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I. 'SCIENCE AND THE MIND' BY D.R. KHASHABA

"I think, therefore I am", said Descartes. Why "therefore"? As if my being could be in doubt and needed proof, whereas my being - and specifically being as a self-conscious mind - is the most evident reality for myself. Descartes thought his Cogito proved more than the reality of the immediate awareness of our being, then the conclusion was not adequately grounded. Descartes was not really interested in establishing that conclusion. He using the Cogito as a model of the axiomatic evidence that should characterize all trustworthy reasoning. Yet that - the criterion of clear and distinct as a test of truth - was nothing new; it had always been the standard of mathematics. What was new and what spread and seeped into the philosophy of the following centuries and vitiated it was the implied split between the I that thinks and the I that is, as if the thinking I were one thing and my being another. Whereas, as a knowing being, my knowing is one and my being is my knowing.

The split implicit in the Cogito was a twin to Descartes' explicit and better-advertised bifurcation of mind and body, and, in my view, was not so damaging. I hold that all the fruitless travail of modern philosophers' quandaries of self-body, mind-brain, and the like, springs from our taking these distinctions for more than working fictions. To think, we have to break the whole into distinct aspects - substance-attribute, subject-object, knower-known, etc. - but to take these aspects as having any reality apart from the whole is to be deluded and to fall into endless error.

As if the Cartesian double-split between mind and body and between knower and object known were not bad enough, the British Empiricists thought that objectively given is all we need to bother about. Rationalists and Empiricists thus unwittingly joined hands in perpetrating the mind-body problem which is a pseudo-problem. While Empiricists, if they concede to mind any kind of being at all, see it as an epiphenomenon that we can simply disregard, Rationalists having split the integral act of knowledge into knower and known, forgetting their own edict of separation, try to see the knower

object.

Now neuroscientists, philosophers of mind, and psychologists are in a full-on race looking for the mind (or consciousness or the soul or whatever). I believe that it will continue to labour in vain so long as they fail to realize that our reality is not an object of our reality, and that it is a reality that is not amenable to study by the methods of the natural sciences.

To speak of consciousness as a phenomenon is already to have gone astray. We can surely study the phenomena of consciousness by scientific methods, but the phenomena of consciousness are not consciousness. Consciousness gives rise to the phenomena of consciousness but transcends those phenomena. It is meaningless to ask, what is consciousness?, as if we could define consciousness in terms either of what is not consciousness or of the content of consciousness. It is meaningless to ask, what am I? [= what is a person?], for, except in terms of biographical intent, I am not definable in terms of the present content of my experience (let alone of my physical being) or in terms of what I was or will be: I am just this moment of living intelligence that utters the words.

Those who speak of mind as a negligible epiphenomenon do so because they do not proceed from the presupposition that only what is objectively given is real. But it is the nature of mind not to be an object: yet that makes it not only real but more real, if we may be permitted to speak in this manner. That is why I insist that we have to make a radical distinction between the meaning of mind and reality and existence. In my philosophy what exists (what is given) is real, and what is real does not exist: but there is nothing existing that is not secure its existence in reality, and there is no reality that is not actualized in some manner of existence. These are two dimensions of being without which nothing could be. (This condensed statement necessarily sounds enigmatic, but it is not intended to be paradoxical or to mystify; it sounds enigmatic because in my terminology 'reality' and 'existence' have special senses which I find it necessary to distinguish.)

So to the question, Can science solve the puzzle of consciousness?, my answer is, Science cannot. Does that mean that the puzzle will remain unsolved? No, for in fact there is no puzzle. Science creates the puzzle by trying to reduce mind into what is not mind. Once we realize that mind is mind and not an object, the problem vanishes. It is often asserted that the problem is a modern one. I think it is the same problem that lay at the base of what Plato called the Battle of the Gods and the Giants, or of Idealists and Materialists. (Plato, *Timaeus*, 245e ff.) Idealists seek reality in the verities of the mind. Materialists seek reality in what there is nothing beside what could be observed objectively.

