

INTRODUCTION

1. The aims of this book in a nutshell

The present collection of essays,¹ most of which have been written within the very last years, aims at founding a novel stance concerning that aspect of the time-honoured ‘mind-body’ problem which has to do with the relationship between *subjectively experienced consciousness* and *objectively observable occurrences in the central nervous system* (‘consciousness-brain’ problem). Although, from the times of ancient Greek philosophy up to the fashionable though dubious ‘neurophilosophical’ approaches of our days, this problem has found innumerable answers, *most* of them – and, as far as I can see, *all* of them that are presently being discussed by mainstream philosophers, psychologists, physiologists, neurobiologists, and other empirical scientists – may be roughly subsumed under the well-known generic labels of either ‘*dualism*’ or ‘*monism*’.

Objecting at the same time to *both* of these overall positions – all variants of which, I think, may gain whatever little appearance of acceptability they own at all mostly in the light of the obvious shortcomings of their respective opposites –, I am going to suggest trying out a ‘*third way*’ *beyond monism and dualism*, which I propose to call ‘*complementaristic*’ in much the sense of Niels Bohr’s.²

¹ Let me stress from the very beginning that the present booklet is intended to be, not a homogeneous monograph subdivided into a series of consecutive ‘chapters’, but a mere collection of ‘essays’ concerning related problems. This is to say, *inter alia*, that the single essays are as self-sufficient as possible, from which it follows that a small handful of passages will have to be repeated. In my eyes, this disadvantage is clearly outweighed by the advantage that they may be read in an arbitrary order. Cross-references will make it plain on every relevant occasion where to look for pertinent details and further information.

² In point of historical fact it ought to be noted that Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg seem to have elaborated the conception of complementarity in close co-operation. Let me summarise a passage, and translate a few sentences, from Heisenberg’s reminiscences of Bohr in the years 1922 to 1927. Near the end of February, 1927, after one of his frequent late evening discussions with Bohr, Heisenberg went for a lonely walk in the Fælledpark behind Bohr’s institute in Copenhagen. ‘On this walk under the starry sky of the night it occurred to me, plausibly enough, that perhaps one might simply postulate that nature admits of only such experimental situations that can also be described within the mathematical scheme of quantum mechanics. As one could infer from the mathematical formalism, this means that apparently *one cannot accurately know the position and the velocity of a particle at the same time.*’ But before Heisenberg could communicate this *indeterminacy principle* of his to Bohr, the latter left for a longer ski holiday to Norway, where he ‘seems to have sketched the *concept of complementarity*, which was to make it possible to *render the dualism between the wave and the particle images the point of departure of the interpretation.* This concept of complementarity agreed exactly with the basic philosophical attitude he had practically always adopted and in which

2. Against a watered-down conception of complementarity

To be sure, current *‘two-aspect theories’*, notably the one recently worked out by the London psychologist Max Velmans,³ often claim to be of a ‘complementaristic’ character, too. However, to the best of my knowledge all contemporary consciousness-brain theories posing as ‘complementaristic’ more or less silently assume the existence of some entity, say a ‘psychophysical mind’,⁴ which, being *one and the same* ‘Je-ne-sais-quoi’ or, speaking more down-to-earth, ‘I dunno what’, can be accessed in *two* ‘complementary’ modes which, though being in a way mutually exclusive, have to complement each other in order for there to be a comprehensive or all-around view of the matter in hand. So I take it that they are but variants or combinations of monistic and dualistic positions. This is testified conspicuously enough by Max Velmans himself, who characterises his ‘complementaristic’ two-aspect theory of consciousness as ‘a form of nonreductionist monism (ontological monism combined with epistemological dualism)’.⁵

In the following essays, I am going to try and show, not only why I am loath to speak of *one and the same* psychophysical entity which is alleged to be accessible in *two* complementary ways, but also that we are not justified in believing that, with respect to any given subjective conscious experience and any seemingly ‘corresponding’ or ‘correlated’ neural event, we have but the choice of taking them to be either *one and the same* entity or else *two numerically different* ones.

3. Linguistic and logical problems of identity and non-identity

Now at first sight this may seem strange indeed. For if we have an entity *a* and an entity *b*, and if *a* and *b* are not *one and the same* entity, mustn’t they needs be *two different* ones? But a closer look easily shows us that this is by no means

the shortcomings of our means of expression are considered a central philosophical problem. So he was disturbed by the fact that I did not want to start from the dualism between waves and particles. But after some weeks of discussion, which were not altogether free from tensions, we soon realised, in particular also thanks to the co-operation of Oskar Klein, that *basically we meant the same thing* and that also *the indeterminacy relation was but a special case of that more general complementarity*’ (translated from Heisenberg 1964: pp. 66f.; all italics mine). – It should be added that most of the important literature concerning Bohr’s concept of complementarity, as far as I have become acquainted with it, is of practically no relevance to the development of my conception of *psychophysical complementarity* in particular and *anthropological complementarity* in general. Hence I will abstain from quoting this or that well-known book or article from the fields of the history and the philosophy of science which some readers might miss.

³ See esp. Velmans 1990, 2000.

⁴ Velmans 2000: p. 251.

