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Naturalism And Dualism

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Abstract

I explore the relations among the doctrines of Materialism, Dualism, Naturalism and Theism. I argue that there are two different versions of Naturalism – I call them “narrow” and “broad” – that both derive from a core contrast between the intentional and the non-intentional. While narrow Naturalism just is Materialism, and so is obviously incompatible with Dualism, I argue that Dualism is consistent with broad Naturalism. In fact, I argue that there are good reasons for Dualists to embrace broad Naturalism.

1. Introduction

Dualism is a doctrine in the philosophy of mind, usually opposed to Materialism (or Physicalism, I will use these two terms interchangeably), though also to Idealism. Materialism is the view that, in the relevant sense, nothing - in particular, neither the mind nor mental phenomena - is “over and above” the physical. What is meant by “over and above” is controversial, as is what is meant by “physical”. I will address these issue shortly. Idealism is the view that, in the relevant sense, everything is ultimately mental in nature. This view is standardly associated with the empiricist philosopher Berkeley. Both Materialism and Idealism are versions of “Monism”, the view that everything is ultimately of one kind of stuff - physical, according to the Materialist and mental, according to the Idealist. Dualism, on the other hand, is the doctrine that mind and matter are of very different kinds of stuff; reality breaks down ultimately into two, hence Dualism.

Naturalism is a doctrine in metaphysics and philosophy of science. While there are differences over the content of Dualism and Materialism, these are relatively well-defined terms compared to “Naturalism”. Philosophers intend a variety of doctrines by this term, as the essays in this volume testify. The precise content depends to a large extent on what it is being contrasted with. Often the contrast is with Theism, the doctrine of most religions, that there is a God (or gods) that created the world and whose decisions and behavior are responsible for (a lot of) what happens in it. But sometimes the contrast is with Dualism, or related doctrines. I do not claim there is one right way to characterize Naturalism. I think there are legitimate divergent uses of the term. However, I do think there is a core idea that underlies a lot of the different uses, and it’s instructive to see how two different interpretations of this core idea give rise to the two specific Naturalistic doctrines that contrast with Dualism, on the one hand, and Theism on the other. My task in this paper is to draw out both the common underlying idea and the distinction it gives rise to.

In section 2 I will briefly characterize the core idea. In section 3 I will explain how this is expressed in the sense of “Naturalism” – I’ll call it “narrow Naturalism” - that contrasts with Dualism and describe the debate between Dualists and those who believe that the mind can be “naturalized” (the Naturalists, that is, in this case, Materialists).¹ In section 4 I will show how interpreting the core idea differently gives rise to the contrast with Theism. On this interpretation, Dualists can be Naturalists as well. Let’s call this sense of Naturalism “broad Naturalism”. Finally, in section 5 I will

¹ For an example of this use of the term “naturalizing”, see Dretske (1995).

conclude with a brief defense of the claim that Dualism is quite compatible with broad Naturalism against an argument of Robert Adams (1987).

2. The Core Idea

When most people are asked what they mean by the “natural, they typically respond by contrasting it with phenomena that involve, or are the product of, mental, or intentional activity. For many people the main term that contrasts with “natural” is “artificial”. So, what makes a food ingredient natural is that it’s not artificial, where the latter is explicitly humanly produced, while the former is found in nature without human intervention. The core idea, then, is the contrast between the mental and the non-mental, the latter being the natural.

If the natural is defined as the non-mental, then we need to have a more positive characterization of the mental - it can’t just be the “unnatural”, as that would be circular. Traditionally, philosophers have identified two features of mental phenomena - intentionality and consciousness - as essential (as that which makes them mental). Intentionality is that feature of mental states by virtue of which they have what we call a “content” - what they are about. So when I think that the peaches on my tree are now ripe, say, my thought - a state of my mind - is about the peaches on a particular tree. By virtue of having a content thoughts can be true or false; in this case, true if those peaches are ripe, and false otherwise. Similarly my desire for a ripe peach to eat has a content - that I eat a ripe peach - and, while not either true or false, my desire is fulfilled or not depending on whether I do indeed eat a ripe peach. “Aboutness”, then, is the core of intentionality.

One might have thought, both from the colloquial meaning of “intentional”, as in “she did it intentionally”, and also from the ordinary distinction between the natural and the artificial, that what is crucial to the contrast with the natural is the idea of purpose, or goal. That is, a natural object is one that arose from a process that had no inherent purpose or goal, whereas an artifact is something that was explicitly designed for a purpose. Teleology, serving a goal, might seem more to the point than intentionality, as philosophers conceive it.

