ANDRII LEONOV
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
andrii.leonov@siu.edu

Qualitative Naturalism as Dewey's Ultimate Solution to the Mind-Body Problem[1]

Abstract

In this paper, I argue that Dewey's ultimate solution to the mind-body problem is grounded not in his emergentist metaphysics *per se* but rather in his metametaphysical *qualitative naturalism*. The latter precedes Dewey's emergent theory of mind, as postulated in his *Experience and Nature.* Thus, Dewey's emergentism is rather a *consequence* of his qualitative naturalism. As such, Dewey's ultimate metametaphysical solution to the mind-body problem precedes his emergentist metaphysics, and not *vice versa*. The essence of Dewey's qualitative naturalism can be captured in a maxim "*Quality* first, quantity second!" which is an alternative to Galileo's quantitative naturalism with the maxim "*Quantity* first, quality second!"

1. Introduction

Despite the common perception that Dewey dismissed,[2] dissolved,[3] or simply did not care[4] about the mind-body problem, it is in Dewey's metaphysical 1925/29 magnum opus *Experience and Nature* (LW 1) where his general philosophy of mind is stated most explicitly with the mind-

[1] Forthcoming in *The Pluralist*. This paper owes a lot to critical comments, immense support and encouragement from Matthew J. Brown. I am also grateful for great feedback and discussion to Justin Bell, Steven Fesmire, Peter Godfrey-Smith, David Gray, Larry Hickman, Stephen Houchins, Steven Levine, Zachary Piso, Dmytro Sepetyi, Kenneth Stikkers, and Andrew Youpa. Thanks to Aynur Charkasova for editorial suggestions. Thanks to audiences at SAAP, SIAP, and SERPA conferences for asking great clarificatory questions and putting forward some helpful criticism.

[2] "Dewey thinks that the mind-body question is a pseudo-problem" (Savery [1939] 1951, 510).

"Dewey, along with most positivists, has been very explicit in his rejection of ontology, epistemology, and the so-called mind-body problem as offering meaningful questions for philosophers to worry about" (Brodbeck 1947, 9-10).

[3] "The mind/body problem is not *solved* by Dewey's evolutionary account of the mental; it is *dissolved* by it" (Hildebrand 2003, 38).

"This is the core of Dewey's critique of epistemology: once one adopts a functional logic, those problems that have so long exercised modern epistemology, which arise due to recurrent and pernicious dualisms of mind/body, internal/external, and so on, dissolve" (Brown 2012, 293).

[4] In their "Editor's Introduction" while talking about Dewey's attitude towards "the textbook 'problems of philosophy'" including the mind-body problem, Burke, Hester and Talisse say the following:

"Dewey's response to these problems, prominent in his work as early as 1890s, is well known. He contends that many of the concerns central to traditional philosophy should be regarded not as problems in a strict sense but rather as 'puzzles' arising the vocabulary and presuppositions of philosophy itself (LW 1, 17). Dewey would recommend that we 'not solve' these puzzles but rather we 'get over them' (MW 4, 14)" (Burke, Hester, Talisse 2002, xii).

body problem at the center. This allowed Thomas Alexander (1987, 292) to label chapters 7 and chapter 8 as "Dewey's '*De Anima.*'" But what exactly is Dewey's *solution* to the mind-body problem?

There seems to be a widespread agreement that Dewey's "postulate of continuity" (LW 12, 31-32) or his "'emergent' theory of mind" (LW1, 207) is that very solution.[5] On the one hand, Dewey himself seems to suggest such an interpretation, when already in Preface to *Experience and Nature*, he says that "[r]estoration of continuity is shown to do away with the mind-body problem" (8). Later, in chapter 7, Dewey claims that "the 'solution' of the problem of mind-body is to be found in a revision of the preliminary assumptions about existence which generate the problem" (202). *Prima facie*, it seems that the above-mentioned quotes present themselves as one and the same thing which is just stated in different words. It also seems that it was Dewey's original intention to have it this way because the just mentioned quote from chapter 7 is referred by Dewey as an "introductory statement" from Preface (represented by the first quote). But are they the same solution or in fact different ones? In my paper, I claim that, in fact, they are different solutions and that one is preceded by the other. If this is the case, then what exactly constitutes their main difference?

The main thesis of my paper is the following: Dewey's ultimate solution to the mind-body problem is grounded not in his emergentist metaphysics *per se* but rather in his metametaphysical *qualitative naturalism*. The latter precedes Dewey's emergent theory of mind, as postulated in his *Experience and Nature.* Thus, Dewey's emergentism is rather a *consequence* of his qualitative

[5] E.g., Thomas Alexander uses "continuity or emergence" (1987, 69) as synonyms, i.e., where the "or" is inclusive. Further, he cites Dewey's above-mentioned quote about continuity as the solution to the mind-body problem (98), and confirms that "[f]or Dewey, the principle of continuity connects naturalism with emergentism, i.e., with the theory that higher forms or modes arise from lower ones but cannot be reduced to them" (ibid.).

naturalism. As such, Dewey's ultimate metametaphysical solution to the mind-body problem precedes his emergentist metaphysics, and not *vice versa*.

This paper consists of two parts. In part I, I will critically overview and dig into what I call the "Alexander-Rorty debate" which is a debate between the two major Dewey scholars Thomas Alexander and Richard Rorty about Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem. In part II, I will provide the metametaphysical reading of Dewey's solution to the problem as an alternative to both Rorty's and Alexander's interpretations.

Part I.

2. The Alexander-Rorty Debate

One of the first analyses of Dewey's own treatment of the mind-body problem was done by the neopragmatist philosopher and Dewey scholar Richard Rorty. In his 1977[6] paper "Dewey's Metaphysics," Rorty addresses Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem directly. Another major Dewey scholar, Thomas Alexander, in his 1987 book *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature* critically responds to Rorty's interpretation of Dewey's solution, which establishes a debate between the two scholars which I would like to call the "Alexander-Rorty debate." It is this debate that I would like to focus on in this part.

This overview has the following structure. I will start with a short account of Rorty's critique of Dewey's metaphysics (section 2.1). Then I will proceed towards Alexander's critical attack on Rorty that marks the beginning of the debate (section 2.2). Section 2.3. will deal with Rorty's quasi-Kantian reading of Dewey as well as point out its problematic aspects. Section 2.4. will dig into Alexander's emergentist reading of Dewey and the problems that it poses.

[6] Here I am referring to Rorty's 1982 book *Consequences of Pragmatism* where this paper was reprinted. Therefore, the reference to this paper in the text will be (Rorty 1982b).

2.1. Rorty's Critique of Dewey

Rorty's article "Dewey's Metaphysics" can roughly be divided into two parts. In part 1, Rorty is talking about Dewey's metaphysics in general. It is part 2 of the essay where Rorty is directly addressing Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem as an instance of his general criticism of Dewey's metaphysics. Overall, Rorty sees Dewey's metaphysics as the confusion of two ways of rejecting philosophical dualisms: a *Hegelian* sociological or historicist way, and a *Lockean* empirical or naturalistic way. The Hegelian way is about showing that it is due to some specific cultural circumstances that dualisms still exist even though their usefulness has been outlived (1982b, 82). The Lockean way emphasizes continuity between lower (natural, physiological) and higher (experiential, psychological) processes. In other words, Dewey simultaneously attempted to be "as naturalistic as Locke" and "as historicist as Hegel" (ibid.). For Rorty, having a conjunction between these two approaches is indeed possible[7] as long as one keeps them separate because "these two lines of thought neither intersect nor conflict" (ibid.). On the one hand, it would have helped Dewey with his original war with the traditional epistemological problems. On the other hand, metaphysics itself will be left with not much to deal with. But since Dewey did not accept the idea of philosophy as a therapy whose mission was to make itself obsolete, and instead wanted to discover the true generic traits of experience, this is exactly where the problems for Dewey began, according to Rorty (82-83). A particular application of such critique was Dewey's treatment of the mind-body problem.

[7] Paradoxically, earlier in the paper, Rorty (1982b, 81) claims that "no man can serve both Locke and Hegel" because it is just another way to show Santayana's criticism of Dewey naturalistic metaphysics as a "contradiction in terms." Thus, "Nobody can claim to offer an 'empirical' account of something called 'the inclusive integrity of 'experience,'' nor take this 'integrated unity as the starting point for philosophic thought,' if he also agrees with Hegel that the starting point of philosophic thought is bound to be the dialectical situation in which one finds oneself caught in one's own historical period – the problems of the men of one's time" (ibid.).