Jerry Fodor in a review of Joseph LeDoux's 'Synaptic Self' (Times Literary Supplement, May 17 2002) finds fault with LeDoux's work and with much of modern neuroscience in that "the models of the brain [they are] building are not designed to implement a cognitive psychology that nobody with any sense has believed in for decades." I think that the trouble goes much deeper. Fodor rightly maintains that the question, "what makes us what we are?", interpreted in terms of the philosophical problem of personal identity, "isn't one that it would be reasonable to expect brain science to answer." But are there any *philosophical* questions that brain science - or any science, including 'cognitive science' - can answer?

Fodor suggests that the question: "what is going on in your brain when you think about what is going on in the world and decide what you are going to do about it?" is the "big question" that neuroscience should address. The question thus formulated may possibly outline a good - or the best - programme of research for that science. But that research, however fruitful, will not give us an answer to the parallel philosophical question: "what goes on in your *mind* when etc., etc.?" The answer to this latter question can only be given in terms of ideas, not in terms of descriptions of observable and measurable phenomena and processes. The mind (consciousness) is not an object amenable to scientific study, but is a dimension of being that can only be understood in terms of ideas.

philosophy that recognizes its radical difference from objective science.

To express my position bluntly: I believe that thinking and neurological processes pertain to two distinct and incommensurable dimensions of the one, whole mind-body thing we call a person. Our subjective life is a reality not reducible to brain structure. No knowledge gained in neuroscience or in genetics, however great, can help advance our understanding of the mind of a human being any more than advances in, say, astrophysics can. All science dealing with phenomena and processes extraneous to the quite distinct world of ideas, ideals and values that constitute the reality of the mind and the specific human realm, which is the concern of philosophy.

On the other hand, I think that what is wrong with cognitive science is that it hovers in a no-man's-land between philosophy and science. It can either be treated as science, raising questions about observable phenomena and processes, or as philosophy, raising questions about meanings and values, but by trying to do both it gets lost in a maze of insoluble riddles. Unless we recognize this radical distinction between philosophy and science, both our science and our philosophy will continue to suffer.

What is the alternative to the vain attempt to get to the mind through the brain? Is it the view that the mind is a 'soul-stuff' of some sort? The problem lies in the word 'stuff': however much we refine that stuff, as long as it is regarded as something objective, it will fare no better than the brain. If we don't accept the simple solution that stares us in the face - that mind is in fact the reality we know best and most immediately? Or, as I would say, that mind is the only reality we know and that it cannot be reduced to anything else? And we lose nothing by this: we would still have our neuroscience that can go on progressing indefinitely and we would still have all the objective truths we have ever had or can ever have; only we should acknowledge that these will never explain the mind any more than any scientific theory can ever explain the colour of a single flower.

We can perhaps say that brains become minds; or, to put it in a deserving flowery manner, brains flower into minds. But I will not say that brains generate minds. Brains become minds in a creative move, just as all beings become creative, just as the coming into being of a sonnet or a symphony is a creative move. Earth and water and air and sun become a red rose, but the colour and fragrance of the rose are realities in their own right and cannot be reduced to what went into their making.

Shall we find the alternative in diving down into the ever receding depths of the constituents or the basic structure of the physical world till we reach a level where matter is no longer material but dissolves into mathematical equations and concepts? I would still say, No; for these would still be objective givens that will never yield the subjectivity of mind.

Philosophers, baffled by the irreducible realities of the subjective spirit, have invented the word 'qualia'. That was good as far as it went, as far as it went as an acknowledgement of the reality of those realities. But then they went on to apply to qualia the same reductionist methods that they had been applying to the mind, with the same result.

The reality of mind will remain a mystery, just as Being will always remain an ultimate mystery; and the ideal content of our minds can be understood only in - and only in terms of - the ideas created by those very minds.

