



## The Identity of Subject and Object

**Abstract:** We experience ourselves and the world as subject and object only through conceptualization and language. This dualism, however, is only mental and not real. Mind produces this subject-object dualism. The subjectivity of our mind affects our perceptions of the world that is held to be objective by natural science. Hyponoesis (Universal Mind) creates both aspects, mind and matter as individualized forms that belong to the same underlying reality.

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Our everyday experience confirms the apparent fact that there is a dual-valued world as subject and object. We as consciousness, as personality and as experiencing beings are the subjects, whereas for everything for which we can come up with a name or designation, seems to be the object, that which is opposed to ourselves as a subject. Physical objects are only part of the object-world. There are also mental objects, objects of our emotions, abstract objects, religious objects etc. Language objectifies our experience. Experience per se as pure sensational experience does not make a distinction between object and subject. Only verbalized thought reifies the sensations by conceptualizing them and pigeonholing them into the given entities of language.

Some thinkers maintain, that subject and object are only different aspects of experience. I can experience myself as subject, and in the act of self-reflection, I objectify myself. The fallacy of this argument is obvious: Being a subject implies having an object. We cannot experience something consciously without the mediation of understanding and mind. Our experience is already conceptualized at the time it comes into our consciousness. Our experience is negative insofar as it destroys the original pure immediacy. In a dialectical process of synthesis, the original immediate experience becomes an object for us. The common state of our mind is only capable of apperceiving objects. Objects are reified negative experience. The same is true for the objective aspect of this theory: by objectifying myself I do not dispense with the subject, but the subject is causally and apodeictically linked to the object. As soon as I make an object of anything, I have to realize, that it is the subject, which objectifies something. It is only the subject who can do that. Without the subject there are no objects, and without objects there is no subject. This interdependence, however, is not to be understood in terms of a dualism, so that the object and the subject are real independent substances. Since the object is only created by the activity of the subject, and the subject is not a physical entity, but a mental one, we have to conclude then, that the subject-object dualism is purely mentalistic.

The Cartesian dualism posits the subject and the object as separate, independent and real substances, both of which have their ground and origin in the highest substance of God. Cartesian dualism, however, contradicts itself: The very fact, that Descartes posits the "I", that is the subject, as the only certainty, he defies materialism, and thus the concept of a "res extensa". The physical thing is only probable in its existence, whereas the mental thing is absolutely and necessarily certain. The subject is superior to the object. The object is only derived, the subject is the original. This makes the object not only inferior in its substantive quality and in its essence, but relegates it to a level of dependence on the subject. The subject recognizes that the object is a "res extensa" and this means, that the object cannot have essence or existence without the acknowledgment through the subject. The subject posits the world in the first place and the

subject is posited by God. Apart from the problem of interaction between these two different substances, Cartesian dualism cannot explain and understand the subject-object relation.

By denying Cartesian dualism and resorting to monistic theories such as personal or absolute idealism, materialism or positivism, the problem is not resolved either. What the positivists did, was just verbalizing the subject-object relation through linguistic forms. It was no longer a metaphysical problem, but only a linguistic problem. Our language has formed this object-subject dualism. These thinkers are very narrow-minded thinkers, because they do not see that in the very act of their analysis they inevitably think in the mind-set of subject and object. By relativizing the object and subject in terms of language and analytical philosophy, they avoid the elusive and problematical aporia of subject-object, which have been the fundamental questions in philosophy since its dawn. Shunning these metaphysical questions is no solution. Excluding something, by reducing it to a more material and verifiable level, is not only pseudo-philosophy but actually a depreciation and decadence of the great philosophical ideas of humanity.

Therefore we have to come to grips with the idea of subject-object in a new manner. We experience this dualism as a fact in our everyday lives. Every experience is subject to this dualistic pattern. The question, however, is, whether this underlying pattern of subject-object dualism is real or only mental. Science assumes it to be real. This assumption does not prove the reality of our experience, but only that with this method science is most successful in explaining our empirical facts. Mysticism, on the other hand, believes that there is an original unity of subject and object. To attain this unity is the goal of religion and mysticism. Humans have fallen from this unity by disgrace and by sinful behavior. Now the task of the human being is to get back on track again and strive towards this highest fulfillment. Again, are we not, on the conclusion made above, forced to admit, that also the mystic way of thinking is only a pattern of the mind and, as the scientists, that they have their own frame of reference and methodology to explain the supra-sensible facts most successfully?

If we assume mind to be the originator of the subject-object dualism, then we can not confer more reality on the physical or the mental aspect, as well as we cannot deny the one in terms of the other.

Either both, subject and object, mind and matter, are real or both are unreal, imaginary. The assumption of just an illusory subject or illusory object leads to dead-ends and to absurdities. This would entail an extreme form of skepticism, wherein everything is relative or subjective and nothing could be known for sure. This is not only devastating for the human mind, but also most ludicrous.

Does this leave us with the only option, that both, subject and object are alike real? That would again create a real dualism, which we realized, is only created in our mind. So, what part of this dualism is not real?