Hildebrand (2020, 343) summarizes this Rorty's critique of Dewey's "implicit methodology" as an attempt to provide "experience from a God's-eye point of view."

2.2. Alexander's Critique of Rorty

In his *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature* Thomas Alexander (1987) attempts a holistic analysis of Dewey's philosophy, including his metaphysics. Richard Rorty's above-mentioned article about Dewey's metaphysics is also under Alexander's critical scrutiny. In chapter 3 "Metaphysics of Experience," Alexander critically addresses Rorty's take on Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem,

> Like Croce, Rorty believes that Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem was merely to introduce a hyphen and posit an entity called "body-mind." In summary, for Rorty we should disregard the Dewey who presents us with "answers" to the experience-nature problem, the mind-body problem, or who speaks of philosophy as committed to a serious inquiry into the general meanings governing human existence. This renders, I believe, the critical side of Dewey's philosophy without any basis whatsoever and therefore meaningless. Rorty's comments have nevertheless drawn into focus the central importance of understanding Dewey's metaphysics and metaphysical enterprise in attempting to understand other aspects of his philosophy. (67)

On the one hand, Alexander acknowledges Rorty's efforts to bring back scholars' interest to Dewey's metaphysics, including the mind-body problem. On the other hand, Alexander criticizes Rorty for treating Dewey's metaphysics as misguided and criticizes Rorty's interpretation of Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem, because it was just about introducing a hyphen and positing an entity called "body-mind." But was Rorty's interpretation of Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem as simplistic as Alexander presented it to be?

First, where does Alexander bring that Rorty's belief from? It looks like that this is the very passage from Rorty's paper that Alexander interprets in the way shown above:

> Dewey wanted not merely skeptical diagnosis but also constructive metaphysical system-building. The system that was built in *Experience and Nature* sounded idealistic, and its solution to the mind-body problem seemed one more invocation of the transcendental ego, because the level of generality to which Dewey ascends is the same level at which Kant worked, and the model of knowledge is the same—the constitution of the knowable by the cooperation of two unknowables. (Rorty 1982b, 85)

It is somewhat hard to understand how exactly from this passage Alexander got Rorty saying that Dewey solved the mind-body problem by merely introducing a hyphen in-between body and

mind.[8] In the above quote, Rorty does not mention either a "hyphen" or "body-mind" at all. Such an interpretation appears not only simplistic but also somewhat distorting. It almost appears that it was Croce who had inspired Alexander to ascribe this idea to Rorty in the first place. With this in mind, we need to look at Rorty's interpretation of Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem in his own terms.[9]

2.3. Rorty's quasi-Kantian Reading of Dewey

What Rorty finds the most problematic in Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem[10] is not putting the hyphen in-between body and mind but the phrase "qualities of interactions." Rorty

[8] The endnote is not helpful either. It starts with a useful mention that chapters VII and VIII from *Experience and Nature* are Dewey's "*de Anima*;" then there is a comparison between Dewey's treatment of the body with that of Merleau-Ponty as presented in his *Phenomenology of Perception;* and finally, Alexander is comparing "Rorty's remark with Croce's ascerbic comment" that seems to be the only place where one can find the mention of the "hyphen" that Alexander addresses to Rorty:

"Dewey cannot overcome the dualism of mind and nature. He is led to delude himself that he has overcome it by means of a continuous process of nature-mind, in which the hyphen connecting two words would provide the victory which speculative logic … resolving … nature into mind, is alone capable of accomplishing" (Croce 1952, 5; as quoted in [Alexander 1987, 292]).

It is also possible that it is literally Rorty's above-mentioned phrase "the constitution of the knowable by the cooperation of two unknowables" that provided such an inspiration.

[9] Interestingly, Larry Hickman (2004, 164) refers to the hyphen in-between mind and body in a more positive way:

"Dewey's dissatisfaction with the traditional philosophical treatment of 'the mind–body problem' led him to coin the term 'body–mind.' Starting from the human organism as a whole, experiencing and interacting with its environing conditions, Dewey employed the term on the left of the hyphen to point backward to a history of evolutionary development that is continuous with the rest of non-human nature and is brought forward as instinct, structure, and habit. He employed the term to the right of the hyphen to point forward to the future development of the organism, a future that is determined by its ability to make plans and hypotheses, as well as its ability to draw implications and thus to take charge of its own evolution. By rejecting the traditional notion that body and mind are ontologically separate, as matter and spirit, Dewey was also able to reject the traditional assumption that the determination of their relation constitutes an epistemological problem."

[10] Rorty finds Dewey's direct solution to the mind-body problem in the following excerpt from *Experience and Nature*:

"Feelings make sense; as immediate meanings of events or objects, they are sensations, or more properly, sensa. Without language, the qualities of organic action that are feelings are pains, pleasures, odors, noises, tones, only potentially and proleptically. With language, they are discriminated and identified. They are then 'objectified'; they are immediate traits of things. This 'objectification' is not a miraculous ejection from the organism or soul into external things, nor an illusory attribution of psychical entities to physical things. The qualities never were 'in' the organism; they always were qualities of interactions in which both extra-organic things and organisms partake" (LW 1, 198-199).

thinks that it is a kind of phrase that will "soothe those who do not see a mind-body problem and provoke those who do" (Rorty 1982b, 83). But what exactly is the problem with it?

Overall, on Rorty's reading, it looks like Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem is more *epistemological* than strictly metaphysical and thus Kantian. It is as if, for Dewey, one cannot see any divisions between the objects as well as distinguish between objects and their qualities, "until concepts have been used to give sense to feelings" (ibid.). But then Rorty asks if this commits Dewey to transcendental idealism because the problem between the "empirical self and the material world" can be solved only when we invoke the transcendental ego to constitute both (ibid.). So, instead of overcoming the classical metaphysical tradition, Dewey himself seems to have gotten trapped in its cage. What exactly led Dewey into it?

For Rorty, Dewey got trapped because he wanted to sit on two chairs at the same time. And these chairs are *naturalism* and *transcendental idealism*. Thus, what Kant considered as "the constitution of the empirical world by synthesis of intuitions under concepts" has been transformed by Dewey into interactions between extra-organic things and organisms (84). At the same time, Dewey attempted to approach phrases like "transaction with the environment" and "adaptation to conditions" simultaneously naturalistically and transcendentally. A naturalistic approach was expressed *via* his common-sensical remarks about human perception and knowledge from the point of view of a psychologist, while a more transcendental approach was stated through his appeal to the generic traits of existence. All of this led to a state where Dewey's key notions like "transaction" and "situation" came to sound as mysterious as the Kantian thing-in-itself (ibid.). As a result, we arrive at the same Kantian model of knowledge where the knowable is constituted by the "cooperation of two unknowables." In other words, Rorty accuses Dewey of what Dewey himself was an extreme opponent – a "spectator model of knowledge" which, according to Ryle,

Sellars, Wittgenstein, and Heidegger, gives rise to the mind-body problem as such (84-85). Hence, the snake had bitten its own tail.

This again became possible because both the Lockean "physiological" accounts as well as the Hegelian "sociological" accounts that Dewey wanted to be associated with originally were replaced with his search for the generic traits of existence, and hence an idealistic transcendental ego as the main solution to the mind-body problem shows itself as its direct consequence (85). Instead, Dewey should have been fully Hegelian and simply criticized culture without any attempt to redescribe nature, experience, or both (ibid.). The moral is this: one cannot attempt to overcome the metaphysical tradition and thus dissolve the traditional metaphysical problems, including the mind-body problem, and at the same time attempt to *solve* them too. In this case, one is simply sitting on a tree branch while simultaneously sawing it off. This is Rorty's diagnosis of Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem in a nutshell.

Here, I want to show that such a framing is wrong. Dewey adopted neither a Lockean nor a Hegelian approach, and therefore he did not become a Kantian (in Rorty's sense) but instead chose a rather different perspective. Dewey could not accept the Lockean way of rejecting philosophical dualisms because Locke's empiricism is based on a famous division of qualities into primary qualities and secondary qualities. This division comes from Galileo Galilei's 1632 *Assayer*[11] which is considered a pioneering work not only for the contemporary scientific method but also as an influential *philosophical* work with a specific *metaphysical* claim. In this book, Galileo writes:

> I do not believe that in order to stimulate in us tastes, odors, and sounds, external bodies require anything other than sizes, shapes, quantity, and slow or fast motions. I think that if one takes away

[11] According to Martha Bolton (2022), "To the best of our knowledge, the doctrine of qualities is first stated by Galileo Galilei. A paradigm-destroying natural philosopher for whom 'the book of nature is written in the language of mathematics' (Galileo 1623 [2008, 179–83]; Crombie 1972). Galileo argues for the distinction in a section of *The Assayer* (1623)."

