

What Am I?

A Study of Cartesian Dualism and Objections to It

By

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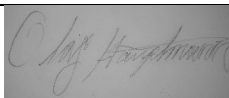
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Summery

The focus of this paper is to access Descartes' argument for mind body dualism. Descartes conclusion is that we have a thinking self that is separate from the body. The paper will look at various arguments for and against this conclusion. After Descartes we proceeds to Hume's critique of dualism. The focus of this paper is to access Descartes' argument for mind body dualism. Descartes conclusion is that we have a

thinking self that is separate from the body. After Descartes we proceed to Hume's critique of dualism. Hume has four arguments against dualism. First it is investigated which of his arguments address Descartes' claims. The second argument is found to be most pertinent. The conclusion of the second argument is that there is no one self or consciousness just a bundle of perceptions. The argument is analysed by contrasting it with Descartes and it appears that Descartes has superior explanatory force.

The Humian argument becomes the focus going forward. While the argument seems to have some flaws it should be noted that several subsequent philosophers take up similar claims. In the following section we access how David Kaplan through his language philosophy arrives at a claim very similar to Hume. Kaplan analyses the use of the first-person pronoun. This causes Kaplan to reject Frege's idea that we all have a primitive self-acquaintance. Not that different from Hume's idea that within we have no self to behold. Kripke does a careful analysis both of Frege's and Kaplan's claims and establishes quite convincingly that the primitive self-acquaintance is needed for us to be able to coherently refer to ourselves when we think, speak or write.

In the second section we look at Kripke's modal argument for dualism. Kripke uses examples of states of pain in the brain and nerves as opposed to feelings of pain to establish that the mind and brain have different identities, and therefore cannot be one. Finally, we examine two objections to Kripke's argument. First from James Madden who seeks to undermine both Descartes' and Kripke's argument. Madden show that these arguments rely on conceivability and claims that this is what makes them weak. An analysis of the example that Madden uses, intending to show that conceivability is inscrutable, surprisingly turns out to be more of an argument in favour of conceivability. With Kripke's doctrine of essential properties it is shown that "James Madden is a reptile" is not possible in any world. Finally, we will look at Kripke's own objection to dualism. This claims that the fact that personal identity is crucially affected by parents through the sperm and egg. The claim which Kripke only hints at is outlined and analysed. While this does pose challenge for dualism, we also outline a possible solution.

The conclusion of this paper it should seem could be a smashing endorsement of Cartesian dualism. However, it is recognized that is a very big question and that this paper by no means address all the

objections. Instead, it cautions that both sides ought to arm themselves humility. As Kripke puts it: “The mind body question is wide open and extremely confusing.” (Kripke, 1980, p. 155)

Problem

In the discussion of dualism there seems to be two main objections that are very important to keep separated. There is the naturalist objection which simply claims that consciousness is nothing more than the processes in the brain; then there is Hume’s objection which is a bit more difficult to summarize. If we are pressed, we might say that it amounts to there being no single conscious self. It is the contention of this paper that there is a tradition from Hume through Wittgenstein to John Perry, David Kaplan and others that all claim that we have no special perception of ourselves. Our knowledge of self is no different from our third person knowledge of others. The aim of this paper is to as far as possibly sort out some of the various Humian objection and assess how well it does against the arguments of Descartes, Frege and Kripke. When we come to Kaplan the discussion will focus much on the first-person pronouns and what their meaning is.

On the side of dualism there is a tradition going all the way back to Plato. However, for the purpose of this paper we will focus on Descartes. The contention being that Descartes has a particular form of argumentation which is carried on by Frege and Kripke. Kripke will be the main focus of this paper as we will look particularly at his arguments as well as how he addresses the Humian objections.

There are several different arguments for dualism. The main focus of this paper is the Cartesian argument. But there are also arguments by Lock and Leibniz which make very different claims about the human consciousness. Hume makes four different arguments against dualism. Unfortunately, Hume does not label the arguments as to what arguments or philosopher they are directed against. When reading them one must keep in mind what claims the different dualists make to understand which argument counters what. As we shall see some of Hume’s arguments are poor responses to Descartes but may be much more potent objection to Lock or Leibniz. Hume’s second argument does seem to take aim directly at Descartes’ “res cogitans.” This in turn is rejected by Kripke and Frege. Again, Frege’s argument seems like a poor even strange response to naturalism. It will, however, be shown to be much more meaningful

when pressed into service against Hume. Indeed, to see Hume's argument as the target is the more charitable reading.

In this contest Descartes as well as Kripke's neo-Cartesian argument do seem to win out against Humian arguments. But even if they win against the Humian objection, it seems that naturalism still poses a formidable obstacle. Newer critics such as James D. Madden have also pointed out that conceivability is a weakness of Descartes as well as Kripke's argument. Towards the end this paper I will consider this objection as well as Kripke's own objection to dualism. However, on closer scrutiny the objection to conceivability is considerably weakened, we also pose a possible solution to Kripke's counterargument. Philosophy of mind is a big and complex field no one side seems able to claim complete victory which is the moral of this paper.

Descartes' Cogito

Here is Descartes argument in a condensed version.

1. Sensory impressions and memory have previously deceived me and can therefore not be trusted to provide me with something I can believe which is not susceptible to doubt.
2. Everything that I have previously believed including what concerns my body must be put to the side.
3. What then is left? The fact that I think.
4. Therefore, I can know with certainty that my existence is a necessary truth. (Descartes, 2011, p. 492)

Descartes uses an evil demon "of the outmost power and cunning" (Descartes, 2011, p. 491) to make it plausible that we can be deceived about anything coming from our senses. But not so with our thinking. In this way Descartes manages to insert a wedge between the thinking mind, and the body and its senses. Thus, thinking is depicted as something intrinsic or essential to being human, but sensing is a contingent appendix. We can possibly imagine being numbed to sensory input. If, however, we are numbed to thinking, it seems that the lights have been turned off (Hauptmann, Unpublished, p. 2).

Through the rest of this paper, we will be returning to this argument. For Hume the question was whether there was a unified personhood that we are acquainted with. In the language philosophy of our times the question becomes whether singular first-person pronouns refer to something.

Ruminating on Hume

When it comes to Hume's objections to Descartes argument, then it seems apparent that it is a problem that has bothered Kripke personally for many years; in fact, since his early teenage years and fifty years on. This is not the finding of a deep analysis but according to Kripke's own testimony in the paper, "The First Person." He says that he reads Descartes argument when he is 12 or 13, and then some time after he reads Hume (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 304). Born in 1940 this must be in the early to mid 1950's. In his twenties it is still an active problem for Kripke (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 306). He publishes "Naming and Necessity" with the footnotes in 1972, there at the end of the very last footnote he writes:

In any event, Descartes' notion seems to have been rendered dubious ever since Hume's critique of the notion of a Cartesian self. I regard the mind body problem as wide open and extremely confusing. (Kripke, 1980, p. 155)

Because of the way that "Naming and Necessity" has been composed, first given as a lecture, then edited and footnotes added, this last footnote can very well be considered as the conclusion that Kripke intended for his book. The very last words that he wanted to leave the reader pondering. These words certainly shook me with a sense of sharp honesty. He has just given a powerful argument in favour of Cartesian Dualism yet in the end he concedes that it does not lead us to any kind of certainty. It seems that Kripke believes that, at most, he has managed to open a debate that many had considered closed. This debate does not consist of one or two arguments (one for the other against) but a landscape of arguments. Each argument is one factor amongst several that must be assessed and weighed by each participant. In this landscape Hume's argument was still very much a problem for Kripke in 1972, and he was not afraid to admit it. Indeed, when he says that Hume's argument has rendered Descartes' dubious, then he is saying that this is how the broader philosophical community generally sees the matter.

When it comes to Hume's argument, we only get the present resolution published in 2011. What seems to prompt this resolution is reflection on Kaplan and Frege's treatment of the first person. Kripke notes about the first person:

... it might be a paradigmatic case, one that I did not mention in *Naming and Necessity* (1980), of fixing a reference by means of a description: it is a rule of the common language that each of us fixes the reference of 'I' by the description 'the subject'. However, since each of us speaks a natural language, and not an imaginary 'scientific language' spoken by

no one, for each of us the referent can be different. This is the moral that I wish to stress. (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 304)

For my historical analysis to go through, when Kripke says that he did not mention it in “Naming and Necessity” then it is because he had not yet realized it (in 1972). This seems to be further cooperated when Kripke writes about the paper “The First Person” (in the opening paragraph) that:

The genesis of these reflections is a fairly recent invitation to Barcelona to give a talk about my views on David Kaplan’s manuscript. (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 292).

In the accompanying footnote (no. 1) we are told that the talk in Barcelona was in 2005. The reflections in Kripke’s head which started for the 2005 talk are then given as a talk in New York in 2006. Then they are considerably revised and finally published in 2011 (Kripke, 2011(2), pp. 293,*). Some thoughts apparently take a long time to mature (remember that Kripke first read Hume in early to mid 1950ties). All this time of reflection does seem to have a good influence on the readability. The first section of the paper on Kaplan I find quite challenging to read. However, in the second section as the subject turns to Hume’s argument the reading flows much more easily. Ruminating does makes digestion and absorption easier.

Hume’s First Argument

Hume has four arguments. In the first argument he considers the *idea* of the “self,” and finds it incoherent. The second argument considers the perceptions we have of the self. Here Hume comes to the startling conclusion that there is no clear perception of the self. We will consider each argument in turn. Here is an outline of the first. It is shortened only slightly, and the original wording is mostly retained.

1. Some philosophers imagine that we are every moment conscious of the self, its existence and continued existence, that we are certain of both of its perfect identity and simplicity.
2. We do not have any idea of the self after the manner explained.
3. It must be some one impression that gives rise to every real idea.
4. But self or person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference.
5. If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same, through the whole course of our lives, since self is supposed to exist after that manner.
6. But there is no impression constant and invariable.
7. Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other and never at all exist at the same time.
8. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is derived

9. Consequently, there is no such idea. (Hume, 1964, p. 533)

In premise three Hume invokes a rule that the idea of self must stem from *one* impression. In premise five we are further told that this impression must continue the same through life. It could be argued that these premises invoke a spurious rule. It seems very doubtful that every *real idea* must arise from *one* impression. In his third argument Hume will amongst examples talk about a series of sounds. Maybe we can imagine them as a hammer pounding a nail. While each blow of the hammer produces a sound much like the previous, Hume points out that they are not numerically the same sound (Hume, 1964, p. 539). If Hume has any consistency, we must conclude that when he says “one impression” then it cannot be a series of similar impressions as these will have only specific identity and not numerical identity. Unless our lives be very short and our observation not interrupted by things like sleep, it seems impossible that we have only one impression of ourselves that remains the same through life.

It seems possible that there are things that we could have only one impression of in life. It could be that we saw one elephant exactly once. Cast our eyes on it exactly only once. That would indeed be one impression that would not change through our life. It would not be one impression that continued the same. The only thing that I can imagine that comes close to something like that would be a tinnitus that started at birth and continued through our life so loud and persistent that one would hear it even while a sleep. If a swoon caused us to be unconscious of it even for the briefest of time it would be interrupted and no longer one. Such a requirement on “real ideas” we must conclude is so stringent that either we are not capable of having real ideas or the requirement is itself absurd as one may wonder if it itself is a real idea.

Could we not imagine two detectives who investigate the same crime and they both reach the conclusion that Mr. X is the murderer. One detective did it on the basis of DNA the other found that Mr. X had a strong motive. They both arrive at the same conclusion from two different angles. Would the idea that Mr. X is the killer then be a spurious idea? The two origins of the idea, however, seems to do little to invalidate it. We can even suppose that one detective has made a mistake and has been led to suspect the real killer on mistaken evidence. Or maybe it may be, that Hume’s objection is, that one man cannot arrive at one idea from two impressions. Therefore, suppose it is one detective who has the two kinds of

evidence from which he concludes that Mr. X is the killer. Neither of these two options leads to the conclusion that the belief or idea that Mr. X is the killer is a wrong or spurious idea. Therefore, according to the rules of logic it should not matter where from an idea arises. To claim an idea invalid because of its origin is a genetic fallacy.

