Title: On the Antipathetic Fallacy in Phenomenal Thought

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Abstract: 2.28

To reject the dualist intuition that consciousness is nonphysical, Papineau has explained this intuition in terms of the “antipathetic fallacy.” According to Papineau’s antipathetic fallacy hypothesis (AFH), the intuition exists because thinking about experience requires a special mode of thought that recruits actual experience, which is lacking when thinking in physical terms. Thus for any claim that identifies an experience with a physical process (e.g., “pain=C-fibre firing”), there is a “phenomenal contrast” caused by the fact that one term in the identity statement (“pain”) is thought with an experience while the other (“C-fibre firing”) is not. The phenomenal contrast causes the intuition that the two terms in this statement cannot refer to the same thing. AFH is challenged by multiple counterexamples. For example, Sundström has argued that in the statement “My brother’s most salient current experience is identical with the experience of off-white that I have right now”, one term (i.e., “the experience of off-white”) is thought with an experience but the other (“my brother’s most salient current experience”) isn’t; yet this statement doesn’t induce the dualist intuition that the two terms cannot refer to the same thing. In response, I propose to revise AFH. According to the new proposal, the right sort of phenomenal contrast is between what is conceptualized as phenomenal and what is not. With a term that is conceptualized as about something phenomenal (e.g., “pain” or “my brother’s current experience”), the mind forms the concept with experience. If there is no determinate experience to use, there is nevertheless some expectation of experience. In contrast, with a term that is not conceptualized as about something phenomenal (for example, “C-fibre firing” or “my brother’s current brain process”), no expectation of experiences arises. The revised AFH explains the counterexamples.