> ears, tongues, and noses, there indeed remain the shapes, numbers, and motions, but not the odors, tastes, or sounds; outside the living animal these are nothing but names, just as tickling and titillation are nothing but names if we remove the armpits and the skin around the nose. [...] many properties, which are considered to be qualities inherent in external objects, do not really have any other existence except in us, and that outside of us they are nothing but names. (2008, 187-188)

Quantitative features (sizes, shapes, numbers, and motions) of "external bodies" were termed by Galileo as "primary qualities." These are *objective* features of the world. Odors, tastes, or sounds have become "secondary qualities." These are purely *subjective* and locked up in one's head; they are what we now call *qualia*.[12] Rorty seems to take such a picture for granted because Dewey's above-mentioned phrase "qualities of interactions" between extra-organic things and living organisms which for Rorty constitutes the very issue in Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem is taken as *secondary qualities* (1982b, 84). But Dewey did not accept the Galilean-Lockean division of being into primary and secondary qualities. Instead, Dewey attempted a *reversal* of the order of qualities. What had been considered primary qualities by Galileo and Locke became secondary qualities in Dewey. Thus, physico-mathematical descriptions do not constitute the objective features of the world but rather are *instrumental* in the control of problematic

[12] Even though Galileo's and Locke's arguments for the primary-quality distinction differ, the result is pretty much the same: they both seem to be secondary-quality *subjectivists* and primary-quality *objectivists*. The interpretation of Locke's (1961 [1690], 24-30) argument in particular is complicated due to his difficult terminology of qualities, powers, ideas, and (in)sensibility. Overall, for Locke, qualities are "powers" (i.e., dispositions or capacities [Lowe 2006, 49]) of the external objects to cause perceptions or ideas in our minds (Locke 1961 [1690], 24), though Michael Jacovides (2007, 104) and John Mackie (1976, 12) claim that Locke never intended to identify primary qualities as powers or dispositions and only secondary qualities were properly intended as such. According to Locke, the ideas/perceptions of primary qualities are "resemblances" in that they are *veridical representations*. The ideas of secondary qualities are only thought of as veridical representations but in fact they are *not* (1961 [1690], 30). It is only primary qualities that are *real* and *original* qualities because they represent the real features of the physical objects and are essentially mind independent. These qualities are "in the things themselves, whether they are perceived or not" (ibid.). When it comes to secondary qualities (e.g., colors, smells, tastes, and sounds), we think of them as real or objective "by mistake" when in fact they are just "in the subject" (25) or "in *us*" (29) and "are in truth nothing in the objects themselves" (25, 26). As such secondary qualities are the *effects* that primary qualities have the power to produce in our mind but the objects themselves do not have them (28). Mackie (1976, 12-13), on the other hand, claims that this is the place where Locke has traditionally been misinterpreted: secondary qualities are not purely subjective (or only "in the mind") but it is only the *ideas* of them that are so. Secondary qualities are also in the objects because essentially, they are *powers* of the material things to produce perceptions by means of primary qualities which are the intrinsic properties of those material things (see also Jacovides [2007, 114]).

That secondary qualities (or our ideas of them) are currently usually interpreted as *qualia* including the debates about such an interpretation, see Shoemaker (1990), Smith (1990), and Nolan (2011a).

situations. What Galileo and Locke had termed "secondary qualities" for Dewey became primary qualities that would constitute the natural events as such. This is how I think Dewey's quote that "[t]he qualities never were 'in' the organism; they always were qualities of interactions in which both extra-organic things and organisms partake" (LW 1, 199-200), a quote which puzzled Rorty so much, must be interpreted. In other words, Dewey does not need a transcendental ego to synthesize the secondary qualities. If this was the case, then these qualities would have been *in* the organism (i.e., the view that Dewey wants to reject). But Dewey wants to say that the so-called secondary qualities are always *out there* in the world as the essential constituents of natural events,[13] or the primary qualities, and not the secondary ones that exist only inside one's head.

According to Rorty, Dewey's Hegelian way of rejecting philosophical dualisms is predicated on that (i) the beginning of philosophic thought is always *historical* and is essentially about the problems that men deal with at the time (1987, 81); (ii) the claim that it is due to some specific cultural circumstances that the dualisms still exist even though their usefulness have been outlived (82); and (iii) it is about a criticism of culture without the latter's taking any form of an attempt metaphysically to redescribe nature or experience or both (85). But Dewey's search for the generic traits of experience constituted a mistake that cost him both his Lockean way as well as his Hegelian way of rejecting philosophical dualisms and made him a Kantian in the end. Instead of being fully Hegelian and successfully overcoming the traditional metaphysics with its insolvable problems, Dewey himself got trapped in it.

But Dewey was not strictly a proponent of the Hegelian approach either. For Rorty, the latter is merely about a criticism of culture or deconstruction without metaphysics. Thus, the Hegelian approach is basically about working passively with the history of philosophy and digging

[13] "The *intrinsic* nature of events is revealed in experience as the immediately felt qualities of things" (LW 1, 6).

into the contemporary consequences onto culture of the ideas, once called "philosophic," that were fruitlessly aiming at description of the "generic traits of existences" (87). It seems that Rorty's deconstructivist or Hegelian approach would merely be that of an intellectual historian.

Thomas Alexander (1987, xxi), on the other hand, claims that Dewey's philosophy is that of reconstruction and not deconstruction, which is hard to disagree with. But I also think that a proper analysis would reveal that Dewey is a philosopher of both criticism or deconstruction *and* reconstruction. And Dewey's treatment of the mind-body problem is a very good example of it. Because it is here where I would say that Dewey's deconstruction-reconstruction approach is most visible and what it essentially consists of.

2.4. Alexander's Emergentist Reading

For Thomas Alexander, it is Dewey's *principle of continuity* or emergentism that is Dewey's key solution to the mind-body problem. Even though "Dewey never fully developed his theory of continuity," he nevertheless "constantly appeals to it at crucial moments in most of his writings" (1987, 98). And Alexander takes it for granted what Dewey said in Preface to *Experience and Nature* that is "[r]estoration of continuity is shown to do away with the mind-body problem" (LW 1, 8). Interestingly, when Rorty (1982b, 82) finds the origin of Dewey's idea of continuity in Locke and not Hegel, Alexander (1987, 99) claims that the idea of continuity "clearly has echoes of Hegel," although the main influence on Dewey's idea of continuity was that of Aristotle.

Alexander surprisingly finds the most "direct analysis" of Dewey's principle of continuity not in *Experience and Nature* (which in itself is both an inquiry into and an application of the very principle (ibid.)) but in Dewey's *Logic: Theory of Inquiry*.[14] From there, Alexander concludes the

[14] This is the passage from *Logic* that Alexander relies on when it comes to Dewey's *principle of continuity*: "The term 'naturalistic' has many meanings. As it is here employed it means, on one side, that there is no breach of continuity between operations of inquiry and biological operations and physical operations. 'Continuity,' on the other

following. On the one hand, it is the organic model that achieves mature expression in this theory. And the above-mentioned growth of a plant must demonstrate that Dewey's continuity is akin to the principle of organic development (ibid.). On the other hand, Alexander emphasizes that Dewey's principle of continuity is essentially Aristotelian. Because not only does Dewey's idea of continuity reintroduce the notions of actuality and potentiality that are fundamental to Aristotle (ibid.) but is also "firmly grounded" on them. Continuity as such is *potentiality* (100).

According to Alexander, nature is in experience while experience is in nature (97). Experience is *of* nature because it is *in* nature (ibid.). If put logically, continuity then is a *conjunction* that unites two conditionals "if nature, then experience" *and* "if experience, then nature." But how exactly are nature and experience continuous with each other? What will that "and" be a symbolic representation of? From Alexander's perspective, this would be Dewey's notion of *situation*.

