
Ontology: The Basis of the Mind-body Problem

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Abstract

The mind-body has a long history in philosophical thought. It is one of the critical problems that connect with diverse issues, creates a link with the neurosciences, thereby paving the way for onward research therein and is essential to understanding human nature. This relation to nature gives it an ontological base as the problem of entity such that, if well understood, would give a lasting solution. There have been disagreements among philosophers on what constitutes the mind-body problem and how best to deal with it. The nature of the reality in question is of the essence. It means that the issues of the relationship of mind and body do not precede the question of being. With conscious experience, we realize ourselves and other objects as existing entities. This presence of experience necessitates the use of the phenomenological approach. The argument, therefore, is that it is good to establish its ontological status before seeking a solution founded on the set platform. Human beings are the centres of these experiences, a ground of the certainty we have.

Keywords: Being, conscious experience, mind-body problem, ontology.

1. Introduction

An understanding of being qua being is at the heart of ontology. It is the quest to know what exists and how it does exist. Every human discovery unveils something novel about the universe. Such a novelty gains an ontological status that gives room for epistemic foundations. Quests like this could go on endlessly through generations. Human ingenuity paves the way for growth. When there are epistemic grounds for the existence of something, it becomes a problem in search of a solution. We find this in the mind-body problem. It is one of the most elusive philosophical issues. Transmogrification in this study stupendously unveils through time, profound constant development. While it could be linked to ancient issues of great concern, it also seems relevant to current studies. As such, it is an old and yet new phenomenon. At each of its developmental stages, supposedly proffered solutions in themselves turn problems in need of further clarifications. This reason probably accounts for all the neologisms that have accompanied it through the years while the fundamental issues remain unchanged.

As it stands, the plausibility strength seems to be the yardstick for the successes of proffered views. How parsimonious they are gives them choicest places within the different schools of

thought. However, when taken on ontological grounds, it calls all aspects of reality to question. It means that partial treatments, which rely on some aspects of reality, would only give corresponding partial results. The nature of the human being, if properly examined, would espouse the mind-body problem as just a part of the said nature. It would show that both first- and third-person ontology are twin non-negligible views for far-reaching comprehension. The paper argues for a return to this parting ground that lasting solutions would emerge.

2. What ontology means

The term ontology derives from two Greek words *on* (also *ont*, *onto*) meaning “being or entity”, “that which is”, “that which exists” and *logos* meaning “discourse”, “science” “study”. *Ontologia* renders the Greek combination of these two words, whose popular usage dates back to Christian von Wolff in his *Philosophia prima sive ontologia*. It is the discourse on being or in other words, the science or study of being. Being or entity, as the case may be, entails what is; that which exists. Whatsoever exists, in any form possible is called being and a major preoccupation of ontology. All that exist forms reality, which is another term that captures the subject matter of ontology. So, being is real and forms the basis for what is (ontology), how we find out about it (epistemology) and what it does (causation) (Searle 18). With the mention of being as its case study, metaphysics which deals with being qua being immediately comes to mind also. On the grounds of these general definitions, they seem the same. Being qua being is the main subject matter of the Book IV of Aristotle’s First Philosophy or Metaphysics. It summarises the principles that form the foundations of that from which every other entity there is comes from. Questions about existence and essence, universals and particulars, act and potency, form and matter, causes, etc. and their relationships are the major concerns of metaphysics.

The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy gives a hint that explains the connections between metaphysics and ontology. It describes the latter as “the branch of metaphysics that concerns itself with what exists.” De Quincey understands it in the same light. Added to this conception, he defines it as the “theoretical investigations into the nature of reality”; “the study of the ‘furniture of reality’” – which considers the “kinds of entities that actually exist” (12, 292). This link is probably why Strawson was not bothered with their distinctions in his definition in the *Selves*. For him, “Metaphysics (or ontology) is the general study of how things are or can be or must be” (1). According to *The Penguin dictionary of philosophy*, ontology is “the general theory of being as such, and forms the general part of metaphysics, or theoretical philosophy.” In this sense, a general estimate of ontology would basically cover all there is, in whatever form they are or can be or should be and any form of interrelations they might have. What reality is made out of, their common features, dynamism and relations amongst them are the crux of the matter for this discourse. They form the most basic points of reference in the descriptions of ontology.

