

Fallowfield
Manor Road
Penn, Buckinghamshire

Confidential

March 28th, 1975

Dear Mario,

Many thanks for your charming letter of February 26th, in which you tell me that you dreamt of me, and in which you raise two questions.

Before I answer them, let me ask you a question - this is entirely confidential, i.e. between you and Martha and myself. My advice has been asked about a chair in philosophy in London. Are you still interested? I remember that many years ago you were interested in an English chair. You must realize no doubt that the financial^{-aspect} is very bad. Yet a professor still gets more than a coal miner. The worst is the pension.

I must also mention that, although my advice has been asked, it would not necessarily be taken, and conditions (i.e. the tightness of money) may delay action indefinitely.

Now to your questions. I assume that you have a copy of your letter of February 26th, 1975 before you.

1. You attribute to me the view (last line of your question 1) "that the mind is a separate substance from the body". But I regard the concept of substance as superseded. There is no material (extended) substance. And of course there is even less a mental substance.

As to the question ~~What~~ is mind? I have in my Open Society explained that I regard "what is questions" as irrelevant.

What is mind? - No matter.

What is matter? - Never mind.

author;
Russell's
grandmother

I conjecture that ^{the}self, and that higher consciousness which permits consciously planned action, is an (emergent) product of evolution by natural selection. If so, it must have survival value, like a bodily organ, and a certain degree of autonomy, like a bodily organ: it must make a difference. (Against epiphenomenalism.) Thus it must interact with the brain.

2. I favour a methodological individualism in the sense in which classical economics does. That is, I recommend a situational analysis or the construction of a model of the relevant (social, historical...) situation which makes the action in question understandable (reasonable - not necessarily optimal). See Objective Knowledge, chapter 4; Open Society, chapter 14.

I am afraid these answers to your questions (which I have been asked before) are a bit brief. But the answers to these questions are straightforward and simple.

Only after receipt of your letter have I found out that you have published two volumes of your Treatise on Basic Philosophy. (You mention in your letter that you are working on vls. 3 and 4.) I have not so far been able to get hold of the first two vols; but I shall get them soon.

May I comment on your reference to our agreement on p. 70 of your new and excellent Philosophy of Physics? Surely we agree; but we did so already in my first two publications on propensity, references [54] and [55] on p. 44 of your volume Quantum Theory and Reality. If you care to look at these two publications (of 1957 and 1959 respectively, you will find that I did never confine myself (though it may ^{have} seemed so in Quantum Theory and Reality) to experimental arrangements. On the contrary, in both papers ([54], p. 69, section 4, and [55], p. 37, last paragraph) I stressed the realistic and metaphysical character of the propensities (I did so still more fully in my unpublished Postscript.)

Love to you and your family
yours ever
Karl