Indeed, Alexander claims that Dewey understood his idea of continuity through his "theory of situations" (104). But what are the situations? They are *ousiai* (or "individuals")[15] and as such possess the following characteristics. Situations are ontologically primary and thus mark the beginning of the philosophical understanding (ibid.); situations are "*res*" or active lived

side, means that rational operations grow out of organic activities, without being identical with that from which they emerge. […] The primary postulate of a naturalistic theory of logic is continuity of the lower (less complex) and the higher (more complex) activities and forms. The idea of continuity is not self-explanatory. But its meaning excludes complete rupture on one side and mere repetition of identities on the other; it precludes the reduction of the 'higher' to the 'lower' just as it precludes complete breaks and gaps. The growth and development of any living organism from seed to maturity illustrates the meaning of continuity" (LW 12, 26, 30).

[15] According to Alexander, "Dewey's individual situations are more like Aristotle's individuals than like Newton's. That is, each individual is a process, an activity, which always has potentialities to act and be acted upon. It is not self-sufficient from the universe; it is only distinguishable. Presumably, for Newton, one atom does not need or depend on any other to exist. Modern physics has dismissed this notion for one in which events are seen as inextricably connected with each other. Again, the tendency to regard an individual as a self-contained *thing* with no potentialities for interaction is part of the seventeenth-century world view Dewey rejects. Dewey's individuals are organic wholes which have both an immediate aspect and a mediated one, an actual and a potential side, a radically unique and a formal or general character, just as did Aristotle's *ousiai*. Unlike Aristotle's *ousiai*, however, Dewey's situations have no fixed or essential endstate toward which they are heading" (114).

experiences which are essentially non-cognitive (105); situations are *temporal*; they possess both *intentionality* and *teleology*,[16] are always *open-ended* (106), present themselves as *field-interactions* (107),[17] and since they form interactive functional wholes, situations are also *transactions* (108-109).

One of the most fundamental characteristics of a situation is that of *feeling* or *quality*. As such, this quality is so "pervasive" that it unifies and marks out every situation (113). It resides neither in the sentient organisms nor in the object but is rather only *in* the situation itself and is *of* it (112). This is where Alexander brings the quote from Dewey that Rorty saw as Dewey's solution to the mind-body problem and which had puzzled him so much, "The qualities never were 'in' the organism; they always were qualities of interactions in which both extra-organic things and organisms partake" (LW 1, 198-199). But can Alexander answer Rorty's (1982b, 84) important follow-up question, "what qualities do those two sorts of things have when they are not interacting?" It seems that Alexander (1987, 112) addresses Rorty's question in the following way. The main point of Dewey's philosophy is that when such problems are being *functionalized*, i.e., when we stop looking at subjects and objects as fixed and distinct things, the problems in question disappear.[18] Thus, it seems that Rorty's mistake was to treat extra-organic things and organisms as fixed and distinct things instead of looking at them as functional parts of the functional whole of the situation. At the same time, Alexander thinks that, according to Dewey, as "qualities of

[16] "They are 'about' a subject-matter, and they have a teleological focus, an 'intentional' dimension, i.e., something toward which they are oriented dynamically" (105).

[17] It is because they "do not exist atomically unrelated to other events but interact as parts of a field" (107).

[18] Peter Godfrey-Smith (2010, 204-305) seems to support such a view when he says that Dewey's analysis is shaped in the following way, "Where we see a traditional philosophical 'gulf' (mind and matter, matter, thought and world, fact and value), there tends to be a real distinction present that has a kind of functional significance. But events in the history of philosophy, in interaction with the history of science and politics, will have led to this distinction acquiring a distorted philosophical role, one in which it poses a problem in the form of a gulf or dualism. Attention to the functional significance of the distinction, and its history, enable the problem to be partly solved and partly dissolved."

cosmic events" (LW 1, 204), feelings are *emergent*. Nevertheless, whether Alexander's functional explanation answers Rorty's question, I think, still remains problematic because it fails to tell us where qualities or feelings actually come from.[19]

It is also not very clear how much did Dewey actually embrace Aristotle's original idea of potentiality. The passage from Dewey's article "Time and Individuality" that Alexander quotes to support his claim ends with the following sentence, "While it is necessary to revive the category of potentiality as a characteristic of individuality, it has to be revived in a different form from that of its classic Aristotelian formulation" (LW 14, 110). If Dewey claims explicitly that it must be reintroduced in a *different* form from the original, then how can it be the case that "Dewey's later doctrine of continuity is *firmly* [emphasis added] grounded on the Aristotelian concept of real potentiality" as Alexander (1987, 99) puts it? Rather, one can say that Dewey was rather *inspired by* Aristotle's idea of potentiality, while acknowledging that its original account is inadequate.[20]

Secondly, there seems to be the final-cause problem. Did Dewey also embrace Aristotelian teleology? The previously mentioned passage from Dewey's *Logic* on which Alexander grounds his interpretation of the principle of continuity ends with the following sentence, "The growth and development of any living organism from seed to maturity illustrates the meaning of continuity" (LW 12, 30). Alexander indeed mentions that Dewey's principle of continuity involves a "naturalistic, functional teleology" but at the same time it reintroduces "Aristotle's fundamental concepts of actuality and potentiality" (1987, 99). But is it possible to combine the two? It also

[19] For example, one can ask the following question, "If qualities are of cosmic events, then how exactly are they emergent?" Rather, qualities being of cosmic events seems to suggest some kind of (feeling) panpsychism rather than emergentism, and if so then it also becomes not quite clear as to what role do situations have to play in such a (panpsychist) cosmic order. It also begs the question to what extent these perspectives are overall compatible since panpsychism itself is "based partly on the denial of emergence" (Levine 2019, 228).

[20] Even if one can find some emergentist elements in Aristotle's philosophy, it does not mean that it is them that actually *caused* Dewey's own emergent theory of mind. It can be a matter of *correlation* rather than causation. If so, then Alexander seems to commit the *post hoc* fallacy when he claims the opposite.

seems clear that what Dewey is talking about in this quote from his *Logic* is what in his 1917 essay "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy" he called "the doctrine of biological continuity or organic evolution" [21] (MW 10, 26) or "the scientific notion of evolution (biological continuity)" (25).[22] And what Dewey means by the latter is of course that of Darwin.[23]

One indeed can see a reference to Aristotle's idea of potentiality or final cause ("a living organism from seed to maturity") as well as a reference to *biological continuity* ("growth and development"). But is Darwinism compatible with Aristotle's idea of final cause? In the literature on Darwin there is an overall disagreement about this too:

> […] because Darwin was very fond of describing natural selection as a process that worked for the good of each species, Darwin's followers seemed to have diametrically opposed views as to whether his theory eliminated final causes from natural science or breathed new life into them. In either case, there was also serious disagreement on whether this was a good thing or a bad thing. (Lennox 2019)

Thus, it opens a question of how Dewey himself interpreted an idea of final causes. As his 1909 essay "The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy" (MW 4, 7) shows he was quite uneasy with

[21] Interestingly, David L. Hildebrand (2020, 342) claims that both Dewey's continuity thesis is rather grounded in *psychology*, "Dewey's account of experience built on his own (and James's) continuity thesis in psychology: that mind and body, mental and physical, were not categorically different substances, but were instead dynamic and ongoing events in a larger system. Mind and body were co-constitutive, each implicating the other, as well as the environment, other people, and whatever various cultural, historical, and linguistic features might be part of (what Dewey called) a 'situation.'"

[22] That Dewey's idea of continuity comes from *biology* is also supported by Peter Godfrey-Smith (2010, 307), "From biology, Dewey took the idea of continuity between human cognition and a larger class of organic responses in animals. This larger class of adaptive responses displays, as a shallower precursor, some features of the general pattern seen in problem solving. The link to biology is also used to support Dewey's insistence that our epistemic commerce with the world develops out of various kinds of nonepistemic commerce with it and remains embedded within this larger context of interaction."