Sequel to this, ontology is applied in diverse contexts. These do not change its common understanding. One could speak of ontological problems which would deal with all questions that seek answers on the status of entities be they abstract or concrete. The abstract entities

cover a whole range of immaterial beings even if they be mere objects of thought or imagination. Questions on the existence of God, angels, human soul, etc. would fall within this camp. Concrete entities would cover on things within the objective world. They are mostly palpable realities within the range of scientific discovery. Dennett speaks about the ontology of a theory. By this he means “the catalogue of things and types of things the theory deems exist” (36). One could also talk of ontological claims which, according to Chalmers, “are claims about the existence of entities” (267). There is also fundamental ontology which “studies the basic-level kinds of entities” (De Quincy 292). Here, what these entities are becomes its major preoccupation.

On these grounds, three broad divisions of ontology are eminent. It deals with issues in cosmology, rational psychology and natural theology. These camps of studies envelop both the material and immaterial concerns of ontology. The terms material and immaterial are here used in their natural meanings of physical and nonphysical entities respectively. As such, ontological issues would involve concerns about the world. It has interest in the workings of the world. This would cover the material or physical sphere of the verifiable realities in the camp of science. All forms of sciences cash in on this. Objective approaches to the mind-body problem are all covered within this sphere. That is the cosmological dimension. It also deals with issues concerning the human soul. Questions about the immortality of the soul readily come to mind. Are there other beings with soul apart from humans? Does the world have soul or is it soul-less? Of interest here too are the subjective aspects of the mind-body problem which immediately seem inaccessible to the objective world. All those constitute the essentials of rational psychology. The last aspect, which is natural theology, raises questions on the existence or non-existence of God and all other invisible intelligible beings. If they exist, how do they relate? If they don't why do such ontological commitments gain much attention? Issues of transcendence are given special attention here. When the human person is said to be self-transcend, it is presumed that he shuffles between the realms of rational psychology and natural theology.

Ontology underscores troubling questions, establishes models and raises theories that help us understand the world. Such issues and concerns range from general to particular features of the world. What and how these questions really are within the perimeters of ontological commitment and meta-ontology form the basis of discourse. With the former, we face the difficulty of answering the questions of what it is there is. Here, it is also difficulty to be champions of our ontological commitment to some of our positions. With the latter, what the ontological question really entails is ambiguous and its goal seems oblique too. Despite these odds, Hofweber gives us a motivation for the study of meta-ontology which “is simply the question of what question ontology aims to answer.” With this, it is noteworthy to take cognizance of the four working definitions he laid which seem to encapsulate the basic tenets of ontology. First, it is “the study of ontological commitment”. This means that it deals with “what we or others are committed to”. Second, it studies “what there is”. This is the fundamental understanding obvious in virtually every definition so far. Third, it deals with the “general features of what there is, and how the things there are relate to each other in the metaphysically most general way.” Fourth, it is the “study of meta-ontology”, that is to “say

what task it is that the discipline ontology should aim to accomplish, if any, how the questions it aims to answer should be understood, and with what methodology they can be answered” (Hofweber).

These four immediate definitions make assertions of ontology that will serve the purpose of this work. Though they are all related to the previous conceptions we had looked at, they shall guide our comprehension of the ontological basis of the mind-body problem. With the first, the work shall espouse some of the ontological commitments and/or positions taken to address the mind-body dichotomy. Here, their ontological stance would be a big deal. The second shall consider the general idea of what exists, that is the mind and the body, mental and physical, as seemingly obvious based on human experience of pain, for instance. On the third, the issues of their relations, if any or none, between the mind and the body shall come to bare, depending on the perspective one looks at it from. In other words, their causal roles or none is of interest. Such positions in question could be monistic or dualistic. The last shall chart a course for the possibility of relook on the ontological foundations of the mind-body problem. It shall advance a possible reason it has lingered for so long without an impeccable solution. This returns us to the quest for a better understanding on the nature of the human subject. Before then, it is pertinent to comprehend what the mind-body dichotomy entails.