However, there are good reasons to focus instead on intentionality. The main reason is that teleology presumes intentionality, at least when it comes to minds; intentionality, then, is more fundamental than teleology. After all, what is involved in someone’s building something for a purpose? Aside from the actual physical activity of building it, what makes it a purposive activity are the beliefs, desires, and intentions of the artisan. A hammer is designed for a purpose to the extent that someone represented to herself that a certain kind of device is needed and then envisaged - that is, represented to herself - that something shaped like this and made of that material would satisfy the job description. So the ability to represent is prior, in this sense, to the ability to plan and execute the satisfaction of goals.

What’s more, appeal to representation solves a kind of puzzle associated with teleology. It’s common to think that the purpose for which an object is created counts as a kind of cause of its existence (the ancients refer to this as a “final cause”). But how can a non-existent future state of affairs cause anything in the present? How do the future functions the hammer is going to fulfill explain how it came into existence? The answer to this puzzle is that goals and purposes play the causal role they do by virtue of

their being represented in the minds of the producers. While the actual functions themselves are fulfilled after the object appears - how else could it be? - the representations of the functions occur prior to the appearance of the object. Hence there is no puzzle after all.

The second feature of mentality mentioned above is consciousness. By consciousness I mean one's subjective experiences, the sort of thing it is apt to describe in terms of "what it's like" for the subject having the experience.² Sensory experiences, such as the smell of a rose, the taste of chocolate, or the searing pain of a toothache, are like something for the subject having them. Most would argue that there is also something it is like for the subject to experience emotional states, like anger and love, and some even include episodic thoughts, such as consciously wondering whether one locked the door before leaving the house. For reasons to be presented below, this feature of mentality has proved resistant to explanations in terms of physical embodiment.³

To sum up, the core contrast with the natural, as I understand it, is with the mental. Of course, one may wonder, if the mental is contrasted with the natural, then is Naturalism, as applied to the mental, just a contradiction in terms? Of course not, but this brings us to the next section.

3. Naturalism vs. Dualism

² Thomas Nagel (1974) made this the standard way to express this aspect of mental life.

³ For debate over so-called "cognitive phenomenology", see Bayne & Montague (2011).

Materialists don't generally deny the existence of mental.⁴ Rather, their view is that mental phenomena, perfectly real though they be, are nothing over and above physical phenomena. As mentioned above, to make the doctrine precise requires elucidating both what is meant by "the physical" and also what is meant by being "over and above". Both of these issues have spawned a great deal of literature, but I will provide a brief, and somewhat oversimplified, description of my own view on these matters.⁵ I don't believe there is any good way to define "physical". The science of physics is the foundational study of the physical, and whatever it comes up with is ipso facto physical. The problem is that we don't know what physics will come up with in the future, so it's hard to see how we can get a genuinely substantive conception of the physical. In the end, is matter just a wave, a wave-particle combination, a field, or something we haven't yet considered? Fortunately, I think defining the physical isn't necessary for a proper characterization of Materialism. When it comes to philosophy of mind, the doctrine of Materialism can get by without a positive conception of the physical, so long as we have a positive conception of the mental; and this is what I characterized in the last section. Thus the basic thesis of Materialism can be stated as follows: The mental is nothing over and above the non-mental.

Let's turn next to the phrase "over and above". What is it for one phenomenon to be something "over and above" another? I won't provide a precise characterization here, but rather give the general idea and flesh it out with some examples. Perhaps the basic idea is that of metaphysical construction. Some objects and states of objects are

⁴ Though some do go that far, the so-called "Eliminativists". See Churchland (1981), for example.

⁵ For an overview of that literature, and extended defense of my own position on it, see chapter 1 of Levine (2001).

“constructible” from more basic objects and states. So, for instance, statues are constructible from materials such as clay and marble, which are then shaped according to the intentions of the sculptor. You put the material into the right shape (with the right intention) and you have a statue. In this sense, a statue is nothing over and above the relevant material being (intentionally) shaped the right way.