This does not seem to be an objection to Descartes' argument, for Descartes' does not seem to claim that the mind is a simple thing nor that it has perfect identity as in premise one.

Hume's Second Argument

The first argument took aim at the "idea" of the self. The second argument takes aim at the perceptions of the self, a perception which according to Hume is oddly missing.

1. Some philosophers imagine that we are every moment conscious of the self, its existence and continued existence, that we are certain of both of its perfect identity and simplicity. (Hume, 1964, p. 533)
2. What must become of all our peculiar perceptions upon peculiar hypothesis?
3. All these are different, and distinguishable, and separable from each other, and may be separately considered, and may exist separately, and may have no need of anything to support their existence.
4. After what manner therefore do they belong to self; and how are they connected with it?
5. For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception.
6. When my perceptions are removed for any time, as by sound sleep; so long am I insensible of *myself*, I may truly be said not to exist. And were all my perceptions removed by death, and could I neither think, nor feel, nor see, nor love, nor hate after the dissolution of my body, I should be entirely annihilated, nor do I conceive what is farther requisite to make me a perfect non-entity.
7. If anyone upon serious and unprejudiced reflexion, thinks he has a different notion of *himself*, I must confess I can reason no longer with him. All I can allow him is, that he may be in the right as well as I, and that we are essentially different in this particular. He may, perhaps, perceive something simple and continued, which he calls *himself*; though I am certain there is no such principle in me. (Hume, 1964, p. 534)

In this argument Hume is saying that all he sees when looking into himself is perceptions, he does not observe a-little-Hume inside. He sees no self. It is not unlike the little boy whose grandad takes him to the circus. After the show, the boy exclaims: "Where was the circus, all I saw were clowns, horses, elephants, trapeze artists, but I did not see *The Circus*." Grandad might say: "But *that* is the circus." Hume might agree with the little boy, that there is no such thing as a circus. If one of the horses has been

called “circus” it would have been different. Then circus could have been perceived. In the same way if one perception is called “perception of me” or “perception of I” or “perception of mind”, in the way that we perceive a house, a cat or a carrot, then the mind could have been said to be perceived. Hume finds that there is “no such principle in me.”

While the first argument does not seem to take issue with Descartes argument, this one does seem to fit the bill. Where Descartes finds himself in thinking Hume does his own somewhat different examination of his mind and apparently he finds no “res cogitans” (thinking thing).

In this argument Hume applies his scepticism a bit differently than Descartes. Descartes applied scepticism to all his perceptions and found that there was one thing that he could not doubt. Hume merely applies scepticism to Descartes’ conclusion but accepts all perceptions without any doubt. It may be asked how it is known that Hume does not doubt his perceptions. The answer is that he takes them as good and reliable reasons to reject the Cartesian conclusion. This is odd for I had always thought that Hume was the more radical sceptic. It could be said that Hume is the more radical sceptic because he applies scepticism to conclusions and therefore ends up believing very little. While Descartes applies scepticism only in the beginning of his argument and therefore ends up believing at least one thing which is a lot more than Hume. We come away from Descartes argument with one thing that we know for certain. However, when we put down Hume’s book we don’t know anything for certain. But maybe it matters not who is the more radical, but who is right.

Let’s imagine bringing Hume and Descartes together. Hume might say: “When I look at the human mind, I see all these disparate parts without any connection, how can you possibly say that they amount to one self? Not one of the perceptions is me?” To which Descartes might answer: “Yes of course you see many disparate parts I see them too. However, you must consider every one of your perceptions critically. An all-powerful daemon could have inserted them into your mind. Take your bundle of perceptions, look at each one of them critically and ask of each one of them in turn if it is necessarily true. In the end it seems that we will be left with only one thing that we cannot doubt, that is thinking.” To which Hume might respond, “Thinking was the only thing that I did not consider.”

On this way of looking at the two argument, it may be Descartes' argument that cast doubt on Hume and not the other way round. Descartes shows us that Hume uses an approach that is way too uncritical. Hume seems to accept any perception as a valid premise, be it pain, pleasure, grief, joy, passions and sensations, heat, cold, light, shade, love or hatred (Hume, 1964, pp. 533-4). It seems that such an uncritical approach has an almost unbounded potential when it comes to drawing conclusions. Therefore, it should not surprise us if the conclusion is close to absurd.

Descartes argument also seems to win out because of its explanatory ability to distinguish what is merely a contingent property of the self and what are necessary. While in a bewildering landscape Hume's argument only give us one more thing to doubt. At most it just asserts that the bewildering complexity is the same as the reality. In addition, Descartes argument help us navigate the otherwise bewildering complexity, and give us at least a rough categorizing of what is dubious and what can be trusted and what is contingent and what is necessary.

With Frege and Kripke we can add further plausibility to the Cartesian argument. For they both point out that there is something very unsatisfactory about positing perceptions without a mind to hold them (Frege, 1997(2), p. 334). But we will go into their critique after having considered Hume's two last arguments.

Hume's Third Argument

This argument seeks to compare the identity of self to the identity of plants and animals, but also compare it to a church building, a ship and a river. The argument is a bit hard to read because Hume goes to great lengths to show a mistaken way of thinking. However, he does not give the reader much indication when he is switching from describing the right way of thinking to the mistaken way. I have inserted a word here and there in brackets to smoothen the reading.

1. Some philosophers imagine that we are every moment conscious of the self, its existence and continued existence, that we are certain of both of its perfect identity and simplicity. (Hume, 1964, p. 533)
2. What then gives us so great a propensity to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions, and to suppose ourselves possessed of an invariable and uninterrupted existence through the whole course of our lives? ... (Hume, 1964, p. 535)
3. Thus, we feign the continued existence of the perceptions of our senses, to remove the interruption; and run into the notion of a *soul*, and *self*, and *substance*, to disguise the variation. But we may further observe, that where we do not give rise to such a fiction, our propensity to

confound identity with relation is so great, that we are apt to imagine something unknown and mysterious, connecting the parts, beside their relation; and this I take to be the case with regard to the identity we ascribe to plants and vegetables. (Hume, 1964, p. 536)

4. ..., it can only be by mistake we ascribe to it an identity; ... (Hume, 1964, pp. 536-7)
5. In order to [demonstrate] this, suppose any mass of matter, of which the parts are contiguous and connected, to be placed before us; 'tis plain we must attribute a perfect identity to this mass, provided all the parts continue uninterruptedly and invariably the same, whatever motion or change of place we may observe either in the whole or in any of the parts. (Hume, 1964, p. 537)
6. But supposing some very small or inconsiderable part to be added to the mass, or subtracted from it; though this absolutely destroys the identity of the whole, strictly speaking, ... (Hume, 1964, p. 537)
7. This may be confirmed by another phenomenon. A change in any considerable part of a body destroys its identity; but it is remarkable, that where the change is produced gradually and insensibly, we are less apt to ascribe to it the same effect. (Hume, 1964, p. 537 (emphasis added))
8. But this is still more remarkable, when we add a sympathy of parts to their common end and suppose that they bear to each other the reciprocal relation of cause and effect in all their actions and operations. This is the case with all animals and vegetables; where not only the several parts have a reference to some general purpose, but also a mutual dependence on, and connection with, each other. The effect of so strong a relation is, that though every one must allow, that in a very few years both vegetables and animals endure a total change, yet we still attribute identity to them [mistakenly], while their form, size, and substance, are entirely altered. An oak that grows from a small plant to a large tree is still [called] the same oak, though there be not one particle of matter or figure of its parts the same. An infant becomes a man, and is sometimes fat, sometimes lean, without [us ascribing] any change in his identity. (Hume, 1964, p. 538 (emphasis added))
9. ...though we commonly be able to distinguish pretty exactly betwixt numerical and specific identity, yet it sometimes happens that we confound them, and in our thinking and reasoning employ the one for the other. Thus, a man who hears a noise that is frequently interrupted and renewed, says it is still the same noise, though it is evident the sounds have only a specific identity or resemblance, and there is nothing numerically the same but the cause which produced them. (Hume, 1964, p. 539)
10. We now proceed to explain the nature of personal identity, which has become so great a question in philosophy, ... And here it is evident the same method of reasoning must be continued which has so successfully explained the identity of plants, and animals, and ships, and houses, and of all compounded and changeable productions either of art or nature. The identity which we ascribe to the mind of man is only a fictitious one, and of a like kind with that which we ascribe to vegetable and animal bodies. It cannot therefore have a different origin but must proceed from a like operation of the imagination upon like objects. (Hume, 1964, p. 540)

It seems that this argument is much stronger than the two first ones. It seems that Hume is on a much firmer footing when he invokes the rule of identity. In premise five he says that an unchanged object is identical to itself. This then entails that any change must cause a change in identity (premise six and seven). In 8 and 9 Hume explains why we despite these rules persist in prescribing identity to things that in fact are changing. (There are many more such compelling illustrations in the text). Hume seems to presuppose the Leibnizian definition of identity. Leibniz wrote:

...it is not true that two substances may be exactly alike and differ only numerically, ... (Leibniz, 2011, p. 611 (IX))¹

In other words, substances or things that appear the same but differ numerically, are not identical. In this way we arrive at the conclusion that the identity of the mind is fictitious. What Hume very clearly and convincingly rejects is that there is a continuous identity of the mind. There is no continuous mind of Descartes or Chris or Charlie. But what exactly does that mean? That we are always changing, sure. But it seems still a bit far to conclude that there is no mind, especially when we consider that the same must hold true of vegetable and animal bodies. I may not be able to say exactly what brussels sprouts are but I firmly believe that they exist and that they are not ships, churches, rivers or minds. Cabbage heads do exist, but not every head is a cabbage.

Whatever we have arrived at here it has something to do with the continuous identity of the mind. We must therefore look again at Descartes argument to see if he makes any claims on identity of mind.

Cartesian Self Identity?

Looking again at Descartes' argument one notices that he is a sceptic like Hume. Descartes on his first day of meditation doubts everything. Quite a depressing result for a day of work. Then on the next day he goes searching to see if there might be a little morsel that he could still believe in:

Archimedes used to demand just one firm and immovable point in order to shift the entire earth; so I too can hope for great things if I manage to find just one thing, however slight, that is certain and unshakeable. (Descartes, 2011, p. 491)

Descartes is hoping for something great if he can find but one certain thing. He proceeds to cast doubt on the existence of his body and memory again. A deceiver of supreme power and cunning may deceive him about everything except that he thinks (Descartes, 2011, p. 492). This argument and conclusion is modest.

It seems that if we look at Descartes' argument then there is nothing on the surface that contradicts Hume's argument. That is Descartes is not claiming a special identity not simplicity nor continuity. The

¹ "Discourse on Metaphysics" was not published until 1907. "Themes from the "Discourse," however, appear, somewhat transformed in the "New System of Nature," which Leibniz published in 1695 ..." (Pojmann, 2011, p. 611). It must have been from "New System of Nature," that Hume got this definition of identity.

only thing that is required is thinking. But might there be something between the lines. Might there be an unwritten implication of this argument that the self which it arrives at must be identical with itself over time or have a property of simplicity? Maybe it is that thinking is only an activity that can be conceived in a constant mind?

To this it could be countered that thinking itself is a mind-altering activity or at least it has the potential of being mind-altering. A theist who upon long and strenuous meditation reaches the conclusion that there is no God, it seems has altered his mind quite significantly. Things he previously thought holy and sacred may now have become insignificant to him. Other things might have taken on a whole new significance such as survival and competition. Such a person it would seem to his friends and himself had had a mind-altering experience, brought on by the activity of thinking. This all leads us to the conclusion that a thinking mind does not carry with it a hidden implication of a constant identity or simplicity.

