

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF ARTS

**PERSONHOOD, CONSCIOUSNESS AND HUMAN COMMUNICATION IN AKAN
PHILOSOPHY**

**THIS THESIS IS PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON**

**BY
YAW YIRENKYI LAMPTEY
(10233469)**

**THIS THESIS/DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD
OF PHD IN PHILOSOPHY DEGREE.**

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND CLASSICS

INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

SEPTEMBER 2025

DECLARATION

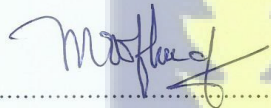
I hereby declare that this thesis, *Personhood, Consciousness and Human Communication in Akan Philosophy*, is my own work undertaken under supervision.



YAW YIRENKYI LAMPTEY

(Candidate)

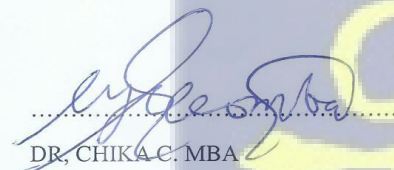
Date: 02/09/2025



PROF. HASSKEI M. MAJEED

(Supervisor)

Date: 02-09-2025



DR. CHIKA C. MBA

(Co-supervisor)

Date: 02/09/2025



ABSTRACT

In explanations about the basic features and behaviour of a human being, mainstream discourses in philosophy are dominated by the one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person. Physicalist concepts of mind evoke one-aspect concepts of person, and Descartes' substance dualism (mind and body) is a two-aspect concept of person. It is thus necessary to ask how a three-aspect concept of person of African origin compares with those Western concepts at performing the same tasks. The chosen three-aspect concept is the Akan concept of person, which says a human being is made up of metaphysical aspects, *okra* and *sunsum*, and a physical aspect, *honam*.

Kwame Gyekye (1995) explains that *okra* is the bearer of life, *sunsum* is the receptacle for personality and character traits, while *honam* is the body. He argues that *okra* and *sunsum* perform different functions but are metaphysically identical. However, this thesis explains that *okra* and *sunsum* execute different functions because they are slightly different in metaphysicalness. Yet in explaining that *okra* and *sunsum* perform separate roles, Gyekye affirms the original Akan philosophy position that a living human being is made up of three aspects. This thesis is thus a comparative analysis of the relative conceptual efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person.

Such comparative analysis is not new. Before constructing a conception of consciousness, James (1904) discarded substance dualism and chose "one stuff of material in the world, a stuff of which everything in the world is composed" (1904, p. 478). When Wiredu (1996) wanted to construct a framework of human communication, he discarded the mind inherent in substance dualism and constructed a reductive physicalist concept of mind. This project thus takes the Akan concept of person out of the Akan conceptual scheme and sets it

among its peers, that is, other concepts of person, in what is regarded as mainstream philosophy. The three concepts are referred to as peers, because each is, at the pain of repetition, a concept of person, which stipulated the ontological constitution of a human being; this establishes a criterion in the common framework for this comparative analysis.

The objective is to see which of the three concepts of person explains with relatively high efficiency the human features of personhood, consciousness and the human behaviour of communication. To attain that objective this project will perform two broad tasks. One, discuss the characteristics of each of the chosen concepts of person to determine how each explain mental or metaphysical lives. Two, conduct a comparative analysis of how each of these concepts explains selected issues in each of the three chosen areas of philosophy.

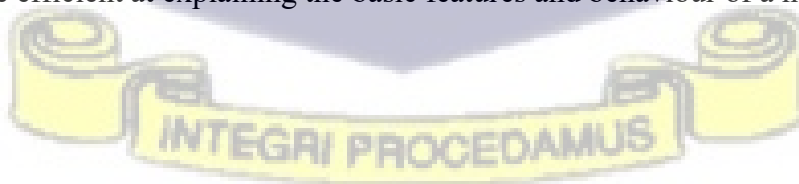
Since the three selected areas are separate fields, it is important to highlight the points of coherence of this thesis. One, the three concepts of person are applied to conduct the comparative analysis in the three areas. Also, concept of person is used to explain ontological personhood, which enables us to comprehend and explain consciousness, the expression of which, consequently, is imperative to the expression of human communication.

Another issue that runs through all the chapters is the issue of ontological gap between the metaphysical and physical aspects of a human being. Physicalist concepts of person avoid discussing it, while substance dualism fails to explain the heterogeneous interaction that would have purged it of the gap. However, a proposed hypothesis of the feature of *sunsum* allows the Akan model to account for the interaction that seamlessly over-rides correlation, which then allows the Akan concept of person to explain ontological personhood, *anidaho* (consciousness), and human communication.

From the foregoing, the central question for this project is: What are the relative conceptual efficiencies of a one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person? And the main thesis is: When it comes to explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being, the Akan concept of person is relatively more efficient compared to substance dualism, which is also more efficient compared to physicalist concepts of person.

This discussion commences with a look at how by their characteristics one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person account for mental (metaphysical) lives, at how a three-aspect concept accounts for metaphysical lives, and then at how all three concepts explain ontological personhood. This is followed by a discourse on consciousness, on how each of the three concepts – viewed from African, Western and Asian philosophical traditions – explains it, and then on how all that could lead to a holistic conception of consciousness. The discussion ends with a discourse on language as a medium of human communication and on whether Wiredu's framework of human communication allows (what is herein termed) porting. Porting is how the human being accepts tangible terms of language and transmutes these into abstract concepts of thought and emotion, etc. within a human being, and *vice versa*; that is, to enable the individual to participate in communication in the social arena.

Generally, this project contributes to knowledge by showing that compared to one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person of Western philosophy, the Akan (African) concept of person is relatively more efficient at explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being.

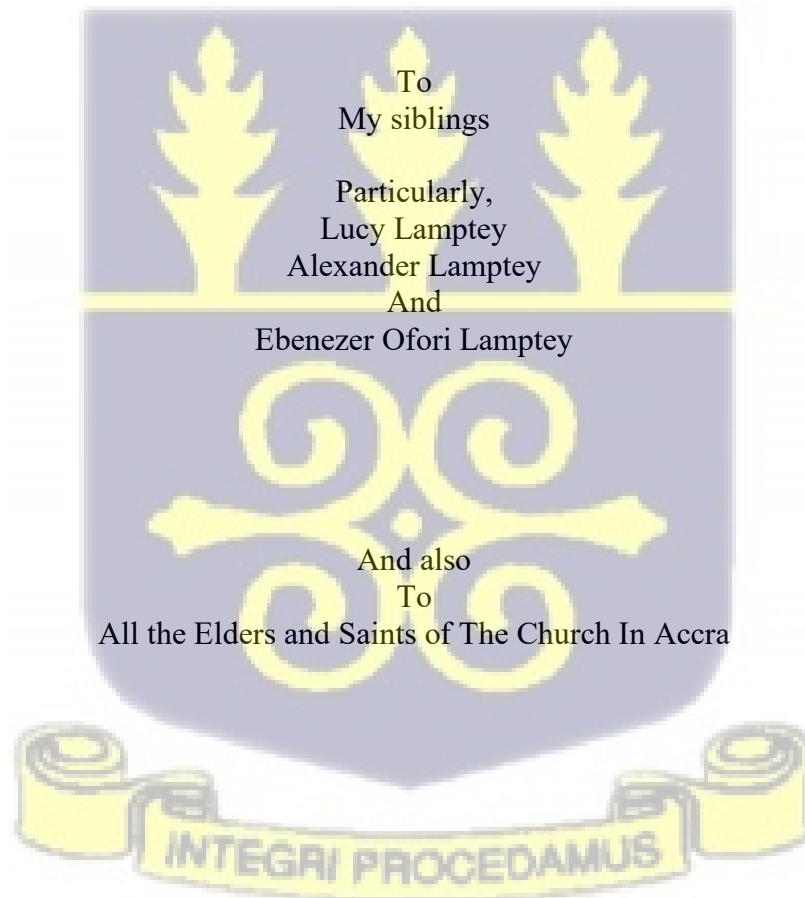


DEDICATION

This work is dedicated
To
My late father
John Odartey Lamptey

And

My Mother
Comfort Afumwaa Dei



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a world of thanks to my supervisors, H. M. Majeed and Chika Mba. They were very supportive throughout the period I was conducting this research. They were flexible yet did not countenance any sloppiness on my part. Their guidance was superb. Additionally, Majeed has been my mentor throughout my graduate studies.

Special Thanks

To Richmond Kwesi for being there for me at the very beginning before the commencement of this research, and; to Nancy Myles Baffour-Gyamfi for her ever-supportive friendship,

To Kofi Ackah for his unparalleled guidance throughout my graduate studies

To the long line of teachers through whose hands I ever passed.

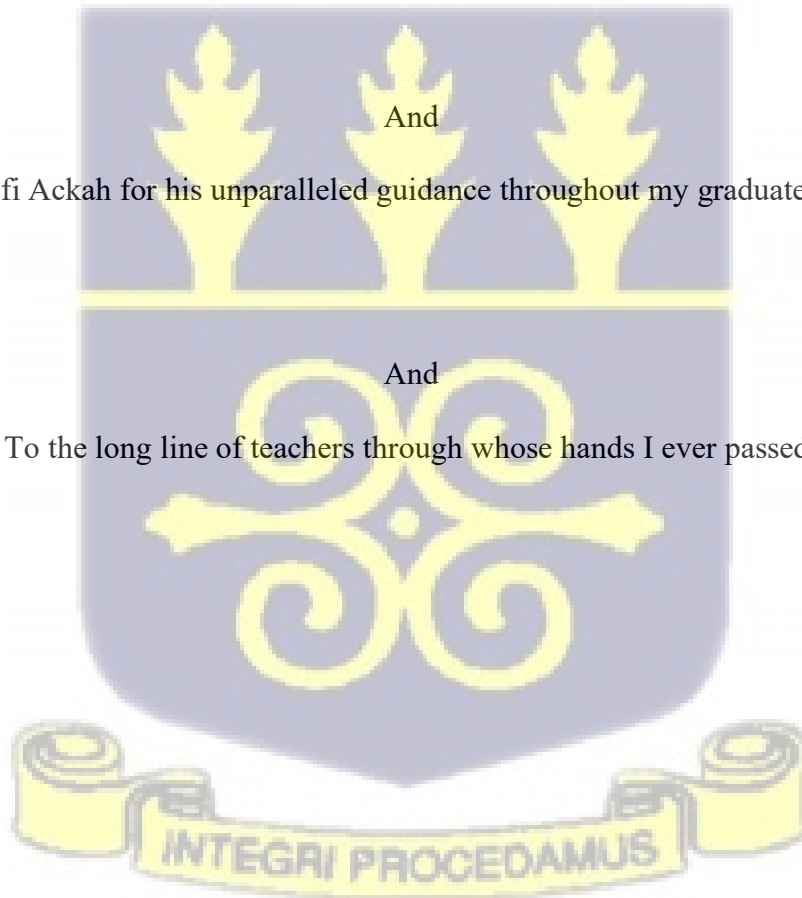


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Declaration.....	ii
2. Abstract.....	iii
3. Dedication.....	vi
4. Acknowledgement.....	vii
5. Table of Contents.....	viii
6. Chapter One: General Introduction.....	1
7. Chapter Two: One-aspect vrs. Two-aspect Concepts.....	39
8. Chapter Three: Akan Concept of Person.....	75
9. Chapter Four: Understanding Consciousness.....	118
10. Chapter Five: Understanding Human Communication: The Challenge of Porting.....	162
11. Chapter Six: General Conclusion.....	202
12. Notes.....	210
13. Reference.....	210



**PERSONHOOD, CONSCIOUSNESS AND HUMAN COMMUNICATION IN AKAN
PHILOSOPHY**



CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In trying to understand the self and our activities towards progress in different communities and even of the human species, different cultures have evolved different concepts of person. These concepts are modelled to afford us understanding of the features and behaviour of the human being. And such an understanding is applied to explain the human being's inherent capacities and possibly enhance how the individual and even communities exploit those capacities to ensure survival in the environment; both by the individual and the collective. There may be as many concepts of person as there are different human cultural communities, however, the tendency in African academia is to treat as part of mainstream philosophy the concepts of person couched by conventional Western philosophy, while the concepts of person of African philosophy are treated as models outside that mainstream. In a 2018 article, Jonathan O. Chimakonam and Victor C. Nweke affirm thus, "In the Nigeria university system, philosophy (specifically, Western philosophy) is often presented to the first year students as a universal academic enterprise" (Chimakonm and Nweke, 2018, p. 1). Yet critical analysis portrays that these Western concepts because they are one-aspect or two-aspect suffer critical deficiencies when applied to comprehend major features and behaviour of the human being. And such deficiencies tend to be particularly marked when the explanatory efficiency of any of those models is compared to that of a three-aspect concept of a person, such as that of Akan (African) philosophy.

Comparatively, a three-aspect concept of a person (typified by the Akan model) is highly efficient at explaining the features and behaviour of the human being than one-aspect and two-

aspect concepts (represented by models in Western philosophy). Hence the main task of this thesis is to show the cogency or otherwise of that position by comparative analysis of the respective conceptual efficiencies of the chosen models in selected areas, that is, personhood, consciousness and human communication. The performance of that task will follow the pursuit of certain goals. One, it will show some deficiencies of one-aspect and two-aspect concepts by direct analysis of their characteristics. Two, it will again depict the limitations in the efficiency of the one-aspect and two-aspect concepts, but this time, by examining how these explain the selected basic features and behaviour. Three, this thesis will portray the relative explanatory efficiency of the selected three-aspect concept by direct analysis of its characteristics. And four, this thesis will show the relative explanatory efficiency of the selected three-aspect concept through how it explains the selected basic features and behaviour. The detailed method for this comparative analysis is explicated in the sections on “Methodology” and “Concise Chapter Details” below.

For this chapter, the purpose is to give an overview of the extent and depths of specific issues dealt with herein and their inter-relations to ensure ready comprehension of the theme, task, goals and possible sub- and main arguments of this thesis. This chapter, therefore, proceeds by outlining the background and motivation for this entire work, and includes mention of fundamental knowledge gaps this thesis seeks to address and the basic research question, and the main objectives that will be pursued in response to the basic research question. That is followed by a critical review of relevant literature on two fronts. The first front is reviewing the efficiencies of one-aspect and two-aspect (Western philosophy) concepts by leading the narrative with the issues of consciousness and human communication. As part of the introduction of this review, however, it is necessary to set up a conceptual framework for the comparative analysis

that will follow in succeeding chapters. The second is a review of the literature to arrive at the philosophy Gyekye upholds – the basic affirmations of the Akan concept of person – and an assessment of whether Wiredu’s criticism of that concept discredits its explanatory efficiency or not. This chapter continues with scope of research and statement of the main thesis, defining core key terms of this work, setting out the methodology and concise details of chapters, and ends with the significance of this research.

1.1. Background and Motivation

When independently applied towards understanding major features and behaviour of the human being, a one-aspect or two-aspect concept exhibits deficiencies, however, a two-aspect concept displays higher explanatory efficiency at that task than a one-aspect model. By logical corollary, one expects a three-aspect concept to display higher relative conceptual efficiency at the same tasks. Yet when James, in discussing consciousness, rejected Descartes’ dualism and what he (James) will term the “epistemological” dualism of Kant, James did so in favour of “one stuff of material in the world, a stuff of which everything in the world is composed” (1904, p. 478). That is a subscription to the singularity of existent entity. Again, when Wiredu (1996), before mounting his framework of human communication, rejected Descartes concept of mind in favour of a reductive physicalist concept of mind, Wiredu was upholding the explanatory efficiency of a one-aspect concept over a two-aspect concept. If Wiredu and James chose single-aspect conceptions over a two-aspect conception, then each has indeed made a decision on the relative conceptual efficiencies of the two models. So, it will be interesting to find out if indeed a one-aspect concept is relatively efficient compared to a two-aspect concept when both are put to performing the same set of tasks.

Again, Kwame Gyekye is a foremost philosopher of African origin. One of his major works is *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (1995); in which he discusses and analyses different subjects and aspects of Akan philosophy. Indeed, he commences this work with sound arguments to show that traditional African (Akan) thought is indeed philosophy (1995, pp. 3-12), that is, rather than the derogatory characterisation given it by some authors; H Odera Oruka, for example, describes it as ethno-philosophy (2003, p. 120). Gyekye then buttresses his affirmation with Chapter Two which depicts why traditional African thought is, appropriately, traditional African philosophy. However, of direct relevance to this thesis, Gyekye, in that book, upholds the Akan concept of person as the three-aspect model it is (1995, p. 85).

Gyekye discusses this three-aspect model within the Akan conceptual scheme (1995). And while some authors, such as Segun Gbadegesin (2003), have conducted comparative analysis of aspects of the model in other contexts, the Akan concept of person largely remains confined within the conceptual scheme. Yet, the efficiency of a concept of person, including the double-aspect type of Descartes' substance dualism (1911) or the one-aspect type evoked by Hilary Putnam's functionalism (2021), is (partly) expressed in how it accounts for features and behaviour of a (living) human being. Thus, what motivated or inspired this work was the curiosity over what will be the outcomes of taking the three concepts of person from African and Western philosophies and putting them to work at performing the same sets of tasks. Hence the task of this thesis is to conduct a comparative analysis of the relative efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of a person at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being.

The extensive review of critical literature conducted for this thesis did not uncover any material on the cross-cultural comparative analysis of the explanatory efficiencies of the three selected concepts of person. And this thesis attempts such comparative analysis. Also absent in available literature is the notion of porting, which this thesis argues is necessary within a person if the individual is to participate in the learning and use of language or communication.

From the fore-going, therefore, the research problem is finding out what will happen if the three concepts of person are put to work in performing the same set of tasks. And the central question of this thesis is: What are the relative explanatory efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being? This central question will be explored through the pursuit of two broad objectives. One is an examination of the capabilities of the three selected concepts of persons to account for metaphysical lives. Subsequent on that is a comparison of the efficiencies of the three concepts of person at explaining the chosen features and behaviour of a human being.

1.2. Critical Review of Relevant Literature: One-aspect and Two-aspect Concepts

This section briefly discusses one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person. Since it is the commencement of the critical review of relevant literature for this thesis, it is useful to begin with a vital point in mind. That point is the fact that none of the available literature accessed discusses the cross-cultural comparative analysis of the explanatory efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person. That raises some points, and to reach a justifiable end on this leg of the general discussion we need to establish a distinction between the method and the items compared.

Franz Fanon (1998) discusses the meeting of cultures, African and European, and some of the tools used by the latter to dominate the former. The domination was possible and attainable because of the contrast between the two cultures, yet the implied comparison is that both are cultures. It is also significant that Kai Horsthemke (2017) conducts comparative analysis of aspects of African philosophy and Western philosophy, and the compared items are rather knowledge systems.

Also, Bruce B. Janz writes, “British philosophy tends not to reflect philosophically on the question of what it means to be British, while African philosophy does tend to reflect philosophically on the question of what it means to be African. So, a great deal of African philosophy in the twentieth century has focused on addressing meta-philosophical questions” (2019, p. 690). In other words, the question of identity is not as much of a fundamental question for British philosophy as it is for African philosophy. However, when some philosophers, such as Oruka (2003, p. 120) or Janz (2019, pp. 689-690) argue in a way that suggests or implies that traditional African thought is not philosophy, other authors need to prove the falsity of those arguments. In Chapters 1 and 2 of *The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (1995), Gyekye explains that falsity. Still, the point here is to show that Janz conducts comparative analysis of aspects of African and Western philosophies, and the items of the comparison are identities.

Also, in Chapter Two of *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (1995), Gyekye conducts extensive conceptual analyses, but the items are instances of ideas that qualify as philosophy – from Africa, the West, Islam and the East. In that chapter, Gyekye’s goal is to show that traditional African thought is a subset of African philosophy. Also, in *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective* (1996), Kwasi Wiredu conducts several instances of cross-cultural comparative analyses. An almost

unrecognisable instance of it can be found in Chapter 7—Wiredu’s apt observation that grammar, the rules of language, presumes non-contradiction hence instills every language with a multiplicity of internal sequence, therefore, every culture has logic. (Wiredu, 1996, pp. 84-85)

Again, one will encounter below instances of comparative analysis of the perspectives of Buddhism and neuro-science on say consciousness. However, it is essential to note that that is different from the comparative analysis conducted by this thesis. That means a critical look at existing works in the central area of this research is absent from this review. And as stated above, it leaves a void in knowledge or a knowledge gap which the basic research question of this thesis seeks to address.

As indicated above, therefore, almost all cultures have a concept(s) of person. Western philosophy, being as vast as it is, has several concepts of person, and the concept of mind almost always is central to discussions of the concept of person. Largely, therefore, concepts in philosophy of mind are the ones that give us concepts of person in which minds are a subset.

Also, in Western philosophy, discussions of concepts of person go as far back as Plato and Aristotle. And reports indicate that Plato explicated a two-aspect concept of person (Leslie Stevenson, 2013, p. 30), while Aristotle affirmed a one-aspect concept of person (Christopher Shields 2020; Section 2). According to Sasha Blakeley, Erica Cummings and Gina Wilkerson (2023), “Plato argued that what people see and experience in their daily lives is actually just a representation of actual reality, which people cannot access but which influences the world nevertheless” (p. 1). The form has characteristics (that should not concern us here), but clearly, for Plato, each object in reality, including the human being, has two essential parts, form and physical. Aristotle argued a physical monistic concept of person (see Section 2.3.5. paragraph 2).

In modern Western philosophy, discussions of the concept of person or of models that evoke it start with and tend to take reference from Descartes' two-aspect substance dualism made up of body and mind. Most concepts of mind are physicalist models, and since we hardly see walking about minds detached from bodies, it is safe to state that each concept of mind is a subset of a one-aspect concept of person.

To keep the scope of this project within manageable limits, Descartes' substance dualism is chosen as the two-aspect concept. Interestingly, almost all the physicalist concepts of mind or their respective one-aspect concepts of person that have followed Descartes' have been conceived on the basic assumption of denying substance dualism. In *The First and Second Meditations* Descartes was searching for the basic ontology of a human being, however, the journey that led him to the discovery was epistemological. For Descartes, therefore, the mind is responsible for consciousness.

Also, human communication is an instance of behaviour, and Wiredu (1996), after rejecting substance dualism, applies a one-aspect concept of person to mount a framework of human communication. Communication is central to the capacity to know, which is attributable to consciousness. Selecting Wiredu's framework (for Chapter Four) further limits the ambits of this narrative. This section, therefore, looks at one-aspect and two-aspect aspect concepts of person by placing the limelight on mind and consciousness and human communication

1.2.1. Mind and Consciousness

Several authors have discussed consciousness from epistemological angles, which will be examined in Chapter Two. Others – including Descartes (1911), A. J. Ayer (1947), Locke (2017), and Putnam (2021) – have discussed consciousness but from metaphysical perspectives.

After Descartes' substance dualism, several metaphysical concepts of mind and consciousness emerged. These include physicalist concepts, all of which, in direct or indirect refutation of Descartes's conception, proceed from the basic assumption that a human being is a physical monolith. A selective sketch will fit the purpose here.

1.2.1.1. Behaviourism

A. J. Ayer (1947) discards the mind completely and talks about “dispositions” that manifest as behaviour in terms of interpreting symbols. Whatever that position means, consciousness is implied by the capacity to interpret symbols. Behaviourism comes on the assumption that the human being is a physical monolith, but fails to reduce mind, thought, consciousness, etc. into physical or sense-perceivable entities. For instance, Armstrong writes, “The mind was not something behind the behaviour of the body; it was simply part of the physical behaviour” (Armstrong, 1970, p. 70). For Armstrong, mind and body are ontologically identical; obviously in direct opposition to Descartes' dual substance philosophy. Armstrong's conception makes the mind thoroughly physical, but it has a fundamental challenge – it cannot account for the intangible capacities of a human being, say thought.

1.2.1.2. Functionalism

Putnam commences defence of functionalism thus, “[A]re we made of matter or soul-stuff?” (Putnam, 2021, p. 127). He then pushes that question aside in favour of “the real concern behind the question... the autonomy of mental li[ves]” (Putnam, 2021, p. 127). He then explains that if we focus on that “concern”, “we could be made of Swiss cheese and it wouldn't matter” (Putnam, 2021, p. 127). That is the basis for a conceptual experiment: Let us mould a (human)

mannequin with Swiss cheese and see if it will start breathing. If that sounds trivial or even ridiculous, the goal is to show that if Putnam was right about human beings made of Swiss cheese some of the human beings walking about at any time may be made of Swiss cheese; that is, considering the intricate sophistication of reality. Again, comparing a human being to a state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) humanoid robot shows a distinction in physicality that, plausibly, points to sophistication in the human constitution which Putnam ignores. Yet again, let us mould an AI humanoid robot with only Swiss cheese to see if it will begin breathing. Eventually, can we even talk about mind, mental lives and consciousness if a human being is indeed made of only Swiss cheese?

Putnam concludes his work thus:

“[W]hat we are really interested in, as Aristotle saw, is *form* and not matter. *What is our intellectual form?* ...not what the matter is. And whatever our substance may be, soul-stuff, or matter or Swiss cheese... My conclusion is that we have what we always wanted – an *autonomous mental life*. And we need no mysteries, no ghostly agents, *elan vital* to have it.
(Putnam, 2021, pp. 136-137)

From Shields’ (2020) discussion of Aristotle’s works, Putnam’s point that Aristotle was interested in “form and not matter” may be a simplistic interpretation because Aristotle’s conception of the human being combines both “form” and “matter”. Also, as essential as the “form” (or what Putnam refers to as “our intellectual form”) is, it is necessary to also demand the feature of whatever the “form” *rests or hangs on, is part of or is interwoven with*. Automatically, critical questions arise. What are mental lives or “intellectual form” autonomous of? That of which mental lives are autonomous, what is it made of? And consequently, what is the set of autonomous mental lives too made of? The questions raised on the Swiss cheese mannequin and

AI humanoid robot could lead to the possible essentialness of “form” or “autonomous mental li[ves]”, which essentialness calls for caution in such off-handed expulsion of or avoidance of questions of ontology. Chapter Two examines this issue.

Still, the fact that functionalism is categorised as a physicalist concept hands us a pointer for modifying some of the above questions into specific ones. From that fundamental assumption, it is safe to say that that of which mental lives are autonomous is the body (the physical). Consequently, what is the sense in which mental lives are autonomous of a physical ontology, and, compared to the physical what is the ontological characteristic of mental lives? These are beckoning puzzles which Putnam avoids.

Still, that does not exhaust the puzzles raised by the functionalists’ position. It is from a functionalist perspective that Putnam discusses mental lives. Mental lives are evidence of consciousness, a capacity by which a human being interacts with and collects information (also) from the exterior world. However, a function is a derivative of a capacity, and the capacity is exhibited by an entity, say an animate. Can a function by itself, that is, irrespective of the metaphysical milieu it resides in, make a statement about consciousness? These issues are discussed in Chapter Four. Here the critical question is whether functionalism can account for mental (or metaphysical) lives; a question we need to answer prior to bringing functionalism, or the physicalist concept of person it evokes, to the later comparative analysis of the explanatory efficiencies of the three concepts of person.

1.2.1.3. Brain processes and co-relation

Also essential to discussions of mind and consciousness is the notion of brain processes. J. J. C. Smart explains, “Consider an experience of pain, or of seeing something or having a

mental image. The identity theory of mind is to the effect that these experiences just *are* brain processes” (Smart, 2017, para 1, His emphasis). Smart’s position is that mental images or experiences are identical to brain processes. However, issues arise. For instance, by using the term “experience” Smart implies the universal category that philosophy of mind evokes, the concept of person, which raises more issues. Still, the bigger issue is: If Smart, as we will see in Chapter Two, acknowledges that the brain is not identical to the mind how are mental processes identical to brain processes?

Daniel Dennett (2001) argues for a modern-scientific study of consciousness. (pp. 230-231) He affirms, “A neuro-scientific theory of consciousness must be a theory of the Subject of consciousness, one that analyses this imagined central Executive into component parts, none of which can itself be a proper Subject” (p. 235). Of course, “...it will have to be a third-person science of (p. 230) consciousness [since] [t]here is no such thing as first-person science” (pp. 230-231); it will have to be the way a scientist studies say a monkey (p. 230). For Dennett, consciousness is the accumulated total of the contents of the individual’s experience. His general position is that whatever the Subject’s observation and assessment of his or her own consciousness (first-person view) these must be confirmed by experiment (third-person view) conducted by either the Subject himself or herself or by others. A first-person science (or personal) conviction of what consciousness is is “a fine datum in need of explanation, by her [the Subject] or by others” (p. 230). Such explanation is provided by “a third-person science” or experiment. And the “data” or outcome of these experiments is the “component parts” of “this imagined central Executive” [the Subject] (p. 230). In other words, it is from the “component parts” or experimental data of the Subject’s experiences that we can know the Subject of consciousness or gather a theory of consciousness. Obviously, however, the key term in

Dennett's position is "neuro-scientific", and its explanatory capacity or defining efficiency depends on co-relation between consciousness and brain processes.

Discussing consciousness and brain processes, Shurger and Graziano (2022) point out that neural co-relates of consciousness is still how modern science explains consciousness. Yet co-relation is correspondence between neural processes of the brain and consciousness because the two are separate entities. Thus, one of the issues up for discussion in this thesis, consciousness, hinges on the ontological statuses of the brain and mind and reducing that discussion to a discourse on processes only side-steps the central issue of ontology. This research will look at the relationship between mind/consciousness and brain processes to see if co-relation, which is a perspective of consciousness from the location of brain processes, can help us account for metaphysical lives, let alone enable us know what mind or consciousness is.

1.2.1.4. Defining consciousness

From the fore-going, an appropriate question is: What is consciousness? Admittedly, a response to that question may eventually lead to learning if consciousness has scope. Yet, the complexity of *internal* human experience – say, typified in the outlay of epistemic capacities listed by Kant (2003, p.65) – allows us to already ask whether the expression of consciousness has scope. So does the set of metaphysical levels encountered by Descartes on his epistemological journey in *Meditations II*. Also, Brentano writes about the "unity of consciousness" in which "experience does not resolve itself into a bundle or multiplicity of scattered bits" but is a "mono-categorical ontology" (Barry Smith, 1995, pp. 62-63). In Brentano's characterisation of consciousness, the issue of "experience" as possibly "a bundle" or made up of variety – which, note, Brentano denies – also allows us to pose the question of scope.

And we can ask that question now, that is, even while we await affirmation of what consciousness is, for, scope may be instrumental to a proper definition of consciousness.

Again, it will be essential to look at consciousness itself commencing with how some authors have directly conceived it. The rationale for that resides in the fact that while a one-aspect concept of a person will give us a scope of consciousness different from what a two-aspect concept will, consciousness may have its **basic definition** and scope. We need to know the characteristics of consciousness itself to possibly apply it as a kind of reference point for the comparative analyses of the explanatory efficiencies of the separate concepts of a person. This discussion may not name every capacity that participates in the possible full scope of consciousness, yet knowing its possible fullest scope will help at identifying whether a three-aspect concept encumbers more capacities or accommodates more of what a human being possesses than a two-aspect concept.

The dictionary, on one hand, and, on the other, philosophical literature have various meanings of “consciousness”. It is thus necessary to assess these meanings to find out if any of them, taken alone or in concurrence, will give us a definitive concept or even starting point of what the feature or function is. This project will look at the positions of Rocco J. Genarro (2021) who discards consciousness as understanding and knowing (Section 1), in favour of consciousness as “Thomas Nagel’s... famous ‘what it is like’ sense” of the term (Genarro, 2021, Section 1). (See also Nagel, p. 437, p. 438, p. 441, p. 442). Genarro explains that (for Nagel)

When I am in a conscious mental state, there is “something it is like” for me to be in that state from the subjective or first-person point of view. When I am, for example, smelling a rose or having a conscious visual experience, there is something it “seems” or “feels” like from my perspective. An organism, such as a bat, is conscious if it is able to experience the outer world through its (echo-locatory) senses. There is also something it is like to be a conscious creature...

(Genarro, 2021, Section 1)

“What it is like” or “something it is like” refers to a simile of the actual. This discussion is about consciousness as an actual rather than “what it is like” to be conscious. Also, “what it is like” is described from the angle of subjective experience. Admittedly, there is a subjective aspect to being conscious, but consciousness as a common feature of, at least, all human beings is so much more. And a fundamental premise here is the possibility that “consciousness” can, primarily be objectified in a way that applies to all human beings; and plausibly, all animate creatures. This will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Nevertheless, Genarro appears to set in broad outline the scope of the activity of consciousness by saying, “Through consciousness, one can have knowledge of the external world or one’s own mental states” (Genarro, 2021, Section 1). Descartes will concur with that, but adds that a human being also has innate knowledge of God (Descartes, 1911, p. 18). Thus, for Descartes the scope of what a human being can apprehend with his or her consciousness is wider than Genarro allows. George Hagar says, “Consciousness at its simplest refers to sentience or awareness of internal and external existence” (Hagar, 2020, para 1). While Hagar’s conception is wide enough to contain all possible internal and external existences or entities under reference, it is essential to ask whether there are limits to the possibilities of internal existence(s). This question of possible limits to internal existence(s) is posed not to Hagar because his conception can accommodate any scope of consciousness set by any concept of person. The relevance of that question resides in the fact that intrinsically different concepts of person (consummately or implicitly mounted) give different types or scopes of internal existence(s). And the significance of these different types for the tasks of consciousness is vast,

since each may give a different scope of those tasks. The issues arising will be discussed in Chapter Four.

1.2.1.5. The challenge of defining consciousness

Discussions of consciousness face another basic challenge – the apparent general belief that it is difficult or even impossible to define. This challenge has a direct relation to the assumed impossibility of attaining a definition of consciousness. Genarro says “consciousness” “is notoriously ambiguous”, i.e., it lacks a single meaning. Also, Hagar says, “Despite centuries of analyses, definitions, explanations and debates by philosophers and scientists, consciousness remains puzzling and controversial... Perhaps the only widely agreed notion about the topic is the intuition that it exists” (Hagar, 2020, para 1)

However, if consciousness remains “puzzling and controversial” it is because there are so many concepts of it by different authors, and, implicit in the quote, none of those encapsulations meets any criterion that thrusts it into general acceptance. Significantly, we do not need lengthy discussions of these definitions of consciousness to know the truth of the above quote. A certain level of familiarity with philosophical texts and narratives that define concepts will reveal that too many of the available definitions of any putative concept are made from different narrow perspectives of particular fields of study or even from specific areas of particular fields. This project will thus look at the dictionary meanings in conjunction with the positions of Descartes, Locke, and Genarro to see if we could extrapolate a conception of consciousness.

Ultimately, the discussion will also help in answering one of the research questions: What are the relative efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person at explaining the basic feature of consciousness?

1.2.2. Human Communication

The behaviour chosen for the comparative analysis is human communication. Wiredu (1996) rejects Descartes' concept of mind and sets out a reductive physicalist concept of mind. He then mounts a framework of human communication that allows human beings [with consciousness] to interact through the learning of language, which process of learning commences and results in the cultivation of the mind. Still, Wiredu affirms that a human being is biological thereby making the mind inherent in him or her a thoroughly physical entity. Both physicalist minds imply a one-aspect concept of a person as opposed to Descartes's two-aspect concept. Eventually, a major question here is: In a human being which type of mind or ontological aspect permits *porting* or acceptance of the concepts of language coming from the social environment and their transmutation into thought concepts and *vice versa*; hence allowing and facilitating the learning and use of language or human communication? If the concept of person evoked by the mind Wiredu chooses allows porting by the concepts of language, how different will be such porting compared to what is possible in two-aspect or three-aspect concepts of person? If the concept of person evoked by the mind Wiredu chooses does not allow porting, which other could help rescue his framework of human communication? This issue is discussed in Chapter Five.

1.2.2.1. Wiredu's discussion of thought, mind and brain states

Wiredu discredits the mind inherent in Descartes' substance dualism, because it affirms mind as an entity or substance (Descartes, 1911). Wiredu also refers to the Akan term "*adwene*", which means "thought", and says it is the closest the Akan comes towards a concept of "mind"

and affirms that “adwene” makes “mind” a “function of thought”. He argues that since thought is non-physical, mind cannot be a substance (1996, pp. 16-17). He then describes mind as “an on-going complex set of [brain] states”.

To discredit dualism, and then affirm mind as “an on-going complex set of [brain] states” is not a complete argument on the feature of brain states or of mind. In a poke at dualism, Wiredu writes, “[T]he claim that thought is non-material [or non-physical] determines absolutely nothing about what its nature might be” (1996, p. 17). True, the isolated statement that thought (or even mind) is non-physical is not direct commentary on its actual feature, yet an affirmation that thought is “an aspect of brain state” is also not. Indeed, to deny dualism and then affirm thought as non-physical and a brain state only confounds the discussion, for it raises a vital question: What is the feature of brain states?

Wiredu points out that “empirically established connections between its [brain] states and the occurrence of thought” is an advantage his concept of mind has over dualism. Wiredu draws inspiration from massive advances in neuro-science. (On advances in neuro-science, see Wayne Wu, 2018, Introduction). Critical questions arise here. What is that “connection”? Does Wiredu tell us what that “connection” is? What does neuro-science say about such “connection”? And does that “connection” actually have the appropriate characteristic Wiredu refers to as the source of “advantage”? Does that tell us anything about the features of brain states or how it is a collection of thoughts? These issues are dealt with in Chapter Five.

Just like thoughts, Wiredu affirms that “concepts ...are brain states...” hence “the stuff of the mind”, and since a proposition is a “combination of concepts”, propositions are also “the stuff of the mind” (p. 18). Thought is a brain state, which is a concept, thus; each is “the stuff of ‘on-going complexity of [brain] states’” or mind. That relationship – among brain states,

thoughts and concepts, on one hand, and, on the other, mind – is very critical to the framework of human communication Wiredu mounts. So, how does Wiredu’s concept of mind help explain his basic concept of human communication as “the transference of thought” among persons in a community”?

1.2.2.2. Mind and communication in the framework

Wiredu affirms a biological nature of a human being and the social feature of language. He explains that human beings share a “basic biological similarity” and so can communicate because of the “biological affinities” they (human beings) share (1996, p. 19). Those affinities “make possible the comparison of experiences and the inter-personal adjustments of behaviour that constitutes social existence” (1996, p. 19). In a nutshell, human beings can communicate among themselves because they are biological and share similarities and attractions that make it possible for them to inter-relate to co-exist and make the necessary adjustments to make community possible.

Wiredu explains that

A human being is born with a biological make-up, but with no concepts. ...[W]ithin this make-up, within the brain specifically we have the basis of innate conceptual abilities. ...To possess a specific concept, an idea, entails some linguistic ability. [So] ...[h]uman life is a learning process which begins almost immediately on arrival in the world. The learning has to be in the context of a society. ...This learning process which at the start is nothing much more than a regime of conditioning is, in fact, the making of mind. (1996, p. 19)

First, by “within the brain” Wiredu is referring to the brain as the holder of “abilities” not thoughts. Also, he affirms that a human being is a biological entity; hence has ingrained abilities to gain and use concepts, plus linguistic abilities for learning and using language. Again, he

explains that using these abilities and using them for learning commences and happens in society, such that learning is the social process of “conditioning” or tuning, and that tuning is the making of mind. Wiredu does not directly tell us what is tuned, but it appears to be what he terms “innate conceptual abilities”. However, abilities are expressions of capabilities and capabilities proceed from a capacity or faculty, so what is the faculty behind the abilities? What is it in the biological nature of a human being that is tuned – abilities or faculties? And what is this entity that is tuned? These and more issues will be discussed in Chapter Five.

What can be stated here, however, is that Wiredu puts himself in a vice, because by picking the biological as the thorough feature of a human being he automatically subscribes to an utterly physicalist concept of a human being. The social is behavioural, therefore, also perceivable. Both a physicalist conception of a human being and the social realm result in a layered set of physicality; though different in characteristics. So, what is the feature of the interface between the social and biological? What is the feature in the biological nature that allows possible porting?

After stipulating a biological nature for the human being, Wiredu writes, “The development of communication is the development of mind. We do not first develop a mind which then has to learn how to communicate” (1996, p. 19). Apart from the concept of mind Wiredu rejects, the two other concepts of mind in his work are mind as a function of thought and the thoroughly biological mind that is developed through the development of communication. These minds are disparate; that is, unless these are identical, but Wiredu does not say so. Which of these minds is developed through the development of communication? Also, can a mind be developed through the development of communication? Responses to these issues will be provided in Chapter Five.

Wiredu also equates “thoughts” to “brain states”; a point which, as discussed above, is dissipated by Smart’s concession that mind is not identical to brain. Again, as we noted above, Shurger and Graziano’s point on neural co-relates of consciousness means consciousness is separate from brain processes or states. Since consciousness has features similar to those of mind and thoughts are of mind, how can thoughts be brain states? Here too, the essential issue is about the relation between mind and brain and whether this physicalist conception can account for metaphysical lives, for it is when a concept of person can account for metaphysical lives that it becomes a candidate for proper comparative analysis. These matters will be deliberated upon in Chapter Five.

1.2.2.3. Implications for actual human communication

It was pointed out above that Wiredu’s point that one develops a mind only after encountering terms of language from the social arena demands the presence of a faculty within the human being. William Uzgalis points out that Locke affirms in a human being a faculty for receiving concepts in-coming from experience (2018, Section 2.2). For Locke (2017), there is in a human being a “*tabula rasa*”. “*Tabula rasa* or blank sheet” means a human being is born with a “sheet” or mind, however, one that is as clean as a slate waiting to be written upon by how the individual experiences life in a community. Note that Wiredu’s biological nature contains no mind at birth. Locke is an empiricist, which means, in principle, like Wiredu, he disagrees with dualism. However, significantly for Locke, according to Uzgalis, a human being is born with “faculties” he or she uses to accept concepts before using the “abilities” (also inherent) to process the concepts (2018, Section 2.2). Taken in a general sense, what is the feature of “faculties”? The response could be helpful to this general discourse.

Still, a point of interest to this context beckons. In 1995, the Dalai Lama announced the then 6-year-old boy, Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima, as the 11th Panchen Lama of a Tibetan Buddhist School (Tikkanen, para 4). The evidence for this declaration – hardly published these days – is that the boy could recall accurate details of events and scripture statements from many centuries ago. Sceptics may argue that Nyima’s is an isolated case or part of a set of isolated cases. True! Nevertheless, Nyima’s instance represents a high-end possibility of human capability. And it shows that concepts of a person that incorporate physicalist concepts of mind hugely underestimate the possible capabilities of a human being, and that even a *tabula rasa* mind at birth is not always true. These issues and more will be discussed in Chapter Four.

