

## **“The Nature of Mind in Aristotle”**

The dialogue opens by raising a wide range of problems concerning the mind, the self, the soul, and the relation of the mind to the body. Descartes enters the scene and defends his view that the mind is a substance the essence of which is thought. Mental attributes are properties of the mind. Physical attributes are properties of the body. The mind and body stand in a two-way causal relationship. This conception is elaborated and then subjected to criticism. Mind/brain identity theory is also examined and found wanting. Aristotle enters, and advances his biological conception of the mind. The Aristotelian concept of the *psuchē* is elaborated and defended, and the rational *psuchē* is argued to be what distinguishes mankind from the rest of the animal kingdom. The rational *psuchē* consists of the distinctive powers of the intellect and ratiocinative will. Unlike the Cartesian mind, the *psuchē* is not an agent, but a set of powers. One does things with one's mind not as one does things with an organ (hands or legs), but as one does things with one's talents. Contrary to dualist conceptions, mental attributes are properties of the living human being, not of the mind – just as eyesight is a property of the living animal and not of its eyes.