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II. 'AUSTRIAN VIRTUELLESCHULE' BY SIMONE KLEIN

Notions and perspectives on the workshop of the Virtual School Austria Interpaedagogica educational fair in Vienna, Nov. 6th-9th in the eyes of a philosopher

Much is said about the blessings of information technologies and the information or "knowledge based" society and the consequential necessity of lifelong learning, of integrating new technologies into education in schools and the method of of e-learning. Thus the eLearning Initiative of the European Commission "seeks to mobilise the educational and cultural communities, as the economic and social players in Europe, in order to speed up characterising the education and training systems for Europe's move to a knowledge-based society." (More about the eLearning action plan for designing tomorrow's education at: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001_0172en01.pdf)

Looking around at the Interpaedagogica educational fair in Vienna from Nov. 7th-9th this year, one would feel oneself being shifted into a total new and auspicious dimension of education: stands full of Teaching and Drilling Software, Content Management Systems, eLearning Suites, Authoring Suites and whatnot, promising paradise in everyday school life for everyone involved. Immediate enthusiasm very soon calms down at a second glance, as all these pretty things are far too expensive (licenses, etc.), of questionable quality and most of the teachers do not know how to handle all these fantastic things either on technical or didactic counts.

To deal with these problems, years ago The Virtual School Austria, an "Interface for Innovations", evolving from the Virtual School Europe, came into play: "The main aim of the Virtual School Austria is providing online educational information for teachers, pupils and all those interested in continuing education". The Virtual School is organised in departments according to subjects taught in Austrian schools and some additional departments. In each department "following the tutor principle, and on their own responsibility, the individual heads or teams" (of each department) "guarantee the quality of content and didactics for the subject specific information presented on their web sites". The individual departments offer, amongst others, lesson plans and pedagogical discussions, teaching materials and course plans, case studies on pilot projects and questions concerning teaching aids and equipment". So far, so good. (Info virtuelleschule Austria in English: <http://www.virtuelleschule.at/info-englisch.htm>)

The original idea is, that (almost) everything is available on the web and has to be gathered in huge link lists, presented on the web site of the individual departments. Now we had lots of content, still left out were questions about quality of the web sources and a new problem arose, the stability: web contents have a tendency to vanish from one day to another.

The workshop of the virtual school Austria on Nov. 6th showed that after years of experimenting, besides justifiable objections of some members (Shouldn't true knowledge be independent of fashions like the www? Are our didactics provided for the web far too arbitrary? who says that we really need and want THIS information society?), the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture has invested lots of money in computer networks (the notorious "computer billion"), but still hardly anything was done to maintain and keep these machines running, establishing the projected computer-network let alone of providing useful educational software or reliable methods of computer-based teaching on any level. This situation condenses in the newest eEurope-statistics, which show that Austrian schools are quite well equipped in terms of hardware, but that this equipment is rarely used compared to the European average (see http://europa.eu.int/information_society/europe/benchmarks).

Result: The ball again is completely placed in the teacher's court and his/ her discretion. To those ready for innovational experiments, open solutions came into mind, but these ideas collapsed in many cases as we and programming skills and lots of time are demanded. Others rigged up content on their own, especially in the fields of mathematics and computer sciences of course. This second wing merged in one of the additional departments called "services", ready to help colleagues with their technical problems.

Some of the consequences are, that the organisation of the Virtual School in the future be more network based, rather than the previous existing parallel of the departments, partly with fixed specifications (corporate identity, etc.), but leaving space for the individual demands for each department. To cover the idea of interdisciplinary teaching a searchable database for all departments has to be installed (adapted), there much will have to be done in creating serviceable keywords.

OK, now what are the consequences for our Austrian combination of the philosophy/ psychology (being taught in the last two years to A-level students)?

Understandably a department for these subjects didn't even exist before 2002. While in subjects close to information technology, like mathematics, physics, and of course computer science, new technologies of interactive virtuality can be integrated in teaching and learning, what benefits could there be for philosophy and psychology? For these text-based subjects at a glance there doesn't seem to be much, if any, difference between printed and electronic texts. And there doesn't seem to be much possibility for electronic interactivity in philosophy or psychology.