From Wiredu’s explication, the first ever concept(s) that a human being encounters is (are) a total stranger to him or her since he or she has no mind. It is this first-ever in-coming lingual concept(s) (from the social setting) that eventually sets in motion the making of mind in the human being. Since Wiredu does not indicate how the biological nature inculcates a non-physical aspect such as thought, one may conclude that the biological nature lacks a “faculty” for accommodating thought (or even a mind or consciousness). The essential point here is not that a human being lacks thought or mind or consciousness, but that the biological nature cannot account for these. In the absence of thought or mind in the concept of person afforded us by Wiredu’s concept of mind and biological nature, what is it in the human being that is tuned to commence the making of mind?

Here, the issue of porting comes up again. Wiredu is right that thoughts are intangible terms, however Ilyenkov (in Hanzel, 2018) and works of Tibetan philosophy (Hugon, 2023) affirm Wiredu’s implication that language is indeed tangible terms developed in the social realm. Thus, how are the physical concepts of language altered into intangible concepts of thought in a

human being and *vice versa* to facilitate the use of the shared meaning of language? Is there anything in Wiredu's framework of human communication that allows porting?

Also discussing the human capability for learning and using language, both Naom Chomsky (2024) and Fiona Cowie (2017), separately, indicate the presence of a faculty – what Cowie refers to as the “*property of us*” (2017, para 2, Her emphasis) – that is used for such a purpose. Chomsky, who is an acknowledged authority on the matter, points to “cognition” as that “property of us” which resides in the mind/brain. The question then is whether his conception of mind/brain accounts for the human being capacities to learn and use language.

Eventually, Wiredu's framework of human communication has potential; that is, despite its possible inherent challenges. So, is there a possible concept of mind or concept of person that could be applied to rescue it? As hinted at above, the central issue with the framework is whether it allows porting. It thus goes without saying, that the concepts of person that allows porting will be the ones that hold the potential or possibility of rescuing it. Which or which ones of the three chosen concepts of person can allow porting? This last question is about the possible explanatory efficiencies of the concept of person.

1.3. Critical Review of Relevant Literature: A Three-aspect Concept

Gyekye commences a discussion of the Akan concept of person by pointing out that because its constituents are *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam* several authors describe it as “tri-partite” (1987, p. 85). He, however, argues and affirms that the Akan concept of person is a duality. Is the concept a duality or tri-partite? My position is that the Akan concept of a person is both a duality and three-aspect, and both are positions Gyekye subscribes to. How is that possible? This is discussed in Chapter Three. This section deals with two main issues. First, what makes

the position Gyekye upholds a three-aspect concept of person? And then, does Wiredu's criticism of the Akan concept of person do any damage to the concept hence to its efficiency at explaining the features and behaviour of the human being?

Essentially, the Akan concept of person includes how the three aspects bond together to make a living human being. What are the features and roles of these aspects? In Akan philosophy *okra* and *sunsum* are metaphysical and *honam* is physical. What are the major arguments Gyekye puts forth to uphold this as part of his philosophy?

1.3.1. Gyekye on Akan concept of person

Gyekye affirms that for Akan *okra* comes from Onyame (God) (1987, p. 85). *Okra* is “the spark of... Onyame” in the human being; hence is “the innermost self, the essence, of the individual” (1995, p. 85). The presence of *okra* makes a person a living human being and its absence means death (Gyekye, 1995, p. 85, p. 88; Wiredu, 1983, p. 112). Gyekye adds that *sunsum* bears the personality and character traits of the individual (1995, p. 90), and together *okra* and *sunsum* inhabit *honam* (body). The body thus provides an obvious vehicle for the other two aspects to complete the encapsulation of a human being.

Also, Gyekye characterises *okra* as soul and *sunsum* as spirit (p. 85, p. 88-89). However, Wiredu (1973, p. 119), Gbadegesin (2004, p. 175) and Kwame (2004, p. 348) separately caution against trying to make African concepts fit into the moulds of Western categories. For example, Wiredu points out that in Western philosophy “soul” is identical to “mind” (1983, p. 120), however, *okra* plays the role of bearer of destiny (or, loosely in Akan, *nkrabea*), while the soul has no such task (1983, (p. 120). (Note that *nkrabea* is a much more sophisticated concept compared to destiny). So, are Gyekye's characterisations appropriate or inappropriate?

Gyekye adds that *okra* and *sunsum* are ontologically the same, but logically different (1987, p. 98). That, in essence, means they are of the same primal substance though each performs separate function(s). Is that wholly true? Upfront this project concurs with Gyekye that *okra* and *sunsum* perform different functions. In fact, in affirming separate functions for *okra* and *sunsum*, Gyekye concurs with the traditional Akan position that the two have certain differences. The issue then is whether the two are ontologically the same as Gyekye affirms. Generally, “soul” and “spirit” have different meanings, yet there are in English meanings of the two terms that converge. And one will not be faulted for wondering whether such convergence could be used as basis to uphold sameness of substance between *okra* and *sunsum*. Yet the matter is not that simple. To advance the argument, therefore, is it not possible to presume separateness of substance, no matter how slight, between entities with different names, especially when they perform different functions? The response herein is affirmative, and this project will establish how in Chapter 3.

Based on Gyekye’s characterisation of *okra* and *sunsum* as both metaphysical he explains that Akan concept of person is a duality and not tri-partite. If by “metaphysical” Gyekye means intangible hence unobvious, then he is right. However, the position herein is that there could be some difference in the metaphysical-ness of the two aspects, which difference is what allows them to perform separate functions. Thus, while this research concurs with Gyekye on ontological duality of the concept, it is necessary to affirm what Akan affirms, that a living human being is constituted of three different aspects. This research will explain why. Yet what is already stated allows us to reach the critical conclusion that Gyekye upholds the Akan position that a living human being is made of three aspects – *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam* – and each plays specific role in yet a relationship of complementarity to ensure a person’s animacy and life in

terms of living and interacting with other human beings and the environment, both animate and inanimate.

1.3.2. Conceptual efficiency of Akan concept of person and Wiredu's criticism

Explanatory efficiency is the extent to which a concept helps us to understand the characteristics or workings of a feature(s) or phenomenon or phenomena it, the concept, is put forth to explicate. The explanatory efficiency of a concept of person is the extent to which it enables us to understand the features and behaviour of a human being. Therefrom, what is it about the combined aspects in Akan concept of person that hands it efficiency at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being? Before answering that question, however, there is a critical issue. Wiredu has criticised the Akan concept of person. And, until those criticisms are examined to reach an understanding of what and how much damage, if any, these does to the Akan concept, there can be no affirmation of the features or explanatory efficiency of the concept.

First, Wiredu re-characterises *okra* as quasi-physical rather than metaphysical, and then constructs what he terms an “Akan concept of mind”. Do Wiredu’s concepts and positions mount an alternative to the philosophy Gyekye upholds? The second issue is an implication posted by Wiredu’s creation of “the Akan concept of mind” —the plausible necessity of a mentioned mind as an aspect of every concept of person. Is that necessarily true? Also, Wiredu casts *okra* as quasi-physical, but Safro Kwame (2004) conceives a quasi-physical mind and then introduces modern science into the discourse on quasi-physicalism. Does Kwame’s explication advance the role Wiredu conceives for quasi-physicalism or mounts fresh set of challenges for it?

In a paper titled “The Akan Concept of Mind” Wiredu (1983) proffers several reasons to deny that *okra* is metaphysical and affirms that it is rather quasi-physical. From the entire discussion it is obvious that Wiredu has leanings towards physicalism, so why does he avoid stating, straight-forwardly, that *okra* is physical? This question is relevant because Wiredu rejects the metaphysical feature the Akan gives *okra* yet appears to use that very feature to mitigate what should have been for him the physical feature of the entity. And why does he ascribe a quasi-physical *okra* to Akan rather than to himself? What is the philosophical implication of such ascription? Does the evidence Wiredu adduce allow him to even make such ascription? Chapter 3 discusses these issues.

Again, Wiredu does not discuss the feature of *sunsum* (1983, pp. 120-121), but moves on to later mount “The Akan Concept of Mind”. In fact, Wiredu is right in pointing out that the Akan concept of a person does not include or mention mind as a constituent. (1983, p. 121), that is, looking at the aspects listed in the Akan concept. Wiredu then points out that the closest Akan comes to mentioning mind is “*adwene*”, which translates into English as “thought” (1983, p. 112). Its verb equivalent, “*dwene*”, is “think”. Wiredu also points out: “[W]hile the word ‘mind,’ ... is susceptible of either a substance or non-substance interpretation, ‘adwene’ is susceptible of only a non-substance one” (1983, p. 116). Substance interpretation of mind is reference to mind in Descartes’ philosophy, while non-substance interpretation of mind is largely reference to the array of concepts in the physicalist schools. And then since thought is a process, to put it down as mind would, for Wiredu, render the latter a non-substance.

Based on the fore-going points, Wiredu expresses several positions. For example, “Mind is, from the Akan point of view, a logical construction out of actual and potential thoughts” (1983, p. 118). That means mind is but a combination of the possibility of thinking and actual

thinking. Ontologically, for Wiredu, that makes mind a non-substance. That is interesting because even in Descartes philosophy where mind is a substance, thought is a (non-substance) activity (1911, p. 102-112). According to Gyekye, thought is an activity performed by *sunsum* (1995, p. 87). Thus, if mind is here strictly taken to be what Wiredu defines it to be for the Akan, as that used for thought or thinking, then mind, in Akan concept of person, must be part of *sunsum*; in fact, Wiredu points to that as a possible implication in traditional Akan philosophy when he writes that “the sunsum... would have to be a possessor of mind” (1983, p. 121), but he does not believe it. Yet, since thought is partly responsible for the personality and character traits of a person, Gyekye is right in ascribing thinking to *sunsum*. Significantly, these points raise issues *vis-à-vis* the characterisation of and tasks performed by mind in Descartes’ philosophy. These issues will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Also, the path Wiredu takes from thought to mind raises issues. It is easy to infer the presence of “mind” from “thought” or *vice versa* if one defines mind as that strictly used for thinking. On the other hand, how seamless is it to move from “thought” to a mentioned “mind” in a tradition that lacks mind as an aspect of person? The relevance of that question resides in the fact – already hinted at above – that there may be no feature identical relation between thought and mind in Akan thought as Wiredu affirms. Also, taking any concept of person without a mentioned mind, can one go from “thought” to mounting for it a mentioned mind? Does such mounting not presume deficiency in that concept of person? Indeed, there is a more provocative yet plausible presumption, an almost law-like one, associated with such mounting—that a mentioned mind is a necessity for every concept of person. Is that necessarily true? Chapter 3 will discuss it.

In “The Akan Concept of Mind” Wiredu writes, “This is not the place to enter into a full analysis and evaluation of the Akan concept of a person” (1983, p. 121), yet that, precisely, is what he does. To re-characterise the ontological status of *okra*, not characterise *sunsum*, and mount a concept of mind which always presumes a full concept of person smacks of an attempt to re-structure Akan concept of person. Is there evidence in this Wiredu paper or possibly any of his later works that tells us what his actual task was in this paper?

1.3.3. Akan concept of person and Kwame’s criticism

Also necessary to this issue is whether works by other authors take up further discussion of quasi-physicalism or possibly even try to consummate what Wiredu commenced. Whereas Wiredu conceived quasi-physicalism, it is Sefro Kwame who defines it. According to Kwame, the concept

admits of quasi-physical objects as belonging to a category between the obviously physical objects, i.e., those objects that *obey the known laws of physics*, and the realm of the *so-called* spiritual or completely immaterial objects that *do not obey any of the known laws of physics*.
(pp. 345-6, Emphases added)

This definition raises issues, and some are discussed in Chapter 3. A few highlights here will lead to that discourse. Kwame admits leanings towards physicalism yet upholds quasi-physicalism, which Gyekye translates as “seemingly-physical” (1987, p. 86). And indeed, Kwame’s ultimate point on quasi-physicalism, his possible prospect, confirms Gyekye translation. Kwame’s possible prospect is his position that given an improved quality of the laws of physics in future, quasi-physical entities may be seen as what they are, physical objects. Kwame applies Ockham’s razor when arguing the future of quasi-physical objects. He points

out that current laws of (modern science) physics are (now) fallible, hence certain objects appear quasi-physical to us. Kwame thus explains that one day with improved known laws of physics we may come to realise that what today appears quasi-physical are indeed all physical (2004, pp. 345-346). Hasskei M. Majeed responds to quasi-physicalism in two connected ways. With Wiredu's original claim that *okra* is quasi-physical, Majeed disagrees (2013, p. 23-24), and adds that it is not likely future laws of physics will render *okra* physical (2013, p. 30). Is the inferred likelihood even a possibility? Chapter Three looks at these issues.

In the light of Kwame's possible prospect, other entities he describes as quasi-physical, may or must be physical, for example, God (2004, p. 346). Historical evidence shows that science as a humankind knowledge enterprise was practiced for thousands of years before modern science was born in Europe (Beatrice Lumpkin, 1985; Hunter Havelin Adam, 1985; Joseph Osei, 1995).¹ Today, there is evidence that certain critical scientific discoveries made thousands of years ago by cultures other than the cultural milieu of modern science is either finer than that of modern science (Lumpkin, p. 71; Osei, p. 17),² or is only being confirmed by modern science² (Adam, p. 42; Lamptey, p. 73-74), or; modern science is still ignorant of it³ (Adam, p. 27, pp. 27-46; Lamptey, pp. 74)³. On those bases, one could wonder whether science as an enterprise will not have already revealed it if God is a physical entity.

For this thesis, Kwame expands the scope of discussion on quasi-physicalism but does not attempt to tackle let alone consummate Wiredu's project of criticising the Akan concept of person or possibly mounting a surrogate. A major point of analytic interest that arises out of Kwame's work is how the development status of a set of epistemic criteria determines the metaphysical status or *actual-ness* of an entity. Also, since Kwame points to limitations of

reductive physicalism and non-reductive physicalism before mounting quasi-physicalism, it is appropriate to ask what type of physicalism Kwame's possible prospect leads to.

Eventually, do Wiredu's and Kwame's criticisms and positions succeed at altering the features of the aspects of Akan concept of person and hence succeed at diminishing whatever explanatory efficiency it originally possesses? If these criticisms reduce the conceptual efficiency of the concept to naught, any discourse on the central thesis here is dissipated and the comparative analysis cannot even commence. In the end, how do all the questions and issues raised in this entire critical review of relevant literature impact on the answering of the basic research question of this research?

1.4. Thesis, Scope of Research, Definition of Key Terms and Coherence

This research is a comparative analysis of the efficiency of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of persons at explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being. Hence the project thesis: Compared to one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person, a three-aspect concept of person is highly efficient at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being. Thus, the basic research question is: Comparatively, what are the efficiencies of a one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person at explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human? This research will discuss the specific characteristics of each concept, and then look at their relative efficiencies at explaining the selected features and behaviour.

There is a vast array of such concepts which can be applied in a myriad of selected areas, so what are the ambits of this research? To limit the scope of this research, therefore, several steps are taken. The Akan concept of person is the selected three-aspect model. A three-aspect concept of person affirms that a human being is made up of three separate aspects. According to

the Akan concept of person, a human being is made up of *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam*. A two-aspect concept of person states that a human being is made up of two separate (parts (aspects)). The picked two-aspect concept of person is Descartes' substance dualism, which states that a human being is made up of a body and a mind. Descartes' concept was the first to clearly portray a key feature of a two-aspect concept of person, the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction, and another substance dualist concept, by Richard Swinburne (2009), encountered during literature review does not tackle the puzzle.

A one-aspect concept of person affirms that a human being is made up of only one aspect, and the physicalist concepts of person are selected for this research. A physicalist concept of person is attained by conceiving a body in addition to any specific concept of mind one is concerned with. There are several physicalist concepts of person, some of which have very striking differences. For two reasons, however, this thesis will look at several one-aspect concepts exemplified by several concepts of mind but will put the limelight on functionalism. First, though each selected concept of mind has a unique proposition of physicalism, each comes on the basic assumption that Descartes concept of person is flawed. Second, all one-aspect concepts of person are mounted on the same basic assumption that a human being is a physical monolith.

To delimit the scope further specific issues are chosen from the selected areas of personhood, consciousness and human communication. Thus the first chosen feature is ontological personhood, which is the aspect(s) a person is made up of and how the aspect is responsible for the functioning of a living human being or how the aspects complement each other for the functioning of a living human being. The second feature is consciousness defined basically and broadly as "the expression of awareness". And the chosen human behaviour is

human communication or how the individual is able to learn and apply language in the social arena.

The concepts and areas have been carefully put together to ensure coherence of the entire narrative. The first layer of coherence is in the fact that the three concepts of person are applied in all three selected areas. Also, a concept of person is basically for explaining ontological personhood or the features of a living human being, and both allow us to understand consciousness as a feature of human beings. Consequently, it is through the general expression of consciousness that an individual interacts with the environment, including others. And then the individual's behaviour, including human communication, is generally guided by and coordinated through the expression of consciousness.

1.5. Methodology

The project has a two-pronged methodology. The first is to discuss and assess the features of each chosen concept of person, and then conduct comparative analysis of their explanatory efficiencies in the selected areas of personhood, consciousness and human communication. The specifics commences with an analysis of the characteristics of one-aspect and two-aspect concepts and how each accounts for mental lives, which is followed by discussion on the selected three aspect concept of person and how each of the three concepts account for ontological personhood. This thesis then discusses consciousness, and then the necessity of the porting to a person's inherent capacity to learning and using language to communicate.

1.5.1. Brief Chapter Details

This section sets out concise details of the chapters of this work. Chapter I is the “General Introduction” of the thesis. It sets out the main issues of the entire study – among others, the selected issues and their inter-relations, its scope and basic research questions, thesis, general methodology and concise chapter details, and general significance.

Chapter II discusses chosen one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person of Western philosophy. For decades these concepts have dominated academic discourse as *the* concepts for comprehending the features and behaviour of a human being. This chapter discusses the features of each concept and its merit(s) or demerit(s) in explaining mental lives, which, in Western philosophy, is regarded as essential to the proper functioning of a person.

The main subject matter of Chapter III is the Akan concept of person, however, for reasons given therein, it also discusses ontological personhood. The discourse commences with a look at the concept and Gyekye’s analysis of it. It then continues with criticisms of the concept by Wiredu and Kwame. Here the main sub-issues are two. Do Wiredu’s (and Kwame’s) concepts and positions discredit the explanatory efficiency of the Akan concept of person? And, how true is the implied Wiredu position that mind, as a mentioned aspect, is necessary in every concept of person? This chapter will then outline the features responsible for the efficiency of the three-aspect concept, and then compare the explanatory efficiencies of the three concepts of person in the area of ontological personhood.

The next, Chapter IV is on a consequence of the previous two chapters. Closely related to personhood is consciousness, which is a key feature of a living human being. Indeed, it is directly through the application of consciousness (not exclusively though) that a human being interacts with the holistic environment. Hence it is essential to (try to) properly know it. What is

consciousness? Does consciousness have a scope? This research will respond to those questions through a comparative analysis of the explanatory efficiencies of the three concepts of person.

In Chapter V the discussion shifts to another consequence, the behaviour of human communication. As conscious beings, humans live in and interact in a community. Wiredu rejects Descartes' two-aspect concept of a person and mounts an implicit reductive (one-aspect) concept of a person. He then presents a framework of human communication in which a human being is born with a biological nature but without a mind, hence mind is made and developed through communication with lingual concepts from the social arena. According to Wiredu, this biological nature of a human being is inherent with abilities, but he says nothing about faculties that must be applied before the use of abilities. Wiredu's work raises several questions.

Also, Cowie and Chomsky affirm the need for a faculty or faculties for learning and using language. Hence it will be important to look at what faculty Chomsky, who is an authority on this matter, conceives for learning and using language.

Wiredu says thought concepts are abstract, and Ilyenkov and Hugon are right that language is tangible, yet Wiredu provides no notion of porting which is vital to altering tangible language into intangible thought and *vice versa* in the individual. A discovery of this thesis is that without a notion of porting within a human being he or she cannot communicate with language. So, which of the concepts of person can uphold the necessary capability of porting and thereby help in, so to put it, consummate Wiredu's framework of human communication?

Chapter VI is the General Conclusion of the entire research. It will summarise the contents of the preceding four chapters, outline some significant contributions this thesis makes to knowledge, and, possibly, make some appropriate recommendations for future research.

1.6. Significance of this Study

Largely, the Akan concept of person is confined within the Akan conceptual scheme and philosophy. This project thus unfetters it from that context, and set it among its peers, other concepts of person, in an analysis of their relative efficiencies at explaining selected features and behaviour of a human being. Eventually, this thesis makes a valuable contribution to humankind's knowledge by establishing that compared to one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person of Western philosophy, the Akan concept of person (of African philosophy) is relatively efficient at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being.

Conclusion

This chapter gives the background and motivation for this project and conducts critical review of relevant literature. It also set out its basic research question, thesis, scope and points for coherence, methodology, concise chapter details, and significance. The central question is compared to one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person, is a three-aspect is relatively efficient at explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being? The thesis is: Compared to one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person, a three-aspect concept of person is efficient at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being.

Generally, the chapter looks at characteristics of one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person by leading the narrative with ontological personhood, consciousness and human communication. In modern Western philosophy, mind is a ubiquitous aspect of a human being, and contemporary discourses on it and consciousness commence from Descartes' two-aspect concept of person, substance dualism, which affirms that a human being is made of mind and body. Also, Descartes appears to make consciousness equivalent to mind which is a

metaphysical entity. Then arise several schools of physicalists who discard mind as a substance and come on the basic assumption that a human being is a physical monolith. These physicalists include behaviourists, thorough physicalists, and functionalists. Substance dualism accounts for mental lives hence consciousness. And since in Western philosophy mental lives are affirmed as instrumental to proper functioning of a human being, it will be interesting to find out whether under the closest scrutiny of their characteristics these physicalist concepts of mind, which evoke one-aspect concepts of person, have anything to say about mental lives hence ontological personhood and consciousness. This research will also discuss consciousness by looking at how Descartes, Locke and other authors have looked at it. On consciousness, the key questions will be “What is consciousness?” and “Does consciousness have a scope?”

The discourse on behaviour concerns human communication. Wiredu constructs a framework of human communication in which the human being has a biological nature. A biological nature is a reductive physicalist position, and it evokes a one-aspect concept of person. Wiredu points out that human beings communicate by the transference of thought and explains that thoughts are intangible concepts. So, where in the biological nature do thoughts reside? Ilyenkov concurs with Wiredu’s implicit point that language is a social construct (of linguistic concepts) hence tangible. To facilitate communication, tangible language and intangible thoughts necessarily require a notion of porting which stipulates the human being’s capability to transmute one into the other and vice versa to facilitate communication. Wiredu provides no such notion.

And it becomes obvious that without a notion of porting no framework of human communication can explain human communication. This thesis therefore provides such a notion. It also becomes obvious that the only way a concept of person can explain human

communication is by accommodating and accounting for the notion of porting. Thus, this thesis also looks at the relative efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three aspect concepts of person in accounting for the porting.

The three-aspect concept of person, the Akan model, affirms that a human being is made up of *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam*. Gyekye explains that *okra* and *sunsum* are metaphysical but perform separate functions. And a critical question for this thesis is whether two entities that have different names and perform separate functions could lead to an argument that *okra* and *sunsum* have differences in their metaphysical-ness. That aside, Gyekye's position that *okra* and *sunsum* perform separate functions means he accepts Akan's position that a living human being is made up of three aspects; herein, this is the philosophy Gyekye upholds or Gyekye's philosophy.

This research is ultimately about the explanatory efficiency of Akan concept of person. However, Wiredu (and Kwame) criticise it, and it is essential to discuss the criticisms to see if these in any way diminish the efficiency of the Akan concept. Wiredu says *okra* is quasi-physical, and attributes it to Akan. What are his bases for affirming so, is *okra* quasi-physical and is that an Akan position? Also, Wiredu creates what he terms "The Akan Concept of Mind", therefrom posting the plausible implication that every culture must have mind as a mentioned aspect of its concept of person. Kwame introduces modern science into the discourse on quasi-physicalism via a concise definition of the term, but later posts a possible prospect that says comprehensive laws of physics may one day reveal that what appears quasi-physical today are all indeed actually physical. What are the implications of that possible prospect?

CHAPTER TWO

ONE-ASPECT VRS TWO-ASPECT CONCEPTIONS OF PERSON

This chapter discusses the characteristics of one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person chosen from Western philosophy. Despite the plethora of concepts of person modelled by separate cultures, the one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of Western philosophy dominate philosophical discourses in African academia as the reference models for explaining the features and behaviour of the human being. Do these philosophical concepts occupy that prime position because of merit expressed in their relatively high explanatory efficiencies? In this essay, I rely on an African philosophical conception of person, the Akan model, and then conduct a comparative analysis of the conceptual efficiencies of the three concepts of person at explaining the features and behaviour of the human being. That is the task of this entire project, and the comparative analysis will be conducted in three selected areas – personhood, consciousness and human communication. As a prelude to that comparative analysis, this chapter selects and analyses the characteristics of two-aspect and several one-aspect concepts of person of Western philosophy.

The main argument of this chapter is that compared to one-aspect concepts of person a two-aspect concept is relatively efficient at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being. There are metaphysical conversations that are direct discourses on concepts of person or on concepts of mind that evoke concepts of person, and then there are epistemological conceptions that may be cast as a one-aspect or two-aspect conception of how we can know. Both conversations are essential to dialogue on the main argument.

This chapter will therefore look at both epistemological and metaphysical discourses. The discourse looks at several one-aspect concepts of person but singles out functionalism for the influence it enjoys among contemporary philosophers. The discussion then shifts to mental lives, to the relation between functionalism and mental lives, and then concludes on how one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person explain mental (or metaphysical) lives.

2.1. The Centrality of Mind in Western Philosophy

It is necessary to clarify the relation between the concept of mind and the concept of person and indicate the centrality of mind in understanding the features of a human being in Western philosophy. Western philosophy of mind tends to discuss only mind (without the body), however, since we do not see isolated minds walking about, it is important to remind ourselves that a mind is in or accompanies a body. In this research, therefore, every concept of mind implies or evokes the holistic category it is a subset of, the concept of person.

Conventionally, in academia, discussions of consciousness, rationality, and so on, are generally undertaken under or as a relation of the philosophy of mind, where the tendency is to discuss mind, mental lives or mental states or processes. Writing about “Theory of Mind” – though from a psychological perspective – Massimo Marraffa (2021) opens the discourse thus: “Theory of Mind is the branch of cognitive science that investigates how we ascribe mental states to... persons and how we use the states to explain and predict the actions of those... persons” (Marraffa, 2021, para 1). Here, Marraffa’s implicit point is that the mind is part of a person’s constitution. It makes the concept of mind a subset of the concept of person. Further, in the spirit of philosophy, we could add *features* to the identified “actions” or behaviour to complete the issues we need to “explain and predict” about the human being using concepts of

mind. Since “Theor[ies] of Mind” feed philosophy of mind, both share that common goal. It is this explaining of the features and behaviour of human beings and consequently predicting their behaviour that renders the discussion of concept of mind and concept of person important.

That brings us to the centrality of mind to the assessment of the features, behaviour and functioning of a human being in Western philosophy. This is how Patrick Rysiew (2018) introduces a discussion:

“Rationality” is among our central and most widely used evaluative notions. That humans are “rational animals” is a presumption built into the very name of our species, *Homo sapiens*; and the thought that humans are rational, perhaps distinctively so, appears to be part of the popular fabric of thought about ourselves... Because it is a term that is used in so many ways, and with regard to such a wide range of topics and subjects, it [rationality] does not admit of any neat analysis. (Rysiew, 2018, para 1)

Rysiew is saying that human beings concede that we are also animals, however, we consider ourselves unique because we view ourselves as “rational”, and such labelling is essential to the generality of how we (human beings) think about ourselves. Also significant is Rysiew’s point that the result of multiple, differential uses of “rationality” is that “it does not admit of any neat analysis” or, simply put, forestalls reaching a common meaning of it. Thus, it is essential to indicate that in this thesis “rationality” simply means the capacity for conscious thinking, which in Western philosophy is considered an activity of the mind.

Rysiew adds, critically, that “rationality” is central to schemes for evaluating ourselves as human beings. The fact that rationality is considered closely related to mind and is central to evaluative schemes means it could be applied to make interpretations on the capacity or capacities of mind(s) of individuals or groups. This portrays the centrality of mind to understanding the features, behaviour and functioning of a human being in Western philosophy.

2.2. An Epistemological Conversation on the Concept of Person

Do epistemological conceptions give us possible concepts of person? Epistemological conceptions are about knowing, that is, how one can know, why and so on. Thus, we expect that inclusive in such conceptions must be a subject. If there is a subject, we can further anticipate that the inherent notion of such subject will possibly hand us a certain concept of person. So, let us look at the epistemological conceptions of James (1904) and Kant (2003). From each of those conceptions, we will see if we can make inferences to any inherent concept of person.

2.2.1. Kant: Consciousness and a possible concept of person

As Kant (2003) points out, a human being can know because he or she has an inherent property that allows knowing. James (1904) states that that inherent property is consciousness. In Western philosophy the issue of consciousness is closely related to the history of the concept of mind. And the trend this research is directly interested in commences with Rene Descartes. Descartes undertakes an epistemological journey of search – conducted through the activity of thinking – that eventually led him to substance dualism. And both, the metaphysical and epistemological aspects of his philosophy, have attracted major criticisms that have partly led to the mounting of several positions that evoke or imply one-aspect concepts of person or epistemological conceptions based on singular existent material in the world. In Western philosophy, therefore, contemporary discussions of the named issues largely focus on Descartes and works that have followed his.

In Descartes' philosophy (*Meditation* I and II), consciousness is the responsibility of mind. Kant appears to detach consciousness from mind, and he also maintains what James

describes as a subject and object relationship (1904, p. 478). Indeed, Kant mentions “mind” yet is coming from an epistemological perspective. Kant states,

In whatever manner and by whatever means a mode of knowledge may relate to objects, *intuition* is that through which it is in immediate relation to them, and to which all thought as a means is directed. But intuition takes place in so far as the object is given to us. This again is only possible to man at least, in so far as the mind is affected in a certain way.

(p. 65)

First, on Kant’s point that knowledge is about given objects, one could ask whether the object of thought is always given without the subject’s ontological constitution. We will encounter that issue below when we get to Descartes’ position on knowledge of God. Again, note Kant’s reference to how a human being has a “mind” that can be “affected in a certain way” by an “object [that] is given”. From the quote, one could surmise that “thought” is of the mind. If so, then “thought as a means is directed” towards “intuition”, which is how “a mode of knowledge” is “in immediate relation to” the object. That means knowledge of an object is attained through thought working through intuition. What is intuition?

In the above quote, Kant appears to be using “intuition” to mean the capacity to immediately realise that there is an object that is given to a person, but without understanding; not yet. Kant continues the above quote thus,

The capacity (receptivity) for receiving representations through the mode in which we are affected by objects is entitled *sensibility*. Objects are given to us by sensibility, and it alone yields *intuition*; they are *thought* through the understanding, and from the understanding arise *concepts*. But all thought must, directly or indirectly, by way of certain characters relate ultimately to intuition, and therefore, with us to sensibility, because in no other way can an object be given to us.

(p. 65)

At the end of this quote, Kant re-affirms his position that objects are given to a human being from without his or her holistic encapsulation. Again, since “sensibility” is “[t]he capacity... for receiving representations through the mode in which we are affected by objects” and “sensibility... alone yields intuition”, “sensibility” is a capacity inherent in a human being and lies between “intuition” and the “object [that] is given”. When “representations” of a given object are received through this line of identified epistemic capacities, “understanding” conducts thought to arrive at “concepts” of the given object. Note also that Kant – like Descartes – puts down “thought” as an activity. “Understanding” is also an epistemic capacity that appears conceptually separate from another epistemic capacity, “thought”. This line of identified non-perceivable, intangible epistemic capacities will be essential to later dealing with questions of interest, such as “What is consciousness?” Here, we need to remind ourselves that for Kant there is a subject that is separate from the given object, and since the subject’s body is implied in the application of the senses, that subject, plausibly, must be a two-aspect.

2.2.2. James: Consciousness and concept of person

Taking an epistemic path, James discards consciousness as an entity and casts it as a function. He writes, “I believe that ‘consciousness’... is the name of a non-entity and has no right to a place among first principles...” (1904, p. 477). That, plausibly, refers to Descartes’ philosophy which, according to certain interpretations, makes mind equivalent to consciousness. If the *Meditations (I and II)* are anything to go by, however, Descartes makes mind responsible for consciousness. Descartes identifies several epistemic capacities – the senses, imagination and feeling, thinking, understanding, etc. – but points out that ultimate awareness and understanding are of the mind (Descartes, 1911, pp. 10-11).

Thus, James is saying consciousness is not a substance hence not a basic metaphysical concept. He re-affirms the first part of the previous quote when he states, “I mean only to deny that the word [consciousness] stands for an entity and to insist most emphatically that it does stand for a function... That function is *knowing*. ‘Consciousness’ is supposed necessary to explain the fact that things not only are but are reported, are known” (p. 478). In short, consciousness is a “function” called “knowing”, and consciousness is important to how we know ‘things... are’ or that things exist, can be “known” and can be “reported”; at least by human beings. That makes James a functionalist from the epistemological perspective.

James makes an epistemological statement but one loaded with metaphysical import. He writes, “My thesis is that if we start with the supposition that there is one stuff of material in the world, a stuff of which everything in the world is composed and if we call that stuff ‘pure experience’...” (pp. 477-478; Square brackets added). By this James is affirming a unitary stuff or entity in the world and that entity is “pure experience”. So, note that James outlaws or claims to outlaw all types and even vestiges of dualism. James talks of remnants of dualism because he explains that authors who later subscribed to Kant’s position closed Kant’s subject and object gap to “object-plus-subject” (James, 1904, p 478). However, for James, the object-plus-subject conception still retains remnants of dualism, thus his task is to expel even those remnants. Yet note that “one stuff of material in the world” is an epistemic construction rather than a reference to the constitution of a human being.

James explains that consciousness, which is a function, is a witness of “happenings in time” or events but has no role in those events, yet he adds that in “Experience” there is “*awareness of content*” and “*fact comes to light*”. (p. 479). Some puzzles arise. Experience teaches us, and Kant concurs (above), that there is always someone or an entity that is aware.

And it is from such awareness that “fact comes to light” or knowledge is generated, and then could be articulated. Taking that from another perspective, James admits consciousness is a function, so in what *metaphysic* is that function inherent, or who performs the function since consciousness is internal to a subject? And, unless the consciousness James is explicating is a feature of zombies – with no personality differences – there is bound to be differences in the report of the “*fact [that] comes to light*” in the “pure experiences[s]” reported by separate individuals. In such a situation, we cannot overlook or drown into extinction the determinant role of the subject in “pure experience”.

Thus, if subject A is observing another person B, “pure experience” will be different from when A is observing another person C or also a stone. Thus, granting James’ singularity of substance, if a unitary concept has at least two parts and one part is constant while another part could change or keeps changing, we need to recognise at least the conceptual separateness of the part that keeps changing. To say the least, therefore, James’ “pure experience” does have a subject and an object, and, at the very least, is akin to the vestige of Kantian dualism James claims to have expunged (1904, pp. 477-478).

For both Kant’s and James’ philosophies, we may ask whether that capacity to be conscious refers us to an ontology that belongs to a subject to whom an object is given, and whether that can lead us to a possible concept of person. Since Kant includes a subject who possesses epistemic capacities, we can apply for him the fundamental presumption we make for philosophers of mind – that, his idea of epistemic capacities *reside in a body*. Again, since “thought” is inherent in Kant’s subject, and he describes thought as an activity, Kant’s subject plausibly has a metaphysical aspect.

In the case of James, it appears his concentration on the singularity of “pure experience” may eclipse another issue necessary to the epistemological; that is, the metaphysical-ness of the participant entity or entities within “pure experience”. For example, how are we to explain the situation where A closes his eyes and all he has left is his or her “internal” space when he or she is not being given any object? James refers to this specific circumstance when he states, “When the world of outer fact ceases to be materially present, and we merely recall it in memory, or fancy it, the consciousness is believed to stand out and to be felt as a kind of impalpable inner flowing” (1904, p. 479), but he disagrees with that position. James then recounts quotes from two authors, Paul Natorp and G. E. Moore, who separate “consciousness” and its “content” within the constitution of a human being. James responds that *“Experience, I believe, has no such inner duplicity; and the separation of it into consciousness and content comes, not by way of subtraction...”* (1904, p. 480, His emphasis). True, the authors he quotes are discussing an aspect of experience. Hence, James’ “duplicity” refers to the split those authors maintain between “consciousness” and its “contents”.

One puzzle in the quote is how James can refer to such separation as “not by way of subtraction”. Subtraction eventually leaves one with less than what one commenced with, and such separation, between consciousness and its content, does just that. Indeed, the subtraction can happen to “pure experience”, for, when A shuts his or her eyes what he or she has effectively done is the truncation of a portion of “pure experience”. In that circumstance, no object is given at present; what one is left with, indeed, is “memory” or the subject’s internal impressions of what used to be given and awareness of that fact. And the consciousness in whatever is experiencing is aware of these impressions of what used to be given, and even aware that those

impressions came from beyond the senses. Also, if shutting the eyes can truncate part of “pure experience”, then the conception has parts.

Throwing the limelight on what experiences does call for linkage to the function of knowing. A function allows the performance of a task, and a function is or must be inherent in and performed out of a capacity. So, what is the capacity that performs the knowing in “pure experience”? Again, a capacity is inherent in a metaphysic, say a person, so, there has to be a metaphysic who or which experiences. Thus, James acknowledges “a knower, of a state of mind, of ‘consciousness’” (1904, p. 480). This indicates that he acknowledges a subject that possesses a mind or consciousness. However, this recognition also indicates that “pure experience has parts. Yet James prefers to shut all the parts – including knower, object and contents of consciousness – in “pure experience”.

By that, he forecloses any reference to the subject in his “pure experience” and leaves us nothing by which we can reach the concept of person inherent in his conception. It is like making truthful inferences from a person’s statements that there is cash in a closed safe, yet until we open the safe, we cannot be certain about that fact. “One stuff or material in the world” is conceptually akin a perpetually closed safe.

This section has arrived at two points. One, Kant’s epistemological conception could be handing us a two-aspect conception of a person. We will see how a two-aspect concept accounts for consciousness in Chapter Four. On the other hand, James’ epistemological conception may have handed us a one-aspect concept of person, but his fundamental pre-supposition, “pure experience”, forestalls that. Note that it is not that James does not discuss the human being, but that his conception gives us nothing by which we can infer the human being; the subsumed entity could as well be an AI robot.

2.3. The Metaphysical Conversation

Another trend in the possible debates on mind and consciousness takes the path of metaphysics and also proceeds from Descartes. This section thus examines Descartes' concept of person, and then analyses a string of physicalist concepts of mind each of which comes on the presumption of denying Descartes' substance dualism. Each of those physicalist concepts evokes or implies a one-aspect concept of person. Also essential is the issue of mental lives, since in Western philosophy that is what concepts of person are largely supposed to explicate.

2.3.1. Substance Dualism

The chosen two-aspect concept of person is substance dualism. However, there are several accounts of it. And this thesis looks at the conceptions of Descartes (1911) and Richard Swinburne (2009).

2.3.1.1. Descartes' substance dualism

Descartes undertook an epistemological journey of searching for the essence of a human being and discovered that he or she is made up of two parts – a non-perceivable and intangible mind hence the metaphysical aspect or essence, and a tangible and obvious body hence the physical aspect. Since the two aspects are heterogeneous, the legitimate question Descartes was asked is how do the two interact. Several criticisms were laid against substance dualism. For example, James holds the position that being *non-perceivable and intangible* renders an entity “mysterious and elusive” (1904, p. 480). However, the major criticism against Descartes is prospected by the question Princess Elizabeth asked Descartes in a letter: *How* do two

heterogeneous entities interact? (Yandell, 1997) That puzzle has been labelled the mind-body problem. Responding, Descartes explains that those doubting the existence of heterogeneous interaction do so only because they are coming from a position that sees homogeneous interaction as the only possibility. (Yandell, 1997, p. 249) That simply means heterogeneous interaction is as real as homogeneous interaction, and if one gives up the basic premise that says only homogeneous interaction is possible, he or she will accept the latter too as real.

Descartes is right in the point of his response – to be real is to exist or to exist is to be real. However, does that answer the *how* of heterogeneous interaction? Sophie Oluwole (1995) explains that to be real is to exist (p. 359). However, Oluwole adds that simply affirming the reality of a phenomenon or an entity without a supporting argument is inadequate in philosophy (1995, p. 360). Descartes' inadequate response has partly been the basis for the emergence of a largely physicalist tradition in which each of several concepts of mind evokes or implies a type of concept of person.

2.3.1.2. Swinburne's substance dualism

Richard Swinburne (2009) affirms that "...each of us on Earth consists of two parts - a physical body and a non-physical soul. (p. 1)", and he re-affirms that duality by adding, "I am my soul plus whatever brain (and body) it is connected to (2000, p. 7)". And when he states that "persons are mental substances" (2000, p. 3) and "I am therefore a pure mental substance, essentially a soul (p. 11)", Swinburne is saying the essence of the "soul" and "pure mental substance" are identical. He explains that the two, soul and body, are "connected" or "causally interacts" (p. 7, 8), and then states that "...my soul is the essential part of me - its survival is necessary and sufficient for me to survive" (2000, p. 7)". It is clear that Swinburne upholds

substance dualism – of two metaphysically different substances that interact to make a person, and the soul bears the essence of a person. The soul “has privileged access” or its contents are directly available to only the person whose soul it is, while the body “has no privileged access” since it is obvious to other people (2000, p. 1).

Swinburne also adds, critically, “Each person, and so the essential part of each person - his or her soul, has a ‘thisness’ a uniqueness which makes it the soul it is quite apart from the particular mental properties it has (the life it has led) (2009, p. 12). Swinburne is re-affirming that the soul is the essence of, and bears the “uniqueness” of a person. Although a human being is made up of two main constituents, “particular mental properties [a soul] has [that is] (the life it [the soul] has led)” are “quite separate” not from the soul but from the “uniqueness” (or pure mental properties (p. 12)) of the soul. By “particular mental properties” or *the life the soul has led*, Swinburne may be referring to the individual’s accumulated contents of consciousness. This presumes that both the “uniqueness” and the “particular mental properties” reside in the soul. And while the uniqueness is responsible for the essence of the person (a property without which uniqueness the soul ceases to exist (2000, p. 1)), the mental properties are non-essential (a property without which the soul can exist (2000, p. 1)).

It is interesting though that Swinburne uses the terms “connect” and “interact” and their other derivatives several times, but he neither discusses nor accounts for the how of heterogeneous interaction.

2.3.2. Emergentism

There are two sets of physicalist theories, the non-reductive and the reductive. The non-reductive physicalists maintain that a human being is a physical monolith, yet one which

accommodates a somewhat separate set of mental properties, states or processes. The reductive physicalists affirm that the human being is a physical monolith through and through. There is, however, a third type of physicalist conception, property dualism, according to which the world is made up of only a physical substance which is sub-divided into two kinds, mental properties and physical properties (Robinson, Section 2.2). Essentially, all these three sets of concepts come on the presumption of denying Descartes' substance dualism.