Another example, much closer to the case of the mental, is the relation between software and hardware in a computer. Programs are lists of instructions, and given that instructions involve representational content (they involve telling something what to do) they embody a form of intentionality. Also, there is an abstract computational structure to the procedures determined by the program that is conceptually independent of the physical description of the computer’s hardware. The very same program can run on computers constructed in a variety of different ways. Yet, the program is nothing over and above the physical processes of the computer. That is, once we determine which physical processes are taking place inside the computer, that determines which programs it is running. Put another way, we can explain how it is the computer carries out its programming function by appeal to the electronic hardware. That is, we can see how it is that the software is constructed out of the hardware.

Construction, in the way I’m using it here, has both a metaphysical and an epistemological side to it. On the metaphysical side is the fact that once the sequence of physical states of the computer are determined, its program is thereby determined as well. On the epistemological side, we can explain the ability of the computer to carry out its program by appeal to the physical states. So explanation and construction, or determination, go hand in hand here. When one phenomenon is constructible in this

way from another, we will say that the former is nothing over and above the latter. Materialism (as it applies to the mind) is the doctrine that mental phenomena are constructible in this way from non-mental phenomena. In the case of human minds, that would mean that our mental lives are constructible from the electro-chemical processes of our brains.

While no one denies that, in our sense, the software of a computer is nothing over and above its hardware, whether our minds are nothing over and above our brains is a matter of vigorous controversy. Materialists point to the computer analogy and claim that the relation of our minds to our brains is relevantly similar to that between a computer's software and hardware. Dualists, however, point to two crucial differences. First, the intentionality of computer states - their constituting representations - is derived from that of their human designers. That is, if one asks by virtue of what facts it is that a certain state of the computer represents what it does, it is reasonable to answer that the relevant facts include the intentions of the users and designers of the computer. But of course Materialists can't claim that human intentionality is similarly derived, so they need another element in their story about how the mental is constructed out of the non-mental. Given that the non-mental items out of which mentality is supposedly constructed - the relevant bio-chemical ingredients - are not themselves invested with intentionality (they don't represent anything, aren't about anything), where does it come from?

Secondly, while this is a matter of some dispute, many philosophers, along with most people, are reluctant to attribute consciousness, subjective experience, to

computers. Few would claim that there is something it is like to be my Mac laptop.⁶ So again, if there is nothing it's like to be a neuron, how can it be that there is something it's like to be a hundred billion of them? Answering these two challenges - how to construct both intentionality and consciousness out of materials that have neither feature - is the task facing the Materialist.

Materialists do have a lot to say with respect to both of these challenges. When one thinks about what tools for constructing mentality are provided by non-mental objects and processes, the main item that emerges is this: some physical systems, by virtue of the causal relations they sustain internally among their states and externally with the environment around them, constitute "information processors". Materialists then try to show that with enough sophisticated twists a theory of the construction of the fully mental out of the non-mental is possible in terms of the causal relations that sustain information processing.⁷ This is a tall order, and there is no consensus on any particular version among Materialists, much less is there agreement on the project's prospects for success. Suffice it to say that Materialists believe that some such theory can work and Dualists deny this.

Let's return now to the question of Naturalism. As just described, the Materialist project is to show how it is possible to construct the mental out of non-mental ingredients. This project is often called the project of "naturalizing" the mind. Why "naturalizing", and not just "materializing", or "physicalizing"? The controlling idea here seems to be that mentality - intentionality and consciousness - is not to be found among

⁶ What about Data, from Star Trek? Yes, sufficiently complex and human-like machines might qualify for most people, but how would we tell? This is a complicated issue to be sure. See the discussion of the question how we would tell in Levine (2001) and Block (2002).

⁷ Dretske (1995) is a good example of an attempt along these lines.

the basic, fundamental ingredients of Nature. By “basic” or “fundamental” I mean an ingredient that is not constructible from any of the others. So if one holds this position with regard to the basic ingredients of Nature, then one will also hold that Naturalism entails Materialism. Naturalism, on this construal, is the claim that all phenomena are constructible from a certain restricted class of items; in particular, they are all non-mental items (probably non-normative as well, but this is a different issue). Dualism, which posits the mental as basic – the mental is not constructible from the non-mental - would then be opposed to Naturalism.

I think this is one very reasonable way to construe Naturalism, as it makes sense out of the “naturalizing” projects of Materialists. Dualists, on this view, are non-Naturalists, because they include “non-natural” items, like minds, among the basic constituents of the world. However, I do not think this construal of Naturalism is appropriate in all contexts. For one thing, there are Dualists who consider themselves Naturalists. Obviously, in the sense we’ve attached to the term “Naturalism” in this section that would be a straightforward contradiction. Secondly, Naturalism is often invoked in arguments in the philosophy of religion, where it is usually opposed to (at least traditional forms of) theism. As I will argue in the next section, for this purpose we need a different construal of Naturalism, according to which Dualists can indeed be Naturalists.