In meditation Descartes proceeds to consider what he formerly thought of himself:

But it is also the case that the ‘I’ who imagines is the same ‘I’. For even if, as I have supposed, none of the objects of the imagination are real, the power of my imagination is something that really exists and is part of my thinking. (Descartes, 2011, p. 493)

Can we question Descartes’ reasoning here? Is Descartes asserting too much of a structure such that it would be tantamount to an identity, when he says that *the imagination* is part of the thinking? It seems to me that he is not asserting anything more than what Hume asserts in his second argument when he says that it is a bundle (Hume, 1964, p. 534). “Bundle” Hume uses to describe the nature of the mind. For that too seems to presuppose that it is the *same* bundle. Continuing along the same line Descartes also asserts that it is him or “I” who has sensory perceptions (Descartes, 2011, p. 493). Here he seems in line with Hume, for Hume bundles together both thinking, imagination and sensory perceptions when he says: “a bundle of perceptions.” Note well just how elastic or far encompassing the word “perception” is. It seems that Hume is not very discriminating (maybe a bit cheeky) when he just lumps it all together by using this very elastic word.

Now Hume did not overtly specify what philosopher or argument he is taking aim at. As we have pointed out the words strongly suggest that it is Descartes, and this is also how it has traditionally been read and certainly how Kripke understood it.

It may be that when we meet Hume in the next life that he will say that he was not aiming a Descartes. Maybe there is another, lesser-known philosopher a follower of Descartes who used Descartes' conclusions and added the bit about identity and simplicity. In that case Hume will very convincingly have shown such a philosopher to be very wrong. It can also be that Hume erected a strawman, who is to say? What we can say is that this argument does not counter Descartes.

Hume's Fourth Argument

11. It is evident that the identity which we attribute to the human mind, however perfect we may imagine it to be, is not able to run the several different perceptions into one and make them lose their characters of distinction and difference, which are essential to them.
12. It is still true that every distinct perception which enters into the composition of the mind, is a distinct existence, and is different, and distinguishable, and separable from every other perception, either contemporary or successive.
13. But as, notwithstanding this distinction and separability, we suppose the whole train of perceptions to be united by identity, a question naturally arises concerning this relation of identity, whether it be something that really binds our several perceptions together, or only associates their ideas in the imagination; that is, in other words, whether, in pronouncing concerning the identity of a person, we observe some real bond among his perceptions, or only feel one among the ideas we form of them. This question we might easily decide, if we wou'd recollect what has been already prov'd at large, that the understanding never observes any real connection among objects, and that even the union of cause and effect, when strictly examin'd, resolves itself into a customary association of ideas. (Hume, 1964, p. 540)
14. For from thence it evidently follows, that identity is nothing really belonging to these different perceptions, and uniting them together, but is merely a quality which we attribute to them, because of the union of their ideas in the imagination when we reflect upon them. (Hume, 1964, p. 540)

[We should carefully note what Hume is not saying. He is not saying that each perception does not have its own identity. Hume is saying that the identity of the conglomeration of perceptions is something that we give them in our imagination.]

15. Now, the only qualities which can give ideas a union in the imagination, are these three relations above mentioned. These are the uniting principles in the ideal world, and without them every distinct object is separable by the mind, and may be separately consider'd, and appears not to have any more connection with any other object than if disjoin'd by the greatest difference and remoteness. It is therefore on some of these three relations of resemblance, contiguity, and causation, that identity depends; and as the very essence of these relations consists in their producing an easy transition of ideas, it follows that our notions of personal identity proceed

entirely from the smooth and uninterrupted progress of the thought along a train of connected ideas, according to the principles above explained. (Hume, 1964, p. 541)

This is essentially the argument. In the proceeding Hume goes onto explain why the mind succumbs to the idea of simplicity and identity where according to Hume no such thing can reasonably be posited. Turning to the core of the argument it seems that Hume formulated it very cautiously when he questions the identity that bind our perceptions together. Can we not quit reasonably make a much stronger statement? Might we say:

There is absolutely no relation between some of our perceptions. Such a seeing a cat jumping, hearing a composition by Bach, and thinking the time of the next meal should be soonish. What should possibly bind them together? Conclusion, nothing.

As we have noted, some perceptions have nothing whatsoever in common. They are not connected by resemblance, for they have no resemblance, nor contiguity most people would say that their mind had jumped from one idea to another. Furthermore, we would never dream of positing a causal connection between them. It seems that Hume is stating his case here weakly when it could be made much stronger. We might wonder if Hume is not making a strawman here. That is there anybody that has ever argued or tried to argue that all our perceptions make one mind because they are so very harmonious. That is certainly not Descartes claim, indeed Descartes posits that almost all his perceptions could be the product of a demon.

Whether Hume intentionally made a straw man or whether he is refuting some presumptuous student of Descartes or a third philosopher of mind we cannot say.

However, there is another candidate that may fit the bill better. T.H. Green in his commentary is clearly supposing that it is Lock, and that it is Lock who has argued for the identity of the self (Green, 1964, p. 295). It is outside the subject of this paper to consider Lock's views on the self. However, it seems very worthwhile mentioning it here. For it may be that Hume made a bad refutation of Descartes because it was never intended as a refutation of Descartes but a refutation of Lock. In that case Hume does not necessarily come out looking so bad, for if we don't know any better, we must hold open the possibility that it is a perfectly good refutation of Lock.

Frege on Dualism

Frege's paper "Thought" in many respects resembles Descartes "Meditation" in its approach. But there is no demon. Instead Frege says:

Physical, chemical, and physiological occurrences get in between the three and my idea. Only occurrences in my nervous system are immediately connected with my consciousness - or so it seems - and every observer of the three has his peculiar occurrences in his particular nervous system. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 338)

Where Descartes used a demon to make a wedge between the mind and body, Frege posits that "physical, chemical and physiological occurrences" may get in between the mind and the body. These occurrences may blur the information from the senses rendering it less credible than our immediate experience of self. This seems to address Hume directly. Hume is an empiricist, though he is not uncritical of empirical observation, he does seem to presuppose that they are less problematic than what Descartes and Frege can imagine.

In this way Frege does some of the same weeding out in perceptions as Descartes. Interestingly he uses "physical, chemical and psychological occurrences" instead. However, these have sufficient plausibility to do the trick, if for some reason prejudice against demons rules them out for you. Coupled with other optical illusions Frege posits that these factors can give rise "to an idea to which nothing at all corresponds." (Ibid). Maybe the discharge of a lightning could so affect our visual nerve that we believe that we see flames when there are none. (Ibid). He says further:

Properly speaking this stimulation of the visual nerve is not immediately given; it is only a hypothesis. We believe that a thing independent of us stimulates a nerve and by this not only that end of the process which impinges on our conscience. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 339)

Now one could think that Frege just wrote this at the time because it had not yet been definitively proven by science how visual impressions are captured by the eye and conveyed by the visual nerve to the brain. However, we need to remember that no such definitive proof exists. We remember that we cannot even prove that we are not a Boltzmann brain, nor verify the true factor of our visual impressions. Then we can appreciate that what Frege wrote in 1918 seems as true today as when it was written. Frege is making a Cartesian style argument that shaves off sensory perceptions as possibly spurious and therefore not reliable.

Frege on Hume

To see how pertinent a response Frege gives to Hume consider this little brilliant illustration that Frege gives.

The patient who has a pain is the owner of this pain, but the doctor who is treating him and reflecting on the causes of this pain is not the owner of this pain. He does not imagine he can relieve the pain by anaesthetizing himself. There may well be an idea in the doctor's mind that answers to the patient's pain. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 340)

Now Frege takes this illustration a step further and imagines the doctor consulting another doctor about the patient's pain. From which Frege concludes that 'not only things but also an idea may be the common object of thinking for people who do not have the idea.' (Ibid). We should point out that it is not a good refutation of naturalism. However, it seems brilliant against Hume. Just try to consider the scenario on an Humian interpretation of consciousness. On Hume there is no owner of perceptions, just a bundle. Nor is there even a container of this bundle. If there is, Hume has not seen it.

Now let's consider Frege's patient with pain. Here we run into the first problem as there is no owner. We cannot say that a patient or person X *has* pain, as this implies some ownership in the loose Fregean sense of owner. Indeed, on Hume it is not clear how the two are related, the patient and the pain. For while we may know what a pain is. It is after all one of the perceptions Hume specifies. On Hume we have no perception of personhood. Shall we say that there is a pain in the vicinity of patient X? Suppose all this can be overcome. What is there to prevent the doctor from taking the pain from the patient. Indeed, if the patient explains *it* and the doctor grasps *it*, then the doctor now holds *it*. It seems that on Hume we are not allowed to distinguish ways of being associated with pain such a Frege did. Accordingly, the doctor should now be able to present *it* (the very same pain) to the second doctor and he should be able to feel *it* too, in the painful way that that particular pain is felt. But that is just giving pain to more people. It seems to me that the good doctor should convince his patient to relinquish the pain and never mention *it* again for fear of more painful encounters. This is exactly the kind of absurdity that Frege is getting at when he quips: "He does not imagine he can relieve the pain by anaesthetizing himself." (Ibid). This is all very absurd not unlike the silly nursery rhyme

Hey diddle, diddle!
 The cat and the fiddle,
 The cow jumped over the moon;
 The little dog laughed
 To see such sport,
 And the dish ran away with the spoon.

Is this what Humian philosophy of consciousness is, the stuff that silly nursery rhymes are made of? Leaving aside the nursery rhyme, we see that it is difficult even unintelligible to talk about a perception without a perceiver. Indeed, perceptions, which Hume never seems to tire of recounting, become unintelligible without a perceiver. Consider the synonym “impression” it rightly seems to imply that it has been made in some malleable substance. In this way a foot can leave a foot impression in some soft clay. Light can be captured by the eye and leave some impression in some conscious mind. But no such impression is made where there is no medium or “me” to be impressed. It therefore seems absurd that there should be a perception without a perceiver.

Frege seems to have gotten around to most if not all the possible scenarios when he says:

If man could not think and could not take as the object of his thinking something of which he was not the owner, he would have an inner world but no environment. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 341)

When Frege says “environment” here then he must be referring to social environment. Here Frege is in other words considering the scenario where the doctor is utterly unable grasp much less consider a pain that is not his own. This is the scenario in which there is nothing but private perceptions. Each Humian mind is its own bundle of perception with no possible sharing of ideas and thoughts between them. This too is rather absurd and as such poses difficulties when it comes to describing it. An initial thought might be that this is how it is with dumb animals that cannot communicate. But the fact is that even animals can communicate. Have we not all hear of the bees that through their dance tell other bees of where the flower is? What then comes to mind is a world where people led completely solitary lives, as they are completely unable to share in each other’s experience. Might we call it a peculiar solipsism not because there are no other people, but because for all intents and purposes there are no other people for me or you? Not only is it wildly absurd but my heart shudders at the thought.

One should think that after such response the Humian tradition would be dead. But that seems far from the case. Might it have helped a bit if only Frege had specified what philosophy he was debunking. Kripke points out that there are several others who take up the Humian torch, most prominently Wittgenstein. Unfortunately, we don't have time to dive into his work. Instead, we will proceed straight to David Kaplan. But first a few more words on Frege.