Emergentism is an interesting concept because apart from a property dualism concept it has another concept that belongs in the non-reductive physicalist school. Strong emergentism is a property dualism concept and says when physical properties are organised in a certain way, as in the human being, mental properties arise but these defy physical laws. (O'Connor, 2021, Section 4). According to strong emergentism, mental properties cannot be reduced to physical properties, but the former does influence the latter. A readily obvious criticism against strong emergentism is why both mental properties and physical properties are physical, yet the latter obeys physical laws, and the former does not.

Conversely, weak emergentism is a non-reductive physicalist position that argues that nature is made up of physical layers arranged in increasing complexity with each layer having its own set of explanatory scheme. (O'Connor, 2021, Section 3). That means the mental and physical layers are simply different levels of physical complexity and each obeys separate set of rules. If the mental is also physical, why is it not sense-perceivable, and why does it obey a separate set of rules.

Note that despite insistence that the human being is a physical monolith, both types of emergentism maintain separation between mental properties and physical properties. Note also that strong emergentism maintains certain type of two-part yet physicalist (one-aspect) concept

of person, while the weak version maintains a one-aspect concept of person yet fails to collapse the mental into the physical monolith.

2.3.3. Behaviourism

Ryle humorously characterises Descartes' dualism as "The Dogma of the Ghost in the Machine" (Ryle, 2009, p. 5). By that Ryle means what Descartes refers to as "mind" is a phantom; hence the human being is a physical monolith. For behaviourists, if the mind is not perceivable via the senses, it is not a separate substance. Ayer affirms that mental states that transcend the physical do not exist (Ayer, 1947, p. 1). And then Ryle talks about "dispositions" in the human being which manifest as behaviour (2009, p. 22). Close analysis, however, shows that "dispositions" are a non-perceivable "ghost" that manifest in perceivable behaviour in the "machine" or body; meaning Ryle has simply replaced Descartes' intangible entity with another. Behaviourism is a purported reductive physicalist conception that fails to cast all aspects of a human being into the physical monolith.

Thus, some identity theorists criticised Ayer's and Ryle's behaviourism. These identity theorists also hold a thoroughly (reductive) physicalist concept of mind. Armstrong writes, "The mind was not something behind the behaviour of the body, it was simply part of the physical behaviour" (Armstrong, 1970, p. 70). This means that mind and body are ontologically identical. The position expressed in Armstrong's quote disposes of "dispositions" and makes mind thoroughly physical, but it has an essential challenge – it cannot explain non-perceivable capacities of a human being, such as thought.

For both behaviourist positions, it is easier to simply assert than argue that a human being is a physical monolith.

2.3.4. Identity Theory: Mental Processes and Brain Processes

Also essential to the discussion of mind and consciousness is the notion of brain processes, because some reductive physicalists affirm that mental processes are brain processes. Most authors who hold this position appear to have taken inspiration from advances in neuro-science. In the last several decades, neuro-science has mapped out large parts of the sophistication of the human brain and metaphysical activities that excite particular portions of the brain (Wu, 2018, Section 1.1). And this sophistication appears to have convinced these identity theorists that brain processes are mental processes. J. J. C. Smart (2017) states,

The identity theory of mind holds that... processes of the mind are identical to... processes of the brain. Strictly speaking, it need not hold that the mind is identical to the brain. Idiomatically we do use ‘She has a good mind’ and ‘She has a good brain’ interchangeably but we would hardly say ‘Her mind weighs fifty ounces’. Here I take identifying mind and brain as being a matter of identifying processes... of the mind and brain.

(Smart, 2017, para 1)

Can this concept cure the challenge of the concept Armstrong describes? True, in common sense linguistics, one could say “She has a good brain” and mean “She has a good mind”, because in common sense language mind could be a synonym of “brain”. On the other hand, the statement that mental processes are identical to brain processes is an ontological affirmation. Hence, although identifying processes of mind with processes of brain does create a common platform for looking at the two entities, the *actual focus* is not supposed to be on “processes” of mind and brain but on mind and brain themselves.

Thus, Smart’s dual position that brain is physical hence can be weighed, but mind cannot be weighed should have prompted him that there is between the two entities a difference that

deserves closer attention. Smart appears to be aware of that difference when he states that “processes of the mind are identical to... processes of the brain [though] [s]trictly speaking, it need not hold that the mind is identical to the brain”.

Smart explains, “Consider an experience of pain, or of seeing something or having a mental image. The identity theory of mind is to the effect that these experiences just *are* brain processes...” (Smart, 2017, para 1, His emphasis) Smart’s position is that mental events or experiences are brain processes. He then emphasises that by affirming that mental processes are “...not merely *correlated with* brain processes” (Smart, 2017, para 1). As we saw in Chapter One and will see again below, however, Shurger and Graziano (2023) affirm that neural (brain) co-relates of consciousness is how modern science studies the relation between brain and consciousness. The term “neural” is descriptive of the noun “neuron”, which, according to biologists, is a strand of brain or general nervous system material. Co-relation (or correlation) means a particular thought or expression of consciousness or mental process causes the excitement of a specific portion of the brain. Thus, Smart cannot discard co-relation so easily, and his attempt to draw a relation of identity between mental processes and brain processes is a fallacy.

2.3.5. Functionalism

For the links functionalism has with modern science and technology, some philosophers hold it in high regard. It will therefore be necessary to spend some space on it to see its capacity to account for mental (or metaphysical) lives. This sub-section also looks, briefly, at the position that Aristotle’s concept of the “soul” is functionalist. Looking at Aristotle’s position will enable

us to later determine whether a point Putnam makes below about Aristotle's "form" and "matter" is sound.

Janet Levin describes Aristotle as a functionalist (2018, Section 2.1), and Christopher Shields concurs (Shields, 2020; Section 2). Shields explains that for Aristotle the human being, or any other entity, is made for a purpose or function (Shields 2020; Section 2). Shields adds that Aristotle was interested in, among other things, both the form and matter of a person. The generality of Aristotle's conception was hylomorphism", which is from two Greek terms, "*hule*" for matter and "*morphe*" for form (Shields, 2020, Section 2). Hylomorphism has four basic concepts – the "matter" is the material out of which an entity is moulded, the "form" [or for animates, soul] is how the matter is made to enable it to fulfil its "purpose", and the "agent" does the moulding (Shields, 2020, Section 2). It is significant that Aristotle applied hylomorphism to both animates and inanimates alike, and without going into too much details, one may surmise that the realisation of form will differ in the two broad categories. We will see in Chapter Three how Ancient Egyptian (black) philosophy affirmed that difference. In the case of a human being, Levin states, "Aristotle argues [that] the soul is inseparable from the body, and comprises whichever capacities are required for a body to live, perceive, reason, and act." Shields points out Aristotle's denial that the body and soul are identical (Shields, 2020, Section 3), and affirms Aristotle's insistence that the soul does not survive death (Shields, 2020, Section 2). These points affirm Aristotle as a monist.

2.3.5.1. Functionalism after Descartes

There are various strands of functionalism, but this discussion is about basic features they all share. According to B. Duignan (2024), functionalism took inspiration from descriptions in

technology created by human beings, such as, the states of computers, where the focus was on a particularised state within the system. Thus, for the computer, a specific input sets a particular state in motion and onwards to specific output. Duignan states, “Such analogies between mental states and the functional parts of complex machines provided the inspiration for functionalist approaches to understanding mental states”. (Duignan, 2024, para 2) The question then is whether understanding the states of machines allows us to understand mental states of human beings well enough to make statements on the characteristics of mental states.

The issue of *analogy* is central to functionalism, and Thomas W. Polger applies the analogy of mouse traps to portray two other main features of functionalism (Polger, 2021, Section 2). The trap has a task or *function*, catch or kill a mouse. Also, the mouse trap could be made of different types of materials and designs, say wholly of metal, of wood and metal, of a card and adhesive, or poison, etc. The issue of different materials plus separate design, as functionalism would have it, is about “multiple realisability” of the same function in different traps. “*Multiple-realisability*” is, therefore, a basic principle of functionalism.

Again, Levin states,

Functionalism is the *doctrine* that what makes something a thought, desire, pain (or any other type of mental state) depends not on its internal constitution, but solely on its function, or the role it plays, in the cognitive system of which it is a part. More *precisely*, functionalist theories take the *identity* of a mental state to be determined by its causal relations to sensory stimulations, other mental states, and behaviour. (Levin, 2018, para 1, Emphases added)

Basically, Levin is saying a mental state is defined by its role within a human being’s larger cognitive system. However, her point that “what makes something” what it is “depends not on its internal constitution, but solely on its function” raises a basic puzzle; one discussed below.

Also, what Levin terms “causal relations” implies the input-output principle by which correspondence is established in functionalism. And John P. Burgess mentions that some authors make that functionalist point about the so-called Turing machine (2016, Section 4). The NYU Script states that one strand of functionalism is “...couched in terms of a Turing machine” (2006, p. 66). However, Burgess recounts Saul Kripke’s position thus: “What is conventionally but misleadingly called a Turing *machine*... really should be called a Turing *programme* [since] it is not a piece of hardware... but something abstract that can be concretely executed or implemented by such hardware (Burgess, 2016, Section 5, His emphases). Kripke’s point here is that it takes a programme and hardware to make a machine. Thus, being only a programme, the Turing cannot give the realisation of the input-output principle. (Burgess, 2016, Section 5).

Kripke is right. It is rather the analogy of the computer – programme plus hardware – that makes the functionalist argument. Functionalism “is a theory about the nature of mental states [that says] mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of” (Polger, 2021, para 1). It is thus essential to note that this definition rests on the analogy. However, for the reader of philosophy of mind, the issue is whether sheer analogy between mental states and the states of say a computer can tell us the features of mental states.

Duignan mentions some critical advantages of functionalism. For example, functionalism “frees [physical] reductionism from a chauvinistic commitment to the particular ways in which human minds happen to be embodied, allowing them [minds] to be “multiply realised” in any number of substances and bodies, including machines, extra-terrestrials, and perhaps even angels and ghosts” (Duignan, para 3). That means functionalism is reductive physicalist, and whereas other reductive physicalist concepts make mind unique to the human being, functionalism allows “mind” to be “multiply realised” in beings other than humans. Do

similar or same roles in different entities point to similar or same type of ontology? The functionalist may respond, and it is true, that they are not interested in ontology and that all they are interested in is the similarity or sameness of roles. Still, “multiple-realizability” compels us to ask about the features of the ontologies of the function-bearing aspects of the objects named in the analogy. There are at least two reasons for that. One, those similar function-bearing aspects are likely to be dissimilar, and two, the dissimilarity will determine how each performs the function. Indeed, other choices of material or ontology for the functional part(s) of specific entities may even negate the function.

Another merit of functionalism is that “it allows philosophers of mind to recognise a complex psychological level of explanation, one that may not be straight-forwardly reducible to a physical level, without denying that every psychological embodiment is in fact physical” (Duignan, para 3). Here, it says functionalism gives a sophisticated explanation of human psychological states that cannot be cast in physical terms yet allows us to say the psychology itself is indeed physical. How is that possible? Here, the focus is on the “explanation” of psychology rather than to psychology itself. Still, that changes nothing since an explanation intends to capture the essence of what is being explained. Thus, if the explanation of the psychology cannot be reduced into physical terms it is because the psychology itself is not or may not be reducible to the physical, so, how can the psychology itself be indeed physical? An affirmative version of the second part of the question is a conclusion of reductive physicalism. And an affirmative version of the first part of the question is the conclusion functionalism or, indeed, all physicalism, avoids stating.

On advantages, Duignan continues, “Functionalism thus vindicated the reasonable insistence that psychology not be replaced by physics while avoiding the postulation of any

mysterious non-physical entities as psychology's subject matter" (Duignan, para 3). The last phrase of the quote, after "while", is a poke at substance dualism. A basic assumption of reductive physicalism is "avoiding [what it accuses substance dualism of, that is,] the postulation of... mysterious non-physical [i.e., metaphysical] entities as psychology's subject matter". Yet, as we just saw above, functionalism concedes that psychology is irreducible into anything physical. That means even in functionalism psychology is still "mysterious non-physical entities", and it is on that basis alone that functionalism can insist "that psychology [which is a feature of human beings] not be replaced by physics [which studies the features and behaviour of inanimates]". Therefore, the issue of "avoiding the postulation of any mysterious non-physical entities as psychology's subject matter" is negated by one of functionalism's own affirmations; a reticent one though. Obviously, therefore, if functionalism vindicates "the reasonable insistence that psychology not be replaced by physics" it does so in spite of itself.

Levin further compounds the puzzles of functionalism when she states, "[F]unctionalism is compatible with the sort of *dualism* that takes mental states to cause, and be caused by, physical states" (Levin, 2018, Section 1, Her emphasis). Based on the fore-going, Levin adds, "[F]unctionalism is officially neutral between materialism and *dualism*," (Levin, 2018, Section 1, Emphasis added, Square brackets inserted). In philosophy of mind, materialism is the position that mind is made of matter, and "dualism" refers to Descartes' substance dualism. And every physicalist concept comes on the presumption (stated or tacit) of denying substance dualism, and on insistence that a human being is a physical monolith. On those bases, Levin cannot describe functionalism as a "sort of *dualism*". Yet her statement raises an issue on the objective of functionalism and the true significance of the intangible or "mysterious" mental states which functionalism, with reticence, identifies.

As Levin herself puts it, functionalism “is [a] doctrine [of] what makes something a thought... (or any other type of mental state)”. Further, when the NYU script refers to “[t]he functionalist view of the nature of the mind...” (NYU Script, 2006, p. 63, Square brackets inserted), it is alluding to a generic concept, feature of mind, and pointing to functionalism as a particular kind of that concept. It is the same in Joel W. Krueger’s “...a functionalist account of mind” (Krueger, 2006, p. 45). Thus, Polger states that functionalism “is a theory about the nature of mental states [that says] mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of” (Polger, 2021, para 1). “What [something] is made of” is a statement of ontology, which is central to philosophy of mind or, partly, to the concept of person. Thus, by side-stepping that and “identif[ying]... [mental states] by what they do” functionalists avoid the first question they must answer, and rather appeal to analogy and correspondence to make the point they wish to make.

Several criticisms have been laid against functionalism. For example, Jason Newman discusses John Searle’s criticism of the “inputs and outputs” principle by explaining that “functioning in the right way [“or having the right input and output”] is not sufficient for having mental states” (Newman, 2021, Section 9). Here, Searle is attacking the consequence of the functionalist position established via correspondence, that the capability of a machine to perform certain roles a human being performs means it (machine) has a mind. The NYU Script criticises functionalism for “classifying systems that lack mentality as having mentality” (NYU Script, 2006, p. 70, Section 1.2). The position in the script is that even if machines, including artificial intelligence humanoid robots, can perform certain roles humans perform it does not mean these machines have minds.

Is same or similar function indeed evidence of same or similar ontology? To approach it from the functionalist's preferred perspective, what is the ontology of the "mind" of the machine, and then what does that say about the ontology of the human mind? How do we recognise that the states in these machines are of minds when functionalism has not given us the ontology of mind or mental states to aid us in any process of identification? To address the concern of functionalism in re-phrasing the question, similar or same role may be the result of similar or same capacity, but is same or similar capacity always attributable to same or similar ontology? The point of this question is based on the failure of functionalism to tell us the characteristics of mind or mental lives of human beings.

2.3.5.2. Searle on the central claim of functionalism

John Searle argues why the functionalist claim that digital machines have minds is false. Below, we will look at the distinction between *Set a* and *Set b* mental lives or capacities. Also, according to Jaegwon Kim, machines cannot express derivatives of emotion because it [emotion] eludes "functional characterisation" (2011, p. 304); whereas an activity like multiplying or performing complex mathematical operations have yielded to "functional characterisation". Why have certain capacities or activities yielded while others have not?

Part of the reason may lie in John R. Searle's (1984) point that digital computers only work syntactically without engagement with semantics or content (p. 670). The significance of Searle's argument lies in the fact that it answers the question from the perspective of the internal operation of the digital computer. He explains that a digital computer programme uses multiple combinations of the binary digits, 1 and 0 – which are in themselves meaningless – to instruct a computer on what to do (Searle, 1984, p. 670). A digital computer works by following a

multitude of such meaningless but logical instructions (Searle, 1984, p. 670). And the computer can attain results through the manipulation of symbols it selects according to the specifications of an input, which symbols then allows it to set in motion another set of symbols that then selects specific output as the appropriate response to the input (Searle, 1984, p. 671).

Effectively, that means the digital computer executes an activity without direct contact with the contents of the input or output. That is why the person in Searle's Chinese Room argument can be ignorant of the language yet can provide appropriate Chinese responses or provide appropriate mediation to the input-output of the Chinese questions (1984, p. 671). Critically, therefore, it is not the digital computer that thinks. The digital computer has simply been set up to mediate the input and output aspects of the thinking of the programmer(s) of the machine. It is a technological sleight of hand. Hence, Searle concludes that digital computers only simulate rather than duplicate thinking (1984, p. 673). Human beings, on the other hand, proceed both syntactically and semantically hence do think (1984, p. 671). In a nutshell, the digital computer does not have a mind.

2.4. The Concept of Mental Lives

A functionalist, Putnam, opens a paper by asking, "[A]re we just material beings, or are we 'something more'?" He responds, "...[T]his whole question rests on false assumptions. ...My purpose is... to speak to the real concern which is behind the question... [-] the autonomy of mental life" (Putnam, 2024, p. 127). We will see the full significance of this quote below, but here the quote is only used to introduce the issue of concern, the mental lives of a human being.

It is important to add that "mental lives" are appropriate in conventional Western philosophy, where mind is generally accepted as the receptacle for internal lives or existence(s)

of a human being. When we widen the scope to the concept of person, we have to use *metaphysical lives*, since other concepts of person, such as the Akan model, has mentioned aspects that do not include mind. There will be more on metaphysical lives in later chapters.

In *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity: An Introduction to Theoretical Spirit*, Willem A. DeVries sets out an intricate list of mental capacities or lives (DeVries, 1988, pp. xxi-xxii). He then conducts discussions under the following headings: Sensation, Feeling, Consciousness, The I, Intuition, Representation and Re-collection, Imagination: Universalisation and Signification, Memory: Language as the Material of Thought, Representing and Thinking, and Thought.

From the perspective of both mental and metaphysical lives, DeVries' list gives a possible scope of capacities in a living human being. And it is not necessary to discuss these one after the other. What needs to be done is to set out two categories from that list. *Set a* are capacities human beings have and machines too have, and *Set b* are capacities human beings have and machines do not. Maybe, not yet, functionalists may reply to *Set b*. Indeed, as technology advances machines can do more and more of what human beings can do. The issue is whether a time will come when *Set a* will overlap *Set b*.

For now, it is also essential to separate intrinsic capacity or set of capacities from possible activities springing from such capacity or set of capacities. For such separation must be a key determinant in the discussion of corresponding functions in yet intrinsically different physical make-ups of separate entities. A capacity may determine an activity, but a set of intrinsic capacities working in tandem may determine the possible depth, scope and even intrinsic sophistication of yet another activity. Thus, unique is the complexity of the intricacies and complementarity of the intangible, non-perceivable internal existence(s) of a human being, for it gives rise to a sophisticated holistic constitution. Such a unique constitution of internal

existences and its relationship with a human being's peculiar physical constitution is, plausibly, one of the highest, in creation. Thus, here, it is theoretically fair to ask whether an AI humanoid robot, made of even the finest types of what it is today made of – metal, rubber, plastic, glass, etc. – will one day attain the full metaphysical capacities inherent in the unique constitution of the human being and function precisely like a human being in all sophistication and finesse. Avoiding questions on the differences in physical constitution is a demerit of functionalism.

Under the capacity called “Thinking” DeVries lists “understanding”, “judgement” and “formal reason”. If “formal reason” is responsible for logical reasoning, then we may say machines have it, because they can also perform arithmetic, such as multiplication or addition and even complex computations, that is, when instructed to do so. Here “logical” simply means sequential. Formal reasoning and all formal capacities belong in *Set a*, for example, making logical “representations” and “re-collection”. Machines apparently can collect information and make representations and re-collect information, thus have the capacity for information storage. I will not term machine storage memory, because memory is peculiar to the unique internal constitution of a human being, and plausibly, to different extents, to those of other animates. Also, if learning is obtaining new information and storing and reproducing it later, then machines appear to have the capacity for, probably, logical learning. Note, critically, that, generally, *Set a* capacities are used to perform sequential activities. Even then, what Searle says about digital computers accounts for the use of “may”, “apparent” and “appear” in this paragraph.

Yet *Set b* capacities have certain essential peculiarities. Machines do not have emotion; not yet functionalists may say. According to Jaegwon Kim, machines cannot express derivatives of emotion because emotion as a capacity eludes “functional characterisation” (2011, p. 304); whereas activities, such as multiplying or performing complex mathematical operations, have

yielded to “functional characterisation”. As used here, “functional characterisation” must be scientifically duplicating a human capacity as a role that machines too can perform. And emotion is yet to yield to it.

Also, machines do not have that high “intuition” or instinct, which is defined as the capacity to know what is true without conscious thought. Nor do machines, arguably, have “willfulness” or the intrinsic, relatively unfettered will of a human being. Chapter Four will look at whether machines do or can have consciousness. Note also that DeVries’ list says nothing about dreams, paranormal activity or human activities such as prophesying, that is, having foreknowledge of, hence revealing, an event before it happens, or; the capacity for disclosure of “hidden” information that comes say through dreams; etc. Yes, satellites can tell us about rain before it happens, yet it does so from empirical information that already portends rain. “Prophesying” as used herein is about first apprehension of an event in thought before it (event) happens or even portending signs forecast it.

The entire category of the peculiarities of *Set b*, including all those not mentioned here, comprises realities acknowledged, affirmed and confirmed in many philosophical traditions, including that of the Akan. Also, DeVries does not mention the human capacity or capability typified in *Gedhun Cheekyi Nyima*; discussed in Chapter Four. Such capabilities and more are due to the intricacies of and complementarity of mainly *Set b* capacities and, of course, working in tandem with *Set a* capacities, and how such sophisticated inter-relations (among *Set a* and *Set b* capacities) interact with the *unique* physical constitution of a human being. Critically, because the sophistication of that lot defies the logical, it complicates matters further for the reductive physicalists, who take inspiration from and yet inspire praise of the so-called logical-quantitative method of modern science. They may thus describe such a complex set of confirmed human

activities as “bizarre experiences” (Oluwole, 1985, p. 369), and even swear, fetish-ly, that these are non-existent (Oluwole, 1985, pp. 363-364).

2.5. Functionalism and Mental Lives

Single-aspect concept of person is discussed here, and for critical reasons, the one evoked by functionalism is preferred. As different as the separate physicalist concepts of mind are the concepts of person these all evoke share a fundamental challenge, which more than anything else is the matter with them. The differences among the concepts of mind will determine the flow of any discussion. However, the need for detailed discourse on physicalism, combined with the possibility that all physicalist concepts of mind share the same demerit allows us to choose one to represent all. Again, physicalism is a basic principle of modern science, and, as stated above, functionalism is picked here because it is, arguably, the one most linked to modern science and technology.

2.5.1. Functionalism and internal constitution of functional entities

So, can functionalism provide justifiable explanation of human internal lives, that is, in a way that render these not “mysterious” or – as physicalists prefer to interpret the antithesis of “mysterious” – obvious and tangible? In that regard, how helpful are the favoured tool of functionalism – function, analogy and the correspondence principle, and their subsequent, “multiple realisability”? Let us take it from the perspective of the mind-body problem.

Kripke’s criticism of what Newman (above) appropriately terms “Turing-inspired model” allows us to discuss the mind-body problem. Originally, the mind-body problem is about the *how* of heterogeneous interaction in substance dualism, but is it restricted to substance dualism

alone? Let us see. What we saw Kripke refer to as the challenge with the “Turing-inspired model” is that it does not afford functionalism application of the input-output possibility, which, if we allow it, in a human being, is possible between the mental states and (what Burgess refers to as) the “*wetware* of the brain [and the entire body]” (2016, Section 5, Emphasis added). That difference upholds the position that the computer analogy, which allows input-output, is what perfectly establishes the functionalist argument. However, note that perfectly establishing the functionalist argument is not synonymous with functionalism providing an appropriate response to the question on the characteristics of mental lives.

Functionalism is “the view that minds are functional systems like the computing systems we rely on every day, only much more complex” (Newman, 2021, Section 5). The only explicit fundamental statement this analogy makes is that [at least] a human mind works like the states of a computer or *vice versa*. Thus, we need to interrogate Newman’s qualification in the quote, “much more complex”. Since “[a] functional state (F-state) ... is defined as a relationship between 'input' and 'output'” (Malcolm, 1979, p. 212), we can say the input-output principle is an abstract rule of the functionalist analogy or equivalence. So, what precisely is the equivalence saying?

Malcolm writes,

An electric typewriter may exhibit the same input-output relationship, although the electric machine operates on different physical principles and has a different internal physical arrangement, than does the manual machine. But since in both machines there is this same input-output relationship, both machines are said to exhibit the same F-state. F-states are defined in terms of external functional rather than internal structural distinctions.

(Malcolm, 1979, p. 213)

Note Malcolm's admission that the "internal... arrangement" or characteristics hence workings of the electric machine are distinct from those of its manual sibling. However, the claim that F-state is an external function bears challenges, for even the functionalist will agree that the route from output to input goes through the internal constitution of any systems being compared. Therefore, input and output are the observables hence external while F-state is the internalised mediation between input and output. Hence, if the implicit point of functionalists is that the analogy between brain and machine states makes a statement on the features of human mental states and lives, then they are yet to provide the basis for that point.

Taking a holistic view, there is a vast, possibly infinite, diversity of entities in creation, and the critical observer may have realised that possible accompanying activities or functions of those entities are quantitatively very much less. That is the basis for multiple realisation of a specific function in creation. Yet the internal physical constitution path taken by a specified input-output principle is different in say an amoeba, a human being, a snail, a computer and a humanoid robot, and even in a paramecium, grass or a tree. Thus, similar input-output principles may point to the same or similar roles but not necessarily to "multiple-realisation" of the same internal states.

If, as we saw above, co-relation is the interaction between mind and consciousness, on one hand, and, on the other, brain-body, then, as we will see in Chapter Three, there is a high possibility that mental lives are without brain-body, and activities of the former simply come through the latter. Levin's point above, that functionalism is "compatible with [a] sort of *dualism*" tends to lend credence to that position. If so, the proponents of functionalism are yet to concede the existence of the mind-body problem and then address it.

As Levin indicates, worries have been raised about whether functionalism properly accounts for the [actual and full] causal efficacy of human mental states. (Levin, 2018, Section 5.2). In other words, the analogy of functionalism, possibly, under-estimates the depth, extent and even complexity of the causal relationships among different sections of a human being's intangible aspects, and also between those internal aspects and his or her body. These causal relationships are also responsible for mental activities or lives finding expression in features and behaviour. Hence to under-estimate the matrix of their intricacies, complementarity and sophistication is to leave oneself, intentionally or without volition, short on, according to Marraffa (above), proper understanding of human features and behaviour.

2.5.2. Putnam on functionalism and mental lives

Putnam commences defence of functionalism thus, “[A]re we made of matter or soul-stuff?” (Putnam, 2021, p. 127). He immediately pushes that question aside in favour of “the real concern behind the question... the autonomy of mental li[ves]” (Putnam, 2021, p. 127). He then points out that if we focus on that “concern”, “we could be made of Swiss cheese, and it wouldn’t matter”. (Putnam, 2021, p. 127) That is basis for a conceptual experiment: Let us mould a (human) mannequin with Swiss cheese and see if it will start breathing or will be instilled with mental lives. That sounds trivial, even ridiculous, but the goal is to show that if Putnam was right some of the human beings walking about at any time will be made of Swiss cheese. Again, one only needs to compare a human being to a state-of-the-art AI humanoid robot to see the stark basic puzzles Putnam’s position presents. Eventually, can we even talk about mind, mental lives and even consciousness if a human being is indeed made of only Swiss cheese.

Putnam concludes his work thus:

[W]hat we are really interested in, as Aristotle saw, is *form* and not matter. *What is our intellectual form?* ...not what the matter is. And whatever our substance may be, soul-stuff, or matter or Swiss cheese... My conclusion is that we have what we always wanted – an autonomous mental life. And we need no mysteries, no ghostly agents, *elan vital* to have it.

(Putnam, 2021, pp. 136-137)

First, Shields' discussion of Aristotle's works, examined above, indicates that contrary to Putnam's point Aristotle was interested in "form and not matter"; Aristotle affirmed both "form" and "matter". Since Putnam is also a monist it is within the limits of consistency to ask what "our intellectual form" will be *an irretrievable integral part of*. What are mental lives or "our intellectual form" autonomous of? That of which mental lives are autonomous, what is it made of? And consequently, what is the set of autonomous mental lives too made of?

In "whatever our substance" Putnam hints at matter. That hint plus the fact that functionalism is categorised as a physicalist concept allows us to modify the questions in the previous paragraph into specific ones. From that physicalist presumption of functionalism, it is safe to say that that of which mental lives are autonomous is the body (physical). Consequently, what is the sense in which mental lives are autonomous of a physical ontology? And, compared to the physical what is the feature of mental lives? Such avoidance of questions of ontology is a fallacy of side-stepping the essential philosophical puzzles.

Functionalists, therefore, do not tell us the characteristics of mental lives. Yet what is certain from the functionalist narrative is that mental states or lives are still "mysterious" to even *them*, and, plausibly, it is their inability to cast mental lives into the physical monolith or explain away its "mysterious-ness" that makes functionalists avoid questions of ontology. To

functionalists, mental lives are still – to use Putnam’s derisive terms – “mysteries, ...ghostly agents [or] *elan vital*”, because functionalism has yet to cast mental lives as a set of physical entities.

Functionalism has its peculiar challenges. However, it shares a fundamental challenge with all other physicalist concepts of mind or the concepts of persons all of them evoke. They all subscribe to the basic presumption that the human being is a physical monolith. And there is no place for mental lives in that monolith.

Conclusion

Based exclusively on the features of one-aspect and two-aspect concepts, which of them has a relatively high efficiency at explaining the features and behaviour of human beings? A prior question should be which of those concepts have relatively high efficiency at explaining mental lives, since these lives are responsible for the features and behaviour of humans, and it is by these that one interacts with the environment.

Descartes’ says a person is made of a substance mind and body, but the physicalists reject that. Reductive physicalism affirms that a human being is a physical monolith but cannot reduce all his or her aspects into the physical, while non-reductive physicalism affirms that a human being is a physical monolith yet concedes that some of his or her aspects are unlike the physical. Non-reductive physicalism is dualism masquerading as monism, and reductive physicalism is monism that is unrepentant in the face of persisting evidence to the contrary.

After Ryle describes Descartes’ mind-body as a “ghost in the machine”, Ayer and Ryle are simply postulating a “ghost” of “dispositions” in a human being. Smart side-steps actual ontologies and discuss “processes”. Putnam avoids ontological questions and discusses

functions. Physicalism comes after substance dualism, and the automatic expectation is that it will cure the puzzles afflicting the latter concept. Yet physicalism avoids the major challenge of substance dualism –the *how* of heterogeneous interaction. Effectively, physicalists have only ended up affirming that a human being indeed has aspects that cannot be reduced into the physical, hence like Descartes, they should be answering the same major question as Descartes.

Other physicalists, functionalists, point to the ever-increasing human activities that machines perform, but say nothing about what capacities and ontologies allow the human being or machine to perform those activities. They draw correspondence between human and machine functions and affirm that machines have minds but tell us nothing about the feature of mind. Functionalism thus avoids discussing the differential features of the aspects they compare in the correspondence.

Mind hence mental lives are essential to the functioning of a human being; hence it is appropriate to set out activities of humans that machines can perform (Set a) and human activities machines cannot yet perform (Set b). My position is that the unique constitution of the physical aspect of a human being and the peculiar, sophisticated matrix it makes with mental lives is responsible for certain *Set b* activities, say dreaming, which machines are yet to perform.

Eventually, functionalism shares a fundamental challenge with all the physicalist concepts of mind; that is, subscription to physical monism. Such a subscription places them in a vice. That is obvious in Levin's admission that functionalism is a "sort of dualism". However, that description will apply only if functionalists will convert from physicalist monism to Descartes' side. In the light of subscription to monism, all the physicalist concepts are excellent pieces for generating extensive interesting debate, but none can uphold mental lives. It is

recognition of that “accurate knowledge of the truth” (Bible: 1 Timothy 2:4) that pushed Putnam to change the critical question on mental lives before answering it.

Some of Kant’s epistemic capacities are intangible, and unless he puts himself in a vice like that of physicalists, his epistemological conception gives us a dual concept of person. If that is true, then the concept of person inherent in his conception is like that of Descartes. Descartes’ substance dualism upholds a metaphysical-physical feature of a person, but it has the challenge of how these interact. Still, by affirming the dual feature, Descartes’s concept of person accounts for mental lives. The outstanding issue is whether any justifiable explanation can be advanced for the interaction.



CHAPTER THREE

THE AKAN CONCEPT OF PERSON

This chapter focuses on a three-aspect concept of person chosen from Akan philosophy. What are the features of the aspects of the Akan concept of person, and what are the results of Gyekye's analysis of it? This discussion commences with the first question. Further, Kwasi Wiredu (1983) and Safro Kwame (2004) have criticised the concept, and Gyekye has responded to some of these. Thus, while prior discussion of the aspects will lead to ready comprehension of the criticisms, proper determination of the explanatory efficiency of the Akan concept must be the consequent of an assessment of those criticisms, since those criticisms may have damaged that efficiency. It is only then that one can proceed to determine the capability of the concept to justify the existence of metaphysical lives, and, beyond that, apply it to conduct a comparative analysis in the selected areas.

The Akan concept of person is a three-aspect – *okra* and *sunsum* are metaphysical, and *honam* is physical. Gyekye describes the concept as a metaphysical duality, yet my position is that his subscription to the truth that *okra* and *sunsum* have separate functions does ultimately uphold the original Akan position that a living human being is a three-aspect entity. Again, Wiredu's and Kwame's criticisms are interesting, yet do damage to neither the composition nor features of aspects of the Akan concept. It will be shown that compared to one-aspect and two-aspect concepts, the Akan concept is relatively efficient at explaining ontological personhood, which is the features responsible for the living and functioning of a human being.

This discourse commences on the Akan concept, and continues with Gyekye's analysis of it, and the separate metaphysical-ness of *okra* and *sunsum*. These are followed by a look at

different criticisms. Only then is it possible to derive Gyekye's philosophy or the philosophy Gyekye upholds, and then outline the characteristics and roles of the aspects. For reasons given below, Section 5, below, is a comparative analysis of the efficiencies of the three concepts of person at explaining ontological personhood.

3.1. The Relation among Material, Physical and Creation

It is important to clarify the relation among three terms – physical, material, and creation. The clarification is critical to showing that the physical is material and the physical is but an aspect of what Akan refers to as *Abodie* (Creation). To Kwame (2004) and Majeed (2013), “material” and “physical” are separate concepts. Kwame says, “Quasi-physicalism does for physicalism what physicalism did for materialism...” (2004, p. 345). Majeed refers to an instance where Armstrong says, “Physicalist or Materialist” (2013, p. 24), and explains that it implies the two are interchangeable. Majeed later affirms, “Materialism and physicalism are... not the same” (2013, p. 25). However, Daniel Stoljar (2017) writes that for some schools of thought “the words ‘materialism’ and ‘physicalism’ are now often interpreted as interchangeable” (Section 1.1).

For those who maintain a distinction between materialism and physicalism, the material refers to the coarse matter directly perceived by the senses, while the physical goes deeper. The physical also embraces what a physicist, Pierre Duhem, (in the words of Alvin Platinga) will refer to as “the ultimate nature or constituents of matter”, which are the intangible building blocks from which matter is constructed (Platinga, 1997, Part 2 Section 3). However, the conceptual movement from the coarseness of “material” to the unobservable basic constituents of “physical” represents no ontological shift; hence “material” is “physical”.

For the Akans, reality is a holistic entity made up of metaphysical and physical aspects; a position Sophie Oluwole (1995) too upholds. That is the position in this thesis.

3.2. Akan Concept of Person

There are two types of personhoods in philosophy. One, it can refer to the basic constituent(s) that make up a living human being or what Gyekye collectively refers to as concept of person. And two, personhood is also a normative concept that is socially calculated in terms of how an individual's speech and actions conform to any set of moral standards in a community. The former personhood is a changeless concept, a given, while the latter is fluid (Gyekye, 1997, p. 49). In Akan, the same word, *onipa*, is used for both concepts of personhood, and the "context of its use" determines which concept is in reference (Gyekye, 1997, p. 47). This project is about concept of person. So, per Akan concept of person, what are the constituents of a human being? What are the characteristics and roles of those constituents in a living individual?

For the Akan, the constituents of a person are *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam*. *Honam* is the body.

3.2.1. Okra

Hans Debrunner (1961) quotes Meyerowitz as saying,

The [*o*]*kra* is [what] keeps man alive... It is also his instinct, which protects him and may save him from danger; and that is why the [*o*]*kra* is believed to be a person's guardian spirit. It is also the source of good and bad luck...
(p. 10, Square brackets inserted)

Some of these issues belong in ontological personhood while others belong in the lived life of a person. For Akan, *okra* is the source of life in a person. The presence of *okra* means life and its absence means death (Gyekye, 1995, p. 85, p. 88; Wiredu, 1983, p. 112). Also, *okra* is not a person's instinct; instinct resides in *sunsum*. Again, there are circumstances in which *okra* could be spoken of as the source of good or bad luck or even as an entity that can "save [a person] from danger", but such usage applies in specific parts of the day-to-day living of an individual and not in the fundamental conception of a person. That distinction, as Gyekye portrays, is essential.

3.2.2. Source and Features of *Okra*

When Debrunner poses the vital question "Whence does the [*okra*] come?" he again falls on Meyerowitz, and writes,

It is... divine... "It is a created thing which God has made for man, and which he puts into him..." Man is endued with his *kra* before entering into this world. According to the widespread tradition, this is done by Nyankopon himself. "The deed is carried out by Nyankopon who shoots a particle of the Sun's fire into the blood stream of the child, thus bringing its blood to life" (1961, p. 10)

This is a set of truths and untruth. The last sentence, from Meyerowitz, is about "The deed...", and it is open to question whether Meyerowitz heard this directly from someone or deduced it from a set of available information. "The deed" refers to how *okra* is deemed to come into the individual. However, this statement is false. The Sun or its fire has no place in the Akan conception of a person. Neither is the blood stream of the child the primal receptor of *okra*; otherwise, the foetus will be dead before it develops blood. As both Gyekye (1995, p. 94) and

Wiredu (1983, p. 119) intimate, in Akan philosophy, *mogya* (or blood) along with its male counterpart, *ntoro*, are essential only in [clan and filial inheritance].

If “divine” means *comes from Onyame* (God), then Debrunner is right. As Gyekye says, for Akan *okra* comes from Onyame (1995, p. 85), hence is “the spark of ...Onyame” in the human being (1987, p. 85). However, a “spark”, like a particle, comes off wherefrom it arises and is detached thereof. Another characterisation that nevertheless points to the proper relation between *okra* and Onyame is: The *okra* is a *ray* of Onyame. A *ray*, no matter how far it goes from its reservoir of light still takes its source from that reservoir. It is by *this* relation that *okra*, as possessor of mitigated versions of the features of Onyame, is “the innermost self, the essence, of the individual” (Gyekye, 1995, p. 85). The presence of *okra* makes an individual a living entity; its departure leaves behind a corpse (*mu* or *e-mu* in Akan).

On this essential feature of *okra*, our Akan elders give us certain proverbs. One says: “*Onyame be wu na m’awu*” – God will die for me to die, and the other says: “*Onyame nnwu na m’awu*” – God will not die, (therefore) I will not die. Since Onyame is immortal and Onyame as Oboadie made the individual with *okra* which comes from Onyame, the human being’s essence, *okra*, renders one immortal. (There is extensive debate on immortality, but it falls without this context). As Gyekye explains, the presence of *okra* in a person is indicated by the presence of breath, *honhom*, whose verb form is *home* (breathe) (1995, p. 88). No matter how faint, the presence of *honhom* is a sign that *okra* still inhabits *honam* (body).

Gyekye discusses the many names Akan has for Onyame (1995, p. 70), that is, different from names of Onyame given from the perspective of reality, such as Father or Mother. These names include Onyankopon – or Nyankopon – The Only Great One (1995, p. 70). Note that Onyankopon or other names of Onyame are neither comparatives nor superlatives. From an

assessment of the names, Gyekye concludes that Onyame is incomparable and alone in all aspects. As “Tetekwaframua” Onyame is “The One that endures from ancient (of ancient) times and forever, and as “Odomankoma” Onyame is “Infinite, Boundless, Absolute, Eternal”; hence Onyame transcends time” and “is beyond and independent of the categories of time, space and cause” (1995, p. 70). In being beyond cause Onyame is Obiannyew [or Obiammow], which means Uncreated (1995, p. 70).

According to Majeed (2014), J. B. Danquah mounts a hierarchy of greatness for the names of Onyame. The hierarchy rises from Onyame, through Onyankopon to Odomankoma. He adds that to Danquah Onyame is a “feeling entity” (2014, p. 133) with Onyankopon (as the “metaphysical or intellectual goal” of Onyame (2014, p. 133)). Majeed adds that Danquah relates “feeling (or Onyame) to *sunsum* and insight (or Onyankopon) to *okra* (understood as ‘destiny’)” (2014, p. 133). Onyankopon is thus separate from yet greater than Onyame (p. 133) hence “Onyankopon (sic.) is the Okara [or okra] of Onyame” (1968, p. 141). Majeed then explains that to Danquah “Odomankoma ‘is Soul, an ‘Ideal’ (Danquah, 1968, pp. 67-68) and devoid of experience”, yet human beings experience Odomankoma through Onyankopon, “who, according to Danquah, embodies both experience and Ideal (“*sunsum*” and “*okara*”) (pp. 68-69) (2014, 133). Onyankopon is thus the “reconciliation” of Onyame and Odomankoma [Danquah, p. 152] (2014, p. 133).

Two obvious points are established above – a hierarchy of mounting greatness of Onyame inherent in selected names of Onyame, and the representation of *sunsum* in Onyame and *okra* in Onyankopon. However, by sheer chapter headings Danquah himself links *sunsum* or experience to Onyankopon (1968, p. 141), and *okara* (*okra*) to Odomankoma (1968, p. 153). Critical issues arise from these positions.

