

Summaries

GERGELY AMBRUS

Metaphysical and logical empiricist physicalism: the origins of sensation–brain state identity theory

In contemporary analytic philosophy of mind, there is a “received story” about the origin of physicalism, and within it the mind-brain identity theory. Accordingly, metaphysical physicalism appeared in the form of reductionist materialism in the mid-1950s, following the proposals of Place and Smart, and a little later Lewis and Armstrong, primarily as a response to logical behaviorism, mainly to the views of Ryle and the late Wittgenstein. The contribution of the logical positivists to the development of physicalism was minimal, it is limited to the ideas of Feigl, who in his book “The ‘Mental’ and the ‘Physical’”, published in 1958, also represented a different kind of mind-brain identity theory. The views of Carnap, Neurath, and Hempel, if mentioned at all, are characterized as a kind of unsophisticated logical behaviorism based on verificationism. By comparing the views of the metaphysical physicalists and the logical empiricist physicalists, mainly of Carnap, I will show that the received view is wrong: the contribution of the logical empiricists to the sensation-brain state identity theory is much more significant than it is usually assumed. First, I will summarize the common core of the various versions of the “Australian” mind-brain identity theory, then I will broadly present the different Carnapian views on the “mental”, on sensations in particular, and then I will discuss Carnap’s late “identity theory” in more detail.

TAMÁS BARCSI – SZABOLCS DIÓSI

Docile Body, Dividuum, Raw Material. From Disciplinary Society to (Self-) monitoring and Surveillance Capitalism

In his book, *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault explored the nature of disciplinary society in great detail. In some institutions of disciplinary society (schools, barracks, factories, hospitals, prisons), all that matters is that the individual conforms to the prescribed standards of normality and thus functions as a docile body. Although disciplinary structures are still relevant today, many philosophers, sociologists, and cultural critics argue that today’s societies of global capitalism can no longer be considered primarily disciplinary. In this paper – drawing on the ideas of Deleuze, Fisher, Han, and Zuboff – we will attempt to assess the extent to which the mechanisms described by Foucault are still present in the era of global capitalism, to examine the role of current information technologies in external/internal control systems, and to identify possible challenges for the future.

BERNÁTH LÁSZLÓ

Physicalism, Free Will, and Morality

In this paper, I argue for three claims. In the first part, I attempt to show that physicalism is incompatible with free will; or to put it more precisely, it is inconsistent with a type of free will I dubbed as ‚free volition’. The main claim of the second part of the paper is that physicalism, due to its incompatibility with free volition, has to consider one of the subsystems of our morality as illusory together with moral obligations that have special normative force. In the third part, I point out an odd implication. Namely, one may have an epistemic right to sustain the belief in the existence of both free volition and moral obligations as unconditional imperatives even if one does not have sufficient evidence for the falsity of physicalism.

GYÖRGY GÖMÖRI

Newton’s first Hungarian Followers and Adherents

Though amongst Isaac Newton’s first Hungarian followers and adherents there were two Unitarian students visiting England, the first person who praised him in print was Ferenc Foris Otrókocsi, a colourful Protestant theologian and linguist who had spent a year in Oxford in 1690–91. Having returned to Hungary, Otrókocsi converted to Catholicism, but in a book entitled *Theologica prophetica* (Tyrnava, 1705) he nevertheless praised the “eminent Newton” as an astronomer. This was followed some years later by a number of Transylvanian Hungarians who either bought later editions of *Principia*, or books by Newton’s most devoted follower at the University of Leiden, Willem ‘s Gravesande. This paper concludes that Hungarian and Transylvanian students returning from Leiden and Utrecht played a major role in the popularization of Isaac Newton’s ideas in Hungarian-speaking territories in the first half of the eighteenth century.

MÁRTON GÖMÖRI

Reductionism: Draft of an Argument Based on Explaining Correlations

One of the main motivations of physicalism in the philosophy of mind comes from the intuition that the most straightforward explanation of the correlation of mental and neurophysiological events is their identity. In this short essay I will outline an argument for reductionism in general which will unpack and sharpen this intuition.

BALÁZS GYENIS

Theory-Supervenience Physicalism and Future Changes of Physics

We introduce a supervenience relation between theories and argue that it holds both diachronically (past physical theories supervene on future physical theories) and synchronically (non-physical theories supervene on physical theories). This entails a weak

sense of knowledge accumulation during theory change, as well as a solution to philosophical puzzles relating to the proper formulation of a currentist thesis of physicalism and its defense against threats of future changes in physics.

MIKLÓS MÁRTON

A Permissive Physicalism. Noam Chomsky's Methodological Physicalism

In the present paper I first outline briefly the main points of the contemporary debate about the concept of the 'physical', and then I present Chomsky's methodological naturalistic conception, highlighting its main claims, motivations, and theoretical consequences, especially the critique of the traditional mind-body problem and methodological dualism. After that, I will argue that Chomsky's naturalist position can be interpreted as a futurist methodological physicalism, one that is able to answer to the main objections to futurism, primarily to the problems of emptiness and triviality. Finally, I will show some consequences of this interpretation, indicating what, based on it, we can say about the soundness of the most widespread contemporary anti-physicalist arguments, and the relationship between physicalism and naturalism.

SZABINA PÉTER

Perception and Interpretation

In the relation of art and philosophy the inaffability of ordinary experience presents the greatest obstacle. Works of art seem not available for interpretation since it would require a language we often seem to lack. The language based on dualistic thinking is only partly capable of making the non-linguistic experience – present in the intensive moments of experiencing, when both language and logic gets entangled into paradoxes and oxymorons – apprehensible through its conceptual apparatus. In this paper I want to address the set of problems with which we are confronted when we attempt to describe the uncommunicable, present in the singularity of non-linguistic experiences (artistic experience included). I will rely on the perception-related means of philosophies stemming from the non-conscious, non-reflexive, non-representing thinking (proposed by Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Maurice Merleau-Ponty).

LÁSZLÓ E. SZABÓ

Physicalism and the Quine–Putnam Indispensability Argument

The Quine–Putnam indispensability argument is usually considered the strongest argument for mathematical Platonism. Obviously, if the argument is correct, then the ontological doctrine of physicalism is wrong. In this paper, we briefly outline how it is possible to understand the fundamental nature of logical and mathematical theories in terms consistent with the ontology of physicalism. We examine what a physical theory is and how the theory refers to elements of the physical world. On this basis, we formulate a physicalist response to the Quine–Putnam argument.

MIKLÓS SZALAI

Freedom in History: Historical Materialism and Human Emancipation

Marx's theory of history applies two mechanisms for the explanation of history: the development of productive forces and the class struggle. According to the „classical” Marxian model of transition, the transition from capitalism to socialism will occur as a joint result of these two factors: the sharpening antagonism between the capitalist and the working class, and the contradiction between the socialization of production and private appropriation. But the historical experience of the development of capitalism since Marx's day hasn't supported this classical model. This study proposes an alternative scenario of the transition, based on the work of the contemporary American philosopher Debra Satz. According to this account, in the history of humanity another mechanism of progress is also effective (besides the class struggle, and the development of productive forces): the aspiration of human beings to assert their autonomy, the control of their life-activity. This tendency is based on the development of productive forces, as a condition – but it cannot be reduced to it.