Kripke on Frege

In "Naming and Necessity" Kripke spends a fair amount of space on disagreeing with Frege and Russel regarding how name is associated with its object. Specifically, Kripke rejects the descriptive theory that is that a name is associated with its referent by a description (Kripke, 1980, p. 27). That, however, was when the subject was names or nouns. Now when the subject is indexicals Kripke finds himself much in agreement with Frege. Then it is quite a reversal to read Kripke's paper "Frege's Theory of Sense and Reference" and "First Person" all of a sudden Frege is being praised for having good ideas. Then when one finally dives into Frege's "Der Gedanke" (Thought) it becomes apparent that Kripke has borrowed a lot from this man. Consider this little snippet from Frege:

Being felt necessarily goes with pain, and furthermore someone feeling it necessarily goes with its being felt. (Frege, 1997(2), pp. 339-4)

Then compare it to these lines from Kripke's "Naming and Necessity":

Can any case of essence be more obvious than the fact that *being a pain* is a necessary property of each pain? The identity theorist who wishes to adopt the strategy in question must even argue that *being a sensation* is a contingent property of [*pain sensation*]. (Kripke, 1980, p. 146)

The wording is not the same, but the idea is. To Kripke's credit it should be noted that he employs it in a very different argument. Frege (as we have discussed) arguably uses it to rebut Hume. Kripke makes an argument which demonstrates the contingent relationship between consciousness and brain states, thus he is refuting naturalists. We will get back to this argument. Some might say that great writers steal. Others could argue that necessary ideas cannot be the property of anyone in specific. All that is beyond this paper, all we wanted to demonstrate here is just one example of how much Kripke borrows from Frege, sometimes without giving credit.

When reading Kripke it also could seem that what he shares with Frege is a fondness for language philosophy and logic. Kripke does not mention that Frege is a dualist. That, as we have seen, seems to have a crucial influence on Kripke's dualistic thinking.

Frege Primitive Self-Knowledge

According to Frege the person using "I" could know who they are referring to because they have a primitive knowledge of themselves.

Now everyone is presented to himself in a special and primitive way, in which he is presented to no one else. So, when Dr Lauben has the thought that he was wounded, he will probably be basing it on this primitive way in which he is presented to himself. And only Dr Lauben himself can grasp thoughts specified in this way. But now he may want to communicate with others. He cannot communicate a thought he alone can grasp. Therefore, if he now says, 'I was wounded', he must use 'I' in a sense which can be grasped by others, perhaps in the sense of 'he who is speaking to you at this moment'; by doing this he makes the conditions accompanying his utterance serve towards the expression of a thought. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 333)

To fully appreciate this quote, we need to understand what Frege means by "thought." For Frege "thoughts" are different from ideas. It is like the logical preposition contained in a sentence, the kernel of truth. The same "thought" can accordingly be expressed with different words or different sentences. One of Frege's examples of a thought is the Pythagorean Theorem. It is also possible that lots of words are strung together with little or no "thought" contained in it. Which seems to be close to Frege's view of poetry.

When Dr Lauben is using the language correctly in a scientific manner then he is able to generate a thought that corresponds to his own in other people's heads. Now there does seem to be something strange here. Dr. Lauben thinks that he is wounded. Then the inner state of being wounded is considered a very personal subjective feeling something uncommunicable. Nevertheless, it is spelled out in words that I very strongly suspect that we easily grasp a hundred years after they were first published. The thing that is not communicable must be the sense of "I". Might we say that Dr Lauben knows himself in a way that no one else can possibly be aware of. To get around this Frege posits that there is another sense of "I" that everyone in the community understands. In this case "I" refers to the person speaking to you right now (Ibid).

This way of understanding the first-person pronoun is not just an attempt to give a parsimonious explanation of the language that we speak, but it is also an attempt to see the way that we speak as giving support to the thesis of mind body dualism. Which becomes evident when Frege precedes to give four reasons for dualism or reasons to consider that the inner world of ideas is distinct from the world of things:

1. Ideas cannot be sensed.
2. Ideas are something that we have.
3. Ideas need an owner. [They are private].
4. Every idea has only one owner. (Frege, 1997(2), pp. 334-5)

These reasons may not seem like a great obstacle to a current day naturalist, might he not just respond that ideas are housed in the brain? However, when we consider Hume's argument it should become apparent that they are much more formidable challenge for this line of reasoning. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that they are written with Hume in mind. We will therefore return to these four reasons later and consider them in greater detail.

Returning to the first-person pronoun it may still seem like a bit of a messy, "ad hoc" kind of explanation to say that there are two meanings to "I." One for when I am speaking to myself and another when speaking to others.

Kaplan On Meaning and Reference

According to Frege words or signs as he calls them have a meaning (Sinn) and a referent (Bedeutung). The referent is the specific object that a word or words points to. Meanings are the ways that the word or words point us to that object (Frege, 1997 (1), p. 152).

For all words or phrases understanding the meaning of a word or words give us the referent. On this Frege, Kripke and Kaplan largely agree. However, Kaplan believes that there are some exceptions to this rule. Kaplan believes that there are certain words that simply refer directly without a meaning (Kaplan, 1989, p. 483). He writes:

When we say that a word is directly referential are we saying that its meaning *is* its reference (its only meaning is its reference, its meaning is nothing more than its reference)? Certainly not. In so far as meaning is given by the rules of language and what is know by competent

speakers, I would be more inclined to say in the case of directly referential words and phrases that their reference is *no* part of the meaning. (Kaplan, 1989, p. 520)

According to Kaplan when we analyse directly referential words (including indexicals) we should not look for the meaning. Especially the first sentence in the quote expresses not only his view but also how fervently he holds this view. Passages like this makes philosophical reading more interesting. Here we get a sense of who Kaplan is as a person. It therefore seems unfortunate bordering on the counterproductive that in the last sentence he dials back the language and becomes much more cautious. He seems so certain that meaning plays no part in fixing the referent; so certain of what reference is not. He then seems just about to make a positive statement, only he then changes his mind and instead says more or less what he has already said. The meaning, Kaplan writes, is given by the rules (Ibid). As a result, we don't come away with a sense that Kaplan fervently believes that for these directly referential words there is absolutely no meaning. Of course, if there is some sort of meaning involved here then it seems that 'directly referential' cannot mean what Kaplan asserts. But let's leave that aside and consider what it means for our first-person pronoun.

The main point is that for some words instead of meaning there are rules. When it comes when it comes to the first-person pronoun the rules are as follow:

- (D1) 'I' is an indexical, different utterances of which have different contents
- (D2) 'I' is, in each of its utterances, directly referential
- (D3) In each of its utterances, 'I' refers to the person who utters it (Kaplan, 1989, p. 520)

If we speak Kaplan, we can say that the meaning of "I" is rule D1 to D3. The meaning is the rule, or as Kaplan puts it, don't look for the meaning instead of meaning we have semantical rules. Now this is a bit confusing. When we remember that "semantical" and "meaning" are synonyms. It seems that we should be allowed to say that there is still a meaning, only according to Kaplan it is given by rules. Thus, the distinction of "directly referential" does not seem to be as neat as Kaplan would like. Additionally, it does not seem that strange that the same word generally has the same meaning no matter the context or who use it. The word "Bicycles" tend to pick out mechanical objects not a horse or a butterfly.

Kaplan claims that the first-person pronouns are directly referential there is no meaning involved, this in turn allows us to shelve Frege's theory of self-acquaintance as a theory that has been tried and found

wanting and now only has interest as a piece of philosophical history. It is not needed or as Kaplan puts it:

..., I sincerely doubt that there is, for each of us on each occasion of the use of 'I', a particular, primitive, and incommunicable Fregean self-concept which we tacitly express to ourselves. (Kaplan, 1989, p. 534)

While Kaplan does not say anything further about mind or consciousness. We can still see this statement as setting his theory right in the Humian tradition. Indeed, it provides -at least potentially- additional plausibility to the Humian interpretation. We can say that Kaplan's explanation allows us to align Hume's intuitions with the intuitions that we carry with us in our language. The language philosophy started by Frege is now refined and adjusted to show a beautiful alignment not with dualism such as Frege thought but with the sceptical Humian view of mind.

Description From Above

In describing Kaplan's theory Kripke says that Kaplan thought the language of a community can be given by a complete "description from above" in a "scientific language." It is a cool neutral description that should allow a language student to learn the language (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 293). Kripke also compares it to historiography which is a school of history that emphasises that history should be written in a detached scientific manner, as opposed to "Verstehen" which is another school that emphasises the feelings of historical figures, in its extremes tries to emulate the feelings of historical figures. In respect to this description of language from above as a learner's guide Kripke concedes that it might add a bit to Kaplan's theory (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 294).

When we come to the first-person pronoun Kaplan's main point is that we should not look for the meaning of "I." The correct description of "I" is fully given by the description from above. In the language from above the truth conditionals are fully given. To my knowledge Kaplan does not mention the human mind directly. We can, nevertheless, easily see Kaplan in the Humian tradition when he says that he doubts the Frege's first person perspective. (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 298). He is not saying that there definitely is no such thing as unified mind. Nevertheless, his comment does have applications beyond linguistics, it throws the self into the mist of the undiscernible. Our use of language certainly does not point us to such a mind or personal acquaintance with such a mind.

Kaplan distinguishes between demonstratives and indexicals. Demonstratives are words that need additional information to point us to the referent such as pointing or gesturing, words such as “here” or “him”. Kaplan accuses Frege of mistaking the indexical “I” for a demonstrative. Kaplan’s point is that according to Frege “I” seems to require the thinker to use some inward pointing (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 299).

If we are to use an impersonal scientific language (or a language from above) then it is hard to see how to explain the first-person pronoun reference. That is how “I” refer on Frege’s model. Because a scientific language cannot admit a primitive knowledge of ourselves. In a scientific language everything has to be spelled out in terms accessible if not to anybody then at least to people who have a reasonable mastery of the given field of inquiry.

Lets use Kripke’s example. The subject speaking, writing or thinking. We can formulate it as “*The subject for me, the subject that I am aware of, by being aware of my own thinking*, the formulation runs into a circle.” (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 298).

This leads John Perry to conclude that to avoid the circle that the primitive knowledge of self must be not only a primitive aspect of me, but also one that only I am aware of having (ibid.) This in turn makes Frege’s theory too extreme or absurd. David Kaplan and Perry reject the idea of a primitive knowledge of self. Kaplan writes:

..., I sincerely doubt that there is, for each of us on each occasion of the use of ‘I’, a particular, primitive, and incommunicable Fregean self-concept which we tacitly express to ourselves. (Kaplan, 1989, p. 534)

Right here we see Kaplan rejecting or doubting the Cartesian “res cogitans,” at least that is how Kripke read him. In this was Kaplan joins in the tradition from Hume.

How does Kaplan come to hold such a position? Kaplan takes it that Frege has come to hold a demonstrative view of indexicals. According to Kaplan demonstrative require a pointing gesture to pick out the referent, while indexicals don’t. Kaplan writes:

The linguistic rules which govern the use of the true demonstrative ‘that, ‘he’, etc., are not sufficient to determine their referent in all contexts of use. Something else -an associated demonstration- must be provided. (Kaplan, 1989, p. 490)

For “that” or “he” (“there”) we often must point in order to give to full meaning of what we are trying to communicate. What Kaplan is saying or accusing Frege of, is the idea that when we use “I” then we are doing some inward cognitive pointing (Kaplan, 1989, p. 534).

Kripke points out that this idea of Kaplan and Perry only comes about because they presuppose a scientific language or a language from above that can describe everything in the spoken language and fix every referent (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 300). Such a language prohibits that we might fix the referent by means of a primitive uncommunicable knowledge. Because such a language carries with it a requirement that everything in language can be given further explanation by a scientific language. But once we rid ourselves of the idea of such a language, we are also set free from the requirement (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 300). Then at least Kaplan’s hindrances for such a primitive self-knowledge are out of the way.

Kaplan believe that his conception of the scientific language is more or less presupposed by Frege’s theory. Which in turn means that Frege is contradicting himself when he says that the first-person acquaintance of self is a primitive uncommunicable acquaintance. Something has to give here. Either Frege is wrong, or the scientific language has to be modified or go completely.