From a purely logical perspective, the first issue concerns references and identity of the same entity. A simple example of such an instance given by Western philosophers is how both Morning Star and Evening Star refer to the same entity, Venus. Danquah's analysis portrays the case of seeing certain features of Venus in the name Morning Star and other features of the same Venus in the name Evening Star. It is a case of splitting the features of the *referred to* between (or even among) distinct instances of its referents. Indeed, it is the case of using referents as starting points to split up the identity of an entity. If that were proper, both terms cannot refer to Venus; neither can all the appropriate referents of an entity refer to the same entity.

From the specific context of Danquah's discussion, the issues go deeper. Danquah is right on one thing; in a broader way, each name of Onyame is conceptually different from all the others, yet each is connected to the others for the obvious, simple reason that they all refer to the same entity. However, each name refers to an absolute feature of Onyame in a different respect, hence all the names are equals; there can be no hierarchy. Again, if *okra* and *sunsum* are to be placed in the constitution of the Supreme Being, then each constitution, represented by each name, must be inherent with both *okra* and *sunsum* for Onyame to be able to properly express the capability portended by each name.

From the names of Onyame, therefore, Gyekye rightly infers that Onyame is "transcenden[t]" (1995, p. 75), or beyond reality. However, Wiredu disagrees. He describes the English concept of creation *ex nihilo* (out of nothing) as transcendental (1996, p. 88) because things were created without prior materials. He then explains that "owing to the empirical orientation of the vocabulary of Akan", which, as he adds, "refers [to Oboadie (maker of things) as] a hewer, writ large, cosmically speaking", the Akan does not have a "transcendental concept" of God (1996, p. 88). Here, Wiredu appears to be interpreting "hewer" as carver or sculptor (as a

physical artist) who uses *something* to create something; hence rendering Oboadie (Onyame) physical; or, possibly, quasi-physical, as Kwame characterises God (2004, p 346).

Majeed (2022) looks at Wiredu's point that Onyame as Oboadie made things from some raw materials; hence Oboadie made rather than created things. He does so from the perspective of meanings of the Akan term "*bo*", which means "to create" or "to make". Majeed explains that if Oboadie created all things then Oboadie created death too, yet the nature of death is such that it does not have raw materials (Majeed, 2022, p. 62). True, death affects animates, such as human beings, which may have been made with raw materials, however, death itself falls without that category. On that basis, Majeed states, rightly, that "creation need not pre-suppose raw materials" (2022, p. 62). Still, granting the fact that Oboadie made things pre-supposes raw materials for the objects in reality; the only logical ascription will be that Oboadie made those raw materials before applying them.

The Akan affirm Onyame as metaphysical. Our Akan elders say: "*Odomankoma booadie ma owu faa no*" – The Eternal created things and Death took the Eternal. "The Eternal" is repeated in the English translation because the pronoun "Him", though appropriate in English, is inappropriate in Akan thought where God is genderless. Odomankoma (the Eternal) is one of the names of Onyame. An Eternal entity that is dead in or absent from reality is transcendent. This proverb is, therefore, a cryptic way of portraying the eternal-ness and transcendent feature of Onyame. Thereby, Onyame's transcendence is affirmed. A Ga name for God – though applying the names of Onyame from the perspective of Reality, aptly captures God's transcendence. That name is Ataa Naa Nyongmo. "Ataa" is the respectable title for a male or king and "Naa" is the respectable title for a female or queen. Ataa and Naa cancel each other out, and God is genderless; beyond gender.

Ada Agada (2024) discusses what he terms Gyekye's conception of God – the view that “the universe is a unity of interacting material and non-material entities” (Agada, Introduction). Gyekye explains that all entities contain *sunsum*, by which they have the power of agency, and in that regard, God as omnipotent also has *sunsum* (1995, p. 72). From that Agada explains, “The everyday world of physical objects is animated by a wholly immaterial stuff called *sunsum*” (2024, Introduction). He then argues that Gyekye's conception of God... has significant pan-psychist dimension...” (Agada, 2024, Introduction) Agada explains that pan-psychism is “the view that... an immaterial principle is fundamental and ubiquitous in the world” (Agada, 2017, para 2).

However, Gyekye's point that God has *sunsum* is only to express God's position as having supreme power of agency. That does not make God a part of reality in Akan philosophy. According to Gyekye, the Akans “do not identify the creator with the creature, the author with his work. Indeed, the concept of transcendence [of God] held by them [the Akans] implies a rejection of pantheism”; hence he strikes a difference between pantheism and pan-psychism (1995, p. 75). God is transcendent for Akan means God is without creation. Thus, the link Agada draws from God expressing as *sunsum* and of *sunsum* being inherent in creation is non-existent.

Moving on, Meyerowitz is right that Onyame created *okra* and puts *okra* in a person before the individual enters the world. Contrasting *okra* with *sunsum*, Robert S. Rattray rightly describes *okra* as that in a person “...upon which depend ...life, that is, breath...” (1955, p. 46). In Akan concept of person, *okra* comes from Onyame and is the bearer of life in the individual. What about *sunsum*?

3.2.3. *Sunsum* and its features and functions

Gyekye affirms *sunsum* as one of the aspects of a human being (1995, p. 88). He also explains that *sunsum* is responsible for the personality and character traits of the individual (1995, p 90).

Debrunner commences his discussion of *sunsum* thus,

[A human being] is considered to be made out of the blood [*mogya*] of the maternal ancestors, the *abusua*, and of the spirit of male ancestors, the *ntoro*. ...[The *okra*] is linked with the blood, and the... *sunsum* linked with the *ntoro* element. As it is sometimes said that “the [*okra*] is blood” so the *sunsum* and the *ntoro* are used almost as synonymous.

(p. 14, Emphases added)

Mogya and *ntoro* are entities of filial and *abusua* (clan) inheritance; hence the links Debrunner respectively draws between the former and *okra* and the latter and *sunsum* are false. For example, *sunsum* cannot be synonymous with *ntoro*, because some children have personality features of their mothers.

For Akan, *ntoro* is what a man contributes to filial or group inheritance while a woman contributes *mogya* (blood) to clan inheritance. Wiredu states, “The doctrine of ‘*mogya*’ and ‘*ntoro*’ is, presumably, bound up with some kind of rudimentary genetics” (1983, p. 119). However, *mogya* and *ntoro* are not genetic entities. “Genetic” is the descriptive of “gene”, which describes in modern science specific basic entities of inheritance, entities deemed physical yet non-perceivable. Thus, genetics cannot be descriptive of the Akan (African) concept of filial and clan inheritance.

When Debrunner asks, “What is this *sunsum*?” he writes,

It is that spiritual [entity] in a man or woman upon which depends not life, i.e., breath, for that is the *[o]kra*—but that force, personal magnetism, character, personality, power, soul, call it what you will, upon which depend health, wealth, worldly power, success in any venture, in fact everything that makes life at all worth living.
(1961, pp. 14-15)

Apart from the use of “soul”, this is an accurate affirmation.

Above, we see Debrunner says *okra* is linked with *mogya* (blood) and *sunsum* to *ntoro*. He also states, “There is a certain difficulty in distinguishing between the [*okra*] and *sunsum*. They are indeed sometimes used almost as synonyms...” (1961, p. 15). If these statements were true, *okra*, *sunsum*, *ntoro* and *mogya* will all be synonyms and should simultaneously be playing the same set of roles. As an anthropologist (or, appropriately, a sociologist), Rattray states the truth about *okra* and *sunsum*. Philosophically, it takes Gyekye to disentangle Akan concept of person from the misconceptions and affirm the proper roles of *okra* and *sunsum*.

3.3. Gyekye’s Analysis of the Akan Concept of Person

This section looks at how Gyekye examines Akan concept of person and some conclusions he draws on such analysis.

3.3.1. *Okra* as “Soul” and *Sunsum* as “Spirit”

Gyekye characterises *okra* as “soul” and *sunsum* as “spirit” (1995, p. 85, p. 88-89). He explains that *okra* is “the essence of the individual... [It] is the individual’s life... [and] a spark of the Supreme Being... [and the] divine essence in a human being... Hence, it is correct to translate *okra* into English as soul” (1995, p. 85). That means the essential features of a human being can be likened to features of the Supreme Being and that makes *okra* equivalent to “soul” in English. On *sunsum* as “spirit”, Gyekye explains that it is “the “basis of personality... the co-

performer of some functions of *okra* (soul) – undoubtedly held as a spiritual entity – and as the subject of the psychical activity of dreaming, the *sunsum* must therefore be something spiritual...” (1995, pp. 93-94). This means *sunsum* is responsible for personality; collaborates with *okra*, which is divine, in the execution of certain activities, and acts in dreams, and since these activities are non-physical *sunsum* must be spiritual. Hence *sunsum* is spirit. Upfront, one may ask, if both are spiritual why cast one as soul and the other as spirit.

Some authors have separately cautioned against trying to make African concepts fit into Western categories (Wiredu, 1983, p. 119; Gbadegesin, 2004, p. 175; Kwame, 2004, p. 348). When Kwame wrote, “There is a danger, to which we all sometimes succumb, in translating African categories into the most obvious Western ones” (2004, p. 348), he was criticising Gyekye for using “soul” to characterise something that, for Kwame, does not exist in Akan philosophy, a metaphysical entity called mind (or soul). The Akan characterise *okra* as metaphysical, but Wiredu denies that and argues that it is quasi-physical (1983, p. 119). Kwame subscribes to quasi-physicalism and agrees with Wiredu’s position that Akan concept of person does not include a concept of mind (or soul) similar to that of substance dualism hence *okra* cannot be “soul”. Their basis aside, though, Kwame’s statement is good advice for all authors. We will see below the reason for “Kwame’s basis aside” in the previous sentence.

Segun Gbadegesin (2003) provides vital reason for the caution. Beginning a discussion of *Eniyan* or the Yoruba concept of person, Gbadegesin writes,

One way to avoid or, at least, minimise confusion is not to start with English equivalents of these [Yoruba] terms, but rather to describe their usage among the Yoruba and to relate them to each other in terms of their functional inter-dependencies. Besides helping us to avoid any inadequate pre-judgements concerning resemblances between English-language and Yoruba-language philosophical discourses, this approach will help throw light on the distinctiveness of Yoruba philosophical language.

(p. 175)

Gbadegesin is right. The uniqueness of African (or any language) terms is the result of the particularity of the conceptualisation of each, and the “functional inter-dependencies” or contextualised relation among these terms in a philosophical framework. Yet there is another reason to avoid designating *okra* as “soul” and *sunsum* as “spirit”. In Western philosophy “soul” and “spirit” have different meanings yet are sometimes cast as similes. Since *okra* and *sunsum* are distinct, it is unsafe to apply to them trans-lingual terms that bear the possibility of licit conflation in meaning, which conflation carries the potential of confirming the false synonymous-ness discussed above.

3.3.2. Gyekye’s Analysis of the “Idiomatic Thesis”

Gyekye discusses the following position: The fact that the Akans use *okra* and *sunsum* in separate sets of sentences is simply semantics devoid of any reference to intrinsic difference between them. Gyekye terms it the “idiomatic thesis” (1995, p. 96).

Gyekye lists two sets of sentences, one set about *okra* and the other about *sunsum*. For example, the Akans say, “*Ne sunsum ye duru*” – His or her *sunsum* is heavy; meaning he or she has an over-bearing personality (1995, p. 96). For me, the appropriateness of this statement resides in the fact that *sunsum* is the internal aspect by which a person interacts with others. The Akans never say that about *okra*. About *okra*, Akan may say, “*Ne kra ye*” – “His or her *okra* is good; this is about being lucky or fortunate (Gyekye, 1995, p. 95). For me, the appropriateness of that statement lies in the fact that though *okra* brings life, it also brings along *nkrabea* (loosely, destiny), which potentially plays a role in the day-to-day living of a human being. A positive statement about *sunsum* is “*Owo sunsum pa*” – He or she has good *sunsum*; meaning he

or she is a generous person [or his or her presence engenders positive development in another]. To use *sunsum* in the negation of that statement, “*Ne sunsum nnye*” – His or her *sunsum* is bad, will mean that the person is evil or a [destructive] witch (Gyekye, 1995, p. 95).

Gyekye describes such insistence on intrinsic similarity between *okra* and *sunsum* as “a kind of ‘identity theory’” (1995, p. 97). Recall from Chapter Two that “identity theory” is the position that any two entities in reference are the same. Within the “idiomatic thesis” “[l]anguage ...at any rate in the present context, is... a misleading guide to metaphysics...” (Gyekye, 1995, p. 97). Here, Gyekye appears to be using “metaphysics” as standing for the essence of the two aspects. Yet, since the different usages of the terms are about separate roles as well, the “idiomatic thesis” must be about both essence and function.

From the two sets of sentences, Gyekye concludes that *sunsum* and *okra* “are logically distinct” [but] ...not *ontologically* distinct” (1995, p. 98, Gyekye’s emphasis). From the two sets of sentences, “logically distinct” must be a reference to differences in usage based on separate functions, while “not *ontologically* distinct” means both are metaphysical. Gyekye states, “The *sunsum* may, more accurately, be characterised as a *part* – the active part – of the *okra*...” (1995, p. 98). Critically, therefore, Gyekye’s disagreement with the “idiomatic thesis” goes only as far as function is concerned. Ontologically, he concurs with the identity theory part.

This writer concurs with Gyekye that *okra* and *sunsum* perform different tasks. In fact, by handing them separate functions and referring to one as “the active part” of the other, Gyekye concurs with the traditional Akan position that *okra* and *sunsum* are separate aspects.

3.3.3. A Duality that is yet a three-aspect

Now, based on Gyekye's characterisation of *okra* and *sunsum* as both metaphysical and *honam* as physical, he explains that Akan concept of person is a duality and not tri-partite (1995, p. 85). On the duality, Wiredu and Kwame disagree with Gyekye. Wiredu argues that *okra* is "quasi-physical" (1983, pp. 119-120); and Kwame agrees. Of course, Wiredu does not directly deny this duality. However, his re-characterisation of the feature of *okra* is adequate ground against duality, since the metaphysical duo is fundamentally responsible for the ontological duality.

Responding to Wiredu's assertion, Gyekye argues that a quasi-physical or "seeming-physical" *okra* "runs counter to" the Akan concept of life after death or survival of the metaphysical aspect of a human being after death, which survival is the antecedent of another concept, *asamando*, where *nananom nsamanfo* (living ancestors) reside (1995, pp. 86-87). True, a derivative belief mounted on a putative concept presumes the existence of the concept. However, a more regular sequence must be that the reality of the putative concept is what upholds the derivative belief. That way, we may say the evidence for the metaphysical-ness of *okra* is that it comes from Onyame, a metaphysical entity. Yet, that will not satisfy most agnostics. Hence a question that beckons is whether there is possible evidence that *okra* is metaphysical.

Gyekye thus states, "The Akan metaphysical world is... a dual world..." (p. 69). Here, Gyekye is speaking from the perspective of the essence of the aspects that constitute a person. Thus by "metaphysical" Gyekye is arguing that, compared to *honam*, *okra* and *sunsum* are intangible and non-perceivable. I agree with Gyekye on metaphysical duality as far as primal

constituents are concerned. Yet, as we will see in the next section, the reason for the duality of a person commences elsewhere.

Ultimately, Gyekye upholds the position that a living human being is made up of basically three aspects. Also, in the light of the confusion that surrounded the roles of *okra*, *sunsum*, *mogya* and *ntoro*, Gyekye bears full credit for setting out the proper particulars of Akan concept of person. After consulting and discussing several sources, Gyekye concludes that *okra* is the bearer of life, while *sunsum* bears the personality and character traits of the individual (1995, p. 90). *Honam* is the body, the physical casing that completes the encapsulation of a human being. By affirming separate functions for *okra* and *sunsum*, which are accompanied by *honam*, Gyekye upholds the traditional Akan position that a living individual is a three-aspect. However, are the two intangible aspects the same in metaphysical-ness?

3.4. Metaphysical Separateness of *Okra* and *Sunsum*

There is evidence that establishes the difference in the metaphysical-ness of *okra* and *sunsum*. The basic framework for such evidence is supplied by Yirenkyi Lamptey (*NewAfrican*, 2009, pp. 72-73). What is outlined here is an expanded deeper version of what is in that article.

3.4.1. The Emergence and Features of *Sunsum*

Literature review for this research did not uncover any record of how Onyame made the human being. What follows, therefore, is what I consider a hypothesis or plausible explanation.

The metaphysical duality of a human being is that Onyame (God) made him or her with two very primal entities, *okra* and *honam*. In a (living) human being, therefore, there is a purity or “essence”, *okra*. *Okra* comes from Onyame and bears qualities of Onyame. The moment

okra couples with *honam*, however, the fullness of Onyame in it is mitigated. When *okra* meets pure *honam* to make a human being, the two primal entities overlap or merge up to a point. This overlapping creates a new entity whose constitution and features are different from either of its basic constituents. This overlap of primal creation entities is *sunsum*.

As we saw above, *sunsum* bears the individual's character and personality traits. It is in *sunsum* that differences in individuality reside. Thus, in Akan philosophy, *adwene-atenka* (thought-emotion) in *sunsum* are metaphysical and brain is physical. *Sunsum* contains numerous capacities not necessarily arranged in hierarchical order and is thus a highly sophisticated aspect of a human being. However, for the sake of this discussion let us agree that *adwene-atenka* is the conceptual core middle of *sunsum* and of Akan concept of person. Life comes with *okra*, which also bears the latent capacities of *sunsum*, and once the human being is made these capacities are installed in *sunsum*. It is by the set of capacities in *sunsum* that the individual either influences or is influenced by the external environment, including other people. Yet, let us note, that the intrinsic features and state of *honam* are responsible for the presence or absence of animacy when *okra* enters; hence for what capacities emerge, that is, whether these will be alive or dormant. *Honam* or the thoroughly physical is what we can perceive by our senses, say what we see with our eyes, or with either a microscope or telescope—the two instruments merely expand the spectrum of our sight or physical perception (Lampitey, 2009, pp. 72-73).

Honam is tangible and obvious. Regularly, all parts of *sunsum* are unobservable and intangible; hence it is metaphysical. Parts of *sunsum*, those conceptually between *adwene-atenka* and *honam*, could be described as the *physical side* of the metaphysical-ness of *sunsum*. Conceptually, from *adwene-atenka* towards *okra* could be described as the *metaphysical side* of the metaphysical-ness of *sunsum*. This side of *sunsum* plus *adwene-atinka* and *okra* itself are not

and will never be observable via the senses. Yet, note, that other individuals are aware of the presence of *okra* in a person because of – as Gyekye explains (1987, p. 88) – the observable presence of *honhom* (breath).

Our Akan elders say: “*Wo nnim owu a, hwe nna*” – If you do not know death, watch sleep. The comparison lies in a human being lying very still *unaware* of happenings around him or her, and the contrast is in the presence of *honhom* in only one case. Descartes shows the presence of an animating principle in a person by (also) comparing the living to a corpse (1911, p. 9). Also, we are aware of the presence of *adwene* in a person only because he or she can articulate his or her thoughts, intentions, understanding, rationality, etc., and we are aware of the presence of *atenka* (emotion) in a person only because he or she can express various sorts of feeling, which in Akan is also referred to as *atenka*, so context indicates the difference. Indeed, we are aware of all contents of *sunsum* only because a human being exhibits behaviour that indirectly points to those unobvious contents. Thus, pretense is possible only because of the indirect way of knowing a person’s *sunsum* contents.

3.4.2. Significance of *Sunsum*

A basic puzzle hurled at Descartes is the *how* of heterogeneous interaction (Richardson, 1982, 250; Wiredu, 1983, p. 121; Yandell, 1997, p. 20); which puzzle is justified because of the obvious ontological gap between mind and body. In Descartes’ concept of person, the ontological leap and the seeming intractability of question(s) concerning the interaction have been characterised as the mind-body problem.

Lying between *okra* and *honam*, *sunsum* is a seamless overlap of primal metaphysical and physical entities, hence answers the *how* of heterogeneous interaction for Akan concept of

person. However, more sophisticated issues arise. As we just saw, portions of two primal entities overlap to create a transition stage between the still present two primal aspects. Here, the issues lie in the need to account for both the interaction which gives rise to *sunsum* and the uniqueness of *sunsum*. Other issues arise, including where was Onyame before Onyame made *Abodie* (Creation), what is the origin of Onyame, and where did Onyame obtain the primal *honam* from? Those questions fall without this context. What this sub-section has done is to show that *okra* and *sunsum* are different in their metaphysical-ness and that *sunsum* is a seamless transition. As there is a hierarchy of the physical – say solid, liquid and gas, and even sound – so is there a hierarchy of the metaphysical. And *sunsum* has two versions of metaphysical-ness.

3.5. Criticism of Akan Concept of Person

Wiredu criticises the Akan concept of person on two fronts – casting *okra* as rather quasi-physical, and then creating what he terms “The Akan Concept of Mind”. From this 1983 paper the “quasi-physical” has gained fame, yet Wiredu’s actual focus was “The Akan Concept of Mind”. The first criticism if it is true will have vast and dire ramifications for Akan concept of person. This section thus discusses fundamental issues raised by these two criticisms. Interwoven with the discourse are aspects of Safro Kwame’s (2004) work which introduces modern science into the discourse on quasi-physicalism.

3.5.1. What is quasi-physicalism?

Wiredu conceived quasi-physicalism, but Kwame was the first to formally define it. Later, Wiredu (2011, p. 25) subscribes to the fundamental concept inherent in Kwame’s definition. According to Kwame, the concept

admits of quasi-physical objects as belonging to a category between the obviously physical objects, i.e., those objects that *obey the known laws of physics*, and the realm of the *so-called* spiritual or completely immaterial objects that *do not obey any of the known laws of physics*.

(2004, pp. 345-6, Emphases added)

The description of “spiritual”, “so-called”, is highlighted to show that quasi-physicalists deny the existence of spiritual (metaphysical) entities. One may argue that Kwame uses “so-called” out of convenience and that his use of “spiritual” to couch his concept indicates grudging acknowledgement of its existence. Indeed, Kwame makes a point that, in principle, could be used against him. He queries why traditional medicine people claim to be spiritualists in focus yet apply physical objects in their work (2004, pp. 347-348). However, his use of “spiritual” allows him to do (what is herein termed) logical placement of the quasi-physical – that is, also using for his definition an entity he does not believe in but which most others believe in, and which entity is one of the possible subjects of the putative dialogue. Thus, his descriptive, “so-called”, clearly establishes his denial of “the... spiritual”, the use of which, nevertheless, enables him to convey to his readers the ontological position of his preferred concept. As we will see below, however, clarity of the logical placement of the quasi-physical does not necessarily translate into clarity of what quasi-physical itself is.

Neither Wiredu nor Kwame says so yet their rejection of the metaphysical is one of the basic assumptions of quasi-physicalism. For Kwame, an implicit basic premise is the epistemic criterion of quasi-physicalism – “obey[ing]” or “not obey[ing]” “the known laws of physics”. Kwame’s stated basic assumptions are (i) admitted inclination towards physicalism, (ii) avoidance of multiplying entities beyond what is necessary and (iii) acknowledgement of the fallibility of the present state of scientific knowledge (2004, p. 346).

Kwame applies Ockham's razor to throw out metaphysical entities from Akan ontology (2004, p. 346). According to Grosettes, Ockham's razor is a principle that says if there are two or more competing explanations for a concept, phenomenon, etc., one must pick the simpler or simplest one (John Losee, 2001, p. 34). The rationale for Ockham's razor is to forestall multiplying ontological entities unnecessarily. Yet if we grant the possibility that compared to a single-aspect explanation, a multiple-aspect one could be relatively efficient at explaining a phenomenon, etc. issues arise. By what criterion or criteria does one pick the simpler or simplest available explanation? The substance of that question resides in the principle that efficiency must take precedence over simplicity so that it is only when competing explanations, irrespective of the number of entities or levels, perform the task equally well that simplicity becomes a criterion of choice.¹

Asking about the feature of the quasi-physical leads us to a significance of obeying or not obeying "the known laws of physics". What is herein termed Kwame's possible prospect says one day when modern science has discovered less fallible known laws of physics, it may reveal "quasi-physical objects as bona fide physical objects" (2004, p. 346). *Vis-à-vis* his rejection of both reductive and non-reductive physicalism (2004, pp. 343-345), the possible prospect raises yet another paradox whose conclusion is nevertheless certain. How can Kwame dismiss wholesale physicalist concepts of mind, propose quasi-physicalism, and then prospect a possible time when future laws of physics may show that quasi-physicals are or have all along been, indeed, physical? We will discuss, below, the actual significance of this possible prospect. For now, Kwame commences his paper with "Let me assert, categorically and unambiguously, that I am neither a materialist nor a physicalist" (2004, p. 343). However, Majeed has rightly

concluded that Kwame, is a physicalist in disguise (2013A, p. 29). The issue is what sort of physicalist he will be.

3.5.2. What are the bases of quasi-physicalism?

It is a fundamental principle of philosophy that every concept must have a basis or bases. Wiredu supplies some for quasi-physicalism, and since all the arguments have the same conclusion looking at two will suffice.

3.5.2.1. Metaphysical Entities and *Okra* Eat and Drink

Originally, as Gyekye (1995) explains, the Akans conceive Onyame (God), *abosom* (deities), human beings and *nananom nsamanfo* (ancestors) as metaphysical beings (p. 68). However, Wiredu points to the Akan concept of pouring libation to God, deities and ancestors, and also to leaving of food at vantage points for deities and ancestors and sometimes preparing food for a person's *okra* during specific rituals, and then posts the implication that in the mind of the Akan these metaphysical entities eat and drink (1983, p. 120).

Does Akan, indeed, affirm or even concede that these metaphysical entities eat and drink? The query is heightened by Wiredu's observation that "the way in which traditional Akans approach such procedures [the rituals] suggests that they [Akans] take them *more seriously than as just symbolic gestures*" (1983, p. 120, Emphases added). However, Majeed affirms that the rituals are indeed only symbolic for Akans. He explains that Akans offer the food and drink only to depict reverence for and in remembrance of the living metaphysical entities, hence it only depicts the "premium" the Akans place on the relations the Akans share with these entities (2013, pp. 26-27).

Wiredu goes further. He picks on the Akan position that a person could eat food allergic to his or her *okra* (1983, p. 120). Gyekye mentions “*okraguare*” or “washing the *okra*” (1995, 96). However, “*okraguare*” or “*kra guare*” is a resultant of “*ne kra yare*” – his or her *okra* is sick. The healing or restoration ritual is termed “*kra guare*” or “*kra bathing*”, which includes the ritual of offering appropriate food and drink to the affected person to appease his or her *okra*. For Wiredu, the fact that *okra* can fall sick and must be given food implies it has physical proclivities; hence it is not spiritual.

Indeed, for Akans, “*ne kra yare*” and “*kra guare*” only carry symbolic import yet concern an issue of paramount importance. Majeed explains that the metaphysical and the physical aspects of a person are in “cross-realm interaction” (2013, p. 26). This is necessary, as the Akans explain, for the two aspects to be in harmony for the living individual to be healthy and properly function as a human being. Thus, “*ne kra yare*” is an expression for the fact that the individual has done something – say, in Wiredu’s terms, eaten “food obnoxious to his *okra*” (1983, p. 120) – which act has disturbed the harmony between the metaphysical and physical aspects. Thus “*kra guare*” is also an expression for taking the individual through appropriate rituals as part of the general process applied to help restore the harmony. Such restorative ritual includes the individual taking appropriate food and drink (Majeed, 2013, p. 27).

Traditional Akan philosophy affirms that the metaphysical purity of *okra* is such that it neither gets sick nor can be physically bathed. Thus “*kra yare*” encapsulates the disturbance in the metaphysical-physical interaction that has made *okra* jittery, that is, inflicted it with a tendency to depart the constitution of a person, which possible departure, threatens and portends death. Again, as pointed out above, *guare* means “to bath”. And when one recalls that the conceptual goal of bathing is to cleanse, one realises that the symbolism of “*kra guare*” is

conceptual representation of cleansing to restore harmonic interaction, that is, to, again, make the general constitution of the individual conducive to the metaphysical life-giving entity called *okra*.

3.5.2.2. *Okra* as a Person's "Double"

Wiredu points to Debrunner's explanation that some Akan view the *okra* as "a person's double, conceived in his [or her] material image complete with a head, hands, legs and all" (1983, p. 120). Wiredu then observes, "Conceived in this way, the *okra* is described as a person's companion" (1983, p. 120). He then quotes the following from Asare Opoku: "In this role [as a person's double or companion] it [*okra*] is a separate entity from the person and it may fail to guide and protect him; hence the expression *Ne kra apa n'akyi*, his... *okra* has failed to guide him" (1983, p. 120). Wiredu then adds, "It is of course, a nice problem, which we cannot stop to ponder, how the 'okra' can be both a 'principle' in the person which makes him a living being and a separate entity which can go its own way" (1983, p. 120).

The paragraph containing those quotes (Wiredu, 1983, pp. 119-120) is on a contrast between *okra* and soul. And while Wiredu's end comment is the point of interest, it was necessary to show how he arrived there. This paragraph opens with the need for caution "in striking correspondence between these concepts [say *okra*] and Western concepts..." and contains Wiredu's assertion that *okra* is quasi-physical (1983, p. 119). It is thus safe to conclude that one of the key positions in that paragraph is to show that *okra* is quasi-physical instead of metaphysical. These issues raise critical questions.

For example, did Debrunner say *okra* is an individual's double in the manner Wiredu posits it? Here is Debrunner's original statement: "As a 'man dwelling in [the individual]', the

[o]kra is considered as a sort of double, having legs, arms, head, heart, etc., like the material body, only of finer substance” (1959, p. 9). Wiredu obviously ignored the qualification provided by Debrunner in the end phrases. “[L]ike the material body” refers us to the prior description, “...as a sort of double, having legs, arms, head, heart, etc....” And then, note the terms “like” and “sort of”, which point to an analogy or a comparison, yet note the critical qualification, “...of finer substance”, that is, not material like the body.

Therefore, Wiredu applies the description of *okra* as “a person’s double” and “a person’s companion”, and even “*Ne kra apa n’akyi*” only to argue that Akan thinks *okra* possesses seeming physical features. As we will soon see, another point prevents Wiredu from taking that argument to its logical conclusion—that *okra* is physical. Thus, Wiredu’s objective is to make a point that *okra* is the life-giving “principle” yet “a separate entity which can go its own way”. In making that disjunction, Wiredu overlooks a very essential distinction. True; *okra* is the life-giving principle that can go its own way, but if going its own way means away from the body then the result will be death. However, the notion captured by Asare Opoku, “*Ne kra apa n’akyi*”, does not result in *okra* going away from the body. That statement is an idiom for saying luck has eluded a person in a specific circumstance. Yet Wiredu uses those points as part of his bases for his position that *okra* is quasi-physical.

3.5.2.3. Seeing or Communicating with *Okra*

Using his bases discussed above, Wiredu concludes,

The *okra*, ..., is quasi-physical. It is not, of course, supposed [by the Akans] to be straight forwardly physical as it is believed not to be fully subject to spatial constraints. Nor is it perceivable to the naked eye. Nevertheless, in some ways it seems to be credited with *para-physical* properties. For example, highly developed medicine men are claimed

to be able to enter into communication with ‘okra’, and those that have eyes with medicinally heightened perception are said to be capable of seeing such things. (1983, pp. 119-120, Emphases added)

Here then is the reason Wiredu refrains from concluding that *okra* is physical—the Akans do not describe *okra* as strictly physical. Yes, the Akans believe highly developed medicine people can communicate with and even *see* a usually non-perceivable aspect of a person after that person is dead. However, certain factors – the specific characteristics of Akan concept of person, a general conceptual scheme that accommodates a hierarchy of ontologies – demand that we ask what type of communication is involved in this putative instance or what aspect is *seen*. Not asking such fundamental questions at this stage could be philosophically fatal. For, one needs to understand a philosophical framework well enough to know how its original author(s) interpret(s) the inter-relations of entities therein, events such as rituals, and the resultants of incidents, such as death. It is only then that one is free to comment on it; before that, commentary could lead to mis-characterisation of features of named entities and even of processes.

Again, Wiredu is here explaining that these Akan notions of the living communicating with and *seeing* an aspect of the deceased gives that aspect spatial properties or makes it “para-physical”, that is, it possesses a likeness of physical properties. He then adds that since the Akans do not regard the *okra* or that entity as a straightforwardly physical entity, it must be quasi-physical. Note, surprisingly, that Wiredu ignores Akan description of *okra* and re-characterises it yet applies an inference from that very description to mitigate his re-characterisation of *okra*.

Gyekye (1995) disagrees with Wiredu (1983), and affirms the traditional Akan position that *okra* is metaphysical. Majeed also affirms *okra* as metaphysical, and also places a critical

poke at the doorstep of quasi-physicalism. He explains that granted that there is brief period in which *okra* – or the *seen* aspect – becomes obvious to medicine people, all one can conclude on that basis is “occasional visibility” (2013, p. 28). In other words, the *seeing* is transient, yet Wiredu is using a transient instead of the essential feature to define the aspect. However, is there a relation between the length of time a feature is seen and the characteristic of that feature; see below?

A critical question raised here is whether *okra* can be seen, that is, whether by the senses or instruments of science, or even by medicine people. Majeed states, “It is very much doubtful if the *okra* will ever be subject to physical laws” (2013, p. 29). That means with high possibility *okra* will never succumb to laws developed by (modern science) physics. That raises issues that fall without this context. Yet, note that not all the entities conventionally regarded as covered by the laws of physics are physical (Sophie Oluwole, 1995, pp. 367-368). Indeed, from the Akan characterisation of *okra*, it is eternally inaccessible to the laws of physics; not even laws on the truly non-perceivable, hence non-physical, entities modern science *nicodemus-ly* studies.⁴ What remains of the question then is whether *okra* could be perceived by even medicine people with extraordinary capabilities; see below.

3.5.3. Absence of a Mentioned Mind

From Wiredu’s 1983 paper the “quasi-physical” has gained fame, yet his actual focus was “The Akan Concept of Mind”. In this paper Wiredu appears fixated on Akan concept of person lacking a mentioned mind, so he creates one. He writes, “The only conceivable translation of ‘mind’ into Akan is ‘adwene.’” (1983, p. 116), yet *adwene*, as he agrees, is thought, not mind. Wiredu also affirms, “Mind is, from the Akan point of view, a logical construction out of actual

and potential thoughts” (1983, p. 118), or a combination of the possibility of thinking and actual thinking. Yet the fact that *adwene* (thought) is the “only conceivable translation of mind” leaves room for doubt over that relation. That mind is, therefore, a Wiredu concept of mind.

On the issue of fixation, Wiredu also states,

The chief point to be emphasised is that the Akans most certainly do not regard mind as one of the entities that go to constitute a person. Mind is not conceived as an entity. The same reason accounts, of course, for the absence of any mention of ‘adwene’ in the Akan enumeration of the components of a person.
(1983, p. 121, Emphases added)

Wiredu is right that thought is not a mentioned aspect of Akan concept of person. And that is because, as Gyekye states, thought is an activity of *sunsum* (1996, p. 87). The critical point is why it should be an issue that the Akans do not make *adwene* or mind one of the mentioned “components of a person”. Is it an error in philosophy not to have a mentioned mind as an aspect of one’s concept of person? Is a mentioned mind necessary in every concept of person because mind is an aspect of a person in Western philosophy? Wiredu appears to have answered yes to both questions when he created a concept of mind in Akan philosophy.

Before creating his concept of mind, Wiredu re-classes *okra* as quasi-physical, thereby denying Akan concept of person any metaphysical content. He also states that “the word ‘mind,’ ... is susceptible of either a substance or non-substance interpretation” (1983, p. 116). A “substance... interpretation” is reference to mind in Descartes’ concept of person in which mind is metaphysical. And it is interesting that in Descartes’ philosophy, where mind is a substance, thought is an activity (1911, p. 2-12). Does Wiredu’s position mean that without a mind like the Descartes type, a concept of person cannot make claims to having a metaphysical aspect? An

affirmative response will make an entity equivalent to its feature, which position forecloses the possibility of multiple named entities, even in different cultures, sharing a common feature.

The issue of the absence of a mentioned mind and Gyekye's point that thought is an activity of *sunsum* demands that we look at the relation between thought and brain. As we saw in Chapter Two, mind is responsible for thought in substance dualism and the physicalist concepts of person under consideration. Maybe, that is why Wiredu created his concept of mind; to enable him to use it in Akan philosophy the way some physicalists use it. In Chapter Two, we also saw Smart's point that thought processes are identical with brain processes, but co-relation between thought and brain disproves that. Indeed, in Western philosophy co-relation indicates that thought only comes through the brain.

The situation is the same in aspects of African philosophy. In Akan, brain is "*amene*" (Wiredu, 1983, p. 117), and *opolo* in Yoruba (Gbadegesin, 2003, p. 176). Since *sunsum* is separate from *amene*, thought comes through *amene* (brain). Also, for Yoruba, Gbadegesin affirms that "*opolo* [brain] is recognised as the *life-line* of logical reasoning and ratiocinative activities" (2003, p. 176, Emphasis added). Since a "life-line" is a "channel" or "route", *opolo* (brain) is simply the channel of thought or thinking. Akan or Yoruba philosophy does not need a mentioned mind to account for thought or its relationship with the brain.

3.5.4. What is the actual feature of the quasi-physical?

A puzzle raised above but left unattended to is whether clarity of the logical placement of the quasi-physical, using the "spiritual" as one of the two mark-off points, translates into clarity on what the quasi-physical is. Gyekye translates "quasi-physical" as "seemingly-physical"

(1995, p. 86), and the conclusion of Kwame's possible prospect upholds that translation. Yet beyond the possible prospect, does the quasi-physical exist?

3.5.4.1. The ultimate of Kwame's possible prospect

The spiritual is intangible; the physical is tangible. What then is quasi-physical or seemingly-physical? Majeed wonders why quasi-physicalists would rather not refer to themselves as quasi-metaphysicians (2013A, p. 28). However, Kwame's declared inclination towards physicalism forbids such naming. Still, the substance of Majeed's question remains: Why quasi-physicalism? And there are respects in which *why quasi-physicalism* is linked to *what is quasi-physicalism*, and therefrom to *what is the real feature of the quasi-physical*.

Kwame responds.

He states that

it is noteworthy that the modern or contemporary quasi-physicalist does not deny that as our discovery of physical laws proceeds and our scientific knowledge increases, we may come to accept *some or all* the quasi-physical objects as bona fide physical objects. The quasi-physicalism of today may then turn out to be the materialism and physicalism of tomorrow.
(p. 346) (Emphasis added)

Here, we encounter another significance of obeying or not obeying *the known laws of physics*. First, Kwame's adoption of passive affirmative phrases, "does not deny" and "we may come", to formulate his assertion subtracts nothing from its substance thereof. After all, he is prospecting. His leanings towards physicalism and use of the phrase "as our discovery of physical laws proceeds" consummate his point onto certainty. Further, since he states that "some or all", he

leaves open the possibility of all quasi-physical objects being unveiled, one day, as “bona fide” or actual physical objects. His prospected ultimate is the unveiling of an ontology.

The critical issue is the core of the basic epistemic criterion he is employing, *the known laws of physics*. One then comprehends Kwame’s position that the current known laws of physics are representative of “science’s [contemporary] state of ignorance” or a higher level of “epistemic... fallibilism” (Kwame, 2004 p. 346), that is, the current shortcomings of the laws of physics. Awareness of those shortcomings is what informed Kwame’s “epistemic modesty” (2004, p. 346); hence his contemporary acceptance of quasi-physicalism. For him, physical objects today appear quasi-physical because of the current limited capability of known laws of physics. Thus, the quasi-physical is merely a contemporary apparition feature so obvious simply because of the current fallibility of the epistemic criterion. By Kwame’s possible prospect, the so-called quasi-physicalist is an interminable physicalist.

There are consequences of Kwame’s possible prospect. For example, if as Kwame stated God is quasi-physical, then his possible prospect renders God physical even right now. Historical evidence shows that science as a humankind knowledge enterprise was practiced for thousands of years before modern science was born in Europe (Beatrice Lumpkin, 1985; Hunter Havelin Adam, 1985; Joseph Osei, 1995). Today, there is evidence that certain critical scientific discoveries made thousands of years ago by cultures other than the cultural milieu of modern science is finer than that of modern science (Lumpkin, p. 71; Osei, p. 17)², is only being confirmed by modern science (Adam, p. 42; Lamptey, p. 73-74)³, or modern science is still ignorant of it (Adam, p. 27, pp. 27-46; Lamptey, pp. 74)⁴. On those bases, one could wonder whether science as an enterprise will not have already revealed it if God is a physical entity.

3.5.4.2. What is it that is *seen*?

Beyond Kwame's possible prospect, does the quasi-physical entity exist, and if yes, what is the entity that is *seen*?

The essence of Majeed's query to quasi-physicalism is that what some medicine people see is transient. However, it is not the feature that is transient but rather the medicine person's capability to *see* it. So, is what they *see* the *okra*? For Akan *okra* comes from Onyame and hence shares the same feature, metaphysical-ness, with Onyame. Since Onyame will never be seen, we can safely conclude that what is *seen* is not *okra*. Therefrom, is anything seen, and is it quasi-physical?

Here, I proffer a continuation of the hypothesis or plausible explanation commenced above. Recall from above that *sunsum* is the overlap or merging of parts of primal entities, *okra* and *honam*. Another feature of *sunsum*, not explained above, is this: The overlap of the primal entities is such that, conceptually, as one moves from one end of *sunsum* towards the other, the intensity of the primal aspect one is moving away from gradually decreases while that of the aspect one is moving towards increases; each imperceptibly. Conceptually, that means the part of *sunsum* closest to pure *honam* is coarser than the part closest to pure *okra*. Thus, what is *seen* is different shades of the part of *sunsum* which conceptually lies between *adwene-atenka* (thought-emotion) and what used to be pure *honam* when the person was alive. That means the quasi-physical is an encapsulation of *okra* and what is left of *sunsum*, which left part still includes *adwene-atinka*. And as long as *okra* is still encapsulated the quasi-physical entity is alive and can be seen by people possessing the requisite epistemic capability. In Akan or even Ga philosophy, this may be an *otofo* or the lingering around *remains* of the victim of a sudden severely painful death, such as an accident. Eventually, *okra* could depart (possibly, to

asamado) or what is left of *sunsum* could dissolve away, or, the combination could survive to be re-born in a baby somewhere in another lifetime.

What is *seen* is a combination of *okra* and what is left of *sunsum*. And one may ask whether it is the entire combination that is quasi-physical. No. The Akan concept of person has metaphysical and physical aspects, yet it is only the physical aspect that we see. Since *okra* will never be seen, it is only the quasi-physical that can be *seen*.

If this set of *okra* and part of *sunsum* combination is, indeed, seemingly-physical, then that, in itself, accounts for why only medicine people with “heightened” levels of perception can see it. That makes it an extant ontology. So, what Wiredu was told is *seen* is not what is *seen*, however, Wiredu is on point in characterising what is *seen* as quasi-physical. Therefore, Kwasi Wiredu bears full credit for appropriately naming the feature of one of the possible ontologies in the *extrapolated* range of metaphysics of a human being.