[23] Jerome A. Popp (2007, 83) makes this connection explicit when he says, "Evolution shows us that the phenomenon of living things is only adequately explained in terms of the continuity of growth, which is the central characteristic of the theory. Dewey grasped this feature of all living things and saw that any adequate, forward-going analysis of human cognition would have to respect the principle of continuity, which means that mind, consciousness, and knowledge must be described in the same language of constant continuous change required to express evolutionary theory. Thus, a hard line between mind and body, or the mental and the physical, is pre-Darwinian. The profoundness of Dewey's understanding of the consequences of Darwin for philosophy can be seen in the current literature in cognitive science, which has subsumed the theory of mind, and denies such a hard distinction between mind and body in favor of talk about the mind-brain or of talk about the mind being something the brain does." In fact, "Dewey's whole approach to philosophy is to put post-Darwinian ideas to work in philosophic thought" (82).

this idea because as a central epistemological, naturalistic, and scientific principle, it is an obstruction towards an idea of *change* that Darwin's *Origin of Species* had well demonstrated.[24]

Alexander seems to be aware of such a difference since he immediately says that Dewey rejects the idea of potentiality as implying a "fixed or predetermined end in any absolute sense; potentiality simply refers to 'a characteristic of change'" (1987, 101). But even if Dewey tried to functionalize the classical conception of final cause instead of treating it as fixed, the question as to whether Dewey's idea of biological continuity was "firmly grounded" on Aristotle's idea of potentiality or rather it was merely *inspired* by it still remains. Or in other words, the question is whether Dewey attempted the *reconstruction* of Aristotle's idea of final cause, or if he did firmly *ground* his own idea of continuity onto it. And if it is the former, is it justified to refer to Dewey's idea of continuity as "firmly" *Aristotelian*? Or would it be better to consider Dewey's principle of continuity as rather a direct descendant of "Darwin's *continuity principle*" (Clayton 2006, 10) which is based on the idea that Darwin as a gradualist "was methodologically committed to removing any 'jumps' in nature" (ibid.)? In other words, is Dewey's idea of continuity or emergence essentially Aristotelian or Darwinian? For now, I will leave these questions open.

According to Alexander (1987), it is a "pervasive quality" that unifies and marks out every situation and makes situations *individual* because every quality is *sui generis*. The quality (feeling) is an actualization of a physical event or the realization of potentiality which signifies its being emergent. But what makes such an emergence genuinely *qualitative*? It is conceivable that such an emergence could be with no qualities whatsoever. This question can also be supplemented by

[24] On Rorty's (1998, 301) reading, "Dewey argued that Darwin had finished the job Galileo began - the job of eliminating from nature any purpose that transcends a particular organism's needs in a particular situation. […] The object becomes an object of manipulation rather than the embodiment of either a *telos* or a *logos,* and truth becomes 'the expedient in the way of thinking.'" Later, Rorty claims that "Dewey offers us a relativist and materialist version of teleology rather than an absolute and idealist one" (305).

Rorty's earlier question about the interaction between organic and extra-organic things, i.e., what kind of qualities do they have when they are not interacting? How to answer these questions?

A hint to the answer can be found in Alexander's later article "Dewey, Dualism, and Naturalism" where he says the following:

> Another dualism, that of "matter and mind," is also extensively treated in *Experience and Nature* through Dewey's "emergentism." Descartes' dualism originated from the interests of modern physics. Galileo had advanced two powerful ideas: the first was the distinction between "primary" qualities (those in bodies by themselves) and "secondary" qualities (due to bodies affecting the senses). The other was the belief that bodies and their motion could be essentially described in terms of mathematics. This was the basis for the modern view of nature as a vast machine whose parts readjusted themselves by fixed laws while the system as a whole remained constant. Events were ultimately equations, and qualities were removed to the mental realm where mathematical physics could ignore them. (2006, 190)

Thus, Galileo's distinction between the primary qualities and the secondary qualities led to the mind-body problem and Dewey's emergentism is a cure for it. But how exactly? If to adopt an Aristotelian interpretation of Dewey's emergence/continuity as realization of potentiality, then it is also conceivable that such a realization would be with no qualities at all. In other words, it becomes somewhat hard to explain how it is that "the growth and development of any living organism from seed to maturity," the very exemplar of Dewey's meaning of continuity/emergence, is always accompanied by a "pervasive quality." It seems then that Dewey's emergentism is not the end of the story and that it itself seems to be grounded in a move that made possible an outer existence of the qualities in the first place. The next part will inquire into this very move.

Part II.

3. A Metametaphysical Reading of Dewey

On Rorty's account, Dewey should have stayed Hegelian the whole time and criticized metaphysical problems without trying to solve them on their own terms. But Dewey did not do this and instead fell back into the classical metaphysics trap – i.e., he became Kantian in the end.

In other words, Rorty wanted Dewey to be fully a deconstructivist with no attempt at the metaphysical reconstruction whatsoever[25] because this is the only possible way successfully to overcome the tradition.[26] But I think that Dewey did attempt to overcome the tradition without becoming a Kantian. Dewey's attempt to solve the mind-body problem must be understood not as simply metaphysical but as *metametaphysical*.

This part consists of the following. Section 3.1. will clarify the meaning of metametaphysics that is employed in this paper. Section 3.2. will dig into Dewey's qualitative naturalism as his ultimate solution to the mind-body problem as well as shed some light on Dewey's emergentism as the *consequence* of such a solution.

3.1. What is Metametaphysics?

So far it seems that there is no precise understanding and definition of metametaphysics. According to David Manley (2009, 1), when metaphysics deals with the "foundations of reality," metametaphysics, on the other hand, deals with the "foundations of metaphysics." Tuomas E. Tahko (2015, 5) defines metametaphysics as "the study of the foundations and methodology of metaphysics." Ricki Bliss and J.T.M. Miller (2021, 1) characterize metametaphysics as "the domain of inquiry that is concerned with methodological issues that arise within metaphysics" but whether it is the right definition of the subject is a matter of debate. Thus, in the literature, there is an emphasis on metametaphysics as dealing with either the foundations of metaphysics, or its methodology, or both.

[25] John Stuhr (1992, 165) thinks that Rorty's "diagnoses of Dewey's metaphysics are deeply and thoroughly mistaken." Not only do they misread but they also misuse Dewey. Nevertheless, they are still "instructive" because they help us see the "sharp contrast" between Dewey's own pragmatism with its focus on the culture *reconstruction* on the one hand, and Rorty's neo-pragmatism with its focus on the theory *deconstruction*, on the other.

[26] Although the phrase itself is coming from Rorty's (1982a) earlier essay titled "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey," in the later essay "Dewey's Metaphysics" Rorty (1982b) is still on the same track when it comes to his interpretation of Dewey.

Also, one of the main methodological issues here is whether "metametaphysics" and "metaontology" are synonyms or have somewhat different meanings. Very often, these concepts are used interchangeably (Tahko 2015, 4), but there is also a way to interpret metaontology as a subset of metametaphysics. Thus, to this reading, the latter is broader in that it encompasses not only metaontology with its issues but also deals with the broader methodological issues concerning metaphysics itself (6).

Here, I define metametaphysics as the second order inquiry into the nature of the first order metaphysics. Thus, any metametaphysical reasoning is the second order reasoning that is about the nature of the first order metaphysics and its problems.[27] When it comes to Dewey's own second order or metametaphysical move the situation is this. It consists not only in reflecting about the premises that ground the first order metaphysical problem in question but is also an attempt to *fix* them which is what Dewey himself usually appealed to as *reconstruction*. Elsewhere (see Leonov [2022]) I called this Dewey's methodological procedure "genealogical deconstruction" and "pragmatic reconstruction" respectively.

David Chalmers (2018) initiates the project that he calls "the meta-problem of consciousness" which is a good example of metametaphysics. According to Chalmers,

> The meta-problem of consciousness is (to a first approximation) the problem of explaining why we think that there is a problem of consciousness. Just as metacognition is cognition about cognition, and a metatheory is a theory about theories, the meta-problem is a problem about a problem. The initial problem is the hard problem of consciousness: why and how do physical processes in the brain give rise to conscious experience? The meta-problem is the problem of explaining why we think consciousness poses a hard problem, or in other terms, the problem of explaining why we think consciousness is hard to explain. (6)

[27] Metaethics and normative ethics can serve as a good analogy. Thus, when the latter is the first order inquiry into what qualifies as a moral value or disvalue, second order metaethics is an inquiry into the status and the nature of the values in question as such. For example, Mackie's (1977) inquiry into the problem of the objectivity of values is a good example of such metaethical questioning.

What Chalmers earlier (1995; 1996) called "the hard problem of consciousness" is now analyzed at the meta level. Chalmers immediately classifies the meta-problem of consciousness as one of the "easy problems" (2018, 8) where the empirical methods of cognitive sciences such as psychology, neuroscience, and others will play a more significant and crucial role than philosophy (9) and so the solution to the meta-problem of consciousness is not the way to "solve or dissolve" the hard problem but is rather the way to "constrain the form of a solution" (8). In other words, for Chalmers the meta-problem of consciousness is the metametaphysical problem only in a sense that it is *about* the classical metaphysical hard problem of consciousness, but one cannot solve or dissolve the latter *via* finding the solution to the former.

