

The Illusion of Contingency and the Argument for Dualism

1. Identities:

Kripke holds that some true identity statements, both those involving individuals, and those involving kinds, are knowable by us only *a posteriori*, but that they nevertheless are necessary:

- (1) Hesperus = Phosphorus
- (2) Heat = the motion of molecules

2. What might have turned out:

Since these identities are *a posteriori*, it would seem as if it might have turned out that these statements were false: the investigation might have turned out differently than it did.

Kripke poses to himself the following objection:

I gather that Hesperus might have turned out not to be Phosphorus. What then can you mean when you say that such eventualities are impossible? If Hesperus might have *turned out* not to be Phosphorus, then Hesperus might not have *been* Phosphorus. [...] To deny this fact is to deny the self-evident modal principle that what is entailed by a possibility must itself be possible. (p. 141)

The Objection:

It might have turned out that Hesperus \neq Phosphorus. If it might have turned out that Hesperus \neq Phosphorus, then it might have been the case that Hesperus \neq Phosphorus. So, it might have been the case that Hesperus \neq Phosphorus.

3. Kripke's Defense by Diagnosis:

The evidence I have before I know that Hesperus is Phosphorus is that I see a certain ... heavenly body in the evening and call it 'Hesperus', and in the morning and call it 'Phosphorus'. I know these things. There certainly is a possible world in which a man should have seen a certain star at a certain position in the evening and called it 'Hesperus' and a certain star in the morning and called it 'Phosphorus'; and should have concluded – should have found out by empirical investigation – that he names two different ... heavenly bodies. [...] And so it's true that given the evidence that someone has antecedent to his empirical investigation, he can be placed in a sense in exactly the same situation, that is a qualitatively identical epistemic situation, and call two heavenly bodies 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', without their being identical. So in that sense we can say that it might have turned out either way. (p. 103)

The Diagnosis:

The objector is thinking of a situation which is possible, but is **mis**describing that as a situation in which Hesperus \neq Phosphorus.

possible:	I be in a qualitatively identical situation and my words 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' not refer to the same thing.
IMpossible:	Hesperus \neq Phosphorus.

Diagnosis requires: it be possible that in a qualitatively identical epistemic situation my words 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' refer to something other than what they actually refer to, but that is not a situation in which Hesperus \neq Phosphorus.

In this way, things that **seem** possible might fail to **be** possible.

Similarly, it might seem as if it's possible that

(3) heat \neq the motion of molecules. ,

but it's not. What's possible is (roughly) that

(4) I could be in a qualitatively identical evidential situation, and my word 'heat' refer to something \neq the motion of molecules.

This is because something other than the motion of molecules could give me the exact same sensation as heat. (I'm simplifying a bit here.) Thus:

- (5) I could have the sensation S , and yet the phenomenon sensed by S be \neq the motion of molecules.

possible:	I be in a qualitatively identical situation and the cause of sensation $S \neq$ the motion of molecules.
Impossible:	heat \neq the motion of molecules.

Diagnosis requires: The situation summarized by (5) is possible, but is not a situation in which (3) is true.

[**BLACKBOARD**]: draw the “common factor” cartoon.

4. The Argument for Dualism:

Consider:

- (6) Pain = C-Fibers Firing.

Is it true? Kripke believes that such theoretical identities if true are necessarily true, so:

- (7) Pain = C-Fibers Firing only if it is impossible that pain \neq C-Fibers Firing.

So, if it turns out to be possible that pain \neq C-Fibers Firing, then (6) will turn out to be false.

But it seems to be possible that pain \neq C-Fibers Firing. To see this, note that even proponents of (6) think that, even if it's true, it is a (yet to be made!) empirical discovery. Thus, we might have discovered that, though there is such a thing as pain, there is no such thing as CFF. (Pain might have turned out to have a distinct neural correlate – D-Fibers Firing.)

But **Kripke's diagnosistic pattern fails**:

Consider the following trio of sentences:

- (8) Pain \neq CFF.
 (9) I could be in a qualitatively identical evidential situation, and my word 'pain' refer to something \neq CFF.
 (10) I could have sensation [**OUCH!**], and yet the neural correlate of [**OUCH!**] be \neq CFF.

Diagnosis requires:

possible:	I be in a qualitatively identical situation and the neural correlate of [OUCH!] \neq CFF.
Impossible:	pain \neq CFF.

The diagnosis requires: The situation summarized by (10) is possible, but it is not a situation in which (8) is true. But,

Kripke claims, pain just *is* the sensation [OUCH!]. So any situation in which (10) is true is a situation in which pain itself \neq CFF.

Thus, the proponent of (6) must provide some other explanation of why the apparent possibility that pain not be CFF may be rejected.

5. **Other diagnoses may do the trick:**

We can run Kripke's diagnosis on the "CFF" side of the identity.

6. **Kripke's diagnosis fails in other cases:**

(a) **Things that don't seem contingent:**

(11) Obama is self-identical (if he exists).

Is there a qualitatively identical epistemic situation in which "is self-identical" means "is president"?

What do we "keep fixed"?

PROPOSAL: Everything that's *a priori*?

OBJECTION: Then we'd better keep fixed

(12) 'Hesperus' refers to Hesperus.

(13) 'Phosphorus' refers to Phosphorus.

This would ruin the diagnosis in the case of (3).

(b) **Non-identities:**

(14) Obama is not a robot.

You'd have to be crazy (I think) to think of a situation in which someone **resembling** Obama is a robot and confuse it with a case in which Obama himself is a robot.

Compare: "You don't really *believe* that Obama is a robot, you believe that someone *resembling Obama* is a robot."

CONSTRAINT: The diagnosis must be **Freudian**: it must be a diagnosis that you yourself accept.

7. **Kripke's diagnosis fails in the cases we are considering:**

Diagnosis requires: that you are not in fact thinking of a situation in which heat \neq the motion of molecules.

Why believe that you are not thinking of such a situation?

Kripke is holding firm on

The Humean Projection Principle If one can think of/imagine/conceive of a situation in which P , then it is possible that P .

Ultimately, holding firm on HPP and the necessity of (5) and its ilk requires the claim that one cannot think of/imagine/conceive of a situation in which the identity fails to hold.

THIS SEEMS WRONG: we can easily believe that Obama is a robot. And, if we can believe it, it seems, we can conceive it.

(**Modal epistemology:** This is supposed to give us a grip on what's possible.)