access to one term of the mind-brain relation, but we do not have such access to the nature of the link. Introspection does not present conscious states *as* depending upon the brain in some intelligible way. We cannot therefore introspect *P*." (McGinn, 1989: 354).

No amount of introspection and reflection could lead us to our neurons, their electrical activity; no matter how much we focus, concentrate, meditate intensively, thoughts will only produce more thoughts and we will never reach the foundation of our thoughts because it's not cognitively accessible (Ibid: 351). On the other hand, as Nagel and others pointed out, no matter how much empirical research I do, I will never understand how it is to see red color, or in the end find a specific neuron which has this or that notion, or an image of Mona Lisa (Nagel, 1974; Jackson, 1982). Zooming in on neurons with a microscope will just show us their deeper structure, as cells.

We can assume that if we are to create a conscious AI then that machine would have to be able to be self-conscious (conscious of itself) and, in the end, to be able to utter the words: "I am". That means that the "logical form" of consciousness is something more than just a physical realization of that form. I am a human being, a biological organism with a brain, and I'm conscious of myself; on the other hand, a machine with its silicon components, microchips, wires, etc. – if it is to be conscious – must be self-conscious in the same manner as I am. So, the basic form of an I, that it is a consciousness returning in itself, or self-consciousness, could be (in theory) realized in both organic substance – a brain, but also in "artificial" substance – a computer, or something else.²⁰

20 This all is to imply that the human type of consciousness is the "minimum" necessary form or condition of consciousness, not that it is a universal or only possible form.

21 As noted above, I don't make any metaphysical or ontological claims in this paper, rather, that consciousness is *not* amorphic; and logical form doesn't point to any claims about the world. But if we are to suppose a naturalistic standpoint then it would be a challenge to explain how logical form stems from natural processes in the brain (or, even in the previous example, how does the Pythagorean theorem "emerge" from atoms or chemical processes, and is it even justified to think in that way). In any case, that task would far outreach the scope of this paper.

If we assume that the I has its own form, independent of the body in which it is realized or actualized, then it would be safe to assume that I "have" an I, but so does every other conscious human being, or any other conscious being for that matter.²¹ It is independent of the fact that it stems out of my brain, or your brain, or a machine, etc. It would be the form of consciousness itself.

Conclusion

This paper aimed to present the mind-body distinction or "duality", however, not from the common third-person point of view, as a relation between two objects (mind and body), rather, from the *first-person point of view*, as a relation between a subject (the I) and his body, as an object. The mind wasn't presented as an object of the inquiry, rather as a subject inquiring about himself. Therefore, the question had to be changed from how are the mind and the body connected, to how am I distinct or different from my body? Consequently, am I the body (i.e. as a whole), or am I that "thing" (a subject) that asks in the first place? Conceptualized this way, with the emphasis on the first-person perspective, it comes as a necessity that the subject needs to have some form of *immediate self-consciousness*, i.e. relation with itself, in which the body is not contained. In that perspective, we are not confronted with a case of connecting two objects to each other, rather we have one side, a subject (the I), for which the other side is an object that it owns, or from whom it can *distance* itself. The reason being that the subject-side is *self-enclosed* with regard to cognitive accessibility.

Yet, transferred into the first-person perspective, the *epistemological* "duality" doesn't necessarily imply an *ontological* one. From an epistemological standpoint, starting from the I (the order of notion), one could argue that there is no question that I am a mind with a body or that the body is an illusion (fueling the intuitions of thought experiments). But, from an ontological standpoint (the order of beings), the I (i.e. the mind) is claimed to be a product of

the body, neurophysiology of the brain. What I am then is precisely that – *an* I (ego or self) to which self-consciousness has immediate and direct relation; it is for itself.²² And exactly here is the place where the body becomes the *Other* – something else, different, something not-I, an *object* in *my* possession. The further task should be to investigate exactly how and when does this *self-distancing* become possible, i.e. distancing oneself from one's body (and from other aspects of selfhood). In other words, this isn't a question of whether the Cartesian project is right or wrong, but how is it even possible in the first place (how can *I* distance *myself* from, e.g. *my* perceptions)?

On the other hand, the mind is always “outside” of itself, directed towards external things intentionally. Minds are likewise intrinsically extended and embodied, “immersed” into the world. Extendedness of the mind is understood not just as a mere directedness outward, towards objects in the world, but also as using these objects as means to extend its “reach”.²³ Physical objects (material bodies) extend ourselves (our I's) and our reach, our presence without moving or extending our bodies. Therefore, it seems that self-consciousness should be just a small “part” of it, albeit the formal and necessary, i.e. transcendental, that *permeates* consciousness. It is not the *consciousness of self* – that only emerges in the reflection when we direct our attention to ourselves, and Sartre gives a few compelling examples of that (Sartre, 1957) – but a *pre-reflective self-consciousness* (or pure I), feature characterizing the experiential dimension as such (Zahavi, 2015: 7). The pure I is simultaneously a transcendental element of consciousness and a logical subject that encompasses the entire consciousness making it “*mine*”. In other words, it is a Husserlian “I-pole” of consciousness to which everything is polarized in ascription (*my* body, *my* consciousness, *my* personality, etc.). Hence, no matter the degree of extendedness or immersion of consciousness, the I remains imbuing it.

In the end, we are confronted with opposing ways of conceptualizing the relation between the mind and the

body. It could be that the body is not constitutive of the consciousness, or the self, i.e. it doesn't enter the “picture” of oneself other than through ownership of an object (“I have a body”); it could be that the I is actually a purely logical form of consciousness that could be potentially realized in different physical realizations and manifestations (organic brains, AIs, computers, etc.). It could also be that the mind or the I is extended throughout space (and time) using matter – bodies, objects, tools, technology; or even that our own selfhood, or more precisely I-hood, encompasses our body in such a way that we are immersed in the world as bodily subjects and pre-reflexive consciousness. The point is, these conceptualizations already depend on our standpoint regarding the I.

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22 Even if the I is for itself, it doesn't possess the reason for itself within itself. True, I do not require another term like the body to account for this phenomenon, but the epistemological enclosedness doesn't entail that there is an actual ontological difference between the two. As in phenomenological tradition, any metaphysical claim is suspended.

23 Phones extend the reach of our communication and interaction; books could be understood as an extension of our memory; computers extend the reach of our access to information and most importantly our *presence* (e.g. in online meetings).

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