By the same token, we can formulate the "mind-body meta-problem," which would consist of the question, "Why do we have the mind-body problem in the first place?" I think that this is exactly the question that Dewey is directly trying to address. But Dewey's strategy is different than that of Chalmers. The mind-body meta-problem is not seen as an "easy problem" to be addressed empirically but rather as a problem which Dewey attempts to solve (meta)*philosophically*, i.e., at the second order or metametaphysical level. Dewey's metametaphysical solution is not just the way to "constrain the form of a solution" but is a clear attempt to *solve* it. He tried to understand the origin of the mind-body problem as such and fix what went wrong metaphysically and caused the problem in the first place. Dewey's metametaphysical solution to the mind-body problem is his *qualitative naturalism*.

3.2. Dewey's Qualitative Naturalism

I think that Raymond Boisvert provides us with the correct diagnosis when he says that Deweyan philosophy considers the mind-body problem "as associated with an earlier, erroneous

ontology" (1988, 210). But what exactly is erroneous about the earlier ontology that the mind-body problem is associated with? This is what this section aims to clarify.

On the one hand, Dewey complains that the mind-body problem is grounded on the wrong ontological premises (i.e., the Galilean-Lockean order of qualities). The situation was caused by the natural sciences' success, which came at a price. It was paid through a substitution of the immediate – later, "secondary" – qualities (the "'sense" of events") such as wet and dry, hot and cold, up and down with the primary or "signifying" qualities which were treated by the scientists not as real qualities but rather as *relations* (LW 1, 203).

Dewey explains the origin of the Galilean-Lockean ontological premise in the following way:

> The surrender of immediate qualities, sensory and significant, as objects of science, and as proper forms of classification and understanding, left in reality these immediate qualities just as they were; since they are *had* there is no need to *know* them. But, as we have had frequent occasion to notice, the traditional view that the object of knowledge is reality *par excellence* led to the conclusion that the proper object of science was preeminently metaphysically real. Hence immediate qualities, being extruded from the object of science, were left thereby hanging loose from the "real" object. Since their *existence* could not be denied, they were gathered together into a psychic realm of being, set over against the object of physics. Given this premise, all the problems regarding the relation of mind and matter, the psychic and the bodily, necessarily follow. (ibid)

This quote explains not only the origin of the Galilean-Lockean ontological premise, which can be summarized in a maxim "*Quantity* first, quality second!" and is the essence of Galileo's *quantitative naturalism* but also shows how it would give rise to the mind-body problem as well.

To use Dewey's terminology, Galilean natural science was exclusively oriented at *knowledge*. The objectively existent immediate qualities (or things-as-*had*) played no role in Galileo's attempt to mathematize nature. Thus, these immediate qualities became something like "nomological danglers." They do exist but their existence does not suffice for the novel type of

scientific explanation.[28] This led them to be qualified as purely subjective states or what are now called *qualia* that exist only in one's head. And it is this situation that led to the appearance of the mind-body problem. It is also not hard to see how the "hard problem of consciousness" or the question "Why and how do physical processes in the brain give rise to conscious experience?" (Chalmers 2018, 6) has the same origin. Because if objects (including the brain states) of physical science is reality *par excellence* then why does conscious experience exist in the first place when it is clearly conceivable a situation when all the physical processes take place with no consciousness involved whatsoever? Thus, the hard problem is born.

On the other hand, Dewey does not want to leave this metaphysical situation as is but also attempts to *fix* it through reversing the order of the qualities which one can put in a maxim, "*Quality* first, quantity second!"

> Change the metaphysical premise; restore, that is to say, immediate qualities to their rightful position as qualities of inclusive situations, and the problems in question cease to be epistemological problems. They become specifiable scientific problems: questions, that is to say, of how such and such an event having such and such qualities actually occurs. (LW 1, 204)

And it is this Dewey's call to "change of the metaphysical premise," I understand as a metametaphysical shift that constitutes Dewey's *qualitative naturalism.* It is obvious that it is opposed to the Galilean-Lockean *quantitative naturalism*, the maxim of which would be "Quantity first, quality second!", and which led to the mind-body problem itself because, as it was stated earlier, it is this from premise that the mind-body problem necessarily follows (203). Hence, "[…]

[28] Godfrey-Smith (2010, 308) summarizes this situation in the following way, "We then jump forward to a profound shift in social conditions, associated with the rise of capitalism and early modern science. This produces a transformation in actual epistemic practice − in knowledge and methods. In particular, we see a new emphasis on individuality, experiment, and methods continuous with craft. We also see the discovery of the enormous power of a focus on the mechanical structure of nature − for Dewey, on mechanical *aspects* of natural affairs. But there is a failure to make corresponding shifts on the philosophical side, which would properly accommodate the new practices of knowledge gathering. The result is a retention of the idea that the objects of knowledge are the genuinely real, in combination with a new conception of what is known and knowable. What has turned out to be knowable is the mechanical order, so the things apparent in ordinary experience (colors, everyday objects, values) become philosophically problematic."

See also Nolan (2011b, 2).

the 'solution' of the problem of mind-body is to be found in a revision of the preliminary assumptions about existence which generate the problem" (ibid.). The assumptions that must be revised are about the idea that the quantitative objects of science constitute reality *par excellence* while immediate qualities are just purely one's subjective states that have nothing to do with objective reality. Now it must be clear that Dewey's "revision" is about the reversal[29] of Galileo's qualities order.[30] And I think it was Dewey's *intention* to have as the *consequence* of such a metametaphysical revision what he himself called in *Experience and Nature* "restoration of continuity"[31] (9) or "'emergent' theory of mind" (208). How does it solve the mind-body problem and how are Dewey's qualitative naturalism and emergentism connected? This is where an idea of a *qualitative natural event* comes into play.

Both mind and matter have been transformed into just "different characters of natural events, in which matter expresses their sequential order, and mind the order of their meanings in their logical connections and dependencies" and it is only our unfamiliarity that is the only obstacle to our thinking of them as such (66). The natural event as such is essentially *qualitative*. And so, the cause of the mind-body problem is grounded in the situation when the general qualities of natural events are denied (194). In fact, the immediate qualities which we habitually think of as

[29] Galileo's *quantitative* naturalism one can identify with what is traditionally understood as "ontological naturalism." According to Papineau (2020), the core idea of the latter is that "[…] all spatiotemporal entities must be identical to or metaphysically constituted by physical entities. Many ontological naturalists thus adopt a physicalist attitude to mental, biological, social and other such 'special' subject matters. They hold that there is nothing more to the mental, biological and social realms than arrangements of physical entities." But Dewey's *qualitative* naturalism seems to imply an ontology and ontological naturalism of a different (i.e., *qualitative*) kind. Thus, Dewey's *qualitative naturalism* can rightly be seen as a revolt against Galileo's *quantitative naturalism* and can be termed as Dewey's "ontological revolution."

[30] Paul Cherlin (2023) claims that "[…] qualities, as Dewey understands them, have very little, if anything, in common with the 'primary' and 'secondary qualities' that figure in Locke's empiricism" (67). If my diagnosis of Dewey's intention is right, the situation is quite the opposite: Dewey's qualities have everything to do with Galilean-Lockean qualities. It is just they must be seen in a reversed order.

[31] Rorty seems to have missed the point because he somehow classified Dewey's continuity or emergence thesis that "examines the emergence of complex experiences out of simple ones" (1982b, 81) and "which emphasizes continuity between lower and higher processes" (82) as Lockean instead.

merely the qualities of sentiency are objectively out there and as such are the "qualities of cosmic events" (205). Life and mind are "caused" by natural events that have matter as their character, and so the dependence of life, sentiency and mind on matter is practical or instrumental (201).[32] Now, what exactly is Dewey's emergentism?