Perry and Kaplan argue that according to Frege thoughts (in the Fregian sense) have to be articulatable. Which leads them to conclude that Frege is contradicting himself on this point. Kripke argues that though thoughts for the most part are articulatable according to Frege it does not prevent the existence of thoughts that for special reasons are only intelligible to one person (Kripke, 2011, p. 286). Kripke goes on to give two examples from Frege’s texts where a thought held by one *cannot* be grasped by another. In “Grundlag Der Arithmetik” there are two people talking about three dimensional spaces, but what one means by “point” the other means by “plane” and vice versa. He concludes that they could not detect the difference. (Ibid) In that example we have two people who have thoughts that despite attempts to communicated are not brought across nor grasped by the other and so remain private. Further on Kripke quotes “Der Gedanke” about the sense impression of read:

...it is impossible to compare my sense impression with someone else’s. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 335)

Now “Der Gedanke” is the very same text in which Frege asserts that our self of self is this private incommunicable thought. However, Kripke points out that this from a very different place in the text where the subject is ‘visual perception’ and not ‘the first-person pronoun.’ It all goes to show that Frege throughout his career believe that there are thoughts that are incommunicable. Incommunicable self-acquaintance can therefore not be written off as some self-contradiction that Frege has worked his philosophy into.

Lastly Kripke tries to imagine Frege using Kaplan’s semantical rule for the first-person pronoun.

But how can Frege use the word ‘*ich*’ on the basis of these instructions? Should he think, ‘*Hmm*, so how am *I* going to use the word “*ich*” on the basis of this general statement? Well, any German should attribute, say, being in pain or being a logician to *himself* if and only if the German is in pain or is a logician, as Kaplan says. So *I* should do this.’ Alternatively, Frege might remark, ‘So Frege, or Dr. Gustav Lauben, should attribute a property to Frege, or respectively to Dr. Lauben, using “*ich*” if and only if Frege (or Dr. Lauben) has the property. But *I* am Frege, so I suppose that I should use the word “*ich*” if and only if Frege has the property.’ Either formulation would presuppose that Frege already has the concept of *himself*, the concept he expresses using ‘*ich*,’ so here we really are going in a circle. (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 301)

Here Kripke shows that Kaplan’s semantical rules lead to a circle. Additionally, it gives us a compelling demonstration that any given person if they are going to refer to them-selves with the first-person pronoun then it seems that they cannot get away from the primitive self-acquaintance. Even when one uses Kaplan’s rules some other knowledge seems to be presupposed if we are actually going to refer to an object. Or as Kripke puts it: “No one can grasp the rule for ‘I’ stated in the common language except by means of one’s own self-acquaintance.” (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 301).

This is a very strong refutation of the Humian view of consciousness. However, Kripke goes one step further for he claims that he has talked to Kaplan and that Kaplan has given up his theory and now believes that someone must have a concept of self to use “I” in the proper way (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 303). Now the reader may at a quick glance at such a statement feel that anyone could say something like that about their opponent. However, it does not take much thought to see that that would be very unwise in the philosophical community. For if not true it would likely result in devastating critique that would put a celebrated philosopher’s life work into serious question. What further bolsters this claim of Kripke is that on the back cover of the book that contains this philosophical essay called “First Person” there is an

endorsement from Kaplan himself which says: “I have learned more from Saul Kripke than any other philosopher of our time.” (Kripke, 2011(3), p. Back cover). This is not a devastating critique but a fine endorsement.

If we use Kaplan’s detraction of his theory to argue that the theory is flawed it could be misconstrued as a genetic fallacy. A better way to read this argument is to see it as an argument from authority. Surely Kaplan is an authority on his on the theory that he himself has formulated and therefore in a good position to see when it has been properly invalidated.

Arguments from authority have been out of fashion for many years. However, if the current corona crisis has taught us anything then it is that it is a reasonable rational thing to listen to and follow the advice of authorities on a given subject on which one has no expert insight. In the context of this paper, it is not suggested that we consider this case only on Kaplan and Kripke’s or any other philosopher’s authority. But that we carefully weigh all the arguments presented.

Kripke on Hume

Now that we have come to an understanding of what Hume and Kaplan are arguing for, we can use the insights gained from an analysis of Kaplan’s theory to see the same problems in Hume’s argument. Indeed, this is exactly what Kripke seems to do in his paper “The First Person.”

Kripke points to all the usage of pronouns (not just the first person) point to the very thing that Hume wants to disprove. Kripke does not agree with Kaplan on this particular point. But it seems that he can thank Kaplan for drawing his attention to the issue of the first person. For once Kripke had done the work of going through Kaplan’s theory on the first person and reflecting on the fact that Frege seems to have a more plausible explanation of referring to a primitive self-knowledge. Then all the capital “I” as well as the other pronouns in Hume’s text reveal a reference and meaning that previously seems to have eluded Kripke. These pronouns are referring to the very thing that Hume wants to disprove (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 306).

Kripke is probably most famous for his theory on naming from “Naming and Necessity.” This theory is about nouns and went a long way in sorting out how names work. This was the issue that seems to have

been foremost in the minds of language philosophers. Not accounted for were indexicals, these strange words that have meaning or reference from context. This may also be part of the reason why Kripke was not able to see his way through Hume's argument back in the late sixties and seventies when publishing "Naming and Necessity." In "First Person" (2011) Kripke writes:

...Hume says that we confusedly form the notion of a single, persisting entity because of the close relation between the various impressions. But who is this 'we' who does this? ... A more basic problem for Hume is that he seems to think that there could be impressions, mental acts, and so on with no bearer. (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 307)

Kripke's first point is that Hume presupposes the mind that he wants to reject. The second point is how there can be perceptions without a mind to be impressed.

Now it seems that Kripke gets these two critiques of Hume more or less directly from Frege. Kripke openly acknowledge that it is from Frege that he gets the analysis of the first-person pronoun. Especially the two last lines in the quote above seem to have a lot in common with the following words from Frege:

It seems absurd to us that a pain, a mood, a wish should go around [in] the world without an owner, independently. A sensation is impossible without a sentient being. The inner world presupposes somebody whose inner world it is. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 334)

Thomas Hill Green seems to have a very similar objection to Hume's argument.

He writes:

Thus, the more strongly Hume insists that 'the identity which we ascribe to the mind of man is only a fictitious one,' the more completely does his doctrine refute itself. (Green, 1964, p. 297)

The whole undertaking of philosophy requires that there is something that is rationally capable of thinking. Therefore, if one denies the mind, it undercuts anything else you might say. Kripke also points to Roderick Chisholm as having a similar objection and Chisholm in turn points to Price (Kripke, 2011(2), pp. 307, 38). One point here is that several people have similar thoughts about Hume's argument.

Further Reasons for The Primitive Self-Knowledge

What in my mind gives further reason to consider such primitive self-knowledge as a good explanation of the first person pronouns is if we consider not having it. "I" becomes something that is ultimately

explained in a sort of third person way. On Frege as well as Kripke and other Cartesians we have a special knowledge of ourselves denoted by first person singular pronouns. On the scientific language model, we will know ourselves no differently than we know other people. I have heard that computers relate to themselves and other computers in a sort of third person fashion. The way that a computer knows itself does not differ from the way that it knows other computers. With computers it is quite plausible that one computer may hold a lot of information about another that the other computer does not hold itself. While this is possible with people as well (I suppose that there are jokes about people who are unaware of this or that fact about themselves) it does seem to have its limitations.

The philosopher David Lewis gives the example of a possible world in which there are two gods both omniscient as far as propositional knowledge goes. Either god does not know which one of the gods he is. But as Kripke (with reference to Robert Stalnaker) points out it does not make sense to have someone who does something without him or her realising that it is himself doing it (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 316).

What we will not grant is that with a given healthy functional person that someone else is more knowledgeable about all their inward states than themselves. Someone else may have noticed a quirk or two of ours that we have not noticed ourselves. But when it comes to feeling tired, rested, hungry, satisfied, being in pain or pleasure we tend to grant that each knows themselves best. It is possible that we are mistaken about some of these self-perceptions. However, we tend to grant that the first person has the best vantage point for observing and knowing what is going on inside of them. Maybe the examples I have given thus far are things that could quite conceivably be observed on people. Might hungry people produce more saliva before they even recognize that they are hungry, etc. However, then there are more subtle preferences. Such as our preference for the arts from literature, through movies, paintings, design etc. Desires when it comes to selection of future partner. Though we can be mistaken it is difficult to imagine how anyone could be in a better position to know. We can say that when it comes to the first person it seems that "I" am in the first row and all others are several rows further back with the limited view that such distance gives.

Even in the case of the mentally diseased such as with the man who mistakenly thought himself Napoleon Bonaparte. One cannot argue with him if he says that he prefers wine over beer or smoked salmon over

cheese. It may also be that the man in first row is mistaken about what he sees and the man several rows back observed rightly. We are not claiming that the first person knows everything about himself best. Nor that he is never mistaken, just that his knowledge is different owing to his privileged point of view, more intimate. Certain things he is the only one who can observe such as his thoughts. None of this is “primitive” in the sense that it cannot be articulated.

When it comes to knowing if it was me doing something, it surely is a first-person knowledge that clearly distinguishes from third persons as already pointed out.

So far, I have only demonstrated that we have a different knowledge of ourselves. We have not yet touched on the part that we cannot articulate. But if we take the knowledge that we can articulate and ask just a couple of “why” then surely, we get to it or at least to that boundary between what can be articulated and the other deeper reasons that we have some sense of but cannot put words to. Why do we prefer this book over that? Maybe it is the descriptions that strike us as beautiful. Then we can ask why we find that particular beautiful, etc. Soon we find ourselves unable to answer. Clearly our preference is rooted in something. There is a perception there when it comes to our sense of the beautiful. We may feel it quit strongly but be utterly unable to put into words. We can share our taste of beauty as when we tell someone what we find beautiful. In this way they may get a sense of our preference. But they cannot feel our feeling as we do, that is primitive knowledge to which only we are privy. Just as the Frege pointed out that visual perceptions of colour cannot be shared. As he says of his colourblind friend:

Now does my companion see the green leaf as red, or does he see the red berry as green, or does he see both with one colour which I am not acquainted with at all. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 335)

If we are to express the same in a more formal way might we say that the extent of our knowledge is not infinite. It ends somewhere. As we approach the end of our knowledge -though having not quite reached it yet- at some point we run out of words to describe it yet there are still strong intuitions. This is the case both in our knowledge of ourselves as well as of other. However, when it comes to self the articulatable intuitions of knowledge are much more intimate, just as in the case of knowledge that we can articulate.

Kripke on “I”

Here we need to turn more specifically to the analysis of the first person. Frege says about Dr. Lauben

Now everyone is presented to himself in a special and primitive way, in which he is presented to no one else. So, when Dr Lauben has the thought that he was wounded, he will probably be basing it on this primitive way in which he is presented to himself. And only Dr Lauben himself can grasp thoughts specified in this way. But now he may want to communicate with others. He cannot communicate a thought he alone can grasp. Therefore, if he now says ‘I was wounded’, he must use ‘I’ in a sense which can be grasped by others, perhaps in the sense of ‘he who is speaking to you at this moment’; by doing this he makes the conditions accompanying his utterance serve towards the expression of a thought. (Frege, 1997(2), p. 333)

Kripke notes that several philosophers think that there is a problem for Frege here. It appears that Frege believes that there are two senses of “I.” One where Dr. Lauben is speaking to himself and the other when talking to other people. Furthermore, there is a problem with identifying “I” with the one speaking to you right now. For what if several people are speaking at the same time, then the referent of “I” cannot be the “one who is speaking now”. Kripke says that there is an easy solution to these problems. Instead of having two senses for the first-person pronoun, Kripke suggests that from our own “primitive self-knowledge” which we use in determining our own use of “I” we can reasonably infer that other people have a similar “primitive self-knowledge” which they rely on when using “I”. As Kripke puts it:

Everyone knows what this type of acquaintance is by analogy with his own case. So the hearer who hears Dr Lauben knows what type of thought is being expressed, even though, strictly speaking, he cannot have the thought. It is like the case of the reader of the old newspaper. (Kripke, 2011, pp. 287-8)

As to sketching out these two points, maybe the credit goes to Frege. However, there is also something to be said for identifying what argument they ought to be aimed at. While Frege’s objections may have much more limited effect on a naturalist who believes that the mind is the brain. It is a much more forceful refutation of Hume.