3. The mind-body problem in view

The mind-body problem is one of the age long problems of philosophy. Traces of it are evident in the different epochs of philosophy. However, its clearest designation is found in Descartes whose *Meditations in First Philosophy* and *Discourse on method* readily lay out the line of course. His methodical doubt led to his ‘self-discovery’. This is spelt out in the dictum: *Cogito ergo sum*, I think, therefore, I am. From this thought, he came about the realization of himself as also possessing a body as an extended thing. In Descartes, *res cogitans* and *res estensa*, denoting both “thinking thing” and “extended thing”, respectively are cardinal poles. He poses the mind (or soul as the case may be) as distinct from the body (matter or physical as the case may be). By this, two distinct and seemingly opposite ontological realities are obvious. There is an affirmation of the existence of mind and body. The former is said to cover the mental sphere, immaterial by nature and conscious; while the latter presupposes a ‘nonmental’ state, physical by nature and presumed unconscious. This covers the most generic notion of ontology already: what is; what exists. In this case, questions of the mind and the body immediately come to lamplight. Searle tabulates them in his *Mind: A brief introduction* to help us understand the immediately presumed differences this camping of terms seems to breed (11).

	Substances	
	Mind	Body
Essence	Thinking (consciousness)	Extension (having spatial dimensions)
Properties	Known directly Free Indivisible Indestructible	Known indirectly Determined Infinitely divisible Destructible

How is this then a problem? one may ask. From the table, it is obvious that what the mind is conceived to be is the direct opposite of what the body portends. There seems to be a disparity between them. On this level ground, both are seen as independent entities. Should we use the human person, for instance, in him are found both of these realities yet he is a single entity. From this, it is obvious that positing the existence of the mind and the body pre-empts a possible relationship between. This appears to be the first step to the mind-body problem: understanding the relationship between the mind and the body. As Campbell puts it, “the Mind-Body problem, can be posed most briefly in a single question: What is the relation, in man, between his mind and his body?” Still on this, using other terms, he continues: “the Mind-Body problem will be for us the problem of determining in what relation a human mind stands to a human body” (1). The causal role between the mind and the body, given their seemingly incompatible nature, is what draws one’s immediate attention. How is it possible that an invisible entity would impact on a palpable entity? In more difficult terms, Searle, in his *Mind* would ask, “What exactly are the relations between the mental and the physical, and in particular how can there be causal relations between them?” (11). The first working definition of ontology based on ontological commitments captures this aspect. It raises logical questions that separate the various positions of the schools of thought therein.

Having called the mind-body problem a *puzzle*, Westphal basically looks at it from this logical dimension. He seems to evade the ontological aspect. This for him is so because it “will help us not to get lost in the metaphysics of things other than the mind and the body” (ix). This format for him had always been the norm since the “metaphysical problem itself has only gained its significance since philosophers first became aware of it, and at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, for better or for worse, it is still alive and well” (xii). Such a logical approach is built around an inconsistent tetrad. A tetrad consists of four propositions that seem true individually but all cannot be equally accepted at the same time without grievous contradictions. This account for the use of incompatible or inconsistency before the tetrad propositions to depict the tension that waves in when one strives to forcefully reconcile them (1). He takes this model from Campbell (14). Both of them list out the logical tensions embedded in this dichotomy where an acceptance of a proposition amounts to denial of another. This would only be possible when the entities in question exist in first place. It presupposes that the mind-body problem was first an ontological problem before the thought of its interpretations giving room for so many considerations. There has to be an ontology before any possible logical or epistemological

questions would arise. These latter questions only arise out of the need to understand what is already. In defining philosophy of mind, Kind hints on the basic issues it deals with. For her, it.