Earlier (see Leonov [2020]), I suggested adopting a term "cultural emergentism" which I think better captures the emergence picture that Dewey was advocating. Mark Johnson and Jay Schulkin follow the same train of thought and think that, from Dewey's perspective, what exactly emerges is *culture*:

> Our culture is the soil in which we sprout and from which we are nourished, not just physically, but mentally […]. We are so habituated to thinking of mind as something possessed by individual persons that perhaps it would be easier for us if we could substitute "culture" or "cultural meaning" for Dewey's use of the term "mind," in order to indicate all of the systems of meaning, practices, and values shared by a people and constituting the source of the meanings that are available to individual subjects. (2023, 44-45)

Thus, Johnson and Schulkin suggest substituting the term "mind" with terms "culture" or "cultural meaning." But what does it have to do with the mind-body problem *per se*? They go further and suggest that our "mental processes just are bodily processes" (72) and that we must rethink both mind and body in terms of *habits*. Thus, the body must be thought of as a "conglomeration of habits of perception, feeling, and action" (ibid.), and the mind would be an "interpenetration of habits of meaning-making, thought, valuing, and judgment" (ibid.). So, the mind becomes continuous with the body through *habit*. How does it fit into the current understanding of emergence?

[32] This discussion also opens the question of how Dewey understood the notion of "nature." According to Alexander, Dewey's understanding of nature is closely related with that of Aristotle's idea of nature as *phusis*, i.e., as a cluster of potentiality and actuality (1987, 49). Nature as *phusis* is a "a temporal, generative process" (126). Naturalistically, it refers to creation as a genuine emergence or the birth of the new (36). But did Dewey actually embrace Aristotle's idea of nature as *phusis* or was he again more *inspired* by it? This question is not easy to answer and here I leave it open for further inquiry.

David Chalmers (2006, 244-245) distinguishes between two types of emergences: *weak emergence*, and *strong emergence*. Weak emergence refers to a situation when the facts about the high-level phenomenon are *unexpected* from the facts about the low-level domain from which it emerges. Strong emergence refers to a situation when the truths about the high-level phenomenon are not even *logically deducible* from the facts about the low-level phenomenon from which it emerges. What kind of emergence is Dewey's culture/habit-emergence?

It seems that the very distinction between weak and strong emergence is predicated on the classical physics picture that Dewey was critical of. For Chalmers, it is consciousness that seems to be "exactly one clear case" (246), if not the only example of a phenomenon that is strongly emergent (247).[33] To prove his case Chalmers uses an example of a "Laplacean super-being" that "could, in principle, deduce all the high-level facts about the world, including the high-level facts about chemistry, biology, economics, and so on" (ibid.), but would still fail to deduce the facts about consciousness. Hence, the high-level facts (like chemistry, biology, and economics) that, even though unpredictable but are still *logically deducible* from the low-level facts are *weakly emergent*, and the ones that are *not* deducible (like consciousness) are strongly emergent. But does this strategy apply to Dewey?

In his 1938 essay "Time and Individuality," Dewey claims that the Laplacean super-being idea is an exemplar of the classical physics that was undermined by the Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy which "actual force and significance is generalization of the idea that the individual is a temporal career whose future cannot be *logically* deduced from its past" (LW 14, 108). From this it seems to follow that Dewey's emergent theory of mind is then neither of a weak nor of a strong kind since Dewey denies the very foundation for the distinction. Instead, we can think of

[33] See also (Chalmers 2015).

Dewey's cultural emergentism as a case of *pragmatic emergence*[34] which is a consequence of his qualitative naturalism while the Laplacean super-being idea seems to be a consequence of Galileo's quantitative naturalism respectively. So far, this is just a preliminary conclusion and further investigation is necessary.

To sum up, Dewey's *qualitative naturalism* can indeed be seen as a way to overcome the tradition in Rorty's sense, and at least *prima facie*, it does not seem to fall into a classical metaphysical trap, and thus to end up as a form of Kantianism. Instead, Dewey's qualitative naturalism is rather a *metametaphysical* approach. It is a *critical* or deconstructivist approach to traditional metaphysics on the one hand, because it questions the metaphysical premises of the problem as such, but at the same time it also attempts to *reconstruct* or fix the classical metaphysical situation without simultaneously being trapped into it in a Rortyan sense, on the other. And it is this metametaphysical qualitative naturalism that seems to make Dewey's emergentism or the "restoration of continuity" possible.[35]

---

[34] Lynn J. Rothschild (2006, 162-164) offers an *evolutionary biology* perspective on emergence. Thus, she proposes the third type of emergence which she calls "pragmatic emergence" that is additional to the weak and strong types. This approach is essentially non-reductive and is "a higher-level approach, which acts *as if the characteristic were emergent.*" Although it can be seen as the feeblest example of emergence, for biology as a discipline it "could be the most useful one" and which can especially shed light on the question of emergence of life. Even though Rothschild attempts at depicting a novel type of emergence "regardless of its philosophical underpinnings" (151), this account still inherits the idea that there must be hierarchy between its components (161).

Ludger van Dijk (2022), on the other hand, defends Dewey-based *pragmatic emergence* view that is essentially diachronic, non-hierarchical, or *fla*t. Unlike standard approaches to emergence where ontological realm is fundamentally complete (= ontological determinism), on the pragmatic emergence view (as also inspired by quantum mechanics) the ontological realm is essentially unfinished and open-ended (= ontological indeterminism). Thus, the basal property **B** is only *historically prior* to its emergent property **E** but is not logically or metaphysically prior. Nevertheless, **E** is ontologically as real as **B**. Since ontology is not pre-existent, epistemology is not *a priori* separated from it, but they are both codetermined.

[35] What is the relationship between Dewey's qualitative naturalism and his own methodology such as his *denotative method*? *Prima facie*, it seems that Dewey's denotative method played crucial role in his metaphysical inquiries including the mind-body problem. The very structure of *Experience and Nature* seems to suggest as well as support such thinking. First, Dewey presents his method in chapter 1 of his *opus magnum*, and so it looks as if everything that comes *after* this chapter has been derived *from* it. But is it *de facto* the case? I think that the real scenario was different. I suggest that at first Dewey makes his metametaphysical move where he reverses the order of qualities as presented in chapter 7, and only *after* that the denotative method as starting from the objective immediate qualities (or "primary experience") becomes even possible. I agree with Thomas Alexander who claims that Dewey's denotative method is essentially his old postulate of immediate empiricism (1987, 87). The motto of the latter is "things

4. Conclusion

I claimed that Dewey's ultimate solution to the mind-body problem was not his emergentism *per se* but rather metametaphysical *qualitative naturalism* that would allow him to avoid getting trapped into the net of classical metaphysics. But it is also possible to imagine that some philosophers could disagree. For example, some could say that Dewey's main solution to the mind-body problem can be seen as a kind of *neutral monism* as Peter Godfrey-Smith (2010; 2013) suggests explicitly and Richard Gale (2002, 505-506) claims implicitly despite Dewey's own worries relating this matter (e.g., see [LW 1, 67]).

Later in his career, Richard Rorty directly charges Dewey's continuity thesis as the one that leads to *panpsychism*:

> The problem with this way of obtaining continuity between us and brutes is that it seems to shove the philosophically embarrassing discontinuity back down to the gap between, say, viruses and amoebas. But why stop there? Only giving something like experience to protein molecules, and perhaps eventually to quarks - only a full-fledged panpsychism - will eliminate such embarrassments. (1998, 296)

Steven Levine (2019, 227-228) calls Rorty's argument as "where does it stop argument." If there are no gaps and discontinuities in nature, then it would be hard to draw the line between experiential and non-experiential beings and so experience must be everywhere in nature. Therefore, Dewey's continuity thesis is essentially panpsychist.

Richard Gale (2002, 513-514) follows a similar route and offers two ways to interpret Dewey's principle of continuity, "bottom-up" and "top-down." The former results in reductive materialism and the latter winds up in *panpsychism*. Since Dewey did not prefer the bottom-up

---

are what they are experienced as." If my hypothesis about the grounding of Dewey's denotative method in his qualitative naturalism is correct, then the same also applies to his older immediate empiricism. Things become what they are experienced as only when the initial order of qualities is reversed, and Galileo's fundamental error is corrected. This suggests that Dewey's qualitative naturalism is *de facto* twenty years older than when it first explicitly appeared. Thus, it seems that Dewey's method played no role when he was dealing with the mind-body problem. In fact, Dewey's method is also preceded by Dewey's solution to the problem in the first place.

interpretation where our biology, psychology and sociology are explained by the physical concepts, then what is left is the top-down one where the higher-level concepts are employed to explain the lower-level phenomena thereby leading to panpsychism. It interesting that Gale sees the roots of this view in Dewey's first published essay "Metaphysical Assumptions of Materialism" (1882) where the key idea is that the cause must have as much reality as its effect because otherwise the mind's emergence from matter is impossible to explain. It is also interesting that Gale directly attributes the top-down interpretation of Dewey's principle of continuity to Thomas Alexander (1987), which implies that Alexander's emergentist reading of Dewey's continuity principle is also panpsychist.

