

ABSTRACT

In contemporary philosophy of mind, the theory of dualism is commonly assumed to be the only metaphysics, which can accommodate the mental without reducing it to something physical in a philosophically satisfactory way. This thesis examines this entrenched belief and argues against it. It examines the basic tenets of dualism by considering various kinds of dualism and some of the most important arguments proposed in favor of it. The overall conclusion of the thesis is that dualism in *any* of its prevalent variety is unsatisfactory as the metaphysics of the mental. For, dualism as a position rests on a faulty conceptualization of the mental; namely, that the mental is ontologically independent and must be completely opposite to the physical.

However, though this thesis finds dualism unsatisfactory, it does not thereby advocate physicalism (materialism) as a more appropriate choice. In fact, it is argued that dualism and physicalism both cannot serve as a satisfactory metaphysics for the mental, as they both share the said incorrect conception of the mental. This thesis further shows how this notion of the mental is historically and culturally imbibed uncritically by the philosophical positions in question. Finally, the thesis indicates and recommends the ways to avoid the mistaken conceptualization of the mental, and to propose a metaphysic of the mental.

Key words: Dualism, physicalism, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, mental