4. Naturalism vs. Theism

In section 2 I claimed that the core idea of the contrast between the natural and the unnatural had to do with the contrast between the mental and the non-mental. One

construal of this contrast is that Naturalism is the doctrine that the mental can be constructed out of the non-mental. So while Naturalism does not deny the existence of the mental, it denies that the mental appears among the fundamental, or basic ingredients of reality, or Nature. Dualism, by contrast, insists that the mental is found among the fundamental ingredients. Let's call this notion of Naturalism, according to which it is opposed to Dualism, "narrow" Naturalism.

However, there is another kind of contrast that one might have in mind between the natural and the unnatural, and this too involves the distinction between the mental and non-mental, but in a different way. One question regarding the mental is whether it is included among the fundamental entities out of which all Nature is constructed. Another question is whether the mental in some way serves as the foundation for everything else, particularly the non-mental. Let me explain what I mean here by explicitly relating it to the doctrine of Theism.

On the traditional Judeo-Christian conception of God, God is an immaterial entity who has thoughts and plans. God created the world, with everything in it, for the purpose of realizing His plan (whatever that is). On this view, then, God's thoughts exhibit intentionality - they are about something - for instance, the things He intends to create and His plans for them - and they involve teleology as well, as it is His purposes that determine what there is and what laws govern it. On this conception of the world, then, intentionality - both in the philosophical sense of "aboutness", or representational content, and in the ordinary sense of doing something for a purpose - underlies everything there is, including the laws that govern them. Mind, and intentionality, constitute the core of reality, on this view.

It is this sort of view, which I'm calling "Theism", that I want to contrast with "broad" Naturalism, which is to be distinguished from the narrow Naturalism characterized in the last section.⁸ What I said about mind constituting the core of reality suggests the doctrine of Idealism, a view traditionally associated with Bishop Berkeley.⁹ On Berkeley's Idealism, material things are really mental entities in disguise, ideas contained within minds. Everything is mental on this view, and the order maintained within the realm of ideas that gives the appearance of an external, non-mental reality, is sustained by God, who encompasses all ideas within Himself.

While Berkeley's Idealism is certainly a version of the non-Naturalism/Theism I have in mind, it isn't the only version. Most Theists, even of the very traditional sort, are not Idealists. They believe that among God's creations is inanimate matter, out of which all physical objects are made. Their Theism is opposed to (broad) Naturalism¹⁰ because they believe that the source of matter (as well as minds other than God's), along with the laws governing its behavior, is God's intentional plan. In this sense Nature is at bottom intentional, not because all entities in it are intentional, or mental, but because everything that exists is explained ultimately by appeal to intentions (i.e. God's intentions).

Naturalism is the view that all of Nature is determined by laws and processes that have no plan, no intentions, at their foundation. So, for instance, if you want to know why unsupported objects fall to the earth you appeal to gravity. This both Naturalists

⁸ While Theism is the most obvious and prominent form of non-Naturalism, and the one with which I'll be concerned in this paper, note that there can be non-theistic versions of non-Naturalism as well.

⁹ See Berkeley (1713/1979).

¹⁰ For the rest of the paper I will drop the term "broad" and just use "Naturalism" for this doctrine, including the qualifier "broad" only when context requires it.

and Theists can do. However, suppose you ask, why is there gravity? Or, why does gravity work precisely the way it does? While physics itself may have answers to these questions, at some point, if one keeps pushing for explanations, physics hits rock bottom: that is, a set of fundamental laws, and possibly some singular events (such as the Big Bang), which are treated as just brute and given. The answer to why things are like this is just: because that's how the world is constructed. Whereas the Naturalist bottoms out in her series of natural explanations with brute, and thus inexplicable, laws and facts - the very fundamental, or basic, laws and facts - the Theist explains the entire system, including the laws and facts treated as fundamental within physics, as explained by appeal to God's intentions. In this sense, then, the debate over Naturalism is a debate about whether Nature is an explicitly designed system or whether it is a given, brute fact. For the Naturalist, then, Nature may be intelligible to the extent that we can someday figure out what are its most fundamental laws and facts, but it is ultimately unintelligible in the sense that there won't be any overriding plan - intentionally conceived - that explains why it is precisely the way it is. To sum up, Naturalism is the view that brute fact - just the way things are - constitutes the foundation of Nature, where its denial, most prominently Theism, sees a deep intelligibility and explicit design at the foundation of Nature.