Finally, Philip Goff (2019) seems to take a route similar to Dewey's and argues that it is due "Galileo's error" that the mind-body problem exists and to fix this problem, we must put the secondary qualities back into their proper place in nature. The outcome of this and the idea that Goff is intensely defending is that of *panpsychism*. Thus, Goff could also argue that what I call Dewey's "qualitative naturalism" is just another name for a good-old panpsychism and nothing more. But of course, further inquiry must be done to address these issues better.

References

Alexander, Thomas. 1987. *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature.* State University of New York Press.

———. 2006. "Dewey, Dualism, and Naturalism." In *A Companion to Pragmatism*, edited by John R. Shook and Joseph Margolis, 184–92. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

———. 2019. "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics." *The Oxford Handbook of Dewey*. Steven Fesmire (ed.), 25-52. Oxford University Press.

Bliss, Ricki, Miller JTM. (eds.). 2021. "Introduction: What is Metametaphysics?" In *The Routledge Handbook of Metametaphysics*, Ricki Bliss and JTM Miller (eds.). Routledge.

Boisvert, Raymond. 1988. "Dewey's Metaphysics: Form and Being in the Philosophy of John Dewey." Fordham University Press. Project MUSE. https://doi.org/10.1353/book.63960.

Bolton, Martha. 2022. "Primary and Secondary Qualities in Early Modern Philosophy." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman (Spring 2024 Edition). https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2024/entries/qualities-prim-sec/

Brodbeck, May. 1947. "A Critical Examination of John Dewey's Logic: Theory of Inquiry." A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The Department of Philosophy in the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa.

Brown, Matthew J. 2012. "John Dewey's Logic of Science." *HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science*, vol. 2: 258-306.

Burke, Thomas F., Hester Micah D., Talisse Robert B. (eds.). 2002. *Dewey's Logical Theory: New Studies and Interpretations*. Vanderbilt University Press.

Chalmers, David. 1995. "Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness." *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 2 (3): 200-219.

———. 1996. *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2006. "Strong and Weak Emergence." In Philip Clayton and John Davis (eds.)., *The Re-Emergence of Emergence*. Oxford University Press.

———. 2015. "Why Is Emergence Significant?" YouTube, 26 March, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjPxBS4sIxQ&ab_channel=CloserToTruth.

———. 2018. "The Meta-Problem of Consciousness." *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 25, No. 9–10: 6–61.

Cherlin, Paul Benjamin. 2023. *John Dewey's Metaphysical Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Clayton Philip. 2006. "Conceptual Foundations of Emergence Theory." In Philip Clayton and John Davis (eds.)., *The Re-Emergence of Emergence*. Oxford University Press.

Crane, Tim. 2000. "The Origins of Qualia." In *The History of Mind-Body Problem*, T Crane, S Patterson (eds.). London: Routledge.

Croce, Benedetto. 1952. "Dewey's Aesthetics and Theory of Knowledge." Translated by Frederic Simoni. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XI: 1-6.

Dewey, John. (1909) 2008. "The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy." In *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924. Volume 4: 1907-1909, Essays, Moral Principles in Education*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press (MW 4).

———. (1917) 2008. "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy." In *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924. Volume 10: 1916-1917, Essays*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press (MW 10).

———. (1925/29) 2008. *Experience and Nature*. In *The Later Works*, 1925-1953, vol. 1: 1925, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press (LW 1).

———. (1938) 2008. *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry.* In *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953. Volume 12: 1938, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press (LW 12).

———. (1938) 2008. "Time and Individuality." In The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953. Volume 14: 1939-1941, Essays, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press (LW 14).

Gale, Richard M. 2002. "The Metaphysics of John Dewey." *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Fall): 477-519.

Galilei, Galileo. 2008. *The Essential Galileo*. Edited by Finocchiaro Maurice A. Hackett Publishing Company.

Godfrey-Smith, Peter. 2010. "Dewey, Continuity, and McDowell." In *Naturalism and Normativity*, Mario De Caro and David Macarthur (eds.), 304-21. New York: Columbia University Press.

———. 2013. "John Dewey's Experience and Nature." *Topoi*. DOI 10.1007/s11245-013-9214-7 https://petergodfreysmith.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/PGS-on-Experience-and-Nature-Topoi-2013.pdf

Goff, Philip. 2019. *Galileo's Error: Foundations for a New Science of Consciousness*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Hickman, Larry. 2004. "John Dewey, 1859-1952." In *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy*, Armen T. Marsoobian and John Ryder (eds.), 155-173. Blackwell Publishing.

Hildebrand, David L. 2003. *Beyond Realism and Antirealism: John Dewey and the Neopragmatists* Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Hildebrand, David L. 2020. "Rorty and Dewey." In *A Companion to Rorty*, Alan Malachowski (ed.). John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Jacovides, Michael. 2007. "Locke's Distinctions between Primary and Secondary Qualities", in *The Cambridge Companion to Locke's "Essay Concerning Human Understanding"*, edited by Lex Newman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 101–129.

Johnson, Mark and Jay Schulkin. 2023. *Mind in Nature*: *John Dewey, Cognitive Science, and a Naturalistic Philosophy for Living.* The MIT Press.

Lennox, James. 2019. "Darwinism." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman (Spring 2024 Edition). https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2024/entries/darwinism/

Leonov, Andrii. 2020. "Instrumentalist Logic of Scientific Discovery: Reflections on Dewey's Method and Its Metaphysical Foundations." *Actual Problems of Mind*, (21), 3–23. https://doi.org/10.31812/apd.v0i21.4369

———. 2022. "Dewey's Denotative Method: A Critical Approach." *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* [Online], XIV-1 | 2022, Online since 13 May 2022, connection on 01 September 2023. URL: http://journals.openedition.org/ejpap/2735; DOI: https://doi.org/10.4000/ejpap.2735

Levine, Steven. 2019. *Pragmatism, Objectivity, and Experience*. Cambridge University Press.

Locke, John. (1690) 1961. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Abridged)*. In *The Empiricists*. Doubleday.

Lowe, E.J. 2005. *Locke*. Routledge.

Mackie, John. 1976. *Problems from Locke*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

———. 1977. *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. Penguin Books.

Manley, David. 2009. "Introduction: A Guided Tour of Metametaphysics." In *Metametaphysics: New Essays on the Foundations of Ontology*, David Chalmers, David Manley, and Ryan Wasserman (eds.). Oxford University Press.

Nolan, Lawrence (ed.). 2011a. *Primary and Secondary Qualities: The Historical and Ongoing Debate*. Oxford University Press.

———. 2011b. "Introduction." In *Primary and Secondary Qualities: The Historical and Ongoing Debate*, Lawrence Nolan (ed.), 2-15. Oxford University Press.

Papineau, David. 2020. "Naturalism." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman (Spring 2024 Edition). https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2024/entries/naturalism/

Popp, Jerome A. 2007. *Evolution's first philosopher: John Dewey and the continuity of nature*. Albany: State University of New York Press

Rorty, Richard. 1982a. "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey In *Consequences of Pragmatism (Essays: 1972-1980)*. University of Minnesota Press.

———. 1982b. "Dewey's Metaphysics." In *Consequences of Pragmatism (Essays: 1972-1980)*. University of Minnesota Press.

———. 1998. "Dewey Between Hegel and Darwin." In *Truth and Progress. Philosophical Papers*. Cambridge University Press.

Rotschild, Lynn J. 2006. "The Role of Emergence in Biology." In In Philip Clayton and John Davis (eds.)., *The Re-Emergence of Emergence*. Oxford University Press.

Savery, William. (1939) 1951. "Significance of Dewey's Philosophy." In *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, Paul Arthur Schlipp (ed.). *The Library of Living Philosophers*, Open Court.

Shomaker, Sidney. 1990. "Qualities and Qualia: What's in the Mind?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 50, Supplement (Autumn): 109-131.

Smith, A.D. 1990. "Of Primary and Secondary Qualities." *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (Apr.): 221-254.

Stuhr, John. 1992. "Dewey's Reconstruction of Metaphysics." *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Spring): 161-176.

Tahko, Tuomas E. 2015. *An Introduction to Metametaphysics*. Cambridge University Press.

Van Dijk, Ludger. 2021. "Temporalizing ontology: a case for pragmatic emergence." *Synthese* 198: 9021–9034. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-020-02615-1.