⁵ *Ibid.*: p. 281 n. 5; cf. pp. 233, 249, 254.

invariably the case. For although it has been made evident by prominent possible-worlds theorists that we have to assume an ‘intermundane’ or ‘trans-world’ numerical identity or else numerical non-identity between any two ‘inhabitants’ of two ‘*counterfactually* possible worlds’ (variants of the real world, or of any world considered in a certain context to be real),⁶ this is certainly not true of the ‘inhabitants’ of any two disconnected ‘*fictionally* possible worlds’ (isolated worlds of fiction, say of novels or fairy tales). It is considerably less easy, however, to see that this somewhat trivial case is not the only example in which the supposedly exclusive alternative of being either *one and the same* thing or else *two different* things breaks down. Rather, in order to convince ourselves of the logical or ‘depth-grammatical’ fact that there are a great many other cases exemplifying this consequential phenomenon – for instance, that a person and a natural number, or a neural event and a conscious experience, cannot properly be said to coincide or differ *numerically* –, we have to unearth the hidden logical structure of ordinary-language identity statements and their denegations.

So the logico-linguistic propaedeutic offered in the first three of the following papers, written in 2005–2006, should be considered an integral part of the studies on consciousness presented in the present book. In the first essay – *Hare’s Two Definitions of ‘Entailment’ and the Generic Relation of ‘Linguistic Implication’* – I will gradually work out a fundamental relation which I take to be the basis of a sound and sober research into the multifarious ‘linguistic implications’ obtaining between fully interpreted sentences (or, in precisely this sense: ‘propositions’) of ordinary language. In the second essay – *Five Kinds of Linguistic Implication* – I will develop criteria for splitting up this highly generic relation into three subrelations (‘semantic implication’, ‘pragmatic implication’, and ‘catapragmatic implication’) and two sub-subrelations (‘semantic presupposition’ and ‘catapragmatic presupposition’). The application of some of these criteria I take to be highly effective tools for doing what has been called ‘linguistic analysis’, i. e., conceptual analysis carried out in a linguistic key. Whereas the concepts of semantic and pragmatic implication, and the criteria necessary for telling them apart, play a major role in, say, the development of analytical metaethics in the wake of Richard M. Hare’s ‘universal prescriptivism’,⁷ in our present context it is mainly *semantic presupposition* that we have to focus our interest upon. For in the third essay – *Identity Statements and Nonsense* – I will have to draw, inter alia, on Bertrand Russell’s analysis of ‘definite descriptions’ and identity statements containing such individual constants; and since Peter F. Strawson’s early writings it has been a frequently repeated objection against this analysis that it fails to do justice to the difference between entailment (‘logical implication’) and the intricate and multiform linguistic phenomenon commonly called ‘presupposition’. In fact I think we are justified

⁶ *Loci classici* are Kripke 1971, 1972.

⁷ See esp. Hare 1952, 1963, 1981; Hoche 1992, 1995d, 1995e, 2001, 2004; Dudda 1999.

in accepting Russell's analysis only on condition we can prove that the relevant form of presupposition, which I suggest to call *semantic* presupposition, is but a special case – or a subrelation – of that particular form of entailment which I will call, not just *logical*, but *semantic* implication; and the first two of the following essays serve precisely the purpose of making this as plain as possible.

4. A 'noematic' approach to consciousness

Whereas the first three of the following essays, though admitting of an illuminating *application* to the consciousness-brain problem, in themselves are of a much wider philosophical interest, the fourth one – *Consciousness*, the first draft of which dates back to 1998 – addresses the central topic of the present book, 'anthropological complementarism', in a most straightforward way. Prompted by my having become acquainted with Max Velmans's 'reflexive model' of consciousness, which at first sight looks highly promising indeed but on closer inspection loses its attractiveness rapidly, this paper tries to clarify the salient features of *subjectively experienced* consciousness – that is, of *my own* consciousness as it presents itself *to myself* in what nowadays is usually called the 'first-person perspective' – in a direct (though largely exemplary) way. For intrinsic reasons, the favourite among my examples is sense perception, especially *visual perception* or *seeing*. I will suggest that the alleged 'psychical *event*' of my seeing a given material object (say, a dog approaching me) should be considered to be, not some 'process' or 'happening' being performed on either a physiological or else a psychical 'inner stage',⁸ but what, for the sake of accuracy (though doubtless a bit circumstantially), might be called 'the object (say, the dog) *as, qua, or in its capacity of*, being seen by me at the given moment of time and in the given mode of visually appearing to me'.

At first sight, this replacement may certainly seem to be a revealing specimen of a philosophical hair-splitting in general and an *obscurum per obscurius* in particular. I am confident, however, that at least the more benevolent among my readers will convince themselves in due course that it would be philosophically short-sighted to suppose so. Not the least advantage of this replacement seems to me to be the fact that attending to physical objects out in the world and attending to psychical events allegedly going on, in one way or another, 'within' myself cannot be shown once for all to be mutually exclusive. After all, if we can easily see a visual object and hear an auditory object at the same time, or can both see and hear a blackbird on the top of the roof simultaneously, why in the world shouldn't we be able to perceive a bodily object and to experience a mental event at the same time, too? If we keep in mind, however, that we cannot simultaneously *perform* the abstraction

⁸ Cf. Ryle 1949: *passim*.