

Subject: Spiritual Human

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The Mind-Body Dichotomy

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Traditional philosophies of the mind can be divided into two broad categories: a) Dualist theories and b) Materialist theories. The Mind-Body dichotomy was postulated by R. Descartes (1596-1650), who described the mind as a nonphysical (immaterial) substance not following the laws of nature. The problem with dualism is its incapacity to explain how an immaterial mind can become the cause for physical events. Thus, we need a third intermediary between the physical body and the nonphysical mind. This is, according to my understanding, what is known as the **spirit**.

Defining the spirit is not so easy; because it connects the mind to the body, but remains independent and is different from both of them. We know that the body and the mind interact and affect each other. The psychosomatic diseases, such as gastritis, panic attacks, some sort of headaches are clear examples of this interaction which cannot be explained with simple stimuli-response relationships. Thus the solution of the mind-body problem is beyond a naïve behaviorist approach.

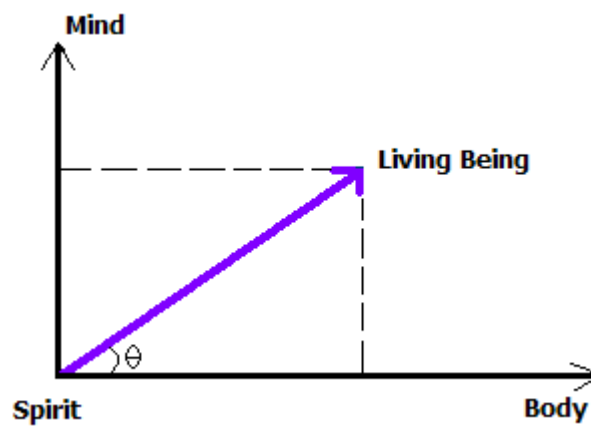
The materialist approach to this problem claims that the mental is not distinct from the physical. Some proponents of this theory accept the existence of mental states, but claim that they are identical with neurophysiologic events in the brain. But what are those neurophysiologic events? Are they just a group of neural bonds which become a sudden center of electro-chemical information-emitter or are these neural structures capable in interacting globally and creating a holistic perception?

One way of visualizing the spirit is to accept it as being a local energy concentration embedded in a global and holistic energy field. Thus the spirit is an energy wave, capable in influencing all material objects and living beings. Modern science and especially **Quantum Mechanics** claims that all existing objects have both a material as well as a wave aspect.

Einstein also postulated that Energy and Matter are interchangeable in accordance with his famous formula $E=mc^2$. Thus, all matter could be considered as simply being a 'localized' energy concentration within a multi-dimensional 'global spirit'. The mind is then a self-organizing 'potential energy source' waiting to be activated by that engulfing mysterious spirit. Feeling the existence of the spirit is what differentiates the human from the animal.

It was Einstein, again, who said: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed." In other words, we are "*truly alive*" as long as we are in contact with our human spirit.

Recent research is defining the brain as an interacting holistic network. It is not a hierarchical structure which has a master region giving orders to subordinate regions. Today's neuroscientists are claiming that the brain is made out of "*distributed regions*" or several "*encoded ensembles*"; networks of cells **acting in concert** to produce a perception, a sensation or a thought. Although mental states and neural states seem to be correlated, one does not interfere with the other and the nature of the relationship eludes material and causal explanations. The graph below may help to visualize the mind-body problem.



Every living being can be considered as a *vectorial* sum of the body and the mind; and not as a linear, arithmetical sum of both. The body as well as the mind are the two orthogonal components which do not have any direct effect on each other, but could interact through the spirit located at their intersection, or the 'origin' of every living being. Thus, the spirit is the essence of life and every living being may be considered as a vector having a different angle Θ . Without the spirit the body would be a senseless piece of matter and the mind an immaterial wave. This graph is also a help for our understanding of the *particle-wave* duality. All matter is the *vectorial* sum of the particle aspect and the wave aspect of all that is within our universe.

The concept of a holistic, self-referential universe dismisses the idea of a hierarchical organization in favor of an egalitarian, self-organizing multi-dimensional manifold. The self-referential aspect of our universe results in creating order out of chaos and chaos out of order, *vice versa*. One is not independent and cannot exist without the other. This is because the universe is inherently in-deterministic and non-linear. For more scientific explanations on this subject please see **3-A Different Universe** and **8-Entangled States** under *Science*.