Addresses issues in both metaphysics and epistemology. On the metaphysics side, philosophers of mind ask: What is the nature of the mind? What is its relation to the brain and to the body? Which sorts of beings have mind? On the epistemological side, philosophers of mind ask: What methods of study can provide us with knowledge about the mind? Or, more specifically: Are introspective methods – methods where we draw upon our inwardly-focused mental assessment – reliable? How can we know whether (and, if so, which) other beings have minds? (3).

The metaphysical questions above pushes on the mind-body discourse. There are ambiguities to the nature of the mind. This also goes for the body. Such ambiguities as to what the mind or the body is made of are the possible reasons it has lingered on. One thing is clear, however, all that concerns immateriality are easily linked to the mind, while all that are perceptible within the objective world are commonly aligned with the body. In a subtle way, Bealer presupposes these ontological distinctions with his definition of identity thesis. Though tagged mental substances, the correlates he speaks about are those of mind and body, or mental and physical as the case may be. According to him, “The identity theses (...) is the doctrine that every mental property (e.g., being in pain) is identical to first order physical property (e.g., having firing C-fibres)” (185). His use of the terms substances and properties seem undifferentiated. Though dealing with a form of the physicalist or materialist ontology, he pitches camps for both mind and body as mental properties before reducing the mind to the body thereby making it identical.

This only draws us to other ways of understanding the mind-body problem on their ontological basis. Beyond the literal consideration of them as distinct entities and subsequently, the relations between them, what is also worrisome is how consciousness arises. This gradually drives home the modern conception of the mind-body dichotomy. It is the problem of consciousness which before now was restricted to the mind as we had seen in the table above. How does conscious experience come about in the objective world? Breaking it further, Searle asks several questions that come with implications: “How can conscious experiences like pain exist in a world that is entirely composed of physical particles and how can some physical particles, presumably in your brain, cause the mental experiences?” This questions raised by Searle spill into other problems: “How can the subjective, insubstantial, nonphysical mental states of consciousness ever cause anything in the physical world? How can your intention, not a part of the physical world, ever cause the movement of your arm?” He calls this the problem of mental causation. The next is: “How can your thoughts, presumably in your head, refer to or be about distant objects and states of affairs, political events occurring in Washington, London, or Paris, for example?” This he calls the problem of intentionality which in this context in use by Searle “means the directedness or aboutness of the mind” (3).

When one feels pain, s/he knows s/he has an experience of some discomfort. Nothing of it is a mirage. S/he knows exactly what s/he feels. Balmer puts it, “we have a clear and accurate conception of experience” (8). We know what we feel when there is a toothache, for example. He continues, “by virtue of having experience, we know that there exists some reality beyond the objective world but experience is unable to tell us any specific details about the nature of transcendent reality because of the fact that we misconceive experience” (9). In his *Conscious mind*, Chalmers also affirms this knowledge of consciousness in what better captures it when juxtaposed with the world: “We know consciousness far more intimately than we know the rest of the world, but we understand the rest of the world better than we understand consciousness” (3). He is famous for his coinage of the mind-body problem as ‘the hard problem of consciousness’ which in the greater part treats the *same* issues thus far. From all these, it is evident that the mind-body problem poses challenges. On these lay the grounds for its ontological foundations. Be it part of the natural world or not, once we clearly understand these, we could properly see reasons to begin a sincere quest for solution. Chalmers though using the term consciousness for it presents the targets of his work. The first and the most important is “the very existence of consciousness.” The questions that immediately follow are ontological in nature: “Why does conscious experience exist? If it arises from physical systems, as seems likely, how does it arise? This leads to some more specific questions. Is consciousness itself physical, or is it merely a concomitant of physical systems? How widespread is consciousness? Do mice, for example, have a conscious experience?” (5) These ontological questions are targeted at the very base of the mind-body problem. In other words, if there is mind and body, the second working definition of ontology gains merits. This is because it deals with the questions about what exists.