Let's turn to Dualism and see on which side of this Naturalism-Theism divide it falls. My claim is that one can find Dualists on both sides. Clearly, Theists, at least of the traditional variety, will be Dualists (if not Idealists). God's mind, at least, and likely human minds as well, will not, on this view, be constructed from non-mental ingredients. God, after all, is allegedly immaterial, so there must be mental facts, those involving

God's ideas and plans, that are indeed something over and above the non-mental.

Also, on many Theistic doctrines, humans possess an eternal soul that is fundamentally mental, not constructed from non-mental, physical elements. So it's easy to see how Dualists fit naturally into the non-Naturalist, Theistic camp.

However, not only is it the case that Dualists need not be Theists, but they can be Naturalists as well. Indeed, David Chalmers (1996) calls his form of Dualism, "Naturalistic Dualism". I also consider myself a Naturalist, but also a Dualist (or, at least, an anti-Materialist). Let me describe the position that I espouse, and why I consider it to be a version of Naturalism, at least on this second interpretation of it.

Naturalistic Dualism is the position that the mental is something over and above the non-mental; in fact, mental phenomena are among the fundamental constituents of reality. There are a lot of different versions of this position. Some hold that minds are immaterial entities - very much like the souls of religious doctrines - that are attached in some way to bodies and interact with them. Others hold that there are fundamental mental properties that are possessed by, or instantiated in, physical objects. The former view is usually called "Substance Dualism", whereas the latter is called "Property Dualism". Among Property Dualists, some believe that the fundamental mental properties are instantiated in the very simplest physical objects (like elementary particles) - these are called "Panpsychists" - while others hold that it is only certain highly complex physical systems like brains that instantiate mental properties - these are called "Emergentists". As I consider myself an Emergentist, let me describe that position briefly and explain why it counts as Naturalistic.

Many of the capacities that we consider mental - such as our ability to speak language, pick up information concerning our immediate environment through our sense organs, and voluntarily move our bodies - seem to be explicable in terms of physically embodied information processing systems. Oversimplifying greatly, we can explain these mental capacities in ways that are very similar to the ways we explain the capacities of computers to solve problems that seem to require intelligence. This much is consistent with Materialism, as the capacities in question are shown to be constructible from non-mental entities - neurons, and their basic chemicals.

However, when it comes to conscious experience - such as seeing and smelling a rose, feeling a toothache, or daydreaming about one's upcoming vacation - it seems that the situation is quite different. If we ask, what explains the fact that we have subjective experience, it's not at all clear that appeal to the physical events underlying our sensory interaction with the world, together with the internal neural processing that follows, helps much. For instance, consider what it's like to see a red rose in sunlight, or feel the pain of a toothache. While certain physical conditions can be cited as the causes of such experiences - light bouncing off the rose into our eyes, or inflammation near the nerve of a tooth - what we are looking for are the physical states that ultimately constitute the experiences in question. Presumably these lie deep within the brain. But why should there be something it's like to have these brain states? What about the brain states explains not only their processing information regarding the rose and the tooth, but also making it the case that one feels the pain and actually experiences the red rose. It seems possible, for instance, that a computer programmed to detect red

roses and inflamed teeth could do so without experiencing either redness or pain; that is, without there being anything it is like to be that computer.

Of course, Materialist philosophers have responses to this argument and the debate is long-standing and complex.¹¹ But my position is that the best hypothesis of why we cannot explain conscious experience in terms of the physically embodied information processing of the nervous system and brain is that the phenomenon is “emergent”. That is, rather than being constructible from the underlying physical processing, there is just a basic law of nature such that when certain complex configurations occur conscious experience also occurs. Assuming that this psycho-physical law - a law that relates certain physical phenomena to certain mental phenomena - is itself a fundamental, or basic law of nature, then the mental phenomena themselves will count among the fundamental ingredients of reality. By including mental phenomena, like subjective conscious experiences, in the inventory of basic phenomena, we have abandoned Materialism. We defined Materialism (with respect to the mind) as the doctrine that all mental phenomena are constructible from non-mental phenomena (hence mental phenomena are not basic in Nature). Emergentism, which posits mental phenomena among the basic phenomena, is inconsistent with Materialism.