3.5. The Philosophy Gyekye Upholds

As we saw above, Wiredu’s and Kwame’s criticisms fail to do any damage to the original features of Akan concept of person? Re-characterising *okra* as quasi-physical is based on philosophical mis-representation, and, as we just saw, it is not *okra* that is quasi-physical. Also, Akan concept of person does not need a mentioned mind to qualify as an ontological model. Hence the features and explanatory efficiency – as set out above – of Akan concept of person remains intact.

Essentially, the few variations between the particulars of Akan concept of person and some conclusions of Gyekye’s analysis are not substantial enough to assert variance between them. Even separateness in the metaphysical-ness of *okra* and *sunsum* (argued herein) only

affirms their different functions, which Gyekye affirms. Thus Gyekye upholds the eventual position of the Akan concept of person: A living human being is made of three aspects – *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam* – and each plays a specific role in a milieu of complementarity to ensure a person's animacy and living in terms of applying *sunsum* features, of course, livened up by *okra* and then working through *honam* to interact with other human beings and the environment, both animate and inanimate.

3.6. The Conceptual Efficiency of Akan Concept of Person

So, what are the features and roles of the aspects responsible for the explanatory efficiency of the Akan concept of person? First, the position that *okra* comes from Onyame hands the concept an attribution or source of *onipa* and of *onipa*'s life and capacities.

As the overlapping aspect of *onipa*, *sunsum* is the arena of convergence and divergence of influences. Internal influences are from *okra* and Onyame, and, indeed, from within *sunsum* itself and *honam*. For example, *okra*'s influence is giving life. Externally, there are influences from without *honam*. Critically, therefore, it is from *sunsum* that one can influence the external. Hence from the affirmations of scholars, such as Gyekye, that *sunsum* is the arena of an individual's personality and character traits, it is safe to infer that *sunsum* is a broad enough receptacle for *all* the human capacities responsible for a human being's personality and character traits. The fluctuations and changeable resultants of the combined effects of these sets of influences play fundamental and essential roles in the life of an individual and, on a complex cumulative collective scale, in the lives of a community. *Sunsum* is thus broad and highly sophisticated.

Also, the broadness of *sunsum* as the receptacle of all human capacities allows us to mention *atenka* (emotion) as separate from yet as an accompaniment of *adwene* (thought) therein. Rationality is conscious thought; the responsible capacities include thinking, consciousness, intention and will. *Adwene* or *atenka* plays a role the other cannot. So, what is the status of *atenka* (emotion) in this hypothesis?

In Chapter Two, we see how Descartes separates thought from feeling and imagination but does not mention emotion as a constituent of mind; plausibly because in Western commonsense and philosophical usage emotion is generally synonymous with feeling. However, if imagination is a derivative of thought (a capacity) acting on information from without the person, which capacity is responsible for the emergence of feeling? Andrea Scanrantino and Ronald de Souza (2021) refer to “emotion” as “an aspect of mental life” (Scanrantino and De Souza, 2021, Introduction), or part of “the topography of mind” (Scanrantino and De Souza, 2021, Introduction). They also state that “emotions have historically been conceptualised in one of three main ways: as experiences, as evaluations, and as motivations. (Scanrantino and De Souza, 2021, Introduction).

“Experience” or “evaluation” as emotion is inherent with empirical aspects. Each is internal to a person but is the result of application of something internal (capacity) to information from without the human being. And while “experience” and “evaluation” could generate “motivation”, motivation could be generated, internally, and aimed at something external. Descartes’ use of imagination makes it a derivative of thought and information from external sources. His use of feeling too makes it a derivative of a capacity and information from without the person; thus, feeling carries subjective import. So, what capacity is responsible for the emergence of feeling? This calls for a re-look at the relation between emotion and feeling.

It is thus critical that the writer of a blog (counseling.online.wfu.edu, 2024) observes, “Many people use the terms ‘feeling’ and ‘emotion’ as synonyms, but they are not interchangeable”. The writer also states, “Feelings are a conscious experience, although not every conscious experience, such as seeing or believing, is a feeling...”, and “...an emotion “can only ever be felt...through the emotional experiences it gives rise to, even though it might be discovered through its associated thoughts, beliefs, desires, and actions” (2024, Section 1). In principle, “emotion” is an internal state that gives rise to “emotional experiences”, while “feeling” is part of conscious experience”. The writer is saying, critically, that, “feeling” is “experience”, and “emotion” is “felt”. Since what is felt is “feeling”, we can say “emotion” gives rise to “emotional experiences” or “feeling”. This distinction between “emotion” and “feeling” is vital.

It appears from the blog content that “emotion” and “feeling” are mental lives, but the writer, like Scanrantino and de Souza (2021), does not indicate the relation between emotion and thought. Kofi Ackah and Vida Owusu-Boateng (2013) point out that emotion is but a lesser aspect of mind (pp. 184-185). However, the position of this thesis is that emotion is distinct from thought because I believe that, as Descartes cast them, thought gives rise to imagination and emotion gives rise to feeling. Thus emotion, like thought, is a separate capacity and is of equal status as thought or any other human capacity. For this thesis, therefore, “emotion” is a capacity and feeling is the derivative of the relation between emotion and information from without the person.

As will be shown in Chapter 4, therefore, *atenka* (emotion) shares a similar level of importance with *adwene* (thought) and both are highly essential to the make-up, functioning and survival of a human being. On that basis, *atenka* deserves mention as a capacity. It is also

significant that in Akan languages *atenka* refers to both emotion and feeling, and, as Gyekye will observe, the context of a statement does indicate which of the terms is in reference.

Honam has dual function. It completes the full encapsulation of a living human being and allows one to be sense perceivable by others. Also, *honam* affords the individual the opportunity to interact with the external environment.

Thus, Akan concept of person accounts for two categories of metaphysical lives – *okra* is responsible for life, and *sunsum* for capacities responsible for personality and character traits and behaviour. Properly, therefore, the human capacity for paranormal activity may be the derivative of several of those capacities working in tandem. In inanimates, *sunsum* is a centre of force and power (Gyekye, 1995, pp. 68-84), which, properly, medicine people and traditional priests can evoke, tap and harness onto definitive ends.

3.6. *Sunsum* and *ntoro* as sources of personality

Mention of the sets of multiple influences that converge in *sunsum* (above) leads us to a very essential point. Gyekye explains that *sunsum* is the bearer of personality and character traits. However, Majeed (2017) observes that Gyekye neither discusses the source of *sunsum* nor whether *ntoro*, which Gyekye acknowledges as essential to filial inheritance, plays any role in the making of an individual's personality (2017, pp. 147-148). (The source of *sunsum* has been discussed in the plausible explanation advanced above). Majeed explains that if a trait, such as gentleness could be inherited from the father, then the *ntoro*, which is what a father contributed to filial inheritance could contribute to the gentleness in a child (2017, p. 148). By this Majeed is pointing to the complementary roles of *sunsum* and *ntoro* in setting personality.

This thesis has persistently referred to *sunsum* as the carrier of capacities and as the receptacle for all personality and character traits. There are multiple influences in and on *sunsum*, which is thus a point of both convergence and divergence of influences. *Okra* contributes life, and *sunsum* is the bearer of capacities. Also, the state of *honam* (the body), whether sickly or healthy, say in the foetus or at birth, also contributes. For example, the health status of *honam* determines the extent to which *okra* finds it (*honam*) conducive. Another set of possible essential influences are inherited traits, and it is not only *ntoro* that contributes. Recall the point above that *sunsum* is not synonymous with *ntoro*, because some children have personality features of their mothers. According to the Akan, therefore, *mogya* too is essential to filial inheritance. These, not exclusively though, contribute to one's possible original personality traits (and even physical looks).

And the above plausible explanation position that *sunsum* is the overlap of sections of *okra* and *honam* may uphold this position; both *okra* and *honam* do contribute to capacities in *sunsum*. However, that is not all. Once a person is born external influences also become a factor. And it is the dialectic inter-relations between the set of all these influences and the set of external influences, converging in and operating from *sunsum* which, with time, moulds the personality and character of the individual. Wiredu states that “there is a close relation between ‘sunsum’ and ‘ntoro’” (1983, p. 119). Both make possible contributions to personality and character traits; but they are different entities.

3.7. How the Three Concepts of Person Explain Ontological Personhood

Now, as we see Marraffa point out (in Chapter Two), the goal of any discussion of mental lives (or metaphysical lives) – or, broadly, concepts of person – is to explain and predict the

features and behaviour of human beings. The entirety of Chapter Two up to the preceding section has discussed the characteristics of the three types of concepts of person and whether these concepts account for metaphysical lives. Here, therefore, we can safely conduct a comparative analysis of one of the features of a human being, ontological personhood. However, it is important to first establish a framework for the comparative analysis.

For any proper comparative analysis, it is necessary to ensure that the items in the comparison are proper peers and also that either the criteria for comparison appropriately and equally apply to all the items without any form of bias or the areas in which the items will be applied are the same. For example, Robin Horton (1967) ignores the peers rule by comparing traditional African religion and Western science. Religion and science are a dissimilar pair.

“Marraffa’s statement is on the uses of theories of mind – ascribing mental states to individuals, and then applying the mental states to explain the behaviour and (this thesis includes) features of the individual. And although in Western philosophy concepts of mind are discussed in isolation, this thesis explains that a mind is, obviously, an aspect of a person’s constitution in that philosophy. Mind is therefore a subset of a concept of person. A one-aspect concept of person means the individual is a body that includes a mind, while a two-aspect concept of person means the individual is made up of a mind and a body, separate substances that interact. And then there is the three-aspect concept of person from Akan philosophy. As concepts of person, therefore, the three are, fundamentally, peers.

Also extrapolating from Marraffa’s position, it is actually a concept of person that is used to explain the features and behaviour of a human being. However, Akan concept of person does not have a mentioned mind as an aspect. It is thus necessary to change mental states to a category it (mental states) is a subset of, metaphysical lives. Metaphysical lives then become a

category that can be smoothly accommodated by every concept of person irrespective of the concept's contents. And then as peers the three concepts could be put to work at the same set of tasks. These factors lay the framework for seamless comparative to determine their relative conceptual efficiencies at performing those tasks.

That brings us to the start of the comparative analysis proper. One of the concluding points of Chapter Two is that any philosopher who subscribes to a single-aspect concept of person can talk and write about mental lives, yet a single-aspect concept cannot account for mental lives. That is because a physical monolith cannot accommodate the metaphysical aspect of a person. On that basis, a physicalist concept of person fails to account for thinking, feeling or dreaming.

Physicalists may ascribe the origin of a human being to evolution thereby avoiding the mention of a *createur*. However, evolution is a process. So, who applied or applies the process to make a human being? A well-rehearsed logical response will be: The fact that there is a process does not mean there has to be a *createur*. However, as an IA humanoid robot, Chiti, says in the Indian movie *Enthiran*: If Dr. Vaseegaran made me, then he must also have a maker (2010). Of course, Chiti has no mind or capacity for thought and says only what it has been programmed to say. However, from our unique human perspective, what Chiti is made to say is sound philosophy. The critical question then is whether Chiti's statement will necessarily succumb to *infinite regress*.

Every concept of person accounts for the body (or *honam* in Akan philosophy), and we have looked at its role above. A two-aspect concept of person affirms both the physical and metaphysical aspects of a human being, hence accounts for mental lives, including thinking, feeling and dreaming. However, because of the challenge of the *how* of heterogeneous

interaction, substance dualism simply has the potential to account for ontological personhood or the functioning of a living human being. Still, Descartes mentions God as the maker of the human being (Descartes, 1911, p. 1-7), and thus accounts for the source of life and a person's innate capacities, yet the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction, again, precludes their articulation. On the other hand, the Akan concept of person, with its seamless transition, *sunsum*, accounts for metaphysical lives, hence for the sources of life and human capacities, and hence for the functioning of a living human being.

Conclusion

Akan concept of person says a person is made up of three aspects – *okra* and *sunsum* are metaphysical, and *honam* is physical. Gyekye affirms that the concept is an ontological duality, and that *okra* and *sunsum* are ontologically the same but perform different functions. However, different names and functions of *okra* and *sunsum* presume difference in metaphysical-ness. The hypothesis here is that Onyame (God) made a human being from two primal entities, *okra* and *honam*, and *sunsum* is the overlap of those two primal entities resulting in an entity different from either primal entity, both of which are still present. Nevertheless, Gyekye's affirmation that *okra* and *sunsum* perform separate functions upholds the position of Akan concept of person that a living human being is made up of three aspects; this is the philosophy Gyekye upholds.

However, Wiredu and Kwame criticise Akan concept of person. Wiredu re-characterises *okra* as quasi-physical. Kwame, on the other hand, defines "quasi-physical" and introduces modern science into the discourse on quasi-physicalism. Kwame posits a possible prospect that says one day more infallible laws of physics may reveal that what appears quasi-physical today

are indeed physical. Gyekye translates quasi-physical as “seemingly-physical”, and, the outcome of Kwame’s possible prospect confirms that translation, since it says quasi-physical entities are actually and interminably physical. Thus, Majeed rightly declares that Kwame, even now, is a physicalist.

Wiredu applies several arguments as the basis for his erection of quasi-physicalism. The premises of one argument say that since Akan claims *okra* can be seen by medicine people with “heightened levels of perception”, it has spatial properties. The premises of another one argument say the Akan acts of communing with metaphysical entities, such as Onyame and *nananom nsamanfo*, during specific rituals by offering food and drinks means these entities have physical proclivities. Wiredu then concludes both arguments by saying since Akan does not deem these entities as straight-forwardly physical they (the entities) must be quasi-physical. However, Majeed responds that argues, rightly, that the offering of food and drink is simply symbolism for the premium the Akans place on their relationship with these living metaphysical entities.

Eventually, Wiredu’s and Kwame’s criticisms do no damage to Akan concept of person. That means the explanatory efficiency of the philosophy Gyekye uphold is intact. Since *okra* comes from Onyame, the Akan concept of person includes attribution for the origin of a human being and of his or her life and capacities.

Sunsum is a seamless transition between *okra* and *honam*, and it eliminates the why of heterogeneous interaction that afflicts substance dualism, though it raises other issues. *Sunsum* is also the receptacle of all innate capacities of a human being. Gyekye is right that *sunsum* is the bearer of personality and character traits, which position is also basis for arguing *sunsum* as such a receptacle for capacities. That also makes *sunsum* the arena of divergence and convergence of

all influences, internal and external. *Honam* completes the encapsulation of a human being by providing a sense-perceivable vehicle for the internal existences, and a means by which one could interact with others and the environment.

Single-aspect concepts do not account for intangible mental lives; hence cannot explain metaphysical personhood. A two-aspect concept of person affirms both tangible and intangible aspects of a human being, hence accounts for mental lives. However, because of the challenge of the *how* of heterogeneous interaction, substance dualism simply has the potential to account for metaphysical personhood. On the other hand, Akan concept of person is accounts for metaphysical lives, and is relatively efficient at explaining metaphysical personhood, that is, the unique and complementary roles of the three aspects in ensuring animacy in a human being.



CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING CONSCIOUSNESS

Closely related to personhood is consciousness. The direct application of consciousness, of course, in tandem with other capacities, allows a human being to interact with the general environment. Such interaction is eventually and dialectically linked to the survival of the individual, of communities and indeed of the entire genus of humankind. Yet, some works state that “consciousness” is either ambiguous (Buckman, 2011; Genarro, 2021) or difficult to define (James, 1904). Some authors discuss consciousness as a capacity (Descartes, 1911), and others cast it as a function (James, 1904). Yet again, while most authors approach consciousness from an observer’s perspective, Nagel insists it is just a subjective entity (Nagel, 1974).

Discussions in previous chapters further compound the issue. In Chapter Two we see, implicitly and explicitly, outlays of epistemic capacities through which consciousness is expressed. In Chapter Three it becomes obvious that while in conventional Western philosophy mind is the single receptacle of internal existences or capacities (including consciousness), Akan concept of person, on the other hand, gives us two internal existences, *okra* and *sunsum*. So, “What is consciousness?” and “Does consciousness have a scope?”

Consciousness is both a capacity and an activity common to human beings. Compared to substance dualism, the Akan concept of person allows proper delineation and outlay of the essence and capacities vital to the expression of consciousness, and these capacities include *adwene* (thought) and *atenka* (emotion). Again, the ontological leap or separation between mind and body due to the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction affords substance dualism only the potential to explain consciousness and personal and common identities, however, *sunsum*, as an

overlap and imperceptibly layered transition, allows Akan concept of person to explain these critical features.

This discussion begins on the ontological separateness of brain and consciousness and the distinctiveness of life and then looks at the persistence of the separateness in some philosophy traditions. It then discusses the basics of consciousness and the received hypothesis that consciousness is difficult to define or ambiguous. The discourse then shifts to how one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person account for consciousness, to consciousness in aspects of Asian philosophy, and then to how Akan concept of person accounts for life and consciousness. This chapter concludes on whether or how the three concepts of person account for common and personal identities.

4.1. The Ontological Separateness of Brain and Consciousness

It has been explained in previous chapters that Western philosophical concepts of person discussed in this thesis approach it from the perspective of mental lives, states, properties or processes. However, the inclusion of Akan concept of person in this research has required that we expand mental lives to metaphysical lives, since the Akan concept has no mentioned mind as an aspect and has two internal existences. And, as already portrayed, that distinction has vast implications for the explanatory efficiencies of the three concepts of person, and possibly, for their capabilities to explain consciousness and its relation to *amene* (brain). Again, Chapter Two points to two essential facts – in the Western philosophical conceptions examined herein consciousness is closely related to mind, and some particulars of the epistemological conversations examined – particularly of Kant's outlay of epistemic capacities (003, p 65) – show that consciousness, together with mind are non-perceivable. For example, James

characterises consciousness as a function yet explains that the “knower” is “consciousness”, which is “a state of mind” (1904, p. 480). Also, Chapter Three introduces life into the discourse on concepts of person, indicates its source, and explains that *okra* is the bearer of life, which instills animacy.

4.1.1. Leibnitz and James on the separateness

Robert Van Gulick (2018) discusses Leibnitz’s direct affirmation of the separateness of conscious thought from brain processes. According to him, Leibnitz uses the “analogy of the mill” to argue the point. Leibnitz

asked his reader to imagine someone walking through an expanded brain as one would walk through a mill and observing all its mechanical operations, which for Leibnitz exhausted its physical nature. Nowhere, he [Leibnitz] asserts, would such an observer see any conscious thoughts. (Van Gulick, 2018, Section 1)

“Conscious thought” is a combination of intention and thinking directed by the will; hence is not directly consciousness. Yet all are either mental lives or metaphysical lives. In effect, no amount of splicing of brain neurons will show us what is will or intention or thought or even consciousness.² Leibnitz is saying if conscious thought is a physical process we will perceive it in the brain. That makes Leibnitz a believer in a two-aspect concept of person.

James (1952) adopts the point of view of evolution and argues the increasing complexity of entities as one goes up the evolutionary scale, where the increasing complexity happens via the increasing sophistication in the arrangement of atoms from and through plant and animal lives to the human being. He then writes, “But with the dawn of consciousness an entirely new nature seems to slip in, something whereof the potency was not given in the mere outward atoms

of the original chaos” (1952, p. 95). First, the hope here is that James does not place “the dawn of consciousness” at the emergence of the human being, because consciousness is a feature of animacy. Here, James is simply saying nothing about the body or its expression accounts for the emergence of consciousness or its “potency” or sophisticated capabilities. James adds,

The enemies of evolution have been quick to pounce on this *undeniable discontinuity in the data of the world*, and many of them, from the failure of evolutionary explanations at this point, have inferred their general incapacity all along the line. ...Accordingly, even the vaguest of evolutionary enthusiasts, when deliberately comparing material and mental facts, have been as forward as to emphasise *the ‘chasm’ between the inner and outer worlds*.

(1952, p. 96) (Emphases added)

“Undeniable discontinuity in the data of the world” refers to the certain “‘chasm’ between the inner and outer worlds” or the separation between the physical body, on one hand, and, on the other, consciousness or mind. He is criticising but does not deny the position. James’ other point is that evolution was yet to explain the separation. Later, he admits “correspondence” or co-relation between thought and brain (1952, p 117). Not surprisingly, Place too admits co-relation (1956, p. 44). Co-relation, as already shown, is the result of the ontological leap.

4.1.2. Smart, Place and Nagel on the separateness

While Smart asserts that “mental processes are brain processes”, he affirms that that fact does not make brain and mind identical (2018). Again, Smart affirms that “sensations are brain processes” (1959, p. 144), yet later admits that it is a “hypothesis”, “a very plausible one” (1974, p. 153). Smart also refers to dualism as a “hypothesis” (1974, p. 153), but dualism is not hypocritical about the existence of the separateness. Place too describes his thesis, “consciousness is a brain process”, as “a reasonable scientific hypothesis”, one “not to be

dismissed on logical grounds alone” (1956, Abstract. p. 44). Is Place saying his hypothesis could be dismissed on other grounds combined with the logical? Still, Sophie Oluwole explains that a “hypothesis” is an unproven claim or one yet to be backed up with proof (1995, p. 363). From Oluwole’s explication, how much substance is inherent in these physicalist assertions by Smart or Place? The question is based on the point that the purpose of a concept, even if initially proposed as a hypothesis, is to explain phenomena. Once an hypothesis performs that task with a fine degree of success it becomes a plausible explanation or even proper theory.

Also, Nagel considers himself a physicalist, however, arguably, his greatest contribution to philosophy of mind (in Western philosophy) is his affirmation of the futility of the reductionist enterprise of physicalism (1974, pp. 435-436). Nagel thus considers consciousness [or mind] as a “type” of subjective point of view of experience (1974, pp. 144-145). From his explanation, consciousness is a subjective perspective of experience that concomitantly is objective in the sense that the experience though peculiar to an individual, say Q, can be understood by another individual, say R, such that the closer R is to Q in terms of species kind, the more equipped R is at understanding Q’s experience hence the activities of Q’s consciousness. That is clear yet uninformative in the light of a basic task of philosophy of mind – explaining the feature of consciousness [or mind].

Nagel implies critical separateness when he states, “Without consciousness the mind-body problem would be much less interesting. With consciousness it seems hopeless” (1974, p. 436). The determinant of “interesting” or the “hopeless[ness]” is the unique feature of consciousness when compared to the body. Thus, Nagel’s point is that the uniqueness of consciousness is, according to him, responsible for all the attention the mind-body problem is getting, yet that very feature renders futile the resolution of the problem. Nagel opens his paper

thus, “Consciousness is what makes the mind-body problem intractable” (1974, p. 435). So, why is consciousness responsible for the persistence of the mind-body problem? Jaegwon Kim responds by stating: “This [mind-body] problem ultimately comes down to understanding how our conscious life [or consciousness] is related to the biological-physical processes going on in our brain” (Kim, 2011, p. 301). That means the mind-body problem exists because body is tangible and obvious, while consciousness (and mind) is intangible and non-perceivable.

Hence Kim’s point: “There is a general consensus that the fate of physicalism hangs on whether consciousness can be given an adequate physical account” (2011, p. 301). Well, Smart gives a “physical account” when he affirms that “mental processes are brain processes”, yet that has neither collapsed the mind-body problem nor reduced mind into a physical entity. The mind-body problem exists because from body to mind or *vice versa* there is an ontological leap, which demands an explanation of how heterogeneous entities interact. The critical puzzle is whether Kim expects “an adequate physical account” to dissipate the distinction.

4.1.3. The distinctiveness of life

The expression of consciousness is the exhibition of life. And Kim states, “One of the ‘two great mysteries’ of the world, life and mind, has yielded to physical explanation. Can we expect the same for the one remaining mystery, mind and consciousness?” (2011, p. 302). In the case of life and mind, he explains, “Physical science has been able to explain the phenomenon of life—from molecular genetics we now know how reproduction, arguably the most salient biological phenomenon, is possible” (Kim, 2011, pp. 301-302). Reproduction is how animals make and bring another of their kind into existence as independent entities, yet the fact that some foetus are born dead means reproduction does not always give life. Life can be inherent in the

entity due to reproduction, but reproduction is simply the process by which that entity comes about. Explaining reproduction does not explain life. Life is a qualitative feature of a human being; it is also a qualitative capacity. Biological phenomenon is physical, so, how does it explain a non-physical relation, that is, between mind and life? Kim's position is a mixture of physical and metaphysical issues, it is therefore necessary to unravel these for clarity.

As was hinted at in Chapter Three, any discussion of concept of person is also about life. By "life and mind" Kim is referring to the relation between, at least, human life and the human mind. Of course, as long as there is life, the mind works. In the light of co-relation, Kim's point that the relation between life and mind has yielded to physical explanation must take account of the ontological separateness between mind (or consciousness) and the brain. However, one cannot affirm that point without first discussing the source of life. If mental lives and life itself are qualitative aspects of a human being, and mental lives, along with consciousness, resist characterisation as a physical entity, then it is hasty to move from understanding the co-relation between mind and brain to comprehension of the relation between life and mind, particularly, on a biological basis.

True, when brain activity ceases a person could die. It is easy to conclude on that basis that the presence of life is also due to the presence of brain activity; that is, on the basis that life and even consciousness emerges from a sophistication of physicality (Koch, 2018, p. 12); see below. However, the ontological leap cautions against direct movement to such a conclusion. Reproduction and the entire biological process show the presence of life rather than the source of life. Besides, mental or metaphysical lives are the qualitative aspect of a human being, so that, plausibly, life is more allied to those lives than to the brain or body. Physicality is not a basis for comprehending the relation between two intangible entities or the source of one of those entities.

To understand the relation between what is perceivable and what is not from the sole perspective of what is perceivable does not yield an understanding of the feature, working [or even source] of what is non-perceivable (Oluwole, 1995, pp. 367-368). On that basis, Kim's point of a physical or molecular explanation of life or the relation between life and mind is vacuous.

If compared to *sunsum*, *okra* is relatively highly and purely metaphysical, then what it (*okra*) bears, life, is more metaphysical than even consciousness. And if physicalism cannot account for consciousness, how can it begin to explain life?

Thus, Kim's "great mysteries" are still "two". He, implicitly and partly, points to the true state of affairs when he writes, "The mystery of the mind is, in essence, the mystery of consciousness. And consciousness may well be what makes the mind truly miraculous." (2011, p. 305). If, for a physicalist, a miracle is what defies reduction into physicality, then the ontological leap plays key role in the establishing of that "miraculous[ness]". However, what Kim refer to as a miracle – in principle, the metaphysical aspect – is not a miracle in Akan (African) philosophy, and is not fully so in substance dualism. Therefrom, "miracle" must have a different meaning in the two philosophy traditions.

4.1.4. Ontological separateness of brain and consciousness in other philosophical traditions

This section looks at the relation between consciousness and brain in other philosophical traditions. The Buddhist and Hindi traditions of Asia have thousands of years old literature on consciousness. Yet Olivia Goldhill (2015) quotes Evan Thompson as saying, "neither neuroscience nor Buddhism has a definitive answer on exactly how consciousness relates to the brain" (Goldhill, 2015, para 9). Some Asian philosophies have holistic conceptions of reality, and, as we will see below, consciousness expresses itself in closely related stages.

4.1.4.1. The separateness in Ancient Egyptian philosophy

One can infer the separateness of consciousness and brain in Ancient Egyptian philosophy as explained by Joseph Osei, who also draws similarity between the Ancient Egyptian (black) concept of person and others “still prevalent in West Africa” (Joseph Osei, 1995, p. 19). One of those “still prevalent” concepts must be the Akan concept of person. Osei writes,

The [Ancient] Egyptians ...believed that a human being is not just a physical entity, but a psychosomatic being with a body and soul. The Egyptian word for body is *Khat* and for soul is *Ba* or *Ka*. *Ba* has human characteristics and so it is distinguishable from *Ka* which is the conceptual replica or form of physical reality created by Ptah with the assistance of Atum. There is also the *Khu* (mind), which is the shining part [of a human being] that bridges the gap between the human being, the superhuman being and the body (*Khat*). (1995, p. 19)

First, note the distinction between *Ba* (or soul), the essence of a living human being, and *Ka* or “the conceptual replica or form of physical reality”. That critical distinction was prospected by the examination of Aristotle’s hylomorphism in Chapter 2. Second, “*Khu* ...bridges the gap between the human being, the superhuman being and the body” should possibly rather read: *Khu* ...bridges what could have been the gap within the human being, that is, between the superhuman being, *Ba*, and the body (*Khat*). Again, it is possible Osei uses “soul” and “mind” so that the similarities will communicate to his readers the arrangement of aspects in the Ancient Egyptian concept. It will thus be unsurprising if detailed conception of *Ba* and *Khu* are indeed different from “soul” and “mind”.

Also, note that the Ancient Egyptian concept of person is a three-aspect like the Akan concept of person. If that is true, then *okra*, in principle, is akin to *Ba*, and *Khat* to *honam*.

Further, *Khu* “bridges the gap” or is the transition stage between *Ba* and *Khat*. A further critical point is the description of *Khu* as “the shining part of a [human being]”. If “shining” makes the expression of *Khu* perceivable, then the expression makes it an active aspect of a person. As we saw above, Gyekye describes *sunsum* as the active part of a metaphysical duality. If that is true, then *Khu* may be equivalent to *sunsum*, and may be the bearer of a person’s personality and character traits since it is the activity or expression of those traits that could make *Khu* shine. *Khu*, like *sunsum*, must be the bearer of consciousness which is ontologically separate from brain. And then the separateness of *Ba* and *Khu* from *Khat* and the fact that each of these perform different functions mean they are somewhat ontologically separate as depicted for Akan concept of person in Chapter Three.

4.1.5. Some recent positions on ontological separateness in Western Philosophy

Christoff Koch (2018) expresses “very little sympathy for this desperate [search for a] solution to the mind-body problem” (p. 9), and discloses, “More than a quarter of a century ago Francis Crick and I decided to set aside philosophical discussions on consciousness ...and instead search for its physical footprints” (p. 9). As Smart explains, however, the footprints of Bill Sykes the criminal are not Bill Sykes (1959, p. 142). Koch prescribes, “Ultimately what we need is a satisfying scientific theory of consciousness that predicts under which conditions any particular physical system—whether it is a complex circuit of neurons or silicon transistors—has experiences” (Koch, 2018, p. 11). By the “physical footprints” of consciousness, Koch is referring to brain processes, hence the “scientific theory” depends on co-relation. Also, “silicon transistors” refer to critical particulars in the transmission circuitry system of digital computers,

and Koch is establishing identity between brain processes and silicon transistors; this, in principle, was discussed in Chapter Two.

Even most recent literature on neuro-science and consciousness point to the separateness; hence to the ontological leap. For example, Aaron Shurger and Michael Graziano (2022) write,

Consciousness is an unusual phenomenon to study scientifically... This misalignment between the means—science—and the end—explaining consciousness—gave rise to what has become a productive workaround: *the search for ‘neural correlates of consciousness’ (NCCs)*. Science can side-step trying to explain consciousness and instead focus on characterising the kind(s) of neural activity that are reliably co-related with consciousness. However, while we have learned a lot about consciousness in the bargain, *the NCC approach was not originally intended as the foundation for a true explanation of consciousness*. Indeed, it was proposed precisely to side-step the, arguably futile, attempt to find one [i.e., a direct explanation of consciousness]. So *how can an account, couched in terms of neural correlates ...explain consciousness? The answer is that it cannot, and in fact most modern accounts of consciousness do not pretend to*. ...[M]odern [science] accounts of consciousness ...describe what they cannot explain...

(2022, p. 1, Emphases added, square bracket inserted)

This is self-explanatory. And while pessimism is not a term for this research, note the finality of the authors’ affirmation that modern science cannot attain an explanation of consciousness.

Still, Shurger and Graziano propose a “modern account... [that] qualifies as an explanat[ion of consciousness]” (2022, p. 1). However, the “*explanatory power [of the account lies in] offering to explain why we believe in consciousness rather than explaining consciousness per se*” (2022, p. 2, Emphases added). They add that “many people find this unsatisfactory” (2022, p. 2), which is true, because their account too does not address the central puzzle.

Again, Matteo Grasso, Andrew M. Huan, and Giulio Tononi (2023) explain, “Neuro-science has made remarkable advances in accounting for how the brain performs its various functions. Consciousness, too, is usually approached in functional terms...” (Abstract). First,

note that the two statements are about parallel activities or functions. As we saw in Chapter Two, functionalism avoids the ontological issues it must address. Thus, the link between the remarkable advances neuro-science has made on the functioning of brain and on the parallel of consciousness is based on implicit affirmation of co-relation.

4.2. Creation Abhors Ontological Separateness

Thus, persistence of ontological separateness – yet to be foreclosed, if that is ever possible – means ontological separation, along with the metaphysical-physical characteristics of a human being and hence of co-relation, even in Western philosophy, are historically affirmed. However, separation in a holistic system and co-relation indicate an interaction between the different ontologies. This brings up the notion of transition or some form of connection between the metaphysical and physical aspects of a holistic entity.

A human being is such a holistic entity, and the fact that the human being is or can be alive and functioning means there is interaction between his or her metaphysical and physical aspects. The fundamental challenge with substance dualism is the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction. Descartes' failure to provide an answer to the puzzle means he failed to account for the transition in the human being. On that basis, if we assume that every holistic entity must be inherent with a sort of transition to properly function, we can stretch it to say reality abhors ontological separateness in a holistic entity made up of heterogeneous aspects.

If reality eschews ontological separateness in holistic entities, then there must be a plausible response to the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction. That response is what will, theoretically, affirm the conceptual wholeness of substance dualism and turn its potential into a capability to account for consciousness. That response is what Princess Elizabeth asked of

Descartes (Yandell, 1997). Descartes' response was simply that heterogeneous interaction is as much a part of reality as homogeneous interaction. By that, he was implicitly pointing to a transition within the holistic heterogeneous system. Alas! Descartes did not establish that transition.

As we saw in Chapter Three, there is no puzzle of heterogeneous interaction in Akan concept of person, because *sunsum* is a seamless ontological transition between *okra* and *honam* (body) which includes *amene* (brain). Still, our Akan elders tell us: “*Etiri ennye brofre na y’apae mu ahu nea ewo mu*” – The head is not pawpaw that we can split it (open) to see what is in it. Of course, when we split an *onipa*’s (a human being’s) head open we will see *amene*. Thus, for Akan, the referent of *what is in the head that we cannot see* is the working of all the metaphysical capacities – including *adwene-atinka* (thought-emotion) and *anidaho* (consciousness) and rationality – coming through *amene*.

As stated above, the metaphysical features in Akan concept of person, including consciousness, are not “miraculous”. Yet, that does not foreclose basic questions about consciousness. Conversely, the fact that in Western philosophy some authors, such as Kim (2011, p. 305), describe the features of mind and consciousness as miraculous emphasises the imperative-ness of those basic questions. “What is consciousness?” The response to that will be essential to whether consciousness has scope. The complexity of *internal* human characteristics and experience – as typified, at least, in the outlay of epistemic capacities listed by Kant, or by the sophistication of *sunsum* – allows us to upfront ask whether consciousness has scope. Again, Brentano writes about the “unity of consciousness” in which “experience does not resolve itself into a bundle or multiplicity of scattered bits” but is a “mono-categorical ontology” (Barry Smith, 1995, pp. 62-63). Unity could denote an aggregate of “bits”. Hence, the issue of “experience” as

possibly “a bundle”, though denied by Brentano, also allows us to immediately pose questions about scope. Again, we discussed Kant’s and James’ epistemological conceptions of consciousness in Chapter Two, and if those discussions are anything to go by, then questions about scope are also essential to this discourse.

4.3. The Challenge of Delineating Consciousness

Any full discussion of consciousness faces a prior fundamental challenge – the apparent general belief that it is ambiguous or difficult or even impossible to define. Emmanuel Buckman (2011) points out that “variations in the meanings of the concept of consciousness have been common and more radical”, and “the various meanings of consciousness have contributed to make the concept not only a difficult one to unravel but also a complex one” (p. 13). G. E. Moore states, “The moment we try to fix our attention upon consciousness and to see what, distinctly, it is it seems to vanish. It seems as if we had before a mere emptiness” (James, 1904, p. 479). That means consciousness is so subliminal that it is difficult to conceptualise. Paul Natorp also states, “Consciousness is inexplicable and hardly describable” (James, 1904, p. 479), and Rocco J. Genarro (2021) says “consciousness” “is notoriously ambiguous”.

Even writers who directly discuss consciousness hardly pin it down as this or that. Place (1956) affirms that “consciousness is a process in the brain”. However, since, according to him, that is not a definition, Place has to tell us what consciousness itself is. Nagel takes on almost the entire *corps* of physicalist philosophers for ignoring the mind-body problem (1974, pp. 435-436). However, he discusses consciousness from the largely subjective perspective of “what it is like to be [the organism that is experiencing]” (1974, p. 436, Square brackets inserted). That

perspective has the potential to foreclose the fruitfulness of any possible objective or observer approach to the subject of consciousness.

Yet Nagel also establishes a critical point: It is with consciousness that one experiences. However, the puzzle in Nagel's conception is whether an observer's (O's) understanding of the experiences of the experiencer (E) may lead O, through introspection, to what consciousness is. If yes, the possible challenge will be whether O can then adequately articulate a conception of consciousness that delivers to others a concept of consciousness rather than of consciousness from O's perspective. For, an objective conceptualization of consciousness is the proper response to "What is consciousness?" But if consciousness is largely the unique experience of an organism, then Nagel's encapsulation of it may not be the response anticipated for "What is consciousness?"

Hence it is not strange when Diana Gasparyan (2019) re-affirms "Merab Mamardashvili's ideas about the 'invisible' and 'unknowable' nature of consciousness, as conveyed by the term 'non-objectifying'" (p. 241). She explains, "The term 'non-objectiveness' assumes not only the non-physicality of consciousness but also the logical impossibility of positively and affirmatively apprehending consciousness in terms of standard subject-object determinations" (2019, p. 241). Mamardashvili's position, therefore, portrays "the paradoxical nature of consciousness" (Gasparyan, 2019, 241). That means because of its metaphysical feature consciousness defies objective, scientific analysis and, hence is enigmatic or difficult to characterise.

Not surprisingly, therefore, George Hagar (2020) says,

Despite centuries of analyses, definitions, explanations and debates by philosophers and scientists, consciousness remains puzzling and controversial, being both the most familiar

and [yet] the most mysterious aspect of our lives. Perhaps the only widely agreed notion about the topic is the intuition that it exists.
(2020, Introduction)

If consciousness remains “puzzling and controversial” it may be because there are so many definitions of it, and, implicit in the quote, none of those encapsulations meets any criterion of general acceptance.

In light of such pessimism, is it possible to conceive a definition that appeals to most if not all fields of study? Admittedly, such a concept need not answer all questions that can be posed about it. Its merit will lie in its relatively high efficiency at performing the task(s) it and its conceptual peers, say concepts of person, are applied to perform. The question then is whether such plausible true encapsulation is possible for *consciousness*.

4.4. The Fundamental Characteristic of Consciousness

Consciousness has been characterised as awareness, understanding, perception or knowing. Which is the appropriate one? This section looks at the basics of consciousness, and onward to the establishing of consciousness in part, that is, conceived based on encounter with physical reality, including bodily existences.

4.4.1. The basic scope of the expression of consciousness

The online “Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary” gives us two definitions of consciousness useful herein. One says “consciousness” is “the state of being able to use your senses and mental powers to understand what is happening”; the second says consciousness is “the state of being aware of something”. The first definition is *understanding with the senses and mental capability*, and the second is *awareness*. The first presents a challenge. An Akan

statement says “*Ye de anua hwe ade, nanso ye de adwene na ehu*” – We use the eyes to look at a thing, but it is thought that we use to see. Here, ‘see’ means “to be aware of”. Eyes are for sight, and you may be aware of the situation of sometimes not being aware of an object that is right in front of you. In the *Meditations*, Descartes argues that though the features of the wax change, it is by understanding (through thought) that he knows it is the same wax (1911, p. 11). Thus, without subtracting anything from the importance of the eyes (or senses), understanding is a feature that accompanies thought, and both are essential to awareness.

William James (1904) affirms that all mental events are about the external world. Descartes will agree with that. However, Descartes adds that the idea of God is innate to a human being (p. 1-18). Descartes arrived at that innate idea through will-directed activity of consciousness plus thinking. Majeed (in Simpson *et al*, 2013B) explains that the Akan attained the conception of Onyame through rational activity (p. 119) – or, appropriately, will-directed activity of consciousness plus thinking – since Akan inferred it from observation and in-depth understanding of *Abodie* (creation), including the features and behaviour of the human being.

Genarro (2021) expands the spectrum of the activity of consciousness by saying, “Through consciousness, one can know the external world or one’s own mental states” (Section 1). Certainly, Descartes concurs with that, but adds more with human knowledge of God. Thus, for Descartes the spectrum of what a human being can use his or her consciousness to apprehend is wider than Genarro’s conception allows.

Hagar gives the broadest possible conception of the range over which a person expresses consciousness by saying, “Consciousness at its simplest refers to sentience or awareness of internal and external existence” (Hagar, 2020, Introduction). While that is wide enough to accommodate any conceivable combination of internal and external spectrums in reference, it is

essential to ask whether there are limits to the possibilities of internal existence(s). Note, however, that that query is posed not to Hagar's conception. Its relevance resides in the fact that intrinsically different concepts of person give different possibilities of or different types or spectrum of internal existence(s). And, vast is the significance of these possibilities or different spectrums for the conceptual expressions of consciousness.

4.4.2. Consciousness as awareness

Above, we saw the use of consciousness as awareness and as understanding. Discussing consciousness, John Locke uses "perceive" (Locke, 2017, p. 330), and Genarro (2021) gives the etymology of "consciousness" as "knowing..." (Section 1). Which of these is a fitting term for the expression of consciousness?

The Dictionary gives several definitions of each term. "Awareness" is also "knowing"; "know" is also "to realise", "understand" or "be aware of"; "perceive" is also "...understand" or "become aware of...", and "understand" is also "know" or "realise". Obviously, "awareness" could mean "to know" or "knowing", which could mean "realise", which could mean "understand", which could mean "perceive".

These terms are synonyms, yet it is essential to note that synonyms have in meaning slight inflections that demand caution in picking the appropriate term for the specific context of a term or sentence. On closer examination the meaning of each term includes "awareness" yet means much more; meaning "awareness" is basic to all these other terms. Hence, "awareness" is the appropriate basic term for consciousness. And we can now accept Hagar's conception, though tentatively: Consciousness refers to awareness of external and internal existence(s). There are usually no arguments over what the external existence(s) are – the activities without

the full encapsulation of a human being. The disagreements and debates are, largely, over the internal existences and the ontological features and possible spectrums of these. The internal existences are the set of activities within the full ontological encapsulation of a human being.