There are two ways to approach these questions. One could attempt an answer from via negative which is the denial of their existence. This path would negate the existence of mind or body or even conscious experience as they case may be. Philosophers in this camp, even though they use the term consciousness, see it as an illusion or better still insist that it does not exist at all (Strawson 171-172). Others, like Strawson, would lay off the coinage mind-body problem for reasons of improper understanding of what the physical really entails. While he would accept conscious experience in his *Real materialism and other essays*, he would dismiss the acronym mind-body problem (20). This ushers in Chalmer’s second target which aims at questions that wholly affirm that there is the mind-body problem. Issues as this too are not so easy to tend. Nevertheless it seems obvious that mind and body exist, what they are made of is not an easy knot to crack. Even in this sphere, they could be looked at as wholly distinct or indistinct entities. This too further deepens the questions raised. In fact, the different ontological approaches, as we shall come to see, differ considerably on their understanding of what is mind and body or even consciousness as the case may be. How do we know the essence of what it is that exists advances epistemological questions that are not easily dismissed either. Chalmers’ second challenge hinges on this via positive approach that affirms the existence of the mind-body problem or conscious experience. Its goal for him is on “the specific *character* of conscious experiences” (5).

Having acknowledged the existence of mind-body, be they the same or separate entities, it is good to examine the questions therein. First, there is the tendency to explaining the mind-body issue based on the physical functions of the body. Cognitive science here seeks the causal properties of the different parts of body. This seems the most dominate method given the objective nature of scientific experiments. Chalmers believes learning and memory are functional properties characterized by causal roles. As a result, the question “How could a physical system have psychological property P?” comes to the same thing as “How could a state of a physical system play such-and-such a causal role?” (24). in this context, a mechanical approach seems predominant. Functions are related to parts of a physical system or a body to explain how they come about. Such is applied to the conscious experience. This is evident in the definitions by Strawson and Searle of consciousness as mere neural firing (Strawson 13, 18; Searle 79). While this perspective poses a lot of questions, they are not really the core of the mind-body problem. They form the psychological aspects of the problem and not the phenomenal ones. Hence, Chalmers calls them the easy problems (24-25).

The hard problems deal with the phenomenal questions. They come with serious ontological issues. They are not easily explained away by causal functional approach of the cognitive sciences nor do the psychological behavioural correlation of some parts of the body, like the brain for example, exhaust the demands therein. Moreover, they deal with the entity as a whole. On this, Chalmers asserts: “The hardest part of the mind-body problem is the question: how could a physical system give rise to conscious experience?” In other terms, for instance, it deals with “why all the stimulation and reaction associated with pain is accompanied by the *experience* of pain” (25). The formulation of these questions by Chalmers seems to encapsulate the physicalist/materialist ontological quest. Though he answered them via negativa in his *Conscious mind*, his *Character of consciousness* takes the opposite dimension. Not even these two aspects have been able to lay off the mind-body problem. They all seem to scratch the surface, reason being that they are not all-inclusive in the quest to solve the mind-body problem. They all seem to argue from exclusive ontological grounds.

4. Ontological approaches to the problem

In the light of the mind-body problem, there have been different approaches to the problem through the years. Every proffered solution begins from an ontological ground. This is what this aspect underscores without necessarily discussing them in details. Those could be issues for further discussions. All this work seeks is to establish their ontological status. On this, two broad divisions immediately come to lamplight: monist and dualist ontology. All other forms of considerations seem to be subsumed under these two broad classifications. Monist ontology lays credence to one basic kind of entity in the universe. This basic thing grounds all there is. It is single stuff ontology irrespective of the possibility of its being multidimensional. As such, everything in the universe is explained from this unique perspective, outside of which, nothing exists. Idealism, physicalism (materialism as the case may be) and Russellian monism are three subdivisions of monism.