So is Emergentism, as I’ve just described it, a form of Naturalism? It is, so long as the psycho-physical laws that relate physical phenomena to mental phenomena are brute, fundamental, and therefore inexplicable. To repeat, the core idea of Naturalism is

¹¹ Among the best Materialist strategies, to my mind, is the so-called “phenomenal concept strategy”, so named by Stoljar (2005) and pioneered by Loar (1990). For discussions of this strategy, both pro and con, see Alter and Walter (2006).

that reality bottoms out in brute facts and laws. They are brute because they are not explicable by any more basic laws - after all, we're talking about the most fundamental laws - and because they are not explained as the product of any intentional design. For Emergentists intentions certainly exist - and may even be among the fundamental entities - but they are themselves the outcome of non-intentional, therefore purely natural processes. So long as the ultimate laws introducing mentality into the world are not themselves the result of intentional design, whether they are treated as basic, as the Emergentist claims, or constructible from non-mental phenomena, as the Materialist claims, their existence is consistent with Naturalism.

To sum up this section, there is a sense of "Naturalism", broad Naturalism, that can include Dualism. To be a (broad) Naturalist is to view the entirety of Nature as a system of entities and laws that itself arose "naturally"; that is, not as the product of intentional design. For the Theist, Nature is a kind of artifact, sharing with our artifacts the feature of having been produced by explicit, intentional design. Naturalism opposes this conception, providing room for intentionally designed artifacts within Nature, but rejecting the view that Nature itself is an artifact.

5. Naturalism Defended

In "Flavors, Colors, and God" (in Adams 1987), Robert Adams presents an argument to the effect that if you reject narrow Naturalism you ought also reject broad Naturalism (though this is not the way he puts it). That is, he thinks that the standard arguments against Materialism that appeal to the special, irreducible nature of conscious experience also support Theism, and thus abandonment of the more general

form of Naturalism described above. In this final section I want to argue that maintaining broad Naturalism contra Theism is quite reasonable, even if one has abandoned narrow Naturalism, or Materialism.

Adams argues as follows. Let's assume that when it comes to conscious experience Materialism is false. In particular, he contends that those qualitative properties of our sensory experiences - the flavors and colors mentioned in the title of his paper - are not identical to, or reducible to any physical, non-mental properties. Let's accept without question this portion of his overall argument.

Even though experiential qualities like the taste of sugar, or the way a ripe red tomato looks, are not reducible to any non-mental properties, it is still clear that there is a tight connection between these experiences and the electro-chemical states of our nervous systems. If someone is visually experiencing red you can (or at least vision scientists can) predict quite a bit about the state of that person's visual cortex. If you were to remove the relevant part of the visual cortex, color vision would go away. So while experienced qualities are not identical to, or reducible to the neurophysiological properties of one's brain, there is a robust and lawful correlation between the two kinds of properties. No brain, no experience. If there's experience, then there's some corresponding brain activity.

Materialists and Dualists agree that there are robust correlations among physical (i.e. non-mental) states and conscious experiences. However, the Materialist believes that we can explain these lawful correlations in more basic, non-mental terms. The Dualist, on the other hand, believes that these correlations reflect basic, brute facts; they are included among the fundamental laws of nature.

With respect to Adams's argument (and also according to my own considered opinion) we are siding with the Dualist here. Thus, we accept that the robust correlations that hold between physical states and types of experience are, in a sense, brute and inexplicable. There is no more basic level of analysis to which we can appeal - one that descends beneath the level of the mental to deal only in the non-mental - in terms of which the tight connection between some particular type of neural process and the experience of seeing red, say, can be explained. It's just a basic fact that the former causes the latter, or that the latter emerges from the former.

This is where Adams's argument enters the picture. Adams claims that it's highly implausible that there is no explanation of the tight connection between physical states of the brain (or nervous system) and types of experience. Surely, he argues, there must be some reason that this particular kind of neural activity gives rise to experiences of red, and that other kind of neural activity gives rise to experiences of green. But if we reject - as we're assuming now - that this correlation can be explained in terms of more basic non-mental properties, then what's left? Well, what about God? Why not say, as many early modern philosophers (like Descartes and Locke) did, that what explains the correlations between physical state types and experience types is God's decision to pair just those items, and not different ones? So, for instance, if you want to know why neural activity of this sort causes reddish experiences and neural activity of that sort causes greenish experiences, the answer is that God - for His own reasons - decided to connect them in that way. Nothing forced that upon Him, and He could have done it the reverse way. The argument, then, is that by positing God as the creator of everything, we can explain these apparently brute correlations as results of His intentional action, in

the same way that all of Nature is explained as the result of His intentional action. Thus Dualism gives us reason to adopt Theism and reject Naturalism of any sort.