Acquaintance

Before we get into Kripke’s theory of acquaintance we should note that it is a theory that has its origin in Bertrand Russell. Russell differentiated between what he took to be two different kinds of knowledge,

knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. Here we shall be chiefly concerned with acquaintance. About this Russell wrote:

We shall say that we have *acquaintance* with anything with which we are directly aware, without the intermediary of any process of inference or any knowledge of truths. Thus in the presence of my table I am acquainted with the sense-data that makes up the appearance of my table—its colour, shape, hardness, smoothness, etc.; all these are things of which I am immediately conscious when I am seeing and touching my table. (Russell, 2018, p. 27)

Now we can see that acquaintance is the kind of knowledge that is relevant when it comes to knowledge of self. Here I presume that we all know ourselves in the same direct way that Russell is describing knowing his table. It would be very odd if we came to know ourselves from reading a book or going to a lecture. This distinction of knowledges has since received some critique. We are not going to be concerned with whether this distinction holds or not. Just mention it to explain why this word is used rather than knowledge.

Kripke's Theory of Acquaintance

Kripke is shying away from giving a full-fledged theory of acquaintance. In "Naming and Necessity" he was a bit shy of formulating a theory of naming; instead, he said that he was just drawing a picture.² With acquaintance he seems to be even more careful. There is no mention of either theory or picture. It is as if he is giving us a first outline of acquaintance leaving up to others to turn it into a picture and maybe a theory one day. All that said, if we carefully sift through his writings, we do find lots of lots of pieces for the puzzle.

In "Naming and Necessity" Kripke talks about knowing who someone is. In that book the subject is how we know other people and stuff outside of us, rather unpersonal compared to our present subject. Nevertheless, can it be that knowledge of self and knowledge of others, in many instances have something in common?³ About knowing other people Kripke writes:

² "I think I said the other time that philosophical theories are in danger of being false, and so I wasn't going to present an alternative theory. Have I just done so? Well, in a way; but my characterization has been far less specific than a real set of necessary and sufficient conditions for reference would be. ...other considerations must be satisfied in order to make this into a real rigorous theory of reference. I don't know that I am going to do this because, first, I'm sort of too lazy at the moment; secondly, rather than give a set of necessary and sufficient conditions which will work for a term like reference, I want to present just a *better picture* than the picture by the previous views." (Kripke, 1980, p. 93)

..., I won't go into the question of knowing who someone is. It's really very puzzling. I think you *do* know who Cicero is if you just can answer that he's a famous Roman orator. (Kripke, 1980, p. 83)

This may seem like a fairly innocent remark intended to quickly pass over the far-reaching subject of epistemology. While this may well be one of Kripke's intentions at the time of writing, it does not exclude the possibility of an allusion to the idea in epistemology that some things we can only know in a way best described as properly basic.

What things does Kripke indicate that we can know

- 1) There is generally enough time indication in our regular languages for us to know at what time a statement is true.
- 2) We have a primitive un-articulatable acquaintance of ourselves.
- 3) Kripke clearly asserts that we can know other people. (Kripke, 1980, p. 83)
- 4) From our own self acquaintance, we can infer that others know themselves too.
- 5) We have a primitive acquaintance of the present time and a less reliable acquaintance of our past (Kripke, 2011, pp. 277-8).
- 6) From these can we not reasonably infer an acquaintance with the place we presently are in. Maybe we don't know its geographical relation to other places (as this requires a knowledge of other place's (geography)). Might we say that we know at least one place.

This list is by no means a complete list. It seems that much more can be added. Frege believed that "This tree is covered with green leaves." Is an incomplete without time specification. But it seems we additionally need a specification as to location, for trees closer to equator are not bare for 6 months of the year and closer to the poles there are no trees. Nor are we at sea, in space or on Mars. On Frege it seems, if we are to be consistent, the place also should be specified. Maybe the species of tree also, as it is only deciduous tree the loose their leaves in winter. On Kripke, however, (and it is his theory/picture that we are trying to specify) it seems reasonable to assume that the place is in some ways specified in sufficient measure, as we can reasonably exclude at sea, in space, on Mars, arctic or antarctica nor a hemisphere where it is currently winter. And the tree also is specified (thought broadly) as one of those with leaves. This leaves room for a lot of ambiguity in Kripke's picture. That, however, is if we mix up Frege's and Kripke's kind of analysis. A pure Kripkian analysis would reason that just as the speaker, thinker or writer is acquainted with himself and the time of utterance, so he is also acquainted with the place of utterance. "Now" is used with present tense to emphasise that the time is the same as utterance, so "here" may be used to emphasise

the same place as the speaker. (Though Kripke grants that this is not entirely accurate in all cases he retains it for simplicity (Kripke, 2011, p. 267)). About “now” Kripke says:

We can understand utterances containing “now.” They are incomplete and are completed by the time of utterance considered as part of the expression of the thought, and so on, ... (Kripke, 2011, p. 278)

The point is that where Frege demands that the time specification be explicate, Kripke is satisfied that it is sufficiently specified in the tense and context. I take that this is what he means by “...the time of utterance considered as part of the expression of the thought, ...” (Ibid). Which is why we can understand a newspaper headline that reads: “Russian and France are now at war.” (Ibid). Though there is no explicate date on it. If we allow ourselves to reason analogously, it should be similarly for “here.”

Frege would not like the ambiguity. But Kripke seems to tolerate it. Maybe we can imagine Kripke responding that despite all this supposed ambiguity we still seem to understand each other far more than what Frege is comfortable in conceding. Maybe more telling is the fact that though Kripke has several pieces that some of us can be tempted to see as a theory of acquaintance, he refrains from even calling it so. He has a reputation as reasonably reliable philosophy, and he is not about to risk it on something that he does feel more certain about. All that said, Kripke is compelled to posit that we can reasonably be said to be acquainted with ourselves in a special way, with others, the place and time we are in. Kripke observes that Frege’s philosophy depends on a theory of acquaintance much like Russell. This is the central thought that he establishes in his paper “Frege’s Theory of Sense and Reference.” In the final paragraph of the paper, he writes:

...to apply these rules, and indeed to understand them, a user of the language or a thinker must have something very like Russellian acquaintance with directly or indirectly quoted material, senses, times, subjects and inner mental states. (Kripke, 2011, p. 288)

This is the argument in brief. To understand language, to be able to apply the rules one must have an acquaintance of certain things. Here in the concluding words the spotlight is turned onto Frege and Russell’s more or less explicit theory of acquaintance. It seems Kripke in this way wants to quietly get his own theory, picture, sketch, rough roadmap (call it what you want) of acquaintance through the customs.

We, however, should not be mistaken. Kripke's rough roadmap of acquaintance is just as needed for his theory as Frege's implicit doctrine of acquaintance is needed for Frege's theory.

It should also be mentioned that in addition to the thing already noted that we can be acquainted with, it seems that we can now according to Kripke be acquainted with a whole lot more things. Reflecting on Kripke in broader strokes, trying to see him in a larger context, it seems that he is making a break from many years of scepticism. Scepticism was ushered in by thinkers like Descartes and Hume. Especially the latter seems to emphasise how much is beyond the reach of our knowledge. Now with Kripke we seem to turn the tide and speculate that we can know a whole lot more than what has been previously thought. As already mentioned, Descartes is different from Hume (in those bygone centuries) for though he uses a sceptical method, the result when it comes to knowledge reaches further. Descartes spoke with confident knowledge about many things that both Hume and Kant could only speculate.

Crucially for this paper is the knowledge of our selves. If we know how to use first person pronouns and other references to self correctly then it is because we have a primitive acquaintance of self, much like Descartes posited. We should also notice that the acquaintance or knowledge of self is different from how we know other things or other people. This becomes obvious in Kripke's treatment when considering the first-person pronouns. For ourselves we use and know how to use the first-person pronouns from our self-knowledge. When it comes to understanding others use of the same first-person pronouns then we understand them (not directly or immediately but) by inference to how we use that pronoun ourselves. Though we may be acquainted with other people we know ourselves the best. Inference has to be an inferior knowledge compared to direct acquaintance.

Time and First-Person Acquaintance

It seems that there is one resolution of the Humian challenge in Descartes argument. Then there is another resolution in Frege's "Der Gedanke." One could wonder why Hume caused Kripke so much trouble. Here we need to remember that the resolution in Frege's system is by no means ready to use. Kaplan in many ways is coming out of the same material in Frege but reaches very different conclusions.

When it comes to “now” Kripke writes:

... Frege’s Theory is that the present tense and “now” involve an autonomous use of a time as a piece of language. In general, Frege thinks that such wording leaves an incomplete sense. (Kripke, 2011, p. 284)

Autonomous simply means that it is part of the meaning of “now” that it maps itself to the present time or the present time of the utterance. Other words especially regular nouns refer to a specific kind of object such as bicycle or kitchen sink. In “Naming and Necessity” Kripke spends a good part of the book demonstrating how some names and some descriptions rigidly pick out the same object in all possible worlds, these he calls rigid designators (Kripke, 1980, p. 48). “Now” or “I” is different as it does not point to the same time or person. But every time it is used it points to a verity of times or people respectively. The vexing question is how we account for the use of these words. “Now” was not satisfactory for Frege to make a complete thought. There had to be a time specification (Frege, 1997(2), p. 343). That aside, it is still clear that for Frege “now” refers to the time of utterance.

Kripke disagrees with Frege’s analysis of “now” but agrees with the analysis of “I” to the extent that the primitive self-acquaintance is required to use the first-person pronoun. Perry, Kaplan thinks that it is the other way round. That is, that Frege has gotten it right when it comes to “now” but wrong in respect to the first-person pronouns.

Kripke argues that it is the same for “I.” Or might we say, that “now” ought to follow similar rules as “I.” Interestingly, for Frege “I” expressed a complete thought, that is without any further qualifying words. Kripke argues that “I” like “now” autonomously refers to its referent. He writes:

In this, as in other cases of autonomous designation, the use requires that the speaker or thinker be acquainted with the object. Just as the speaker is acquainted with the present time, so following the familiar Cartesian idea, each speaker if acquainted with him- or herself. (Kripke, 2011, p. 284)

The important point here is that if we are using the language according to the theory that Kripke is putting forward and use the word “I” then it is necessary that we know who or what we are referring to otherwise we will not make any sense.

One may wonder if it is not a requirement that we always be acquainted with the things that we are talking about if we are to make any sense. Here we just need to consider that we can talk about the king of

Sweden, the prime minister of England and the president of the USA without knowing who any of these people are, similarly with the captain of the Titanic. But we need to remember that according to Kripke we do know who these people are or are sufficiently acquainted with them if we know their titles. When we use a name to pick out a person then we are using a rigid designator, but that by no means prohibits that we pick out a person by using a contingent description. Titles are, generally speaking, contingent properties. Which is clear from the consideration that the US president in 1970 could have been someone else than Nixon. But when it comes to the name Nixon it is clear that no one else than Nixon might have been Nixon (Kripke, 1980, p. 48). So, names as rigid designators do not pick out a person by description. But we can pick out a referent by a description. Kripke has an amusing example in “Naming and Necessity” it goes like this:

It is a point, made by Donnellan, that under certain circumstances a particular speaker may use a definite description to refer, not to the proper referent, in the sense that I've just defined it, of that description, but to something else that he wants to single out and which he thinks is the proper referent of the description, but which in fact isn't. So you may say, 'The man over there with champagne in his glass is happy', though he actually only has water in his glass. Now, even though there is no champagne in his glass, and there may be another man in the room who does have champagne in his glass, the speaker *intended* to refer, or maybe in some sense of 'refer' did refer, to the man he thought had the champagne in his glass. (Kripke, 1980, p. 25)

I suspect that the person or persons that the speaker in the champagne example is talking to would understand what was said without ever venturing to ascertain the true nature of the substance in the man's glass. In other words, one would not walk up to the person, take the glass from his hand, taste it, only to exclaim: "That is water, it cannot be him who is the referent of *the man over there who is happy*." I suppose that we have a custom of using certain shapes of glass containers for certain drinks. We drink tea from teacups, beer from beer glasses and wine from wineglasses and for champagne we tend to use tall slender glasses. So maybe it was a bit of sloppy speaking where the speaker ought to have referred to shape of the glass as it is easily ascertainable at a distance, as opposed to what was most likely contained in it. What further supports this conclusion is that we cannot accept that whoever in the room is found to actually have champagne in his glass is the referent. Nor would we accept the statement that there is no referent because several men were found to carry champagne in their glasses and therefore there was no one person who uniquely qualified. That would be absurd.