At a second glance, some advantages of electronic texts appear: e-texts are searchable, e-texts on specific problems can be directly compared/ discussed without having to buy and distribute expensive books and electronic texts can always be made available while textbooks are not always available, whether in bookstores or local libraries. And of course e-texts can be communicated either in succession (e-mail, bulletin board), or even at the same time (moderated chat).

With this pre-condition I launched the web site of the Department of Philosophy & Psychology of the Virtual School Austria on August 24th 2002 (www.sophiasworld.at/vs/phildept.htm). I admittedly had only vague ideas but the strong feeling that something more can be done.

With the background experience gained during my studies at the corresponding university of Hagen and through my work as a Mentor in Dr. Klemmner's Philosophy Programmes, my original Mission Statement, close to that of the Virtual School as a whole was:

"We provide ideas, concepts and course material for contemporary teaching of philosophy and psychology. We understand ourselves as an active service for everyone involved or interested in this task and invite everyone to participate in our projects."

Although as an innovative librarian I was used to gathering information from all kinds of databases, I had an idea how to come up with an active service. I had and still have to think hard about providing really useful "innovative" material and methods. And in what respect is all this going to be innovative? What about the proposed focus on interactivity? And don't all the three other subjects merge in philosophy?

This led to an extended Mission Statement:

"The Department of Philosophy & Psychology of the Virtual School

School Austria, launched on Aug. 24th, 2002 provides ideas, concepts and material for *inter-disciplinary* and *hypermedial* teaching of Philosophy and Psychology..."

Taking in account some of the benefits and features from already established web based technology, there are:

- Elimination of travel time and travel cost
- Low or non-existing distribution cost of learning material
- Real-time grading of interactive exercises through CGI scripts
- Immediate feedback to users, training, IS department - Tracking of individual performance on question and exercise base
- One copy of material that is always current
- No recall actions of outdated material necessary
- Hypermedia learning systems accommodate various learning styles
- worldwide distribution possible Platform independence

and having in mind, that eLearning programmes and course materials are to promote electronic interactions between students and their mentors, modules are organised around sets of problems to be solved by virtual students who interact electronically and in person where possible, there definitely are new aspects especially in philosophy teaching (psychology empirical science is to my opinion better suited for hypermedia applications anyway), for example:

- Establishing virtual cross-cultural classes for intercultural projects
- Creation of virtual teaching/ learning environments containing biographies, theories, original texts (in original language where possible) collected on specific topics (Walden's Path), providing online-encyclopaedias and dictionaries, demonstrations and simulations, experiments (psychology)
- Creation of interactive environments, role-playing, exercises, tests, virtual classrooms and workshops
- Forcing the integration of non-European philosophies
- Integrating current social, economic, political, religious problems and those of science and technology (including our own projects!), motivating critical thinking and direct discussion of different views without distances (catchword: mature citizens)
- Integrating ICT not only as means of communication and interactive teaching/ learning, but also as creative and evaluation instrument
- Having philosophy altogether in mind as an active skill of questioning, reasoning, defining, decision-making, logical and networked thinking

In the meanwhile, to avoid expensive commercial products, I've been looking for open-source and free-licence solutions and there are plenty of them, for example:

Hot Potatoes: a suite of six programs for creating interactive educational exercises for the world wide web. These are the programs included, along with the types of exercise they create:

- JBC: multiple-choice or true-false quizzes
- JQuiz: text-entry or short-answer quizzes
- JCloze: gap-fill exercises
- JCross: crosswords
- JMix: jumbled-sentence exercises
- JMatch: matching and ordering exercises

All of the exercises use JavaScript and HTML for their functionality, and the number of questions can be adjusted to an amount of expected browsers.

Licensing: "The Hot Potatoes suite is distributed as shareware. If you are a non-profit-making individual or institution, and you post all materials created with Hot Potatoes on a web site where others can use them, then you may use Hot Potatoes free of charge."

Phpbb2: an open-source bulletin board package, fully scalable, and highly customisable. phpBB has a user-friendly interface, simple and straightforward administration panel, and helpful FAQ. Based on the powerful PHP server-side scripting language and your choice of MySQL, MS-SQL, PostgreSQL or Access/ ODBC compatible servers, phpBB is the ideal free community solution for all web sites.