4.4.3. Some actuals of how consciousness is expressed

John Locke explains consciousness in a way that allows us to realise four sets of perceiving, where the “sets” is not necessarily hierarchical. Locke states, “...(C)onsciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and, as it seems to me, essential to it: it being impossible for anyone to perceive without perceiving that he does perceive. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will anything we know that we do so...” (2017, p. 330). First, “(C)onsciousness which is inseparable from thinking” means the two closely work together through they are different. Also, “see” and “hear” are, respectively, the result of “look and “listen” which are sense activities. Thus, let us replace “see” with “look”, and “hear” with “listen”, and then, note that the activities Locke mentions fall into four different categories of perceiving. These are sense experience, feeling, meditating, and perceiving that we perceive. For each category, information from Descartes corroborates Locke’s point.

Smell, taste, look and listen are sense experiences. As Descartes demonstrates, the senses for anyone tend to be the first line of contact with the external existence(s), which Descartes refers to as “all other things which are external to me (and which are met with outside of me)” (1911, p. 12).

Locke does not list imagine but mentions “feel”. Everyone has feeling and imagination. “This power of imagining... it forms part of my thought” and “I am the same who feels, that is to say, who perceives certain things, as by the organs of sense”, (Descartes, 1911, pp. 11) Here,

Descartes places imagination in thought, and puts down feeling as perceiving by the senses. However, while observing with eyes cannot be feeling, a person's first impression of that observation could be a species of what Kant terms "sensibility". However, it is when thought is applied to those first impressions of external existences that imagination results, within.

Descartes himself appears to provide such clarification when he states, "...I could not even understand through the imagination what this piece of wax is, and that it is my mind alone which perceives it" (1911, p. 11). Here, for Descartes, understanding resides in mind and is separate from imagination. Descartes also says one perceives with the mind, which is only part of the truth; the details are finer and more sophisticated. In Chapter Three we separate emotion from feeling, and decided to make emotion a basic capacity, like thought. Again, therefore, it is when emotion is applied to the first internal impressions of external existences that feeling results; within. Therefore, it must be obvious that imagination and feeling are the interfaces between what the senses have picked up and the rest of an individual's internal existence(s).

Another category Locke mentions is to "meditate". Let us reset it as meditation or thinking (thought); most probably, not the spiritual concept of meditation but simply an activity of deep thought and analysis. Thus, Descartes also writes, "...[S]olely by the faculty of judgment which rests in my mind, I comprehend that which I believed I saw with my eyes" (1911, p. 12). In Descartes' philosophy, judgement and comprehending are features of mind. Here, Descartes separates sense perceiving from perceiving with mind. Thus, Descartes, consider mind as a receptacle of human capacities, including thought, understanding and judgement, and even consciousness and feeling. As we saw above, Kant separates understanding from thought. And if judgement can lead to understanding then the two are separate, although they must all reside in mind with thought or meditation.

4.4.4. Consciousness as awareness that we perceive

Locke also speaks of “perceiving that he [or she] does perceive”. Descartes puts the same point differently: To “...perceive something as the subject of the action of my mind” (Descartes, 1911, p. 13). These instances refer to being aware that we are aware of something. Since thought is a means by which we can perceive, this capability, awareness of being aware, must be separate from thought. It is indeed the kind of awareness James refers to when he states that other authors affirm that we can have “immediate consciousness of consciousness itself” (James, 1904, p. 479).

But that is not all. Let us recall from above that Locke also mentions “will anything”. “Willing” is certainly different from all the capacities already considered, and the position herein is that it falls outside mind; that is, if mind is about mental activities. The list of capacities mentioned here does not exhaust the capacities innate to a human being. However, one must by now be getting a hint that not all human capacities, for example, feeling and imagination and will, should directly fall in mind.

The capacity of being aware that we are aware is discussed in aspects of Asian philosophy. Narayanan Srinivasan (2020) writes, “Verse 7 of the *Mandukya Upanishad* mentions four states of consciousness. Three [of the] states of consciousness are familiar; [these] are wakefulness, dreaming, and sleep” (Srinivasan, 2020, p. 1, Square brackets inserted). For its significance, the fourth, awareness that we are aware, is discussed further below. Note the difference Srinivasan’s list makes with Locke’s; the latter mentions capacities while the former states activities by the human being. Thompson (in Goldhill, 2015) states, “The standard neuroscience view is that deep sleep is a blackout state where consciousness disappears.

[However], ...[i]n Indian [Buddhist] philosophy we see some theorists argue that there's a subtle awareness that continues to be present in dreamless sleep; there's just a lack of ability to consolidate that in a moment-to-moment way in memory" (Goldhill, 2015, para 7). In Buddhist philosophy, therefore, consciousness does not always go to sleep when the individual sleeps. Also, in Buddhist philosophy, a person could still express consciousness during dreaming. This is similar to an interpretation in Akan philosophy – during dreams one can even project *sunsum* (Gyekye, 1995, pp. 92-93). Such projection involves the application of consciousness, will and intention acting with other capacities. Indeed, such a projection could be the basis of paranormal activity.

During wakefulness, consciousness is expressed through several other capacities, including thought, understanding, willing, imagination and feeling, and also the senses, and it happens through interaction with the mental, bodily and external environments. In conventional Western philosophy – as it appears from the works of Kant, James, Place, Smart and Nagel – therefore, the expression of consciousness during “wakefulness” appears to be the most familiar.

From the fore-going, therefore, we may deduce *consciousness in part* – the expression of awareness through an outlay of intangible and tangible epistemic capacities for knowledge and understanding of all mental existences, bodily activities, and external existences.

4.5. Consciousness: One-aspect vrs Two-aspect Concepts

This section commences the exploration of possible types or spectrums of internal existence(s) and how each accounts for consciousness. As hinted at above, any possible type of internal existence and its spectrum are determined by a concept of person since each concept takes account of different set(s) of metaphysical lives. Depending on the type or spectrum, the

possible location or even scope over which consciousness is expressed alters, yet a specific concept of person will even determine whether consciousness will be accounted for at all. If consciousness is accounted for, to what extent is it accounted for and where does it reside?

There is very little to be said for one-aspect concepts of person, since, as we saw in Chapter Two, a physical monolith cannot contain or uphold mental lives. Failure to uphold mental lives translates into a lack of capacity to adequately account for consciousness. Consciousness has no residence in a physicalist conception of a person. If a primal assumption of physicalism is to avoid the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction, then the physicalist projects were conceived despite the actual ontological make-up of a human being.

Descartes' two-aspect concept upholds mental lives, hence accounts for consciousness. However, his failure to articulate *the* transition to explain the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction reduces the capability of substance dualism to mere potential. Theoretically granting the transition hypothesis allows us to assume that potential altered to capability, for substance dualism to account for consciousness. such a transition could be provided by what Osei (1995) refers to with the term “bridges” (above), and what Pascale Hugon (202*) refers to as “bridging” (see Chapter Five).

Further, as we saw above, Descartes appears to differentiate consciousness from thought or thinking when he says, “...[to] perceive something as the subject of the action of my mind”. Since mind is the only ontological space for internal existence(s) and capacities, consciousness and thought are part of mind. However, Descartes goes further elsewhere and throws up a challenge. ““In the *Principles of Philosophy* (1640) [Descartes] wrote, “By the word ‘thought’ (*pensée*) I understand all that of which we are conscious as operating in us”” (Van Gulick, 2018, Section 1). Here, Descartes holds thought as distinct from consciousness of what is going

on within; yet makes thought equivalent to “conscious of all that [is] operating in us” or mind, which also includes consciousness. That stated, Descartes conceives a more or less full scope of the expression of consciousness yet makes mind as his definition of thought the sole receptacle of all internal existences.

4.6. Consciousness in Aspects of Asian Philosophy

Aspects of the expression of consciousness in Asian philosophies have been mentioned above. It is important to also discuss some of these aspects in detail, for the essential similarities that can be drawn between these and the expression of consciousness in Akan philosophy.

Above we saw Srinivasan’s rendition of how the expression of consciousness is conceived in aspects of Oriental philosophy. Other Oriental accounts discuss consciousness as a metaphysic. And consciousness as a metaphysic and how it is expressed is the concerns of this chapter. This section examines the fourth state of consciousness on Srinivasan’s list, and then discusses V. Jayaram’s rendition of approaches to the expression of consciousness in aspects of Asian philosophy. The discourse includes comparisons with modern neuro-scientific positions. The goal is to see whether this could lead us closer to or to what consciousness is.

Buddhism and neuro-science disagree on the possible range of the expression of consciousness. “[T]he two fields diverge on certain aspects of the topic. Buddhists believe that there’s some form of consciousness that’s not dependent on the physical body, while neuro-scientists disagree” (Goldhill, 2015, para 9). Since “dependent on the physical body” stretches from within the body to the individual’s experiences with the external environment, its opposite must, plausibly, mean content that is not the direct result of experiences with physical entities, including bodily experience. And Jiddhu Krishnamurti (2023) appears to concur with the neuro-

science rebuttal when he affirms that “[c]onsciousness is its content” and then goes on to link content to experience within the body and with the external world (2023, Part 1, Section 1).

4.6.1. Consciousness without content from physical experience

Hindi and Buddhist philosophies refer to yet another level of consciousness. Srinivasan writes, “Many traditions in the East have proposed that *consciousness without content* is possible...” (2020, Abstract, Emphasis added). “Consciousness without content”, as we just saw, must be awareness of content that is not the direct result of experiences with physical entities, including bodily experience. This, “consciousness without content” (Srinivasan, 2020, p. 2), is “[t]he most interesting and unusual [level,] the fourth state called *Turiya*” (Srinivasan, 2020, p. 1). Srinivasan also states, “Buddhists also ...mention four planes of consciousness in which the fourth plane is called *Lokuttara*, which is unintentional consciousness (*nirvana*). *Nirvana* is a pure conscious state” (2020, p. 2). Pure state of consciousness must be similar to consciousness without content, and, that, in addition to consciousness with content, tells us that consciousness is a capacity; that is, before it can have content.

Quoting Olivelle, Srinivasan writes, “*Turiya* is defined as follows:

They [Hindi] consider the fourth quarter as perceiving neither what is inside nor what is outside, nor even both together; not as a mass of perception, neither as perceiving nor as not perceiving; as unseen; as beyond the reach of ordinary transaction; as ungraspable; as without distinguishing marks; as unthinkable; as indescribable; as one whose essence is the perception of itself alone; as the cessation of the visible world; as tranquil; as auspicious; as without a second. That is the self (atman), and it is that which should be perceived (Olivelle, 1998, p. 475). (Srinivasan, 2020, p. 1)

Turiya is also mentioned in other Upanishads (Srinivasan, 2020, p. 1). This above-quoted description of *Turiya* portrays “consciousness without content” as a state of awareness completely divested of any contents gained from experience with physical entities. Again, close look reveals that this description of *Turiya*, “as the cessation of the visible world” or “as beyond the reach of ordinary transaction”, makes it the state of consciousness of the essence and conceptual commencement point of a human being. V. Jayaram describes *Turiya* as “the transcendental state” (Jayaram, 2023, para 5). ; It is the state of the mitigated transcendental in a human being.

Srinivasan observes, “The state of consciousness without bliss is problematic because such states are described as non-intentional” (2020, p. 2). His worry arises from the fact that intention directed by will almost always accompanies the expression of consciousness. Indeed, it takes far great intention directed by will to make or sustain that inward journey *up* from the level of the senses through the outlay of epistemic capacities to reach the *atman*. Yet, *atman* is uncharacterised by intention, because it (*atman*) is a wholeness onto itself. It is the essence of a human being. The *atman* is the bringer of life, and all qualitative features of reality or capacities of a human being yet is simultaneously empty of these features; these features or capacities are *latent* in the *atman*. The *atman* is the representative of the creator in an individual or creation, where the individual is not necessarily a human being. The *atman* is the untainted purity that comes from God.

If this statement on *atman* sounds perplexing or esoteric to physicalists, it is partly because, as Friedrich Waissman explains, when sceptics are deeply questioning accepted knowledge – especially, those that portend progress in knowledge – language could become a kind of barrier (1968, p. 14). That point can be extrapolated further. From certain levels of the

metaphysical and on the issue of God language fails us. To communicate about entities and experiences at those levels, we are unavoidably compelled to apply language which, interminably, cannot describe them. That is because *kasa* (language) is birthed by the inter-relation between the expression of *anidaho* (consciousness) – through *adwene-atenka* (mind-emotion) and the other epistemic capacities – and the physical.

4.6.2. Levels of consciousness as a metaphysic

Jayaram's major contribution to this discourse lies in what he describes as the "four divergent approaches ...about the universal consciousness or pure consciousness..." (2023, Section 2). As we will see below, the first and second approaches are two aspects of the same holistic conception of God consciousness and of consciousness as the essence of a human being, and; each of the last two appears to be different versions of materialist approaches somewhat opposed to the holistic conception. Note that Jayaram's presentation treats consciousness as a capacity or metaphysic. The significance of his rendition is that it allows us to trace the path along which consciousness is expressed, right from consciousness of God, through the essence of a human being within the human being, and the other aspects of a human being and ending in the senses.

One approach is that

...the universal consciousness is the innermost reality or the center of human consciousness. It exists not only at the universal level as an independent entity and controller of all, but also in all beings as their very center and inner Lord. If you strip all the modifications and components of the individual consciousness, what remains in the end is the one eternal, indivisible, supreme consciousness.
(Jayaram, 2023, Section 2:1)

Jayaram continues, “That one eternal consciousness alone is true. The rest is an illusion. When one realises it, one becomes liberated. This is the school of non-dualism” (2023, Section 2:1), which says consciousness is one. Here, “illusion” simply means unessential compared to the “one eternal consciousness”. Indivisible supreme, consciousness that is eternal plus non-dualism means beyond reality; it is transcendental. This is God consciousness, and to realise it while living in the body means one must, so to put it, express consciousness *backwards*, that is, beyond *atman* to the source of *atman*.

The second approach says, “[T]he universal consciousness is present in all beings as their very Self. However, it is not the same as the consciousness of the Supreme Being (Jayaram, 2023, Section 2:2). The fact that this Self, plausibly *atman*, “is not exactly the same as” Supreme consciousness deserves qualification. The *atman* is a ray of Supreme Being but whose qualities have been mitigated by coupling with matter. Jayaram adds, “When a being attains liberation, the liberated Self continues to exist as an independent, eternal, and free entity. This is the view of the schools of dualism and qualified dualism” (2023, Section 2:2). This is characterisation of the highest state consciousness can be expressed to within reality, *Turiya* or *atman*.

As stated above, for cultural traditions that are fundamentally holistic, these first two approaches must, *most likely*, be aspects of the same holistic conception. In Hindi, the Supreme Consciousness gives *Turiya*.

Thus, the third approach appears to be opposition to the holistic, that is, the set of the first two in Hindi philosophy. This view, held by “Jainism and the Yoga and Samkhya schools” of the Hindi tradition, is that “there is no eternal, universal [one] consciousness” (Jayaram, 2023, Section 2:3). There are only a collective of individual separate consciousness, and if each can

suppress the modifications of [his or her mind] and bodies and free [himself or herself] from desires, [he or she] can extinguish the suffering caused by the afflictions of [the mind] and enter into an indistinguishable, and indefinable state of all knowing, aloneness (Kaivalya), which is their true state.
(2023, Section 2:3)

From the description, *Kaivalya* appears to be the name of *Lokuttara* in a different tradition of Hindi philosophy. Here there are only separate objects, each with an essence, and there is no hub for the essences. Consciousness can be expressed only to the level of *Kaiyalva* and never beyond; there is no consciousness beyond reality.

According to Jayaram, yet another approach to the expression of consciousness is held by “Buddhism and some materialistic schools of [the Hindi tradition]” (Section 2:4). For these traditions, consciousness is expressed in individual entities in reality; there is no supreme hub of consciousness.

Again, since there is no concept of God consciousness in these last two approaches, it is not readily obvious what happens to the individuality of each aggregate, self, once it disintegrates. Another issue concerns the source of individuality.

4.7. The Akan Concept of Person and Life and Consciousness

What is the relationship between consciousness, on one hand, and, on the other, *amene* (brain) in *honam* (body)? Where does life fit in? This section looks at how Akan concept of person accounts for life and human capacities, including *anidaho* (consciousness). It also looks at whether life arises out of a sophistication of physicality or comes to couple with it. This section ends with an encapsulation of consciousness.

4.7.1. Consciousness in Akan

What is consciousness in Akan? An extensive search for works on consciousness by African philosophers yielded nothing until the discovery of Buckman's MPHIL thesis. Buckman discusses a set of terms and picks out "*anidaho*" as the Akan term for consciousness. He explains that the etymology of *anidaho* is two words, *ani* (eye) and *daho* (lying beside or focused on) (Buckman, 2011, pp. 22-23). Therefore, *anidaho* means *eyes focused on*. These are two empirical terms put together to make an abstract or a metaphysical term. Chapter Three hinted at a problem Wiredu has with such Akan metaphysical terms. However, the position herein is that once empirical words are combined to create a metaphysical term, the empirical meaning(s) of the basic term(s) no longer apply. For the Akans, therefore, *anidaho* is either "intention" or "awareness".

Buckman's pick is significant. Starting with the term "eye", we have to consider its presence in the metaphysical term as pointing to *the lead of our attention*, and further backwards to *the attention of our awareness*. Thus, *anidaho* is conceived as the focusing of our inner attention or awareness on any stage of the other epistemic capacities it (awareness) is expressed through. Here, therefore, *anidaho* is "awareness" expressing through a list of epistemic capacities, such as *adwene* (thought) or *atenka* (emotion).

It is stated above that life is the bringer of consciousness. Yet consciousness makes one aware of his or her life. And, as is stated above, life is qualitative and hence must be allied to metaphysical lives rather than to the physical. So, wherefrom does life come?

4.7.2. What is the source of life?

Akan concept of person has two aspects of internal existence – *okra* and *sunsum* – and because of the feature of *sunsum* there is interaction, which over-rides co-relation. According to the plausible explanation outlined in Chapter Three, *okra*, as the bearer of life and coming from Onyame, couples with *honam* leading thereby to the making of a third aspect, *sunsum*. Most or all physicalists will disagree with that.

According to Koch (2018), “[T]he central puzzle of our existence [is] how a three-pound organ [the brain], exudes the feeling of life” (p. 12). Here, “exudes” means “slowly push out”. Hence, for Koch, life comes out of the physical or, as James will have it (see above), out of a sophistication of physicality. First, “feeling of life” should be *concept of life*. Also, Koch appears to presume the response to a prior fundamental question, “What is the source of life?”, and then shifts the emphasis to what he terms “the central puzzle of our existence”. As we saw in Chapter Two, physicalism fails to uphold even mental lives. Since mental lives are a consequence of life, we can begin from the basic assumption that physicalism is unqualified at telling us the source of life.

It appears by “the feeling of life” Koch means the expression of consciousness. Life instills consciousness. An amoeba lacks a human-like brain, and Kim says it is not conscious (2011, p. 272). However, even an amoeba has animacy and hence possesses certain level of awareness, because if it comes up against a stone while moving, it alters its direction. As to whether the amoeba is aware that it is aware, we may have to, as Nagel will explain, get into the experience of the amoeba to know that.

For a human being, therefore, life and consciousness form part of the metaphysical qualitative aspect, which is fluid and malleable compared to the physical aspect. Thus, the

reality may not be, as Koch states, that the physical “exudes the feeling of life”, but rather that the metaphysical aspect comes to combine with the appropriate physical constitution to make a human being.

4.8. The Significance of Consciousness without Content and God Consciousness

The critical point from the Asian philosophies, consciousness without content and God consciousness, shortens what could have been a lengthy narrative because we can draw parallels with the expression of consciousness in Akan concept of person. The basic, hence common, position is that an individual could direct consciousness not only from and through *sunsum* and into the body and outward to the eternal environment, but also in the conceptual opposite direction. In Asian philosophy, the individual can direct the expression of consciousness in the opposite direction to the *atman* and, possibly, onward to God or God consciousness.

The parallel is where an individual could direct *anidaho* (consciousness) in the opposite direction to *okra* and possibly to Onyame. The Akan names of God – such as Onyame, Odomankoma, Atoapem and Enyiasombea – affirm the Alone-ness or Absolute Uniqueness of Onyame in all aspects. God or Onyame consciousness is transcendental. *Okra* comes from Onyame and bears life, which is content yet content that has nothing to do with content generated from experience with the physical; its content is latent. *Turiya* is what Jayaram refers to as the “the innermost reality or the center of human consciousness”, or, according to Srinivasan, what is “beyond the reach of ordinary transaction” and “as the cessation of the visible world”.

A plausible parallel is consciousness that rests in *okra*, which, according to Gyekye, is the innermost essence of a human being, and, as expressed in Chapter Three, is beyond the reach

of all physical laws. Yet, note, critically, that *okra* is not the conceptual residence of *anidaho* or consciousness. *Anidaho* as a capacity – and even rationality – resides in *sunsum*, and a person expresses it through an outlay of other capacities to interact with others and the environment, and backwards over higher levels of consciousness beyond the capacity of consciousness in *sunsum*.

4.9. The basic responsibilities of *anidaho*

A person or the individual in a community apply *anidaho* through several epistemic capacities to enable him or her to interact with others and the environment. These capacities include rationality, *adwene* (thought) and *atenka* (emotion). Using the last two for the discussion will establish the importance of *anidaho* to a human being.

In the individual, imagination is the intermediary of the expression of *adwene* through other epistemic capacities, such as emotion and understanding, for evaluating and comprehending both the internal existences and external environment. In Chapter Three, “emotion” was put down as a capacity and “feeling” as a derivative of the relation between the expression of emotion and information from the physical realm. Thus, in the individual, feeling is the intermediary of the expression of *atenka* through other epistemic capacities, such as thought and understanding, for evaluating and comprehending both the internal existences and external environment. Both ways in which a person expresses *anidaho* concern what can be done to maintain hence enhance life rather than hurt or destroy it. Both primarily concern the individual applying *anidaho* to ensure survival. It is obvious that the individual applies *adwene* and *atenka* differently, and since each cannot play the role of the other, each, like every capacity in *sunsum*, shares equal status of importance to a person.

Defined above is *consciousness in part*. Here is a conception of holistic consciousness: It is the capacity of awareness expressed through an outlay of intangible and tangible epistemic capacities to bring about holistic knowledge about oneself and for understanding onto holistic living, welfare and survival.

The Akan concept separates life from metaphysical lives hence making it easy for us to look at life and discuss it as a separate concept. It also enables us to set *sunsum* apart as the sole receptacle for human capacities, and the aspect responsible for the expression of consciousness. Backed by life, the combined expressions of consciousness and the other capacities in a physical environment, complemented by factors of inheritance, help generate an individual's personality and character traits. And an individual's day-by-day exercise of these personality and character traits – which falls in the domain of normative personhood – results in the making and maintaining of both personal and common identities.

4.10. Common Identity and Personal Identity

Different concepts of person decide whether consciousness will be accounted for at all. And where consciousness is accounted for, the concept of person determines the scope over which the individual can express consciousness. Personal identity is a set of intrinsic characteristics that is unique to each human being despite our extrinsic and intrinsic human commonalities and changes that can happen to it. Common identity is a set of intrinsic features shared by all human beings despite our intrinsic and extrinsic differences due to individual or (intra-human) group characteristics. How a person expresses consciousness is closely related to identity, common and personal. Thus, while the different concepts of person hold separate

possibilities for common identity, their possible list of the epistemic capacities through which consciousness is expressed holds different possibilities for personal identity.

4.10.1. Hume and Locke on personal identity

Hume (2017) and Locke (2017) discuss opposing views of personal identity. According to Hume, the self or personality of a human being is but “a bundle of different perceptions ...which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity and are in perpetual flux and movement” (2017, p. 334). He explains that information coming in through the senses change from moment to moment, and so do our thoughts, thus “...the mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance” (2017, p. 335). In a nutshell, consciousness as self has no consistency; hence there is no personal identity.

So, how do we recognise people and, within reasonable limits, can sometimes predict their character and behaviour? As far as immediately recognising a person is concerned, a ready response is by the physical appearance, that is, even when a person changes his or her clothes. However, in this era of liposuction and possible thorough re-construction surgery, how will we always recognise a person?

Identity is a feature or set of features for recognising a person or object as itself irrespective of time or place. Our Akan elders tell us: “*W’atutu anomaa no ne ntakra na wo de abe kyere me rebisa me se: Anomaa ben ni?*” – You have plucked the feathers of the bird and then have come to show it to me asking me: “What bird is this?” If the features are gone, on what basis can one infer the identity? This bird proverb is about physical features. So, what if an individual undergoes thorough re-construction surgery to alter all his or her physical features?

Descartes addresses that issue. He explains that when an object alters, it is by the understanding alone that we recognise it as the same object (1911, p. 11). Thus, in the James Bond movie *Die Another Day* (2016), when San altered his facial features, it was by a behaviour trait that Bond later recognised him. That means apart from physical features there is a certain level or even optimum of permanency to character and behaviour that altered physicality cannot obliterate. Still, it will be difficult recognising a putative individual who is good at pretending; hence alters his or her character and behaviour too. Hume's ever-changing bundle of perceptions denies permanency, at least, in the expression of consciousness; hence in the making of personal identity.

For Locke, on the other hand, a person is the thinking intelligent being who thinks because thinking is accompanied by consciousness (p. 330), and thus this person can consider his or her self as his or her self, that is, the same thinking thing, in different times and places (2017, p. 330). For Locke, therefore, personal identity depends on consciousness (2017, p. 329). Yet, "every one is to himself [or herself] that which he [or she] calls self" (2017, p. 330). Therefore, personal identity is that by which a conscious intelligent thinking being knows himself or herself as *self* and as separate from all other thinking things. This *self* has a degree of permanency irrespective of the passage of time, whether he or she sleeps and wakes up or changes in a person's body (Locke, 2017, p. 330). Changes in a person's body are those connected with say aging or those brought on by other factors, such as ailment or accident. Self, irrespective of the passage of time or location, suggests certain permanency, yet note that self is the product of the accumulated set of how an individual expresses consciousness. Thus, certainty of permanency depends on whether Locke uses consciousness as a capacity, and, essentially, what others can observe of such expression of consciousness. So, does Locke apply consciousness as

a capacity or as content? Locke does not directly answer that question but appears to argue for consciousness as a capacity (2017, p. 330). If such inference is right, then Locke is for certain level of constancy in personal identity.

4.11. The three concepts of person and common and personal identities

A capacity is an inherent permanent feature of a human being, yet its expression is the obvious features by which a person is recognised by others – say physical presence or what is expressed thought or emotion, character and behaviour. These expressions can alter. The expressions of consciousness, with considerable internal components, including inherited traits, predispose a person to interact differently with the environment. In a reversible manner the environment influences those internal existences thereby accumulating unique content, personality and character traits, out of which issue character and behaviour. Since there are generally differences in the personality and character traits of individuals, there are distinctions in character and behaviour; hence in personal identities. This makes personal identity a unique optimum range of recognisable physical, personality and character features. On the other hand, common identity is a set of intrinsic features shared by all human beings despite our intrinsic and extrinsic differences due to individual or (intra-human) group characteristics. It is thus necessary to take yet another look at these, here, especially, from the perspective of each of the three concepts of person, that is, physicalism, substance dualism and the Akan concept of person.

Physicalists do awkwardly complicate the discourse – their concepts cannot account for mental lives, including consciousness; yet they discuss mental lives as if their concepts do account for these. With such limitation, single-aspect (physicalist) concepts of person leave us just one means of determining personal identity, physical features. Thus, when a person alters

his entire physical appearance, the physicalist is supposed to have nothing for making any inferences on personal identity. Conversely, substance dualism accounts for personal identity since it accounts for body and mind, and for how the individual expresses consciousness through interaction with other parts of the mind, the body and the environment; that is granting the theoretical notion of transition argued above or what Osei and Hugo will refer to as “bridging”.

On common identity, all physicalism does account for is physical appearance of a human being. On the other hand, physicalism does not account for metaphysical common identity, because it fails to uphold mental lives hence life and consciousness. On the other hand, substance dualism and Akan concept of person uphold metaphysical lives hence accounts for life and consciousness, and the body, thus accounts for common identity.

However, to throw life and every metaphysical life into mind is an over-simplification of the internal existences of a human being in a way that de-limits our comprehension of ourselves (as human beings). The Akan concept of person sets *okra* as the bringer and bearer of life, and *sunsum* as a sophisticated matrix of multiple features responsible for the lived life of the human being. If mental is of mind, then life, emotion and even consciousness – unlike thought – fall without mind. That makes *sunsum* a relatively credible receptacle of human capacities.

If the bible says, life and death are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21), let us realise that that power emanates from the metaphysical aspect of a human being. It is because by the metaphysical lives a human being, as Gyekye will explain, has power of agency.

In Akan philosophy that metaphysical aspect is *sunsum*, of course, backed by *okra*. Our Akan elders put part of that bible injunction with an advisory slant, “*Wo to aduro bone a, ebi ka w’ano*” – If you throw (speak) bad medicine (or a curse to hurt another or others), some (of it) remains on your lips.

Indeed, the sophistication of *sunsum*, of *okra*, and of their inter-relation, also with *honam*, is such that language cannot properly describe their entire combined features and potential and the awesome capabilities these endow the living human being with. Those capabilities include paranormal activity and high forms of intuition. Note that the expression of these capabilities may be for good or bad – for and against the individual, or others, depending on the individual’s influence or power.

A person can be ill in *honam* or *sunsum* but, as explained in Chapter Three, never in *okra*. This, fundamentally, is the reason the Traditional African medical practitioner is a healer rather than a curer. There are instances that modern science medicine terms “spontaneous remission” (DeVon Franklin *et al*, 2016), which according to the doctor character in the movie is “what can’t be explained”. Properly put, “spontaneous remission” is any instance of an event, such as healing of a disease which modern science fails to cure, but which gets cured anyway by other means which modern science medicine cannot explain. Yet, the sophistication of *sunsum*, backed by *okra*, is such that, ultimately, – in those rare times that modern science medicine may term “spontaneous remission” – “Man [fails to cure, but] God heals” (Kofi Appiah-Kubi, 1981).

Safro Kwame (2004) questions why the African medical practitioner, claiming to be a spiritual healer, uses physical items in his or her processes (p. 348). And Majeed (2013) responds that it is because of the inter-relation between the body and [internal aspects] (p. 26). Yet, an answer prior to Majeed’s must be that if the human being were a wholly spiritual entity the traditional practitioner will not need to apply anything physical.

Conclusion

The fundamental questions here have been “What is consciousness?” and “Does consciousness have a scope?” The discussion commences on the ontological separateness of consciousness and brain, and on a general look at works in several philosophical traditions which portray that separateness. These works are from Ancient Egyptian, Asian, Western and traditional African cultures. And two of the definitive points that came out here are the persistence of the ontological separateness in all these traditions and the affirmation by Shurger and Graziaono that neuro-science cannot offer a direct explanation of consciousness. That means every progress modern science has made in explaining the expression of consciousness is based on inferences from the co-relation it has with brain activity. Again, since life is animacy; consciousness or awareness is a consequence of animacy, and life, like consciousness or thought, is a qualitative feature of a human being, it becomes obvious that any discussion on consciousness invites a discourse on life.

One-aspect concept of person makes a human being a physical monolith, yet they discuss the metaphysical aspect of a person. That means physicalists are in denial of the ontological separateness. In substance dualism the ontological separateness is acknowledged. On the other hand, the imperceptibly layered transition of *sunsum* between *okra* and *honam* in Akan concept of person ensures interaction rather than co-relation. Still, the metaphysical feature of *okra* and of *sunsum* and all its content capacities – including *adwene-atenka* (thought-emotion) and *anidaho* (consciousness) – make for differentiation between them and *amene* (brain). Generally, therefore, it is not surprising that compared to brain Kim refers to mind, hence consciousness, as a miracle. However, neither the metaphysical aspects of a human being (including consciousness) nor the separateness is a miracle in Akan philosophy, because the metaphysical is

an accepted feature. In African philosophy, therefore, a miracle must have a different conception.

Focusing on consciousness, there is a received hypothesis that it is either ambiguous or too difficult or impossible to define. That is the result of the fact that no definition of consciousness yet meets a generally accepted conception. The issue then is whether this hypothesis is firm enough to forestall the attainment of any possible definition of consciousness objective enough for general acceptance.

Most authors of Western philosophy, including Descartes, characterise knowledge gained via how consciousness is expressed within the arenas of mind and body and the external environment. Descartes also affirms knowledge of God as innate to a human being. This affirmation widens yet the spectrum of how the human being expresses consciousness, making it holistic. However, by saying consciousness is “...awareness of external and internal existence[s]”, Hagar gives us the widest possible spectrum over which consciousness is expressed. There is no issue about the characteristics and range of external existences. The issue is over the conceptual possibility and spectrum of internal existences because that possibility and spectrum depend on a particular concept of person. And that has substantial implications for the possibilities or ranges of tasks of consciousness.

The basic expression of consciousness was derived as “awareness”. Then from a Locke explication of consciousness as awareness, it was possible to delineate four stages of the tasks of consciousness – sense experience, imagination and feeling, meditation or thinking, and perceiving that one perceives or consciousness as a capacity.

Looking at consciousness as awareness in Asian philosophy traditions, Srinivasan delineates four states – sleep, dreaming, wakefulness and consciousness without content. While

neuro-science regards deep sleep as a complete blackout of consciousness, the Buddhist and Hindi positions are that consciousness does not always sleep when a person sleeps. Indeed, Akan philosophy also describes a similar circumstance where an individual can project *sunsum* during sleep and dreaming.

It thus appears from the available literature that the application of consciousness during wakefulness is the generally accepted position in conventional Western philosophy. During wakefulness, a person expresses consciousness through the mental, feeling and imagination, and senses. This allows the conception of *consciousness in part*.

In conventional Western philosophy, one-aspect concepts of person do not uphold mental lives; hence cannot account for consciousness. Substance dualism upholds mental lives; hence accounts for consciousness. Yet, this account cannot be upheld until substance dualism has attained conceptual wholeness through the application of a hypothesis of transition to address the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction. We can derive the ontological transition because Descartes accounts for the metaphysical-physical aspects of a person, there has to be that transition in a living human being for him or her to function.

“Consciousness without content”, according to Srinivasan, is the fourth level of consciousness in Buddhist and Hindi philosophies. It is obvious from his explanation that “consciousness without content” is so-termed not because it is content-less, but because its content is not generated through experience with anything physical. It is *Turiya* in Hindi or *Lokutarra* in Buddhism. He explains that this is the level of the *atman* or Self or pure consciousness in a human being. From the explanation, it is obvious that the *atman* is the essence of the human being, the representative of “Supreme consciousness” or the creator in an individual; it is the bringer of life.

On the other hand, Jayaram discusses consciousness as a metaphysic and describes four approaches to it in the Asian philosophies. The first is universal consciousness, supreme, transcendent, alone, and beyond duality or reality. Universal consciousness is God consciousness. The second approach is the presence of the expression of universal consciousness as the Self in each being. This is *Turiya*, in the space of dualism or reality.

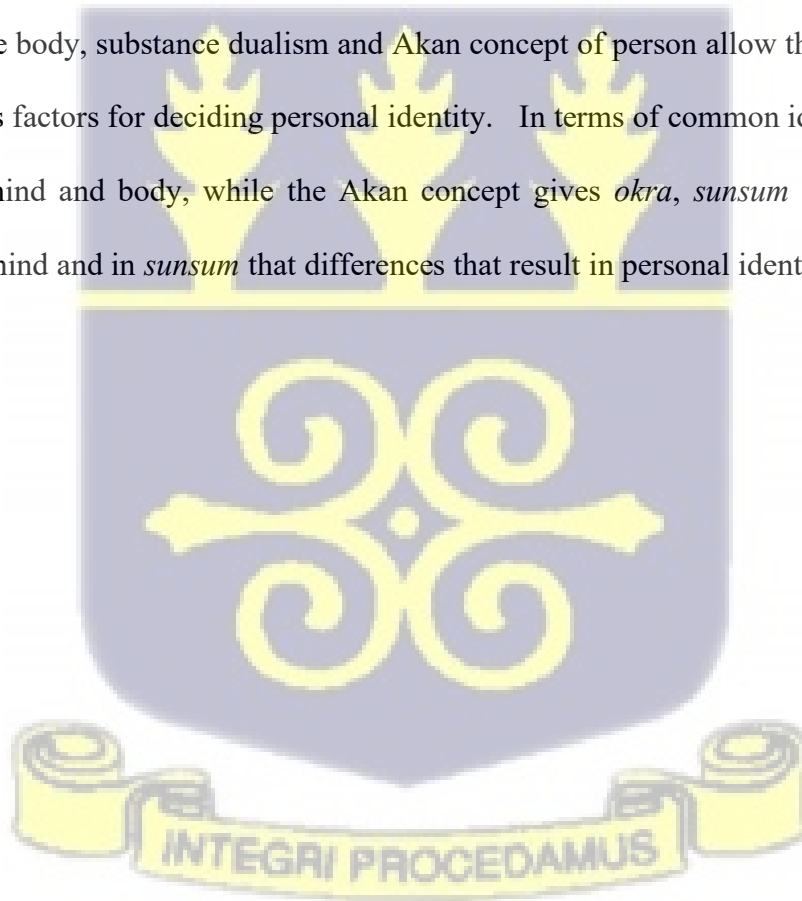
So, I draw respective similarities between *atman* and *okra* and between universal consciousness and the Alone-ness of Onyame. And I explain that universal consciousness or Onyame consciousness could be reached by, so to put it, stretching the expression of consciousness *backwards* to the *atman* or *okra* and then *backwards* through the *atman* or *okra*.

The discourse thus far allows us to answer how the three concepts of person account for life and consciousness. For physicalists, such as James and Koch, a sophistication of physicality “exudes” or is the source of life. However, the argument herein is that the metaphysical aspect of a human being is qualitative compared to the physical, so the physical cannot exude life, but rather the metaphysical comes to couple with a sophistication of physicality. In failing to uphold for mental lives, including consciousness, physicalism fails to account for life. Substance dualism accounts for consciousness, and in making God the source of the essence of a human being Descartes makes God the source of life. As always, the challenge is the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction. Akan concept of person accounts for both consciousness and life. However, while substance dualism packs life and all metaphysical lives into one receptacle, mind, the Akan concept of person puts life in *okra* and the metaphysical lives in *sunsum*.

Akan concept of person, therefore, offers a relatively efficient explanation of how an individual expresses consciousness over a list of other epistemic capacities. It allows us to conceive *holistic consciousness*.

Eventually, since the expression of consciousness leads to the possible creation of identities, personal and common, it becomes necessary to discuss these identities. Hume denies the existence of personal identity, while Locke affirms it. The position herein is that if identity is a set of features by which others could recognise an individual as himself or herself – that is, via physical appearance or character and behaviour – then such features have an optimum range of permanency that nevertheless records alterations through time. The only contribution one-aspect concepts of person make to both common identity and personal identity is the body. Yet in this era of thoroughly alternative construction surgery, the body may not always be or cannot be a way of establishing personal identity.

In addition to the body, substance dualism and Akan concept of person allow the use of character and behaviour as factors for deciding personal identity. In terms of common identity, the former concept gives mind and body, while the Akan concept gives *okra*, *sunsum* and *honam*. It is respectively in mind and in *sunsum* that differences that result in personal identities commence.



CHAPTER FIVE

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN COMMUNICATION: THE CHALLENGE OF PORTING

As conscious beings, humans live in communities, interact and communicate amongst themselves in various ways. How is communication possible? Apart from the concepts of shared meaning, what is it about the human being's constitution that makes communication possible? Wiredu mounts a framework of human communication, and, among other things, explains that thoughts are intangible concepts, yet E. V. Ilyenkov (Hanzel, 2018) affirms, and Wiredu (1996) concurs, that language is a set of tangible terms generated and applies in the social realm. So, how are tangible terms transformed into concepts of thought before their assessment and comprehension that could lead to one partaking in the shared meaning of language? In essence, what is it in a human being which allows seamless porting, that is, receiving tangible terms and ensuring the transmutation of those terms into intangible thought concepts and *vice versa*?

Wiredu defines human communication as the transference of thought concepts and creates a concept of human communication in which the human being, with a biological nature, uses language in the social arena. Since language is tangible and thoughts concepts are intangible, a framework of human communication requires (what is herein termed) porting, or prior to that, what Pascale Hugon (2023) refers to as “bridging”. These two notions are necessary to making communication possible, yet Wiredu discusses neither. Also, the concept of mind Wiredu rejects before creating his framework, the one in Descartes' substance dualism, could have allowed “bridging” but for the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction; hence it bears the

potential of rescuing Wiredu's framework. On the other hand, Akan concept of person, because it allows porting, helps in rescuing the framework of human communication.

This chapter commences with a look at certain essential features of language which make it a medium of communication, and then looks at the concepts of mind Wiredu respectively constructs and rejects. The discourse then shifts to the relation between thoughts and the biological nature of a human being, and then moves to the fundamental challenge with Wiredu's framework. It also looks at how other authors have discussed concepts of how humans learn and use language and other issues critical to human communication. Finally, this chapter looks at which of the concepts of person – physicalist, substance dualism or the Akan concept – could be applied to rescue Wiredu's framework of human communication.

5.1. Delineating Language and Communication

Wiredu affirms that communication is the transference of thought content among people in a community (1996, p. 13). Also implicit in his work is the fact that language, used in the social realm, mediates such transference. Shared meaning is antecedent to proper human communication (Libretexts, 2024, para 2). "Shared meaning is achieved when the receiver attaches a similar meaning to the message that the sender meant to convey" (Libretexts, 2024, para 2). That should read, *shared meaning is achieved when the receiver of a message attaches to it the same understanding the sender meant to convey*. "Shared meaning" is therefore the common or agreed understanding of what each of the **terms** or messages of proper communication refers to. Since human communication happens within community, what are the features of language that allow it to be altered into thought content within the receiver, who in

turn alters thought content back into language in the social realm to complete the individual's participation in the process of communication?

Today, communication is such a broad concept because of the multiplicity of mechanisms used to mediate such two-way transference which is facilitated by language. It is thus important to de-limit the scope of communication in terms of how it will be applied herein. This chapter is not about the artificial means or technology used as mechanisms to facilitate such interaction and transference. Here transference of thought content is taken in its most basic form – as human-to-human inter-relations mediated by language.

This research is not about detailed characteristics of thought or language. According to Henna Lemetyinen (2023), human beings have the capability to “express infinite ideas (sentences) with a limited set of symbols (speech sound and words)” (Lemetyinen, 2023, para 1), and “sensitivity to the grammar needed to understand causative sentences ([such as] who did what to whom...)” (Lemetyinen, 2023, para 4). Formation of sentences and grammar are, however, issues internal to language. Also, in-depth analysis of thought content and of its characteristics as concepts is an issue internal to thought. Such internal issues do not concern this chapter. Here, language or thought as a concept is just viewed as particulars in a framework of human communication.