I do not find this argument convincing. Adams seems to assume that an explanation of the correlation between type of neural activity and type of conscious experience is necessary, and so, if no Materialist explanation is available, the most plausible hypothesis is the Theistic one. However, Adams ignores the possibility that this correlation just doesn't have an explanation; that is, it is a fundamental or basic law of Nature. Notice that the most fundamental laws of physics are not amenable to explanation - after all, in terms of what could one explain them, if they are indeed the most fundamental laws already? Nature, then, contains brute facts and laws. So why couldn't the lawful correlations between types of neural activity and types of conscious experience be among them?

I can imagine two replies Adams might make. First, he might say that Theism not only explains the otherwise brute correlation between physical states and mental states, it also provides an explanation for those supposedly fundamental and inexplicable laws of physics themselves. Everything that exists, and all the laws that govern them, are the result of God's plan, His intentional decisions and actions. So Theism provides explanations that Naturalism fails to provide.

This reply begs the question against Naturalism in a very fundamental way. As I have characterized the contrast between Naturalism and Theism in the last section, it comes down to whether or not one must find reason - in the sense of an intentionally characterized purpose or plan - underlying Nature or whether Nature in some sense "just is". The Naturalist says that there is a fundamental level of reality that is not a

product of reason, and claims that on this basis all other levels of reality can be explained in terms of it. The Theist, for her part, insists that there must be a reason - an intelligible and intentionally entertained purpose - why things are ultimately the way they are. So to defend Theism by appealing to this position is to beg the question against the Naturalist. The Naturalist denies that explanations must ultimately bottom out in reasons (of the intentional variety).

What's more, even the Theist has to grant a certain level of brute and inexplicable reality. After all, what is the explanation for God and His purposes and designs? Aren't they fundamental? It doesn't seem that one can appeal to any reasons that God exists or has the plans He has, unless one appeals to yet further deities, and that way lies both infinite regress and polytheism. Theists generally reply that since God is a necessary being - God exists necessarily, unlike all other entities in space and time that exist only contingently - God's existence requires no explanation. But I find this evasive. First, it's not at all clear what a necessary being is supposed to be, and unless one can make much sense out of this one can't appeal to it to explain other things. Second, given that God's existence isn't conceptually necessary - it's coherent to imagine that there is no God - then we can still ask, but why should there be a necessary being of this sort? That is, we cut off explanation at God's existence only by stipulation.

The other reply Adams might make is more plausible. The problem with treating the relevant physical-mental correlations as basic is not that all basic laws need an explanation but that correlations that obtain at such a high level of composition - at the level of brains, not elementary particles and fields - is especially difficult to accept.

Indeed, this appeal to the oddity of having brute and basic correlations at this level of aggregation in the world is one of the Materialist's arguments against the Dualist. There must be an explanation in non-mental terms, she argues, because we expect the only fundamental laws to obtain at the most fundamental, or simple level of aggregation.

I am sympathetic to this consideration, and indeed find it one of the strongest considerations in favor of Materialism, though I think there are even stronger reasons for rejecting Materialism. So why not go all the way and abandon all forms of Naturalism? This strikes me as rash. Yes, there is something odd about there being fundamental laws of nature at the level of the brain. But I find it odder to embrace the entire theological account of the origins of Nature as a whole, to see God's intentional design behind everything, just to explain this one admitted oddity about conscious experience. Perhaps the best one can say - and this might be agreeable to Adams himself - is that if one has other compelling reasons to reject Naturalism and adopt Theism then the ability to explain the correlations between types of neural activity and types of conscious experience, as the unfathomable choices of an intentional agent whose reasons are beyond our comprehension, adds a little bit of support. But not finding any of these other reasons compelling, I find the postulation of fundamental laws relating brains to consciousness the simpler and more conservative hypothesis by far.

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Key Words: naturalism, dualism, materialism, theism, consciousness, qualia, intentionality

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