The first is a mind-centred ontology by which all that is said to exist proceed from the mind. Perception validates what we have as experience of the world. Here, the notion of immateriality and mentality are predominantly used since the physical world as we have it would exist first in the mind; hence, immaterial and mental. One certainty idealism grapples with is the concrete nature of physical reality as we have it. The second contrasts this; it is a physical-centred ontology by which everything is physical or matter. It suggests that nothing exists in the universe that is not made of physical entities. There is nothing beyond the physical world as we have it, it seems to say. Under this group, Papineau speaks of “type identity, token identity, realization, or supervenience” (8) as the possible nodes anyone who seeks to address issues of the mind-body problem must begin from. Issues about how conscious experiences come about accounts for the different versions of physicalism. Russellian monism, being the third, takes its name from Russell. Being relatively recent, compared to the two above, it affirms that basic reality is lies between these two. It is a composite of what they attempt to explicate. This makes it a neutral stuff such that physics is “interpreted in a way which tends towards idealism, and perception in a way which tends towards materialism” (Russell 2007). The different forms of idealism or physicalism are explained with this general framework of single ontology. With Russellian monism, it is difficult to ascertain the nature of consciousness as fundamental reality or not.

Dualist ontology argues for two basic entities in the universe. Within this spectrum, the universe is made of both mind and physical entities. Both are distinct entities that are mutually exclusive yet co-exist. Two forms of dualism are prominent: substance and property dualism. Going by the first, two obviously different entities, physical objects and immaterial mind, exist in the universe. It admits of two substances in the world where mind and physical, thought and extension are somewhat independent of each other. This is sometimes called Cartesian dualism. Property dualism, on the other hand, is somewhat different. It does not admit of two mutually exclusive substances but of properties of objects in the universe. It affirms that in every object there are two distinct properties which are mental, in some sense, and also physical, in another sense. Either ways, there is the problem of an inadequate account of mental phenomena and how non-palpable phenomena would affect concrete entities.

The ontological status of consciousness discourses also explores ontology as being subjective and objective. In the former, conscious experiences are seen in the light of their being the experiences of subjects. This aspect has an immediate link to the inner life of the subject whose experience it is, in a certain sense exclusive of others’. To it is attached some degree of privacy. In this case, there is first-person ontology. This grip on the privacy of experience does not rule out the possibility of intersubjective relations where similar subjects correlate, thereby sharing their experiences. On the other hand, the objective concerns the experience of things in the outer world, accessible to everyone at the same time. This deals with the public domain open to all. It is third-person ontology very common within the sciences. Seeking a nexus between the subjective and objective domains, Searle opines the importance of stressing that one “can have epistemically objective knowledge of a domain that is ontologically subjective” (328). For this reason, he believes that “an epistemically objective

science of ontologically subjective consciousness is possible” (328). There is such a possibility surely but that is not exhaustive given that not only epistemic issues are at stake when it relates to the mind-body problem.

5. A wholesome approach to the mind-body problem

The foregoing has shown that ontology is preoccupied with what is, what exists. This serves as a foundational definition since what is must so be first before any form of relationship would emerge. Existence precedes relation. The fact that something is gives the reason for its study. From this stems out the epistemological and logical constructs that better help our descriptions of it. While these could be misconstrued, they easily give rise to other questions that further deepen the enterprise. Such are the questions that have sustained the mind-body discourse for the length of years of its considerations. Every being is multifaceted. Like a coin, each being is multi-dimensional. To understand it better, an integral approach that seeks to unravel what each of these divergent aspects of being entails must come to play. Questions about its origin are always the most basic ones. They predate existence of particular entities and seek to understand the connection this holds with its immediate state. This is very important for all structures.

It is true that both subjective and objective approaches have been employed in the mind-body studies. Their applications often times seem pitched against each other. The objective deals with all third-person understanding of the issues at stake. This is what scientific methods mostly bank on. They concentrate on the causal functions of physical systems and their correlations. By this, they affirm that there is something and that it correlates with others. It simply *reduces* the mind-body problem to the physical system and explains it in physical terms, be they phenomenally intended to convey what is involved. Based on this, one can easily explain away the mind-body problem as “neural firing” as we had seen earlier. In such ontology, everything is physical and nothing else outside of the physical world exists. The idea of a supra-sensible world (of God, angels, spirits) is a mere mental formulation that does not have bearing on the physical world as we have it.

