

## **Abstract**

The aim of this thesis is to critically examine Daniele Dennett's conception of consciousness. In the first chapter, we will identify three main components of his account, namely, the concept of the non-intelligent designer, the duality of competence and comprehension, and the concept of the user-interface. The point of culmination of this investigation and of Dennett's account of consciousness will be the claim that consciousness is an illusory feature brought about by both the cultural and biological evolution our species has gone through. Together with the establishment of the illusion of consciousness, we will see that the self also disappears amidst the complicated workings of both our brains and our culture.

We will, then, consider Dennett's account in regards to two critics of the physicalist approach to consciousness, i.e., the approach which opts for explaining consciousness away via physical phenomena only. These critics will be Thomas Nagel and David Chalmers.

It will be within Nagel's critical remarks where we will find inspiration for our own question concerning Dennett's philosophy of consciousness. Our question, however, will not reach towards the subjective directly but rather indirectly through the concept of the unconscious. We will ground our understanding of the unconscious on Sigmund Freud's example of neurosis and claim that Dennett's account lacks the complexity to house such a concept in its more complicated meaning. This will be done in the second chapter of this thesis.

Finally, due to Dennett's inadequacy in regards to the unconscious, we will suggest that it is the idea of panpsychism that can get the best of the both worlds, so to speak. That is, it can both retain the ingenious contribution of Dennett's to the inquiry about our nature and about our consciousness while also providing aid in facing the issue of uncomplexity. We will attempt to ground the notion of panpsychism on Baruch De Spinoza's thought while also keeping in mind the idea's modern versions. This will be the third and final chapter of the thesis.

## **Keywords**

Materialism, Panpsychism, Unconscious, Consciousness, Mind, Body, Evolution, Brain