So, while there is something very unambiguous about using rigid designators as they necessarily pick out the same referent, it does not rule out that we cannot and quite often use contingent descriptions. We can also consider heat. Kripke points out that it is necessarily molecular motion. However, prior to the discovery that it is molecular motion it was picked out as a certain sensation (Kripke, 1980, p. 131). The sensation would be a contingent fact about heat. For one thing it depends on people being able to feel it (Ibid). Then consider that people reasonably could talk about heat even before its necessary quality had been discovered. Therefore it is quite reasonable to talk about things using a contingent description. It may be preferable to use rigid designators as it seems to eliminate a lot of ambiguity, but not prohibit the use of contingent descriptions, especially when we do not have a rigid designator, or the knowledge of the correct rigid designator is not shared by the listener. We might know that the man with the champagne glass is called Anton. But we may still refer to him as the man with champagne in his glass in part because we are aware that no one else knows his name. When it comes to picking out the referent for the first-person pronoun Kripke writes:

... it might be a paradigmatic case, ..., of fixing the referent by means of a description: ...
(Kripke, 2011(2), p. 304)

The description that Kripke is referring to must be the description that we have of ourselves in our primitive self-acquaintance. This in turn reveals another tantalizing thing about our relationship to self, that is that we for the most part do not know necessary qualities about ourselves. Just as we prior to the scientific discoveries of the essential properties of water, heat, lightning, and many other things had to refer to them by contingent properties so when it comes to self, we seem to be almost in a prescientific age in the sense that we refer to ourselves by what we can reasonably presume to be a contingent description. Here we presume that it is a contingent description because it is incommunicable and therefore eludes further scrutiny. We cannot rule out that it might contain some essential property, it just does not seem probable. If we are to conjecture something about this knowledge, might we say that we know ourselves, by the way we talk, by certain patterns of thinking, maybe smell. If not these things, then something in that neighbourhood, all of which are contingent. We could walk, talk, think, smell differently and though this difference might be very discernible it may not be describable. We don't want to exclude

the possibility that we know ourselves by more profound properties. We are just attempting to give a picture that may serve as a kind of analogy.

Kripke's Arguments from Pain

Descartes and Kripke have various ways of showing it to be plausible that the mind and body are possibly not identical. Descartes argues that we can imagine the mind without the body. Kripke says that he might as well have argued that the body can exist without the mind as happens when we die (Kripke, 1980, p. 145) (see especially the footnote 74 on page 145). Kripke illustrates this with the following very short dialogue:

‘Descartes had a serious accident, did he survive?’ ‘Yes, of course- take a look at this coffin.’ This response is absurd, we have to say that Descartes is no longer with us. (Kripke, 2011(2), p. 310)

In addition, Kripke has two other arguments using pain to establish the separation of mind and body. In the first argument he lets **A** represent a sensation of pain and **B** be the corresponding pain state. Then he says that it is theoretically possible that we can have **B** without **A**. Jones could have the brain state that we associate with pain without feeling pain (Kripke, 1980, p. 146).

...if something is a pain it is essentially so, and it seems absurd to suppose that pain could have been something other than the one it is. The same holds for ‘C-fibre stimulation’. Provided that ‘C-fibres’ is a rigid designator, as I will suppose here. (...) Thus the identity of pain with the stimulation of C-fibres, if true, must be necessary. ... This means that the identity theorist is committed to the view that there could not be C-fibre stimulation which was not pain nor pain which was not C-fiver stimulation. (Kripke, 1980, pp. 148-149)

According to Kripke a “rigid designator” is a name that refers to the same object in all possible worlds in which that object occurs (Kripke, 1980, p. 48). When it comes to “C-fibres” Kripke is supposing that this name always picks out that object (or kind or speeches of objects). Thus, it is not possible to claim that “C-fibres”, according to counterpart theory -in some other world- where they speak a different language, refer to (what we call) “cat” and accordingly C-fibre stimulation means stroking the cat, which in most instances has nothing at all to do with pain. If a C-fibre is stimulated by a pinprick or by stubbing one toe it must necessarily result in pain, that is, if mind and body are one, as naturalists holds. However, this seems too strong a conclusion. Might we have tried injuring ourselves and only feeling the pain much later. Kripke argues that is certainly conceivable to have C-fibre stimulation and no pain. As Kripke notes:

The trouble is that the identity theorist does not hold that the physical state merely produces the mental state, rather he wishes the two to be identical and thus a fortiori necessary co-occurrent. (Kripke, 1980, p. 151)

This is a reduction ad absurdum. Kripke shows that if mind and body or mind and brain are identical then any C-fibre should result in immediate pain. Might we say that this is an absurdly strong conclusion, for we can easily imagine being bruised and not necessarily feeling pain. This intuition leads to the conclusion that the mind and body are two.

One of the underlying premises of Kripke's arguments is Leibniz's axiom of indiscernibility of identicals, the idea that identicals have all properties in common. Kripke believes it to be as self-evident as the law of contradiction and finds it bizarre that other philosophers doubt it (Kripke, 1980, p. 3). This further entails that the connection between C-fibre stimulation and pain must be necessary if mind and body are one thing. Or as in the second argument:

If *A* and *B* were identical, the identity would have to be necessary. (Kripke, 1980, p. 146)

If, however, mind and body are of two separate identities then the relationship between them is contingent. Which leaves open the option that they may interact sometimes and not others. The mind can notice what is going on in the body but also be free to explore the inner world (as Frege calls it) and pay less attention to the body. Sometimes we may feel our pains other times we may be distracted from them. Thus, dualism is more in line with what we observe. Kripke does not talk about what we observe. Such language would probably take him too far into science where he may not be so comfortable. Therefore, he couches it as "theoretically possible."

It is worth noting that Kripke's arguments were mainly aimed at type-type identity theory (Kripke, 1980, p. 144). Still, it seems that they do much to bolster the case of dualism in general. Which is also what Kripke says towards the end of "Naming and Necessity." He writes:

...the theorist who wishes to identify various particular mental and physical events will have to face problems fairly similar to those of type-type theorist; he too will be unable to appeal to the standard alleged analogues. ... I suspect, however, that the present consideration tell heavily against the usual forms of materialism. Materialism, I think, must hold that a physical description of the world is a complete description of it, that any mental facts are 'ontologically dependant' on physical facts in the straight-forward sense of following from them by necessity. (Kripke, 1980, p. 155)

It is not just that there are some things that materialism cannot explain. That would be to put the matter too opaquely. Rather it is that dualism explains the very things that materialism cannot explain. We are faced with a very plausible theoretical scenario that seems unexplainable on materialism.

Madden's Critique of Conceivability

James D. Madden believes that the Descartes and Kripke's argument for dualism go through. However, as both arguments rely on conceivability he finds that they do not lead to a knock out argument.

Of course, if a state of affairs is logically contradictory, then it is inconceivable. But does that mean that we must say that all states of affairs free of logical contradictions are conceivable? Cases like "Jim Madden is a reptile" are not logically contradictory, but it is hard to say that they are conceivable. (Matten, 2013, p. 41)

Descartes, and Kripke have an argument. But it does not seem to carry much strength or so Madden argues. Thus, it can seem that we have come along way only to have expended a lot of hot air. Maybe it is putting it too strongly, as there are some philosophers who do feel that conceivability is good premise for supporting the Cartesian conclusion. But it is somewhat shy of a decisive conclusion. This according to Madden concerns Descartes argument and Kripke's argument from "Naming and Necessity."

If we allow ourselves to go along with Madden and concede that these are inconclusive, we need to remember that Kripke now has provided very strong arguments against the Humian objection. The bundle of perceptions without any further attributes has turned out to be a very inadequate explanation. Similarly, the neo-Humian notion that first person pronouns do not refer or that we have no special acquaintance of self has also been exposed as an inadequate account. In addition, the language argument from the first-person use of "I" gives us new evidence that establishes the "res cogitans" (thinking thing).

The question that remains is whether the mind is a property of the body or separate. More specifically how strong the Cartesian argument is when it comes to asserting the separation between mind and body. Madden says that Descartes and Kripke argument depends on conceivability.

Here maybe we should consider if Madden is reading Kripke's argument in the strongest way. To be fair to Madden it should be pointed out that his outline is inspired by Kripke and so should not be considered as an accurate summery (Matten, 2013, pp. 35,25). It goes as follows:

1. If materialism is true, then psychological states are identical to processes or events in my brain, call them collectively *B*.
2. If my psychological states and *B* are identical, then necessarily my psychological states and *B* are identical.
3. It is possible that my psychological states exist without *B*.

Therefore:

4. It is not necessary that my psychological and *B* are identical. (from 3)

Therefore:

5. My psychological states and *B* are not identical. (from 2 and 4)

Therefore:

6. Materialism is false. (from 1 to 5)
7. Either materialism or dualism is true.

Therefore:

8. Dualism is true. (from 6 and 7) (Matten, 2013, p. 36)

The very crucial part of this argument is how exactly we establish the separation of mind and body. Premise two asserts the Leibnizian rule of identity called indiscernibility of identicals, to establish the identity between mind and brain and that it is a necessary relationship that a thing has to itself. Once this is asserted all that we need is the mere possibility that they are not the same, for possibility contradicts necessity, and the rest of the argument is formality.

What Madden question is whether the mere possibility or conceivability is sufficient. He concedes that we can reasonably follow along with the argument, but questions whether conceivability is really a convincing premise. He points out that things that are logically impossible cannot be conceived such as a square circle. In this way he concedes that inconceivability is a strong premise. But he points out that there are a lot of things that we can conceive from which it does not necessarily follow that they must be true.

We could say that he distinguishes between two kinds of premises for modal arguments:

9. The logically contradictory as well as inconceivable.
10. The mere conceivable.

The first makes a very strong and convincing premise for any argument the second is much more questionable. Descartes believed that he could conceive of the mind (or his thinking) as separated from

the body because he could doubt the body but not the thinking (Matten, 2013, p. 41). This we might concede to Madden may not be the strongest form of conception. But is it not possible that amongst the premises in the category here labelled as 10 there may be some stronger premises and others weaker? If so, maybe it is not justified to lump conceivability-premisses into two crude categories. The first category is indeed very justified. The second however, should maybe have something of a gradian scale. It seems reasonable that Kripke formulated his argument not just to repeat Descartes' argument but because he thought he had something to add. Then it seems uncharitable to simply dismiss it on the same basis as Descartes'. Ought we not at least to consider that the states of affairs that Kripke offers us give us something stronger than mere conceivability, or a stronger plausibility than what Descartes offered?

Let's consider what Kripke says about his own argument:

...the theorist who wishes to identify various particular mental and physical events will have to face problems fairly similar to those of type-type theorist; he too will be unable to appeal to the standard alleged analogues. ... I suspect, however, that the present consideration tell heavily against the usual forms of materialism. Materialism, I think, must hold that a physical description of the world is a complete description of it, that any mental facts are 'ontologically dependant' on physical facts in the straight-forward sense of following from them by necessity. (Kripke, 1980, p. 155)

Madden asserts that mere conceivability is inscrutable. However, are there *any* philosophers who have considered Kripke's premises and asserted that they can just as easily conceive having pain *whenever* a C-fibre is stimulated? It would seem that such a refutation is difficult to honestly pose.