This immediately turns our attention to the subjective dimension which is a first-person view of conscious experience. Here, the experience of pain is a personal thing, fundamentally unshared; though could be understood by others. Being a subjective account, two people might not experience the same pain exactly the same way. All about this dimension is wholly phenomenal and at the base of the very hard problem so coined. It is not easily explainable, though, it is the most certain thing we have. Issues about shared consciousness come in mostly in the objective world. The subjective world seems private. Cognitive science seems limited in this domain even though great progress seems to be made daily. Libet’s experiment, for instance, shows that the account of the experience is necessary to certify the objective claims we make. There can be no such objective claims without subjective basis. Where then does this leave us?

The human subject is the harbinger of both subjective and objective views of consciousness. In the mind-body dichotomy, there is an account of mankind’s quest to understand itself first

and the world around it. The first aspect covers the subjective dimension while the second dwells on the objective. Both are necessary if we must perfectly understand human ontology. Is human nature just about the body or the physical entity? Or is it merely a psychological entity? One position pitched against the other already spells out contradictions. Beyond this, is there any possibility of an additional attribute to this entity? The human person self-transcends. There is an aspect of human nature that transcends both physical and psychological considerations. The human being is not just body and mind or soul, as the case seems to be. Human beings are bio-psycho-spiritual beings whose nature is not just physical (bio or body) and psychological (psycho or mind) (Stein, 109, 117; Mobeen 8-9; Caltagirone 13; Caltagirone 50, 367). There is a spiritual attribute added to these two known (though debatable) already given the nature of scientific investigations. This too is necessary for an understanding of human ontology around which all discourses on the mind-body problem revolve. Any attempt that blinds itself to this would only *successfully* treat of its aspects. In fact, the coinage mind-body problem seems inadequate on this ground. Being an ontological issue, a better understanding would spring from an integral look at this nature. Such would be the nature of a wholesome approach in this case. Does that mean this can be easily proven within cognitive science which seems to be the yardstick for contemporary judgement?

Scientific theories are within the objective world, we had noted. Outside this familiar domain, they mostly fall short. Transcendence by nature attempts understanding realities beyond the rudimentary ambient of the empirical world. This slightly seems to account for the difficulties the objective world has grasping the phenomenal world of consciousness. It is probably the reason this controversy has lingered this long. One who truly seeks to solve it must return to its base: the anthropological subject. The question of what is the nature of the human being would readily come to mind. Not even philosophy has made attempts at exhausting the questions therein. Once we clearly understand this, it would be clear how the mind-body problem is deeply rooted in it. What we know for certain is that both subjective and objective approaches are human efforts to solving the same problem. While they are intact, they open us to more to dig into. It is human's quest for self-knowledge and should be properly so understood. Both ought to be harnessed for an adequate solution. They must not appear mutually exclusive; they are co-extensive in their quest to solve the same issue. This, we must also remain focused on.

6. Conclusion

So far, the paper sought to establish the ontological base of the mind-body controversy. It argued for this from the perspective that what is perceived or experienced necessarily exists. Ontology is about the things that exist and the correlation between them. As such, being the problem of the relation of mind and body in human beings, in the specific sense, and other creatures, in the generic sense, the issues raised within the mind-body discourse are ontological in nature. Every conscious experience has a subject who has a relationship with other 'subjects' of experience with whom it holds shared experiences of the objective world. None of these should short-change the other in any way. We have seen how the different approaches viewed reality from their perspectives, taking out the mind as a distinct entity, or

the body, or keeping both without adequately accounting for their coexistence. It is partly so because science, accruing itself the power of judgment, does so within the objective realm. By itself, this seems a limitation, given the nature of the human being, in particular in this case, and the world in general as we have it.

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