5.1.1. Communication as interaction and language

Another noteworthy point is the scope of the term “language”. Most of the consulted literature restricts the scope of language to the lingual (Perlovsky, 2011; Cowie, 2017; Hugon, 2023; Lemetyinen, 2023). However, Wiredu explains that this transference of thought content can happen through the use of “a statement ...or the expression of an attitude, an emotion, a

wish” or “gestures, artifacts, etc.” (1996, p. 13). As Wiredu explains, therefore, a fact borne out by experience, communication can happen via means other than the verbal, including the use of objects. Even symbols, such as those of *Adinkra*, are a means of communicating thought concepts. Thus, if we agree with Wiredu that apart from the verbal there are other means of communicating, then language is a generic term for all the means of communication.

It is thus not surprising that Mary Ellen Forster (2019) defines language from a generic perspective. She states,

An important aspect of face-to-face social conversation is fluent, flexible linguistic interaction; face-to-face dialogue is both the basic form of human communication and the richest and most flexible, combining unrestricted verbal expression with meaningful non-verbal acts such as gestures and facial displays, along with instantaneous, continuous collaboration between the speaker and the listener.
(2019, p. 1)

Engaging in “face-to-face social conversation” requires the use of means of interaction which includes the “linguistic” and “non-verbal acts”. Yet the specification of “face-to-face” raises the issue of distance and the possibility of using technology to mediate the interaction. In non-technology mediated face-to-face interaction distance could be less or more than a metre. Yet during a technology-mediated interaction, such as tele-conference, the location of participants could be thousands of kilometres apart yet, depending on the quality of the audio-visual communication equipment mediating the interaction, a participant could easily read even the mood and behaviour of the others as if the distance between them is more or less a metre. It thereby becomes easy to realise that, for most interactions, distance is not an issue. Rather what is an issue, as pointed out above, is transmuting thought into the particulars of language in a way that readily renders shared meaning available to the listener(s).

5.2. The critical features of language as a social entity

Communication happens in a social milieu. This demands a deeper analysis of the relation between language as a means of human communication and the social context in which it is applied. An example of such analysis is done by E. V. Ilyenkov, as explained by Igor Hanzel (2018).

According to Hanzel, Ilyenkov adopts Marx's concept of the ideal "status of money [as] signs in the course of commodity exchange" to create his concept of the ideal feature of language (2018, p. 3, Square brackets added). Marx states that "the status of money as a sign [arises from] its function as a measure of value" (Hanzel, 2018, p. 3, Square brackets added). That means "the body of one specific commodity (say gold) becomes the exclusive carrier, the embodiment of the value of all those commodities against which it is exchanged" (Hanzel, 2018, p. 3). That way, the "palpably real bodily form" of the gold is different from its sign as a measure of value, which, according to Marx, is "a purely ideal or imagined form" (2018, p. 3). Gold is adopted as a kind of "measure of value" or means of exchange or currency, thus making it the one commodity that can be exchanged for anything else. However, the status of gold as a means of exchange is different from its physical status; the former status is "imagined" or abstract, and it is separate from the actual physical feature of gold, or the object so adopted. Ilyenkov, therefore, affirms the abstractness of the measure of value when he states that it is "'bodily' ...in a completely different point of space" from which even "a single atom" of the chosen item, gold, is absent (2018, p. 3).

Thus, Hanzel explains Ilyenkov's position,

‘Ideality’ is a specific imprint imposed on the matter of nature by the social-human life-activity; it is a form of functioning of physical thing in the process of social-life human activity. Therefore, all things involved in the social process acquire a new ‘form of being’, an ideal form not given in and completely different from their physical nature. (2018, pp. 3-4).

For emphasis, Ilyenkov is here saying a physical entity has its form and role, yet the human being as a social entity can also create an abstract role for a physical object specifically because of that very fact of social existence. Hanzel then quotes Ilyenkov thus:

The immediately ideal is realised in and via a symbol—that is, via the external, sensually perceptible, visible, or audible body of the word. But the word, remaining itself, is, at the same time, the being of another body, and this is—as its ideal being—something completely different from its form perceived by ears and eyes. The word as a sign, as a name has nothing in common with that the sign of which it is. (Hanzel, 2018, p. 4)

A word is a “symbol” that is “sensually perceptible, visible, or audible” or physical, yet it is concurrently a “sign” or word which simultaneously bears an abstract feature or meaning that is a concept that points us to an object or entity, which Wiredu will refer to as a “referent” (1996, p. 14), or what is referred to or, for Ilyenkov, “that the sign of which it is”. Although both features belong to the same word, the characteristics of each feature are distinct.

In Tibetan (Buddhist) philosophy, according to Pascale Hugon (2023), “‘words’ consist in singular sound emissions uttered at a specific place and time, and the ‘objects’ that are interacted with as a consequence of language use are momentary and unique particulars” (Section 3.1). Note the separation of “word” or the physicality of language from the “object” that is the referent of the word. Note, especially, the particularity of the referred-to object, and also the point that a “word” is a “singular sound emission... uttered at a specific place and time”; that is, it is physical. The fact that a “word” is a “singular sound emission... uttered at a specific

place and time” leaves open the possibility of the same word signifying a different object or having different meanings in different languages or even the same language.

Hugon goes further by adding, “Particular words express particular objects only in virtue of the conventional relation established, within a linguistic community, between generic words and meanings” (Hugon, 2023, Section 3.1). This position implicitly reinforces the point, just made above, that a single word could have separate referents or meanings in a language or different languages. It also means the particularity of a single object word operates within the context of words that refer to groups of objects and then within a specific language community.

Wiredu also provides the essential distinction between the “signified” or object that is referred to and “signifier” or the word or term that does the referring (1996, p. 15). Hugon (2023) explains that in Tibetan philosophy, language is treated “in terms of the relationship between ‘what expresses’ (*rjod byed*) and ‘what is expressed’ (*brjod bya*) ...”, and adds that this, respectively, is a parallel of the “the signifier” and “the signified” (Section 3.1). The object is the signified or referent, while the signifier is the word that refers to the object. The word has a meaning, the abstract representation, which tells us the object referred to.

Thus, apart from the physical gold, its use in terms of what Marx refers to as the “measure of value” gives us, also, the entity of shared meaning. The physical gold is separate from its application as a measure of value. So too is the word, physical in nature, different from its abstract feature which represents the shared meaning or what it signifies. That is the shared meaning to which all users of the language do and must subscribe; that is, if communication will be possible and smooth. Note, however, that while the measure of value is an ideal that can be exchanged against all other commodities, the word (that signifies an object) further has a shared meaning that points us to either a particular object or to a specific set of objects.

5.3. Assigning words to objects or meanings to words

Ilyenkov also links the concept of work to the activity of human communication in a meaningful way. Hanzel writes,

Ilyenkov employed Marx's reflections on the priority of the value-form with respect to the money sign, ...for another purpose—namely, for the assignment of conceptual priority to the notion of work in the sense of production-activity as compared to the notion of language—and where language he understands as a system of signs, in the sense of purely physical entities (2018, p. 4)

For Ilyenkov, language is “a system of signs” or words, hence a physical entity and the process of assigning “value-form” or concept to each “sign” or term of language, to an entity, is a “production-activity” or “work” (Hanzel, 2018, p. 4). Simultaneously, he adds, “[S]ocial work engenders the need for language, and then the very language, speech” (Ilyenkov, 2018, p. 4, Square brackets inserted). Here speech is listed as language. However, the main point is that human activities in a community raise the need for and encourage the use of language. Here, it is not necessary to go into Marx's dialectics, except to point out that since human beings play different roles, economic or otherwise, all towards the welfare and progress of the collective, it is essential to understand each other towards that common end, hence the need to have a language for easy social interaction. That means language itself is a necessary consequence of the need for work and the exigencies of work in the social arena.

According to Ilyenkov, a person must relate with nature; besides, inter-relations in the social realm demand “ideal image[s]” or abstract concepts (Hanzel, 2018, p. 4, Square brackets inserted). These abstract concepts are created via thinking, which creating is an activity of

production or work (Hanzel, 2018, pp. 4-5). Discussing “onto-genesis” Ilyenkov explains that thinking “in its initially-fundamental and simple form, is nothing more than *activity in the object with the object* and not *activity in the word with the word*” (Hanzel, 2018, p. 5). “Onto-genesis”, according to an online dictionary, is “the development of an individual organism... from the earliest stage to maturity”. Here, the issue in focus is the social behaviour of learning and applying language. From the basis of the “*onto-genesis* of human infants” considered by Ilyenkov, the “*activity in the object with the object*”, plausibly, is the initial stage of a human being, encountering “the object”, a given entity, and struggling to associate with it its meaning, whether new or already assigned. This struggle to associate a concept with an object must thus be thinking “in its initially-fundamental and simple form”. And it, most likely, refers to the creative process within the full encapsulation of a human being of initially attaching a “word” to a likeness of an external object. On the other hand, the “*activity in the word with the word*” is plausibly the thinking required for taking a word that is already assigned to an object or entity and appropriately applying it in human communication. And both, according to Ilyenkov, are forms of work in the learning and use of language.

Yet we cannot depart this section without discussing Hanzel’s appraisal of Ilyenkov position. As we just saw, Ilyenkov uses concepts from Marx to explicate his understanding of the characteristics of language and of the relation between work and language. However, Hanzel (2018) is of the view that Ilyenkov’s interpretation diverges from Marx’s position. According to Hanzel, Marx writes, “At the end of the work process, a result emerges that had already existed at its beginning in the representation of the worker, hence already existed ideally”, while Ilyenkov takes the position that “social work gives birth to the need for language [the ideal], and then to language, speech itself”. Hanzel then observes that “Marx,... contrary to Ilyenkov, does

not claim any temporal priority of the production process with respect to the production of the ideal” (Hanzel, 2018, p. 13).

Yet when someone says $2 + 3$ and leaves it at that, what we have is the beginning of an addition equation divested of the result. The situation is comparable to the ignorance of a child who is being taught addition for the very first time. The child must thus use counters to resolve the mystery by finding the answer; this is the production process. Yet even at the beginning stage the result, 5, already exists, ideally, unmentioned. Thus, a knowledgeable adult, possibly the one who gave the work to the child, already knows the unmentioned answer. Once the equal to sign ($=$) is applied and the result is put in place (part of the production process), we can say like Marx (above) that the “result” (5) already existed, ideally; that is, as an automatic outcome though unmentioned (at that beginning). The result existed, ideally, at the commencement, but becomes obvious only later; this is the production of the ideal. Even the situation where the direct result of $2 + 3$ is put down as $1 + 4$ does not deny the eventual result (5) as an ideal. It only introduces greater intricacies into the computation, lengthens the production process, and postpones the realisation of the eventual result. That means the first part of the equation gives birth to what, before the birth, only existed ideally. Though Ilyenkov does not mention that the ideal existed at the beginning, both Marx and Ilyenkov hold the ideal, language – in Marx words – as “a result [that] emerges” “at the end of the work process” or as the outcome of the “work process” or “production process”. There is no divergence here.

5.4. Significance of the essential features of language

From the fore-going, it is easy to prospect two points. One is the relation between the essential features of language and what process is conducive to its application in a human being

towards facilitating communication. Two is the significance of the essential feature of language which renders it appropriate for communication. As we already saw above, a “word” is tangible, yet has an abstract feature or shared meaning, and both are different from the features of the object or entity the word refers to. And it is essential to add that where an entity is itself not physical but rather metaphysical – say thought, as we saw in previous chapters – the same circumstances apply.

As we saw above, Ilyenkov discusses the significance of language to social life. He explains that human beings perform different activities towards the common goal of collective good or welfare and progress. In a dialectical manner, the common goals demands that all these activities are coordinated and synchronised, while the coordination and synchronisation, if properly done, lead towards the common goals. This, Ilyenkov explains, demands a medium of communication or language. Another demand of that very dialectical situation is that human beings understand each other. This is where the specific physical feature of language becomes essential. It is tangible so can be exchanged among members of a community. Also, the physical nature of language is such that, within a human being, it can be easily transmuted into thought concepts from which one can extract the shared meaning, which is essential to comprehending one another in a community.

A way of affirming the appropriate physical nature of language is by comparing it to the counter-factual situation where the physical-ness of words was akin to blocks. Of course, such counter-factual situation also allows the response that if language were blocks reality would have made the human being in a way that affords the individual the capability to accept and transmute these into readily applicable forms. However, the difference is that between physical blocks and

physical, pliable sound the latter simplifies the process of acceptance and transmutation in a way that demands the expenditure of the least amount of energy.

Again, Ilyenkov's characterisation of the use of language by humans as work in the social realm, brings up the need for a notion of porting, which, as stated above, is the acceptance and transmutation of tangible language into intangible concepts of shared meaning in a human being and *vice versa*. Language is a set of tangible terms and thoughts are abstract concepts. There is, therefore, the need to account for the transmutation of the physical concepts of language manufactured and exchanged in the social realm into abstract concepts of thought within the human being and *vice versa*. This is the notion of porting. This is the complete basic yet dialectical cycle of language-thought contents inter-changeability, a multitude of which is responsible for communication during interaction.

It is essential to also look at the learning or using of language as work, which, according to Ilyenkov, is potentially a struggle. According to Hanzel, Ilyenkov looks at onto-genesis in human infants learning words for the first time and explains that it involves some form of struggle (2018, p. 5). Such struggle, in a possibly modified form, is also potentially inherent in an adult learning a new language, though the extent of such struggle may be also due to individual characteristics. It is also certainly different from how tangible terms from the social realm are accepted and transmuted into intangible thought concepts in a human being, that is, depending on the concept of person in question. It will be important to later see how each of the selected concepts of person will account for this basic process of porting which is fundamentally essential to human communication.

Further, it is obvious that thinking or *adwene* (thought) – or, in Western philosophy, mind – cannot be by-passed in any framework of human communication. As we saw in Chapter

Three, *atenka* (emotion) is also essential to a human being's general ability for assessing and evaluating information received from the environment and dispatching outward similar content to ensure appropriate response. Thus, *atenka* too, as a capacity, cannot be by-passed in any framework of human communication. These and all the capacities within mind or *sunsum* are critical to the making, learning and application of language.

Thus, while the learning and application of language are essential to human communication, we cannot overlook the necessity of porting in the human being; the process that allows a person to access and use the abstract shared meaning (that the terms of language bear) to convey thought concepts. So let us now turn our attention to the concepts of mind Wiredu discusses.

5.5. The Concepts of Mind Wiredu Rejects and Constructs

As a prelude to mounting his framework of human communication, Wiredu discredits substance dualism, because it affirms a non-physical mind as an entity (Descartes, 1911), and then constructs a reductive physicalist concept of mind.

Note, that discrediting the mind inherent in substance dualism, plausibly, indicates leaning towards physicalism. Wiredu writes,

...owing to the purely negative character of the notion of a non-physical entity – its whole nature seems to consist in allegedly being non-physical – we have no positive basis for the assumption that such an entity [substance mind] is better adapted to give rise to thought than say the brain. With regard to the brain we have at least the *advantage* that there are *empirically established connections* between its states and the occurrence of thought.

(1996, pp. 17-18; Emphases added, Square brackets inserted)

The issue of “advantage” is discussed further below. First, by “the purely negative character of the notion of a non-physical entity” Wiredu appears to be describing the feature of a substance mind by indirect reference to another feature; that is, physical. And, he emphasises that point with the phrase in parenthesis. However, the feature he is referring to as “non-physical” has a more direct name, “metaphysical”, but Wiredu does not use it, probably because of his leaning towards physicalism. Yet the actual puzzle in his first sentence is how “the negative character of the notion of a non-physical entity” is related to the negation of the “positive basis for the assumption that such an entity is better adapted to give rise to thought than say the brain”, or how the non-physical feature of a substance mind subtracts from its capability to account for thought compared to the brain.

After arguing very little for his preferred position, Wiredu affirms

...but I hope it emerges from the fore-going remarks that there is no real antecedent implausibility in the hypothesis that a thought may be an aspect of a brain state and mind an on-going complex of such states. ...[T]he mind is not the brain but rather a certain complex set of aspects of its states.
(1996, p. 18, Square brackets inserted)

Mind is not identical to the brain means the mind is not the brain. Also, Wiredu is here saying “thought [is] an aspect of a brain state” and “mind [is] an on-going complex of such [brain] states”. If mind is not the brain, how can thought or mind be brain state(s). As we saw Leibnitz argue in Chapter Two, if thought is of the brain or as Wiredu affirms here, an aspect of brain state, we should observe thought in brain; but we do not.

Again, Wiredu neither argues for nor gives any criterion for assessing the “real antecedent implausibility” or prior lack of soundness (or otherwise) of his “hypothesis” that “thought may be a brain state”. To give a reason for rejecting F does not negate the necessity of

giving a reason for choosing D over F. Thus, if there is “no real antecedent implausibility”, it is not because there has been an assessment and it yields none, but because Wiredu neither gives a criterion for conducting such assessment nor conducts such assessment himself for his reader’s attention. When Sophie Oluwole found it necessary to establish the *scientificity* of paranormal activity, she deemed it also necessary to argue for that position, and as part of that argument she gave a three-step criterion that could be applied to determine the scientific status of even modern science (1995, p. 367).

So, what type of mind does Wiredu prefer? As we saw in Chapter Three, he refers to the Akan term “*adwene*” which means “thought” and explains that it is the only Akan word that comes closest to the term mind. That, according to Wiredu, makes mind for the Akans the possibility of thought and thought itself (1983, p. 118). That, he later affirms, makes “mind” a function of thought or a non-substance (1996, pp. 16-17). So, what, for Wiredu, is the relation between this non-substance mind and the brain?

In terms of what produces thought, Wiredu provides a preferred substitute to a non-physical substance mind; that is, the brain states. He directly provides no relation between the mind as a function of thought and the brain. However, one may surmise from his work that such a mind may be what he also describes as “an on-going complex set of [brain] states”.

Yet to discredit substance dualism, and then affirm mind as “an on-going complex set of [brain] states” is not a complete argument about the mind or brain states; especially when correlation has been established as the only relation between mind (or consciousness) and brain. In a poke at dualism, Wiredu writes, “...the claim that thought is non-material [or non-physical] determines absolutely nothing about what its nature might be” (1996, p. 17, Square brackets inserted). True, for the plethora of concepts of mind in Western philosophy, the fact that thought

or mind is non-physical says little about their features. Yet neither does the affirmation that thought is “an aspect of brain state” say anything about the feature of thought. Indeed, to deny dualism and then affirm thought as non-physical and a brain state only confounds the discourse; precisely because of co-relation. What is the feature of brain states? And what is it about aspects of brain states that render these thoughts?

Seeking responses to those questions brings up what Wiredu refers to as “advantage” in the penultimate quote. There, Wiredu points out that “empirically established connections between its [brain] states and the occurrence of thought” is an “advantage” over the capability of a substance mind to give rise to thought. For that affirmation, Wiredu appears to draw inspiration from massive advances in neuro-science, which advances have established clear co-relation between thinking (or consciousness) and brain activities (Wu, 2018). And so by “empirically established connections”, Wiredu is simply referring to evidence drawn from the co-relation between mind and brain activities. Hence his so-called “advantage” is the evidence from co-relation, whose basic rule says anytime there is a particular thought, a specific activity takes place in an exact part of the brain.

Going by this “advantage”, Wiredu intends his points in these quotes as reinforcement of his position that brain “is better adapted to give rise to thought” than a non-physical substance mind. If “the negative character” of a substance mind is simply due to its metaphysical feature, then Wiredu overlooks the fact that saying a mind is a function of thought or set of brain states does not alter but overlooks the fact that mind only co-relates with brain. Co-relation, as we say in Chapter Two, indicates that brain and mind possess different features and perform separate roles or activities, which activities are nevertheless “connected”, as Wiredu himself states above. As argued in Chapter Three, therefore, the different features of mind and brain, and their separate

yet co-related roles push the preponderance of conclusion towards the fact that thought, or the general functions of mind only come through brain.

5.6. Thought as Concepts as Brain States

Wiredu affirms that just like thoughts “concepts ...are aspects of brain states...” hence “the stuff of the mind”, and since a proposition is a “combination of concepts”, propositions are also “the stuff of the mind” (1996, p. 18). Thought is a brain state, which is a concept, thus; each is “the stuff of ‘on-going complexity of [brain] states’” or mind. Propositions are the semantic means by which human beings communicate, yet Wiredu defines a proposition as “the stuff of mind” thus as an aspect of brain state. However, a more appropriate rendition of his position, within his own set up, will be that human beings communicate via the articulation of brain states. That way, even if we concur that thought is a brain state, then a concept, as he applies it, is a thought, and a proposition is a set of articulated thoughts, concepts or brain states.

Let us now interrogate the relation Wiredu establishes between thought concepts and the biological nature of a human being.

5.6.1. The biological nature and concepts in the framework

After affirming a biological nature for a human being, Wiredu explains that human beings share a “basic biological similarity” and so can communicate because of the “biological affinity” they share (1996, p. 19). That affinity, he explains, “makes possible the comparison of experiences and the inter-personal adjustments of behaviour that constitutes social existence” (1996, p. 19). In a nutshell, human beings can communicate among ourselves because we are

biological, have comparable characteristics, and share an attraction that makes it possible for us to inter-relate to co-exist and make the necessary adjustments that make community possible.

Wiredu also explains that

A human being is born with a biological make-up, but with no concepts. ...[W]ithin this make-up, within the brain specifically we have the basis of innate conceptual abilities. ...To possess a specific concept, an idea, entails some linguistic ability. [So] ...[h]uman life is a learning process which begins almost immediately on arrival in the world. The learning must be in the context of a society. ...This learning process which at the start is nothing much more than a regime of conditioning is, in fact, the making of mind. (1996, p. 19, Square brackets inserted)

Wiredu states “within the brain”, but he is referring to the brain as holder of “innate... abilities” not thought. Also, he affirms that a human being is a biological entity; hence has ingrained abilities to use concepts, plus linguistic abilities for learning and using language. Again, he explains that using these abilities and using them for learning commences in society, such that learning is the social process of “conditioning” or tuning, and that tuning is the making of mind. Wiredu does not directly tell us what it is in a human being that is tuned, but it certainly must be something in the biological make-up. Several issues arise.

The first is the issue of ontology. A biological nature is thoroughly physical, hence all inherent features that emerge with the body upon birth will be physical as well. Wiredu explains that language is a set of concepts used for making sense in communication (Wiredu, p. 13), thus we have a peculiar situation that arises with “conceptual abilities” and, consequently, with linguistic abilities. Even if one concurs that the “abilities” are inherent in the biological; hence are physical, one cannot overlook the fact that thought “concepts”, as Wiredu himself characterises them, are non-physical. Wiredu’s biological make-up may receive some respite from Ilyenkov’s point that language is made up of bits of tangible hence physical terms, or; from

the Tibetan philosophy position that “‘words’ consist in singular sound emissions”, hence are physical. Unfortunately, that only compounds Wiredu’s puzzles, for, we are then confronted by another issue: How are tangible (physical) concepts of language accepted and transmuted into intangible concepts of thought in a human being and *vice versa*?

5.7. The fundamental challenge

It is not enough for Wiredu to just refer to “conceptual abilities” when discussing the relation among tangible concepts of language, the biological constitution of a human being and thought in the framework, and leave it at that; especially, following his criticism of dualism. First, because of co-relation, he must account for “bridging” or how heterogeneous entities interact. And then he must say what it is about the human being’s physical constitution that renders it capable of allowing porting. Every part of the physical body, including the brain, is tangible and sense perceivable, and one cannot insist on a biological basis of human communication without breaching rules of ontological concord in an actual human being.

Here, Wiredu puts himself in a vice, because by picking the biological as the thorough feature of a human being he automatically subscribes to an utter physicalist concept of a human being. Social interaction is behavioural, therefore, also sense perceivable or tangible. Both result in a layered set of physicality and leave us with questions about human learning and use of language which Wiredu provides no answers to.

It is thus significant that Hugon explains that in Tibetan philosophy the general goal of language is “...bridging the gap between the conceptual realm and reality” (2023, Section 3.1(a)). Note the distinction between reality (objects or entities) and the “conceptual realm” or abstract concepts that represent shared meanings that refer to objects and entities in reality. Two

points come up here, and the first concerns Hugon position on what causes the “bridging”. It is not language that causes the “bridging”. Rather the “bridging” is an ontological necessity that can allow the transmutation of language thought concepts and *vice versa*. Second, the characteristics of the interface between two interacting parts determine the features of the “bridging”. If the parts are both physical, “bridging” too is physical and relatively easy to observe. On the other hand, if the interface is characterised by a physical part and a metaphysical part, we have a peculiar challenge that demands more than regular attention; that is, a unique sort of “bridging”.

While I independently figured out the need for porting, it is noteworthy that Hugon has already affirmed the need for a prior notion, “bridging”. From the way Hugon uses “bridging”, it is clear that the term means allowing access between two parts that are originally separated, either physically or; ontologically, which is what he was discussing. Results of the general search for “porting” indicate that it is a software computer engineering term. According to Margaret Rouse, “Porting is the process of *adapting* software in an environment for which it was not originally written or intended to execute in” (2011, para 1, Emphasis added). And while *Wikipedia* is not an acceptable source for academic work, it provides clear explanation of Rouse’s rendition of porting. It says, “In software engineering, porting is the process of *adapting* software for the purpose of achieving some form of execution in a computing environment that is different from the one that a given program (meant for such execution) was originally designed for”. It is obvious from Rouse definition and the explanation that, in principle, there is an entity used for certain purpose in certain space or realm, however, it becomes necessary to “adapt” or *alter for use* the same entity for another purpose in a different

space or realm, which novel purpose is what calls for “adapting” or altering the entity to suit use in the new realm.

This explanation upholds the use to which I put my *notion of porting*. The use to which I put it also indicates that porting is already present in reality; that is, before digital computers were made. “Bridging” is an ontological necessity that solves the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction so that porting can take place within the full constitution of a human being.

From that it is easy to deduce that the biological-social structure of Wiredu’s framework of human communication has a fundamental challenge – it overlooks co-relation hence is devoid of the two notions essential to using mind and body for articulating how human beings learn and use language. True, human beings communicate through the articulation and transference of meaningful, intangible concepts amongst themselves, of course, mediated by the tangibles of language in the social arena. The claim that something is an “ability” says little about its features, yet, a biological nature makes the “ability” physical. Again, to claim a human being could apply an “ability” to accept and alter physical concepts into non-physical ones or *vice versa* demands an explication of what it is in the biological constitution which renders it thus capable. Without that critical explication, Wiredu leaves us with a vital puzzle, whose depth mounts because in reality, a human being is callable of allowing porting.

5.8. Communication and mind

Before mounting his framework of human communication Wiredu creates a functionalist concept of mind. This is interesting, because Wiredu uses a function, “*adwene*”, to create a metaphysic, mind, which he then describes as a function. However, functionalism neither discusses the characteristic of mind nor the relation between mind as a function and physical

states. And then for his framework, he chooses a biological nature for a human being. A biological nature is a concept of person that includes a thoroughly reductive physicalist concept of mind. So, are these minds identical? Wiredu does not say. Still we need to inquire whether the development of mind, even a functionalist concept of it, is possible in a thoroughly physicalist concept of person.

5.8.1. Mind, learning language and knowledge

Here, a term that comes in handy is ontogenesis, which, as indicated above, focuses on the development of an individual organism during the social behaviour of learning and using language, though, basically, during infancy. The shared meaning of the terms of language and the thought concepts it (language) evokes within a human being are critical to communication. Yet, the porting of the tangible concepts in a human constitution is critical to attaining those intangible concepts of shared meaning irrespective of the age at which one is learning a language for the first time. Yet for an infant who is yet to encounter any tangible terms from the social arena, the work may be harder because, according to Wiredu, there is no mind (or faculties) for accepting or making discernment of that first word(s) the infant receives. Yet experience indicates that even children learn language seamlessly (Cowie, 2017, para 5; Lemetyinen, 2023, para 3), and some authors affirm an innate capacity or faculty that allows human beings, including children, to do so (Cowie, 2017, Chomsky, 2024).

Wiredu writes, “The development of communication is the development of mind. We do not first develop a mind which then has to learn how to communicate” (1996, p. 19). Even if we grant that development of mind presumes the presence of what can be called mind, we have already seen in preceding chapter that a biological nature, or physical monolith, cannot

accommodate a mind. That will mean that at birth a human being does not have a mind. That, in the words of Caesar Atuire,⁵ means a human being at birth does not have even a “tabular rasa”.

Available literature points to ancient discourses on how human beings can learn mathematical concepts (Dawes, 2017, para 2) or even to how some authors have discussed the notion of “tabula rasa” (Samet, 2019, para 1). However, John Locke is noted for strongly advocating tabula rasa in a modern espousal of empiricism (William Uzgalis, 2018, Section 2.2). Uzgalis writes,

Locke holds that the mind is a *tabula rasa* or blank sheet until experience in the form of sensation and reflection provide the basic materials – simple ideas – out of which most of our complex knowledge is constructed. While the mind may be a blank slate in regard to content, it is plain that Locke thinks we are born with a variety of faculties to receive and abilities to manipulate or process the content once we acquire it. (William Uzgalis, 2018, Section 2.2)

“*Tabula rasa* or blank sheet” means a human being is born with a mind or set of faculties, however, one that is as clean as a slate waiting to be written upon by how the individual, starting as an infant, experiences life in community. Locke is an empiricist, meaning – in principle, but on an epistemological level – he disagrees with the intrinsic conception of dualism, which disagreement falls without this research. Note, however, that for Locke a human being is born with “faculties” he or she, plausibly, uses to accept physical concepts before using the “abilities” to process them.

Here, a point of interest beckons. In 1995, the Dalai Lama announced the then 6-year-old boy, Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima, as the 11th Panchen Lama of a Tibetan Buddhist School (Tikkanen, 2024, para 4). The evidence for this declaration – hardly published these days – is that the boy could recall *from memory* details of events and documented statements from many

centuries earlier. Sceptics may argue that Nyima's instance is an isolated case. True! Nevertheless, Nyima's instance represents a high-end possibility of human capability in thought, consciousness and paranormal activity. And it shows that concepts of person that incorporate physicalist concepts of mind hugely under-estimate the possible features and capabilities of a human being, and that a *tabula rasa* mind at birth is untrue in at least Nyima's case.

5.8.2. Thought, propositions and communication in a biological nature

From Wiredu's explication, the first ever concept(s) that an individual encounters is (are) alien to him or her since he or she has no mind. It is this first ever in-coming concept(s) from the social setting that set in motion the making or improvement of mind. Since Wiredu's biological nature lacks a "faculty", what is it therein that allows "bridging" and then porting, which is a necessary prelude to the tuning that makes a mind? Let us see whether Wiredu's conception of brain states as thought(s), as mind, as propositions does help.

As explained above, a proposition is an articulated thought or idea, which makes a proposition different from a thought. That difference is critical. And Wiredu makes a point that, plausibly, should have led him to realise that between mind or thought, on one hand, and, on the other, brain and even an articulated thought there is a conceptual division that is not easy to characterise. Substance dualism takes account of that division but does not explain how the interaction between the disparate interfaces takes place. As we saw Nagel point out in Chapter Two, most physicalists overlook that persistent division.

Above, we see Wiredu refer to "...[brain] states and the occurrence of thought..." and then his point that the "connection" between the two is "empirically established". That "connection" would have been true if he had not followed it up with the affirmation that thoughts

are aspects of brain states. When R is an aspect of U, R is part of U. In Chapter Four, saw Leibnitz's point that thought is not in the brain, and also the pervasive point that the only relation that exists between thought (or consciousness) and the brain is co-relation. Co-relation means brain activity and thought are connected but parallel. Thus, even though some physicalists use "brain states" as identical to mind or thought, the portrayed identity is inappropriate. Therefrom, what Wiredu refers to as "connection" (or the co-relation) refers to co-relation between thought and brain activities or states rather than identity between the two. Thus, his point that thought is a brain state simply complicates the discourse, needlessly.

One may discredit dualism, yet it is philosophically perilous to ignore or pretend to ignore ontological separateness when applying the features of a human being to discuss human behaviour. Wiredu ignores the ontological gap to the detriment of his framework of human communication. And any conception that can be used to rescue the framework must take account of the ontological gap.

5.9. Rescuing the human communication framework

But for the fundamental challenges, the framework has merit and potential. A survey of available academic African philosophical literature portrays a dearth of works on human communication. Wiredu thus deserves credit for his paper which is at the centre of this discussion. However, it has been shown above that Wiredu's framework has certain challenges. So, what will it take to rescue his framework of human communication? If Wiredu's functionalist concept of mind is different from his biological concept of mind, will the rescuing take a unique concept of mind, such as Kwame's quasi-physical mind? Or will it be the concept of person whose mind Wiredu rejects or the Akan concept of person?

To participate in communication an individual must have access to the shared meaning inherent in in-coming tangible terms of language, and a concept of person can afford the individual such access if it (the concept) allows “bridging” and then porting. It is this comprehension and application of shared meaning that assures the individual the capability to learn and apply language for interaction in the community. Thus, a critical aspect of human communication is social interaction, yet without the vital processes that happen within the individual communication will be curtailed.

Almost everywhere in the available literature there are varieties of what Fiona Cowie (2017) characterises as “the *properties of us* in virtue of which we can learn and use a natural language” (Cowie, 2017, para 2, Her emphasis). The “*properties of us*” refers to the faculty in human beings or the aspect of a human being that imbues one with the capability to learn and use language. From the available literature, the dominance of such perspective appears to be the result of the authors looking at communication as a purely social phenomenon in which a human being, as an individual, participates by learning and using language. And, plausibly, the focus of these authors appears to have been solely on language as the means of communication; that is, without attention to the vital facilitating process within the individual. Osei mentions “bridges”, Hugon was able to come up with the notion of “bridging”, and this student writer was able to discover porting, because they all took account of that critical internal process.

It is a concept of person that must account for the “the *properties of us* in virtue of which we can learn and use a natural language”, and it is a concept of person that must allow accept “bridging” or allow porting. And it is when a concept upholds this vital process that it (the concept) will account for the learning and use of language. Which of the concepts of person can account for both notions?

5.10. A quasi-physical mind to the rescue?

Maybe, in the light of the plausibly disparate minds, a uniquely peculiar concept of mind will help. Wiredu coined the term “quasi-physicalism”, but it is Safro Kwame who may have first applied it to mind (Kwame, 2004, p. 343). As we saw in Chapter Three, Kwame describes an object as quasi-physical if it “belong[s] to a category between the realm of the physical, i.e., those objects that obey the known laws of physics, and the realm of the so-called spiritual or completely immaterial objects, i.e., objects that do not obey any of the known laws of physics” (2004, pp. 345-346). This definition raises issues; some of which were discussed in Chapter Three. As we saw in that same chapter, Gyekye, rightly, explains ‘quasi-physical’ as “seemingly physical” (1995, p. 86). From both positions the uniquely peculiar feature of a quasi-physical mind, not spiritual yet not physical, becomes obvious.

Nevertheless, any attempt to apply a quasi-physical mind to rescue the framework of human communication is thwarted by Kwame’s possible prospect, the position that one day when modern science has obtained less fallible advanced laws of physics it may reveal that what today appears quasi-physical is indeed physical (2004, p. 346). And we saw Majeed’s point that that makes Kwame a physicalist even today (2013, pp. 27-28). Moreover, the ontological import of his position is already obvious—even today, a quasi-physical mind is intrinsically physical, which takes us back to Wiredu’s glitch.



5.11. A physicalist concept of person to the rescue?

There are some physicalist conceptions of how the human being is able to learn and use language. These conceptions make important points on faculties for learning and use, and it will be interesting to find out whether these indeed account for human use and learning of language.

5.11.1 The physicalist conceptions of Skinner and Chomsky

In Western philosophy, an authority on human capability at learning and using language is Naom Chomsky. After pointing out that “[c]learly, there is something very special about the brains of human beings that enables them to master a natural language....” Cowie states, “...Chomsky[‘s] [idea] that what is special about human brains is that they [brains] contain a specialised ‘language organ,’ an innate mental ‘module’ or ‘faculty,’ that is dedicated to the task of mastering a language” (Cowie, 2017, para 6, Square brackets inserted). And Lemetyinen (2023) states that “[t]his innate capacity typically develops in early childhood and involves complex interplay of genetic, cognitive, and social factors” (Lemetyinen, 2023, para 3, Square brackets inserted).

Note the three factors named by Lemetyinen – “genetic”, “cognitive”, and “social”. These factors hint at a physicalist conception of factors that contribute to the process of learning and using language. And Lemetyinen confirms this physicalist orientation when she discusses two concepts of the process – a behaviourist theory of language acquisition by B. F. Skinner, and Chomsky’s theory. Skinner is a behaviourist who “accounted for language development using environmental influence, through imitation, reinforcement, and conditioning” (Lemetyinen, 2023, Section 2). It excludes anything internal to a human being.

This is, therefore, how Chomsky (2024) criticises Skinner's conception: "This behaviourist approach has proven almost entirely barren, in my view, a fact that is not at all surprising since it refuses in principle to consider the major and essential component of all behaviour, namely, the states of the mind/brain" (2024, p. 512). In short, the behaviourist conception concentrates on factors external to the human being and leaves out what is "essential" or vital to how a human being learns and uses language, the mind/brain.

What then is Chomsky's model for what he describes as "the state of the mind/brain"? He writes.

It seems reasonable to resort to a representational theory of mind of the Cartesian sort, including the concept of mind as an information-processing system that computes, forms and modifies representations; and we should also adopt something like the Cartesian concept of innate idea as tendencies and dispositions, biologically determined properties of the mind/brain that provide a framework for the construction of mental representations, a framework that enters into our perception and action. Ideas of this sort have been revived in the context of the cognitive revolution of the past generation. (2024, p. 514)

The discussion in Chapter Two shows that Chomsky's conception is a composite of positions from some physicalist schools and substance dualism. "[T]endencies and dispositions" are behaviourist terms; "the concept of mind as an information-processing system that computes, forms and modifies representations" is a functionalist position; "biologically determined properties of the mind/brain" is a reductive physicalist concept, actually a dualist concept masquerading as monism, and; a "theory of mind of the Cartesian sort" and "the Cartesian concept of innate idea" are part of a proper dualist concept. Nothing stops Chomsky from creating this composite conception. However, in the light of the current positions of the concepts he subscribes to, his conception is an impossible composite, unless Chomsky gives further

clarification on points of convergences among these basically different concepts. Possibly, the reason for adding Descartes' ideas is to account for co-relation. However, Chomsky can commence outlining his points of convergences after he convinces physicalists to forsake their basic assumption that the human being is a physical monolith.

Chomsky deepens his challenges when he names “modern science, mathematics and technology” (2024, p. 515) as the major influences of the “the cognitive revolution” which inspired his conception. “Technology” is what links functionalism to modern science which is a maker of technology. “Modern science” is fundamentally fetish about the physical though, as we saw in Chapter 3, not all the entities it studies are physical. Also, the firm logic and strict sequence of “mathematics” is unfit for assessing or comprehending the relatively *fluid* basic features and behaviour of human beings.

5.11.2. The physicalist conception of Perlovsky

It is significant that Leonid Perlovsky (2011), in discussing human learning and use of language, takes account of co-relation. He states,

How [do] language and cognition interact in thinking? ...We develop a hypothesis that language and cognition are two separate but closely interacting mechanisms. Language accumulates [through] cultural wisdom; cognition develops mental representations [by] modeling surrounding world and adapts cultural knowledge to concrete circumstances of life. Language is acquired from surrounding language “ready-made” and therefore can be acquired early in life. ...Cognition is developed from experience. Yet cognition cannot be acquired from experience alone; language is a necessary intermediary... A mathematical model is developed... It models recent neuro-imaging data about cognition... (2011, p. 1)

In his question, Perlovsky recognises the distinction between the realms of language and cognition (or, broadly, mental lives). He then explains that language is a social entity and cognition is abstract. He gives further details that cognition is generated from experience, though not from experience alone since language acts as a go-between. Consequently, Perlovsky develops the hypothesis that language and cognition are separate but closely interacting mechanisms. True, language and cognition are separate but interact.

However, looking for the interaction between cognition and language in “neuro-imaging data of cognition” or records of brain activities that are the result of cognition or thinking is an identity theory effort. Also, to develop a mathematical model of neural activities as a way of arguing his hypothesis simply strengthens his physicalist conception.

As we saw in Chapter Two, the physicalist basic assumption that the human being is a physical monolith forestalls the capability of any physicalist concept of person to account for mental lives, which forecloses any capacity of a physicalist concept of person to account for “bridging” or eventually porting.

Thus, by choosing a biological nature for a human being, Wiredu invites into his framework the physicalists’ crunch, that is, their basic assumption that the human being is a physical monolith. As we saw Leibnitz explains in Chapter Four, the brain (or a physical monolith) does not contain intangible thought.

5.12. Substance dualism to the rescue?

Does the concept of person Wiredu rejects, substance dualism, have the capability to account for human communication?

Cowie gives us a position that is related to substance dualism, but it is about the “*property of us*” that allows us to learn and use language. She writes, “In Part 5 of the *Discourse on the Method*, for instance, Descartes identifies the ability to use language as [a major feature] distinguishing people from “machines” or “beasts” and... [adds that, for Descartes] ...human beings have a “rational soul” and beasts “have no intelligence at all” (Descartes 1984: 140-1.)” (Cowie, 2017, para 3, Square brackets inserted). This means for substance dualism a human being can learn and apply language because he or she possesses a “rational soul” or “mind”.

Substance dualism has metaphysical-physical aspects and so *prima facie* could account for human communication. It has two vital merits over physicalist concepts of person. Descartes’ concept of person gives us two different realms, metaphysical-physical, and he affirms interaction between these. “Bridging” can cure substance dualism of the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction. Yet the fact that Descartes has no notion of “bridging” means his concept fails to account for interaction, thus leaving us an ontological gap, which, in reverse fashion, prospects “bridging”. Without “bridging”, substance dualism only has the potential to account for porting hence for human communication.

5.13. Akan Concept of Person: Porting and Human Communication

What is the capability of Akan concept of person to allow porting? And if it upholds the notion, what does it mean for the definition of human communication given above?

Language is tangible, hence its acceptance and coming through the physical part of a human being is no challenge at all. The issue is how it could be transmuted into intangible concepts that are readily accommodated by the metaphysical aspect of a human being. As we saw in Chapter 3, Akan concept of person has a seamless transition, *sunsum*. As an

imperceptibly layered transition between *okra* and *honam*, *sunsum* offers a seamless layered terrain over which the smooth transmutation of physical language into intangible concepts and *vice versa* can take place. Note, however, that this conception does not and may not immediately respond to every question raised against it.

The three-aspect concept of person the Akan model represents is thus more conducive to porting by language in-coming from the social arena and of internal concepts exiting into the same arena. Again, because *sunsum* is the receptacle for human capacities, such as thought, will, rationality and emotion, and; upholds a person's potential capability for paranormal activity, Akan concept of person offers a relatively efficient explanation of the high-end human capacity of Nyima (encountered above). *Sunsum* allows porting; hence makes Akan concept of person capable of accounting for human communication.