To those who want to refute his premises Kripke writes:

Someone who wishes to maintain an identity thesis cannot simply accept the Cartesian intuition that *A* can exist without *B*, that *B* can exist without *A*, that the correlative presence of anything with mental properties is merely contingent to *B*, and that the correlative presence of any of any specific physical properties is merely contingent to *A*. He must explain these intuitions away showing how they are illusory. (Kripke, 1980, p. 148)

Madden's objection is that these perceptions are inscrutable. But are they really? The scenarios that Kripke offers us do seem to be stronger than Descartes'. But if we cannot say exactly how they are stronger must they then be considered a weaker form of argument?

Maybe it is similar to our primitive acquaintance of self. We are clearly able to refer to ourselves in conversation. We know that we know ourselves, but we cannot say what our distinguishing features are.

We perceive them but cannot articulate them. So might we perceive that Kripke's premises are stronger than Descartes' but cannot say how.

If Madden is right, then Kripke is setting an impossible standard for refuting his argument. For how can someone explain these intuitions away as Kripke says we must? Let's consider Madden's short example of something that he believes is not logically contradictory but of which it is hard to say if it is conceivable.

"James Madden is a reptile." (Matten, 2013, p. 41)

Unfortunately, there is a bit of ambiguity here. For it seems fairly easy to consider or conceive a case where we find, catch or procure a reptile and then call it James Madden. It is eminently conceivable and involves no logical contradiction. So that plainly cannot be what Matten means. Rather he must be speaking *de re*, that is specifically about the James Madden who is himself. We therefore find that what he is saying is that there is no logical contradiction in saying that he himself is a reptile.

We have already considered the case of Queen Elisabeth and whether she could have been born of different parents. Kripke says that there is no logical contradiction in us hearing the announcement that it has turned out that contrary to common belief that she is not the child of the former King and Queen of England. That is possible, or we can say there is a possible world in which it is found that the Queen is the child of Mr. and Mrs. Truman. Kripke elaborates:

This still would not be a situation in which *this very woman* who we call 'Elizabeth II' was the child of Mr. and Mrs. Truman, or so it seems to me. It would be a situation in which there was some other woman who had many of the properties that are in fact true of Elizabeth. (Kripke, 1980, pp. 112-3)

Does the same not apply to the curious case of James Madden? That is that if he was a reptile presumably born or I should say hatched from a reptile egg, then it would be a case where a reptile was found to have many of the properties that are in fact true of James Madden, but it would not be a case where "James Madden is a reptile" is true.

If Kripke seems a bit vague or unsure of his claim when he writes "or so it seems to me" in the quote just above. Then consider what he says about essential or accidental properties:

...it is very far from being true that this idea [that a property can meaningfully be held to be essential or accidental to an object independently of its description] it is a notion which has no intuitive content, which means nothing to the ordinary man. (Kripke, 1980, p. 41)³

Being mammal or reptile are not accidental properties as opposed to being a teacher or a plumber. That is if a whale is a mammal, then it is necessarily a mammal (Kripke, 1980, p. 138) which also necessarily excludes that it can be a reptile or a fish. Similarly, if it is true that James Madden is a mammal then it is necessarily true which necessarily excludes the possibility that in another world he could be reptilian.

This conclusion further illustrates that intuition (Kripke's term) or conceivability (Madden's term) by no means is as pliable as Madden argues. It shows what a formidable philosophical tool it can be. In Madden's defence it may be said that he by unfortunate accident came upon an example which on closer scrutiny turned out to support the very opposite claim of what he had intended. It seems that his main intent was not to write a book about Kripke's modal argument for dualism but rather about Aquinas' arguments. To that end Kripke was merely touched upon in the preliminary discussion to give more of an overview rather than an in-depth analysis.

Even though Madden's example fails, might we grant him that there could possibly be better, more conceivable examples that might better support his case. We do grant that while Descartes' argument has some intuitive weight Kripke's has more.

That, coupled with the account of reference for first person pronouns, seems to make a very strong case for dualism. We thus have two independent pieces of evidence that come together to strengthen the Cartesian argument. The first-person account strengthens Descartes case for the "res cogitans". Not only is it a thing that we cannot doubt, it is also a thing that we have to be acquainted with in order to speak the languages that we do. As with the point that the mind is different than the body this was something that Descartes conceived in the weaker sense of conceivability (not excluding that it could not be different). This seems considerably strengthened with Kripke's argument from pain backed up by the doctrine of essential properties.

³ The square brackets as well as the text between them are Kripke's own writing, presumably to indicate that these words were not part of the original speech but a later addition of his.

Kripke's Critique of Dualism

In order to argue for pain as being necessarily felt as painful Kripke has developed a theory of essential properties. Accordingly, water is necessarily H₂O, gold has the atomic number of 79, heat is necessarily molecular motion, whales are necessarily mammals (Kripke, 1980, p. 138). Now that Kripke has brought it out in the light, it seems that it has strengthened Descartes' argument considerable. There is, however, a caveat. Kripke's new evidence is not entirely supportive Cartesian Dualism. In his very last footnote in the book "Naming and Necessity" Kripke writes:

... identity theorists have presented positive arguments for their view, which I certainly have not answered here. Some of these arguments seem to be weak or based on ideological prejudices, but others strike me as highly compelling arguments which I am at present unable to answer convincingly. Secondly, rejection of the identity thesis does not imply acceptance of Cartesian dualism. In fact, my view above that a person could not have come from a different sperm and egg from the ones from which he actually originated implicitly suggests a rejection of the Cartesian picture. If we had a clear idea of the soul or the mind as an independent, subsistent, spiritual entity, why should it have any necessary connection with particular material objects such as a particular sperm or a particular egg? A convinced dualist may think that that my views on sperm and egg beg the question against Descartes. I would tend to argue the other way; the fact that it is hard to imagine me coming from a sperm and egg different from my actual origins seems to me to indicate that we have no such clear conception of a soul or self. (Kripke, 1980, p. 155)

What exactly is the problem that Kripke is identifying here? First Kripke hints that the identity-theorist does have some good arguments for their case that Kripke has not addressed. What exactly these arguments are or exactly how strong they are we will not go into. Just note that the identity theorist seems to have given up that peculiar form of materialism. For them it seems Kripke's argument carried the day. That, however, is not all. For Kripke also concedes that in the process of formulating his theory of essential properties he has come upon his own objection to dualism.

The problem is that people also have essential properties. That is there are facts about humanity, just as whales are necessarily mammals, so it seems safe to say that humans also are necessarily mammals. There are also facts about every individual person that are necessarily so, or in other words, could not have been otherwise. One of those facts that Kripke identifies is that if we are talking about a specific person *de re*, then we cannot say that they have come from a different sperm and egg, as that would simply have resulted in a different person. Thus, it seems to be the egg and sperm that determines much of our peculiar

personhood. It seems hard to conceive according to Kripke that consciousness which according to hypnosis is non-material should in its essential properties be determined by material substances such as the sperm and egg.

Kripke considers various counterfactual situations (other worlds) where Elizabeth II is born by other parents or is switched after birth and becomes a pauper. Then he writes:

This seems to be possible. And so it's possible that even though she was born of these parents she never became queen. Even though born of these parents, like Mark Twain's character she was switched off with another girl. But what is harder to imagine is her being born of different parents. It seems to me that anything coming from this origin would not be this object. (Kripke, 1980, p. 113)

If you or someone had different parents, they would be a different person. When Kripke says that "it is harder to imagine", what he is saying when we consider his theory of essential properties is that we cannot imagine. To put it even stronger, it is that the parent child relationship is necessary. Or even stronger the egg sperm relationship to our personhood is necessary. For we can imagine being generated by the same parents but another sperm and egg in which case they would not be the person that they are but a sister or brother.

As already noted, this creates considerable problem for Cartesian dualism as it is the physical properties that define the essential properties of a person *de re* rather than the mind. Kripke also writes "A convinced dualist may think that that my views on sperm and egg beg the question against Descartes." (Kripke, 1980, p. 155 as already quoted). Here Kripke is saying that he is not a convinced dualist. It seems that he strongly inclines to dualism. That is the position that he keeps arguing for through his long career. However, he is not convinced (at least not back in 1980).

Let's try to imagine the scenario of human conception to see more specifically what the problem is. The sperm and egg join and start to grow. One problem then is at what point is the supernatural consciousness added? Three options occur to me:

1. The mind is formed by the body.⁴
2. Then mind enters to body during gestation

⁴ An idea quite similar is found in Emanuel Swedenborg's book "Conjugal Love" (Swedenborg, 1995, p. 212)

3. The mind is passed on with the sperm and egg from the parents.

The first option seems to rule out dualism, as it seems unable to explain why a natural body would create a supernatural mind. The second option seems to be portrayed in the Disney movie “Soul” from 2020. In the movie souls inhabit a different realm until the time when joined with the body. It seems to be sometime during gestation (Doctor, 2020). But the exact stage has not been specified. This time seems to be a philosophical problem. For with a gradually growing fetus any moment of receiving supernatural consciousness seems arbitrary. Why not the moment prior or the one proceeding? Maybe this problem can be overcome. It also seems to be a problem that body, and consciousness have no apparent relation, though it may go some way to explain various levels of alienation that many of us feel towards our bodies. However, these reasons do seem to make this scenario less plausible. Which brings us to the third option that consciousness is passed on along with sperm and egg, and paternal and maternal consciousness join at conception. Then there can be a heredity in the mind compatible with the heredity in the body, which can explain the identity of the person which then is an identity of a mind body duality. This option may have problems of its own. But it seems to address the problem that Kripke is hinting at.

Conclusion

I have already quoted much of the last footnote in “Naming and Necessity” and will here include the very last lines.

In any event, Descartes’ notion seems to have been rendered dubious ever since Hume’s critique of the notion of a Cartesian self. I regard the mind body problem as wide open and extremely confusing. (Kripke, 1980, p. 155)

Since 1980 Kripke has done a lot to re-establish Descartes argument and render Hume’s argument more dubious. Today, dualism therefor seems on much firmer footing than forty years ago. But there are still serious arguments that seem to point to naturalism. We may be very confident with much of the theory of names or essential properties. We may feel quite confident that in order to use first person pronouns correctly we must have a very special un-articulatable first acquaintance with self. But it seems that to ultimately sort out this nature of self we are far less confident. We can talk confidently about, whales, lightning, light, and their necessary properties. We have sailed the oceans, mapped it’s depts and gone to

the highest peaks. We have even sent people to the moon. We can know many things about the world around us and even say of some of what we know, that it could not be otherwise. We even know that our parents are necessarily our parents though we might not necessarily know who they are. But it is very different when it comes to our inner life. We do know that we are necessarily a thinking thing. Beyond that we also have this uncommunicable knowledge of our self, which enables us to distinguish us from other people. But it seems that when we go beyond that and conjecture about the makeup of consciousness, we are met with formidable problems. Indeed, Frege and Kripke's discovery that we refer to ourselves by using a description in a primitive uncommunicable self-acquaintance strongly indicates that our knowledge of self compared to our knowledge of the world around us, is only based contingent truths, sort of prescientific in nature. The self is a bit elusive for us. Unlike so many other things it seems to refuse dissection and qualification in terms of essential properties. We have some very good reasons to believe that dualism does provide us with a good answer. However, there are also reasons that point in a very different direction. I find myself very much resonating with Kripke's assessment that the mind body problem is wide open (Ibid).

What kind of conclusion can we possibly draw from that? We have some good reasons to believe in dualism. There may also be some good reasons to believe in naturalism. This paper has barely looked at that side. At the end of "Naming and Necessity" Kripke hints that naturalism has potent objections to dualism. However, with the conclusions from this paper, no side ought to arm itself with too much confidence and assert to the broader public that this is the truth of the matter, for we just don't know.

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