To answer this, we have first to inquire into the meaning of the term "real". Reality comes from the Latin word "realitas", which could be literally translated by "thing-hood". "Res" does not only have the meaning of "material thing". "Res" can have a lot of other meanings in Latin, most of them have little to do with materiality, e.g. affair, event, business, a coherent collection of any kind, situation, etc. These so-called situative terms are always subjective, and therefore related to the way of thinking and feeling of human beings. Outside of the realm of human beings, reality has no meaning at all. Only in the context of conscious and rational beings does reality become something meaningful. Reality is the whole of the human affairs insofar as these are related to our world around us. Reality is never the bare physical world, without the human being. Reality is the totality of human experience and thought in relation to an objective world.

Now this is the next aspect we have to analyze. Is this objective world, which we encounter in our experience and thought, something that exists on its own or is it dependent on our subjectivity. That the subjective mode of our consciousness affects the perceptions of the objective world is conceded by most of the scientists. Nevertheless, they assume a real and objective world, that would even exist without a human being alive or observing it. One way to

handle this problem is the Kantian solution of the "thing-in-itself", that is inaccessible to our mind because of mind's inherent limitations. This does not help us very much, but just posits some undefinable entity outside of our experience and understanding. Hegel, on the other side, denied the inaccessibility of the "thing-in-itself" and thought, that knowledge of the world as it is in itself is attainable, but only by "Absolute Knowing" , the highest form of consciousness.

One of the most persuasive proofs of an independent objective world, is the following thesis by science: If we put a camera into a landscape, where no human beings are present, and when we leave this place and let the camera take some pictures automatically through a timer, and when we come back some days later to develop the pictures, we will find the same picture of the landscape as if we had taken the picture ourselves. Also common-sense tells us: if we wake up in the morning, it is highly probable, even sure, that we find ourselves in the same environment, without changes, without things having left their places uncaused.

Is this empirical argument sufficient to persuade even the most skeptical thinker, that there is an objective world out there? Hardly. If a skeptic nonetheless tries to uphold the position of a solipsistic monism, then the above-mentioned argument would only be valid, if the objects out there were assumed to be subjective mental constructs. Not even Berkeley assumed such an extreme position. His immaterialism was based on the presumption, that the world around us is the object of God's mind, that means, that all the objects are ideas in a universal mind. This is more persuasive. We could even close the gap between the religious concept of "God" and the philosophical concept of Hyponoesis or "Universal Mind" by relating both of them to the modern quantum physical concept of "vacuum ". All have one thing in common: there must be an underlying REALITY, which contains and produces all the objects. This idea of an underlying reality is interestingly enough a continuous line of thought throughout the whole history of humanity. Almost every great philosopher or great religion assumed some kind of supreme reality. I deal with this idea in my historical account of mind's development.

We're still stuck with the problem of subject and object. If we assume, that there may be an underlying reality, neither physical nor mental, neither object nor subject, but producing both aspects, we end up with the identity of subject and object. So long as there is only this universal "vacuum", nothing is yet differentiated. Everything is one and the same. By a dialectical process of division or by random fluctuations of the vacuum, elementary forms are created, which develop into more complex forms and finally into living beings with both a mental and a physical aspect. The only question to answer is, how were these two aspects produced and developed. Maybe there are an infinite number of aspects, but only two are visible to us, such as Spinoza postulated it. Also, since the mind does not evolve out of matter, there must have been either a concomitant evolution of mind and matter , or matter has evolved whereas mind has not. Consequently mind is valued somehow superior to matter. Since both are aspects of one reality, both are alike significant. Science conceives the whole physical world and also human beings to have evolved gradually from an original vacuum state of the universe (singularity). So, has mind just popped into the world at some time in the past, or has mind emerged from the complexity of matter? The latter is not sustainable (s. my essay on the Evolution of Mind). This leaves us with the possibility, that the other aspect, mind, has different attributes and qualities. This could be proven empirically. We do not believe, that our personality is something material, that our emotions, our love and fear is of a physical nature. The qualia and properties of consciousness are completely different from the properties of matter as science has defined it. By the very nature and essence of each aspect, we can assume therefore a different dialectical movement. Whereas matter is by the very nature of its properties bound to evolve gradually and existing in a perpetual movement and change, mind, on the other hand, by the very nature of its own properties, is bound to a different evolution and existence. Mind as such has not evolved. The individualized form of mind (Exonoesis) in the human body, that is, the subject, can change, although in different ways than matter changes. Both aspects have their own sets of laws and patterns. Since mind is also non-local, it comprises all individual minds. Actually, there is only one consciousness, which is only artificially split into individual minds. That's because of the connection with brain-organs, which are the means of manifestation and expression for consciousness. Both aspects are interdependent and constitute the world and the beings as we know them.

We have now Hyponoesis (Universal Mind) that creates both mind and matter. Mind in this sense can be divided into a collective consciousness and individual consciousnesses, as well as into individual minds (Exonoesis). Matter (Exohyle) is the totality of empirical objects. There are elementary particles or vibrating strings or even force fields which are the building-blocks of complex forms and finally the universe. All these words are just concepts and do not supersede the highest transrational knowledge (Paranoesis) of Hyponoesis itself.

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Updated: 6/10/06