Wiredu defines human communication as the transference of thought among people; implicitly, in community. While that is true, the discourse thus far portrays the inadequacy of that definition. It is not just the contents of thought that is transferred. If we admit mind as the metaphysic of thought, then accompanying capacities, such as will and emotion, can be considered partly vital to what is transferred. Some of the transferred concepts are emotional or even sheer gestures that at the point of generation in an individual have no thought or emotional content yet may evoke thinking or emotion in the receiver(s).

Three points are already obvious. One, a physicalist concept cannot uphold porting. Two, substance dualism because it fails to explain heterogeneous interaction with a sort of "bridging" only has the potential to account for porting. And the Akan concept of person upholds porting because it has a seamless transition that accounts for the heterogeneous

interaction. That means the Western concepts of person discussed herein do not account for human communication.

That calls for re-appraisal of what is transferred in human communication. In Western philosophy, thought is generated by mind. When mind is dropped for *sunsum*, it becomes necessary to re-define the content that is transferred. Again, since thought is but one of the items of the transferred content, it also becomes necessary to include in the conception an aspect of how such content is generated. In short, the conventional Western philosophy concepts of thought and mind appear inadequate for a proper conception of human communication.

Before a re-conception of consciousness, however, it is obvious that we need to re-characterise porting. Porting is the acceptance of the tangibles of language into a human being and the transmutation of those tangibles into the intangible concepts of thought and emotion, consciousness, etc. and *vice versa*.

Therefore, application of Akan concept of person leads us to a relatively holistic hence more appropriate conception: Human communication is the transference among human beings of contents of *sunsum*. This content is generated in a human being through the expression of *anidaho* (consciousness) expressing itself in tandem with and through a list of intangible and tangible epistemic capacities. And the transference is mediated by language in the social arena.

It is obvious that among the three concepts of person, the Akan model is the one which allows smooth porting by language and the abstract concepts in or contents of *sunsum* because of the seamless transition of *sunsum*. Thereby, the Akan model has relatively high conceptual efficiency at explaining the human being's ability to learn and use language. And this called for a re-definition of the conception of human communication.

In terms of basic concepts modern science is physicalist-oriented, and as the entire thesis portrays the three-aspect Akan concept of person is relatively highly efficient at explaining the features and behaviour of a human being. The fact that modern science is able to make sophisticated technology is no guarantee of its capability at explaining the inherent features and behaviour of a human being (discussed in this work). One just needs to pause for a moment and gradually re-consider the issues. Modern technology fabricated with knowledge from modern science is pervasive, and its capabilities are generally-accepted and generally-applauded. Because of that modern science is, without critical analysis, presumed to be capable of explaining everything, including the inherent features and behaviour of a human being. However, if modern science remains physically-oriented it will still be limited at explaining those features and behaviour. The position of this thesis – as drawn out in the full argument herein – is that humankind needs to re-think the sanctity of the ability of modern science (and technology) to explain at least the inherent capacities, capabilities and behaviour of a human being. On the other hand, the Akan concept of person explains the features and behaviour of a human being analysed herein. That is the relevance of Akan concept of person in this (currently) modern-science-and-technology-oriented world.

Finally, a critical question beckons: Is this work not trying to impose a *culturally-biased definition of a “human being”* or three-aspect concept of person on the rest of the world? For example, Bruce B. Janz (2019) writes, “African philosophy... is a set of culturally original questions about the full range of philosophical issues” (2019, p. 689). The “philosophical issues” and the “culturally original questions” raised about them are separate, and African philosophy is the latter not the former. For an explication of “cultural”, Janz (2014) writes; “I am not referring to historical or cultural origins (which, after all, address the issue of the history

of thought, but not necessarily philosophy)...” (2014, p. 10). That means “historical or cultural origins” are about “thought... not... philosophy”.

Again, in a bid to jettison traditional African thought out of philosophy, Janz defines philosophy thus: “It designates on one hand a set of reflective practices rooted in culture and reason, which rigorously and critically explicate a life-world, and on the other a discipline in the university, with a set of codes, standards, recognised practitioners, and customs” (2019, p. 689). That means philosophy is applied to describe two things – “a set of reflective practices rooted in culture and reason” and “a discipline in the university.” That way traditional African thought qualifies as philosophy under the first designation, but today – in this 21st Century – it fails, while academic African thought qualifies as philosophy under the second designation.

However, Europe also has culture, because culture is the total way of life of a people. Franz Fanon (1998) discusses the meeting of cultures, African and European, and some of the tools used by the latter to dominate the former. The domination was possible and attainable because of the contrast between the two cultures, yet the implied comparison is that both are cultures. Again, Tsenay Serequeberhan (1998) quotes Edward W. Said who refers to the presence of European ways of life in Africa, Asia and the Americas as the “parent culture” (Serequeberhan, 1998, p. 144). These render vacuous the distinction Janz asserts, and shows that “cultural” is not applicable to only items of Africa philosophy.

It is also significant that the Akan elders Rattray (1925) spoke to to obtain the proper truth of Akan sociology, politics, knowledge, philology and philosophy largely gave the British sociologist proper information. And Gyekye recounts a discovery by Rattray thus: “Here then we have a far more real equality than any which our [British] laws confer upon us. To the

Ashanti [or, broadly, Akan] our [British] equality would seem a fictitious fellowship” (Gyekye, 1997, p. 43).

From the fore-going, it will be spurious to allege that this work tries to imposition a culturally-biased three-aspect conception of a human being on the world.

Conclusion

Before constructing a framework of human communication, Wiredu explains that human communication is the transference of thought which, implicitly, is mediated by language in the social arena. Both Wiredu and Forster define language as a generic term that includes both linguistic and non-linguistic elements. It was thus necessary to understand the relation among the particulars of language, the social arena and how human beings create, learn and apply language in it. Ilyenkov applies the relation Marx establishes between gold and its use as a measure of value to discuss some features of language. Gold is physical but its measure of value is abstract. That essential feature of the measure of value makes it a common entity against which all other commodities are exchanged. For Ilyenkov, therefore, a word, like the gold, is tangible but each bears an abstract feature by which we refer to an object or entity. However, the analysis here shows that while a measure of value can be exchanged for any other commodity, the abstract feature of a word, herein recognised as the shared meaning, applies to either a specific object or entity or to a set of objects or entities.

Ilyenkov also draws out two levels of relation between language as a social construct and work. Human beings work and interact, which inter-relation necessitated the emergence and application of language. My explication is that the interaction and different types of work of human beings in a community are towards certain common ends, including welfare; hence

language plays a key role in the general effort at generating collective understanding and movement towards those common goals. The other level of the relation between language and work is in the effort to either generate a new term for an object or learn to, for the first time, apply a term to its agreed referent. Such work, according to Ilyenkov, requires two sets of thinking in the learning and application of language – first encounter of a word and struggling to associate its meaning with it, and struggling to appropriately apply an already assigned during communication.

Ilyenkov's use of work and thinking portrays and affirms the significance of thought in human communication. As we saw in Chapters Three and Four, however, emotion too is highly essential to human communication since it is an instance of how a human being assesses incoming information and crafts out-going information, possibly for a response. Still, if as we have already seen, each of human capacities, say understanding or consciousness, plays a role different from thought or emotion, then all human capacities play vital roles in human communication. Ilyenkov's utilisation of work and thinking also leads to a discussion of the notion of porting, which is the acceptance and transmutation of the tangible concepts of language into intangible concepts of shared meaning within an individual.

As a prelude to mounting his framework of human communication, Wiredu rejects the mind inherent in substance dualism and constructs a reductive physicalist concept of mind of thought as a function. He explains that a thought is a brain state which is also a concept and conceives mind as a non-physical on-going complex set of brain states. He then affirms that a human being has a biological nature, hence the biological similarity and the resultant biological affinities humans share pre-disposes them to inter-relate and meaningfully co-exist in community. Also, inherent in this biological nature are conceptual and linguistic abilities by

which human beings communicate through the transference of thought or concepts. Wiredu also argues that an infant is born without a mind, which the infant develops through the development of communication. That means a human being has no faculty for accepting the terms of language. However, Locke argues that a human being has a faculty for accepting the words of a message before applying the abilities to use those words.

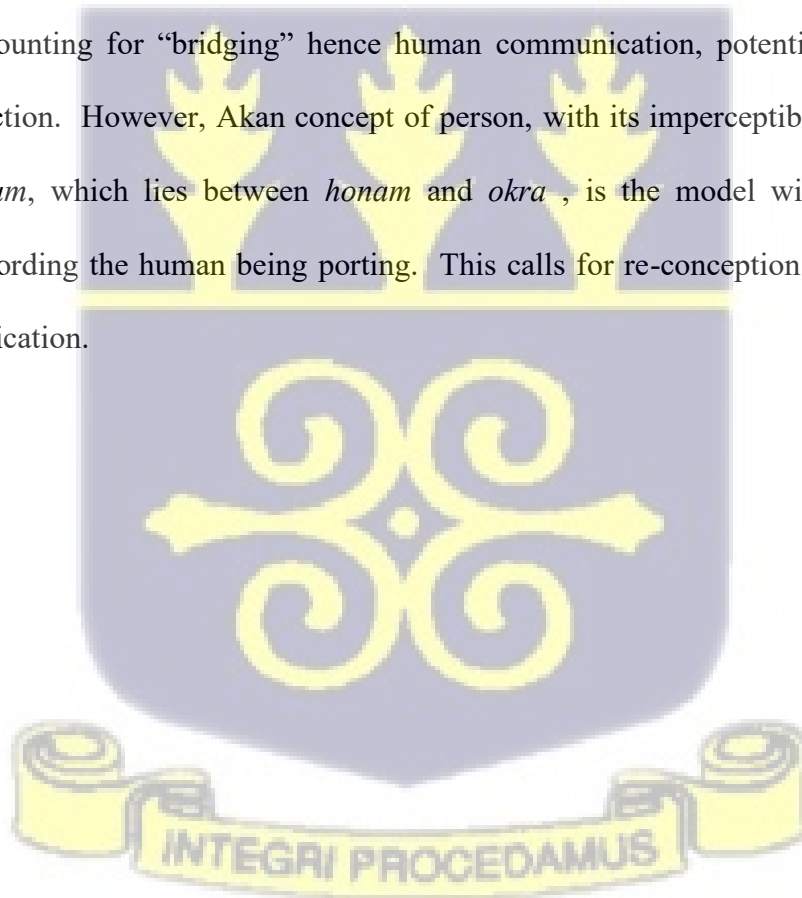
Wiredu also affirms thought as abstract concepts yet admits that language is generated in the social arena. Ilyenkov also affirms that language is tangible. Hence the critical challenge for Wiredu's framework is how the tangible words of language are accepted and transmuted into intangible concept of shared meaning in a human being and *vice versa*. The persistence of the ontological separateness of mind and brain has already been demonstrated. That separateness demands that a framework of human communication must account for porting, or what Hugon terms "bridging". "Bridging" connects and thus allows interaction between two parts that are originally separate, say ontologically. Yet Wiredu's framework of human communication includes neither a notion of "bridging" nor a notion of porting.

Lemetiynen, Cowie and Hugon describe how human beings use and apply language. And some conceptions discuss how such learning and application. However, each conception must account for either "bridging" or porting if it is to justify the individual's ability to learn and use language. Skinner gives a behavioural account of the ability, and Chomsky gives a composite conception of mind/brain that combines physicalist and substance dualist aspects. However, Skinner's conception is physicalist, and Chomsky's conception will be plausible when it is accompanied by a caveat that denies the basic assumption of physicalism that say a human being is a physical monolith. Perlovsky's conception takes account of the ontological separateness, yet his conception is also physicalist. Chomsky's and Perlovsky's conceptions

discuss what Cowie refers to as “the properties of us” that allow humans to learn and apply language, none discusses necessity of “bridging” or porting.

Eventually, therefore, the critical issue is which concept of person allows the “bridging” or porting to facilitate a human being’s participation in social communication. Physicalist concepts of person cannot uphold mental lives; hence cannot account for “bridging” or human communication. And Wiredu, by subscribing to a physicalist concept of person invites the physicalist glitch, of the human being as a physical monolith, into his framework of human communication.

The concept of person Wiredu rejects, substance dualism, upholds mental lives; hence has the potential of accounting for “bridging” hence human communication, potential because of the puzzle of interaction. However, Akan concept of person, with its imperceptibly layered smooth transition, *sunsum*, which lies between *honam* and *okra*, is the model with relatively high efficiency at affording the human being porting. This calls for re-conception of the concept of human communication.



CHAPTER SIX

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This has been a comparative analysis of the conceptual efficiencies of one-aspect, two-aspect and three-aspect concepts of person at explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being. The general conclusion is that compared to one-aspect (physicalist) and two-aspect (substance dualist) concepts of person, a three-aspect concept (the Akan model) is highly efficient at explaining the basic features and behaviour of human being.

6.1. One aspect and Two-aspect Concepts of Person

The discourse commenced with an examination of the fundamental characteristics of physicalist concepts of person and substance dualism, and whether these uphold mental (or metaphysical) lives. Substance dualism affirms that a human being is made up of two substances, mind and body; hence accounts for the metaphysical aspect of a human being. Physicalist concepts of person come on the basic assumption that a human being is a physical monolith. While reductive physicalist concepts argue that the human being is a physical entity through and through, the non-reductive physicalist concepts affirm that the human being though physical has separate mental properties, states or processes that are part of the physical. The position herein is that reductive physicalists pretend they have cast mental lives, including thought and consciousness, into their physical monolith, and non-reductive physicalist concepts are dualist concepts masquerading as monism. On the other hand, Descartes is sincere about the features of the human being—that a person has both metaphysical and physical aspects.

However, in failing to adequately respond to the puzzle of how heterogeneous entities interact, Descartes gave Western philosophy what is today known as the mind-body problem.

In conventional Western philosophy, therefore, the established relation between the metaphysical and physical aspects of a human being is co-relation, where brain activities and mental activities are parallel but are causally connected. In terms of upholding mental lives, therefore, substance dualism has only the potential to do so – it affirms mental lives, but the mind-body problem prevents it from actualising the capacity. Although functionalism was singled out for detailed discussion, all physicalist concepts share a common limitation – subscription to the basic assumption that a human being is a physical monolith. And since there is no room for mental lives in the physicalist monolith, physicalist concepts of person fail to uphold mental lives.

6.2. A Three-aspect Concept of Person

Prior to Gyekye's 1985 (Second edition, 1995) book, there had been writings on the entities that come together or contribute to the making of a person in Akan philosophy. Some authors like Debrunner linked *sunsum* to another entity, *ntoro*, while others linked *mogya* to *okra*, and; in another breadth linked all four. However, in Akan philosophy, *mogya* is what a woman contributes to filial (blood or clan) inheritance, and *ntoro* is what a man contributes to filial inheritance. Both Gyekye and Wiredu explain that *ntoro* and *mogya* are genetic entities. However, *ntoro* and *mogya* are not genetic entities, since genetics is a modern science filial inheritance system. *Mogya* and *ntoro* are particulars of filial inheritance in Akan (African) knowledge system. This research also explains how *ntoro* and *mogya* contributes to an individual's personality and character traits.

According to Gyekye, the Akan concept of person affirms that a human being is made up of metaphysical aspects, *okra* and *sunsum*, and a physical aspect, *honam*. *Okra* comes from Onyame and is the bringer of life, *sunsum* is the receptacle for a person's personality and character traits, and *honam* is the vehicle for the metaphysical aspects. Thus, it took Gyekye to clearly delineate the Akan concept of person in philosophy.

Gyekye argues that *okra* and *sunsum* are ontologically the same but perform separate functions. But the position in this thesis is that there is slight difference in the metaphysical-ness of *okra* and *sunsum*, which is why they perform separate functions. I put forth the hypothesis that Onyame made the human being with two primal entities, *okra* and *honam*, and in the process the two overlapped or merged up to a point leaving behind part of *okra* and part of *honam*. The overlap or merging creates a new entity, *sunsum*, which is a seamless transition from *okra* to *honam*, hence it accounts for heterogeneous interaction. In accounting for the interaction, *sunsum* eliminates the ontological gap that physicalists avoid and which plagues substance dualism with the mind-body problem.

The (above) argument of difference in the metaphysical-ness of *okra* and *sunsum* only goes to corroborate their separate functions. And since Gyekye affirms separate roles for *okra* and *sunsum*, he eventually upholds the Akan philosophy position that a living human being is made up of three aspects.

6.3. The Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis of the conceptual efficiencies of the three concepts of person is conducted in three selected areas – ontological personhood or the features of a living human being, consciousness and human communication. It was obvious that the efficiency of any of the

concepts of person to explain any of the selected features of a human being depends on its capability to uphold mental (or metaphysical) lives.

Physicalists discuss mental lives, that is, although physicalist concepts of person do not and cannot uphold mental lives. This deserves qualification because available literature shows that physicalists do discuss mental lives. They do, but the critical issue is whether physicalist concepts of person can accommodate (in their physical monolith) any metaphysical entities. The response is negative. Since physicalist concepts of person do not uphold mental lives, they cannot account for ontological personhood, consciousness or human communication.

As stated above, substance dualism has only the potential to uphold mental lives. It accounts for the metaphysical aspect of a human being but is afflicted with an ontological gap because of the puzzle of heterogeneous interaction. Substance dualism thus also has only the potential to account for ontological personhood, consciousness and human communication. And even that is based on a proposed hypothesis of transition that allows what Hugon refers to as “bridging” between mind and body. It is when “bridging” is allowed that substance dualism can account for ontological personhood, consciousness and human communication.

On the other hand, Akan concept of person, because *sunsum* is a seamless transition, can uphold metaphysical lives, hence accounts for ontological personhood, *anidaho* (consciousness), and human communication. Bringing into the discourse aspects of Asian philosophical traditions allows this thesis to apply Akan concept of person to eventually outline a conception of holistic consciousness. In the case of human communication, the discussion indicates that the only way a concept of person can account for human communication is by necessarily allowing (what is herein termed) porting, which is the acceptance and transmutation of the tangible concepts of language into intangible concepts of thought and emotion, etc. within a person, and *vice versa*.

6.4. Possible Specific Contributions to Knowledge

As far as the available relevant literature portrays, this thesis has made several contributions to humankind's knowledge. Some are listed here.

Descartes did not directly explain how heterogeneous entities interact, thereby leaving Western philosophy a legacy of mind-body problem. The unique metaphysical-ness argued for *sunsum* allows it to provide for interaction in Akan concept of person. This confers on the Akan concept a relatively ready capability to explain and account for the basic features and behaviour of a human being. It is essential to add that while I figured out the unique feature of *sunsum*, my plausible explanation of those features would have been a false one if Akan concept of person did not neatly accommodate it. The explanation is thus (not mine but) an Akan concept of person explanation. I was only able to unveil *what already is*, exists ideally, as one of the conceptual premises whose conclusion is the Akan concept of person. Still, the plausible explanation is one of the highlight contributions of this thesis.

Some respondents told Wiredu that the *okra* can be seen by people with heightened levels of perception, and that was one of the bases upon which he described *okra* as quasi-physical. However, the proposed unique feature of *sunsum* allows us to demonstrate that it is not the *okra* that is seen. As affirmed, *okra* has features like those of Onyame, and thus will never be seen. What is seen by these spiritual people is but an aspect of the *sunsum* of the dead person. While the *okra* is not what is seen, Wiredu's description of what is seen as quasi-physical is apt.

On ontological personhood, Akan concept of person already has metaphysical-physical aspects, and the major issue was whether there was co-relation or interaction. And the position in this thesis is that the unique feature of *sunsum* affords the Akan concept of person interaction

that seamlessly over-rides co-relation. By that the Akan model can explain the basic features of a living human being. The ability to express consciousness is a consequence of ontological personhood, thus the Akan concept of person explains consciousness, allows us to even differentiate life from consciousness, and then propose a holistic definition of consciousness. Another consequence of ontological personhood and of even the expression of consciousness is human behaviour.

Prior to explaining human communication, the Akan concept of person accounts for porting; a notion that is a revolutionary discovery of this thesis.

6.5. General Significance of this Research

In African academia Western philosophy, along with its concepts of person, is treated as mainstream philosophy, which could imply that those concepts of person must be priority models for explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being. However, the affirmative response to the basic research question of this project indicates that, indeed, compared to the one-aspect and two-aspect concepts of person of Western philosophy, a three-aspect concept of person of African origin is highly efficient at explaining the basic features and behaviour of a human being. This is valuable contribution to knowledge.

6.6. Areas for Further Research

There are several areas on which this thesis does not delve deeper. Such areas call for further research.

Kim explains that machines, including digital ones, can conduct activities, such as multiplications, working complex mathematical equations and making representation of images,

because these have yielded to functional characterisation. Conversely, Kim adds, machines are not able to represent acts of emotion, because emotion till now resists functional characterisation. This thesis points out that the issue may be more due to the difference in the features of the physical casing of human being as opposed to that of a machine, and then the type of metaphysical entities each casing can uphold, that is, if it does at all. It will thus be interesting to explore whether this basic metaphysical-physical difference is solely responsible for the lack of functional characterisation of emotion, or whether there are other contributing factors. Searle takes the matter even further by explaining that digital computers do not have minds; hence do not think, because they do not engage with the content they accept and produce. This point too deserves further or corroborative research to pin-point precisely what it is that makes digital computers capable of doing what they can do or uphold or deny Searle's conclusion.

Another issue for further research arises from Kwame's position that one day less fallible laws of physics may or will show that all quasi-physical entities are physical. His position prospects the unveiling of an ontology which today appears as a phantom because the epistemic criterion – the laws of physics – is contemporarily fallible. For this thesis, in the situation where spiritual people can see the quasi-physical aspect of a dead person, it is the epistemic capability of the spiritual person that transiently improves; not because of any change in the feature of what is out there or laws governing its appearance. It will thus be interesting to delve into how an improved alteration in human knowledge of laws inherent in reality will unveil to our senses the ontology of things already in existence.

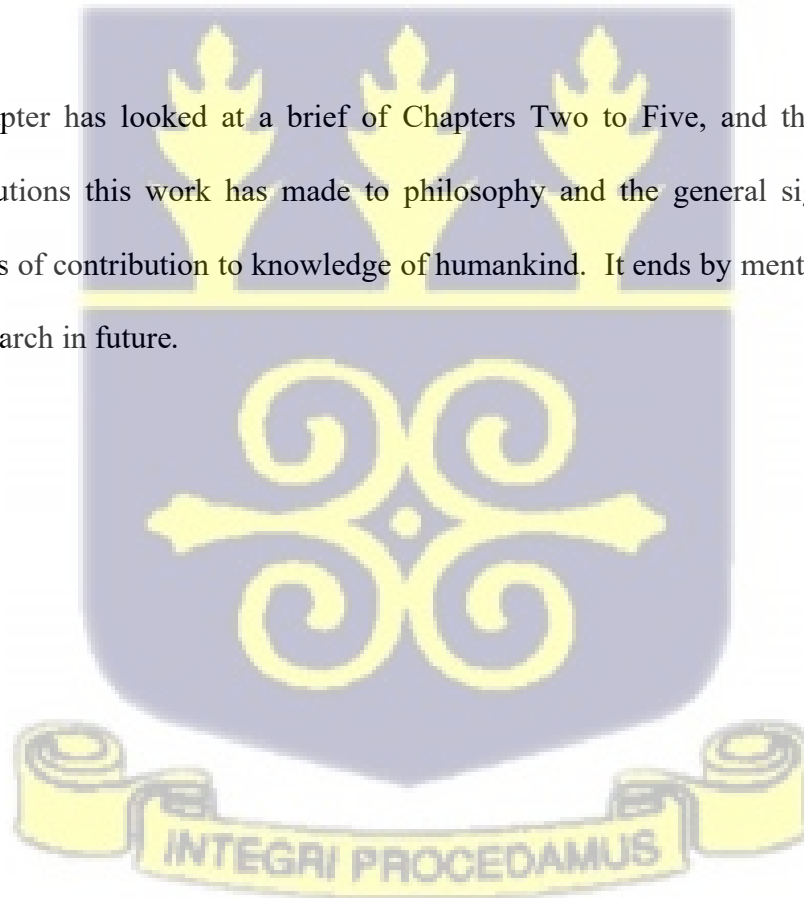
Also, this research concentrated on African (Ancient Egypt (black) and Akan) concepts of person, some concepts of person in Western philosophy, and on conception of consciousness in aspects of Asian philosophical traditions. All these traditions indicate that a human being is

made up of metaphysical and physical aspects. It will thus be interesting to find out whether other philosophical traditions (other than these three), or even other aspects within these three traditions, also point to the same situation.

Again, there definitely are in existence other three-aspect concepts of person, and it will be interesting to discuss their constituents, and then whether any of these will give the same results as Akan concept of person or will show different outcomes. Where the outcomes are different, it will also be informative to know the extent of the differences compared to the results obtained with Akan concept of person.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at a brief of Chapters Two to Five, and then outlined some specific contributions this work has made to philosophy and the general significance of this research in terms of contribution to knowledge of humankind. It ends by mentioning some areas for possible research in future.



Notes

1. Beatrice Lumpkin and Joseph Osei give evidence to the effect that the π value used by black Ancient Egyptians to build the Pyramid is finer than the current value given humankind by modern science (mathematics).
2. According to Hunter Havelin Adam, thousands of years ago Dogon astronomer scientists of Mali, Africa, observed the twin stars, Sirius A and B, and made a diagram of their joint trajectory for hundreds of years to come. In the last century when modern science astronomers drew a portion of that trajectory it was simply a photocopy of a portion of the Dogon diagram.
3. Adam, and P. Gomani Chinguwo (Lamptey, 2009) mention the annual “Bado” festival celebrated by Dogons. The basis for that festival is the one-year Sirius B takes to rotate on its own axis.
4. The points of this paragraph are from my MPHIL thesis.
5. Caesar Atuire is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at the Department of Philosophy and Classics, University of Ghana, Legon.

Primary Reference

- Ackah, K & Owusu-Boateng, V. (2013). Emotions and reason in Euripedes’ Medea, In C. Simpson *et al* (Eds.), *University of Ghana Readers: A Celebration of Philosophy and Classics – Arts and Humanities Series*, 1 (pp. 183-195). Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited.
- Adams III, H. H. (1985). African Observers of the Universe: The Sirius Question, In I. V. Sertima (Ed.), *Blacks in science* (pp. 7-46). Transaction Books.
- Armstrong, D. M. (1970). The Nature of Mind, In (Ed.) C. V. Borst, In *The mind-brain identity theory* (pp. 67-79). Macmillan.
- Ayer, A. J. (1947). *Thinking and meaning: Inaugural lecture*. H. K. Lewis & Co.
- Agada, A. 2024. The Pan-psychist dimension of Kwame Gyekye’s theistic conception of God. *Springer*. Article, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11841-024-01020-2>. Accessed: 11:10 HRS GMT September 1, 2024.
- Appiah-Kubi, K. (1981). *Man cures, God heals*. Allenheld, Osmun & Co.
- Buckman, E. Y. (2011). The Concept of Consciousness in Akan Philosophical Thought [MPHIL Philosophy Thesis], The University of Ghana. ugspace.ug.edu.gh. URL: <http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh/handle/123456789/36637>.
- Chadha, M. (2015). The problem of the unity of consciousness: A Buddhist solution. *Philosophy East and West*, 65(3), 746-764. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/43831172>. Accessed: 14:11 HRS GMT March 6, 2023.

- Danquah, J. B. (1968). *The Akan Doctrine of God: A Fragment of Gold Coast Ethics and Religion*. Frank Cass and Co. Ltd.
- Descartes, R. (1911). *Meditations on first philosophy*. E. Haldane (Transl.). *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*. Cambridge University Press. (See also Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy). Accessed: 17:53 HRS GMT July 6, 2021.
- DeVries, W. A. (1988). *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity* (Ithaca. Cornell University Press.
- Debrunner, H. W. (1961). *Witchcraft in Ghana*. Presbyterian Book Depot.
- Dennett, D. Are we explaining consciousness yet? *Cognition* 79 (2001) 221-237. www.elsevier.com/locate/cognit. Accessed: 10:44 HRS GMT July 6, 2025.
- Duignan, B. (Ed.). Functionalism. *britannica.com*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/philosophy-of-mind/Functionalism>. Accessed: 14:37 HRS GMT September 20, 2021.
- Editors of Counseling.online.wfu.edu. (2024). The difference between feelings and emotions, *counseling.online.wfu.edu*. <https://counseling.online.wfu.edu/blog/difference-feelings-emotions/>. Accessed: 11:40 HRS GMT September 23, 2024.
- Editors of NYU Script. (2006). Four troubles with functionalism, *nyu.edu*. 63-102. <https://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/philo/faculty/block/papers/1981.Troubles.pdf>. Accessed: 15:11 HRS GMT September 10, 2021.
- Editors of Study.com, “Plato’s Forms”, *study.com*. <https://study.com/learn/lesson/plato-theory-forms-realm-physical.html>. Accessed: 11:50 HRS GMT July 26, 2025.
- Fanon, F. (1997). Racism and culture, In Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (Ed.), *African Philosophy: An Anthology*. (305-311). Blackwell Publishers.
- Foster, M. E. (2019). Natural language generation for social robotics: opportunities and challenges. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.*, Article B 374: 20180027. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2018.0027>.
- Franklin, D. & Jakes T. D. & Roth, J. (Producers), Riggins, P. (Director). (2016). *Miracles From Heaven*. [Motion picture]. USA: Sony Pictures.
- Gbadegesin, S, (2003). Eniyan: The Yoruba concept of a person, In P. H. Coetzee & A. P. J. Roux (Eds.), *The African Philosophy Reader*. (175-191). Oxford University Press of Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Genarro, R. J. (2021). Consciousness, *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002. <https://iep.utm.edu/>.

- Gerson, L. P. (2004). The unity of intellect in Aristotle's 'De Anima', *Phronesis*, 49(4). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4182761>. Accessed: 10:23 HRS GMT January 4, 2023.
- Grasso, M. & Huan, A. M. & Tononi, G. (2021). Of maps and grids", *Neuro-science of Consciousness*, 7(2), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nc/niab022>. Accessed: 13:51 HRS GMT March 6, 2023.
- Gyekye, K. (1995). *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gyekye, K. (1997). *Tradition and Modernity*. Oxford University Press.
- Gyekye, K. (2000). *Beyond Cultures: Perceiving a Common Humanity*. Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Hagar, G. J. (Ed.). (2020). Consciousness, *New World Encyclopaedia*. The Christian Herald. <https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Consciousness#:~:text=%22The%20state%20of%20being%20aware,of%20itself%20and%20the%20world.%22>. Accessed: 9:29 HRS GMT September 3, 2024.
- Horsthemke, K. (2017). Indigenous (African) knowledge systems, science, and technology, In Adeshina Afolayan and Toyin Falola (Eds.). *The Palgrave Handbook of African Philosophy* (585-603). Palgrave Macmillan. DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-59291-0_39.
- Horton, R. (1998). African traditional thought and Western science, In Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (Ed.), *African Philosophy: An Anthology*. Blackwell Publishers. (181-192).
- Hume, D. (2017). I am a Bundle of Perceptions. In S. Baronett (Ed.), *Journey into Philosophy: An Introduction with Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Routledge.
- Hugon, P. (2023). Tibetan epistemology and philosophy of language, In E. N. Zalta & U. Nodelman (Eds.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2023/entries/epistemology-language-tibetan/>.
- James, W. (1904). Does 'Consciousness' Exist? *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, 1(18), 477-491. DOI: 10.2307/2011942. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2011942>.
- James, W. (1952). The principles of psychology, In M. Adler & R. M. Hutchins (Eds.), *Great Books of the Western World*. Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc.
- Janz, B. B. (2019). African philosophy. *researchgate.net*. (689-702). DOI: 10.1515/9780748629299-049. Accessed: 11:15 HRS GMT July 31, 2025.

- Janz, B. B. (2014). The location(s) of philosophy: Generating and questioning new concepts in African philosophy. *Philosophia Africana*, vol. 16, no. 1, July 2014. DOI: 10.5840/philafricana20141612. Accessed: 11:07 HRSGMT July 31, 2025.
- Kant, Immanuel. (2003). *Critique of Pure Reason*, In (Transl.) N. K. Smith. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kim, J. (2011). Consciousness and the mind-body problem, in *Philosophy of Mind*. Westview Press. (pp. 263-300).
- Koch, C. (2018). What is consciousness?”, *Nature*, L557, 8-12. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41568-018-05097-x>. Accessed: 13:23 HRSGMT March 6, 2023.
- Krishnamurti, J. (2023). What is consciousness?, *kfoundation.org*. https://kfoundation.org/the-transformation-of-consciousness/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI3oPrjaHH_QIV2eN3Ch1yTwOnEAAYAAEgJu3PD_BwE. Accessed: 12:13 HRSGMT March 6, 2023.
- Krueger, J. W. (2006). Concrete consciousness: A Sartrean critique of functionalist accounts of mind”, *Sartre Studies International*, 12(2), 44-60. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23511002>. Accessed: 15:48 HRSGMT September 10, 2021.
- Kwame, S. (2004). Quasi-materialism: A contemporary African concept of mind, In Kwasi Wiredu (Ed.), *A Companion to African Philosophy*. Blackwell. (pp. 343-351).
- Lamptey, Y. (2009). African science and Western science... which?, In *New African*, 43rd Year (485), 70-75
- Lemetyinen, H. (2023). Language acquisition theory, (Rev.) by S. McLeod & O. Guy-Evans, *simplypsychology.org*. Accessed: 10:57 HRSGMT April 13, 2024.
- Levin, J. (2018). Functionalism, (Ed.) E. N. Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/functionalism/>.
- Locke, John. (2017). Identity and diversity”, In S. Baronett (Ed.), *Journey into Philosophy: An Introduction with Classic and Contemporary Readings*. (pp. 329-333). Routledge.
- Losee, J. (2001). *A Historical Introduction to the Philosophy of Science*. Oxford University Press.
- Lumpkin, B. (1985). The pyramids: Ancient showcase of African science and technology”, In (Ed.) I. V. Sertima, *Blacks In Science*. (pp. 76-83). Transaction Books.
- Majeed, H. M. (2013A). A critique of the concept of quasi-physicalism in Akan philosophy. *African Studies Quarterly*, 14(1 & 2), 23-33.

- Majeed, H. M. (2013B). Rationality, supernaturalism and humanism: Traditional Akan thought questions some Western claims”, in Carl Simpson *et al*, *University of Ghana Readers: A Celebration of Philosophy and Classics – Arts and Humanities Series No. 1* (pp. 113-123). Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited.
- Majeed, H. M. (2014). *On the rationality of Traditional Akan Religion: Analysing the concept of God*, Legon Journal of Humanities. (pp. 127-141). <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ljh.v25i1.7>.
- Majeed, H. M. (2017). An analysis of Kwame Gyekye’s analysis of “Sunsum in Akan Philosophy”. *Ghana Journal of Religion and Theology*, New Series 7(1), 137-150.
- Majeed, H. M. (2022). Evil, death, and some African conceptions of God”, *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions*, 11(4). <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ft.v11i4.4s>.
- Malcolm, N. (1980). 'Functionalism' in philosophy of psychology, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, New Series, 80, 211-229. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4544959>. Accessed: 15:37 HRS GMT September 10, 2021.
- Maran, K. (Producer), Shankar S. (Director). (2010). *Enthiran* [Motion picture]. India: Sun Pictures.
- Marraffa, M. (2021). Theory of mind. *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002. <https://iep.utm.edu/>.
- Nagel, Thomas. (1974). What it is like to be a bat”, *The Philosophical Review*, 83(4), 435-450. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2183914>.
- Negrao, B. L. & Viljeon, M. (2009). The neural co-relates of consciousness”, *Africa Journal of Psychiatry*, 12, 265-269. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajpsy/article/view/49040/35387>. Accessed: 11:09 HRS GMT January 4, 2023.
- Niikawa, T. & Miyahara, K. & Hamada, H. T. & Nishida, S. (2022). Functions of consciousness: Conceptual clarifications”, *Neuro-science of Consciousness*, 2022(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nc/niac006>. Accessed: 14:09 HRS GMT March 6, 2023.
- O’Connor T. (2021). Emergent properties”, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/properties-emergent/>.
- Oruka, H. O. (2003). Four trends in African philosophy, In P. H. Coetzee & A. P. J. Roux (Eds.), *The African Philosophy Reader*. (pp. 119-124). Oxford University Press of Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Oluwole, S. (1995). On the existence of witches”, In (Ed.) A. G. Mosley, *African Philosophy – Selected Readings*. (pp. 357-370). Prentice Hall.

- Osei, Joseph. “Who were the first philosophers: Ancient Greeks or Black Africans?”, *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, 8, 13-35.
- Perlovsky, L. (2011). Language and cognition [and their] Interaction [in] neural mechanisms, *hindawi.com*. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2011/454587>. Accessed: 11:13 HRSGMT April 13, 2024.
- Place, U. T. (1949). Is consciousness a brain process?, home.sandiego.edu.
<https://home.sandiego.edu/~babber/analytic/Place1949.html>
- Plantinga, A. (1997). Methodological naturalism”, *Perspectives on science and Christian faith*, 49. 143-154. <http://www.asa3.org/ASA/PSCF/1997/PSCF997Plantinga.html.ori> Accessed: 21:44 GMT October 18, 2016.
- Polger, T. W. (2021). Functionalism, *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002. <https://iep.utm.edu/>.
- Putnam, H. (2021. Philosophy and mental life”, *arabphilosophers.com*.
http://www.arabphilosophers.com/English/research/non-arabic/Philosophy_of_Mind/Hilary_Putnam/Putnam_Philosophy_and_Mental_life_English_Article.pdf. Accessed: 14:41 HRSGMT September 20, 2021.
- Rattray, R. S. (1955). *Ashanti*. Oxford University Press.
- Richardson, R. C. (1982). The 'scandal' of Cartesian interactionism, *Mind*, New Series, 91(361), 20-37.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00264423%28198201%292%3A91%3A361%3C20%3AT%600CI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Q>. Accessed: 11:13 HRSGMT, May 7, 2018.
- Robinson, H. (2023). Dualism, (Eds.) E. N. Zalta & U. Nodelman, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2023/entries/dualism/>.
- Rouse, M. (2011). What does porting mean?, *techopedia.com*.
<https://www.techopedia.com/definition/8925/porting>. Accessed: 10:37 HRSGMT April 26, 2024.
- Ryle, G. (2009). *The Concept of Mind*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. http://s-f-walker.org.uk/pubsebooks/pdfs/Gilbert_Ryle_The_Concept_of_Mind.pdf
- Rysiew, P. (2018). Rationality, *Oxford Bibliographies*.
<http://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780195396577-0175>.
- Samet, J. (2019). The historical controversies surrounding innateness", In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/innateness-history/>.

- Scarantino, A. & De Sousa, R. (2021). Emotion, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/emotion/>.
- Serequeberhan, T. (1998). The critique of Eurocentrism and the practice of African Philosophy, In Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (Ed.), *Post-colonial African philosophy: A critical Reader*. Blackwell Publishers (141-161).
- Shurger, A. & Graziano, M. (2022). Consciousness explained or described”, *Neuroscience of Consciousness*, 2022(1) 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nc/niac001>. Accessed: 11:05 HESGMT March 6, 2023.
- Smart, J. J. C. (2017). The mind/brain identity theory, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/mind-identity/>.
- Srinivasan, N. (2020). Consciousness without content: A look at evidence and prospects, *Front. Psychol.* 1992(11). <http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2010.01992>.
- Stevenson, L. (2013). *Twelve Theories of Human Nature*. Oxford University Press.
- Stoljar, D. (2017). Physicalism, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/physicalism/>.
- Swinburne, R. Substance dualism, in *Faith and Philosophy*, 26, 2009. 501-513.
- Tikkanen, A (Ed). Panchen Lama: Tibetan Buddhism. *britannica.com*. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Panchen-Lama>. Accessed: 10:09 HRSGMT November 10, 2021.
- Van den Heever, J. & Jones, C. (2020). Building blocks of consciousness: Revealing the shared, hidden depths of our biological heritage, *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies*, 76(1), Article a6055. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i1.6055>. Accessed: 11:15 HRSGMT January 4, 2023.
- Waissman, F. (1968). In R. Harre (Ed.). *How I See Philosophy*. Macmillan and Co. Ltd.
- Wilson, M. G. & Broccoli, B. (Producer), Tamahori, L. (Director). (2002). *Die Another Day* [Motion picture]. UK: MGM.
- Wiredu, K. (1983). The Akan concept of mind”, *Ibadan Journal of Humanistic Studies*, 3, 113-134.
- Wiredu, K. (1996). *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*. Indiana University Press.

- Wiredu, K. (2011). Empiricism: The Empirical Character of an African Philosophy, In H. Lauer & Nana A. A. Amfo & J. A. Anderson (Eds.), *Identity Meets Nationality: Voices from the Humanities*. Sub-Saharan Publishers. (pp. 18-34).
- Wu, W. (2018). The neuroscience of consciousness, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/consciousness-neuroscience/>.
- Yandell, D. (1997). What Descartes really told Elisabeth: Mind-body union as a primitive notion, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 5(2), 249-273. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09608789708570966>. Accessed: 23:24GMT, October 24, 2014.

Secondary Reference

- Burgess, J. P. (2016). Kripke on Functionalism. *Critica* (Méx. D.F., 48(114). URL: http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0011-15032016000300003. Accessed: 14:22 HRSGMT September 20, 2021.
- Cowie, F. (2017). Innateness and language. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/innateness-language/>.
- Dawes, G. W. (2017). Ancient and Medieval Empiricism". In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/empiricism-ancient-medieval/>.
- Gasparian, D. (2019). The philosophical legacy of Merab Mamardashvili [Special Issue], *Studies in East European Thought*, 71(3). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/48700940>.
- Goldhill, O. (2015). Neuroscience backs up the Buddhist belief that “the self” isn’t constant, but ever-changing, *qz.com*. <https://qz.com/506229/neuroscience-backs-up-the-buddhist-belief-that-the-self-isnt-constant-but-ever-changing>. Accessed: 13:49 HRSGMT March 6, 2023.
- Hanzel, Igor. (2018). Ilyenkov and language, *Studies in East European Thought*, (70(1). 1-18. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/48700910>.
- Miller, F. D. (1999). Aristotle’s philosophy of the soul”, *The Review of Metaphysics*, 53(2), 309-337. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20131355>. Accessed: 10:37 HRSGMT January 4, 2023.
- Newman, J. (2021). Philosophy of mind, *Introduction to Philosophy of Mind*. *press.rebus.community*. <https://press.rebus.community/intro-to-phil-of-mind/chapter/functionalism/>. Accessed: 14:56 HRSGMT September 10, 2021.
- Shields, C. (2020). Aristotle’s psychology, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archivea/win2020/entries/Aristotle-psychology>.

- Uzgalis, W. (2020). John Locke, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/locke/>.
- Van Gulick, R. (2018). Consciousness, In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/consciousness/>.