PhpCMS: an open-source Content Management System; perhaps not a typical CMS because it is not database-supported, but this is balanced by a full-text-search facility.

That's it for a quite theoretical skeleton, and hopefully we'll succeed in moving all this into practical dimensions, or to stay with the metaphor, let this skeleton come alive. One of the most important tasks of our department is still that:

"We understand ourselves as an active service for everyone involved or interested in the task of teaching/ learning philosophy and psychology and invite everyone to participate in our projects, be it in creating, testing, commenting or evaluating."

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III. 'CENTRAL SCHOOL OF RELIGION: A SHORT HISTORY' BY MARK GRETASON

what constitutes a school?
 Not ancient halls and ivy-mantled towers,
 where dull traditions rule
 with heavy hand youth's lightly springing powers;
 Not spacious pleasure courts,

And lofty temples of athletic fame,
 where devotees of sports
 Mistake a pastime for life's highest aim;
 Not fashion, nor renown
 Of wealthy patronage and rich estate;
 No, none of these can crown
 A school with light and make it truly great.
 But masters, strong and wise,
 who teach because they love the teacher's task,
 And find their richest prize
 In eyes that open and in minds that ask.
 (Henry Van Dyke)

This poem has prefaced most prospectuses of CSR and its predecessor, Central University. What is now CSR was founded and chartered in Indiana in 1854.

CSR is one of the oldest institutions exclusively concerned with distance education in the world today, and one of the first truly Anglo-American theological seminaries. It is the successor of a correspondence institution called Central University. In 1947 the name was changed to Central School of Religion to take advantage of the First Amendment which guarantees religious freedom from state control.

Older members of the Philosophical Society of England will be interested to know that leading lights Dr Rupert Judge, Dr John Gurney-Smith, the Revd Paul Faunch and the Revd John (Jack) Styles were members or officers of the school. Other members of both organisations have included the late Bishop Milner FPHS, the Revd Donald Thomson and Canon Mark Gretason APhS.

For some years, courses in philosophy were offered by I Cleon Forbes, MEd (Oklahoma) for, whilst the range of courses offered had already tended to be broadly theological courses the remit always allowed related studies. The school is organised into two Faculties of Theology and Church Music respectively. The School awards the diplomas of Ath, LTh, ThSoc, and the degrees of BTh, BD, MA, MTh, and ThD (the latter conferred from Indiana) awards in Church Music. Those who wish to support the work of the School become subscribing members and the School also appoints Associates and

Although Christian in its character, CSR has never been exclusively associated with any particular denomination. The School simply states that it bears witness to the unique inspiration of Holy Scripture. It thus seeks to stand apart from a confessional approach. The current President is Dr Walton, a lately Anglican Archbishop of Dublin. His predecessor, Dr Harold Whitne had written at some length against the outlook of Barth, was a presbyter minister and former theological college principal. Links are maintained with a number of institutions and the Honorary Chaplain undertook PhD studies at the university of Brighton in collaboration with the School.

In many ways the two organisations have had parallel experiences. Both have been ahead of their time, occasionally denigrated, essentially as amateur subjects to the tensions that change brings, which, in the case of the sciences and philosophy have caused forward-thinking folk to undertake the use of a new form of communication via the internet, with all the opportunity for distance this allows; yet, the same search for truth over credentials, for open-minded spirit of free enquiry, free from closed questions and unquestioned methods makes both institutions of a mind common with that of the poet. Perhaps the worthwhile schools of every kind must more and more learn to be free of external interference and the ethical and moral decay which comes from spin, artificiality of 'political' constraints, basing themselves if not always upon what is true however provisionally, deemed to be of intrinsic merit, at least upon what is practicable.

Free to think, free to learn, free to grow, free to be fully human - such a future lies, as it so often does, at the margins of experience.

The writer is grateful to John Kersey for information supplied in the v of this article.

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[Editor's Note on abbreviations:

APhS: Associate of the Philosophical Society of England FPhS: Fellow of Philosophical Society of England]

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